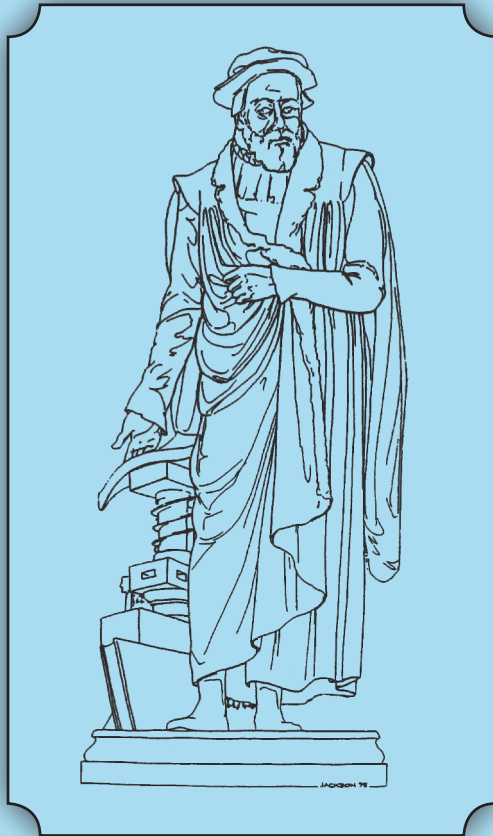


# The Tyndale Society Journal



No. 42  
*Summer 2013*

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*Registered UK Charity Number 1020405*

Founded by Professor David Daniell in 1995, five hundred and one years after Tyndale's birth. The Society's aim is to spread knowledge of William Tyndale's work and influence, and to pursue study of the man who gave us our English Bible.

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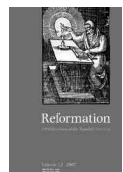
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**Guest Editor for Tyndale Society Journal No.43:**

**Neil Inglis**

**We invite your contributions for the next Journal  
by 15<sup>th</sup> November 2013 please (see *p. 10*)**



*Especially Welcome...*

*contributions for: 'How I Met William Tyndale'*

## Editorial

Neil Inglis

Guest Editor - TSJ Nos. 38, 39, 40, 41, 42

A while ago, my cousin Gordon Magill reported to me on a major Bible history event in the U.S. heartland. *“We have just seen a marvelous exhibit here based on the history and legacy of the King James Bible. It is at the Harry Ransom Center of the University of Texas. The exhibit covers the evolution of the English-language bible from John Wycliffe to very modern translations. There are fabulous displays of old English bibles, including the Bishop’s Bible that Queen Elizabeth I kept in her private chapel, covered in red velvet and silver. Also an original King James, circa 1611, and many, many other editions and related texts. The Ransom Center also has a first edition of the Gutenberg Bible on display.”*<sup>1</sup>

A sense of the importance of Bible history is in the air around the world, a conclusion affirmed in the unlikelyst quarters. Even arch-atheist Richard Dawkins joined in the recent **KJB** festivities; he spoke in a video produced by the King James Bible Trust in 2010. As he explained, *“You can’t appreciate*

*English literature unless you are to some extent steeped in the King James Bible. There are phrases that come from it — people don’t realize they come from it — proverbial phrases, phrases that make echoes in people’s minds. Not to know the King James Bible is to be, in some small way, barbarian.”*<sup>2</sup>

Tyndale Bibles, in particular, have been making waves—and not always where you would expect. WT’s work was featured in a recent exhibit at the Vatican. One report told the story as follows: “In the section on the English-language Scriptures, a near complete copy of William Tyndale’s New Testament points to the personal cost that was borne to translate the Bible into the common vernacular.” And an Old Testament scroll bore witness to the tumultuous history of these essential texts:

*In the first room, glass cases hold rare scrolls, among them a Jewish Old Testament scroll dedicated in Poland in 1934, not long before the Nazis invaded and began a campaign of extermination against the Jewish population there.*



Neil Inglis

*Another scroll is one of only a few to have survived the Spanish Inquisition.*<sup>3</sup>

The Tyndale message is universal. All over the globe, people are stepping forward to claim Tyndale as their inspiration. “*When Ken Taylor started Tyndale House Publishers 50 years ago, he named it after the scholar William Tyndale, whose translation of the Bible into English in the 1500s helped lead to him being strangled and burned at stake.*”<sup>4</sup>



**ON THE MANTEL-PIECE.** At the *TSJ*, we monitor international press stories on Tyndale using the Google Alerts service. The avalanche of Tyndale news stories (prompted in large measure by the *KJB* celebrations and Howard Brenton’s *Anne Boleyn* play) has subsided to some extent, but this is only a lull. Media coverage continues for other Reformers who met untimely deaths; here, developments are unfolding at a rapid pace. Such press attention affords an opportunity to solve the mysteries surrounding these men, whose lives are incompletely documented. By way of illustration, let us consider the stories of Tyndale’s approximate contemporaries Thomas Cromwell, and the Spaniard Michael Servetus.

*TSJ* Readers will be aware that Hilary Mantel’s *Wolf Hall* is to be televised. If you are concerned to see Cromwell’s life relegated to the historical fiction bookshelf, take heart; the *Master Thomas Cromwell* blog has been delving into Cromwell’s early years (as the blog post makes clear, Reformers traveled widely—not always for pleasure). The gaps in the chronological record will one day be filled; further revelations can be expected soon.

*To conclude, Cromwell’s early years were more than likely the making of him. He was faced with adversity from the beginning, but persevered; giving him skills that cannot be taught. His travels broadened his mind, and helped him to develop a vision for what the future for England could and should be. He could see beyond the constraints of tradition and the established order, and there is no denying that his mark on history has been as profound as it has been controversial.*<sup>5</sup>

In this field, primary source materials may burst forth after a long period of quiescence, radically changing the game (a good example from the *Daily Telegraph* concerns a recently discovered letter from Cromwell to Henry VIII prior to the Cleves marriage). Progress is, as always, a question of patience and persistence.<sup>6</sup>

Here at the *TSJ*, Brian Buxton and other contributors have applied their exceptional gifts as forensic historians to the task of piecing together Tyndale’s early years. Their diligent efforts have built the foundations so that when further documentary evidence is unearthed, the Tyndale story will be blown



Michael Servetus. Line engraving, 1696, after C. van Sichem, 1607. ©: Wellcome Library, London

Daniell biography of WT).<sup>7</sup>

In previous editorials I have described my visit to the Servetus memorial in Champel, Geneva on Avenue Michel Servet, located across the street from a hospital. My quiet, reverential, and thoughtful inspection of the Servet monolith (on the site where he was burned at the stake) attracted wary looks from passers-by 10 years ago. Now the monolith has been joined by a nearby statue: as the Servetus Society's website reports (my translation from the Spanish follows), "*On Monday October 3, 2011, the city of Geneva paid a historic and unique tribute to Miguel Servet on the Quincentennial of his birth. The Geneva authorities (...) unveiled near the Cantonal hospital a statue depicting Servet; this action reflects a long overdue gesture in recognition of the suffering, and intellectual and ethical integrity, of a dissident among dissidents, of a reformer among reformers, of a man who epitomizes modern values. The statue has been placed fewer than three meters away from the monolith (unveiled in 1903).*"<sup>8 9</sup>

But the biggest headline news story concerns the opening of the Miguel Servet center, a research facility and museum in what is described as the Reformer's Childhood Home (*casa natal*) in Villanueva de Sigüenza, Spain.<sup>10</sup> The center contains much important material on the history of medicine in Servet's time (focusing of course on Servet's discovery of the pulmonary circulation of the blood). This facility—a historic memorial and center for ongoing research—sets an example to the world regarding how to tell the tale of an

wide open—and we at the *TSJ* will be here to report on the latest developments.

There has been a cataract of recent news stories concerning the life of Spanish Reformer, doctor, and medical researcher Michael Servetus (aka Miguel Servet or Michele de Villeneuve), whose many achievements and terrible suffering have been recounted in the pages of the *TSJ*. The Servetus International Society has reported a flood of new books on the Spaniard; one that caught my eye was the Italian translation of Roland Bainton's classic *Hunted Heretic* (which made me the Servetian I am today—as influential, in its own way, as the David

unjustly forgotten intellectual hero. This story is full of useful ideas for Tyndalians, particularly as we endeavor to educate nonspecialists and newcomers regarding Tyndale's life, work, and achievements.

---

**PLOWBOY LECTURES.** There are important points to bear in mind when preparing for a lecture before a nonspecialist audience. First and foremost, to give a plowboy lecture is *not* to dumb down—quite the contrary. There are subjects in which a non-academic group may have a high degree of specialized knowledge not far removed from the presenter's own—one thinks of Civil War history in the US, where speakers must contend with audience members who have participated in Civil War re-enactments (sewing their own authentically scratchy costumes, baking their own hard-tack rations). Biblical Archaeology is another field characterized by widely-read listeners; here, spectators have participated in digs in the Holy Land, possess a considerable degree of hands-on experience, and can and do match wits with lecturers. Such audiences are keenly well-informed, and can keep speakers on their toes. So it is with the Reformation.

But you must never forget to tailor your speech to your audience. A paper on Servet's medical discoveries to doctors will require a different approach than a lecture addressing his theology. And there are certain subjects which, although second-nature to Reformation enthusiasts, can be stubbornly difficult for complete beginners to understand. As TSJ contributor Anne Richardson remarked in conversation with the editor, "*Where speaking on the Reformation is concerned, it makes a difference whether your audience knows that scripture translation was a capital crime in England.*" This is a telling detail which audiences may have great difficulty wrapping their heads around.

---

**THIS ISSUE'S FEATURED ARTICLES.** Brian Buxton shares with us his immense scholarship and indefatigable sleuthing on Tyndale's early years. The documentary record is incomplete (few letters survive from the period, with wills often the lone primary source). My personal view, as TSJ editor, is that we are on the cusp of major breakthroughs akin to the discovery of intelligent life elsewhere in the universe. Carl D. T. Watson-Gandy addresses the same theme, Ralph Werrell contributes his own learned insights, and there will be further discussion of these papers, and their implications, in our next issue.

Anne Richardson then provides us with a perfect example of the plowboy



lecture's art, showing her inimitable capacity to draw connections between ideas and to bring a subject unforgettably and thought-provokingly to life. Presenting material for younger audiences poses its own challenges; and in this vein, Shan Stephens tells us more about the immensely exciting Tyndale project for schools. It is thanks to such initiatives that future generations will cease to languish in ignorance regarding Tyndale and his epic achievements. Those of us who remember when our schools were Tyndale-free zones will raise three mighty cheers.

Barbara Cross assesses the lives of two Presbyterian ministers from the 1600s (Edmund Calamy and Thomas Watson). Ruth Magnusson Davies brings us an enthralling account of her publishing company Baruch House's *New Matthew Bible Transposition Project*; we are delighted to share this report, for the life of William Tyndale naturally opens the door to the study of other Reformers (John Rogers, in this instance) who lost their lives in the flames. In other headline news, we are honored to publish an announcement concerning the resumption of the CUAP Tyndale project, a topic of keen interest to Society members. Next, we travel to Japan for the latest installment in our "How I Met Tyndale Society" series, a delightful and heart-warming contribution from Kaoru Yamazaki. In closing, Tyndale Society President Mary Clow rounds out an exceptional issue with her stimulating and incisive event reports and book reviews, including the latest offering from the ever-controversial Eamon Duffy.

