



Augustine Came to Kent

Barbara Willard , Mary Beth Owens (Illustrator)

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It is the year 597 and Pope Gregory is sending a select number of his monks, led by Fr. Augustine, to re-evangelize England. Young Wolf, born in that land but raised in Rome, accompanies his father, Wolfstan, who goes as a guide and interpreter. Though the King of Kent's wife is a Christian, the missionaries from Rome do not know whether they will be welcomed, tolerated or martyred. In a story full of adventure, Wolf meets Fritha, a Saxon girl whose life and destiny are soon closely bound up with his own. Events, significant in the history of Christianity, are vividly brought to life by this veteran writer of historical fiction. Ages 10 and up.

Augustine Came to Kent Details

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From Reader Review Augustine Came to Kent for online ebook

Heather says

Set at the time Pope Gregory I sent Augustine to England, Augustine Came to Kent is the story of the first Archbishop of Canterbury through the eyes of a boy. It tells of Augustine preaching, baptizing King Ethelbert, and on through the end of Augustine's life. It's a gentle story with excellent pacing. I recommend it for kids studying medieval England.

Cynthia Scott says

This was a very enjoyable book. I didn't realize when I acquired it that it is a book for older children. It has whetted my interest in learning more about this period when Christianity had a faded in the British Isles and was reintroduced by missionaries from Rome.

Katey Magill says

Hard to find children's books that take place in this kind of time and setting; as a Protestant, I might have wished things were presented a little differently, but nothing major

Christina Pilkington says

Wolf, a young boy raised in Rome, accompanies his father back to their homeland of Britain along with Fr. Augustine in order to re-evangelize Britain. We follow the work of these early missionaries in the 4th Century A.D. and look at how St. Augustine influenced the growth of the Christian church.

While the audience of this book is middle grade readers, the language is very sophisticated at times, and more reluctant readers may have a harder time reading this story on their own.

I do think it's a worthwhile read, though, especially if you are learning about the early Middle Ages and how the pagan beliefs of the Saxons gradually became mostly replaced by Christianity due in large part through the efforts of Pope Gregory, Abbot/Archbishop of Canterbury Augustine and the baptism and conversion of the Saxon King Ethelbert.

A.K. Klemm says

I read this out loud to my kiddo as part of her school lessons. It depicts a rich visual of early Christian evangelism in Britain during the reign of King Ethelbert in Kent (not to be confused with the Saxon King

Ethelbert who ruled over Wessex 860 AD). Augustine (of Canterbury - NOT to be confused with Augustine of Hippo who wrote Confessions and City of God) was sent on behalf of the Pope (Gregory) from Rome to bring Christ to the pagans. It's an interesting read, rich in what the world must have looked like to the Christians. I look forward to diving into this time period with the kiddo deeper when she's older and finding work that might highlight more of what the people of Kent were feeling. To Barbara Willard's credit, she does not turn a blind eye to the tension for the sake of being child-friendly though the book is child-friendly. Can't wait to acquire all the Living History Library books, they truly do help us remember our history timeline better.

LuAnn says

I found this story of St. Augustine of Kent and the Benedictine monks bringing the Christian message back to Britain after the Roman Empire pulled out well done and captivating. St. Martins Church in Canterbury, their first home and the ruins of the monastery they founded are still there. The fictional story of the Angle captives, freed by Pope St. Gregory (based on historical fact), who accompanied them gives the story interest and context, especially for younger readers. I've enjoyed all historical fiction by this author.

Elevetha says

I read this for school and hated it. It was boring beyond all belief. The characters were horrible. I could not have cared less if Wolf and his crush died. Half, or more, of the book seemed to consist of Wolf mooning over Fritha. Augustine comes to Kent and that is basically his only role in this book. There is certainly nothing bad in this book; unless you count horrible characters and writing. Blah. Never again.

Ursula says

10YO wanted to give it 3.5 stars :)

Pedro says

no one should have to read this book (unless it is for school) oh and Elevetha Houre you are absolutely right

Catherine ~Whatever you are, be a good one~ says

This is a fabulous Christian/Catholic book I would recommend to ages 9+, with minor violence and minor romance. It's a positive book, but really draws you in! It's also educationally worth the read.

Positive messages: Christianity, loyalty, love, faith

Positive role models: St. Augustine of Canterbury, a holy queen, a hardworking farmer who leaves his farm to follow St. Augustine, a hardworking boy

Educational value: It's set in Medieval Times and fairly accurate with St. Augustine of Canterbury's mission to England.

Stephanie Sheaffer says

I would never have picked up this book on my own accord as I am generally not a fan of books set in the Middle Ages (...not to mention the bland cover art). It was an assigned text for my 4th grade daughter's literature class.

Certainly not exciting, the book hovers close to "boring." That being said, it does offer a somewhat historical look into the lives of monks, missionaries, and ordinary lay people in the 500s (AD).

Giving two stars because "it was ok."

Caitlin says

this book is really boring

Mary says

A young boy who was captured and sold into slavery in Rome is freed and sent back on a mission with (now saint) Augustine. He falls in love and travels with his father, who finds his old tribe and brings about the beginning of their conversion. The story of Saint Augustine himself is tangential to the story of Wolf, but students will learn about him and about England during this time period.

Nicole Marie says

NEVER AGAIN. Terribly boring. Not very good writing or characters. Frankly, I don't know if I ever want to read another Barbara Willard book again.

Rachel says

I was sorry to see so many bad reviews of this book - it's really a lovely story of the re-Christianizing of England after the reign of the Romans has long since been over (c. 597).

Wolf, an English boy born and bred, travels with his father from their home in Rome, Italy along with a convoy of monks and the great Prior Augustine to spread the good news of salvation to Wolf's own long-begotten homeland (where his family were taken from as captives years ago).. New adventures await him

and his father - new dangers; and new friends to make. A sweet childhood friendship blooms into love; forgiveness and a new way of life are found. Such a good story of the time period, and I did not find it dull or boring - just simple and pleasant.

This would make a nice supplement for using in school, but there is enough information within the book that if you know nothing of this era it won't deter away from enjoying the story. :)
