ST. BONIFACE' DAY

Posted on June 5, 2015 by Eddie

When people talk about British missionaries, they tend to mention people such as William Carey, Hudson Taylor and David Livingstone, but it is doubtful if any of them had as much impact on the history of the Church as Boniface of Crediton.
Category: Church: World

I'm not a great one for Saints' days and stuff like that, but today, I thought I'd make an exception and celebrate someone who should be far better known in the English-speaking mission world. Boniface of Crediton. Boniface, whose real name was Winfrid (or Wynfrith...) was born in Devon around 675.

He was both an enthusiastic evangelist and also an extremely gifted administrator. His most famous success came in the German town of Geismar, where there was an oak tree which was sacred to the Norse god Thor. In a scene reminiscent of Elijah on Mount Carmel, Boniface set to chopping it down as the local people watched, convinced that Thor would destroy him. Before Boniface could finish felling the tree, a strong wind came and blew the tree down, shattering the trunk into four pieces. People waited for Thor to zap Boniface, but nothing happened. Realising that Bonifaceâ€™s God was far more powerful than Thor, many people became Christians.

Boniface had a long and illustrious career. Successive Popes used his administrative talent to bring some organisation to the chaotic situation of the Church in that part of Europe. Thanks to Boniface, the power and authority of Rome was thoroughly established in Germany and the Low Countries. HeÂ met his end in a fitting way. In June 5 754, he was conducting a mass baptism on the banks of a river, when the group were attacked by a band of pagans. Boniface knelt in prayer, calling on those with him to non-violence, and was killed by the raiders. When people talk about British missionaries, they tend to mention people such as William Carey, Hudson Taylor and David Livingstone, but it is doubtful if any of them had as much impact on the history of the Church as Boniface of Crediton.