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# X Marks The Spot: The Cult of St. Alban the Martyr and the Hagiotoponymy of Imperial Anglicanism in Canada, 1865–1921<sup>1</sup>

JONATHAN S. LOFFT

**I**n a favorite scene from the Hollywood blockbuster movie *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (Steven Spielberg, 1989), the title character, a swashbuckling treasure hunter who supports himself by slumming it with an academic job in the Ivy League, insists to his class of sleepy undergraduates that: “ninety percent of an archaeologist’s time is spent in the library. Myths can only be taken at face value. We do not follow maps to buried treasures, and X never *ever* marks the spot.” In the end, of course, it is precisely this prejudice that Indy must overcome in order to gain the advantage. Sensitive to the critical turn in place-name studies, just occasionally, X *does*, in fact, mark the spot.

More precisely, the following study examines evidence generated between 1865 and 1921 of an imperialist cult of St. Alban the Martyr active in Victorian Canada, otherwise absent from his dossier. Through an exploration of expanding High Church

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Professor Carole A. Hough of the University of Glasgow for her helpful suggestions and her encouragement with this paper, especially its subtitle. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Church History, Ryerson University, Toronto, 1 June 2017.

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devotion to his name and fame, his title of protomartyr, and his distinctive heraldic emblem, as well as by tracing the network of his devotees responsible for three of the first dedications of churches to his patronage in Canada, the contours of the figure of St. Alban as a patron saint of the British Empire are discerned. This reinvention of his patronage points to the importance of a further surveying of what are termed here imperial hagiotoponyms—simply, colonial place-names derived from canons of metropolitan saints. Stock should be taken of these names, as aspects of intangible cultural heritage, in order to document the true scope, not only of the cult of St. Alban and his intercolonial network throughout the Anglican Communion, but of the fullness of hagiotponymy as a Christian colonial placemaking practice.<sup>2</sup>

#### SPATIALIZED CULTIC PRECEDENTS

Across a nascent imperial Anglican world, a spiritual empire to mirror Britain's ascendant hegemony, settler appropriation of space involved the organization of sacred landscapes, despite lingering Protestant disdain for the cult of the saints.<sup>3</sup> As Robert Bartlett stressed, however, "the influence of the Saints on place names continued well after the Reformation."<sup>4</sup> Out of seeming oblivion, the dedications of churches gradually resurfaced. Indeed, the relatively limited number of permissible dedications in the Anglican repertoire prior to the Oxford Movement gazettes these select hagiotponyms—dedications to Saints Alban, Chad, George, and Paul, along with Christchurch, and a few others—as peculiarly British. Nor is "Making places familiar by repeating names, associating

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<sup>2</sup> I have freely adapted this term from the "imperial toponymy" described in Stephen J. Hornsby, *Imperial Surveyors: Samuel Holland, J. F. W. Des Barres and the Making of the Atlantic Neptune* (Montreal and Kingston, 2011), 141. See also Jennifer S. H. Brown, "Intangible Culture on Inland Seas, from Hudson Bay to Canadian Heritage," *Ethnologies* 36 (2014): 141-59.

<sup>3</sup> For a schematic of the main structures represented in settlement names, see Carole Hough, "Settlement Names" in Carole Hough, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming* (Oxford, 2016), 92-93.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshipers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton, 2013), 455.

one place with another,” a modern strategy for tying personal and community identity to toponyms.<sup>5</sup> The practice of imperial hagiotoponymy entwined cultic and imperialist zeal in the production of place, and of translocal geographies, a concept understood “as a simultaneous situatedness across different locales which provide ways of understanding the overlapping place-time(s) in migrants’ everyday lives.”<sup>6</sup> Imperial hagiotoponyms index translocalities, “virtual neighbourhoods that emerge at the articulation of media and mobility as . . . ‘deterritorialized imaginings’ of ethno-national identity . . . networks of sites . . . linkages and interconnections.”<sup>7</sup>

By no means did the notion of a patron saint of the British Empire originate with St. Alban’s *impresarii* in Confederation Era Canada. In his consideration of the fashionably resurgent cult of St. George the Martyr in Victorian Britain, Jonathan Good described a transition in which the romantic medievalism of this revival shifted emphasis from homely English agrarian concerns, associated with figures like John Ruskin, his Guild of St. George, and the Pre-Raphaelites, to the political programme touted by Lord Baden-Powell and other notable imperialists.<sup>8</sup> The waning of Georgian utopianism among an élite made space for the continued growth of the popular cult of St. George, Good contended, transforming the martyr from mere patriotic symbol into “an Imperial icon.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Nicole Guenther Discenza, *Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place* (Toronto, 2017), 73-85.

<sup>6</sup> For which see Katherine Brickell and Ayona Datta, eds., *Translocal Geographies: Spaces, Places, Connections* (Farnham, Surrey, 2011), 4. See also Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Exploration of Landscape and History* (Minneapolis, 1987).

<sup>7</sup> Michael Peter Smith, “Translocality: A Critical Reflection” in Katherine Brickell and Ayona Datta, eds., *Translocal Geographies*, 181-83.

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Good, *The Cult of St. George in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2009), 140-43. For Ruskin and the Guild see Mark Frost, *The Lost Companions and John Ruskin’s Guild of St. George* (London, 2014). For Baden-Powell’s devotion to an Imperial St. George see Precious McKenzie, *The Right Sort of Woman: Victorian Travel Writers and the Fitness of an Empire* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2012), 97-98.

<sup>9</sup> Good, *The Cult of St. George in Medieval England*, 147. See also Ayla Lepine, “Anglican Art and Architecture, c. 1837–1914” in Rowan Strong, ed., *The Oxford History of Anglicanism* vol. III (Oxford, 2017), 401-15. For the problematic distinction between *saints* and *icons* see James F. Hopgood, “Introduction: Saints and Saints” in the Making in James F. Hopgood, ed., *The Making of Saints: Contesting Sacred Ground* (Tuscaloosa, 2005), xvii-xviii.

In addition to successive Hanoverian monarchs as namesakes, dedications made to England's national tutelary guardian can be found the world over: in the naming of St. George's Town, Bermuda (1797); the dedication of St. George's Church, Penang, Malaysia (1819), the oldest Anglican church in Southeast Asia, and at St. George's Cathedral, Jerusalem (1899).<sup>10</sup> Of the medieval significance of hagiotoponymy Karen Jankulak wrote that the practice "seems to indicate a striking level of commemoration (more profound than, for example, that indicated by the inclusion of the saint's name in a liturgical calendar)."<sup>11</sup> Along with his name and nationality, St. George's attributed coat of arms, featuring a red cross straddling a white field, proliferated in an innumerable variety of highly visible representations as the standard of imperial Anglicanism. Typical of this pattern, the cross of St. George continues to feature prominently in the emblems of both the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Episcopal Church, to name only two examples of immediate relevance to the context of this paper.<sup>12</sup>

The cross of St. George also forms the basis of the flags of a multiplicity of secular political entities, Britain's many colonies and their successor states, as a central element of the British Union Flag (itself a hybrid representation of the heraldic crosses of Saints George, Andrew, and Patrick, the national patrons of England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively). One outspoken imperialist in Victorian Canada boasted in racialized terms of the vexillological

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<sup>10</sup> For the ubiquity of Georgian dedications on the eighteenth-century Imperial namescape see Jeremy Gregory, "The Hanoverians and the Colonial Churches" in Andreas Gestrich and Michael Schaich, eds., *The Hanoverian Succession: Dynastic Politics and Monarchical Culture* (Farnham, Surrey, 2015), 115-16. See also David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (London, 2001), 102-03.