Neil L. Inglis  
Bethesda, Maryland

## Notes and References

1 <http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/exhibitions/2012/kingjamesbible/>

2 <http://www.newswithviews.com/Wall/allan158.htm>

3 <http://global.christianpost.com/news/bible-exhibit-in-rome-tells-survival-story-of-scripture-70607/#hlJMJBvFRdBTkQml.99>

4 <http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20120716/business/707169864/>

5 <http://masterthomascromwell.wordpress.com/2012/07/28/thomas-cromwell-in-the-beginning/>

6 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/9322677/Thomas-Cromwell-letter-to-Henry-VIII-before-Anne-of-Cleves-marriage-discovered.html>

7 <http://www.servetus.org/public/es/noticias-y-eventos/noticias/218-hunted-heretic-has-a-new-translation-in-italian.html>

Key quote from the webpage: *"Hunted Heretic" has a new translation, in Italian. Fazi Editore has released the history of the life and death of Michael Servetus, 1511-1533 by Roland H. Bainton. This edition is based upon Peter Hughes' 2005 edition. The Italian historian Adriano Prosperi, specialized in Reform and Counter-reform, has written a new introduction for this edition.*

8 <http://www.servetus.org/public/en/events/news/195-miguel-servet-rehabilitado-en-ginebra-con-una-estatua.html>

9 <http://archives.tdg.ch/geneve/actu/brule-fois-servet-aura-statue-geneve-pagani-2011-09-30>

10 <http://www.servetus.org/public/es/noticias-y-eventos/noticias/230-documental-la-casa-natal-miguel-servet.html>

## Submission Guidelines

# *Tyndale Society Journal No. 43*

### **Guest Editor: Neil Inglis**

Please send all article submissions  
(via email where possible) to Neil at:

**lordstarlink@gmail.com**

Articles may be supplied either via *Word Document*, or as *plain text* in the message body of your email. Alternatively, we can accept *typewritten copy* (for scanning in) or clear, *hand-written copy* submissions.

Artwork and photographs may be supplied electronically either via email or on CD-R (*minimum resolution for all digital images: 300dpi*). Alternatively, these can be supplied in *hard copy* form, for scanning.

All type-written/hand-written copy, digital artwork on CD-R/hard copy artwork for scanning should be sent to:

**Gillian Guest, Tyndale Society Journal No:43  
28 St Paul's Crescent, Botley, Oxford OX2 9AG, UK.**

**Deadline for submission of articles for the next issue:  
15 November 2013**

# William Tyndale: Born Upon the Borders of Wales

Brian Buxton

The year 2012 marked three hundred years since the publication of *The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire* by Sir Robert Atkyns. In describing the parish of North Nibley he wrote of ‘*William Tyndal, who was burnt in Flanders for his new translating the Bible, and was born in this place*’. Atkyns has been criticised for failing to give his authorities and here is a case in point. This claim may have been no more than an unsubstantiated family tradition passed on to Atkyns by a ‘*Mr Daniel Tindal*’ who ‘*has a good house and estate in this place and is descended from William Tyndal*’!<sup>1</sup>

Later researchers have investigated Tyndale’s family background with more diligence. Whilst offering differing conclusions they have all recognised that the origins of ‘*the father of the English Bible*’ are shrouded in some obscurity. As David Daniell points out at the very start of his discussion of this issue: ‘*There is no documentary evidence of him at all until he took his Oxford B.A. in his late teens*’.<sup>2</sup>

The consensus of opinion amongst those who have researched this matter has been that William Tyndale’s background lay in the area of Berkeley in Gloucestershire, although one recent writer has suggested that attention should move further west across the Severn. It is the evidence for these ideas which will be examined in this article, in particular the claims of North Nibley and Stinchcombe to be his home.<sup>3</sup>

## Three Preliminary Considerations

Firstly, bearing in mind Tyndale’s life, it must always have been likely that written evidence linking him with a particular place or family would be hard to find. He left home as a boy to study at Oxford and thereafter followed academic and priestly careers before taking himself abroad, never to return. Thus he was unlikely to feature in manorial records, leases and the like. It was improbable that he would be involved in litigation, even in such a litigious age. Personal correspondence from this period is rare. On the other hand, family wills are quite often a way into unravelling relationships. Unfortunately very few Gloucestershire wills survive from the time prior to the creation of the Diocese of Gloucester in 1541. Even during the remainder of the sixteenth century there are only a handful of wills of Tyndales in the Berkeley area.<sup>4</sup>

Secondly is the issue of his name. As a young man he appears to have called himself William Hychyns (or variant spellings) and this is how he is described in the registers of Oxford University and in the ordination lists of the dioceses of Hereford and London. It is generally agreed that this man is the same as the person now known as William Tyndale.<sup>5</sup>

Later he began to use the name Tyndale, with an occasional reference back to Hychyns. Thus in the 1534 edition of the New Testament he heads the prefaces as '*W.T. unto the reader*' and '*William Tyndale, yet once more to the Christian reader*'. On the other hand the preface to *The Obedience of a Christian Man* in 1528 is headed '*William Tyndale otherwise called William Hychins unto the reader*'. His only known letter, to the Governor of Vilvoorde Castle, is signed with the name Tyndale.

There is no evidence as to whether he was brought up to call himself Hychyns, Tyndale or Tyndale alias Hychyns nor why he should have used variant names.

Thirdly, determining a person's age is difficult in a time before the registration of baptisms or births. Assessments of Tyndale's date of birth have been based on the dates of his degrees and ordinations as found in the registers of Oxford University and the bishops' registers of Hereford and London. Currently it is generally reckoned that he would have been born somewhere between 1491 and 1494.<sup>6</sup>

### **Born upon the borders of Wales**

There is only one known statement from contemporary sources which makes claim to have some knowledge of Tyndale's birthplace. Twelve years after his execution in Brussels a short paragraph about that event appeared under the year 1535/6 in the book commonly known as Hall's *Chronicles*. This includes the sentence: '*Suche as best knewe him reported him to be a very sobre man, borne vpon the borders of Wales, and brought vp in the vniuersitie of Oxford and in life and conuersacion vnreprouable*'.<sup>7</sup>

It sounds as if Hall received information from some persons who had known Tyndale but who had only a vague idea as to his home area. Clearly 'the borders of Wales' is an imprecise location and it could refer to parts of several counties. Despite this only recently has there been a challenge to the claim of the Berkeley area of Gloucestershire as Tyndale's home.

Tracing back through the centuries to see how this tradition developed proves a rather inconclusive exercise. After Hall's *Chronicles* in 1548 there does not seem to be any written claim regarding Tyndale's birthplace until

the statement of Atkyns in 1712 quoted at the beginning of this article and also, at about that same time, an unpublished note naming Nibley by another Gloucestershire antiquarian, the Reverend Richard Parsons. It then rather appears that for many years Atkyns was taken on trust. He is quoted as an authority in the correspondence of Oade Roberts with the antiquarian Daniel Lysons in 1814/1818 and Nibley is again named as Tyndale's birthplace in one of the earliest biographies, that of George Offor in 1836.<sup>8</sup>

However, researchers were gradually coming to recognise the existence of Tyndale and Hychyns families in villages neighbouring on Nibley and thus when Christopher Anderson published *The Annals of the English Bible* in 1845, a book primarily aimed at lauding William Tyndale, he recognised the uncertainty and widened the discussion. It was Anderson who first seriously presented the possibility of Stinchcombe as an alternative to Nibley.<sup>9</sup>

### **North Nibley: An uncertain tradition**

Some earlier writers, such as Roberts and Offor, felt justified in their acceptance of Atkyns' claim for Nibley as William's birthplace by also accepting a pedigree relating to Hunts Court in that parish given in 1639 by John Smyth of Nibley, Steward of the Berkeley Estates. Smyth makes no reference to William but he does say that there was a '*Hugh Tyndall als Hutchins*' married into the Hunt family and possessing Hunts Court as early



*Tyndale Monument at North Nibley*

© Philip Halling, [Geograph.org.uk](http://Geograph.org.uk)

as c1480. What he says conflicts with the documented evidence for the coming together of the Hunts Court estate with that of Melksham Court, Stinchcombe, by the marriage, probably in the first years of the sixteenth century, of an Alice Hunt, heiress of lands in Nibley, with a Thomas Tyndale of Melksham Court. In addition, Smyth gives Thomas' father as John rather than the recorded Richard.<sup>10</sup>

Hunts Court had been in the hands of the Hunt family, not the Tyndales, for generations and after the marriage the couple would no doubt have lived at Melksham Court at Stinchcombe. Indeed a list made for tax purposes in 1522 places Thomas in Stinchcombe and after his death Alice and her children are still listed under Stinchcombe. Not until 1543 is there a secure reference to a Tyndale in Nibley. This William Tyndale may have been Thomas' brother, or a son of the marriage, living as a tenant at Hunts Court.<sup>11</sup>

Possibly Smyth of Nibley had seen some material but became confused about it. The present archivist of Berkeley Castle has suggested that as Smyth was writing after his retirement and shortly before his death he may in fact have been relying on his recollections of what he had been told long years before rather than on written material. Smyth himself said that he had been unable to see certain Tyndale family papers because they were locked in a chest in Stinchcombe Church.<sup>12</sup>

The situation is not made any clearer by the fact that the descent of lands in Nibley and Wotton to Alice was not an inheritance from her father. In a deed of settlement of her lands in Nibley and Wotton, made in 1542, she is described as sister and sole heir of Thomas Hunt and cousin and heir of John Hunt.<sup>13</sup>

The tradition that was picked up by Atkyns, and by his contemporary Richard Parsons, cannot simply be dismissed, although perhaps it was not originally so specific to Nibley as the Tyndales of Hunts Court liked to believe. After all, they were descended from the Stinchcombe family. It seems unlikely that this confusion will be resolved unless some new documentation comes to light.

