The Tyndale Society Journal

No. 27
July 2004

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Submission of articles for the journal

Please send items to the Editor at the address on the inside front cover of this issue. Submissions can be made on paper (post or fax) or electronically (floppy disk for PC or e-mail). Electronic submissions should be in the form of a word-processor document file (preferably Word, although we can deal with some versions of WordPerfect), and a version in plain text or Rich Text format. For e-mail submissions, the document or Rich Text files should if possible be sent as attachments and the body of the message should contain the article as simple plain text. However, in case of difficulty with e-mail attachments, it is acceptable to send the article solely as plain text in the body of the message. The deadline for submission of articles to the next issue is Friday 26 November 2004.

Please note that neither the Tyndale Society nor the Editor of this Journal necessarily share the views expressed by contributors.

Editorial

Valerie Offord

Feast Day of St Thomas More 22 June 2004

It is uncanny how often a common theme emerges for an issue of the Journal. A recent lead article in the ***Church Times*** bore the eye-catching title *'By the light of burning martyrs - heresy trials in prospect'*. Suddenly the words heresy and martyrs are on everyone's lips in everyone's thoughts in the 21st century when many think they were confined to the 16th century! Sad cases of heresy have been brought to our attention from India and Pakistan, it has featured in recently published books, and Tyndalians are keenly aware of it through their studies of Foxe's ***Book of Martyrs***.

The trials of a certain John Hoggesflesh from Lewes in the county of Sussex leapt out from the pages of a book by Jeremy Goring ***Burn Holy Fire: Religion in Lewes since the Reformation*** (reviewed in this issue). Lewes had long been well known for harbouring a Lollard group in the peculiar deanery of Malling. Hoggesflesh was accused of the stock Lollard offence of denying the validity of the Holy Sacrament, but the reason that makes his case of interest is that it ran its course through a series of judicial courts and procedures and that finally he, although punished, was not burnt as an heretic. Rarely in the history of religious conflict has one obscure individual caused so much trouble to so many important people over such a long period of time.

John Hoggesflesh, lived in the parish of St Mary Westout, Lewes, and was a keen reader of the Bible. In October 1534 he was charged with refusing to *'give any honour or worship'* to the Blessed Virgin and with affirming that '*it is not necessary to be confessed to a priest'*. After a preliminary hearing in Lewes he was despatched to Chichester, where he was arraigned before a court composed of the diocesan chancellor, the dean, two canons, the mayor of the city and other dignitaries. After a lengthy trial, in which he defended his position vigorously with numerous biblical texts, his judges appear to have been confounded. Uncertain about the seriousness of his errors, they referred the case to Archbishop Cranmer, who in turn referred it to the Duke of Norfolk, who in his turn referred it to the King in his new capacity of Supreme Head of the Church in England. In due course Henry VIII confirmed that the opinions were erroneous and the Bishop of Chichester was accordingly instructed to have Hoggesflesh condemned. Eventually this *'famous heretic'* was forced to recant his *'detestable opinions'*, do public penance in the cathedral and read out a declaration of his errors in the market places of Chichester, Midhurst

and Lewes. A light punishment for the time when compared with the lot of Thomas Bilney in Norwich, William Tylesley in Amersham and a later group of avid Bible readers in Lewes who were all burnt for such an offence and who are all featured in this issue.

What fascinates Goring, the author of the book, is how had Hoggesflesh acquired his impressive knowledge of Scripture? Before the publication of Miles Coverdale's edition in 1535, the Bible in English was a prohibited book; furthermore before 1538 when, in accordance with the Second Royal Injunctions, the churchwardens of St Andrew's, Lewes bought a Great Bible to be set up (chained) in their church for the use of parishioners, it was difficult for the laity to lay hands on one. In 1534, at the time of his trial, there were in fact only two (strictly illegal) vernacular versions available. One was William Tyndale's New Testament printed clandestinely in the Netherlands, copies of which had been smuggled to England from 1526 onwards chiefly through ports along the South Coast. It is not impossible that some may have arrived in Lewes, where contemporary subsidy rolls record a number of Dutchmen lived. If Tyndale's New Testament was not the source of Hoggesflesh's extensive biblical knowledge it would have had to have been a manuscript copy of Wycliffe's Bible.

His trials may have been long but his sentence was light compared with the horrific fate of Thomas Bilney, the subject of lead article by Korey Maas. This paper was delivered at the very informative *Norfolk Bilney Day* this spring (reported on in this issue). At the *North Ockendon Day Conference* in March Brian Buxton gave an interesting follow up to his research on the Poytnz family. The thoughts he delivered then and his transcript of Thomas's letter of 25 August 1535 to his brother John asking him to intercede on Tyndale's behalf in England constitute the second article in this issue. Thomas Poytnz, although not burnt as a heretic himself, suffered great misfortune in trying to prevent William Tyndale's martyrdom. Eunice Burton has written a very succinct report for those members unable to attend this meeting in Essex.

The Annual Gloucester Cathedral Lecture *'Translating the Bible: Why Tyndale is still Vital'* delivered in October 2003 by Prof. David Daniell is printed in full. It recounts the writing of and quotes passages from his magnum opus published in 2003 ***'The Bible in English'***. This has been reviewed for us by a newcomer to our team, the Rev. Edwin Robertson.

This time I have been truly blessed with book reviewers. Neil Inglis, appropriately for this 'martyrdom' issue, chose a book by David Cloud ***Rome and the Bible: The history of the Bible through the Centuries and Rome's Persecutions Against it.*** Neil's reviews are never dull and one always emerges better

informed from reading them! Prof. Don Millus has reviewed a far from easy book ***D'Aubigné's Méditations sur les Psalmes*** and Dr Helen Parish tackled Archbishop Rowan Williams' ***Anglican Identities*** with verve.

America is definitely awakening. A great incentive to get this Journal out on schedule has been the thought that you will all rush off and register for the **American Tyndale Society Conference *'The Bible as Battleground: The Impact of the English Bible in America'*** which is being held in Virginia Beach this September. The organizing committee has put together an interesting programme and found an impressive line-up of speakers. Look on the website (no excuses accepted - get a friend to do it if you have not got a computer), sign up and get a flight to 'hasten ye there'.

Still dogged by Lollards, *Press Gleanings* continues the martyrdom theme with an account of the Amersham Martyrs Community Play by Garry Marshall who assures us that in spite of it not being *'a ball of fun subject'* the creation and performing of it was greatly enjoyed by the community.

The Ploughboy Group is rallying. David Ireson reflects on the Gospel Truth, David Green strikes a more practical note with an account of his recent activities and his pursuit of musical ballad. *Society Notes* will give an insight into the activities of your Society and its members but, above all, please read, note down and inwardly digest the *Dates for Your Diary* section at the back of the Journal. Fascinating and excellent events are being organized for members. Many of you missed their predecessors earlier in the year; and so do not let them pass you by this coming autumn and for the future do not forget the **Fifth International Oxford Tyndale Conference** in September 2005 and the **Lichfield Conference** in 2006.

Heartfelt thanks to those who have written to me and to the many contributors to this 'heretics and martyrdom' issue. Paradoxically it has been a pleasure to edit. Even the offline state of my editorial assistant, Judith Munzinger, has not been the great impediment I had feared. She has had to resort to a near Wycliffian manuscript state since her computer went into an inaccessible box in a furniture store but her devoted quill-scratching proved equal to the challenge.

Even though I received my education in Lewes, witnessed the burning of effigies of the Pope by the Martyrs memorial and relaxed in the ruined Priory grounds I would not have understood an earlier Sussex historian's remark *'Lewes may claim to have some fitness as a starting place for the study of English religious history'*. After working on this issue, as you will see as you read further, all is now explained and clear.

Thomas Bilney: 'simple good soul'?

Korey Maas

It is one of the curiosities of English Reformation scholarship that so little has been written about Thomas Bilney. It is a curiosity because, as Marcus Loane long ago noted, 'to Bilney must be ascribed the first human impulse in the Reformation movement in the schools of Cambridge'.[1] And even in recent years this assertion has been repeated by John Davis, who writes quite simply that 'he took the lead in starting the English Reformation'.[2] Davis also goes on to emphasise that he was the 'leading preacher of the English Reformation', and that his two trials for heresy can without exaggeration be called 'the most important of the Reformation'.[3] And the fact that I have very kindly been invited to speak here today suggests that some of you, at least, would agree that Thomas Bilney is indeed a very important figure of the Reformation in England.

But for all of the agreement about his significance, a very simple question remains unanswered. Or, rather, answered in too many incompatible ways. Again, it is John Davis who highlights this fact by stating that 'Few figures are more variously described in English historiography than Thomas Bylney'.[4] So the question to be asked is simply: Who was Thomas Bilney? One of the most enduring – and certainly most endearing – answers to that question was put forward by Bilney's convert and companion Hugh Latimer, who referred to him as 'little Bilney'[5] and 'Saint Bilney',[6] and whose frequent eulogies were summarised with his description of that friend as 'a very simple good soul'.[7]

Latimer's sketches of Bilney's life, which make their way into Foxe's book of martyrs, and thus become a virtually unquestionable orthodoxy among later English Protestants, provide ample testimony in support of Bilney as 'a very good soul'. We read that he was 'of a strait and temperate diet'[8] and 'could abide no swearing',[9] that he was 'laborious and painful to the desperates'[10] and 'ever visiting prisoners and sick folk'.[11] We also hear of his intercession on behalf of a woman falsely accused of murder;[12] and Latimer will fairly gush with praise when he describes Bilney as so prompt and ready to do every man good after his power, both friend and foe; noisome wittingly to no man, and towards his enemy so charitable, so seeking to reconcile them as he did.[13]

Now, of course, a sceptic would be quick to point out that this is precisely the kind of testimony one might expect from friendly witnesses like Hugh

Latimer and John Foxe. Which is why it is all the more significant that even Bilney's arch-enemy – the man who also did so much to make William Tyndale's life miserable, Sir Thomas More – could find little room to disagree with this characterisation of Bilney's life. Even he had to admit that Bilney was 'onys good, faythfull, & vertuouse'.[14] Even he had to admit that Bilney 'had lernynge, and had ben accustumed in morall vertues'.[15]

There is little question, then, that Bilney was indeed 'a very good soul'. But, at the same time, there can be little question that he himself would not have been entirely happy with an inordinate amount of attention being paid to his good deeds. After all, those deeds were not unique to Bilney; they are precisely the sort for which so many mediaeval saints were honoured by the Roman church: the very deeds which Bilney denied had any merit, and the very saints which Bilney insisted should not be honoured. So if we want to answer the question of who Thomas Bilney was, we also have to ask what he believed. What was it that motivated him to the kind of piety to which his friends as well as his enemies testified?

The answer to this question is far from simple, for the reason that Bilney himself, despite Latimer's description, was not 'a very simple soul'. To the contrary, Bilney and his beliefs are a complex and complicated issue. It is for this reason that Davis has already told us that 'Few figures are more variously described'. The late Richard Marius put this down to Bilney himself, calling him 'a martyr of somewhat confused beliefs'.[16] But confusing is perhaps a better adjective, because Bilney himself seems to have been quite consistent; it is only in the later literature that the inconsistencies and contradictions especially become developed.

A few examples: William Clebsch, in his much used survey of England's earliest Protestants, describes Bilney as the 'moving spirit of the Cambridge circle of Lutherans'.[17] And more recently Louis Schuster has concurred, calling him the 'leader of the Lutheran enthusiasts'.[18] But Davis, whom I have already mentioned several times, insists that 'Bylney was closer to the Lollards than he was to Luther'.[19] And there are those who also agree with him. Anne Hudson has said 'it seems certain that Bilney's views were genuinely only Lollard'.[20] In addition to these positive assertions, we can also find an equal number stated in the negative. Gordon Rupp was quite blunt when he insisted that 'Bilney was no Lollard'.[21] And Greg Walker is equally blunt in his contradiction: 'Bilney was . . . no Lutheran'.[22] More confusingly, there appears to be no clear consensus even on the question of whether Bilney was a heretic of any stripe, whether he had indeed passed beyond the fluid boundaries of orthodox mediaeval Catholicism and into either Lollardy or

Lutheranism. While there are those who claim he was a 'Protestant reformer' who held a 'Protestant world picture',[23] others argue that 'he cannot be called a Protestant although he is often portrayed as one'.[24]

So much for Bilney being a 'simple soul'.

But what accounts for such confusion? Partly, it is due to the fact that, unlike William Tyndale, Bilney left to posterity no substantial body of written material. In fact, what we do have amounts to not much more than a few letters, the transcripts of his trials, and a too infrequently referenced, but very revealingly annotated Latin Bible, which he had in his possession probably until his first trial in 1527. So the evidence with which to sketch an outline of Bilney's theology is not overabundant. With that in mind, what I would nevertheless like to do is to look once again at some of this evidence in an attempt to pin down more precisely what he did believe.

The best place to begin then, is right here, in Norfolk, because it was here that Bilney was born and began his education. And if we want to suppose Bilney had particularly Lollard leanings, then his Norfolk background is quite a convenient fact. Norfolk had a long tradition of Lollardy, with suspects being either abjured or burned throughout the whole of the fifteenth century.[25] And when the Norwich bishop Richard Nix complained about the Cambridge college of Gonville Hall, saying that there was 'no clerk who had lately come out of it but savoureth of the frying pan', he undoubtedly did so knowing that Gonville Hall – like Bilney's college, Trinity Hall – was largely populated by Norfolk men.[26]

Of course, setting aside what some psychologists might say, one's early environment is not an infallible determiner of one's later views. So we are forced to examine the evidence of Bilney's own words or, at least what are recorded as Bilney's own words. If we turn to the evidence of his preaching we can find there some strong indications of Lollard influence. Many of the witnesses against him at his first trial in 1527 were quick to accuse him of standard Lollard fare. Those who had heard his sermons at Willesden, Newington, and Ipswich especially recalled his condemnation of images.[27] And the testimony of those who heard him preach at St Magnus, London, deals almost exclusively with his criticism of the cult of saints.[28] And it is difficult to dismiss his accusers as hostile witnesses, because even those sympathetic to Bilney tell the same story. Thomas Fen and Guy (or Guido) Glazen, both Suffolk shoe-makers, as well as John Pykas, an Essex baker, would later recall that their own opinions concerning saints and images were either prompted by or confirmed by Thomas Bilney.[29] William Tyndale would also say that Bilney did speak against the cult of saints, their images, and pilgrimages to

their shrines.[30] John Foxe goes so far as to say this was the 'whole sum of his preaching and doctrine'.[31]

But even if we accept all of this as incontrovertible, we must also admit that, despite the strong Lollard flavour of such ideas, they were by no means exclusive to Lollardy. We can find the same sentiments not only in the works of such orthodox humanists as Desiderius Erasmus and John Colet, but they are just as strongly expressed in the writings of Luther and his Wittenberg circle.[32] We do have to admit that Bilney's preaching sounded sufficiently Lollard to attract a strong Lollard following. Thomas More complained that he knew of at least two who would not hesitate to travel twenty miles to hear Bilney deliver a sermon.[33] And his preaching at Ipswich in 1527 did draw a crowd of Lollards all the way from Colchester.[34] But, once again, Bilney is not unique in attracting such an audience. And once again Colet's name is worth mentioning, since a group of Lollards is also known to have travelled for some miles in order to hear him preach at Paul's Cross.[35] And, of course, from the earliest date Luther's books were being received in Lollard circles just as warmly as they were in the universities.

You can see why Bilney's position has become such a topic of contention. On the basis of his preaching – and it was his preaching for which he was best known – one is led to believe that his constant and consistent theme was the denunciation of such common beliefs and practices as pilgrimages, the veneration of images, and the intercession of saints. But this was a theme shared by orthodox humanists, Lollards, and Lutherans alike. So where did his contemporaries place him in this spectrum of beliefs? The simple fact that he was twice brought to trial and twice convicted is enough to indicate that the authorities, at least, could not consider him orthodox. And the evidence of these two trials, especially the first, sheds interesting light on the position they did believe him to hold.

One of the curiosities of this 1527 trial is that in the register of Bishop Tunstall, who presided over the hearing, there exist two separate sets of interrogatories. The first is a list of thirty-four questions recorded in Latin; the second is a much shorter list, recorded in English.[36] The different languages are themselves telling, but even more so are the contents of each list. The shorter list, which focuses on images, saints, and ceremonies, has not unjustly been called 'wholly Lollard in character'.[37] The longer list, by contrast, has been defined by the same author as 'a Lutheran list'.[38] And this is also a fair assessment. The very first question found on this list is whether 'the assertions of Luther . . . were justly and godly condemned' and whether 'Luther, with his adherents, was a wicked and detestable heretic'.[39] What

is particularly noteworthy here is the fact that, despite having both sets of interrogatories at hand, that judged to be essentially Lollard in character was simply ignored, and Bilney's trial proceeded solely on the basis of those articles considered 'Lutheran'. This needs explaining.

One author has attempted to explain this by suggesting that, in assuming him Lutheran, Bilney's judges had 'partially prejudged the issue'.[40] If they did so, this is at least understandable. If Bilney's Norfolk context might suggest Lollardy, then his Cambridge context could certainly suggest Lutheranism. It is well known that Luther's books were widely circulating in Cambridge during Bilney's day. It was only one year after he had become a fellow of Trinity Hall that they fuelled a bonfire in that city. Those who frequented the White Horse Inn, including Bilney, are most often assumed to have done so to discuss the reforming ideas of Luther. And it was Bilney's convert Robert Barnes who created the first public controversy in Cambridge by preaching a 1525 sermon in which he followed Luther's postil on the text for the day. It is this kind of evidence that has led Richard Rex to say of Cambridge in the early 1520s that 'all we see of the Reformation in Cambridge is Luther'.[41]

So, again, it would certainly be understandable if Bilney's position had been prejudged. But was it in fact? As significant as the articles brought against him are for what they say, they are equally significant for what they do not say. In particular, he was never accused of what had long been a central tenet of Lollard thought: the rejection of Christ's bodily presence in the sacrament. Rather than prejudging the case, it is quite probable that Bilney's judges simply found it easier to reconcile his moderate iconophobia with Lutheran ideas than to reconcile his view of the sacrament with those of Lollardy.

What is there, then, to prevent one from saying that Thomas Bilney was indeed a Lutheran, at least insofar as that term can be defined before 1530 and the presentation of the Augsburg Confession? Well, one small matter, it would seem, is decisive. Bilney, standing before his judges, confessed with his own mouth that Luther was indeed 'a wicked and detestable heretic' and that he was 'justly and godly condemned'.[42] Such an unambiguous admission certainly is problematic. Until we read Bilney's response to the rest of the charges brought against him. He confessed that everything on which he stood accused was indeed heresy. He defended none of the doctrines attributed to him. He simply said he had preached no such thing.[43] He denied everything.

In the face of the overwhelming evidence concerning Bilney's preaching – presented by friend and foe alike – this is really quite remarkable. Unbelievable even. And Thomas More, for one, refused to believe it. And he states his reason for distrusting Bilney's denial. He claims that he had heard on good authority that Bilney told his followers: 'Let us preche and set forthe our way. And yf we be accused / lett us saye we sayd not so'.[44] More's conclusion, then, is that Bilney 'in very dede persevered in perjury'.[45] This is a serious charge, and one which Gordon Rupp, at least, was unwilling to consider. He argued that it was inconceivable that Bilney, otherwise known to be scrupulously honest, would stoop so low as to lie, even in such dire circumstances.[46] But, in fact, we have good reason to believe that he would, and that More's accusation carries some serious weight.

I mentioned earlier that one of the few illuminating documents still available to us is Bilney's own annotated Vulgate. Since the thoughts recorded there were private thoughts, not intended for the eyes of the authorities, we can safely assume that they accurately reflect Bilney's true views. Two of his annotations especially speak to the issue at hand. At one point he speaks of the prophet Jeremiah telling a 'pious lie'.[47] And in the margin at 1 Samuel 19, where David's wife Michal lies in order to save his life, he notes, 'Michal, David's wife, practises deceit blamelessly.'[48] In Scripture itself, Bilney was able to find justification for sometimes speaking untruthfully. Which forces us to ask: if he would lie about his rejection of saints, images, and pilgrimages – which he almost certainly did – is it not likely that he was also being less than honest when he claimed that Luther was a heretic who had been justly condemned?

If we look once again at Bilney's preaching, this time not only asking what he preached, but why, we can begin to formulate an answer to that question. Bilney was certainly no rationalist; he was not attacking popular piety because he thought it superstitious nonsense. And it would seem that he was not simply a proponent of crude anti-clericalism, despising the authority such piety granted the clergy, as so many Lollards did. So why did he preach against the intercession of saints? In debate with the conservative friar John Brusierd, who criticised him for a sermon preached at Ipswich, Bilney argued that Christ's all-sufficient atonement made the role of saints superfluous.[49] Christ alone effects salvation. So why were pilgrimages condemned? Because, Bilney insisted, man 'can in no wise merit by his own good deeds'.[50] Instead, he explained to Bishop Tunstall, men should only 'put their confidence in Christ, who was for them crucified'.[51] God's grace alone, received by faith alone, is sufficient for salvation. And on what basis did Bilney proclaim such radical ideas? He told his hearers at Ipswich: 'here is the New Testament, and here is the Old. These be the two swords of our

saviour Christ which I will preach and show to you, and nothing else.'[52] In other words, Scripture alone carries doctrinal authority. Scripture alone; Christ alone; grace alone; faith alone. Those famous watchwords of the Lutheran reformers were no less the presuppositions of Bilney himself. It will not do to say that only Bilney's doctrine of faith is Lutheran, while his other opinions are merely Lollard.[53] Even when he is preaching what might sound like simple Lollard tenets, his underlying motivation for doing so goes quite beyond the bare biblical legalism of Lollardy.