<sup>11</sup> Karen Jankulak, *The Medieval Cult of St. Petros* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2000), 73.

<sup>12</sup> Originally designed in 1908 by Edward Marion Chadwick (1840-1921), for whom see below. A modified form of these arms were granted by the Chief Herald of Canada in 1995, for which see *Public Register of Arms, Flags, and Badges of Canada*, Vol. III, 16, <http://reg.gg.ca/heraldry/pub-reg/project-pic.asp?lang=e&ProjectID=534&ProjectElementID=1870>. For the arms adopted in 1940 by the Episcopal Church, see Eckford de Kay, *Heraldry in the Episcopal Church: How Ecclesiastical Coats of Arms Depict the History of the Church* (San Jose, CA, 1993), 18.

Anglo-Saxon “supremacy” embodied in the design of the Union Flag.<sup>13</sup> Contemporary detractors, on the other hand, retorted that “the Union Jack is not the flag of this country . . . it is the modern flag of brute-force dominion . . . constructed to celebrate the triumph of a swollen, greedy Empire,” preferring the plain cross of St. George for England, conceding reluctantly that national flags would always endure as decorative elements of churches.<sup>14</sup>

Like the pointed architecture coats of arms adorn, decorative elements of the Gothic idiom became medievalisms abroad in the modern world conveying symbolic politics.<sup>15</sup> More recently, Rowan Williams commented on the “uncomfortable symbol . . . of aggressive Englishness” the emblem too frequently becomes in popular culture.<sup>16</sup> However enduringly significant the cult of St. George continues to the enterprise of Anglican and English identity, and, in view of one recent naming of a senior heir of the House of Windsor, to the perpetuation of the crowns of Britain and Canada, there remains another highly venerated heavenly patronage, perhaps only an aspiring icon, repeatedly invoked in the course of sacred placemaking throughout the British Empire in the nineteenth century: that of St. Alban the Martyr.

While translocal geographies may be a new context for exploring imperial hagiotoponymy, importing this framework in the course of an examination of the Canadian cult of St. Alban confirms Christian Jacob’s sentiment that “toponyms can lend themselves to discursive forms of organization, to serial articulations that cannot be reduced to the sum of their component parts.”<sup>17</sup> Certainly, hagiographers have long acknowledged the significance of spatiality in cultic

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<sup>13</sup> Barlow Cumberland, *History of the Union Jack and Flags of the Empire* (Toronto, 1909), 53-55. See also Joanne Parker, ‘England’s Darling:’ *The Victorian Cult of Alfred the Great* (Manchester, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Matthew Grimley, *The State, Nationalism, and Anglican Identities*, 117.

<sup>15</sup> G. A. Bremner, *Imperial Gothic: Religious Architecture and High Anglican Culture in the British Empire* (New Haven, 2013), 185-200.

<sup>16</sup> Rowan Williams, “Epilogue” in Samuel Wells and Sarah Coakley, eds., *Praying for England: Priestly Presence in Contemporary Culture* (London, 2008), 172, to whom I am grateful for encouragement with this paper when I ambushed him in Toronto with my argument.

<sup>17</sup> Christian Jacob, *The Sovereign Map: Theoretical Approaches to Cartography Throughout History* ed. Edward H. Dahl, trans. Tom Conley (Chicago, 2006), 236.

reverence, the most famous of these describing in his *Golden Legend*, “the debt of interchanging neighbourhood” owed to the saints in heaven for their intercession before God as paid by devotees on earth using names and places as currency.<sup>18</sup> The present interest in imperial hagiotoponyms also builds on work by Nicholas Orme in assessing a process termed the invention and casting of Victorian parish dedications. Orme’s claim that dedication names have never been adequately surveyed resonates throughout what follows.<sup>19</sup> No future survey of the historical, or hagiotoponymical, landscape of the British Empire should be made without gazetting the ubiquity of both St. George and St. Alban, holy figures conspicuously absent from most current interpretations of imperial migration and colonial practice. The imperial hagiotoponymies of other Christian traditions and European empires might also be explored with the ultimate goal of a comparative study of a practice best understood as simultaneously colonial and devotional.

#### ST. ALBAN THE MARTYR

The occurrence of Queen Victoria’s accession to the throne on 20 June 1837, one of several days in that month confusingly designated as the *dies natalis* of St. Alban in the liturgical calendars of Western Christianity, cannot be ignored.<sup>20</sup> This happy accident

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<sup>18</sup> Jacobus de Voragine, *Golden Legend*, VI, 97, quoted in Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–1580* (New Haven, 1992), 160–61.

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas Orme, *English Church Dedications with a Survey of Cornwall and Devon* (Exeter, 1996), xi, 58.

<sup>20</sup> Currently, the National Calendar for the Catholic Church in England, recognised by the Holy See in 2000, and the many calendars of the Anglican Communion, including those of the Church of England and the Anglican Church of Canada, do not agree as to the date of St. Alban’s Day. The General Roman Calendar never enrolled St. Alban. The first-mentioned, National Catholic Calendar, provides for an optional memorial on 20 June, a modern corrective dating, while most contemporary Anglican calendars memorialise St. Alban on 22 June, a date supplied by Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, though the Calendar of the Church of England, as printed in the Book of Common Prayer (1662), unlike that in *Common Worship* (2000), retains the long-held, but apparently erroneous, 17 June. A summary of the problem and possible explanation are put forward in F. E. Brightman *The English Rite: Being a Synopsis of the Sources and Revisions of the Book of Common Prayer*, vol. 1 (London,

encouraged the imperialist cult of St. Alban, the informal patron of Queen Victoria's reign. Accordingly, her spectacular Diamond Jubilee was celebrated on 22 June, Bede's dating of the martyrdom of St. Alban. Following the earthly apotheosis of the Hanoverian St. George, though never sainted, Queen Victoria's regnal name became another, still more ubiquitous, feature of the British imperial namescape with distant translocal nodes repeatedly dedicated to her fame. Collectively, the many far-flung places dedicated to Saints Alban, George, Queen Victoria, the Duke of Wellington, and others, can even risk undermining the commemorative function of toponyms, blurring the important distinction between the "who" and the "where" of place-names.<sup>21</sup> Particularly following the death of Prince Albert (1819–1861), St. Alban increasingly became a useable masculinity in the contemporary public imagination. A more suitable counterpart for the monarch in an ecclesiastical context than even the prince consort, he emerged as one of a succession of picturesque male companions discreetly associated with Queen Victoria's power as a feminine icon.<sup>22</sup>

As for St. Alban himself, the most striking aspect of his hagiography may be its close resemblance to that of St. George. The topological similarity is striking in places, no doubt the result of the overlapping sources of their *vitae*, including Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine, and latterly Alban Butler's *Lives*.<sup>23</sup> Both were soldiers by profession, and martyrs, at the pinnacle of

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1915), ccxii–ccxiii. I am grateful to Professor Jesse Billett of Trinity College, Toronto for this reference. In nineteenth-century Britain and Canada, 17 June was most frequently the date of the Anglican liturgical observance of St. Alban's martyrdom.

