

# THE MYSTERIOUS IDENTITY OF SAINT GEORGE



## Introduction

Unlike the patron saints, Andrew of Scotland, David of Wales and Patrick of Ireland, who are all historically recognizable figures, St George of England is a patron saint with no immediately apparent historical provenance. Apart from what seems to begin with 5th-century folklore, most reference books relate that there are no contemporary or other historical documents relating to St George. Under such circumstances, it is rather odd that George became not only the patron saint of England, but also of numerous other countries, orders and occupations.<sup>1</sup> The most perplexing anomaly is that, although George rose to prominence in the saintly ranks, he was originally deemed personally unsuitable by the Vatican, and the written accounts of his life were proscribed by Pope Gelasius in AD 496. But why would Gelasius have denounced George as a known individual if he were mythical as so often supposed? Clearly, there was an aspect of George's character of which the Church did not approve – an aspect that was subsequently veiled and conveniently forgotten as the centuries passed. In this regard, the literature concerning the saint identifies an evolutionary strategy of character manipulation through more than 1,000 years. This ongoing creation of an acceptable heritage for George actually led to the emergence of an entirely mythical figure, in the course of which the real history of the man was lost.

## Original Records

The oldest extant Greek manuscript of George's tradition dates back to the early 5th century, and a revised Latin version known as the *Acta Sancti Georgii* was circulating in the 6th century. The Greek text exists today only in fragments at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, but had been translated into Syriac (a classical Aramaic language of

Mesopotamia) in the middle 5th century.<sup>2</sup> The oldest extant Syriac manuscript concerning George is preserved at the British Library, and was written around AD 600, making it the earliest complete witness to the original. In the Syriac rendition, George is referred to as *Mor Gewargis Sahdo* (St George the Martyr).<sup>3</sup>



Since the 13th century, most people have associated St George with the dragon that he slew, but there is no dragon as such in the early accounts. Originally, the term *drakon* (serpent) was used as an epithet for King Dadianus of the Black Sea region of Bithynia, where Georgios (Mor Gewargis) was said to have confronted “this dragon”, a forceful oppressor of the Christian faith. In later texts of the Catholic tradition, the reality of King Diadanus was strategically corrupted by substituting his name for either the Roman Emperor Diocletian (AD 245–312) or his co-ruler Galerius Maximianus (AD 250–311), both of whom had been violent persecutors of Christians before the 4th-century implementation of the Church of Rome.

Although the now familiar fire-breathing dragon of George’s legend did not enter the literary arena until 1275 (*see* page 20), the symbolic *drakon* of Diadanus (as in the above Syriac icon) was portrayed in much earlier times, thereby giving rise to the tradition as it evolved pictorially from its original figurative context.

### **George the Martyr**

As mentioned above, the Catholic Church was initially reluctant to accept George within the saintly fold. Even though he was venerated by the Eastern (Byzantine) Church, the Western Church of Rome found his legacy disturbing. Some decades before things changed and the first *Acta Sancti Georgii* manuscript was produced, Pope

Gelasius had denounced the Greek and Syriac literature concerning St George in his decree *De Libris Recipiendis et Non Recipiendis* of AD 496 concerning approved literature. He acknowledged that many Christians honoured the saint, and plainly understood why, but in his opinion George's legacy was heretical, and he claimed that his "actions are only known to God".<sup>4</sup> The main implication here was that George was indeed known to Gelasius as a real figure of the preceding era.

In order to understand the Pope's concern, we need to discover the man and the actions to which he was referring – and from the earliest reports of St George these things are not difficult to ascertain.

A primary exponent of medieval saintly lore was the 10th-century Byzantine hagiologist Symeon Magister, better known as Metaphrastes (the Compiler), who prepared the *Menologia* – a calendar for the Eastern Church year. From this work we can see how the Byzantine Church viewed George as against the early Catholic opinion of the Church of Rome.<sup>5</sup> In line with Metaphrastes, the original Greek and Syriac manuscripts identify that the chronology of George's story began not in the era of Emperor Diocletian (AD 245–312), as given in the subsequently contrived Latin *Acta Sancti Georgii*, but in the later period of Emperor Constantine (AD 312–37).

The Church of Rome was established by Constantine after the *Edict of Milan* in AD 313. This edict (jointly declared by Constantine in the West and Emperor Licinius in the East) put an end to the persecution of Christians within the Roman Empire. To formalize the Church, an ecumenical Council of bishops from various regions was convened in AD 325 at Nicaea in Bithynia – a region of latter-day Turkey. A primary aspect of the debate was that of the Holy Trinity (God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit), and there were two main groups of protagonists. Those in favour of the Trinity doctrine were led by Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria in Northern Egypt, and those against were led by Arius, a presbyter also from Alexandria. His followers were called Arians. They did not concede that God and Jesus were one and the same person, but asserted (in line with the Gospels) that Jesus was born separately in the flesh. Although the Trinitarians won the vote and Arius was banished as a heretic, it was actually the more moderate

Arian view that Emperor Constantine preferred. Resultantly, on his death-bed in AD 337, Constantine requested baptism by Eusebius, the Arian prelate of Nicomedia (another city of Bithynia).<sup>6</sup>

Constantine had been born in Britain as the son of Emperor Constantius Chlorus, who had his Western base at York. Constantine's mother was Princess Elaine (Helena) of Colchester and, before becoming Emperor in AD 312, Constantine was raised by his mother's Christian household. This facilitated his introduction of the faith as the new religion of his Roman Empire. The prevailing Nazarene faith of Britain was far more like the moderate Arian view than that of the Trinitarian bishops and, although Arius was banished by the Council of Nicaea, Constantine's sister Constantia convinced him that it was a serious error. Constantine therefore recalled Arius to his capital at Constantinople where he was granted a pardon and given a special communion.<sup>7</sup>

Another Eusebius, the Bishop of Emesa in Phoenicia, had been the chief spokesman for the Arian party at Nicaea, but he was shouted down, his papers snatched from his hands, torn to shreds, and trampled.<sup>8</sup> When writing afterwards of the event in the *Historia Ecclesiastica* (AD 439), the Byzantine historian Socrates of Constantinople<sup>9</sup> stated that the notably violent Athanasius subsequently travelled to Emesa, where he charged Eusebius with practising astrology. Under threat of Catholic reprisals, Eusebius fled to the company of his closest friend George of Laodicea, the chief confidant of Arius.<sup>10</sup>

Prior to AD 246, Laodicea had been called Diospolis and was a city of Lydia in Anatolia (eastern Turkey).<sup>11</sup> George (Georgios), the Arian Bishop of Laodicea, had been born in his father's province of Cappadocia (northern Phrygia, to the east of Lydia), and his mother was from Lydia. Following Emperor Constantine's acceptance of the Arian belief, Athanasius was banished by Constantine's son in AD 356, to be succeeded by George of Laodicea as Bishop of Alexandria. He was appointed by the Council of Antioch at a time when the bishopric of Alexandria was second in status only to the papal bishopric of Rome.<sup>12</sup> Socrates of Constantinople recorded that George then wrote the life history of his colleague Eusebius and, based on his home and clerical territories, he became variantly known as George of Cappadocia or George of Lydia.

In all early texts, prior to the 6th-century Latin *Acta Sancti Georgii* (which began the papally approved corruption of St George's history in order to bring him posthumously into the Catholic fold), the saint was only ever classified by either one of three names: George of Laodicea, George of Cappadocia, or George of Lydia. He had been the closest friend of Arius, who ordained him, and became the Arian Bishop of Alexandria.



From the era of Constantine's son, Emperor Constantius, Arianism flourished widely from its Alexandrian base. But things changed in AD 361 with the accession of his younger cousin Emperor Julian (Flavius Claudius Julianus). Known as 'Julian the Apostate', he completely rejected Christianity in any form (Catholic or Arian), and on 4th February AD 362 he promulgated an edict to return to a pagan regime. Some years earlier, Julian had met with Bishop George (a comrade of Emperor Constantius), and was also reputed to have met with George's colleague Eusebius of Nicomedia. But when eventually fronting his campaign to restore polytheism, Julian's punitive measures targetted the most influential Christians so as to drive them from the empire.

A forefront recipient of this assault was his predecessor's friend George of Laodicea, the Bishop of Alexandria. He was arrested, imprisoned and subsequently executed. His mutilated body was cast into the sea by a pagan mob on 24th December AD 361.<sup>13</sup>

### **A New Image**

With the accession of Emperor Theodosius, Christianity was revived with vigour within the Roman Empire. In AD 381 Theodosius revisited the Trinity dispute at the Council of Constantinople, at which time the doctrine of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost

became a law of the Catholic Church. Arianism was proclaimed an outright heresy, and its literature was positively banned. The greatest single repository of Arian texts (and indeed of all ancient and contemporary documents that were anathema to the new regime) was deemed to be the Serepæum library in Alexandria. Thus it was that in AD 391 Theodosius instructed Bishop Theophilus to raze the library to the ground and destroy it altogether.

A prolific anti-Christian writer at the time of Emperor Julian had been the Roman army officer Ammianus Marcellinus, who had produced a text concerning George that was now to become useful. There was no way that the widespread veneration of George could be extinguished by Theodosius, but his character could be reinvented. The requirement in this regard was to separate the bishop from his Arian heritage and thereby create a replacement figure who could be accommodated within the Catholic structure. The writings of Ammianus were readily suited to this end since he had drawn a picture of George that was entirely different from the reality. Conceding that George was a Cappadocian, Ammianus had lessened his noble birthright by claiming that he was born the son of a poor fuller at a town called Epiphania in nearby Cilicia.<sup>14</sup> The Catholic churchman Gregory Nazianzen (a Phrygian of the era who disapproved of Arians) had followed the Ammianus lead. He added that George was a notorious tyrant who had become rich from amassing illegal taxes. By using these spurious writings, it was possible for the Arian George to be defamed and discredited, thereby facilitating the posthumous introduction of a Catholic George whose legacy was entirely different.

Given that George's executed body had been cut into pieces, burned and thrown into the sea, there was no way that his Arian supporters could retrieve his remains for a reliquary shrine. It was therefore possible, a century later, for Pope Gelasius to close the door on George of Laodicia with his above-mentioned decree. The original Georgian texts were proscribed in AD 496 because they were Arian documents which had been declared heretical by the Church of Rome. The combined series of events now meant that another George could be invented if there could be found a suitably unnamed martyr whose story might be tactically applied to him. In this regard, there was indeed such a figure waiting in the wings of obscurity.

