

Excerpt from
"The Anglo-Saxon legends of St. Andrew and St. Veronica"
by Charles Wycliffe Goodwin, published 1851, Cambridge

From the Introduction:

The legend of Veronica in its original form, is found in a Latin narrative of great antiquity, entitled 'Cura sanitatis Tiberii Cesaris Augusti et Damnatio Pilati,' first published by Foggini in his *Exercitationes historico-criticse de Romano Divi Petri itinere*, from a Vatican MS. of the 11th century, and subsequently printed from a MS. of the 8th century, by J. D. Manso, in his *Supplement to the Miscellanea Stephani Baluzii*, vol. iv. p. 55. To whom the authorship of the story belongs, when it was first written, and whether in Greek or Latin, it is not easy to discover. The chronicler Marianus Scotus, who compiled his work about the middle of the 11th century, gives a brief summary of the legend, quoting the words of a writer whom he calls Methodius. There were several writers of this name, the earliest being a bishop of Tyre, who flourished at the close of the 3rd century. Another, patriarch of Constantinople, lived about the beginning of the 9th. The Jesuit Henschenius, who has collected most of the passages in mediaeval writers relating to the subject, (in the *Bollandine Acta Sanctorum*, 4 Febr., p. 449) takes it for granted that the Bishop of Tyre is the author whom Marianus cites, and thus endeavours to establish the high antiquity of the legend, while he dismisses as altogether unworthy of notice the abovementioned Latin narrative, the apocryphal nature of which is in truth manifest enough. But a comparison of the words cited by Marianus with the opening of the *Cura Sanitatis Tiberii* is sufficient to show that this is the document from which he quotes, and his attribution of it to Methodius cannot be considered of much weight. We cannot therefore be certain that the legend is of higher antiquity than the 8th century, the date of Manso's manuscript.

=====

St. Veronica

It came to pass in the days of Tiberius the great emperor, within a little time after our heavenly Lord was crucified, that there was a certain nobleman, whose name was Tyrus. And he was king in Equitania under Tiberius the emperor, and mostly dwelt in the city called Lybia. And this same Tyrus, as books say, was diseased in his face, having the malady which we call cancer in his nose, from the right nostril till it reached his eye.

Now it fell out that a certain man journeyed from Judea, whose name was Nathan, and he was the son of a citizen of Israel, whose name was Nau. And this same Nathan was so travelled a man, that he had gone from one land to another, and from sea to sea, and had journeyed over the whole earth. The same Nathan also was sent for by the emperor Tiberius to Rome, that he might do his errand and give his

pledge there ; for Tiberius the emperor also was so unsound by reason of various wounds that he became a leper. And Nathan was proceeding forwards upon his errand towards Rome, and it was by ship that he travelled. But the south wind sorely hindered him and his passage, and drove him till he came to the port of the city Lybia. And Tyrus the lord of the castle beheld it, and straightway knew by their course that they were from Judea, and he thus spake, greatly wondering, "Never before have I seen such a marvel in this land, that Jewish men should come hither by ship." But Tyrus bid one run and call to him him who should be the principal man in the ship; and Nathan went straightway to him. And Tyrus asked him and said, "What art thou in sooth, or from whence art thou come?" Nathan answered him and said, "I am Nathan, son of Nau, and I am come hither from Greece; and I was of the Jews, a subject of Pontius Pilate; and afterwards I was sent, to go to the emperor Tiberius, and to do his errand from Judea to Rome. But the strong wind overpowered me, and hath brought me to this place, that I know not where I am.'

Tyrus answered him and said, "Oh! if thou mightest find out something, whether ointment or herbs or any other thing, wherewith thou mightest heal my wound, which I have on my face; I would give thee to thy meed without any doubt of gold or of silver as much as thou wouldest, and also would bring thee to the presence of Tiberius the emperor." Nathan answered and said, "Oh! my lord, I can not find out any such thing, nor know I ought thereof; but if thou hadst some time ago been in Judea, thou mightest then have found such a man, yea a chosen prophet, whose name was the Lord Jesus Christ. He himself healed his people of their sins, and also with his word he cleansed lepers, and enlightened the blind, and awoke the dead. And a certain woman was suffering from a flux of blood, even twelve winters; (she was named Veronica,) and she approached behind him and touched the hem of his garment, and straightway through that she was healed. And he filled five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes. All these things and many others he accomplished before his execution. But the Jews were filled with envy and took him, and the elders and mass-priests scourged him, and begged of Pilate that they might hang him on a wooden gallows; and even so they did, and they gave him to drink wine and vinegar mixed together; and he thus on the cross gave up the ghost, and afterwards he descended into hell, and there visited all the saints and set free the human race. And Joseph the righteous buried his corpse, and the Jews set guards thereto, that they might watch over him, lest his disciples should come and fetch away the body. But I say in sooth, that in the same body in which he was buried he afterwards arose within two days; even so I know in sooth that he is the true God."

