

**LOLLARD INFLUENCES IN MID-SIXTEENTH CENTURY  
ENGLISH REFORMATION THOUGHT : A REASSESSMENT  
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO 'WICKLIEFFE'S  
WICKET', A FIFTEENTH CENTURY LOLLARD TEXT  
PRINTED IN 1546, TOGETHER WITH AN EDITED TEXT OF  
THE 'WICKET' AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL  
COMPRISING THE 'PROTESTACION' OF JOHN LASSELS  
AND WILLIAM TRACY'S 'TESTAMENT' WITH  
'EXPOSITIONS' BY WILLIAM TYNDALE AND JOHN FRITH  
FOUND IN THE PRINTED EDITION OF 1548**

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A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St Andrews



1995

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Lollard Influences in mid-Sixteenth Century English Reformation Thought. A re-assessment with particular reference to **Wickliefes Wicket**, a Fifteenth Century Lollard text printed in 1546, together with an edited text of the **Wicket** and supplementary material comprising the **Protestacion** of John Lassels and William Tracy's **Testament** with **Expositions** by William Tyndale and John Frith found in the printed edition of 1548.

JONATHAN MARK LOVIE



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**Declarations**

I certify that Jonathan Mark LOVIE has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution of the University Court, 1967, No. 1 (as amended), and is qualified to submit this thesis in application for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

.....  
Professor J.K. Cameron, Supervisor.

I was admitted as a research student under Ordinance 350 (General No. 12) on 1st October 1986 and as a candidate for the Degree of Ph.D. under Resolution of the University Court, 1967, No. 1 (as amended) on 1st October 1986.

The following thesis is based on the results of research carried out by myself, is my own composition, and has not previously been presented for a higher degree. The research was carried out in the University of St. Andrews under the supervision of Professor J.K. Cameron.

.....  
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## Acknowledgements

The financial support of the British Academy and the University of St. Andrews is acknowledged.

I am grateful to my Supervisor Professor J.K. Cameron and to Dr. J. S Alexander and Dr. D.W. Lovegrove of St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews for guidance and encouragement, and to Professor Anne Hudson of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford for the initial inspiration and subsequent advice in undertaking this research.

I am indebted to the staff of the following Libraries and institutions:

The Bodleian Library, Oxford; the British Library, London; Cambridge University Library; Durham University Library; National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh; Emmanuel College, Cambridge; Gloucester County Records Office; Guildhall Library, London; John Rylands Library, Manchester; Lambeth Palace, London; Public Record Office, London; Rugby School; St. Andrews University Library and St. Mary's College Library; Trinity College, Dublin; Warwickshire County Library (Rugby); Worcester County Records Office.

I acknowledge with gratitude the support and encouragement of family and friends, and particularly that of my late Grandmother Kitty Clarke Mills who did not live to see the completion of this work. It is dedicated to her memory.

## Abbreviations

ARG	Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte, (Leipzig/Gutersloh, 1903-)
BIHR	Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research (London 1923-)
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library (Manchester, 1903-)
BL	British Library, London
CS	Camden Series (London 1838-)
Dickens, Reformation	Dickens, A. G., The English Reformation, London 1964.
EETS	Early English Text Society (London 1864-). OS - Original Series; ES - Extra Series; SS - Supplementary Series.
Foxe	Foxe, J., Acts and Monuments, ed. Cattley, S.R. and Townsend, G., London, 1837-41; some references to 4th edition, [London 1877] ed. Pratt, J., as indicated.
Frith	Wright, N.T., ed., The Work of John Frith, Sutton Courtenay Press 1978.
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History (London, 1950-)
JWCI	Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes (London, 1937-)
Lollards	Dickens, A.G., Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York 1509-1558, London 1959.
MAE	Medium AEvum (Oxford, 1932-)
MED	Middle English Dictionary, ed. Kurath, H. and Kuhn, S.M., Ann Arbor 1952.
PS	Parker Society (Cambridge, 1841-55)

**Reformation** Hudson, A., **The Premature Reformation, Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History**, Oxford 1988.

**RS** **Rolls Series** (London, 1858-1911)

**SCH** **Studies in Church History** (London, 1964-)

**Smeeton** Smeeton, D.D., **Lollard Themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale**, Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies VI, Kirksville, 1986.

**STC** **Short Title Catalogue**, ed. Pollard, A.W. and Redgrave, G.R., London 1976, 1986

**Sudeley** Sudeley, Lord, ed., **The Sudeleys - Lords of Toddington**, Manorial Society of Great Britain, London 1987.

**Tradition** Rupp, E.G., **Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition**, Cambridge 1947.

**Wyclif** **Wyclif in His Times**, ed. Kenny, A., Oxford 1986.



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## Abstract

The central part of this thesis consists of an edited text of the 1548/50 edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** printed in London by John Day. The absence of a critical edition of this text has prevented historians from adequately assessing its significance either in its Wycliffite or its Reformation context. The **Wicket** itself deals primarily with eucharistic theology, and as secondary themes with ecclesiology, Christology, vernacular scriptures and the problems of religious language. It is suggested that the origins of the **Wicket** can be ascribed to no later than the last quarter of the Fifteenth Century, and its theology to Lollardy. In the Sixteenth Century the **Wicket** appeared with the Testament of William Tracy, a notably Protestant document dating from 1530 which was expounded by both John Frith and William Tyndale, and John Lassels' Protestacion, an eve-of-execution confession of faith written by a Gentleman of the King's Household in 1546. The detailed examination of each text reveals different aspect of Lollardy as it survived in the early Sixteenth Century, and particularly its wide appeal and political influence. It is further suggested that Wycliffite theories of dominion not only helped to justify the Royal Supremacy in 1530, but were also invoked by writers such as Coverdale to counter the extreme Protestants in the early years of Edward VI.

The edited texts are inspired by the work of Professor Anne Hudson on Fifteenth Century English Wycliffite texts, and this study attempts to move forward to apply the same disciplines to a notable printed text of the Sixteenth Century. It attempts to assess the influence of Lollard thought in the mid-Sixteenth Century English Reformation, and the conclusions of the study will particularly support Dr. Hudson's view that education was of particular importance in shaping the development of the Reformation by creating an informed but questioning, individualistic attitude among the laity in those areas of the country where Protestantism was embraced at an early date.

## Introduction

The origins of a movement as complex and extended as the English Reformation are almost certain to be as convoluted as they are obscure. The explanation for this phenomenon so fundamental to the development of English culture and society <sup>1</sup> is a task which many have undertaken but which few have accomplished with any degree of comprehensive success <sup>2</sup>. The intention of this thesis is to make a contribution to the work of what might be described as an emerging school of Reformation studies which seeks to examine the phenomenon of the English Reformation in the light of the survival of Wycliffite or Lollard<sup>3</sup> thought well into the Sixteenth Century <sup>4</sup>. Existing side by side with Continental Protestant theology from the early 1520s, it seems increasingly perverse to deny the possibility of a role for Wycliffite thought in shaping the development of the distinctive Anglican form of Protestantism.

The title of this thesis undoubtedly begs a question: to what extent is a re-examination of the Lollard influences on the mid-Sixteenth Century English Reformation necessary? A brief examination of some of the more readily available histories of the English Reformation should be sufficient to convince the reader that there is wide disagreement on the origins of the movement, and certainly no over-all agreement of the role to be assigned to late

Wycliffite thought and literature in its development. Donald Smeeton <sup>5</sup> and Rosemary O'Day <sup>6</sup> have both produced valuable surveys of historical writing on the English Reformation, and it is unnecessary to reproduce their work here. Several notable and significant trends emerge from a survey of historians' various explanations of the English Reformation, however. What is perhaps noticeable above all is that very few historians have been prepared to allow Lollardy a serious, that is constructive role in the early history of the English Reformation.

Until the past twenty years most writers have tended to view the English Reformation almost exclusively in terms of secular politics. Professor Rupp noted this tendency when he wrote in 1947:

The great political themes have largely occupied the attention of modern historians....But this is not the whole tale, and there remains that ferment, theological, liturgical and religious, without which the story of the sixteenth century might have been the tale of the destructive virus of human greed and human pride. <sup>7</sup>

These political historians have tended to see the Reformation in the context of developments in government, and in this they take their lead from the

Nineteenth Century "progressive constitutionalists" <sup>8</sup>. Sir James Gairdner writing at the turn of the Century thus places responsibility for the Reformation on Henry VIII, contending that its significance is primarily administrative in that it secured for the crown final and absolute control over the last "independent" area within the state:

**This great ecclesiastical revolution was  
that which completed and consolidated the  
fabric of Henry's despotism. <sup>9</sup>**

Gairdner essentially claims that control over the Church was necessary for the Henrician government to function effectively however distasteful ecclesiastical change might be to the monarch or people on a personal level. Others have followed a very similar line of argument. Professor Elton writing in 1962 suggests that the reform of the Church sprang from Cromwell's reform of the mechanisms of government <sup>10</sup>. Elton would only disagree with Gairdner over the extent to which Henry VIII was personally responsible for the changes wrought by the Reformation: he believes that Henry was interested only in general trends and aims of policy and was content to leave its execution to able ministers such as Wolsey or Cromwell <sup>11</sup>. Pollard sees the Reformation as something imposed upon the people and the Church by the secular power of the monarch and Parliament: the Church was almost to be "nationalized"; it was to be viewed as a local body

under the control of the state rather than as a universal body encompassing all Christians owing loyalty to a superior power <sup>12</sup>. Bindoff sees the Reformation as a movement initiated by Henry VIII for his own benefit, and it should be noted that the perceived benefits are exclusively secular <sup>13</sup>. Both Bindoff and Pollard make extensive use of the political records contained in the **Letters and Papers** <sup>14</sup> when formulating their conclusions, and it is therefore not surprising that they arrive at an almost exclusively political interpretation of the Reformation.

The liberal historians of the late Nineteenth Century and the early years of the present Century adopted a different, but equally negative attitude towards the religious element of the English Reformation. One example from the work of J.A. Froude will perhaps suffice by way of illustration:

We have been led forward unconsciously into a recognition of a broader Christianity ... in this happy change of disposition we have a difficulty in comprehending the intensity with which the different religious parties in England detested each other. <sup>15</sup>

This attitude has continued to influence the work of Twentieth Century historians such as Dr. A.L. Rowse

and has led to an unfortunately distorted interpretation of the English Reformation 16

Throughout this period, and particularly from the late 1930s, there have been those historians who acknowledged that Lollardy and Wycliffite thought must be assigned a role in the development of English Reformation thought<sup>17</sup>. Professor Rupp was unequivocal when he wrote in 1947:

Any due assessment of the causes and consequences of the English Reformation must take into account the survival of Lollardy. The new doctrines from the continent found a ready made and hungry audience among those whom John Foxe named "the secret multitude of true professors", who prepared for the development of radical and sacramentarian doctrines in the reigns of Edward VI and Mary. 18

Lollardy is only accepted as being important as a preparation for the new doctrines imported from Europe in the early Sixteenth Century. It seems that Rupp and other historians feel that because Lollardy appears to decline and vanish in the mid-Sixteenth Century, it is a movement which failed to produce anything of significance. Workman had written in 1901:

Wyclif, it is true, was no more the author of the Reformation than the Morning Star is



the cause of day. Nevertheless the judgment of Fuller on the Lollards is correct: "These men were sentinels against an army of enemies till God sent Luther to relieve them"....By their continuity of dissent they had linked on the older protest of Wyclif with the greater movement of the sixteenth century. 19

Among these historians there reigns a genuine confusion as to the nature of late Lollardy, and the scope and sophistication of the Wycliffite thought that survived into the Sixteenth Century. Rupp accepts that the eucharistic theology of those condemned as anabaptists under Edward VI was essentially that of the traditional Lollard, but dismisses the possibility that what he calls the "Christian Brethren" who operated in London in the 1540s might be a late manifestation of Lollard activity with greater haste than the evidence would seem to warrant. Rupp's work concentrates on the careers of individual Reformers whom he feels have been neglected by historians, but his treatment of Wycliffite thought and Lollard survival although refreshing, is too intent upon denying them any constructive or enduring role in the development of English Protestantism 20.

Published only five years after Rupp's work, K.B. McFarlane's **John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity** reveals an interesting if

contradictory attitude towards the survival of Lollardy in the Sixteenth Century: on the one hand McFarlane is anxious to minimize the enduring influence of Lollardy in the development of Anglicanism, while on the other he contends that Lollardy was the basis for the Brownists and Independents, and through them for the whole tradition of English nonconformity. One instance will illustrate the tendency of McFarlane's work:

Lollardy had always appealed most strongly to the lower middle class; after 1414 that class monopolised it completely. That is why it had very little influence in the Reformation when it came....The establishment of a state church under the supreme headship of the king brought no end to the persecution of the Lollards.. Their feeble protest was ultimately drowned in the louder chorus of protestant nonconformity. Their heirs were in short, not the Anglicans, but the Brownists and the Independents. 21

McFarlane's study is, as the Introduction makes clear, more concerned with the political and administrative implications of Wyclif and the Lollards. A book intended to illuminate the workings of late mediaeval government is perhaps not the best source from which to gain an insight into the

religious origins of the English Reformation, and it is thus surprising that McFarlane's words have exercised such a great influence. In fairness to both Rupp and McFarlane it is important to recall that they wrote in the absence of much important evidence which has only become readily available in the past twenty years and which does much to improve the understanding of the nature of Wycliffite thought.<sup>22</sup>

Important evidence with regard to the survival of Lollardy in the Sixteenth Century has been gained through research into the social aspects of the Reformation. From the 1960s onwards, perhaps as a reflection of the concerns of contemporary society, much greater interest has been expressed in the attitudes of the non-government classes to the religious changes of the early and mid-Sixteenth Century. Research in this area was almost bound to uncover what traces remained of Lollard and Wycliffite activity at this period. An interest in the role of Lollardy in the development of the English Reformation is best served by a course of research which takes account of the social aspects of the Reformation and which attempts to discover something of popular religious sentiments of the period.

Professor J.J. Scarisbrick addresses the problem of popular religious affections in his wide-ranging study of Henry VIII published in 1968 <sup>23</sup>. Scarisbrick concluded that while "local" anticlericism, the

objection to a known corrupt priest, local tithe exactions, ecclesiastical property holdings might be quite common among the laity, "positive" or "religious" anticlericism springing from a theological objection to the prevailing concept of the Church and priesthood was quite rare and confined to a small section of society<sup>24</sup>. The Church was seen to play a vital role in society, especially through parish guilds which satisfied lay desires to play an active role in religious life<sup>25</sup>. Scarisbrick produces detailed and compelling evidence to show that these parish guilds and fraternities were vibrant and active well into the Sixteenth Century, and in many cases their loss during the Reformation must have caused distinct hardship for local people<sup>26</sup>. Scarisbrick concludes that most "ordinary" laymen were prepared to accept the early Sixteenth Century Church as it stood, and viewed the Church, at least on an institutional level, with affection. Only when the crown attacked property vested in the Church did laymen discover that they too could profit from Protestantism and lent their support to a Reformation they had done little or nothing to bring about. Evidence is produced to suggest that some local communities may have participated in the dispersal of ecclesiastical property which they regarded as being held "in trust" by the Church for the community in order to prevent it from falling into the hands of the government<sup>27</sup>. Arguments such as those developed by Scarisbrick and

backed by considerable local evidence carry much weight and could do much to re-enforce the view that by the early Sixteenth Century Lollardy was a spent force. However it should be noted that Scarisbrick is emphasising one portion of the evidence to show that religious life in early Sixteenth Century England was considerably more active and healthy than has often been assumed by earlier historians. Scarisbrick has presented the evidence necessary for the formation of a valid opinion with regard to religious life on the eve of the Reformation, but that evidence is not intended to provide a picture of Lollard survival and cannot be construed as a negation of the hypothesis that Lollardy and Wycliffite thought played an active role in shaping the early progress of the English Reformation.

At first sight Claire Cross' book *Church and People 1450-1660*, sub-titled *The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church* appears to be a direct contradiction of Professor Scarisbrick's conclusions. Cross contends that from 1450:

The laity in general, not merely the king and his ministers, or even the Crown together with the nobility and gentry, was beginning to demand a far more active role in the life of the Church. 28

Cross' analysis of the ecclesiastical situation in England during this period is simple and persuasive. The socially diverse group which pressed for reform in the late Fourteenth and early Fifteenth Century, first through Parliament and then through force, was crushed after the defeat of Sir John Oldcastle's revolt in 1414 <sup>29</sup>. The Church attempted to force and persuade the laity into a passive orthodoxy; they failed to stem the lay desire for literacy and freedom of thought, and thus they failed to prevent the ultimate re-emergence of lay demands for ecclesiastical reform and participation in religious life. Successive regimes had required the moral support of the Church and ecclesiastics were accordingly appointed to high offices of state. This tended to protect the Church from lay demands for reform and enabled ecclesiastics to continue on a course substantially unaltered. Only when the crown assumed sufficient power to stand independently of the Church could the protests of the laity assume any dangerous aspect. Henry VIII was thus able to throw in his lot with the lay anticlericists in Parliament, having dismissed Wolsey the "arch-clericist" <sup>30</sup> signalling the end of clerical domination over secular affairs of government. Cross believes that literacy and "New Learning" in the early Sixteenth Century led a substantial class of laymen to expect considerably more from the church than could be offered by an essentially late mediaeval organization <sup>31</sup>.

Scarisbrick concentrated upon evidence of contentment with the ecclesiastical **status quo**; Cross has looked for instances of discontent. The evidence should not be looked upon as being contradictory, but rather it is supplementary.

This difference of approach highlights a fundamental methodological problem for the historian of the English Reformation: both Cross and Scarisbrick have set out to write wide-ranging histories of the general trends and movements of ideas associated with the Reformation in England; they have both sought to balance the omissions of earlier works by basing their conclusions upon the copious use of highly detailed local material which shows what individuals in a particular locality did in the face of the Reformation changes. Local evidence, however, by its very nature can only give a very small insight into general trends. Assessed together the apparently contradictory evidence produced by Cross and Scarisbrick paints very much the picture of the Sixteenth Century Church in England one might expect: the laity was becoming better educated and in some sections more highly articulate; many accepted the Church as they found it without entering into open criticism, for the border between criticism and heresy could be very fine, as is demonstrated by the distrust shown towards Dean Colet in the early part of the Sixteenth Century <sup>32</sup>. Many people clearly accepted the Church because they felt

that it was adequate to their spiritual needs or because it satisfied a general taste for the extravagant in early Sixteenth Century England <sup>33</sup>; at the same time there is clear evidence that the Church fulfilled valuable social and humanitarian functions within society <sup>34</sup>. However there were also those who objected on political and theological grounds to the state of the contemporary Church, as Scarisbrick acknowledges <sup>35</sup>. In the early Sixteenth Century many of these divergent groups were able to co-exist within the Church, but in different localities specific pressures would lead to the predominance of a particular view of the Church. Local evidence is of fundamental importance for the historian of the English Reformation, but is an area which was sadly ignored until recent decades. The difficulty of extrapolating valid general conclusions regarding the reaction of the whole nation to religious and theological change from local evidence must, however, be noted.

Perhaps the seminal text for all historians of the English Reformation who have sought to make use of local evidence in their discussion is Professor A.G. Dickens' *The English Reformation* published in 1964 <sup>36</sup>. In the Preface Dickens explains that as part of the purpose of his book he has:

**Sought to depict the movement as it affected  
ordinary men and women, who have somehow**



tended to fall and disappear through the gaps between the kings, the prelates, the monasteries and the prayer books. 37

Professor Dickens acknowledges that local and regional research can make a rich contribution to the social history of the English Reformation but is clear that the evidence from this research can only be used to effect when the conventional themes of governments, rulers and reformers is kept in sight: "the story will not cohere in their absence" 38.

Dickens is clear that this is not a definitive history of the English Reformation 39. In the face of continuing research this could not be a realistic aim for anyone working in the field. Dickens predicted that in twenty years' time a more definitive treatment might be possible, but as the thirtieth anniversary of the publication of *The English Reformation* approaches the volume of local research makes it almost impossible to evaluate or collate into a definitive study of the social aspects of the Reformation in England. One major problem which extensive local and regional research has high-lighted is the patchy nature of sources. Some records available to Sixteenth Century writers have now disappeared, making the evaluation of their recorded information more or less impossible 40. Diocesan records are often uninformative and vary in quality and completeness so much as to make any meaningful comparison difficult

41. Professor Dickens was one of the first researchers to make use of wills and testamentary material in an attempt to determine the spread of Protestant thought in particular localities 42. this work has produced interesting results, but is not without its own problems, particularly in determining what is the work of the testator rather than the clerk or lawyer 43.

Recent historians interested in more than the political history of the English Reformation have turned to a variety of alternative sources in order to supplement the history of the "official" Reformation to be gleaned from the State Papers 44. One notable group, and the one which has most influenced this present study, is that which has focused its attention upon the material which was available to and read by religiously minded men and women in the Reformation period and the decades leading up to it. Dr. Anne Hudson has contributed greatly to the understanding of the Wycliffite movement in the Fifteenth Century, particularly through the painstaking preparation of the English Wycliffite sermon cycle and other material for publication 45. It is this work which has inspired the present edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** around which this study is based. To know what the religiously minded literate read in the Fifteenth Century and early Sixteenth Century is perhaps the closest that it is possible to come to knowing the inner thoughts and beliefs of these men and women 46. A knowledge of the

works available to the early Sixteenth Century reader shows the historian what influenced the literate in their own thought. In some instances where texts were proscribed it is possible to trace individual readers through official records of prosecution. Even where a text is not mentioned by name, its presence within a community can sometimes be gaged by suspects' use of quotations and concepts clearly derived from a specific text. This goes some way towards indicating the extent of a text's readership, its geographical spread, and thus its influence. It is as a small contribution to this field of Reformation studies that the recently unedited material printed under the title **Wickliefes Wicket** in 1546 is offered.

In any discussion of **Wickliefes Wicket** it is immediately necessary to distinguish between the varied texts which have appeared in print together below that title. The distribution of the texts in the various editions will be discussed in the ensuing Bibliographical Analysis, but for the present it will be sufficient to note that this edition comprises five texts which have at various times in the mid-Sixteenth Century been printed under the title of the oldest of their number, **Wickliefes Wicket**.

**Wickliefes Wicket** itself, hereafter usually called the **Wicket**, has always enjoyed primacy within the collection of texts <sup>47</sup>. It is the most substantial of the texts both in terms of length and theological

matter. It makes bold claims for its own antiquity and its use of the name of John Wyclif undoubtedly lends it a further air of authority. Always placed first among the collection of texts, it gave its name to the whole, as often happened at this time. The **Protestacion of John Lassels** is a confession of faith dating from 1546 which raises important questions concerning the extent of the political influence of Wycliffite sacramentarians in the closing decade of the reign of Henry VIII. It will be known here as the **Protestacion**. The **Testament of Master William Tracy**, a Gloucestershire gentleman who died in 1530 is an important though brief document in its own right. Its importance is considerably increased, however, because it attracted the expository skills of two of the leaders of the English Reformation: William Tyndale and John Frith both wrote **Expositions** and discussions of the original text by Tracy. This group of related texts will be designated **Testament, Tyndale and Frith**.

It is unfortunate that most historians who have mentioned **Wickliefes Wicket** have failed to make clear to which text they refer. By inference it seems that most have used the title to refer to the **Wicket** alone<sup>48</sup>. The significance of the compilation as a whole is one that has not been addressed, and with the exception of Tyndale's **Exposition of the Testament** the remaining texts have been largely ignored. The decision to prepare an edition of all the texts which

make up **Wickliefes Wicket** may thus require some explanation. The **Wicket** alone could provide sufficient material for a lengthy study: it is set apart from the other texts by its obvious antiquity and independent existence prior to 1546 <sup>49</sup>. However a study of the **Wicket** in isolation would present only half its story. The remaining texts provide the context within which the **Wicket** came to be known by its mid-Sixteenth Century readers. There is, furthermore, an underlying unity of theme: the eucharist and its true understanding lies at the heart of each text. Taken as a whole **Wickliefes Wicket** provides a rare glimpse of the forces which drove men and women of varied backgrounds on towards what was to become the Anglican settlement under Edward VI. Comparatively humble Cotswold and Chiltern farmers and tradesmen, Essex villagers and priests, gentry, London clergy, bishops, leading Reformation thinkers and probably a Queen are all united by their connection with **Wickliefes Wicket**. In terms of the social history of the English Reformation **Wickliefes Wicket** could hardly be of greater significance. Many have noted in passing the theological importance of the **Wicket**, but no one has previously sought to go further than this and demonstrate that **Wickliefes Wicket** suggests that Wycliffite themes, particularly relating to the eucharist, were at work at all levels of early Sixteenth Century society and were instrumental in shaping what was to become the distinctively English

Reformation. The present study therefore sets itself two major tasks: in the first instance the presentation of thorough critical editions of each of the texts which comprise **Wickliefes Wicket**; and secondly the use of evidence derived from a social and theological analysis of **Wickliefes Wicket** to demonstrate the way in which the influence of Wycliffite thought was felt in mid-Sixteenth Century Reformation circles in England.

#### **Bibliographical Analysis.**

The absence of a manuscript of any portion of **Wickliefes Wicket** inevitably leads to editorial difficulties <sup>50</sup>. For knowledge of **Wickliefes Wicket** it is necessary to rely upon the four Sixteenth Century printed versions of the text and the edition printed at Oxford in 1612. The history of **Wickliefes Wicket** is plagued by confusion and concealment which was little removed by those Nineteenth Century editors who were prepared to modernize the texts at will, utilize Sixteenth Century material for their own controversial purposes <sup>51</sup>, or simply to present a bald text devoid of all critical analysis <sup>52</sup>.

The essential differences between the various versions and editions of **Wickliefes Wicket** are

outlined in Bibliographical Tables I - III below. It will be noted that in the most expansive versions of the text, designated here as texts C and D, the tract **Wickliefes Wicket** was printed with **The Protestacion and Confession of John Lassels**, and **The Testament of Master William Tracy** with separate elucidations and commentaries by William Tyndale and John Frith. Both the **Wicket** and the **Testament** in both its **Expositions** enjoyed an independent existence, while the **Protestacion** does not seem to have been published outside the compendium **Wickliefes Wicket**.

The present edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** is based upon the text of 1550 (text D<sup>53</sup>). This represents what is best described as the corrected text of the most expansive version of **Wickliefes Wicket** comprising the **Wicket**, the **Testament** in both its **Expositions** and the **Protestacion**. In addition the editorial material printed in texts C and D and attributed to Miles Coverdale is edited, together with the Introduction written by Dr. Henry Jackson for his edition of the **Wicket** in 1612.

Essential bibliographical information has been summarized in the three Bibliographical Tables. The following paragraphs will supplement and expand upon that basic data.

## The Sixteenth Century Editions of Wicklieffes Wicket:

### The First Edition:

#### 1. Text A

The title page of both the **Wicket** and the **Testament** in its **Exposition** by Tyndale is ornamented with a leaf, 7mm x 12mm placed to the left of the leading line of print. The cusp of the leaf faces right, pointing towards the text. The **Wicket** title page reads:

Wycklyffes | Wicket: whych he | made in kyng  
Rycards da= | ys the second in the yere | of  
our lorde God | M.CCC.XCU. 54

This is followed 25mm. below by a quotation from John 6:51:

I am the liuyng bread...for the lyfe of the  
worlde.

A triangular device of three commas is placed in the centre of the page below this quotation.

The title page of the **Testament** reads:

The Testa= | ment of master wylliam | Tracie  
esquier, expounded by Wylliam | Tyndall.  
Wherin thou shalt perceyue with | what  
charite the chaunceller or worceter | Burned  
when he toke vp the dead car | cas and made  
asshes of it after it was buried. | M.D.  
xxxv. 55



This version bears the following colophon on C3r:

**Inprynted at Norenburgh, | 1546.**

Two copies of this printing survive in British collections, one in the Bodleian Library and one in the British Library. The **Short Title Catalogue** lists copies in the United States at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington and the New York City Library.

## **2. Text B**

This is very similar to text A and priority is not immediately obvious. Some errors in A seem to be corrected in B, but B is by no means a perfect text, and the quality of its type is suspiciously crude. On the basis of the number of variants found in A but not in B, and therefore assumed to have been corrected in B, priority has been ascribed to A. It is possible to interpret the evidence in the opposite direction and conclude that A is a degenerate variant of B, but this would be to ignore the fact that text C appears to rely upon readings found in B<sup>56</sup>. C is known to have been printed later than A or B because it includes the dated **Protestacion** of John Lassels. On this basis it seems fair to conclude that there is a chronological progression through the texts and that the order suggested by the **Short Title Catalogue** is correct.

The title page of the **Wicket** and the **Testament** as expounded by Tyndale are both ornamented with a

Maltese Cross device placed to the left of the first line of type, 9mm. x 8mm. x 4mm. The title page of the **Wicket** reads:

Wycklyffes | Wicket: whych he | made in kyng  
Rychards da= | ys the second in the yere |  
of our lorde God a | M, CCC.XCU. 57

The same quotation from John 6:51 is found 2mm. below the main title as in text A, while a device of three commas is placed below the quotation in the centre of the page.

The title page of the **Testament** reads:

The Testa | ment of master wylliam Tracie  
esquier, expounded by Wylliam | Tindall.  
Wherin thou shalt perceyue wyth | what  
charite the chaunceler of Worceter | Burned  
whan he toke vp the dead car | kas and made  
asshes of hit after | hit was buried. |  
M.D.XXXV. 58

The use of the pronoun **Hit** should be noted. Rare in the Sixteenth Century this form was still sometimes used as a means of giving special emphasis to the object represented by the pronoun 59.

This version bears the colophon:

Inprynted at Norenburgh, | 1546.

Five copies of this printing are extant in Britain. The Bodleian Library possesses two copies, and there is one each in the collections of the University of Cambridge, John Rylands in Manchester and the Marquess of Bute in the National Library of Scotland. The **Short Title Catalogue** lists one copy at the General Theological Seminary in New York. Bodley copy B4(1)Med.B.S. is distinguished for bearing upon its title page the autograph signature of the Reformer George Joye. Rylands copy R.17693 is bound with **The Souper of the Lorde**, at one time attributed to William Tyndale but now usually considered to be the work of George Joye <sup>60</sup>. Cambridge University Library copy Syn.8.54.89(1) is also bound with **The Souper** and manuscript notes in both the **Wicket** and **The Souper** in this copy are clearly both in the same Sixteenth Century hand indicating that the two works were bound and read together from an early date. Despite the different dates in the colophons of the two works the similarity of the type used in each should be noted <sup>61</sup>. The person to whom the **Wicket** was congenial theological reading might find himself attracted to reading **The Souper**.

#### Second Edition:

##### 1. Text C

This is the first of the two expanded versions of **Wickliefes Wicket**. Once again priority is difficult to establish other than on the basis of a number of

variants found in text C which are not repeated in text D. The type in D has been substantially re-set, particularly in the editor's preface; indeed the frequency with which variant forms are encountered reduces significantly after A8v. It thus seems reasonable to suppose that D was printed subsequently to C and represents a corrected version of the material first printed in C<sup>62</sup>. In both C and D the initial "W" of the first word of the title is made up from the two letters "U" and "v" printed abutting each other.

The title page of the **Wicket** is considerably expanded in this edition and reads thus:

Wickliefes | Wicket. Faythfully ouerseene |  
and corrected after the originall and first  
co | pie. The lacke wherof was cause of  
innu= | merable and shamfull erroures in the  
other | edicion. As shall easily appeare to  
them | that lyste to conferre the one wyth  
the | other Herun to is added an Epi= | stle  
to the reader With the pro | testacion of  
Jhon Lassels | late burned in Syth= | felde:  
and the Te= | stament of Wylliam Tra= | cie  
Esquire, expounded | by Willyam Tyn= | dall,  
and Jhon | Frythe. <sup>63</sup>

1mm. below the title is placed a triangular device made up from three symbols: (\*). The apex of the

triangle points towards the head of the page. 4mm.  
below this device is printed:

**Jhon the. vi. chapter.**

A further 4mm. below this is found the quotation from  
**John 6:51** which was earlier used on the title pages of  
editions A and B.

The title of the **Protestacion** is found on B7v and  
provides further information with regard to the  
content of Lassels' work:

**The protestacion & confession of John |  
Lasselles where vppon he suffered in Smyth |  
fielde at London. Anno. M.cccccc.xlvi. 64**

The title of the **Testament** falls on C2v and is  
essentially a corrected version of the title which was  
used in texts A and B:

**The testa= | ment of maister Wyllyam Tra= |  
cie Esquyer, expounded by Wyllyam Tyn |  
dall, Wherin thou shalt perceyue with what |  
charite the chaunceler of Worcester |  
Burned, when he toke vp the dead | carkas  
and made ashes of | it after it was buried.  
| M.D. XXXU. 65**

Text C bears an ornamented colophon on D8r:

**Ouerseene by.M.C.**

This is preceded on the same line by an ornamental leaf 6mm. x 2mm., its cusp pointing towards the right-hand margin.

Five copies of this printing of **Wickliefes Wicket** have survived in British Libraries. The British Library copy G.11996 bears heavy manuscript annotations: two lines run vertically along the right-hand face of the title page, while the blank leaf at the end of the work is covered on both sides with heavy notes in the same hand. These overlie earlier notes in a much lighter hand which may represent mathematical calculations involving sums of money <sup>66</sup>. The copy in the Library at Durham University, R.xvi.D.32, has sustained damage to the top and bottom right-hand corners of the title page. This continues to A7 and the damage is also present on ff. D3-8. In both cases the text is slightly impaired. This copy is more interesting for its inscriptions made by two Seventeenth Century owners:

**Robt. White Anno. Dom: 1669**

**Samuell White his Book Anno. 1666:**

The Nineteenth Century binding has re-used an earlier red and gold tooled spine which may date from the Seventeenth Century. This, taken with the inscriptions, indicates the esteem in which the **Wicket** was held by the White family in the mid-Seventeenth Century when the volume appears to have been handed on as a family heirloom. The Cambridge University Library

copy, Syn.8.54.11(5), and the copy in Emmanuel College Library, Cambridge, MS.A.A.1 bear no distinguishing features or manuscript annotations, but the presence of the text in a College noted for its puritan sympathies might be significant. The copy in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, Press B.1.11, has only been examined by photograph, but a manuscript cypher would appear to be present on the title page 67.

In the United States the Short Title Catalogue records copies of this edition at the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, New York City Library, and the Vermont University Library.

## 2. Text D

This is the second of the expanded versions of *Wickliefes Wicket* and in most respects it is very similar to text C. The principal means of distinguishing the two editions will be found in the presentation of the title pages:

Wickliefes | Wicket. Faythfully ouerseene |  
and corrected after the originall and first  
co | pie. The lacke wherof was cause of  
innu= | merable and shamfull erroures in the  
other | edicion. As shall easily appeare to  
them | that lyste to conferre the one wyth  
the | other. Here vnto is added an Epi= |

stle to the reader. With the pro | testacion  
of Jhon Lassels | late burned in Smyth= |  
felde: and the Te= | stament of Wylliam Tra=  
| cie Esquire, expounded | by Willyam Tyn= |  
dall and Jhon | Frythe. 68

1mm. below the title is placed the same triangular  
device found in edition C made up buy the symbol (\*).  
4mm. below this device is printed:

Jhon the. vi. chapiter.

A further 4mm. below this is found the quotation from  
John 6:51 found on the title page of all previous  
versions of Wicklieffes Wicket.

The title page of the Protestacion falls in this  
text on B7v and reads:

The protestacion and confession of Jhon |  
Lasselles where vppon he suffered in  
Smyth | fielde at London.  
Ann.M.CCCCC.xlvi. 69

The Testament has its title at C2v and reads:

The testa= | ment of master Wylliam Tra= |  
cie Esquyer, expounded by Wylliam Tyn |  
dall, wherin thou shalt perceyue with what |  
charite the chaunceler of Worcester |  
Burned, when he toke vp the dead | carkas



and made ashes of | it after it was buried.

| M.D.XXXU. 70

Text D bears a colophon similar to that found in C. On D8r the colophon in text D has an ornamental leaf 6mm. x 2mm., the cusp of which points towards the right-hand face of the page and reads:

**Ouerseene by.M.C.**

Five copies of this printing are extant in British libraries. The copies in the Bodleian Library and Christ Church Library, Oxford and that in the British Library are not distinguished in any way. The John Rylands Library in Manchester has a particularly magnificently bound copy of this text which was once in the Lovell Collection<sup>71</sup>. This copy has early manuscript annotations at Dlv 5 and Dlv 11-12. The most interesting copy of this version is perhaps that in the Library of Lambeth Palace where the leaves in fold A are incorrectly distributed in the order A2, A4, A3, A5. Apart from this error of binding the copy is complete and perfect <sup>72</sup>.

To summarise this survey of the Sixteenth Century prints of **Wickliefes Wicket**, the evidence suggests that the four versions of the text represent two distinct editions of the work, each with a variant or possibly corrected version. Thus A and B will be seen to form the First Edition, while the Second Edition comprises C and D. The relationship between B and C, especially that noted at B2r 19 further suggests that

a chronological ordering of the texts as suggested by the Short Title Catalogue is correct.

**Seventeenth Century Editions:**

**1. Edition E**

This is an interesting early Seventeenth Century edition comprising the **Wicket** alone. Edited by Henry Jackson, a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, this edition can be fitted into an emerging school of thought which sought to define more precisely the nature and origins of the Church of England. Henry Jackson worked on the papers of Richard Hooker which had passed to the President of Corpus <sup>73</sup>, and the editorial material reproduced here in Appendix II shows a desire shared with other contemporary writers such as the Bodley Librarian Thomas James <sup>74</sup> to identify the Church of England with elements of the pre-Reformation Church. Jackson's title page makes it clear that in compiling his edition he made use of the earlier printed editions rather than a now lost manuscript of the **Wicket**, and indeed it can be seen that his text follows that of C closely, for example at A8r 11 and A8r 14<sup>75</sup>.

WICKLIFFES WICKET | OR | A LEARNED AND |  
GODLY TREATISE OF | THE SACRAMENT, | Made by  
| JOHN WICKLIFFE. | Setforth according to  
an ancient | Printed Copie. <sup>76</sup>

2mm. below the title is an ornamental device of three stars arranged in a triangle, the apex of which points towards the base of the page. Below this is the symbol of the Oxford University Press followed by the details of the edition's publication:

AT OXFORD, | Printed by Joseph Barnes, and  
to be sold by John | Barnes, dwelling neere  
| Holbourne | Conduit. 1612.

Edition E is widely available through Britain in major libraries and collections. Of the copies examined in the preparation of the present edition, attention should be drawn to the copy in the British Library, 114.a.56, which comprises the editor's preface alone, and to Cambridge University Library copy Peterborough K.2.3(6), which is a similar fragment. The **Catalogue of English Cathedral Libraries** indicates that of all the editions of **Wickliefes Wicket**, this edition alone is found in the cathedral chapters' collections. The **Short Title Catalogue** shows that edition E is widely available in the United States. It is clear that this edition of the **Wicket** alone was produced in far greater numbers than were any of the earlier printings of **Wickliefes Wicket**.

Between Henry Jackson's edition of the **Wicket** in 1612 and Thomas Pantin's edition printed in 1828 there is no record of the publication of any of the constituent parts of **Wickliefes Wicket**. This does not

mean that the work was not read or lay disregarded for two centuries. The inscriptions in the Durham University Library copy of text C referred to above <sup>77</sup> suggests that the **Wicket** was read and valued in the mid-Seventeenth Century <sup>78</sup>, and the presence of Henry Jackson's 1612 edition in so many English cathedral libraries suggests that the theology of the **Wicket** and the historical theories outlined by editor in the face of Roman criticism <sup>79</sup> had become part of the accepted understanding of the Church of England. Jackson's edition is accurate, complete and well-suited to its purpose. There was simply no need for a further edition of the **Wicket** until an antiquarian interest in "old English texts" arose in the Nineteenth Century, fuelled by anti-Roman Catholic prejudice and a desire to stress the Protestant nature of the Church of England which followed the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829, and Newman's conversion in 1845. The **Testament and Protestacion** had been re-printed by Foxe in the **Acts and Monuments** and were therefore very widely available from that source <sup>80</sup>.

### **The Nineteenth Century Editions**

The four Nineteenth Century editions of the **Wicket** seem to have been motivated by a combination of antiquarian zeal and a desire to bring the theology of the **Wicket** to bear upon contemporary controversies such as Roman Catholic Emancipation in the 1820s and the Anglo-Catholic controversies of the 1850s and

later. Both Thomas Pantin and later Richard Vaughan in his Wycliffe Society edition of the **Wicket** alone<sup>81</sup> choose to make text A of 1546 the basis of their respective works. Henry Fish also appears to follow A in his partial edition of the **Wicket** in his work **Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence Ancient and Modern** printed in 1856. All three editors modernised the text indiscriminately and it is unfortunately difficult to see precisely which edition they follow at any given point. Pantin, a Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, states in his Preface that it is the intention of his edition to honour the memory of Wyclif, a former member of his College. It may not be coincidental that the text was printed just before the passage of the Catholic Relief Act through Parliament in 1829. The Wycliffe Society edition together with those produced by Robert Potts and Henry Fish have a clearly Protestant intent: they are intended to show the roots of true Anglican doctrine in the theology of John Wyclif, but unlike Jackson and James in the early Seventeenth Century they do not wish to prove a continuity with the pre-Reformation Church. Rather they wish to portray Wyclif as a Protestant in advance of Luther and the true begetter of English Protestantism. Their notions may ironically have contained some truth, but not for the reasons they suggested.<sup>82</sup>

The edition of the **Wicket** printed by Robert Potts in 1851 requires both an explanation and a warning. It

forms the fourth in a series of tracts written by Cambridge dons entitled **Old Tracts for Present Times** which was clearly intended to counter-balance the **Oxford Tracts for the Times** produced by Newman and his circle from 1833 <sup>83</sup>. Here Potts has mixed material from a variety of sources: the introduction by Miles Coverdale from texts C and D of **Wickliefes Wicket**; a modernized text of C; and a bibliographical notice of John Wyclif originally written by Thomas James as an introduction to his **An Apology for Iohn Wicklief** printed at Oxford in 1608. This diverse material is presented by Potts in such a way as to suggest that it was all printed in an edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** above the colophon **Norenburgh 1546**. This was not the case. A small glossary included by the editor at the conclusion of his compilation might prove useful, but some of his interpretations of "obsolete words" might now be considered dubious.

The Nineteenth Century editions of the **Wicket** are useful in that they present the text in a clear and more readily available form. However in each case the complete lack of any critical analysis renders them of little use to the serious scholar who wishes to gain more than a general impression of the sense of the text. During the Nineteenth Century the **Wicket** was never subjected to the high standards of editorial discipline found in many of the editions produced by the Early English Text Society, or demonstrated by

Forshall and Madden in their edition of the **Wycliffe Bible** produced in 1850<sup>84</sup>. It is unfortunate that the subject matter and to an extent the style of the **Wicket** tended to attract the attention of partisans in the Nineteenth Century English ecclesiastical disputes rather than the dispassionate assessment of an historical or literary scholar.

#### **Editions of Texts other than the Wicket**

The bibliographical examination of **Wickliefes Wicket** would not be complete without an inspection of those editions which include texts other than the **Wicket** from the **Wickliefes Wicket** compilation. The **Testament** has appeared as a separate work in three surviving editions, the most notable of which was printed at Antwerp in 1535. This rare edition appears only to survive in one copy now in the British Library, C.37.a.28(6)<sup>85</sup>. The **Short Title Catalogue** attributes the printing of this edition to H. Peetersen van Middelburch, but notes that it was formerly attributed to J. Hoochstraten; N.T. Wright in his edition of **The Work of John Frith** notes that the printing may be the work of the Widow Endhoven.<sup>86</sup> The title page is decorated with a Maltese cross device placed to the left of the first line of the title. The text of the extended title anticipates almost exactly that used in the subsequent editions of the **Testament** found in editions A-D of **Wickliefes Wicket**:

The Testa= | ment of master Wylliam Tracie  
es | quier expounded both by William Tindall  
and Jho[n] | Frith. Wherin thou shalt  
perceyue with what | charitie ye chaunceler  
of worcetter Bur | ned whan he toke vp the  
deed car | kas and made ashes of hit after  
hit was buri. | ed. | M.D. XXXV. 87

The title is followed by a triangular device, the apex of which faces the head of the page. This edition has an unusual collation: its format is that of an 8vo book, but its pages run A8, B4, C6. It should be noted that fold B is complete and that no text is missing. The edition is further distinguished by the liberal use of decorated and bold capital letters. No full-stops are used, their place being taken by vertical sentence lines. With the exception of two short passages at the conclusion of Frith's **Exposition** of the **Testament** the contents of this edition are identical with that found in texts C and D of **Wickliefes Wicket** 88.

The use of the Maltese cross device on the title page of this edition is interesting, for it is repeated in precisely the same way on the title page of the **Testament** in text B of **Wickliefes Wicket**. This suggests that the editor of B was consciously imitating the earlier edition of the **Testament** when he saw his new version through the press. It should further be noted that the date, M.D. XXXU., found at



the conclusion of the title in this edition of the **Testament** is repeated in every subsequent printing, supporting the notion that texts A and B of **Wickliefes Wicket** deliberately sought to imitate the 1535 Antwerp edition of the Testament, and it is probable that the printer believed the date to refer to the events described in the title rather than to the date of printing. It is puzzling that the editor of **Wickliefes Wicket** A and B should have chosen to omit Frith's **Exposition** altogether when in other respects he chose to imitate the Antwerp edition.

John Foxe the Martyriologist included the **Expositions** of William Tracy's **Testament** by Tyndale and Frith in his edition of **The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, three worthy Martyrs, and principall teachers of this Church of England**, printed in London by John Day in 1572/3. Foxe includes in his edition of Frith's **Exposition** the concluding passages found in the Antwerp edition of 1535 but omitted by Coverdale in texts C and D of **Wickliefes Wicket**.

William Tracy's **Testament** and its **Exposition** by William Tyndale was published by the Parker Society in an edition by Henry Walter in 1850<sup>89</sup>. This edition is of a much higher editorial standard than the Nineteenth Century editions of the **Wicket** discussed above. An interesting introduction with accurate information relating to the text is provided, and many

of the footnotes to the text would be of assistance to the modern reader. There is however one error in this edition to which attention must be drawn: Dr. Walter states that the title and the Epistle to the Reader which follows it were composed by Foxe for his edition printed by Day in 1572/3. As has been shown above, this was not the case: the title, together with what Walter called the Epistle were both present in the 1535 Antwerp edition of the **Testament** and are found in each of the four Sixteenth Century editions of **Wickliefes Wicket**. The Parker Society edition of the **Testament** and Tyndale's **Exposition** is still a useful version of the texts but is unfortunate in the lack of any analysis of the theological outlook which influenced William Tracy when writing the **Testament**.

The **Protestacion** made by John Lassels, a gentleman of the Royal Household, in the hours leading up to his execution in July 1546 has been largely neglected since the Sixteenth Century <sup>90</sup>. To an extent Lassels was even overlooked by his contemporaries at the time of his death, for on the same fire perished the notorious Anne Askew, a woman who had left her husband to preach heresy up and down the country and had finally been apprehended in London consorting, it was alleged, with some of the leading ladies of the Court <sup>91</sup>. Askew has consistently attracted more attention than Lassels, perhaps because the account of her sufferings was printed almost immediately under

the able editorship of John Bale<sup>92</sup>, because of her sex, or because she was severely tortured before her execution <sup>93</sup>. Her case aroused fresh controversy in the Nineteenth Century which was by turns incredulous, appalled and delighted by the idea of a woman tortured on the rack by the Lord Chancellor in the hope that she might incriminate Queen Katherine Parr in Protestant heresy<sup>94</sup>. Historians have thus tended to concentrate upon the person and beliefs of Anne Askew to the exclusion of her co-religionists and fellow-sufferers.

The **Protestacion** appears in texts C and D of **Wickliefes Wicket** where it is provided with an introductory notice which seeks to clarify the eucharistic doctrine advanced by Lassels in his text. It is clear that the doctrine was under attack even when these editions of **Wickliefes Wicket** were printed; the attack continued, for in 1604 the Jesuit Robert Parsons thought it worth suggesting that Lassels was guilty of holding the radical eucharistic doctrine of Carlstadt <sup>95</sup>. The **Protestacion** was re-printed by Foxe in his **Acts and Monuments** <sup>96</sup> and would doubtless have reached a wider audience from that source. The text agrees with that printed by Coverdale in **Wickliefes Wicket** C and D, but is supplemented by important although not strictly accurate information regarding the execution of Lassels at Smithfield on 16th July 1546.

The bibliographical history of the texts contained in **Wickliefes Wicket** is not straightforward but it is essential in the absence of a surviving manuscript for any of these texts. The complexity is not surprising when it is recalled that here are four essentially separate works: the **Wicket**, Tyndale's **Exposition** of the **Testament**, Frith's **Exposition** and Lassels' **Protestacion**. In the mid-Sixteenth Century these were gathered together to form a single volume by an editor who saw, in them the opportunity to further his theology. The implications of **Wickliefes Wicket** were sufficient to disturb the civil authorities and to secure the deaths of Lassels and Askew and the investigation of many others <sup>97</sup>. Against the background of the trial of Lassels, Askew and their associates, the Chronicler Wriothesley records the issue of an interesting royal proclamation on 7th July 1546 against:

The bookes of Frith, Tindalle, Wyckliffe,  
Joy, Roy, Basiley, Barnes, Coverdale,  
Tourney and Tracye. <sup>98</sup>

This proclamation has not previously been interpreted against the background of **Wickliefes Wicket**, but its selection of authors taken with the timing of its issue suggests that this is indeed part of its background. History may have given scant attention to **Wickliefes Wicket**, but contemporaries viewed it in a more serious light. It will be a major part of the task of this thesis to examine the extent

to which the secular and ecclesiastical authorities were justified in viewing **Wickliefes Wicket** with concern by attempting to assess the extent of its influence in shaping the thought of the mid-Sixteenth Century English Reformation.

1 - Dickens, A.G., **The English Reformation**, London 1964, 5.

2 - Many writers have concentrated upon too narrow an area when seeking to explain the origins of the English reformation: political consideration, Protestant literature printed abroad and the spread of Lutheran theology in the English Universities have all received attention at the expense of the examination of the native background which too often has been assumed to be decadent long before 1500 [Rupp, E.G., **Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition**, Cambridge 1947, 5-10].

3 - In this work the precedent set by Prof. Hudson with regard to the terms Wycliffite and Lollard has been followed: the two words are used largely as synonyms. Wycliffite is sometimes used where the specifically academic nature of a word or argument is to be stressed, but after careful consideration the present writer concurs in Hudson's thesis that "no useful distinction can be drawn between the academic disciples of Wyclif and the later, provincial Lollards". Cf. Hudson, A., **The Premature Reformation. Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History**, Oxford 1988, 2.

4 - Chief among these must be counted Dr. Anne Hudson: **Reformation; English Wycliffite Sermons**, I, Oxford 1983; **Selections from English Wycliffite Writings**, (ed.), Cambridge 1978; **Lollards and their**

- Books**, London 1985 - collected essays and articles; and Margaret Aston: **Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion**, London 19984 - collected essays and articles; "Wyclif and the Vernacular", **Studies in Church History Subsidia 5** (1987), 281-330. **English Wycliffite Sermons**, II, ed. Gradon, P., Oxford 1988; **English Wycliffite Sermons**, ed. Hudson, A., Oxford 1990.
- 5 - Smeeton, D.D., **Lollard Themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale**, Vol. VI Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, Kirkville 1986.
- 6 - O'Day, R., **The Debate on the English Reformation**, London 1986.
- 7 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, xi.
- 8 - Cf. Comments made by O'Day concerning the approach of Pollard and Bindoff to Henry VIII. O'Day, R., **Debate**.
- 9 - Gairdner, J., **Cambridge Modern History**, II **The Reformation**, Cambridge 1903, 463.
- 10 - Elton, G.R., **Henry VIII - An Essay in Revision**, Historical Association, London 1962.
- 11 - Elton, G.R., **Henry VIII**, 4.
- 12 - Pollard, A.F., **Henry VIII**, London 1966, 215.
- 13 - Bindoff, S.T., **Tudor England**, Harmondsworth 1950, 111.
- 14 - **Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII**, ed. Brewer, J.S. and Gairdner, J., London 1862-1910; **Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII**, ed. Brodie, R.H., London, 1920.
- 15 - Froude, J.A., **The Reign of Henry VIII**, (3 vols.) London 1908, I, 1.
- 16 - Cf. Rowse, A.L., **Tudor Cornwall**, London 1941, new ed. 1969, 290.
- 17 - Smeeton, 26.
- 18 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 1.
- 19 - Workman, H.B., **The Dawn of the Reformation**, I, **The Age of Wyclif**, London 1901, 289.
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- 21 - McFarlane, K.B., **John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity**, London 1952, 187.
- 22 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 1-2. Hudson notes the "discrepancies between the evidence of Lollard texts, in content and in manuscript presentation, and the pictures given by those historians [McFarlane and J.A.F.Thomson in *Later Lollards*]".
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- 27 - Scarisbrick, **The Reformation and the English People**, 85-108, esp. 100-103.
- 28 - Cross, C., **Church and People 1450-1660. The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church**, London 1976, 9.

- 29 - Cross, C., **Church and Laity**, 10-30; Rupp made a similar point, **Church and Laity**, 2ff.
- 30 - Cross, C., **Church and Laity**, 62ff.
- 31 - Cross, C., **Church and Laity**, 52; O'Day, R., **Debate**; O'Day, R., **Education and Society in Britain 1500-1800**, London 1982.
- 32 - Cross, C., **Church and Laity**, 52.
- 33 - Scarisbrick, J.J., **The Reformation and the English People**, 12-24.
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- 35 - Scarisbrick, J.J., **Reformation**, 12-12.
- 36 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, London 1964.
- 37 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 5.
- 38 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 5.
- 39 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 5-6.
- 40 - Cf. Hudson's discussion of episcopal registers and court books, **Reformation**, 32-40.
- 41 - Cf. Fines, J., "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield 1511-12", **JEH** 14 (1963), 160-74.
- 42 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 266-7.
- 43 - Cf. comments of Scarisbrick, **The Reformation and the English People**, 2-12; 14; 17-18.
- 44 - Cf. note 14 above.
- 45 - Cf. note 4 above.
- 46 - Hudson has drawn particular attention to the importance of education in the context of the Lollards. Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 180-200; 512-13. Aston has also discussed the problem of the general level of literacy in this period. Cf. Aston, M., "Lollardy and Literacy" in **Lollards and Reformers**, 200ff; "Wyclif and the Vernacular" in **Studies in Church History, Subsidia** 5 (1987), 281-330.
- 47 - In any surviving Sixteenth Century collection of texts the **Wicket** is always placed first. Its title page is always more elaborate or more extended than that for any of the other texts.
- 48 - Almost all authors who afford **Wickliefes Wicket** only a brief discussion fail to make any distinction between its constituent texts. It is usually possible to tell from the context which text is under discussion, but greater clarity could be helpful.
- 49 - Despite the lack of a manuscript version of the text there is sufficient evidence to prove beyond doubt that it existed in essentially its present form at least twenty years before its first printing in 1546. See **Introduction to Wickliefes Wicket** for further detailed evidence.
- 50 - Research in all likely libraries and collections has failed to produce a manuscript of the **Wicket, Protestacion** or **Testament**. This is particularly surprising in the case of the latter two items as they each led to protracted legal proceedings.
- 51 - This is clearly the case with the editions prepared by Potts and Fish who were interested to

- stress the "Protestant" nature of the Church of England against the Oxford "Romanisers" in the 1850s.
- 52 - No Nineteenth Century edition of the **Wicket** contains any academic material of weight.
- 53 - **STC** no. 25591a.
- 54 - Title, **STC** no. 25590.
- 55 - **Testament**, **STC** no. 25590.
- 56 - Cf. **Wicket** B2r 19: A,B and C read: **fleshe and bloude beinge in the vyrgyn**; D omits **beinge**.
- 57 - Title page, **STC** no. 25590.5
- 58 - **Testament**, **STC** no. 25590.5
- 59 - Cf. **Middle English Dictionary**.
- 60 - **STC** no. 24468-24471. Cf. Cargill Thompson, W.D.J., "Who Wrote the **Supper of the Lord?**", **Harvard Theological Review** 53 (1960) 77-91; Clebsch, W.A., "More Evidence that George Joye Wrote **The Souper of the Lorde**", **Harvard Theological Review** 55 (1962) 63-66; Davis, N., **William Tyndale's English of Controversy**, London 1971, 5.
- 61 - **The Souper** is clearly dated 1533 and bears the colophon: **Norenburg, N.twonson**. This has been attributed by the **STC** to Antwerp of N. Hill, London 1546. The editions numbered 24470 and 24471 by the **STC** are attributed to John Day, London 1547. The possibility of a connection between the **Wicket** and **The Souper** is thus increased.
- 62 - For dependence of C on A and B see note 56 above.
- 63 - Title, **STC** no. 25591.
- 64 - **STC** no. 25591, B7v.
- 65 - **STC** no. 25591.
- 66 - This may indicate that the text was owned by a wealthy merchant or farmer, but the point should not be pressed too far in the absence of a reliable interpretation of the annotations. The hand is so weak as to defy transcription.
- 67 - The mark in the lower right corner may be the owner's autograph mark, although it is not immediately decipherable. There is a possibility that this copy of the **Wicket** reached Dublin among Archbishop Ussher's papers: Ussher acquired part of Archbishop Laud's dispersed Library including some of the Hooker manuscripts edited by Henry Jackson, the editor of Edition E of the **Wicket**. Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**.
- 68 - Title page, **STC** no. 25591a.
- 69 - **Protestacion** title, **STC** 25591a.
- 70 - **Testament**, title, **STC** no. 25591a.
- 71 - This is presumably the collection of Thomas Coke, Lord Lovell and Earl of Leicester, created 1728.
- 72 - No other mis-bound copy has been found. The error probably occurred when the **Wicket** was bound with other Reformation tracts in the Seventeenth Century.
- 73 - Henry Jackson, 1586-1662. Dr. Spenser, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, commissioned Jackson to edit manuscript notes left by Richard Hooker to Spenser on his death in 1600. Jackson printed several Hooker sermons at Oxford in



1612-13 at precisely the same time as his edition of the **Wicket**. It is not clear whether there is any intrinsic link between his work on the **Wicket** and the Hooker manuscripts. Beyond a general interest in the nature of Anglicanism and a desire to stress the continuity of the pre- and post-Reformation Church there probably is not. The Hooker manuscripts found their way to the Lambeth Palace Library but were destroyed or dispersed when Archbishop Laud's library was destroyed by the Long Parliament in 1644. Some material was taken to Dublin by Archbishop Ussher. Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**.

74 - James, T., **An Apologie for Iohn Wickliffe, shewing his conformitie with the now Church of England; collected chiefly out of diuerse works of his remaining in the Publicke Library at Oxford, Oxford 1608.**

The significance of this work is discussed further in the Comparison of Two Introductions to **Wickliefes Wicket**, below.

75 - It is thus possible to conclude that the **ancient printed copie** of the **Wicket** was a copy of C. Interestingly no copy of this edition of the work has survived in Oxford libraries.

76 - Title, **STC 25592**.

77 - **Durham University Library, R.xvi.D.32.**

78 - It seems likely that the **Wicket** was read and valued for its contents by the Whites rather than as an antiquarian curiosity, although that cannot be ruled out in the absence of any information with regard to the social standing and religious outlook of the White family.

79 - Criticism especially from Parsons, Bellarmine and Coster. Cf. Kenny, A., "The Accursed Memory: The Counter-Reformation Reputation of John Wyclif" in ed. Kenny, A., **Wyclif in His Times**, Oxford 1986, 147-168. For a description of the development of the Protestant "myth" of Wyclif, cf. Aston, M., "John Wycliffe's Reformation Reputation", reprinted in **Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion**, London 1984.

80 - On the influence of Foxe's **Acts and Monuments**, cf. Mozley, J.F., **John Foxe and His Book**, London 1940.

81 - **Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe, D.D., with selections and translations from his manuscripts, and Latin works**, ed. Vaughan, R., Wycliffe Society, London 1845.

82 - The mid-Nineteenth Century "establishment" view of Wyclif is an area which could reward further exploration. An interesting parallel to Potts' and Fish's written prejudice is found in Ford Madox Brown's oil, **Wycliffe Reading his Translation of the Bible** [1847] now in the Bradford City Art Gallery. In lunettes above the main body of the painting are to be seen two allegorical representations of "Roman" religion and Protestant religion: Rome is represented by a cowled friar, his face obscured by the shadows cast by his hood, holding a closed, clasped Bible in

one hand and a faggot in the other. Protestant religion, by contrast, is a fresh-faced young girl who looks the observer straight in the eye while holding an open Bible in her hand. A study of the Roman figure is to be seen in Birmingham City Art Gallery's collection.

83 - The other tracts in the Cambridge series do not seem to have survived even in the University Library.

84 - **The Holy Bible...made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his Followers**, ed. Forshall, J. and Madden, F., Oxford (4 vols.), 1850. For comments on the task which faced Forshall and Madden, see Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 239.

85 - **STC** no. 24167. No further copies have been located in Britain.

86 - Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 51ff. Wright quotes as authority Hume in Yale ed. of **More**, 1089.

87 - Title, **STC** no. 24167.

88 - The omission of these passages may indicate that the printer of texts C and D of the **Wicket** cut the passages in order to save using a fresh sheet of paper for a few lines of text. As printed C and D fill C3v. Alternatively he may have felt that the lines were inauthentic, or possibly he worked from a different text. It seems more likely that economy of space was the motive. Foxe, who included the passages in his editions, claimed to work from a manuscript in Tyndale's hand, so there is little question about the authenticity of the texts.

89 - **An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue, The Supper of the Lord...and Wm. Tracy's Testament Expounded. By William Tyndale, Martyr, 1536**, ed. Walter, H., Parker Society, Vol. 38 [Tyndale, Vol. III], Cambridge 1850.

90 - **Protestacion**, **STC** no. 25591 and 25591a; for the events surrounding Lassels cf. **Foxe**, V, 550. Foxe's account is defective in regard to dating and the names of all the heretics executed. See Introduction to the **Protestacion** below.

91 - Cf. **Foxe**, V, 537-550.

