# Cook's Tour of Internet Resources for Students and Scholars of the Early Modern Period

## Cook's_Tour_2: The Book of Common Prayer (Sarum Missal, 1459, 1552, 1559)

Compiled by Hardy M. Cook, Editor of SHAKSPER

Perhaps, the best site on the Internet for locating resources associated with the three Early Modern Period editions of the Book of Common Prayer (1549, 1553, and 1559 as well as the pre-Reformation Sarum Missal) is sponsored by **The Society Of Archbishop Justus**. I strive to put the origins of the Book of Common Prayer into historical context, acknowledging from the onset that what follows is heavily influenced by traditional Anglican historiography. No matter how careful an author tries to be, there is always a danger when discussing anything related to politics or religion of stirring up deeply held passions. I assure my readers that I aim here above all else to disseminate information.

The Anglican Church considers itself to be both catholic (that is, orthodox) and reformed. This particular identify was established during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I and is retained to this day. "It resulted in a Church that consciously retained a large amount of continuity with the Church of the Patristic and Medieval periods in terms of its use of the catholic creeds, its pattern of ministry, its buildings and aspects of its liturgy, but which also embodied Protestant insights in its theology and in the overall shape of its liturgical practice" <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/history/>. Late seventeenth-century divine Richard Hooker best expressed the Anglican Church's via media orientation in his monumental work of Anglican theology *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie*, which defends the Church of England from attacks from both Roman Catholicism and Puritanism and affirms the Anglican tradition as a "threefold cord not quickly broken" – Bible, church (that is, tradition), and reason.

Since the introduction of Christianity to the Roman province of Britain at the time of the Roman Empire, the Church of England (*Ecclesia Anglicana*), as defined by local synods such as the Synod of Whitby in 664, claims a distinct identity of its own separate from the other orthodox branches of Christianity. "The History of the Church of England" article at the official Church of England website maintains that "What eventually became known as the Church of England was the result of a combination of three streams of Christianity, the Roman tradition of St. Augustine [of Canterbury who landed in Kent to begin the work of converting the 'pagan' Angles, Saxons, and Jutes] and his successors, the remnants of the old Romano-British church [with St. Alban's being the first member known by name] and the Celtic tradition [associated with the evangelizing figures of St. Illtud in Wales, St. Ninian in Scotland, and St. Patrick in Ireland] coming down from Scotland and [further] associated with people like St. Aidan and St. Cuthbert" <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/history/>.

During the reign of Henry VIII, the Church of England (*Anglicana Ecclesia*) with the Act of Supremacy of 1534 formerly separated from the Roman Catholic Church, a separation that was re-affirmed during the reign of Elizabeth I by the Second Act of Supremacy of 1559.

Previously, Henry VII (Henry Tudor) established the Tudor dynasty by overthrowing Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field, ending the long dynastic struggle, **The War of the Roses**. To secure further his hold on the throne, Henry VII, last of the Lancastrians, married Elizabeth of York, last of the Yorkists.

For obvious geo-political reasons, Henry VII married his heir, Prince Arthur, to Catherine of Aragon (the youngest surviving child of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain), first by proxy and then in person in November 1501; however, in April 1502 Arthur died. Henry VII, in part, fearing the loss of Catherine's substantial dowry, quickly arranged a marriage of Catherine to his son Henry, who was then twelve. However, because of Biblical prohibitions (Leviticus 20:21), canon law required that a dispensation from the Pope be obtained. In 1503, the papal dispensation was granted. In April 1509, Henry VIII succeeded to the throne and married Catherine in June. Catherine gave birth to six children between 1510 and 1518; all but Mary, however, were either stillborn or died in infancy.

At this point, the narrative is less clear. In 1521, Henry worked on a refutation of Martin Luther's *De captivitate Babylonica* published as *Assertio septem sacramentorum* (*The Defence of the Seven Sacraments*), in which he is identified as the *Defence*'s sole author. In return, the Pope awarded Henry VIII the title "Defender of the Faith" (*Fidei Defensor*). In 1527, Henry VIII requested an annulment of his marriage to Catherine for what, from his point of view, was a fruitless marriage resulting from his having married his brother's widow, the reason for which his father initially sought and was granted a papal dispensation. Catherine, in return, appealed to Pope Clement, contending her marriage to Arthur was never consummated and thus invalid. Working against Henry VIII's being granted this request was the annulment he had already received and the Pope's fear of Catherine's nephew, Charles V, King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor.

The extreme Anglican position maintains that "the annulment of the marriage of King Henry VIII to Catherine of Aragon" was "merely the occasion, but not the cause, of [the] break with Rome," a break, from this perspective, that recovered the autonomy the Church of England had enjoyed prior to the Norman Conquest.