### **The case for Stinchcombe**

After Atkyns, none of the later eighteenth century historians of Gloucestershire made reference to Tyndale's birthplace. At the end of the century Ralph Bigland implied that he came from the Berkeley area but nothing more. Thus Nibley was accepted until Anderson showed the possibility of Stinchcombe, although even he seemed unable to bring himself to reject the former.<sup>14</sup>

The village of Stinchcombe lies just north of Nibley and it would be quite natural that there should be both marriages and other dealings found between their inhabitants. The significant marriage of Alice Hunt to Thomas Tyndale has already been mentioned. A record of 1480 shows '*Richard Huchyns of Stinchcombe*' as witness to a document conveying land in Nibley to his son-in-law.<sup>15</sup>

For Stinchcombe there is an unusually good selection of manorial records. In 1539 the Lord of the Manor, Sir Adrian Fortescue, was executed and, although he only held these lands by virtue of his marriage, the documents were taken by the crown and remain to this day in The National Archives.<sup>16</sup>

These records, mainly rentals and minutes of the manorial court, confirm the residence in Stinchcombe of various members of the Tyndale and Huchyns families. The earliest document, from c1400, suggests that the Tyndale family were already based on an estate centred upon the property known as Melksham Court and including a '*toft and two acres of land formerly Holderes*' of both of which '*John Tendale*' was the tenant.<sup>17</sup>

There is then a gap in the surviving records until 1478 when the existence of the two families, Tyndale and Huchyns, and some link between them becomes clear. In a Rental of that May it appears that the property and land which had been held by John Tendale had been divided. A Tebota Hochyns was now tenant of Melksham whilst a Richard Tyndale held the croft known as Holderscroft. In due course, although there are no dates in surviving records, it seems that Richard acquired Melksham as well and that the tenancy of both estates then passed down through his family. There is no evidence as to the relationship between Tebota and Richard.<sup>18</sup>

Two sons of Richard, Thomas and William, appear to have held the lands jointly, although Thomas seems to have been the lead figure. In the 1478 entries quoted above there has been written over the name of Tebota '*Thomas*' and over the name of Richard '*now Thomas Hochyns*'. From 1507 to 1523 there are several rentals which contain this sentence, or similar: '*Thomas Tyndale alias Huchyns and William Tyndale, his brother, jointly hold by indenture a tenement called Milkesham with a toft called Holdarse and pay per annum £4 17s 8d*'. The lease of Melksham was renewed in 1511 with only the name of Thomas given and yet it seems clear that William was still involved. The Huchyns alias does not appear after 1520.<sup>19</sup>

In another part of Stinchcombe, known as Southend, the names of Tyndale and Huchyns also appear at the same period. In the 1478 rental, already mentioned, a '*Richard Hochyns*' is recorded holding land, both in his own right and, in the case of some woodland, jointly with others. It seems

that in 1485 this family also inherited some pasture land within the manor of Hurst at Slimbridge. By 1507 Richard was dead and his son John took over his tenancies. In a rental of January 1507 he is described as '*John Tyndale alias Huchyns*' but in the following August, when he appeared at the manorial court to do fealty for the woodland, he becomes '*John Huchyns alias Tyndale*'. In subsequent records his name is given variously as Huchyns or Tyndale. On his death in 1515 he was described as '*John Tyndaalle*'.<sup>20</sup>

Stinchcombe was sometimes described as within the parish of Cam. A Walter Hochins is recorded there in c1400, a John Huchyns in 1444 and there are further mentions of this name well into the sixteenth century. Intriguing is the Richard Tyndale of Cam who, at some undated moment in Henry VIII's reign, was accused of adultery and incitement to murder!<sup>21</sup>

What is very clear from these records is that both families were present around Stinchcombe in the years of Tyndale's birth and childhood, and that some family members used an alias or reversed their names from time to time. What is very unclear is the nature of the link between the two families and the reason for the use of an alias and for changes of name. The reasons may have been related to a marriage or an issue of inheritance but there is no evidence to confirm either of these suggestions. Sometimes it may have been the manorial scribe who got muddled and varied the names of members of inter-married families in the official records, causing yet more confusion.

If an assertion made in 1533 by Bishop John Stokesley of London is to be believed then there is a suggestion of a relationship between William and the Tyndales of Stinchcombe rather more specific than simply shared names.

### **Brother Edward**

When Alice Tyndale, as a widow, made her deed of settlement of her lands in Nibley and Wotton in 1542 an Edward Tyndale was appointed a feoffee and was a witness. He is described as of Hurst at Slimbridge. When Alice made her will, in the following year, Edward was appointed an overseer and again was a witness.<sup>22</sup>

It was Robert Demaus who discovered in the National Archives two letters of 1533 which drew attention to Edward Tyndale. The letters were written by John Stokesley, then Bishop of London, to Thomas Cromwell and related to a lease on some Gloucestershire land. Stokesley was pushing for a friend of his to be granted the lease. One argument he made against



another claimant was the man's kinship with Edward Tyndale 'under-receiver of the Lordship of Berkeley' who, according to Stokesley, was regularly acquiring grants of land for his relations and was '*brother to Tyndale the arch-heretic*'.<sup>23</sup>

Stokesley had been Rector of Slimbridge. This may have put him in a good position to know about a relationship between Edward and William, but, on the other hand, he may never have visited the parish and perhaps knew nothing about the local families. It is impossible to be sure whether he was stating a fact, passing on a rumour or simply inventing a relationship in order to put pressure on Cromwell. Assuming that he was correct, then here is another pointer to a link between William and the Stinchcombe family.<sup>24</sup>

Unfortunately Edward's parentage is as veiled in mystery as that of William and there is no evidence that he ever used the name Hychyns. However, much more is known about his own life and family. It is clear from a range of surviving records, and from his own very detailed will of 1546, that this was a cultured man of some significance and success. In 1516 he had acquired the manor of Hurst at Slimbridge, and three years later he was appointed Receiver of the Berkeley estates in Gloucestershire, Somerset and Warwickshire, both manor and appointment being from the crown which at that point held the Berkeley lands. In his will he described himself as '*of..... the pulle courte in the County of Worcest[er]*'. Pull Court was a manor at Bushley in Worcestershire which he leased from the Benedictine abbey at Tewkesbury, of some of whose estates he was steward and auditor and with which he seems to have had a very long-standing connection. At his death he held lands across Gloucestershire, Somerset and Worcestershire leased either from the crown or from Tewkesbury Abbey. There are clues to suggest that he had contacts and influence at the highest levels.<sup>25</sup>

Whether brothers, or some other relation, these two men were clearly a very able pair, one pursuing an academic life with great distinction and the other involved in the management of significant estates and himself building up a not inconsiderable land holding.

### **The Hundred of Berkeley: A Summary**

The coming together of the Tyndale and Hychyns families indicates the Berkeley area as a likely home of William Tyndale. There were Tyndale families in other parts of England but there does not seem to have been an attempt by any of these to claim William Tyndale, nor to claim a connection

between themselves and a Hychyns family. However uncertain the tradition picked up by Atkyns and Parsons at Nibley it does suggest a long standing belief in the area that this was Tyndale country.

Recently it has been argued by Ralph Werrell that Tyndale had access, when young, to the library at Berkeley Castle. If this is so it is obviously a further argument in favour of that area. Also, it is known from John Foxe that for a year or so in adult life Tyndale lived a little to the south at Little Sodbury Manor. Again this suggests the possibility of local contacts. If Edward was indeed William's brother it is conceivable that it was he who obtained for him the role of chaplain or tutor to the family of Sir John Walsh, thus providing a quiet place to study. Sir John, like Edward, had held responsibilities on the Berkeley estates and they were almost certainly acquainted.<sup>26</sup>

However, to claim one particular village as William's home is going beyond the known facts. Nibley appears to have had an oral tradition associating him with that place, Stinchcombe was a significant village for the Tyndale / Hychyns extended family, but the nuclear family to which William belonged could have been living in any part of the Berkeley area, and, indeed, even beyond.<sup>27</sup>

Over the last two centuries some have attempted to build up a genealogy, attaching William Tyndale to one or other of the known local families, but again there is insufficient evidence to place him in this way. William, the brother of Thomas, seems to be the only family member who could conceivably be him. However, it is likely that this individual would have been too old, appearing already as joint holder of Melksham in 1507, and he continues to appear as joint holder up to the final record of that series, in 1523.<sup>28</sup>

### **An alternative**

As yet the only serious challenge to the Berkeley neighbourhood of Gloucestershire as Tyndale's childhood home has come from Andrew Brown who has gone so far as to suggest that it should '*probably now be discarded*'.<sup>29</sup>

The main point of Brown's argument arises from his study of the ordination lists of the Hereford diocese for 1514 and the London diocese for 1515. From these he traces the ordinations of William Hychyns as sub-deacon, deacon and priest and points out that, not only was he ordained sub-deacon in the Hereford diocese but that in all the ordination records he is described as being from that diocese. It was the Bishop of Hereford who gave him Letters Dimissory to be ordained to the higher orders in another

diocese. There is no suggestion in the Hereford registers that Hychyns was being ordained sub-deacon outside his home diocese. At first sight there appears a real difficulty here. However, as Andrew Hope showed in his paper at the Tyndale Society conference held at Bristol in 2008 there could be several explanations which would resolve the difficulty.<sup>30</sup>

A couple of points may be worth bearing in mind. By the time of his ordinations Tyndale would have been in his early twenties. He could easily have been born in the Berkeley area and later come to see his home base elsewhere as a result of changes in his family situation. Further, there is good evidence of people with the name Hychyns, or variants, living in Gloucestershire west of the Severn. This area was in the Diocese of Hereford and it was very close to Berkeley by river crossing.<sup>31</sup>

## **In Conclusion**

To summarise the present state of knowledge about the family background of William Tyndale:

No documentary evidence is currently known providing definite information about the specific geographical location of his birth and upbringing or about his nuclear family.

Putting together such clues as do exist suggests a family background in the Hundred of Berkeley in Gloucestershire and that he was part of the extended families of Hychyns and Tyndales, possibly centering on the village of Stinchcombe where it is clear that there were individuals who called themselves Tyndale alias Hychyns.

If the above supposition is correct then there must be a likelihood that his own birth and upbringing were in or near to Stinchcombe but there must also be the possibility that his immediate family was located at or moved elsewhere, maybe west of the Severn but conceivably further afield than that.

Whilst it may be that no further evidence will come to light clarifying the issue, the possibility of this happening should not be discounted, particularly if the family was settled away from the Berkeley neighbourhood. The recognition that the ordinations of William Hychyns as deacon and priest are clearly recorded in the register of Bishop Richard Fitzjames of London is quite recent. The failure of past researchers to find the records was simply that they were not looking in the right place. It must be just possible that some clue as to Tyndale's background will yet come to light in a similar way.

## Notes and References

B&GAS = Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

BL = British Library

CPR = Calendar of Patent Rolls

GA = Gloucestershire Archives

HRO = Hereford Record Office

L&P = Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic of the reign of Henry VIII

LMA = London Metropolitan Archives

SHC = Somerset Heritage Centre

TNA = The National Archives

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Atkyns *The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire* London 1712 2nd edition unrevised 1768 p. 304. Hopefully Daniel Tindal was not descended from a celibate priest!

<sup>2</sup> David Daniell *William Tyndale: A Biography* Yale University Press 1994 p.9.

<sup>3</sup> Three older but still useful works discussing the Berkeley proposal are: Robert Demaus *William Tyndale A Biography* 1871 Revised Edition London 1886. B.W.Greenfield *Notes relating to the family of Tyndale of Stinchcombe and Nibley in Gloucestershire being an attempt to discover the parentage of William Tyndale alias Huchyns translator of the New Testament and martyr* Printed by Mitchell & Hughes 1878 (Many of the manuscript references used by Greenfield have been replaced as a result of more recent cataloguing and these latter are used in this article). J.F. Mozley *William Tyndale* London 1937.

<sup>4</sup> Until 1858 all wills were dealt with for probate purposes by church courts. For Gloucestershire prior to 1541 this meant at Hereford or Worcester.

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of this point see Andrew Hope *Who was William Tyndale?* in *The Tyndale Society Journal* No.38 Spring 2010 p.10ff.