<sup>21</sup> Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, and Maoz Azaryahu, "Geographies of Toponymic Inscription: New Directions in Critical Place-Name Studies," *Progress in Human Geography* 34 (2010): 459.

<sup>22</sup> Sarah Carter, "The Faithful Children of the Great Mother are Starving: Queen Victoria in Contact Zone Dialogues in Western Canada," in Sarah Carter and Maria Nugent, eds., *Mistress of Everything: Queen Victoria in Indigenous Worlds* (Manchester, 2016), 82.

<sup>23</sup> For the similar typologies shared by various Roman soldier saints, including the coupled Saints Bacchus and Sergius, Saints George and Demetrius, as well as Martin of Tours, and others, see Samantha Riches, *St George: Hero, Martyr, and Myth* (Stroud, Gloucs., 2000), 8.



saintly status, even portrayed as victims of the same persecution. Both are traditionally located dwelling in the mists of apostolic antiquity, citizens of imperial Rome living at the peripheries of the known world. Recent popular agitation even calls for St. Alban to replace St. George as England's tutelary guardian!<sup>24</sup> Subsequent reinventions of the cult of St. Alban over the centuries, despite their differences, consistently stress an artificial unity—Britishness—as the greatest benefit of his *patrocinium*. The value of St. Alban's imputed ethnicity, his *praesentia*, the antiquity of the dedications to him, his imagined Anglicanism, cannot be underestimated. These endowed his cult, to the disadvantage of St. George, with a heightened sense of place, opening the path to translocation in the places dedicated to him manifested through “a network of ‘interpersonal acts.’”<sup>25</sup> These acts included the creation of imperial hagiotoponyms that, as Peter Brown explained, “both facilitated and further heightened the drive to transmute distance from the holy into the deep joy of proximity.”<sup>26</sup>

The title of protomartyr usually associated with St. Alban also merits attention. Significantly, Bede did not invoke the title, one that does not seem to have had much impact until after the Conquest. As Paul Antony Hayward made clear, the title was repeated by successive Norman archbishops of Canterbury to bolster the establishment of a pan-Britannic patriarchate, normalizing what was previously a narrower local identification of St. Alban as *Anglorum protomartyr*.<sup>27</sup> Despite the easy translatability of his medieval cult, it is little wonder that Anglo-Saxons were uninspired by a saint so unambiguously identified with the

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<sup>24</sup> Emma Flanagan, “St George's Day: What is the History of England's Patron Saint?,” *Manchester Evening News* (Manchester, UK), 30 August 2015, <http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/whats-on/st-georges-day-history-england-9057124>.

<sup>25</sup> Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981), 87.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>27</sup> Paul Antony Hayward, “The Cult of Saint Alban, *Anglorum Protomartyr*” in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman England” in Johan Leemans, ed., *More than a Memory: The Discourse of Martyrdom and the Construction of Christian Identity in the History of Christianity* (Leuven, 2005), 186.

Britons, and whose name may originate as the personification of Albion.<sup>28</sup>

Recent cultic rivalry between Saints Alban and George belies both the iconographic partitioning of the two figures, to avoid confusion, and, inversely, pairings, and other groupings. The most recent of these team-ups include representations joining Saints Alban and George with a third preeminent heavenly warrior, St. Michael the archangel—perhaps the rehabilitation in Britain, after 1904, of an important French cult, mirroring evolving political and military alliances in the prelude to the Great War.<sup>29</sup> While medieval pairings of Saints Alban and George and of Saints George and Michael proliferated, twentieth-century devotion has cast three protectors, selected for England, the British Empire, and France, partners in the Entente Cordiale and its immediate concern with colonial expansion.<sup>30</sup> The better-known female and secular national personifications of Britannia and Marianne were similarly represented embracing in friendship as a result of improved Anglo-French relations, but the muscular trio of Saints Alban, George, and Michael was

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<sup>28</sup> M. D. Laynesmith, “Translating St Alban: Romano-British, Merovingian and Anglo-Saxon Cults” in Simon Ditchfield, Charlotte Methuen, and Andrew Spicer, eds., *Translating Christianity* (Cambridge, 2017), 51-70.

<sup>29</sup> For the history of a chronologically parallel, though distinct, and esoteric, revival of a Celtic St. Michael the archangel as “a marker of British indigeneity” in the twentieth century see Amy Hale, “Reigning with Swords of Meteoric Iron: Archangel Michael and the British New Jerusalem” in Joanne Parker, ed., *The Harp and Constitution: Myths of Celtic and Gothic Origin* (Leiden, 2016), 174-88.

<sup>30</sup> One early example of this trio is to be found in the stained glass at St. Mary’s Church, Ware, designed by Christopher Whall (1849–1924) in 1905, for which see <http://www.stainedglassrecords.org/Ch.asp?ChId=14831>. Another early grouping in stained glass, the work of the firm of Shrigley and Hunt, adorns the King’s Own Lancaster Regiment Chapel in Lancaster Priory, built between 1903 and 1905, details of which are found in Valerie B. Parkhouse, *Memorializing the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902: Militarization of the Landscape, Monuments, and Memorials in Britain* (Kibworth Beauchamp, Leics., 2015), 164-65. An impressive reredos featuring the trio, the work of Frank Ernest Howard (1888–1934) of the Warham Guild, is located in the Church of St. James, Silsoe, and is pictured in Percy Dearmer, *Some Recent Work by the Warham Guild* (London, 1922), <http://anglicanhistory.org/dearmer/recent1922/>. For the grouping of these three “Muscular Christians” in the memorials to the Great War see Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914–1940* (Cambridge, 2007), 222.

useful in ecclesiastical contexts.<sup>31</sup> As with the triumvirate, “their origins and early history are obscure,” but these anthropomorphized female personifications of nation are emanations of mass-produced tradition, not cultic devotion, despite their obvious similarities.<sup>32</sup>

In a remarkable example of what Cynthia Hahn termed framing, the site of St. Alban’s martyrdom, and his chief shrine at Verulamium in Hertfordshire, are located in a city bearing his name, housed within a cathedral abbey of a diocese both dedicated to his patronage—unlike St. George, whose physical presence cannot be claimed for English history, despite attempts beginning in the sixteenth century to do precisely this.<sup>33</sup> What made St. Alban translatable for Victorians in their efforts at creating a utopian, globe spanning “transcolonial polity of Anglo-Saxon communities . . . anchored in ideas of British or Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism” that emerged as an imperial fantasy was his Britishness. Britishness as a racialized identity that made the Protomartyr an “embodiment of a progressive civilization which was designated by Providence to spread its culture, religion, and political institutions across the face of the earth.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> William Kidd, “Les Caprices Anglais de Marianne: La Caricature Britannique des Années 1990” in Maurice Agulhon, Annette Becker, and Évelyne Cohen, eds., *La République en Représentations: Autour de L’oeuvre de Maurice Agulhon* (Paris, 2006), 379. For the growing nineteenth-century preference for classical personifications see Marilyn J. McKay, *A National Soul: Canadian Mural Painting, 1860s–1930s* (Montreal and Kingston, 2002), 43.

