

= John Joscelyn =

John Joscelyn or John Joscelin (1529 ? 1603) was an English clergyman and antiquarian as well as secretary to Matthew Parker , an Archbishop of Canterbury during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I of England . Joscelyn was involved in Parker 's attempts to secure and publish medieval manuscripts on church history , and was one of the first scholars of the Old English language . He also studied the early law codes of England . His Old English dictionary , although not published during his lifetime , contributed greatly to the study of that language . Many of his manuscripts and papers eventually became part of the collections of Cambridge University , Oxford University , or the British Library .

= = Early life = =

Joscelyn was born in 1529 , and was the son of Sir Thomas Joscelin and Dorothy Gate . John was their third son to survive childhood , and was probably born on his father 's estate at High Roding , Essex . He attended Queens ' College at Cambridge beginning in 1545 , attaining a Bachelor of Arts in 1549 . In the school year 1550 ? 1551 he taught Latin at Queens ' College , and the following school year he taught Greek . At the end of 1552 , he was awarded a Master of Arts . In 1555 , during Queen Mary I 's reign , Joscelyn subscribed to the required church doctrine , and was once more a teacher of Greek during the school year 1556 ? 1557 . However , in 1557 he resigned from his fellowship at Queens ' College .

= = Work for Parker = =

In 1559 shortly after he was appointed as archbishop , Matthew Parker , the Archbishop of Canterbury , named Joscelyn to a chaplaincy , and also as his Latin language secretary . The following year Parker gave Joscelyn a prebend in Hereford , held until 1577 . Unusually for the time , besides Greek and Latin Joscelyn was a scholar of Hebrew . From Parker 's interest in the history of early Christianity , and to discover more information about the growth of papal power in the Middle Ages , Joscelyn also began to study Old English (a topic of interest to Parker) , and helped the archbishop in his studies of the English pre -@- Norman Conquest church . Joscelyn helped discover lost manuscripts , obtained them for Parker , and prepared them for publication . Joscelyn also acquired manuscripts for himself , 40 of which were written in Old English .

Joscelyn often annotated the manuscripts he or Parker owned , and even inserted some pages of faked script into the D manuscript of the Anglo -@- Saxon Chronicle , and probably owned that manuscript prior to Robert Cotton . His glosses are still extant on several dozen manuscripts , usually in Latin , but occasionally in English . He was , however , also concerned that their collections be properly cared for . He had a good understanding of the law codes of the English Anglo -@- Saxon kings , which he used in the preparation of an Old English -@- Latin dictionary he worked on , but which was never completed . The dictionary was , however , of great help to later Old English scholars , as it passed into the hands of Robert Cotton , and became part of the Cotton Library as manuscripts Titus A xv and Titus A xvi . Joscelyn 's written work on Old English grammar also became part of the Cotton library , but was lost after Cotton loaned the manuscript to William Camden in 1612 .

Parker published in 1572 a work entitled *De Antiquitate Britannicae Ecclesiae & Priuilegiis Ecclesiae Canuariensis , cum Archiepiscopis eiusdem* 70 , which is the first privately printed work to appear in English . Although Parker claimed in a letter that he was the author , it is likely that at the very least Joscelyn did most of the research , and the manuscript of the work , which is now Vitellius E xiv , is largely in his handwriting . Further , Parker 's son , after the archbishop 's death , noted beside the bequest notation for Joscelyn 's brother Thomas that John Joscelyn was the author of the work .

= = Legacy and death = =

Joscelyn also published an edition of Gildas ' work *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* in 1568 , for which he wrote the preface . He also wrote a history of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge that remained unpublished until 1880 , 200 years after his death . He contributed extensively to Parker 's *A Testimonie of Antiquitie Shewing the Auncient Fayth in the Church of England* , the earliest printed book containing portions in Old English . Joscelyn also contributed a large part of Parker 's *De Antiquitate Britannicae* , published in 1572 .

In 1577 , Parker 's successor gave Joscelyn a rectory at Hollingbourne , Kent , replacing the prebend at Hereford . He died on 28 December 1602 , probably at High Roding , and was buried in All Saint 's Church in High Roding . He never married .

Joscelyn 's contributions to the study of Old English have been called " a significant contribution to the development of the study of the language " . The historian May McKisack called him a " man of great learning and a good servant to his master " . Besides his dictionary and grammar , his working notebook also became part of the Cotton library , now manuscript Vitellius D.vii. Other of his manuscripts , either written or acquired by him , were either given to Corpus Christi College by Parker 's heirs , or became parts of the British Library or the Bodleian Library .