92 - Bale, J., ed., **The first examinacyon of Anne Askew, lately martyred in Smythfelde, by the Romysh popes vpholders, with the Elucydacyon of Iohan Bale, ...Imprinted at Marpurg in the lande of Hessen, in Nouembre, Anno 1546** [ie. Wesel, D. van der Straten, 1546]. **STC** no. 848.

**The lattre examinacyon of Anne Askewe, lately martyred in Smythfelde, by the wycked Synagoge of Antichrist, with the Elucydacyon of Iohan Bale, ...Imprinted at Marpurg in the lande of Hessen, 16, die. Ianuarii, anno 1.5.4.7.,** [ie. Wesel, D. van der Straten], **STC** no. 850.

The texts edited by Bale have every appearance of being originally written by Askew and are discussed further in the Introduction to the **Protestacion** below.

93 - Cf. **Foxe**, V, 537-550.

94 - Cf. **An Account of her Sufferings** [drawn from her own words], anon., London 1849; Kavanagh, J., **Women of**

**Christianity exemplary for acts of Piety and Charity**, London 1852; Lingard, **History of England**, 5th ed. London 1849, V, 201; Jardine, "Reading on the Use of Torture" [N.D.]; **The Lincolnshire Tragedy**, London 1866; Gough, J.G., **The Racking of Anne Askew**, Westminster 1860.

It is clear that the intention of applying torture was to gain incriminating information regarding ladies of the Court and the Queen. See Introduction to the **Protestacion**, below.

95 - Parsons, R., **The Third Part of a Treatise Intitulated: of three conuersions of England .... An examen of the Calendar or Catalogue of Protestant Saints .... diuised by Iohn Foxe**, 1604, reprinted Scholar Press, 1966.

96 - **Foxe**, V, 550.

97 - Among these were Edward Crome, John Cardmaker, Bishop Shaxton, Sir George Blagge, ladies of the Court and probably Queen Katherine Parr. The case for linking the investigation of heresy in London during May-July 1546 to **Wickliefes Wicket** is made in the Introduction to the **Protestacion**.

98 - Wriothesley, **Chronicle**, Camden Soc. Vol. 11 [N.S.], ed. Hamilton, W.D., I, 167.

Also **Tudor Royal Proclamations, I The Early Tudors (1485-1553)**, ed. Hughes, P.L. and Larkin, J.F., London 1964, 373, item 272.

## Bibliographical Tables I - III

### Key to abbreviations of Locations used in Bibliographical Tables I -III.

BL	British Library, London
Bute	Marques of Bute's Collection, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
C	Cambridge - University Library
C(2)	Cambridge - Emmanuel College Library
D	Durham - University Library
L	Lambeth Palace Library, London
M	Manchester - John Rylands Library
O	Oxford - Bodleian Library
TCD	Dublin - Trinity College Library

Edition Letter	Printer	Format	Contents	Locations
A	John Day London	8vo A8 B8 C3	<u>Wicket A-B3r; Testament</u> (Tyndale), Colophon - <u>Norenburgh, 1546</u>	O. Douce W.21 B.L. C.142.a.50
1546				
25590				
B	John Day London	8vo A8 B8 C3	<u>Wicket A-B3r; Testament</u> (Tyndale), Colophon - <u>Norenburgh, 1546</u>	O. B4(1)Med.B.S. O. S.221 (5)Th. M. 17693
1546				
25590.5				
C	John Day London	8vo A8 B8 C8 D8	<u>Wicket A-B6r; Protestacion</u> <u>Testament (Tyndale and</u> <u>Frith), Colophon -</u> <u>Overseene by.M.C.</u>	Bute B.L. G.11996 C. Syn.8.54.11 C(2) MS.A.A1 D. R.xvi.D.32 TCD Press B.1.11
1548				
25591				
D	John Day London	8vo A8 B8 C8 D8	<u>Wicket A-B6r; Protestacion;</u> <u>Testament (Tyndale and</u> <u>Frith), Colophon -</u> <u>Overseene by.M.C.</u>	O. B5(1)Med.B.S. B.L. 1360,a.3 L. 1548.3 M. R.1892 C. Syn.8.54.89
1548/1550				
25591a				

Edition Letter	Printer	Format	Contents	Locations
Date of Edition	City			
STC Number				
E	Jos. Barnes	4to	Ed. Henry Jackson	O. W.30Th. Ashm.1206
1612	Oxford	*4 A4 B4	<u>Wicket alone with</u>	B.L. 1018.d.15 114.a.56
25592		C2	editor's Introduction	L. 1612.15
				C. Bb*.10.51 Peterb.K.2.3
Pantin	University	8vo	<u>Wicket</u> . Reprint of A with	Widely available
1828	Oxford		small Glossary. Edited by	
			Thomas Pantin of Queen's College	
W.S.	Wycliffe	8vo	<u>Tracts and Treatises of</u>	Widely available
1845	Society		<u>John de Wycliffe, 273-84</u>	
	London		<u>Wicket</u> . Follows A. Edited	
			R. Vaughan	
Potts	University	8vo	<u>Old Tracts for Present</u>	C. Cam.C.851.3
1851	Cambridge		<u>Times, IV, Wicket</u> . Also	
			Coverdale's Introduction	
			from C and D, wrongly dated	
			1546. Edited R. Potts	

Edition Date of Edition <u>STC</u> Number	Printer City	Format	Contents	- Location
Fish 1856	Hodder and Stoughton London	8vo	<u>Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence Ancient and Modern</u> , I, 116-126, <u>Wicket</u> . Incomplete - begins at A6r 30 in text A, modernized text follows A. Edited Henry C. Fish	Widely available

STC Number	Date of Edition	Edition Letter	Printer City	Format	Contents	Location
T 1535 24167		H. Peetersen van Middel- burch Antwerp	8vo A8 B8 C6	<u>Testament</u> (Tyndale and Frith), some short passages not included in A-D but found in Foxe	B.L. C.37.a.28 (6)	
A 1546 25590		John Day London	8vo A8 B8 C3	<u>Testament</u> (Tyndale) B3v- C3; <u>Wicket. Colophon</u> - <u>Norenburch, 1546</u>	O. Douce W.21 B.L. C.142.a.50	
B 1546 25590.5		John Day London	8vo A8 B8 C3	<u>Testament</u> (Tyndale) B3v- C3; <u>Wicket. Colophon</u> - <u>Norenburch, 1546</u>	O. B4(1)Med.B.S. O. S.221.(5)Th. M. 17693 Bute	
C 1548 25591		John Day London	8vo A8 B8 C8 D8	<u>Testament</u> (Tyndale and Frith) C2v-D8; <u>Wicket</u> ; <u>Protestacion. Colophon</u> - <u>Overseene By.M.C.</u>	B.L. G.11996 C. Syn.8.54.11(5) D. R.xvi.D.32 C(2) .MS.A.A1 TCD Press B.1.11	



Edition Letter Date of Edition <u>STC</u> Number	Printer City	Format	Contents	Location
D 1548/1550 25591a	John Day London	8vo A8 B8 C8 D8	<u>Testament</u> (Tyndale and Frith) C2v-D8; <u>Wicket</u> ; <u>Protestacion</u> . Colophon - <u>Querseene</u> by M.C.	O. B5(1)Med.B.S. B.L. 1360.a.3 L. 1548.3 M. R.1892 C. Syn.8.54.89(1)
Foxe 1572/3	John Day London		<u>The Whole Workes of</u> <u>Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and</u> <u>Doct. Barnes</u> , ed. John Foxe. <u>Testament</u> (Tyndale) I, 429-36 <u>Testament</u> (Frith) II, 77-81	O. Antiq.d.E.1572
P.S. 1850	Parker Society Cambridge		Vol. 38, 269-283, ed. Henry Walter. <u>Testament</u> (Tyndale and Frith)	Widely available

Edition Letter	Printer	Format	Contents	Location
Date of Edition	City			
STC Number				
C	John Day	8vo	<u>Pretestacion</u> B7v-C2r;	B.L. G.11996
1548	London	A8 B8 C8	<u>Wicket; Testament</u>	C. Syn.8.54.11
25591		D8	(Tyndale and Frith). Colophon - <u>Querseene by.M.C.</u>	D. R.xvi.D.32 C(2) MS.A.1 TCD Press B.1.11
D	John Day	8vo		O. B5(1)Med.B.S.
1548/1550	London	A8 B8 C8	<u>Protestacion</u> B7v-C2r;	B.L. 1360.a.3
25591a		D8	<u>Wicket; Testament</u> (Tyndale and Frith). Colophon - <u>Querseene by.M.C.</u>	L. 1548.3 M. R.1892 C. Syn.8.54.89(1)
A & M	John Day		<u>Acts and Monuments</u> by	Widely available
1563	London		John Foxe. Ed. Townsend, G., London 1840, V, 551-2	

Introduction to Wickliefes Wicket, an anonymous Wycliffite exposition of eucharistic doctrine printed in 1546.

**Wickliefes Wicket** could not justly be described as a typical "neglected text". Its existence has been well-known to those working in the Wycliffite field since it was reprinted during the Nineteenth Century<sup>1</sup>. The text has been described as the "**vade mecum of English Lollardy**"<sup>2</sup>, and Professor Rupp has been equally happy to accord the **Wicket** an important role in the sustenance of Wycliffite theology into the Reformation period<sup>3</sup>. Among present scholars Dr. Margaret Aston and more particularly Professor Anne Hudson have devoted some attention to **Wickliefes Wicket** within the context of the examination of later Lollardy<sup>4</sup>, but all would seem to agree with Professor Hudson when she writes that **Wickliefes Wicket** is a text which stands in need of further critical examination and analysis<sup>5</sup>. It is perhaps surprising to find that a text which had attracted a considerable degree of notoriety in the early Sixteenth Century should lack a modern critical edition<sup>6</sup>. In truth **Wickliefes Wicket** has been regarded as something of a problematical text. Surviving only in mid-Sixteenth Century printings<sup>7</sup> and usually joined with a variable selection of other works dating from the 1530s and 1540s<sup>8</sup>, its origins, authorship and original purpose are all obscure.

A critical examination of **Wickliefes Wicket** will immediately raise several pressing problems, the most important of which is undoubtedly the absence of a manuscript version of the text. Indeed, no version of the text survives from before the first edition printed by John Day at London in 1546 <sup>9</sup>. The lack of a manuscript text proves far more limiting than, for example, the lack of any significant information regarding the author of the work <sup>10</sup>. The lack of a manuscript forces the modern editor to fall back upon deductions based upon the printed text and evidence provided by the testimonies of those examined on suspicion of heresy in the ecclesiastical courts especially when trying to reach any conclusion regarding the age of the text. With reference to this Professor Hudson writes:

Placing the text's origins at any particular point between 1390 and 1500 is, in truth, guesswork. <sup>11</sup>

This view is perhaps in some senses overly pessimistic as it is surprising what even a printed text - necessarily the starting point for any investigation of the **Wicket** - can reveal about a text's previous history. There is nothing particularly unusual in the absence of a manuscript version of the text <sup>12</sup>. Wycliffite books had been sought out by diocesan officials with varying degrees of vigour for at least a century prior to 1500. Patchy evidence from

episcopal registers should not lead the historian to conclude that persecution lapsed for lengthy periods during the Fifteenth Century. Evidence has been produced by Hudson and Fines<sup>13</sup> which suggests that the majority of heresy proceedings were recorded in an episcopal court book rather than the Register proper. A separate document from the Register, the few court or act books which have survived, most notably those for Norwich [1428-31]<sup>14</sup>, Coventry and Lichfield [1511-12]<sup>15</sup> and York<sup>16</sup> suggest that these documents were not intended to be particularly permanent<sup>17</sup>. Most, for example, are found to have been written on paper rather than vellum, a fact which immediately places them at greater danger from the ravages of time. The court books, coupled with the absence from extant episcopal records of any mention of cases which can be located and dated from other sources<sup>18</sup> suggest that persecution, and hence the destruction of books and manuscripts may have been more widespread and thorough than the surviving evidence - even taking into account the now lost records used by Foxe<sup>19</sup> - would at first sight suggest.

Several Lollard texts have, like the **Wicket**, survived mainly in Reformation period printings. The **Lanterne of Ligt** has survived in two manuscripts and a print of 1535<sup>20</sup>. A more direct parallel with the case of the **Wicket** is found with **The Praier and Complaynte of the Ploweman**, a text which deals with the question

of the availability of vernacular scriptures and which survives only in a text printed in about 1531 probably at Antwerp <sup>21</sup>. The printer claims, rather like the printer of the first edition of **Wickliefes Wicket**, that his text dates from "not longe after ... 1300"<sup>22</sup>; the printer of the **Wicket** dated that text to the reign of Richard II <sup>23</sup>. In both cases the claim is evidently false. Another example of a Lollard text found only in a Reformation period printing is **The Plowmans Tale** which appeared in about 1536 and was subsequently incorporated by William Thynne in his edition of Chaucer's **Works** printed in 1542 <sup>24</sup>. The reasons for the absence of a manuscript of **Wickliefes Wicket** are not immediately obvious. One hypothesis - the most obvious - has been outlined above, namely that the manuscripts were destroyed by persecution; but having noted that the **Wicket** is not alone in surviving only in mid-Sixteenth Century prints it is probably unprofitable to speculate further with regard to the vanished manuscript.

In the absence of a manuscript it is necessary to begin any examination of **Wickliefes Wicket** with a survey of the surviving printed texts. The **Wicket** appeared in two mid-Sixteenth Century editions with a single variant version each, and a further edition of 1612. It did not appear again until the early Nineteenth Century. The first two versions were printed by John Day in 1546 <sup>25</sup> and must be numbered

among this influential Sixteenth Century English printer's earliest works <sup>26</sup>. Both texts comprise **Wickliefes Wicket**, William Tracy's **Testament** and an edition of William Tyndale's **Exposition** of the **Testament**, a work which had previously appeared from Antwerp in 1535 <sup>27</sup>. These two earliest versions of the **Wicket** are principally distinguished by the ornamentation of their title pages. The first used a leaf device as its principal ornament, while the second adopts a Maltese Cross apparently in direct imitation of the ornaments used in the 1535 Antwerp edition of the **Testament**. Both the first and second version of the **Wicket** use the same title formula:

**Wycklyffes Wycket: whyche he made in kyng  
Rychards days the second in the yere of our  
lorde God a M,CCC. XCU [1385] <sup>28</sup>**

This is followed by a quotation from John 6:51, "I am the lyuyng breade whych came downe from heauen...". Both prints appear over the assumed imprint **Norenburgh** [Nuremburg], a ruse common among printers of Protestant material of all sorts at this period <sup>29</sup>. There is no editorial material in either version apart from a brief introductory passage prefacing Tyndale's **Exposition** of the **Testament**<sup>30</sup> which is taken *verbatim* from the edition of 1535. Both versions of the **Wicket** contain numerous variations of type-setting and archaic language which may reflect something of the original text from which the printer

worked <sup>31</sup>. It is possible that the editor of the first two versions of the **Wicket** was William Tracy's younger son Richard. He was certainly publishing theological works in the early 1540s and used the press of Day and Seres in 1548 to publish one of his eucharistic tracts **A Godly Instruction**. The doctrine of Tracy's work recalls that of the **Wicket** including the major themes of the idolatry of the mass, the unprincipled use of Latin to mislead the laity, and the memorialistic nature of the Supper.

The third and fourth versions of the **Wicket** are, like the first and second, remarkably similar in appearance. Again attributed to the press of John Day, both are much more professional and polished productions than the earlier works <sup>32</sup>. New material is included here, not in the text of the **Wicket**, but in the form of two supplementary works comprising an **Exposition of the Testament** by John Frith which had been included in the 1535 Antwerp edition of the **Testament** but which had been omitted from the 1546 impressions of the **Wicket**, and the **Protestacion** or eve-of-execution confession of faith of John Lassels dated 1546. The **Short Title Catalogue** numbers these two versions 25591 and 25591a and ascribes the dates 1548 and 1548/1550 to each respectively. Clearly both are very closely related, but it is clear that they do not represent different editions. Close examination of the copies of the text numbered 25591a by the **Short**



**Title Catalogue** suggests that they represent a corrected version of the copies numbered 25591. Apart from the corrections within the body of the text, the two texts are easily distinguished by the configuration of the lines on their title pages. The title has been entirely re-written in view of the inclusion of new material and all reference to 1385 and Richard II has been dropped:

Wickliefes| Wicket. Faythfully ouerseene|  
and corrected after the originall and first  
co|pie. The lacke wheerof was cause of innu-  
|merable and shamfull erroures in the other  
| edicion. As shall easily appeare to them |  
that lyste to conferre the one wyth the |  
other. Here vnto is added an Epi| stle to  
the reader. With the pro| testacion of Ihon  
Lassels | late burned in Smyth-| felde: and  
the Te-| stament of Wyllyam Tra| cie  
Esquire, expounded | by Wyllyam Tyn-| dall  
and Ihon | Frythe. 33

The same quotation from John 6:51 completes the title page. As the new title states, editorial material is included in the later edition, and a hint to the identity of the editor is found in the colophon which reads:

Ouerseene by. M.C. 34

These initials have been attributed to Miles Coverdale, but this ascription has not won universal approval. Aston has accepted Coverdale's involvement with the text <sup>35</sup>, but Hudson sees little evidence to support this view <sup>36</sup>. A comparison of the literary style of the Introduction written by Coverdale for his translation of Calvin's **A Faythful and most Godly Treatyse concernyng the most sacred sacrament of the blessed Body and Bloud of our Sauour Christ** <sup>37</sup> and the Introduction to **Wickliefes Wicket** can leave little doubt that they are by the same hand. This view is strengthened when other similar editorial passages are examined such as the exactly contemporary Introduction to Bullinger's **The Old Faith** <sup>38</sup> or the **Fruitful Lessons** of 1540-47. It should also be noted that Coverdale used his initials as a colophon to the translation of Bucer and Melanchthon's **Acts of the Council of Ravenspurg** in 1547 <sup>39</sup>. Coverdale's possible association with the **Wicket** some years prior to 1546 will be discussed below when the evidence of trial records is examined, but on the whole the case for allowing Coverdale's editorship of the 1548 and 1550 editions of the **Wicket** seems strong.

Certain individual copies of the Sixteenth Century editions of **Wickliefes Wicket** bear distinguishing feature which are of note, not least for what they imply about the early history of the printed text. The second printing of 1546 provides

three significant copies. The first, in the Bodleian Library bears on its title page the autograph signature of George Joye <sup>40</sup>, one time fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge and companion and later rival of William Tyndale during their period of exile <sup>41</sup>. At what point Joye acquired his copy of the **Wicket** is not clear, but it is interesting to note that he had read it. A copy of the same printing at the John Rylands Library <sup>42</sup> is bound with a copy of the 1533 edition of **The Souper of the Lorde**, a work which has been attributed to Tyndale but which is now generally accepted to be by Joye <sup>43</sup>; the copy of this version of the **Wicket** in Cambridge University Library<sup>44</sup> is similarly bound with **The Souper**, and more significantly the two tracts are annotated in what appears to be the same Sixteenth Century hand, thus suggesting that they were associated from an early date. In view of the marked similarity in type it seems likely that the **Souper** and the **Wicket** could have been printed at the same period <sup>45</sup>, and Joye's interest in Lollard themes in the **Souper** has been noted by Hudson<sup>46</sup>; it seems probable that the two works, both dealing with the eucharist from a similar theological perspective, would appeal to the same readership and may share something of a common inspiration.

The third version printed in 1548 presents two interesting copies, the most significant of which is

that in Durham University Library <sup>47</sup>. The title page of this copy bears inscriptions of ownership from two generations of the White family dating from the mid-Seventeenth Century. The Nineteenth Century binding had re-used a fine red calf and gold-tooled spine which would appear to date from the early Seventeenth Century. This implies that the **Wicket** was still considered an important text well into the Seventeenth Century, and as such was passed on as something of a family heirloom <sup>48</sup>. The British Library copy of this version <sup>49</sup> bears heavy manuscript annotations including some obviously Sixteenth Century lines overlaid by later writing which appear to represent mathematical calculations involving relatively large sums of money. This may indicate ownership in the Sixteenth Century by a merchant or trader <sup>50</sup>.

The fourth version of the **Wicket** presents only one copy of note. More of an eccentricity than a significant edition, the copy now in Lambeth Palace Library <sup>51</sup> has the leaves in fold A gathered in the wrong sequence. The copy is complete but this accident of binding is perhaps significant in so far as it draws attention to the fact that this volume of tracts was put together in the early Seventeenth Century. Many of the collections of tracts in which the **Wicket** is found date from this period, and this demonstrates the great increase in interest in Wyclif and his works as a source of inspiration for the Church of England

in the early Seventeenth Century <sup>52</sup>. It is not surprising, therefore, that a third edition of the **Wicket** was printed at this period.

The third edition, edited by Henry Jackson, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, was printed by the University Printer Joseph Barnes in 1612 <sup>53</sup>. At about the same time that he was working on the **Wicket**, Jackson was commissioned by the President of Corpus, Dr. Spenser, to edit the **Opuscula** of Richard Hooker from papers which had passed to Spenser after Hooker's death in 1600. Jackson's work forms part of an early Seventeenth Century movement at Oxford which hoped to find a new historical justification and basis for the Church of England which would stress the continuity of the reformed Church with the mediaeval Church. Thus Jackson writes in his Preface to the **Wicket**:

Now amongst some of those [books spared from the fire] I present to thy view this little treatise called Wicklieffes Wicket .... In this discourse hee [Wyclif] teacheth the true doctrine of the sacraments with the now Church of England, which he also did in other Treatises, as learned M. Iames hath very well shewed in ... his Apology for Wickliffe. <sup>54</sup>

In this way Wyclif was to be transformed into the herald of the Anglican settlement and the champion against the incursions of the Jesuit missionaries <sup>55</sup>.

The four Nineteenth Century editions of **Wickliefes Wicket** are quickly disposed of. Each comprises an edition of the first text printed by John Day in 1546 <sup>56</sup>. The first was issued under the editorship of Thomas Pantin at Oxford in 1828. The three remaining editions all appeared between 1845 and 1856. In 1845 the Wycliffe Society published an edition by Vaughan, but lacking any critical apparatus or analysis. In 1851 a Cambridge don, Richard Potts, issued the **Wicket** as the fourth in a series of tracts entitled **Old Tracts for Present Times** <sup>57</sup>. Finally an edition of the **Wicket** appeared in a work edited by Henry Fish in 1856 called **Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence Ancient and Modern**. This modernized text begs a number of questions, not least whether it is admissible to include the **Wicket** in a selection of sermons under the attributed authorship of John Wyclif. It is clear that the two later Nineteenth Century editions were produced more in response to the pressures facing the contemporary Church in the wake of the Oxford Movement than from an academic interest in Wycliffite writings.

Having examined the extant editions of **Wickliefes Wicket** it is possible to proceed to an examination of the text with a view to discovering any

indications which might assist in providing it with a date. One particularly important event in the early Fifteenth Century has allowed many Wycliffite texts to be given at least a date before which they could not have been written: in 1409 Archbishop Arundel issued his **Constitutions** which, among other things, forbade the translation of the scriptures into the vernacular 58. Thus any text which condemns the ecclesiastical prohibition upon vernacular scriptures can be dated with some safety to the period after 1407-9. In **Wickliefes Wicket** just such an extended passage can be found in which the designation of vernacular scriptures as heretical is condemned:

And they [the clerks condemned in the preceding passage] say it is heresy to speake of the holye scripture in Englyshe, and so they woulde condempne the holy gooste that gaue it in tongues to the Apostles of Christe, to speake the worde of God in all languages that were ordayned of God vnder heauen as it is wrytten .... And Christ were so mercyfull to sende the holy Gooste to the heathen men, makynge them partakers of hys blessed worde, why shoulde it then be taken away from vs that be christen men? Consyder you whether it be all one to denye Christes wordes for heresy and Chryste for

an heretyke. For yf my worde be a lye, then  
am I a lyar that spake the worde. 59

The author continues his argument by stating that it is the same to condemn the writing of the word of God in any language as heresy as to call God himself an heretic, for it is well known that in the words of John's Gospel God and his Word are One <sup>60</sup>. The clergy are likened to Antichrist because they deny the word of God, the scriptures, to the laity in a language that they can understand <sup>61</sup>. The likening of ecclesiastical authority to antichrist is found in the **Wicket**:

How may any antechrist for dread of God take  
it [scripture] awaye from vs that be  
christen men, and thus to suffer the people  
to dye for hunger in heresy and blasphemy  
of mannes lawe that corrupteth and sleyth  
the soule, as pestilence sleth the body...  
62

In developing the argument of **Wickliefes Wicket** the question of the availability of vernacular scriptures is to be the crucial factor underlying all other aspects of doctrine: the denial of vernacular scriptures to the laity enables the clergy to foist their "monstrous idolatry", the doctrine of transubstantiation, on them. The problem of the prohibition placed upon vernacular scriptures is of



particular concern to the author of **Wickliefes Wicket** and is a source of great resentment. This may indicate that the text was written at about the time of the introduction of the Constitutions, but even if this is pressing a point too far, it is safe to conclude that the **Wicket** was written after Arundel's ban on the English Bible came into force in 1409. This in turn indicates that the text cannot be the work of Wyclif himself.

The text itself is less helpful in providing a **terminus post quem**. Various factors point strongly to the view that the **Wicket** cannot be considered a mid-Sixteenth Century forgery with Wyclif's name applied to it in order to lend its contents an air of antique respectability <sup>63</sup>. The doctrine of the **Wicket** which is discussed below is clearly not that of Luther <sup>64</sup>, and there is further external evidence which shows conclusively that a book known as **Wickliefes Wicket** was in circulation well before 1546. Before turning to examine this external evidence it is worth pausing briefly to look at the few indication which can be gleaned from within the text itself that this is not an original product of the mid-Sixteenth Century.

A careful comparison of the printed versions of the **Wicket** will reveal that between the second and third printings [1546 and 1548], several words have been deliberately changed. In each case an older, clearly Middle English word has been replaced by a

more modern word in order to clarify the sense of a particular passage. Thus in the extended quotation from **Daniel 11** <sup>65</sup> the first and second versions use the word **Compaigne** in order to express a sexual relationship between a man and woman <sup>66</sup>; the third and fourth substitute the more academic word **Concupisence** <sup>67</sup>, a word unlikely to have been in general use before 1500. **Compaigne**, however, had been in use in this context since about 1300 <sup>68</sup>. In the same passage the Middle English verb **Applied** is replaced by the more modern word **Ioyned** <sup>69</sup>. At a later point in the text the third and fourth versions clarify a reference to Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai which had read simply, "**Moyses was in the hyll with God**" <sup>70</sup>. Finally one later suppression may have helped to disguise the identity of the author of the **Wicket** <sup>71</sup>. Where the third and fourth versions read, "**the wordes ... of these thinges ben wrytten inthe begynning of Genesis**" <sup>72</sup>, the first and second read, "**the wordes ... of these thynges by me wrytten in the begynning of Genesis**" <sup>73</sup>. The implication of the earlier passage with its use of the first person singular is that the writer of the **Wicket** is the same person as the translator of the text from **Genesis** which is quoted in the following section. In the absence of any manuscript evidence it is difficult to assess how much weight to place on a phrase which might be a simple attempt by the author to add authority to his work. This small indication may, however, be the closest

that it is possible to come to discovering the identity of the author of the **Wicket**.

There remains one internal indicator of the age of **Wickliefes Wicket** in the form of the extensive scriptural quotations which are such a prominent feature of this text. These quotations are particularly striking for their preference for the translation of the Later Wycliffite Bible <sup>74</sup>. Research has shown that that the rather literal Latinized Early Version was far more diverse in its editions than was believed by Forshall and Madden when they prepared their edition of the Wycliffite scriptures in the Nineteenth Century <sup>75</sup>. The Later Version of the Wycliffite Bible was clearly the result of a process of gradual evolution through revision and glossing <sup>76</sup>, rather than being a separate production, and this process is reflected in the scriptural quotations found in **Wickliefes Wicket**. Thus it is possible to conclude that the author worked from a late variant of the Early Version which already embodies most of the revisions of the Later Version. A careful collation of all the surviving manuscripts of the Wycliffite Bible might establish which manuscript was used by the author of the **Wicket** and hence something of its geographical origins <sup>77</sup>. The scriptural quotations may not be of much help in dating the **Wicket** within the Fifteenth Century, although the use of a late variant of the Early Version would tend to suggest a slightly

earlier rather than later date, but they do help to rule out fairly conclusively the possibility of forgery in the mid-Sixteenth Century. The author was clearly not familiar with Tyndale's translations<sup>78</sup> of the New Testament: Rolle's prose Psalter<sup>79</sup> and the Early Version variant are his only sources. More significantly, perhaps, the Sixteenth Century editors and printers do not seem to have felt constrained to make any substantial changes to the scriptural quotation in the **Wicket** beyond the substitution of more modern words where the sense was obscure as noted above. It is probably safe to conclude therefore that the first and second texts of the **Wicket** printed in 1546 accurately reflect an older version of the text possibly dating from the previous century.

Turning to the external evidence in support of the existence of **Wickliefes Wicket** prior to its first printing in 1546, use can be made of several diverse sources. Most important among these are undoubtedly the records of the cases brought against suspected Lollards in the ecclesiastical courts in the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Century. As has been suggested above, the records which survive today present a patchy and incomplete picture of the persecution of Lollards. Even records seen by Foxe and Ussher have been lost<sup>80</sup>. The accounts here will draw largely upon the records mediated by John Foxe in the **Acts and Monuments**, and while this is not the place for an

extended discussion of Foxe's reliability as a source, it is worthy of note that the majority of recent research has shown Foxe's account to be substantially accurate <sup>81</sup>.

Foxe records seven cases in which **Wickliefes Wicket** is specifically mentioned by that title, and two of these stand out as being of particular significance. The first of these relates to John Stilman and probably provides what is the earliest glimpse of the **Wicket** in any surviving record <sup>82</sup>. A resident of St. Giles' parish, Reading, Stilman abjured heretical beliefs before the Bishop of Salisbury in 1508 <sup>83</sup>. This abjuration makes no mention of heretical books, but at a further trial for relapse before Bishop Fitzjames of London in 1518 it emerged that books had played a large part in Stilman's heretical activities <sup>84</sup>. Stilman had been taught the essentials of Lollardy by Stephen Moone, a resident of the diocese of Winchester some twenty years earlier in about 1498 <sup>85</sup>. After this Stilman was instructed by Richard Smart who had been burnt at Salisbury "about fourteen or fifteen years past" <sup>86</sup>:

One Richard Smart ... did read unto you  
Wickliefes Wicket, and likewise instructed  
you to believe that the sacrament of the  
altar was not the body of Christ: all which  
things [including the denial of the efficacy  
of pilgrimages, prayer before images and in

particular Our Lady of Walsingham] you have erroneously believed. 87

At his trial in 1518 Stilman was alleged to have "highly comended John Wyclif affirming that he was a saint in heaven, and that his book called the Wicket was good and holy" 88. Stilman had obtained the Wicket from Richard Smart at some time before the latter's execution in about 1503 and, it appeared, had gone to some trouble to hide that and other books from Bishop Audley's investigators:

You have at divers times read the said book called Wicklieffes Wicket, and one other book of the Ten Commandments, which the said Richard Smart did give you; and at the time of your first apprehension you did hide them in an old oak, and did not reveal them unto the bishop of Salisbury, before whom you were abjured of heresy about eleven years since [1508]...

It is evident that you be relapsed ... in that about two years after your abjuration you went into the said place where you had hidden your books; and that taking them away with you, you departed the aforesaid diocese [Salisbury] without the license of the bishop, and brought them with you to London.

89

Thus it is clear that Stilman learnt the heresy for which he was to die in the dioceses of Winchester and Salisbury, possibly in a community near their mutual border at some point in the closing decade of the Fifteenth Century. **Wickliefes Wicket** was being used as a text with which to strengthen the belief of new converts in that primary Wycliffite tenet: that in the sacrament of the altar there remained material bread and wine after the priest had pronounced the words of consecration <sup>90</sup>. Hudson draws attention to the evidence of Stilman's travels, and it may be assumed that he himself helped to disseminate heretical ideas in much the same way that he had been proselytized earlier <sup>91</sup>. Stilman's heresy was not confined to the eucharist: he denied the validity of pilgrimages, attacked images, denounced the pope as antichrist and denied the whole apparatus of the sacrament of penance <sup>92</sup>. In words which could equally well have been spoken at any time in the previous century or the century and a half to come, Stilman denounced the Sacred College as the limbs of antichrist and the inferior prelates and clergy as the synagogue of Satan <sup>93</sup>. Here in this extreme anticlericalism can be found all the ingredients of later English apocalyptic imagery <sup>94</sup> some time before Bale's influence came to be felt <sup>95</sup>.

The second case where mention is made of the **Wickliefes Wicket** is important for showing again that

the text was still being used to instruct converts in the "right belief" about the eucharist in 1528, ten years after Stilman's trial before Fitzjames. Thomas Topley was an Augustinian friar from the house at Stoke by Clare, a small village on the Essex-Suffolk border some five miles from Steeple Bumpstead <sup>96</sup>, a traditional hotbed of Lollardy heresy throughout the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Century <sup>97</sup>. The friar was first introduced to Lollard teaching by Richard Fox the curate of Steeple Bumpstead, who had himself been converted by John Tyball <sup>98</sup> in about 1526-8. Fox ensured that Topley read **Wickliefes Wicket**:

As I was in his [Fox's] chamber, I found a certain book called Wickliefes Wicket, wherby I felt in my conscience a great wavering for the time that I did read upon it ... Yet my mind was still much troubled with the said book (which did make the sacrament of Christ's body in the form of bread, but a remembrance of Christ's passion), tyll I heard Sir Miles Coverdale preach, and then my mind was sore withdrawn from the blessed sacrament, insomuch that I took it then but for the remembrance of Christ's body. <sup>99</sup>

The details of Coverdale's sermon are tantalizingly vague, but it must be assumed from Topley's words that he endorsed a memorialistic



understanding of the eucharist at least sufficiently similar to that of **Wickliefes Wicket** for Topley to take it as an endorsement of that text's teaching. Coverdale<sup>100</sup> also had private conversation with Topley in which he convinced the friar that auricular confession was unnecessary, while the sermon persuaded him that images and the intercession of saints were abuses <sup>101</sup>. Coverdale's association with the third and fourth editions of the **Wicket** printed in 1548 and 1550 becomes more credible in the light of this evidence, which also provides an illuminating insight into what John Davis has called the interaction of native heresy and Cambridge "evangelicalism" in the villages of Essex and Suffolk in the late 1520s <sup>102</sup>. Coverdale must have been aware of Luther's views by 1528, but it seems from the evidence of Topley's case that he was still happy to endorse the traditional Lollard position on characteristic issues such as the eucharist, pilgrimages, images and the saints.

Trial records allow something to be traced of the means by which **Wickliefes Wicket** was spread about the country. It has already been noted that John Stilman had brought his copy of the **Wicket** from the diocese of Salisbury (an area covering most of the country from the Chilterns and the Thames valley south-west towards Dorset and Hampshire) to London in about 1511 <sup>103</sup>; the case of Richard Johnson and his wife Alice shows the **Wicket** being transferred from the same diocese of

Salisbury to Boxted in Essex <sup>104</sup>. Thus Foxe records their case:

This Richard and his wife were great favourers of God's word, and had been troubled for the same of long time. They came from Salisbury to Boxted by reason of persecution, where they continued a good space. At length, by resort of good men, they began to be suspected, and especially for a book of Wicklieffes Wicket, which was in their house, they were convented before Stokesley, Bishop of London, and there abjured. <sup>105</sup>

The abjuration of the Johnsons took place as late as 1532. It is interesting to note that once established in their new home in Essex they became acquainted with John Tybal, the same resident of Steeple Bumpstead who had converted Richard Fox the priest in about 1526. It is significant that many of the people whose names have been associated with the **Wicket** were great travellers, or supporters of others who travelled from one centre of Lollardy to another. Tybal travelled from Steeple Bumpstead to Colchester stopping with several notable heretical households along the way <sup>106</sup>. John Stilman moved from the diocese of Salisbury to London, and prior to that seems to have had contacts in Hampshire <sup>107</sup>. At his trial he is alleged to have said that there were some "twenty

**thousand**" of his opinion which whilst doubtless a gross exaggeration may indicate his knowledge of a widespread adherence to heresy in the Hampshire countryside.

At about this same period Andrew Randal, together with his wife Marian and his father, all residents of Rickmansworth in the Chilterns were detected by Thomas Holmes:

**Because they received into their house  
Thomas Man flying from persecution, and for  
reading Wicklieffes Wicket. 108**

Thomas Man was another itinerant purveyor of heretical literature somewhat in the mould of the early Wycliffite "prophets" such as Swinderby, Thorpe, White and Wyche. Man and his wife claimed to have converted six to seven hundred persons between 1511 and their apprehension in 1518 <sup>109</sup>. At the time of his shelter with the Randalls Man seems to have been fleeing persecution at Bristol <sup>110</sup>; it is clear that he worked in London, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and the area to the West of London at least as far as Oxford <sup>111</sup>. While it is not clear that Man supplied the Randalls with their copy of **Wickliefes Wicket** it is important to note that once again the **Wicket** is linked with the area to the West of London on the edge of the Chilterns, an area which had long been associated with Lollardy and which bordered the diocese of Salisbury

where the **Wicket** first appeared in episcopal records. It should also be noted that the articles alleged against Man show his faith to be entirely consistent with that traditionally held by Lollards in that area 112.

The impression that the **Wicket** enjoyed particular favour and may even have had its roots in the Thames Valley and Chilterns is strengthened by an examination of the case of Richard Colins of Ginge in Berkshire 113. The Colins family was notorious: fifteen members of the family were mentioned in the records of trials which spanned three generations, and the family had spread northwards from its original home on the edge of the Berkshire downs to Burford and the Cotswolds. Professor Hudson has devoted some attention to disentangling this complex family network, and the following account draws upon her valuable work.

Richard Colins of Ginge on the northern edge of the Berkshire Downs was reported to the ecclesiastical authorities by his brother Robert who lived at Asthall near Burford. Foxe summarizes the case against Richard Colins thus:

Robert Colins, being sworn on the four evangelists, did detect Richard Colins ... for that this Richard Colins did read unto the said Robert the Ten Commandments<sup>114</sup> .... Also for teaching him not to worship images,

nor to set up candles, nor to go on pilgrimage . . . . Also for teaching him, that the sacrament of the altar is not very God, but a certain figurative thing of Christ in the bread; and that the priest hath no power to consecrate the body of Christ. Also the said Richard did teach him, in Wicklieffes Wicket, how that a man may not make the body of our Lord, who made us; and how can we then make him again?<sup>115</sup> The father is unbegotten and unmade, the Son is only begotten and not made; and how then can man make that, which is unmade?<sup>116</sup> said he. And in the same book of Wicklieffes Wicket follow the words of Christ thus speaking: If my words be heresy, then am I an heretic; and if my words be leasings, then am I a liar;<sup>117</sup> &c. Also another crime against Richard Colins for having certain books in English, as Wicklieffes Wicket, the Gospel of Sy. John, the Epistles of Ss. Paul, James, and Peter, a book of our Lady's Matins in English<sup>118</sup>, a book of Solomon in English, and a book called the Prick of Conscience<sup>119</sup>.

120

Not only was Richard Colins an heretic, but his father and mother, also from Ginge, are mentioned as heretics <sup>121</sup>. His son John seems to have shared in the

heresy, while his daughter Joan knew the Epistle of James and the elements of religion in English 122. Altogether Hudson is correct to describe the household at Ginge as "almost a residential school of heresy" 123. Richard's wife Alice was in particular endowed with a fine memory and could recite large portions of the Bible and favoured texts. Thus as Bishop Longland's enquiries revealed, "when any conventicle of these men did meet at Burford, commonly she was sent for, to recite unto them the declaration of the Ten Commandments, and the Epistles of Peter and James" 124.

The Colins family were familiar with another courier of heretical literature, John Hacker or Haggar, who was tried for heresy by the Bishop of London in 1527 125 and had previously abjured before Bishop Longland in 1521 126. According to Hudson's research Hacker may have originated in the Newbury area 127, but his main area of activity up to 1521 was around Burford and the Berkshire downs where he regularly took books, preached and read the scriptures to sympathisers 128. By the time of Longland's enquiries in 1521 Hacker had moved to Coleman Street in London, an area which has been decribed by Hudson as "a hotbed of religious dissent" 129, and at some point before 1527 he moved his area of activity to Essex where he worked in much the same way that he had worked in the Chilterns and Oxfordshire 130. Through

Hacker the Colins family would have been linked to a loose network of heterodoxy which extended beyond their immediate neighbourhood and which indirectly links the two areas where the **Wicket** is most frequently encountered <sup>131</sup>.

To return to what the Colins case can demonstrate about **Wickliefes Wicket**, it does much to re-enforce the emerging impression gained from the other cases examined that the **Wicket** was connected with individuals who all emerged from much the same part of the country: the Chilterns, Berkshire downs and Hampshire, the borders of the diocese of Salisbury and Lincoln. More than this the cases cluster in the first two decades of the Sixteenth Century, although there are indications that Stilman learnt his heresy in the closing years of the Fifteenth Century. As in that case, the Colins case carries with it hints that the text might have been known considerably earlier. A note in Bishop Audley's register states that Richard and Alice Colins and the elder John Colins had abjured heresy in 1421 <sup>132</sup>. No further details of the case survive and so it is impossible to know of what their heresy consisted. Finally one important factor emerges from the examination of Richard Colins when it is noted that he was able to quote several extended passages of the **Wicket** from memory<sup>133</sup>. These passages are so close to the text as it has survived in the print of 1546 that it proves beyond doubt that the

text encountered in records of trials in the early Sixteenth Century under the title **Wickliefes Wicket** is the same text that is known today.

The case of the Colins family concludes the present examination of cases where **Wickliefes Wicket** is specifically mentioned as a book owned by one or more of the suspects <sup>134</sup>. Other cases exist where books are mentioned in equivocal terms which could be taken as a reference to the **Wicket**. One such set of investigations took place in the Chilterns as part of the same drive against heresy by Bishop Longland that caught the Colins family <sup>135</sup>. The records of Bishop Fox of Winchester show that several suspects including Thomas Denys and Philip Braban, a former servant of the Colins' at Ginge <sup>136</sup> owned a book which is simply called "a boke of heresy called Wiclif" <sup>137</sup>. Hudson has commented that this work may be synonymous with the text known today as **Wickliefes Wicket** <sup>138</sup>, and on the face of things this is very likely when the connection with the known readers of the **Wicket** at Ginge is recalled. The words spoken by Thomas Denys at his examination before Bishop Fox in 1513 strike the reader as somehow familiar. They are not a direct quotation from **Wickliefes Wicket**, but they come very close to both its language and doctrine:

[The eucharist] is not the varay body of  
**Criste but a commemoration of Cristis**



passion, and Cristis body in a figure and  
not in the veray body. 139

In order adequately to assess comments such as this, and those reported of the Coventry Lollards in 1511-12<sup>140</sup> to see whether they may be attributed to a knowledge of **Wickliefes Wicket**, it is necessary to turn to an examination of the argument and teaching of the text itself.

The principal doctrine discussed in the **Wicket** is that of the eucharist. As has been noted, all printed editions of the text have included on their title page the Johannine quotation, "I am the lyuinge bread ..."<sup>141</sup>. The first and second editions prefaced the text itself with the sentence, "A verye brefe definition of these wordes, Hoc est corpus meum"<sup>142</sup>, and this is an accurate description of what follows. Naturally other doctrinal issues are touched upon in the course of argument such as the question of the availability of vernacular scriptures, the problem of justification and the whole notion of religious language and metaphor<sup>143</sup>, particularly the understanding of Biblical images relating to Christ such as the vine and the temple when related to the eucharistic imagery of bread and wine. The strange title of the work is clearly derived from the early use of the image of the "strayght & narowe" gate through which the true believers will find their way to God<sup>144</sup> in contrast to the "large and brode...way that leadeth to

**dampnacion**" 145. Wyclif's wicket, then, is to be interpreted as Wyclif's prescription for entry to heaven through true belief. The origin of the biblical quotations found in the **Wicket** has already been addressed, but it should be noted that such quotations comprise a substantial portion of the completed text, although it is hardly fair to agree with Rupp that the **Wicket** is a slight document when its biblical quotations are removed 146. Unusually for a Wycliffite text the **Wicket** does not appear to include any patristic references 147. Biblical references are carefully - though not exhaustively - provided in the margins of the printed texts as had become usual in such texts. There are however no references to any extra-biblical material or sources. This is the more surprising as it would appear that the author of the **Wicket** made use of a concordance in order to compile his typically Lollard series of related biblical quotations 148. These often extensive quotations are used by the author to demonstrate that his doctrine is firmly based in scripture - in implied contrast to that of the contemporary Church. Again, although this is perhaps less surprising, there are no references, apart from the implied condemnation of Arundel's **Constitutions** 149 to the Canon Law. Ecclesiastical law is, however, contrasted unfavourably with the law of God: canon law, the invention of man, kills or stifles the souls of the laity 150. The "**clerkes of the law**" 151, by which the author appears to mean the

ecclesiastical lawyers as opposed to the parochial clergy, are explicitly likened to the Pharisees of the Old Testament who were "euer agaynste God the Lorde both in the olde lawe and in the newe" 152. An attack upon canon law as an human anti-scriptural force could clearly be developed into an attack upon the understanding of the eucharist accepted by the contemporary Church, defined as it had been by Decree of the Fourth Lateran Council<sup>153</sup>. This is not the author's only line of attack, however, and much of what is said is typically Lollard in character.

The author takes his argument through approximately twenty stages of development. He begins by warning his reader, through a series of biblical quotations culminating in an extensive passage from Daniel 11 of the danger of falling into idolatry<sup>154</sup>, the people being "led awaye frome God, beyng taughte to worshyppe for God, that thing that is not God nor sauoure of the worlde" 155. It is intended that the reader should interpret the words of Daniel in an apocalyptic sense and apply them to the state of the contemporary Church. It is interesting to note that the prophesies reported to be current among the Lollards around Newbury in the 1490s and elsewhere correspond in details to the apocalyptic imagery of Daniel 11. Thus the Lollards of Newbury held that there would be war between Lollards and priests, that the Church would be destroyed and the world saved by

the Lollards <sup>156</sup>, while Hacker (who probably came from the same area) is reported to have said that there would be a battle against the priests who would win and rule for a time, only to be destroyed in their turn "because they hold against the law of holy church, and for making false gods"; after this all would be "merry", presumably in a world governed by vindicated Lollards <sup>157</sup>. William Baxter or Wright had told an enquiry at Norwich in 1430 a strikingly similar tale <sup>158</sup>. It is possible that the author of the **Wicket** was drawing upon a long tradition of Lollard apocalyptic speculation when he chose to incorporate the text of **Daniel 11** into his work. The quotation is justified on the grounds that not everyone has access to the scriptures <sup>159</sup>, and indeed the author continues his argument by showing that the lack of vernacular scriptures allows the laity to be misled by the clergy into idolatry and false belief. The clergy, "make vs to beleue a false lawe that they haue made vpon the secrete hoost....For where fynde ye that euer Chryst or any of his disciples or apostles taughte any man to worship it [?]" <sup>160</sup>. That the scriptures were used in the way implied by the author of the **Wicket** as a measure of the life of the clergy and effectiveness of the Church may find some support from the remarks of Henry Knighton:

The Gospel which Christ gave to the clergy  
and doctors of the church ... has become

vulgar and more open to laymen and women who can read than it usually is to quite learned clergy of good intelligence. And so the pearl of the gospel is scattered abroad and trodden underfoot by swine. 161

The theory of transubstantiation, enshrined in the teaching of the Church 162, is seen by the author as conforming neither to the scriptures, the creeds, nor to reason. He argues from the creeds that Christ is "the sonne of God only begotten and borne of the father before al the world" 163, and that the Father and the Son are both "vnmade" 164. A characteristic Wycliffite argument is then advanced:

And thou then that art an earthly man, by what reason say that thou makest thy maker? Whether may the made thyngge saye to the maker, why hast thou made me thus? Or may it turne again and make hym that made it (God forbyde). 165

This theme recurs throughout the *Wicket* and is elaborated at various stages 166. It is indeed a theme which occurs in other Lollard sources, most clearly perhaps in the reported beliefs of the Lollards in Coventry investigated in 1511 167.

The author now proceeds to change the ground of argument slightly by turning his attention to the actual words of Christ at the Last Supper. He

questions whether it was the bread and wine that were the subject of Christ's blessing at the Supper and concludes, interestingly, that this was not the case:

It semeth more that he blessed hys disciples  
and apostles, whom he had ordayned witnesses  
of his passion, and in them he lyfte his  
blessed worde whyche is the bread of lyfe  
.... Therefore it semeth more that he blessed  
hys discyples, in whome the breade of lyfe  
was lefte moore then in materyall breade...

168

The disciples and apostles were ordained witnesses of Christ's passion, and in them he left the "blessed worde" which was to be the life of the world and its spiritual sustainance <sup>169</sup>. This argument lead the writer neatly into another typically Lollard argument against transubstantiation: it is a matter of common sense and empirical observation that "materyall breade hath an ende" <sup>170</sup>. Bread can rot, or if eaten it is subject to the digestive process<sup>171</sup>. In either case such a process might be seen as an insult to the divinity of Christ if the bread were physically the substance of Christ's body as Roman teaching maintained <sup>172</sup>. The author of the *Wicket* is more concerned, however, to stress the eternal nature of the blessing promised by Christ which thus cannot be linked inextricably with corruptible bread <sup>173</sup>.

The writer appears to be orthodox in his understanding of the incarnation and the manner of Christ's earthly existence. Christ lived and died as a man in order that the divine purpose might be fulfilled, death overcome and man redeemed:

Here men may see by the wordes of Chryst  
that it behoued that he dyed in the fleshe,  
and that in hys death was made the fruyte of  
euerlastynge lyfe for all them that beleue  
on hym. 174

After death Christ's body was transformed, as all human bodies will be transformed, from flesh into a "spirituall bodye" 175. The priests are thus caught in the snare set up for them by the author of the Wicket:

Then how say the Hipocrites that take vpon  
them to make our lordes body? Loo ether make  
they the glorified bodye ether make they  
agayne the spirituall body which is rysen  
from deathe to life eyther make they the  
fleshely body as it was before he suffered  
deathe... 176

Either way the priests are trapped: if they say that they make the glorified body of Christ, that cannot be for he has ascended to heaven:

Yf they saye also that they make the  
spiritual body of Christe it maye not be so,  
for that thynge that Christ sayd & dyd it as  
he was at supper before he suffered his  
passion, and it is wrytten that the  
spiritual body of Christe rose agayne from  
death to lyfe. Also he ascended vp to  
heauen, and that he wyll abyde there tyll he  
come to iudge the quycke and the dead.<sup>177</sup>

If the priests claim to make the human body of  
Christ then they imply that Christ must die for a  
second time and thus invalidate the promise of  
scripture that Christ died to gain the "lordshyppe of  
euerlastinge lyfe" 178.

The argument now concentrates upon the words *Hoc  
est corpus meum*, the real subject of the whole debate.  
These words, the author claims, are words "of *gyuyng*"  
<sup>179</sup> not of creating or "*makyng*" <sup>180</sup>. If Christ's body  
was made at the Supper, it was not done with the words  
*Hoc est corpus meum*:

If Christ had made of that bred his body, he  
had made it in his blessing or els in  
*gyuyng* of thankes & not in the wordes of  
*gyuyng*, for yf Christe had spoken of the  
materiall bread that he had in his handes as  
when he sayde, *Hoc est corpus meum* this is  
my body then had it ben made before, or els



the worde had bene a lye. For yf I say this is my hande and it be not my hande then am I a lyar, therefore seke it busely yf ye can fynde two wordes of blessinge or of gyuyng of thanckes wherwith Christ made his body and bloude of the bread and wine. 181

No such words exist in the scriptural account of the Supper, but the author points out that if they were once found, then the priests would "wax great maysters aboue Christe", and Christ would himself be forced to honour them as his creators 182. The author implies that through the doctrinal status accorded to the theory of transubstantiation, priests are indeed anxious to obtain such honour despite the gross blasphemy involved 183.

The foregoing section of the text serves as a preliminary to the outright attack upon the eucharistic theology of the contemporary Church:

They say that when ye haue sayd: Hoc est corpus meum, that is to saye this is my bodye, the which ye cal the wordes of consecracion or els makynge, and when they be sayde ouer the bread, ye say that there is left no bread, but it is the body of the lorde, so that in the bread there remayneth nothing but an heap of accidentes as whytnes, ruggednes, roundenes, sauor,

**touchynge, & tastynge and such other  
accidentes. 184**

The author of the **Wicket** clearly has a good understanding of the terms in which the contemporary Church explained transubstantiation, even to the extent of using the "technical" language of accidents. This contrasts sharply with the view of the later Lollards as semi-literate artisans <sup>185</sup> and is an example of the author's evident theological schooling. The contemporary eucharistic doctrine thus defined, the author proceeds to follow what Dickens has described as the objections of a "sceptical materialist" <sup>186</sup>: if the bread, and therefore the body of Christ extends to meet the needs of the whole congregation, and indeed the needs of every congregation throughout Christendom each day of the year, must not Christ's body "**wax more in one day by carte lodes than he dyd in xxxii. yeres when he was here in earth**" <sup>187</sup>. If the bread on the altar is seen as God today, by implication the author suggests, the corn which is now growing in the field will be God tomorrow <sup>188</sup>.

The contemporary notion that at the mass the priest stood in some way in loco Christi is firmly opposed. If this were to be accepted, any immoral, drunken man might be honoured <sup>189</sup>:

And yf thou mayst make the body of the Lorde  
in those wordes, Thys is my bodye, thou thy  
selfe must be the person of Chryste or els  
there is a false God, for yf it be thy body  
as thou sayest, then it is the body of a  
false knaue, or of a dronken man, or a thef,  
or a lecherouer or full of other synnes, &  
then there is an vncleane body for any man  
to worshyp for God. 190

Humans, whether ordained priests or not, have neither power nor authority to make the physical body of Christ <sup>191</sup>. Thus the clergy have "feygned this crafte of youre false erroures"<sup>192</sup>, and have led the people into that worst of sins, idolatry <sup>193</sup>. The use of the word "crafte" in this context is interesting because it is clearly intended to carry with it an implication of magic and conjuring suggesting that the eucharistic practice of the Church is somehow akin to sorcery or fairground tricks <sup>194</sup>. The idolatry which the author of the *Wicket* sees in the eucharistic practice of the laity is every bit as serious as that of the Israelites when they worshipped the golden calf<sup>195</sup>. The attack upon the Church's eucharistic practice continues when the author turns his attention to the consecration of the elements <sup>196</sup>. The church claims that under the accidents of bread, which is consecrated first, there is contained the whole substance of Christ's body <sup>197</sup>. If this is so, the

people adore a false god in the chalice which is unconsecrated at the time of the elevation of the bread.

When we shall be housled [communicated], ye brynge to vs the drye flesh, and let the bloud be away, for ye gyue vs after the breade, wyne and water, and sometymes cleane water vnblest (rather coniured<sup>198</sup>) by the vertue of your crafte. And yet ye saye vnder the hooste of breade is the ful manhode of Christe, then by your owne confession muste it nedes be that we worshyppen a false god in the chalice whyche is vnconiured, when we worshyp the bread and worshyppe the one as the other... 199

This argument is not developed further in the direction of Utraquism and it is interesting to note that even in 1546 that distinctive feature of Hussite heresy which must have been known in England does not find a place in the *Wicket* <sup>200</sup>. Instead the author here choses as his decisive point the truth based upon scripture that the body and blood of Christ ascended to heaven:

Yf it be so as I am sure, that the flesshe and bloude of Christe ascended, then be ye false harlottes to god and to vs. <sup>201</sup>

The unscriptural nature of transubstantiation and the contemporary teaching of the Church is again emphasized. Rhetorically the author asks whether it is possible that the apostles and disciples who were so familiar with Christ forgot to "set it [transubstantiation] in the crede" <sup>202</sup>. Rather transubstantiation is seen as one of the "false wayes" and "sleightes of the fynde" <sup>203</sup> which the clergy use to beguile simple people. The author proceeds to elucidate two sophistries with which the Church has attempted to hide the truth. In the first a looking glass is smashed into fragments, each one of which reflects the whole of what had previously been reflected in the whole glass <sup>204</sup>:

For ye saye as a man may take a glasse, and breake the glasse into many pieces & in euerye piece properly thou mayeste se thy face, and thy face not parted. So ye saye the Lordes bodye is in eache hooste eyther piece and hys bodye not parted. <sup>205</sup>

The second image concerns candles all lit from a single flame <sup>206</sup>. In each case the author points out that logically these arguments lead to polytheism:

And so by this reason, yf ye shall fetche your worde at god, and make god, there muste nedes be many goddes and that is forbydden in ye fyrst commaundement. <sup>207</sup>

What is perhaps important to note here is that the arguments expounded by the author of the **Wicket** come very close to those originally used by Wyclif when writing of the eucharist 208.

Finally the author proceeds to an examination of the eucharist in a positive light and rather than dwelling upon the Church's abuse of the sacrament, sets out in detail his understanding of the purpose of the sacrament and its mode of operation<sup>209</sup>. The Church is commanded to break bread as a reminder of God's grace to mankind through Christ:

Ye shoulde not teache the people to  
worshyppe the sacramentes or myndes of  
Christe for Christe hym self, which  
sacramentes or figures ben lefull as God  
taughte and lefte them vnto vs, as the  
sacrifyces other myndes of the olde lawe  
were full good as it is wrytten. They that  
kepe them shoulde lyue in them, and so the  
breade that Christe brake was lefte to vs  
for mynde of thynges passed, for the bodye  
of Christe, that we shoulde beleue he was a  
very man in kynde as we be. And god in  
vertue, and that manhode was sustained in  
food as oures be. 210

A sacrament, the author maintains, "is no more to saye, but a sygne or mynde of a thyng passed or a

thyngge to come" 211, and just as the face regarded in the glass is "not the very face, but the fygure there of", so too "the breade is the fygure or mynde of Christes body in earth" 212. The sacrament is seen in memorialistic terms<sup>213</sup> as a reminder of Christ's saving death rather than as a means of grace in itself. The notion of figure in this context could have been derived from a number of sources, including of course the works of Wyclif 214. Wyclif himself had found support for his views from Augustine 215 and other Fathers. Its occurrence in later Lollard literature will be discussed below. It is possible that the memorialistic theme in the *Wicket* is also derived from a patristic source such as Fulgentius of Ruspe, but if this is the case the derivation was not acknowledged in the printed text and no indication of it is provided in the body of the text 216

The author concludes his development by showing that much of the problem associated with the eucharist is caused by the way in which metaphors as employed in religious and biblical language are understood and interpreted<sup>217</sup>. Several examples are used to illustrate this surprisingly learned contention:

What say ye, the cuppe whyche he sayde is  
the newe testamente in my bloude, was it a  
materiall cuppe in whyche the wyne was that  
he haue hys disciples wyne of, or was it his  
moost blessed body in whiche the blessed

bloude was kepte tyll it were shed out for  
the sinnes of them that shoulde be made safe  
by his passion, nedes must we say that he  
spake of his holy bodye, as he dyd when he  
called his passion eyther sufferng in body  
a cuppe when he prayed to his father or he  
went to his passion and said. Yf it be  
possible that this cup passe from me....He  
spake not here of the materiall cup... 218

Similarly the "mother of zebedeus sonnes" <sup>219</sup> was  
told that she did not understand what she asked when  
she enquired whether her sons would sit at the right-  
hand of Christ. They must rather share his cup, by  
which the author says Christ "promised them to suffer  
tribulacion of thys world as he dyd, by the whych they  
shulde enter into lyfe euerlasting" <sup>220</sup>. The metaphor  
of the vine and the temple<sup>221</sup> from St. John's Gospel  
are both discussed in a similar vein:

Also Chryste sayeth I am a very vyne.  
Wherfore worshyppe ye not the vyne for God  
as do ye bread? Wher in was Christ a very  
vyne, or wher in was bread Chrystes body? In  
figuratiue speache, which is hyd to the  
vnderstandynge of synners. Then yf Chryste  
became not a materiall eyther an earthly  
vine, neyther materiall vyne became the  
body of Christe. So neyther the materiall



breade was chaunged frome hys sustaunce to  
the fleshe and bloude of Chryste. 222

The Roman Church errs in taking literally the words "Hoc est corpus meum", which should rather be understood in a figurative or metaphorical sense to stand as a reminder of Christ's all-saving passion:

And ryght so Christ spake of hys holy bodye when he sayde, thys is my bodye whych shalbe geuen for you whych was geuen to deathe, and into rysynge agayne to blysse for all that shalbe saued by hym, but lyke as they accused hym falsely of the temple of Ierusalem. Right so now a dayes they accusen falselye agaynste Chryste and saye that Christ spake of the bread that he brake amongst his Apostles, for in that Chryste sayd thus, they ben deceyued, take it fleshly and turne it to the materiall breade as the Iewes dyd to the temple, and on this false vnderstandynge they make abhominacyon of discomfort. 223

The key to the Wicket is language, and particularly the correct interpretation of the words of Christ at the Supper. The emphasis is perhaps slightly different from that adopted by Wyclif 224, but the point remains very much one that Wyclif could have endorsed: the eucharist is not about the physical

presence of Christ's body and blood in the consecrated bread; it is not about the powers or words of the priest. Rather it is about the spiritual presence of Christ for the sustenance of his Church, the congregation of the elect. As Keen remarks:

The miracle of the mass was the repetition of the miracle of the Incarnation, two substances present in the same moment, the spiritual body of Christ and the physical substance of bread, and it was God who brought this to pass in accordance with his promise, not the priest in the liturgy. 225

The author of the *Wicket* places great emphasis throughout his text upon the body of Christ, but this is entirely consistent with Keen's observation. The author writes:

Yf he spake of his holy body and passion when he sayd. This cup is the newe testament in my bloude. So he spake of his holy bodye, when he sayd this is my body that shalbe giuen for you, and not of the materiall bread which he had in his hande. 226

This is intended to stress the incarnate body which suffered "for our synnes and not his"<sup>227</sup> and which because of his divinity conquered death and won redemption for humanity <sup>228</sup>.