<sup>6</sup> For an explanation of these dates see Andrew J. Brown *William Tyndale on priests and preachers with new light on his early career* Inscriptor Imprints London 1996 pp.24, 25, 34-36.

<sup>7</sup> Edward Halle *The Union of the Two Noble Houses of Lancaster and York 1548* Scolar Press 1970 facsimile of the second edition of 1550 p.ccxvii. Halle died in 1547 and the work was then completed and published by the printer Richard Grafton.

<sup>8</sup> The work of Parsons was not published but Atkyns was allowed to see his material. The two men give different information about the family which suggests that Atkyns did not copy Parsons but that they picked up the information independently, maybe, or maybe not, from the same source. Parsons wrote of Nibley: 'Tyndall the martyr born here and his family still remain at Hunt Court having about £100 per annum'. John Fendley ed. *Notes on the Diocese of Gloucester by Chancellor Richard Parsons* B&GAS 2005 p.105. BL

Add MSS 9458 letters of Oade Roberts. George Offor A Memoir of William Tyndale 1836. For information and comment on Atkyns, Parsons and Lysons see Irvine Gray Antiquaries of Gloucestershire and Bristol B&GAS 1981 p.20, p.47ff, p.49ff & p.77ff. For Atkyns see also Alan Pilbeam Gloucestershire 300 Years Ago The History Press 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Christopher Anderson The Annals of the English Bible Volume 1 London 1845 p.15ff.

<sup>10</sup> John Smyth The Berkeley Manuscripts: A Description of the Hundred of Berkeley in the County of Gloucester and of its Inhabitants Vol. 3 John Maclean ed. for B&GAS 1885 p.284. SHC DD/BR/gr12 August 1568 Recovery of Hunts Court for confirmation that Alice's land in Nibley included this property. The date of the marriage is unknown. Mozley p. 2 said that 'this marriage cannot be placed before 1505' but gave no reason. The fact that at least two, and possibly three, sons lived into the last quarter of the century may indicate that the marriage was no earlier than the date mentioned by Mozley (GA 1577/109 Will of Richard Tyndall, including reference to brother John; GA 1596/140 Will of a Thomas Tyndall, possibly brother Thomas).

<sup>11</sup> For Thomas see R.W.Hoyle ed. The Military Survey of Gloucestershire 1522 B&GAS 1996. For Alice and her sons, and for William, see TNA E179/114/240 1543.

<sup>12</sup> I am grateful to David Smith, Archivist of Berkeley Castle, for his comments on this puzzle (email 21/01/2012).

<sup>13</sup> GA D2078 Acc 4311 box 18 January 1542 deed of settlement by Alice as heiress to land in Nibley and Wotton. I am grateful to David Smith, Archivist of Berkeley Castle, for locating this document.

<sup>14</sup> Ralph Bigland Historical, Monumental & Genealogical Collections Relative to the County of Gloucester 1791/2 Vol. 1 p. 293 Note on Charfield.

<sup>15</sup> Calendar of Close Rolls Henry VII Vol. 1 1485-1500 Published 1955 Item 300 December 1480 for the land transfer (there is no explanation as to why a 1480 document is in that volume).

<sup>16</sup> The Stinchcombe manorial records are mainly catalogued at The National Archives under Special Collections (SC). I am grateful to Simon Neal, member of the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives ([www.agra.org.uk](http://www.agra.org.uk)), who has produced translations of the relevant passages.

<sup>17</sup> TNA SC 11/247 Rental of the manors of Breadstone and Stinchcombe. The date is uncertain but possibly October 1416. Attention was first drawn to this reference by C. Overy and A.C.Tyndale in The Parentage of William Tyndale, alias Huchyns, Translator and Martyr Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Vol.73 1954 pp.208/209.

<sup>18</sup> TNA SC 11/209 Rental May 1478. TNA E 315/37 no 173 April 1511 Indenture of lease of 'tenement in Stynchecombe called Milkeshamus' to Thomas Tyndale 'which Richard

Tyndale, father of the said Thomas, previously held’.

The name Tebota is generally reckoned to be female. I am grateful to Simon Neal for his suggestion that this may be ‘the female equivalent of Theobald, as Theobald can be found as Tibbott’ (Email 13/10/2011). J.H.Cooke in *On the Tyndales in Gloucestershire Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* Vo. 2 1877/78 p. 36 Note 1 refers to one other instance he had found of the use of this name. This was in Cam c.1350.

<sup>19</sup> TNA SC 11/214 January 1507 Rental is the first example of Thomas and William as tenants. TNA E 315/37 no 173 April 1511 lease to Thomas Tyndale. TNA SC 6/HENVIII/1083 Michaelmas 1524 is the last record of Thomas and William as tenants.

<sup>20</sup> TNA SC 11/209 May 1478 Rental. John Smyth *The Berkeley Manuscripts: A Description of the Hundred of Berkeley in the County of Gloucester and of its Inhabitants* Vol. 3 John Maclean ed. for B&GAS 1885 pp. 243/244 for Rivers lands in Hurst. TNA SC 11/214 January 1507 Rental. TNA SC 2/175/19 August 1507 Manorial court. TNA SC 2/176/13 April 1515 Manorial court.

<sup>21</sup> TNA SC 6/HENVII/1072 1508 Account of Receiver for reference back to Walter. TNA DL 30/982/77 Berkeley View of Frankpledge April 1444. TNA C1/1505/35-36 William Hicks v Richard Tyndale.

<sup>22</sup> GA D2078 Acc 4311 box 18 January 1542 Deed of Settlement. GA 1543/4 1543 Will of Alice Tyndale.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Demaus pp.20/21. TNA SP1/74/94 & 100 January 1533 Stokesley to Cromwell.

<sup>24</sup> For further discussion of the Stokesley letters see Andrew Hope Who was William Tyndale in *The Tyndale Society Journal* No.38 Spring 2010 p.12ff.

<sup>25</sup> TNA PROB 11/31 1546 Will. L & P 2/2570 1516 Grant of Manor of Hurst. L & P 3/405/18/m19 1519 for appointment as Receiver. CPR 8Eliz Pt 2 Item 2140 for reference to a lease on Pull Court of 1539, but TNA SP1/49/158 for a letter from Edward at Pull undated but catalogued as 1528. John Caley ed. *Valor Ecclesiasticus* London 1810-1834 Volume 2 p.171ff for roles in relation to Tewkesbury Abbey estates.

<sup>26</sup> Ralph Werrell Tyndale in *Gloucestershire The Tyndale Society Journal* No.35 Autumn 2008 p.16ff. John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or TAMO (1563 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 08.02.2012] p.569ff. For Sir John Walsh and the Berkeley lands see John Smyth *The Berkeley Manuscripts: The Lives of the Berkeleys* Vol. 2 John Maclean ed. for B&GAS 1883 p.145.

<sup>27</sup> The fact that there are extensive manorial records surviving for Stinchcombe might be giving an unbalanced view of its importance to the two families. Also there may have been other branches of the family in the various villages who were insufficiently significant to appear in records. For the period between 1543 and 1626 there are eleven wills at

Gloucestershire Archives for the name Tyndale. Of these eight are from Stinchcombe. Only once does North Nibley appear, that in 1626. However, again it was only the better off who left wills.

<sup>28</sup> It would be interesting to discuss the records mentioning William with an expert in manorial matters.

<sup>29</sup> Andrew J. Brown William Tyndale on priests and preachers with new light on his early career Inscriptor Imprints London 1996 p.21ff.

<sup>30</sup> Andrew Hope Who was William Tyndale? in The Tyndale Society Journal No.38 Spring 2010.

<sup>31</sup> Joan Tucker Ferries of Gloucestershire Tempus Publishing 2008.

## A Note on the Possible Progenitor of William Tyndale

Carl D T Watson-Gandy

In a recent issue Andrew Hope<sup>1</sup> and Brian Buxton<sup>2</sup> gave interesting insights into the questions of who were William Tyndale and John Tyndale. This article proposes to give some background to the Tyndale families particularly from a genealogical perspective using some unpublished material. It is hoped that this note may serve to add some additional light on the background of William Tyndale.

### The Tyndale Families

In 1937 Philip Kerr, Rouge Croix Pursuivant of Arms provided a report to a member of the Tyndale family concerning a possible relationship between Edward Tyndale of Pull Court (his direct ancestor and the presumed brother of William according to Bishop Stokesley) and the Tyndales of Hockwold.<sup>3</sup> Kerr reported that there were 6 main groups of Tyndale. These are (using the spelling '*Tyndale*' for convenience as Kerr did):

1. Tyndale, Barons of Langley, Co. Northumberland, who became extinct in the male line temp. Henry III (1216-72).
2. Tyndale of Corbridge and Dyvelston, Co. Northumberland, became extinct in the male line temp. Richard II (1377-99). Radclyffe Earl of Derwentwater, Baron Tyndale, claimed a female descent from this line
3. Tyndale of Burgham, Co. Westmorland, became extinct in the male line temp. Henry VI (1422-61 but died 1471).
4. Tyndale of Brotherton, Co. York, ended in the male line 1686. Lucy Tyndale, the heir female, was the grandmother of General James Wolfe.
5. Tyndale of Dene and Tansover, Co. Northants, from Edw. I, to Henry VII, became then of Hockwold, in Norfolk and finally of Maplestead in Essex.
6. Tyndale of Gloucestershire, temp. Edw. IV. (1461-83). The principal branch of this family, frequently known under the alias of Huchyns, were Tyndale of Stinchcombe and Tyndale of Nibley.



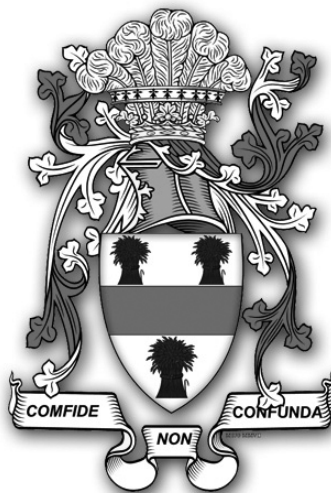
Only the last three families appear to be extant in 1480-90 - approximately when William was born. However, only the Gloucestershire family have been known to use the alias of Huchyns.

### Tyndale/Huchyns

It is curious that the Tyndale family might need to use the alias of Huchyns at a time when surnames were only just coming into use. Family folklore, as reported by George Offor,<sup>4</sup> states that Hugh, Baron de Tyndale of Langley Castle, supported the Yorkists and escaped from the field of battle when the Yorkists were overcome. He fled into Gloucestershire under the name of Huchyns. There he married Alicia, sole heiress of Hunt of Hunt's Court, Nibley.

He, according to Offor,<sup>4</sup> was the father of John Tyndale and the grandfather of William. This is patently not true. Kerr<sup>3</sup> points out that Alice, the heiress of Nibley, who married Thomas Tyndale, made Edward Tyndale of Pull Court one of the feoffees (trustees) in the deed of settlement of the estates. The family had been already well established by that time. Demaus<sup>5</sup>, in his biography of William Tyndale, suggests that this rumour first appeared in Atkins' Gloucestershire with the original source being Oade Roberts, a collateral descendent of the Tyndale family. Furthermore, if Kerr is correct, and there seems no reason to doubt him, the Tyndale, Barons of Langley (No.1 above) had died out at least 100 years before the York/Lancaster wars. Therefore, Hugh Baron de Tyndale is ruled out as the grandfather of William.