<sup>32</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870–1914” in Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), 276.

<sup>33</sup> For reliquaries as placemaking frames, see Cynthia Hahn, *The Reliquary Effect: Enshrining the Sacred Object* (London, 2017), 12–13. Both Ely and Odense claimed rival sets of relics of St. Alban, for which see entry for “Alban,” in David Hugh Farmer, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Oxford, 2011). For the early modern St. George see Samantha Riches, “An English Patron for English People” in Madeleine Gray, ed., *Rewriting Holiness: Reconfiguring Vitae, Re-Signifying Cults* King’s College London Medieval Studies (London, 2017), 283–300. See also Kevin Walton, “Sacred Bones, Stones, Stories: St Alban’s and Bethel,” *Theology* 121 (2018): 422–29.

<sup>34</sup> Penelope Edmonds, “Canada and Australia: On Anglo-Saxon “Oceana,” Transcolonial History, and an International Pacific World” in Karen Dubinsky, Adele Perry, and Henry Yu, eds., *Within And Without The Nation: Canadian History as Transnational History* (Toronto, 2015), 115–17; Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867–1914* (Toronto, 2013), 217.

That similar, though less geographically aggressive, patterns emerged in the promotion for political ends of the cults of St. Joan of Arc in France, or of St. Serafim of Sarov in Russia, in the same half-century, is less surprising considering that their causes, like St. Alban's, "represented the very epitome of a heavy blend of religion and nationalism . . . one of the more distinctive and powerful forces of the era."<sup>35</sup>

High Church historians in the Church of England, supportive of establishment, and the concomitant idea that nationality, inclusive of religious identity, extended into the colonies of settlement, prepared the ground for this recasting of St. Alban. An imperial Anglicanism assisted in "making them as much a part of England as 'Kent or Cornwall,'" constituents of a Greater Britain.<sup>36</sup> The High Church argument for the descent of the Church of England from a British antecedent continued influential in ecclesiastical matters. Thus, while a majority of contemporary historians were keen to bust the myths of figures like the Briton King Saint Lucius, a luminous churchy minority resisted "the conclusion that the Romano-British civilization, including its church," of which St. Alban became protomartyr, "had not been inherited, but rather destroyed, by the conquering Anglo-Saxons."<sup>37</sup> Thus, Britishness became the particular heroic virtue of St. Alban.

Significantly, few details of St. Alban's *acta*, *passio*, or *inventio*—his defence of the spurious St. Amphibalus, for example—were ever mentioned in the Canadian context. Only his title of English protomartyr, subsequently reiterated as British protomartyr, and, finally, as protomartyr of the Anglican Communion, was repeated. These omissions likely stemmed from that Protestant

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<sup>35</sup> James F. McMillan, "Reclaiming a Martyr: French Catholics and the Cult of Joan of Arc, 1890-1920" in Diana Wood, ed., *Martyrs and Martyrologies* (Oxford, 1993), 359; Richard Price, "The Canonization of Serafim of Sarov: Piety, Prophecy and Politics in Late Imperial Russia" in Peter Clarke and Tony Claydon, eds., *Saints and Sanctity* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2011), 362-64.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in James Kirby, *Historians and the Church of England: Religion and Historical Scholarship, 1870-his 1920* (Oxford, 2016), 103-04. "Greater Britain" was a term coined by radical imperialist Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, Bt (1843-1911) in the title of his eponymous book of 1868.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

disdain for the veneration of the saints, church dedications, and the cult of relics and reliquaries, reinforced by the migration of Anglo-Irish missionary clergy in the period.<sup>38</sup> Though, as we shall see, even pseudo-relics of St. Alban were eventually obtained in Victorian Canada, and his veneration was more than once associated with advanced Ritualism. St. Alban's was also a chronologically belated Victorian cultic revival, seemingly encouraged by the creation of the aforementioned Diocese of St. Alban's in the Church of England in 1877, the product of what Arthur Burns called a geographically destabilising rearrangement of jurisdictions by High Church activism in Parliament.<sup>39</sup>

Liberated from the most complex entanglements of sanctity, yet absolutely rooted in place, and possessed of his own distinctive heraldic emblem, a sort of inversion of that attributed to St. George, consisting of a golden saltire on a blue field, St. Alban became increasingly useful as an imperial icon.<sup>40</sup> In places where identity was defined within the context of Britain's symbolic vocabulary, St. Alban readily became a marker of translocality, of the woven fabric of a global nationality. The coat of arms granted to the English See of St. Alban's at its founding—the familiar golden saltire on a blue field, but differenced by the superimposition of two preeminent symbols of martyrdom, a sword and a celestial crown—suggests a great convergence at his shrine, or, X marks the spot.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> One Canadian-born bishop, Thomas Brock Fuller (1810–1884) of the Diocese of Niagara, went so far as to characterise the “evil” of local expressions of Tractarianism as being derived from the close association of Anglicans in Canada with the decadence of the contemporary Church of England, for which see Alan L. Hayes, *Anglicans in Canada: Controversies and Identity in Historical Perspective* (Urbana, Illinois, 2004), 121.

<sup>39</sup> Arthur Burns, *The Diocesan Revival in the Church of England c. 1800–1870* (Oxford, 1999), 161.

<sup>40</sup> The precise origin of the attributed arms of St. Alban, blazoned *Azure a saltire Or*, is obscure, though, like the arms of the Diocese of Bath and Wells, they may be a differenced version of the attributed arms of St. Andrew, *Azure a saltire Argent*. St. Andrew was long a competing patronage at St. Alban's Abbey, whose cult was mostly, but not entirely, obliterated by Norman Abbot Geoffrey de Gorham (d. 1146) in the mid-twelfth century, for which see William Page, *St. Alban's Cathedral and Abbey Church: A Guide* (London, 1898), 25, 79, and *Middlesex and Hertfordshire Notes and Queries*, volume 3, 1897: 96. These attributed arms of St. Alban are currently used by the Abbey-Cathedral.

<sup>41</sup> John Woodward, *A Treatise on Ecclesiastical Heraldry* (Edinburgh, 1894), 186–87.