Tyrus heard all this very gladly, and lifted up his head and believed on Christ, he and all his household; and he thus spake, "Oh! if I had been there, and had seen his face, and could have known him, I would have avenged him with the sharpest revenge, and have slain all his enemies, for that they so dealt with our Lord." But when Tyrus had thus spoken, the cancer which had before so grievously consumed him fell down from his face, and his flesh became firm and sound, and he cried with a loud voice and said, "Oh ! he is the true Judge, and the mighty King, and the righteous God; for I never saw him nor yet believed on him, until that I now heard his name, and through that am I healed." And Tyrus fell down outstretched upon the earth, and prayed to the Lord, and thus spake, "Oh ! almighty God, King of all kings and Lord of all lords, I beseech thee that thou permit me, that I may go to the land where thou wast born, that I may there behold thy enemies and blot out their name and avenge thy death."

And after he had thus prayed, he called Nathan to him and said to him, "Lo! now, how sawest thou those baptized who believed on Christ? Come quickly and baptize me, that I may with all my heart believe on him; for I never saw him and yet he hath made me whole." Then Nathan came near to him and baptized him in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and took off from him the name Tyrus, and named him at his baptism, Titus, that is, in our tongue, Pious.

And Titus sent messengers to his fellow-general, who was named Vespasian, who was also a heathen; and they went both together, when they would go on any military expedition. And Vespasian came to him without delay, with seven thousand armed men. And when he came to the city Lybia, he straightway asked what it was for which they sent after him so suddenly. Titus answered him and said, "Oh! why considerest thou not in thy heart, that thou shouldest believe on the almighty God and the living Father; and how the Saviour Christ the son of God was born in Judea, in the Jewish city Bethlehem, and how the Jews scourged him and hung him on the cross, all through their envy, and how he afterwards rose from the dead on the third day; and his disciples and many other men afterwards saw him in the same flesh in which he was before; and within fourteen days after his resurrection he appeared to his disciples, and they all saw where he ascended into heaven with great power? And I wot that he is the true God. But come let us two now be his disciples, and go and avenge him and destroy all his enemies from all the living earth, that all nations may hereafter know and acknowledge that never on earth did his like appear."

Titus and Vespasian then held their council, but so that Vespasian was first baptized, and then they went from the city Lybia, and took ship, and journeyed to Jerusalem, and they overwhelmed all the kingdom with destruction. But when the kings who dwelt in the land heard of it, they were sorely troubled and afraid unto death. And Herod the king was so dismayed, that he said to Archelaus his son, "Alas! my child, take thou our kingdom, and with these other kings who are about thee take ye all counsel, that ye may deliver yourselves from your enemies' power, who wish utterly to destroy you and overthrow your kingdoms." Then, as we certainly know for truth, Herod himself took his spear and stabbed himself, and thus miserably ended his life.

And Archelaus his son went to the other kings, who reigned throughout the Jewish territory, and they all took counsel, and agreed that they should shut themselves up in Jerusalem, with all the people that was with them, so that it came to pass that they all went into the city, and there was none of the folk left without. There were at first eight kings of eight kingdoms, with all the people which would go with them, and they remained therein seven years.

But wisdom grew with Titus and Vespasian, so that they had soon gone through all the kingdoms and reduced them to poverty. And it came to pass in the eighth year, when the great famine came upon them, that they ate earth for lack of bread. But the chief warriors who were in Jerusalem and they of the eight kingdoms took evil counsel among themselves, and spake thus, "What profiteth us our life, seeing that the Romans have come, and take to themselves our kingdom and our place and eke all these nations? Better were it for us in sooth that we slew ourselves, than that they should put us to an evil

death, and afterwards say that they had triumphed over us." And I wot that they drew their swords, and fought with one another, so that there were slain in all on that day at least eleven thousand.