When writing his *Historia Ecclesiastica* back in AD 322, Constantine’s appointed Church historian, Eusebius of Caesarea, had recounted a soldier of noble birth who was put to death under Emperor Diocletian at Nicomedia on 23rd April AD 303. The soldier was said to have torn down Diocletian’s edict of Christian persecution, and was resultantly martyred. Eusebius did not, however, give the soldier’s name, his country or his place of burial.<sup>15</sup> This provided a perfect opportunity for subterfuge; George’s martyrdom could be related back to the Diocletian persecutions of AD 303, separating him from the later Julian reality of AD 361. All that remained was to discover some equally suitable relics in a place far removed from Cappadocia, Lydia and Alexandria.

We saw above (page 5) that three descriptive names had been used for George in the early texts of his life: George of Laodicea, George of Cappadocia and George of Lydia. We saw also that Laodicea had previously been called Diospolis. Suitably as it transpired for the papal stratagem, way to the south of George’s native domain was another town called Diospolis, near Joppa (Tel-Aviv) in Palestine. The famous *Mosaic Map of Madâba*, produced in AD 570, relates to this place with a vignette stating that this “Diospolis is also known as Lydea or Lydda”.<sup>16</sup> Conveniently for the bishops, there was another Diospolis and another Lydia (Lydea and Lydda were deemed similar enough!). The Lydda site could not have been better located; it was in a different country and was precisely where St Peter had performed a healing miracle, according to the New Testament Acts 9:32–35. All that remained necessary was to find some little-known relics in Palestinian Lydda and the newly devised St George could emerge.



Jerusalem detail of the AD 570 *Mosaic Map of Madâba*

The writings of Eusebius of Caesarea were therefore scoured once more for something that might be suitably applied – and again the bishops were in luck. In his *Onomasticon* of AD 330 (a catalogue of biblical sites),<sup>17</sup> Eusebius wrote that in AD 322 a chapel had been established in Lydda, and was “dedicated to a man of the highest distinction”. The man’s name was not given, and it was therefore decided that this “man of the highest distinction” would henceforth be associated with St George.

Although the *Mosaic Map of Madâba* was produced well over two centuries after George’s death, it identifies only two small chapels at Lydda – one consecrated to St Aeneas and the other to St Dorcas.<sup>18</sup> There is no mention of any dedication to St George. Prior to that, however, the newly contrived Latin *Acta Sancti Georgii* had moved into circulation. In order to better relate to the said “highest distinction” of the Lydda foundation, the unnamed soldier-martyr of Nicomedia (now associated with George) had been promoted in the *Acta* to the rank of tribune (a legionary officer). Furthermore, his Cappadocian father was now logged as having been the Governor of Palestine and, to fully cement the location, the Nicomedia story was itself dismissed. George was now said to have been born at Lydda in AD 280 and martyred at Lydda by Emperor Diocletian in AD 303. There is actually no George mentioned in the Roman *Martyrology of Palestine*,<sup>19</sup> but what the bishops managed was to substitute George’s mythology for a little-known martyr of Lydda. According to Eusebius and the *Martyrology*, he was Romulus, the deacon of the chapel of Aeneas, and had indeed been arrested and slain by order of Diocletian. His beheaded remains were interred at the chapel, and the existence of these forgotten relics completed the overall requirement.

It is written in some works that a church at Lydda had been founded by Emperor Constantine during his imperial reign from AD 312. The foundation has even been referred to as Constantine’s “magnificent Byzantine church” and his “beautiful temple”.<sup>20</sup> But the records identify that Romulus was the deacon at Lydda some decades before Constantine arrived on the scene. We also know that, even as late as AD 570 (some 233 years after Constantine’s death) there was no church or temple at Lydda, only two small chapels, and neither of them was dedicated to George. When St Jerome wrote his AD 388 *De Situ et Nominibus Locorum Hebraicorum* (48 years after the death



of Emperor Constantine), he again only referenced the saints Aeneas and Dorcas<sup>21</sup> in connection with Lydda.<sup>22</sup> In fact, the resident Bishop of Lydda who had consecrated the second of the two chapels to St Dorcas was Aetius, an Arian who attended Constantine's Council of Nicaea in AD 325. (The only known historical reference to a Georgian church associated with a Constantine comes from the 11th-century *Chronographia* of the philosopher Michael Psellus of Nicomedia. It relates to the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX who, in about 1050, demolished an old church of St George in Constantinople and built a new one on the site.)<sup>23</sup>

Assisting the bishops' construction of the Lydda mythology during the 6th century was the archdeacon Theodosius, who was commissioned by them to compile a new topography and pilgrims' itinerary of the Holy Land. His resultant *De Situ Terrae Sanctae*, from around AD 530, was the very first document to cite any connection between George and Lydda, even though the relationship remained unstated by secular historians for the balance of the century. Theodosius wrote: "In Diospolis where St George was martyred there is his body and many wonders are wrought".<sup>24</sup> Other similar references emanate from when the resultant pilgrimages were under way, the first being from a certain Antoninus of Piacenza in about AD 570.<sup>25</sup>

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Given that the real Georgios, Aryan Bishop of Alexandria (friend of Arius and of Constantine's son Constantius), was not martyred by Emperor Julian until AD 361, it is not surprising to find that there are no recorded St George dedications before that date – and the earliest known foundation was not in Palestine, but in Syria. In fact, there were no specific St George consecrations until the 6th century when the Eastern Church sought to counter the Catholics' spurious dedication at Lydda. The oldest epigraphic evidence from AD 515 is a Greek inscription at Zorava by a city governor (prōteuōn) named John, son of Diomedes. It states that the old temple of Daimones was rededicated in that year to St Georgios. Another inscription at Shaqr records the dedication of a church to St Georgios by a certain bishop Tibernius in AD 535.<sup>26</sup> The only possible reference to a Palestinian foundation in this era comes from AD 515, when Cyril of Scythopolis (a monk of the *Great Laura* desert community of Judaea) recorded a chapel

of St George at a hospice on the outskirts of Jerusalem. But the reality of this establishment has never historically been ascertained.<sup>27</sup> The first known record of a Georgian chapel near Jerusalem relates to a Greek foundation at Ramot in AD 762.<sup>28</sup>



### The Emergent Legend

In view of the beheaded remains at Lydda (actually those of the deacon Romulus), the hunt later began for the greatest trophy: the head of St George, which was not with the body at Lydda. This hunt was not started by those involved at Lydda, but somewhat strangely by churchmen in places like Italy and Gaul. An anonymous biographical work from Gaul (France) in AD 690 recorded that Queen Clotilde (wife of Clovis the Merovingian), who died in AD 544, had founded the St George's monastery for virgins at Chelle,<sup>29</sup> but there is no record of this in the Merovingian chronicles.

The first person to set the Western scene for supposed Georgian relics was the Frankish bishop Gregory of Tours. In his *Glory of the Martyrs* (AD c594) he wrote that relics of St George had been carried from the East to the territory of Limoges in Gaul, where they had been laid to rest in an oratory. He also added, “There are relics of Georgios in the village of Saint-Martin-des-Bois in the territory of Le Mans, where often many miracles are revealed”.<sup>30</sup>

Various supposed heads of St George were said to have been discovered thereafter, but they were denounced as unauthentic by papal decree when the said ‘true head of St George’ was found by Pope Zacharia (AD 741–52) in no less a place than the Lateran Palace in Rome! It was maintained that he discovered “St George the martyr’s sacred head, kept safe in a casket. In this he also found a note made out in Greek letters, indicating the head’s identity ... and caused it to be taken with hymns and spiritual chants to the venerable deaconry which is dedicated to him in the city” (the subsequently renamed church of San Giorgio in Velabro). This event was later recorded in the Vatican’s *Liber Pontificalis* (Lives of the Popes) of AD 885.<sup>31</sup>

By Pope Zacharia’s time in the 8th century, the Latin *Acta Sancti Georgii* existed in a number of sequentially revised versions, each more exaggerated than its predecessor. The mythical George of Lydda was said to have performed innumerable miracles – even resurrecting to life people who had been dead and buried for centuries. Meanwhile, the early Syriac record had been expanded in similarly romanticized Coptic and Ethiopic editions as the Byzantine Church, under the Patriarch of Constantinople, battled for supremacy against the Pope and the Church of Rome. One of these elaborate Syriac works was translated into English in 1888 by Sir Ernest A Wallis Budge (Keeper of Manuscripts for the British Museum), and was published as *The Martyrdom and Miracles of St George of Cappadocia*.<sup>32</sup> (Interestingly, although the Eastern versions of George’s tradition had been substantially enhanced along with the Western *Acta Sancti Georgii*, George remained as being ‘of Cappadocia’, and no account was taken of the Roman Church’s Lydda mythology.)

A character whose identity changed consistently between one textual version and another was that of George's ultimate persecutor. Sometimes he was given as the Roman Emperor Diocletian, and sometimes Emperor Galerius, while in other works he was King Diadanus of Nicomedia. Alternatively he was Dacian, King of the Persians.