But, finally, we have to ask, how far does it go? How far beyond Lollardy, and even mediaeval orthodoxy, does Bilney's theology extend? The last defence of those who would like to save Bilney from the heresy of Lutheranism can be summarised in the words of A.G. Dickens: 'To his dying day he remained orthodox on the Papal Supremacy, the authority of the Church, [and] the doctrines of transubstantiation'.[54] Harold Darby wrote nearly the same, saying he was 'orthodox in acknowledging the sacrifice of the mass, the doctrine of transubstantiation and the authority of the church'.[55] If this truly is the case, then Bilney would be a strange Lutheran indeed, since Luther himself was orthodox on none of the above. It is for this reason that John Davis concludes that Bilney was no proponent of Lutheranism, but of something called Evangelism, which he defines as 'the espousal of doctrines of faith while remaining in communion with Rome'.[56]

But even on the points raised by Dickens and Darby – and these are points Rome would have considered decisive: sacraments and ecclesiastical authority, especially the authority of the papacy — Bilney's communion with Rome is difficult to maintain. Bilney did tell his judges in 1527 that he believed the church could not err.[57] But once again he seems to have been less than completely honest, because the annotations in his Bible tell a different story. 'The church can err', he wrote.[58] And again, 'surely one can deduce how vain is that saying which is advanced: that the Catholic Church cannot err'.[59] In Thomas More's opinion, Bilney's regard for the visible Roman church was so fundamentally errant that 'the contempnyng of Crystes catholyke knowen chyrche, and the framynge of a secrete unknowen chyrche . . . was the very poynt that broughte hym unto all hys myschyefe'.[60]

It would seem, then, that Bilney was not orthodox on the authority of the church. Nor does it appear that he was any more orthodox on the subject of papal supremacy. It may be unwise to read too much into Latimer's statement that Bilney 'died well against the tyrannical see of Rome';[61] but Foxe is a bit more specific when he writes that Bilney began in his preaching tour of 1527 'to pluck at the authority of the bishop of Rome'.[62] In May of that

year he claimed that there had been no good pope in the previous five hundred years, and that they must be preached against because 'they have foreslaundered the bodie of oure Savyoure Cryste'.[63] When John Brusierd, the conservative friar who heard this sermon, criticised him for such unguarded words, Bilney justified himself by claiming that papal authority was no divine right. When Brusierd pressed the matter, Bilney even went so far as to confirm that the papacy looked uncannily like the description of Antichrist found in St Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians.[64] In the light of such comments, perhaps a bit more weight can be given to some rarely mentioned Norwich memoranda which assert that it was for 'speaking against the Pope's supremacy' that Bilney was eventually burned.[65] Taken together, such comments speak quite strongly against any claims that Bilney remained orthodox in the matter of papal primacy.

Claims for his orthodox stance on the sacrament, however, do rest on firmer ground. It has already been noted that, despite the dozens of articles brought against him, Bilney was never questioned on the sacrament.[66] And even with the great mass of information available to him, John Foxe several times regrets to inform his readers that Bilney 'never differed therein from the most gross catholics'.[67] It is very curious, then, that when Miles Huggarde wrote *The assault of the sacrament* in 1554, he included 'olde Bylney' among those who did indeed assault the sacrament.[68] It is certainly possible that Huggarde, simply for the sake of polemics, found it convenient to tar Bilney with a sacramentarian brush, especially since so many of his contemporaries did break with Rome on the Eucharist. But it is also possible that Foxe was being less than precise when he dismissed Bilney as orthodox. While generically stating that his opinion did not differ from that of the old faith, he nowhere goes so far as Darby and Dickens in stating that he held specifically to transubstantiation or the sacrifice of the Mass.[69]

Without further evidence this point cannot be pressed too far, but it is at least possible that Bilney's true opinion represented a subtle 'middle way', which allowed Protestants to accuse him of Romanism while also allowing Catholics to accuse him of Protestantism. What would such a 'middle way' look like? It would look very much like the eucharistic theology of Luther, a theology which insisted on Christ's bodily presence in the sacrament, yet at the same rejected the process of transubstantiation as a dogmatically binding explanation for that presence. Again, this point cannot be pressed too far, but this sort of confusion is not entirely unheard of. It is found, for instance, in the theology of Thomas Cranmer; and the confused party is Cranmer himself. When he looked back on the sacramental view he had held in the 1530s,

Cranmer disparagingly referred to it as nothing other than 'the papist's doctrine'.[70] Yet Peter Newman Brooks has convincingly proved that Cranmer's views at that time were in fact distinctively Lutheran.[71] The confusion arises only because Cranmer, who eventually rejected any notion of corporal presence in the sacrament, came to view the subtle distinction between the positions of Rome and Wittenberg as inconsequential.

At this point, a brief apology is probably in order. I have carried on for so long about Luther that some of you may be thinking you have stumbled into a meeting of the Luther Society rather than the Tyndale Society. But by way of conclusion I would like to suggest that Bilney's connection with Luther cannot be completely separated from his connection with Tyndale.

In the few statements we have from Bilney himself, Tyndale is never mentioned as someone he had known. Nor do Tyndale's few references to Bilney indicate any more than a familiarity based on second-hand knowledge. And despite continuing speculation that Tyndale might have been resident in Cambridge during Bilney's time, there is still no firm evidence to substantiate this. What Bilney certainly did know, however, were Tyndale's publications. It is with reference to Tyndale that Thomas More states: 'Another is there also, whom hys unhappy bokes have broght unto the fyre, Tho. Bylney'.[72] It was 'Tyndals heresye' of which he accused Bilney;[73] and therefore, he would say, 'god caused hym to be taken, & Tindals bokes with hym to, & both two burned togyder'.[74] But More is equally insistent in apportioning some of the blame to Luther; 'the very fundacyon wheruppon all other heresyes are byelded', More said Bilney had 'lerned of Luther and Tyndale'.[75] It was, he argued, the result of 'the false delyght of Luthers and Tyndales bokes'.[76]

Given their early and well-distributed presence in Cambridge, it is very likely that Bilney would have read some of Luther's works.[77] But the only questionable literature he is ever known to have had in his possession is not Luther's, but only Tyndale's. In particular, Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, and his Obedience of the Christian Man, both of which he was found to be delivering at the time of his final arrest.[78] Even these two works, however, bear the unmistakable imprint of Luther. Richard Rex has outlined Tyndale's debt to Luther in producing the Obedience of the Christian Man.[79] But even more well known is the Lutheran influence on Tyndale's translation of the New Testament. His translation borrows heavily from the vernacular Bible produced by Luther only a few years previously. Equally telling is the fact that the prefaces found in Tyndale's Testament are little more than reproductions of those found in Luther's edition.[80]

And what is true of the New Testament and the Obedience is true of much

of Tyndale's work: 'No other theologian of the English Reformation translated as much Luther as did William Tyndale'.[81] The result is that, on a great many topics, to read Tyndale is to hear Luther. It is partly for this reason that James McGoldrick felt justified in speaking of Tyndale as 'Luther's English Connection'.[82] McGoldrick only describes one other person in this way, the Cambridge reformer Robert Barnes. But on the basis of the evidence presented above, he might have been equally justified in describing Thomas Bilney – Barnes's associate and Tyndale's admirer – as another significant link in the 'English connection' of Martin Luther.

As noted earlier, there is by no means a unanimous consensus on this. Among recent authors it is not even a majority opinion. But if the interpretation presented here is even partially convincing, it will at least confirm the suspicion that Bilney, though perhaps a 'good soul', was by no means a 'very simple soul'.

Endnotes

[1]Marcus L. Loane, *Masters of the English Reformation* (London, 1954), 9.
[2]John F. Davis, 'The Trials of Thomas Bylney and the English Reformation', *The Historical Journal* 24 (1981), 775.
[3]John F. Davis, *Heresy and Reformation in the South-East of England, 1520-1559* (London, 1983), 46.
[4]Davis, *Heresy and Reformation*, 30.
[5]Hugh Latimer, *Sermons of Hugh Latimer* (Parker Society, 1844), 222.
[6]Latimer, *Sermons*, 334.
[7]Latimer, *Sermons and Remains of Hugh Latimer* (Parker Society, 1845), 330.
[8]John Foxe, *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe* [hereafter *A&M*], 8 vols., ed. J. Pratt (London, 1877), IV, 620.
[9]*A&M*, IV, 621.
[10]*A&M*, IV, 620.
[11]Latimer, *Sermons*, 335.
[12]Latimer, *Sermons*, 335-6.
[13]Latimer, *Sermons and Remains*, 330.
[14]Thomas More, *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* [hereafter *CWM*], 15 vols., ed. C.H. Miller, et al. (New Haven, 1963-1997), 8:518.
[15]More, *Confutation*, *in CWM* 8:26.
[16]Richard Marius, 'Thomas More's View of the Church', in *CWM* 8:1344.
[17]William A. Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants 1520-1535* (New Haven, 1964), 278.
[18]L.A. Schuster, 'Thomas More's Polemical Career', in *CWM* 8:1140.
[19]Davis, 'The Trials', 777.

[20]Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation: Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History* (Oxford, 1988), 500.
[21]E.G. Rupp, 'The "Recantation" of Thomas Bilney', *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* 167 (1942), 185.
[22]Greg Walker, 'Saint or Schemer? The 1527 Heresy Trial of Thomas Bilney Reconsidered', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 40 (1989), 230. See also D. MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County, 1500-1600* (Oxford, 1986), 150 n.68, who agrees with the view of John Davis that 'his views were not Lutheran'.
[23]H.C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958), 59.
[24]Davis, 'The Trials', 775.
[25]Elizabeth Gow, 'Thomas Bilney and his Relations with Sir Thomas More', *Norfolk Archaeology* 32 (1958-61), 292.
[26]Quoted in Gow, 293.
[27]For the testimony concerning his preaching at Willesden, Newington, and Ipswich, see *A&M*, IV, Appendix. For brief commentary, see Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993), 63.
[28]For the testimony concerning his preaching at St Magnus, London, also see *A&M*, IV, Appendix. For brief commentary, see Davis, 'The Trials', 780.
[29]Davis, 'The Trials', 785.
[30]William Tyndale, *Tyndale's Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue*, ed. H. Walter (Parker Society, 1850), 145-6.
[31]*A&M*, IV, 649.
[32]Even in the Lutheran movement's defining document, the Augsburg Confession, the cult of saints is treated with the 'chief articles of faith' rather than with the less pressing issues of ecclesiastical abuse. See the Augsburg Confession in *The Book of Concord*, tr./ed. T.G. Tappert (Philadelphia, 1959), 23-96.
[33]Thomas More, *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, in *CWM* 6:269.
[34]Haigh, 62.
[35]Claire Cross, *Church and People, 1450-1660: The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church* (London, 1976), 48.
[36]The interrogatories from Tunstall's register are reprinted in *A&M*, IV, Appendix. Foxe provides English translations of the Latin interrogatories in the text. See *A&M*, IV, 624-5.
[37]Davis, 'The Trials', 777.
[38]Davis, *Heresy and Reformation*, 9.
[39]Subsequent questions go on to address the 'Lutheran' positions on the relation of faith to works and of divine grace to human free will.
[40]Davis, 'The Trials', 777.
[41]Richard Rex, 'The Early Impact of Reformation Theology at Cambridge University, 1521-1547', *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 2 (1999), 42.

[42]*A&M*, IV, 625.
[43] See, e.g., More, *Dialogue*, in *CWM* 6:256: 'ever byfore hys judges he confessed from the begynnynge that the maters were playn false heresyes / the holders therwith heretyqes. Sayng for him selfe that he never preched them'.
[44]More, *Dialogue*, in *CWM* 6:257.
[45]More, *Dialogue*, in *CWM* 6:279.
[46]E.G. Rupp, *Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition* (Cambridge, 1947), 26.
[47]J.Y. Batley, *On a Reformer's Latin Bible: Being an Essay on the* Adversaria *in the Vulgate of Thomas Bilney* (Cambridge, 1940), 48.
[48]Batley, 47.
[49]*A&M*, IV, 628.
[50]*A&M*, IV, 627.
[51]*A&M*, IV, 634.
[52]*A&M*, IV, Appendix.
[53]See, e.g., Walker, 230.
[54]A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, (rev. edn.: London, 1967), 118.
[55]Harold S. Darby, 'Thomas Bilney', *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review* 167 (1942), 74.
[56]Davis, *Heresy and Reformation*, 30. See also p.31 for mention of Eva-Maria Jung, who defines Evangelism similarly, calling it 'reforming and ecumenical and within the Roman communion but having divergent tendencies'. Davis, 'The Trials', 778, assumes that Bilney was speaking honestly when he confessed at his 1527 trial that the church could not err. He also hesitates to give credence to evidence suggesting that Bilney did in fact reject papal supremacy. See his *Heresy and Reformation*, 66.
[57]*A&M*, IV, 626.
[58]Batley, 36.
[59]Batley, 36.
[60]More, *Confutation*, in *CWM* 8:25.
[61]Latimer, *Sermons*, 222.
[62]*A&M*, IV, 621.
[63]*A&M*, IV, Appendix.
[64]*A&M*, IV, 630. There is an interesting historical footnote to this debate. When the Protestant John Merbecke compiled *A booke of notes and commonplaces* later in the century, he included an article titled 'How the Pope doth sit in the temple of God, as God', by which he meant to illustrate the antichristian nature of the papacy. Significantly, the sole authority cited under this locus is Thomas Bilney, with special reference made to his conversation with Brusierd. See John Merbecke, *A booke of notes and commonplaces. . .* (London, 1581), 1079.
[65]See 'Chronological Memoranda Touching the City of Norwich', *Norfolk Archaeology* 1 (1847), 144.
[66]Nor was his like-minded preaching companion Thomas Arthur, who was tried

with him in 1527. For Foxe's error on this point, see Davis, 25.

[67]*A&M*, IV, 649; cf. 646 ('he was yet ignorant, and also devout as others then were'), and 648.

[68]Miles Huggarde, *The assault of the sacrament of the altar*. . . (London, 1554), sig. E2r.

[69]Foxe, *A&M*, IV, 649, does record one deposition against Bilney which might imply such a position. Thomas Daly claimed that Bilney exhorted his Willesden hearers to forego pilgrimages and instead to 'keep you at home and worship the sacrament at home'. However, another Willesden deposition on the same point (p.648) says only that he encouraged hearers to stay home, give alms, and 'offer your hearts, wills, and minds, to the sacrament'. The Willesden articles which make their way into Tunstall's register include no mention of the sacrament at all; they state only that Bilney preferred his hearers to forego pilgrimages in order to stay home and give alms. See *A&M*, IV, Appendix.

[70]*A&M*, VIII, 56; see also D. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven, 1996), 234.

[71]P.N. Brooks, *Thomas Cranmer's Doctrine of the Eucharist*, 2nd edn. (London, 1965); cf. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 181-2.

[72]More, *Confutation*, in *CWM* 8:22-3.

[73]More, *Confutation*, in *CWM* 8:26.

[74]More, *Confutation*, in *CWM* 8:359.

[75]More, *Confutation*, in *CWM* 8:25.

[76]More, *Confutation*, in *CWM* 8:518.

[77]In the 1530s Laurence Staples confessed to having delivered to Bilney some illegal books. See Cross, 59-60. And it was Bilney's friend Robert Forman, one of those who attempted to intercede on his behalf in 1527, who stood at the centre of English trade in heretical books, first in Cambridge and later in London. See Haigh, 61; Davis, 'The Trials', 783.

[78]The books were delivered to a Norwich anchoress, probably Dame Agnes Edrygge. See Rupp, *Studies in the Making*, 29.

[79]Richard Rex, 'The Crisis of Obedience: God's Word and Henry's Reformation', *The Historical Journal* 39 (1996), 866-7.

[80]Luther's influence and Tyndale's borrowing are especially unsurprising in the light of Tyndale's matriculation at Wittenberg only one year before his 'Cologne fragment' was printed.

[81]Jeffrey Leininger, 'How Lutheran was William Tyndale? Justification in an English Reformer', forthcoming in *Lutheran Theological Review*. I am grateful to Dr Leininger for allowing me to read a draft of this essay before its publication.

[82]James E. McGoldrick, *Luther's English Connection: The Reformation Thought of Robert Barnes and William Tyndale* (Milwaukee, 1979).

Thomas Poyntz: Defender of Tyndale

Brian Buxton

Edited extracts from a review of the efforts of Thomas Poyntz on behalf of William Tyndale in the summer and autumn of 1535 presented at the Tyndale Society's North Ockendon Study Day Meeting, Saturday 20 March 2004.

Thomas Poyntz would appear to have been in Antwerp for approaching ten years when he and his family were overtaken by the events surrounding Tyndale's arrest. Our knowledge of what happened in the following months comes from two basic sources, Foxe's Book of Martyrs[1] and some surviving manuscripts in the National Archives at Kew and the British Library.

It was in the summer of 1534 that William Tyndale became the house guest of Thomas Poyntz and his family. Thomas was quite explicit about this when he wrote, 'This man lodged with me three quarters of a year'. [2]

The life and work of the English merchants in Antwerp was centred on the English House and it has generally been assumed that this was where the Poyntz family lived and where they took in Tyndale as a guest. However, Paul Arblaster has recently drawn my attention to a book published in Antwerp in 1954 which explains things differently and makes sense of several puzzling facts and statements, not least that of Poyntz himself stipulating that 'This man lodged with me three quarters of a year'.

According to this theory not all merchants lived at the English House. There were other approved houses in which some, particularly young merchants, lived. [3]Thomas Poyntz ran such a house. If this is so then he was certainly right to speak of Tyndale having lived in, and been arrested from, his house. This also makes sense of a claim by John Foxe that Poyntz ran a house of English merchants. Most important of all, this helps to explain the degree of involvement of Thomas Poyntz in what followed.

Early in 1535 a man appeared in Antwerp who was to cast a dark shadow over the lives of Tyndale and the Poyntz family, Henry Phillips. Much about

Phillips and his activities is still uncertain. It appears clear that he was in desperate financial difficulties and had accepted payment from somebody in England to deliver Tyndale into the hands of the authorities in Brussels, accused of heresy. Foxe tells us that Poyntz was deeply unhappy about Henry Phillips from the start, particularly so after one day when Phillips appeared to be sounding out Poyntz as to whether he might be bribed into helping him. Phillips was calling at Poyntz's house and conversing at length with Tyndale who was talking openly about his work. Poyntz challenged Tyndale about this man. Tyndale believed that he was genuine, and so Poyntz assumed that a mutual friend had introduced them.

Phillips waited his opportunity. Whatever the technicalities of law it was generally reckoned that an Englishman inside the English house or one of its offshoots would be safe from arrest. The local authorities were reluctant to provoke a diplomatic incident. The merchants were economically important to Antwerp. If Tyndale was to be taken it had to be outside the house.

Every spring for several weeks the merchants left Antwerp to attend a trade fair at Bergen op Zoom, a town some distance away. Poyntz went as usual. When he returned it was to find Tyndale gone, his books taken away, and the news that his house guest was now in prison in Brussels. Tyndale, an Englishman, had been arrested under local heresy laws. The position was now quite delicate. The English merchants cannot have been happy at having a guest lured away from one of their houses and then arrested. Foxe suggests that they immediately wrote letters to the authorities in Brussels but the response is unknown.

What is clear is that by August, three or four months after Tyndale's arrest, no real progress had been made. Tyndale was shut up in prison. Thomas Poyntz could see quite clearly that his former guest would soon be executed. On 25th August his patience expired. He decided to take a personal initiative. He took up his pen and wrote a long letter to his brother John, at North Ockendon in Essex. He pleaded with John to take any action he could to help Tyndale's position before it was too late. [4]

It is difficult to be certain why Thomas wrote to John rather than direct to the king or Thomas Cromwell. It has often been said that John had served long years at court. Whilst this is possible the evidence seems uncertain, particularly in view of the fact that there was a John in the Poyntz family of Gloucestershire at the same time and that this family had very well recorded court connections. However, a review of Poyntz family links shows, amongst others, links with Kent through the first marriage of John's wife, Anne, to a John Cheney of Sittingbourne. From his will it is clear that he was close to

his near neighbour, and presumably relation, Sir Thomas Cheney of Sheppey. Sir Thomas was one of the longest serving officials of the Tudor court and a man of real significance. Also, one of John's beneficiaries, the guardian of his son and one of his executors was Sir Christopher Hales who, by the time of Tyndale's arrest, was Attorney General.[5] In 1535 the great families of Kent were still influential, with one of their number Queen. When Thomas wrote his letter he may have had in mind a range of possible contacts his brother might use on Tyndale's behalf.

Poyntz recognised the danger of the situation for Tyndale. Whilst he wrote of Tyndale's death as a 'great hindrance to the Gospel', he placed his greatest emphasis in appealing for help on Tyndale as a loyal subject of the English king. He recognised that a plot had been hatched and implemented. He believed those involved represented the conservative religious element in England, those opposed to the royal supremacy of the church, those he calls 'papists'. He spoke of their making fun of the king. Poyntz seemed to hope that if only Tyndale could be brought to England he and the king might come to some understanding. In this he may have been over optimistic. In any case, for Tyndale to come to England would mean first negotiating his release in Brussels.