This account of the theological content of **Wickliefes Wicket** serves to demonstrate that it is a theological work of some sophistication. The author may not make references to the fathers, but he is familiar with the language of transubstantiation and the way in which it has come to be incorporated into the teaching of the contemporary Church. The **Wicket** is an essentially Wycliffite or Lollard work: there is nothing in its content that could not have been said by any Wycliffite or agreed with by Wyclif himself, although some of the emphases are different to those found in early Lollard works <sup>229</sup>. The author is clearly working within a philosophical and theological framework which rests upon the belief in the scriptures as the highest criterion for determining Christian teaching. The one feature which has surprised some modern readers is the strong memorialistic theme which runs through the eucharistic doctrine in the text <sup>230</sup>, and this might give rise to the suspicion that the text is either a mid-Sixteenth Century forgery, or more plausibly, has had the benefit of a Zwinglian revision. It is however precisely this distinctive feature which allows the **Wicket** to be placed firmly within the Wycliffite corpus and which may allow an insight into the nature and spread of later Lollardy in Southern and Central England.

It has been suggested above that echoes of the doctrine of the **Wicket** can be found in the statements of suspects examined on charges of heresy but who do not name the **Wicket** as their source or inspiration. Davis has quoted several examples of Lollard eucharistic statements drawn from a period of over a century, which show most clearly that the notion of the eucharist as a figure or sign of Christ's passion was current in Lollard circles by at least 1428 when Thomas Fouzeler said:

The sacrament of the aulter ys but a figure  
or a shadowe in comparison to the present  
body of god. 231

While this does not show the developed memorialism of the **Wicket**, the use of the word present implies an acceptance of the belief also found in the **Wicket** that Christ's body had ascended to heaven<sup>232</sup>. Thus Fouzeler is saying that the sacrament is a "**shadowe**" rather than the presence of the physical body of Christ.

In 1499 John Whitehorne, the rector of Letcombe Basset in the diocese of Salisbury, not far from the area inhabited by the Colins family, stated that after the words of consecration were spoken, "**pure bread**" remained in the sacrament, and supported this view with the assertion that Christ's body had ascended to heaven where it would remain until Judgment Day <sup>233</sup>. An interesting strand of thought occurs when slightly

later the eucharistic bread is equated to the Word of God, the Johannine **Logos**. This view is never quite stated in these terms in the **Wicket**<sup>234</sup>, but an interest in Johannine Christology is evident and the recurring use of the phrase "word of God" suggests that the author might have agreed with the suspect whose views are recorded in Archbishop Morton's **Register**:

For the worde ys God and god is the Worde As  
in the begynnyng of Saint Johannus gspell  
And therefore whosoever Resceive devoutly  
goddis word he Receyueth the verye body of  
christe.<sup>235</sup>

This idea is stated in even more explicite terms by the Essex Lollard John Pykas, an associate of the same Hacker who visited the Colins family at Ginge and Burford, when he said in 1528:

The body of Christ was in the Word and not  
in the bread; that God is the Word, and the  
Word is God, and God and the Word cannot be  
departed.<sup>236</sup>

It is instructive to compare these words with those of Wyclif in order to see how great was the continuity of Lollard thought on the subject of Christ's presence in the eucharist from the time of Wyclif to the early Sixteenth Century. In **De veritate sacre scripture** Wyclif writes:

Christus sit scriptura, quam debemus  
cognoscere, et fides, quam debemus  
credere.<sup>237</sup>

Further strong echoes of the eucharistic theology of the **Wicket** are found in the statements made by suspects examined at Coventry during Bishop Blythe's investigations in 1511-12<sup>238</sup>. There is a surprising uniformity of views expressed which strongly suggests that some common teacher or text had been used for the suspects to arrive at their conclusions<sup>239</sup>. This group, which had existed for some twenty years before it was finally dealt with by the authorities <sup>240</sup>, set great store by books and maintained links with other heretical groups in the Chilterns, London and Essex <sup>241</sup>. It seems that heretical ideas may have been first brought to Coventry from Bristol via Birmingham by John Jonson <sup>242</sup>. The Coventry suspects made statements such as:

May a priste make god todaie and ete hym and  
doo likewise to morowe?

The hooste consecrate was not the very body  
of our lorde but a figue.

God made man and not man god as the  
Carpenter doth make the howse and not the  
house the carpenet. And that he should take  
it [mass] as a token or remembraunce of

cristes passion and not as the very body of  
cryste.<sup>243</sup>

The evidence from these cases makes it clear that the teaching of **Wickliefes Wicket** on the eucharist was not so very unusual: it is in effect a comprehensive statement of the Lollard position with regard to the mass. As such it seems that the **Wicket** may have been a text intended for the instruction of Lollard sympathisers and members in the truths they professed <sup>244</sup>. In some respects the text resembles a Wycliffite sermon: a text is produced at the head of the work and the following sections relate to it. It is however much longer than most surviving single sermons, and while it is more discursive in its treatment of the text than is usual in a Wycliffite sermon, there is no indication that it is a compilation of several different texts <sup>245</sup>. Despite its biblical text and opening and concluding prayers or invocations <sup>246</sup>, it seems much more likely that the **Wicket** was written as a manual of instruction, perhaps to comprise in a simplified form the essential teaching of Wyclif's **De Eucharistia** which it follows closely. As is shown by surviving records, the text was read aloud at meetings in Lollard homes <sup>247</sup>. Fairly concise, the **Wicket** in manuscript form would have been easily concealed or carried from place to place by men such as Man, Hacker or Tybal, while at the same time being a most effective and persuasive

document of instruction as is shown by its use by Richard Fox the priest at Steeple Bumpstead in the early Sixteenth Century <sup>248</sup>. The author's device of placing controversial views in the mouth of an anonymous interlocutor - not used throughout the text<sup>249</sup> - suggests that the **Wicket** may have been intended to provoke discussion among the assembled company; and the evidence from the trial of Richard Colins shows that at least one Lollard went to the trouble of learning sections of this work by heart <sup>250</sup>. Indeed the presence of the **Wicket** among the books in the Colins' household re-enforces the impression of this work as a book of instruction, for the evidences points very strongly towards the fact that the Colins ran what can only be described as a "school" in their home. Agnes Edmunds had been in service at Ginge so that "**she might be instructed there in God's law**" <sup>251</sup> and another former servant Philip Braban was investigated for heresy by the Bishop of Winchester in 1513 <sup>252</sup>. The same is true of the Randalls of Rickmansworth whose views came to the attention of the authorities because of the resort of "**good men**" to their home for readings of material which included the **Wicket** <sup>253</sup>. The friar Thomas Topley was confirmed in his heresy when Richard Fox read him **Wickliefes Wicket** <sup>254</sup>, and John Stilman was given a copy of the **Wicket** after he had been converted to Lollard views by Richard Smart <sup>255</sup>. The **Wicket** is mentioned so frequently in connection with homes where



meetings were held or the conversion of individuals to the tenets of Lollardy that it is hard to escape the conclusion that the text was used, if not originally intended, for the instruction of Lollards.

Another notable coincidence is the frequency with which the **Wicket** is mentioned in connection with households which were associated with men who were known to have been engaged in spreading and circulating Wycliffite literature<sup>256</sup>; some of the readers mentioned were themselves known to be great travellers <sup>257</sup>. It seems likely that the **Wicket** was probably circulated among groups of heretics meeting in Berkshire, Oxfordshire, the Chilterns and London. Spreading gradually from the West it was carried to London and thence to Essex by the beginning of the Sixteenth Century. It is possible that the text originated from Bristol, and it should be noted both that Thomas Man reached the Randalls from Bristol <sup>258</sup> and that the heresy detected at Coventry in 1511 - which had its origins back at least as far as 1485 <sup>259</sup> - had reached that city from Bristol and bears a striking resemblance to the terms in which the **Wicket** speaks of the eucharist. It is true that the **Wicket** does not feature in any of the few recorded cases of heresy in Bristol, but this is not conclusive evidence that it was not present: it is apparent that the surviving records do not provide an accurate picture of the extent of heterodox belief in the city, partly

no doubt because it was a major port which lay on the borders of the dioceses of Worcester, Bath and Wells and Salisbury <sup>260</sup>. Only fifteen miles distant from Bristol, the diocese of Salisbury was the place where the **Wicket** first emerges into the episcopal records, and the villages where the **Wicket** is later encountered are mainly situated in a band straddling one of the ancient routes from Bristol to London<sup>261</sup>. The apparent continuity of Wycliffite belief in Bristol <sup>262</sup> from an early date might help to account for some of the peculiarities of the **Wicket**: its mixture of early scriptural quotations with a eucharistic theology which while largely consistent with Wyclif's own is expressed in a form more consistent with a later date of composition. In a sense this is all speculation: the absence of a manuscript precludes anything but a tentative sketch of the history and origins of the **Wicket**. However working with the data that is available, certain definite conclusions can be drawn.

The **Wicket** is clearly a Lollard rather than Zwinglian or Lutheran document. The furthest back that the **Wicket** can be traced with certainty is 1495-98, the date at which John Stilman learned his heresy from Stephen Moone <sup>263</sup>. Moone had himself been taught by Richard Smart who had been executed for heresy in about 1500. There is no reason to suppose that either of these men himself wrote the **Wicket**, and so it seems reasonable to conclude that it was in existence in the

last quarter of the Fifteenth Century<sup>264</sup>. More than this it is impossible to say. The most striking feature of the **Wicket**, and indeed the most striking conclusion that can be drawn from this survey is the strong continuity which existed between the thought of John Wyclif and the earliest Lollards, and those who were condemned as Lollards in the early Sixteenth Century. Nor is the teaching of the **Wicket** particularly simple or debased as some critics have attempted to maintain <sup>265</sup>: the issues of the Incarnation, the eucharist and in particular religious language are dealt with in a sophisticated manner which presupposes an educated readership. The doctrine of Wyclif, all be it somewhat shorn of its full philosophical finery, is present in the **Wicket**, and through its pages was mediated to the heretics of the mid-1540s. The views of people such as Anne Askew, John Lassels, Edward Crome or Nicholas Shaxton mirror the eucharistic teaching of **Wickliefes Wicket** which is itself consistent with the teaching of Wyclif himself. The examination of **Wickliefes Wicket** emphasises once agin the necessity of a reassessment of the influences which helped to shape the Edwardian Church settlement.

- 1 - **Wickliffes Wicket**, ed. Pantin, T., Oxford 1828;  
**Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe**, ed. Vaughan,  
R., Wycliffe Society, London 1845, 273-284;  
**Old Tracts for Present Times**, IV, ed. Potts, R.,  
Cambridge, N.D.;
- Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence Ancient and Modern**,  
ed. Fish, H.C., London 1856, I, 116-126
- 2 - Cf. Smith, H.M., **Pre-Reformation England**, London  
1963, 277.
- 3 - Rupp, E.G., **Studies in the Making of the  
English Protestant Tradition**, Cambridge 1947, 5, 10.  
Cf. also Workman, H.B., **John Wyclif, A Study of the  
English Medieval Church**, Oxford 1926, II, 39 (n).  
Workman has a useful and concise discussion of the  
origins of the first printed edition of the **Wicket**. It  
should be noted, however, that his assertion that  
Jackson's edition of 1612 includes a biographical  
notice of Thomas James is incorrect.  
Workman, H.B., **The Dawn of the Reformation - I The Age  
of Wyclif**, London 1901, 279, 299-301.
- 4 - Cf. Aston, M., **Lollards and Reformers: Images  
and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion**, London 1984  
[including several reprinted essays]; "Wyclif and the  
Vernacular", **SCH Subsidia** 5 (1987), 281-330.  
Hudson, A., **Lollards and their Books**, London 1985  
[including several reprinted essays]; **The Premature  
Reformation. Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History**,  
Oxford 1988, 489-93.
- 5 - Hudson, A., "'No Newe Thyng': The Printing of  
Medieval Texts in the Early Reformation Period" in  
**Middle English Studies Presented to Norman Davis**,  
Oxford 1983, reprinted in **Lollards and their Books**,  
Oxford 1985, 231-2, 246-7.
- 6 - Cf. Comments of Tunstall, writing to Erasmus,  
5th June 1523 in **Complete Works of St. Thomas More**,  
Vol. 8 ed. Schuster, A., Yale 1973, 163/31.  
Trial records discussed particularly by Hudson,  
**Reformation**, 483ff further illustrate the extent to  
which the **Wicket** was known to heretics and the  
authorities alike in the early Sixteenth Century.
- 7 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, [London, John Day], 1546 [2  
versions], 1548 and 1550 (2nd. ed.). **STC** no. 25590;  
25590.5; 25591; 25591a. A further edition was printed  
by Joseph Barnes at Oxford in 1612, edited by Henry  
Jackson, **STC** no. 25592.
- 8 - The two versions of 1546 comprise: **Wicket**,  
**Testament of William Tracy** (1530), **Exposition of  
Testament** by William Tyndale (1533?).  
2nd. ed. of 1548 and 1550 comprise: **Wicket**,  
**Protestacion of John Lassels** (1546), **Testament of  
William Tracy** (1530), **Exposition** by William Tyndale  
(1533?), **Exposition** by John Frith (1532?).  
Cf. Bibliographical survey in Introduction for detail.
- 9 - **STC** no. 25590.

- 10 - Hudson has discussed the problem of dating in **Reformation**, 11.
- 11 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 452.
- 12 - Other examples include **The Praier and Complaynte of the Ploweman**, printed at Antwerp in about 1531 and the **Ploweman's Tale**, 1536?. Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 11, 28.
- 13 - Fines, J, "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, 1511-12", **JEH** 14 (1963), 160-74.
- Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 32-34.
- 14 - Westminster Cathedral MS B.2/8; printed as **Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich**, 1428-31, ed. Tanner, N.P., Camden Soc. 4th ser. 20, 1977.
- 15 - Lichfield Record Office B/C13; Fines, J., **Op.cit.**
- 16 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York 1509-1558**, London 1959, 51ff.
- 17 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 34.
- 18 - Cf. Discussion by Hudson, **Reformation**, 35-42.
- 19 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 39-40.
- 20 - BL Harley 2324; Harley 6613. Printed text **STC** 15225 about 1535 by Robert Redman.
- 21 - **Praier and complaynte of the ploweman**, in **Harleian Miscellany**, London 1744-6, vi, 84-106. Cf. also Hudson, A., "'No Newe Thyng': The Printing of Medieval Texts in the Early Reformation Period", reprinted in **Lollards and their Books**, 230-2.
- 22 - Cf. **Harleian Miscellany**, London 1744-6, vi, 84. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 11.
- 23 - ie. 1377-99. The intended implication is clearly that the **Wicket** is one of Wyclif's own late works.
- 24 - Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 28 n.118
- 25 - **STC** nos. 25590 and 25590.5
- 26 - Day's first recorded publication was also in 1546: **The Tragical Death of David Beaton, Bishop of St. Andrewes**.
- 27 - **The Testament of Master Wylliam Tracie**, Antwerp, H. Peetersen van Middelburch, 1535. **STC** no. 24167.
- 28 - Title, **STC** 25590 and 25590.5
- 29 - For comments on this practice as applied to the Antwerp trade, Cf. Kronenburg, M.E., "Notes on English Printing in the Low Countries (Early Sixteenth Century)", **The Library**, 4th ser. 9 (1928-9), 139-63. Much of this also applies to the English trade at this period.
- 30 - **Wicket**, [A,B], B4r.
- 31 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 11; "No Newe Thyng" in **Lollards and Their Books**, 230-1, 246-7.
- 32 - **STC** nos. 25591 and 25591a.
- 33 - Title, **STC** no. 25591. Differences with 25591a are outlined in Bibliographical Introduction.
- 34 - **Wicket**, B5v 30. All references to **Wicket** are given for the present edition unless otherwise indicated.

- 35 - Aston, M., "Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Revival", in **Lollards and Reformers**, 233-4.
- 36 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 493.
- 37 - Parker Society 1844, **Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter**, 425ff.
- 38 - Parker Society, *Ibid.*, 11 [dated 1547]; also **Fruitful Lessons upon the Passion, Buriall...Gathered out Of The Foure Euangelists**, Marburg 1540-7.
- 39 - Parker Society, *Ibid.*
- 40 - Bodleian, copy B4(1) Med.B.S. Photographic copy in Volume II, Appendix I.
- 41 - For biographical details see **Dictionary of National Biography**; Smeeton, D.D., **Lollard Themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale**, Vol. VI **Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies**, Kirkville 1986, 72-3; Butterworth, C.C. and Chester, A.G., **George Joye, 1495?-1553: A Chapter in the History of the English Bible and the English Reformation**, Philadelphia, 1953.
- 42 - John Rylands Library, Manchester, R.17693.
- 43 - **The Souper of the Lorde**, Nicolas twonson, Nornburg, 5th April 1533. **STC** no. 24468. Clebsch, W.A., "More Evidence that George Joye Wrote **The Souper of the Lorde**", **Harvard Theological Review** 55 (1962), 63-66.
- Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 502.
- 44 - Cambridge University Library, Syn.8.54.89'
- 45 - Joye is likely to have written **The Souper** in about 1533 but the **STC** suggests that it may not have been printed until 1546 by N. Hill in London, or possibly a press in Antwerp - Cf. **STC** 24468. There seems little reason to question the **STC** attribution of the **Wicket** to Day's press although this point might reward further investigation.
- 46 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 502
- 47 - Durham University Library, R.xvi.D.32.
- 48 - Unfortunately nothing of the social position of the White family is known, nor of its place of origin. The dates on the title page are 1666 and 1669.
- 49 - British Library, 1360.a.3
- 50 - No indication of the owner's name can be found. The earlier annotations are so heavily overlaid that positive identification of their content is difficult.
- 51 - Lambeth Palace Library, 1548.3
- 52 - Cf. Comments of Kenny on Thomas James' **Apologie for Iohn Wickliffe** [1608] in "The Accursed memory: The Counter-Reformation Reputation of John Wyclif", Kenny, A., **Wyclif in His Times**, Oxford 1986, 167-8.
- 53 - **Wickliffes Wicket or A Learned And Godly Treatise of The Sacrament Made By John Wickliffe. Setforth according to an ancient Printed Copie**, ed. Jackson, H., printed by Josph Barnes, Oxford 1612. **STC** no. 25592.
- 54 - **Wickliffes Wicket**, ed. Jackson, H., 1612, P4. This Preface is discussed further in the Examination of Two Introductions to **Wickliefes Wicket** below.

- 55 - Cf. Kenny, A., "The Accursed Memory", in Kenny, A., ed., **Wyclif**, 161ff.
- 56 - Each consists of the **Wicket** alone and ignores the other material which appeared along with it.
- 57 - This edition included Coverdale's Introduction from the 1548 and 1550 edition incorrectly dated 1546.
- 58 - Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 15.  
For text, cf. Wilkins, D., **Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae**, London 1737, III 314-19.  
The **Constitutions** were drafted in 1407 and formally issued in 1409. Cf. Cheney, C.R., "William Lyndwood's **Provinciale**", **Medieval texts and Studies**, Oxford 1973, 172.
- 59 - **Wicket**, A5r 11-29.
- 60 - **Wicket**, A5r 30 - A5v 3; **John** 1:1.
- 61 - Cf. Wyclif's own identification of the "four sects of Antichrist" with the opposition to vernacular scriptures: eg. **De Nova Prevaricantia Mandatorum** in **Polemical Works**, ed. Buddensieg, R., London 1883, I, 126/14; **Opus Evangelicum**, London 1895-6, II, 115/4.
- 62 - **Wicket**, A5v 13-18.
- 63 - Cf. Comments of Hudson on "contemporanety" of Wycliffite texts in Sixteenth Century. **Reformation**, 17.  
Aston, M., "Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Revival" reprinted in **Lollards and Reformers**, 219-42.
- 64 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 452.
- 65 - **Wicket**, A3v 29 - A4r 31.
- 66 - **Wicket**, A4r 20.
- 67 - **Wicket**, A4r 20.
- 68 - Cf. **Middle English Dictionary**.
- 69 - **Wicket**, A4r 8.
- 70 - **Wicket**, B1r 30-31.
- 71 - The editor has noted the comments of Hudson, **Reformation**, 9-10 with regard to the attempted identification of the authors of anonymous Lollard texts. After a preliminary attempt with regard to the **Wicket**, effort has been concentrated in more profitable areas of research and this question will not be addressed here at any length.
- 72 - **Wicket**, A7r 29-32.
- 73 - **Wicket**, B1r 12-14.
- 74 - Cf. Summary of work on the Wycliffite translation of the Bible by Hudson, **Reformation**, 238-47. For scriptural references used in **Wicket** see Table following edition of text in Vol. II.  
**The Holy Bible...made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his Followers**, ed. Forshall, J. and Madden, F., Oxford 1850 (4 vols.).  
**The Earlier Version of the Wycliffite Bible**, ed. Lindberg, C., **Stokholm Studies in English** 29, 1973.
- 75 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 245.  
Hargreaves, H., "The Wycliffite Versions" in **The Cambridge History of the Bible**, II, ed. Lampe, G.W.H., Cambridge 1969, 405-6.  
Fristedt, S.L., **The Wycliffe Bible**, **Stokholm Studies in English** 21, 1969, xx-xlvi.
- 76 - Fristedt, **Op.cit.**, xx ff.

Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 243-47.

77 - Such a collation was not undertaken by Forshall and Madden in the preparation of their edition. Cf. Hudson, **Reformation**, 239 n.62.

Such a collation might be helpful in the case of the **Wicket**, but this is doubtful. It is likely that the author used whatever version of the English Bible was available to him, and it is unlikely that it had remained in its original place of writing when he made use of it. Hudson's comments on the analysis of mediaeval English dialects [**Reformation**, 19] in the context of dating and locating the origins of texts are relevant here. The only striking or distinctive word forms tend to occur within quotations in this text, and thus any evidence which might be derived from dialect analysis is unlikely to provide any useful insight into the origins of the **Wicket**.

Accordingly a linguistic/geographical analysis of the text is not produced here. Cf. McIntosh, A., Samuels, M.L., and Benskin, M., **A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English**, (4 vols.) Aberdeen 1986. This work might prove valuable in dealing with a different text.

78 - Available in England from late 1525 or early 1526. Cf. **Smeeton**, 59-60.

Strype, **Ecclesiastical Memorials**, London 1816, V, 369 - account of the purchase of Tyndale's **Testament** from Robert Barnes by Lollards from Steeple Bumpstead, 1527.

79 - Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 259, 422.

Everett, D., "The Middle English Prose Psalter of Richard Rolle of Hampole", **Modern Language Review** 17 (1922), 217-27, 337-50; 18 (1923), 381-93.

The only reference to this work in the **Wicket** is a passing one to **Psalm 1:1** [A5v 20] and so can hardly be counted as evidence that the author had a thorough knowledge of Rolle's **Commentary**.

80 - **Supra**, 2, n.18, n.19.

Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 32-42.

Ussher's notes on the Alnwick courtbook now form Trinity College Dublin MS 775, ff122v-125.

81 - Thomson, J.A.F., "John Foxe and some Sources for Lollard History: Notes for a Critical Appraisal", **Studies in Church History**, 2 (1965), 251-7; O'Day, R., **The Debate on the English Reformation**, London 1986, 22-30, 89; Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 40-1 - Hudson notes Foxe's errors of chronology in a limited number of cases. See also Smart, S.J., "John Foxe and 'The Story of Richard Hun, Martyr'", **JEH** 37 (1986), 1-14.

82 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.

83 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.

**Salisbury, Reg. Audley**, 148r-148v.

84 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.

85 - Cf. Hudson's discussion of this case in **Reformation**, 465-6 where she notes that Moone's case is not recorded in the Register of Bishop Fox of Winchester despite the presence of records of other trials for heresy in that document.

86 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.



- 87 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.  
88 - **Foxe**, IV, 207.  
89 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.  
90 - Wyclif, J., **Triologus**, Oxford 1869, 149; **De Apostasia**, London 1889, 210.  
Leff, G., "Wyclif and Hus: A Doctrinal Comparison", in Kenny, A., ed., **Wyclif in His Times**, Oxford 1986, 117-8.  
91 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 466.  
**Winchester, Reg. Fox**, III, 73v-74r.  
**Foxe**, IV, 229.  
92 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.  
93 - **Foxe**, IV, 208.  
94 - The linking of antichrist and the limbs of antichrist was characteristically Lollard and was usually used as a device for denouncing the ills of the Church. Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 266, where attention is drawn particularly to: **Hereford, Reg. Trefnant**, 288-300, 353-7; **Foxe**, III, 597.  
95 - Christianson, P., **Reformers and Babylon: English Apocalyptic Visions from the Reformation to the Eve of the Civil War**, Toronto 1978 . Suggests that Bale was first of school of English apocalyptic. Evidence from Wyclif's own texts and those of his followers suggest this view is over-simple.  
96 - **Foxe**, V, 39-40.  
97 - Cf. Cross, C., **Church and People**, 51, 57.  
Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 479.  
98 - Strype, **Ecclesiastical Memorials**, Oxford 1822, I, ii, 52-61.  
Davis, J.F., **Heresy and the Reformation in the South East of England 1520-1559**, London 1983, 61.  
99 - **Foxe**, V, 39-40.  
100 - It should be noted that Coverdale was an Austin friar, as was Topley and another heretical friar from Clare, William Gardiner. Other notable members of the Order who espoused reform include Robert Barnes. It is not clear whether their was a network of dissent or heresy within the order particularly at Cambridge.  
101 - **Foxe**, 40.  
102 - Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", **JEH** 33 (1982), 227.  
Davis defines **evangelicalism** as a wide-spread European movement which embraced reform but not **solafideism**. Davis suggests that the Sir Arthur mentioned in the case of Tybal may be Thgomas Arthur, Cambridge contemporary of Coverdale, **Heresy and Reformation in the South East of England**, London 1983, 62. Hudson dismisses this on credible grounds, but the evidence either way is not strong. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 480.  
103 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.  
104 - **Foxe**, V, 41.  
105 - **Foxe**, V, 41. Abjuration is recorded for 1532 so their activities span a decade or so up to then.  
106 - Strype, **Ecclesiastical Memorials**, I, ii, 53; I, i, 117, 121-2.

Ward, J.C., "The Reformation in Colchester, 1528-1558", **Essex Archaeology and History**, 15 (1983), 84-95.

107 - Thomas Watts of Dogmersfield, Hampshire mentions Stilman in 1514. **Winchester Reg. Fox**, III, 73v-74.

Dogmersfield is not so distant from Stilman's original home in Reading tht he could not have visited there quite easily.

108 - **Foxe**, IV, 226.

109 - **Foxe**, IV, 208-14.

Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 449.

110 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 471 n. 143 quoting **Foxe**, IV, 208-9.

111 - **Foxe**, IV, 208-14; 234.

112 - **Foxe**, IV, 208-9, 210-11 - articles against Thomas Man.

Cf. Comments of Hudson, **Reformation**, 449.

113 - **Foxe**, IV, 235-8.

Also, with reservation noted by Hudson, **Reformation**, 463, PRO C85/115 no. 10 dated 18th August 1511.

114 - Probably a Wycliffite text in a tradition dating back to late Fourteenth Century where the commandments gave the opportunity for an attack upon the various imputed "idolatries" of the contemporary Church. Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 484; 484 n.226. It may not be coincidental that idolatry is one of the fundamental themes of the **Wicket**.

115 - **Wicket**, Blr 15-18. It should be noted that the word apparently spoken by Colins at his trial take the form of a series of direct quotations from the text of **Wickliefes Wicket** as it survives today. This demonstrates that at least the sections of the text quoted did not change between 1518 and their printing in 1546.

116 - **Wicket**, A6r 2-6.

117 - **Wicket**, A5r 25-29.

118 - Hudson has suggested that even such an apparently innocuous text as **Our Lady's Matins** could conceal heterodox material in the form of English translations of the Gospels and Epistles. In this context where English is specified in relation to this text and it occurs alongside St. John's Gospel and other Biblical material in the vernacular it is reasonable to conclude that this was an heterodox text lurking beneath an innocent sounding title. Cf.

Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 484.

119 - **The Prick of Conscience** - cf. British Library Harley 1731. Hudson discusses the **Prick**, **Reformation**, 485-6 and in particular the attempt to trace a Lollard interpolation of the usually orthodox work in view of the number of cases in which it appears.

Cf. Allen, H.E., **Writings Ascribed to Richard Rolle Hermit of Hampole and Materials for his Biography**, London 1927, 387-94; Lewis, R.E. and McIntosh, A., **A Descriptive Guide to the Manuscripts of the 'Prick of Conscience'**, **Medium AEvum Monograph**, 12, 1982.

120 - **Foxe**, IV, 235-8.

- 121 - **Foxe**, IV, 234-9.  
 122 - **Foxe**, J., **Op.cit.**, IV, 339.  
 123 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 464; basing herself on **Foxe**, IV, 238.  
 124 - **Foxe**, IV, 234-6, 238.  
 125 - Strype, J., **Ecclesiastical Memorials**, I, i, 123; MS Harley 421, 18v-35.  
 126 - **Foxe**, IV, 242.  
 127 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 464; based on **Foxe**, IV, 240; **Winchester Reg. Fox**, III, 73v-75v.  
 128 - Cf. **Foxe**, IV, 226, 234, 237, 239, 240.  
 129 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 464.  
**Foxe**, IV, 236. Davis devotes some attention to the geography of heterodoxy in London at this period and beyond: Davis, J.F., "Lollardy and the Reformation in England", **Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte**, 73 (1982), 217ff. Davis refers to MS Harley 421, 209r-212r.  
 130 - Strype, J., **Ecclesiastical Memorials**, I, i, 114, 126.  
 131 - The link is tentative but still cannot be ignored. Hacker knew the Colins family and probably came from the same locality as John Stilman. In Essex he knew John Pykas of Colchester who, as Hudson notes [**Reformation**, 479] moved in the same circles as John Tybal the converter of Richard Fox of Steeple Bumpstead and friend of the Johnsons of Boxted, all of whom are known to have owned or read the **Wicket**. In London it has been suggested that Hacker was instructed in heresy by Thomas Vincent, and that Vincent's father-in-law was Thomas Man who sought refuge with the Randalls at Rickmansworth. Cf. Davis, J.F., **Heresy and Reformation in the South East of England**, London 1983, 57. Hudson questions the evidence for this **Reformation**, 475.  
 For further interesting details of Lollardy in the Chilterns and Buckinghamshire, see Plumb, D., "The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy: A Reappraisal", **SCH** 23 (1986), 111ff.  
 132 - **Salisbury, Reg. Audley**, 163v. The suspects are noted to have all lived at "**Lockynge**", not far from Ginge. The proximity of Ginge, Locking and East Hendred, the location for earlier Lollard activity [cf. Aston, M., "Lollardy and Sedition 1381-1431" in **Lollards and Reformers**, 36 - 20,000 men were to gather at E. Hendred in revolt in 1431] suggests that there was a long tradition of Lollard heresy in these small communities reaching back to the early Fifteenth Century.  
 133 - **Foxe**, IV, 235-8.  
 134 - Other cases certainly exist, eg. that of John Tewkesbury, **Foxe**, IV, 688-94; MS Harley 241, 12v; Strype, J., **Ecclesiastical Memorials**, I, i, 116.  
 135 - **Foxe**, IV, 235-8.  
 136 - **Foxe**, IV, 238.  
 137 - **Winchester Reg. Fox**, III, 69v, 71r.  
 138 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 471.

- 139 - **Winchester Reg. Fox**, III, 69. Quoted by Hudson, **Reformation**, 468.
- 140 - Fines, J., "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, 1511-12", **JEH** 14 (1963), 160-74.
- 141 - **John** 6:51.
- 142 - **Wicket**, [A and B], Alr 1.
- 143 - Cf. **Wicket**, A5r 25 - A5v 18; B3v 19 - B4r 2; B4r 12 - B4v 28; B5r 5-15; B5r 19 - B5v 13.
- 144 - **Wicket**, A3r 15; quoting from **Matthew** 7:13.
- 145 - **Wicket**, A3r 17-18.
- 146 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 10.
- 147 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 208-217: outline of usual Wycliffite appeal to patristic authority.
- 148 - Cf. **Wicket**, A3v 2-26; A4v 9-33.
- 149 - **Wicket**, A5r 11 - A5v 4; A5v 13-18.
- 150 - **Wicket**, A5v 15-18.
- 151 - **Wicket**, A5r 3.
- 152 - **Wicket**, A5r 5-11.
- 153 - Mansi, J.D., **Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio**, revised Petit and Martin, Lyons, 1899-1927, XXII, 982.
- 154 - **Daniel** 11:31-19 - **Wicket**, A3v29 - A4r31.
- 155 - **Wicket**, A4v 1-3.
- 156 - **Winchester, Reg. Courtney** 26r; **Salisbury Reg. Langton** II 35-41v; **Salisbury Reg. Audley**, 134v.
- 157 - **Foxe**, IV, 234.
- 158 - **Foxe**, III, 597.

These prophecies might be compared with those of John Latham, a prophet apprehended during the course of enquiries into the activities of John Lassels and his associates in London during 1546. Latham had been in trouble with the authorities for his prophecies since 1531. Cf. **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 1013; 1027. Latham's prophecies have been discussed by Jansen, who relates them to the Merlin tradition, but it is not clear that they do not owe something to this Lollard tradition. Cf. Jansen, S.L., **Political Protest and Prophecy under Henry VIII**, Woodbridge, 1991, 28, 38, 54.

- 159 - **But for bicause that euey man can not haue the boke of Daniel to knowe what his prophesy is. Loo his words....**

**Wicket**, A3v 26-29.

- 160 - **Wicket**, A5v 21-25.

- 161 - **Foxe**, III, 235.

Compare the words of Askew when interrogated by the Lord Mayor of London. Bale, J., **The fyrst examinacyon**, Wesel 1546, Alv, A2r.

- 162 - Cf. Mansi, J.D., **Op.cit.**, XXII, 982 - Fourth Lateran Council, 1215.

- 163 - **Wicket**, A5v 27-29.

- 164 - **Wicket**, A6r 2-4.

- 165 - **Wicket**, A6r 5-9.

- 166 - **Wicket**, A7r 28; A7v 15; A8v 13-20; B1r 12-29; B3v 5-7.

- 167 - Cf. Fines, J., "Heresy Trials" in **JEH**, 14 (1963), 145-60. Lichfield B/C/13.1

- 168 - **Wicket**, A6v 2-15.  
 169 - **Wicket**, A6r 3-4; 10-12.  
 170 - **Wicket**, A6v 15-16.  
 171 - **Wicket**, A6v 17-21, quoting **Matthew** 15:17.  
 172 - When questioned on her eucharistic beliefs in 1541 Anne Askew spoke of the empirical observation of bread mouldering in a closed pix. Cf. Bale, J., **The fyrst examinacyon**, A2r.  
 173 - **Wicket**, A6v 21-23.  
 174 - **Wicket**, A7r 6-10.  
 175 - **Wicket**, A7r 20-21.  
 176 - **Wicket**, A7r 27-33.  
 177 - **Wicket**, A7r 33 - A7v 9.  
 178 - **Wicket**, A7r 14.  
 179 - **Wicket**, A7v 19-20.  
 180 - **Wicket**, A7v 20.  
 181 - **Wicket**, A7v 23 - A8r 2. This is one of the passages which Richard Colins of Ginge recited at his trial in 1521. **Foxe**, IV, 234-8.  
 182 - **Wicket**, A8r 2-8.  
 183 - **Wicket**, A8r 8-15.  
 184 - **Wicket**, A8r 15-25.  
 185 - For the former view, no longer tenable, Cf. Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 2.

Literacy among the Lollards has been stressed in recent research. In particular see the work of Aston, M., "Lollardy and Literacy" in **Lollards and Reformers**, 193-218. Hudson stresses the importance of both literacy and education in the Lollard movement: cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 180-227; 511-14.

The evidence of trials such as that of Richard Colins [**Foxe**, IV, 234-8] shows a high level of literacy where it might not otherwise be expected. On the other hand denials of literacy in trial suspects cannot always be taken as true: a plea of illiteracy could be a valuable defence. Hudson, **Reformation**, 374.

Cf. Moran, J.A.H., **The Growth of English Schooling 1340-1548**, Princeton 1985, 19-20, 172ff.

- 186 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 34.  
 187 - **Wicket**, A8v 7-9. Cf. Hudson, A., "The Mouse in the Pyx: Popular Heresy and the Eucharist", **Trivium** 26 (1991) 42-3.  
 188 - **Wicket**, A8r 25 - A8v 1. Cf. Hudson, "The Mouse in the Pyx", **Trivium** 26 (1991), 43 - quoting Salisbury, Rg. **Langton** ii.f.42 (suspect from 1491 - further evidence that views expressed in the **Wicket** were current in the Salisbury diocese in the late Fifteenth Century).  
 189 - **Wicket**, A8v 9-20.  
 190 - **Wicket**, A8v 9-20.  
 191 - **Wicket**, B1r 18-19.  
 192 - **Wicket**, B1r 20-21.  
 193 - **Wicket**, B1r 28-29.  
 194 - Cf. **Middle English Dictionary** for definition.

The term would have been somewhat old-fashioned by 1546. **Crafte** is used again in the same context,

**Wicket**, B1v 17.

- 195 - **Wicket**, B1r 30 - B1v 3.

- 196 - **Wicket**, Blv 19ff.
- 197 - **Wicket**, Blv 9-15.
- 198 - **Coniured** carriages with it the same implications as **Crafte** above, and is clearly intended as a derogatory term. Cf. **MED**.
- 199 - **Wicket**, Blv 28 - B2r 6.
- 200 - Although Utraquism does not feature in the **Wicket**, Nicholas Shaxton endorsed it in the Thirteen Articles in which he confessed his heresy on 9th July 1546. **Guildhall Library, Reg. Tunstal, 9531/10, 108r-109r**. Also **Letters and Papers 21.1, 1244**. Hudson has discussed the absence of Utraquism from Lollard thought but appears to enjoin caution in dismissing the possibility too lightly. Cf. Hudson, **A., Reformation, 289**.
- 201 - **Wicket**, Blv 25-28.
- 202 - **Wicket**, B2r 9-14.
- 203 - **Wicket**, B2r 21-22.
- 204 - **Wicket**, B2r 24-30.
- Thomas More used this argument against Frith as can be seen from Frith's reply: cf. Frith, J., **Answer unto M. More's Letter** in Wright, Frith, 58, 401-2.
- 205 - **Wicket**, B2r 24ff.
- 206 - **Wicket**, B2v 15-22.
- 207 - **Wicket**, B2v 25-29.
- 208 - For example, see discussion in: **De Apostasia**, London 1889, 129; **De Eucharistia**, London 1892, 14, 63, 284; **Dialogus**, Oxford 1869, 261, 263, 269 - all concerning the inherent tendency to idolatry of transubstantiation as taught by the Church. On its potential blasphemy in associating Christ with a corruptible substance, cf. **De Eucharistia**, 11-13; **Dialogus**, 272.
- 209 - **Wicket**, B3r 3-27.
- 210 - **Wicket**, B3v 9-22.
- 211 - **Wicket**, B3r 5-7.
- 212 - **Wicket**, B2v 11-13. Cf. Hudson, "The Mouse in the Pyx", **Trivium 26 (1991)**, 48-50.
- 213 - Cf. Hudson's comment, **Reformation, 289**.
- 214 - **De Eucharistia**, 34, 37, 38. The parallel is very close and it seems reasonable to suppose that this was the author's source.
- 215 - Augustine, **Decret. III De consecratione**, dist. II, 108.
- 216 - The surprising absence of patristic quotations in the **Wicket** has been noted above. It was also noted that the majority of the scriptural quotations were acknowledged in the printed text which suggests that patristic quotations if present would also be acknowledged. The present passage [**Wicket B3r 5ff**] outlining the author's memorialist interpretation of the sacrament is the only obvious possible unacknowledged patristic quotation. The memorialistic theme is possibly derived from Fulgentius of Ruspe, **Liber De Fide**. [cf. Works in Migne, Vol. 65]
- 217 **Wicket**, B4r 12ff.
- 218 - **Wicket**, B4r 17-31.
- 219 - **Wicket**, B5r 1-4.

- 220 - **Wicket**, B4v 21-24.
- 221 - Vine - **Wicket**, B5r 4-15; Temple - **Wicket**, 15-23.
- 222 - **Wicket**, B5r 4-15.
- 223 - **Wicket**, B5r 30 - B5v 11.
- 224 - Cf. Keen, M., "Wyclif, the Bible and Transubstantiation" in Kenny, A., ed., **Wyclif**, 14-15.
- 225 - Keen, M., "Wyclif, The Bible and Transubstantiation" in **Wyclif**, 15.
- Cf. **Fasciculi Zizaniorum**, ed. Shirley, W.W., London 1858, 122.
- 226 - **Wicket**, B4v 2-8.
- 227 - **Wicket**, B4v 1-2.
- 228 - **Wicket**, A7r 27 - A7v 14; A8v 20 - B1r 12; B2r 15-20.
- 229 - Cf. Hudson, **Reformation**, 289. Notes of the distinctive features of the **Wicket**.
- 230 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 289.
- 231 - Davis, J.F., "Lollardy and the Reformation in England", in **ARG 73**, 219, quoting **PRO State Papers**, 1, 113, xi, fo. 108v.
- 232 - Cf. **Wicket**, A7v 7.
- 233 - **Lambeth, Reg. Morton**, I, 104r; 194.
- 234 - Cf. **Wicket**, A5r 9ff; 22-23; A5v 3-13.
- 235 - **Lambeth, Reg. Morton**, I, 104r.
- 236 - Strype, J., **Ecclesiastical Memorials**, I, i, 130; Harley 421, 24.
- Compare with **Wicket**, A5v 1-2: "For he & hys worde is all one and they may not be seperated, and yf the worde of him be the lyfe of the worlde..."
- 237 - Wyclif, J., **De veritate sacre scripture**, ii 170/20. This point is made by Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 472.
- 238 - Cf. **Lichfield Reg. Blythe**, 98rff.
- 239 - It may alternatively be due to the way in which the cases were recorded by the officials in the court. Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 34.
- 240 - cf. Fines, J., "Heresy Trials ", in **JEH 14**, 161-2.
- 241 - Fines, J., **JEH 14**, 163ff.
- 242 - **Lichfield B/C13**, 2r, 2v.
- 243 - Cases quoted by Fines, J., **JEH 14**, 164-70.
- Compare these statements with **Wicket**, A8r 25 - A8v 4; B2v 12; B3v 17-20; A6r 4-9.
- 244 - For a description of Lollard schools cf. Hudson, **Reformation**, 174-200.
- 245 - Cf. Introduction to **English Wycliffite Sermons**, I, ed. Hudson, A., Oxford 1983. However note Hudson's comments, **Reformation**, 184-5 on **BL Egerton 2820**, printed in **Selections from English Wycliffite Writings**, no. 18/100-15. This text would take between four and five hours to deliver, but is quite clearly a single sermon and shares a number of characteristic with the **Wicket** including its slightly chaotic construction. The possibility that the **Wicket** was originally a sermon thus cannot be ruled out, but it is perhaps fair to comment that it is closer to a lecture than what is now understood as a sermon.

- 246 - **Wicket**, A3r 20 - A3v 1; B5v 13-30. It is possible that both invocations may be later additions, especially the earlier one which makes use of the late word **Papistes** [line 25]. Cf. **Middle English Dictionary**.
- 247 - Richard and Alice Johnson of Boxted, **Foxe**, V, 41; Andrew and Marian Randal of Rickmansworth, **Foxe**, IV, 226; Colins family, Ginge, **Foxe**, IV, 235-8.
- 248 - **Foxe**, V, 39-40.
- 249 - Cf. **Wicket**, A6r 10; A6r 13; A7r 28; A7v 15; A8r 15; B2v 21.
- 250 - **Foxe**, IV, 234-8.
- 251 - **Foxe**, IV, 238.
- 252 - **Foxe**, IV, 238; **PRO** C85/115 no. 10.
- 253 - **Foxe**, IV, 226.
- 254 - **Foxe**, V, 39-40.
- 255 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.
- 256 - The Randalls harboured Thomas Man at Rickmansworth and the Johnsons were probably associated with John Hacker through John Tybal and Thomas Pykas.
- 257 - John Stilman seems to have moved about north Hampshire and finally to London; Alice Colins spoke at Burford; the Johnsons moved for the Salisbury diocese to Boxted in Essex.
- 258 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.
- 259 - Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 183; 193-4.
- 260 - This observation is made by Hudson, **Reformation**, 122-3.
- 261 - Cf. Thomson, J.A.F., *The Transformation of Medieval England 1370-1529*, London and New York 1983, 408 - Map 1 showing probable line of major roads in the late mediaeval period.
- 262 - Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 122 for a list of instances of heresy detected at Bristol spanning the years 1408-1500. Detailed investigation might reveal direct parallels between testimony and text. Also Thomson, J.A.F., **The Later Lollards**, 20-21.
- 263 - **Foxe**, IV, 207-8.
- 264 - Hudson draws attention to Bale's contention that William Grocyn had written a text against the **Wicket**. This would clearly place the date of composition prior to 1510. Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 452; Bale, J., **Catalogus**, 707, **Index**, 126; Burrow, M., "Linacre's Catalogue of Grocyn's Books, followed by a Memoir of Grocyn", **Collectanea** 2, Oxford Historical Soc. 16, 1890, 365-6.
- 265 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 42; Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 5, 10.



**Introduction to the Protestacion of John Lassels,  
1546.**

The burning of John Lassels, a gentleman of the royal household, at Smithfield on July 16th, 1546 <sup>1</sup> provides a brief and confused episode in that sorry catalogue of religious persecution and suffering. Foxe allows the more sensational case of Anne Askew, a gentlewoman burnt alongside Lassels to dominate his narrative. Foxe's information with regard to those who suffered with Askew and Lassels named in his account as Nicholas Belenian, a priest from Shropshire, and John Adams, a London tailor, is inaccurate. Contemporary documents, including the eye-witness account of the execution by John Louthe <sup>2</sup> provide rather more substantial information. Here the victims are named as a priest called Hemmysley whom the **Chronicle of the Greyfriars of London** describes as an "**Observand freere of Richemond**" <sup>3</sup> and a tailor called Hadlam from "**Colchester or thereabouts**" <sup>4</sup>. This evidence is supported by Wriothesley in his **Chronicle**.

Many contemporaries seem to have shared Foxe's pre-occupation with Anne Askew. Her case was fuel to gossip and scandal: a wealthy and socially privileged woman had left her husband in order to preach her own message up and down the country. Many appear to have suspected that her morals were lax, and in the days leading up to her execution it was rumoured in London that she had been tortured on the rack in the Tower

without the various legal consents from the Council. A letter written by the London merchant Otwell Johnson to his brother at Calais on 2nd July 1546 shows something of the interest and sensation the case was causing in the City <sup>5</sup>. Askew wrote her own colourful and highly readable account of her ordeals which within months of her death had been printed under the supervision of that able controversialist John Bale <sup>6</sup>. Askew had found a champion in Bale, but John Lassels was not so fortunate. His theologically fascinating but somewhat less racy account of the faith for which he died was printed in the second edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** under the supervision of Miles Coverdale in two versions in 1548 and 1550 <sup>7</sup>. It was from **Wickliefes Wicket** that Foxe derived the version of the **Protestacion** which was printed in the **Acts and Monuments** <sup>8</sup>. After this, obscurity descended upon Lassels and he is rarely mentioned by later historians except in the course of their discussion of Anne Askew. It is indeed ironic that such a controversial case concerning a man who played a crucial political role in the development of the English Reformation should have ended in such obscurity.

It is clear from the start that the cases of John Lassels and Anne Askew are linked, and it will be necessary to examine the beliefs of one in order to elucidate the teaching of the other <sup>9</sup>. Some clues as to the origins of John Lassels' later heresy may be

found in his early life. The family is described by the **Greyfriars Chronicle** as "A ryght worshipfull house of gateforde in Nottinghamshire ny Worsoppe" <sup>10</sup>. The Lassels held estates at Gateford in the parish of Worksop, a town dominated by the holdings of the Duke of Norfolk, and at Sturton, some ten miles east of Worksop. Presumably with a view to completing his education and developing a career in the service of the Crown John Lassels moved to London in the late 1530s where he became a gentleman of Furnivall's Inn <sup>11</sup> and a sewar in the King's Chamber <sup>12</sup>. The Askew family seems in many respects to have been similar to the Lassels: a gentle family with aspirations of bettering its fortune. The Askews had their principal seat at Stallingborough on the Lincolnshire coast, but their other estate, occupied by Anne's brother, was at South Kelsey, some fifteen or twenty miles north-east of the Lassels' estate at Sturton. Professor Dickens has raised the interesting possibility that Lassels and Askew may have been acquainted before either of them came to London <sup>13</sup>. Although the distance between the family homes might seem to present a considerable obstacle given the state of mid-sixteenth century rural communications, it remains true that in an age more accustomed to local solidarity, once in London Lassels and Askew would have felt bound by an essentially common background.

Professor Dickens also draws attention to the existence at Worksop of an apparently flourishing Lollard group during the 1530s <sup>14</sup>. He does not go on to associate Lassels with this group, but an examination of their respective theological positions makes this possible. Two cases recorded in the Registers of Archbishop Lee of York provide striking echoes of the theology which Lassels was to develop in his *Protestacion* some thirteen years later <sup>15</sup>. In the first case Lambert Sparrow, "ootherwise called Lambert Hooke" is accused of eucharistic heresy. Specifically he is said to have denied that the eucharistic bread is the substantial body of Christ unless it is received with faith in the name of Christ. He expresses anti-clerical and anti-ecclesiastical views which developed into a specific attack upon the sacrament of penance. The terms of his abjuration suggest that he had not kept his views to himself, but had been busy spreading heretical belief throughout the parish of Worksop. There is an interesting hint here that the ecclesiastical authorities feared that a larger group was at work in the area. Sparrow was thus required to swear:

Ne that I woll herafter use, rede, teache,  
kepe, bye or sell any bokes, volumes or  
queares or any workes called Luther's or  
anye odre mannes bookes of hys hereticall  
secte or of any oodre, conteighneng heresy

in them or prohybyted by the lawes of holy  
churche, nebe conuersante or familier  
wytttingly with any person or persons  
suspecte or deffaymyd of heresy. 16

The Archiepiscopal Court appears to have been somewhat confused as to the source of Sparrow's views, and if they thought them to be derived from Luther they were almost certainly mistaken <sup>17</sup>. They seem to have been better advised when they prohibited Sparrow from consorting with others suspected of heresy, for the following year, 1534, another Worksop case appears in the archiepiscopal Register. This is for Gyles Vanbellaer, described as a "douchman" from Worksop. His opinions follow closely those condemned in Sparrow the previous year: he denied that the priest had any authority to consecrate "the very body of Christ as he was here reynyng in yerth"<sup>18</sup>, denied the power of priests to absolve the penitent, alleged that all Christians might baptize and finally attacked tithes and the whole structure of the institutional Church. The abjuration which Vanbellaer was forced to sign repeats the conditions imposed upon Sparrow. As Dickens comments, the views of these Worksop Lollards closely reflect those of the Essex Lollards detected in the *Magna Abjurata* of 1528 <sup>19</sup>; it is possible, as Dickens suggests, that these "Douchmen" or foreigners learned their heresy in the South East <sup>20</sup>. It is not clear how or indeed when these men of foreign origin

came to Worksop, but given their antecedents it might be tempting to look for a background in the anabaptist movement or in Zwingli's theology. Professor Dickens acknowledges such a possibility but his detailed comparison of doctrinal positions remains convincing in its conclusion that these men had far more in common with the English Lollards than they did with any one Continental Reformer <sup>21</sup>. Such "radical" elements as emerge from the answers of these suspects might be accounted for by a link with the Christian Brethren, which, as John Davis has noted, developed an eclectic theology in the mid-Sixteenth Century which blended native Wycliffite thought with more radical elements from the Continent <sup>22</sup>. In view of the clear parallels between the eucharistic theology of these two Worksop Lollards and that developed by John Lassels in the **Protestacion**, together with the fact that Lassels was himself accused of promoting the radical theology of Carlstadt <sup>23</sup>, it seems reasonable to suppose that Lassels came to London well-versed in a Wycliffite heresy tinged with radical tendencies. The existence of a Lollard cell within his home parish which promoted views so similar to those for which he was later to die cannot be mere coincidence.

When the **Protestacion** is examined, it is immediately apparent that Lassels is a lay theologian of more than average competence. His theology is in many respects similar to that expounded so vigorously

by Anne Askew, but his means of expression are more intellectual. It would be misleading to compare the style of Askew's *Examinacyon* <sup>24</sup> with Lassels' *Protestacion*; the circumstances in which these works were written and edited were very different <sup>25</sup>. The correct counterpart to the *Protestacion* is Askew's *Confession* <sup>26</sup>, but even here the contrast between the two authors is pronounced. Throughout the "more solid intellectual attainments" <sup>27</sup> of Lassels are evident. Lassels is keen to reject the contemporary doctrine of transubstantiation, but unlike Askew, he does not base his objections upon the physical observation of mouldering bread <sup>28</sup>. Lassels bases his theology on scripture to which he constantly refers for authority, but his biblicism is tempered by other elements. Scripture is interpreted and eucharistic doctrine is developed from an understanding of the practice of the Early Church. The mass in its present form is thus seen as an invention of the Church in the city of Rome:

As ... ye moost innocent and immaculate body and bloude of Christ is the q[u]yetnes of all mens consciences, and the onely remedy of our synnes, and the whole redemption of mankynd, which is called in the scripture the dayly offeringe: so the masse which is the inuention of men, whose author is the pope of Rome, .... The masse I saye is the

vnquitnes of all Christendom, a blasphemy to  
Christes bloud and a shame to all chrysten  
prynces. And as Daniell calleth it the  
abhominable dissolacion ... 29

Lassels believes that:

Saynt Paule ... was to lerne of the  
Romaynes church the maner of ye  
consecracion (as they call it) wyth the  
breathyng over the hoste and other  
ceremonyes, besydes that he durst not take  
vppon hym to saye Hoc est corpus meum. 30

It is Lassels' intention to arrive at a  
biblically authentic doctrine of the eucharist:  
anything which adds to or subtracts from the  
scriptural account of the eucharist as practiced by  
the Early Church is to be dispensed with.

Now for ye supper of the Lorde I do proteste  
to take it as reuerently as Chryst left it,  
and as the holy Apostles dyd vse it  
accordyng to the testimonyes of the  
prophetes, the Apostles and our blessed  
Sauour Iesus Chryst ... 31

Lassels' emphasis on the Pauline teaching with  
regard to the eucharist comes close to Wyclif's own  
treatment of that subject in *De Eucharistia* 32, and  
indeed the three criteria by which Lassels judges the



practice and doctrine of the contemporary Church could be those of Wyclif himself: scripture, the Early Church and reason <sup>33</sup>. Lassels lacks something of Wyclif's philosophical sophistication, but it should be remembered that the **Protestacion** and Wyclif's treatises belong to essentially different **genres**.

Lassels' eucharistic theology is strikingly Christocentric. It is Christ who accomplishes the redemption of mankind through a process which is seen in terms of the sacrifice of the perfect being, Christ, for the imperfection of mankind <sup>34</sup>. This sacrifice of Christ upon the cross not only atones for the sinfulness of man, but makes man acceptable to God. Christ alone has performed the unique act of our salvation:

Now yf anye man be able to fynyshe the acte of oure saluacion not onely in breakynge of his body and in shedyng of hys bloude here, but also to fynysh it wyth the father in heauen then let hym saye it. But...[if men study St. Paul they will say with him]...The Lorde Iesus sayde it and ones for all, whyche onely was the fulfiller of it. <sup>35</sup>

Christ has "made an ende of the onely acte of oure saluacyon not onelye here in thys worlde, but wyth hys father in heauen" <sup>36</sup>. It follows from this Christology that Lassels' view of the eucharist will

differ significantly from that taught by the contemporary Church. Because Christ has already accomplished the salvation of man, through his death upon the cross, the rite of the eucharist cannot itself add or subtract anything from the eternal fate of the individual: the hearing of mass can no longer be seen as a meritorious act; the celebration of masses for the souls of the departed avails them nothing. There can be no repetition of the sacrifice of Christ in the mass, and the priest does not offer the sacrificial victim or host to propitiate God on behalf of his flock. Whereas in much contemporary eucharistic theology the priest was seen to be standing in loco Christi at the mass, Lassels sees him as a minister, a servant who occupies a position totally subordinate to Christ:

The minister hath no further authoritye then  
to preache and pronounce the lordes death,  
or els to say, the Lorde Iesu sayd it. Which  
dyd fulfyll it euen on the crosse. <sup>37</sup>

In words which strongly echo Wicklieffes Wicket, Lassels says that the minister has no authority to do more than preach and show forth Christ's death <sup>38</sup>.

For Lassels the eucharist is a re-enactment of the historical event of the Lord's Supper rather than the propitiatory sacrifice upon the cross. The eucharist serves as a memorial, a reminder or

signification of Christ's act of redemption, begun at the Supper and completed on the cross. At the same time it must be noted that Lassels' doctrine is not simply memorialistic: he has a developed sense of the real presence which depends upon the faith of the individual:

I do stedfastly beleue that when the bread is broken accordyng to the ordinances of Christ the blissed and immaculate lambe is present with the eyes of oure fayth and we eate his fleshe and dryncke hys bloude whych is to dwel with god and god with vs, and in this we are sure which dwell with god in that he hath geuen vs his holy spirite.

39

Those who have true faith will discern in the broken elements the spiritual presence of the body of Christ. Just as the apostles recognised Christ for the Messiah when he sat at Supper with them and broke bread, so now in the celebration of the Lord's Supper Christ is present for the faithful. Thus they are spiritually sustained and drawn into the very presence of God. Lassels demonstrates the logical necessity of his doctrine by reference to the example of Judas, who received the bread at the first eucharist, but through lack of faith received it to his own damnation:

The example is manifest in Iudas which at Christes handes receyued the bread and wyne, and for lacke of beleue (whyche maketh the presence of Chryste) the deuell entred into Iudas all though he receyued the same wyne and breade that the other Apostles dyd. 40

Lassels' doctrine of the eucharist naturally predicates a developed understanding of predestination which is further coupled with a distinct and individual ecclesiology. In many respects Lassels seems to follow Wyclif in both areas, and confirmation of this may be found in the remark made by Lassels and reported by Louthe 41; after his trial before the Bishop of London Lassels said, "My lorde byshoppe wold haue me confesse the Romane Church to be the Catholycke Church, but that I cannot, for yt ys not trew" 42. Within the context of Lassels' theology, this remark may be taken to suggest that its author followed Wyclif in believing that the eternally reprobate and the eternally predestined co-existed together within the visible Church. The pope and the hierarchy may or may not be destined to salvation; the only clue as to this is to be found in their moral conduct 43. Lassels draws a distinction (previously drawn by Wyclif and later Wycliffite writers) between the local, visible church militant and the Catholic Church which comprehends all the elect 44. Such a view was not unique to Wycliffites, and Lassels could have

derived it from a study of authors such as Ockham or Marsilius of Padua <sup>45</sup>. On balance, however, it seems more likely that Lassels reached his views through the mediation of Wyclif and subsequent Wycliffite writers <sup>46</sup>. Much the same may be said of Lassels' eucharistic doctrine which at first sight appears to have much in common with Oecolampadius and Zwingli; but while Lassels may have been exposed to these influences through reading the later works of John Frith <sup>47</sup>, it remains true that he could have derived the entire foundation and much of the substance of his thought from English Wycliffite sources. In the case of Anne Askew, the "rough and ready" style of her theology and its lack of sophistication suggest that that she had little or no first-hand experience of Continental Reformed theology<sup>48</sup> . With the work of Lassels, however, its evident structure, his firm grasp of the connection between theology and ecclesiastical practice, the tempering of Wycliffite biblicism with a more sophisticated appeal to ecclesiastical history and his general air of erudition suggest that he may have read and made a serious attempt to assimilate the theology of the Continental Protestants, possibly as mediated to English readers by John Frith. The research of John Davis into the trade in Continental theological printed texts at this period among the so-called Christian Brethren suggests that it would not have been impossible for a man based in London to gain access to a wide range of foreign printed works <sup>49</sup>.

An example of Lassels' attempt to develop upon traditional Wycliffite theology is found in his treatment of what he regards as the idolatry of the mass. It is unfortunate that Lassels was unable to complete this section of the **Protestacion** "for lack of tyme" <sup>50</sup>, but by following the scriptural references which he appends it is clear that he intended to endorse the point made by Wyclif in **De Eucharistia**: that the doctrine of transubstantiation and the celebration of the mass in the contemporary Church was the great Idol, the **Abomination of Desolation** of which the Bible had forewarned <sup>51</sup>. Furthermore Lassels wished to stress that this turning away from the true worship of God is part of the divine plan for mankind: true worship will be preserved by a remnant. This theme is the same as that developed by Coverdale in the Preface to **Wickliefes Wicket** and is the traditional Wycliffite understanding of the eternal Church, the **congregatio predestinatorum** in a slightly modified form <sup>52</sup>.

It seems reasonable to conclude that Lassels' theology was Wycliffite in inspiration, but his articulation makes it frequently difficult to identify the precise origins of the theories he advances. Lassels and his associates seem to have more in common with the English Lollards than with any Continental Reformer, but to gain further insight into the problem of inspiration, it is necessary to focus attention

upon Lassels' associates who made up his circle in London in the 1540s.

It is difficult to establish the precise limits of Lassels' associations in London. There can be no doubt, however, that he was associated with Anne Askew, who was also the only other member of this group of suspects to leave a substantial written account of her beliefs <sup>53</sup>. It is perhaps because of this that Askew, rather than Lassels has often been seen as the leader of the heretical group uncovered in London in May 1546. Professor Dickens is the first person seriously to challenge this myth first advanced by Robert Parsons in 1604 in defiance of the first-hand evidence of John Bale <sup>54</sup>. Parsons held that Askew was the "Captayne of all" <sup>55</sup> and that Lassels and his fellows were merely "all schollers and disciples of this yong mistresse" <sup>56</sup>. The style in which Parsons writes, and the conclusions which he draws indicate that his purpose is to render Askew's male associates ridiculous in the eyes of his contemporaries by purporting to show that they mindlessly followed the ravings of a loose-living woman who had left her husband "to gad vp and downe the countrey a ghospelling and ghossipinge where she might, and ought not" <sup>57</sup>:

Lo, what the persuasion and example of a  
woman could do, to draw them [her male  
associates] to this vayne glory of dyinge,

for defence of their particular opinions!