In their individual attempts to execute George, he was said to have been stretched on a rack and ripped to shreds with flesh hooks, harnessed to machines that drew him apart, after which salt was poured into his wounds, which were rubbed with a haircloth. He was then pressed into a box, pierced with nails, impaled on sharp stakes, plunged into boiling water, and his head crushed by a great hammer. But after all that, he was resuscitated by the power of God! George was then tied to an iron bed, where molten lead was poured into his mouth and eyes, after which sixty nails were driven into his skull before he was lacerated on a vicious wheel of swords, cut into ten pieces, and thrown into a well that was sealed with a stone. But once again God saved him from death! He was subsequently hung upside down over a fire with a stone tied around his neck, then encased in the revolving belly of a metal ox that was filled with swords and nails. Then he was cut in half and boiled to bits before God made him whole again and took him to Paradise!<sup>33</sup>

In the course of all this imaginative literature, word of St George reached Britain in the 7th century. The first to write about the saint was Adamnan, the Celtic Abbot of Iona. In his *De Locis Sanctis* of AD 635 Adamnan explained that a Frankish bishop named Arculf, lately from Constantinople, had told him about George who had been bound to a marble column and flogged at Diospolis. George's image, he marvelled, was still to be seen on the column, which was now in the house of a Christian.<sup>34</sup> The same column at Diospolis was referenced a century later by a monk called Epiphanius. He added, however, that the great torturer's wheel of swords was still tied to the column, and that George's blood flowed from it for three hours on each anniversary of his death.<sup>35</sup> Apparently, a knight had tried to pierce the image with his spear, "but it passed right through as if the column were made of snow".<sup>36</sup>

Back in France, the anonymous author of *The Deeds of the Abbots of Fontenelle*, wrote in AD 830 of how a container, resembling a small lighthouse, was carried on the sea to the harbour of Portbail near Cherbourg. The excited people, anticipating a great and wonderful treasure, opened the container and “discovered a piece of the most precious jaw of the blessed martyr George” which, it was claimed, must have miraculously broken free from the head of St George at the church in Rome!<sup>37</sup>

From Anglo-Saxon England, we should perhaps expect the primary 8th-century Church historian, Bede of Jarrow, to have referenced George in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (AD 731), but he did not. There is a tradition that, in his separate *Martyrology*, Bede mentioned St George as having been martyred under Dadianus of Nicomedia. But there are no surviving copies of the venerable Bede’s *Martyrology*, so it is impossible to know whether or not he mentioned George. A French work (supposedly from an old transcript of the *Martyrology*) does however include the Georgian reference.<sup>38</sup>

Rather than from Bede’s *Martyrology*, it would appear that England’s ‘Dadianus’ reference actually came from the *Old English Martyrology* produced in the 9th century. This work, which is often confused with that of Bede, establishes George’s feast day (the said date of his martyrdom) as 23rd April. Interestingly, this *Martyrology* relates specifically to George’s Trinitarian opponent Athanasius, the Catholic Bishop of Alexandria, who challenged the Arians at Nicaea (*see* page 5). It is based however on a version of the legend that had changed the persona of Athanasius, portraying him as an evil magician of the god Apollo over whom George was victorious.<sup>39</sup> In the late 10th century, this version of the Georgian tale was rendered into Old English rhythmic prose by Ælfric, a monk of Cerne Abbey in Dorset (later abbot of Eynsham), for his *Lives of the Saints*.<sup>40</sup>

By the 8th century the revised Catholic *Acta Sancti Georgii* legend had been well cemented in the Western culture, and stories of a thoroughly new St George had been progressed through about 200 years. Outside the Eastern tradition, George of Cappadocia had been almost forgotten until later discovered and resurrected by the

crusaders. Meanwhile the new saintly hero was known as George of Lydda.<sup>41</sup> During this period Huneberc, a German nun of Heidenheim, wrote the only extant record of an 8th-century pilgrimage to the Holy Land in her work entitled *The Hodoeporican of St Willibald*. In relating the travels of the monk Willebald, she recounted that after leaving Jerusalem, “He then set out for a place called Lydda, to the church of St George”.<sup>42</sup>

Quite Apart from all the Roman subterfuge, the well established historical reality still prevailed in that, from his Arian base in Alexandria, George had been a friend of Emperor Constantine’s son and successor Constantius. This was quite out of keeping with the much earlier Diocletian time-frame of the Latin *Acta Sancti Georgii*, but the 8th-century Church found a way to counter this so long after the event.

Constantine’s father had also been named Constantius (AD 250–306) in the days of Emperor Diocletian (AD 245–312). This earlier Constantius had become Emperor in the West in AD 305, just two years after Diocletian’s energetic persecution of the Christians in which the *Acta* claimed George to have died. The mythological George of Lydda was therefore said to have been a friend of Constantius the father of Constantine (as against the real friendship of George of Laodicea with Constantine’s son Constantius II).

This concept was eminently suitable to the Catholic Anglo-Saxons of England because, prior to Saxon times and even before his imperial appointment, Emperor Constantius I (better known as Constantius Chlorus) had been the Roman Governor of Britain from AD 293. Thus, if George of Lydda had been his friend, then George must have visited Britain! Since George was reckoned by then to have been a tribune in the Roman army, it all made perfect sense, and George could equally have been a companion-at-arms to young Constantine himself. Then to add weight to this notion, George was said to have visited two of Britain’s traditional Christian sites at Glastonbury and Caerleon-on-Usk (a garrison post of the 2nd Legion).<sup>43</sup>

Eventually, a Passion was written for George in the 9th century by Ecgberht, the Saxon Bishop of York. Its details were included in a metrical calendar and subsequently entered the ritual of Durham church – later to be rebuilt by 11th-century Normans as

Durham Cathedral. At that time, although George had been accepted as a Christian military hero and a martyr, he was not fully recognized as a saint in England, and it was to be some while before any churches were consecrated in his name. In fact, very little else was written about George until the time of the Crusades.

### **Crusades and the Cross**

In about 1120, Archbishop Baldric of Dol in Brittany wrote that, during the First Crusade, St George had turned the battle for the Christians at Antioch in 1099 when he appeared at the head of a heavenly army, riding on white horses and carrying white banners. Fantastic as this image might be, there is no mention of the now familiar red cross of St George at this stage.<sup>44</sup>

When the knights of the First Crusade arrived at Lydda (on the sea-plain of Palestine) in 1099, they recorded no churches at the place. Their only report was that the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I had built a church there in the 6th century,<sup>45</sup> which had since been demolished by Islāmic invaders and was no longer to be seen.

There is a tradition that King Richard I of England (the Lionheart) introduced the red cross banner during the Third Crusade (1189–92), but the English knight Roger de Hovedon, who was on the Crusade with Richard, reported that in fact the English Crusaders wore white crosses, the French red, and the Flemings green.<sup>46</sup> None of the three colours, at that time, had anything to do with St George or any other saint; they were simply Christian cross symbols which denoted the knights' countries of origin. Precisely the same was recounted over 200 years later by John Hardyng (1378–1460), Constable of Warkworth Castle, Northumberland, and Lord of Geddington, Northamptonshire. Following his service under King Henry V at Agincourt in 1415, his *Chronicle* relates that, with the French then battling against the English, the distinctive crosses (red and white respectively) were used “for a common signe, eche manne to knowe his nacion from his enemies”.<sup>47</sup>

Meanwhile, even though the red cross was a French military device (though still not associated with St George), Archbishop Thomas of Canterbury recorded in the 14th century that, when Edward I of England had laid siege on the Scottish castle of Caerlaverock, Dumfriesshire, in 1300, his knights carried red cross banners. This is confirmed in the *Caerlaverock Roll of Arms*, which lists the shields of arms of the participants in the siege of Caerlaverock.<sup>48</sup>

George's prominence had taken a significant upturn in England's culture by the time of Edward I (1272–1307). This interest had begun in 1204, when the knights of the Fourth Crusade returned to Europe from Constantinople. They brought back an adventurous tale of a 4th-century Byzantine folk hero called Georgios of Lydia, who came from Cappadocia in Turkey and had apparently killed a dragon that was preventing access to a village water supply.

Following the crusaders' report, George featured again in 1209 when the Catholic Church implemented numerous proscriptive regulations against the Jews in Europe. King Edward I Plantagenet was obliged to expel all Jews from England, but he allowed physicians and other professionally qualified Jews to remain. This greatly upset the Church, and in 1222 Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, convened a Synod at Oxford in order to establish restrictive laws against the remaining Jews: They were forbidden to operate synagogues in England, and their business association with Christians was prohibited. It was at this Oxford Synod that George was brought inexplicably into the picture when it was proclaimed that the new rulings were to be implemented and upheld in the name of St George.

In 1190, just a few years before the Synod, a church of St Cuthbert had been built at Doncaster on the site of a ruined Norman castle, but in 1204 the church was badly damaged and much of Doncaster destroyed by an engulfing city fire. The church remained unused thereafter, but it was decided at the Synod to rededicate it to St George in prospect of its rebuilding. This did not happen until major restructuring work began from 1430, but the fact of the site's pre-emptive consecration in 1209 renders it the first church dedication to St George in England.<sup>49</sup>



Although both Edward I and Edward II flew red cross banners in their assaults against Scotland, it was not until the reign of Edward III (1327–77) that the cross became associated with St George. The French chronicler Jean Froissartt wrote that it was onwards from 1357 when the English battlefield commanders repeatedly called upon St George for aid.<sup>50</sup> John Speed's *Historie of Great Britain* (1611) recalls that Edward III "appoynted his souldiers to wear white coats with a red crosse before and behind over their armour".<sup>51</sup> But in spite of that, they were not able to use the red cross in any conflict with France, since it was the traditional French military banner as introduced during the Crusades. In 1364 the French knights quarrelled with the English over their use of the red cross, but they were ignored and, on 17th June 1386, King Richard II ordered his soldiers to wear the red cross to identify themselves in battle, so long as they were not fighting against the French.<sup>52</sup>

What had happened during the two centuries between Richard I and Richard II was that, although England and France had been crusading allies in the first instance, they were at loggerheads from 1324, and were at war against each other from 1346. It was by virtue of French inheritance that Richard I's successors, the Edwards I, II and III, used the red cross in their assaults into Scotland since this dynasty of Plantagenet kings (from the time of Richard's father Henry II) were of male-line descent from Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou.

The struggle between the nations was sparked by a dispute between Edward II of England and Charles IV of France, to whom Edward was technically a vassal in that country. But Charles seized some of Edward's French territories in 1324, at which time Edward was married to Charles' sister Isabella, the daughter of King Philippe V. Siding against Edward in the dispute, she and her lover Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, plotted the murder of Edward II in 1327, subsequent to which his son, Edward III, had Mortimer executed and confined Isabella to a convent.

In the following year, Charles IV of France died, and a new dynasty began under his cousin the Duke of Valois, who became King Philippe VI. But Philippe's inheritance was challenged by Edward III of England who, as the grandson of Isabella's father

Philippe V, declared himself to be the rightful King of France. In 1346 he took his bowmen to Crécy, defeating the French with a hail of arrows – and so began the Hundred Years' War.

Two years later, England was struck by the Black Death, but amid the general turmoil of battle and plague, the Age of Chivalry was born when Edward III constituted The Most Noble Order of the Garter in 1348. It was the world's first national order of knighthood. At that stage of legendary development, the story of George slaying the dragon had been introduced. Thus, when founding a College for the Order at Windsor Castle, Edward attached it to an existing chapel which was rededicated to St George "for the successful prosecution of his political ambitions in France and for the values of knightly virtue that the king so admired". St George was thereafter the patron saint of the Garter, and at the same time Edward proclaimed him the national patron saint of England. Today, the Royal College of St George at Windsor continues to serve as home for the sovereign's principal order of chivalry.