THE CHURCH OF ST. ALBAN THE MARTYR, OTTAWA, ONTARIO, 1865

Setting down “a page of personal history” in 1901, Archdeacon Thomas Bedford-Jones (1830–1901), in failing health, recorded the beginnings of the parish he founded, St. Alban’s, Ottawa.<sup>42</sup> He recalled,

The first celebration of Holy Communion took place on Advent Sunday, 3 December, 1865 . . . and the name of the new parish was then announced for the first time, as that of St Alban the Martyr. That was the name selected by the Bishop out of three submitted to him. It was the very first church in all of what is now the Dominion of Canada dedicated to St Alban, England’s proto-martyr. Indeed, I am inclined to believe it was the first so designated on this continent. There are now very many, the Bishop of Toronto having named his new Cathedral “St Alban’s.”<sup>43</sup>

In partnership with Bedford-Jones, Bishop John Travers Lewis (1825–1901) of the Diocese of Ontario became the founding *impresarii* of the cult of St. Alban in North America, or so they claimed. Bedford-Jones was retrospectively on the events of 1865 nearly four decades later, permitting him the luxury of making explicit connections to later foundations of the same name. The symbolic re-encoding of St. Alban as imperial patron begun in Confederation Era Canada by Bedford-Jones and Lewis would be developed in subsequent decades by other cultists. Moreover, their recasting occurred at a stage when it is claimed that “the notion that there could be” a saint for all Canadians, or for the settlers in other British colonies, like Australia, was deemed “absurd.”<sup>44</sup> The dedication is also helpful for understanding the full effects of Tractarianism upon Anglicanism “in a wider, imperial context.”<sup>45</sup> The decision to dedicate the new church as they did

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<sup>42</sup> Thomas Bedford-Jones, *St. Alban’s Parish, Ottawa: How St. Alban’s Church and Parish had Their Beginning Under the First Rector* (Ottawa, 1995), 2.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>44</sup> Josephine Lafin, “‘A Saint for All Australians?’” in Clarke and Claydon, eds., *Saints and Sanctity*, 404.

<sup>45</sup> Rowan Strong, “The Oxford Movement and the British Empire: Newman, Manning and the 1841 Jerusalem Bishopric” in Stewart J. Brown and Peter B.

was not rendered haphazardly, whatever difficulties, as well as imitations, arose from their selection.

The difficulties came first. The laity of Ottawa opposed Bedford-Jones' arrival in their city. His invitation came at the personal behest of Lewis, himself newly patented to episcopal office, and without consultation. Thus, the unfamiliar dedication was perceived, like his appointment, as high-handed, a prelatical gesture in an unstable context.<sup>46</sup> Neither, of course, could an informed Victorian churchman, even in Canada, ignore the scandalous developments at St. Alban's, Holborn, in the metropolis. Within two years of the dedication of St. Alban's, Ottawa, the Reverend Alexander Heriot Mackonochie (1825–1887), described as the so-called “martyr” of St. Alban's, Holborn, was famously prosecuted for breaches of ritual discipline as rector.<sup>47</sup> Bedford-Jones distanced his Ottawa parish from the taint of scandal, explaining away the unintended association:

In one way, however, the name proved to be unfortunate and detrimental. In 1864, in London, England, St Alban's Holborn, under the Rev. A. H. Machonochie [*sic*] had become notorious for its advanced ritual. As few people in Canada had ever heard of St Alban's Church before, all the extravagances and novelties of worship in St Alban's, Holborn, were attributed to St Alban's, Ottawa!<sup>48</sup>

While absolving both Bedford-Jones and his bishop of advanced Ritualistic tendencies, Donald Schurman repeated the suggestion that the dedication of St. Alban's, Ottawa, did “rouse suspicions” as to their theological orientations.<sup>49</sup> The establishment by Bedford-Jones of a Canadian chapter of the Guild of St. Alban the Martyr, with Lewis as visitor, further evidences a

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Nockles, eds., *The Oxford Movement: Europe and the Wider World 1830–1930* (Cambridge, 2012), 79.

<sup>46</sup> Donald M. Schurman, *A Bishop and His People: John Travers Lewis and the Anglican Diocese of Ontario 1862–1902* (Kingston, Ontario, 1991), 97.

<sup>47</sup> M. Reynolds, *Martyr of Ritualism: Father Mackonochie of St. Alban's, Holborn* (London, 1965) cited in Nigel Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain 1830–1910* (Oxford, 1999), 250.

<sup>48</sup> Bedford-Jones, *St. Alban's, Ottawa*, 8.

<sup>49</sup> Schurman, *A Bishop and His People*, 104.

rapidly advancing churchmanship at Ottawa. The guild, originally founded at Birmingham in 1851 with the object of encouraging “the study of . . . the Liturgy and Principles of the Church of England,” was possessed of its own Office.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps the local confusion of an ecclesiastical expression of Anglophilia for Romanising subversion—the conflation of colonizing influences—reveals a significant problem for understanding sanctity faced in recasting any cult for a political cause, Ottawa’s case being one translocal digression along a line of British anti-Romanist paranoia.<sup>51</sup> New invocations cannot erase cultic history, however inconvenient, felicitous, detrimental, geographically removed, or even accidental, these may prove for the suppliant.

A grave difficulty with Bedford-Jones’ speculations about the history of St. Alban’s, Ottawa, is his mistaken claim that its dedication in 1865 was the first to the protomartyr in North America. This was a bold assertion, apparently accurate in the Canadian context, but impossible to maintain in light of the imperial hagiotoponymy of the United States, a former European colonial frontier. Perhaps this was wilful ignorance. Both the dedications of St. Alban’s Episcopal Parish in Washington, D. C., and St. Alban’s Town, Vermont, antedate St. Alban’s, Ottawa. The great notoriety of the so-called St. Alban’s Raid in October 1864, a paramilitary incursion by agents of the Southern Confederacy into Vermont, covertly attempting to use Canada as a neutral base of operations in the course of the Civil War, could not have escaped the attention of either Bedford-Jones or Lewis, nor the congregations committed to their charges.<sup>52</sup> The

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<sup>50</sup> *Constitution, Rules, and Office of the Guild of St. Alban Martyr, Ottawa* (Ottawa, 1876), 3. For the role of the Guild in the Church of England, originally visualized as “the nucleus of a ‘Puseyite’ monastery,” whose members assembled “in private oratories, correctly furnished according to the rules drawn up by the Ecclesiological Society, which was awarded nearly the same authority as that of the Roman Congregation of Rites,” see Peter Anson, *Building Up the Waste Places: The Revival of Monastic Life on Medieval Lines in the Post-Reformation Church of England* (Eugene, 2015), 30-31. See also Jeremy Morris, *The High Church Revival in the Church of England: Arguments and Identities* (Leiden, 2016), 90.

<sup>51</sup> Rowan Strong, *Anglicanism and the British Empire, c. 1700–1850* (Oxford, 2007), 109.

<sup>52</sup> John Boyko, *Blood and Daring: How Canada Fought the American Civil War and Forged a Nation* (Toronto, 2014), 179-85.



public crisis provoked by the raid was one catalyst for Canadian Confederation in 1867.<sup>53</sup> Between these fateful events came the dedication of the Ottawa parish.