58

Askew had been judged to be an heretic by the authority of the Church, and therefore Parsons seems to believe that nothing is too terrible or odious to say of her <sup>59</sup>. The presence of a woman in an heretical group suggested to the Sixteenth Century mind that the trouble and discord was somehow inevitably all her doing, just as mankind had fallen through the weakness of Eve. Parsons is undoubtedly an hostile witness, and his words may provide a more interesting insight into the prejudices of a late Sixteenth Century Jesuit than into the actual events of 1546. Thus Parsons' attribution of leadership to Askew should not be accepted without question.

John Bale was perhaps an equally partial witness, his purpose being to lay the blame for Anne Askew's appalling treatment at the feet of the pope and those whom he saw as the pope's servants in England <sup>60</sup>. Bale never goes so far as to attribute leadership of the heretical group to Askew. Rather he refers to Lassels as "a gentleman which had been her instructor" <sup>61</sup>. A simple comparison between Lassels' Protestacion and the record of Askew's answers under interrogation reveals both the basic similarity of doctrine and the great intellectual differences between them. Askew's answers are full of evasion, impertinence and counter-questions for her examiners. The whole process must



have been exasperating for the authorities, and Parsons was probably not far from the truth when he wrote of her that:

The proud and presumptuous answers, quips, and nips which she gaue both in matter of Religion, and otherwise to the Kings Councell, and Bishops, when they examined her, and dealt with her seriously for her amendment: do well shew her intollerable arrogancy. 62

Asked by her examiner to expound a portion of the acts of the Apostles which she herself had introduced into the discussion, she refused, saying that "I wolde not throwe pearles amonge swyne, for acornes were good ynough" 63. In response to the question of whether the "sacrament hangyne ouer the aultare was the verye bodye of Christ reallye" she retorted:

Wherfore [was] S. Steuen ... stoned to death? And he [her examiner] sayd, he coulde not tell. Then I aunswered, that no more wolde I assoyle hys vayne questyon. 64

Of her precise eucharistic doctrine it is difficult to be certain. Her evasion and silence render the burden of her belief uncertain, and the examining authorities seem to have been puzzled by what they found. Most of their questions are designed to ensnare a Lollard, but others aim to detect more

radical opinions <sup>65</sup>. With regard specifically to the eucharist Askew consistently protests that she has not denied the real presence of Christ's body in the sacrament. It is clear however that she follows the traditional Wycliffite belief that the accidents of bread and wine cannot be preserved without their substances: she believed that she received the body and blood of Christ through "faythe" <sup>66</sup>:

Without faythe and sprete, I can not receyue  
hym worthelye. <sup>67</sup>

Askew does not demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the philosophical background to transubstantiation. Hers is an almost emotional reaction, very much akin to that of the Lollards. Asked if she would deny that the consecrated bread and wine were Christ's physical body and blood, she replied:

Yea: for the same Son of God that was born  
of the Virgin Mary, is now glorious in  
heaven, and will come again from thence at  
the latter day like as he went up. And as  
for that ye call your God, it is a piece of  
bread. For a more proof therof (mark it when  
you list) let it but lie in the box [ie. pix  
or aumbrey] three months, and it will be  
mouldy, and so turn to nothing good,

whereupon I am persuaded that it cannot be  
God. 68

This reaction against her perception of the doctrine of the Roman Church is strikingly similar to many instances found among the later Wycliffites. Many of the cases quoted by John Fines in his examination of the heresy cases at Coventry in 1511-12 show precisely this attitude to eucharistic teaching 69. Professor Dickens has characterized this kind of objection as that of the "sceptical materialist" 70, and has observed that it is typical of the less sophisticated theologian. Such views are encountered in Wycliffite literature with some frequency: Askew's views are a close echo of the teaching of **Wickliefes Wicket** 71.

The doctrines of the **Wicket** find further echo in Askew's **Confession** signed before her execution. Here it is possible to see that the basis of her theology is a thorough-going biblicism, very much in the traditional Wycliffite mould 72:

I find in the scripture, that Christ took  
the bread and gave it to his disciples,  
saying, Take eat, this is my body which  
shalbe broken for you; meaning in substance,  
his own very body, the bread being therof an  
only sign or sacrament. For after like maner  
of speaking, he said he would break down the

temple, and in three days build it up again, signifying his own body by the temple as S. John declareth it, and not the stony temple itself. So that the bread is but a remembrance of his death, or a sacrament of thanksgiving for it, wherby we are knit unto him by a communion of Christen love. <sup>73</sup>

Biblicism leads Askew to reject the efficacy of masses for the dead <sup>74</sup> and the practice of eucharistic reservation. For her the mass accomplishes nothing more than the proclamation of Christ's single and unique act of redemption and salvation<sup>75</sup>.

Askew emerges as a competent theologian, but by no means a brilliant or original thinker. Her theology is not of a calibre to be expected of a leader of an heretical group in London. She was committed, and probably charismatic, but the answers she claims to have given her examiners do not show her as a reformer of the first rank. There are some similarities between Askew and the extraordinary Joan Butcher, better known as Joan of Kent, but on the available evidence it is difficult to assign to Askew a role in mid-Sixteenth Century reform as dynamic as that occupied by Joan <sup>76</sup>. Resolute, an encouragement in the face of adversity, these things Askew may have been; but she does not seem to have the make-up of a group leader. Parsons' claim that Askew was the leader of the group uncovered in 1546 can be set aside with safety.

It is not clear how many other people were involved with Lassels and Askew in heretical activity in London in 1546. The **Chronicle of the Greyfriars of London** provides valuable information concerning the execution of Lassels and Askew and also identifies further parties to their case. Among those who suffered "for grett herryssy" were:

Hemmysley a prest, whyche was an observand freere of Richmond; Anne Askew, otherwyse callyd Kyme by hare husband; John Lassellys, a gentyلمان of Furnivalles Inne; and a taylor of Colchester. And Nicolas Schaxton some tyme byshopp of Salsbery was one of the same company, and was in Newgat and had juggement with them; Blacke, gentyلمان; and Christopher Whytt, of the inner tempull; these iii. had their pardon. And Schaxtone preched at their burnynge, and there sath on a scaffold that was made for the nonse the lorde chaunceler with the dewke of Norfolke and other of the counsell. <sup>77</sup>

John Louthe records that the other suspects who had been pardoned included Sir George Blagge, a gentleman of the King's Chamber<sup>78</sup>. He would correspond to the Blacke mentioned by the Greyfriars Chronicler, and would have been an associate of John Lassels' in the Royal Household. Wriothsesley's

**Chronicle** states that Blagge was arraigned with Bishop Shaxton and John Hemsley the Observant friar on 12th July 1546 <sup>79</sup>. Blagge denied having spoken heresy of the mass at a sermon delivered by Dr. Crome at Paul's Cross in May 1546 <sup>80</sup>. Foxe suggests that Blagge's apprehension owed more to the political intrigues of the Lord Chancellor, Thomas Wriothesley, than to Blagge's heresy <sup>81</sup>. This important observation draws attention to one of the themes which recurs throughout this case: the examination of heresy is never far removed from political considerations. Thus the State Papers reveal even more detail concerning the parties involved in the case, their alleged crimes, and the way in which the Crown dealt with the suspects.

The first mention of Lassels' arrest in the State Papers comes in a letter from the Council to the Secretary of State Sir William Petre dated 11th May 1546. This document indicates that Lassels had been arrested some time previously in connection with a sermon preached by Dr. Edward Crome in the City on 11th April <sup>82</sup>. The Greyfriars Chronicler reports that this sermon contained heretical teaching on the mass <sup>83</sup>. Crome was no stranger to religious controversy: he had been examined by the Bishop of London before 1521; at the Canterbury Convocation in 1531 formal charges of heresy were laid against Crome, Latimer and Bilney, but the proceedings were dropped in view of their earlier recantation <sup>84</sup>. By 1540 Crome was again

accused of holding heretical opinions, this time the denial of justification through works, the efficacy of masses for the dead and prayers to the saints and the possibility of truths underrived from scripture. Finally in April 1546 came the sermon in which he denied transubstantiation. Surprisingly Crome managed to survive his troubles, and it is possible that this was due to the influence of powerful friends in the Council. It is clear that Crome was closely associated with both Lassels and Askew. The latter asked to take council of Dr. Crome during her examination in June 1546 <sup>85</sup>, and with regard to the former the Council's letter states:

Ye shall receive that Mr. Crome notith in his aunswer, to be comforted by oon Lasselles, whome we have in examination - nat called upon Crome's detection, but because himself boosted abrode that he was desirous to be called to the counseill, and he would answer to the pricke. <sup>86</sup>

A later reference to Lassels in the State Papers suggests that he was arraigned with the Vicar of St. Bride's, Fleet Street, and a Scottish friar <sup>87</sup>. The Vicar of St. Bride's was John Cardmaker or Taylor, a Cambridge man who used his position as a reader at St. Paul's to criticize Bishops Gardiner and Bonner <sup>88</sup>. Dr. Cardmaker is described by the Council as "of the same sort but not so bold"<sup>89</sup> as Dr. Crome, but the

Scot is dismissed as an ignorant fool. It is possibly significant that Cardmaker had begun his career as an Observant friar: the Scot detained with him was also a friar, possibly an Observant, and Hemsley who died along with Lassels and Askew was also an Observant. The strongly Protestant sympathies of some of the former Observants of Richmond suggests that the Order may have assisted in distributing heretical or Protestant opinions and material in the 1530s and 1540s <sup>90</sup>.

By 14th May it would seem that Lassels' anxiety to be questioned by the Council has faded, for in a further letter the Council notes that:

Laselles wil not answeere to that parte of his conference with Crome that toucheth Scripture matier, withoute he have the Kinges majestes expresse commandement, with his protection; for he sayeth it is neither wisdom nor equitie that he suld kyll himself. <sup>91</sup>

On 17th may the Council examined Lassels with Worley, a page and Playne "the skynner" <sup>92</sup> for their erroneous opinions "and the disuading of Crome" <sup>93</sup>. This indicates that the Council believed that Lassels had influenced Crome against retracting his views against the mass which he had expressed in his April sermon. To ascribe such influence in these matters to



a layman is of particular interest and lends weight to the view that Lassels was one of the leaders of his group in London. It should be noted that Foxe records that a man named Playne was sent by "one master Tracy", presumably Richard Tracy, to urge Crome to stand firm in his beliefs. The implied connection between Tracy and the London heretics is of great interest. The records of the Council note that Lassels and his companions are held under the provision of the Act of Six Articles <sup>94</sup> indicating the religious nature of their sedition. They are committed to the Tower and orders are given for the arrest of Crome's servant.

By 7th June the case against Lassels had developed in an unexpected direction, and he was now being investigated along with Weston a lute-player, a man named Barber or Barker, and an itinerant "prophet" called Latham or Lanam. The Privy Council records:

At St. James's, the vii day of June, 1546.  
Weston the lute-player, for his seditious conference at sondrie tymes with one Barber and one Latham and Lasselles, with others, upon proffecyeyes and other thinges styrringe to commotion against the Kinges m'tie, after his briefe examination wherin he [Weston] would confesse small matter in respect of that he had spoken, was comitted to the porter's lodge to be further examined. <sup>95</sup>

On the same day it is recorded that "**Latham a prophetier**" was committed to the Tower on evidence supplied by Weston and Barber <sup>96</sup>. The details of Latham's propheties are difficult to interpret, but confessions made by William Weston and Robert Barker, alias Barber on 9th June give some indication of their substance. In the main they seem to have been political, concerning wars with Scotland and the siege of Boulogne. Both men mentioned that Latham had said that there would be a new queen within the year, and both said in terms which recall the use of Daniel's prophecy in **Wickliefes Wicket** that Henry VIII would be driven from his realm by force, only to return greatly strengthened <sup>97</sup>. There are some elements in the reported propheties which point to a particular religious outlook on the part of the persons involved. Weston alleged that Latham had said:

There should be a pope within England, and that Charing Cross should be taken down to pave a market place for people to stand and sell victuals. <sup>98</sup>

Similarly Barker reported that Weston had said during a walk outside the walls of the City:

Do you not hear of the going down of these colleges and chantries? Mary! I trust to see the day that every priest shall be glad to say mass in chalices of wood, and once

within this twelve month ye shall see that every boy in the street shall spit in the priests' faces and hurl stones at them. 99

Barker testified that the words were spoken "between Moregate and Crepullgate" 100 which probably indicates that these suspects dwelt in that area of the City which has been described by Davis as a particular centre of late Lollardy 101. The ways by which Latham spread his views are strikingly similar to the way in which Lollard groups are seen to operate in different areas: personal introduction led to a gradual widening of the circle. It seems that Latham was itinerant for there were long periods when Weston saw nothing of him and he was presumed to be absent from London. The evidence suggests that there was a Lollard group working in London which embraced the fringes of the Court: merchants, lawyers, City clergy, gentlemen of the Inns of Court, minor officials of the Royal Household were all apprehended in the course of investigations into Lassels' activities 102. It is possible that Latham was an itinerant preacher or teacher, a supplier of heretical literature in London and rural areas similar to those described by Davis and Anne Hudson 103.

Lassels' associations were not confined to London: Hadlam or Adams the tailor came from Colchester in Essex 104, and the State Papers reveal further links between London and East Anglia. On 13th

May 1546 Nicholas Shaxton, the former bishop of Salisbury was summoned to London from his exile in rural Suffolk to answer charges of heresy which arose directly from the investigation of Edward Crome <sup>105</sup>. Shaxton had long been suspected of holding Wycliffite views, and at Cambridge he had been associated with Thomas Bilney and Thomas Arthur as well as with others who were to become leaders of the "official" English Reformation <sup>106</sup>. Although suspected at Cambridge he was able to survive by swearing an oath repudiating the doctrines of Wyclif, Hus and Luther. This gives a very clear indication of the views he was believed to hold, and in 1532 Bishop Nix of Norwich required Shaxton to make a formal abjuration of Wycliffite and Lutheran heresy, notwithstanding the former Cambridge oath. Indeed at the trial of Thomas Bilney later in the same year the Bishop attributed that man's heresy to Shaxton, describing him as the greater heretic of the two <sup>107</sup>. Possibly because of these views, Shaxton found favour with Anne Bolyne and through her patronage became Bishop of Salisbury, a position he resigned in the wake of the passing of the reactionary Act of Six Articles in 1539 <sup>108</sup>. After a period of imprisonment, Shaxton made the significant move of retiring to the Suffolk village of Hadleigh which along with Steeple Bumpstead, Stoke by Clare and Boxted enjoyed a long and distinguished history of Lollardy <sup>109</sup>. It was in these Essex and Suffolk villages that Shaxton's Cambridge contemporaries

Coverdale and Arthur came into contact with Wycliffite groups in the 1520s <sup>110</sup>, and it was at Hadleigh from 1544 that another Cambridge contemporary Dr. Rowland Taylor was incumbent <sup>111</sup>. As Davis has remarked, in these Essex and Suffolk villages took place that "fruitful interaction between Cambridge evangelicalism and native Lollardy" <sup>112</sup> which was to be so significant for the course of the English Reformation. Shaxton's heresy was sacramental and the thirteen articles to which he subscribed indicate clearly that there was a firm Wycliffite basis to his thought <sup>113</sup>.

Although it is difficult to prove an absolute connection it seems significant that on 15th May 1546 Bishop Bonner, acting as Commissioner for the Six Articles sent to the Council a list of five heretics who had been detected in Essex. Without exception their eucharistic heresy is consistent with the Wycliffite thought which had been flourishing in Essex in 1528 and earlier <sup>114</sup>. It is also noticeable that the views of these people are by no means dissimilar to those of Lassels, Askew, Shaxton and Crome. It is possible that Hadlam the Colchester tailor were detected at this time, although Hadlam is not encountered in the State Papers until 23rd June when he was sent to Newgate. He had, however been sent to the Council from Essex at an earlier date with an unspecified number of persons who held similar views. Three of these Essex men were released from prison on

16th July, the day of Hadlam's execution, and it is probable that these three, together with Hadlam and possibly Hemmysley the former Observant correspond to the five heretics apprehended by Bonner in May. This re-enforces the view that the Lollards in London associated with Lassels, Askew and Crome enjoyed connections through Bishop Shaxton to the traditional strongholds of heresy in Essex and Suffolk.

There remains one further name which has been associated particularly with Anne Askew. Joan Butcher or Joan of Kent was certainly familiar with Askew, for she makes an interesting reference to her during her own trial in 1550 <sup>115</sup>, and in his study of this fascinating woman Davis is prepared to accept that Joan was connected with Askew in London between 1543 and 1546 <sup>116</sup>. There is reasonable circumstantial evidence which argues in favour of this theory, but the tradition rests upon a narrative first recounted by Parsons and retold by Strype, to the effect that Askew and Joan used their voluminous skirts as a means of smuggling heretical literature to the Queen's ladies <sup>117</sup>. This traditional story, for which it must be admitted little firm evidence exists, suggests that heretical texts may have played a part in the activities of the London circle which included Lassels and Askew among its members. This finds support in the Proclamation issued on 8th July 1546 which required any man or woman who had books:

Printed or written in the English tongue  
which shall be set forth in the names of  
Frith, Tyndale, Wycliffe, Joy, Roy, Basille,  
Bale, Barnes, Coverdale, Turner, Tracy, or  
by any of them ... 118

To hand them over to the authorities to be burnt.

The fact that the Proclamation was issued during the course of the investigation into Lassels and Askew suggests that it may have been connected with their case. The list of authors suggests a readership with both Wycliffite and Continental tastes coupled with a degree of theological sophistication. The Proclamation is not just further evidence of the ascendancy of a reactionary party at Court or an intolerance in the same spirit as the Six Articles: it is a reaction to the discovery of an heretical group working in London which did not restrict itself to the artisan classes but included gentry, lawyers, clergy and members of the Court. Davis had questioned Gairdner's contention that English Lollardy had an active political aspect 119. Here, however, is found evidence for the existence of a wide-ranging group which perhaps not through the intention of its members, found itself at the centre of political intrigue in the closing year of Henry VIII's reign.

The political aspect of the case against Lassels, Askew and their associates is best approached by

examining one of the most curious features of the authorities' conduct of the case. Anne Askew was racked during her confinement in the Tower <sup>120</sup>. Her crippled condition at Smithfield on the day of her execution was noted by eye-witnesses, so there can be no doubt that she was indeed tortured as she maintained <sup>121</sup>. The question remains, however, what was it that Thomas Wriothesley hoped to elicit from her by the application of force, and what could have rendered necessary the presence of a leading member of the Council at the side of the rack? The answer to both these questions can be found in Askew's record of her examination <sup>122</sup>. Torture was applied not to gain more information about Askew's beliefs for the authorities already had more than sufficient evidence to condemn her as a relapsed heretic. Wriothesley wanted more information about Askew's associates, and in particular her testimony shows that she was questioned about several leading ladies of the Court, the wives of some of the most influential men in England, who it was alleged had been her associates and had sustained her during her imprisonment in the Counter <sup>123</sup>. The questioning ties up well with Parsons' contention that Askew and Joan Butcher had been responsible for spreading heretical literature among the ladies of the Court <sup>124</sup>: the authorities, or at least one faction of the Council, believed that heresy had reached into the royal family itself. The Duchess of Suffolk was step-mother to the King's



nieces and it was suggested that she had introduced them to heretical ideas; Lady Denny was married to a member of the Council and Groom of the Stole; Anne Stanhope, Countess of Hertford was soon to become Duchess of Somerset and wife of the Protector 125. Various sources have alleged that Queen Katherine Parr was leader of this group, but the evidence is not certain<sup>126</sup>. What can be said with certainty is that through racking Askew, Wriothsesley hoped to have in his hands evidence which would destroy some very high-ranking women and through them it must be presumed, their husbands. The whole exercise makes little sense unless the Queen is included at the head of the list of suspects. Perhaps the strongest reasons supporting this hypothesis can be found in a survey of John Lassels' political role in 1540-41, from which it would appear that the destruction of royal spouses was nothing new in 1546.

Since 1541 John Lassels must have been a marked man in the eyes of religious and political conservatives on the Council for it was he who played a crucial role in the frustration of the plans of a resurgent Catholic group led by Bishop Gardiner and Thomas Wriothsesley after the fiasco of Henry's marriage with Anne of Cleves and the fall of Thomas Cromwell. It seems that Gardiner and the Catholic "party" <sup>127</sup> had early decided to take advantage of the unsatisfactory state of the royal marriage by setting

up Katherine Howard, the unfortunate niece of the Duke of Norfolk as the royal mistress. Katherine's history of broken engagements and liaisons better fitted her to be mistress than queen, and it was this compromising information which John Lassels was responsible for bringing to the attention of the authorities. Lassels' actions are so daring that it is impossible not to conclude that he acted under the protection or guidance of a powerful man of state.

The State papers reveal that Lassels' sister Mary had been a member of the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk's household at Lambeth when Katherine Howard had resided with her aunt before going to Court <sup>128</sup>. Thus it was alleged that Mary Lassels had been privy to Katherine's affair with Henry Manno, a man employed to teach her the virginals, and her subsequent liaison with a distant kinsman Francis Dereham who enjoyed the favour of the Duchess. Correspondence from the Council to Paget, ambassador in France, explains that these matters ostensibly came to light when John Lassels suggested to his sister, now married to a Sussex gentleman named Hall, that she might find a position in the new Queen's household. She had replied that she would not seek such a place and that she was sorry for Katherine because she "is light, both in living and condition" <sup>129</sup>. This conversation was reported to Thomas Cranmer during the royal progress to York in 1541 <sup>130</sup>, and further evidence of Katherine's

imprudence and possible incontinence was gathered <sup>131</sup>. The information was finally passed to Henry by Cranmer with results for Katherine which are well-known. It is important to note that Cranmer's role is crucial: having alerted his sovereign to the situation, he was left to resolve the situation to his own satisfaction, questioning Katherine at Hampton Court and reporting to the Council <sup>132</sup>. Circumstantial evidence points strongly in favour of the assumption that there was a plot to overthrow Katherine Howard, and that Thomas Cranmer was, if not its instigator, then one of its leading protagonists. It follows that John Lassels was probably employed by Cranmer as an agent to pass on information which would help to keep the Archbishop abreast of political developments within the Court and London in much the same way that Haynes has described during the reign of Elizabeth <sup>133</sup>, and particularly to keep him advised of his rivals' and enemies' activities <sup>134</sup> in the still precarious 1540s.

If there was a "Protestant" plot to overthrow the Queen in 1541 it could only be accounted a partial success: Katherine Howard was removed and the influence of her family was for the moment curtailed <sup>135</sup>. The reactionary party at Court did not fall, however, and indeed Wriothesley's position was greatly strengthened by the fall of the Howards. Personal ambition probably determined his attitude to the

Howards, and after 1541 he emerges as the leading layman of the Catholic group within the Council.

If Lassels had been involved in a political plot in 1541, it seems safe to conclude that he himself was a victim of a similar plot designed to ensnare Katherine Parr in 1546. Katherine Parr was no equivocating Protestant <sup>136</sup> and her position of potential influence with an ailing monarch would have been irksome to men such as Wriothesley in the "**years of ruthless jockeying by ruthless men**" <sup>137</sup>. Rumours that Henry planned more sweeping religious reforms including the abolition of the mass and the introduction of an English communion in August 1546 would have been of further concern to conservatively minded members of the Council <sup>138</sup> and would have served to remind them of the damage that might be done to their interests by a powerful Protestant Queen dowager aided by Cranmer. It was natural that the Queen should become a focus of attention for those trying to secure their future after the death of Henry. It is possible that Wriothesley had begun to work against Parr as early as 1543 when a group of heretics was uncovered at St. George's Chapel, Windsor by Dr. London <sup>139</sup> indicating that heresy, including the study of Calvin, was carried on within the royal household <sup>140</sup>. When evidence surfaced suggesting that heretical literature was circulating among the ladies of the Court, Wriothesley must have thought that fate

had presented him with the ideal opportunity to "strike at the knot of vipers at Court who were gathered around the queen herself" <sup>141</sup>. In 1541 John Lassels had served his political master Cranmer by providing information against the queen. In 1546 he was to serve the political interests of others by dying condemned as an heretic.

In conclusion, John Lassels might be described as a "neglected Wycliffite reformer", his **Protestacion** being an equally neglected profession of mid-Sixteenth Century lay thinking on the mass. Coming from a parish where contact with a relatively sophisticated form of Lollardy would have been possibly during the 1530s <sup>142</sup>, Lassels moved to London as a gentleman servant in the royal household which was already permeated by heresy. Once in London Lassels was associated with a group of heretics which was broken up in the late Spring of 1546. It is probable that he was the leader of this group if it had any formal leadership <sup>143</sup>, and its members included Anne Askew, Nicholas Shaxton, Edward Crome, John Cradmaker along with lawyers, merchants and members of the royal household. Lassels' theology was clearly based upon traditional Wycliffite thought, and the beliefs of his associates so far as they can be judged seem to accord perfectly with the ideas set forth in the **Protestacion**.

One of the most striking features of the group to which Lassels belonged is its great social breadth.

Apart from City clergy and lawyers, merchants and artisans, it possibly embraced ladies of the Court and their influential husbands, and may even have included the earl of Surrey <sup>144</sup>. Unlike earlier rural Lollard groups which tended to be dominated by artisans <sup>145</sup>, Lassels' group was solidly middle-class in its support <sup>146</sup>. The case of John Lassels provides further support for Professor Scarisbrick's contention that:

By the 1540s religious heterodoxy ceased to be an affair of pockets of Lollard weavers and husbandmen and merchants, or of individual clerics, but had permeated and silently taken root in every level of society, including the Court. <sup>147</sup>

Scarisbrick contends that the early 1540s saw a concerted effort by Gardiner to uncover "the whole network of friends, patrons and disciples who lay" behind the prominent individual heretics <sup>148</sup>. Sacramental heresy in particular had won support from some of the highest in the land. As Scarisbrick remarks:

Like puritanism and Catholic recusancy later, it won influential women to its cause who, more than any other persons, perhaps, could allow it to come out of the universities and the avant-garde London

churches to take possession of lay, domestic life. 149

If Gardiner planned a concerted attack upon heterodoxy in the early 1540s, it seems that the attack upon Lassels and Askew was intended to be a definitive strike against the whole undercurrent of heterodoxy which flowed through London and the Court. This prosecution serves to demonstrate the political significance of figures such as Lassels, Askew, Shaxton and Crome in 1546: on the one hand their theology was used by one political group gathered around the Queen and certain leading members of the Council to consolidate a more overtly Protestant policy for the future reign <sup>150</sup>; and on the other the same theology was used by religious and political conservatives such as Gardiner and Wriothesley in an attempt to destroy their rivals <sup>151</sup>. While the King declined, ruthless and increasingly desperate men and women plotted and counter-plotted to ensure not only their personal survival under the new king, but also the dominant hand in shaping the religious and political outlook of the government. Wycliffism was, directly or indirectly, one of the forces which drove them on.

John Davis is reluctant to accord Lollardy a political influence in the 1540s <sup>152</sup>, but the fierce opposition of men such as Gardiner and Wriothesley to the activities of Lassels and his associates weighs

against such a view. Lassels' **Protestacion** and the history of its author afford not only a glimpse of the theological impact of Wycliffite heresy as late as 1546, but demonstrates that by 1546 Wycliffite heresy had recaptured something of its former political influence. The case of John Lassels shows that once Lollardy reached out from the classes which appear to have preserved it through the Fifteenth Century<sup>153</sup>, it was still a potentially vital political force. As late as 1546 Wycliffite thought was exercising a political role in England which it had not enjoyed since the days of the Lollard knights in the late Fourteenth and early Fifteenth Century<sup>154</sup>; and by 1546 the Henrician ecclesiastical settlement ensured that those who held political influence also shaped the destiny of the English Church.



1 - **Foxe**, V, 550-1.

Foxe states that the execution took place in late June 1546. Other sources indicate that this is inaccurate. Cf. Stowe, **Annals**, fol. London 1631, 592; Wriothesley, **Chronicle**, I, 168-9 [Camden Soc. 77]; **Chronicle of the Greyfriars of London**, 51 [Camden Soc. 53]. All these sources agree that the execution took place on 16th July 1546. Bishop Shaxton, accused of heresy along with Lassels and Askew, did not sign his confession until 9th July 1546 [Cf. **Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic from the Reign of Henry VIII**, ed. Brewer, J.S. and Gairdner, J., London 1862-1910, 21.1, 1244].

2 - **Narratives of the Days of the Reformation**, ed. Nichols, J.G., Camden Soc. 77, London 1859, 345ff.

3 - **Chronicle of the Greyfriars**, 51.

4 - Louthe, J., in **Narratives**, 43; Wriothesley, **Chronicle**, I, 169.

Cf. Oxley, J.E., **The Reformation in Essex**, Manchester 1965, 147-8.

Hadlam is recorded as being sent to the Council by Mr. Lucas of Colchester along with others suspected of heresy. Examined on 23rd June and detained for further questioning, two of his fellow suspects Smith and Abbot recanted. Hadlam and John Adams in Foxe's account could be the same man given the similarity of surname.

5 - Otwell Johnson to John Johnson, 2nd July 1546 in **Letters and Papers**, 21.1.

6 - Bale, J., **The first examinacyon of Anne Askew, latelye martyred in Smythfelde, by the Romyshe popes vpholders, with the Elucydacyon of Iohan Bale**, [Wesel, D. van der Straten], November 1546.

Bale, J., **The lattre examinacyon of Anne Askew, latelye martyred in Smythfelde, by the wycked Synagogue of Antichrist, with the Elucydacyon of Iohan Bale**, [Wesel, D. van der Straten], January 1547.

These works represent the substance of Askew's examinations and documents and statements reproduced by Bale in his texts are confirmed by the record of Askew's interrogation in the episcopal Register. Cf. London, Reg. Bonner, Guidhall Library, 9531/12, 1540-50, fol. 109r.

See also Parker Society, **Select Works of John Bale**, London 1894, 243-4: Bale explains that he first heard of Askew's case from a Dutchman and states that Askew's name is famous in England and "Dutchland also".

7 - Wicklieffes Wicket faythfully ouerseene and corrected after the originall and first copie ... With the protestacion of Ihon Lassels late burned in Smythfelde ... [2nd ed., London, John Day, 1548/1550], edited Miles Coverdale, B7v-C2r. STC no. 25591; 25591a.

8 - **Foxe**, V, 550-1.

9 - Such cross referencing is necessary because of the paucity of material written by or concerning

either person. To gain some impression of common beliefs and thus the basis of their shared faith, a thorough comparison of each writer is required.

10 - **Chronicle of the Greyfriars of London**, 51.

Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York, 1509-1558**, Oxford 1959, 33-4. The biographical details given above are based upon Dickens' account.

11 - **Chronicle of the Greyfriars**, 51; Wriothesley, **Chronicle**, I, 169.

Furnivall's Inn, an Inn of Chancellery, was situated off Holborn and Leather Lane, by Ely Place. The original buildings stood until they were demolished in the mid-Nineteenth Century to be replaced by the red-brick insurance company offices which still occupy the site. Lassels' presence in an Inn of Court does not indicate that he was training for a legal career. A period in an Inn was frequently seen as an alternative to a University education for a gentleman. Cf. Stowe, **Chronicle**, fol. London 1, 77; Herbert, **Inns of Court**, 324-8.

12 - A sewar was charged with setting out the dinner table. The position was part of the mediaeval hierarchical household and was always occupied by a man of gentle birth: in the Sixteenth Century service in a great man's household was still a very respectable means of social advancement. The lord's meal was almost a visible expression of the hierarchical political theory, and the serving of it deliberately echoed the ceremonial of the mass. Mark Girouard provides a good description of the duties of the sewar in **Life in the English Country House**, Yale 1978, 47-8. Lassels would have come into personal, all be it ceremonial, contact with the king.

13 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 33; Trollope, E., **Assoc. Archit. Soc. Report**, VI (1862) 117ff.

14 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 33.

15 - **York, Reg. Lee**, 1533 fol. 50-50v; **York, Reg. Lee** 1534 fol. 89v-90.

16 - **York, Reg. Lee** 1533 fol. 50-50v. The wording of the abjuration should be noted, as should the confusion felt by the ecclesiastical authorities at the origins of the heretical beliefs they had detected in Sparrow. The authority of the Church (that is the hierarchy and its officers) to define and judge the orthodoxy and propriety of books and doctrines is stressed. The final phrase of the quotation makes it clear that the ecclesiastical authorities wished to isolate what they feared was a cell active in the parish of Worksop.

17 - The similarity is perhaps more with Oecolampadius who sought to develop a "cautiously positive" view of the eucharist by stressing the spiritual rather than the memorialistic aspects of sacramentalism. Cf. Wright, **Frith**, 59 for discussion of this point. Oecolampadius' eucharistic theology had influenced John Frith when he wrote his two eucharistic works the **Answer to M. More's Letter** and **A**

**Christian Sentence ... of the most honourable  
Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood** in late 1532 [Cf. Wright, Frith, 51ff. It is just possible that Sparrow could have read Frith's work if he had been in London in late 1532, but otherwise he is unlikely to have been exposed to the influence of Oecolampadius.

18 - York, Reg. Lee 1534, fol. 89v. The similarity to the words of **Wickliefes Wicket**, Blv.

19 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 21.

20 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 21. Dickens compares the opinions of Lollards and Anabaptists and concludes that the heretics at Worksop are more typical of English Lollard and Wycliffite belief than of Continental Anabaptism. Neither could their view reasonably be ascribed to Zwinglianism. Dickens goes on to suggest that these men may have come under the influence of the **Devotio moderna** in their native country, and that this pre-disposed them to accept the tenets of Lollardy when they encountered it in England either in London or Essex.

21 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 21. Cf. note 20 above.

22 - Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", **JEH** 32 (1982), 225ff.

23 - Parsons, R., **The Third Part of a Treatise Intituled: of Three Conuersions of England: conteyninge. An examen of the Calendar or Catalogue of Protestant Saints .... diuised by Iohn Foxe ....**, N.D. [Robert Parsons], 1604, 498.

Parsons repeats accusations which were current in 1546 for the editor of the **Protestacion in Wickliefes Wicket** is at pains to show that Lassels did not teach this doctrine:

In like maner as the Romish church taketh occasion at these wordes of Chryste (Hoc est corpus meum) to teache the transubstanciacion of the bread into the body of Chryst: so haue many taken occasion at the wordes of thys protestacioin, to affirme that Chryst (speakyng these wordes) poynted to hys body which suffered on the morrow. Which assercion as it is voyed of all wytte and learnynge: so is it contrary to ye true meaninge of the wordes of this godly man. For he intending to declare that Christ hath ended all sacrifice ...

Coverdale, Preface to Lassels' **Protestacion in Wickliefes Wicket**, London 1548/50, B6r.

24 - Bale, J., **Op.cit.** 1546 and 1547. These texts are here referred to as "Askew's" because the words used by Bale are substantially those of Askew as recorded in Bonner's **Register**. See note 6 above.

25 - Whereas Askew's works were edited by Bale and given a particular "slant", Lassels' **Protestacion** is a personal declaration of faith, probably written in the hours preceding execution.

26 - Askew, A., **Confession**, printed in **Foxe**, V, 546. Foxe's text is based upon the MS in **London, Reg. Bonner, Guildhall Library 9531/12 (I), 1540-50**, fol.

109r.

27 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 34.

28 - Cf. Askew, A., **Confession**, in **Foxe**, V, 546.

29 - **Protestacion**, B7v 21-32. References to the **Protestacion** are given for the present edition of the text.

30 - **Protestacion**, B8r 3.

31 - **Protestacion**, Clv 26.

32 - Wyclif, J., **De Eucharistia, On the Eucharist**, trans. and ed. Ford Lewis Battles, in **Library of Christian Classics XIV, Advocates of Reform**, ed. Spinka, M., London 1953, 61ff.

33 - Cf. Leff, G., "Wyclif and Hus: A Doctrinal Comparison" in **Wyclif in His Times**, ed. Kenny, A., Oxford 1986, 110-117.

Wyclif, J., **De Veritate Sacre Scripture**, London 1905-7, I, 1-2; 36ff; 61; 70. II, 137-8; 173.

**De Ecclesia**, London 1886, 63; 102; 139; 371-2.

**De Potestate Pape**, London 1907, 35; 76; 97; 135; 372

**De Officio Regis**, 210, 211-13.

34 - **Protestacion**, B7v 21-25.

35 - **Protestacion**, B8r 16-25.

The similarity with John Frith's understanding of Justification with its strong emphasis upon the unique and complete work of satisfaction accomplished by Christ through his death on the cross should be noted. Cf. Wright, Frith, 29-32. Salvation is possible for all believers because it depends totally upon the complete and unique work of Christ [Wright, Frith, 31].

36 - **Protestacion**, B8r 11-13.

37 - **Protestacion**, Clr 2-6.

38 - **Wicket**, Blr 17.

39 - **Protestacion**, Clr 6-14.

The emphasis upon individual faith as the key to the discernment of Christ in the sacrament again recalls both Frith and Wyclif. Cf. Frith, J., **A Christian sentence ...of the most Honourable Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood** in Wright, Frith. Wright comments [Frith, 59] that Frith followed Oecolampadius in developing a "cautiously positive" view of the mass agreeing that it was possible to say that communicants "come to the Body of the Lord" or "eat his Body", and declaring it to be profane to say that the bread was received only as a sign.

For Wyclif's eucharistic teaching, Cf. **De Eucharistia**, London 1892, 11-13; 78-80; 125; 284. **Triologus**, Oxford 1869, 149.

40 - **Protestacion**, Clr 21-27.

This passage makes particularly clear the role ascribed to true faith in the discernment of Christ in the eucharist by Lassels.

41 - **Narratives**, Camden Soc. 77, 345.

42 - **Narratives**, *Ibid.*, 345.

cf. Wyclif, J., **De Potestate Pape**, London 1907, 76; 94; 97; 111; 135-41.

43 - Cf. Wyclif, J., **De Potestate Pape**, London 1907, 176. **De Ecclesia**, London 1886, 2; 7; 102-3; 111. **De Blasphemia**, London 1893, 140.

44 - Wyclif, **De Ecclesia**, London 1886, 2; 7; 102-3. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 314-27.

45 - The first English volume of Marsilius' **Defensor Pacis** had been printed by William Marshall under the patronage of Thomas Cromwell in 1535, so it is possible that Lassels has access to this text directly rather than through Wyclif's adaptation and elaborations.

46 - Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 314-27.

47 - Frith, J., **Answer to M. More's Letter and A Christian Sentence ... of the most Honourable Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood** (Oct.-Nov. 1532), in Wright, N.T., **Frith**.

48 - Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 502.

49 - Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", **JEH** 33 (1982), 225ff.

50 - **Protestacion**, Clv 9. This comment lends support to the view that the **Protestacion** was written in the final hours leading up to Lassels' execution on 15th July 1546.

51 - Wyclif, J., **De Eucharistia**, in **Library of Christian Classics**, XIV, 2:34; 3:14.

Christianson has alleged that John Bale was the inventor of the distinctive school of English apocalyptic which flourished among Puritans in the late Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries, but these passages from **De Eucharistia** demonstrate that there was already a flourishing school of apocalyptic thought in England which spoke of the papacy as Antichrist and identified the contemporary Church with the images of **Revelation** and **Daniel**. The Wycliffites were continuing a usage made by Wyclif himself - cf. **Wicket**, A3v 19 - A4v 3.

Christianson, P., **Reformers and Babylon: English Apocalyptic Visions from the Reformation to the Eve of the Civil War**, Toronto and London 1978.

52 - Cf. **Wicket**, Alv; A2r. Leff, G., "Wyclif and Hus" in Kenny, A., **Wyclif in His Times**, Oxford 1986, 112.

53 - Cf. Bale, **Op.cit.**, 1546 and 1547.

Askew, A., **Confession**, in **Foxe**, V, 546.

54 - Parsons, R., **Three Conversions**, 497.

55 - Parsons, R., **Three Conversions**, 497.

56 - Parsons, R., **Three Conversions**, 497.

57 - Parsons, R., **Three Conversions**, 495.

Kenny discusses the propagandist nature of Parsons' **Treatise of Three Conversions** in Kenny, A., "The Accursed Memory: The Counter-Reformation Reputation of John Wyclif" in Kenny, A., **Wyclif**, 165-6.

58 - Parsons, R., **Three Conversions**, 498.

It is clear that in typically Counter-Reformation mood Parsons deplores the "particularity" of the suspects' views as especially offensive because it denies the supreme authority of the Church to determine doctrine and at the same time elevates the responsibility of

the individual to differentiate between true and false teaching.

59 - Cf. Rupp's comments on the Catholic attitude to heretics and infidels in the Sixteenth Century: Rupp, E.G., *Tradition*, 24-5. Speaking of Sir Thomas More, Rupp says:

In no one of the many hundreds of pages of his controversial works does he [More] find one generous word for his opponents, the enemies of the Church and poison of society ... these men were heretics and heretics were monsters and he fixed his gaze on them with far less charitable observation than he would accord to the ape at the bottom of his garden or the poor bewildered savages who had been brought over from the New Found Land.... His beliefs overrode his charitable temper, and led him again and again to take refuge in the authority of accepted usage.

60 - Cf. Titles of Bale's two editions of Askew's writings on her trial: "Lately martyred in Smythfelde, by the wycked Synagogue of Antichrist" [1546] and "lately martyred in Smythfelde, by the Romysch popes vpholders" [1547].

61 - *Select Works of John Bale*, ed. Christmas, H., Parker Society 6, 243.

62 - Parsons, R., *Three Conuersions*, 496.

63 - Bale, J., *The First Examinacyon*, A2r.

64 - Bale, J., *The First Examinacyon*, Alv, A2r.

65 - Cf. Question in Askew's first examination, "Do you have the Spirit of God in you" to which she replies, "If I had not, I was but a reprobate or cast away". The interpretation of both the question and answer is difficult. The answer may indicate nothing more than a traditional Wycliffite understanding of predestination.

66 - Bale, J., *The First Examinacyon*, A4r; C8v.

67 - Bale, J., *The First Examinacyon*, C8v.

The parallel with Frith's understanding of sacraments should be noted. Cf. Wrght, Frith, 5lff.

68 - Askew, A., *Confession*, in Foxe, V, 546.

69 - Fines, J., "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, 1511-12", *JEH* 14 (1963), 160-71.

May a priste make god to daie and ete hym  
and doo likewise to morowe?  
the hoste consecrate was not the very body  
of our lorde but a figur.  
God made man and not man god as the  
Carpenter doth make the house and not the  
carpenter. And that he shuld take it as a  
token or remembraunce of cristes passion and  
not as the very body of cryste.

Reports of suspects' opinions on the mass quoted by Fines, *JEH* 14, 163. The close parallel between these arguments and traditional Lollard arguments against

transubstantiation and those of **Wickliefes Wicket** should be noted.

70 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 234.

71 - Cf. **Wicket**, A6r 2- A7v 14.

72 - Cf. comments by Hudson on role of Bible in Wycliffite thought, **Reformation**, 228-31.

73 - Askew, A., **Confession** in **Foxe**, V, 545-6.

For a very similar use of the image of the Temple, see **Wicket**, B5r 15-30.

74 - Bale, J., **The First Examinacyon**, A6v; Askew, A., **Confession**, in **Foxe**, V, 546.

Askew's biblicism is demonstrated by her remark that she "**had rather to reade fyue lynes in the Bible, then to heare fyue masses in the temple**", Bale, J., **The First Examinacyon**, A3r. The identification of the church building with the temple in Jerusalem is interesting and suggests that Askew had some concept of Christianity being heir to or continuation of Judaism.

75 - Cf. Askew, A., **Confession**, in **Foxe**, V, 545.

76 - Davis, J.F., **JEH** 33, 225.

77 - **Chronicle of the Greyfriars of London**, ed.

Nichols, J.G., Camden Soc. 53, London 1852, 51.

78 - Louthe, J., in **Narratives**, Camden Soc. 77, 345.

79 - Wriothesley, **Chronicle**, I, Camden Soc. 77, 168-9.

80 - Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**. Sir George Blage was born in 1512 and died 1551, the son of a Suffolk judge.

81 - **Foxe**, V, 550.

82 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 5, 184; **Chronicle of the Greyfriars**, in **C.S.** 53, 51.

For basic biography of Crome, see **Dictionary of National Biography**. Also Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 19, 45; Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 499.

Crome seems to have been able to effect a degree of outward conformity for he survived into the reign of Mary despite clashes with the authorities in 1531, 1541 and 1546. His association with Latimer and Hooper and other leading reformers should be noted. In some respects his ability to survive the ecclesiastical storms of Henry's later years mirrors that of Cranmer.

83 - **Chronicle of the Greyfriars**, in **C.S.** 53, 51.

84 - It seems that the events had already been investigated by diocesan bishops and no further action was deemed necessary by Convocation. This inaction still remains surprising however, and no reasonable explanation is forthcoming given the notoriety of the parties involved.

85 - Bale, J., **First Examinacyon**, B4v.

86 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 790.

87 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 823.

The Vicar of St. Bride's, Fleet Street was John Cardmaker, also known as John Taylor. Originally an Observant friar, he was by 1546 Vicar of St. Bride's and lecturer at St. Paul's. His words against Gardiner and Bonner are recorded in the **Greyfriars Chronicle** in **C.S.** 53, 56-7, 63. Apprehended with William Barlow

Bishop of bath and Wells and examined in London with Crome and Hooper in 1555.

88 - Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**.

89 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 283.

90 - Cardmaker and Jerome Barlow, possibly identical to William Barlow, were both former members of the House at Richmond.

91 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 283.

92 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 823. Playne was probably a master of the Skinners' Company and was therefore a wealthy merchant rather than the poor artisan as might first appear. The identity of Playne is of particular interest because it has been suggested by Susan Wabuda quoted by Catherine Davies that Playne is to be identified with the man of the same name who was reported by Foxe to have been sent by Master Tracy to Dr. Edward Crome to persuade him to "stand firm in the truth". It has further been suggested that the torturing of this Playne was part of the same investigation into heresy at the Court and that his case parallels that of Anne Askew. It is not entirely clear why Wabuda and Davies assume that the events referred to by Foxe occurred in 1546 rather than in 1541 when Crome was also in trouble with the authorities, but the connection between Richard Tracy, son of the author of the Testament and one of Lassels' and Askew's circle is of great interest and seems certain. It is possible that the Playne referred to by Foxe was also the master **skynner** and acquainted with Tracy through the latter's position in the Inner Temple. Cf. **Foxe**, VIII, app. 700; Davies, C., "A Protestant Gentleman and the English Reformation: the career and attitudes of Richard Tracy, ?1501-1569" in **Sudeley**.

93 - **Letters and Papers**, Ibid.

94 - Act of Six Article, 1539.

**Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 823.

For comments on the Act, Cf. **The Cambridge Modern History, II, The Reformation**, ed. Ward, A.W., Prothero, G.W., Leathes, S., Cambridge 1903, 450, 466, 477; Dickens, A.G., **The English Reformation**, London 1964, 173, 232, 246-7.

95 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 1013.

96 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 1013.

Cf. Jansen, S.L., **Political Protest and Prophecy under Henry VIII**, Woodbridge 1991, 28, 38, 54. Jansen considers Latham's prophecies to be connected with the well-known "Merlin Prophecies" and notes that he had been in trouble with the Council at various times during the 1530s and early 1540s. The specifically religious nature of some of his recorded statements, however, suggests that by 1546 at least Latham was offering a particularly potent mixture of political prophecy and religious dissent.

97 - The last remark recalls the prophecy from **Daniel 11:31-9** as used in **Wickliefes Wicket**, A3v-A4r. Cf. Jansen, S.L., **Prophecy**, 38, 54 where the prophecies are related to the Merlin tradition.



- 98 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 1027. The reference to the "**pope within England**" can be taken to mean that the papal powers should be confiscated and be exercised by an authority within England. This had already been effected by the Act of Supremacy of 1534, and it is probably the second part of the quotation concerning the destruction of images, in this case Charing Cross, which interested the authorities. Wycliffites had traditionally objected to most images in just this practical, common-sense way. Cf. Hudson, A., **Selections from English Wycliffite Writings**, Cambridge 1978, 27/94-95; 27/99-100. Legislation had been enacted for the dissolution of chantries in 1544. Cf. Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 476.
- 99 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 1027. This seems to represent an extreme anticlerical attitude and an disapproval of ceremonies associated with the mass. It should be recalled that in 1546 Foxe records rumours of plans to establish an English Communion and abolish chantry foundations. **Foxe**, V, 550.
- 100 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 1027.
- 101 - Davis, J.F., "Lollardy and the Reformation in England", **Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte**, 73 (1982), 217-36.
- London, Reg. Stokesley**, Guildhall Library, 5391/11 fo. 71r.
- 102 - The conclusions reached here that Lollard activity in London at this period embraced a wider social spectrum than has previously been accepted finds interesting parallels in Plumb's study of the social and economic spread of rural Lollardy in Buckinghamshire in the 1520s. Plumb concludes that in rural parishes and towns lollards "were to be found at all levels in...society". Plumb, D., "The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy: A Reappraisal", **SCH** 23 (1986), 129. The examination of the case of John Lassels indicates that a similar conclusion should be drawn with reference to London society at the same period.
- 103 - Davis gives a good description of the way in which Lollard cells operated in rural Essex, Suffolk and the City of London, frequently being supported by itinerant teachers and book merchants. Cf. Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", **JEH** 32 (1982), 225ff.
- Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 120-157.
- 104 - **Greyfriars Chronicle**, Camden Soc. 77, 51.
- 105 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 835.
- 106 - For biographical information cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**; also Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 19, 147.
- 107 - For a discussion of the influence of Bilney, see Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 478-9.
- 108 - The Act was intended to enforce religious uniformity. It became a capital offence to deny transubstantiation and felony to maintain communion in both kinds to be necessary, that priests, or religious might marry, that auricular confession was not

expedient and that private masses were not laudable. Cf. **The Cambridge Modern History**, II **The Reformation**, 450.

109 - Wriothesley noted the celebration of the mass in English at Hadleigh "**divers times**" in 1538, **Chronicle**, I, 83. Also Oxley, J.E., **Reformation in Essex**, 139; Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 162, 208, 453, 479-80, 481.

The Wycliffite sympathies of Hadleigh seem to have been established before Shaxton retired there, and it must be assumed that he chose it as his place of retirement because he had encountered its sympathetic reputation.

110 - **Foxe**, V, 550; Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", in **JEH** 32, 227.

111 - Rowland Taylor was associated with William Turner, later Dean of Wells, Hugh Latimer, future Bishop of Worcester and Miles Coverdale, future Bishop of Exeter. Domestic chaplain to Cranmer before 1540, in 1544 Taylor was presented to the living of Hadleigh. He enjoyed further preferment under Edward VI serving on the Commission against Anabaptists in 1549 and becoming Coverdale's Archdeacon in 1552. He was burnt near Hadleigh in 1555. Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**; Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 197, 202. The connection between Taylor, Shaxton and Coverdale should particularly be noted.

112 - Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", in **JEH** 32, 227. Davis defines "evangelicalism" as a European phase of the Reformation rather than a coherent movement which arose in response to Luther. Adherents postulated vague doctrines of grace and faith without going the whole way to accepting solafideism. It elevated the authority of scripture and laid emphasis on the preached word rather than the sacraments. An eclectic phenomenon it embraced such movements as Erasmianism, Illusionism and Lollardy and such diverse figures as Cardinals Seripando and Contarini, Juan Valdes and Jaques Lefever d'Etaples and was particularly pronounced at Cambridge in the circle influenced by Thomas Bilney.

113 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 1244; **London, Reg. Tunstal**, Guildhall Library 9531/10, 108r-109r, a copy of the articles sent by Shaxton to Henry VIII acknowledging his error dated 9th July 1546. Also Crowley, R., **The confutation of. xiii. Articles, wherunto Nicolas Shaxton, late byshop of Salisburye subscribed and caused to be set forth in print in the yere of our Lorde. M.C.xlvi. whe[n] he recanted in Smithfielde at London at the burning of Mestres Anne Askue, which is liuely set forth in the figure folowyng**, London, Day and Seres, N.D.

114 - **Letters and Papers**, 21.1, 836. Hadlam is not mentioned in this source. Oxley, J.E., **Reformation in Essex**, 147-8 notes that Hadlam was sent to the Council by Mr. Lucas of Colchester for examination with others on 23rd June. Bonner's action in May 1546 probably

represents a drive against heresy in Essex and Suffolk. The return of some suspects to be executed in Colchester and the surrounding parishes suggests that the authorities wished to give an ugly warning to others who still remained undetected.

115 - Joan taunted her judges by saying that they had burned Askew "**for a piece of Bread**", and now the same men believed the doctrine they had condemned in her. Cf. Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", in **JEH 32**, 227.

116 - Davis, J.F., **JEH 32**, 227.

117 - Parsons, R., **Op.cit.**, 498.

118 - Proclamation against Heretical Books, issued July 7th, 1546. **Tudor Royal Proclamations, I The Early Tudors (1485-1553)**, ed. Hughes, P.L. and Larkin, J.F., New Haven and London 1964, 373 item 272.

It is not clear whether the use of the word "**woman**" in the preamble is significant. The list of prohibited authors including Wyclif, Coverdale and Tracy suggests that **Wickliefes Wicket**, printed in 1546 and including William Tracy's **Testament** may have been one object of the authorities' displeasure. This would suggest that the Tracy mentioned in the Proclamation is William rather than his son Richard as has frequently been assumed by commentators.

119 - Davis, J.F., "Lollardy and the Reformation in England", in **ARG 73**, 219; Gairdner, J., **Lollardy and the Reformation**, I, 100, 278, 307, 322.

Davis has particularly disputed Gairdner's claim the the Edwardian Church should be seen as "Lollardy in power" and suggests that Gairdner's analysis has diminished the religious role of Lollardy well into the Sixteenth Century. Davis has reason to stress the influential role of Wycliffite thought in shaping the English Reformation but his refusal to accord Lollardy any political role seems to go against much of the evidence which shows that men who were at least aware of Lollardy in the period 1520 to 1547 became leaders of the Edwardian Church.

120 - Bale, J., **The lattre examinacyon**, B2r.

121 - Louthe, J., in **Narratives**, Camden Soc. 77, 345. Louthe records that Askew had to be carried to the stake in a chair because she had been disabled through racking.

122 - Bale, J., **The Lattre Examinacyon**, B3v.

123 - Bale, J., **The Latter Examinacyon**

124 - Parsons, R., **Three Conuersions.**, 496.

125 - Bale, J., **Op.cit.**, B3vff. For biographical details, cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**.

The suspects named by Askew in her account were: the Duchess of Suffolk, Katherine, Baroness Willoughby d'Eresby; Anne Ratcliffe, Countess of Sussex; Anne Stanhope, Countess of Hertford, later Duchess of Somerset; Joan, Lady Denny; Lady Fitzwilliams, probably the widow of the former Alderman of London Sir William Fitzwilliams.

126 - Foxe's account of Wriothsesley's plot to destroy Katherine Parr cannot be ignored although some

writers have sought to discredit it. It must be accepted that no record of a warrant to arrest the Queen has been found, but it is possible that Wriothesley acted **ultra vires** in this respect. The evidence uncovered here suggests that either the Queen and her ladies were involved with heretical circles in London, or that Wriothesley sought to discredit the Queen by associating her name with groups of heretics which were known to exist.

Cf. **Foxe**, V, 550. Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 456-7; 480-2: "**We must allow that her [Parr's]**

**indisputable Erasmianism had a strongly heretical flavour**".

127 - The term "party" is here used in a very loose sense to suggest a group or faction more or less united in a particular course of action but probably motivated by a variety of forces. Political expediency was almost certainly the most powerful influence upon such groups, and they should not be compared with modern political parties in any sense. Such groups appear to have been very fluid and one individual might belong to several different groups at one time, depending upon the issue in question.

128 - **Letters and Papers**, 16, 1334. Letter from Council to Paget, ambassador to the French Court outlining the discovery of the Queen's misconduct dated 12th November 1541.

The Dukes of Norfolk were Lords of the manor of Worksop and it was thus natural that Mary Lassels, a local gentlewoman, should find a position in the household of the Dowager Duchess. Girouard has pointed out that in the Sixteenth Century the greatest in the land would still be waited on by members of the gentry. Just as Lassels served in the Royal Household, so his sister joined the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk as a gentlewoman-companion in order to better her social prospects. Cf. Girouard, M., **English Country House**, 16-17.

129 - **Letters and Papers**, 16, 1334.

130 - **Letters and Papers**, 16, 1334.

131 - Katherine appointed Dereham to her household and arranged nocturnal interviews with her cousin Thomas Culpepper through the connivance of Lady Rochford during the progress to York. Cf. **Letters and Papers**, 16, 1134: letter from the Queen to Culpepper instructing him to come to her when Lady Rochford was in attendance "**for then I shal be at leisure to be at your commandment**", August 1541.

**Letters and Papers**, 16, 1337 - 13th November 1541, records of secret meetings between the Queen and Culpepper arranged through Lady Rochford at Hampton Court and elsewhere.

**Letters and Papers** 16, 1338 - evidence regarding changes made by the Queen to her household in 1541.

**Letters and Papers** 16, 1339 - Dereham's confession in which he acknowledged payment of £13 by the Queen to secure his silence over her misconduct. He alleged that the Queen herself searched out the backstairs to

the royal lodgings during the progress to the North in order to facilitate her affairs.

**Letters and Papers** 16, 1348 - allegations of misconduct between Katherine and Durand, gentleman of the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk's household prior to her marriage with the king.

132 - **Letters and Papers** 16, 1328 - Chapuys to the Queen of Hungary, 10th November 1541 reporting frantic activity at Hampton Court.

**Letters and Papers**, 16, 1325 - Cranmer's report to Henry VIII of part of the interrogation of the Queen.

133 - Haynes, A., **Invisible Power**, Stroud 1992. Haynes describes the role of the spy employed by great men of state under Elizabeth who kept the regime informed of dissent.

134 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 254ff - comments on Cranmer's precarious position in the 1540s.

135 - Cf. **Letters and Papers** 16, 1323 - letter from Chapuys to the Queen of Hungary dated 6th November 1541 in which he states that Norfolk had already left the Court.

136 - Cf. Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 456-6, 480.

137 - Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 482.

138 - **Foxe**, V, 550. This curious narrative has been discussed widely, but no consensus has emerged with regard to it. Cf. Scarisbrick, **Op.cit.**, 420ff. who concludes that it was probably a ploy in negotiations with France.

139 - Cf. Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 478ff. **Cambridge Modern History**, I **The Reformation**, 466-7. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 254-5.

140 - John Marbeck the musician who was pardoned in 1543 had been found to own a concordance of Calvin's works. Other cases surfaced in the wake of the Windsor investigation which suggest that heresy flourished on quite a wide scale within the Household, but pardons were issued to the suspects. Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 255.

141 - Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 479.

142 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 33.

143 - The egalitarian nature of some heretical groups often known as the Christian Brethren has been remarked by some authors who have suggested that this, coupled with the pronounced social concern of authors such as Robert Crowley may have led such groups to espouse a socialist position. Cf. Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent" in **JEH** 32, 227; Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 525.

144 - Surrey was arrested for heresy at the same time as Sir George Blagge, whose case was certainly connected with that of Lassels. Norfolk was still the political rival of Wriothesley in 1546 and his arrest on a charge of treason in connection with an alleged papal plot was certainly politically motivated.

145 - This generalization has been commonly accepted. research by Dr. Hudson indicates sizable

- support from the "yeoman-farmer" class. Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 128-33.
- 146 - Davis notes the middle-class bias of the Christian Brethren which may go some way to support the theory that the London circle was part of the Brethren. Cf. Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent" in **JEH 32**, 227.
- 147 - Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 478.
- 148 - Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 478.
- 149 - Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 478.
- 150 - Cf. Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 420.
- 151 - Political rivals could belong to the same religious faction. Thus Wriothsesley sought to destroy the Howards in 1541 and again in 1546.
- 152 - Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation" in **JEH 32**, 227ff.
- 153 - Cf. Plumb, "Rural Lollardy" in **SCH 23** (1986), 111-129, esp. 114, 129.
- 154 - Cf. McFarlane, K.B., **John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity**, London 1952, 167-85 - description of Oldcastle's plot.

Introduction to the Testament of Master William Tracy, 1530, printed in 1533 with Expositions by William Tyndale and John Frith.

I - Introduction to the text of the Testament itself.

The last will and testament of a Gloucestershire gentleman is at first sight an unlikely document to achieve wide circulation in heretical circles, or to attract the attention of two of the leading theologians of the English Reformation period. This is, however, precisely what happened in the case of William Tracy, a wealthy landowner from the small village of Toddington on the border of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire on his death in October 1530.

In legal terms the document which is now commonly referred to as William Tracy's will should not be spoken of as such. Rather it is, as its printed title states, a testament: a document concerned with the principles lying behind the allocation of property rather than with allotting specific effects to particular parties. Thus the **Testament** lacks any mention of specific reality or heritable property, but rather seeks to expound William Tracy's intentions in the distribution of his property which was clearly effected in a separate instrument or understanding.

Tracy's **Testament** is dated 10th October 1530 and there is evidence which suggests that it was circulating among heretics within a very short time.

Foxe records the case of Thomas Philip, a suspected heretic who was found to "have about him Tracy's Testament; and in his chamber was found cheese and butter in Lent time"<sup>1</sup>. The case is recorded under the year 1530-31 and the mention of Lent suggests that the suspect must have obtained his copy of the Testament before 25th March 1531. A similar case, that of the tailor William Smith, is recorded later in 1531<sup>2</sup>. Smeeton has observed that ownership of a copy of Tracy's Testament is frequently mentioned in accusations against those suspected of heresy and comments that the Testament became a "sacred text" among dissenters<sup>3</sup>.

It is not clear whether the attention which the Testament was gaining in London in 1530 and early 1531 first forced the ecclesiastical authorities to take action against it and its readers, or whether it came to their attention when it was presented to the Prerogative Court of Canterbury in the usual way following the death of William Tracy in late 1530 for the purpose of gaining probate<sup>4</sup>. It is interesting to note that the subject of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the matter of probate had been the subject of a sustained attack in the months following the assembly of the Reformation Parliament in November 1529. Sir Henry Guildford in particular complained that he had been forced to pay Cardinal Wolsey and Archbishop Warham 1,000 marks to gain probate of Sir William



Compton's will. Others alleged that such was the rapacity of the clergy that they would take a dead man's cow from his beggared children rather than forgo their statutory dues<sup>5</sup>. Wills, along with tithes, were probably one of the most frequent causes of friction and dispute between clergy and laity underlying much anticlerical feeling in the early Sixteenth Century. The treatment of William Tracy's **Testament** by the ecclesiastical authorities touched other raw nerves and must have called to the minds of many in the City of London the notorious case of Richard Hunne in 1511-14<sup>6</sup>. The actions of Bishop Fitzjames and his officials in that case are strikingly echoed in the events surrounding the case of William Tracy in 1531.