As can be seen from the Garter Order's star insignia, the red cross of St George differs from other red cross emblems (such as the centred device of the international Red Cross medical aid movement). Whatever shape might be its customary white background (whether a shield, ensign, badge or tunic), the trunk and arms of the cross of St George always extend fully to reach the outermost extremities of its support.

About 140 years after King Edward's Garter inauguration, a collar of knots and roses was added to the Order's dress by Henry VII Tudor, and from this was suspended *The George*, an enamelled figure of St George on horseback slaying a dragon (as shown above).<sup>53</sup>

From the time of Edward III, George's presumed knightly prowess became very much a part of England's military culture, and his association with a red cross was a direct result of the Plantagenet kings claiming their family right to the hitherto Crusader Cross of France.

In contrast to the French and English colour distinctions that later prevailed at Agincourt during the Hundred Years' War, King Henry V's English ships arrived for the 1415 siege of Harfleur displaying flags with red crosses. Various contemporary reports state, however, that the English garrison at Bayonne became terrified by the appearance of a white cross in the sky, and they surrendered to the French, subsequently destroying their own pennons and banners, pledging that "they would all wear white crosses again".<sup>54</sup>

King Henry was nevertheless insistent that, if the French were defeated during his campaign, his claim to the red cross would be justified. Hence it was that, when he captured Rouen in 1418, Henry dismissed his troops' superstition and paraded the red cross in the face of the French as his own personal banner.<sup>55</sup> Pre-empting this, Archbishop Chichele of Canterbury had declared St George's Day (23rd April) as a national festival in England immediately after Henry's earlier success at the Battle of Agincourt.<sup>56</sup>



English ships at Harfleur, 1415

### **George and the Dragon**

During the crusading era, when knights and battles were uppermost in the minds of Christendom, Roman Church scribes had reinvented George yet again. In doing this, they elaborated on the Byzantine story of the dragon and the village water supply as brought back from Constantinople by the crusaders. Added now to the tale was a damsel in distress and, in accord with the earlier Catholic endeavour, the dramatic location was moved from Lydia in Turkey to Lydda in Palestine. In the revised account, the martyrdom of George was not so important since he was now portrayed as a dauntless knight, but his parents were said to have been martyred, with their remains resting near the Palestinian town of Ramys. The cleverly structured work was designed to reflect the Greek legend of Perseus, who was said to have rescued the virgin Andromeda from a dragon at Arsuf, near the settlement of Lydda.

It was presupposed that this would have the effect of fully establishing Lydda as George's native territory in opposition to the competitive Byzantine texts. But the story had no immediate impact because it was so different from previous versions of the *Acta Sancti Georgii*. A more successfully romanticized version claimed public attention, however, when it appeared in the 1275 *Legenda Aurea* (Golden Legend) of the Genoese archbishop Jacobus de Voragine. He also concentrated on George's slaying of the dragon. There is no reference in this story to Lydda, and the adventure which became so famed thereafter in the now best known of all the legends, cites George correctly as being from Cappadocia. His slaying of the dragon and rescue of the princess was moved however to Libya in North Africa. In this account, the daughter of the King of Silene was destined to be sacrificed to the dragon when George came valiantly to her rescue. No longer a Roman tribune, nor even a churchman, he announced "I am named George, I am a gentleman, a knight of Cappadocia".

This was the gallant tale that was so familiar to King Edward III when he founded the Order of the Garter in 1348 and elected George as a military saint and patron of England. Moreover, it was in this work that Jacobus introduced the red cross as a Georgian device. Whereas the 1120 report of the siege of Antioch had claimed that the

crusaders saw a vision of George and his host carrying white banners (*see* page 15), Jacobus added that “they saw St George, which had white arms with a red cross”. It was therefore from the creative pen of Jacobus de Voragine in 1275 that the ultimately familiar and now traditional image of George arose – the knight of the red cross who killed a dragon.

The *Legenda Aurea* was translated by William Caxton into English in 1483, and was one of the earliest books set into print on the world’s first ever printing press at Westminster in London.<sup>57</sup> As a result of the Jacobus work, and not unnaturally given the romantic subject matter, a wave of artwork followed with various portrayals of the dramatic scene.



*St George and the Dragon* by Paolo Uccello, 1460

During this period, processions in George’s honour and mock battles with the dragon were a common feature of the feast days in England, as were some curious 15th and 16th-century folk-plays that carried his name. A few of these were still being performed in the 19th century. Not only were many parish churches of the Middle Ages dedicated to the saint, but he was also adopted as patron by numerous parish guilds, among the most prominent of which was founded at Norwich in 1385.

### The Evolving Tradition

By the late 13th century, English libraries contained various forms of the George legend. These included not only those handed down from medieval times, but also the influential later abridgements by the Dominican friar Vincent de Beauvais (1190–1264) in his *Speculum Historiale* (Mirror of History).<sup>58</sup> The Vincent manuscripts were held for some time at St Augustine’s Abbey, Canterbury, and are now at St John’s College, Cambridge.

Among the most elaborate English literary treatments of George’s legend are those of the poet Alexander Barclay who, in 1515, translated them into rhyming stanzas from the Latin prose compositions of the Carmelite scholar Baptista Spagnuoli. The works of Spagnuoli were later of significant influence to Edmund Spenser’s lengthy poem concerning George, the ‘Red Cross Knight’, within his epic *The Faerie Queene* (1597). The climax of Spenser’s story does not dwell on the martyrdom of George, but concentrates on his battle with the dragon.<sup>59</sup>

But on his breast a bloody Cross he bore,  
The dear remembrance of his dying Lord,  
For whose sweet sake that glorious badge we wore,  
And dead, as living, ever he adored.

Along with dozens of minor variants, there are now 19 separate and distinctly different key legends of St George in the English collection.<sup>60</sup> These include the widely used 13th-century *Breviary of Sarum* (Salisbury), which is the immediate source of the readings for the saint’s feast day. This manuscript excludes certain elements of George’s tradition (such as his dispute with the magician Athanasius before his torture on the wheel) which are included in the *Exeter Ordinal* as prepared by Bishop John de Grandisson of Exeter in 1337.<sup>61</sup> From before the city’s Norman cathedral was built, Exeter was one of the communities that claimed to hold relics of St George. The 11th-century reliquary list includes those “of Sanctes Georgies banum þæs mæran Cristes

*cempan & martyres*” ([some] of the bones of St George, the great champion and martyr of Christ).<sup>62</sup>

Among the legends of England are two which claim English sites for George’s slaying of the dragon. The best known of these is the flat-topped Dragon Hill in Oxfordshire (just below the famous Uffington White Horse). A bare patch of chalk, upon which no grass will grow, is said to be where the dragon’s blood spilled. Another location is that of Lower Stanks, a field outside Hereford. A 12th-century stone carving on the tympanum of the nearby church of St George at Brinsop shows him spearing the dragon at a local well.



From 1606, the flag of the English nation has been the upright red cross of St George. It is embodied within the Union Jack of the United Kingdom, along with the red-X cross of St Patrick of Ireland and the white-X on blue St Andrew’s cross of Scotland.

### **A Revised Understanding**

A key feature of the Lyddan mythology of St George had been his literary linking with a known martyr called Pasicrates, whom he was said to have met near the Bosphorus in Anatolia. Given that George was an Aryan, his name was not entered in the extensive Catholic *Hieronymian Martyrologium* (a list of Christian martyrs produced in AD 590), nor in the Syriac *Breviarium*. An attempt was made therefore to strengthen the case for his Diocletian martyrdom in the Jesuit *Acta Sanctorum*, volume III, of the Société des Bollandistes.<sup>63</sup> The work, first published (in part) in 1653, claimed that Pasicrates had

been George's servant in Nicomedia, where they were executed.<sup>64</sup> But this version takes no account of the historically recorded Pasicrates who was actually martyred by the prefect Maximus in AD 302 in a completely different country – at Dorostbrum (modern Silistria) in Moesia, Bulgaria. The spurious connection between George and Pasicrates had first been made in a 6th-century manuscript of the *Acta Sancti Georgii*. It is held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and purports to have been written by Pasicrates himself.<sup>65</sup> The document is universally acknowledged, however, to have been forged long after Pasicrate's death, and is of no practical merit.<sup>66</sup>

Alongside the 17th-century Bollandist account, bishops of the Church of Ethiopia had produced an even more romanticized version of George's story to outweigh the Roman Church interpretation by Jacobus de Voragine. To give it a weight of credibility, it was said to have been a lost writing of the Byzantine philosopher Theodotus. It was soon pointed out by scholars, however, that Theodotus had died in about AD 200, long before the existence of St George. The said authorship was therefore changed, and it was attributed instead to an unknown *encomium* (work of praise) of another Theodotus, a Christian of Ancyra in Phrygian Galatia. But Theodotus of Ancyra had died in AD 446, thirty years before the original Latin *Acta Sancti Georgii* (to which the said Theodotus text referred) had been written!