The letter would take almost a month to reach North Ockendon. In the meanwhile Poyntz became involved in more official action. Probably in the same week that he wrote his letter to John in Essex, Thomas Cromwell also sat down to write. Amongst his notes is a reminder to ask the king whether he should write letters about Tyndale.[6] This certainly suggests that pressure was still being brought on Tyndale's behalf from some quarter. Presumably the king's answer was 'yes' as we know that in the next few days Cromwell did indeed write two letters.[7]

Cromwell wrote to two significant figures in the Low Countries, the Marquis of Bergen and the Archbishop of Palermo. We can only guess at the contents. Unfortunately the letters themselves are lost. When the letters arrived at their destination the Marquis of Bergen had left on a diplomatic mission to Denmark. The merchants arranged to send his letter after him by the hand of Thomas Poyntz, seeming to indicate that Poyntz was recognised as having a special involvement with Tyndale. He caught up with the Marquis who gave him a letter for the Archbishop of Palermo asking him to deal with the matter in consultation with the Regent and Council.[8]

The reply to this initiative was then brought from Brussels to England by Thomas Poyntz late in September. Again the contents are unknown to us. He must have arrived within a few days of his brother receiving the letter

written in Antwerp in August. John received that letter on the 20th September and the following day he decided to send it on to Thomas Cromwell with a covering note. [9]

On 28th September the royal summer progress ended with ceremonies at Winchester. Professor MacCulloch, in his biography of Thomas Cranmer, has suggested that this progress was aimed particularly at emphasizing the king's new role as head of the church. If so Thomas' letter, with its emphasis on Tyndale's loyalty to the king, could be said to have arrived at the right moment.[10]

Cromwell now had his reply from the authorities in the Low Countries, and he had the letter Thomas Poyntz wrote. He may also now have taken the opportunity to speak personally with Poyntz when the court returned to London. Whilst we can only speculate, it could be that any such discussion touched on the possibility of Poyntz playing a more serious role in resolving the issue than simply being a courier. Certainly when Poyntz returned to Brussels with Cromwell's reply in late October he was given to understand that Tyndale would be released into his hands. Again this makes more sense if the arrest was from Poyntz's own house.

Unfortunately Henry Phillips, always listening at an open door, heard of this possibility. Presumably without Tyndale's conviction he would not get a final payment from his masters in England. Immediately he lodged accusations against Poyntz that he too was a heretic. Some time in November Thomas Poyntz was arrested. The scheme to involve him in a negotiated release of Tyndale nearly proved fatal for him. Phillips' concern to remove Poyntz suggests that he saw this merchant as pivotal to a resolution of the issue. There is no sign of a queue of other merchants lining up to take his place.

Poyntz was not put in a prison but seems to have been kept in a house with two men to guard him. Here he was interrogated but using delaying tactics he managed to avoid giving answers for some weeks. Once this process was complete he hoped to be allowed his freedom with surety. However, the financial demands for his release increased, and he was also being ordered to pay for the wages and food of his two guards as well as his own board. According to Foxe he expected help from the English merchants at Antwerp but this was not forthcoming.

By February 1536 he realised that he would almost certainly be moved to a proper prison and he had come to believe that his life was in real danger. He decided to make his escape. His gaoler was heavily fined and the other debts were left unpaid - things that were to come back to haunt Poyntz a decade later.

If there was a plan to release Tyndale to Poyntz this idea may have been his

own or it may have come from the English merchants, Thomas Cromwell, or the authorities in Brussels. Foxe wrote that one reason he expected help from the merchants was that 'they brought him into this trouble themselves'. As to Cromwell, he must have agreed to the plan and yet there seems no evidence of any attempt from England to help Poyntz once he was arrested. Three years later he wrote to Cromwell requesting the use of a dissolved religious house to provide accommodation for his family. Perhaps he felt the English authorities owed him something, and he pointedly began that letter: '..he trusts his trouble your lordship has in remembrance'. [11]

So as 1536 drew on William Tyndale was executed in Brussels, whilst in London Thomas Poyntz was beginning a twenty-year period which was to be full of great personal difficulties - almost a living martyrdom.

Looking back over the events of that summer and autumn we see Thomas Poyntz actively involved in attempts to assist Tyndale's plight. It is clear from the letter to John that he had a personal regard for Tyndale arising from what he had observed of this man over the nine months of their living under the same roof. He highlights loyalty to the king and service of the gospel. However, he may have also seen it as his duty to be actively involved, particularly if the suggestion is correct that he ran the house in which Tyndale lived. He had accepted a degree of responsibility for Tyndale, probably at the request of Henry Monmouth who may have been Governor of the English House in 1534 and who had been a supporter of Tyndale back in London in earlier years. Poyntz had been dubious about Henry Phillips from the start. When he returned home to find his guest arrested he must have felt a sense of responsibility, even guilt, not to mention anger at what had happened. Throughout the following months he seems to have been the one who was looked to as the key figure amongst the merchants in the diplomatic efforts to free Tyndale and he seems to have accepted that role. In doing so he became involved in a situation which mixed religious, political and diplomatic issues. When he escaped from prison he knew that this was his only hope of life, and yet this in itself raised further problems - not least financial. His entanglement with issues far beyond his control was to overshadow most of the remainder of his life.

For some account of the following years see Thomas Poyntz: Brought Unto Misery For So Godly a Cause Tyndale Society Journal No. 24 April 2003.

Endnotes

[1] Cattley, S.R. ed. ***The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*** (London 1838). All references to Foxe are based on Volume 5 of this edition.

[2] Letter from Thomas Poyntz to John Poyntz 25th August 1535 : British Library Cotton Galba B.x.60.
[3] Oskar De Smet *De Englese Natie te Antwerpen in de 16de eeuw* (Antwerp 1950-4).
[4] See Note 2.
[5] Will of John Cheney National Archives Public Record Office PROB 11/22 February 1527.
[6] Cromwell's Remembrance August 1535: Letters & Papers Foreign & Domestic Henry VIII Vol. IX Item 498.
[7] Stephen Vaughan to Thomas Cromwell 4th September 1535: National Archives Public Record Office SP1/96 p.83.
[8] Robert Flegge to Thomas Cromwell 22nd September 1535: British Library Cotton Galba BX.x.62.
[9] John Poyntz to Thomas Cromwell 21st September 1535: National Archives Public Record Office SP1/196/208.
[10] Diarmaid MacCulloch *Thomas Cranmer* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press 1996) p.138.
[11] Thomas Poyntz to Thomas Cromwell 1539: National Archives Public Record Office SP1/156/105.

Letter written by Thomas Poyntz to his brother John 1535

Transcribed and edited by
Brian Buxton

To my well beloved brother John Poyntz, gentleman, dwelling in North Ockendon, Essex.

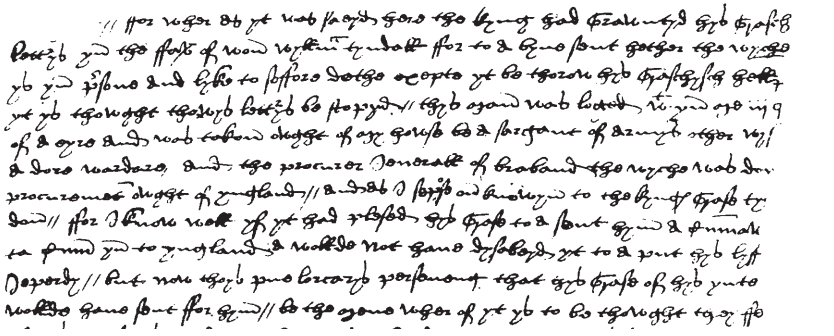
At Antwerp, the 25th day of August 1535.

Right well beloved brother, I recommend me unto you and to your wife, trusting in God that you be in good health.

I am writing to you now about what seems to me a great matter concerning the king's grace. Although I am living here in Antwerp, yet, of the very natural love I have to the country in which I was born, and also because of the obedience which every true subject is bound by the law of God to have to his prince, I am compelled to write about what I perceive might be prejudicial or hurtful to his most noble grace.

This hurt may come about through those who seek to bring their own ends to pass under cover of pretending the king's honour. They are as

thorns under a godly rose. I would say they are very traitors in their hearts. Who they be I name no man, but it may be the papists who have always deceived the world by their craftiness.



Whereas it was said here that the king had granted his gracious letters in favour of one William Tyndale to be summoned to England, who is now in prison and likely to suffer death without the king's gracious help, it is thought that these letters be stopped.

This man lodged with me for three quarters of a year and was taken from my house by a sergeant of arms and the Procurer General of Brabant, this done by procurement out of England and, I assume, unknown to the king's grace until done. For I know well if it had pleased his grace to have sent William Tyndale a command to return to England he would not have disobeyed it to have put his life in jeopardy. However, it is assumed that these men feared that the king would have sent for him and, in his abundant goodness, would have listened to him, and that this would have hindered their plans. So they must have persuaded the king or the council that the putting to death of this man would be to the king's high honour.

If a poor man may boldly reason with them, I think that if they had proper respect for God, their prince or public opinion they should beware of procuring such a thing. When these crafty fellows meet they jest at the king whom they have so clearly deceived. They care not that what they have done may become known, for it be reckoned among their sort as great wisdom. They are past shame. But a poor man that has no promotion, nor looks for none, having no quality but a very natural zeal and fear of God and his prince, would rather live as a beggar all the days of his life, and put himself in danger of death, rather than to live and see those leering curs to have their purpose. Some men see more than they can express in words and they sorrow inwardly until the matter is remedied.

Because this poor man, William Tyndale, stayed in my house three quarters of a year, I know that the king has never a truer hearted subject to his grace this day living. Whatever the king may have been told I am certain that, as this man knows that he is bound by the law of God to obey his prince, he would not do the opposite, even if he would then be made lord of the world. What care these papists for that! Their pomps and high authority have always been upheld by murder and the shedding the blood of innocents, causing princes by one means or another to agree with them.

Brother, about eighteen or twenty years ago they at Rome, to magnify the king's grace in his style, gave him the name 'Defender of the Faith'. This may be likened to the prophecy of Caiaphas when he said: 'It is expedient that one man should die for the people that all do not perish'. The prophecy was true, but not as Caiaphas meant it. So those in Rome thought that the king would be a maintainer of their abominations, but God, who sees all things, entered his grace into the right battle. Never has a prince done so nobly since Christ died, in the which I beseech God to give him the victory.

The death of this man, William Tyndale, should be a great hindrance to the gospel, and, to the enemies of it, one of the highest pleasures. If it would please the king's highness to send for this man so that they could discuss his ideas it may be that the court and council of this country could soon be at another point with the Bishop of Rome.

I think William Tyndale shall shortly be condemned. There are two Englishmen at Louvain that have taken great pains to translate out of English into Latin things they have against him so that the clergy here may understand it, and condemn him - as they have done others for keeping opinions contrary to what they call the orders of the holy church.

Brother, the knowledge that I have of this man causes me to write as my conscience binds me, for the king's grace should have of him at this day as high a treasure as of any one man living. Therefore I desire you that this matter may be solicited to his grace for this man with as good effect as shall lie in you, or by your means to be done. There be not many perfecter men this day living, as God knows who have you in his keeping.

Your brother,
Thomas Poyntz

Reference

Manuscript British Library Cotton Galba B.x.60

The Annual Gloucester Cathedral Lecture October 2003

Translating the Bible; Why Tyndale is still vital

Professor David Daniell

This is a real 'doorstop' of a book, as you can see! It is the story of the making of the bible in English from the earliest times — until last Tuesday — effectively! And is a story which seems to me to be one very well worth telling. It has to be told in that bulk. The Yale University Press has done a wonderful job and it's extremely attractive. But, as I always say, I only wrote the words, they made the book and they have made it beautifully.

I want to talk about something of the experience of making it. Although there had been a number of books lately about the King James' Bible (the AV), and they keep on coming, not many people have surveyed the whole extraordinary history of the bible in these islands and then in America, from the earliest time in the first millennium till now. That is an ocean in which the 1611 or AV or KJV is only one wave. I thought that there might be value this afternoon in hearing from someone who has seen the whole story and about what some of that experience reveals.

First, I want to talk about the whole scene of translating the bible into English. I want to start quickly by saying at the very beginning, although everyone in the room knows this I'm sure, that the Old Testament was almost completely in Hebrew, the sacred and very restricted language of the Jews, and that the New Testament was written in the common, widespread language of the Eastern Mediterranean in the 1st century, Greek. As I shall reiterate, the New Testament is a Greek thing; I keep saying this and it is very important that we know it. By the end of the fourth century the Roman Empire had brought stability across a huge swathe, from Scotland in the north to deep into North Africa and from Portugal in the West to the border of Afghanistan to the East - and the common language from metropolitan Rome was Latin. It was into Latin that the bible was, quite late on translated in various, largely inadequate versions, merged by Jerome in the late 300s into a standard version and used by the increasingly powerful bishop of Rome, later called the Pope. This Latin version, erroneously presented as the original, was kept by the church in its tight, iron grip until the 16th century. In the 15th century, North Italian humanist quest for the true originals of everything, increasing knowledge of Hebrew in Europe (though not in England), and Erasmus' printing in 1516 of the Greek New Testament, led

to the widespread printing and circulation of fresh translations in European vernaculars, led by Luther's German New Testament in 1522.

William Tyndale, first in 1526 and again in 1534, translated the New Testament into English for the first time from the original Greek. He went on to translate the first half of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew.

That Greek New Testament was the one that had recently been printed by Erasmus. Tyndale was also printed for the first time in unusually large numbers for a book of that time. It is always stressed how important this printing was, as an invention, but not enough has yet been made of the revolution caused by everyone who could read and hear, having the New Testament in English from the Greek. This matters very much and I can't stress it too strongly, - Tyndale opened the door of the Greek to the English-speaking people. His descendants, as it were, the New Testaments which we hold today, have not usually been 'bent out of shape' by being first in Latin.

In talking of the bible and translations, I need now to try to clarify numbers: the sheer volume of English bibles made since Tyndale in 1526. This clarification of numbers falls into two parts: first, the number of new translations made, and second, the numbers printed. Both figures startle people. Even before the A.V., the King James Version of l611 and after 1526, there were in England, uniquely in Europe, nine fresh translations or major revisions — Tyndale again, Coverdale, The Matthews Bible, The Great Bible, the three Geneva Bibles, The Bishops' Bible and the Rheims New Testament. From Tyndale in 1526 until today, the number of completely fresh translations of the whole bible, or of significant parts that have been published in English, is just over 3,000, 1200 of them since the end of the World War II. These figures are easily assembled from standard documents.

To many people, more surprising still, are the figures for fresh editions, not reprintings, of any translation. Numbers printed is another thing! The numbers of complete bibles or large parts in English bought between 1526 and 1540 make a total of well over a million. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the figures of English bibles bought, particularly in America, defy expression. One thinks of a number and then goes on and on and on adding noughts. The English bible has been the most influential book in the history of the world. Of course I knew that before I started writing, but I was myself amazed.

Now let me just pause for a moment on the Authorised Version of 1611, always known in America as KJV, the King James Bible. It can be beautiful and powerful especially in the New Testament, where it is as we now know, 83% pure Tyndale. But though a good deal of the K.J. Old Testament poetry

and prophecy is fine, a good deal of it is incomprehensible. But for some reason one is not allowed to say so! Not because of archaic language, but through bad translation and a loss of notes. As I was preparing this, my AV fell open at the first page of Micah, where I read these words:-

'Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of Saphir, having thy shame naked: the inhabitant of Zaanan came not forth in the mourning of Beth-ezel: he shall receive of you his standing'

Now that is incomprehensible - dare I also say it's rubbish?! There are, of course those, and I have met them, who say seriously that it doesn't matter that it is rubbish because God wrote it and He will help us to understand it. And there is worse. A cluster of marginal alternatives in King James only make it more difficult. The Geneva Bible at that point is much better and the marginal notes more elucidatory. Tyndale was killed before he could get to the second half of the Old Testament, so we don't have Tyndale on that.

For the record, King James had almost nothing to do with his version as it is always called, beyond receiving the obsequious dedication where he is surely blasphemously described as the 'author of the work'. Myths abound. We know now, thanks to recent study by Patrick Collinson, that the standard account of the version's initiation at Hampton Court in January 1604, with its hatred of the Geneva Bible, reeks of the writer's prejudice and malice and was a political gesture to the Bishop of London as a step to his own preferment. Moreover, in spite of another persistent myth, the 1611 KJV was not instantly loved and taken to the heart of English Christians ever after. Its publication was a non-event - the arrival of a large piece of church furniture, at best described as *'The new translation without notes'* (notes are essential to Hebrew poetry... half the Old Testament). Many of those who noticed its arrival more carefully, loathed it and said so. Its publishing success was the result of murderous rivalry between printers fighting over monopoly. No one has ever told this story before; it includes all sorts of extraordinary things including court cases and imprisonments.

The King James Version did not reach its near-divine status until the late 1760s. That was a political happening; the lifting up of God's England against the wicked French, and exactly paralleled the *'invention'* of Shakespeare, in the same year, 1769, as the *'Immortal Genius'*. It was to mark the English as God's proper people, (not the French), because they had the bible – and - Shakespeare.

In the centuries after Tyndale, what is overwhelmingly visible in the history of Britain and America, is the continually maintained vigour of the work of translating the New Testament from the Greek to English. After

Tyndale there were new editions and often new translations in every year except one, 1667, the reaction to the Commonwealth. Though the fashion among historians has been to brush them away, the effects of English bibles on our national lives have been so big as to be almost incommunicable. Tyndale has given the English nation an English plain style, a register close to but just above speech, sustained and varied, which has Saxon vocabulary and short sentences in Saxon syntax; the regular subject — verb — object, which simply 'gets on with it'. It is Shakespeare's base because drama has above all to 'get on with it'. He was a Geneva Bible man. With everyone reading the New Testament in English, (and the sounds, incidentally, as well), one can watch the excited discovery that God wrote poetry in English! Everyone was now free to read, think and say, without fear of a charge of heresy and a terrible death. for the first time for two centuries. Language and liberated imagination took off together at the end of the l6th century. The result was Hamlet and King Lear, The Fairy Queen and Paradise Lost, and all the '*nests of singing birds*' of those years.

Most noticeable in the whole story is the wider spread of translation work since the Second World War, an output, mainly from America that can only be described as a torrent. The great American achievement was the Revised Standard Version of 1952. They had been struggling for some 70 years after the English Revised version to make their own and failing. Then, suddenly in 1952 they succeeded, and in the book you will find a picture of the RSV, as it is still known, being presented to President Truman. There is such triumph in all the smiles on the faces —" We've done it at last! — an American version" (and it's very good). Since then American scholars have made about 150 fresh translations of the whole bible or of significant parts - and they're still at it! America is now awash with bibles. Most of them have been made over many years by vast salaried committees on leafy campuses, with full secretarial backup. It's a long way from William Tyndale in exile, cold and hungry, working alone in his room in Antwerp.

All the 87 fresh New Testaments made in England and America since 1945, with no exception, claim to be doing that miraculous thing — giving the Word of God at last to the people in a way that they can receive. This is a praiseworthy aim. If a truck driver in a layby puts aside a girlie mag for St. Mark's Gospel in racy language and gets something from it we should rejoice with the angels in heaven. But we need to be far more alert to what exactly the truck driver is receiving. Versions which consist of flip, one-line colloquialisms cannot convey the mystery of God and the power of New Testament theology. The illustration which I have used before is John 14; where Jesus

begins to assemble His disciples to tell them the most serious thing in His life -- that He is going to be killed, taken from them and that He is going ahead to prepare a place. He begins; '*Let not your hearts be troubled'*. That's Tyndale and you can't better it. One very popular modern version has *'Don't be worried or upset'*. Wrong! Wrong for the Greek, wrong in English, and quite the wrong emotional experience.

I claim to have seen, while living in California, 'Jesus got his disciples together. He threw them a grin and said - Hey you guys, lighten up!' Now we haven't got quite to that (and I made that up!) But I have seen things that are remarkably close to that. The three essentials in making an English translation of the New Testament are (1) accuracy to the Greek, (2) clarity in English, and (3) the hardest of all, the finding of an appropriate register of language.

As the popular English languages changed, in the 18th century for example, from the wide interest of sentiment in novels, or in the later 19th century from the severe limits of propriety to the increasing global interaction during the 20th century, so the problem of register has been more and more present. What is new now, and what makes bible translation so difficult is the breadth of the spectrum of the registers available. I think it makes a serious and now, probably insoluble, problem to make it approachable and yet just that little bit elevated. Faithfulness to the Greek can still produce great differences. Cutting loose from the Greek I'm afraid, has happened and is something else. The trick still, I think, eluding modern work, is to combine a proper dignity with an immediate grip on the reader's attention. So I realise even more how blessed we are to have a foundation in Tyndale. His skill with Saxon vocabulary, as I have said, plus a neutral word order, short sentences, all governed by a wonderful ear for placing stresses – '*This thy brother was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found'* is wonderful. He is still with us!

I was recently making a programme about Tyndale for Australian Radio from my desk at home, and a query arose about whether he still felt 'modern'. My eye fell on Tyndale's sentence in Luke 5 which was by chance open on the desk. *'And He kept himself apart in the wilderness and gave himself to prayer'*. What could be clearer? Tyndale can be uncannily timeless.

Now the word 'similitude' is not a word we know, we know 'parable', but here it is in Luke 18: '*And He put forth a similitude unto them, signifying that all men ought always to pray, and not to be weary saying: There was a judge in a certain city, which feared not God neither regarded man. And there was a certain widow in the same city, which came unto him saying: avenge me of my adversary. And he would not for a while. But afterward he said unto himself: though I fear*

not God, nor care for man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her lest at the last she come and hag on me. And the Lord said: hear what the unrighteous judge saith. And shall not God avenge his elect, which cry day and night unto him, yea, though he defer them? I tell you he will avenge them, and that quickly'. This is Tyndale, and I claim, clear.

Also; '*They brought unto him also babes, that he should touch them. When his disciples saw that, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him and said: Suffer children to come unto me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you: whosoever receiveth not the kingdom of God as a child, he shall not enter therein*'. This sounds modern. One of the few great improvements that the King James' men made was to add 'little' to the children which improves the rhythm.