However, the suggestion that the family came from the North was supported by Thomas Tyndale of Eastwood Park (great grandson of Edward Tyndale) who wrote to his cousin Thomas Tyndale of Stinchcombe in February 1663 (as quoted by Offor,<sup>4</sup> and supported by Kerr<sup>3</sup>) *"I have heretofore heard that the first of your familie came out of the north, in the times of the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster... That it was your predecessor his fortune to come into Glocestershire, changing his name to that of Hutchins, and that afterwards he married there, and so having children, he did before his death declare his right name, and from whence, and upon what subject he came thither, and so taking his*



*The arms of the Tyndall family of Deane and Hockwald.*

©Martin Goldstraw, [cheshire-heraldry.org.uk](http://cheshire-heraldry.org.uk)

*own name, did leave it unto his children.*” Thomas of Eastwood addresses Thomas of Stinchcombe as “*Cousin*” and signs himself “*your loving cousin*”.

A more plausible alternative as the ‘*northern progenitor*’ of the Gloucestershire Tyndales would be No. 2 in the list above, namely, Tyndale of Corbridge and Dyvelston who became extinct (disappeared?) in the male line in the reign of Richard II, or No. 3 Tyndale of Burgham which family became extinct in the male line in the reign of Henry IV. Both families came from the north of England and it is likely that they would have been adherents of the Percys, Earls of Northumberland. In 1403 Hotspur, son of the Earl of Northumberland, led a small force attempting to join together with Owen Glendower but was defeated by Henry IV at Shrewsbury. A Tyndale might have conveniently escaped from the battle at Shrewsbury into Gloucestershire and settled there. This is, of course, speculation. Kerr was unable to trace Edward of Pull Court’s ancestry any further back but his conclusion is that Edward Tyndale of Pull Court and the Tyndales of Stinchcombe and Nibley are all inter-related. Edward, in his will, referred to a ‘*Griffith Tyndale*’ which certainly argues for the Welsh Borders.

Curiously Demaus<sup>5</sup> reports the ordination of a William Tyndale of the diocese of Carlisle to the nunnery of Lambley on the 11th March 1503. Lambley is in Northumberland but on the border between Northumberland and Cumberland. This William Tyndale would appear to be of the Westmorland family (No. 3 above).

### **Tyndales of Hockwold**

The main reason for Kerr’s report was to explore any connection between Edward Tyndale of Pull Court and the Tyndales of Hockwold. The Tyndales of Hockwold were certainly in existence at the right time but seem to have been courtiers, Demaus states that Sir William Tyndale of Hockwold was created a knight of the Bath at the marriage of Prince Arthur, and that his eldest son Sir John received the same honour at the marriage of Anne Boleyn. Family folklore says that Sir John was offered the Crown of Bohemia – he had claims through his great grandmother the ‘*Ugly Duchess*’. He asked Queen Elizabeth for her advice and was told to refuse it – which he did. Sir John Tyndale would have been alive at the right time but, being a courtier, he is not to be confused with the merchant John Tyndale who corresponded with William and helped him with money.

## Conclusions

This note has provided the Tyndale family explanation for the use of the alias Huchyns by the Gloucestershire Tyndale family and proposed a possible ancestry for that family. Unfortunately it does appear that there were more than one Tyndale family in existence, and given the draw that London ever has, this might explain the number of John Tyndales found by Buxton.

## Notes and References

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Hope, 'Who was William Tyndale?', *The Tyndale Society Journal*, No. 38 (Spring 2010), pp 10-24

<sup>2</sup> Brian Buxton, 'Identifying John Tyndale', *The Tyndale Society Journal*, No. 38 (Spring 2010), pp 25-32.

<sup>3</sup> *Philip W.Kerr, 'Report on a Search Relating to the Family of Tyndale', Unpublished report to the Tyndale family, 1937.*

<sup>4</sup> *George Offor, 'The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: published in 1526. Being the First Translation from the Greek into English by that eminent scholar and martyr William Tyndale. With a memoir of his life and writings.' Samuel Bagster, 15 Paternoster Row, London, 1836.*

<sup>5</sup> *R. Demaus, 'William Tyndale. A Biography', The Religious Tract Society, 56 Paternoster Row, London, 1871.*

**Plowboy Lecture:**  
**William Tyndale's Artistry of Vexation**  
*Talk delivered to the Annual Meeting of the Institute for Historical Study  
at Oakland, California, on February 25, 2012*

Anne Richardson

My initial experience with William Tyndale was not through his limpid translations of the Bible, which I shall bypass on this occasion, but through his speaking up for his outspokenness; most stirringly in the rough-hewn masterpiece, *The Obedience of a Christian Man* of 1528. Tyndale's writing, in a Victorian edition with the original spellings modernized, brought a spine-tingling sensation of being some two centuries ahead of itself: I was reading, not a "religious" writer, but a street-wise, iconoclastic citizen who exuded common sense and the rights of man.

Indeed, the word "religion" has a strongly negative connotation for Tyndale: "our most holy religion" is the English papal church as he viewed it, a men's club of hypocrites and cronies who maintain their power by fooling, frightening and robbing the English people. By the fall of 1528, the church and the state have escalated; they seek to criminalize the mere reading of "the word of. . . thy soul's health," Tyndale's name for the copies of the 1526 *New Testament*, translated by himself from the original Greek, and smuggled into England in bales of cloth or other merchandise. "They burned the New Testament," he says in his debut book, *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*; "I doubt not they will burn me also."<sup>1</sup> His acceptance of his fate as a martyr, and his self-effacement in his translations as a mere medium of a message far larger than himself, pressurize as explosiveness when he speaks in his own voice. Hence: the artistry of vexation.

Tyndale attacks two obscurantist practices of the church: one is the habit of allegorical reading, the other the outlawing of vernacular translation.

The allegorizing habit plucks words out of context and encrusts any truths that can be salvaged with factitious doctrine. For example, Pope Boniface VIII seizes upon the moment in the story of the Last Supper after Jesus tells the disciples to break with their tradition and arm themselves:

*And they, because they understood him not, answered, 'here are two swords.'*  
*and Christ, to make an end of such babbling, answered, 'two is enough.' And*  
*two swords were enough: yea, never a one had been enough. For if every one*

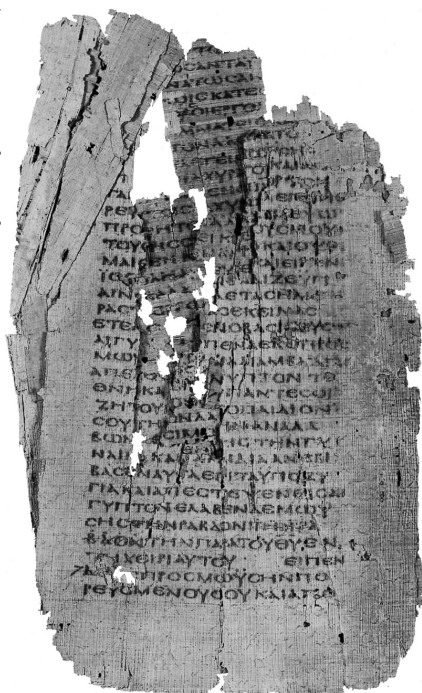
*of them had had ten swords, they would have fled ere midnight.*

With comic realism, Tyndale invites us to imagine an irritated Jesus, who desires “to put an end to such babbling” and calls an arbitrary halt to the commotion by saying, “two is enough.” (Some of my colleagues in Tyndale studies, who are devout Christians, refuse to believe that Jesus could get cross at the “babbling.”) So Boniface yanks the two swords out of context: in his bull *Unam sanctam* of A.D. 1302 they come to hand as the spiritual sword, which condemns heresy, and the temporal sword, the lay power, to which the heretic can be released for punishment.

Tyndale calls for searching *ad fontes* (in the meanings of the original languages) for the literal sense of a passage, and working with that. Literally and contextually, we can read what

Jesus and Paul actually said—and contrast with them the way the late-medieval Church behaves, and its claims for itself. So strongly he defends the effort to press for the literal sense of a passage, that he has been recently attacked, from the bully pulpit of the Harvard University English Department, as the source of early-twentieth-century Baptist fundamentalism! If not smeared over by allegory, the scripture can be a record of what Jesus and Paul actually said: therefore, in the eyes of the head man of the English church, the literal sense of the Bible acts as a dangerous exposé of clerical behavior: “*What then?*” sayeth my lord of Canterbury, to a priest who would have the New Testament go forth in English, “*What? Wouldest thou have the lay people weet what we do?*”

Tyndale was, however, enough of a literary critic to be interested in allegory and its operation. He calls it “*borrowed speech*,” the idea of borrowing is etymologically derived from the Greek verb *allegorein*. He thinks allegorical borrowing is what makes jokes work, and provides an anticlerical joke-book, starting with, “*It is the gentlewoman of the parsonage,*” a side-of-the-mouth



MS. 187  
Bible Exodus. Egypt, mid 4th c.

Greek New Testament on Papyrus

©www.schoyencollection.com

reference to the concubine of the local priest. "*When a thing speedeth not well, we borrow speech and say 'the Bishop hath blessed it,' because that nothing speedeth well that they meddle withal. If the pottage be burned or the meat over roasted, we say, 'the bishop hath put his foot in the pot,' or, 'the bishop hath played the cook,' because the bishops burn who they lust and whosoever displeaseth them.*" Tyndale's sharp analysis of the language of jokes could stand on its own as a pioneering contribution to literary theory, and the attribution to Tyndale of a key role in shaping our language derives from deft touches such as this.

Perhaps more important for the biography of the man, William Tyndale, is his heroic effort to promote scripture in the vernacular.

Freedom of thought in Tyndale's England was held hostage by the Oxford Constitutions promulgated by Archbishop Thomas Arundel <sup>2</sup> in the period 1407-1409, still on the books when Tyndale was born in about 1494, and in 1524 when he began his career. Arundel's aim was to save Christendom—a tall order!—which he hoped to bring about by eradicating a thriving religious and political movement loosely derived from the clever, subversive writings of the fourteenth-century English thinker, John Wiclif. Wiclif's followers were known as Lollards, and Lollardy is termed by the scholar Anne Hudson, "*the English heresy.*" The most hard-hitting of the Oxford Constitutions outlawed translation of the Bible and all Church deliberations from the Latin into the mother tongue. Few people saw, as Tyndale did, that the Vulgate, attributed to St. Jerome and vested with supreme authority, was itself a vernacular translation from the Old and New Testaments into Jerome's mother tongue, Latin.