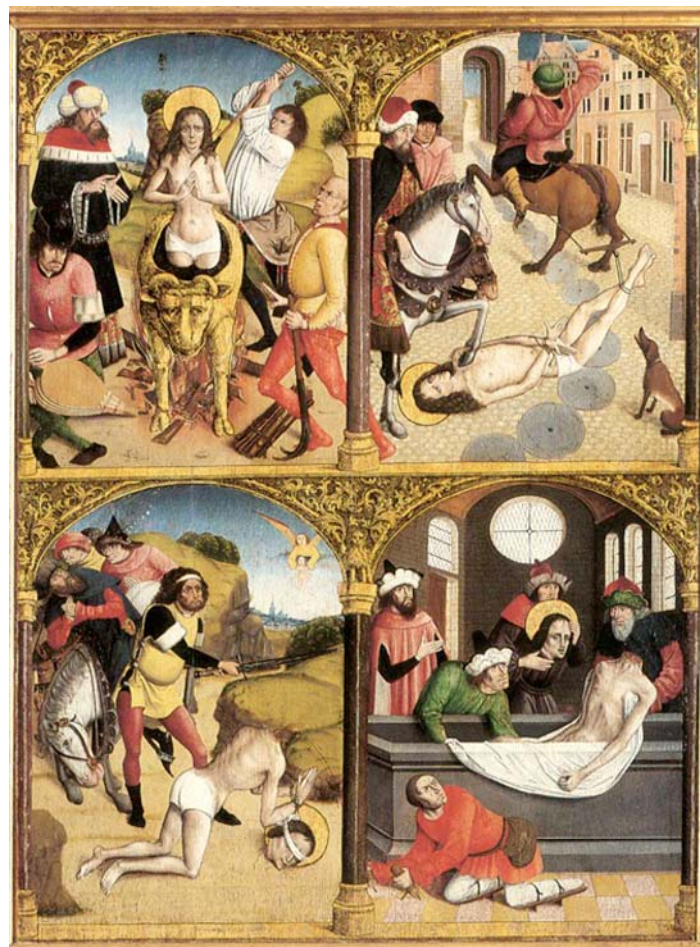
It was then argued by linguists that the language of Theodotus in Galatia, Asia Minor, in the 3rd, 4th and 5th centuries was Celtic-Galatian (similar to Gaelic), not the Ethiopic language of North Africa in which the Theodotus text appeared. The bishops then admitted that the document was not actually an original, but had been copied and translated from an old manuscript. However, when the Oxford theologian and royal chaplain, Peter Heylyn, made enquiries on behalf of King Charles II and the Garter Court in 1660, the bishops were unable to supply the said original.<sup>67</sup>

In accordance with the then currently promoted *Acta Sancti Georgii*, this pseudo-Theodotus document related that George was put to death numerous times. He was trampled by horses, encased in a metal ox filled with swords, beheaded, chopped into small pieces, buried deep in the earth and consumed by fire, but was on each occasion



resurrected by way of his personal holiness! The account also featured the historically unrecorded instances of Emperor Constantine having consecrated churches to St George, including the chapel of AD 322 which Bishop Aetius had actually founded to St Dorcas in Lydda.

George's father (now given the name Anastasius) was said to have been a native of Melitene in Cappadocia, but at the age of 25 he became the Romans' governor of the whole country of Palestine. In that place, Anastasius was said to have met his bride Kîra Theognôsta, the subsequent mother of Georgios and his sisters Kasiâ and Matôna, who were all reckoned to have been born in Lydda known as Diospolis. In time, George was supposedly betrothed to the daughter of his father's successor, Justus, but ended up being celibate because God had other designs for him.



*Scenes from the Many Deaths of St George*  
Flemish Master, c.1510

This wholly fabricated Ethiopic account was eventually translated into English by Sir Ernest A Wallis Budge of the British Museum. In 1888 Budge had published his transcript of *The Martyrdom and Miracles of St George of Cappadocia*.<sup>68</sup> Then in 1930 followed his translation of the pseudo-Theodotus work under the title *George of Lydda – A Study of the Cultus of St George in Ethiopia*.<sup>69</sup> In his introduction, Budge identified that although Lydda in Palestine was alternatively known as Diospolis, the Diospolis associated with the original Georgios was a completely different place; it was Diospolis in Anatolia, which was also called Laodicea. (Related to the God Jehovah, *Diospolis* means City of Jove.)

The legend of St George took on a new lease of life during the Counter Reformation, when expeditions into Africa, India and the Americas presented vast new fields for the Christian missionary endeavour. In these countries St George was commonly invoked as an example of how to face and overcome dangers for the good of the Church. Meanwhile, the Protestant author John Bunyan recalled the story of George and the dragon in his account of the envisioned fight between Christian the Pilgrim and Apollyon the Destroyer in *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678).<sup>70</sup>

One of the characters who had detested the Arian beliefs of George during his lifetime was the Catholic bishop Gregory Nazianzen of Constantinople (AD 328–89). Known as Gregory the Theologian, he was a foremost advocate of the Trinity doctrine as proposed at the Council of Nicaea. Although he had written discourses against Arianism, and against its leaders Arius and George in particular, the Church of Rome had ignored some of the content in its effort to bring George into the Catholic saintly fold by way of a restyled mythology. But George was not unique in this respect; the same had been contrived with others, notably a prominent Arian of Egypt called Artemius, who was also martyred under Emperor Julian at Antioch in AD 362. His historicity was similarly manipulated so that he became a Catholic saint in the latter 5th century.<sup>71</sup>

The 4th-century Latin historian Ammianus Marcellinus (*see* page 6) had written that George's father was a Cappadocian cloth-worker, and Gregory Nazianzen repeated this, adding a fanciful account of George's own occupation:

He obtained an appointment connected with the supply of bacon to the army; but being detected in some unfaithfulness, was stripped of his charge and his emoluments ... He afterwards wandered from one city or province to another till he was fixed at Alexandria, where he ceased to wander, and began to do mischief.<sup>72</sup>

Gregory's work was eventually revisited in 1781, when repeated in the second volume of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by the English historian Edward Gibbon. Having converted to Catholicism a few years earlier, Gibbon made a fierce onslaught against the Arians, and especially against George. Quoting and exaggerating the 4th-century work of Gregory Nazianzen, Gibbon wrote:

George was of a bad family (*irovripos to ytvos*) ... By assiduous flattery or other means he acquired the contract to supply the Roman army with bacon. His employment was mean; he rendered it infamous. He accumulated wealth by the basest arts of fraud and corruption ... He became a profane grandee of the ruling Arian Christians. As a wealthy and influential opponent of the Catholic Athanasius, he was well-placed to take the bishop's chair in Alexandria when Athanasius was driven into exile ... The odious stranger, disguising every circumstance of time and place, assumed the mask of a martyr, a saint and a Christian hero; and the infamous George of Cappadocia has been transformed into the renowned St George of England, the patron of arms, of chivalry, and of the Garter.<sup>73</sup>

In the light of this, the writings of Ammianus Marcellinus were also brought back into limited publication. He had written about the martyrdom of Artemius the Arian of Egypt: "The whole population went wild with joy at this at this unexpected piece of good news". Then recounting the killing of George on 24th December AD 361, he stated from first-hand knowledge of the event:

They fell upon George, howling and yelling, beat him about, trampled upon him, and finally spread-eagled him and finished him off. Dracontius, the superintendent of the mint, and a certain Diodorus, who was thought to be in league with him,

had ropes tied to their legs and were killed at the same time. Not content with this, the brutal mob loaded the mutilated bodies on camels and took them to the beach, where they burned them, and threw their ashes into the sea for fear that the remains might be collected and have a church built over them.<sup>74</sup>

The problem with this was that, although Edward Gibbon had felt he was dutifully supporting Catholicism by publishing his literary assault against Arianism, the original first-hand accounts from Gregory Nazianzen and Ammianus Marcellinus (even though maliciously applied) made it clear to all in the latter 1700s that the ‘George of Lydda’ story was no more than Church inspired mythology: George was not born in Lydda, and had not been martyred under Emperor Diocletian in AD 303 as given in the *Acta Sancti Georgii*, but during the later reign of Emperor Julian in AD 361. Furthermore, he was never a Roman tribune, but the Arian Bishop of Alexandria, known as George of Lydia, Laodicea (Diospolis) or Cappadocia.

Gibbon attempted in 1789 to recant his statements about George along with similarly problematical entries in his work concerning Constantine’s mother St Helena and others. But it was too late; word was out and the game was up. With the truth of George’s Alexandrian bishopric now known, Protestants in Britain and elsewhere subsequently disregarded all variations and derivatives of the Latin *Acta Sancti Georgii*. In practical terms, the Protestant Communion was rather more akin to the Arian beliefs of Emperor Constantine and his son Constantius in its interpretation of the Trinity doctrine, and George’s real place in Church history came as welcome news. This, together with other aspects of inter-denominational dispute, led in 1896 to the Bull *Apostolicae Curae*, wherein Pope Leo XIII decreed the Anglican Church’s Protestant Communion to be “absolutely invalid and utterly void”.<sup>75</sup>

There was, however, a significant difficulty presented by the new understanding. George’s canonization in the West was a Roman Church institution, and his position as England’s patron saint from 1348 was a product of the nation’s Catholic status in Plantagenet times. From the formation of the Anglican Communion in 1570, George’s patronage has existed as a matter of adoption by way of express permission from the

Catholic establishment. By virtue of this legacy, remnants of the interpretation of George's legend from the *Acta Sancti Georgii* still survive in the Protestant arena.



The Royal Society of St George

This is especially noticeable in the literature of The Royal Society of St George, a patriotic charitable trust founded in 1894 “to foster the love of England and to strengthen England and the Commonwealth by spreading the knowledge of English history, traditions and ideals”. In this regard, the Society has retained the Latin references to ‘George the tribune martyred under Diocletian’ despite the subsequently related papal affront to the Anglican Communion two years after the Society’s founding.

### The Lydda Complex

Notwithstanding the early chapels of Saints Aeneas and Dorcas, the first explicitly documented Christian church at Lydda appears to have been built in the crusading era. In 1177 a Greek pilgrim, John Phocas, wrote: “A large church of the great martyr St George can be seen there, in the very place where he was born and underwent the greatest fights for his piety, and where also is found his holy tomb”.<sup>76</sup> Seemingly, this church was built during the reigns of the Crusader Kings, but other accounts of Lydda relate, in contrast, to a Knights Hospitallers’ church of St John at the site. Whatever the case, it was largely destroyed by Islāmic forces after the 2nd Siege of Acre in 1291 and fell into ruin thereafter. Subsequent to that, the town of Lydda was under Arab control for 626 years, and was renamed *al’Lud*.