In fact, the town of St. Alban's, in the present-day state of Vermont, was the 1763 foundation of Benning Wentworth (1696–1770), governor of the Province of New Hampshire. This imperial hagiotopeponym was one of the first two examples of its kind in New England, and the novelty of the practice offended local sensibilities in an increasingly patriotic environment.<sup>54</sup> St. Alban's complemented a nearby dedication also by Wentworth to St. George, twinned imperialist gestures by one eager to curry royal favour at the dawn of "a High Church revival" occasioned by the accession of George III in 1761.<sup>55</sup> Wentworth's simultaneous invocation of Saints Alban and George in the cause of imperialism remains to be researched, though he appears to be the first *impresario* of St. Alban's cult in North America.<sup>56</sup> Considering the prevailing attitude of "hostility to their cults and to ceremonies like dedications," characteristic of eighteenth-century Anglicanism, Wentworth's pioneering namings of places for saints, albeit in the course of secular placemaking, seems bold.<sup>57</sup> Echoing this pattern, another nineteenth century dedication to St. Alban in Canada, made at Acton, Ontario, in the Diocese of Niagara in 1876, paired the new church with its mother, St. George's, Guelph. Wentworth, like other proprietary colonizers, also dedicated imperial toponyms to his own fame, including the town of Bennington, New Hampshire, though he did not presume, like some, to describe himself as a Saint.<sup>58</sup>

Mount Alban, in Washington, D. C., was named by Joseph Nourse (1754–1841), a pious Presbyterian and political foe of

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

<sup>54</sup> Esther Monroe Swift, *Vermont Place-Names: Footprints of History* (Montpelier, Vermont, 1996), 249-50.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 250; Peter B. Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760–1857* (Oxford, 1997), 10.

<sup>56</sup> For Wentworth, see Thomas N. Ingersoll, *The Loyalist Problem in Revolutionary New England* (Cambridge, 2016), 30.

<sup>57</sup> Orme, *English Church Dedications*, 44, 52.

<sup>58</sup> For which see Robert Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?*, 458.

Andrew Jackson, who purchased his farmland in 1817 and named it as he did, “because the sloping hillside reminded him of the hill on which St Alban’s Cathedral is located in Hertfordshire.” His naming furnishes an example *par excellence* of both psychological toponymic attachment and a translocal invocation.<sup>59</sup> Nourse’s Protestant reluctance to include any explicit mention of sainthood in the name he gave his land is equally typical of seventeenth-century English hagiotoponymic practice as it was of early nineteenth-century American. Subsequent generations of the family, converts to the Episcopal Church, would see Alban’s sainthood restored, so that there was an “evolving toward Mount St Alban.”<sup>60</sup> The Episcopal Parish of St. Alban’s, founded by the offspring of Nourse in 1854, more than a decade before events in Ottawa, derives its name from the ancestral invocation. While Canadians could easily have been ignorant of the Washington parish at the time of dedication, by 1901, its prominence, like that of the town in Vermont, seems unavoidable.

The reasoning behind Bedford-Jones’ mistaken opinion that the dedication at Ottawa of a church building to St. Alban was the first of its name in North America remains obscure. Possibly, his attempt at erasure reveals tensions in a new national context experienced by imperialists in Canada around the events of the Civil War, and a concomitant desire to obliterate St. Alban’s, Vermont, as well as the notoriety of the eponymous raid, from the historical memory of the new country.<sup>61</sup> Possibly, the dedication actually perpetuates the memory of the St. Alban’s Raid, and the Confederate Lost Cause that Carl Berger demonstrated was the object of imperialist nostalgia in Canada. The Fenian threat to Canada in the aftermath of the Civil War

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<sup>59</sup> Ruth Harwood Cline, *Church at the Crossroads: A History of St. Alban’s Parish, Washington, D. C., 1854–2004* (Chevy Chase, Maryland, 2009), 10. For toponymic attachment, see Laura Kostanski, “Toponymic Attachment” in Carole Hough, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming*, 414–15.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>61</sup> Adam Mayers, *Dixie and Dominion: Canada, the Confederacy, and the War for the Union* (Toronto, 2003), 115–16. For the erasure in the urban setting of ‘sites, memories, and histories which sit uncomfortably with a given imaginary’ by the layering of memorialization, see Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, *Cities: Reimagining the Urban* (Cambridge, 2002), 23.

horrified the Anglo-Irish clergy, men like Bedford-Jones and Lewis, whose sympathies were British, and, thus, not with the victorious Union.<sup>62</sup> The first possibility suppresses the original instance of a hagiotoponymic dedication to St. Alban by an imperialist High Churchman. The second, that the dedication perpetuated the memory of the raid, would dramatically reorient the translocal scope of the cult and considerably nuance its political meaning, as well as the Canadian history of the American Civil War. That one of Victorian Canada's most boisterous imperialists, Colonel George Taylor Denison (1839–1925) was linked with both Bedford-Jones and Lewis, harbored in his Toronto home the Confederate operative responsible for orchestrating the St. Alban's Raid, may have had consequences for the cult of St. Alban, described in what follows.<sup>63</sup> With the demise of the Confederacy, American dedications to St. Alban could have been perceived as distracting from the promotion of a strictly British, rather than Anglo-Saxon, network of dedications to the protomartyr's patronage in Canada, and were consequently written out of filiopietistic local history.

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. ALBAN THE MARTYR, TORONTO,  
ONTARIO, 1883

Consider a second example of a dedication to St. Alban in Canada; that of the new chief church of the Diocese of Toronto, already mentioned by Bedford-Jones in his own recollections. Owing to complexities beyond the present scope, for more than half a century, Toronto Anglicans looked with considerable ambivalence to the unfinished Cathedral of St. Alban the Martyr as the

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<sup>62</sup> The official Anglican newspaper in Canada declared of the Fenians that "if those fanatics would only look at the present position of Ireland, under the glorious flag of our noble Queen, they would possibly discover their native land was better off than they could make her." *The Canadian Churchman*, 7 March 1866, 2.

<sup>63</sup> Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 16. For Denison, see Norman Knowles, "DENISON, GEORGE TAYLOR," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/denison\\_george\\_taylor\\_1839\\_1925\\_15E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/denison_george_taylor_1839_1925_15E.html).

seat of their bishop.<sup>64</sup> Erecting a purpose-built cathedral church for his diocese was the struggle of Bishop Arthur Sweatman (1834–1909). Consecrated on the Feast of Saints Philip and James in 1879, Sweatman’s original intention had been to dedicate the new cathedral to these patrons of his own episcopate. In 1883, during a meeting of Ontario’s provincial parliamentary Private Bills Committee, opposition arose to this selection in the form of a representative of the older, informally styled, St. James Cathedral. Cathedral status was extended to St. James decades earlier as a courtesy befitting the mother church of the diocese. The draft act of incorporation creating the cathedral establishment being officially scrutinized, it was objected that two nearly identical cathedral dedications, both invoking St. James, in one city, would “give rise to confusion and misapprehension.”<sup>65</sup> More practically, a recent bond issue floated by the wardens of St. James was intended to help manage mounting debt and the brand recognition of this financial instrument was at stake. Edward Marion Chadwick (1840–1921), Sweatman’s closest advisor, subsequently treasurer of the Cathedral Chapter, conceded the point, and arranged on the spot for the substitution of the name of St. Alban the Martyr.<sup>66</sup>

Little explanation of this alternative exists. The diocesan jubilee pastoral letter, issued in 1889, and other printed sources of Sweatman’s episcopate, described the cathedral’s purpose as “ancient precedent and modern practice, modified by the local requirements of our Colonial circumstances,” and encouraged generous financial support of the project, but avoided explicit discussion of

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<sup>64</sup> For Toronto’s vexatious “Cathedral Question,” see William G. Cooke, “The Diocese of Toronto and Its Two Cathedrals,” *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 27 (1985): 98–115.