The keynote of Lollardy was its uniform, anonymous style: all Lollards sounded like each other. They ducked recognition, were content to form underground cells and secret scriptoria, in which they copied continually their contraband translations into English from the Vulgate, called by scholars of the last century "*Wiclif A*" and "*Wiclif B*." "*Wiclif A*" was a trot for parsing the Latin Vulgate, with Latin word order; "*Wiclif B*" presented its words in English reading order. Some two hundred fifty Lollard Bibles, some of them fragments, survive to this day, eluding the frequent book-burnings by the Church authorities—a testimony to how diligent and well-organized the underground scriptoria were, in these times before the invention of printing. Lollard cells were adept at pulling up stakes and resuming their work—a skill we can admire in William Tyndale, who used various insecure bases of operations until he was given the hospitality of the English Merchant Adventurers in Antwerp. Tyndale has been dubbed by an early 20th-century scholar, "*a full-grown Lollard*" since

much of his thinking was built on his sophisticated Oxford and Cambridge education; accordingly my late friend and co-editor Donald Smeeton entitles his groundbreaking book *Lollard Themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale*.

Not for Tyndale was the anonymous style of the Lollards, the ducking of recognition. He says he was “*turmoiled*” in the English countryside; one bigoted archdeacon tried to anathematize him for heresy, but botched the attempt. Employed as a children's tutor at Little Sodbury Manor in Gloucestershire, Tyndale memorably exploded at the dinner table: as John Foxe reports the incident:

*Master Tyndall happened to be in the company of a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him drove him to that issue, that the learned man said: ‘We were better be without God's law than the Pope's.’ Master Tyndall, hearing that, answered him: ‘I defy the Pope and all his laws’; and said: ‘If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost.’*

Paranoid, grandiose, and delusional, perhaps, he not only saw the need for reform, but took upon himself the responsibility to make it happen. “*O cursèd spite, that ever I was born to set it right,*” was the note he sounded. If Not I, Then Who? He stood up to his monarch—as did Thomas More and John Fisher, who refused to subscribe to the Oath of Succession; but they, his brave doctrinal antagonists, were imprisoned in the Tower of London; he, as “*the heretic who is everywhere and nowhere,*” was free to make terms. He was not tempted to return to England by talk of a seat on the Privy Council; bait for a idiot! Instead, he proposed that he would return to England in two days, there to be tortured to death, if the King would but allow the circulation of a Bible in English—this vernacular Bible to be translated by anyone the King chose—even a Catholic, is the unspecified possibility. The martyr's bluff was mooted by his capture and execution in the Low Countries in 1536; but the terms of the bargain were met, in 1539, by the so-called *Great Bible*, chained to the lectern of every church in England.

To conclude: it is an enormous irony, of course, that the man who brought us the Bible in English should do so in the guise of a criminal. But perhaps Tyndale's choice of disgraced status was not totally at odds with what we know of the great, mythic movement of renaissance humanism. Humanism challenged reactionary thinking, and the forces of reaction pushed back. Valla and Pico encountered significant trouble from the Inquisition. Erasmus

managed to appease the Inquisition during his lifetime; but his old humanist friend, Caraffa, had no sooner become Pope Paul III than he placed all Erasmus' books, even those which had nothing to do with religion, on the papal Index of Forbidden Books. In such conditions, only Tyndale's unusual agility enabled his achievement to survive.

## Notes and References

<sup>1</sup> Author's note: Actually, Tyndale said "... in burning the New Testament they did none other thing than that I looked for: no more shall they do, if they burn me also, if it be God's will it shall so be." DOCTRINAL TREATISES, ed. Henry Walter for the Parker Society, (Cambridge: 1848), pp. 43-44.

<sup>2</sup> Ed.: For further reading, see the author's superb paper on Arundel in TSJ40.



## Sealed Up by Sufferings

Barbara Cross

I would briefly like to introduce you to two Presbyterian ministers whose lives were terribly affected by the cataclysm of the Great Ejection.

EDMUND CALAMY 1600-1666 is known as *'the Elder'* because he was the first of four generations of non-conforming ministers bearing the same name. Calamy was born in London and educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, where because of his opposition to Arminianism, he was not allowed to obtain a Fellowship. In spite of this he was made Chaplain to the Bishop of Ely, and was given a living at Swaffham Prior which he held until 1626. Following this for 10 years he became the lecturer in the town of Bury St. Edmunds.

His commitment to Puritan convictions became apparent when he left his ministry at Bury St. Edmunds for two reasons. The first was because of his bishop's insistence that he observe certain ceremonial practices. The second was his refusal to read out of the



Edmund Calamy

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Book of Sports to his congregation. It had been the custom in England for people to attend church on Sunday morning and then to engage in sports in the afternoon. Puritans, in conflict with the gentry, objected to sports being played on the Sabbath. James I was called in to rule on the matter, and to settle the issue, set out what sports could and could not be played on the Sabbath, decreeing that all Anglican ministers were to read this Book of Sports to their congregations. Edward Calamy refused to do so, and left his position. For a period of time he served in another parish but resigned due to poor health.

Finally in 1639 he was made the curate of St. Mary Aldermanbury in London where the congregation was made up of many prominent citizens with a strong Puritan tradition. Here Calamy was received the biggest annual stipend of any church in London.

During his time at St. Mary Aldermanbury, Bishop Joseph Hall published a defense of Episcopacy. Calamy, along with others, organized a response and he records that *"I was the first that openly before a committee of parliament did defend that our Bishops were not only not an order distinct from Presbyters but that in the Scriptures a Bishop and a Presbyter were all one."* Thus we see not only his Puritans beliefs but also his commitment to the Presbyterian form of church government.

Though a Presbyterian by conviction, his generous spirit was shown when he entered into an agreement with those Puritans who held an independent position on church government *"that for advancing of the public cause of a happy reformation neither side should preach, print nor dispute or otherwise act against the others' ways."*

In 1643 Calamy became an active member of the Westminster Assembly – an assembly of divines that the Long Parliament had assigned to restructure the Church of England. Edmund Calamy, as a representative of the Presbyterian position, was the 14th most active speaker in the debates which produced the Westminster Confession of Faith along with the Larger and Shorter Catechism which are still the standards of conservative Presbyterian churches.

It is a commendation of Calamy that though he was entrusted with the distribution of Parliament's pay to the members of the assembly he stated that he did not wish to share in receiving any money –possibly because he was better off financially than most of the other men involved.

Along with many Presbyterians he had greatly opposed the execution of Charles I. Consulted by Oliver Cromwell on becoming the Lord Protector, Calamy told him that it was unadvisable that one man should assume the government of the country. When Cromwell tried to appeal with the idea that it was for the "safety of the nation" Calamy warned him, *"It is against the voice of the nation – there will be nine in ten against you."* Though at first he supported Richard Cromwell (who ruled following the death of his father) he became disillusioned and worked for the restoration of the monarchy.

The Covenanter Parliament in Scotland had never agreed to the execution of Charles I. They offered the throne to Charles II provided he accepted Presbyterianism - which Charles promised, and was crowned King of Scotland at Scone on New Year's Day 1651. In England, because of the breakdown of the Cromwellian government and the disillusionment of the people, Charles II was restored as the monarch in 1660. Calamy, like most of his countrymen, rejoiced at this. For his loyalty he was appointed a Royal Chaplain and even preached before the new king. – In fact, Samuel Pepys

noted in his diary that Calamy “*made a good sermon upon these words, ‘To whom much is given, of him much is required.’*” Along with this he was offered a bishopric but he declined.

Charles’ insincere commitment to a Presbyterian Church government, and the strong pro Church of England policies of his second Parliament, led to various legal acts in order to stamp out non-conformity. These acts required the swearing of allegiance to the Church of England by office holders, compulsory use of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer in church services, non-conformist religious gatherings of more than five people to be outlawed and the prohibition of any non-conformist clergyman to come within 5 miles of his former parish.

Some 2000 ministers would not conform and were thrust out of their churches. Edmund Calamy said in his farewell sermon to his congregation, “*That beside many outward troubles, this brings a spiritual famine upon the land – a famine of the word.*”

Ignoring the new laws Calamy continued to attend his former church. One Sunday, when the minister who was assigned to preach that day did not appear, the people urged Calamy to once again fill the pulpit. The result was that he was arrested and put in the infamous Newgate Prison. One of the king’s mistresses was held up in her carriage by the crowd around the prison. When she heard that “*a person, much beloved and respected was imprisoned for a single sermon*” she told the King, whereupon Charles II set Calamy free.

Edward Calamy lived to experience the Great Fire of London in 1666 which destroyed 89 parish churches. As he was driven through the terrible ruins of the fire he was heart-broken. Arriving home he never left his room again and he died from prolonged grief on 29 October 1666. He was buried where his pulpit had stood in the ruins of the church which he had pastored for twenty-three years.

THOMAS WATSON 1620-1686 had an impact on my own spiritual life through his writings after a small booklet was given to me entitled *A Divine Cordial* (now titled *All Things for Good*). Like many Christians, I knew and loved Romans 8:28, which promises, “*All things work together for good.*” In reading this booklet I was given both a deeper insight into the riches of that verse, and also an introduction to a man, who in my opinion, is the sweetest of the Puritans and the easiest one to read.

The date and place of Watson’s birth are uncertain but it is thought likely to be 1620 in Yorkshire, England. We do know for certain that he attended Emmanuel College, Cambridge where he was prepared for his life’s work.

Emmanuel College had been founded by a Puritan, Sir Walter Mildmay, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer to Elizabeth I. His purpose in founding this college was for the training of puritan preachers. Though he had obtained a license from the Queen she was not in full agreement with his purpose and said, *“Sir Walter, I hear you have erected a puritan foundation,’ to which Mildmay replied: ‘No, madam; far be it from me to countenance anything contrary to your established laws; but I have set an acorn, which when it becomes an oak, God alone knows what will be the fruit thereof.’”*

The “fruits” from this Emmanuel College include eighty-seven names of well-known Puritan preachers, among whom Thomas Watson studied and found fellowship. He was known as a serious scholar, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1639 and Master of Arts in 1642.

In 1642 Watson was called to be the rector at St Stephen’s Walbrook in London, where he ministered for 10 years to a packed congregation. He was known not only for preaching which went to the heart of his hearers, but also for his care of his flock. One wrote of him, *“He was well known in the city for his piety and usefulness... a popular and judicious preacher.”*

A famous Bishop came to hear him, was impressed with his preaching but especially with his prayers. After the service the Bishop asked Watson for a copy of his prayer. Watson answered, “Alas that is what I cannot give, for I do not use to pen my prayers. It was no studied thing but uttered, pro re nata as God enabled me from the abundance of my heart and affections.” The Bishop left wondering how any man could pray in such a way without a written prayer.

Sometime around 1647 Watson married Abigail Beadle who was the daughter of a Puritan preacher in Essex. Over the years they had at least 7 children but sadly, as happened to many in those days, four of them died while very young.

Watson’s ministry took place within a time of great spiritual and political upheaval. God raised up many godly men like Watson who wanted to see the Church of England ‘purified’ and the Reformation completed. In this desire there was unity among these Puritans, although in political matters there was division. There were those led by Oliver Cromwell who saw King Charles I as a tyrannical despot believing himself to have the ‘divine right’ to rule the nation independently – without the aid and approval of Parliament. This led to the English Civil War between Parliament and the Royalists, which ended with the beheading of the king. Watson protested the death sentence and because of his commitment to the monarchy, along with many

English and Scottish Presbyterians he became involved with a plot by the Presbyterian Christopher Love to restore Charles II to the throne. With other ministers Watson was briefly imprisoned, while Love was executed, accompanied to his death on Tower Hill by two of the Westminster divines, Simeon Ashe and Edmund Calamy.