During Henry VIII's reign, the English Church was not radically altered. Although Henry supported Thomas Cranmer Archbishop of Canterbury's ordering the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Bible readings be in English, the Mass continued to be said in Latin. During Henry VIII's lifetime what was practiced was Catholicism without the Pope. Elements of Protestant Reformation took stronger hold upon the doctrines and practices of the Church of England during the brief reign of Henry VIII's son Edward VI. "In the reign of Henry's son Edward VI the Church of England underwent further reformation, driven by the conviction that the theology being developed by the theologians of the Protestant Reformation was more faithful to the teaching of the Bible and the Early Church than the teaching of those who continued to support the Pope." In 1549, Thomas Cranmer and Nicholas Ridley produced the First Prayer Book (Book of Common Prayer), a simplified version of the Roman Catholic liturgical books in the vernacular. To the extreme Reformers, the First Prayer Book did not go far enough to transform the rites of the English Church; consequently, in 1552, Cranmer produced the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI, which radically differed from its predecessor; "The structure of the Holy Communion service was changed, many ceremonies were eliminated, and the vestments worn by the clergy were simplified." However, eight months later, Edward died, and his Roman Catholic half-sister Mary I rolled back the changes made during his and their father's reigns, restoring the Old Faith and with it the Latin liturgical services and missals. Mary died in 1558. Under her half-sister Elizabeth I, the 1552 Prayer Book was restored in 1559 with a few significant changes: the 1559 Book of Common Prayer allowed for belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and removed from the litany an offensive prayer against the Pope.

The most comprehensive site on the Internet that I have found with information on the 1549, 1552, and 1559 Books of Common Prayer is the work of Charles Wohlers at a site sponsored by The Society of Archbishop Justus.

The Society of Archbishop Justus was formed in 1996 and incorporated in 1997 as a nonprofit corporation in the State of New York for the purpose of using the Internet to foster and further unity among Christians, especially Anglicans <http://justus.anglican.org/soaj.html>.

Saint Justus (d. 627), fourth Archbishop of Canterbury, was sent in 601 from Rome by Pope Gregory along with Laurentius, Mellitus, and others to reinforce the Kentish mission. In 604 he was consecrated first bishop of the Diocese of Rochester by Augustine, and 28 April received from Æthelbert, king of Kent, a grant to his church of certain lands lying about Rochester. As a portion of these lands has always borne the name of Priestfield, it has been suggested that it is possible that Justus was not a monk (though this would of course be contrary to the belief of the Canterbury historians).

Justus helped Augustine in his ecclesiastical government (*S Bonifacii Epistolæ*, i. 104, 168), and after Augustine's death joined Archbishop Laurentius and Mellitus in writing to the Scottish bishops and abbots to urge them to conform to the

Roman usages. On the relapse into idolatry that followed the accession of Eadbald in Kent, he fled with Mellitus into Gaul in 617, and remained there a year, until he was recalled to his bishopric by the king. He governed his diocese diligently, and received a letter of exhortation addressed to him and Archbishop Mellitus by Boniface V, who became Pope in 619.

On the death of Mellitus on 24 April 624, he succeeded to the See of Canterbury, and received a pall from Boniface with a letter referring to the gift as conveying the right of consecrating bishops; so it was probably after receiving it, though in the same year as his accession, that he consecrated Romanus to succeed him at Rochester. Another letter from Boniface to Justus giving the primacy of the whole English church to Canterbury (*Gesta Pontificum*, p. 47) is probably spurious. On 21 July 625, Justus consecrated Paulinus bishop, to accompany Æthelburh to Northumbria. One or two further details given by Elmham can scarcely be considered historical. There are lives of Justus by Gervase, and by Goscelin, in manuscript in the Lambeth Library. None of them adds anything to Bede's account. Justus died on 10 Nov 627, and was buried in St. Peter's porch at St. Augustine's, Canterbury <http://justus.anglican.org/justus-bio.html>.

Among the Computer Services Offered by the Society of Archbishop Justus <http://justus.anglican.org/> one can find a section of "Anglican Communion primary source materials or reference documents," a collection of primary source materials <http://justus.anglican.org/resources/> and among this collection one finds The Book of Common Prayer collection <http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/index.html>.

***The Book of Common Prayer Collection***

The resources of most interest to those involved in the study of the Early Modern Period that can be found among these pages are organized under the following rubrics:

**The Sarum Missal**: The Communion service commonly used in the English Church before the Book of Common Prayer; in Latin and English. <http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/Sarum/index.htm>

**Exhortation & Litany** (1544): The first liturgy in English
<http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/Litany1544/Exhortation&Litany_1544.htm>

**The Order for the Communion 1548:** The first communion service in English.
<http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/Communion_1548.htm>

**1549 Book of Common Prayer:** The first Book of Common Prayer
<http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1549/BCP_1549.htm>

**1552 Book of Common Prayer** : The second Prayer Book of Edward VI
<http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1552/BCP_1552.htm>

**1559 Book of Common Prayer** : The Elizabethan Book
<http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1552/BCP_1552.htm>

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