

The Age of the Saints in the Early Celtic Church

*The Riddell Memorial Lectures
Thirty-second Series
delivered at King's College in the
University of Durham
on 22, 23, and 24 March 1960*

BY

NORA K. CHADWICK

LONDON
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
NEW YORK TORONTO



UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM
PUBLICATIONS

12

The present lectures are a contribution to the literary aspect of sanctity in the Early Celtic Church of the sixth and seventh centuries—the 'Age of the Saints'. The author concentrates on the records of the literary no less than the spiritual activities of the ascetics of the Early Church. The first lecture surveys the background of the Age of the Saints, indicating its relationship to the ascetics of the Eastern Church, and contrasting the episcopal Church in Gaul reflected in the Patrician documents. The second lecture defines the nature of Celtic monasticism in the sixth and seventh centuries, and demonstrates the essential unity of the monastic institution, both coenobitic and anchoritic. The third lecture traces the steps by which the Celtic Church and the institutions of the Age of the Saints were finally absorbed into the discipline of the Church of Rome, and emphasizes the direct stimulus which the controversy gave to literary production and to poetry. The book may be described as an anatomy of Celtic spirituality.

Mrs. Chadwick is an Honorary Fellow of Newnham College, Cambridge, and Director of Studies in Anglo-Saxon, Celtic and Old Norse subjects at Girton College.

Oxford University Press, Amen House, London E.C.4

GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI LAHORE DACCA
CAPE TOWN SALISBURY NAIROBI IBADAN ACCRA
KUALA LUMPUR HONG KONG

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

First published 1961
Reprinted with corrections 1963

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

IN DESERTO PEREGRINANTIBUS
DEDICAVI

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