Upon being released from jail, Watson was restored to his ministry at St. Stephen's. Sadly, it was under Charles II, the very man that Watson and the Presbyterians worked to restore to the throne, that the infamous 1662 Act of Uniformity was passed. It was an Act to counterbalance many measures passed during the Civil War which freed subscription to the Church of England. We have seen with Calamy some of the requirements, but in addition to those, without subscription to this Act no-one could hold office in the government or in the Church of England, nor teach in the schools. It also required that no one could be a minister who had not submitted to Episcopal ordination. Thomas Watson, along with over 2000 other godly ministers, could not sign the oath agreeing to this Act and so he and they were forced to resign their livings

With much sadness on the part of his congregation, Watson was removed from St. Stephen's. In the three farewell sermons that he preached he commended the church members for their love shown to him, their attention to the Word of God and their *'zeal against error'*.

From Thomas Watson's farewell address

*"This morning, I had a flock and you had a pastor, but now behold a pastor without a flock, and a flock without a shepherd! This morning I had a house, now I have none. This morning, I had a living, now I have none: 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' And thus, brethren, I bid you all farewell. Finally, brethren, farewell."*

Thereafter he preached wherever he could, teaching in *'barns, kitchens, out buildings, or dells and woods'*.

Change came in 1672 when Charles II, in an attempt to give Catholics the right to worship openly, granted The Royal Declaration of Indulgence. This allowed those like Thomas Watson, as a non-conformist to the Church of England, to preach more publically. The great hall of Crosby House in London became a place where non-conformists could come to worship under the ministry of Thomas Watson.

When Thomas Watson was declining in health, he moved to Barnston in Essex where his father-in-law had served as pastor. There he died while at his private prayers in 1686. It was a great highlight of my 20 years of residence in

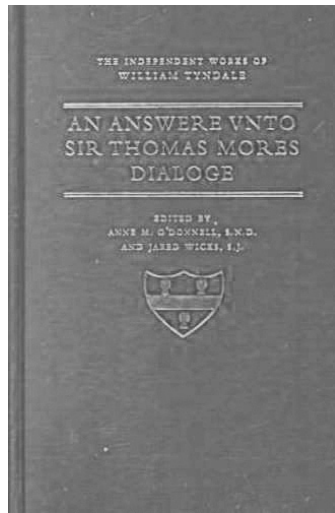
England to turn up the country lane going from the village of Barnston and find the ancient Norman church where he ministered. I had feared that there would be no remembrance of this great man. What a pleasure it was to find that a plaque had been put in the church some years ago commemorating his ministry and his great work, *The Body of Divinity*.

Although Thomas Watson wrote and preached on many topics, this is his most well-known and enduring book. It is a series of 167 sermons based on questions and answers on the Westminster Shorter Catechism. While a great theological work it has retained its popularity because of its readability and his use of illustrations. Today *The Body of Divinity* is usually divided into three books – the last two being on the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments. Though I have enjoyed several others, it was this work that especially engaged my attention and warmed my heart.

These two men – Edmund Calamy and Thomas Watson surely represent many men who, because of the Great Ejection, had their ministries “*sealed up by sufferings.*”

## Announcement

### *Tyndale Project Revived*



There was much excitement among Tyndalians when the Catholic University of American Press announced its intention to publish in critical editions The Complete Independent Works of William Tyndale. The CUA Press is the academic publishing arm of the Catholic University of America in Washington DC, and, in a clear example of ecumenical sharing, this series would parallel the publication by Yale University Press of The Complete Works of Thomas More.

In May, 2000, the first volume appeared: *William Tyndale: An Answer unto Sir Thomas More's Dialogue*, edited by Anne M. O'Donnell, S.N.D. and Jared Wicks, S.J. (ISBN 0-8132-0820-3). Peter Auksi stated in *Reformation* that "It is a thorough, authoritative, well-documented and scholarly edition, complete with 'Commentary', 'Glossary' and 'Indices'. It is a major publishing event" (Volume Six, 2001/2002, pp. 205-7).

John King wrote in *Sixteenth Century Journal* that "With their splendid edition of *An Answer*, Anne O'Donnell, S.N.D., and Jared Wicks, S.J., inaugurate the Independent Works of William Tyndale, a much-needed edition of the nontranslation prose. . . . [T]he Independent Works will make Tyndale's complete oeuvre available in texts that conform to up-to-date editorial standards. They will enable scholars to study a remarkable textual bedrock of exegetical and controversial writings that exerted an extraordinary influence on



sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English Protestant theological doctrine, literature, ideology, politics, and history. . . . [T]his book represents a model edition of a text fundamentally important to English Renaissance and Reformation studies” (XXXIII/1, 2002, pp. 243-44).

Peter Newman Brooks wrote in *The Journal of Theological Studies*: “This volume . . . provides the best possible aperitif to sustaining main courses promised in the language, literature, history, and theology scholars have come to link with a remarkable Englishman. . . . A truly objective edition of . . . [Tyndale’s] *Answer* to Thomas More’s damning *Dialogue*. . . . Sister Anne O’Donnell and Father Jared Wicks have taken endless trouble to assemble the full range of academic apparatus and appendices only to be found in the best critical editions” (New Series, October 2001, Vol. 52 Part 2, pp. 950-52).

It was intended that the series would continue with *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, *The Practice of Prelates*, and *Obedience of a Christian Man*, and a great deal of work was done in preparation towards this - including by the late Dr Donald D. Smeeton, who identified nearly 900 biblical allusions in *Obedience*. It was a disappointment to many when the series was suspended.

However it can be publicized with much rejoicing that work will recommence. Dr Anne M. O’Donnell, now Emerita Professor of English of the Catholic University of America, has established the Marie A. O’Donnell Fund in memory of her late mother with a legacy received from her, and is devoting those resources to help revive the Tyndale Project.

An editorial committee has been formed that will include Dr Brian Cummings of the University of York, Dr Susan Felch of Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI, Dr Anne M. O’Donnell, Dr Mark Rankin of James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA, and Dr Cathy Shrank of the University of Sheffield. Dr Felch is the new Executive Editor and will be editing *Obedience*; Dr Rankin is editing *Prelates*; Dr Tibor Fabiny, Karoli Gaspar University of the Reformed Church, Budapest, is theological co-editor of *Exposition of 1 John* and *Exposition of Matthew 5, 6, 7*; and Dr Shrank will edit *A Pathway into the Holy Scripture*, *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, and *A Brief Declaration of the Sacraments* in Volume 5.

The series will require detailed, pains-taking work, and the publication date has not yet been set for the next edition. The editors, however, are presenting scholarly papers on Tyndale at various conferences and anticipate a growing interest in the project. The Tyndale Society looks forward to bringing you more information as soon as it is available.



# The New Matthew Bible Project

## *Introduction to the New Matthew Bible Transposition Project*

Ruth Magnusson Davis

Baruch House, a small Canadian publisher, has undertaken to republish the 16th century Matthew Bible, minimally edited for today's reader. The *New Matthew Bible* will, we pray, be a true and outstanding monument to the work and faith of the three men who produced it: the translators William Tyndale and Miles Coverdale, and the editor John Rogers, who compiled their work, added study helps and notes, and spearheaded publication. These men spent years in exile from their beloved England so that they could pursue their work with Scripture, and Tyndale and Rogers paid for their labour with their lives, in fire at the stake.

The *Matthew Bible* is thus a martyrs' bible. It is God's word purchased with blood during the great tribulation of the Reformation years. It is also the real, though often unacknowledged, primary version of our King James Bible, which is a testament to its enduring worth.

### **Estimated Completion**

It is difficult to anticipate with certainty when the New Matthew Bible (*NMB*) may be complete, however we tentatively hope to have the New and Old Testaments ready by 2020, for production and distribution with a major publisher if possible. An early version of the New Testament may be published before the Old.

We would like the *NMB* to be easy to hold in the hand and convenient to read, but with its tables, introductions, and notes, it could be akin to a good size study bible. Therefore we will need to consider production options in due course. As for the Apocrypha, we reserve for the future any decision about publication.

### **Style and Tone of the *New Matthew Bible*: Faithful to the Original**

The goal is not to make a modern bible from an old one, but to keep as much of the old as possible while making it understandable for today. Eccentric spelling, together with syntax and grammar that obscure the meaning, must be updated. Obsolete words ("*advoutry*," "*assoil*") must be replaced. Words that have changed their meaning and are therefore misleading ("*conceits*," "*singleness*," "*ghostly minded*") need to be replaced. However we will keep certain archaic constructions, and words that are still understandable, such as the preposition "*unto*" which we will selectively retain. "*Unto*" is within the passive competence of native English



We are working from this original 1549 Matthew Bible (a 2nd edition of the 1537 Matthew Bible)

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speakers and is able to express some concepts in a way that no modern preposition can. We will retain Tyndale's *"sweet bread,"* which he put following Martin Luther, and where others have *"unleavened bread."* We will keep *"beseech," "brethren,"* and *"tarry;"* also *"heathen," "the flesh,"* and *"Abraham's seed."*

There are good reasons to keep close to the original *Matthew Bible* besides the fidelity that is called for by the name. Foremost is that, as a faithful and uncompromised translation, to depart too far from the text is to risk departing from truth. Also, because the *Matthew Bible* formed the basis of the Geneva and King James Bibles, a body of theological and devotional works and hymns has been developed over the centuries using its language and turns of phrase, and those resources will remain accessible and relevant. Thomas Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer*, especially the traditional versions still in use in Anglican congregations in many countries, shows the influence of Coverdale and Tyndale. More could be said, but we believe that many will find the language of these scriptures, once brought to light again, and with the cobwebs of time dusted off, to be the real and the most pleasing language of the faith.

We share William Tyndale's desire to make the scriptures plain, even for "the boy that drives the plough." His famous words to a Roman Catholic cleric were related by John Foxe:

*Master Tyndall happened to be in the company of a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him drove him to that issue, that the learned man said, "We were better be without God's law than the Pope's." Master*

*Tyndall, hearing that, answered him, "I defy the Pope and all his laws"; and said, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost."*

But Tyndale did not offer God's holy word in street language. Nor did he promise instant comprehension of every verse of scripture. He said that the idiom of the Bible may "*at the first chop*" be difficult, and that a right understanding is given progressively by God. Our challenge, therefore, is to update the 16<sup>th</sup> century text only as far as is necessary to avoid needless obscurity. And even if we do this well, it will nevertheless be now as it was then: ploughboys who grapple with the mysteries of the faith must ask, seek, and knock, and then they will find.<sup>1</sup>

### People and Resources

The *New Matthew Bible* project is primarily the labour and passion of one person, who is author, student, researcher, and chief editor: Ruth Magnusson Davis. However it was Dan North who first saw the need and occasion for the work, and his encouragement helped give birth to it. Others provide editorial or technical assistance, and David McEwan and Ruth's mother Joan Davis have given long hours reading aloud to compare texts. Two new volunteers joined the project in the Spring of 2012: Ruth Soffos is the daughter of one Thomas Rogers, and traces her ancestry back to our John Rogers who compiled the Matthew Bible. Mrs. Soffos and her daughter-in-law Kathy are versifying and preparing text for the editor's pen. It is most fitting that they are working to restore the magnum opus of their forefather.