The Franciscan friar Niccolò da Poggibonsi wrote of the place in 1347, referring to a monastery and chapel of Greek monks at *al’Lud*, beneath which he was told were the

beheaded remains of St George.<sup>77</sup> His contemporary Ludolphus of Sudheim also described the chapel, adorned with mosaics and marble, but he did not relate to George's remains – only that, in accordance with the *Acta Sancti Georgii*, it was said to have been the place of George's martyrdom.<sup>78</sup>

On 26th May 1431, Mariano da Siena saw the place half dismantled,<sup>79</sup> and on 2nd August 1494, the Milanese canon Pietro Casola stated that it was then “quite desolate”. By that time, he explained that the Muslims had erected a mosque on the old site, and this was confirmed by the Islāmic writer Mujir ed-Din in 1496. He attested:

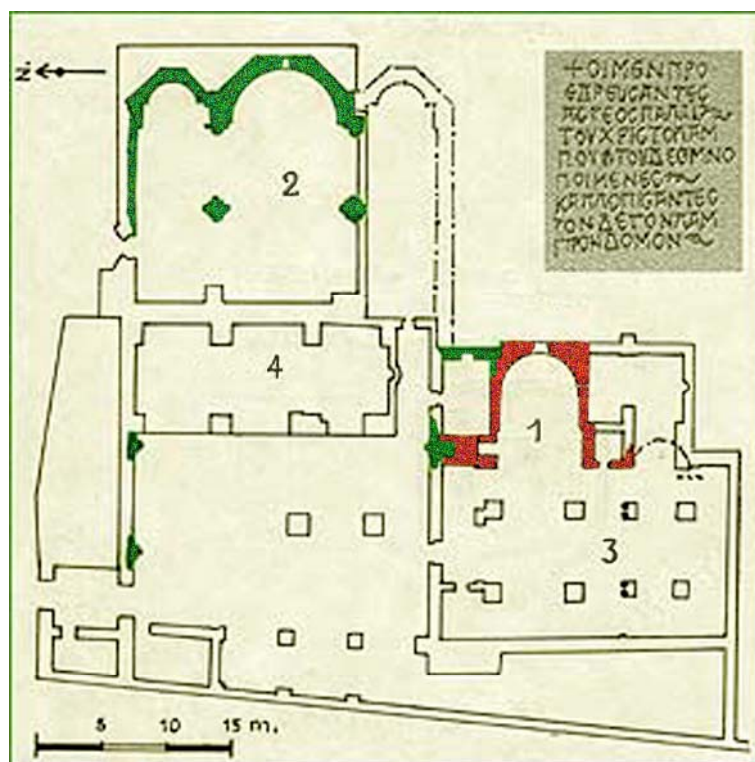
There was at Lydda a solidly built church with a large courtyard. The Christians had endowed it with many goods and they have a firm faith right up to our day. King Saladin destroyed it. May God have pity on him and may he be content! Lydda has a beautiful appearance. It has a venerated mosque which was a church built by the Greeks. It is surrounded by majesty and neatness, and has a tall minaret”.<sup>80</sup>

There is no mention at this stage by Mujir ed-Din or any other writer of St George, and it seems that by the 15th century only the mosque was extant and operative. The mosque was not, however, a wholly new construction; it had been built upon the extended remnant of an earlier Greek monastery.

In 1847 Father A Bassi pointed out the partly Western character of the building with its remaining nave and columns. “One arch alone remains intact”, he stated, “and it is very slightly pointed. On one of the surviving pillars now rises the minaret to which the Turkish santon climbs to announce the hour of prayer”.<sup>81</sup> Subsequently in 1860, Melchior DeVogüé of the Académie Française provided some critical notes on the buildings in his *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte*. He also saw a visible part of the previous crusader church incorporating the central and northern apses, with some pillars.<sup>82</sup>

The confusion over whether there was previously a Crusader church or a Greek monastery on the site was solved when the French orientalist Charles Clermont-Ganneau received permission to enter the mosque in 1873. With the help of

architectural archaeologist A Lecomte du Nouÿ, he produced a comprehensive plan of the ruins, with the results published by the Palestine Exploration Fund in London. There were in fact two earlier buildings – erected in close proximity but in different periods. On one side of the mosque had been a Greek monastery and chapel dedicated to St George. Alongside this had been a large church of the crusading era – the Hospitaller establishment that was dedicated to St John of Jerusalem.<sup>83</sup>



Clermont-Ganneau's diagram of the Lyddan site.

- No 1: Greek monastery (red) – enlarged as No 3: Islāmic mosque of Al-Khidr.
- No 2: Knight Hospitaller church of St John of Jerusalem (green)  
– lately rebuilt as a Greek Orthodox church (*see below*).
- No 4: Another mosque.

Shortly before the period of British Mandate from 1917, a completely new Greek Orthodox church was built at Lydda on the old site of the church of St John (*see above* plan item 2). It was consecrated in 1873 to St George in accordance with the earlier dedication of the nearby monastery. Adjacent, to the south-west of this church, remained the Islāmic mosque of Al-Khidr. Along with another smaller mosque extension, these are the buildings that exist together with their allied shops today.



Al-Khidr's primary monument is the *Qu'bbat al-khidr*, a domed mosque in Jerusalem. As the mystical servant of Moses in *Al-Qur'ân* (*Sūrat Kahf* 18:60–82), Al-Khidr is reckoned to travel in the clouds between Mecca and Jerusalem, and is attributed with extraordinary powers of healing and guidance. The name *Al Khidr* means 'The Green'.<sup>84</sup> In scriptural terms, Muslims associate Al-Khidr with the Old Testament prophet Elijah (*Eliyahu ha Navi*). However, since the Lydda mosque was on the old Christian monastery site, it became a practice for Muslims to allow Christian access to the mosque once a year on the annual feast day of St George (*Mar Jiryis*).<sup>85</sup> In 1927, during the period of British Mandate, the Jerusalem physician Taufiq Canaan reported in his *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine* that Muslims, Christians and Jews were all using the complex of adjacent buildings at Lydda.<sup>86</sup>



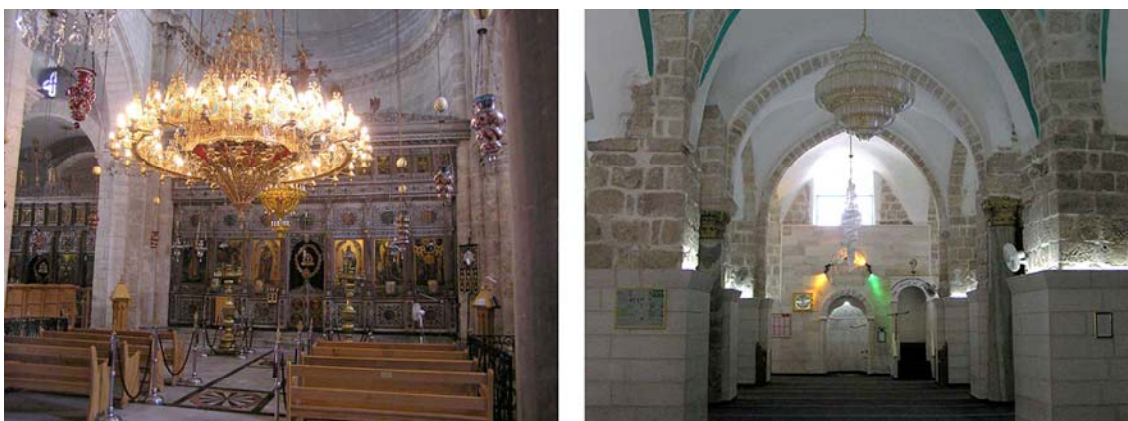
The Al-Khidr mosque at Lydda

Much the same was said of a monastery shrine in the village of Beit Jala, near Bethlehem, which at the time was frequented by all three of Palestine's religious communities as a mental institution. Christians associated Beit Jala with the *Acta Sancti Georgii* birthplace of Georgios. To the Jews it was the burial site of Elijah, and for the Muslims it was a healing centre of Al-Khidr. A report from 1907 states:



Deranged persons of all the three faiths are taken thither and chained in the court of the chapel, where they are kept for forty days on bread and water. The priest at the head of the establishment reads the Gospel over them, or administers whipping as the case demands.<sup>87</sup>

By whatever name (Al-Khidr, Eliyahu ha Navi, or Mar Jiryis), it was said in multicultural Palestine that each could “restore mad people to their senses”. In the 19th century, Christian mothers would threaten to send their children to the Beit Jala “madhouse of St George” as a punishment for their misbehaviour.<sup>88</sup>



Interiors of the Christian church of St George and the Islāmic mosque of Al-Khidr at Lydda

Following the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan, which ended the British Mandate in Palestine, the territory fell again to Arab dominion in the following year. Five Arab nations<sup>89</sup> launched assaults against the new State of Israel in May 1948, and two months later the Israeli prime minister David Ben-Gurion sent his troops into Lydda. This led to the famous Lydda-Ramlah massacre which caused the first wave of 50,000 expelled Palestinian refugees in what became an ongoing struggle of territorial interests thereafter. Since then, the substantially enlarged Lydda has been renamed Lod as a primary city of the State of Israel hosting the Ben-Gurion Airport, the hub of El Al Israel Airlines. This was the site of the later massacre when George Habash of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (a child survivor of the original slaughter and expulsion) organized the gunning-down of 28 air passengers in 1972. These days, Lydda/Lod is an essentially Jewish centre, where only 18% of the population is Muslim, and as few as 1% Christian.

### Modern Times

To this day, and despite the historical inaccuracy, the Lyddan tourist industry thrives on the Christian cult of St George. Pilgrims travel to see the burial place of Romulus, the 4th-century deacon of Aeneas, which has long been publicized as the resting place of St George. In 1871 a symbolic marble tomb was made and subsequently placed in a shrine beneath the altar of the Greek Orthodox church.



The symbolic St George shrine at Lydda

As distinct from Britain's Most Noble Order of the Garter, the Prince Regent – later King George IV – founded another order of knighthood in 1818 to commemorate the British protectorate of the Ionian islands and Malta, which came under British rule in 1814. It was called The Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George – each of them being legendary dragon slayers. The chapel of the Order, dedicated in 1906, is in St Paul's Cathedral, London, and contains the banners and coats of arms of the Knights Grand Cross.<sup>90</sup>

Knights are appointed to the Order rather than invested with it (as in the case of Garter knights), and the award is made for exemplary service in respect of The Commonwealth or other foreign nations. A noted Grand Cross Knight of the Order, appointed by King George V in 1927, was Robert, Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Scouting Movement. In his 1st-edition 1908 handbook *Scouting for Boys*, he had recounted (although on

what evidence no one knows) that King Arthur’s Knights of the Round Table had adopted Saint George as their patron “because he was the only one of all the saints who had been a horseman. Thus, he is also the patron saint of cavalry ... from which the word chivalry is derived”.<sup>91</sup> On the basis of this, St George became the patron saint of the Scouts.

From the Plantagenet days of King Edward III, and based on his said encounter with the dragon, George has been largely associated with bravery and achievement in the face of danger. In 1940, during the worst days of the Luftwaffe’s *Blitz*, King George VI instituted the George Cross – a medal “for acts of the greatest heroism or of the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme danger”. The award, which is second only to the Victoria Cross (a military award), is usually given to civilians and can be given posthumously. For lesser, but still outstanding acts of courage, the King created the George Medal.