Unfortunately no copy of the **Testament** appears to have been preserved in the records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and it is necessary to rely entirely upon secondary sources for evidence that Tracy's executors followed the usual procedure in presenting the document to the Court for proving. Hall's **Chronicle**, a nearly contemporary document states that Richard Tracy presented the **Testament** to Archbishop Warham as part of the process to gain probate <sup>7</sup>. It appears that the Court referred the **Testament** to the Convocation of Canterbury which was assembled in London in early 1531 <sup>8</sup>. Wilkins records that on 25th February Convocation examined the various errors of doctrine contained in William Tracy's

**Testament**, which it was claimed gave scandal to both the Church and laity:

ut exinde scandali nihil aut ignominiae vel ecclesiae vel populo generetur. <sup>9</sup>

The matter seems to have been dropped by Convocation for about a month, during which time there is evidence to suggest that the **Testament** was sent to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge for further opinions to be gathered <sup>10</sup>. On 23rd March Convocation proceeded to examine Richard Tracy in order to discover whether his late father had employed the services of a lawyer or clerk in the composition of the **Testament**. It is clear that the point of Dr. John Lethe's questioning was to determine the extent to which William Tracy himself could be held responsible for the errors of doctrine contained in the **Testament**. The caution of the ecclesiastical authorities illustrates the problems associated with using wills and testamentary material as evidence of the theological views of the testator and has been echoed by some contemporary historians when discussing the use of such documents to assess the extent of Protestant belief in England at a particular period <sup>11</sup>. In this instance Richard Tracy confirmed that his father had not employed any other person in the composition of the **Testament**. This important point established, Archbishop Warham could proceed to a final judgment upon the **Testament** and its author

during the same session of Convocation on March 23rd. William Tracy was condemned as:

**scandalosum, sibi repugnans, impiumque et  
haereticum.** 12

As a condemned heretic William Tracy had no right to enjoy the benefits of burial in consecrated ground. Thus instructions were issued by the Archbishop and Convocation that his remains should be removed from holy ground by the following 16th October 13.

For the events which followed upon the decision of the Archbishop and Convocation it is necessary to turn to the expanded title and Introduction to the edition of the **Testament** printed at Antwerp in 1535<sup>14</sup> and re-printed as part of **Wickliefes Wicket** in two editions each with one variant version between 1546 and 1550 <sup>15</sup>. Dr. Thomas Parker, the Chancellor and Vicar General of the absentee Bishop of Worcester <sup>16</sup> exhumed the corpse of William Tracy as ordered by the Archbishop, but then proceeded to burn it in much the same way that a living heretic might be burned after condemnation by the civil authorities under the terms of the statute **De haeretico comburendo** <sup>17</sup>. In doing this Parker not only exceeded the mandate issued to him by the Archbishop, but also exceeded the powers vested in him as an ecclesiastical official: the burial of a body in consecrated ground was properly a matter for the court ecclesiastical, as was the

determination of heretical and orthodox views in the living and the dead; however the destruction of a condemned heretic was a penalty inflicted by the State and not by the Church. Acting without the authorization of the secular authorities Dr. Parker broke the law and perpetrated a grave insult against the family of a man who while living had been High Sheriff of Gloucestershire for several years <sup>18</sup>. Surprisingly there is little contemporary documentation of what must have been an horrific and scandalous event. The **Register** of Bishop Jerome de Ghinucris of Worcester is a bleak document which gives little insight into the running of the diocese or the events which took place within it. Parker seems to have been content to record little more than the ordinations which took place within his jurisdiction; certainly it contains no mandate for the exhumation of Tracy's body or its destruction by fire. Only indirect confirmation of Parker's activities at Toddington <sup>19</sup> comes from an entry in the **Register** for 23rd October 1532 which records the appointment of Dr. Thomas Baggarde as Vicar General in place of Dr. Parker <sup>20</sup>. No reason is given for Parker's removal from office, but it is reasonable to suppose that his departure from Worcester was linked with the Tracy case. Henry Walter, the editor of the Parker Society edition of the **Testament** <sup>21</sup>, basing himself on Hall's **Chronicle** holds that Parker was sued by the Crown in 1533-4 over the wrongful destruction of Tracy's remains <sup>22</sup>. To

date no record of this case has been traced in the Public Records Office but it is clear from the state papers that as early as 1532 Richard Tracy was petitioning Thomas Cromwell with regard to his father's **Testament** <sup>23</sup>. The **Testament** appears as an item in Cromwell's Remembrances until 1535-1536 <sup>24</sup>, which suggests that it was the subject of protracted legal proceedings. These were probably resolved by 1538 when Richard Tracy was acting as one of Cromwell's Commissioners in Gloucestershire and was appointed High Sheriff of Worcestershire <sup>25</sup>.

The condemnation of William Tracy as an obstinate heretic <sup>26</sup> and the burning of his body perhaps underline the parallels between his case and the earlier case of Richard Hunne <sup>27</sup>. Hunne was accused of heresy because he chose to sue several London clerics and their officials in the civil courts on a charge of **Praemunire** <sup>28</sup> which arose from an earlier conflict in 1511 over mortuary dues. In the course of his examination, Hunne, a wealthy London merchant, was found hanged in his cell in the episcopal prison by Old St. Paul's. A jury found that he had been murdered, possibly under orders from the Bishop's Chancellor. Notwithstanding this unpleasant end to the case, Bishop Fitzjames proceeded to declare that Hunne had died an obstinate heretic and handed the body over to be burned at Smithfield <sup>29</sup>. The particularly interesting parallel is the way in which

in both cases a bishop proceeded to a final condemnation of a man who was dead and therefore unable to defend himself. Commenting upon the case of Richard Hunne, Professor Dickens writes:

**From the legal viewpoint this was rightly thought a strange judgment, for Hunne had not been convicted during his lifetime and no just inference of his final contumacy could be made** 30

In many respects the same could be said of the judgement in the case of William Tracy. Possibly it might be argued that the very death-bed nature of a testament weighed more strongly in favour of concluding that Tracy died a contumacious heretic, but as the heavy sarcasm of the editor of the 1535 Antwerp edition of the Testament shows, many contemporaries would have expected a more charitable reading of Tracy's words <sup>31</sup>. Given the strongly anticlerical mood of men of Tracy's class in the early 1530s, Archbishop Warham's judgement and Dr. Parker's actions seem to be almost deliberately provocative in much the same way that Bishop Fitzjames' earlier actions had inflamed an already dangerous situation <sup>32</sup>.

It is difficult to say much of William Tracy's life prior to the composition of the Testament in October 1530. The family had been settled at Toddington since at least the Thirteenth Century <sup>33</sup>,

and had risen to be a leading family in Gloucestershire <sup>34</sup>. William Tracy served as High Sheriff of Gloucester in 1513, as had three out of the four preceding Tracys; from March 1510 to May 1513 William Tracy was one of the Commissioners of the Peace, serving alongside William Tyndale's future patron Thomas Poyntz <sup>35</sup>. It is difficult to assess the fortune of the family prior to the dissolution of the monasteries, but given their notable acquisition of land during the second half of the Sixteenth Century it is reasonable to conclude that they were "rising gentry" who managed to profit under the Tudors. Extensive building works were carried out at Toddington and at the former monastic grange of Stanway during the early Seventeenth Century, and in 1608 the family purchased the suppressed abbey of Hailes, converting the former abbots' lodgings into a commodius but probably not luxurious residence <sup>36</sup>.

The Tracys' rapid acquisition of former monastic property serves as a reminder of the extent to which their estate at Toddington was surrounded by monasteries and their estates: Hailes and Winchcombe both lie within ten miles to the south, while Tewkesbury to the west held extensive lands around Toddington; the more distant houses of Worcester, Gloucester, Evesham and Pershore would also have made their influence felt in the district. Richard Tracy's repeated petitioning of Thomas Cromwell in the 1530s

for the lease or purchase of former monastic lands in the area suggests that the family had accumulated a considerable wealth but lacked the land appropriate to its local status, and particularly an estate for an ambitious younger son such as Richard Tracy <sup>37</sup>. There are indications that the family had been involved in disputes with their monastic neighbours. A letter from the Abbot of Tewkesbury to Cromwell concerning the lease of the manor of Stanway to Richard Tracy suggests that Tracy had claimed a false legal right to the tenure of the property. The claim is refuted by the Abbot, despite his willingness that Cromwell should allow Tracy to take the lease of the manor <sup>38</sup>.

The living of Toddington had been appropriated by the Bishop of Worcester to Hailes Abbey in 1386 <sup>39</sup>, and there is further evidence that by the Sixteenth Century relations between the family and the nominees of the Abbot were not always good. A puzzling letter survives in The Letter Book of Robert Joseph, a monk of Evesham Abbey and scholar of Gloucester College, Oxford <sup>40</sup>. The letter, dated by the editors to 29th September 1530 and sent from Robert Joseph to Master Henry Wyllys, a secular then resident and presumably parish priest at Toddington <sup>41</sup>, hints at considerable discord but states little in unequivocal terms. Joseph remarks that he has heard rumours concerning a will that has been written by William Tracy and which contains various heretical statements <sup>42</sup>. He concludes



that if this is true, it proves that Tracy is as wicked in death as he has been in life by reason of his "pestilential contentions":

Ingens pervolitat rumor de Tracei  
contestamento variis heraesium virulentis  
differto, de quo aut per literas aut per  
temetipsum nos expeditius certiores  
precor facias. Si vera ad nos divagata  
vexit fama, vel (ut verius loquar) infamia,  
certe in Tracaeo evangelica effectum  
sortiuntur verba: Fiunt novissima hominis  
illius peiora prioribus. Futurumque est, ut  
sicut Samson plures moriens trucidarit  
allophylos quam dum adviveret, ita Traecius  
detestabiliorum cladem Christianae inferebat  
religioni dum miseram exhalavit animam quam  
unquam antea intulit suis pestiferis  
contentionibus, quibus os nunquam occlusum  
erat. 43

It seems that Robert Joseph was well acquainted with the reputation enjoyed by William Tracy, and some interesting points arise from his comments. It is clear that William Tracy enjoyed an evil reputation among conservative Catholic religious such as Robert Joseph; it was little surprise that he made a bad death for he was believed to hold views detestable to the Church. It is possible that Joseph was a prejudiced witness, motivated by a dislike arising

from the land disputes which appear to have existed between the Tracys and their religious neighbours; however it is interesting to note that William Tracy's religious views were the subject of discussion even at the time of the composition of the **Testament**. The dating of Joseph's letter by its editors is possibly open to question <sup>44</sup>, but even if it was written after 10th October 1530, the date on which the printed copy of the **Testament** was signed, it is clear that Tracy was widely suspected of harbouring heretical opinions at the time of his death, and that these were quickly the subject of local speculation. This may further indicate the speed with which the **Testament** was circulated following Tracy's death, and may also shed some light on the way in which Dr. Parker acted following the exhumation of Tracy's corpse: the destruction of Tracy's body was not just part of a concerted attack upon heresy in the Church, but was something of a posthumous settlement of a local "score". Tracy's social position had preserved him during life, but after his death Parker was able to exact a penalty he had perhaps contemplated for years, without the difficulties of placing a prominent citizen on trial <sup>45</sup>.

No early copy of the **Testament** has survived, but it seems reasonable to suppose that in the first instance it was circulated alone, unglossed, and in manuscript. The dead man's family or associates were

almost certainly involved in its circulation. At some stage between its composition in October 1530 and his death in July 1533 John Frith wrote an **Exposition** of Tracy's text <sup>46</sup>. Mozley, in his study of William Tyndale, holds that Frith wrote the **Exposition** before he left the Low Countries for England in July 1532 <sup>47</sup>, but again no copy of the **Testament** with this single **Exposition** by Frith remains. It is possible that it too circulated in manuscript in much the same way that **The Souper of the Lorde**, sometimes held to have been written by Frith during his time in the Tower was passed from hand to hand in London <sup>48</sup>. In the absence of more conclusive evidence, it must be allowed as a possibility that Frith wrote his **Exposition** of Tracy's **Testament** after his return to England, also for the benefit of the "Brothers" in London <sup>49</sup>.

The first surviving printed edition of the **Testament** is that attributed to H. Peetersen van Middelburch at Antwerp in 1535 <sup>50</sup>. This consists not only of the **Testament** and its **Exposition** by Frith, but also a further **Exposition** by William Tyndale. The Introduction to this edition contains information which allows something of the development of the texts to be traced. The editor explains that Tyndale's **Exposition** was found among his effects after his betrayal by Thomas Phillips in May 1535 <sup>51</sup>; along with this was a manuscript of Frith's **Exposition** of his "owne doynge and owne hande writing" <sup>52</sup>. At the time

of his arrest Tyndale was living at the English Merchants' House at Antwerp, whither he was introduced by William Tracy's associate Thomas Poyntz. This suggests that a wider association embracing Tracy, Poyntz, Tyndale, Frith and others in London and the merchant community must be considered. The preservation of both Tyndale's text and that of Frith is probably due to the swift intervention of the unofficial chaplain at the Merchants' House, John Rogers, who in the absence of Poyntz was one of the few men who would have had access to Tyndale's study 53.

The anonymous editor of the 1535 edition of the **Testament** explains his intention in printing the text in terms which suggest that he sees it as an indictment of the administration of the contemporary Church, and of ecclesiastical lawyers in particular:

I haue caused [it] to be putte in Prynte, to the intent that al the world shuld se how earnestly ye canonistes and spiritual lawyers (whych be the chefe rulers vnder byshoppes in euery dioces, in so moch that in euery cathedral churche the deane chaunceler and archdeaken are comenly doctoures or bachelers of lawe) do endeuer them selues iustly to iudge and spiritually to geue sentence according to charyty, vpon all the

The editor feels resentment at the role of canon lawyers in the contemporary Church and feels that their actions are incompatible with the Christian injunctions to love and charity. Thus he condemns the actions of Dr. Parker with regard to the exhumation of William Tracy, saying that he acted "**of pure zeale and loue hardely**" 55.

The spirit "**of our spirituality**", or the spirit in which the English clergy act, is contrasted unfavourably with the Holy Spirit, the "**spirite of him that reased vp Chryst**" through love 56. The editor concludes with a prayer for the conversion of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to the "true light" and divine and evangelical truth 57.

The 1535 edition of the **Testament** was re-printed as part of **Wickliefes Wicket** in 1546. In the three editions which followed the **Testament** is present, but it is only in the editions of 1548 and 1550 (C and D) that John Frith's **Exposition** is included along side that by William Tyndale 58. The two earlier editions, probably both dating from 1546 (A and B), follow the 1535 edition of the **Testament** very closely except in the omission of Frith's **Exposition**. It is almost certain that the printer of the second edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** had seen the 1535 Antwerp edition

of the **Testament** for the ornamentation of the title page with a Maltese Cross device and the distribution of the text on the title page is strikingly similar to that of the 1535 **Testament**. The superior impression of the type and the absence of any ornamented capitals in the **Wickliefes Wicket** editions of the **Testament** precludes the possibility that the editions of 1535 and 1546 were the product of the same press. Furthermore the date of the Antwerp edition of the **Testament**, 1535, included at the foot of the title page, is retained in the title of all subsequent editions of the **Testament**. No doubt this is because the wording of the original 1535 title page leaves it unclear whether the date refers to the printing or to the events described in the extended title. The editor of the later editions clearly concluded that the date referred to the latter, rather than to the printing. This is a strong indication that the edition of 1535 and those of the 1540s were produced by different editors <sup>59</sup>. The wording of the Introduction to the 1535 edition implies that the editor was sufficiently familiar with Tyndale to be a sort of "literary executor" with immediate access to his private papers and a certain knowledge of what was to be found among them. Mozley states his belief that the editor in 1535 was John Rogers <sup>60</sup>. The task of editing the **Testament** and the two **Expositions** suggests an editor with some theological understanding, and on the whole there is little reason to question Mozley's conclusion. It is

possible, however, that Rogers acted under the patronage of Thomas Poyntz, the Gloucestershire merchant and friend of William Tracy who acted to some extent as Tyndale's protector in Antwerp <sup>61</sup>.

When examining the text of the **Testament** the reader will be struck by the document's relative brevity. It is surprisingly brief to have attracted so much attention and controversy <sup>62</sup>. It falls into five major sections, each dealing with a particular instruction or bequest, but only in the most general terms. Approximately a third of the text consists of quotations from Biblical or Patristic sources. Despite its brevity, the **Testament** is a surprisingly subtle document with a well-developed theology running through it. Its impact lies perhaps as much in what it omits to mention as in its specific clauses: its simple phrases and skilful use of quotation carry a multitude of theological implications, and in many respects it is more of a theological discourse than a legal deposition.

The first clause of Tracy's **Testament** constitutes the usual committal of the testator's soul to God <sup>63</sup>. The absence of any mention of the protection or assistance of any saints or the Virgin as found in most "Catholic" wills at this period should be noted <sup>64</sup>. The author instead stresses his trust and confidence in divine grace and the merits and virtue of Christ. The wording at this point is not entirely

unambiguous but the continuation and qualification of this clause makes it clear that Tracy intends his reader to understand that it is his faith or "trusting", his belief in his living redeemer which makes him a partaker in the "**merites of Iesus Christe, and ... the vertue of his passion**", and assures him of the remission of his sins and the resurrection of his body <sup>65</sup>. This personal and individual faith is described as "**my hope ... layed vp in my bosome**" <sup>66</sup>. Thus it is through faith that William Tracy presumes to stand before his Creator and Redeemer <sup>67</sup>. Tracy proceeds to expound the nature of his faith in an extension of the first clause of the **Testament**: personal faith or trust-in-hope, is seen as the "**wealthe of my soule**" <sup>68</sup>, and this faith is sufficient to secure remission of sins and resurrection of the body for the Christian:

**the fayth that I haue taken and reheresed,  
is sufficient ... with out any other mannes  
worke, or workes. <sup>69</sup>**

Thus William Tracy unequivocally rejects the contemporary theology of merit accumulated by good works throughout life and the meritorious prayers of faithful Christians after death. Tracy rejects the notion that the Virgin or the saints can intercede on man's behalf with God: there can only be one mediator between God and man, and that is Christ. Redemption was accomplished once for all on the cross, and it is



faith or trust in the sufficiency of this unique historical dispensation of grace which Tracy believes is all important for the Christian. Tracy believes that all men stand equal before the face of God:

I do accept none in heauen nor in earth to  
be my mediatoure betwene me and god, but  
onely Iesus Christe, al other be but  
petitioners in receyuyng of grace, but  
[n]one able to giue influence of grace. 70

In this first clause of the **Testament** William Tracy rejects a crucial plank of contemporary theology. Petitions addressed to God through the saints form the basis of this objection, but the implications of his position go much further. Saints are reduced to the status of other Christians; prayers to and through them are ineffective and idolatrous in so far as they detract honour and praise from God. Redemption depends upon a personal and private internal faith or trust; thus masses and prayers offered on behalf of the dead avail them nothing. It is this point which so strongly echoes the earlier Wycliffite objections to images, the invocation of saints and prayers for the dead. The objection to prayers for the dead is developed further in the second clause of the **Testament** 71.

In this short clause Tracy stresses that he will not bestow any of his goods "for that entent that any

man shoulde saye, or do, to healpe my soule" <sup>72</sup>. Tracy explicitly rejects the efficacy of masses offered for the dead. Rather he states:

I trust onely to the promise of god, he that beleueth and is baptized shall be saued, and he that beleueth not shalbe damned. <sup>73</sup>

Faith and baptism are to be regarded as the marks of the true Christian. The skilful use of Biblical quotations throughout the **Testament** should be noted. The beliefs of the testator are expounded and linked to carefully selected Biblical passages, as in the quotation above where Tracy refers to **Mark** 16:16. The first two sections of the **Testament** are linked in dealing with the distribution of William Tracy's property, and on a more theological level with his beliefs concerning justification and the process of human redemption. The emphasis upon the faith of the individual as opposed to the sacramental mediation of divine grace through the Church appears to bear some resemblance to Lutheran thought; but the comparatively early date of the **Testament** means that as a non-University theologian William Tracy would have had to be adept and assimilative in order to produce a thoroughly Lutheran text by 1530 <sup>74</sup> The parallels are also strong with Wycliffite objections to the way in which the Church had developed for itself an intermediary role in the spiritual life of the Christian <sup>75</sup>.

Tracy implies a fundamental objection to images and pilgrimages to holy places as a means to grace <sup>76</sup>. The unequivocal rejection of masses celebrated for the dead must be seen against the background of Tracy's assertion of the sufficiency of faith for the redemption of the true Christian. It becomes clear that Tracy was not simply objecting to the contemporary use of the requiem mass and the endowment of chantries: he has a fundamental theological objection to the Church's understanding of all masses. Man's redemption has been accomplished as an historical event at the time of Christ's death upon the cross: thus the world is reconciled to God. This event was unique and cannot be repeated: attendance at mass or reception of the consecrated elements cannot add or subtract anything to man's eternal fate which is sealed by his personal faith and his reception into the Church through baptism. It is difficult to ascribe any notion of grace to any sacrament in Tracy's theological system, with the possible exception of baptism: it is a radical rejection of the theology and practise of the contemporary Church. The mass, central to the theology of the contemporary Church is reduced by Tracy to a mere memorial of a greater historical event <sup>77</sup>. These objections to the mass, taken with the implied radicalism of Tracy's belief in the equality of all Christians before God suggests that his views have a more radical background than Continental

Lutheranism. Tracy's theology owes much to native Lollard and Wycliffite thought: there is no element in Tracy's theology which could not have been produced by any Wycliffite writer from the late Fourteenth Century, whereas there are elements which would have unsettled an orthodox Lutheran.

The third clause of the **Testament** is of similar brevity to the second, but represents a distinct development of thought <sup>78</sup>. Tracy moves to discuss the arrangements for his funeral, and again demonstrates what might have been considered a shocking indifference by his contemporaries and the Church. The major portion of this clause is taken up with an extended quotation from St. Augustine's tract **De cura pro mortuis gerenda**<sup>79</sup>. This is adduced in support of Tracy's contention that:

Touchynge the buryinge of my bodye, it  
auayleth me not what be done therto ...

80

Thus Tracy selects a passage where Augustine holds that elaborate funerals are more for the benefit of the bereaved than the merit of the dead:

Ita omnia, id est curatio funeris, conditio  
sepulturae, pompa exsequiarum, magis sunt  
vivorum solatia quam subsidia mortuorum. 81

The arrangements for Tracy's funeral are remitted to his executors in contrast to many of his contemporaries who stipulated elaborate obsequies <sup>82</sup>; this clause again demonstrates Tracy's rejection of the contemporary Church and its conventional liturgical forms. The elaborate liturgies for the dead are equally rejected as worthless to the departed. Tracy's refusal to leave instructions for an elaborate funeral recalls the contempt for the human body which is a common theme in several "Lollard" wills written in the early years of the Fifteenth Century <sup>83</sup>. In these earlier documents the puritanical attitude to the deceased body is coupled with strict injunctions against funeral pomp <sup>84</sup>. The words used by these Wycliffite Knights and their ladies are almost precisely those used by William Tracy a century later.

In the fourth clause Tracy returns to the distribution of his temporal wealth <sup>85</sup>. He attempts to explain his thinking on the question of the relationship between works, faith and merit. It is perhaps here that signs of a Lutheran influence may justly be detected. The main purpose of the clause is not so much the allocation of particular effects but the explanation of why Tracy finds it unnecessary to leave any part of his property to the Church. Tracy believes that he cannot gain any merit in the sight of God through the "good bestowyng" of his wealth:

My merite is the fayth of Iesus Christe  
onely: by whom suche workes are good  
accordynge to the wordes of our Lorde. I was  
hongry, and thou gauest me to eate. 86

Through the grace of God Tracy hopes to bestow his goods in such a way that they are accepted as "fruites of faith" 87. The section is concluded with a passage which would have won the approval of both John Wyclif and Martin Luther:

And euer we shoulde consyder the true  
sentence, that a good worke maketh not a  
good man, but a good man maketh a good work,  
for fayth maketh both good and ryghteouse,  
for a ryghteouse man lyueth by fayth. And  
what so euer spryngeth not out of fayth, is  
synne. 88

The skilful blending of theme and Biblical quotation suggests an author of more than ordinary theological learning and ability. In explaining the distribution of his property William Tracy states concisely a doctrine of justification through personal faith as opposed to the gaining of merit through the performance of "good" or meritorious works. Certain aspects of the Testament bear a resemblance to Lutheran theology, but it should be noted that these same passages are not so distinctively Lutheran that

they could not have been inspired by native Lollardy 89.

The concluding clause of the **Testament** is more legal in character <sup>90</sup>. It should be noted however, that in again stressing that his property is left to his widow and son rather than to the Church or to a chantry foundation, Tracy is drawing further attention to his theology of justification and the accordingly diminished status of good works. It is clear that in these areas he differed fundamentally from the teaching of the contemporary Church, and it is perhaps equally clear that the **Testament** was intended by its author to advertise his dissent. Faced with such an overtly unorthodox document the ecclesiastical authorities were left with little choice but to take action against it and its author. With its beguiling simplicity which in fact serves to convey in a clear and concise form the essentials of an heretical system of belief with implications ranging much further than the issues explicitly dealt with in its pages, it is not surprising that the **Testament** became favoured reading for mid- Sixteenth Century religious malcontents.

It is interesting briefly to compare William Tracy's **Testament** with the analysis of the wills of Latimer, Clifford and Cheyne, three of the early Fifteenth Century "Lollard Knights" made by K.B. McFarlane <sup>91</sup>. In common with these earlier Wycliffite

documents, Tracy's **Testament** is written in English. By 1530 this was by no means so unusual as it had been in 1401 or 1414, and it certainly was not considered a mark of dubious orthodoxy in itself <sup>92</sup>. It is interesting, never the less, that Tracy chose to use English in preference to Latin, a language he was well able to use and which was still favoured by the legal profession. It is tempting to conclude that Tracy deliberately chose to use English in order to both to symbolize his rejection of the Roman Church and to make his **Testament** accessible to a wide readership. McFarlane outlines three further characteristics of the early Fifteenth Century Lollard wills: an emphasis upon the testator's personal unworthiness before God; a contempt for the earthly body; and injunctions against funeral pomp. All three features can be found in the **Testament**, although often in somewhat less austere language than that used by the Fifteenth Century knights and their ladies. Tracy commits himself to God and his mercy <sup>93</sup>, trusting that through faith he will be redeemed <sup>94</sup>. Redemption is through God's own good grace, and not through any human effort <sup>95</sup>. With regard to his funeral, Tracy writes:

And touchynge the buryinge of my bodye, it  
auayleth me not what be done therto, ...  
and therefore I remytte it onely to the  
discrecion of myne executours. <sup>96</sup>



The parallels should not be pressed too far, but the similarities in theme between Tracy's **Testament** and the wills of the Lollard knights is striking.

There can be no question of the "Protestant" nature of the **Testament**. The question to be resolved is the nature of that Protestantism. The qualities of "Lollard" wills noted above, were not, as McFarlane acknowledges, unique to the Lollards <sup>97</sup>. A definitive Lollard will would require other supporting qualities, and by the early 1530s ideas other than Wycliffism were abroad which could inspire a Protestant will. The use of patristic authority, in this case St. Augustine, was common among Wycliffite writers <sup>98</sup>. William Tyndale bears witness to Tracy's profound knowledge of Augustine <sup>99</sup>, but in itself this is not conclusive evidence of a Wycliffite influence in the composition of the **Testament**. Richard Tracy, William Tracy's son, made notable use of pre-mediaeval sources in two attacks upon transubstantiation published in 1549 <sup>100</sup>; this is again strongly reminiscent of authors who found inspiration in Wyclif, but it does not provide much evidence with regard to the origins of his father's theology. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that Richard Tracy was influenced by his background and up-bringing. External evidence regarding William Tracy's theology is inconclusive, although suggestive of a Wycliffite background. When coupled with the internal evidence of the **Testament**,

the case becomes stronger. As suggested above, there is nothing in the **Testament** which is distinctively Lutheran. One or two clauses, in particular clause four <sup>101</sup> have an echo of Luther, but the overall similarity is to early Fifteenth Century Wycliffite theology rather than to Sixteenth Century Lutheranism <sup>102</sup>.

McFarlane suggests that the puritan practise of Lollardy outlived the theology upon which it was founded <sup>103</sup>. In the case of William Tracy's **Testament**, there is evidence that this was not the case. Its influence was far from ephemeral, and was not confined to the years immediately following its composition. Professor Dickens has drawn attention to the will of Edward Hoppay, a yeoman of Halifax, dated 10th May 1548 <sup>104</sup>. Dickens describes this as:

**The most elaborate and interesting  
testimentary essay I have encountered.**

105

Professor Dickens believes that Hoppay's will is an important social document <sup>106</sup>, and he notes that the will shows no evidence of composition by a priest or lawyer, and concludes:

**It seems indeed faithfully to reflect the  
results of Protestant teaching and Bible-  
reading upon a middle-aged or elderly yeoman  
of modest means . . . .**

107

The most surprising feature of Hoppay's will, however, is that it is a verbatim copy of William Tracy's **Testament**, adapted to the needs of a Yorkshire yeoman. Whilst Dickens' conclusions with regard to Hoppay's theological sophistication are clearly invalidated by this interesting example of legal plagiarism, it is clear that Hoppay owned or had access to either a copy of **Wickliefes Wicket** in which the **Testament** was reproduced, or to the 1535 Antwerp edition of the **Testament**. Whichever Hoppay used, it is fair to conclude that he found himself so entirely in agreement with Tracy's theological tone and outlook that he appropriated his **Testament** for himself <sup>108</sup>.

Professor Dickens' remarks, while no longer applicable to Edward Hoppay, remain valid for William Tracy. His **Testament** is sophisticated, elaborate in its implications and yet wonderfully clear in its expression. Its status as an important socio-historical document is without question: the **Testament** is an almost unique insight into the private theological thoughts of a "county" gentleman of considerable local social standing but below the rank of nobility. When the date of the **Testament's** composition is recalled, 1530, the markedly Protestant tone is all the more surprising and significant. With the death of Henry VIII and the establishment of a new, overtly Protestant regime in 1547, it would have been relatively safe for Edward Hoppay to make use of

Tracy's **Testament** in 1548. It is interesting to note that the Testament was well-known in Yorkshire within two years of its first publication in England, and that it was the favoured reading of a layman who was probably no more or less theologically literate or inclined than his neighbours. What is surprising is that William Tracy was prepared to write such a provocative and dangerous document in the far from Protestant days of 1530. It may be that William Tracy felt that his social and economic position freed him to criticize the accepted theology and practise of the Church<sup>109</sup>. If so, he was mistaken, as others were to discover in similar circumstances in the 1540s<sup>110</sup>. His background probably encouraged the freedom of thought which was to lead to the production of a document which was at the same time a significant manifestation of late Wycliffism and emerging English Protestantism. The **Testament** is a bridge between old and new; it is also a link between laymen. In it one layman speaks to others. Tracy caught the anticlerical mood of the Reformation Parliament<sup>111</sup>, but the fact that the **Testament** was re-used in Yorkshire in 1548 shows that its appeal was durable and enduring. William Tracy accurately reflects the attitude of one section of the laity during the Reformation period in England. This attitude to the mortuary exactions of the Church and its expectations of the dying was not new in 1530 as the Hunne case clearly shows<sup>112</sup>: its

roots lie in the Wycliffite past of the Fifteenth Century.

- 1 - **Foxe**, V, 29; 38.
- 2 - **Foxe**, V, 38.
- 3 - **Smeeton**, 69.
- 4 - Where property left in a will was located in more than one episcopal jurisdiction the granting of probate was reserved to the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. Cf. McFarlane, K.B., **Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights**, Oxford 1972, 208-9 for survey of the law relating to wills and probate.
- 5 - Dickens, A.G., **The English Reformation**, London 1964, 138.
- 6 - Details of the case can be found in Dickens, **Reformation**, 132-7. Hunne was involved in a series of proceedings against City clergy which arose from an original dispute over mortuary dues following the burial of Hunne's infant son in 1511. After Hunne's murder whilst in episcopal custody Bishop Fitzjames ordered the burning of his body as though he was an unrepentant heretic.
- 7 - **Hall's Chronicle containing the History of England during the Reign of Henry IV and the succeeding monarchs to the end of the Reign of Henry VIII**, in which are particularly described the manners and customs of those periods, London 1809, 796-7.
- 8 - Wilkins, D., **Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae**, London 1737, III, 725.
- 9 - **Concilia**, 725.
- 10 - **Concilia**, 725. No record of an actual reference to either University has been traced. It is possible that none was made despite the instructions of Convocation.
- 11 - Various contemporary historians have attempted to use wills to illustrate the extent of a particular religious outlook at different stages of the English Reformation. Dickens, Palliser and Scarisbrick are notable exponents of this method. However as Margaret Spufford has suggested, the data gained from wills cannot be used in isolation, for many factors entirely independent of the testator's religious preferences may determine the wording of a will. Cf. Spufford, M., **Contrasting Communities**, Cambridge 1974, 334.
- 12 - Wilkins, D., **Concilia**, III, 725.
- 13 - **Concilia**, 725.

- 14 - **The Testament of William Tracy** [with Expositions by William Tyndale and John Frith], Antwerp, H./ Peetersen van Middelburch, 1535. **STC** no. 24167.
- 15 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, London, John Day, 1546 (1st ed. - 2 versions), 1548, 1550 (2nd ed. - 2 versions). **STC** no. 25590; 25590.5; 25591; 25591a.
- 16 - Bishop Jerome de Ghinucris, an Italian rewarded with the See of Worcester for services to the English Crown at Rome, the fourth Italian in succession to occupy that diocese since 1497. Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 68.
- 17 - **De haeretico comburendo**, 1401, 2 Henry IV, c. 15.
- 18 - Cf. **Smeeton**, 51.
- 19 - There is not even any clear evidence that Tracy was buried at Toddington. The church which existed in the Sixteenth Century was rebuilt in 1723 and again by Street in 1869 when the dedication was changed from St. Leonard to St. Andrew. The present building, a particularly fine Gothic mausoleum for the Tracys' heirs the Lords Sudeley of Toddington unfortunately incorporates very few monuments from the previous churches which occupied a site slightly to the west of the present building. The extant parish records begin only in 1666. Cf. Richards, P.L.C., **St. Andrew's Church, Toddington**, 1981. A curious illustration of the event is reproduced from Lord Sudeley's Pedigree Roll in **The Sudeleys - Lords of Toddington**, ed. Lord Sudeley, Manorial Society 1987, 93. No date for the picture is given but it appears to be of Eighteenth Century and imaginary origin.
- 20 - **Worcester, Reg. Jerome de Ghinucris**, b.716.093.
- 21 - Parker Society Vol. 38, ed. Walter, H., Cambridge 1850, 269-82.
- 22 - **PS 38**, 269; **Hall's Chronicle**, London 1809, 796-7. Davies, C., suggests that "the affair may have had wide financial and political implications...", "A Protestant Gentleman" in **Sudeley**, 122. Davies is almost certainly correct to suppose that considerations of local politics helped to shape the actions of the ecclesiastical authorities, but she does not indicate what parties were involved. It is suggested here that land disputes with ecclesiastical neighbours were the root cause of animosity towards the Tracys by the Church.
- 23 - **Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII**, ed. Brewer J.S. and Gairdner J., London 1862-1910, 6:40
- 24 - **Letters and Papers**, 6:40
- 25 - **Letters and Papers**, 13:1, 545; 13:2, 710; 13:2, 967(26); 14:1, 84; 14:2, 79, 782.
- 26 - Wilkins, D., **Concilia**, 725.
- 27 - For details of Hunne's case see vol.I 188, n. 6.

28 - **Wriothesley's Chronicle**, Camden Society 77, 1. Wriothesley comments that Hunne was "**made an heretic for suing a praemunire**" in his King's Bench action, Hilary Term 1513.

29 - Dickens' comments, **Reformation**, 134 are pertinent. It is interesting to note that in the surviving documentation surrounding the Tracy case no mention is made of forfeiture of goods to the Crown.

30 - Dickens, **Reformation**, 134.

31 - **The Testament of William Tracy**, Antwerp, H. Peetersen van Middelburch, 1535, title page.

32 - The riots which followed Fitzjames' condemnation of Hunne were so severe that he complained that he did not dare to leave his house in London. Cf. Dickens, **Reformation**, 134.

33 - Cf. Britton, J., **Graphic Illustrations with Historical and Descriptive Accounts, of Toddington, Gloucestershire, the Seat of Lord Sudeley**, London 1840.

Also Tracy genealogy drawn from Britton, **Graphic Illustrations**, below; **Dictionary of National Biography**; Atkyns, R., **The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire**, London 1712, I, 780-82.

34 - Connections through marriage to the Throckmorton family of Coughton Court, Warwickshire and Corse Court, Gloucestershire, the Lucy family of Charlecote, Warwickshire, and the Digby family of Coleshill, Warwickshire indicate the position in society occupied by the Tracy family at this period. From the genealogical table at the conclusion of this Introduction it would appear that the early decades of the Sixteenth Century were crucial for the advancement of the family, and this may support the theory that their support for "Protestant" ideas sprang in part from a desire to obtain ecclesiastical lands to support their greatly increased social standing. A rhyme of uncertain age but probably current in the early Sixteenth Century is found in South Warwickshire, North Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire and bears further witness to the wealth and influence of the Tracy family:

**The Tracys, the Lacys and the Fettiplaces  
own all the parks, woods and chases.**

The Fettiplaces of Swinbrook, Oxfordshire were certainly very grand and claimed for themselves descent from the royal House of Portugal. When Walter Jones, a wealthy London merchant of Chastleton, Oxfordshire married the Fettiplace heiress in 1609 his whole house was rebuilt and decorated to celebrate his bride's regal ancestry. The two "triple-decker" Fettiplace monuments in Swinbrook church are remarkable testimony to the wealth of these "county" families in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Cf. **The Parish Church of St, Mary, Swinbrook, Oxfordshire**; Clutton-Brock, A., **A Short Guide to Chastleton House; Charlecote Park, Warwickshire**, The National Trust, 1990.

35 - **Letters and Papers**, 1:1, 1537; 438; 4:390, 1609, 5083(6) (1528).

**Smeeton**, 69.

Davies, in "A Protestant gentleman", **Sudeley**, 121-139 quotes Andrew Hope of Oxford University as saying that the Poyntz family among others "**embraced the Reformation with suspicious promptness**", thus suggesting a Lollard background. Davies, "Protestant Gentleman" in **Sudeley**, 134 n. 1.

36 - Atkyns, R., **Gloucestershire**, II. This contains interesting views of the principal seats in the county drawn by Kip in the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Century. Toddington and Stanway are illustrated, together with the conversion at Hailes. The illustration of the property at Hailes, although set in a notable (although possibly exaggerated) garden, does not altogether bear out the description of it in the title as a "**fine house**". The west range of the former cloister formed the main portion of the house. Another engraving by S. and N. Buck dated 1732 suggests that the house was old-fashioned, cramped, poorly built and surrounded by the debris of the former abbey. By 1794 when Lyson engraved the house it was itself a romantic ruin. No trace of the house remains, but the foundations of the beautifully situated abbey have been well excavated. Cf. Coad, J.G., **Hailes Abbey, Gloucestershire**, London 1970, 10, 14-15. Further illustrations of Hailes, Toddington and Stanway are reproduced in **The Sudeleys - Lords of Toddington**, 99, 141-6, 151-2.

37 - Cf. **Letters and Papers**, 6:161.

Richard Tracy also petitioned Cromwell repeatedly for former estates belonging to Winchcombe Abbey. A brief examination of an O.S. map (**Sheets 150; 163**) will show how surrounded the Tracy's estate at Toddington was by monastic land. Richard Tracy first obtained Stanway by lease from the Abbot of Tewkesbury in 1533. **Letters and Papers**, 6:161; Neidpath, Lord J., **Stanway House**, 1984.

38 - **Letters and Papers**, 6:161

39 - Coad, J.G., **Hailes Abbey**, 9. The appropriation by Bishop Wakefield was intended to increase the Community's revenues in the decades following the Black Death. Cf. also Down, K., "The Ecclesiastical Structure and the Advowson of Toddington in the Middle Ages", in **The Sudeleys - Lords of Toddington**, 106-113.

40 - **The Letter Book of Robert Joseph, Monk-Scholar of Evesham and Gloucester College, Oxford, 1530-3**, ed. Aveling, H., and Pantin, W.A., Oxford 1967, Letter 72, 100-2.

41 - There seems no alternative explanation for Wyllys' presence at Toddington, and from Down's research it appears that Wyllys was the largely absentee incumbent of Toddington, a retailer of witty sermon anecdotes. Cf. Downs, K., "The Ecclesiastical Structure and Advowson of Toddington in the Middle Ages", in **Sudeley**, 106-113; **The Letter Book of Robert**



**Joseph**, ed. Aveling, H. and Pantin, W.A., Oxford 1967, items 27 and 71.

42 - It is surprising that the contents of Tracy's **Testament** were widely known before his death. It is tempting to conclude that Tracy deliberately advertised his views - at least to the local priest with whom, presumably, he was not on good terms. Cf. Davies, C., "A Protestant Gentleman and the English Reformation: the career and attitudes of Richard Tracy, ?1501-1569" in **Sudeley**, 121; Down, K., "The Ecclesiastical Structure and Advowson of Toddington in the Middle Ages" in **Sudeley**, 106-113.

43 - **The Letter Book**, 100-2.

Joseph's hostile tone towards William Tracy may draw upon a tradition that a member of the family had been one of the knights responsible for the murder of Thomas a Becket, and that as a consequence the family lived under a curse. Cf. Camden, **Britannia, Gloucestershire**, London 1695, 239. Also preface to Parker Society edition of the **Testament**, 38, 269.

44 - The edited text does not appear to contain any specific indication of its date of composition. On the whole a date two or three weeks later than that suggested by the editors might be preferred, and would remove the problem of Joseph's apparent anticipation of Tracy's death.

45 - Social position was certainly no guarantee against ecclesiastical investigation, but action against a man in Tracy's position would have required a courage which Parker seems to have lacked. From his **Register** it appears that Parker was happy to preside over a lax regime at Worcester and probably opted for a quiet existence wherever possible. It should be recalled that he acted against Tracy's corpse on the orders of Convocation and subsequently he stated that Archbishop Warham (by now conveniently dead) had ordered him to burn the remains. Cf. Hall's **Chronicle**, 1809, 796-7; Parker Society 38, 269; **Letters and Papers**, 6:40; **Worcester, Reg. Jerome de Ghinucris**, b.716.093.

46 - Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography** for details of Frith. Frith's **Exposition** was printed along with that by Tyndale in the 1535 Antwerp edition of the **Testament**, but not in the two 1546 editions of the **Testament** in **Wickliefes Wicket** printed at London by John Day.

47 - Mozley, J.F., **William Tyndale**, New York 1937, 240-1.

48 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 10ff.

49 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 10-12; Davis, J.F., "Lollardy and the Reformation in England", **Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte** 73 (1982), 217-36.

50 - **STC** no. 24167.

51 - **Testament**, Antwerp 1535, ; **Wicket**, C2v.

References to **Wicket** correspond to the present edited text.

52 - **Testament**, Antwerp 1535, ; **Wicket**, C2v.

53 - Cf. Mozley, J.F., **Tyndale**, 240ff.

For biography of Rogers, cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**.

The only possible alternative editor would be Richard Tracy who himself published theological works from 1540 to 1548, but the appendage of Tyndale's **Exposition** to the 1535 edition makes this very unlikely. Tracy remains a candidate for the editorship of the two editions of **Wickliefes Wicket** printed in 1546, however.

54 - **Testament**, Antwerp 1535/**Wicket**, C2v 14 - C3r 4

55 - **Testament**, Antwerp 1535/**Wicket** C3r 6-7

56 - **Testament**, Antwerp 1535/**Wicket**, C3r 11-12.

57 - **Testament**, Antwerp 1535/**Wicket**, C3r 11-15.

58 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, London, John Day 1548, 1550; **STC** no 25591; 25591a.

59 - The type used is similar, but a careful examination shows it to be different. The editions of the **Wicket** produced in 1548 and 1550 have more elaborate editorial material alongside the texts and bear the initials **M.C.** in a colophon, probably standing for Miles Coverdale.

60 - Cf. Mozley, J.F., **Tyndale**, 241.

61 - Poyntz seems to have acted as patron and protector to Tyndale and indeed pleaded for Tyndale's release after his arrest at some personal danger. Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**.

62 - Cf. Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 199. Mozley, J.F., **Tyndale**, 241: "To us Tracy's will seems so sensible and inoffensive, that we find it strange that two eminent men should have thought it worthwhile to write in its defence."

63 - The following references are to the text in this edition based upon the London editions of 1548 and 1550.

C3r 21ff.

64 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 139. For comparison it might be interesting to refer to the early English will of William, Lord Lovell written in about 1450. The complex details of the establishment of a chantry at Greyfriars', Oxford should particularly be noted. Although belonging to a different period, the tone of Lovell's will would still have been familiar in the early Sixteenth Century. Cf. **Early English Text Society** OS 149, 70-87. Cf. also discussion of Thomas Cromwell's will, Lehmborg, S.E., "The Religious Beliefs of Thomas Cromwell", in **Leaders of the Reformation**, ed. DeMolen, R.L., London and Toronto 1984, 136.

65 - **Testament**, C3r 24-32.

66 - **Testament**, C3r 31-32.

67 - Cf. Tracy's quotation of **Job** 19:25-6; C3r 29-

31.

68 - **Testament**, C3v 1-4.

69 - **Testament**, C3v 2-3.

70 - **Testament**, C3v 7-11.

71 - **Testament**, C3v 12-16.

72 - **Testament**, C3v 14.

73 - **Testament**, C3v 15-16

74 - Cf. **Smeeton**, 48-9; Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 102-5. It is very difficult to assess the pace with which Lutheran thought (i) arrived and (ii) was assimilated by theologians in England. The first books seem to have arrived in 1518-19, but in very small numbers. Dorne, the Oxford book-seller sold a steady but small number of copies of Luther's books between early 1520 and the prohibition of Luther's works later in the same year. Cf. **Smeeton**, 48; Fletcher, C.R.L., ed., **Day Book of John Dorne, Bookseller at Oxford, A.D. 1520, Collectanea**, 1st Series 71-177, Oxford 1885. It is possible, even probable that Tracy had access to some of Luther's works between 1519 and 1530, and it is possible that he was one of the **Maximi** whom Erasmus remarked as admirers of Luther's thought in 1519. What is suggested here, however, is that it would have been difficult for Tracy to have acquired sufficient Lutheran material to assimilate and reproduce a thoroughly Lutheran theological system by 1530. Clearly this point cannot be determined with certainty, and in favour of the opposite view it must be allowed that William's son Richard was familiar with Oxford academic circles having graduated M.A. in 1513 along with William Tyndale.

Davies, C., in "A Protestant Gentleman" in **Sudeley**, 121-139 (121n.1) states that by 1530 Tracy was a Lutheran, although he may have had a Lollard background. On analysis of the text of the **Testament** the present editor is not convinced that it is possible to characterize Tracy as simply a Lutheran with Lollard antecedents: too many un-Lutheran characteristics remain in the **Testament** for this to be an accurate assessment.

75 - Cf. **Smeeton**, 30-31; Tracy's understanding of faith as "trust" recalls the language of the Wycliffite - cf. Hudson, A., ed., **Selections From English Wycliffite Writings**, Cambridge 1978, 82/305-6; Hudson, A., **English Wycliffite Sermons**, Oxford 1983, I, 305/8-11. Tracy does not explain in the **Testament** how the Christian comes to faith or right-belief, but it appears to be more through reason or election than a Lutheran **Anfechtung**. Objection to the rapacity of the clergy, prayers for the dead, ceremonial pomp and the cult of the saints are all common to both Tracy and the Wycliffite writers - cf. **Smeeton**, 31, quoting Verkamp; McFarlane, K.B., **Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights**, Oxford 1972, 207ff. The tone of Tracy's writing and his concerns expressed in it are closer to those of the English Wycliffites than to Luther.

76 - C3v 7-9.

77 - Tracy's theology of the mass can only be reconstructed by reference to the **Testament**, especially C3v 7-16.

Tracy rejects all earthly and heavenly mediation. Tracy implies that priests are not necessary to mediate grace from God to man in the mass or any other sacrament, or to offer prayers and masses on behalf of

the dead. It follows that the mass must be seen in symbolic or memorialistic terms such as those developed in **Wickliefes Wicket** or John Lassels' **Protestacion**.

78 - C3v 17-23.

79 - Treatise written by Augustine to address the question posed by Paulinus of Nola:

**Whether it might be profitable to anyone, after his death, to have his body buried near the honoured tomb of some saint.**

Augustine, *De cura pro mortuis gerenda, Patrologiae Cursus Compleus*, ed. Migne, J.-P., Paris 1841-1871, 40 **S.A. Augustini Opera Omnia**, vol. VI, col. 594.c.II.4

80 - C3v 17.

81 - Augustine, *Op.cit.*, col. 594.c.II.4

82 - Cf. example of William Lord Lovell c.1455 described above, n.64.

83 - McFarlane, K.B., "Lollard Wills", Chpt. VI, **Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights**, Oxford 1972, 207-20.

McFarlane discusses several "Lollard" wills and their common features including those of Robert Folkingham (1399), Latimer (1401), Dame Alice Latimer (1402), Clifford (1404), Cheyne (1413), Dame Alice Sturry (1414), Edward Cheyne (1415), Lady Joan Beauchamp (1435).

84 - McFarlane, K.B., **Knights**, 210-11.

85 - C3v 24 - C4r 9.

McFarlane, K.B., **Knights**, 209, n.2.

86 - C3v 29-32.

87 - C3v 26-7.

88 - C4r 4-9.

89 - Cf. Comments by Smeeton, 138; **Select English Works of John Wyclif**, ed. Arnold, T., Oxford 1869-71, III, 38; **An English Garner: Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse**, ed. Arber, E., London 1903, "The Examination of master William Thorpe", 154. Cf. also note 75 above.

90 - C4r 10-18. Here Tracy appoints executors and refers to another document, presumably a will "**of my owne hande bearynge the date of thys present wrytynge**" which dealt with bequests of property.

91 - McFarlane, K.B., **Knights**, 207ff.

92 - **Smeeton**, 90-2.

Also Hudson, A., "Lollardy: The English Heresy?", **Studies in Church History** 18 (1982), 261-83.

93 - C3r 21-22.

94 - C3v 1-7.

95 - C3v 7-16.

96 - C3v 17; C3v 22-23.

97 McFarlane, K.B., **Knights**, 217ff. Some of the "Lollard" features can be seen in the wills of Bishop Repton (1420?) and Archbishop Arundel (1414).

98 - Cf. **Smeeton**, 110; note especially the quotation from Talbert, E.W., "A Lollard Chronicle of the Papacy", **Journal of English and Germanic Philology** 41 (1942), 173.

- 99 - Tyndale, **Exposition of Tracy's Testament**, Dlr 23-26.
- 100 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 308.  
Dickens notes that Richard Tracy's position on the eucharist is closer to Frith than to Luther. This may shed further light upon his father's theological tendencies. Dickens' view of Richard Tracy is to be preferred to that of Cross. Cf. Cross, C., **Church and People 1450 - 1660. The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church**, London 1979 (2nd. ed.), 75; Cross describes Richard Tracy as a "**convinced Lutheran**". The concerns of his **Supplication** (1544) are however markedly closer to those traditional calls for the reform of the Church made by Wycliffites from the Fourteenth Century onwards than to Luther.
- 101 - C3v 24 - C4r 9.
- 102 - McFarlane, K.B., **Knights**, 215.
- 103 - **Knights**, 215.
- 104 - Dickens, A.G., **Lollards**, 216-7.
- 105 - Dickens, **Lollards**, 216.
- 106 - Dickens, **Lollards**, 217.
- 107 - Dickens, **Lollards**, 217
- 108 - To this extent Dickens' comments on Hoppay's theological sophistication are entirely valid: he could read Tracy's **Testament**, understand it, and identify its sentiments as his own.
- 109 - It must be accepted, however, that social position probably prevented the ecclesiastical authorities from prosecuting Tracy during his lifetime.
- 110 - Cf. the prosecution of John Lassels, Anne Askew and Bishop Shaxton in 1546 and Dr. London's persecution of five members of the royal household in 1543. See Introduction to Lassels' **Protestacion**.
- 111 - 1529-1533: thus the Parliament was contemporary with the composition of the **Testament**.
- 112 - Cf. Note 27 above.

William de Tracy, given the manor of Toddington and granted lands there, ca. 1139 - 1148



Sir William Tracy ("The Elder")  
Lord of Toddington, Sheriff co.  
Glos. 1394 and 1417

Alice de la Spine  
Writ for inquisition, 1441

William Tracy ("The Younger")  
Sheriff, co. Glos. 1420 and 1443  
Knight of the Shire, 1442  
Died before 4th Oct. 1477

Maragaret,  
d. Sir John  
Paunceforte

John Tracy  
of North Piddle, Worcs.

Thomas

Robert

Henry (Harry) Tracy  
Died Before 5th Feb. 1506

Alice Baldington, of Adderbury, Oxon.

WILLIAM TRACY  
Sheriff, co. Glos.  
Died Oct. 1530,  
burned as heretic 1533

Margaret, d.  
Sir Thomas Throckmorton  
of Corse Court, Glos.

Richard

Ralph  
(a monk?)

Elizabeth  
= Bayham

Anne  
= Wye

William Tracy  
m. 1517?

d. Sir Simon Digby  
of Colsehill, Warks.

Anne

Alice

RICHARD TRACY  
of Stanway

= Barbara, d.  
Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, Warks.

Henry Tracy  
d. 1556/7

= Elizabeth, d.  
John Bruges,  
Lord Chandos of Sudeley

Sir Paul Tracy of Stanway  
created Baronet, 1611

= Anne Shakerley

2 sons

The information in the preceding Genealogy is drawn from the Pedigree of the Tracy lineage drawn up by the College of Arms and printed in The Sudeleys - Lords of Toddington, The Manorial Society of Great Britain, London 1987, 100, and information in Atkyns, R., The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire, London 1712 and Britton, J., Graphic Illustrations with Historical and Descriptive Accounts, of Toddington, Gloucestershire, the Seat of Lord Sudeley, London 1840.

## II Introduction to William Tyndale's Exposition of Master William Tracy's Testament.

The circumstances under which William Tyndale came to write his **Exposition** of William Tracy's **Testament** may be reconstructed from the information contained in the extended title page of the 1535 Antwerp edition of the **Testament** <sup>1</sup>. It seems that a copy of Tracy's **Testament** together with an **Exposition** of it written by John Frith had been sent in manuscript to Tyndale at Antwerp. Frith was executed in London in 1533 <sup>2</sup>; Mozley has suggested that his **Exposition** pre-dates his return to England in 1532. The evidence for this is not particularly compelling and it must be admitted that the **Exposition** could have been written in London in late 1532 during Frith's confinement in the Tower <sup>3</sup>. In this case Tyndale would have received Frith's manuscript some time after 1532. When he commenced his own **Exposition** and for what purpose is not clear. The editor of the 1535 Antwerp edition explains that both Tyndale's **Exposition** and that by Frith were discovered among Tyndale's papers in his room at the English Merchants' House at Antwerp following his arrest:

After Wyllyam Tyndall was so Iudasly  
betrayed by an Englishman, a scholer of  
Louain, whose name is Philipes, there were  
certayne thynges of hys doynge founde which  
he had entended to haue put forth ....



Amongest whiche was this Testament of  
mayster Tracie expounded by him self, where  
vnto was annexed ye exposition of the same  
of Ihon Friths owne doynge & owne hande  
writing ...

4

The credit for this discovery should probably be given to John Rogers <sup>5</sup> who was also a resident in Antwerp for a few months prior to Tyndale's arrest in 1536, and it is likely that Rogers was also the anonymous editor of the 1535 edition of the **Testament** and its **Expositions** which was printed at Antwerp. The Introduction to this edition <sup>6</sup> (reprinted in each subsequent edition) raises several questions to which there can be no definite answers. The editor implies that Tyndale had intended to publish the **Testament** and his **Exposition** of it. This is interesting in the light of Tyndale's apparent reluctance to print controversial material after the publication of his **Answere unto Sir Thomas More's Dialogue** in 1531 <sup>7</sup>. Mozley has suggested that Tyndale's **Exposition** was written in 1532 <sup>8</sup>, and this would make it contemporary with his **Exposicion vpon the v. vi. vii. chapters of Matthew** <sup>9</sup>. It has been suggested that at approximately this period Tyndale was engaged in editing Lollard texts for publication at Antwerp <sup>10</sup>. Given the doctrinal background of Tracy's **Testament** it is not unlikely that Tyndale's **Exposition** could have been written as part of a such programme of work. The

fact that it remained in manuscript until late 1535 is difficult to explain, other than by a reluctance on Tyndale's part to re-enter the controversial debates which had ultimately cost Frith his life in 1533.

It was perhaps inevitable that Tyndale should find himself drawn to write an **Exposition** of William Tracy's **Testament**. John Frith's interest in the text would probably have been sufficient to bring it to the elder writer's attention <sup>11</sup>. The widespread interest in the **Testament** in London during 1530-31 could have been reported to Tyndale by his merchant hosts in Antwerp who had regular contact with London. Above all, it seems likely that Tyndale was personally acquainted with William Tracy during his period of residence with Sir John Walsh at Little Sodbury, or possibly at an earlier date in his youth in Gloucestershire <sup>12</sup>. The Gloucestershire connection is convincing, but further evidence for Tyndale's personal knowledge of William Tracy is found in the **Exposition** where Tyndale describes Tracy as:

A learned man, & better sene in the workes  
of saynt Austen. xx. yeres before he dyed,  
then euer I knew doctour in Englande ...

13

This implies that Tyndale knew Tracy as a theologian in about 1510. Tyndale took his B.A. from Oxford on July 4th 1512 and proceeded to his M.A. in

July 1515, the same year that William Tracy's second son, Richard Tracy proceeded to that degree in the same University. This in all probability was the source of their original contact which was likely to be continued during Tyndale's residence at Little Sodbury. Although situated at the opposite end of the county to Toddington, the home of William Tracy, Tyndale's patron Sir John Walsh was connected with both William Tracy and Tyndale's future protector in Antwerp, Thomas Poyntz through the execution of Crown business in Gloucestershire 14.

Tyndale comments that William Tracy's charity and life are signs "not only of a good christen man, but also of a perfect christen man" 15. Tyndale appears to know that Tracy bestowed "a great part of hys goodes, whylle he yet liued, vpon ye poore" 16, and that he "assyned by wrytynge vnto whom an other part shoulde be distributed" 17. The personal tone of Tyndale's comments are continued towards the end of the **Exposition** where he states that William Tracy was:

Vertuous, wise, & wel lerned, & of good fame  
& report, & founde in the fayth while he was  
a lyue. 18

Tyndale is aware that the ecclesiastical authorities had not challenged William Tracy's orthodoxy while he lived:

But yf they say he was suspect when he was a  
lyue, then is theyr doynge so much the  
worse, & to be thought yt they feare his  
doctrine when he was a lyue and mistrusted  
theyr owne parte, their consciences  
testifyng to them yt he helde none other  
doctrine then what was true, seyng then  
they neither spake nor wrote agaynste hym  
nor broughte him to any examination. 19

Tyndale clearly knows that William Tracy was held  
in respect while he lived, "being of so worshipfull &  
auncient a bloude" 20, and for his "vertuous and  
godly" work and life 21. With regard to the treatment  
of William Tracy's corpse by the ecclesiastical  
authorities, Tyndale is uncompromising in his  
condemnation. An implicit parallel with the case of  
Richard Hunne 22 is drawn when Tyndale writes:

Some merry felowes wyll thynke, that they  
ought fyrst to haue sent him to wyt whether  
he woulde haue reuoked, ere they had so  
dispytefully burnt the dead body that could  
not aunswer for it selfe, nor interprete his  
wordes, how he ment them ... 23

The **Exposition** concludes with a plea for an  
impartial reading of Tracy's **Testament**. The godly  
reader is asked to:

Iudge whether I haue expounded ye wordes of  
thys testamente as they shoulde seame to  
signify . . . . which if it so be thinke not  
that he was the worse bicause ye dead body  
was burnt to asshes, but rather lerne to  
knowe the great desyre that hypocrites haue  
to finde one craft or other to dase the  
truth with, & cause it to be counted for  
heresy. 24

In the closing lines Tyndale recalls the anticlerical tone of his opening: the hypocrites, the ecclesiastical authorities and canon lawyers will continue to beguile the ignorant and unsophisticated laity who are ill-equipped to fend-off the vested interests of the corrupt clergy. Whatever the Church feels to be prejudicial to its own interests will be denounced as heresy, "who so euer saye naye" <sup>25</sup>. The faithful must pray to God to change the hearts of those responsible for the administration of the Church. Thus Tyndale concludes with an invocation to the faithful to offer up prayers for the conversion of the canon lawyers he has previously denounced:

The eternall God must be prayed to nyghte  
and daye to amende them in whose power it  
onely lyueth, who also graunt them ones  
ernestly to truste hys true doctrine  
conteyned in the swete & pure fountaynes of

hys scriptures and in hys pathes to directe  
theyre wayes. 26

Tyndale's **Exposition** of Tracy's **Testament** can be seen in at least two different lights. In one sense it is an able defence of the words and reputation of a man, whom, it has been argued, Tyndale knew and respected as a wise and good Christian. At the same time the **Exposition** contains a clear development or discussion of the theological questions raised by Tracy in the **Testament**. It has been noted in the **Introduction to the Testament** that Tracy discusses very few theological issues in specific detail but his words carry wide-ranging implications <sup>27</sup>. It is in William Tyndale's **Exposition** that these implications are developed by an able theological writer. Thus Tyndale's **Exposition** deals at some length with eight clearly defined theological issues: a covenant between man and God; justification of man by faith; prayers for the dead; invocation of the saints; the payment of mortuary dues; Purgatory and indulgences. The list of issues addressed by Tyndale in the course of his **Exposition** reads somewhat like a check-list of the themes which fuelled the Reformation debates in Sixteenth Century England. It is true that in neither the **Testament** nor Tyndale's **Exposition** is the mass dealt with as a specific theological question, but in both works it is ever-present just below the surface. Tyndale's **Exposition** of Tracy's **Testament** is an

indictment of the contemporary English Church of the early 1530s, and at the same time a "Reformation manifesto" in miniature.