I was in California, and one day I was in a bookshop which specialised in religious books and bibles. I stood in front of a wall as wide as this room and round about 8 feet high, solid with American bibles. Bibles of all kinds and for every occasion. Not only the various versions, but what they call over there, study bibles. You can get a bible for a special occasion with different notes in it. Bibles for the time of divorce, bibles for success in business, and so on ....a great wall of them! So many bibles around, and yet you see, I can only rejoice. I have learned, having written that book, to marvel at the massive energy given since Tyndale to retranslating. The freedom to read, study and to retranslate as often as we wish has produced many, many achievements, some of them getting close to that 'Greek-in-English' which is what is needed.

Now, even though there are so many bibles, there is a growing fashion to 'airbrush out' the bible from our history. I have been saddened to find that it is possible to write a history of the early modern period, or of the 16th century, without once mentioning the bible. It is very odd to find the bible missing in accounts of the l6th century and rather like trying to write an account of England and never once mentioning London. Very peculiar, this, and I am also troubled by increasing attempts at 'relevance'—the making of the bible in the language we use today, with no reference to what it has to be. It has to be in a certain way special. Often it is a denial of magnificence; the magnificence both of variety and of words, producing too often a uniform dreariness. I have to say that I have also found some bad paraphrases, masquerading as translations from the original. I don't mind the obviously 'wild' things; in 1969 the USA was shaken by the "Cotton Patch Version", which actually I like very much. It is a version of St. Paul's epistles in the language of the far, far south and it is done with real understanding of the Greek and

of how people speak. It lifts the spirit as well as being accurate. That's fine, and I've just been shown recently the 'Rap Gospels' which, though not to my taste, are eccentric and claiming to be so. In my book, I give an illustration of a comic book bible which I find utterly revolting. It tries to tell the story of Adam and Eve. It is the story as told to a sweetie pie and hunk and contains a rather charming snake. I don't like it.

I wanted the pictures in my book to illustrate the story and decline of bible illustration. We couldn't think what to have as the final plate and we could not go lower than the comic book form. Not without real offence. There was really an extraordinary experience. My editor at Yale, Gillian Malpass, the picture researcher and I sat in silence for half an hour thinking, 'Now what can be the last picture? We can't end on a low note'. It was a very wonderful moment. The other two were not particularly religious; I prayed. We ended up with the Codex Sinaiticus, the Greek text upon which everything depends and which is now in the British Library. I like that. I thought it was rather good.

I am, in fact, just back from New York where I have been launching this book in the USA. I gave a long radio interview and other interviews, lectures and discussions. I bring back from America two strong things which are new to me. First, I hadn't grasped before, even though I've lived in America and worked in their libraries, how few seem to know of the severe repression until the 16th century. Again and again I was asked in interviews and in discussions, why Tyndale was killed. Their history doesn't begin until the late 1580s when Raleigh's ships sheltered in the outer banks off North Carolina. That general ignorance had not reached me before. I thought that everyone understood that the English bible was made in blood.

In New York I was shown a page, from a news magazine about the new initiative from Nashville Tennessee and from the publishers Thos, Nelson and Sons, who are bible publishers, to interest American teenage girls in the bible by linking it with a teenage fashion magazine. The article I read was scornful about Jesus not being a sharp dresser and Mary Magdalen was seen in a low cut dress with masses of jewellery. I confess I felt faintly sick. But within hours of my return I was telephoned by the BBC World Service in London and asked to go in and take part in a broadcast about that very publication, now explained as the New Testament in a modern version, the New Century Version, embedded in a teen-type-mag and called 'Revolve'. Still heavily jet-lagged I went into Bush House for the broadcast. My brain came back mercifully just as the green light came on. Two days later a courier delivered from Nashville my personal copy of Revolve. It is extraordinary. It is the full

New Testament, uncut, in what is, after all, quite a good modern translation, but setting out all the teen mag things, like; 'Do you kiss on the first date?', about, 'Wearing your spiritual lipstick, that your words may be pure throughout the day'; 'How to get on with your mom' (an important point), and so on. Of course I said on air that anything at all which gets people close to the New Testament is to be welcomed and that Jesus meets people where they are, American teenage girls as well. But I said the production of a New Testament has to be accurate, and I was unhappy with associating the New Testament with consumerism. Jesus did not say, 'I am come that they might have consumer goods and have them more abundantly' and nothing is more consumer-driven than fashion. I quoted on air African Christians asking why we in the West, particularly American children, had to have so many things. I was also asked on air whether Tyndale who brought the Bible to the people would have approved and I said a firm 'No'. Jesus in the Gospel gives Himself especially to the destitute, the deprived, the outcasts, the poor in spirit and those who are mourning. The New Testament, as Tyndale always makes clear, is about the deepest possible human experience, the situations of life and death, spiritual growth, healing and salvation — all under a loving Father, and the very difficult issues that morality presents once religious bigotry is left behind. I couldn't relate that to a choice of lipstick. But this magazine has swept America; it has colossal sales. Standing here today, I do find myself at a loss. I do not know what to think about it. I resent the tone of the magazine which says that you are only human if you are American, but on the other hand, it IS the New Testament, complete, in a really very reasonable modern translation. A lot of hard thinking is going to be needed. The issue seems fundamentally to be about growth. What happens next? Very well, Jesus meets people where they are: He meets teenage girls in their mag but what happens next? What follows? If the New Testament is so embedded in the teen experience, what happens when you mature?

I want to close with two bible passages, one from the Old Testament. and one from the New. I wish to show in more detail what I mean in my title by Tyndale still being vital. In what follows I am partly echoing the excellent work by the scholar, Brian Cummings.

I want to take a well-known passage from Genesis 2:-

'And the Lord God took Adam and put him in the garden of Eden, to dress it and keep it: and the Lord God commanded Adam saying of all the trees in the garden see thou eat. But of the tree of knowledge of good and bad see that thou eat not: for even the same day that thou eatest of it, thou shalt surely die'.

Then Eve is created, Genesis 3 begins:-

'But the serpent was subtler than all the beasts of the field which the Lord God had made, and said unto the woman, Ah sir, that God hath said, ye shall not eat of all manner trees in the garden. And the woman said unto the serpent, of the fruit of the trees in the garden we may eat, but of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden (said God) see that ye eat not and see that ye touch it not: lest ye die. Then said the serpent unto the woman: tush, ye shall not die. But God doth know, that whensoever ye should eat of it, your eyes should be opened and ye should be as God and know both good and evil. And the woman saw... and took...and ate '

I remember that John Milton at that point in book IX of Paradise Lost, has:-

'Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty Serpent'

I want to comment on the Genesis language, the Hebrew, in some detail; both in the Hebrew which is here cunning and in Tyndale's English. This cunning, deep in the Hebrew grammar is appropriate for the moment of the serpent's subtle (Tyndale's word) misrepresentation of God's words leading to the human self-justified divorce from God which we call the Fall. Tyndale's English, as I shall show, is as brilliant as the Hebrew and just as cunning. As you know, Tyndale was the first to put Hebrew into English. Hebrew studies had not yet begun in England and he seems to have learned that language in Germany using the standard Hebrew grammar by Johannes Reuchlin. Tyndale's Hebrew was very good. He was a natural linguist, speaking 8 languages and was mistaken for a native German. He had also been well taught in Oxford the art and craft of rhetoric which included the high significance of grammar.

Now Tyndale thought hard about why it was outrageous that the scriptures were forbidden by the church in any other language but Latin (and especially in English). Moreover, he wrote famously in his ***Obedience of a Christian Man*** about how naturally Hebrew goes into English, whereas Hebrew into Latin is clumsy. This was not mere chauvinism, it was hard grammatical fact.

He had learned his Hebrew between his two New Testaments, 1526 and 1534, and when he came to translate the Greek again in 1534 he found a number of things which surprised him. What he had found as a result of his new knowledge he expressed on the first page of his prologue to his 1534 New Testament.

W.T. Unto the reader

'Here thou hast (most dear reader) the new testament or covenant made with us of God in Christ's blood. Which I have looked over again (now at the last) with all diligence, and compared it unto the Greek, and have weeded out of it many faults, which lack of help at the beginning, and oversight, did sow therein. If ought seem changed, or not altogether agreeing with the Greek, let the finder of the fault consider the Hebrew phrase or manner of speech left in the Greek words. Whose preterperfect tense and present tense is oft both one, and the future tense is the optative mode also, and the future tense is oft the imperative mode in the active voice, and in the passive ever. Likewise person for person, number for number, and an interrogation for a conditional, and such like, is with the Hebrews a common usage.'

That is to say, he is telling us that he hadn't before grasped the significance of the fact that first century Greek as written by Palestinian Jews takes on some of the characteristics of classical Hebrew. I shall try to sum all that up in three sentences.

Firstly, what we know as tenses are in a strict sense not found in Hebrew. What can appear to us as an imperfect tense, an uncompleted action in the past, can be in Hebrew as a future tense for an imperfect action which has not yet happened. (There is logic in it.) Secondly, an imperative also appears like a sort of imperfect — a sort of future because it hasn't happened yet. Thirdly, great care is needed in Hebrew to distinguish imperatives from simple futures, further complicated by changes which come with negatives in each case.

Now see what is happening in the story of the fall.

Tyndale takes God's first words in the imperfect, as His imperative command '*all the trees see thou eat*' In spite of some heavy Rabbinic arguments the other way, which Tyndale knew, he then takes the next remark, *'see thou eat not'* — also as an imperative, being exactly the same as a negative future. Why does Tyndale do that? Because he wants, for a very good reason, as we shall see, for God's next phrase to be ambiguous*: 'For even the same day thou eatest of it thou shall surely die'*. Is that a simple command, an irrevocable law or a conditional or a simple future? It is exactly this ambiguity, ringingly clear in Tyndale's English which the subtle serpent exploits in his words.

Tyndale's God has made two unequivocable commands both addressed to Adam, of trees in general (See thou eat i.e. 'Be free to use the abundance that God has provided', and of one particular tree 'See that thou eat not'). The subtle serpent tries to create confusion in Eve's mind. 'Subtle', by the way, was in 1530 a relatively recent word in English, from Latin via Norman

French into late Middle English and exactly right for what the Oxford English Dictionary defines as crafty, treacherously or wickedly cunning, insidiously sly or wily. The OED, however, in its customary ignorance about Tyndale gives its first use to Coverdale in 1535 instead of Tyndale 1530. None of the versions available to Tyndale had anything like 'subtle'; Wycliffe has 'fell' (cruel), Luther has 'listiger', which is 'cunning', the Vulgate, calidus (more the sense of 'skilful'), and the Greek Septuagint has 'promino' which veers towards 'prudent'.

The serpent addresses the woman with the wonderfully flattering 'Ah Sir', not flattering in a sexist way, I hasten to add, but in the spreading of confusion and the sense of being about to say something of serious moment. The serpent knows that Eve hasn't heard the interdiction directly from God. Tyndale's subtle serpent introduces an ambiguity in English, true to the Hebrew, asking Eve whether God has said 'Ye shall not eat...' and this could be either a statement about the future or as a direct imperative. Despite the serpent's verbal tricks, at first Eve remembers scrupulously what has been reported to her by Adam. But the serpent treats God's words as though God had been making an idle or inaccurate prediction. With that wonderful Tyndale word 'tush' he dismisses God as deceitful. What the woman had understood as a command, the serpent has turned into a wish or even a suggestion to be discussed, bargained over or reasoned with. God's knowledge of the future, the serpent is suggesting, is not unequivocable but open to interpretation. Tyndale catches this by using what is technically called a conditional modal auxiliary 'should'; 'Whensoever ye should eat of it', (Perhaps you won't, but perhaps you will, who knows?) 'Your eyes SHOULD be opened', though of course, they might not be. It might always be a trick by God 'and ye should be as God' being as God is no big thing, it is always open to you to choose whether to be or not.

Tyndale has recognised in the Hebrew the mixture of imperfects and imperatives used for different purposes in what the 1534 prologue referred to as the future indicative and the imperative mode and the optative mode. His 'shoulds' are exactly right for what the serpent is up to in Hebrew; twisting the grammar to offer Eve, instead of a God who makes demands from His Divine law, a God who merely makes predictions which are open to discussion, even to curious experiment. The serpent seizes on this indeterminacy of the Hebrew to confuse Eve about which God, the one giving unequivocable laws or the one making suggestions, spoke to Adam. After all it knows she did not hear God herself. This uncertainty . . .reducing God's laws to conditions is all in Tyndale's 'shoulds', this brilliant use of condi-

tional modal auxiliaries.

In the 1611 King James Authorised Version this is a truth quite missed. The 'translators' removed all the subtlety by using the word 'shall' throughout. It is surely a significant loss. The serpent says, *'Your eyes shall be opened, ye shall be as God'*. Simple futurity! Why did the KJ committee do this? Because for political reasons they had been given the wretched 1568 Bishops' Bible to follow. True.. .the first 1560 Geneva bible gave *'shall'* but the Geneva men put in the margin a careful elaboration of the sense of *'should'*, the *'shouldness'* that they wished to get across. As though, they said, the serpent should say God doesn't forbid you to eat the fruits...save that if you should eat, you should be like Him. Splendid! That is what the Geneva notes do all the time. The Bishops' Bible for political reasons had no notes.

In the first 1611 version the margins were bare and instead of the serpent's *"Ah Sir*" they had the miserable *"Yea, because*" and it tells us nothing.

The only consolation is that in the 17th and 18th centuries the KJV was sometimes printed with the Geneva notes, but it is a very sorry tale of loss. And today? With all our sophisticated knowledge of Hebrew and English and biblical theology? Not a *'should'* in sight! The true subtlety of the Fall in Hebrew and in Tyndale, the temptation being not so much to eat the apple, but to misrepresent God as being open to minor experiment has been lost; replaced by a sort of shiny, supermarket futurity.

'God knows in fact that the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like Gods'. This is the New Jerusalem Bible of 1985 and similarly in all the modern versions I have seen. TYNDALE is still vital.

I want now to move on briefly to Tyndale translating the New Testament again in 1534, now knowing Hebrew. Freshly alerted to the idiosyncrasies of Hebrew verse and a need for careful English craftsmanship in rendering them. In this second 'go' he rediscovers the complexities of Greek verbs. And verbs are very much the Greek thing. New Testament Greek verbs are altogether richer grammatically than either Hebrew or English, and certainly than Latin.

He does what he can to tease out the subtleties especially in the writing of Paul who is famously full of rhetorical devices, many of them difficult to render properly in the smaller palette of English verb forms - especially in the Epistle to the Romans. Both Greek and English have the indicative, infinitive and imperative. But all English has to take the place of fully inflected Greek verbs, the fully structured mode of subjunctives expressing contingency or hypothesis and the optative expressing a wish, are a few modal auxiliaries like 'may' and 'might' and so on. Paul, in Romans, a Hebrew writing in Greek has available a big grammatical palette or, to change the image, a large pipe-organ with many stops. English has to struggle to get the effect right. I take briefly one example from Romans 6 in Tyndale and familiar to us: -

'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that there may be abundance of grace? God forbid. How shall we that are dead as touching sin. live any longer therein? Remember ye not that all we which are baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, are baptised to die with Him? We are buried with him by baptism, for to die, that likewise as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the father, even so we also should walk in a new life'. In that paragraph Tyndale uses what Brian Cummings calls a whole lexicon of auxiliaries- 'shall, shall, may, shall, should, must, must, might, should, shall. *'In a scrupulous attempt to match the exacting syntax and elusive theology of Paul's intricate prose,'* Cummings goes on, *'Paul's theology modulates between a statement of how things are, an assertion of how things can be, a description of the conditions prescribed by God if this might happen, a prediction of how He will reward us and finally, an exhortation to what we should do about it. Paul exerts unremitting pressure on Greek grammar in order to test the concentrations, linguistic and philosophical of his readers. In the process he places an intolerable burden upon his later translators.'*

You won't be surprised to hear me say that Tyndale has done well: King James' panel made only slight changes, replacing Tyndale's 'remember' with 'know' and one or two other tiny alterations so that in this passage it is more than the famous 83% Tyndale and much more like 96%. And Today?

In all my experience I found a surprise. Facing that wall of modern versions in California, and taking down a good dozen, I expected a uniform 'wash' of paraphrases, ducking Paul's complexity. Yes, I found one or two of the most 'hyped', those with the biggest marketing budget that were frighteningly glib, miles from the Greek, and Paul, and theology and even God; but the majority of modern versions followed rather carefully the subtleties of Paul's verse. This was excellent news, but there was better news still, for many of them followed Tyndale word for word as being the only way to do it.

Day Conference at North Ockendon, Essex

Report by Eunice Burton

On a blustery March day about 30 members and friends of the Tyndale Society ventured into South Essex to learn more about members of the Poyntz family, whose lives were so closely linked with William Tyndale's achievements. North Ockendon Church is situated amongst fields, but the apparent tranquility is belied by the hum of traffic on the M25 approaching the Dartford Crossing. The nearby Manor House, owned by the Poyntz family and descendants until 1758, was destroyed in World War II.

After welcoming us, Professor David Daniell set the scene by recounting the major events in the life of William Tyndale, particularly stressing the unique contribution he made to the English language, now known as English Plain Style: his use of simple direct words spoke to minds and hearts with dramatic clarity and brevity. It was while he was staying with Thomas Poyntz in Antwerp, 1534-1535, that some of Tyndale's major work was produced and printed, e.g. his translations of books of the Old Testament and revision of the New Testament in English (1534). Tyndale excelled at translating the Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, showing that the natural affinity of these languages with English resulted in a more accurate and attractive version than when the translation was from Latin (e.g. Vulgate). The notable Bibles of the 16th and 17th centuries had their origins in Tyndale's inimitable translations, and Professor Daniell deplored the paucity and crudeness of language in most modern translations. He reiterated *'No Tyndale, no Shakespeare!'.*

Mary Clow then showed slides illustrating sites associated with William Tyndale's life in the Cotswolds (e.g. Lady Anne Walsh of Little Sodbury Manor, where Tyndale was tutor to her sons, was a member of the Gloucester branch of the Poyntz family) and the economic importance of the wool trade: wool was exported to Europe and returned as bales of cloth (in which copies of Tyndale's New Testament were hidden). Finally, we saw scenes of Antwerp. Astute readers of the ***Tyndale Journal*** will remember that issue No. 24 April 2003 contained an article by Brian Buxton on Thomas and Anna Poyntz and the wonderful memorials in the Poyntz Chapel at North Ockendon Church. At the Conference, Brian reminded us how support for William Tyndale in Antwerp and England had been costly for Thomas Poyntz – he suffered 20 years of personal poverty, loss of property, and estrangement from friends, narrowly escaping a martyr's death for heresy but suffering

almost a living martyrdom. When his brother John was Lord of the Manor of North Ockendon, Thomas sent an impassioned letter craving support for Tyndale who was in prison as the result of a Papist plot and in danger of imminent execution, stressing that Tyndale was a loyal subject of King Henry VIII and *'as high a treasure as anyone living'*. John Poyntz forwarded the letter to Thomas Cromwell for the attention of the King, but the appeal did not save Tyndale (see transcript of letter page 26). We had the privilege of seeing a facsimile of this letter and hearing it read by David Daniell.

Brian Buxton also discussed the influence of the 'lesser nobility' on the Monarch, e.g. Thomas' sister-in-law Anne had previously been the wife of Sir Thomas Cheney, a companion of Henry VIII from his youth, and the letter to Thomas Cromwell was sent during a "Progress" in the West country in 1535, which included visits to the Gloucestershire Poyntz families. Later Anne, now Anne Poyntz, was Lady in Waiting to Mary Tudor and prominent in the Coronation Procession of 1553. John Poyntz died in 1547 and Anne in 1554, when Thomas Poyntz became Lord of the Manor, with improvement of his fortunes. His son, Gabriel, inherited the estates on Thomas' death in 1562 and was responsible for erecting the family memorials in the Poyntz Chapel and the magnificent alabaster tomb chest for himself and his wife Etheldreda, whose canopy is decorated in the same style as the Globe Theatre (1598). Gabriel died in 1607. There was an opportunity later to examine the Chapel in detail.

The morning session concluded with a reading by David Daniell of a "letter poem" from Sir Thomas Wyatt (the Elder) to John Poyntz at North Ockendon in 1536, full of witty observations and moralistic advice *'My Mother's maids, when they did sew and spin, they sang sometime a song of the fieldmouse that would needs go seek her townish sister's house…'* The fieldmouse meets an untimely demise as she does not know how to escape from the cat as the town mouse does.

'*Alas, my Poyntz, how men do seek the best and find the worst by error as they stray. Thyself content with that is thee assigned and use it well that is to thee allotted. Then seek no more out of thyself to find the thing that thou hast sought so long before, for thou shalt feel it sitting in thy mind'.*

After lunch, local historian Ann Hilder showed slides of details of the Poyntz memorials and brasses, and of other features of interest in this historic 12th century church. Then Professor Daniell read excerpts from the recently published ***Selective Writings*** of William Tyndale, illustrating his wide-ranging interests, e.g. his theology (his firm belief in the Sovereignty of God and faith in the Promises of God), courage when persecuted, positive

views on the ministry of women *(**Answer to More**)*, adultery and fidelity, parental love and comments on Matthew 5 and I Corinthians 13 (love).

The closing prayers and blessing were given by the Reverend Malcolm Millard, Priest-in-Charge, and then a few members went on to South Ockendon Church, with its round tower and Norman doorway, to view the Saltonstall Chapel; this contains a fine Elizabethan monument to Richard Saltonstall, Lord Mayor of London, and Susannah his wife (who was the daughter of Thomas Poyntz) and their sixteen children.