Our chief textual resource is a 1549 Matthew Bible, whose rag paper pages are well preserved, if fusty-smelling. Rebound in 1887, it is sturdy and complete. Occasionally we encounter elegant notations from an unknown hand, but otherwise the pages are clean and legible, though sometimes a magnifying glass is needed to decipher tiny or blurred letters. In addition we have photographic facsimiles of the 1537 *Matthew Bible*, useful for cross-checking; Tyndale's 1526 *New Testament*, helpful for research; and Miles Coverdale's 1535 bible, which often contains informative alternate renderings.

This work requires an understanding of the doctrine and theology of the men who gave us the Matthew Bible. We have their books, including Tyndale's expositions of scripture, which are deeply edifying. We have Coverdale's translations of Otho Wermulleruss, foundational treatises such as "*The Hope*

*of the Faythfull, declaringe breiefely and clearely the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ past ... With an evident probation that there is an eternall life of the faithful, and everlasting damnation of the wicked.*" And we have, of course, the *Matthew Bible*, which by its thoughtful notes and commentaries often explains itself.

Expertise in Greek or Hebrew is not required for the English transposition. Such expertise might serve more to confound the work, if the editor were tempted to second-guess the translators' decisions. After all, her task is not translating; that has been done. But in her present work with the *New Testament* she consults Greek-English concordances, dictionaries, and interlinear bibles for confirming patterns of translation and so forth, and she will not refuse counsel from those who know the ancient languages.

As to the English, the work of course demands expertise in 16<sup>th</sup> century grammar and vocabulary. Textbooks on early modern English and Shakespearean grammars assist, as do older grammars that treat of obsolete subjunctive uses and suchlike. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) is invaluable; we use the 1936 Shorter *OED* supplemented with the longer online version, which reviews grammatical applications and gives examples of obsolete usages. But even the *OED* may overlook an early word use. Cawdrey's little 1604 dictionary sometimes supplies a missing sense, and the editor is developing her own word and grammar studies, including computer-aided reviews of prose and Scripture that help determine how some of the more mysterious words or constructions should be understood.

## Form and Changes

Scripture text will be organized in paragraphs as in the *Matthew Bible*, though we may not follow its divisions. Verse numbers will be inserted. We hope to add back some of Tyndale's prologues, especially from his 1530 *Pentateuch*, if space allows.

Where it is demonstrated that the *Matthew Bible* scriptures were improved by later revisers, we know Tyndale, Coverdale, and Rogers would desire emendation, and it will be done accordingly. But we often lament that the scriptures have been obscured, or even turned completely around, as at 2 Corinthians 7:12: in Tyndale, Paul explains to the Corinthians that he had rebuked them in order "*that our good mind which we have toward you ... might appear to you.*" But the RSV©1971 has "*that your zeal for us might be revealed to you.*"

We will endeavour to resolve difficult language in Tyndale's translation by borrowing from Coverdale's own 1535 translation of the scriptures, where he used contemporary language. We do this in recognition of Coverdale's work.

We have found places where John Rogers acted editorially to emend Tyndale's translation, and no doubt will in due course find the same in

Coverdale's scriptures. These are not frequent, but may be significant. Some are first seen in the 1549 edition of the *Matthew Bible*, which of course was the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. This seems to confirm that it is wiser to use this edition as our base: more than ten years elapsed between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> editions, which gave Rogers an opportunity to further his studies and consider the work. We wish to reap the benefit of a matured understanding. We find most of his revisions to be pleasing and sensible, and do not doubt that in God's wisdom he added to the value of the Tyndale and Coverdale's translations.

Rogers incorporated in the *Matthew Bible* a "*Table of Principal Matters*," which historians say he took from the French Reformer Pierre Olivetan. It is an important resource containing compendious reviews of bible doctrines, and will be kept in its entirety. Rogers wrote of it:

*As the bees diligently do gather together swete flowres, to make by natural craft the swete hony: so have I done the principal sentences conteyned in the Byble. The whych are ordeyned after the maner of a table, for the consolacyon of those which are not yet exercysed & instructed in the holy Scripture.*

All told, we trust that the *New Matthew Bible* will be as complete and faithful a resource as the original was. We encourage readers to keep up with the unfolding project by visiting our website at [www.newmatthewbible.org](http://www.newmatthewbible.org). The site includes articles about Tyndale and the *Matthew Bible*, and seven *New Testament* books have been posted to date. Interested parties can subscribe for notices of new postings and occasional news bulletins.

### **Biographical Note: Ruth Magnusson Davis**

Ruth received a B.A. in French language studies with a German minor, and then a Bachelor of Laws degree. She practiced law for 28 years until retiring to study for the New Matthew Bible project. A member of the Tyndale Society, some of her articles regarding Tyndale have been published in the Society Journal. As a young believer she founded Baruch House to publish a book she wrote examining problems in the Charismatic Church, *True to His Ways: Purity and Safety in Christian Spiritual Practice*. Ruth resides in British Columbia, Canada, and is a member of the Traditional Anglican Church of Canada, formed in 2010.

<sup>1</sup> I wish to acknowledge my debt to Dr. Jonathan Moore, whose discussion in *TSJ No. 41* of Tyndale's acceptance of obscurity in biblical idiom assisted me to articulate this concept. (See his article *William Tyndale's Influence on the 1611 Bible: A Quadricentenary Appreciation*).

## Dates for Your Diary

♦ Wednesday, 18th December, 2013 12:30 pm

*Tyndale Society Annual Service of Lessons & Carols*

St Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Lane, City of London.

All members and friends are welcome.

Reception afterwards.

♦ 11th December, 2013 - 29th March, 2014

*Wolf Hall and Bring up the Bodies*

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK.

Hilary Mantel's prize-winning novels

adapted for the stage by Mike Poulton

Box Office: +44 (0) 844 800 1110

♦ Thursday, 27th – Saturday, 29th March, 2014

*Renaissance Society of America Conference*, New York City

'Thomas More Facing his Time' session with participants from:

Amici Thomae Mori/Catholic University of America and

The Tyndale Society

(full schedule from September, 2013 on [RSA.org](http://RSA.org))

♦ Saturday, 10th May, 2014

Wolsey & Cromwell in Ipswich – study day

Details to be announced.

**Advance Information:**

**2015**

♦ 1st- 4th October, 2015

*Tyndale Society Oxford International Conference*

Hertford College, Oxford, UK.

Details to be announced.

## Joining the Tyndale Society Frequently Asked Questions:

### What is the Tyndale Society?

The Tyndale Society is a registered charity which exists to tell people about William Tyndale's great work and influence, and to stimulate study of the man who gave us our English Bible.

### Who can be a Member?

Membership of the Tyndale Society is open to all who share an interest in the life and work of William Tyndale.

### Where are Members based?

Our membership is worldwide, with a large proportion of members based in the UK and the USA and some as far afield as Japan and Australia.

### What are the categories of Membership?

Individual Membership (£22.50/\$45 per year)

Reformation Membership (£45.00/\$90 per year)

### What will I receive when I join?

*All members receive:* Two issues of the *Tyndale Society Journal* per year

Regular invitations to conferences, lectures and social events

Invitations to tour historical sites not generally open to the public

25% Discount on advertising in the *Tyndale Society Journal*

*In addition, Reformation (US 'Scholarly') Members receive:*

One issue of *Reformation* per year (representing a 50% discount)

### What Payment Methods are Accepted?

Standing order, Cheque payment in £ (GBP) or \$ (US Dollars)

Cash (if you join the Society at a membership event)

### So how do I apply to become a Member?

Fill in the form opposite or overleaf (depending on country) and send it to:

**UK/EUR/ROW:** Gillian Guest, Membership Secretary,  
28 St Paul's Crescent, Botley, Oxford OX2 9AG, UK.

**US/CAN:** Ron Ferner, The Tyndale Society (USA),  
220 Quakerbridge Ct, Moorestown, NJ 08057, USA.

**email:** maryclow@aol.com



# The Tyndale Society (UK/EU)

## New UK Membership Applications 2013-14

Please complete & return to: Gillian Guest, The Tyndale Society,  
28 St Paul's Crescent, Botley, Oxford OX2 9AG, UK.

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Member Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_  
County: \_\_\_\_\_  
Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Standing Order Mandate To: **The Branch Manager**

Bank/Building Society Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Account Holder: \_\_\_\_\_

Account No: \_\_\_\_\_ Sort Code: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

Please pay: **The Tyndale Society, National Westminster  
Bank, Branch Sort Code: 60-70-03 Account No: 86110683**

**EITHER** £22.50 **PER YEAR** (For Single Membership)  
**OR** £45.00 **PER YEAR** (Membership including Reformation)  
**OR** £60.00 **PER YEAR** (For Friend Membership)  
(please delete two of the above, as appropriate)

Amount in words: \_\_\_\_\_

Commencing on: \_\_\_\_\_ (Date/Month/Year)

And Continuing **every year** on the same date until Further Notice  
(cancelling any previous instructions regarding this payee)

I am a UK taxpayer intending tax to be reclaimed under the Gift Aid  
scheme for Charity No. 1020405 (delete if necessary)

MEMBER SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

Alternatively, I attach my cheque payment in the sum of: \_\_\_\_\_





# The Tyndale Society (US/Can)

## New US Membership Applications 2013-14

Please complete & return to: The Tyndale Society (USA),  
c/o Ron Ferner, 220 Quakerbridge Ct, Moorestown, NJ 08057, USA.

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select your chosen membership category:**

### **‘BASIC’ MEMBERSHIP**

with bi-annual *Tyndale Society Journal* (US Dollars) \$45 **PER YEAR**

**OR**

### **‘SCHOLARLY’ MEMBERSHIP**

(plus annual *Reformation*) (US Dollars) \$90.00 **PER YEAR**

(please circle one of the above options, as appropriate)

I enclose my check payment in the sum of: (US Dollars) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## Tyndale Society Officers:

Chairman Emeritus	Professor David Daniell	
Chairman	Mary Clow	maryclow@aol.com
Vice-Chair	USA	Dr Barry T. Ryan
	Europe	Dr Guido Latré
Accountants	Larking, Gowen, Norwich, UK.	
Secretary to the Trustees	Rochelle Givoni	Rochelle.Givoni@ctl.com
Membership Secretary	Gillian Guest	PMG7515@aol.com

## Key Contacts

Membership UK	Gillian Guest, 28 St Paul's Crescent, Botley, Oxford OX2 9AG, UK. PMG7515@aol.com
Membership USA	Ron Ferner, 220 Quakerbridge Ct, Moorestown, NJ 08057, USA. rferner@cairn.edu
European Representative	Valerie Offord valerie.offord@bluewin.ch
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Ploughboy Group	Revd. David Ireson, 50 Camperdown Terrace, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 1EQ +44 (0) 1395 263307 decuman@hotmail.com
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