Tyndale's development approximately follows the order of the clauses in Tracy's **Testament**. Thus Tyndale begins his discussion, as did Tracy, by turning his attention to the nature of man's relationship with God. The Christian must commit himself to "God aboue all" <sup>28</sup>. This, Tyndale states, is "the fyrst stone in the foundation of our fayth" <sup>29</sup>. Faith is defined in what initially appear to be conventional Lutheran terms:

We beleue and put oure truste in one god ...  
cleuyng fast to his trueth, myght, mercye,  
and goodnes, surely certified, and fully  
persuaded, that he is oure god, yea oures  
30

The Christian comes to God, Tyndale believes, "the waye that he hath appoynted, whyche waye is Iesus Christe onely" <sup>31</sup>. However "greuously we haue trespassed" <sup>32</sup> the way to God through Christ is always open. It is important to note Tyndale's significant use of the phrase "waye that he hath appoynted": the initiative in salvation is to be ascribed to God alone. As Smeeton has remarked, in this respect Tyndale, like Wyclif before him, is consciously anti-pelagian <sup>33</sup>. Although it is not elucidated in totally

unambiguous terms in the **Exposition**, it is clear that Tyndale does not base his soteriology upon Luther's **Anfechtung** <sup>34</sup>. God, the almighty, all good and all merciful <sup>35</sup> takes the initiative in drawing sinful man to himself. As Tyndale wrote elsewhere:

As an oyntment healeth the bodie euen so the  
spirite thorowe confidence and trust in  
christes bloude healeth the soule & maketh  
her loue the lawe of God. 36

Tyndale's doctrine is Biblical in its foundation rather than rational or experiential. Thus in the **Exposition** he comments that Tracy's first clause "is the fyrste sentence in the fyrste commaundement, and the fyrste article of our crede" <sup>37</sup>. Faith for Tyndale, as for Wycliffite writers in the Fifteenth Century was passive trust in Christ. Indeed, the two words are used interchangeably in Tyndale's writing <sup>38</sup>. In the **Exposition** Tyndale writes:

Thys truste and confidence in the mercy of  
God is thorowe Iesus Christe .... Christe  
bryngeth vs into thys grace ... 39

Justifying faith has trust and confidence in Christ <sup>40</sup>:

Who is righteous but he that trusteth in  
Christes bloude be he neuer so weke? 41



Tyndale does not depart from his Biblically-derived doctrine of justification by faith "**testified thorow out al scripture**" <sup>42</sup>. It is, however, a doctrine of justification by faith which is significantly different to that developed by Luther, and which appears to have more in common with the beliefs of those who followed Wyclif in the early Sixteenth Century <sup>43</sup>. Tyndale's difference from Luther is most clearly seen in the development of his discussion of justification in the context of William Tracy's **Testament**. The **Exposition** contains a very clear outline of Tyndale's theology of the covenant. Tyndale pictures the Christian as a servant of Christ "to do hys wyll" <sup>44</sup>. Despite his lowly status it should be noted that the Christian is owed wages for his service:

There is but one whose seruant I am, to do hys wyll. But one that shal paye me my wages, there is but one to whom I am bound, ergo but one that hath power ouer me to dame or saue me, I wil adde to this Paules argument. God sware vnto Abraham foure hundreth yeres before the law was gyuen, that we shoulde be saued by Christe. Ergo the lawe gyuen foure hundreth yeres after can not disanull that couenaunt. <sup>45</sup>

Tyndale elaborates the theme of the covenant as an image for man's relationship with God when he draws an important distinction between true and false faith:

Moreouer to exclude that blynde imagination falsely called fayth, of them yt gyue them selues to vice wythout resistence, affirming that they haue no power to otherwyse, but that God hath so made them, they not entendynge or purposyng to mende theyr lyuyng, but synyng wyth whole consent and full lust, he declareth what fayth he meaneth. ii. maner wayse. Fyrst by that he sayeth, who so euer beleueth and is baptized, shall be saued. By whyche wordes he declareth euidently, that he meaneth that fayth, that is the promes made vpon the appoyntment betwene God and vs, that we shoulde kepe hys lawe to the vttermost of oure power, that is he that beleueth in Christ for the remission of sinne, and is baptized to do the wyll of Christe, and to kepe hys lawe of loue, and to mortifie the flesh, that man shalbe saued, & so is the imagination of these swyne yt wyl not leaue wallowyng them selues in euery myre & podel, cleane excluded for god neuer made promes but vpon appointment or couenaunt vnder

which who so euer wyll not come can be no  
partaker of the promes. 46

The promise made by God to the Patriarchs, the covenant which he formed with Abraham is "as deaplye made to vs as them" 47. If the Christian responds to that promise or Gospel with trust or faith 48, his response will manifest itself in a love for God's law. Faith enables the Christian to love that which he could not love before 49. As Smeeton comments in his discussion of Tyndale's theology, the divine law begins by having a negative role for the would-be Christian (*secundus usus legis*), but through spirit-inspired faith it takes on a positive spiritual function (*tertius usus legis*) in the Christian's life. Smeeton makes a persuasive argument for a Wycliffite background to this promise-law theme in Tyndale's theology:

Although Tyndale ... stressed this issue [the promise/Gospel] more than it had been stressed in Lollard literature, the contours of his thought were already suggested there....

In Wycliffite terms ... the "gospel" had moral implications which specified how men ought to live. Both "law" and "gospel" had ethical demands, and the two could not be separated; therefore one must cleave to

Christ's law as well as to his promises.

50

This is precisely the point which Tyndale sought to make in the lengthy discussion of the covenant quoted above <sup>51</sup>:

True fayth in Christ gyueth power to loue  
the law of God. <sup>52</sup>

Quoting **John 1:12** Tyndale argues that to be a "Son of God" is to "loue righteousnes, and hate vnrighteousnes and so be like thy father" <sup>53</sup>. If the Christian has no power in him to love the law of God, it follows that he has no faith in the redemption wrought through Christ's blood <sup>54</sup>. Tyndale clarifies the causal relationship between the Holy Spirit, the Gospel and the law:

The preaching of the fayth ministreth the  
spirite & the spirite lowseth the bandes of  
Sathan, & giueth power to loue the law, &  
also to do it. <sup>55</sup>

Tyndale realises that his emphasis upon the ethical obligations of the Christian resulting from faith may suggest an objection to his readers:

A wel (wylt thou say) yf I must professe the  
law & worke, ergo fayth alone saueth me not.  
Be not deceued wyth sophistrie: but withdraw

thyne eares from wordes & consider the  
thynges in thyne harte. 56

The explanation which Tyndale offers his readers is worth quoting in full not least because it serves to show the gulf which existed between his concept of justification by faith as developed in the early 1530s and that which had been advanced by Luther. Tyndale writes:

Fayth iustifieth the: that is bringeth  
remission of all synnes, & setteth the in  
the state of grace before all workes, &  
getteth the power to worke ere thou couldest  
worke, but yf thou wylt not go backe agayne,  
but continew in grace, & come to the  
saluacion & glorious resurrection of Christe,  
thou muste worke & ioyne workes to thy fayth  
in wyll & ded to, ... & as ofte as thou  
failest set the on thy fayth agayne without  
healpe of workes. And although when thou art  
reconciled and restored to grace workes be  
required yet is not that  
reconcilynge, and grace the benefyte of the  
workes that foloweth, but cleane contrary  
that forgyuenes of the synnes and restoryng  
to fauour deserue the workes that followe.  
57

Tyndale illustrates his point with an image of a murderer who is reprieved by the king <sup>58</sup>. Once reprieved the criminal will ensure that he upholds the king's law and performs good works. His reprieve did not depend upon his works, but rather upon the king's good grace: "that benefyte and gyfte of his lyfe deserue the workes that folowe" <sup>59</sup>. It is thus the Christian's duty to do all in his power to please God and to keep his law of love; it is a duty which arises from a sense of obligation resulting from God's free grace. As it is a duty to live a moral life within God's law, it is impossible that any resulting good works could merit God's initiative of grace which predicates the whole human relationship with God:

All what so euer thou arte able to do to  
please God wyth all is thy dutye to do,  
though thou haddest neuer synned, yf it be  
the dutie how can it then be deseruyng of  
the mercye and grace that wente before? <sup>60</sup>

Tyndale believes that Tracy's **Testament** shows ample evidence that William Tracy was possessed of the true justifying faith which shows itself in a love for God and his law:

When he [Tracy] sayeth that he purposeth to bestow his goodes, to be accepted as fruites of fayth, it is euident that he meaneth that lyuyng fayth whyche professeth the law of

god, and is the mother of al good workes,  
yea and nurse therto. 61

The **Exposition** of Tracy's **Testament** demonstrates the theological understanding which Tyndale brought to the concepts of election, faith, law, promise and works. In a piece of writing such as the **Exposition** which is more a "practical" apology than a systematic statement of doctrine these concepts are interconnected and frequently dealt with simultaneously. This is not surprising: in many senses it is artificial to view the process of justification in strictly sequential terms. What is particularly clear from the **Exposition**, however, is that all these concepts are unified by Tyndale's theology of the covenant 62.

God offers the Christian justification by faith; the Spirit awakens a sense of trust in the promises made by God to man in the Gospel. This trust or faith brings with it remission of sins and sets man in a state of grace before God. All this is achieved without works on the part of man; indeed, man cannot possibly merit such justification through any effort of his own. It is an entirely gratuitous divine initiative wrought by the Spirit and promised in the scriptures 63. Such a divine initiative requires a response from man 64. The Christian who has true faith in "**Christes bloude**" must cleave ever to Christ and his law of love. Justification for Tyndale does not

depend upon obedience to the law; rather awareness of God's entirely unmerited grace towards mankind calls forth the ethical response of living the life of Christ. This is the essence of the covenant relationship as developed by Tyndale. Its scriptural basis is clear: in **Genesis** 17 God enters into a covenant with Abraham whereby Abraham will be blessed and preserved; in return Abraham and his descendants must bear in their flesh "a token of the covenant betwixt me and you" <sup>65</sup>. For the Christian a cleaving to the law of Christ, a striving to live a moral life replaces the physical token of the Old Testament covenant as a sign of man's acceptance of God's free grace. The concept of a covenant relationship was perhaps more accessible to the Sixteenth Century mind than it is to that of the Twentieth Century: Sixteenth Century man was still familiar with the essentials of the feudal system and the concept of duties of service <sup>66</sup>. Thus it was common-sense and obvious that the ordinary man owed his lord or superior service in recognition of the lord's protection and good government. The villain gave service appropriate to his position in the social hierarchy, such as work in the lord's fields in return for the lord's administration of justice, maintenance of peace, order and social stability and the indirect provision of spiritual welfare <sup>67</sup>. Tyndale's covenant works in precisely the same way: both sides are bound by obligations. The immutable God <sup>68</sup> is bound by his



promise or Gospel to redeem man, who, though full of wickedness, places his faith or trust in God's word. This has been the same throughout all time, for God is eternal and unchanging. The Christian who has placed his trust in God and accepted his word is equally bound by his baptism "to do the wyll of Christe, and to kepe hys lawe of loue" <sup>69</sup>. Mortification of the flesh does not win God's approval or grace, but is a mark of man's sensibility of his indebtedness to God.

There are several interesting points which emerge from an examination of Tyndale's covenant theory. The covenant with its strong emphasis on the ethical duties of the Christian was a theory which made for a stable, harmonious society. If all Christians were to live the moral life of Christ, the evils of poverty and oppression would be diminished. The parallel between the covenant model of man's relationship with God and the feudal society has already been drawn. It follows that the covenant theory presupposes an hierarchical order to creation ascending to God. It is tempting to conclude that in common with some other writers of the early Sixteenth Century, Tyndale felt unease at the society which was developing under the Tudors <sup>70</sup> and regretted the passing of what he felt to be a more caring community orientated feudal society. In a period of rapid social and economic change, it seems that Tyndale looked back to the Fifteenth Century or beyond for his social model. Theologically

too, Tyndale's ideas were not radically new. Smeeton has pointed out the way in which Tyndale's discussion of the covenant model of man's relationship with God would have been immediately familiar to readers with a Wycliffite background <sup>71</sup>. The notion of a covenant as a model for a relationship might be slightly taxing for a reader of poor education, but the terms in which Tyndale explains it, both in the **Exposition** and elsewhere, are far from obscure. Smeeton comments:

Although Tyndale was well prepared academically for his task, his style does not reflect a bookish temperament nor an affected eloquence. Tyndale argued primarily by means of analogy, sometimes by causation, but very seldom by syllogism. His approach was strongly pragmatic rather than theoretical as he constantly invited his readers to judge .... His appeal was not to the head, but to the heart, of his reader; he wished to convey his feelings and the root cause of those feelings. He contended that Scripture was given in plain language so that it could be understood by the common people. His target was the heart of his readers. 72

In this, Tyndale's method reflected that of John Wyclif in his English works; it also reflected the ideas of the more contemporary writer and thinker,

Erasmus <sup>73</sup>. In the absence of stronger evidence in favour of one or the other as a determining influence behind Tyndale's appeal to the common man it is possible to conclude that, influenced by Erasmus' determination that scripture should be freely understood, Tyndale made use of what might be described as a Wycliffite or "heretical" vocabulary <sup>74</sup> in order the better to express his theology. Such a vocabulary, surviving among Lollards and traditional dissenters, appears to have come quite naturally to Tyndale. Thus Tyndale, like Erasmus, is a figure who looked both forwards and backwards into history. The concept of the covenant, taking its origins from Wycliffite thought but given new expression by William Tyndale, continued to play a crucial role in the construction of an Anglican theology well into the "Golden Period" of the Seventeenth Century <sup>75</sup>.

The notion of the covenant is probably central to Tyndale's theology, and it is certainly central to the arguments he develops in the **Exposition** of Tracy's **Testament**. Justification by faith, good works and the moral fruits of faith have already been shown to be inextricably linked in the **Exposition** with Tyndale's theory of the covenant. Other issues addressed in the **Exposition** such as prayers for the dead and for the intercession of the saints, payment of mortuary dues, the existence of Purgatory and the problems of papal

indulgences are all similarly connected to the central soteriological theme of Tyndale's theology.

In the preceding discussion of the covenant, the centrality of Christ has become apparent. The Christian is saved by Christ's death upon the cross; he has faith or trust in Christ; and he strives to live Christ's law of love. Christ was wholly sufficient for the redemption of all men. Thus Tyndale writes:

Christe when he had suffered hys passion,  
and was rysen agayne and entred into hys  
glories, was sufficient for his Apostles  
[redemption], wythout any other meane or  
helpe, ergo the holynes of no saynt syns  
hath deminished ought of that his power. But  
that he is as ful sufficient nowe, for the  
promyse is as deaplye made to vs as them.

76

God's mercy and grace towards man were won by Christ alone. As has been seen above, man's works play no part in his salvation. As Tyndale puts it:

Nowe that mercye, was the benefyte of God  
thy father thorowe the deseruyng of the  
Lorde Christe whiche hath broughte the wyth  
the pryse of his bloude. 77

Tyndale is thus led to discuss the whole problem of petitions made through the saints, prayers offered on behalf of others, and prayers offered for the benefit of the dead. William Tracy, he notes, believed in "none other mediatour but Christe" <sup>78</sup>. Accordingly Tracy bequeathed his goods in such a way that no man should be bound "to anye fayned observance for the healpe of hys soule" <sup>79</sup>, for his faith in Christ ensured that he was "hole in the kyngdome of Christe cleane delyuered both bodye and soule from the dominion of Sathan (as the scripture testifieth all that dye in Christe to be)" <sup>80</sup>. Tyndale concludes that hostile critics will claim that Tracy believed that none but Christ should intercede for him, and that Christians should not pray one for another <sup>81</sup>. This is certainly not what Tyndale believes, and he argues forcefully and conclusively that it is not what William Tracy intended when he wrote his Testament. Both Tracy and Tyndale believe that all men are equally petitioners before God <sup>82</sup>. Tyndale takes this to mean that:

Other maye and oughte to praye, and that we  
maye and oughte to desyre other to praye,  
for vs. <sup>83</sup>

Full confidence or trust cannot, however, be placed upon such prayers of other Christians, even of the saints. Any response depends upon God, and is due entirely to divine grace. Christians should indeed

pray of their charity one for another, but such prayers should not diminish the unique position of Christ who "hath deserued and obteyned power to gyue me al that can be desyred for me" <sup>84</sup>. What is petitioned in Christ's name is given "at the merites of his bloude" alone <sup>85</sup>. Tyndale expounds Tracy's words:

He [Tracy] meaneth yt we may not put our trust and confidence in theyr prayers, as though they gaue of them selues that whyche they desyre for vs in theyr petitions, and so gyue them the thankes, and ascribe to theyr mercies that which is gyuen to vs in the name of oure mayster Christe, at the deseruynges of his bloude. <sup>86</sup>

All is granted through Christ alone; therefore "all the honoure then, truste, confidence, and thanckes, perteyne to his also" <sup>87</sup>. Tyndale offers a lengthy explanation of his point by means of analogy following the pattern established earlier in the Exposition. His argument runs thus:

Now when I wyl go to desyre helpe, I put my truste in god, & complayne to god fyrste, and saye. Lo, father, I go to my brother, to axe helpe in thy name, prepare the herte of hym agaynste I come, that he maye pitie me, and helpe me for thy sake. &c. Nowe yf my

brother remembre hys dutye and helpe me I  
receyue it of god, and gyue god the thankes  
whiche moued the herte of my brother ... And  
I loue my brother agayne .... and as I  
myghte not haue put my truste and confidence  
in my brothers helpe, so maye he not in my  
prayers. I am sure yt god wyll helpe me by  
hys promes, but I am not sure yt my brother  
wyl helpe me, though it be his dutye, so am  
I sure that God wyl heare me whatsoeuer I  
axe in Chrystes name by hys promes, but I am  
not sure yt my brother wyll praye for me, or  
that he hath a good herte to god. 88

The point which Tyndale wishes to stress is that intercessory prayer is part of the Christian's life, but that any response is due to God's grace secured through Christ rather than through the intercessor. Thanks is due to God, not the intercessor. The implications of such an argument are clear: it would be wrong to leave money to poor bedesmen in order to secure their prayers on behalf of the testator. Tyndale undermines the whole concept of chantry foundations, guilds, bedesmen and obit days by his argument that it is a Christian's duty to pray for his neighbours through Christ; and that thanks should be rendered only to God for answered prayers.

The same argument has radical implications for the contemporary understanding of the cult of the

saints. Tyndale proceeds to address this question in his **Exposition**. Certainly the saints in heaven and on earth pray to God and are heard. Moses, Samuel, David, Elisha, Isaiah, Noah and Daniel all prayed to God and were heard. They placed their trust in God, however, rather than in any saint or other mediator 89:

And as damnable as it is for the poore to  
trust in the ryches of the rychest vppon  
earth, so damnable is it also to leaue the  
couenaunte made in Christes bloude, and to  
trust in the sayntes of heauen. 90

Just as the poor can hardly hope to gain any benefit from the wealth of a rich man, so Tyndale argues the Christian cannot hope to benefit from the merit or salvation which belongs to the saints. Those who are in heaven already know who on earth trusts in God's covenant made through Christ, and who cleaves to Christ's law of love; for these alone do the saints in heaven pray 91 :

And these wycked Idolatres which haue no  
trust in the couenaunte of God, nor serue  
God in the spiryte nor in ye gospell of  
Christes bloude, but after theyr blynde  
Imaginacion, chosynge them euery man a  
sondry saynct to be their mediatour, to  
trust to, and to be saued by their merites,  
so the saintes abhore vtterlye. 92



Prayers and offerings made to the saints by such "wycked Idolatres" are "to the sayntes as acceptable & pleasant, as was the prayer and the offerynge of Simon Magus to Peter" <sup>93</sup>. Men who place their trust in the mediation and merits of the saints are truly Idolaters for they diminish or deny the unique role of Christ in securing salvation for man through his death. Indeed the reference to Magus is particularly telling for the way in which it highlights what might be described as the "commercial" aspect of bequests or gifts to a particular focus of saintly devotion: the gift was but a thinly veiled attempt to purchase spiritual favours or a share in the saint's treasury of merit <sup>94</sup>.

There is little room in Tyndale's theology of election for a body of saints canonized by formal authority of the Church. Saints exist both in heaven and on earth as part of the Church Militant; not only Stephen, James, Peter and Paul, but also "simple vnlearned persons" <sup>95</sup>. By reference to II Corinthians 1:4 Tyndale makes clear his essentially Pauline understanding of the nature and function of saints. God, the Father of Jesus Christ, comforts the Christian in all his tribulations and enables the Christian to give comfort and support in turn to his fellows. This in essence is the role of the saints:

Blessed be God ... the Father of mercies,  
and the God of all comfort; who comforted us

in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherwith we ourselves are comforted of God.

For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth in Christ. 96

Saints "are moost comforted & moost able to comfort o-her" 97. Thus St. Stephen and St. James offered prayers for the help of their murderers; and St. Martin of Tours, one of the mediaeval period's favourite saints, steadfastly preached in his diocese and converted pagans up to the time of his death 98. Tyndale's choice of saints in this passage is interesting and illustrates the way in which Tyndale, like Wyclif before him, is prepared to allow a role for the traditional saints of the contemporary Church as examples of Christian living 99. The saints should serve to remind Christians of God and his great mercy in Christ, not to obscure it:

And at onse turne themselues from Gods worde and put their trust and confidence in the saint and his merits and make an advocate or rather a God of the saynt and of theyr blinde imaginacion make a testament or bonde betwene the saynt and them the testamente of Christes bloude cleane forgotten .... They see not the fayth and trust which the sayntes

had in Christe nether the worde of God which  
the sayntes preached nether the entente of  
the sayntes. 100

Thus just as St. Martin converted the rustici  
around Tours by his fervent preaching of Christ, so  
too, Tyndale contends, have many "simple vnlearned  
persons", often previously "great synners" 101 who as  
death approaches place their trust firmly in the  
"bloud of Christ" 102, giving "no rowme to other  
mennes, either prayers or preachyges" 103. Such people  
who have "fallen flatte to the bloud of Christ ... but  
haue as strongly trusted in Christes bloud, as euer  
dyd Peter or Paule" 104 also serve as an example to  
others and as an instrument of conversion:

And [they] haue therto preched it to other,  
and exhorted other so myghtyly that an angel  
of heauen coulde not mende them. 105

The discussion of saints and their role in  
securing man's salvation leads Tyndale to his final  
examination of the payment of mortuary dues to the  
clergy and the belief in Purgatory. By way of  
transition Tyndale returns his attention to the words  
of William Tracy's *Testament*, which he believes  
adequately demonstrate that Tracy was himself filled  
with grace and aware of the sufficiency of his faith  
106. Tracy's faith in God's promises was so strong  
that he had no cause to "faynte and shrynke, when

moste nede is to be strong" 107, or to "feare the popes purgatory & trust to the prayer of priestes dearlye payed for" 108. Tyndale contends that Tracy did not offer money for priests in his Testament as was customary,

Since ther be no mo then ynowe, & haue more then euery man a sufficient lyuinge, howe shoulde he haue geuen but to hyre theyr prayers of pure mistrust in christes bloude?  
109

He does not doubt, however, that Tracy offered prayers for the conversion of priests when he died 110, and that he would have left money for the support of priests had he known of any deficiency or case of hardship. Tyndale believes that Tracy was right not to leave money to the clergy from a sense of custom, for he holds that there is a duty on the laity not to encourage the blasphemous practice of paying for "prayers of pure mistrust in christes bloude" 111. Thus with regard to mortuary payments Tyndale writes:

If robbing of wydowes houses vnder pretence of longe prayers be dampnable: then is it dampnable also for wydowes to suffer them selues to be robbed by the longe pattring of hypocrites thorowe mystrust in Christes cloud. Yea & is it not damnable to mainteyne such abhominacion? 112

Tyndale's language is strong and echoes some of the complaints made in the early sessions of the Reformation Parliament in 1529-30 concerning mortuary payments to the clergy <sup>113</sup>. Tyndale takes the argument one step beyond simple anti-clericalism, and this helps to explain the vehemence of his tone. Not only are such payments a mark of the hypocrisy of the clergy, but they also involve the laity who pay them in a form of idolatry: rather than placing their faith or trust in God's promises made through Christ, they rely upon the purchased prayers of the clergy which can never win salvation for them. Mortuary payments made to the clergy are essentially a blasphemy against Christ's saving death, and a failure to acknowledge the covenant of salvation made by God, through faith, with each of the elect. Mortuary dues are seen as a pernicious self-perpetuating problem which by its continuation will harden people more in this "damnable damnation" <sup>114</sup>. It is thus the duty of learned men such as William Tracy to break this "abomination" <sup>115</sup>. In a sense all this demonstrates a concern on Tyndale's part to know which Christians are of the Elect, and explains why he moves to discuss the arrangements made by Tracy for his funeral and the charitable gifts made during his life. With regard to both these issues Tyndale concludes:

These thinges ... are signes euident not  
only of a god christen man, but also a  
perfect Christen man ... 116

Tyndale approves of Tracy's use of Augustine's *De cura pro mortuis gerenda* 117 saying that there can be no man so foolish as to suppose that "the outward pompe of the body shuld helpe the soule" 118. To be concerned all the time with "what pompe the carkas shalbe carryd to the graue" is the greatest sign of "infidelit~~ty~~e" 119. It is interesting to note that Tyndale's language is even closer to that of early Fifteenth Century Wycliffite wills 120 than the original upon which he comments. Tyndale draws attention to the fact that Tracy does not deny the necessity for an honourable burial; he merely remits its details to his executors, his widow and son, in line with St. Augustine's teaching:

He denieth not but yt a christen man shulde  
be honorably buryed, namely for the honour &  
hope of ye resurrection, & therefore he  
committed that care to his deare executoures  
hys son and wyfe ... 121

In the same way that funeral ceremonies do not assist the soul of the departed, so too William Tracy's charity during his life was performed more from a desire to live the life of Christ than to "merit" rewards from God. Charity is to be seen as a

thankful recognition of God's great mercy, and it should not bind its recipients to any prayers or duties beyond those enjoined by God:

And the bestowinge of a great part of hys  
goodes, whylle he yet liued, vpon ye poore,  
to be thankfull for the mercy receiued  
w[ith]out byynge & selling w[ith] god, yt is  
without binding those poore vnto any other  
appoynted prayers than god hath bounde vs  
already, one to pray for another one to  
helpe another, as he hath helped vs, but  
patiently abydinge for ye blessinges that  
god hath appoynted vnto all maner good  
workes trustinge faythfully to hys promes

122

Tyndale reecognises that Tracy thanks "ye bloude of Christe for the reward promised to his workes & not ye goodnes of the workes" <sup>123</sup>. As has been seen in the preceding discussion of Tyndale's concept of covenant, good works are required of the Christian not as a means of securing salvation, but as a duty of recognition or thanks for God's mercy in justifying the Christian through faith. Thus Tyndale says that Tracy acknowledges that the blood of Christ has secured him his reward as a Christian rather than any innate goodness of his works. Tyndale accepts that Tracy does not think that he has done more than his duty to God, or even as much as his duty <sup>124</sup>. Tyndale

concludes that in so far as it is possible for men to judge William Tracy lived as a "perfect" Christian and was one of the Elect 125 who had no need to fear any doctrine of Purgatory:

**Of such a one as neded not to be agast &  
desperate for feare of the paynful paynes of  
purgatory. 126**

Tyndale holds that the doctrine of Purgatory is one of despair which must of necessity inspire a fear of death in the Christian. Purgatory implies that the Christian soul is separated from Christ, for Christ is not Lord in Purgatory.

**Christ is ther no longer thy Lorde, after he  
hath brought the thither, but [thou] art  
excluded from his satisfaction, & must  
satisfy for thy selfe alone ... 127**

In Purgatory the soul is left to make satisfaction to God for the sins of its life through the suffering of pain. The soul in Purgatory is unable to participate in the blessings of faith, but must shift for itself or rely upon the works of others, who are unable to make satisfaction for themselves, let alone for others:

**Such a one [ who is in Purgatory] ... must  
satisfy for thy selfe alone, & that w[ith]  
suffering onlye or els taryinge the**



satisfyinge of them that shall neuer satisfy  
ynough for them selues. 128

It is worthy of note that Tyndale makes use of the established language of "satisfaction" when writing of Purgatory. He clearly understands the doctrine as it is taught by the contemporary Church, but succeeds in using its own traditional language to turn it back upon itself. Tyndale uses the traditional understanding of Purgatory both to re-enforce his own doctrine of justification through faith in Christ, and at the same time to demonstrate the futile hopelessness and impossibility inherent in the doctrine of Purgatory: sinful man can only be justified through faith or trust in Christ's unique satisfaction obtained through death upon the cross. Works are an appropriate, indeed necessary recognition of man's indebtedness to God for his grace and mercy, but they cannot contribute in any way to man's salvation or give satisfaction to God for man's sinfulness. This can be accomplished only by Christ. Tyndale seems to be conscious that his understanding of Christology and soteriology looks back to a pre-mediaeval model. He condemns the teaching of the contemporary Church as a modern invention and departure from scripture. St. Paul and St. Stephen did not speak of Purgatory in relation to their own deaths, and neither did the Prophets:

Paule trusted to be dissolued & to be with  
Christ. Steuen desyred Christe to take his  
spirite, the prophetes desyred god to take  
theyr soules from them & al the sayntes went  
with a lusty corage to deth, neither fearyng  
or teaching vs to feare any such crudelitie.

129

Tyndale holds that the Church has exceeded its authority in enforcing a belief in Purgatory; it has no historical or scriptural authority, and as Tyndale has already shown, belief in Purgatory is blasphemous in so far as it diminishes man's consciousness of God's mercy and grace towards him. Purgatory elevates the value of human works rather than faith in God's promise and covenant:

Where hath the church then gotten authoritie  
to blynde vs from beyng so perfyt, from  
hauyng any suche fayth in the goodnes of  
oure father, and lorde Christ, & to make  
suche perfytnes & fayth of al heresies the  
greatest? 130

Tyndale draws attention to the terrible irony of a Church which can condemn William Tracy for the heresy of placing faith in Christ and God's promises rather than in human works.

Human works are unprofitable in the seeking of salvation; so too, Tyndale believes, are papal

indulgences. This late mediaeval phenomenon, so topical in the early Sixteenth Century, is discussed in a concise passage of the **Exposition**. Those souls in Purgatory who are left to make satisfaction for themselves may call upon the help of the living, either through prayer, masses, or:

The popes pardons, which haue so great dowtes  
& dangers, what in the mynd & entent of the  
graunter, & what in the purchaser ere they  
can be truely obteyned w[ith] all due  
circumstances and much les certitude yt  
they haue any authoritie at al. 131

Indulgences, the logical conclusion of the doctrine of Purgatory, go even further in institutionalizing the diminution of God's role in man's salvation of which Tyndale complains. As to his rhetorical questioning of the source of ecclesiastical authority to bind man to imperfection rather than to faith, Tyndale naturally supplies an answer. Quoting from **Proverbs** <sup>132</sup> he concludes that it is:

Dane auaryce, with as greadye a gutte, as  
melynge a mawe, as wyde a throte, as  
gapynhe a mouth, & with as rauenyng teeth as  
the beast, which the more she eateth, the  
mougryer she is. 133

It is avarice which has caused the Church to turn away from the faith of the apostles and impose such

inventions upon the people. The reader is clearly intended to conclude that the Roman Church and its doctrine are one and the same as the avaricious Beast, which despite its appetite for evil is a "blynde monstre & a surmising beast, fearing at the fall of euerye leafe" 134, reacts ferociously through fear to any challenge. This is Tyndale's explanation for the actions of the ecclesiastical authorities when dealing with William Tracy. To protect their worldly interests the corrupt administration of the Church will do anything, including the wilful misinterpretation of both scripture and Tracy's Testament.

What doth not yt holy hunger compel them  
that loue this worlde inordinately, to  
committe? Might that deuyls bearyly be once  
ful, trueth shoulde haue audience, & words  
be construed a ryght & taken in the same  
sence, as they ment. 135

With regard to Purgatory Tyndale concludes that while, "it seme not impossible haplye that there myghte be a place, where soules might be kepte for a space" for instruction, it is both impossible and repugnant to scripture that it should be "suche a layle as they langle, and suche facions as they fayne" 136.

Avarice and self-interest have caused a worldly Church to "invent" doctrines such as that of Purgatory

and to depart from God's covenant. Guided by the precept of divine love and mercy the ecclesiastical authorities should have read William Tracy's **Testament** with charity:

Seynge that Christes loue taketh al to the best, & noting is here that may not be well vnderstanded, (the circumstaunces declaryng in what sence al was ment) they ought to haue interpreted it charitablye, yf oughte had ben founde doubtful or semyng to sounde a mysse. 137

The actions of the ecclesiastical authorities in fact serve to show "the great desyre that hypocrites haue to finde one crafte or other to dase the truth with" 138. The truth, God's promises contained in the scriptures are presented to the simple laity as heresy 139. Indeed anything which displeases the ecclesiastical authorities or damages their prosperity is to be counted as heresy:

It must needes be heresye yt toucheth any chyngge theyr rotten byle, they wyll haue it who so euer saye naye. 140

Tyndale concludes his theological discussion of the **Testament** with a re-statement of his fundamental soteriological proposition. Everything else he has written in this **Exposition** relates to the basic understanding of man's relationship with God and its

bearing upon salvation. This passage is worth quoting in full, not least because it demonstrates the clarity of Tyndale's thought, and the centrality of soteriology and Christology to it:

For whan a man is translated vtterly out of the kyngdome of Sathan [by faith], & so confirmed in grace that he can not synne 141, so burnyng in loue that his lust can not be plucked from gods wyll, & beyng partaker wyth vs of the promises of god, & vnder the commaundements: what could be denyed him in that depe innocencie of his most kynde father, that hath leaft no mercy vnpromysed, & axinge it therto in the name of his sonne, Iesus, the childe of hisertes lust, which is our lorde, & hath leafte no mercy vnderued for vs? namely when god hath sworne yt he wil put of[f] righteousnes, & be to vs a father & that of al mercy, and hath slayne his most deare sonne Iesus to confirme his othe. 142

The Exposition closes with a final exhortation for prayers to be offered for the conversion of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to scriptural doctrine and away from worldly corruption which presently holds them in thralldom:

The eternall God must be prayed to nyghte  
and daye to amende them in whose power it  
only lyeth, who also graunt them ones  
earnestly to truste hys true doctrine  
conteyned in the swete & pure fountaynes of  
hys scriptures and in hys pathes to directe  
theyre wayes. 143

1 - The Testament of maister Wylliam Tracie,  
H. Peetersen van Middelburch, Antwerp 1535. STC no.  
24167

2 - Cf. Dictionary of National Biography. John  
Frith, 1503(?) - 1533. Cambridge scholar translated to  
Wolsey's Oxford foundation in 1525. Arrested for  
heresy in 1528 but fled to Marburg where he met  
William Tyndale and worked with him. 1532 returned to  
England and was arrested in October. Imprisoned in  
Tower where he wrote an exposition of eucharistic  
doctrine for the London "Brethren".

3 - This would make the **Exposition** more or less  
contemporary with Frith's writing on the eucharist  
composed during his time in the Tower. Cf. Clebsch,  
W.A., **England's Earliest Protestants, 1520-1535**, Yale  
1964, 107-3; agrees that Frith's **Exposition** was  
written in England in 1532, but suggests that it was  
completed prior to Frith's arrest in October. There  
seems little conclusive evidence either way. Clebsch  
says of Frith's **Exposition**:

The tract showed for the first time a  
theological break between Frith and Tyndale  
- a fact which may explain why it was never  
published during Frith's or Tyndale's  
lifetime.

Clebsch, 107.

4 - Testament, Antwerp 1535; reprinted in  
**Wickliefes Wicket**, John Day London 1546 (2 eds.),  
1548, 1550 C2v 2-13. Page references refer to the  
present edition.

- 5 - Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**. John Rogers, 1500(?)-1555. Graduate of Trinity Hall, Cambridge 1526. Held benefice of Trinity the Less 1532-34. Moved to Antwerp in 1534 where was connected with the English Merchants' House but was probably not formally employed as chaplain. Met Tyndale in May 1535.
- 6 - **Testament** C2v 1 - C3r 15.
- 7 - Tyndale, W., **An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue**, Parker Society Vol. III, Cambridge 1850.
- 8 - Mozley, J.F., **William Tyndale**, New York 1937, 240-1.
- 9 - Tyndale, W., **An exposition vpon the v.vi.vii. chapters of Matthew**, critical ed. by Meyer, S.J., unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Yale 1975.
- 10 - Smeaton, D.D., **Lollard Themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale**, Vol. VI in *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies*, Kirksville 1986, Appendix I, 256-8.
- 11 - Smeaton, 71. "Of all those associated with Tyndale during his exile, Frith was the closest to Tyndale's heart. The relationship was not so much master-pupil but father-son".
- 12 - Smeaton, 51; 70.
- 13 - Tyndale, W., **Exposition**, D1r 23-26.
- 14 - Smeaton, 51; 73.
- 15 - Tyndale, W., **Exposition**, D2r 18-19.
- 16 - **Exposition**, D1v 32-33.
- 17 - **Exposition**, D2r 12-14. This "writing", presumably Tracy's will by which his property was divided among his heirs, has so far eluded discovery. Tyndale appears to know more of this document than the modern historian, and provides valuable evidence in support of the existence of such a document.
- 18 - **Exposition**, D3r 27-29.
- 19 - **Exposition**, D3r 29 - D3v 3.
- 20 - **Exposition**, D3v 10.
- 21 - **Exposition**, D3v 17.
- 22 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **The English Reformation**, London 1964, 132-7; Ogle, A., **The Tragedy of the Lollards' Tower**, Oxford 1949; Milsom, S.F.C., "Richard Hunne's Praemunire", **EHR** 76 (1961), 80-82; Derrett, J.D.M., "The affairs of Richard Hunne and Friar Standish" in **The Complete Works of St. Thomas More**, London 1979, 9, 215-46; Smart, J.S., "John Foxe and 'The Story of Richard Hun, Martyr'", **JEH** 37 (1986), 1-14; Wunderli, R., "Pre-Reformation London Summoners and the Murder of Richard Hunne", **JEH** 33 (1982), 209-224.
- 23 - **Exposition**, D3v 3-9.
- 24 - **Exposition** D3v 13-23.
- 25 - **Exposition**, D3v 27.
- 26 - **Exposition**, D3v 28-34.
- 27 - Cf. **Introduction to the Testament of Master William Tracy**, pg. 8.
- 28 - **Exposition**, C4r 22.
- 29 - **Exposition**, C4r 24-25.
- 30 - **Exposition**, C4r 25-30.



- 31 - **Exposition**, C4v 6-8.
- 32 - **Exposition**, C4v 5-6.
- 33 - **Smeeton**, 124.
- 34 - **Smeeton**, 124.
- 35 - **Exposition**, C4r 27; C4v 1; C4v 4.
- 36 - Tyndale, W., **Exposition of the Fyrste Epistle of Seynt Ihon**, ed. Walter, H., Parker Society II, Cambridge 1849, 184.
- 37 - **Exposition**, C4v 10-12.
- 38 - Cf. **Smeeton**, 128-9.
- 39 - **Exposition**, C4v 13.
- 40 - **Smeeton**, 130, note 37.
- 41 - **Smeeton**, 130, note 36.
- 42 - **Exposition**, C4v 16.
- 43 - Cf. Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", **JEH** 32 (1982), 225-33; Davis, J.F., "Lollardy and the Reformation in England", **Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte** 73 (1982), 217-36; Fines, J., "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, 1511-12", **JEH** 14 (1963), 160-74.
- 44 - **Exposition**, C5v 21-22.
- 45 - **Exposition**, C5v 20-30.
- 46 - **Exposition**, C6r 10 - C6v 2.
- 47 - **Exposition**, C6r 4-5.
- 48 - For Luther **Gospel** meant the **proclamation** of salvation rather than the **promise** of salvation as was the case for Tyndale.  
Cf. **Smeeton**, 149, quoting Laughlin, P.A., "The Brightness of Moses's Face: Law and Gospel, Covenant and Hermeneutics in the Theology of William Tyndale", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Emory 1975.
- 49 - **Smeeton**, 148.
- 50 - **Smeeton**, 150.
- 51 - **Exposition**, C6r 10 - C6v 2.
- 52 - **Exposition**, C6v 2-3.
- 53 - **Exposition**, C6v 6-8.
- 54 - **Exposition**, C6v 8-10.
- 55 - **Exposition**, C6v 11-14.
- 56 - **Exposition**, C6v 19-23.
- 57 - **Exposition**, C6v 24 - C7r 8.
- 58 - **Exposition**, C7r 8-19.
- 59 - **Exposition**, C7r 18-19.
- 60 - **Exposition**, C7r 27-31.
- 61 - **Exposition**, C7v 3-8.
- 62 - McGiffert, M., "William Tyndale's Conception of Covenant", **JEH** 32 (1981), 167-84.
- 63 - Cf. **Exposition**, C6v 24ff.
- 64 - **Exposition**, C6v 8.
- 65 - **Genesis** 17:11.
- 66 - Cf. Comments of Girouard, M., **Life in the English Country House, A Social and Architectural History**, London 1978, Chapter 4 are pertinent, as are those of Morris, R., **Churches in the Landscape**, London 1989, Chapter VI.
- 67 - Research indicates that many parochial churches were founded by secular lords on their estates in the

- Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries. Cf. Morris, R., **Churches**, 227-274.
- 68 - Cf. Morris, R., **Churches**, 370. Fifteenth Century funerary sculptures showing both the deceased in life and in a state of corruption, so called cadaver tombs illustrate a popular pre-occupation with human mutability. Here God stands in contrast to human frailty and mutability.
- 69 - **Exposition**, C6r 27-28.
- 70 - Cf. Writers such as Simon Fish, Robert Crowley and William Barlow. Interestingly Thomas More's **Utopia** makes much the same point. The rapidly changing society in the early Sixteenth Century appears to have had a widely unsettling effect upon thoughtful men.
- 71 - **Smeaton**, 75ff.
- 72 - **Smeaton**, 78-9. Tyndale, W., **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 59.
- 73 - **Smeaton**, 24; 48. Smeaton discusses Erasmus' influence on Tyndale.
- 74 - **Smeaton**, 79.
- Hudson, A., "A Lollard Sect Vocabulary?" **Philological Essays in Scots and Mediaeval English Presented to Angus McIntosh**, ed. Benskin, M. and Samuels M.L., Edinburgh 1981, 15-30.
- 75 - Anglican writers such as Archbishop Ussher and Isaac Barrow in the early Seventeenth Century show the elements of a covenant theology which would have been recognised by Tyndale. Cf. **Anglicanism. The Thought and Practice of the Church of England, Illustrated from the Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century**, ed. More, P.E. and Cross, F.L., London 1962, 287, 292.
- 76 - **Exposition**, C5v 31 - C6r 5.
- 77 - **Exposition**, C7r 32 - C7v 2.
- 78 - **Exposition**, C7v 11.
- 79 - **Exposition**, C7v 12-13.
- 80 - **Exposition**, C7v 14-18.
- 81 - **Exposition**, C7v 18-22.
- 82 - **Exposition**, C7v 23.
- 83 - **Exposition**, C7v 24-25.
- 84 - **Exposition**, C8r 2-4.
- 85 - **Exposition**, C8r 5-6.
- 86 - **Exposition**, C7v 27 - C8r 1.
- 87 - **Exposition**, C8r 6-8.
- 88 - **Exposition**, C8r 14 - C8v 9.
- 89 - **Exposition**, C8v 10-19.
- 90 - **Exposition**, C8v 19-23.
- 91 - **Exposition**, C8v 23-26.
- 92 - **Exposition**, C8v 26-33.
- 93 - **Exposition**, D1r 1-4.
- 94 - Morris, R., **Churches**, 360ff.
- 95 - **Exposition**, D1r 12.
- 96 - **II Corinthians** 1:3-5.
- 97 - **Exposition**, D1r 5-6.
- 98 - Morris, R., **Churches**, 14ff.
- Stancliffe, C., **St. Martin and his Historiographer: History and Miracle in Sulpicius Severus**, Oxford 1983.
- 99 - **Smeaton**, 193-6.

"The Examination of Master William Thorpe, priest ..",  
in **An English Garner: Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse**, ed. Arber, E., Westminster 1903, 139. Thorpe claims that Christians delight to hear how the saints forsook worldly wealth and defeated the Devil and the lusts of the flesh.

100 - Tyndale, W., **The Obedience of a Christian Man**, ed. Water. H., Parker Society I, Cambridge 1848, 184.

101 - **Exposition**, D1r 13.

102 - **Exposition**, D1r 14.

103 - **Exposition**, D1r 15-16.

104 - **Exposition**, D1r 14-18.

105 - **Exposition**, D1r 18-21.

106 - **Exposition**, D1r 21.

107 - **Exposition**, D1r 26-27.

108 - **Exposition**, D1r 28-29.

109 - **Exposition**, D1v 2-5.

110 - **Exposition**, D1r 30.

111 - **Exposition**, D1v 11.

112 - **Exposition**, D1v 8-12.

113 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 147-50.

114 - **Exposition**, D1v 16-17.

115 - **Exposition**, D1v 12. The connotations of idolatry associated with this word should be noted [cf. Daniel 11:31], as should its use in **Wickliefes Wicket** with a similar implication. Cf. **Wicket** A3v 23, B5v 10.

116 - **Exposition**, D2r 18-19.

117 Augustine, **De cura pro mortuis gerenda**, in **Patrologiae Cursus Completus**, ed. Migne, J.-P., Paris 1841-71, 40, **S.A. Augustini Opera Omnia**, vol. VI, col. 594.c.II.1.

118 - **Exposition**, D1v 21.

119 - **Exposition**, D1v 22-24.

120 - McFarlane, K.B., "Lollard Wills" in **Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights**, Oxford 1972, 207ff.

121 - **Exposition**, D1v 25-29.

122 - **Exposition**, D1v 32 - D2r 8.

123 - **Exposition**, D2r 8-11.

124 - **Exposition**, D2r 17-19.

125 - **Exposition**, D2r 17-19.

126 - **Exposition**, D2r 19-22.

127 - **Exposition**, D2r 23-27.

128 - **Exposition**, D2r 26-29.

129 - **Exposition**, D2v 1-7.

130 - **Exposition**, D2v 7-12

131 - **Exposition**, D2r 30 - D2v 1.

132 - **Proverbs 30:15. Exposition** D2v 13ff.

133 - **Exposition**, D2v 15-19.

134 - **Exposition**, D2v 19-21.

135 - **Exposition**, D2v 22-27.

136 - **Exposition**, D2v 28-33.

137 - **Exposition**, D3r 16-22.

138 - **Exposition**, D3v 20-22.

139 - **Exposition**, D3v 22-25.

140 - **Exposition**, D3v 25-27.

- 141 - That is to say "a Christian who cannot again  
turn away from God".  
142 - **Exposition**, D2v 34 - D3r 15.  
143 - **Exposition**, D3v 28-34.

III - Introduction to John Frith's Exposition of Master William Tracy's Testament.

The origins of John Frith's **Exposition** of William Tracy's **Testament** are less clear than those of William Tyndale's commentary on the same work. It was noted in the Introduction to Tyndale's **Exposition** that Mozley believed Frith to have written his **Exposition** before his return to England in 1532<sup>1</sup>. Clebsch, however, suggests that Frith's work was written in England during 1532, probably prior to Frith's arrest in October of that year, and in this he is supported by Wright<sup>2</sup>. There seems little reason to suppose that confinement in the Tower was a barrier to the composition of theological tracts: Frith was able to read "the deuylyshe bokes of Wyclefe Swyngelius, & frere Huyskyne [Tyndale]"<sup>3</sup> during his imprisonment, and he wrote an exposition of eucharistic doctrine for the benefit of a "Christian Brother" in London at the same period<sup>4</sup>. It is not impossible, therefore, that this **Exposition** of Tracy's **Testament** dates from the same period of imprisonment. It cannot be determined with certainty, but Frith's **Exposition** appears to predate William Tyndale's work: Frith's **Exposition** is first encountered as a manuscript among the contents of Tyndale's study after the latter's arrest in 1535.<sup>5</sup> This suggests that Tyndale composed his own work as a reply or possibly a supplement to Frith's text.

Frith's **Exposition** was not printed during its author's lifetime. It first appeared from the press of H. Peetersen van Middelburch at Antwerp in 1535 in an edition <sup>5</sup> which included Tyndale's **Exposition** of Tracy's **Testament** along with a passage at the end of Frith's **Exposition** which was omitted from every subsequent edition until Foxe published his **Works** of Tyndale, Frith and Barnes in 1572-3 <sup>7</sup>. The passage has every appearance of being by Frith and its deletion from John Day's texts of 1548 and 1550 probably owes more to considerations of space rather than content or authenticity. It should be noted that the editor of the first edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** chose to omit Frith's **Exposition** from his compilation in its entirety <sup>8</sup> while retaining Tyndale's **Exposition**. This may reflect something of the nature of Frith's work which at first sight is not compelling: when compared to Tyndale's more substantial text Frith's **Exposition** may appear somewhat thin and even pedestrian. C.S. Lewis noted this characteristic when he wrote that:

John Frith looms larger as a man than as an author... <sup>9</sup>

Frith's method is thorough without being inspiring. He takes sections of the **Testament** and comments upon them in a straight-forward manner. The theological themes are not generally well developed, and where development does take place, it often takes

the form of extended quotations from scripture or St. Augustine <sup>10</sup>. Frith uses metaphorical imagery to add colour and character to the text. Thus William Tracy's detractors are condemned in the following terms:

There is no man yt can receyue venom by  
these wordes, except he haue suche a  
spyderouse nature that he can turne an hony  
combe into perelous poyson. <sup>11</sup>

Frith's **Exposition** has something of the popular preacher or public lecturer about it, and in the light of this its omission from the earlier edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** is particularly interesting. The editor of the first edition of the **Wicket** printed by John Day in 1546 certainly knew of the existence of Frith's **Exposition** because it is referred to in the extended title which was copied directly from the 1535 Antwerp edition of the **Testament** <sup>12</sup>. Frith's work must have been omitted either because the editor of the **Wicket**, Miles Coverdale <sup>13</sup>, felt that its content or theological emphasis would not appeal to the readership for which he was preparing his text, or for reasons of economy. In either case there is a implied judgment which places a lower value upon Frith's work than that attached to any of the texts which were printed in **Wickliefes Wicket**.

The language and character of Frith's **Exposition** give an indication of the audience for which Frith was

writing, and if it is accepted that the text dates from the last two years of Frith's life further insights into his intent in composing the work may be gained. Frith appears to have intended his work for the ordinary men and women who made up groups of dissenters in London in the early 1530s such as the suspects who were found to own copies of the **Testament** in 1530-31<sup>14</sup>. In this his work differs somewhat from William Tyndale's **Exposition** which is clearly systematic and aimed at a reader with a degree of theological sophistication. Frith's appeal relies to a greater extent upon emotion. His attacks upon the clergy and particularly the ecclesiastical lawyers is distinctly reminiscent of the vilification of the clergy indulged in by Lollard writers and preachers of the previous century<sup>15</sup>. The clergy enmesh the laity with "ye scholastical snares and mases"<sup>16</sup>, and while the condemnation of William Tracy owes more to the uncharitable disposition of the worldly canon lawyers, the parochial clergy are condemned by Frith for their greed and rapacity especially in the exaction of mortuary dues:

Peradventure thys might moue their [the  
parochial clergy's] pacience, yt he wyll  
distribute no porcion of his goodes, for ye  
intent that ani man shuld say or do for ye  
weale of his soule are you so sore afrayed



of youre market? Be not afrayed, ye haue  
alues ynough to souple that sore ... 17

The attack upon the ecclesiastical lawyers is continued in the concluding passage of the text which was omitted from the 1548 and 1550 editions of the **Wicket**:

Our canonistes ... are cleane ignoraunt of  
Scripture & therfore condemne all thinges  
that they read not in their law, wherfore we  
renounce their sentence and appeale vnto the  
deuines, which will soone knowe the voyce of  
theyr shepherd ... 18

There is no overt reference in this text to the case of Richard Hunne in 1514 <sup>19</sup> which had been a cause of continuous controversy up to the early sessions of the Reformation Parliament in 1529-30, but the sentiments expressed by Frith would have appealed to many who had resentfully complied with the Church's policy of demanding mortuary dues <sup>20</sup>. Frith's tone corresponds to a widespread anticlericalism of the early Sixteenth Century which embraced all social classes <sup>21</sup>, but he says nothing in this respect that could not have been said in similar terms at any time from the late Fourteenth Century <sup>22</sup>.

If Frith's **Exposition** is popular in tone, it seems reasonable to conclude that it was written, just as his treatise on the eucharist had been, for the

instruction of sympathetic men and women, probably in London, during the early 1530s. Unlike Tyndale's **Exposition**, Frith's work could have been read aloud to advantage and may have been written with this in mind<sup>23</sup>. It is a direct commentary on William Tracy's text which is reproduced section by section, and may have been intended more as brief notes on a popular work than as a polished literary treatise. It is interesting to note that in common with all the other texts incorporated into **Wickliefes Wicket**, Frith's **Exposition** does not appear to have survived in manuscript. This is more significant when it is recalled that the text only survives today because a manuscript in Frith's own hand was discovered among William Tyndale's effects and was printed under the supervision of John Rogers in 1535<sup>24</sup>. Thus the 1535 Antwerp edition is the only remaining source for the text, and while it is not unusual for no manuscript to have survived, these facts must give rise to the suspicion that Frith's **Exposition** was not widely circulated in England and that William Tyndale had come into possession of one of the only remaining manuscripts<sup>25</sup>. It is possible that the text was sent to Tyndale from London via Frith's wife who remained on the Continent when her husband returned to England in 1532<sup>26</sup>.

The precise date of the text remains obscure, but this is ultimately unimportant: it could not have been

written much before about January 1531<sup>27</sup>, and it could not have been written later than June 1533<sup>28</sup>. It is probable that it was written in England between Frith's return to England in 1532 and his death in mid-1533 for the purpose of instructing those who were known to be sympathetic to the author's theological views<sup>29</sup>. It may not have enjoyed a wide circulation in England and certainly seems not to have been printed before an edition was produced at Antwerp in 1535<sup>30</sup>. A manuscript copy in Frith's hand did reach Tyndale, however, and was found in his possession after his arrest in May 1535. Rogers suggests that Tyndale had prepared the text for the press, and it is possible that it formed one of the "Lollard" texts which he is believed to have edited at Antwerp in the early 1530s<sup>31</sup>.

Frith's **Exposition** concentrates upon four areas of theological discussion: scripture as the basis of faith and theological truth; redemption through faith in Christ rather than by merit achieved through works; the futility of all works, papal pardons, payments to the clergy and the futility of worldly pomp and ceremony; the condemnation of the uncharitable and unreasonable attitude of the clergy and particularly of the ecclesiastical lawyers. Wright suggests that the **Exposition** is:

One of the clearest statements in his own works (as opposed to his translations) of

the doctrine of justification by faith, and of the [nature of] the good works which follow from faith. 32

Frith holds that scripture is the basis of all theological truth and faith. In particular he is anxious to demonstrate that everything written by William Tracy "may be established by the testimony of scripture" 33. Frith supports his arguments with quotations from New Testament sources and St. Augustine's writings. Thus concerning Tracy's citation of Augustine as an authority for denying the validity of funeral pomp 34 Frith writes:

What hath he here offended which rehearseth nothing but ye wordes of S. Austen yf you improue these thinges, then reprove you S. Austen hym selfe ... 35

The attempt to return to original sources and authorities marks Frith's work and may suggest a humanist training 36.

Christ forms the pattern for human life, and through scripture Christ becomes the foundation of faith:

Fayth is the suer persuasion of oure mynde of god and his goodnes towardes vs. And where as is a suer persuasion of the mind, there can be no doubting or mistrust, for he

that doubteth is lyke the floude of the sea  
which is tossed with windes & carried wyth  
vyolence. 37

Faith drawn by grace unites the Christian with Christ and with his atoning death and perfect righteousness. Frith's doctrine of justification by faith envisages God reaching down to sinful man in love and grace. This is a free act of divine grace. Man is totally unable to effect his own salvation because he shares fully in Adam's original sin. God accepts man and loves him in this depraved condition, giving him salvation in Christ alone. Christ's death fully satisfies for man's sin and justification becomes the union of the believer with Christ through faith. Wright describes Frith's doctrine as: "justification by grace, in Christ, through faith" 38. Frith's doctrine of justification leads naturally to three results as outlined by Wright: the Christian may be assured of his salvation because salvation depends entirely upon the perfect work of Christ; the Christian understands that he becomes righteous because he is **in Christ** rather than through his own efforts; and good works must follow from true faith, for the Christian is justified by faith towards God but before men his status as one of Christ's flock is shown by his works 39.

If faith is seen by Frith as "the suer persuasion of oure mynde of god and his goodnes towardes vs" 40

in sending Jesus Christ to reveal his grace and love, faith is not a static entity. Faith must become the "roote of the tree, & the quickenyng power, out of whiche all good frutes spring" <sup>41</sup>. Faith must be "fourmed with hope and charitie" <sup>42</sup>; faith must be active through charity and love for God and must not become a sterile historical thing akin to mere knowledge. It is not "that dead historicall fayth, whyche the deuyls haue and tremble" <sup>43</sup>. The Christian must not confuse this "active" faith described by Frith with the justification through works which he claims is the teaching of the contemporary Roman Church <sup>44</sup>. William Tracy "loketh throuwe the grace and merytes of Christe to optayne remission of his synnes" <sup>45</sup>, and this Frith believes conforms not only to scriptural injunction but is also a saying worthy of commendation to all good Christians <sup>46</sup>. Grace, the precursor or precondition of faith, proceeds only from God <sup>47</sup>, and works are irrelevant to man's eternal fate, as are all injunctions of the earthly ecclesiastical hierarchy. Frith describes the authority of the Church as "ye scholasticall snares and mases" <sup>48</sup>. Frith endorses Tracy's statement that Christ alone can mediate between God and man, and develops this with a brief survey of incarnational theology:

He only deseruith ye name of a mediator,  
which being god became man to make men

god[']s. And who by right can be called a mediator betwene god & man, but he yt is both god & man, therfor sith we haue such a mediator, whiche in all pointes hath prouid our infirmitie (sauing only in synne) which is exalted aboue ye heauins, & sitteth on the ryght hande of god, & hath in all thinges obtayned ye nexte power vnto hym, of whose impery all thinges depende, let vs come w[ith] suer confidence vnto ye throne of grace. 49

Christ is the Christian's only mediator with God because he took upon himself humanity and through his sinless nature restored mankind to God by his death. It is only through Christ and God's grace in accepting humanity that the Christian can approach the "throne of grace" 50. The Christian received grace through Christ, but he is powerless himself to bestow grace through any of his actions. As William Tracy had expressed it in his Testament, "Al others be petitioners" equal before God 51. Frith explains that such petitioners receive grace but are unable "to empresse & power therof into any other man, for yt doeth onely god distribute w[ith] his finger (yt is to say, the spirite of god) throw Christ" 52. Without faith it is impossible for the Christian to be acceptable to God 53, and without faith it is impossible for any man to perform good works. Yet good

works, though essential, in no way add to a man's merit: "our glorious pride and high mynde are thus excluded" 54. Frith agrees with Augustine when he says that "The death of the lorde is my meryte" 55; indeed for Frith it is the sum of the Christian's merit. The death of Christ is of no avail, however, unless it be received with faith:

This death of the lorde can not profyte me,  
except I receyue it through fayth, and  
therefore he [Tracy] reckeneth ryghte well  
that the fayeth in Christe is al his  
meryte. I meane the fayth wyche worketh  
through Christ. 56

The denial that good works lead the Christian to acquire merit and thus salvation leads Frith to consider the status of human works in general and the problem posed by the necessity for moral behaviour in the Christian community. Drawing once again upon Augustine, Frith holds that God:

Crouneth the in compassion and mercy, of  
mercy he crouneth the, for thou wast not  
worthye yt he shoulde call the, and whom he  
shoulde iustify when he called the. 57

No man can possibly deserve a reward from God. Redemption and salvation are granted freely and graciously by God as a favour to undeserving mankind:



The remnauntes are saued by the election  
whiche is by grace and fauoure. 58

If saluation is granted by grace, it follows that  
saluation cannot be attained through human works.  
Frith deualops his argument:

Yf it [saluation] be by grace then it is not  
of workes, for then grace were no grace. For  
vnto him that worketh is the rewarde imputed  
not of grace but of dutye. 59

Frith is aware of the possibility that the  
appearance of good works may deceive people into  
believing that a particular man is redeemed. He  
endorses Tracy's comment that "a good worke maketh not  
a good man, but rather a good man maketh the worke  
good" 60. Men may attempt to determine whether a man  
be saved or not by his actions, but God "searcheth the  
hert" 61 and judges men by their faith or lack of it:

Fayth as a quckenying roote must euer go  
before, whych of wycked maketh vs rightwyse  
& good, whiche thinke our workes coulde  
neuer bryng to passe, out of this fountaine  
springe those good workes which iustify vs  
before men, that is to saye declare vs to be  
very rightuouse, for before god we are  
verely iustified by that rote of fayth ....  
but men must loke for workes, for theyr  
sight can not entre into the herte ... 62

Men, judging each other by their works, are often "deceyued vnder the cloke of hipocrisie" 63. This, however, can have no effect upon a man's eternal fate, for his nature is destined either to be good or bad by God, "for there is no man but he is eyther good or euyll" 64. An evil man can do nothing which is not evil in itself, regardless of how it may appear to his fellow men 65. God, however, is not deceived by outward appearances. Thus Frith holds works to be without intrinsic value, although at the same time he insists that the truly faithful will naturally perform good works as a corollary of their faith in God and his love.