Bilney Day in Norfolk

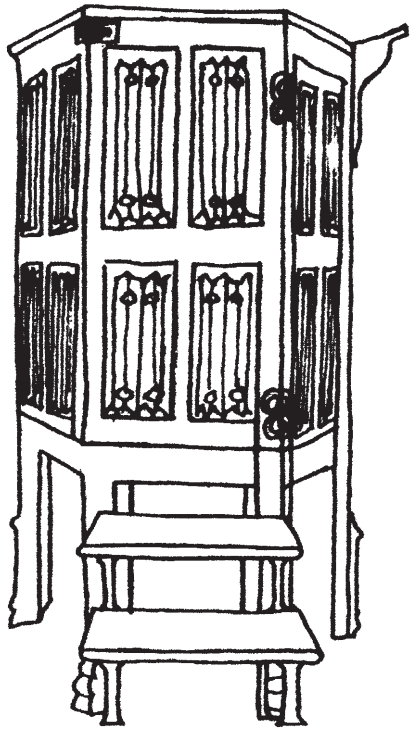
Report by Valerie Offord

June 2004

A Street in Norwich

This spring Mary Clow and Michael Hammond resumed their successful collaboration of the previous year by organising another spring day conference for Tyndalians and their friends in Norfolk. This year's theme was Thomas Bilney (1495-1531), Protestant martyr and contemporary of William Tyndale, who was born and bred in Norfolk, studied and preached in Cambridge and was condemned and burned to death in Norwich – an East Anglian to the hilt!

On the morning of Saturday 24 April, a glorious spring day, a group of us met the London train at Norwich station and set off by mini bus into the depths of the Norfolk countryside for East Bilney, the first destination of the day-long programme. Slightly later than anticipated, after a companionable drive through the county's endless narrow lanes, our small party arrived at St Mary's Parish Church to be greeted by a band of intrepid map-literate car drivers and local residents. Thomas was born and grew up in East Bilney and then moved to Cambridge for higher education. The house where he and his family lived now known as 'The Martyr's Cottage' is still there in the tiny village – now sympathetically restored by its current owner, an enthusiastic historian.



Latimer's pulpit c.1510 in the Church of St. Edward King and Martyr, Cambridge from which Hugh Latimer and Thomas Bilney preached.

After a welcome coffee break we modern-day pilgrims settled down in the pews to listen to an enthusiastic account of the history of East Bilney Church and its restorations by John Crick, the churchwarden. Many of us remained sceptical about his account of Bilney's ashes being accidentally discovered when digging a grave in the churchyard. However, we were able to admire the two panels of the stained glass window made by Shrigley and Hunt in 1886: the first depicted the 16th century martyr expounding on a new translation of the Bible and the second showed him bound in chains with red flames curling round him and Norwich Cathedral in the background.

Our convoy, maps at the ready or simply armed with blind faith and a herdlike instinct, then set off again arriving miraculously intact at Waterfall House, Swanton Morley, to be warmly greeted by the friendly and hospitable Diggle family who had prepared an aperitif followed by a sumptuous lunch for all of us. This was no mean achievement since the number of participants seemed a little uncertain!

The after lunch lecture by Dr Korey Maas, St Cross College, Oxford, was

The Martyr's Cottage, East Bilney where Thomas Bilney was born in 1495.

a triumph – a wonderful lunch is a hard act to follow. The lecturer's fascinating paper, entitled *Thomas Bilney: 'simple good soul'?* (printed in full in this issue of the Journal) was delivered in such a professional manner that the entire audience was enthralled, wide-awake and thoroughly informed. To attend a lecture about a person when one is literally treading the same soil he trod some 500 years previously makes the whole subject so immediate, so relevant.

It was with great reluctance that we broke off our post lecture discussions in the idyllic mill garden and took leave of its owners to continue on our way. Those who went on to Norwich for a guided walking tour of the Bilney sites in that city led by Michael Hammond saw the Guildhall where he was tried and the dungeon where he was imprisoned, and ambled through the mediaeval streets of Norwich past the Cathedral to the Lollard's pit set in a low amphitheatre beyond the Bishop's Gate beside the river Wensum. It was here within sight of the Cathedral that Bilney was burnt on Saturday 19 August 1531.

In all it was a very informative day – a living history day - spent in agreeable, lively company. My one small regret was that so few Tyndale members availed themselves of the opportunity to come to Norfolk to discover the story of a brave man who died for his beliefs. I should like to take this opportunity to extend thanks on behalf of the participants to those who devoted so much time and effort into bringing off a great logistical feat by organising this event.

10th Anniversary Celebrations, Hertford College. Oxford.

Report by Judith Munzinger

When starting to write this report, a question occurred to me. Why were we celebrating in 2004 the Tenth anniversary of the founding of our Society when the standard text on the inside cover of the Journal states that it was founded in 1995? In search of an answer, I consulted David Daniell's tribute to Sir Edward Pickering (see TJ 26) which contains an excellent account of the beginnings of our Society. From this it appears that, although the Society was formally launched at a reception on 31 January 1995 in connection with the *Let There Be Light* exhibition, we date our creation from the many commemorative events that took place in 1994, above all the landmark Tyndale Memorial Service held in St Paul's Cathedral on 6 October 1994, when a congregation of about 1000 was addressed by Lord Robert Runcie, former Archbishop of Canterbury.

It was therefore fitting that the celebration of the Tenth Anniversary should also be a church service, addressed by an eminent churchman, this time the Rt. Rev. Dr Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester. The setting was the small, but imposing chapel of Hertford College, Oxford. Thus it was that a group of Tyndalians gathered in the sunny and peaceful quadrangle of the college on Saturday 12 June, prior to entering the chapel for a Festal Choral Evensong. We were welcomed by the Rev. Dr Simon Oliver, Chaplain of Hertford College, who led the service, which lived up to its name and was truly 'festal'. The college choir sang most beautifully – for me, the highspots were Stainer's Magnificat and the glorious anthem from Haydn's Creation 'The Heavens are Telling'. Bishop Michael preached a fine sermon (which we are unable to reproduce for our readers because he spoke without notes) and the lessons were read by our Chairman, David Daniell, and our co Vice-Chair, Mary Clow.

After the service, the choir and Bishop Michael joined us for a very substantial Real English Tea in the college dining hall – cucumber sandwiches, biscuits, fruit cake and gateaux - excellent to fuel people for their (sometimes long) return journeys.

Chatting with choir members, we learned that many of them were in the middle of examinations. We therefore wish to record in print our grateful thanks for their having given up a Saturday afternoon at this crucial time to provide some truly inspiring music to celebrate this important event in the life of our Society.

St. Dunstan-in-the-Wesr from London City Churches by Paul Middleton

Tyndale Reformation Walk, London May 2004

Report by Mary Clow

Where Old St Paul's Cross once stood, 15 of us gathered under the guidance of the Rev. Keith Berry. Thomas Carlyle called this spot "*the Times newspaper of the Middle Ages*", for here outdoor sermons were preached, heresies denounced, and Bishop Cuthbert Tunstall burned Tyndale's groundbreaking first English translation of the New Testament.

We moved on to Smithfield, where people were burned. We were following the story of John Rogers, condemned under Queen Mary Tudor. Rogers produced the first complete bible in English, incorporating Tyndale's published New and part Old Testament with later books of the Old Testament based on Tyndale, and Rogers's own work. After years in exile, Rogers returned to England under Edward VI, accompanied by his Flemish wife and children. He was made a Canon of St Paul's, and Vicar of nearby St Sepulchre's where we now went. This ancient church was adjacent to the terrible Newgate Prison (later inspiration for Elizabeth Fry to devote her life to prison reform). Standing outside St Sepulchre's we remembered John Rogers, leaving his church for incarceration in Newgate before being led out to be burned at Smithfield. His wife was denied a last visit and held up their 11th child as he passed by.

On to Fleet Street and St Dunstan's-in-the-West. Here William Tyndale preached during his short stay in London while he unsuccessfully petitioned the Bishop of London for permission to translate the bible into English. Since Tyndale's time the church was destroyed in the Great Fire, and relocated and rebuilt nearby during Victorian road-improvements. Still we were glad to commemorate there the young scholar whose sermons caught the attention of the merchant Humphrey Monmouth, leading him to finance Tyndale's life and work on the Continent.

A break for coffee, and then we hopped on a bus for the last stop on our route: the Tyndale Monument in the Victoria Embankment Gardens, Whitehall. This impressive, more than life-size statue in bronze, was sculpted in 1885 by Sir Ernest Boehm, famous for his myriad memorials to Empire builders and military heroes of the Victorian era, scattered all over London. Tyndale is shown with a huge bound tome, presumably the complete Bible which, alas, he never lived to produce. He is wearing a furred gown and a Tudor cap – neither likely in his circumstance – but at least we agreed that the printing press on which he was leaning was authentic. In tribute, we read aloud his last letter to the Governor of the fortress at Vilvoorde.

Note

There will be another Tyndale London Walk on Saturday 9 October, when we hope to find his memorial in Westminster Abbey (see Dates for Your Diary for details).

The Welcoming City: English-speaking Protestants in Geneva from 1555 to the Present Day

An exhibition at the State Archives Geneva, from 3 November 2003 to 29 April 2004

Report by Valerie Offord

Exhibition Organizer and Archivist of Holy Trinity Church Geneva

June 2004

This was the most successful exhibition the State Archives has mounted in the last 20 years in terms of visitor numbers, interest shown and catalogues sold. I hasten to add that this was the comment of the Geneva State Archives not myself!

The English church community was honoured when the State Archivist, Catherine Santschi, accepted our proposition to display the history of English-speaking Protestants in Geneva from the l6th century to the present day, largely but not exclusively, using Holy Trinity Church archives. This was the first time a 'foreign' community had been granted this privilege. The official reason for the exhibition was to mark the 150th anniversary of the building of Holy Trinity Church but as this would have made a very inward looking exhibition I attempted to increase its scope and appeal by choosing subjects which would illustrate the interaction between the Swiss, the Genevese and the English-speaking community as a whole. From the feedback received to date it seems that this approach succeeded extremely well and has contributed to a better understanding and rapport between all those involved.

As my interests are focused mainly on the European Reformation period of the 16th century the Marian exile stay and achievements in Geneva 1555-1560 was highlighted using documents from the State Archives (*Registres de Conseil et Notaires* and the *Livre des Anglois* which is the Register of the English Church under the pastoral care of Knox and Goodman 1555-1559) as well as the publications from Geneva such as the ***Geneva Bible*** printed by Rowland Hall in 1560, ***How superior Powers oght to be obeyd*** by Christopher Goodman, ***Sermons of John Calvin on Ezechias*** translated by Anne Locke in 1560, ***The lawes and Statutes of Geneua*** translated by Robert Fills. Notable by their absence (loans between depositories and libraries in this tiny Republic are notoriously difficult to arrange) were the ***Geneva Psalter***, William Whittingham's ***New Testament 1557, The Boke of Psalms*** by Rowland Hall in 1559 and ***The forme of prayers and ministration of the Sacraments, &c. used in the Englishe Congregation at Geneua and approued by the famous and godly learned man John Caluyn*** printed by Jean Crespin in 1556. Dr

Antoinina Bevan Zlatar contributed research material for a section featuring Anthony Gilby who served both as minister and elder of the English Church in Geneva and who worked on the congregation's ***Forme of Prayers.*** He is best known for his contribution to the ***Geneva Bible*** - as a Hebraist was one of the key translators of the Old Testament

It cannot be denied that the success of the collaboration for the exhibition required a great deal of diplomacy, tact and consideration on all sides. Mr Pierre Fluckiger, the member of the Archives staff designated to help, was efficient, unflappable and unfailingly courteous. He wrote innumerable letters, bypassed the previous practices and traditions in exhibition planning, drew up no end of insurance contracts, saw that all reasonable requests were met. He produced the first draft of the translation from English to French of the entire text of the catalogue and showcase labels in record time and with very limited resources. He ensured that the complicated finances were steered through the bureaucratic channels without disturbing the creative flow of the organizer! But even he was not able to get other institutions to loan many key Marian exile publications for display!

To give a few examples of the slightly unusual nature of the whole undertaking the said Mr Fluckiger was greeted at the foot of the outside staircase at 8am one morning by a fourfold delegation of Civil Servants from various Departments of State, who were joined inside by a fifth member. The purpose of their visit? To discuss the feasibility of drilling 2 small holes in the wall in which to fix a domestic picture rail and hooks from which to hang a poster about John Knox. The wall of the State Archives is an interdepartmental responsibility hence the delegation. Naturally, none of them was so lowly as to know how to use a drill, so that when agreement was finally reached, two workmen had to be sent to actually do it. A scene worthy of the Soviet Union at its paper wielding height and reminiscent of the old joke about how many people it takes to change a light bulb.

On another occasion whilst collecting two models dressed in beautiful replica costumes of King Henry VIII and Queen Anne Boleyn from the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire Mr Fluckiger and I managed to drop Anne Boleyn's head in the gutter. The significance of the executed queen's head falling may not have been quite so clear to him as to me.

A chance meeting in Geneva with Ms Sue Maunder whose family had lived here in the late 19th and early 20th century resulted in her producing a CD rom based on her family archives. (In the planning stage I had also dreamed of doing a computer presentation on the *Livre des Anglois* but that would have required even more permissions, time and financial backup than

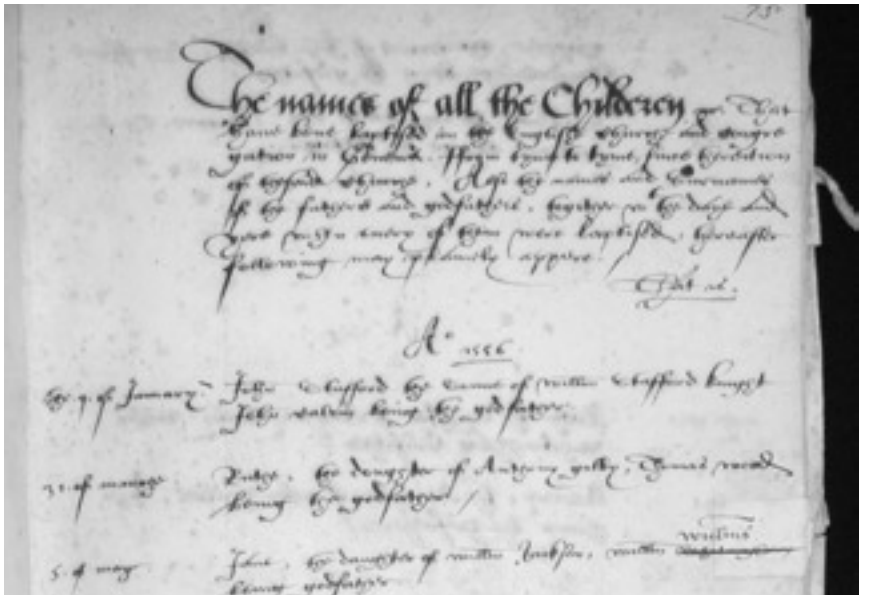
was available last year). It was then discovered that the Archives were not exactly up to date in their display techniques and did not possess an interactive computer terminal. So it was agreed that one should be 'borrowed' from the Chancellerie d'Etat who unceremoniously delivered – well dumped - it in the centre of the exhibition space and left: installation was not part of the contract. Anyway, its label 'Chancellerie' was instantly obscured by a label 'Archives' and it is not at all sure that the Chancellerie will be seeing it again: it now looks perfectly at home in the Archives and is considered an essential display tool of subsequent exhibitions!

The spin off and interest from the exhibition has been quite considerable not only in Geneva and Switzerland but beyond to England and as far as Sri Lanka. The Scottish community in Geneva has been motivated to plan a commemoration of the 450th anniversary of the granting of the Auditoire, at Calvin's request, to the Marian exiles as a place of worship in the autumn of 1555. The Anglican community in Basle is planning an exhibition for 2005 on similar lines to celebrate its 500 years association with the city and has already asked for help on the Marian exile period. The Poyntz and Stafford families will be featured using material from the exhibition and some of Brian Buxton's recent research. Lady Dorothy Stafford resided for a while in Basle after Calvin finally allowed her to leave Geneva. Gabriel Poyntz was registered as a student in Basle. As I write Berne and Zurich are contemplating a similar projects.

The ***Report of the State Archives for the Republic and Canton of Geneva*** presented to the Council of State in 2003 discussed the exhibition at length, in the section on external relations, and portrayed a coloured print of the Anglican Church (Holy Trinity) in 1865 on the back cover. This is indeed real official recognition and it certainly livened up a rather dull document!

Arrangements are at this moment being finalized to put Holy Trinity archives on temporary deposit in the Geneva State Archives. (The ***Livre des Anglois*** was presented to the Genevan authorities when the exiles returned to Elizabethan England in 1559. Although the English Church Community has always been given the right to transcribe and copy it, we have never had the care of it). This means that they will be in safe custody and kept in a state of good repair but they will remain the property of the church. It is undoubtedly the best solution for their long-term survival and, furthermore, they will be more readily accessible to researchers.

This short report has concentrated on the Marian exiles as this is clearly the overwhelming point of interest to Tyndale Society Journal readers. However, the exhibition did cover many other subjects - the development of



Extract from a page in the *Livre des Anglois* showing the baptism of John son of Sir William Stafford, John Calvin being the godfather 4 January1556.

Anglican Church music from the metrical psalters published in Geneva in Calvinistic style to the present day; charitable giving by the English Church in Geneva in the early 19th century; cricket (the church had a cricket team!) and other sports such as mountaineering (John Auldjo, sometime chairman of the Church Council, was the first Scotsman and the 7th person to climb Mont Blanc in 1827); travel and travellers – featuring ***Miss Jemima's Swiss Journal: The First Conducted Tour of Switzerland*** on loan from Thomas Cook archives in England; and, of course, the story of the building of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Geneva in 1853 which, after all, was the main purpose of the exhibition in the first place.

The exhibition was a success - more visitors received than ever before at an exhibition in the Geneva State Archives and more catalogues produced than the Archives have ever sold for a single exhibition. The Archives gave up after the fifth reprint and sold out completely so it is now a collector's item. Many other lines of research, not least in the field of the Marian exiles, have been enhanced and opened up as a result of the exhibition. My only small regret is that its opening ran behind schedule and was a few days after, rather than before, the Geneva Tyndale Conference in October 2003.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Valerie,

I hope that you will be able to use this letter [printed below]. I recognize that it is critical of a piece published in the Journal, and thus differs from most letters sent in, which are friendlier. But perhaps it helps balance the representation of this edition of the ***Answer to More***, I think underestimated by Mostyn Roberts. Of course it reflects my opinion, not that of the Tyndale Society Journal. But I believe Mr Roberts' review reflects his opinion too, and can be addressed, if at all, only in the Journal's pages.

Spurred by the review in No. 26 I am reading ***The Boy King Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation.*** I wish you a happy summer.

Cordially

Anne, 7 May 2004.

To the Editor:

Mostyn Roberts, in ***The Tyndale Society Journal*** 26 (January 2004), 41-43, reviews ***An_Answere vnto Sir Thomas More's Dialoge*** not as a critical edition, still less as a book by William Tyndale, but as a bungled theological hijacking. Sparing Tyndale's text, he issues a "health warning" for the introduction and commentary (the latter of which he refers to as "interpretative notes"). He finds in the editors' contributions distortion of Tyndale's views and collusion with the Catholic revisionist movement.

Roberts' most serious and potentially most alienating charge is that *"[Tyndale's] insistence on works as the evidence of true faith is interpreted as teaching that works are integral to justification".* Nowhere in the volume is such an assertion made. On the contrary, the editors soundly explore and discuss Tyndale's opposition to *"works-righteousness*". Elsewhere, from a statement that *"some friars became notable reformers,"* he teases out "*the revisionism whereby the Roman church reclaims the Reformers as reforming and slightly aberrant members of their own communion".* He must forego complaining that the editors' crusade for Thomas More's reputation, because there are simply no data for such an intent. He does denounce "*an apparent attempt to rehabilitate Fisher*". Indeed, the editors' principal note on Bishop John Fisher does not express the glee some of us may feel at Tyndale' s satirical examination of Fisher's 1521 sermon in the ***Obedience***. But Roberts compromises his own argument, I think, by misquoting Fisher's translation of Gal. 5:6 and by confusing the 1521 sermon with that of 1526.

The provenance of this ***Answer to More*** is unusual: its editors, Anne M. O'Donnell and Jared Wicks, are both members of Catholic religious orders, and its publisher is the Catholic University of America Press. Perhaps these facts edged Roberts into an account dominated by sectarian concerns and remarkably inattentive to such features of the book as the original spelling (probably Tyndale's own) and unique completeness (Henry Walter's 1850 version having been bowdlerized). I share with Roberts his evident view that we are all confessionally shaped. It may be impossible for a Protestant to edit a Tyndale work in the same way as a Catholic would; or a Jew, or a Buddhist, or a freethinker – but vive la différence. Can Tyndale, who chivalrously defended the marital rights of Catherine of Aragon, be understood only by Protestants? O'Donnell and Wicks offer the asset of a full, rich commentary steeped in the same fathers, councils, orders, sacraments and liturgy that governed Tyndale's formation.

Anne Richardson, Albany, California, 24 September 2003.

Dear Valerie,

No. 26 arrived last week, and as usual was ' full of good things'. Please accept my compliments on keeping things lively when they might in other hands be dull.

I assume you will soon have a review of Brian Moynahan's ***If God Spare my Life*** published here under the title 'God's Bestseller'. I think it is a bibliographical crime to publish a book under different titles in the UK and the USA but it is an excellent book.

