

SAUNDERSFOOT AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

For its first meeting of the new year, and following its AGM, the Society welcomed the Rev. Patricia Campion and Mrs. Tessa Pearson to give jointly an illustrated lecture on 'The Apostles – what happened next'

While the passage of time and differences between source material created particular challenges our speakers were nevertheless able to throw light on the lives of the Apostles after the crucifixion of Jesus. Simon Peter was a fisherman from Galilee and a married man whose wife travelled with him. From Antioch he went to Rome where he was martyred under Nero and buried outside the city walls. A basilica was built over his grave during the reign of the emperor Constantine, and in 1939 excavations revealed a number of human remains on the site, indicating a likely Christian cemetery. James was also a fisherman and possibly a cousin of Jesus. Regarded as having a fiery temperament he preached in Spain and was the first Apostle to be martyred; he is the patron saint of Spain and his remains are interred at the pilgrimage site of Santiago de Compostela. His brother John, one of the four authors of the gospels in the New Testament, was banished from Palestine and died naturally in Ephesus, the only Apostle not to suffer martyrdom.

Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, is rarely mentioned in the bible. He travelled widely in Turkey, Ukraine and Greece where he was killed; he is strongly associated with Greece and Scotland whose patron saint he is and some of his relics are held at St. Andrews. Another Apostle with few references is Thomas whose own travels took him east to India where he died though his remains were taken to Italy. Simon, known as the zealot, was a missionary in Egypt and Spain and who may have visited Britain while Matthew the tax collector travelled south through Egypt to Ethiopia. He was, like John, an Apostle who wrote one of the four gospels. Philip had close associations with Greece, his daughters were described as prophetesses, and of course the family life of the Apostles is in itself an interesting line of thought. Philip's tomb may have been discovered at Herapolis now in modern day Turkey.

Bartholomew, another Galilean fisherman, is reputed to have visited India but is more closely associated with Armenia, the first Christian nation. Of James the younger little is known other than he probably died in Jerusalem. Thaddeus or Jude was likely to have been another relative of Jesus and may well have travelled with Bartholomew to Armenia. Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus and later hanged himself out of remorse, was the only Judean among the Apostles. After his death the remaining eleven Apostles chose Matthias to replace him.

Our speakers were warmly thanked by Mr. Bill Cleevly for an informative and unusual presentation. The next meeting of the Society will be on 15 February when Howard Rudd will speak on 'Lady Margaret Beaufort – Mother of the Tudor Dynasty.' Meetings are held in the Regency Hall, beginning at 7.30, and non members are welcome to attend on the night.