Certain works are singled out for particular criticism by Frith. Papal pardons are a notable example, as is the exaction of mortuary payments by the clergy 66. The practice of staging elaborate funerals is also attacked, and in all these areas Frith lends his support to the position adopted by Tracy in the **Testament** and goes on to develop upon the original text. It is here perhaps more than anywhere else in the **Exposition** that Frith develops his own theological position.

Frith develops his argument on the theme of papal indulgences by suggesting that the early Fathers of the Church were so poor at their deaths that they were unable to leave more than "skant ... a halfe peny" 67

to the Church. It might be argued that as a consequence of their failure to endow the Church at their death with mortuary payments and other bequests from their estates they will "suffre ye greuous paines of pergatory" 68:

Yet may they be quenshed both w[ith] lesse cost & labour, ye popes pardone is redy at hande, where both ye crime & ye peine are remitted at once, & verily there is such plenty of them in al places, yt I can skantly beleue yt there lyueth any man yt is worth an halfe peny, but yt he is sure of some pardons in store. 69

Frith concludes this passage with an observation which might be taken to suggest some degree of personal acquaintance with William Tracy: "As for this man [Tracy] he had innumerable [papal pardons]" 70. This suggests that Frith believes William Tracy to have collected a number of papal pardons, and while it may indicate some personal knowledge the observation does not have the quality of William Tyndale's first-hand comments concerning Tracy 71. It is clear that William Tracy's theological outlook which according to Tyndale had been formed for some time would have made Tracy an unlikely customer for the indulgence seller 72.

Frith concludes his defence of Tracy's refusal to make mortuary payments by stating plainly that such payments are unnecessary. Indeed such payments are wicked and blasphemous because they denigrate the saving work of Christ <sup>73</sup>. Mortuary payment will not help the damned to elude his fate, and "**he yt is not dampned is sure of saluacion**" <sup>74</sup>. Election ensures that the payment of money to the Church to purchase its prayers and masses does not affect the Christian's standing with God. The Christian's goods are held by him of God, and it is to God, not the Church that Frith believes he is accountable for their use <sup>75</sup>.

Turning to the funeral upon which William Tracy had been unwilling to lavish unnecessary money, Frith advances an argument similar to the one he had earlier employed against mortuary payments. If it was true that the funeral rites could add to the merit of the deceased, Frith suggests that God had ill-provided for the martyrs who were put to death in such a way that elaborate funerals were impossible:

**Yf these thinges were of so great value  
before god, then Christ had euil prouided  
for his martyrs whose bodyes are commonly  
cast out to be consumed w[ith] fyre, & wilde  
beastes, not w[ith]standing I wolde be  
afrayed to say yt they were any thing the  
worse for the burning of their bodies or  
tearing of it in pieces. <sup>76</sup>**

Frith endorses the teaching of Augustine in the quotation from **De cura agenda pro mortuis** used by Tracy in the **Testament** <sup>77</sup>. Elaborate funeral rites, mortuary payments to the clergy and the establishment of chantry foundations are all superfluous to the eternal fate of the soul. They are merely works of man and as such cannot equip the living or the dead with divine grace. The destiny of the soul depends entirely upon the grace of God. The element of predestination is particularly strong in Frith's theology which lacks Tyndale's emphasis upon the necessity of good works as part of a covenant relationship between God and man <sup>78</sup>.

The strongest moral injunction in Frith's work is to charity or brotherly love. It is through lack of charity that William Tracy's **Testament** has been condemned and Frith's **Exposition** abounds with instructions to the reader to act with charity "towardses your brother" <sup>79</sup>. Frith believes that Christians should labour to "**precell ech other in loue & charitie**" <sup>80</sup>. The concluding passage of the **Exposition** as printed by Foxe in 1572-3 reads almost as a paean of Charity:

Go ye therefore and let charitie be your  
guide, for God is charities, and though our  
Lawyers hart woulde breake, yet must you  
needes iudge him [William Tracy] a Christen

man, which saith nothyng but that [which]  
Scripture confirmeth. 81

Lack of *caritas* or brotherly love and humility has caused the ecclesiastical authorities to condemn the words of William Tracy despite their being in complete accord with the teaching of scripture. The condemnation of the Testament is to be seen as an human act by a corrupt institution rather than as an authoritative act of the Church, and as such it may be rejected by the true believer. Frith understood the Church to be both visible, consisting of the elect and the reprobate mixed together, and invisible, comprising the elect known only to God <sup>82</sup>. In this he not only followed Tyndale, but also the traditional Wycliffite ecclesiology <sup>83</sup>.

Frith finds himself forced to deny the authority of the Church as it had come to be accepted in the early Sixteenth Century <sup>84</sup>. In particular he challenges the competence of canon lawyers to determine true or false doctrine. As Clebsch expressed it, Frith was concerned that God alone be God <sup>85</sup>:

He was constrained to deny the authority of the Church in so far as ... it put both the prelates and the conscientious believers in the position of usurping and arrogating to themselves the judgment of God. <sup>86</sup>

Indeed it should be noted that Frith was condemned to death not so much for asserting his own doctrinal position with regard to the eucharist or Purgatory but for denying the authority of the Church to bind souls to eternal damnation for belief or disbelief of specific doctrinal propositions<sup>87</sup>. Frith agreed with William Tracy that the doctrine of Purgatory was an idle imposition upon the laity; a means of extortion adopted by the clergy for their own ends<sup>88</sup>. His theological reasons for rejecting Purgatory represent a development upon Tracy's thinking: the body was purged through Christ's death upon the cross, just as the soul was purged by the Word of God<sup>89</sup>. Thus a discreet place of purgation whither the soul was destined after death was no longer necessary, and indeed represented a blasphemy against Christ's death<sup>90</sup>. Clebsch suggests that Frith's discussion of the state of the soul after death represents a decisive turning point in the English Reformation debate upon this point:

Frith's comment on the Testament addressed theological issues important to the early English Protestants. While it has generally been thought that the only major disagreement among them involved the sacramentarianism which Frith was to expound from prison in 1532-3, this document shows that already in 1532 they disagreed on the

question of the immediate state of the soul between the time of death and the day of general resurrection .... if souls were not in that nowhere [Purgatory], where might they be? 91

The state of the soul after death became a subject of particular controversy between William Tyndale and his erstwhile assistant George Joye in 1534<sup>92</sup> when Joye chose to substitute the words "Life after this" for "Resurrection" when translating the Greek *Anastasis* in his plagiarised version of the New Testament<sup>93</sup>. Already in 1532 it is clear that some people had suggested that William Tracy believed the "soule to be mortall"<sup>94</sup>. Frith unequivocally dismisses this idea:

Ther was neuer Christen men that euer thoughte (not the verye pagaynes) ... for a good man wolde not once dreame such a thinge. 95

Frith's explanation, however, is not so clear. In the context of the preceding discussion it would seem that the process Frith describes is to take place after death. It must be admitted, however, that the text is ambiguous and could be taken to refer to a process of "evangelical conversion" which takes place during life:



But I pray you why shoulde we not say that  
 the soule doeth verely ryse which throw  
 Christe rysing from ye fylth of synne, doeth  
 enter wyth the body into a new conuersation  
 of lyfe, which they shall leade together  
 [body and soul] wyth out possibilitie of  
 synning [ie. turning from God], we say also  
 of god (by a certaine phrase of scripture)  
 yt he ariseth, when he openith vnto vs his  
 power, & presence. And why may we not say ye  
 same thinge of the soule whiche in the meane  
 ceason [life before the awakening of faith]  
 semeth to lye secret & then shall expresse  
 vnto vs (throw Christ) her power and  
 presence, in takyng agayne her natural body.

96

This passage forms an interesting contrast to  
 Tyndale's acceptance of the possibility, albeit  
 remote, of the existence of a place akin to Purgatory:

Though it seme not impossible haplye that  
 there myghte be a place, where the soules  
 might be kepte for a space, to be taught and  
 instructe: yet that there shoulde be suche a  
 Iayle as they Iangle, and suche facions as  
 they fayne, is playne impossible & repugnant  
 to ye scripture... 97

Here in addressing the questions raised by the doctrine of Purgatory, another important distinction can be drawn between Frith and Tyndale <sup>98</sup>.

Frith does not seem to have been attracted to replacing what he saw as the discredited Roman doctrines with other equally rigid doctrinal positions. It is notable that in the course of the **Exposition** Frith does not once refer in direct terms to eucharistic doctrine. This aspect of the text sets the **Exposition** apart from much contemporary theological writing, and certainly from every other document included in **Wickliefes Wicket**. It is true that Frith dealt with the eucharist in other works, and its absence from the **Exposition** may indicate that its author felt it to supplement his overtly eucharistic works <sup>99</sup>. Frith's reluctance to discuss doctrine within a systematic framework is interesting and clearly relates to the understanding of **adiaphora** which he developed in his later works <sup>100</sup>.

Clebsch has suggested that Frith's **Exposition** "Showed for the first time a theological breach between Frith and Tyndale" <sup>101</sup>, and that this explains why the respective works were not published during either man's life. In effect Frith's doctrinal innovation is two-fold: he introduced a concept of **adiaphora** or things indifferent into his theology; and at the same time he refused to make the transition from a doctrine of justification by faith to a

covenant-model such as that adopted by Tyndale with its attendant moral implications for the Christian 102. Hypocrisy so easily deceived the eyes of men with apparently good works which merely serve to cloak an unregenerate soul. In this Frith was not an innovator: he was holding fast to Lutheran teaching. Clebsch is justified in drawing attention to the contrast in this respect between Tyndale and Frith: Tyndale's insistence upon the necessity of good works not as a means of achieving salvation but as an outward and visible sign of an inner state of grace remained much closer to the views espoused by Wyclif and his followers 103. The inspiration of Tyndale's theory of justification with its covenant theme may, as Clebsch suggests, owe something to "Osiander and Bucer and the Rhineland theologians" 104, but as Smeeton has persuasively argued, this is by no means certain and much may be traced back to Wycliffite sources rather than to German Protestant models 105. In his adherence to Luther Frith stands apart from the other authors whose works came to be published together in **Wickliefes Wicket**. This is almost certainly the reason for the omission of Frith's **Exposition** from the two 1546 editions of the **Wicket** by an editor who did not find his views sympathetic 106.

The significance of Frith's theology for the development of an English theological tradition is difficult to assess. **Adiaphora** was certainly to prove

a useful tool for Anglican clergy who were forced to bridge an ever-widening gap between "establishment" and "evangelical" parties within the Church of England later in the Sixteenth Century <sup>107</sup>, but its roots in John Frith are uncertain. It seems more likely that the concept was derived from German discussions following the Leipzig Interim in 1548 about the indifference of certain points of doctrine and practice. The concept had enjoyed favour among Lutherans but was not unique to them: it had support from Augustine and liberally minded writers of the Fifteenth Century including Gerson <sup>108</sup> before it was adopted by Luther and adapted by Melanchthon <sup>109</sup>.

Sir Thomas More described Frith's tract on the eucharist <sup>110</sup> as teaching "in a few leaves shortly all the poison that Wyclif, Oecolampadius, Huss, Tyndale, and Zwinglius have taught in all their books before" <sup>111</sup>. This may accurately reflect the fact that Frith's theology is not essentially innovative <sup>112</sup>, but it is curious that More, one of the few men in England who had legally read the works of Luther, should fail to include the German doctor's name in the list of theologians upon whom Frith drew for his inspiration. Clearly Frith's views on the sacrament of the altar were not simply Lutheran: other factors, ideas "**well to the left of Luther**" <sup>113</sup> were present in the tract examined by More in 1533 <sup>114</sup>, and it is clear that Frith's views on the sacrament were closer to those of

the English sacramentaries than to those of Luther 115. Frith's inspiration in this area of doctrine appears to have been Oecolampadius and to a slightly lesser extent Zwingli, but it is not possible to exclude a residual Wycliffite influence in his thought 116.

Professor Rupp has described Frith as "the prodigy of the Reformers" 117, whose death "was in some ways the supreme tragedy of the first decade" 118 of the English Reformation. Professor Dickens believes Frith to have been possessed of a "mind of high ability and independence" 119 which, had he lived, would have been one of the most influential of the period. These qualities are more apparent in Frith's other works, especially **A Disputation of Purgatory** 120, than in his **Exposition of Tracy's Testament**. This work does not serve to elucidate the tensions which exist within Frith's thought: on the one hand he endorses a Lutheran view of justification with its absolute rejection of the value of good works, and accepts a similarly Lutheran concept of **adiaphora** with regard to dogmas such as Purgatory and transubstantiation; on the other hand his own eucharistic theology falls much closer to Oecolampadius and Zwingli than to Luther.

Frith is undoubtedly a significant figure in the development of the English Reformation. His association with William Tyndale alone would assure

him of such a position, and the attitude of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities in England to his work provides further proof of the potency of his words 121 The **Exposition** is a competent elucidation not so much of William Tracy's theology as John Frith's belief with regard to Purgatory, the state of the soul after death, justification and the shortcomings of the contemporary Church and canon lawyers in particular. As Claire Cross has remarked, Frith's theology was eclectic:

[In this] **eclecticism and willingness to go on from the doctrines of Luther to find truths in the theology of other Continental Protestant leaders [Frith] represents a certain openness and a disposition to discriminate between reformed ideas which characterized the early English Protestants both at home and abroad.** 122

In this sense Frith's theological method, if not his teaching, serves as a pattern of what developed in the late Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries. Frith's enduring influence is particularly hard to assess, not least because his theology is so eclectic. **Adiaphorism** proved to be a valuable tool in forging the *via media* of the late Sixteenth Century Anglican Church, but its exclusive roots in John Frith's writings are questionable; the harsh rejection of any practical value in good works likewise failed

to find favour with an established Church with a keen interest in securing social and political stability. Election and evangelical regeneration were endorsed by only the more radical elements on the fringe of the Church of England in the late Sixteenth Century 123. Frith's eucharistic theology probably enjoyed most favour, coming as it did so close to the views of the English sacramentaries who built upon the foundation of native Wycliffite dissent with new imported ideas. Indeed Frith's heirs within the later English Church clearly lay among the Puritans and Presbyterians. If William Tyndale's theology provided the foundation for the broad established Church of England, the spiritual arm of an all-encompassing state, John Frith's theology found its logical outcome in those who overthrew that Established Church in the 1640s. Frith's **Exposition**, while not its author's most significant work, is interesting for the glimpse which it offers of this crucial divergence within what was to become Anglican theology. Already in 1532 the divisions which have in various forms continued to beset the Church of England are beginning to emerge: they were inherent in Anglican theology at its birth.

- 1 - Cf. Introduction to William Tyndale's Exposition of Master William Tracy's Testament, above .  
Mozley, J.F., William Tyndale, New York 1937, 241.
- 2 - Clebsch, W.A., England's Earliest Protestants, 1520-1535 Yale 1964, 107.  
Wright, N.T. (ed.), The Work of John Frith, Sutton Courtenay 1978, 44.
- 3 - More, T., The Apology, in The Complete Works of St. Thomas More, Yale 1979, 9, 125.
- 4 - Cf. Rupp, E.G., Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition, Cambridge 1947, 10.  
Cf. Biographical notice of Frith in Dictionary of National Biography.
- 5 - Cf. Extended title of Testament in 1535 edition printed at Antwerp by H. Peetersen van Middelburch, STC no. 24167; also editions printed at London as part of Wickliefes Wicket by John Day in 1546 (2 eds.), 1548 and 1550 - STC nos. 25590; 25590.5; 25591; 25591a.
- 6 - H. Peetersen van Middelburch, Antwerp 1535. STC no. 24167.
- 7 - Foxe, J., [ed.], The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith and Doct[or] Barnes ..., John Day, London 1572-3. Frith's Exposition, 77-81.
- 8 - Wickliefes Wicket, John Day, London 1546 (1st ed. - 2 versions). STC nos. 25590, 25590.5.
- 9 - Lewis, C.S., English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama, Vol. III of The Oxford History of English Literature, ed. Wilson, F.P. and Dobree, D., Oxford 1954, 196.
- 10 - Eg. Exposition, D7v 19ff; D8r 2ff. References are to the present edition.
- 11 - Exposition, D5r 9-13.
- 12 - Testament, C2v 22:  
Thou shalt vnderstande ... that after  
Wylliam Tyndall was so Iudasly betrayed ...  
there were certayne thynge of hys doynge  
founde ... Amongest whiche was this  
Testament of mayster Tracie expounded by him  
self, where vnto was annexed ye exposition  
of the same of Ihon Friths owne doynge &  
owne hande writing...
- 13 - Cf. Introduction to Wickliefes Wicket, above.  
Also Aston, M., Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion, London 1984.
- 14 - Foxe, V, 29; 38.  
Dickens, A.G., The English Reformation, London 1964, 115-17.  
A recent survey of the activities of the "Christian Brethren" can be found in Davis, J.F., "Lollardy and the Reformation in England", Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte 73 (1982), 217-36.
- 15 - Wright comments that Frith refrained from the scurrility found in writers such as Simon Fish. While



this is perhaps true of Frith's editorial material in the translation of Luther's **De Antichristo**, it is questionable with regard to the overtly anticlerical tone of the **Exposition**. Cf. Wright, **Frith**, 34-5.

16 - **Exposition**, D6r 2.

17 - **Exposition**, D6r 26-31.

18 - **Exposition**, Concluding Passage (Foxe 1572-3), 9-15.

19 - For Hunne case, see Vol. I 269 n. 22.

The members of the Reformation Parliament sought to revive or play upon memories of the Hunne case to advance their own policies at the expense of the Church by demonstrating the over-bearing power of the ecclesiastics.

20 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 138-40.

Discussion of anticlerical attitude of the Reformation Parliament in 1529-30.

21 - Cf. Ridley, J., **Henry VIII**, London 1984, 206-32.

Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 126ff.

22 - Cf. Comments of Donald Smeeton on survival of Wycliffite heresy in London in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries Smeeton, D.D., **Lollard Themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale**, Vol. VI in **Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies**, Kirkville 1986, 53-7.

Cross, C. **Church and People 1450-1660. The Triumph of the Laity in the English Church**, London 1976, 39.

Davis, J.F., "Lollardy and the Reformation", 220.

23 - Lollard "schools" appear to have operated quite widely in Southern and Eastern English counties throughout the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Centuries. Texts were circulated and read aloud to the illiterate either by travelling teachers or preachers, or by local leaders such as the Randalls in Rickmansworth, the Colins family at Ginge in Berkshire or Joan Butcher at Steeple Bumpstead in Essex.

Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 56-62; Davis, J.F.,

"Lollardy and the Reformation", 217ff; Aston, M.,

"Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Revival?", **History** 49 (1964), 149ff.

Hudson, A., **The Premature Reformation Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History**, Oxford 1988, 180-208.

Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 24 comments that Frith's works often have a feel of conversation or debate.

24 - Cf. Mozley, J.F., **Tyndale**, 241.

**Testament**. C2v 18ff.

25 - Frith's Introduction to **A Christian Sentence ... of the most honourable Sacrament of Christ's body and blood** (1532) make it clear that he was reluctant to publish the work which was written for private circulation. There is no mention of his **Exposition** of Tracy's **Testament** prior to the appearance of the 1535 Antwerp edition, so it is possible that a similar reticence applied to this work. Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 51ff.

26 - **Foxe**, V, 1-18.

- Ridley, J., **Henry VIII**, 224.
- 27 - **Foze**, V, 29; 38. The first records of suspects apprehended for owning a copy of the **Testament**. Tracy had died in October 1530, so some time might be assumed to have elapsed before it came to Frith's attention. However Robert Joseph, a monk from Evesham in correspondence with a priest in Tracy's village knew of the existence of the **Testament** and its controversial tone at the time of its composition. Cf. **The Letter Book of Robert Joseph, Monk-Scholar of Evesham and Gloucester College, Oxford, 1530-3**, ed. Aveling, E. and Pantin, W.A., Oxford 1967, 100-2. The date ascribed by the editors to the letter in question may be open to question by a week or two.
- 28 - Frith was burnt at Smithfield on 4th July 1533. Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**.
- 29 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 10.
- 30 - Edition printed by H. Petersen van Middelburch, 1535. **STC** no. 24167.
- 31 - Cf. **Testament**, C2v 18ff.  
For details of Tyndale's arrest see **Smeeton**, 73-4. On Lollard texts possibly edited by Tyndale, see **Smeeton**, "Did Tyndale Edit Lollard Tracts?", Appendix I, 256-8, where it is concluded with reasonable certainty that Tyndale was responsible for issuing three Lollard tracts from Antwerp in 1530-31.
- 32 - Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 45.
- 33 - **Exposition**, D4r 4.
- 34 - **Testament**, C3v 19ff.
- 35 - **Exposition**, D6v 21ff.
- 36 - Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 22.
- 37 - **Exposition**, D4r 6ff.
- 38 - Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 29-31.
- 39 - Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 31-2.
- Wright remarks that Frith's doctrine of justification comes close to one of "Double Justification".
- 40 - **Exposition**, D4r 6-7.
- 41 - **Exposition**, D6v 21-22.
- 42 - **Exposition**, D7v 28.
- 43 - **Exposition**, D7v 29-30.
- 44 - **Exposition**, D6v 12-15; D7v 15-18.
- 45 - **Exposition**, D4r 16.
- 46 - **Exposition**, D4v 1-2. Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 29-30.
- 47 - **Exposition**, D6r 15-19.
- 48 - **Exposition**, D6r 3.
- Cf. Frith, J., **De Antichristo - An Epistle to the Christian Reader** (1529) in Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 467.
- 49 - **Exposition**, D6r 3-14.
- 50 - **Exposition**, D6r 14.
- Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 29-39; 40.
- 51 - **Exposition**, D6r 15. **Testament**, C3v 10.
- 52 - **Exposition**, D6r 15-19.
- 53 - **Exposition**, D7v 6-7.
- 54 - **Exposition**, D6r 18.
- 55 - **Exposition**, D7v 20.
- 56 - **Exposition**, D7v 23-7. Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 40-41.

57 - **Exposition**, D8r 12-18.

58 - **Exposition**, D8r 18-19.

Wright, N.T., Frith, 42: Repentance and faith are but a God-given response to the initiative of grace and can only be effected by the work of the Holy Spirit. Wright stresses what he describes as the "Trinitarian" nature of Frith's doctrine of justification by faith "firmly rooted in an understanding of the work of each person of the Trinity, and in the application of that work to the condition of man" - Wright, Frith, 29.

59 - **Exposition**, D8r 20-23.

60 - **Exposition**, D8v 2-3.

**Testament** C4r 4-5.

61 - **Exposition**, D8v 23.

62 - **Exposition**, D8v 15-27.

63 - **Exposition**, D8v 29. Wright, N.T., Frith, 32.

64 - **Exposition**, D8v 4-5.

65 - **Exposition**, D8v 6-8.

66 - **Exposition**, D6r 25 - D6v 4.

67 - **Exposition**, D6v 2.

68 - **Exposition**, D6v 3.

69 - **Exposition**, D6v 4-11.

70 - **Exposition**, D6v 11.

71 - Tyndale, W., **Exposition**, D1r 22-26:

Master Tracie, whiche was a learned man, & better sene in the workes of saynt Austen .xx. yeres before he dyed, then euer I knew doctour in Englande...

72 - Tyndale, W., **Exposition**, D1r 21 - D1v 5.

73 - Wright, N.T., Frith, 31.

74 - **Exposition**, D6v 14.

75 - **Exposition**, D6v 16-18.

76 - **Exposition**, D7r 4-11.

It is interesting to note that Frith is using logic and common sense implications derived from scripture to demolish the teaching of the Church.

77 - **Testament**, C3v 18-23.

78 - Cf. Wright, N.T., Frith, 29. Wright comments that Frith does not develop "sub-themes such as covenant" in his theology. This is clearly true in the case of the **Exposition**. However Wright's remarks with regard to Tyndale being "compromised by moralism" are less easy to support. It is also far from clear that Tyndale and Frith share an identical understanding of justification as Wright maintains. Cf. **Introduction to Tyndale's Exposition**, above where a case for Tyndale's distinctive understanding of justification is maintained.

79 - Cf. **Exposition**, D4v 24; D5v 13ff; D6v 27ff; D7r 12; Conclusion 2ff.

80 - **Exposition**, D5v 11.

81 - **Exposition**, Conclusion [Foxye, 1572-3], 1-7.

82 - Cf. Wright, N.T., Frith, 78.

83 - Cf. Smeeton, 160-62; Hudson, A., ed.,

**Selections from English Wycliffite Writings**, Cambridge 1978, 116. 21-4.

84 - As Smeeton points out [Op.cit., 160], neither Tyndale nor Frith appears to have shared Luther's

early conviction that the Roman Church could be cleansed by a General Council. The contrast of the "True" and "False" Church seems to have been almost ontological for both writers in much the same way that the **Presciti** had been eternally and ontologically separate for Wyclif. Cf. Leff, G., "Wyclif and Hus: A Doctrinal Comparison" in Kenny, A., ed., **Wyclif in His Times**, Oxford 1986, 112-13.

85 - Clebsch, W.A., **England's Earliest Protestants**, 106.

86 - Clebsch, W.A., **Protestants**, 106-7.

87 - Clebsch, W.A., **Protestants**, 105. Also **The Articles Wherefore Iohn Frith Dyed**, written June 23rd, 1533, ed. Wright, N.T., Frith.

88 - **Exposition**, D6r 25-33; **Testament** C3v 12-16.

89 - Clebsch, W.A., **Protestants**, 105.

Wright, N.T., Frith, 40-41.

90 - Wright, N.T., Frith, 31.

Wright is correct to state that Frith's objection to Purgatory is not an isolated attack upon a specific doctrine:

This is not just an attack on a particular doctrine [ie. Purgatory], but a theology of total salvation for the whole man through Christ .... The full doctrine is of a piece with Frith's theology of justification, forensic and actual, in which the sinner is justified first in his new standing before a holy God and second in his actually becoming Christ-like. Wright, Frith, 40.

91 - Clebsch, W.A., **Protestants**, 108.

92 - Clebsch, W.A., **Protestants**, 108; Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 50; Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 112; **Smeeton**, 2-3.

Cf. also Eutterworth, C.C., and Chester, A.G., **George Joye, 1495? - 1553**, Oxford and Philadelphia 1962, 180.

It should be noted that Joye owned a copy of **Wickliefes Wicket** in the second London edition of 1546 (ie. omitting Frith's **Exposition**). Bodleian Library copy B4(1) **Med.B.S.** bears Joye's autograph on the title page.

93 - Clebsch, W.A., **Protestants**, 108; **Smeeton**, 72-3.

94 - **Exposition**, D4v 21.

95 - **Exposition**, D4v 24-29.

96 - **Exposition**, D4v 29 - D5r 8.

97 - Tyndale, W., **Exposition**, D2v 28-34.

98 - The other important difference being the absence of a covenant theme and moral emphasis to Frith's doctrine of justification as described above, note 78.

99 - Cf. Frith, J., **Answer to M. More's Letter and A Christian Sentence ... of the most honourable Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood** in Wright, N.T., Frith. Written for private circulation in October-November 1532.

Wright provides a clear exposition of Frith's eucharistic theology in Frith 55-9, where the doctrine is related to Frith's other major theological tenets.

- 100 - Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 61-64.  
 Wright also notes that Frith does not expound doctrine in a systematic way - **Frith**, 62.
- 101 - Clebsch, W.A., **Protestants**, 107.
- 102 - Cross comments that Frith was careful to reject anything which had the appearance of "double justification". Cf. Cross, C., **Church and People**, 56.
- 103 - Cf. **Smeeton**, 135.  
 Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 29 does not agree.
- 104 - Clebsch, W.A., **Protestants**, 108-9.
- 105 - **Smeeton**, 124-140.
- 106 - Wright shows that Frith's sacramental theology depends largely upon Oecolampadius and to a lesser extent upon Zwingli. As the eucharistic theme is not developed at all in the **Exposition**, these influences are difficult to detect. It is the question of justification which receives most attention, and here the influence of Luther is clear. Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 59-61.
- 107 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 117; 250-1; 438.  
 The role of adiaphorism in the emergence of a practical though unofficial policy of toleration which emerged in the early Seventeenth Century in England should be noted. Cf. Cross, C., **Church and People**, 153-74; Zeveld, W.G., **The Foundations of Tudor Policy**, 137ff.
- 108 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 117. Dickens gives the credit for the incorporation of **adiaphorism** into the Anglican tradition to Thomas Starkey, **Reformation**, 251.
- 109 - Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 61. Wright comments that **adiaphora** is common to both Tyndale and Frith and was intended to avoid in England a split similar to that which followed Marburg on the Continent.
- 110 - ie. **A Brief Sentence ... of the most honourable Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood** [1532] in Wright, N.T., **Frith**.
- 111 - More, quoted by Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 116.
- 112 - Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 58.
- 113 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 116.
- 114 - Frith, J., **On the Eucharist**, in **Works of Tyndale and Frith**, London 1831, III, 321.
- 115 - With the exception that Frith introduced an important spiritual element into his eucharistic theology from Oecolampadius. Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 59. Wright draws attention to the fact that Frith's patristic quotations tend to follow those of Oecolampadius.
- 116 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 10.  
 Frith's birth in the Lollard stronghold of Tenterden, Kent, together with his study at Cambridge may have exposed him to Wycliffite influences in his youth. It is not possible to determine this point with certainty, but superficial parallels with the eucharistic theology of **Wickliefes Wicket** should be noted. Cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 58.
- 117 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 199.

- 118 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 199.  
119 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 116.  
120 - Frith, J., **A Disputation of Purgatory, Made by John Frith, which is divided into Three Books** [published 1531] in Wright, Frith.  
121 - Cf. Ridley, J., **Henry VIII**, 223-4; Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 116.  
Frith's works were prohibited by Proclamation in June 1546.  
122 - Cross, C., **Church and People**, 57.  
123 - Calvinist theology became the norm for most clergy in the later years of Elizabeth, but Presbyterianism and separatism were rigidly opposed until the reign of James I. Calvinism was almost certainly not the personal preference of Elizabeth but political necessity combined with popular lay sentiment to make any alternative impossible. Cf. Cross, C. **Church and People**, 124-74.

**A Comparison of Two Introductions written for  
Wickliefes Wicket by Miles Coverdale in 1548 and  
Henry Jackson in 1612.**

The existence of two introductions written for the same text at least sixty-four years apart affords the modern reader an interesting opportunity to compare the way in which two editors viewed **Wickliefes Wicket**: one at the time of the emergence of the Church of England; the other at what might be described as its first period of consolidated establishment. In some respects the significance of **Wickliefes Wicket** can be gauged by the fact that two men from different periods in the development of Anglican thought that it was a text which had something to offer the Church of England of their day. It is interesting to note the way in which each writer finds something different to commend and gives a different emphasis to the way in which the text is presented. Each reflects the concerns which most pressed the Church of his day, and so in this respect the Introductions go some way towards illustrating the development which took place in Anglicanism between the death of Henry VIII and the reign of James VI and I.

The first edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** printed by John Day at London in 1546 appeared without any editorial material except for John Rogers' Introduction to William Tracy's **Testament** which was

reprinted from his 1535 Antwerp edition of that text<sup>1</sup>. The **Introduction to Wicklieffes Wicket** first appeared in Day's 1548 expanded second edition of the **Wicket** and was reprinted when that edition was corrected and re-issued some two years later<sup>2</sup>. The editorial material is not itself signed by the editor, but the text as a whole appears above the colophon:

**FINIS. Ouerseene by. M.C.**

This has generally been accepted as indicating that Miles Coverdale was the editor responsible for the second edition of the **Wicket**. The attribution does not rest upon tradition alone. On stylistic grounds the **Introduction** to the **Wicket** bears a striking similarity to a number of introductions written by Coverdale for works by Calvin, Bullinger, Bucer and others at this period<sup>3</sup>. Anecdotally it is possible to trace Coverdale's association with **Wicklieffes Wicket** back to 1528 when he acted as assistant priest in the notoriously Lollard parish of Steeple Bumpstead in Essex. A fellow Augustinian friar, Thomas Topley from nearby Clare in Suffolk stated when questioned on a charge of heresy that Coverdale had commended the **Wicket** and endorsed its teaching<sup>4</sup>:

I found a certain book called Wicklieffes Wicket, whereby I felt in my conscience a great wavering for the time that I did read upon it . . . . Yet my mind was still much troubled with the said book (which did make the sacrament of Christ's body, in the form of bread, but a



remembrance of Christ's passion), till I heard  
sir Myles Coverdale preach, and then my mind was  
sore withdrawn from the blessed sacrament,  
inasmuch that I took it then but for a  
remembrance of Christ's body. <sup>5</sup>

Topley reports a conversation with Coverdale in which the latter spoke against auricular confession and images and expressed his agreement with Erasmus' critique of contemporary ecclesiastical practice. It would appear from the facts of his career that Coverdale might have experienced some Wycliffite influence early in his life, but this is far from clear or certain. Having been educated at Cambridge, Coverdale was ordained priest at Norwich in 1514 and returned to Cambridge as an Austin friar. From about 1523 the Superior at Cambridge was Robert Barnes, a man whose position as an early English reformer is without question. The apparent "leader" of the "White Horse group" at Cambridge<sup>6</sup>, Barnes' precise theological leanings have remained a subject of controversy. Certainly he was using Luther as a source for his sermons at Cambridge in the mid-1520s, and during his confinement at the London house of Austin friars he sold lollards from Steeple Bumpstead a copy of Tyndale's **New Testament** with its "**cleaner English**" to replace their Wycliffite translation<sup>7</sup>. On the whole it would seem that Barnes' sympathies lay more with Wittenburg than with Wyclif, and any Lollard

influence upon Coverdale was not likely to have come from that quarter. When Barnes was removed from Cambridge, Coverdale too left off his friar's habit and assumed the life of an unbeneficed secular priest, the better to engage in evangelical preaching. It was at this period that Thomas Topley encountered both Coverdale and **Wickliefes Wicket** in Essex. From 1528 Coverdale spent the best part of a decade in Europe, working upon his Biblical translations and developing contacts both with Lutheran theologians and English exiles, but for a few months in early 1540 Coverdale is found in England assisting the effort to destroy English books, sects and sacramentaries around Newbury<sup>8</sup>. Coverdale had been associated with both More and Cromwell prior to his exile in 1528, and his work with Cromwell in putting down the Berkshire sacramentaries who only believed what **Wickliefes Wicket** taught should be seen as a manifestation of Coverdale's belief in obedience to the power of the state:

I am but a private man and obedient to the  
higher powers. <sup>9</sup>

The Introduction to **Wickliefes Wicket** shows that Coverdale sought to bring about the godly society in England. At different periods of his life the means of achieving this goal differed: exile and work with fellow countrymen abroad when the fire and faggot ruled in England; association with likely reformers

such as More and Cromwell when power was in their hands; the role of a diocesan bishop under Edward VI guiding his diocese towards reform; and finally having spent years of exile in Denmark, Germany and Switzerland Coverdale came to be the leader of what Professor Dickens has described as a "nascent puritan school"<sup>10</sup> which felt that ecclesiastical preferment was incompatible with true Christian living. In appearing to persecute those who held beliefs the same or very close to his own Coverdale was not unique. Cranmer was involved in the trial of John Lambert and Kentish sacramentaries in the 1530s<sup>11</sup>, and recent research has cast doubt upon Cromwell's eucharistic orthodoxy<sup>12</sup>. Coverdale's persecution of anabaptist heretics in the South West in 1550-51 shows again his desire to uphold the authority of the state which he believed to be threatened by these radicals and which he believed could alone provide the conditions necessary for the development of the godly society.

The Introduction to *Wickliefes Wicket* provides an interesting insight into the development of Coverdale's thought and the stage that this had reached by 1548, the year of his return from exile<sup>13</sup>. The Introduction is addressed to "the studious readers and professours of goddes most sacred word & veritie"<sup>14</sup> who are likened by Coverdale to the "vii.m.men which haue not bowed theyr knees to Baale" but who form a remnant of true believers reserved to

God<sup>15</sup> . The parallel is drawn out in explicit terms. Those who in the days of the "Romyshe raygne"<sup>16</sup> had professed themselves to be Christians but gave obedience to the human and therefore fallible authority of the pope, were in reality hypocrites:

The people that professed the christian name had forsaken the couenaunt of the Lord theyr God, destroyinge hys aultares (theyr pure, innocent and thankfull hertes) employnge them selues holely to the prosecution of the true prophets and preachers of hys worde. 17

Coverdale believes that the survival of Wicklieffes Wicket, a "lytle boke, which was wrytten well moste.cc.yeaeres sense" and which had been pursued by a "greate rage of fyre that hath not seased from that tyme hytherto"<sup>18</sup> demonstrates that at no time was God's "church vtterlye extincted .... For he had alway hys nombre"<sup>19</sup> . A book which has survived from "the chiefe tyme of Antichristes raygne"<sup>20</sup> should be regarded with respect and received as an authoritative document preserved through divine providence:

[This book] oughte therefore to be the more thankfully receued of euerye Christian herte, knowyng for certenty that God reserueth alwayes hys membres & present consolation for them, in spyte of all the tyranny of the world. 21

Providentially **Wickliefes Wicket** has been preserved despite the "many thousand bokes of godly mynded mens writtyng [which] haue ben bourned in thys realme"<sup>22</sup> in order to convey the true faith to a more favourable age. Coverdale believes that **Wickliefes Wicket** is like the Old Testament prophets who recalled the erring Israelites to the true faith<sup>23</sup>. A similar Old Testament metaphor, this time the increase of Israel in Egypt, is employed to underline the growth of true believers in more modern times<sup>24</sup>. Coverdale explains that by this he means not those who "take vpon them the name of Chryste to be called christians"<sup>25</sup>, but rather those whose faith has in a sense been "proved by fire":

those onely who no imprisonment, torments, or death:

could be put to silence so that they shoulde not boldly profes alwaies the trueth of godes word and testament. 26

Among such true Christians Coverdale numbers the author of **Wickliefes Wicket**, although it is interesting to note that he does not specifically refer to the author as Wyclif. Coverdale believes that no other writer has "more briefly and playnely, declared the true vnderstanding of the wordes of the supper"<sup>27</sup> and at the same time so well exposed the bigotry, the "moore then beastly blyndneste" of the Roman authorities or those "that do so sturdily bestur

them selmes with swerd, fagote, and fyre"<sup>28</sup> . Coverdale objects to the use of force by the ecclesiastical authorities to enforce a particular understanding of the eucharist, namely belief in the transubstantiation of the bread and wine. The words of consecration spoken by Christ at the Supper and now repeated by "euery myslyuinge priest"<sup>29</sup> do not, according to Coverdale, have "the powre & vertue to tourne the substaunce of bread into the substaunce of Christes Body and bloude"<sup>30</sup> . Christ's words were "spoken to declare vnder what maner we are partakers of the same his body"<sup>31</sup> . Coverdale continues by stating that the reader of Wicklieffes Wicket should not believe that the author of the tract says that Christ pointed to his own physical body when he spoke the words "This is my body". Such an interpretation is not "onely voyde of all wyt & learninge: but also playnely repugnant to the texte"<sup>32</sup> . Christ's purpose was not to "declare vnto them that his body (which they saw) was his body" for their eyes and other senses adequately informed the Apostles of this fact<sup>33</sup> :

it is euident that he went not about to declare vnto them that his body (which they saw) was his body (For their senses gaue them, & they beleued no lesse but it was his body, euen as you se & beleue that a cake is bread). <sup>34</sup>

The purpose of Christ's words was rather to declare the redemption of mankind wrought through the assumption of humanity in the Incarnation:

his intent was to declare vnto them wherfore he toke that body of the immaculate virgine, & what fruite they shulde haue there by. 35

The Introduction is concluded with an injunction to the reader of **Wickliefes Wicket** to have a care that in these last days of the world theological argument should not degenerate into abuse which might give rise to scandal and turn men's minds from the pursuit of true religion:

Be circumspecte therefore (mooste derely beloved in the Lorde) and let your outrageouse talke geue none occasion to the aduersaries, to misraporte that heuenly spirite which is (in these oure dayes the latter dayes of the worlde) so plentuouslye powered oute vpon all nacions and estates. 36

It is not difficult to appreciate that the early months of the reign of Edward VI must have seemed to be filled with eschatalogical portents for a "grave, reverend good man, and a serious promotor of the reformatiō of this Church"<sup>37</sup>. The death of the effective tyrant Henry VIII in January 1547 released a stream of creative theological writing and

speculation. Ideas to which no man could have aspired openly with impunity while Henry yet lived could now be explored with relative safety. A young monarch personally favourable to the cause of reform<sup>38</sup> surrounded by a government itself by convinced or opportunistic reformers must have seemed something like the ushering-in of the new Jerusalem to those clergy like Coverdale who had aspired to reform since at least the 1520s. At last the godly society could be fully realized in England. The pace of reform legislation and changes in 1547-8 alone when compared to the changes in the last years of Henry's reign is astonishing, and must have appeared so to contemporaries of all religious persuasions. From either point of view the changes must have seemed cataclysmic. In 1547 images were destroyed, Communion was administered in both kinds, a Communion Service in English was printed for the first time, an Act defining eucharistic doctrine was passed and an Act for the suppression of chantries was brought forward. It was at this time too that by his own evidence Cranmer was converted to a Ratomnian understanding of the eucharist by Nicholas Ridley<sup>39</sup>.

The note of caution sounded by Coverdale in his reference to "**outragiouse talke**"<sup>40</sup> is very interesting and is perhaps best explained by reference to another Introduction written by Coverdale at about this time. In about 1547<sup>41</sup> Coverdale translated and



wrote an Introduction for Calvin's Treatise on the Eucharist. printed by John Day<sup>42</sup> under the title A Faythful and most Godly treatyse concernyng the most sacred sacrament of the blessed body and bloud of our sauour Christ compiled by John Caluine. The eucharistic theology expounded in this Introduction matches closely that found in the Introduction written by Coverdale for Wicklieffes Wicket. Thus Coverdale writes in his Introduction to Calvin:

Then said he to his apostles, Take ye, eat ye .... Not meaning that he had changed the nature of the bread into the nature of flesh, making the bread that he held in his hand his natural body; for then had he given unto them a mortal and corruptible body to eat; which thing is so much ungodly, that very nature abhoreth it .... Wherefore the night before he suffered, he declared unto us by these visible signs, what communion we have in him ... Here is a plain declaration of the end and purpose of Christ, when he instituted this most sacred sacrament: forsooth, to keep in remembrance his most dolorous death, and precious blood most plentifully shed upon the cross. 43

Coverdale's concern over "outrageouse talke" is amplified in the Introduction to Calvin. Having

explored some of the contemporary complaints about eucharistic practice, Coverdale continues:

I will speak no more concerning these fond inventions about the ministration of this most sacred sacrament, lest I should thereby be an offence or stumbling-block to the weak brothers, whose consciences are not yet fully satisfied concerning the true belief of this holy mystery; I mean, lest I should give the occasion to do, as certain fond talkers of late days done, and at this present day do invent and apply to this most holy sacrament names of despite and reproach, as to call it Jack-in-the-Box and Round Robin not only fond but blasphemous names, not only void of all edification, ... but very slanderous also. 44

Disrespectful names for the eucharist had been a common feature of much Lollard protest since the early Fifteenth Century<sup>45</sup> and had enjoyed an apparent revival during the early Sixteenth Century<sup>46</sup>. Coverdale registers a strong disapproval of such vulgar abuse: it may be licite to speak irreverently of something that has been turned into an abomination, but the good Christian should refrain from such behaviour out of charity and for the practical reason of securing the consciences of weaker brethren:

for that many godly-minded persons, which by the persuasion of certain discreet and modest brothers have been made, of Romish idolaters and diligent students of duncial dregs, disciples of great hope in the sincere and true evangelic doctrine, have by the hearing of these names of reproach and despite taken occasion to think, that the knowledge which these men did profess, which would be so outrageous as to mock and jest at the remembrance of our redemption, could not proceed of the Spirit of God; and have through this persuasion returned to their old leaven again. 47

This is, in more expanded form, precisely the point that Coverdale sought to make in his *Introduction to Wicklieffes Wicket*, and it is also the point which underlies Cranmer's eucharistic legislation of 1547-8<sup>48</sup>. Coverdale was prepared to endorse and make use of the earlier expression of discontent with eucharistic theology and practice; he was able by 1547-8 publicly to agree with and commend the theology of *Wicklieffes Wicket*. He was not prepared, however, to endorse the more colourful language of some of its proletarian readers who in a well-worn Lollard tradition sought to make the eucharist a source of vulgar, even ribbald controversy<sup>49</sup>. An interesting illustration of this phenomenon is provided by an anonymous ballad printed in 1548 by Day and Seres<sup>50</sup>:

I see men honour, Both breade and wyne  
For christ our sauour, which he left for a sign  
To the beleuer, Of hys death deuyne  
Lorde amende thys ....

Wonderful syghtes, I coulde declare  
I loked in the pixte Dome [dumb] gods I saw there  
Made of the priests, Which sinners are  
Liuinge amyse ....

What word hast y[ou] nobby, Wherwith Christ did  
make  
Of bread his body, As y[ou] dost crake  
Wyth all thy studye, An answere take  
And tell me this ....

51

The theology of this ballad is clearly Wycliffite in origin and popular in appeal. It lacks the sophistication of Coverdale's writing, but in essence most reformers in 1548 would have been able to agree with it. Coverdale had benefitted from his enforced exile on the Continent in that he had encountered a variety of theological traditions. Thus his translations into English were not confined to Calvin but included Bullinger in 1547 and a commentary upon the order of communion in Denmark.

Coverdale's Introduction to Wicklieffes Wicket falls within what almost appears to have been a conscious programme of translation and editing which

was designed to make available to the English reader the thought of several different continental schools of reform. Between 1547 and 1550 Coverdale worked upon texts by Bullinger, Bucer, Melancthon, Calvin, Wermullerus in addition to **Wickliefes Wicket**: what each of these differing authors had in common was a rejection of Roman ecclesiastical authority and in particular a rejection of the traditional doctrine of the Mass. The Church of England in 1547-8 stood at a cross-roads: it had few developed doctrinal positions and under Henry VIII had been almost entirely dependent upon the state for the initiatives in its tentative progress towards reform<sup>52</sup>. The death of Henry had removed the greatest brake upon reform and allowed a new, all be it cautious spirit of scholarly speculation as to the best form of religious settlement for England to emerge. Debate and negotiation between "radicals" and "conservatives" was inevitable and at the same time the almost unique role of the state in religious affairs had to be accommodated. It is in this atmosphere of debate that Coverdale's edition of **Wickliefes Wicket**, a venerable tract of domestic origin which testified to the preservation of the true evangelical faith within English shores should be seen. The Word of God spoken by his servants in a past age had survived persecution and prohibition to inspire the Christians who stood at the dawn of what promised to be a new and godly age in England. **Wickliefes Wicket** was placed by Coverdale

before those whose fate it was to forge the first doctrinal statements of the Church of England and to lay the foundations for Anglicanism. It was offered alongside the works of the major figures of the continental Reformation without qualification and as an equal authority. It was offered as an inspiration and model for the nascent Church as it struggled to develop a theology which could combine both convinced reformers such as Latimer and Ridley and reluctant catholics such as Tunstall and Bonner.

Henry Jackson's **Introduction** to the 1612 edition of Wicklieffes Wicket provides a fascinating contrast to that composed by Coverdale in 1548<sup>53</sup>. Jackson was an Oxford don, a Fellow of Corpus Christi College who had been entrusted by the President of the College to edit some of Richard Hooker's papers which had passed to the College after the latter's death<sup>54</sup>. The situation in which Jackson was writing was markedly different to that experienced by Coverdale: whereas Coverdale wrote in what might be described as the intellectual white-heat of the birth of the Church of England, by 1612 the Church was an established institution, part of the fabric of the nation with a fully developed doctrinal orthodoxy. It is surprising therefore to find that Jackson and Coverdale share a number of concerns which inform their writing.

Much of Jackson's work is taken up with refuting Roman critics of Protestant reform. The latter part

of the Sixteenth Century had seen a proliferation of personal attacks from both sides of the theological debate. By the early Seventeenth Century the Church of England felt itself to be under particular attack from the Jesuit mission priests such as Campion and Parsons, so it is not surprising to find that Jackson pays these men particular attention. Some of the most significant points made by Jackson are not fully developed in a text which consists largely of extended quotations from hostile sources.

Jackson opens his **Introduction** by demonstrating the way in which Roman writers who "**remaine in the gall of bitternes**" attempt to fix slanders and lies upon "**our worthies of religion**"<sup>55</sup>. Having attempted and failed to discredit reform by reason, Jackson believes that Roman writers resort to "**odious imputations**"<sup>56</sup> :

Whosoeuer shall ... consider the violent practises of Romish factours in all actions they vndertake, & how malitious they alwaies haue been in fastening odious imputations vpon Catholique Professours, that ... they may wound that truth, which with reason they cannot weaken; .... Out of this abundance of their spittefull hearts, their mouthes speake the worst they can of the chiefe Professours of the Catholique truth. 57

Jackson's use of the adjective "Catholique" to describe what would normally be considered to be Protestant writers is interesting. The choice of word hints at a whole ecclesiological position in which the Church of England and other reformed churches are seen to have supplanted Rome as the true or catholic church. Just as mediaeval theologians and canonists faced with the problem of the Schism sought to re-define the Church in terms which did not depend exclusively upon Rome for its source of authority, so too the early Church of England sought to justify its existence by claiming that in some sense it was not just a replacement of the corrupt Roman regime but a continuation or development of a true church which had existed in England from the earliest days and which was to be seen as something apart from the corruption of the Roman establishment. Jackson lays claim to what could be described as a very "high" concept of the Church: the Church of England is not just an instrument of state, a creature of the Crown devised in peculiarly difficult political circumstances; it does not depend upon the secular arm for its authority. It is a divine institution, the Catholic and Apostolic Church in which true religion has been preserved. Wyclif is thus by implication to be numbered among the "chiefe Professours of the Catholique truth"<sup>58</sup>. The theologians and clergy of the Church of Rome, by contrast, are described as "popish heretikes"<sup>59</sup>.



Jackson believes that the Roman writers "father such villanous and improbable speaches vpon our worthies of religion, that I cannot perswade my selfe, but in their cold bloud themselues mistrust them"<sup>60</sup> . He proceeds to quote from several sources including the Roman priest Thomas Fitzherbert, the Jesuit Cardinal Robert Bellarmine and Kasper Ullenberg, a convert from Lutheranism<sup>61</sup> . These writers had based their comments upon Henry Peter Rebenstock's 1571 edition of *Colloquia, meditationes, consolationes, consilia, iudicia, sententiae, narrationes, responsa, facetiae D. Martini Lutheri, piae et sanctae memoriae in mensa, prandii et cocnae, et in perigrinationibus observata et fideliter transcripta*, a text which Jackson without explanation and perhaps a little too conveniently dismisses as a forgery:

He [Fitzherbert] cites indeed a booke called COLLOQUIA: but the worke is forged, and impudently ascribed to LUTHER, and therefore no credit to bee given to it ... <sup>62</sup>

The "popish heretikes" who have so abused Luther merely follow the example of their forebears who "vsed renowned WICKLIFFE no better, but rather worse"<sup>63</sup>. Jackson claims that the Roman authorities made Wyclif the author of "execrable opinions" in their condemnation of him, and then, as if fearing that their lies should be discovered, ordered the

destruction of his remains and books<sup>64</sup> . The use of historical detail to develop the argument is interesting and indicates a familiarity with at least the essential facts of Wyclif's life and condemnation. Coverdale does not show any such awareness of historical detail in his Introduction and indeed ascribes an impossible antiquity to the **Wicket**<sup>65</sup> . Jackson does, however, share Coverdale's outrage at the "**barbarous**" burning of Wyclif's books<sup>66</sup> , and develops the theme of the persecution of true believers which was found in Coverdale's writing. The "**foolish cruelty**" did not stop at the burning of books: "**they persecuted with fire and fagot all such as had anie of his books**"<sup>67</sup> .

The attention to historical detail continues with Jackson's reference to Polydore Vergil's **Anglica Historia**<sup>68</sup> which is quoted as further evidence of the endurance of Wickliffite books despite fierce persecution. Jackson believes that when the ecclesiastical authorities thought that they had succeeded in destroying Wyclif's books and would thus avoid detection, they began "**to put vpon him what opinions they could devise**"<sup>69</sup> . This was done so effectively that contemporary Protestant writers such as Philip Melanchthon were deceived by these lies and have refused to draw upon Wyclif in their works<sup>70</sup> . Jackson provides both historical and contemporary examples of this "dis-information" which has coloured

men's memory of Wyclif. Thomas Walsingham "the Cholericke Monke" of St. Albans is seen as a forerunner of the modern Jesuits Campian and Coster whom Jackson believes to be "more abstracted and sublimated in their apprehensions"<sup>71</sup>. The lack of charity on the part of these Roman adversaries is compared unfavourably with the attitude of Hus who is reported to have said at his condemnation at Constance that he "wished his soule there where WICKLIEFFES was"<sup>72</sup>.

Jackson concludes his Introduction by focusing his attention upon Wicklieffes Wicket itself. Despite the "furious attempts of Papists" Wyclif's writings "haue bin kept hitherto by Gods providence, to convince them out of crueltie and impudencie"<sup>73</sup>. Among these texts is Wicklieffes Wicket, "which hithertofore hath beene so persecuted with fire and fagot" as reported in Polydore and John Foxe's Acts and Monuments<sup>74</sup>. Jackson explains that he has chosen to put the Wicket before the world because:

In this discourse hee [ Wyclif] teacheth the true doctrine of the sacraments with the now Church of England, which he also did in other Treatises .... But how religiously hee speakes of Gods holy Sacraments, it will appeare by reading this Treatise. 75

Jackson puts forth Wicklieffes Wicket for the use of the contemporary Church, hoping that its readers

may "gather comfort" by it and "Give the glory to God, who is wonderful in his saints"<sup>76</sup> . Jackson writes:

I could not wrap this talent in a towell and  
hide it, but put it forth to vse. 77

The central point of Jackson's argument in his Introduction is that the doctrine taught in **Wickliefes Wicket** conforms with the present doctrinal position of the Church of England. He does not question the attribution of the text to Wyclif: despite his historical knowledge of Wyclif's life, there was little reason for him to do so. The **Introduction** is clearly aimed against two distinct targets: on the one hand Roman and particularly Jesuit propagandists who, basing themselves exclusively upon the record of the articles abstracted from Wyclif's works and condemned at Rome and Constance sought to paint Wyclif as an evil genius, the arch-heretic whose damnable beliefs formed the foundation of all subsequent Protestant writing; and on the other ill-informed Protestant writers who either swallowed the propaganda of Rome or who sought to cover-up the less attractive features of the articles which had been condemned by conciliar decree. The crucial point, well made by Dr. Kenny, is that by the early Seventeenth Century, few Roman writers read, or had access to texts written by Wyclif from which the condemned articles were supposed to have been abstracted. The articles condemned at Rome and

Constance and the glosses upon them formed the only source for authors of the "counter Reformation"<sup>78</sup> . At the same time Dr. Aston has demonstrated the extent to which Wyclif's reputation among Protestants in the late Sixteenth Century rested upon myth rather than historical fact<sup>79</sup> . As Kenny has shown, the publication particularly of Bellarmine's *Controversia* in 1606 and Gretser's defence of Bellarmine, the *Controversiarum Roberti Bellarmini S.R.E. Cardinalis Amplissima Defensio* in 1607<sup>80</sup> stimulated a renewed interest in and investigation into the extant works of Wyclif to be found in England. Undoubtedly the leader of this movement was Jackson's Oxford colleague Thomas James, first Librarian at the Bodleian. Jackson makes reference to James' work in his Introduction:

hee [Wyclif] teacheth the true doctrine of ...  
the now Church of England ... as learned M.JAMES  
hath very well shewed in the 7.cap. of his Apol.  
for WICKLIEFFE. 81

Printed at Oxford in 1608, Thomas James' *An Apologie for Iohn Wickliefte, shewing his conformitie with the now Church of England; collected chiefly out of diuerse works of his remaining in the Publicke Library at Oxford* sought, as its title suggests, to answer Wyclif's critics by making available his works rather than a series of propositions abstracted from them, and to claim for Wyclif a place as one of the foundations of English Reformation thought. On the

whole James' work was successful. As Kenny observes, "he has little difficulty in showing that on most of these issues [of Reformation controversy] Wyclif's position was closer to that of the Church of England than to that of the Church of Rome"<sup>82</sup>. Certainly James was to an extent partisan, and it is possible to detect elements of nationalism in his desire to produce an indigenous "Protestant" writer prior to the arrival of the first Lutheran texts from Germany in 1520. However, "he kept his partisanship within the bounds of decency and plausibility", for above all his interest in Wyclif was academic<sup>83</sup> :

With the work of James the historical consideration of Wyclif reaches a new level of sophistication. James was able to consult and quote many of the original works of the reformer and compare them with the caricature current among his admirers and detractors. For the first time since Netter, scholarship takes the place of slander and sycophancy. <sup>84</sup>

Henry Jackson's edition of *Wickliefes Wicket* fits within this new approach to and interest in Wyclif. James recognized that his work was not exhaustive and that other works "cutt and mangled, and scattered ... may be brought forth and set together againe"<sup>85</sup>. Jackson's edition is thus both a fruit of James' initiative and at the same time an addition to the available Wycliffite corpus. It is produced not so

much in the spirit of informing a doctrinal debate as had been the case when Coverdale produced his edition at the hour of the birth of the Church of England, but rather an almost antiquarian spirit of enquiry into the true works of Wyclif. As Dickens has remarked, the ideal type of the new Anglican Church "was no longer the disputant of the schools, but the patristic scholar in the deanery or the the Bible-reading priest in the vicarage"<sup>86</sup> , and to an extent the complaints made by Jackson against Roman authors reflect this development in England. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore that of all the editions of **Wickliefes Wicket**, that produced by Henry Jackson has survived in the greatest number, and many copies of his work originally belonged to the libraries of cathedral chapters<sup>87</sup>. The tract offered by Coverdale in 1548 as a source of inspiration in the debates and battles surrounding the emergence of the Church of England had by 1612 been accepted as an accurate reflection of the doctrine of the Church and as the work of one of Anglican establishment's greatest inspirations<sup>88</sup>.

1 - The only editorial material found in the two editions of 1546 is the **Introduction** to William Tracy's **Testament** written by John Rogers for his 1535 edition of the **Testament** printed at Antwerp by H. Peetersen van Midelburch. **STC** 24167

2 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, London, John Day 1546 (1st edition - 2 versions), **S.T.C.** 25590 and 25590.5.

**Wickliefes Wicket**, London, John Day, 1548, **S.T.C.** 25591. 2nd edition - with two versions;

**Wickliefes Wicket**, London, John Day, 1548/50, **S.T.C.** 25591a

3 - Cf. **Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter**, Parker Society, Cambridge 1844, 11ff; 425ff.

4 - **Foxe**, V, 40.

5 - **Foxe**, V, 40.

6 - Cf. **Dickens, A.G., The English Reformation**, London 1964, 104. **Rupp, E.G., Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition**, Cambridge 1947, 32.

7 - **Dickens, A.G., Reformation**, 104. **Rupp, E.G., Tradition**, 37

8 - Biographical details from **Dictionary of National Biography**.

9 - **Dickens, A.G., Reformation**, 185.

10 - **Dickens, A.G., Reformation**, 186.

11 - cf. **Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation"**, **J.E.H.** 32 (1982), 225ff.

**Dickens, A.G., Reformation**, 258-9.

12 - **Lehmberg, S.E., "The Religious Belief of Thomas Cromwell"** in **Leaders of the Reformation**, ed. DeMolen, R.L., London 1984, 134-53. **Lehmberg** concludes that Cromwell was not a Lutheran, sacramentary or anabaptist but possibly favoured vernacular scriptures and Mass, clerical marriage, reform of images, pilgrimages, relics and invocation of saints:

Unsympathetic to extremists at both ends of the religious spectrum, Cromwell took his stand somewhere between Rome and Wittenberg. His personal beliefs, never developed with the logic of a systematic theologian, were eclectic and pragmatic. In this adherence to moderation and "mediocrity", Cromwell did much to launch the Anglican Church upon its unique middle path.

**Lehmberg, "Thomas Cromwell"**, 149.

Clearly **Lehmberg** would not support the view that Cromwell was a sacramentary. It does appear from **Lehmberg's** work, however, that Cromwell's personal



beliefs were not orthodox by the standards in force during his life.

13 - It appears from textual evidence that the **Introduction to Wicklieffes Wicket** dates from 1548. The absence of the **Introduction** from the two editions of 1546 supports this view. It is possible, however, that Coverdale wrote some form of introduction for the **Wicket** when he first encountered the text in Essex in 1528.

14 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 1-2.

15 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 11-13.

16 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 15. It is possible to detect a trace of Coverdale's poetic use of language here which is particularly apparent in his translation of the **Psalms** retained in the **Book of Common Prayer** in 1662.

17 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 15-21. The punning use of **holely** for **wholly** implying a futile fanaticism on the part of the Roman Church should be noted.

18 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 24-5; 27-9.

19 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 21-3.

20 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 25-6. The use of **Antichrist's raygne** is a deliberate echo of the earlier **Romyshe raygne**. It is clear that the author intends the reader to associate the two in his mind.

21 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 30 - A2r 3.

22 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2r 3-5.

23 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, Alv 3-21.

24 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2r 6-16.

25 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2r 16-19.

26 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2r 19-23.

27 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2r 24-6.

28 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2r 28; 28-30.

29 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2v 4. The further use of a pun as a literary device should be noted.

30 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2v 4-7.

31 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2v 1-3.

32 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2v 13-15.

33 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2v 15-18.

34 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2v 15-20. The use of **cake** and **bread** should be noted with its implication that the eucharistic wafer remains bread and does not become the substance of flesh after consecration.

35 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2v 20-23.

36 - **Wicklieffes Wicket**, A2v 23-30.

37 - Strype, J., **Ecclesiastical Memorials Relating Chiefly to Religion and its Reformation**, London 1816, III, 346: description of the character of Bishop Coverdale from a catalogue of Edwardian bishops.

38 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **The English Reformation**, London 1964, 268ff.

39 - Cf. Cranmer's evidence at his trial in 1555.

Ridley seems to have been converted in about 1546.

Cf. Dickens, **Reformation**, 259.