I hope you may also publish a review of ***The Adventure of English*** by Melvyn Bragg. It is an extremely good book and has a first rate chapter on Tyndale.

Sincerely,

Ronald Mansbridge, Connecticut, USA, 29 February 2004.

Editor's comment

It is always a pleasure to hear from Ronald, one of our faithful American

readers, and his choice of date for his letter has not escaped me.

For the record a very full review of Brian Moynahan's book (English edition) by Professor Donald Millus of Coastal Carolina University, USA appeared in the ***TSJ no 23 December 2002*** pp 56/58 and the Society also held a meeting in London 'An evening with Moynahan' in December 2002 (see report by Mary Clow ***TSJ no 24 April 2003*** p.39) when Brian answered questions on his controversial Tyndale hypothesis and members were able to buy copies of his book.

However, Ronald has pinpointed one of my concerns as editor namely that there are so many books being published that a choice has to be made and a review should be done quickly to be relevant (I always regret not finding the time to review Eamon Duffy ***The Voices of Morebath.*** By the time I got round to it the book had become a bestseller and a prize winner, rendering a review irrelevant!). Another very practical reason for not being able to include a review on readers' pet subjects is simply that we need more reviewers. Please let me know if you are willing to undertake this task for the Journal and I will do my utmost to obtain a review copy from the publishers. Any offers for the Melvyn Bragg book?

Book Reviews

Rowan Williams, *Anglican Identities*, Darton Longman & Todd (2004) 149pp., £7.95

Rowan Williams has selected eight individuals, whose life and work exerted a powerful influence over the creation of a distinctive Anglican theology and identity. The intention of the volume is not to produce a watertight definition of Anglicanism, but rather to highlight both the shared common ground, and the diverse approaches, of Anglican writers across the centuries. The biographical essays reflect ongoing debates over critical issues across five hundred years, and present a convincing demonstration of the importance of voices from the past in shaping the 21st century church. Chapters explore differing views on scripture, tradition, ecclesiastical authority, and the political position and function of the church, while exposing the potential for conflict and coexistence between the various groups and individuals within the church. Williams argues that the lives and works of these eight figures are testimony to the existence, and distinctiveness, of Anglican theology in the centuries after the Reformation, and suggests that although the book is primarily a study of the past, it is a past which has much to contribute to the more immediate question of what holds the modern Anglican community together. Anglicanism is broadly defined, and taken as clearly reformed, despite the 'pervasive echoes' of the mediaeval past in its life and thought. Its defining characteristic, a theme which recurs frequently throughout the book, is a 'theologically informed and spiritually sustained patience', which binds the members of the church together in past and present.

Each of the eight essays in the volume stands alone as a study of the life and work of one individual, but taken together they allow Williams scope to explore unexpected connections and interactions across the centuries. The selection of subjects is largely pragmatic: the author explains in the Introduction to the collection that several essays had their origins in invitations to deliver lectures and papers to different audiences. The most significant lacuna lies in the period between the Civil War and the High Victorian age. Williams is well aware of this, but excuses the rather patchy chronological coverage on the grounds that the case studies reflect the pattern of invitations received, and asks the reader to fill these two centuries with characters of their own choosing. The selection of subjects might well have something to say about the interests and preoccupations of the modern Anglican community, but the case studies reflect, Williams argues, a 'distinctive constellation in Anglican history'. Successive chapters present an analysis of William

Tyndale and the notion of Christian Society, the distinctive and influential thought of Richard Hooker, George Herbert's Afflictions, the work of B.F. Westcott, Michael Ramsey, John A.T. Robinson, and various Anglican approaches to the Gospel of St John. The later essays provide ample opportunity for the discussion of liberalism in the modern church, and for Williams' constructive criticisms and observations, not least in his analysis of the important but 'imperfect' Honest to God.

Readers of this journal, however, will be pleased to hear a modern archbishop describe William Tyndale as the 'true theological giant' of the English Reformation. The works of Tyndale, Williams suggests, in their emphases upon the home and family, and particularly the economic and social implications of Christian discipleship, have a real contribution to make to the Christian churches of the modern age. Tyndale, he argues, might have appealed to God to open the eyes of the king of England, but this was in no sense a denial of the oneness of the Christian community, its pastors, and secular leaders. Tyndale's 'project of reformation' was doctrinal, political, and social in its implications, requiring the creation of a new commonwealth, founded upon the principle evangelical doctrine of justification by faith. The individual, delivered into freedom by Christ, incurred a debt which was owed to others, not only likeminded Christians, but, more radical still, those outside the church. For Tyndale, 'wicked mammon' was not the simple acquisition of wealth, but the failure to use this wealth for the good of others. Tyndale's charity was not the gift of goods and money to the poor in alms, but the realisation of the potential of individuals to discharge their debts and duties themselves. The implications of this for the modern church, Williams suggests, are most evidently visible in debates over unshared wealth and international debt. The problems highlighted by Tyndale are those that face the church today, and Tyndale's construction of a Christian language provides both a vocabulary and imperative for the modern church.

This analysis of Tyndale's Parable of the Wicked Mammon is followed by two separate chapters on the work and influence of Richard Hooker. Hooker's thought, Williams suggests, was characterised by a sense of the wisdom of God, and the importance of the encounter between humanity and that divine wisdom. The analysis focuses upon issues of sacramental theology and ecclesiastical authority in the works of Hooker, and touches upon ongoing debates over the authority of scripture, tradition and discipline. Hooker's defence of tradition by the same basic method that had been deployed in the defence of vernacular scripture, Williams concludes, provides evidence of paradox rather than contradiction in his thought. In this respect, he suggests, Hooker 'like the Anglican tradition as a whole' is almost impossible to pigeonhole. His legacy to the church is one of 'contemplative pragmatism', which can acquire fulfilment set against more rigidly defined orthodoxies. It is perhaps these three chapters that will be of the greatest interest to those concerned with the history and theology of the sixteenth century English church. However, as Williams repeatedly points out, Tyndale and Hooker are but the beginning of the story: the themes established in their thought and writings are those which have preoccupied the church throughout its history. The style and presentation throughout is engaging and provocative, and testimony to Williams' efforts to ensure that papers initially produced for an academic audience remain accessible to a wider and broader congregation. The ease with which the more familiar ground is covered in the opening chapters provides a further incentive, if it were needed, to read the rest of the volume.

Helen Parish, University of Reading, June 2004

David W. Cloud, ***Rome and the Bible The History of the Bible through the Centuries and Rome's Persecutions Against It***. Way of Life Literature Port Huron, Michigan First printing, October 1996 Third edition revised and enlarged, September 2001 ISBN 1-58318-003-6.

Not long ago I attended a history seminar that could well have been called 'The Softer Side of the Inquisition'. Downplaying the Holy Office's atrocities is the in-thing these days, backed up by recent scholarship and documents newly plucked from the Vatican archives.

Our guide through this revisionist swamp was a likeable priest, similar to Father Mulcahy in the long-running "MASH" TV series. He did not deny the atrocities, including those committed by his own order, the Dominicans (or "Domini-Canes", hounds of the Lord); he could not argue with the facts. He admitted the wanton confiscation of private property carried out under the Holy Office's banner. But he put the Spanish Inquisition's body count at a scant 2,000-5,000 for its entire centuries-long lifespan (we'll come back to this figure later).

There are scraps of truth in this. If there's no smoke without fire, then there are no fires without bellows, and poetic licence is easy to spot in historical accounts of the Holy Office's barbarities. It may also be true, while of scant comfort to men awaiting trial, that the Inquisition marked a hobbling step toward enhanced due process freedoms for defendants.

Moreover, in their haste to damn the Catholic Church, Reformation enthusiasts have conflated the Mediaeval and Spanish Inquisitions, State authorities, private armies and lynch mobs, all distinct entities performing separate functions.

Tactical concessions apart, the agenda here is to discredit the Reformers and what they died for. In our Dominican speaker's worldview, Protestant historians are propagandists, while Vatican archives are scrupulously accurate. Inquisition courts followed the rulebook, while Cathars and Waldensians were "the real extremists". Many of the bodies burned at autos-da-fe were effigies, not human, and so on.

"Even if they killed nobody", I interjected to lusty audience applause, *"what a catastrophic waste of time, human energy, and resources this all was! Couldn't this vast superstructure of priests, and trials, have been put to more productive use*?"

"Well, yes… and no" mumbled the presenter. Yes, because some Catholic religious orders wanted no part of the Inquisitorial frenzy. And no, because… at this point our speaker was reduced to a feeble stammer. Why "no"? There is no "no" here!

Even as a lukewarm Church of England member steeped in the lore of the Reformation, I bore the Dominican no ill will, I quite liked him, and could gladly have carried on our talk elsewhere. He had his point of view and I have mine. I'm not alone that way. The Tyndale Society is a broad church, containing Protestants, Catholics, atheists, and straightforward admirers of fine English prose. We are drawn together by Tyndale's universalist insistence that the Scriptures are, and must be, for everybody. We have no time for sectarian malice and could be said to have an ecumenical philosophy.

One man who will have none of this is David W. Cloud, author of today's book for review. In the United States where Cloud is based, Evangelical Christians and the Catholic Church made their peace decades ago, coalescing around social issues including shared opposition to abortion. Cloud represents an earlier generation for whom Vatican II never happened and for whom the battle lines remain forever stark. When I read that Cloud bears no hatred toward Catholics, just to *"the blasphemous Roman Catholic system"*– and to Evolution or Communism – I almost gave up.

Why, I hear you ask, are we giving a platform to hate literature? Well, that's what reviewers are for - to act as a filter! But wait; Cloud's special hero is… William Tyndale, who receives far more column inches than are customary in books produced by university presses and the London/New York publishing axis. And as an Evangelical publishing house based in the USA, Way of

Life Literature is plugged into a potentially much bigger audience than our Society, acting alone, is likely to reach. It behoves us to monitor how our man is being treated around the world.

This book is written for readers who believe, and who do not merely profess to believe, that people's actions in this life determine their salvation in the next. A sentence from the blurb captures the savour:

'David W. Cloud is founder and director of Way of Life Literature, a 26-year old Fundamental Baptist missionary publishing ministry. Brother Cloud was saved in 1973 at age 23, and the Lord gave him a burden to communicate the truths of God's Word via the printed page. (…) One of the chief goals of Way of Life Literature is to help protect churches from end-time apostasy through doctrinal preaching and carefully documented research.'

Cloud's emphasis on salvation through Scripture has its merits. Historical episodes relegated to footnotes in conventional histories acquire fresh importance through his distinctive lens. The Venerable Bede's translation of the Gospel of St. John, completed before his death, is credited with having saved the souls of those Anglo-Saxons lucky enough to read it. There is a logic to this. Brother Cloud looks forward to a celestial meeting with proto-Reformer John Oldcastle, who died bravely for the faith. It's a sweet thought.

The facts presented here are much as we know them, but the emphases are different. Academic historians dare not indulge in the kind of cut-glass certainty that Cloud permits himself. Thus the Wycliffe Bibles were translated by Wycliffe and Purvey, no English bibles came before them, and there's no mention of Trevisa.

This defiantly traditionalist approach is also apparent in the use of stylized Victorian woodcuts of Reformation scenes, quaint relics of a bygone era of historianship. Mind you, the author has read up on a stupendous number of long-lost Reformation histories. Grateful for the tip, I have already ordered a copy of Thomas M'Crie's super-rare ***"History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Spain in the Sixteenth Century,"*** which I need for my collection.

And away we go, on a tour of early Bible translators throughout Europe, taking in Jacques Lefèvre in France, Francisco de Enzinas and Cassiodoro de Reina in Spain, Nicolo Malermi (or Malerbi) in Italy, and many others, all men who translated the Scriptures at great personal risk to themselves. A brief disclaimer: as your reviewer, I stumbled upon ***"Rome and the Bible"*** in a thankless effort to search for material on Enzinas using Google.

Regarding William Tyndale, I learnt little about him I didn't know already (Cloud is a Foxe and Mozley guy, you'll search in vain for David Daniell in

the bibliography). Cloud views double agents Stephen Vaughan and Henry Phillips as having essentially similar motives, and his heart beats faster when he speaks of Anne Boleyn. We find a passing reference to William Tyndale translating the five books of Moses into Welsh (according to ***"History of the Welsh Baptists,"*** Jonathan Davis, 1835)! And this charming passage…

"Rome was directly connected, then, with the persecutions against this noble translator from beginning to end. Nothing frightened the old religious Harlot more than the thought of the Scriptures laid open before the common man. The Devil, surely understanding something of the importance of England and its language, employed his false church in a bitter warfare against this Bible which was to have a worldwide influence without peer among translations."

Readers on Cloud's mailing list will be left in no doubt as to the importance of Tyndale's work throughout history. But his portrayal of the valiant English translator comes without the pretence of detachment, the scholarly caveats and nuances that we expect.

Just how badly does Cloud cloud the issues, if you'll pardon the pun? He engages in overkill in his never-ending accounts of the massacres of Waldensians, mainly drawn from one source *(**History of the Waldenses*** James Aitken Wylie, c. 1860). There's only so much one can take of Cathar babies getting dashed against the rocks. And 2,000 deaths were recorded *in the very first year* of the Spanish Inquisition's operation, in Cloud's reckoning.

There is grudging recognition that some Catholics throughout history have wanted the Bible translated into the vernacular, and distributed far and wide (not with priestly strings attached). This book's concern is always with the Scriptures and people are judged by their relationship thereto; little else matters. As for Cloud's central contention - that the Vatican has supported vernacular translations only when it had no choice, and crushed them when it had the power - that's a matter for individuals to decide. Hence I thought I would act as a double Devil's Advocate, for the sake of argument.

Cloud's readers might not be aware, although I am well aware, of the Catholic Church's record of support for scholarship in a wide variety of fields, including with regard to the Bible (from the Complutensian Polyglot on down). All large institutions detest freelancers and try to swat them; Bible translators are freelancers as a rule; and if you're a freelance outcast from a mammoth institution, the fly-swatter is that much larger.

As the centuries progress in Cloud's history, and as books and printing come to permeate all aspects of life, the Popes' fulminations against vernacular Bibles acquire an air of desperation. Cloud takes them *au pied de la lettre*. Speaking as a Washingtonian, however, the never-ending Papal thunderbolts

reminded me of the fax bombs which powerful lobbying groups send to the White House when the incumbent dares to stray from orthodoxy. These missives are meant to scare and threaten, and they are never less than utterly predictable. And they succeed! One would feel… let down if these messages failed to appear at the appointed moment.

What conclusions can we draw? Tyndale Society members are not this book's intended audience. Our author is at home in the language of sectarian strife, which makes us feel uncomfortable. For Cloud, the task of pressing the Bible into ploughboys' hands was nothing less than a fight to the death. Who is closer to the spirit of the times he describes? What would Tyndale have to say on the subject? These are sobering thoughts for the ecumenical age in which we imagine we live.

Neil L. Inglis, June 2004.

Alan D. Savage, *D'Aubigné's Méditations Sur Les Pseaumes*, Studies In Reformed Theology and History, New Series. No 8, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, N.J., 2002. 119pp.+bibliography.

Although Agrippa d'Aubigné (1552-1630) fought and wrote in defence of the "Parti protestant," this French Huguenot is hardly familiar to Tyndale readers. Professor Alan Savage of the French Department of Wheaton (Illinois) College in his ***D'Aubigné's Méditations Sur Les Pseaumes*** offers a painstakingly wrought study of a noteworthy contribution to the history of meditative literature. This book is a most fitting addition to Princeton Theological Seminary's Studies in Reformed Theology and History, since the *Méditations* should be of interest to students of Reformation religion, history, and literature. Even if we hesitate at Savage's suggestion that his subject is "*one of the major literary figures of the sixteenth century",* the generous quotations from d'Aubigné and their careful analysis reveal a writer of conviction and artistry.

To this reader, d'Aubigné in his prose meditations seems closer to Ignatius of Loyola than to William Tyndale. Tyndale in his commentaries on the New Testament preaches a gospel of personal salvation by faith, while d'Aubigné creates a prayerful meditation and dialogue that is at once both personal and also directed to a political Kingdom having a practical meaning for his persecuted French Huguenot readers.

But like Tyndale adopting the voice of Paul to his Christian communities, d'Aubigné takes on the "I" voice of the psalms, "je", both for the writer of

the *Méditations* and for his reader. Commentator and reader assume the character of David and expand the original situation of the psalm to "*englobe their own circumstances,"* in Savage's words, and find a model both for their repentance and assurance of their reconciliation to God. Thus what Savage refers to as *"the Catholic sacrament of penitence"* — shouldn't it be "penance"? – is rejected as man's invention, as Tyndale did, even with his touch of ambivalence over *"eare confession"*. This turning by the true believers *"directly to the Bible to repair their relationship with God"* Savage illustrates by both d'Aubigné's embracing the Old Testament voice of David, *"J'annonce la justice dans la grande assemblée; Voici, je ne ferme pas mes Ires, Eternel, tu le sais!"* and the New Testament Paul, *"Mais rien ne me separera de la dilection de Christ"*.

The heart of Savage's work is his explication of d'Aubigné's devotion to the *"langage de Canaan"*. (If there were an index for this book, a regrettable omission, I would wager the use of this phrase would be noted in moderate three figures!) Savage first discusses the ideal readers of the ***Méditations*** which for d'Aubigné "*definitely does not include atheists"* but *"the like-minded Christian reader"*. (Tyndale would have approved!) The realities of the wars of religion intrude, interestingly, with d'Aubigné's targeting in his satirical writing *"the many self-seeking conversions to Catholicism by Protestants*". More fundamentally, d'Aubigné is making the accusation that Catholicism is more of a political, social, and professional structure than it is a true religion dealing with spiritual issues". (Sounds a bit like my *"separated brethren"* of the various "Protestant" denominations over here in South Carolina!) Savage notes that *"A simply Christian d'Aubigné, as opposed to a Protestant d'Aubigné very much hostile to Catholicism, cannot be found in any of his writings"*.

The *"language of Canaan"* is the simple communication of the Christian with his God, like the Israelites being rescued from their persecutors and given their Kingdom, their promised land, their Canaan - like the Pilgrims of America, before they turned to banking and shipping - finding *"la prise de possession de Canaan"*. Savage effectively describes the particular political conditions of sixteenth-century France as related to d'Aubigné's combination of spiritual and worldly hope in his prose meditations on the Psalms. In Savage's chapter, Speaking the *'Langage de Canaan',* he refers to d'Aubigné's use of Job's complaints about the way God is treating him. Doubtless this struck home to readers of the ***Méditations:*** Job *"after remaining faithfully silent for so long.., decides he is justified.., and demands an audience with God*". The *"language of Canaan*" is direct and frank.

Is there a real difference between the Catholic tradition of meditation and

d'Aubigné's ***Méditations?*** Both look to the conversion of the individual, to repentance by faith in a loving God—albeit after occasional meditations on personal damnation from the Catholic Ignatius of Loyola and America's own Protestant, Jonathan Edwards. The ***Méditations,*** however, look to a Kingdom, if not in this world, at least in the next. Savage closes his penultimate chapter thus: *"The interaction between the author-mediator and God often reflects interaction between the king and his subjects. For d'Aubigné, however, all things earthly pale in comparison with spiritual realties, and, in the end, the main focus of the* ***Méditations*** *is the individual believer's relationship with God, a relationship that will be sealed in the eternal Kingdom"*.

D'Aubigné's ***Méditations*** with their *"langage de Canaan"* were intended to bring both d'Aubigné *"contentement du coeur"* and *"exultations de la langue"* to his fellow Christians. Savage's conclusion is that the complexities of this language can be simplified as "*God's eternal Word expressed in the human language of Scripture and appropriated by readers"*. Our simple conclusion is that every serious collection of Reformation scholarship, institutional or individual, should own this book.

Donald Millus, Coastal Carolina University, May 2004

Editor's Note:

Prof. D. Millus is the editor of the William Tyndale's ***Exposition of the Fyrste Epistle of Seynt Ihon*** for the Catholic University of America Press edition of ***The Complete Independent Works of William Tyndale*** to be published in 2005.

David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence.* Yale University Press, New York and London, 2003 ISBN 0-300-09930-4 hardback, pp.900 £29.95.

This is a scholarly book with multiple themes, but written in a way that makes reading easy. One theme, running through the book, is the blood-stained story of how the Bible was made available to the people in a language they could understand. We are alerted to this theme at the beginning by the coloured frontispiece of the Lindisfarne page showing the first verses of St John's Gospel in Latin with tiny translations between the large and beautiful lines of the Latin. This is contrasted on the back cover with a line drawing of Tyndale being burnt at the stake. The frontispiece shows the kindness of a monk to another, less educated in his Latin. If he could read it would have

to be in Old English so he could say the Latin as required and know what he was saying. The back cover shows the savagery of those who resisted the Bible open to the people. There was savagery on both sides and Daniell has not hesitated to recognize the courage of Catholic martyrs in Rheims and Douai.

But his authority as well as his loyalty go to Tyndale who is the patron saint of this book which is dedicated to him. David Daniell, Emeritus Professor of English in the University of London, is the author of books on Shakespeare and editor of Tyndale's New and Old Testaments. He has also written a very significant biography of William Tyndale which will no doubt be the standard for many years to come.

There have been histories of translations before and they are kept up to date by writers listing new ones every time a major translation appears. This is one of those histories, but much more. In his detailed survey he shows the way in which translations of the Bible have developed the English language - much as Luther's translation did for the German language. His examples of the influence on Shakespeare are impressive. One reason is that the Tudor translators worked in the high renaissance of the English language and they became part of it. Daniell does not give as much space to modern translations, which are at times nearer to the original but do not approach the style or give the uplift that the King James' Version (the AV) does. That was supported one night for me as I walked home from a service introducing the New English Bible. A local farmer walked with me and his comment was *'Ah! It don't sing'.* He did not know that the NEB was often more accurate but he knew it didn't sound right. Of course, we need modern translations, as the Anglo-Saxon monks did, but academic accuracy must never be allowed to rob us of the inspiration which comes from the page as we read.