George Cross, Order of St Michael and St George, and George Medal

In many countries, not least in England, the romance of George and the dragon is suitably emblematic of courage, gallantry and brave achievement to warrant his position as a patron saint. Although fictional, this dramatic legend is no more contrived than the stories attributed to various other figures in the Latin *Vita Sancti*. Most such tales are similar to those in the *Acta Sancti Georgii*, wherein George was reckoned to have survived many hideous tortures and deaths by virtue of his extreme piety and godliness. These aspects of George’s fabricated life are largely ignored and forgotten these days,

as too is the real life history of the man and his brutal martyrdom. In the military environment of George's legendary fame, there is no way that the doings of a 4th-century bishop could be expected to outweigh the daring exploits of a shining medieval knight.

In historical terms, the Church's veiling of events surrounding those such as George of Laodicea, Arius of Alexandria, Eusebius of Emesa, and Artemius of Egypt has resulted in a successful cover-up of a Christian schism that persisted from the 4th century. This dispute between Arians and Catholics, which began in AD 325 at the Council of Nicaea, was the greatest of all threats to the Church of Rome, and were it not for the politically contrived baptism of King Clovis of the Franks in AD 496, the ultimate Christian religion of Western Europe might well have become Arian rather than Catholic. The difference between the two factions was a small one, which Emperor Constantine called "an idle dispute about words".<sup>92</sup> It centred entirely on whether Jesus was the physical manifestation of God (the Catholic view), or whether he was born in the flesh with earthly parents (the Arian view). It was for holding this latter opinion that George had been considered unsuitable for Vatican sainthood by Pope Gelasius in AD 496. In the event, however, George had been murdered in AD 361 by the supporters of Emperor Julian not because he was an Arian, but because he was an influential Christian who threatened the imperial regime during a brief period of return to pagan rule.

All things considered, there is not enough historical substance in the George of Lydda story to make it in any way viable. The documented history of its contrived evolution is well enough known to attract immediate academic criticism, beginning of course with the fact that the nominal use of *Lydda* stemmed from a strategic misappropriation of *Lydia*. As given in the very earliest, first-hand accounts of his life before Roman Church intervention, George was the closest confidant of Constantine's son, Emperor Constantius, and of Arius himself. He was the Cappadocian born churchman George of Laodicea, who became the Arian Bishop of Alexandria.

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<sup>1</sup> Alphabetically, St George's patronage includes: Amersfoort, Aragon, agricultural workers, archers, armourers, Baden-Württemberg, Beirut, butchers, Canada, Cappadocia, Catalonia, cavalry, chivalry, Constantinople, the Crusaders, England, equestrians, Ethiopia, farmers, Ferrara, field workers; Freiburg, Genoa, Georgia, Germany, Gozo, Greece, Haldern, Heide, husbandmen, Istanbul, lepers, Limburg, Lithuania, Malta, Modica, Moscow, the Order of the Garter, Palestinian Christians, Portugal, Ptuj, saddle makers, the Scout movement, Slovenia, Senj, sheep; shepherds, soldiers, Teutonic Knights, Venice.

<sup>2</sup> The Syriac text, with an English summary, is published in G Kiraz, *The Acts of Saint George and the Story of His Father, from the Syriac and Garshuni Versions*, Bar-Hebraeus Verlag, Losser, NL, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Dr Thomas Joseph in *Shroro: The Syriac Orthodox Christian Digest*, Syriac Orthodox Church, vol 1, issue 6, May, 2005. Also see EA Livingstone and FL Cross (eds), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd edition), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997, under 'St George'.

<sup>4</sup> Abbé Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Migne, Paris, 1844–55, vol LIX:157–64.

<sup>5</sup> The *Menologia* of Metaphrastes is given in Abbé Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Migne, Paris, 1865, vols CXIV–CXVI.

<sup>6</sup> Eusebius of Nicomedia, as distinct from the Roman Church historian Eusebius of Caesarea.

<sup>7</sup> Norman J Bull, *The Rise of the Church*, Heinemann, London, 1967, ch 7, p 197.

<sup>8</sup> Justo L Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, Harper Collin, San Francisco, CA, 1984, vol 1, p 164.

<sup>9</sup> See his life in Theresa Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople: Historian of Church and State*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI, 1997.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds), *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Hendrickson, Peabody, MA, 1994, series II, vol. II, bk II, ch IX, 'Of Eusebius of Emesa'.

<sup>11</sup> The city had been renamed by King Antiochus II after his wife Laodice. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Robert Appleton, New York, NY, 1910, vol VIII, under 'Laodicea'.

<sup>12</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, 1911, under 'George of Laodicea'.

<sup>13</sup> Walter Hamilton, *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Later Roman Empire AD 354–378*, Penguin, London, 1986, p 247.

<sup>14</sup> JC Rolfe (trans), *Ammianus Marcellinus* (3 vols from Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*), London, 1964, ch 22:9.4.

<sup>15</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea, *An Ecclesiastical History* (trans, Rev CF Crusè), Samuel Bagster, London, 1838, bk VIII, ch V, pp 296–97.

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Madâba Mosaic Map*, Kok Pharos, Jerusalem, 1954, pp 61–62. (The *Mosaic Map of Madâba* was originally 25 x 5 metres and of more than 2 million pieces of colored stone tesserae.) See also *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Robert Appleton, New York, NY, 1910, vol VII, under ‘St George’.

<sup>17</sup> Eusebius Pamphilla, *Onomasticon* (trans, R Steven Notley and Ze’ev Safrai), Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series no 9, EJ Brill, Leiden, NL, 2005. (Eusebius refers to Lydda by its alternative name, Diospolis. This is a strange oversight because the place is called Lydda and Lod in the New and Old Testament respectively, but not Diospolis – see Leah Di Segni, ‘The Onomastikon of Eusebius and the Madâba Map’, in *The Madâba Map Centenary*, Hebrew University, Jerusalem 1999, p 117.

<sup>18</sup> The *Mosaic Map of Madâba* was originally laid in the floor of a Byzantine Church in Madâba, Jordan. The Church ruins were demolished in the 19th century, and replaced by the new Greek Orthodox Church of St George, where the map remnant is now laid. See Michele Piccirillo, ‘The Church of the Map’ in *The Mosaics of Jordan*, The American Center of Oriental Research, Boston, MA, 1993, pp 27–28. See also Herbert Donner, *The Mosaic Map of Madâba*, *Palestina Antiqua* 7, Kampen, Netherlands, 1992, pp 54–55.

<sup>19</sup> Eusebius, *De Martyribus Palaestinae* (trans, HJ Lawlor and JEL Oulton), Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, London, 1928.

<sup>20</sup> For example Isabel Hill Elder, *George of Lydda*, Covenant Books, London, 1949, ch IV, p 59.

<sup>21</sup> Aeneas was the man whom St Peter was said to have cured of palsy at Lydda (Acts 9:32–35), and Dorcas was the woman called Tabitha of nearby Joppa, whom Peter was said to have raised from the dead (Acts 9:36–41).

<sup>22</sup> Jerome (Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus), ‘Peregrinatio Paulae’ in *De Situ et Nominibus Locorum Hebraicorum*, (ed, Klostermann), Leipzig, 1904, ch 108:8. An English translation of Jerome’s work (under its short title, *Liber Locorum*) is included as a parallel reference in Eusebius, *The Onomasticon of Eusebius of Caesarea* (trans, GSP Freeman-Grenville, Rupert L Chapman III and Joan E Taylor), Carter Publishing, Jerusalem, 2003.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Psellus, *Chronographia*, 1063, (trans, ERA Sewter), Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1953, ref Psellus bk II, item 185.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Theodosius, *De Situ Terrae Sanctae*’ in P Geyer, *Itinera Hierosolymitana*, Vienna, 1898, pp 132–50. Also see Yoram Tsafrir, *The Maps Used by Theodosius: On the Pilgrim Maps of the Holy Land and Jerusalem in the Sixth Century CE*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Trustees for Harvard University, vol. 40, 1986, pp 129–45.

<sup>25</sup> Celestina Milani (ed), *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini: Un viaggio in Terra Santa nel 560–70 DC*, Hillman, Milan, 1977.

<sup>26</sup> Frank R Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization c370–529*, vol II ‘Religions in the Graeco-Roman World’, EJ Brill, Leiden, NL, 1994, p 363. Also see W Prentice (ed), ‘An American Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1899–1900’, part III: ‘Greek and Latin Inscriptions’, in *American Journal of Archaeology*, no 437a, New York, NL, 1908.

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<sup>27</sup> J Binns and RM Price (eds), *The Lives of the Monks of Palestine*, Cistercian Publications, Michigan, p 223.

<sup>28</sup> R Arav, L Di Segni and A Kloner, 'An Eighth Century Monastery Near Jerusalem', in *Liber Annuus*, Franciscan Faculty of Biblical Sciences and Archaeology, Jerusalem, no XL 1990, pp 313–320.

<sup>29</sup> Richard A Gerberding and Paul Fouracre (eds), *Late Merovingian France: History and Hagiography 640–720*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1996, p 131.

<sup>30</sup> The first English translation of this work is: Gregory of Tours, *Glory of the Martyrs* (trans, Raymond Van Dam), Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 1988, pp 123–24.

<sup>31</sup> Raymond Davis, *The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes (Liber Pontificalis)*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 1992, p 48.

<sup>32</sup> Ernest A Wallis Budge, *The Martyrdom and Miracles of St George of Cappadocia*, Oriental Text Series I, British Museum, London, 1888.

<sup>33</sup> For a detailed account of the trials and tortures, see E Gordon Whatley, Anne B Thompson and Robert K Upchurch (eds), 'The Martyrdom of St George in the South English Legendary', in *Saints' Lives in Middle English Collections*, Western Michigan University Medieval Institute, Kalamazoo, MI, 2004.

<sup>34</sup> D Meehan (ed), *Adamnan's De Locis Sanctis*, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin, 1983, pp 111–17.

<sup>35</sup> J Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades*, Aris & Phillips, Warminster, 1978, p 119.

<sup>36</sup> Adamnan, *De Locis Sanctis*, British Museum, Cotton MS. Tib DV, folio viii-ix cent, bk III, 4, CCSL 175.

<sup>37</sup> A full transcript of *the Gesta Abbatum Fontanellensium* is given in S Loewenfeld, *MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum*, Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, Hanover, 1886.