<sup>65</sup> Edward Marion Chadwick, *Monograph of the Cathedral of St. Alban the Martyr, Toronto* (Toronto, 1921), 14; *An Act to Incorporate the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral of St. Alban the Martyr*, 46 Vic. c. 63, for which see *General Index to the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario from the Session of 1867–8 to the Session of 1882–3, Both Inclusive* (Toronto, 1883), 386. A printer’s error renders the revised title “Cathedral of St Albans [*sic*] the Martyr.”

<sup>66</sup> Chadwick, *Monograph*, 14. For Chadwick, see Jonathan S. Lofft, *In Gorgeous Array: The Life of Edward Marion Chadwick* (Toronto, in preparation) and by the same author, *A Brief but Accurate Record, 1858–1921: The Diaries of Edward Marion Chadwick* (Toronto, in preparation).

the dedication.<sup>67</sup> The name also became a secular hagiotopeponym as the lands comprising the sprawling “Cathedral Precinct” were developed into an elegant suburban enclave advertised as St. Alban’s Park, presently referred to as a portion of the west annex. Of the dedication, Chadwick stated at the end of his life only that “St Alban is regarded as the Proto-Martyr of the Anglican Church.”<sup>68</sup> His comment repeated a portion of the lengthy inscription found on the elaborately engraved memorial brass that Chadwick had himself earlier designed. Decorated in enamel with a golden saltire on an azure field, the same design as the arms of St. Alban’s Cathedral in Hertfordshire, the brass was affixed to the cornerstone of St. Alban’s, laid “on the Sixteenth day of June A. D. 1887 being the eve of the Anniversary of the Martyrdom of St Alban Protomartyr of the Anglican Church and also at the completion of half a century of the happy reign of our most illustrious Sovereign Victoria Queen and Empress.”<sup>69</sup> Chadwick thus created an affinity between the imperial sovereign, personally, and St. Alban embodied in the new cathedral. If the dedication of St. Alban’s in 1883 was not sufficient evidence of cultic devotion, four years later, the choice of date for laying the corner stone, perhaps in imitation of the example of St. Alban’s, Adolphustown, considered below, leaves less room for doubt.

Probably the most remarkable connection to St. Alban was made at Toronto by the possession by the Cathedral Chapter of a pseudo-relic of the protomartyr’s *passio*. Evoking St. Edward’s chair at Westminster Abbey, containing within it the fabled Stone of Destiny, set within the *cathedra* of the bishop of Toronto, designed, like almost everything else in the place, by Chadwick, was,

A large Roman tile or brick which was taken from ruins of a building discovered near St Alban’s, anciently Verulamium, in Hertfordshire, identified by archaeologists as the Forum, in which it may be presumed that St Alban was condemned to death: this tile to which some of the original cement still adheres, was sent out to us with a

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<sup>67</sup> Henry Scadding and J. George Hodgins, eds., *Jubilee of the Diocese of Toronto 1839–1889: Record of Proceedings* (Toronto, 1890), 9.

<sup>68</sup> Chadwick, *Monograph*, 14.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 16-17.

certificate of verification signed by the Mayor of St Alban's and the Rector of the Parish in which it was found; an interesting relic of 1700 or more years ago.<sup>70</sup>

From this information, it is clearer still that by the dedication cathedral dignitaries sought to refine imperialist devotion to St. Alban, first articulated at Ottawa, by combining the commemoration of his protomartyrdom, and its particular significance to the British myth, with the date of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne, however accidental the timing may have been to their original plans. In an unexpected moment of translocation, neighbourhoods were exchanged, and the reliquary, such as it was, in the one cathedral networked with the shrine in another. The arrival of St. Alban's name, his role as English, now Anglican, protomartyr, his attributed coat of arms, and even a certified relic, signalled an incremental refinement of his cult in Toronto, known as the Queen City, "the most ultra-British city on earth," accomplished by Sweatman and Chadwick, both active members of the Imperial Federation League of Canada.<sup>71</sup> The interior adornment of the cathedral also included a display of heraldic banners, consistent with the "time-honoured custom to decorate Churches with flags," that included "three pairs of long pennons displaying crosses—St George, St Andrew, St Patrick, and St Alban," patrons of the three kingdoms, and the empire.<sup>72</sup>

THE CHURCH OF ST. ALBAN THE MARTYR, ADOLPHUSTOWN,  
ONTARIO, 1884

Finally, consider a further example from the Diocese of Ontario, and the case of the Loyalist Memorial Church of St. Alban the Martyr, Adolphustown. The political hijacking of the centennial celebrations of 1884 at Toronto marking the anniversary of the settlement of Loyalist refugees in Ontario by the

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>71</sup> John Foster Fraser, *Canada as It is* (London, 1905), 40-42. For the sympathetic opinion of the Imperial Federation League held by High Church promoters of the British myth, see Kirby, *Historians and the Church of England*, 86.

<sup>72</sup> Chadwick, *Monograph*, 49.

aforementioned Colonel Denison proved highly unpopular, setting back the cause of organized Loyalism for a decade. “Most offensive” to the sensibilities of many Torontonians was the “perverted” invocation of the Loyalist myth in the Tory cause, popular civic sentiment, while patriotic and generally in favour of the empire, being then inclined to a less partisan tone than that sounded by Denison’s jingo.<sup>73</sup>

Elsewhere in Ontario, however, as at Adolphustown, located in Lennox and Addington County, east of Toronto, a different form of imperialist commemoration was simultaneously devised that, while also highly contentious, successfully achieved monumental proportions, creating an enduring translocal feature dedicated to St. Alban on the local namescape. The monument, a Gothic Revival church building, embodied the explicit invocation of St. Alban in a prayer for imperial unity. The idea to commemorate imperialist heritage at Adolphustown, built adjacent to the site of the Loyalist refugee landings of 1784 on the shores of the Bay of Quinte, had long circulated, but local opinion was divided as to the form the memorialisation should take. The Anglican rector of the place, the Reverend Richard Sykes Forneri (1836–1924), newly appointed to Adolphustown by Bishop Lewis in 1883, zealously took up the cause in anticipation of the Loyalist centennial the next year.<sup>74</sup>

While Forneri’s “authorship” of St. Alban’s, Adolphustown, is undoubted, he did not work alone.<sup>75</sup> The laying of the cornerstone for the building was planned as part of a coordinated effort to commemorate the Loyalist centennial simultaneously at Toronto, Adolphustown, and Niagara, over the course of three consecutive days in June 1884. Forneri and Bedford-Jones, the latter acting as chairman of the building committee, with the support of Lewis, seized the occasion to deliver a joint address at the dedication of the new church that made explicit mention of the,

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<sup>73</sup> Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 82–83.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>75</sup> *In the Beginning: St. Alban’s, Adolphustown* (Adolphustown, Ontario, 1984), 42.