The first part of Daniell's book deals with the period before printing, reaching a climax in Wycliffe's translation from the Latin. There is a strange irony in the opposition to this. The Latin was itself a translation, made so that the people could understand it. Hence the name 'Vulgate'. But that was set in stone and soon became thought of as the original and certainly the accepted text. Wycliffe's Lollard Bibles were fiercely opposed. It was suspected that they had stimulated rebellion and were one of the inspirations for the Peasants' Revolt of the 14th century. To be fair, some thought it was a mistranslation and would lead people astray. Bibles should be read by those with learning enough to interpret them to the common people.

One of the themes running through this book is the glory of the open Bible. It took Tyndale his life work and ultimately his life itself to obtain this.

So far as England is concerned *"what Tyndale opened has never been shut".*

Printing changed a great deal. Erasmus had his Greek text of the New Testament printed and it circulated among scholars. Tyndale circulated his translation with difficulty. He was not alone and Daniell brings out the support he received from Coverdale and others. The three chapters on William Tyndale, After Tyndale and Coverdale's Bible 1535 are the heart of the book. But the effect on subsequent editions such as the Great Bible of 1539, the Geneva New Testament of 1557 and the Geneva Bible of 1560 are treated in detail with appreciation.

What emerges again and again is Daniell's absorbing interest in the language that was developing, greatly affected by Tyndale. He makes a startling revelation when he writes, *'The English language when Tyndale began to write was a poor thing, spoken only by a few in an island off the shelf of Europe, a language unknown in Europe…. It is hard to think that in 1500 it was as irrelevant to life in Europe as today Scots Gaelic is to the city of London'.* Daniell shows the change with adequate illustrations. He does not claim all this for Tyndale, but putting the Bible into plain English was a part of the development. There is much space given to the Geneva Bible and the events that brought it into being. The role of the Psalms in the Reformation is argued closely linked with translations published or otherwise circulated. There are chapters on editions and revisions.

Chapter 21 on the Rheims New Testament, l582, is short but appreciative at first, leading to a violent opposition to the polemic nature of both preface and translation. The chapter ends with, *'Mercifully, the Rheims New Testament had little effect'.* David Daniell has not written an impartial book. He has strong views and he supports them well.

A brief but very important chapter in this book is that which examines the language of Spenser and Shakespeare. Much is original and worth careful study. On Shakespeare he writes:

'What Shakespeare and the Bible have in common is that language, at the highest moments, of elemental simplicity, from the Gospels. It is suffering and poverty that are interiorised by Shakespeare..... Shakespeare met suffering people, registered in the ordinary language of the people, in the texts of the Gospels in English, ultimately Tyndale's English. He interiorised their suffering and put them on the stage'.

After a chapter on 'The English Bible in America - From the beginning to 1640', Daniell devotes two chapters to the King James Bible of 1611. Although much of the story is known, he goes into unseen corners and arouses curiosity, particularly through notes and comments. Appropriately,

as this chapter ends and the readers have been convinced that this 'Authorised Version' is 80% Tyndale and all our familiar quotes are from him - including 'chopping and changeing' - a section of 47 black and white reproductions appears, showing the title pages and other prints to bring out the common appeal of the Bible. One is of Queen Victoria, flanked by Prince Albert, presenting a copy of the Bible to a native chief of some British colony. It is entitled 'The Secret of England's Greatness'.

The book goes on, giving a great deal of space to the Bible in America, a subject which will be new to many readers. The research here has been meticulous and rewarding.

The 19th century was rich in material for such a book as this. It began with the formation of The British and Foreign Bible Society and towards its end the Revised Version of the King James Bible. Daniell uses this period to highlight the effect of the Bible on two artists - William Blake and William Holman Hunt. The greater part is given to Blake and is brilliant, but Holman Hunt is chosen for his 'Light of the World'. Of this, Daniell writes, *'It is a painting in which Hunt achieved something rare, the confident combination of Pre-Raphaelite realism, imaginative vision and true Christian power, in which the biblical typology allows continual revelation of new meaning'.*

One chapter of 35 pages is given to the twentieth century, which is not his main interest and it has been covered many times by many writers - and there will be more. The concluding chapter ends with Tyndale. It is a personal summary well worth discussing. Finally he gives us the full text of the Preface to the first 1611 edition of the KJV. It runs for almost 20 pages.

David Daniell's ***'The Bible in English'*** is a rare book and it will not be replaced for many years as the standard work on the English Bible.

Edwin Robertson, June 2004.

Jeremy Goring, *Burn Holy Fire: Religion in Lewes since the Reformation* Lutterworth Press £17.50 (0-7188-3040-7)

There seems no reason why gunpowder treason should ever be forgot in Lewes, the East Sussex county town that plays host to England's most blood-curdling Bonfire Night celebrations. These also keep alive the memory of a still earlier anti-Roman Catholic grievance: the early Protestants burned at the stake there in Mary I's reign, though in ***Burn Holy Fire*** Jeremy Goring argues that the Lewes Bonfire Night has less to do with a continuous remembrance of these martyrs than with a 19th century invention of tradition.

This study demonstrates how much more there is to the story of Christianity in Lewes than pope-burnings and blazing tar-barrels; but an awareness of religious polemic is inevitably to the fore. Goring focuses on the interplay among the town's different denominations and sects. Simply to list these gives some idea of the possible tensions: Anglicans; Roman Catholics; General, Particular and Strict Baptists; English, Scottish and Irish Presbyterians; Calvinistic, Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists; Quakers; Independents; Congregationalists; Huntingdonians and Huntingtonians; Salvationists; Unitarians; Free Christians.

The micro-history, which addresses broad political, religious and social issues through concentrating on a single town or village, is now a fashionable genre – rightly so, since at its best it can fuse the compelling human details of local history with the methodological clarity of the academy.

Goring attempts a longer time-span than most. The book starts with St Wilfrid's conversion of Sussex in 666, but concentrates on the town's post-Reformation history, and ends in the present day. Within this, the histories of individual church buildings are themselves revelatory of the larger picture. In the 1720s, dissentient members of the Westgate Chapel congregation seriously proposed locking their minister out of the pulpit; but 200 years later Westgate worshippers were pioneering ecumenism, and in 2000 Anglicans, Quakers and Methodists all participated in the chapel's 300th anniversary celebrations.

If Lewes can yield ecumenical success-stories, anywhere can. Goring comes as close as anyone ever will to explaining the complex dynamics of Lewes religion and, more broadly, the enigma of why this part of the country should have been associated with Nonconformity and with sectarianism to such a legendary degree.

One sect he does not discuss is the Church of the Quivering Brethren, described in Stella Gibbon's comic novel *Cold Comfort Farm,* which is also based in Sussex. As the historian Geoffrey Elton commented, this has always been "a shire given to its own secret ways".

Alison Shell

This review by Dr A. Shell, lecturer in English at the University of Durham, first appeared in the Church Times 26 March 2004. The book is available from the ***Church Times*** Bookshop tel. 0044 (0)1420 592975 ctbookshop@shineonline.net price £15.75 + postage.

Platten Stephen, (editor) ***Anglicanism and the Western Christian Tradition*****: Continuity, change and the search for communion** Canterbury Press £19.99 (1-85311-559-2)

The Church of England has changed in the past 25 years, and its history has changed with it. The Catholics who dominated mid-20th-century Anglicanism tended to downplay the Reformation, stressing continuity with the mediaeval Church; but also (paradoxically) they tended to heighten the Oxford Movement's novelty by playing up the Protestantism of the preceding generations. Recent scholarship has redressed the balance: the Church of England was more Reformed in the 16th century, and more high-church in the early 19th, than has sometimes been claimed.

In this book, the new picture is presented by the leading historians who painted it. Others fill in colour and detail. This accessible summary deserves a wide readership.

Diarmaid MacCulloch describes the successive Reformations: Henry VIII's "could more plausibly be called Lutheranism without justification by faith" than "Catholicism without the Pope"; Edward VI's swept away almost all the Henrician Reformation's features; and Elizabeth I's largely restored the Edwardian Reformation, but with more conservative tone and style.

Eamon Duffy concludes that the Elizabethan reformers "intended to establish a Reformed Church which would be part of a Protestant international, emphatic in disowning its mediaeval inheritance and rejecting the religion of Catholic Europe". As MacCulloch says, it is very doubtful whether the distinctive Catholic-but-Reformed strand of Western Christianity known as "Anglicanism" can be found in the English Reformation.

But from the late 1580s came what Peter Lake calls "the Anglican Moment": "the polarities were reversed". To counter Puritan arguments, Hooker redefined the Church of England's position, re-evaluated Rome, and recovered a positive view of tradition and ceremonial worship: "echoes of and continuity with the Catholic Christian past became badges of pride". Bancroft went further, defending episcopacy as divinely instituted. In a sense, Hooker invented 'Anglicanism', but his work was part of a wider sea-change, which was also reflected, as Duffy' shows, in nostalgia for the lost world pointed to by "bare ruin'd choirs".

Pauline Croft illustrates these changing attitudes in the lives of three members of the Cecil family. As Judith Maltby shows, the changes produced Prayer Book Protestants unhappy at Laudian innovations, but loyal to Anglican liturgy and episcopacy even through the interregnum: there was widespread support for restoration of the Church.

The book then leaps from 1662 to the Tractarians, who, Peter Nockles argues, "sought to redefine and remould the Church of England". Their attempted "construction of a self-conscious 'Catholic' identity" involved "a deliberate rewriting of Anglican history". They came to view the English Reformation as an embarrassment. The precedent of the Caroline divines makes it wrong to characterise the Tractarians as mere innovators, but Newman eventually concluded that he had been "taken in" by the Carolines, and went over to Rome.

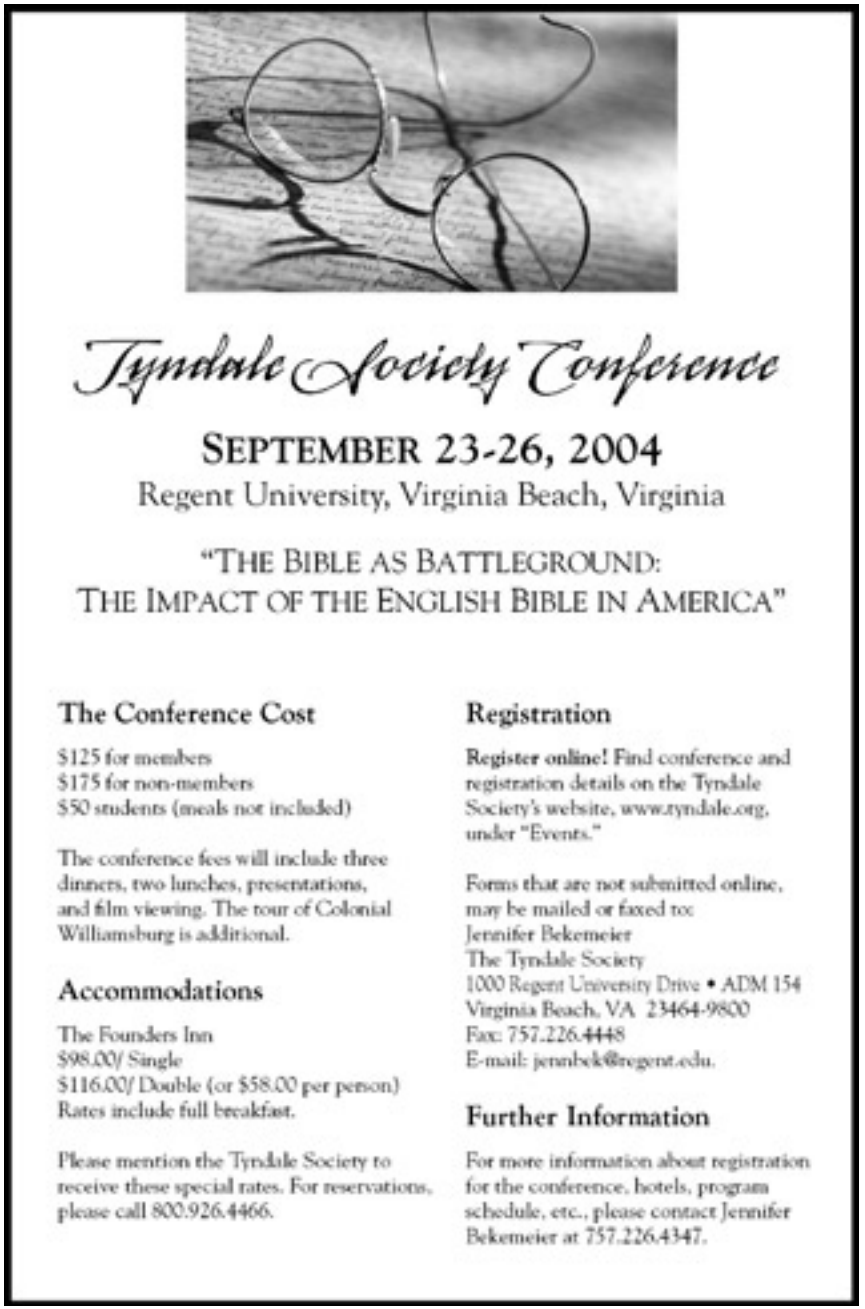
Newman, like Laud, was unwilling "to settle for a mere right to observe certain Catholic doctrines and practices within the widening comprehensive fold of Anglican teaching". Nockles rightly points out that the Anglo-Catholics who stayed had to do so - though their success in remoulding the Church of England should not be underestimated.

The historians' pendulum may have swung a little too far. Despite its subtitle, the book emphasizes discontinuities; but, as Duffy recognizes, the Church of England uniquely "retained totally unchanged the full mediaeval framework of episcopal church government", and its Prayer Book was "saturated with echoes of mediaeval Catholicism". As MacCulloch notes, the threefold ministry in historic succession was continued (if not initially valued).

He also highlights the survival of the cathedral foundations: these corporate bodies with choirs and large staffs of clergy were "an ideological subversion" of Reformed Protestantism. Structural continuity with the mediaeval Church, which made the recovery of Catholic identity possible, was arguably of more enduring significance than the opinions dominant in particular, sometimes quite brief, periods. For a fully balanced picture, both must be given due weight.

Cohn Podmore

This review by Dr Cohn Podmore, Administrative Secretary at Church House, Westminster first appeared in the Church Times 19 March 2004. The book is available from the ***Church Times*** *Bookshop tel 0044 (0) 1420 592975 ctbookshop@shineonline.net price £18 + postage.*



North American News

Report by Jennifer Bekemeier

US Membership Office

The office has recently relocated to Virginia Beach, Virginia, where Professor Barry Ryan and staff will coordinate membership details. Please see updated contact information on the back page of the Journal.

We would like to offer a special thank you to Dr Joe Johnson for his dedication and hard work in the membership office in Paxton, Florida. We look forward to his continued involvement in the Tyndale Society in other capacities.

North American Events

The Tyndale Society East Coast Conference *'The Bible as Battleground: The Impact of the English Bible in America'* takes place at Virginia Beach 23-26 September 2004 (see full page advertisement in this Journal). The outline programme schedule is: -

Thursday, September 23

Registration at Library Atrium: 4-6:30 p.m.
Welcome Reception & Dinner: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Friday, September 24

Extended registration at Library Atrium: 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Morning session
Lunch
Afternoon session
University tour
Dinner
Film presentation

Saturday, September 25

Morning session
Lunch
Tour of Colonial Williamsburg
The Society Banquet
Dr. David Daniell, Keynote Speaker

Sunday, September 26

Worship (optional)

The conference will close after an informal session and farewell reception ending at noon.

Speakers include

Dr Peter Auksi, *University of Western Ontario*
Ms Mary Clow, *Tyndale Society*
Prof. David Daniell, *Tyndale Society (Keynote Address)*
Dr Daniel Driesbach, *American University*
Mr Hector Falcon, *Regent University*
Prof. Douglas Forrester, *William Tyndale College*
Dr John Han, *Missouri Baptist University*
Dr Beverly Hedberg, *Regent University*
Dr Mara Lief Crabtree, *Regent University*
Prof. Don Millus, *Coastal Carolina University*
Sister Anne O'Donnell, *Catholic University of America*
Dr Randall Pannell, *Regent University*
Dr Herbert Samworth, *Sola Scriptura*
Prof. Cordell Schulten, *Missouri Baptist University*
Dr Jay Sekulow, *American Center for Law and Justice*
Dr Diane Severance, *The Bible in America Museum*
Dr Glen Spann, *Asbury College*
Rev. Quency Wallace, *Williamsburg, Virginia*

*For a more detailed schedule and conference updates, please visit www.tyndale.com

Amersham Martyrs

compiled by Valerie Offord

In the last issue of the Tyndale Journal we featured a lyric drama about the life and death of William Tyndale. Scanning through the Church Times this spring a short report on the Amersham martyrs of 1521 and the play written about them caught my eye.

Amersham saw a dozen or more people from or connected with the Lollard movement executed between 1414 and 1532. Foxe relates one such burning in the early 16th century:-

'In 1506, one William Tylesley, a pious man, was burned alive at Amersham, in a close called Stoneyprat, and at the same time, his daughter, Joan Clarke, a married woman, was obliged to light the faggots that were to burn her father'.

Bishop Smith of Lincoln had made a determined stance to stamp out Lollardy and the trial and the persecution of many in the neighhourhood gave rise to much ill feeling in Amersham. In 1521, a Benedictine, John Longland, was appointed Bishop of Lincoln and Confessor to King Henry VIII. A new round of trials was embarked upon and there was an earnest seeking out of those persons who had adjured in 1506. In all some 200 hundred people were implicated.

'The burning of the seven martyrs of Amersham still resonates in the town', says the Rector of St Mary's Old Church, the Revd Timothy Harper. *'People have retained their stubborn independence. They were brutally persecuted by my predecessors for their beliefs in the liberty of conscience and the freedom to read the Bible in English. They stood trial in St Mary's, which has changed very little since that terrible time, and were taken to the hill above the town and publicly burned together.'*

At that time Amersham was part of the enormous Lincoln diocese (now it is in Oxford diocese). The Bishop of Lincoln sent an archdeacon, and might even have been there himself, to watch the blaze. Now the martyrs are commemorated by a community play, first performed four years ago, and now intended to be repeated every four years in St Mary's, where the trial took place. The play reproduces the turbulence of 16th-century life in Amersham, and the trial of the martyrs, finishing with the burning dramatically done with lights. All is set off by the music of the time: works by William Byrd and Thomas Tallis, and plainsong, sung by the specially established Martyrs' Choir.

We print below the article Garry Marshall has written on the play and its performances.

Sources

'After the Flames' ***Church Times*** 26 March 2004.

Andrews-Reading, Michael ***The Amersham Martyrs: The origins and history of Lollardy in 16th century Amersham*** The Amersham Museum 2nd edition March 2004.

The Amersham Martyrs Community Play

by Garry Marshall

Early in the sixteenth century, seven Lollards were burnt in Amersham. They were all residents of the town, and the only such to be burnt, although others were burnt nearby at much the same time in places that included Chesham and Aylesbury.

Amersham sits in a Chiltern fold, in fact, in the valley of the Misbourne. The site is typical of the Chilterns in its geology and also in its seclusion, something that has long made the area attractive to dissidents, as it was to the Lollards. On a ledge in the hillside above the town, near the spot where they were burnt, there is a monument, erected in 1931, to the Amersham Martyrs which has this inscription:-

The noble army of martyrs praise Thee
William Tylsworth Burned 1505
Thomas Barnard Burned 1521
James Morden Burned 1521
John Scrivenor Burned 1521
Robert Rave Burned 1521
Thomas Holmes Burned 1521
Joan Norman Burned 1521

As a contribution to the celebration of the Millennium, the town museum floated the idea of putting on a play about the Amersham Martyrs. The play was actually performed in March 2001. (Amersham runs on its own time.) It was intended to repeat the production in 2006 to mark the five hundredth anniversary of the death of the first of the Amersham Martyrs but, overcompensating, the second production took place in March 2004.

Preparations for the initial production began with the large number of local people interested in taking part carrying out research into the lives and deaths of the Martyrs as well as into conditions in the town at the time. It soon became apparent that reliable information about the Martyrs was hard to come by. After reading Foxe's '***Book of Martyrs***', '***Lollards of the Chilterns***' by W H Summers and a few other references, it became clear that later texts were not above a measure of recycling. Information about sixteenth century Amersham was, if anything, more scarce, but general histories of sixteenth century England abound, and were duly adapted. In any event, it was clear from an early stage that the play would not be a recounting a known story but would have to weave the few certainties into an imaginative, but hopefully plausible, reconstruction.

The production took place in the parish church, St Mary's. The pews were removed from the church's interior to create a dauntingly large performance space and, in due course, four stages, one for each of the scenes, were erected. The play was conceived as a promenade performance in which the audience would walk from one scene to the next. But, before the first scene, and between the others, the audience would mix with the people of sixteenth century Amersham as they went to the market, enjoyed the Charter Fair or went about their everyday life.

Rehearsals began some six months before the first performance. The early enthusiasts, already doing their research, soon found that they had to go back five hundred years, that they had to incorporate the fruits of their research into their performance, and that they had to interact with each other sufficiently to create the bubble of activity necessary to convince an audience that it was market day in Amersham in September 1506. It took about three months for all concerned to overcome their embarrassment, get to know each other, as sixteenth century characters, that is, and to acquire a suitable costume that, more or less, fitted. (To jump ahead, and be immodest, in the end all this work was worth while because many of the audience said that one of the best things about the play was walking into the church and dropping back 500 years as they were almost physically struck by the impression of mediaeval Amersham that this group created.)