And the folk that remained in the city were some of them frightened to death for dread of the kings, for they could nowhere escape from their rage, on account of the multitude that were there slain. And also the stench plagued them terribly on account of the great heat, so that they said among themselves, "Alas! how afflicted and terrified are we, and With great right, for we gave up the Saviour to death, and now we see that we must therefore die an evil death. But let us now bow our heads, and give up the keys of this city to the Roman people, for in good earnest we perceive that we must else perish within these walls by a pitiful death. Come let us deliver them up to Titus and Vespasian and say to them, 'Here we deliver to you our lords Titus and Vespasian the keys of this city, which the lord God above hath given over to you, and we now know that this kingdom is yours and no longer ours, and that it is given to you through Messias, that is, Christ the son of God.'" The whole people assented to this, and gave themselves up to the Roman army, and spake thus to them, "Judge us by what death we shall die, for that we delivered the Saviour up to death." And when they had thus said, straightway they were seized on all sides, and fast bound, and on all sides stoned with stones; and some were hung on withered trees with their feet up and head down, and some were thrust through with spears, and some sold for slaves, and some were cut up into four parts, even as they divided the Saviour's coat into four.

And Titus and Vespasian took counsel between themselves, so that of the Jews who remained there they sold thirty for one penny, in return for the Jews buying our Saviour for thirty pence from Judas his own disciple. And Titus and Vespasian took possession of all the land of Judea, and made diligent search whether there were ever a man who had any miraculous relics of the Saviour, of his garment or some other precious things; and so diligently did they search, that they found a woman, whose name was Veronica, and she was a true Christian and beloved and honoured by all people. It was the same Veronica who touched the Saviour's garment, and was healed thereby from the bloody flux. She had a piece of the Saviour's garment, and treasured it most dearly, and she accounted it even as Christ's own face.

And Titus and Vespasian sent for her, and she remained with them many days, until that Volusianus the emperor's kinsman came, and in the meanwhile they were employed in taking Pilate, and they brought him in an iron cage to the city of Damascus, and then they shut him up cage and all in a strong prison, and set keepers before the door, in all fortyfour soldiers. And they then sent messengers to Rome to the emperor Tiberius, to the end that he should send Volusianus his kinsman to Judea, that he there might inform himself of many things the like of which the emperor had never heard.

Then the emperor Tiberius did accordingly, and said to Volusianus his kinsman, "Go and prepare all things which thou wilt need at sea, and sail to Judea, and then seek out one of the Saviour's disciples, and let him come to me in his Lord's name and heal my wounds which I have so long grievously suffered from. And pass such sentence upon the Jewish kings as they passed upon the Saviour, and put them all to death. And if thou bringest me the man who shall heal my wounds, I will even believe on the Saviour the son of God, and I will be baptized in his name." Volusianus answered him and said, "Yea, Lord, and

what if I find such a man, what reward shall I promise him?" Tiberius answered and said, "Be he from whence he may, let him be king after me."

Volusianus then set forth and came by one day's journey to the sea, which is called Licostratus, and then he went aboard a ship, and with his sailors he set his sail, and quickly sailed forth; and he made such way that on the eighth day he came to Judea and to Jerusalem, and he then commanded that all who knew aught of Christ should come to him, and he then inquired of them all, what acts had been done concerning the Saviour. Then came Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus with him, and told him all that they knew concerning the matter. Nicodemus said, "I know that I saw him, and this I know full well that he is the Saviour of all the earth." Joseph said to him, "I know that they took him down from the cross, and laid him in the sepulchre, which I had myself hewed out of the rock, and I was one of the men who guarded his sepulchre, and bent my head and thought to see him, but I beheld there nothing of him ; but I saw two angels, one at the head and the other at the foot, and they asked me whom I sought; I answered them and said, I seek the crucified Saviour. They said again to me, "Go into Galilee, there shall ye see him, as he foretold to you. And also after this, (said Joseph,) I saw him in the same flesh in which he was before, and gave his disciples to eat and drink."

After Joseph had thus spoken, came the venerable woman Veronica and thus spake, "I know this, that when I was in the throng of people I could not come nigh to him, but I only touched the hem of his garment; and whereas the issue of blood ailed me at least twelve years, I immediately became sound; and I have ever believed that he is the living God to all eternity." Volusianus then commanded Pilate to be fetched, and said to him, "Wherefore didst thou cause the son of God to be slain?" Pilate answered him and said, "His own people and the chief bishops delivered him to me." Volusianus then waxed angry and spake thus, "As the Lord himself liveth, thou shalt die by the most horrible death." And Volusianus commanded him to be brought to the iron cage and put in prison, and then spake thus to the venerable woman, "I command thee, Veronica, that thou give me the holy relics which thou hast by thee." But Veronica vehemently refused him and said, that she had with her no holy relics.

