

I have cited, though they wrote many years after St. Paul, were, nevertheless, giving the tradition current in their day. That there should be no more positive information is not very surprising, considering the persecutions which the ancient Church from time to time suffered, and that during these persecutions the Christian books and records were sought out and destroyed, to say nothing of the constant internal commotion which prevailed in the British Isles both before and after the Saxon invasion, which must have been equally fatal to the preservation of records of the early history of the Church in England.

During one of the persecutions which took place in the reign of Diocletian, A.D. 303, the first British martyr, of which we have any record, suffered. This was St. Alban.

A few years after this event we have a further item of interest in English Church history. In 314 three bishops of the ancient British Church, viz., the Bishops of York, London, and Lincoln (or Llandaff), also a priest and deacon were present at the Council of Bishops, held at Arles, in France. Other bishops of the British Church were present at the Councils of Nicæa, in Asia, in 325, Sardica, 347, and Ariminium in 359. We thus learn that at this early day the Church in England was fully organ-