After three months, a script emerged. Its four scenes proceed as follows:

Scene 1, set in 1506, deals with William Tylsworth and his family and fellow Lollards. In the course of portraying the life of the family, it gently explains the ideas of Lollardy. The scene finishes with Tylsworth's arrest, and the crowd has to pick up this news and its consequences as the action moves on to the next scene.

Scene 2 involves Tylsworth's wife and daughter. Mrs Tylsworth has to tell her daughter that William is to be burnt and that she must light the pyre. She also tells her she is to be branded and, as the scene ends, she is dragged away to be marked with an 'H' by the local drunk. The crowd reacts with a buzz of concern and fear. This is shortly interrupted by an announcement that it is time for the Fair and, in complete contrast, the townspeople erupt into the juggling, Mummer's play and Morris Dancing of the Charter Fair.

Scene 3 takes place fifteen years after the previous scene, in 1521, and involves Tylsworth's daughter, her husband, John Scrivenor, and their children. Scrivenor, who recanted in 1506, has been brought before the court again. Despite his wife's pleading, he refuses to recant again. The scene ends as his wife finally realises that he is determined to become a martyr. The crowd emerges in sombre mood to listen to an announcement that the King will punish anyone attempting to obstruct the forthcoming arrests.

Scene 4 is the trial of Scrivenor and the other five martyrs-to-be. The Bishop makes his way through the crowd to preside and the trial begins. Despite their testimony, the defendants are doomed. One by one they are taken away and, at the end, the flames from their pyres flicker on the church wall.

Not a ball of fun, you may think. And yet it was. Creating and performing the play was great fun. Its lasting legacy is a strengthened and invigorated community. This would seem to be an apt outcome in relation to the intentions of the Lollards, and inapt in relation to the consequences of the actions at that time of the Church. Clearly, the representatives of the Church in present-day Amersham are not to be tarred with the same brush, but then, back in 1521, the curate of St Mary's was one of those charged with heresy.

The Macclesfield Psalter

Valerie Offord

Almost seven centuries ago, the Norfolk village of Gorleston, now a seaside resort near Great Yarmouth, was the centre of one of the most remarkable periods of artistic creativity in mediaeval England.

A local patron, believed to be John, 8th Earl of Warenne, commissioned three illustrated psalters containing the text of the Book of Psalms. One, the Gorleston Psalter, is now in the British Museum. A second, known as the Douai Psalter after the French town that came to own it, was largely destroyed during the First World War.

No other psalters from Gorleston were known until last year, when a Sotheby's team arrived at Shirburn Castle in Oxfordshire to catalogue the library of the Earl of Macclesfield. A family dispute had forced the Earl to leave his ancestral home and he decided to auction most of his books and manuscripts, because there was insufficient room for them in his new house.

Paul Quarrie, the Sotheby's specialist in charge of the sale, reached up to a shelf and pulled down a brightly illustrated mediaeval book. It turned out to be a previously unknown psalter from East Anglia, dating from 1320-30. Further research revealed that the Macclesfield Psalter, as it is now known, had probably been copied by the same scribe as the Gorleston Psalter, who may also have written the one that went to Douai. The text and some of the illumination had been copied directly from the latter, or vice versa.

Furthermore, the newly found psalter was illustrated throughout by one of the two artists who worked on the Douai manuscript. Sotheby's suggests that the illustrator should now be called the Macclesfield Master rather than the Douai Psalter Assistant. Among the illustrations is one of Saint Andrew, patron saint of the mediaeval parish church in Gorleston.

Sotheby's describes the Macclesfield Psalter as *'the most important discovery of any English illuminated manuscript in living memory'* and expects it to fetch between £800,000 and £1.2 million. It is a windfall for Lord Macclesfield, whose forebears probably acquired it in the 18th century and who were unaware of its importance.

Stop Press

The Psalter was sold on 22 June 2004 for more than £1.6 million

Source

An article *Object of the Week'* by Will Bennett in the ***Daily Telegraph*** 21 June 2004.

A Caxton Treasure from Tenterden

Report by Valerie Offord

The ***Polychronicon,*** one of the first books to be printed in England and in mint condition, is being given on permanent loan to the Canterbury Cathedral library by Tenterden council, Kent. It means that the work written in Latin by Ranulph Hugden, a Benedictine monk, in 1360 and translated into Middle English in 1387 by John Trevisa, chaplain to lord Thomas of Berkeley, will he available to historians and put on display at exhibitions for the first time.

The book contains a detailed history from the arrival of man through to the Black Death, and is renowned for its description of the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Caxton updated it with details of world history up to 1482, when the book was printed.

Tenterden council was given this priceless mediaeval book, printed and signed by William Caxton, 83 years ago in 1921 as a farewell gift from an American businessman returning home after making his fortune in Britain. It has been kept in a safe ever since. No one, apart from the odd trusted person, could view it in the small town council building due to lack of adequate display facilities and insurance problems. The loan of the book was partially prompted by fears that a growing damp problem in the offices could damage it.

In any case, as Tenterden's town clerk remarked, *'A book like that needs to be preserved rather than just kept on a shelf. The staff at the Cathedral library understand better than us how to look after rare old books, so that its condition will not deteriorate'.*

Caxton was born in Tenterden in 1422. About 20 copies of the ***Polychronicon*** survive, but the Tenterden edition is believed to be the original and has handwritten annotations in its margins as well as being signed by the printer.

Sarah Gray, the Canterbury cathedral's assistant librarian said '*We are very excited about having it. We have a tremendous collection of rare books but not having a Caxton has always been a big regret. People always ask us if we have one, so this is a real coup and will fill a major gap in our collection. This is a beautiful example of Caxton's work and looks almost brand new'.*

Source

Article *'Priceless Caxton book goes on show for the first time'* in the ***Daily Telegraph*** 21 June, 2004

Ploughboy Notes

The Gospel Truth

David Ireson, Ploughboy Group Convenor

I don't suppose many ploughboys ever read the 1526 New Testament for themselves, but many heard it read and grew in faith. The Bible Society has followed Tyndale's thinking by launching ***'Faith Comes By Hearing: the Complete New Testament'*** on audio CD or cassette. The text of the King James or a modern translation can now be heard as you drive your car or while eating your toast at breakfast time. The Bible Society says that to hear or read the text just as it stands will encourage "*greater participation in church ministry and stronger personal commitment"* to the faith we live by. I have my doubts.

It is clearly the Bible Society's belief that the text will speak for itself without scholarly exegesis. In Tyndale's time just to have the text in English was something to die for. The 1526 New Testament had no footnotes or introductions but with his second edition, William felt the need to include some comment. In our present age the Bible Society states that it wishes to '*recognise a new challenge to make the biblical message more relevant and credible to the millions of people in our society who are genuinely seeking a sense of purpose and direction in life'.* I wish that simply listening to the text could do that, but I do not think it can.

Before the Reformation in England, the interpretation of the Bible was exclusively in the hands of the priests of the Church. They alone could preach on the Latin texts read at Mass each week. The Bible was in Latin and could not be read in English for fear that the layman might interpret the text for himself. In 1526 William Tyndale's New Testament was printed, he said, for the *'ploughboy'* to read. The text was plain enough to understand.

We may delight in reading the Tyndale New Testament rather than one of the 3000 or more translations which have followed. We treasure the language itself, and most reading this Journal will have an informed theological framework into which the Gospels can be placed. However, most '*ploughboys*' and *'checkout girls'* of today have not been given an awareness of the unique literary form of the Bible. The danger is that they will either hear the text and accept, in faith, every word as literal truth or they will dismiss all of

Scripture as an anachronism which no longer has anything to say to people today. Both responses are contributing to the death of Christianity. Evangelical fundamentalism may be bringing many into church, but it is alienating many more.

By the time most young people leave school they have constructed frames of reference into which all truth is made to fit. Those who have not progressed beyond a Sunday School understanding of the Gospel are as good as lost. *'Truth'* is not an objective reality. We like the truth to fit into our prejudices: yes, our prejudices. The reader of the Telegraph or the Times looks upon the world in a different way from those who read the Guardian or the Independent. The Sun reader avoids reading the Mirror. We help shape the truth ourselves before we even try to approach it.

'Did you put anything on the leg my dog bit yesterday?' you ask the postman anxiously. *'No'* he replies, *'He liked it just as it was'.* The Bible can no longer be heard or read just as it was in 1526. We ploughboys of today have to prepare the ground. We have to make the effort to understand. We have to plough the ground ever deeper in this century of ever greater learning.

Because the Christian faith is not simply a philosophy but an interpretation of historical events, we all have to begin to appreciate the history of the Jewish world of the 1st Century. As John Dalrymple says, there are at least three gaps to be bridged between us and Jesus. First there is the culture gap. Jesus was a wandering Middle Eastern religious preacher, socially and culturally miles away from us. Secondly he was a man of his age who knew nothing of the knowledge explosion of the present era. Thirdly he was a layman. '*Jesus of Nazareth belonged to a definite time, class and society which is not that of any of modern followers*' he writes.

We can only understand the Gospel if we are prepared to make the effort to cross over the gaps of history, geography and culture. The *'Gospel truth'* was written tens of years after Jesus walked this earth. The original historical events of his life were passed down by word of mouth for at least a generation before any Gospels were written. Mark, then Matthew and Luke and eventually John, wrote the *'Good News'* for the early Christian communities they belonged to. Their Gospels were written for liturgical use to strengthen the faith of their community. Once the effort to understand the language and meaning of the 1st century writers has been made, and the nonsense of isolating phrases and hanging beliefs on them which were never intended, then we can indeed listen or read the passages of New Testament and rejoice at its relevance for today; yes, even in Tyndale's rich language of the 16th century.

A Ploughboy's Activities

David Green

June 2004.

Not every Tyndale Society lecture is received with such generosity as the one I gave to friends last autumn at the Abbey Road Baptist church in Great Malvern. A most generous retiring collection was made, followed by a second cheque which arrived the next week! A personal 'plus' was the commission I received from the Rev. Ian Green to paint a small picture of that church, a fine stone building sheltering under the Malvern Hills. It is Ian's first church for which he is sole pastor and I felt honoured to be asked.

A second surprise during that same month was an approach by the friend of a local folk singer, Dave Gass. Dave had written a song which he calls *'The Ballad of William Tyndale' (*printed below*)* and he has now sent me the recording with a group of other songs on a CD. For those who appreciate this idiom I would judge it to be a fine example and I will send taped copies to anyone who would like to hear it. I have planned to meet the composer but at the time of writing, I have not yet been able to do so.

Tyndale Ballad

in reggae style

by David Gass

William Tyndale, he had a plan
To put an English Bible in a ploughboy's hand
He studied Greek, learned Hebrew too
So he'd know his translation was true.

(Chorus)
There's always something` they don't want you to see,
There's always someone don't want you to be free.

The Church said `No, No, No, with all our power an' wealth
We don't want people thinkin` for themselves
`Cos his book didn't say this, an` it didn't say that
An` it didn't justify `em bein` rich an` fat
(Chorus)

They burned his book, all they could find
`Cos Tyndale lit a fire in men's minds:
Tyndale got burned on a charge of heresy
For bringin` the word of God to you an` me.
(Chorus)

But you can't turn back the tide an` the people had their say
An` they had to give it to us anyway!
We got the Bible, written in our own tongue -
But shame on the Church for the way it was done.
(Chorus)

The Church they got together and they authorized
The very book they said that they despised:
They took his work an` called it the King James
An` it don't even mention Tyndale's name!

(Final chorus)
But William Tyndale he had that plan
To put the Bible in a ploughboy's hand.

A Talk on Tyndale's Theology?

William Tyndale has generally been thought of as a poor theologian. My research for my doctorate proved that he was a great theologian. His theology was consistent from his first writing (1525) to his last. His theology was scriptural, and because his covenant theology was not a federal covenant he did not have the problems associated with Reformed theology. In many ways Tyndale's theology has a very modern ring about it, for instance his attitude to the welfare of animals as God's command to us.

I am prepared to speak about William Tyndale's theology to any group who would be interested in learning about it.

Please contact: - The Rev. Dr Ralph S. Werrell, 2a Queens Road, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 1JQ, UK. Tel. +44 (0)1926 858677. rswerrell@hotmail.com.

Recent Lectures

Representing the Society, Professor David Daniell spoke recently on Tyndale and his work to three historic bodies at well-attended meetings.

For almost four hundred years, Lambeth Palace Library has served the churches, and the public at large, on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury. One of the world's historic libraries, it holds archives and manuscripts from mediaeval times, and books from incunabula onward. It offers unique facilities for study. In 2003, the collection went online, immediately bringing millions of hits.

The Friends of Lambeth Library were established in 1964 as a means of extending support. Their Annual General Meeting is an occasion when the Friends fill the Great Hall. It is customarily followed by a major lecture, always printed in the Annual Review. In 2003, Archbishop Rowan Williams, as President of the Friends, took the chair for the first time and welcomed Professor Daniell who spoke on *'Access to the Bible in English: the Sixteenth-Century Revolution'.*

The Dissenting Deputies form the oldest civil rights association in the country. Since 1732 they have fought for the rights of Dissenters. Specifically, two Deputies are elected from the Presbyterian, Baptist and Congregationalist churches within ten miles of the cities of Westminster and London.

For over two hundred years the Dissenting Deputies did great, and necessary, work in righting national wrongs and fighting civil penalties, such as denial of access to higher education. They have traditionally advised the Sovereign, to whom they even now have the right of access. They still have a special role in royal ceremonies, and stand fifth in order of precedence on such occasions, even before the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral. Formerly a great campaigning body, their function was largely taken over by the Free Church Federal Council, now absorbed into 'Churches Together'. They remain an annual lecture society, with a determination to preserve the memory of the very great contribution of Dissenters to the political and economic structure of the country.

The Council of Christians and Jews was formed in the Second World War with one aim, to promote understanding between the two faiths. In the light of the horrors revealed in the 1940s, Christians and Jews came together to strive to banish anti-semitism and prejudice. With patrons at the highest level, from Her Majesty the Queen, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the

Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Archbishop of Thyateria and Great Britain, the Free Churches' Moderator and the Chief Rabbi as part of a long and impressive list, they have fifty-five branches over the United Kingdom, in most major towns. Their work in Britain is mainly educational. The Council is also active in striving to bring understanding to both sides in the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Professor Daniell spoke to the annual general meeting of the branch in St. Albans.

Academic Achievement

The Society congratulates Antoinina Bevan Zlatar, a speaker at the 2003 Geneva Conference, on obtaining her doctorate with the highest honours in the Faculty of Letters at the University of Geneva, Switzerland in February 2004. Her thesis entitled '*The Polemical Protestant Dialogue in Elizabethan England'* is to be published as a book.

Dr Zlatar has also been appointed to a post in the Department of English in the University of Zurich and is currently working on and editing, together with Ms Eleanor Merchant of Queen Mary College, University of London, UK, the **Proceedings of the 3rd Tyndale Conference, Geneva, Switzerland 2003** '*Not for Burning: The Marian Exiles in 16th century Europe'.* Her Geneva Conference paper *'Protestant versus Protestant: Anthony Gilby's 'A pleasaunt Dialogue betweene a Souldior of Barwicke and an English Chaplaine' and the Vestments Controversy of 1563-67'* formed part of her doctoral thesis.

Lichfield Conference

The Lichfield Conference will take place from Friday 26 May to Sunday 28 May 2006. Prof. Anne Hudson will give a paper on *The Premature Reformation,* Rev. Dr R Werrell on *The Theology of William Tyndale,* and Prof. David Daniell on *Bible Translation.*

There will be a call for papers nearer the time. A guided tour of Lichfield is also planned to include the sites connected with Samuel Johnson, David Garrick, Ann Sewell, Erasmus Darwin (Charles' grandfather), Elias Ashmole (whose collection formed the basis for the exhibits in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford) who were all born or lived in Lichfield.

Ralph Werrell, Chair Organising Committee, June 2004..

Publications Committee Report

This Committee met on 5 March 2004 at Hertford College, Oxford.

A plan and format for the proposed new 'William Tyndale' booklet were discussed and it was agreed that a design and specification should now be produced prior to making approaches for possible funding. Meetings have taken place with the British Library to investigate the possible publication of Deborah Pollard's 'Tyndale Concordance' and costings and availability analysis are now being explored. Valerie Offord reported progress regarding the suggested publication of the 'Proceedings of the Geneva Tyndale Conference 2003'. The project has begun to gather considerable interest and support.

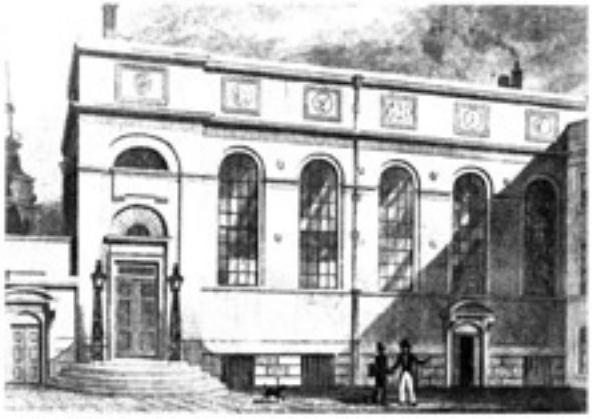
Proposals for the future development of the Tyndale Society website were also discussed and a summary has been put to the Trustees for further consideration.

The Committee will next meet in September 2004.

Peter Clifford, Chairman, May 2004

Stationers' Prize 2004

The annual Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers' prize for 2004 has been awarded to Prof. Thomas Festa, Haverford College, Pennsylvania, USA. His prize-winning essay *Milton's 'Christian Talmud'* which discusses Milton's use of Jewish writing in his Christian theology was published in the Tyndale Society's academic journal ***Reformation volume 8 2003***.



Stationers' Hall, London from a 19th century engraving.

Dates for Your Diary

2004

Thursday 23 September to Sunday 26 September
Tyndale Conference in Virginia Beach, USA *'The Bible as Battleground: The Impact of the English Bible in America'*.

Details from Jennifer Bekemeier, Regent University, 1000 Regent University Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23464, USA. Phone: + 1 – 757 – 226 4347; fax: + 1 – 757 – 226 4448; website www.regent.edu.

Wednesday 6 October 3pm
The Ninth Annual Tyndale Lecture in the Old Deanery at Gloucester Cathedral to be given by David Smith, keeper of the Berkeley Castle muniments and former archivist at Gloucester, on *The Berkeley Castle Muniments*. Followed by Choral Evensong and supper.

Tickets for lecture only £6.50, for lecture and supper £12 obtainable from David Green, 22 Foss Field, Winstone, Gloucestershire, GL7 7JY, tel. +44 (0) 1285 821651.

(Please note that this event is on Tyndale's Day, not 5 October as a recent circular letter stated).

Saturday 9 October, 12 - 4pm
Tyndale/Reformation Walk in Central London (starting at St Paul's Cathedral)

Leader: Rev. Keith Berry

Meet at St Paul's Cross in the churchyard of the Cathedral (nearest tube station St Pauls). For further details contact Mrs Mary Clow, 17 Powis Terrace, London W11 1JJ, UK. maryclow@aol.com

Monday 25 October, 6pm
The Ninth Annual Lambeth Tyndale Lecture, Lambeth Palace, London chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, to be given by Stephen Green, CEO of the HSBC, on the subject of *Money and the Kingdom of God*.

Admission by ticket only - £10 lecture, £30 lecture and dinner afterwards at the Novotel Hotel across the road. Please apply to Mrs Priscilla Frost, 27 Ditchley Road, Charlbury, Oxon OX7 3QS, UK. Phone: +44 (0) 1608 811818. Fax +44 (0) 1608 819010. enquiries.oxcon@pop3.hiway.co.uk.

Thursday 4 November, 5pm
The Tenth Annual Hertford Tyndale Lecture at the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford to be given by Rev. Dr Simon Oliver, Chaplain of Hertford College, Oxford on *'Tyndale's Theology'*.

It will be followed by a reception in the Principal's lodgings, Hertford College. All members, friends and their guests are welcome.

Wednesday 15 December, 12.30pm
Tyndale Society Annual Carol Service, St. Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Lane, London.

It will be followed in the evening from 6pm by the traditional Christmas party with a mystery speaker at Mrs Mary Clow's flat, 17 Powis Terrace, London W11 1JJ (nearest tube stations Notting Hill Gate/ Westbourne Park). Further details maryclow@aol.com.

2005

Thursday 15 September to Sunday 18 September
Fifth International Oxford Tyndale Conference, Hertford College, Oxford. Subject, *'Opening the Word: Voices of Giants'*.

It is hoped that the keynote address will be given by Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury. Speakers arranged include Dr John Court, University of Kent, and Prof. David Daniell. Details from Mrs Priscilla Frost, events co-ordinator.

2006

Friday 26 May to Sunday 28 May
A Tyndale conference in Lichfield, on the subject of Tyndale and Lollardy.

Main speakers: Prof. Anne Hudson, University of Oxford, Prof. David Daniell and Rev. Dr Ralph Werrell.

Details from Dr Ralph Werrell, 2A Queens Road, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 1JQ; tel/fax +44(0) 1926 – 858 677; email: rswerrell@hotmail.com

To ensure that you have the latest information about forthcoming events consult our website at www.tyndale.org.

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enquiries.oxconf@pop3.hiway.co.uk
NB: Priscilla will be able to provide members with information about all our events BUT members should refer to the 'Dates for Your Diary' section for the main contact/organiser of each event.

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