<sup>38</sup> Jacques Dubois and Geneviève Renaud (eds), *Premier Martyrologe de Bède*. IRHT Bibliographies, Colloques, Travaux Pratiques 12. Paris, 1976.

<sup>39</sup> G Herzfeld (ed), *An Old English Martyrology*, Early English Text Society Oxford University Press, London, 1975.

<sup>40</sup> Ælfric of Eynsham, *Lives of The Saints* (ed, Walter W Skeat), DS Brewer, Cambridge, 1890.

<sup>41</sup> An informative article concerning how George of Cappadocia was transformed into George of Lydda is given as: A Addington and H Foy, 'St George of England – A Study of Sainthood and Legend', in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, Royal Society of Medicine Press, London, vol 82, July 1989, pp 434–35.



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<sup>42</sup> Huneberc of Heidenheim, *The Hodoeporican of St. Willibald*, in C H Talbot, *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany, (Being the Lives of the Saints Willibrord, Boniface, Leoba and Lebuin together with the Hodoeporicon of St Willibald and a selection from the correspondence of St Boniface)*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1954.

<sup>43</sup> For a good overview of George's tradition in England, see E Gordon Whatley, Anne B Thompson and Robert K Upchurch (eds), 'The Martyrdom of St. George in the South English Legendary', in *Saints' Lives in Middle English Collections*, Kalamazoo Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, MI, 2004.

<sup>44</sup> Baldric of Dol (1107–1130), *Baldrici Episcopi Dolensis, Historia Jerosolimitana*, published as: Abbé Jacques-Paul Migne, *Baldric of Dol*, Series Latin (*Patrologia Latina*), Garnier, Paris, 1844–92, vol 163, pp 77–96.

<sup>45</sup> This church is mentioned in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Macmillan Library, London, 2nd revised edition, 2006, item by Michael Avi-Yonah under 'Lydda'.

<sup>46</sup> Roger de Hoveden (1174–1201), *Gesta Regis Henrici II et Gesta Regis Ricardi Benedicti abbatis*, (ed, William Stubbs, 2 vols, Rolls series, Master of the Rolls, Court of Chancery, 1867.

<sup>47</sup> Henry Ellis (ed), *The Chronicle of John Hardyng*, G Woodfall, London, 1812, pp 84–85.

<sup>48</sup> Maister Iago ab Adam, *Caerlaverock Roll of Arms*, British Library MS, Cotton Caligula A, vxiii.

<sup>49</sup> St George's church Doncaster was completely destroyed by another fire in 1853. Its magnificent replacement was consecrated by the Archbishop of York in 1858, and it was upgraded in 2004 to the status of St George's Minster.

<sup>50</sup> Jean Froissart, *Froissart's Chronicle*, bk I, re 1322–77, *passim*.

<sup>51</sup> John Speed, *The Historie of Great Britain*, London 1611, p 687.

<sup>52</sup> Sir Harris Nicolas, *History of the Battle of Agincourt*, Longmans, London, c1840 – rep. Frederick Muller, London, 1970, p. 107.

<sup>53</sup> 'The Ceremonial Dress and Accoutrements of The Most Noble Order of the Garter' in *Heraldry News*, Journal of Heraldry Australia 2 & 3, 1992, pp 6–12 and 2000, pp 7–11. (Insignia from *Burke's Peerage and Baronetage*, Burke's Peerage, London, 1840, pp 848–49.)

<sup>54</sup> Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *The Chronicles of Enguerrand de Monstrelet* (trans, Thomas Johnes), 2 vols, London, 1877, bk II, ch cclxix, p 198.

<sup>55</sup> *Excerpta Historica*, Samuel Bentley, London, 1831, p. 28.

<sup>56</sup> David Farmer (ed), *Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997, under 'George'.

<sup>57</sup> The work is currently published as: Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, 2 vols (trans, William Granger Ryan), Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1995.



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<sup>58</sup> Published as JB Voorbij (trans), *Speculum Historiale van Vincent van Beauvais. Een studie van zijn ontstaansgeschiedenis*, Groningen, NL, 1991.

<sup>59</sup> Edmund Spenser, *The Fairy Queen* (ed, Douglas Brooks-Davies), JM Dent, London, 1996, bk I, canto XI, pp 162–178.

<sup>60</sup> As identified by Manfred Görlach, Professor of English and Chair of Linguistics & Medieval Studies at the University of Cologne in Manfred Görlach, ‘Textual Tradition’ in *Studies in Middle English Saints’ Legends* (Anglistische Forschungen), C Winter, Heidelberg, 1998, p 161.

<sup>61</sup> F Procter and C Wordsworth (eds), *Breviarium ad Usus Insignis Ecclesiae Sarum* (3 vols), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1879–86 (reprinted 1970), vol 3, pp 257–60. See also J N Dalton (ed), *Ordinale Exon*, Henry Bradshaw Society, London, 1909, bk 3, p 231.

<sup>62</sup> See Patrick W Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter – A Tenth-Century Cultural History*, Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 1993, pp. 180, 194.

<sup>63</sup> The Bollandists are named after the Flemish hagiographer Jean Bolland (1596–1665). The *Acta Sanctorum* was first conceived by the Dutch Jesuit Heribert Rosweyde (1569–1629), who was a lecturer at the College of Douai in France.

<sup>64</sup> Details of the continuing compilation of the 68 folio volumes of the *Acta Sanctorum* are found in H Delahaye, *The Work of the Bollandists through three Centuries, 1615–1915*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1922. From the original French: H Delahaye, *L’oeuvre des Bollandistes à travers trois siècles. 1615-1915*, 2nd edn (*Subsidia Hagiographica*, 13a), Brussels, 1913.

<sup>65</sup> A Syriac copy of this work, accompanied by an annotated English translation, was published as EW Brooks, *Acts of Saint George*, Series ‘Analecta Gorgiana 8’, Gorgias Press, Piscataway, NJ, 1925.

<sup>66</sup> JA Fabricius *Bibliotheca Graeca*, 1728 (revised by GC Harles, 1790–1812), vol. x. p. 229 – as referenced in William Smith (ed), *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, John Murray, London, 1870, p 131.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Heylyn’s commission upon the Restoration of the Royal House of Stuart in 1660 was to cement the historicity of the St George tradition for the Order of the Garter “as asserted from the fictions, of the middle ages of the church, and opposition of the present”. See Peter Heylyn, *The Historie of the Most famous Saint and Souldier of Christ Jesus: St George of Cappadocia – The Institution of the Most Noble Order of St George named The Garter*, printed by Thomas Harper, for Henry Seyle, London, 1633.

<sup>68</sup> Ernest A Wallis Budge, *The Martyrdom and Miracles of St George of Cappadocia*, Oriental Text Series I, London, 1888.

<sup>69</sup> Ernest A Wallis Budge, *George of Lydda: A Study of the Cultus of St George in Ethiopia*, Luzac, London, 1930.

<sup>70</sup> John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come*, W Oliver, London, 1776, p 97.

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<sup>71</sup> David Woods, 'The Final Commission of Artemius the Former Dux Ægypti', in *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, no 23, Maney Publishing, London, 1999, pp 2–24. See also Virgil S Crisafulli and John W Nesbitt, *The Miracles of St. Artemios*, EJ Brill, Leiden, 1997, MM 13.

<sup>72</sup> William Smith (ed), *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, John Murray, London, 1870, pp 247–49.

<sup>73</sup> Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (ed, David Womersley), Allen Lane, London, 1994, p 903. (Gibbon's original work was published in six volumes 1776–88.)

<sup>74</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, *The Later Roman Empire AD 354–378* (trans, Walter Hamilton), Penguin, London, 1986, p 247.

<sup>75</sup> *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Robert Appleton, New York, NY, 1910, vol I, under 'Apostolicity'.

<sup>76</sup> The complete work is published as: John Phocas, *Ekphrasis*, 1185 (trans, Aubrey Stewart), entitled *The Pilgrimage of Joannes Phocas in the Holy Land*, Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, London, 1889.

<sup>77</sup> Fra Niccolò da Poggibonsi, *A Voyage Beyond the Seas 1346–1350*, Libro d'Oltramare, Jerusalem, 1945.

<sup>78</sup> Ludolphus, 'Descriptio Terrae Sanctae', in *Archives de l'Orient Latin*, vol II, Paris, 1884, ch 28.

<sup>79</sup> See in Mariano da Siena, Niccolò Cicerchia and Domenico Moreni, *Del Viaggio in Terra Santa fatto e descritto da ser Mariano da Siena*, Stamperia Magheri, Firenze, 1822.

<sup>80</sup> Marmadji, *Textes, Géographiques Arabes sur la Palestine*, Paris, 1951, p 191.

<sup>81</sup> A Bassi, *Pellegrinaggio storico e descrittivo in Terra Santa, vol. II*, Turin, 1856, bk II, pp 264–65.

<sup>82</sup> Melchior DeVogüé, *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte*, Paris, 1860, pp 363–67.

<sup>83</sup> CS Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological Researches in Palestine during the Years 1873–74*, Committee for the Palestine Exploration Fund, London, bk II, pp 102–108, 407.

<sup>84</sup> As revealed by the 9th-century Sufi, Ibrahim abn Adham. See under 'Khidr' in Cyril Glassé, *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, Harper and Row, San Francisco, CA, 1989, pp 224–25.

<sup>85</sup> George Adam Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1901, ch VIII, p 164.

<sup>86</sup> Taufiq Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine*, Luzac, London, 1927.

<sup>87</sup> See James Edward Hanauer, *Folk-lore of the Holy Land, Moslem, Christian and Jewish* (ed, Marmaduke Pickthall), Duckworth, London, 1907, ch X, p 52.

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* Also see Elizabeth Anne Finn, *Home in the Holyland*, James Nisbet, London, 1886, pp 46–47.

<sup>89</sup> Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

<sup>90</sup> The Order is the sixth-most senior in the British Honours system, after The Most Noble Order of the Garter, The Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, The Most Illustrious Order of St Patrick, The Most Honourable Order of the Bath, and The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India. The third of the aforementioned Orders – which relates to Ireland, no longer a part of the United Kingdom – still exists but is in disuse; no appointments have been made since 1934. The last of the Orders on the list, related to India, has also been in disuse since that country's independence in 1947.

<sup>91</sup> Lieut Gen Baden Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, Horace Cox, London, six issues, January–March 1908.

<sup>92</sup> *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Robert Appleton, New York, NY, 1910, vol XI, under 'The First Council of Nicaea'.