But Volusianus believed her not, but notwithstanding her denial he compelled her with much terror, so that she confessed and said, "O Sir, it is inclosed in my bedstead, where I daily pray unto my Lord." Volusianus said, "Give me the Lord whom thou worshippest and I also will worship him." Veronica therefore so did, and durst not deny him. Volusianus, when the relic was brought to him, fell down stretched on the earth, and with true faith worshiped it, and supposed that it was the face of the Lord himself (but it was no such thing at all, but was the garment that the Saviour himself wore). And when Volusianus rose up, he took the face, and thought that it was Christ's face, and folded it in a purple sheet, which was also woven with gold. And he placed the sheet in a golden urn and sealed it with his ring, and spake thus, "As the Lord liveth, and so may my soul live, I will never look upon my Lord's countenance, before I first come to Tiberius my lord, and make known to him all the things that have here come to pass."

And I wot he commanded Pilate to be put to the vilest death, and then he went towards his ship. And the venerable woman Veronica forsook all her possessions for the name of Christ, and followed after

Volusianus, and was ascending into the ship with him. And Volusianus said to her, "O woman, what seekest thou?" She answered him and said, "I seek my Lord, and alas! what have I done, I pray thee, that I may not have my Lord? In sooth I tell thee, if thou wilt not give him to me, I will never leave thee before I see where thou layest him, and then will I worship him and ever serve him while I live." When the people heard how Veronica that venerable woman had spoken, all her neighbours as well men as women wept sore. But Veronica said to them, "O children of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children, for it is marvellous if ye never heard how God himself spoke, saying that every man that for Christ's name forsaketh all things shall receive a hundredfold reward and obtain eternal life."

Volusianus then bid his sailors row forth stoutly, and he left there behind Titus and Vespasian, and sailed away until he came to the river Tiber; and he left his ship in the river and went to the castle which is named Lateranis, and from thence sent messengers to the emperor Tiberius, and commanded to inquire of him whether he would that he should come to him. And Tiberius was very glad and bid Volusianus quickly come to him, and immediately asked him what he had found out in Judea concerning the Saviour, or concerning his disciples, "I bid thee tell it all to me!" Then said Volusianus, "O my lord, all things that I there found out, I now do thee to wit thereof. That is, first, I found there Titus and Vespasian thy most faithful viceroys, and there they are still, fearing God greatly; and I found there the emperor hanged, and Caiaphas and Archelaus stoned, and Pilate fettered and bound fast in an iron cage, and put in prison in the city Damascus.

And all this was done because the Jews with spears and staves [smote] the Saviour Christ and with torches suffocated him and slew our light, and suffered it not that it should come hither to us. Now, therefore, Titus and Vespasian have put them to an ill death, and have slain many of the Jews. And thy two faithful servants came from Arimathea, namely Joseph and Nicodemus, and begged for the Saviour's body, and buried it in a new sepulchre.

And he the self-same Saviour arose on the third day from the dead, and showed himself to his disciples in the same flesh in which he was before, and his disciples saw him as he ascended to heaven. And moreover he did many miracles before his passion; he raised the dead, and he enlightened the blind, and cleansed lepers and drove diabolical diseases from men; and many other mighty works he wrought, and the Jews slew him without any crime and hanged him on a green tree.

And Titus and Vespasian dearly requited them for these things, for they hung the Jews with their feet up and head down. The Saviour was slain without any crime, and the Jews were slain with the most ignominious death, and their names are annihilated over all the earth as they deserved. And moreover we found a woman there, who said that she had the Lord's face. Now have I brought here (said he) as well the woman as the face."

Then said Tiberius, "Ah, vehemently have I longed to see him and to worship him." Volusianus then stood up, and spread forth the purple cloth in which the Lord's face was folded, and Tiberius saw the face, and thought that it was really the Lord's face. But it was no such thing at all, but the garment which

the Lord himself wore. But each of the heathen men, when he first looked on it, thought that it was the Lord's face. And Tiberius humbled himself, and the leprosy which had been on him so long immediately fell off, and his body was as clean as that of a young child. And he quickly believed and was baptized and all his household, and all the people that was subject to him, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. To whom be glory and honour for ever and ever. Amen.