Auspicious coincidence that on this day, 17 June, the Church of England commemorates in her calendar England's Proto-Martyr, St Alban, the first man who on British soil sealed with his life-blood his testimony as a loyal subject of his Heavenly King. . . . May his name, under which the memorial church is to be dedicated to God, ever unite our affections to the dear old motherland.<sup>76</sup>

The "coincidence," the approximate date of the original Loyalist landings, and the problematic Book of Common Prayer commemoration of the protomartyr, connected that greatest imperialist virtue, Loyalism, to St. Alban's cult. Ironically, neither Bedford-Jones, nor Chadwick, Forneri, Lewis, or Sweatman, could not claim Loyalist descent for themselves as understood in Canada: that is, descent from an ancestor officially listed as a political refugee from the War of Independence.<sup>77</sup> At Adolphustown, the infusion of the cult of St. Alban with an imperialist ethos was slightly modified by deemphasizing the saint's sectarian, Anglican, identity in contrast with the High Church exaltation of the heroic virtue of his British Loyalism. Nevertheless, this gesture was not adequate to prevent feelings of resentment and alienation from many Loyalists and local residents who were not adherents of Anglicanism. To many, Anglican clergy appeared to be co-opting the centennial for their own ambitions for church extension.<sup>78</sup> Nowhere in Victorian Canada would a more effulgent expression of the imperialist cult of St. Alban manifest than at Adolphustown, "fractured," as the place came to be, through the "personal histories, memories, and a spatialized politics of difference."<sup>79</sup>

The elaborately decorated interior of the church building, adorned with encaustic tiles produced by the English firm of Minton, each commemorating a particular Loyalist refugee, was

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<sup>76</sup> *The Centennial of the Settlement of Upper Canada by the United Empire Loyalists, 1784–1884: The Celebrations at Adolphustown, Toronto, and Niagara, with Appendix* (Toronto, 1885), 36.

<sup>77</sup> For the qualifications required of a certified member of the United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada, see <http://www.uelac.org/membership.php>.

<sup>78</sup> Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 52–53.

<sup>79</sup> Ayona Datta, "Translocal Geographies of London: Belonging and 'Otherness' among Polish Migrants after 2004" in Brickell and Datta, *Translocal Geographies*, 73.



generously subscribed by descendants and by their imperialist supporters, men like Bedford-Jones, Chadwick, and others.<sup>80</sup> The rhetoric invoked at Adolphustown, associating St. Alban's *dies natalis* with the Unity of Empire presided over by Queen Victoria would be subsequently imitated at the laying of the cornerstone for the new cathedral built in Toronto in 1887. The relative obscurity of St. Alban's, Adolphustown, then and now, reflects the overall failure of the several privately planned commemorative events of 1884 to inspire the Canadian public. With the waning of imperialism as a popular alternative in the transition from the Late Victorian into the modern, Loyalist identity was reconceived in the first decades of the twentieth century as a politically neutral and secular movement, exclusively concerned with genealogical antiquarianism, and the fellowship of the living descendants of Loyalists. Even protomartyrdom seemed less lustrous. The precise deliberations of the leadership of the Dioceses of Ontario and Toronto to continue the promotion of an imperialist cult of St. Alban over the course of decades, remain inaccessible. It is clear, however, that a small cadre of (mostly) Anglo-Irish, High Church imperialists cooperated in the repeated, and repetitious, invocation of Britain's protomartyr as patron saint of the empire.

#### CONCLUSION

This article considered evidence, preliminary and tentative, in the form of the narrative history of three of the first church dedications to St. Alban the Martyr in Canada, and of the active existence of an imperialist cult dedicated to his fame. This distinctly High Church following, including both clerical and lay *impresarii*, came to be associated with the usable history of the United Empire Loyalists, as well as with Victorianism itself. Under the leadership of Bishops Lewis and Sweatman, Archdeacon Bedford-Jones, Chadwick, Forneri, and others, this cult claimed significant spaces

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<sup>80</sup> For which see Diane Berlet and Graem Coles, *The Loyalist Encaustic Tiles of St. Alban's: Encaustic Memorial Tiles of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (Adolphustown, Ontario, 2011).

for itself, all extant at the time of writing, in the creation of trans-local geographies spanning the province, as well as the broader horizons of the empire. These networked nodes evoked a specific *locus*, encoded as imperial Britain through the mediation of St. Alban the Martyr, and conveyed to devotees, including Loyalist descendants, ‘a sense of the recipients participating in the Saints’ performance.’<sup>81</sup> This particular flourishing of St. Alban’s cult, an expression of imperialist piety by a movement predominantly Anglo-Irish in extraction, affirmed their identity as British subjects at a time when the “distinctions between the culture of the Ascendancy and the Catholic majority,” in Britain, Ireland, and in the colonies, were “becoming still more sharply articulated.”<sup>82</sup>

Important to note is that not all castings of Victorian parish dedications were so overwrought as those described in what precedes, either in Britain at home, or in the colonies. The Church of St. Alban, Protomartyr, Romford, in the Church of England Diocese of Chelmsford, to point to one humorous example, was hastily named in 1890 at a time of rapid extension, along with its sister parish, St. Augustine, for saints whose names begin with the first letter of the alphabet, in deference to the patronage of their mother parish, called for St. Andrew.<sup>83</sup> In Canada, the 1846 dedication of the Church of St. George, Fairvalley, Medonte, in the Diocese of Toronto, is allegedly derived from the home parish of its founding rector, an example of personal hagiotoponymic attachment, not programmatic commemoration.<sup>84</sup>

Several more churches dedicated to St. Alban in Canada remain to be researched, including the cathedrals of the former Diocese

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<sup>81</sup> Gerhard Jaritz, “Late Medieval Saints and the Visual Representation of Rural Space” in Ottó Gecser, József Laszlovszky, Baláza Nagy, Marcell Sebök, and Katalin Szende, eds., *Promoting the Saints: Cults and Their Contexts from Late Antiquity until the Early Modern Period* (Budapest, 2011), 227.

<sup>82</sup> Laurence Brockliss and David Eastwood, “Introduction: A Union of Multiple Identities” in Laurence Brockliss and David Eastwood, eds., *A Union of Multiple Identities: The British Isles, c. 1750–c. 1850* (Manchester, 1997), 2.

<sup>83</sup> Personal correspondence with Keith J. Price, churchwarden, St. Alban, Protomartyr, Romford, 4 April, 2017.

<sup>84</sup> Barbara Brechin, Mildred Walker, Donna Walters, eds., *A History of St George, Fairvalley, Medonte: The Oldest Anglican Site of Worship in the Deanery of Huronia* (n. p., 1989), 2-3.

of Keewatin (1884), and of the Diocese of Saskatchewan (1886), along with uncounted others throughout the Anglican Communion, such as St. Alban's in the Diocese of Tokyo (1879). Situated at other imperial frontiers, and dedicated in the same half century, these places may have been named to suit the tastemaking Victorian cult. Future studies hold tremendous promise, not only for the sake of knowing the interchanging neighbourhoods created by the invocation of the saints, but also those indigenous locales erased, names obliterated, and bodies excluded, owing to Christian triumphalism, imperial aspiration, and white supremacy.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Jeffers Lennox, *Homelands and Empires: Indigenous Spaces, Imperial Fictions, and Competition for Territory in Northeastern North America, 1690–1763* (Toronto, 2017), 148–49. See also Gwilym Lucas Eades, *Maps And Memes: Redrawing Culture, Place, and Identity in Indigenous Communities* (Montreal and Kingston, 2015), and by the same author, *The Geography of Names: Indigenous to Post-foundational* (Abingdon, 2017).