Some of Cranmer's reforms such as the English Communion were begun under Henry VIII and might have been allowed to come to fruition had that monarch

lived. It remains true, however, that 1547 must have appeared to be a momentous year to most citizens.

40 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, A2v 25.

41 - **Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter**, Parker Society, Cambridge 1844, 425. A date between 1540 and 1548 is suggested. A date later in this band is to be preferred. If Day was indeed the printer - and the type supports this view - a date prior to 1546 - the date of day's first recorded printing - is most unlikely.

42 - John Day was also the printer responsible for **Wickliefes Wicket**. The parallels in presentation, type, etc. are very close.

43 - Coverdale, **Introduction to Calvin's Treatise on the Blessed Sacrament** in Parker Soc. 1844, 430-31.

44 - Coverdale, **Calvin**, 426.

45 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 48. An interesting example of an older historian attempting to minimize the embarrassing aspects of popular Lollardy can be seen in Workman, H.B., **The Dawn of the Reformation**, London 1901, I, 247-50

46 - The large number of cases brought against suspected heretics in the mid-Sixteenth Century may reflect more a variable degree of episcopal vigilance than a sudden growth in heretical opinions. Bishops seem to have been given to periods of almost frantic activity, as at Amersham in 1506-7, London and Essex in 1510 and 1517, and in the diocese of Lincoln in 1521. Cf. Hudson, A., **The Premature Reformation Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History**, Oxford 1988, 446-507.

47 - Coverdale, **Introduction to Calvin**, 426f.

48 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 260. Both Ridley and Cranmer were revolted by the crudely irreverent attacks made against the sacrament of the altar by the proletarian extremists of the reign of Edward VI.

49 - Such comments were not confined to the proletariat. Bishop Bale (a part-time dramatist) makes considerable use of colourful and sometimes inflammatory language - cf. his two volumes of the **Examinacyon of Anne Askewe** printed in 1546 and 1547. There seems to have been a genuine divergence of opinion as to how to proceed in this controversial area among the Reformers.

50 - The **Ballad** may be reconstructed from Robert Crowley's **Confutation of the Mishappen Answer The Abuse of the Blessed Sacrament**, London, Day and Seres, 1548. Crowley is refuting a refutation of the **Ballad** which had been published by Myles Hoggard as **The Abuse of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar**. The text of the **Ballad** is reproduced in **Appendix II** below.

51 - **Ballad**, in **Op.cit.**, A8r; B2v; C2r.

52 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 249ff. Of course the State still retained the central and decisive role in formulating official religious policy after 1547.

53 - Printed by Joseph Barnes, Oxford 1612. **S.T.C.** 25592.

- 54 - Biographical information from **Dictionary of National Biography**.
- 55 - Jackson, (P) 13; 19-20.
- 56 - Jackson, (P) 6.
- 57 - Jackson, (P) 1-17.
- 58 - Jackson, (P) 16.
- 59 - Jackson, (P3) 9.
- 60 - Jackson, (P) 18-21.
- 61 - Jackson, (P2) 3-16; 31; (P3) 1; 5-12.
- 62 - Jackson, (P3) 2-4.
- 63 - Jackson, (P3) 9-14.
- 64 - Jackson, (P3) 15-20.
- 65 - Writing in 1548 Coverdale suggests that **Wickliefes Wicket** to be 200 years old. Even if the **Wicket** was written by Wyclif, it is unlikely that he wrote it at the age of eighteen.
- 66 - Jackson, (P3) 20-22.
- 67 - Jackson, (P3) 27-29.
- 68 - Jackson, (P3) 30 - (P3)v 6. Polydore Vergil, **Anglia Historia**, 1533. Polydore does not approve of Wyclif but endorses the contemporary official policy.
- 69 - Jackson, (P3)v 7-8.
- 70 - Kenny, A., "The Accursed Memory" in **Wyclif in His Times**, Oxford 1986, 167.
- 71 - Jackson, (P3)v 12-28.
- 72 - Jackson, (P3)v 28 - (P4) 2.
- 73 - Jackson, (P4) 3-5.
- 74 - Jackson, (P4) 7-10. Polydore Vergil, **Anglia Historia**; Foxe, V, 29; 38.
- 75 - Jackson, (P4) 10-20.
- 76 - Jackson, (P4) 21-2.
- 77 - Jackson, (P4) 22-3.
- 78 - Kenny, A., "Accursed Memory", in **Wyclif**, 159-65.
- 79 - Aston, M., "John Wycliffe's Reformation Reputation", **Past and Present** 30 (1965), 23-51, reprinted in **Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion**, London 1984.
- 80 - Cf. Kenny, A., "Accursed Memory", in **Wyclif**, 167.
- 81 - Jackson, (P4) 10-14.
- 82 - Kenny, A., "Accursed Memory", in **Wyclif**, 167.
- 83 - "Accursed Memory", 168. This nationalism pervades the Nineteenth Century view of Wyclif and is particularly well expressed in the inscription on the monument erected to Wyclif's memory in his church of St. Mary, Lutterworth, Leicestershire.
- 84 - "Accursed Memory", in **Wyclif**, 168
- 85 - James, T., **An Apologie for Iohn Wickliefte, shewing his conformitie with the now Church of England; collected chiefly out of diuerse works of his remaining in the Publicke Library at Oxford**, Oxford 1608, 66.
- 86 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 250.
- 87 - Eg. the copy once owned by Peterborough Cathedral Chapter, now in the University of Cambridge Library.
- 88 - The extent to which Wyclif was in reality an inspiration for the Church of England is open to question. The point is that by 1612 the doctrine of the **Wicket** and similar tracts had been absorbed into

Anglican thought to such an extent that writers such as Jackson looking back to these historical documents could see their own thoughts mirrored them.

A brief Note on the Reconstructed Ballad from Robert Crowley's Confutation of the Mishappen Answer The Abuse of the Blessed Sacrament, London, Day and Seres, 1548.

The Ballad on the Blessed Sacrament which forms the foundation of Robert Crowley's **Confutation** had previously been the subject of a book by the Roman Catholic writer Miles Hoggard called **The Abuse of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar**. The Ballad is another work which appeared in the mid-Sixteenth Century but which is of dubious age. The doctrine taught in it shows few if any features which are specific to the period in which it was printed: much of it could have been written by any Wycliffite or Lollard writer from about 1400 onwards. The rejection of transubstantiation as a metaphysical explanation for the Mass is unequivocal, and the doctrine with which the author replaces it is strikingly similar to that found in **Wickliefes Wicket**, a text which also deals with the eucharist and which had been printed by John Day in 1546: the eucharist is a symbolic representation of Christ's death which is intended to call to mind the redemption of mankind through Christ's death upon the cross. Redemption is seen as the true fruit of the Incarnation<sup>1</sup>, and the eucharist as the figure or "mynde" of it:

I see men honour, Both breade and wyne  
For christ our sauour, which he left for a sign  
To the beliuer, Of hys death deuyne

### Lorde amende thys

The language of the Ballad points to a later date of composition, however. The occurrence of the words **Romyshe** and **popishe** suggests a date of composition in the Sixteenth Century<sup>2</sup>, but the possibility that the printer "tidied-up" an earlier text cannot be ruled out. There was a certain concern by the 1540s that English texts should be clear and easily understood as is shown by Robert Barnes' famous reaction to the **Wycliffite Bible** shown to him by Lollards from Steeple Bumpstead: Tyndale's **New Testament** was much to be preferred because of its "**more cleaner English**"<sup>3</sup>. The two 1546 editions of **Wickliefes Wicket** and those of 1548 and 1550, also produced by John Day, show several examples of just this process at work with various alterations made between editions to improve and modernize the English<sup>4</sup>. It might be argued that the reference to Edward VI in the **Ballad**<sup>5</sup> confirms a date of 1547-8 for the composition of the text, but the unusual rhyme scheme of the stanza in which this reference occurs<sup>6</sup> may indicate that it is a later insertion into the body of the text. It is unlikely that the problem of the date of composition can be resolved with any certainty: no manuscript appears to survive and the **Ballad** is only known to modern readers through the version published by Robert Crowley in 1548. The version of the text reproduced here has been pieced-together from Crowley's **Refutation** which

printed sections of the Ballad along with Hoggard's comments upon it. It is most unlikely that Crowley's text is complete, and it is possible that it has departed considerably from the original in its transmission via Hoggard's work.

Despite the doubts and problems associated with the **Ballad**, the text remains an interesting example worthy of the attention of the modern reader. Above all, perhaps, this fragmented text demonstrates that in 1548 the theological position adopted by its author was still a viable position and one which was actively promoted by a controversial writer such as Crowley<sup>7</sup>. Regardless of the date at which the text was originally written, its appearance in 1548 is significant. As has been indicated in the discussion of Coverdale's **Introduction** written for the 1548 edition of **Wickliefes Wicket**, the period immediately following the death of Henry VIII was one of great theological debate<sup>8</sup>. At the centre of this debate was the understanding of the eucharist: the nascent Church of England was struggling to develop its doctrinal position on this fundamental<sup>9</sup> as is clearly demonstrated by Cranmer's programme of liturgical reform in 1548-9. It was against this background that editors such as Coverdale and Crowley put out works such as **Wickliefes Wicket**, Calvin's **Treatise on the Sacrament of the Altar**, and the **Confutation**<sup>10</sup> with the intention of influencing the progress of doctrinal

debate within the Church of England. It is clear from Coverdale's Introduction to Calvin's Treatise that the first years of the reign of Edward VI saw considerable theological controversy and a tone of debate which many churchmen found distasteful:

I will speak no more concerning their [the Romans'] fond inventions about the ministration of this most sacred sacrament, lest I should thereby be an offence or stumbling-block to the weak brothers, whose consciences are not yet fully satisfied as concerning the true belief of this holy mystery; I mean lest I should give them occasion to do, as certain fond talkers of late days done, and at this present day do invent and apply to this most holy sacrament names of despite and reproach, as to call it "Jack-in-the-Box" and "Round Robin", not only fond but blasphemous names, not only void of all edification, ... but very slanderous also.<sup>11</sup>

As Professor Dickens has remarked, the problem facing the emerging Church of England was very delicate: it had to attempt to balance the interests of Reformers such as Coverdale, Cranmer and Ridley against those of Henrician Catholics such as Bonner and Gardiner<sup>12</sup>. While men like Coverdale and Crowley were in no doubt where truth concerning the eucharist lay, some of them were concerned by the tone of the



contemporary debate and the effect it might have upon new converts to the reformed way of thinking<sup>13</sup>:

Many godly-minded persons, which by the persuasion of certain discreet and modest brothers have been made, of Romish idolaters and diligent students of duncial dregs, disciples of great hope in the sincere and true evangelical doctrine, have by the hearing of these names of reproach and despite taken occasion to think, that the knowledge which these men did profess, which would be so outrageous as to mock and jest at the remembrance of our redemption, could not proceed of the Spirit of God; and have through this persuasion returned to their old leaven again.<sup>14</sup>

The tone of the **Ballad** is probably similar to that of the works criticised by Coverdale, although no overtly disrespectful words of the kind quoted by Coverdale are used to describe the eucharist. The **Ballad** is clearly a popular work, aimed at a relatively unsophisticated audience and intended to popularize a memorialistic approach to eucharistic theology. This is achieved by the use of typically Wycliffite arguments which closely follow the arguments developed in **Wickliefes Wicket**<sup>15</sup> in a way which almost suggests a dependence between the two texts<sup>16</sup>.

The argument of the **Ballad** may be summarized along the following lines. The author opens by stating that the practice of honouring **Both breade and wyne For christ our sauour is Defended wyth lies**<sup>17</sup>. Christ left the sacrament of the altar for a sign **To the beleuer, Of hys death deuyne**, but the priests now claim to make the **Dome [dumb] gods** which are placed in the **pix**<sup>18</sup>. These priests who claim to "make" the body of Christ are **sinners ... Liuinge amyse**, and their **coninge** is contrary to scripture, for St. Paul teaches that Christ is **holy, harmless, undefiled, seperate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens**<sup>19</sup>. How is it possible for such wicked men to create this perfect omnipotent being?

How w[ith] sinful hand make, His body then you shall

Syr prists tell me thys<sup>20</sup>

This point is developed at some length by the author of **Wickliefes Wicket**:

And **yf** thou mayst make the body of the Lorde in those wordes, **Thys is my bodye**, thou thy selfe must be the person of **Chryste** or els there is a **false God**, for **yf** it be thy body as thou sayeth, then it is the body of a **false knaue**, or of a **dronken man**, or of a **thef**, or a **lecherour** or full of other **synnes**, & then there is an **vnclæane body** for any man to **worshyp** for God.<sup>21</sup>

The author of the **Ballad** believes the clergy claim to make him **Who hath made of nothyng Both y[e] & thi kyn[,]** Heauen earth and al thyng, Contained ther in, but clearly this is not possible, for the clergy are mere creatures of God, unable to make **One heare of thy heade, whyte ether blacke**<sup>22</sup>. The priests argue in return that the transubstantiation is not a voluntary act of theirs but rather it is effected through the power of the words of consecration: **The worde in this ded, taketh effecte**<sup>23</sup>. The writer continues to berate the clergy in colourful language: their argument will not stand, for they have no words with the power to make Christ's body:

What word hast y[ou] nobby, Wherwith Christ did  
make  
Of bread his body, As y[ou] dost crake  
With all thy studye, An answere take  
And tell me this. 24

The words **Hoc est corpus Meum**, the words of consecration, **serueth nothyng** in the argument for the writer argues:

He is but a beast, knowyng ryght nought  
Whicn saith that hoc est, Are wordes to make  
ough<sup>25</sup>

This is precisely the argument developed by the author of *Wickliefes Wicket*. The words *Hoc est corpus meum* are seen as words of *giuyng*e & not of *makyng*e:

yf they say that Christ made hys bodye of breade? wyth what wordes made he it? not with these wordes *Hoc est corpus meum* .... For they be the wordes of *gyuyng*e & not of *makyng*e whych he sayde after that he brake the bread then departyng it amonge his disciples & apostles. Therefore if Christ had made of that bred his body, he had made it in his blessing or els in *giuyng*e of thankes & not in the wordes of *gyuyng*e, for yf Christe had spoken of the materiall bread that he had in his handes as when he sayde, *Hoc est corpus meum* ... then had it ben made before, or els the worde had bene a lye.<sup>26</sup>

The writer of the *Ballad* argues with *Wickliefes Wicket* that If I say to the, This is my head It must so be, Before I so sayde Or els with a lye, I haue the fed. The language deliberately recalls the eucharistic "feeding" of the faithful<sup>27</sup>. The words *Hoc est corpus Meum* do not effect the transformation of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of Christ's body and blood, but even if they did possess that power, it is doubtful whether any man would be able to effect this transformation:

What if in scripture, Were wryttn one lyne  
Wherewith our sauour, Thy god and myne  
Inte thys nature, Dyd tourne bread and wine  
Couldst thou do thys? 28

God's creation is recounted in scripture, but despite this information, man cannot make ought That vnmade is<sup>29</sup>:

Yf w[ith] that scripture Thou canst not make  
The least creature, How wylt thou take  
On thy weake nature, Of bread to create  
The Lorde of blysse. 30

The author of the Ballad believes that in the absence of any word of consecration Wherof the Lord, hath made relacion, the clergy teach their own inuencion which is at variance with both scripture and reason<sup>31</sup>. Scripture indeed supports the opposing view: quoting St. Matthew the author argues that if man ca[n]st not shape One heare of thy heade, whyte ether blacke<sup>32</sup>, then it is certainly impossible for men to make gods so[n]ne ... Whyche in heauen is. Again the Ballad follows closely the argument developed in Wicklieffes Wicket:

Vnmade is the father, vnmade is the sonne, &  
vnmade is the holy gost. And thou then that art  
an earthly man, by what reason mayst thou say  
that thou maketh thy maker. Whether may the  
made thyng saye to the maker, why haste thou

made me thus? Or may it turne again and make  
hym that made it .... then how say the  
Hippocrites that take on them to make our lordes  
body? Loo ether make they the glorified body  
ether make they agayne the spirituall body which  
is rysen from deathe to life eyther make they  
the fleshely body as it was before he suffered  
deathe... 33

The author of the *Ballad* concludes by expressing the hope that Christians in England may *conuert, From the Romyshe way ...Gods truth to obaye*<sup>34</sup>. God will inspire his servants to see in their souls what *hys wyll is*, and English Christians will be granted his supper not mixte with *abuse popishe*<sup>35</sup>. Once converted to evangelical truth, the Christian will:

espie In that signe and token  
Wyth spirituall eie, Thy body broken  
And thy bloud plentiously Shed as is spoken  
To bringe vs to blesse. 36

Just as the writer of *Wickliefes Wicket* had described the eucharist as *set for a mynde [sign] of good thynges passed of Christes body*<sup>37</sup>:

and so the breade that Christe brake was lefte  
to vs for mynde of thynges passed, for the bodye  
of Christe, that we shoulde beleue he was a very  
man in kynde as we be. And god in vertue ....

And so we must beleue that he was very god and man together<sup>38</sup>

So too the author of the **Ballad** believes the eucharist to be a **signe and token** visible to the spiritual eye of the death of Christ on the cross which, through the Incarnation, effected man's redemption.<sup>39</sup>

It is open to question whether the author of the **Ballad**, or for that matter Coverdale when he edited **Wickliefes Wicket** was aware of the extent to which these texts are an accurate - if abridged - re-statement of John Wyclif's teaching on the eucharist. In just the way that the writers of these later works were to look to scripture as the fundamental authority when discussing the doctrine of the Mass, so too in **De Apostasia** Wyclif had drawn upon the Bible and the Fathers as the chief authorities on the development of eucharistic doctrine<sup>40</sup>. In **De Eucharistia** Wyclif develops arguments remarkably similar to those found in later works such as the **Ballad** and the **Wicket**:

This same opinion [of Berengarius] is confirmed by the blessed Augustine's statement . . . : "What is seen is the bread and the cup which the eyes renounce; but what faith demands to be taught is that the bread is the body of Christ and the cup is his blood. These are called sacramental elements for this reason that in them one thing

is seen and another is understood. What is seen has bodily appearance, what is understood has a spiritual fruit." Note that this saint states that the visible sacrament is bread and wine....

As to scriptural witness ... it is related that Jesus took bread and said concerning it, "This is my body." For Luke ... states, "And taking bread he gave thanks and broke it and gave it to them saying 'This is my body.'" There it is clear (but not to a shameless man) that he afterward demonstrated that bread which he then took. And it is certain that so long as that bread remains it is not really the body of Christ, but the efficacious sign thereof. From these words it is gathered that the confession of Berengarius and the ancient decree of the Church are in every respect more in agreement with the truth.<sup>41</sup>

It is clear that the theology being expressed in the **Ballad** is Wycliffite in origin. Of course by 1548 other continental theologians were writing things which might have been open to confusion with this older Wycliffite theology, and it is possible that the writers or editors of texts such as the **Ballad** or the **Wicket** appearing in 1547-8 did not in their minds distinguish clearly between the various theological influences at work upon them. The fundamental point is that through the medium of works such as the



Ballad, the thought of John Wyclif was mediated to the generation which formulated the first distinctively Anglican statements of faith and doctrine in 1547-8. It is true that these men were not Wycliffites in the sense of being men who accepted the whole philosophical ultra-realist position developed by Wyclif: the Schools had ceased to be particularly relevant in the face of new Renaissance learning which had established itself even in English universities by the mid-Sixteenth Century, and the debate between realists and nominalists was no longer fought in the same way. If, however, Maurice Keen's analysis of the way in which Wyclif reached his position on the eucharist is accepted, it is possible to see that the Edwardian writers and editors shared some common ground with Wyclif. Keen argues against Workman's assertion that Wyclif "approached the eucharist from the point of view not of abuses, but of a metaphysical system"<sup>42</sup> and demonstrates instead that "his attack on transubstantiation appears to be linked in his mind with the abuses in the Church that he had been concentrating on in earlier but more recent works, in the De Ecclesia and the De Potestate Pape..."<sup>43</sup>:

What settled his conviction about the remembrance of the bread was not realist metaphysic,...but what he called the logic of Holy Scripture. It was the same logic - and the history of the early Church - that had convinced him that the

pope's powers had no sacred foundation ... Now he had found a still more startling way in which what he called the carnal as opposed to the true Church was leading Christians astray to damnation.... The carnal Church was claiming that its priests - many of them men of unholy life, preknown to hell - could make Christ's own body, the Truth itself: and was enjoining silence upon all questioning... 44

Through texts such as the **Ballad** Wyclif himself was present for the reformers who sought to shape the Edwardian Church, and through them his influence was to be mediated to the Church of England. Sharing Wyclif's moral concerns and fired by an almost ruthless common-sense if not scriptural logic<sup>45</sup> the writer is naturally able to share his conclusions with regard to the eucharist: it is a figure, a **signe and token** of Christ's saving death rather than **the Truth itself**<sup>46</sup>.

As a clear example of the mediation of Wycliffite theology to the emerging Church of England, the **Ballad** is worthy of attention. It is to be seen as part of the debate which took place in 1547-8 as to the shape of the doctrine to be taught by the Church, and incomplete though it is, the text vividly demonstrates the theology which held particular appeal for men such as Crowley or Coverdale who went on in later life to be the founders of the Elizabethan Puritan wing of the

Church. It is there, perhaps, that the ultimate results of the Edwardian debate may be seen.

1 - Cf. **Wickliefes Wicket**, B3v 15ff; **Ballad**, A8r; C3v.

2 - **Ballač**, F7r; F8v. It may be pointed out that **popishe** occurs in a stanza which might with some confidence be regarded as an interpolation.

3 - Cf. Rupp, E.G., **Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition**, Cambridge 1947, 37.

4 - Eg. **Wickliefes Wicket**, title page; A4r 20. There were considerable changes in punctuation between the various editions, but as these do not appear to represent any significant change in editorial reading of the text these have not been recorded. It will be noted that the punctuation of the **Ballad** is eccentric and in some instances obscures rather than clarifies the author's meaning. It seems likely that punctuation was left to the discretion of the printer at this period and that few concrete rules regarding its correct use had been established.

5 - **Ballač**, F8v

6 - This stanza also contains the word **popishe**.

7 - Crowley published three controversial works favourable to reform through Day and Seres' press in 1548. The **Refutation** containing the text of the **Ballad** was one of these. When Crowley operated his own press in London between 1549 and 1551 it is interesting to note that his concern for reform continued, and that he printed another ancient verse text, Langland's **Vision of Piers Plowman** in 1550.

8 - Cf. **A Comparison of Two Introductions written for Wickliefes Wicket**, above,

9 - Cf. Dickens, A.G., **The English Reformation**, London 1964, 249-52; 268-72.

10 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, ed. Coverdale, M., London 1546 (1st ed. - 2 versions); 1548 (2nd ed. - 2 versions).

Coverdale, M., trans. Calvin, J., **A Faythful and most Godly Treatyse concernyng the most sacred sacrament of the blesse:d body and bloud of our sauour Christ**, London, John Day, 1540-8 - Parker Society, **Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter**, Cambridge 1844, 425ff.

Crowley, F., **Confutation of the Mishappen Answer The Abuse of the Blessed Sacrament**, London, Day and Seres, 1548.

11 - Coverdale, **Introduction to Calvin's Treatise on the Sacrament of the Altar**, Parker Society, **Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter**, Cambridge 1844, 426.

12 - Dickens, A.G., **Reformation**, 249-51.

13 - Cf. Coverdale, **Introduction to Calvin, Op.cit.**, 426-427.

14 - **Introduction to Calvin**, 426-7.

15 - The close correlation of argument in **Wickliefes Wicket** and the **Ballad** must be noted, as should the similarities in language and the way in which the argument is expressed. The fact that the **Wicket** and **Ballad** were produced by the same printer within two years of each other may suggest that the **Ballad** is in some way dependent upon the **Wicket**.

16 - It is possible that the **Ballad** represents a verse summary of the argument of **Wickliefes Wicket**.

17 - **Ballad**, A8r; A7v

18 - **Ballad**, A8r; B2v.

19 - **Hebrews 7:26**; **Ballad**, B6v.

20 - **Ballad**, B6v

21 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, A8v 12-20.

22 - **Ballad**, B8v; F5r.

23 - **Ballad**, C1r.

24 - **Ballad**, C2r.

25 - **Ballad**, C2v; C4v.

26 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, A7v 15-30.

27 - **Ballad**, C5v/C6r.

28 - **Ballad**, C8r.

29 - **Ballad**, D6r.

30 - **Ballad**, E1r.

31 - **Ballad**, E2r.

32 - **Matthew 5:36**.

33 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, A6r 2-9; A7r 27-33.

34 - **Ballad**, F7r. Concluding passages expressing such sentiments are found in other similar texts including **Wickliefes Wicket**, Coverdale's **Introduction to the Wicket** and to Calvin's **Treatise on the Sacrament of the Altar**.

35 - **Ballad**, F6v; F8v.

36 - **Ballad**, F9r.

37 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, B3r 3-11.

38 - **Wickliefes Wicket**, B3v 16-26.

39 - **Ballad**, F9r.

40 - Cf. Keen, M., "Wyclif, The Bible, Transubstantiation" in **Wyclif In His Times**, Oxford 1986, 12; quoting Wyclif, J., **De Apostasia**, Chpt. 15, 16.

41 - Wyclif, J., **De Eucharistia**, ed. and trans.

Battles, F.L. in **Advocates of Reform From Wyclif to Erasmus**, ed. Spinka, M., Vol. XIV **Library of Christian Classics**, London 1953, 69-70.

42 - Workman, H.B., **John Wyclif**, Oxford 1926, II, 30.

Quoted by Keen, M., "Wyclif", in **Wyclif**, 10.

43 - Keen, M., "Wyclif", in **Wyclif**, 11.

- 44 - Keen M., "Wyclif", in **Wyclif**, 12-13.  
45 - cf **Ballad**, B6v;C5v/C6r; C7r; E1r.  
46 - Cf. **Ballad**, F9r. Wyclif, J., **De Eucharistia** in  
**Library of Christian Classics XIV**, 70.

## Conclusion

The title of this thesis requires an examination of the possibility of the survival of Wickliffite or Lollard thought into the period of the English Reformation. Opinions on the question of Lollard survival have been mixed. Rupp considered that, "Any due assessment of the causes and consequences of the English Reformation must take into account the survival of Lollardy" <sup>1</sup>. Thomson agrees that Lollardy survived in particular areas such as Bristol, the Chilterns and Kent "despite repeated attempts at suppression by the authorities throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries" <sup>2</sup>, but concludes that, "The future leaders of the English Reformation did not, however, come from the Lollard communities" <sup>3</sup>. Other writers, most notably perhaps K.B. McFarlane, have gone much further and assert that Lollardy had no role to play in the shaping or development of the English Reformation <sup>4</sup>.

In a sense this problem is resolved by the very existence of **Wickliefes Wicket**: as has been demonstrated above the **Wicket** itself dates from at least the last quarter of the Fifteenth Century, embodies ideas on the eucharist and Church which would have been recognized by Wyclif and his followers, and was issued in print as late as 1546. Thomson, among others <sup>5</sup>, draws attention to the re-printing of Lollard tracts in the Reformation period but concludes, "there is little sign of this being done

before about 1530" <sup>6</sup>. The full significance of this observation is not entirely clear, for the important point is surely that Lollard tracts **were** reproduced in the mid-Sixteenth Century<sup>7</sup> and as Hudson remarks with reference to the **Lanterne of Ligt** they appear to have been produced "**as a contribution to current debate**" <sup>8</sup>. This is certainly the case with the **Wicket**. Antiquarian interest was not the force which motivated its publication in the Sixteenth Century as is shown by the absence of editorial material in the two editions of 1546, the distinctly religious, even evangelical tone of the Sixteenth Century works with which it was printed both in 1546 and in the two subsequent editions and the editorial material in the editions of 1548 and 1550. The **Wicket** and its companion pieces was issued with the intention of influencing men's religious outlook and affections<sup>9</sup>. If Thomson means to imply that Wycliffite texts did not enjoy a wide circulation prior to 1530 he is almost certainly not correct. The evidence with regard to the **Wicket** alone which has been summarized above demonstrates conclusively that the work known today as the **Wicket** enjoyed a wide readership in areas as far apart as Newbury and Essex in the period from 1500 to 1521. These "snap-shots" of heresy which was detected can only give an approximate indication of the true extent of Lollard survival which, it is reasonable to conclude, was considerably more widespread than was suspected until recently.

## Continuity or Preparation? Lollardy as the background to the Henrician Reformation.

One of the most striking features of Lollard survival in the early Sixteenth Century is that communities or areas which had been heretical in the early or mid-Fifteenth Century still continued to produce suspects who embraced clearly Lollard views on a wide-range of subjects including the eucharist, images, pilgrimages and the need for vernacular scriptures as a basis for true religion. Until 1518 or 1519 it is impossible for these largely rural heretics to have been anything other than Lollards: the alternative sources of inspiration did not exist except possibly in the large cities and the Universities <sup>10</sup>. Thus Lollardy continued in the Butcher family of Steeple Bumpstead in Essex for at least a century <sup>11</sup>, and at Ginge in Berkshire the Colins family first seems to have been in trouble with the ecclesiastical authorities for Lollard belief in 1421, a full century before being finally dealt with by Bishop Longland in 1521 <sup>12</sup>. There are many similar instances of heresy sustained over a lengthy period in a particular family, community or locality<sup>13</sup>, and the present work is saying nothing new when it draws attention to this survival which in some cases, such as Buckinghamshire, London and the Chilterns appears to continue into the Seventeenth Century<sup>14</sup>. The point,



however, cannot be stressed enough, and it certainly must not be allowed to slip from view when consideration is given to the origins of the English Reformation. Some historians such as McFarlane, have sought to minimise the possibility of any Lollard influence at all in the Reformation period:

Thanks to a Reformation he did little or nothing to inspire and in effect everything possible to delay, he [Wyclif] has been hailed for centuries as its Morning Star....Nothing is to be gained by over-estimating the extent of the English heresiarch's achievement. His excesses and, still more, those of his disciples made reform disreputable and prepared the way for the easy triumph of reaction. Lollardy had always appealed most strongly to the lower middle class; after 1414 that class monopolised it completely. That is why it had very little influence on the Reformation when it came. 15

McFarlane provides little documentary evidence to support his view that Lollardy played no significant part in the English Reformation, but if he is to be believed the English Reformation occurred because Henry VIII and the "men of property" wished it to happen for their various selfish ends. In a sense

McFarlane is right: Henry could certainly have delayed the Reformation by opposition and persecution, but it is doubtful whether he could have prevented its eventual emergence. One of the reasons, which McFarlane perhaps misses, but which is illustrated by the Sixteenth Century **Wickliefes Wicket** compilation, is that by 1530 some gentry and leading citizens were again embracing heretical ideas<sup>16</sup>. In many cases such as that of William Tracy and later those of John Lassels, Anne Askew and their London associates, these ideas were firmly based in Lollard thought, as can be seen from an examination of their surviving works and testimonies. However uncomfortable it may be for some historians, it is clear from both printed works and trial records that Lollardy not only survived into the Sixteenth Century but was active and even flourishing.

The theological activities of William and Richard Tracy spanning approximately the years 1500 to 1560 are of considerable interest to the historian of the Reformation, and in some respects might be taken as a paradigm of the contradictions which seem to exist within the thinking of the Reformers of the 1530s and the attitudes of the disaffected gentry who finally had their opportunity for a limited revenge upon the Church in the Reformation Parliament of 1529 to 1533. Traditional grievances against the clergy such as tithes, or in the cases of Hunne and Tracy, mortuary payments, resentment against monastic landlords,

appropriations and the frequently poor standard of pastoral care provided by the ill-paid vicars of absentee clergy; these grievances when combined with traditional Lollard views particularly on matters such as dominion <sup>17</sup> became a potent mixture and powerful impetus to reform. Reasons for questioning the Lutheranism which has sometimes been ascribed to William Tracy have been outlined in the **Introduction** to his **Testament**. His son Richard has more frequently been described as an early Lutheran. A preliminary examination of his works suggests, however, that the case is not so straightforward and that he shared many of his father's theological ambiguities. Indeed it is not entirely clear that all the works printed under Tracy's name were in fact written by him <sup>18</sup>. Further examination might resolve this point, but the translation of an anonymous Latin work, **Preparation to the Cross and to Death**, clearly dates from several years before its publication in 1540. The emphasis upon the trials of the true Christian recall both the Coverdale Introduction to the 1548 and 1550 editions of the **Wicket** (and earlier sections of the text itself)<sup>19</sup>, and also Lollard attitudes to persecution <sup>20</sup> and the emphasis upon predestination which was a feature of Wyclif's metaphysics and which was passed to his followers. Catherine Davies has suggested that in his treatise **The Proof and declaration of this proposition: that Faith Only Justifieth** printed in 1543 Richard Tracy "took a more straightforwardly

Lutheran line on justification; faith in this treatise, being defined as ' a sure trust' in God's promises" 21. The title of the work and several passages which draw heavily on both Tyndale and Luther's **Exposition of Romans** might suggest that Davies is right, but as Smeeton has shown in the case of Tyndale, translating Luther does not make a man a Lutheran 22, and there are certainly inconsistencies here such as Tracy's apparent following of Frith's view of works. Tracy's later works show a marked anticlericalism which recalls the Lollard attacks upon worldly prelates and canon lawyers, and indeed the whole Wycliffite concept of "prelacy". Tracy's 1548 eucharistic theology<sup>23</sup> is particularly interesting not least for its strikingly un-Lutheran character. An Augustinian definition of a sacrament is offered which recalls both Wyclif's teaching and that of Tyndale, and Tracy goes on to endorse a memorialistic approach close to that of **Wickliefes Wicket**, attacks the manner of consecration in the Roman Church as had the **Wicket**, and the use of Latin to defraud and mislead the people into idolatry. Tracy also endorses utraquism as did his probable associate Nicholas Shaxton in 1546. This is a distinctive development in English wycliffite thought and its origin is particularly hard to place. The nature of Christ's presence is not dealt with in the **Declaration**, but in **A Godly Instruction** Tracy appears to endorse an understanding of the real presence on a spiritual

level which accords both with a Wycliffite eucharistic theology, and one derived from Oecolampadius or Frith. This sums up the essential problem in assessing the influences which bore upon the early English Protestants: so often the historian is confronted with ideas in one man which could have been inspired by several influences, usually some domestic, and some Continental. It has too often been assumed that after 1520 every instance of Protestant heresy must have a Continental inspiration. It is certainly true that some apparently distinctive Lutheran ideas seem to have won a ready acceptance in the 1520s, but even such hallmarks of Lutheranism as **solafideism** can be found to have echoes and parallels in Fifteenth Century Lollard thought<sup>24</sup>; what is far from clear is that England produced many, if any thorough-going native Lutherans who followed Luther alone. Similarly ideas on the eucharist which recall Zwingli and Oecolampadius are encountered in evidence and books from the 1530s and 1540s<sup>25</sup>; but they can also be found in virtually identical language in 1511, 1499 or indeed 1399<sup>26</sup>. These ideas are found too in the **Wicket** which made available to readers in the late 1540s the eucharistic theology of Wyclif's followers. If, as seems possible, Richard Tracy was responsible for first editing the **Wicket** for printing by John Day in 1546 it is possible to see in his person the apparent contradiction which runs through early English Protestantism: an educated man with a

Wycliffite background edited and published Wycliffite material suffused with an eclectic mixture of material drawn from a variety of Continental sources. Some explanations for this contradiction can be found in the original purpose of the **Wicket** itself.

### **Lollardy and Education: the foundation of the English Reformation.**

It has been suggested in the Introduction to the **Wicket** that the text was originally intended for use in Lollard "schools" for the instruction of "true Christians" in the right belief with regard to the eucharist. The teaching follows that of Wyclif's **De Eucharistia** and may have been based quite closely upon that text. The metaphysical teaching is present but in a less academic form, but the discussion of religious language, however, presupposes an educated audience. The introduction to the extended quotation from **Daniel** 11 on A3v suggests that although some readers may not have access to the vernacular scriptures, others will. The culture of the readers for whom the **Wicket** was intended should perhaps not be over-estimated, but neither were they the rude artisans and peasants of the kind sometimes envisaged by those who wish to minimise the influence of Lollardy on the Reformation. Anne Hudson has provided an entirely convincing picture of Lollard schools and Wycliffite education in the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Century. The

evidence she produced to prove beyond doubt the educational endeavours of the Lollards need not be reproduced here, but the point to bear in mind which arises directly from her research is that Lollard education continued well into the Sixteenth Century. The Colins family at Ginge were certainly running what amounts to a boarding school in their home; at Coventry a cross-section of society frequented a Lollard school in 1511 <sup>27</sup>. The evidence is overwhelming, and in most cases where the **Wicket** is encountered, it was clearly being used in the context of instruction. By the time of Longland's enquiries in 1518-21 Hudson notes that the terms used to describe these instructional gatherings had changed to "lectures" and "readings" <sup>28</sup>. This anticipation of the terminology adopted by the later puritans <sup>29</sup> is significant for what it implies about the level of literacy in the Lollard communities. It is clear too that the process of instruction among the Lollards had always been closely linked to the ownership of books, and there is every reason to suppose that the reprinting of earlier texts in the early Sixteenth Century was directly related to this process <sup>30</sup>.

Considerable work has been carried out on Lollard literacy particularly by Aston and Hudson <sup>31</sup> and it is clear that both the level of literacy among Lollards was higher than average for the period, and that Lollard schools actively promoted literacy, all be it

in an elementary form <sup>32</sup>. The memorising of texts was important too, as is seen by the quotations from **Wickliefes Wicket** given by Robert Colins at his trial and the accounts of his wife's activities at Burford where she recited portions of the scriptures at meetings <sup>33</sup>. There are many other cases which illustrate the point that Lollardy introduced to a wide range of people the elements of literacy and, perhaps more importantly, the elements of a scripture-based evangelical religion in a language that was their own. As Hudson has remarked, "it is... impossible to overestimate the importance of education to the Wycliffite programme" <sup>34</sup>; the significance of this work was not confined to the propagation of Wycliffite heresy in the Fifteenth Century. In the early Sixteenth Century the reading of works such as **Wickliefes Wicket** either in private, or more crucially in groups, was essential for the eventual adoption of Protestantism in the mid-Century. If books had been important in the early Lollard movement, and Hudson has shown the extent to which this is true, they continued to be important in the early Sixteenth Century when the printing press made the re-issue of Lollard tracts much easier. The activities of Anne Askew and Joan Butcher in the Court circle in the early 1540s <sup>35</sup> recalls nothing so much as the trading of books by men such as John Hacker to circles of avid readers in the first decade of the Century; and the readings to circles of sympathisers and the



memorisation of sections of scripture, sermons and other words of edification recalls the activities of the puritans in the later Sixteenth Century.

The pattern for the development of lay Protestantism in the mid to late Sixteenth Century was established by the educational activities of the Lollards in the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Century. It is perhaps not so much the precise content of the schools which was important, but the attitude they fostered among their adherents: a biblical piety and moralism, an emphasis upon using scripture as the criterion by which men and doctrine might be judged led to an acceptance of individual questioning, and to a much greater extent than was possible within the Church the acceptance of individual positions with regard to particular doctrines. This was precisely the objection that Robert Parsons raised against John Lassels: he had been vain enough to die for his "particular opinion", rather than bending to the authority of the Church <sup>36</sup>. The same could have been said of any Lollard who died for his or her beliefs, and it was the Lollard education programme<sup>37</sup> which enabled them to decide to place their own interpretation of scripture or doctrine above that of the Church because they knew that they must strenuously follow the teaching of scripture, the Word of God. Lollardy fostered as much an attitude of mind as particular theories, and this is what makes it so

significant for the subsequent development of the English Reformation. It may not be entirely coincidence that the Edwardian Church saw a great emphasis by leading churchmen, largely ignored by the government, upon the foundation of educational institutions with the appropriated wealth of the chantries 38.

Lollard "schools" provided in areas where Lollardy had been strong, such as the South East of England, the Chilterns, Essex and London, a laity which might justly be described as a "seed bed" 39 in which later ideas from the Continent could grow and develop. To an extent this may explain the markedly eclectic character of English Protestantism which even after the return of the Marian exiles was able to embrace a wide range of doctrinal positions inspired by a variety of traditions.

#### **Lollard Political Influence - as shown by Wickliefes Wicket.**

It has been argued by John Davis that Sixteenth Century Lollardy was remote from politics and that it therefore had little influence in what might be described as the "official" Reformation under either Henry VIII or Edward VI 40. An examination of the history behind the Sixteenth Century works which were included in the **Wickliefes Wicket** compilation casts

doubt on this theory. Apart from the evidence referred to above of Cromwell's use of Wyclif's theories on dominion to destroy the power of the papacy in England in 1530, the most obvious doubts arise from an examination of John Lassels' **Protestacion**, where it will be seen that a large group of men and women in London, Essex and Suffolk were extremely active in promoting Wycliffite ideas at the very highest level of society. Elements of the Council were certainly deeply concerned that heresy had penetrated the Court and probably the immediate royal circle as is proved by the torture particularly of Anne Askew in 1546. The heresy for which Askew and Lassels were to die, however, has clear Wycliffite roots and was shared by City clergy, lawyers, merchants, members of the royal Household at least one Bishop, and a number of lesser figures. It has been noted that Richard Tracy was also in contact with this group, writing in 1546 to urge Dr. Crome to stand by his heretical beliefs <sup>41</sup>. Although the group did embrace some members who might be considered in McFarlane's phrase to belong to the lower-middle class, it is clear that the majority of the associates of this group were from the "political" class. It is equally clear that although the primary function of the group may have been religious, it also had a political agenda which included encouraging heresy in the circle of Queen Katherine Parr and supplying the ladies of the Household with heretical reading matter. The important role played by books

should again be noted. If the suspicions of Wriothesley were right, and the evidence although patchy tends to support his view <sup>42</sup>, then already not only the leading ladies of the Court favoured heresy, but their husbands, members of the Council, were also clandestine favourers of a heresy which still bears many marks of Lollardy. The final years of Henry VIII's life have been described as "ruthless" years <sup>43</sup>, and it was against this background of competition for power not so much over the dying king, but over his under-age heir that heresy was able to re-enter the political forum in a way that had been denied to it since the early Fifteenth Century.

In assessing the influence of Lollard heresy in the mid-Sixteenth Century it is as well to recall that although men such as Cromwell who had actively used Wyclif's political theories in the early 1530s had been removed from the scene, others who had been associated with Wycliffite literature had survived. None occupied a position anything like as powerful as that held by Cromwell, but Miles Coverdale, for instance, who was associated with the **Wicket** in Essex in about 1520, survived to play an important role in the Edwardian church. It is interesting to note that in 1548, just a year into the new reign, Coverdale saw fit to supervise the publication of a new edition of the **Wicket** with an introduction and supplementary material. Coverdale's introduction shows clearly that

he wished to urge moderation upon the more radical Protestants who were giving offence to the "weaker brethren" by writing scurrilous attacks upon the mass. These attacks, one of which is reconstructed in the Appendix to this thesis, are of interest because they were popular works whose scepticism, materialism and general tone come very close to the more extreme forms of Fifteenth Century Lollardy as revealed not by written works but by trial records <sup>44</sup>. Thus Coverdale presents the curious spectacle of a Reformer using a clearly Wycliffite text as a means to secure moderation among the more radical Protestants. This curious state of affairs is interestingly repeated in 1612 when Henry Jackson edited the **Wicket**: Jackson was also the editor of Hooker's papers and as such could not be considered to be an extreme puritan. His concern was to develop a Protestant history of the Church of England as defined by the Elizabethan Settlement. It is interesting to note that he felt able to appeal to Wyclif as an authority favourable to the Established Church and its Prayer Book<sup>45</sup>. This goes somewhat against the conclusion of McFarlane in 1952 when he wrote that:

**The establishment of a state church under the supreme headship of the king brought no end to the persecution of the Lollards. Their feeble protest was ultimately drowned in the louder chorus of protestant**

nonconformity. Their heirs were, in short, not the Anglicans, but the Brownists and the Independents.<sup>46</sup>

McFarlane's conclusion at first seems the obvious one to draw from the radical nature of much Lollard thought. However a reconsideration is suggested by Patrick Collinson when he points out that of course puritanism had existed in English religion long before anyone gave it that name<sup>47</sup>. Collinson sees the decisive "geological fault-line" between Anglicanism and Nonconformity as the understanding of religious liberty:

The puritans believed that their christian liberty consisted in total conformity to the word of God in the Bible, applying its general sense and spirit to the whole of religion, including matters of indifference where the Scripture offered no specific guidance. The bishops (it was the condition of their office) insisted that the liberty enjoyed by christians in areas of indifference, adiaphora, must be exercised in obedience to the will of the prince, expressed in the positive law of the land.<sup>48</sup>

The puritans of the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, "progressive protestants" such as the Brownists

and the Barrowites, were forced to embrace separatism and independence through distinct political circumstances. In the early 1560s they had been happy enough to remain within the Church of England while it looked as if the new regime would sanction further change; it was only as these hopes were dashed and a mood of disillusionment spread that they moved outside the Establishment. If these men were influenced by the Lollard spirit of independent judgment which had led men such as Lassels to hold fast to his own doctrine convinced of its evangelical truth to the death, it seems also that those puritans who remained within the Church of England represent another, less extreme, more conformable strand of the Lollard heritage which saw in the royal supremacy and the Edwardian reforms the fulfilment of their goals.

**Conclusions to be drawn from a study of Wickliefes Wicket.**

The conclusion to be drawn from the research undertaken for this thesis is clearly that Lollardy not only survived into the 1520s, but that it continued to exert a powerful influence over men and women in many walks of life up to at least 1550. Gradually with the easing of persecution under Edward VI and the influx of new material from the Continent and particularly from Geneva <sup>49</sup>, the distinctive strand of Lollardy becomes blurred. It can still be

discerned in the eucharistic theology of the Prayer Book of 1549, and again it is seen in both the early Seventeenth Century attempt to construct an Anglican ecclesiology which emphasised the Catholic nature of the English Church, and, ironically at the same time in the independents who were moved by their consciences to remove themselves from a Church which they believed to be in thrall to antichrist and in need of further reformation. Even if Lollardy as a distinct entity ceases to be discernible in the English religious life in about 1550, its influence through its literature and the attitudes of mind which it had fostered across the social classes over the previous century and a half cannot be overestimated.

To suggest that the Lollards were the decisive factor in bringing the Reformation to England might be to overstate the case <sup>50</sup>, but it is clear from an examination of **Wickliefes Wicket** that Lollardy survived in a recognisable form into the mid-Sixteenth Century and that it was promoted by leaders of the Edwardian Church through the reprinting of what had previously been considered to be heretical books and tracts. It is clear that even in the late 1540s Anglican theology was eclectic; it is possible that it is to Lollardy and ultimately Wyclif that the apparent attraction of Anglican theologians to Platonist ideas is due <sup>51</sup>. Further study of texts reprinted in the early Reformation period and the way in which they



were used within the context of the Establishment<sup>52</sup> as a means of securing the Supremacy against the unsettling demands of both radical puritans and papalists would undoubtedly clarify the picture of the emerging Church of England and complement this study of **Wickliffes Wicket**, a single, but typical work of the period.

- 1 - Rupp, E.G., **Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition**, Cambridge 1947, 1.
- 2 - Thomson, J.A.F., **The Transformation of Medieval England 1370-1529**, London and New York 1983, 365.
- 3 - Thomson, J.A.F., **Transformation**, 369.
- 4 - McFarlane, K.B., **John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity**, London 1952, 186-89.
- 5 - Cf. Aston, M., "Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Revival?" in **Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion**, London 1984; Hudson, A., "No Newe Thyng: The Printing of Medieval Texts in the Early Reformation Period", in **Lollards and their Books**, London 1985.
- 6 - Thomson, J.A.F., **Transformation**, 370.
- 7 - Hudson, A., **The Premature Reformation Wycliffite Literature and Lollard History**, Oxford 1988, 483-94; also Hudson, A., "No Newe Thyng: The printing of Medieval Texts in the Early Reformation Period", in **Lollards and their Books**.
- 8 - Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 17.
- 9 - cf. Hudson, A., "The Mouse in The Pyx: Popular Heresy and the Eucharist", *Trivium* 26 (1991), 50.
- 10 - **Day-book of J. Dorne, bookseller in Oxford, A.D. 1520**, ed. Madan, F., **Collectanea**, 1, Oxford Historical Society 5, 1885, 71-177.
- 11 - Cf. Hudson, A., **Reformation**, 479; Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation" in *JEH* 32 (1982) 225-33.
- 12 - Cf. **Foxe**, IV, 234-8; **Salisbury, Reg. Audley**, f. 163v.
- 13 - For further examples in Buckinghamshire, see Plumb, D., "The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy", *SCH* 23 (1986), 114.
- 14 - Cf. Hill, C., **Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution**, Oxford 1965, 310-11.
- 15 - McFarlane, K.B., **John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity**, London 1952, 186-7.
- 16 - For evidence for the view that Lollardy in 1520s embraced a wide social spectrum, see Plumb, D., "The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy", *SCH* 23 (1986), 111-129.
- 17 - It is clear that in the early 1530s Cromwell actively used the theories of dominion from Marsilius of Padua's **Defensor Pacis**. The political situation required a new examination of these issues in the face of the problems raised by the refusal of the papacy to grant Henry's annulment. It is clear that Wyclif's political views with regard to ecclesiastical dominion were used by Cromwell and others in the course of the Reformation Parliament in order to formulate what Dickens has described as "**Henrician Erastianism**". If the political masters were making use of such sources

there can be little doubt that others in the political class read the same works and drew the same conclusions.

18 - It seems possible that some of the earlier works make use of notes or material which could have been written by William Tracy.

19 - Coverdale's Introduction to the Wicket, A2v 25; Wicket, A1r 20-A3v 2.

20 - Cf Hudson, A., *Reformation*, 158-62; 263-4.

21 - Davies, C., "A Protestant Gentleman" in Sudeley, 128.

22 - Cf Smeeton, D.D., *Lollard themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale*, Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies VI, Kiksville 1986.

23 - Cf *A Brief and Short Declaration ...made, whereby every Christian man may know, What is a Sacrament* London, R. Stoughton, 1548; and *A Godly Instruction to be learned of all Christian men and women before they come to the Communion...*, London, Day and Seres, 1548.

24 - Cf *Foxe*, III, 173 - evidence of Walter Brut. Hudson, A., *Reformation*, 114, 194, 383, 503, 506-7.

25 - Cf *Wicket*; *Protestacion; The fyrst examinacyon and the Lettre examynacyon* [of Anne Askew], ed. Bale, J., 1546, 1547; Crowley, R., *The confutation of.xiii. articles wherunto Nicolas Shaxton, late byshop of Salisbrye subscribed*, [Day and Seres, 1546].

26 - Cf the cases at: Coventry, 1511-12 - Fines, J., "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield 1511-12", *JEH* 14 (1963), 160-74; Letcombe Bassett, 1499 and 1508, John Whitehorn, Rector - Lambeth, Reg. Morton, 194-95; *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, 423-4. Also evidence outlined by Hudson, "The Mouse in the Pyx", *Trivium* 26 (1991), 40-45; 46-50.

27 - *Foxe*, IV, 238; *Lichfield B/C/13*, ff 25v, 14v. For further evidence on social background, see Plumb, D., "The Social and Economic Spread of Rural Lollardy" *SCH* 23 (1986), 111-29.

28 - Hudson, A., *Reformation*, 183; *Foxe*, IV, 221, 223.

29 - Cf. comments of Scarisbrick, J.J., *The Reformation and the English People*, Oxford 1984, 169-71.

30 - Hudson, A., "No Newe Thyng: The Printing of Medieval Texts in the Early Reformation Period", in *Lollards and their Books*.

31 - Aston, M., *Lollards and Reformers*, London 1984; Hudson, A., *Reformation*, 185-88.

32 - Hudson, A., *Reformation*, 512.

33 - *Foxe*, IV, 237-8.

34 - Hudson, A., *Reformation*, 521.

35 - Cf. *Foxe*, V, 537-50; Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", *JEH* 32 (1982), 225.

36 - Parsons, R., *Treatise of Three Conuersions of England*, Douai 1603, 498.

37 - Programme seem perhaps to imply too much formal teaching as a deliberate scheme or aim of the Lollard

movement. It is likely that the emphasis upon education came about as much by force of circumstance as through a philosophical conviction. However once established the Lollard schools do seem almost to have operated an educational programme in which the scriptures formed the "core curriculum".

38 - Cf. Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, London 1968, 523-5. Scarisbrick comments that the failure to use the profits of the Dissolutions did much to alienate Protestants such as Robert Crowley. At the same time the ordinary people were often left less-well provided for after the Dissolutions because the various social functions formerly provided for by the clergy and charitable foundations were no longer available. Cf. Scarisbrick, J.J., **The Reformation and the English People**, 1-39; 109-122.

39 - Rupp, E.G., **Tradition**, 3-4.

40 - Cf. Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent", **JEH** (1982), 225.

41 - Davies, C., "A Protestant Gentleman" in **Sudeley**, 136n.44; **Foxe**, VIII, 700.

42 - Cf. **Foxe**, V, 357-50; **Narratives of the Days of the Reformation**, ed. Gough, J.G., Camden Society 77, London 1859, 46.

43 - Scarisbrick, J.J., **Henry VIII**, 482.

44 - Such popular poems which clearly have some merit as memorable instruction had been absent in English Lollardy although they formed an important part of the Czech Wycliffite movement. The sudden emergence of these works in print in 1547-8 may suggest that they had been present in England for some time but could only find printers once the oppression of the Henrician regime was removed.

For consideration of such Lollard views, and the spread of Wycliffite teaching, see Hudson, "The Mouse in the Pyx", **Trivium** 26 (1991), 40-1; 43-5; 48-50.

45 - A Parallel might be drawn with the case of the **Lanterne of Ligt**, reprinted in the mid-Sixteenth Century, which although theologically radical embraces a traditional view of obedience to the prince. This is possibly one of the keys to understanding why Wycliffite texts were reprinted in the Reformation period as a bulwark against more radical spirits who threatened the hard-won Supremacy and seemed to wish to impose a new theocracy in place of the old papacy.

46 - McFarlane, K.B., **John Wycliffe**, 187.

47 - Collinson, P., **English Puritanism**, London 1983, 12.

48 - Collinson, P., **English Puritanism**, 17-18.

49 - The Marian exile of many of the men who were to be most prominent in the Elizabethan Church must be noted as probably the most important factor for the development of the Church in that reign. As Collinson observes, it was probably the first-hand experience of the independent congregations on the Continent which helped to undermine acceptance of a unified national Church. Cf. Collinson, **English Puritanism**, 17; 22; 26.

50 - It must be admitted that Scarisbrick is right to draw attention to the limitations of Lollardy in the early Sixteenth Century. What is impressive, however, is the fact that the areas where revolts and rebellions against the re-imposition of Romanism under Mary occurred were precisely those areas where Lollardy appears to have been strongest. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that in these areas at any rate Lollardy was a most important factor in allowing the Edwardian reforms to be adopted quickly by the laity.

51 - Cf. Ramsey, A.M., **From Gore to Temple**, 79.

52 - Cf. note 42 above.

Lollard Influences in mid-Sixteenth Century English  
Reformation Thought.

JONATHAN MARK LOVIE

VOLUME II - TEXTS

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**Editorial Notes:** The texts edited in this Volume are all derived from text D of *Wickliefes Wicket*, STC 25591a. This version of the text was chosen as the basis for the present edition because it forms one of the two fully expanded versions which comprise the Second Edition. These versions contains the most material relevant to the present study: the editor, Miles Coverdale, felt it appropriate to issue all this material as one volume, and it is therefore legitimate to examine all the texts contained within it when examining possible Lollard influences in the mid-Sixteenth Century.

*Selected* Variants, sources and other important features are recorded in notes which follow each page of text. In almost every case the reading of the Second Edition [texts C and D] <sup>has been</sup> ~~is to be~~ preferred over that of texts A and B as being clearer to the modern reader, while at the same time preserving the original sense of the text. Significant changes are however recorded in the notes with the appropriate text letter for identification. All line references given in the notes and the editorial material in Volume I refer to the present edition.

Each version of the text contains a multitude of typographical and spelling variants. Most of these have been ignored in the interests of producing an unencumbered text. Only those instances where such a change makes a material difference to the meaning of the word in question or where such a change is important as a feature by which to distinguish one version of the text from another has it been recorded in the notes.



## Synopsis of Wickliefes Wicket

Opening quotation, <b>Romans 15:30</b> . Man to be instrument of God's " <b>laud and prayse</b> ".	A3r 1-5
Quotation from <b>Matthew 7:13-14</b> . Exposition provides key to title of <b>Wicket</b> , " <b>Strayte gate</b> " to be passed by the true believer.	A3r 11- 20
Opening prayer: for strengthening by divine grace to gain everlasting life; For strength in " <b>Spirituell liuing</b> " after the pattern of the " <b>Euangelicall Gospell</b> "	A3r 20- A3v 1 A3r 23 A3r 24
" <b>Infideles, papistes &amp; apostates</b> "	A3r 25
" <b>Not in ydle lyuinge, but in diligent labourynge, yea in great sufferance of persecutyon euen to the death ...</b> "	A3r 29- 32
Thus the author sees that to " <b>entre into that strayte gate</b> " the true believer must follow the example of Christ, doing " <b>as Christe oure sayoure and all that folowe hym haue donne</b> ".	A3r 27
Lengthy <b>catena</b> of Biblical passages and references dealing with the nature of man's proper response to God: faith and constancy even in the face of persecution.	A3v 2- 25
This leads to extended quotation from <b>Daniel 11:31-39</b> which is used to illustrate the fruits of mis-belief and idolatry, the <b>Abhominacion of desolacyon</b> , later used by the author as a metaphor for traditional eucharistic doctrine.	A3v 29- A4r 31 A3v 23
" <b>But for because that every man can not haue the boke of Daniel to know what his prophesy is...</b> " The author makes passing reference to the problem of lay access to vernacular scriptures.	A3v 26- 28
Eucharistic theme linked to idolatry introduced. Followed by <b>catena</b> of texts on idolatry and false worship of inanimate objects.	A4v 1ff
Penance - " <b>here of the clerkes of the lawe haue greate neade.</b> "	A5r 2
The author introduces the problem of scriptural translation: " <b>it is heresy to speake of the holye scripture in Englyshe.</b> "	A5r 11- 13
Christ sent the Holy Spirit to heathen men [Gentiles] and inspired the Apostles to preach in all languages throughout the world. Why then " <b>shoulde it ... be taken away from vs that be chrysten men?</b> "	A5r 15  A5r 23

- Is it the same to say that Christ's words  
[the Gospel] translated into any language other than Latin is heresy, and that Christ is an  
heretic? A5r 25-29
- God and the Word of God cannot be separated.  
The author sees the Word as the "**lyfe of the world**". A5v 2-3
- Antichrist takes the Word of God away from  
Christians, leaving the people to "**dye for hunger in heresy and blasphemy of mannes lawe that corrupteth and sleyth the soule.**" A5v 13-18
- This is a crucial passage for the development of the author's argument. Antichrist (the Roman ecclesiastical authorities) take from the people the Word of God which is visualized in a neo-Platonic sense as the sustaining power for the spiritual life of the world. Deprived of the Word as mediated by the scriptures, the laity are subservient to a law created by man and which is non-scriptural. Through superstition they languish in heresy, blaspheming God through their false beliefs.
- "**Chayre of pestilence**" [as in Psalm 1:1]. A5v 20
- Preceding material related back to eucharistic theme: "**moost of all they make vs beleue a false law that they haue made vpon the secrete hoost.**" A5v 20
- "**Secrete hoost**": problem of correct reading. Jackson [1612] reads "**sacred host**". May however refer to secret prayer said silently after the offertory in the mass. A5v 22
- "**Where fynde ye that euer Chryst ...taughte any man to worshyp it [the host]?**" A5v 23
- Reference and quotation from "**masse crede**", ie. Nicene Creed. A5v 26
- Quotation from **Athenasian Creed**, here called "**psalme Quiccuq[ue] vult.**" A5v 33- A6r 4
- Arguments against transubstantiation derived from an orthodox doctrine of Creation start. Can the created object create its creator? A6r 5
- Extended quotation of Biblical narrative of Last Supper, especially the words at the centre of dispute, "**This is my body**": **Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20.** A6r 15-28
- "**Serethursdaye at nyght.**" A6r 15
- Exposition of narratives of Last Supper begin. "**Now vnderstand ye the wordes of oure sayour Christ, as he spake them one after an other.**" A6r 28-31

Author asks "What did Christ bless?" Did he bless the bread? Author believes this is not supported by scriptural evidence.	A6r 31
It seems to the author that Christ blessed his disciples and Apostles, " <b>whom he had ordayned witnesses of his passion</b> ". Christ left his " <b>blessed worde</b> ", the bread of life, in his disciples and Apostles.	A6v 2-4 A6v 12- 15 A6r 13- 15
A scatological metaphor, " <b>materyall breade hath an ende ...</b> ", followed by quotation from <b>Matthew 13:17</b> . The blessings of Christ preserved the disciples in both body and soul as simple bread could not.	A6r 15- 21 A6r 21- 23
The author objects to transubstantiation on the grounds that Christ's physical body is ascended into heaven.	A6r 32f
In order to effect the redemption of mankind, it was necessary for Christ to suffer physical death. The fruit of his death is everlasting life for those who have faith in him.	A7r 2- 10
Extended <b>catena</b> develops preceding theme of death and resurrection through faith in Christ.	A7r 10- 27
The theme of resurrection and the spiritual body brought to bear upon eucharistic argument. If Christ is " <b>translated into a spirituall bodye the fyrste againe risynge of dead men</b> ", how can priests claim to make Christ's body? Either they are making the spiritual body or the " <b>fleshly</b> " body as it was before he died. It cannot be the spiritual body because " <b>that thynge that Christ sayd and dyd he dyd it as he was at supper before he suffered his passion ...</b> ", and Christ's body is translated into a spiritual body, risen and ascended, in heaven until Judgment.	A7r 27 A7r 27- 29 A7v 2-9
It cannot be the physical body because he would have to die again to effect his purpose to save man and gain Lordship of everlasting life.	A7v 9- 14
Some say that Christ made his body of bread, but the author asks how and when this happened.	A7v 15- 19
The eucharistic words " <b>Hoc est corpus meum</b> " are introduced.	A7v 17
The words are discussed and defined as, " <b>words of giving</b> " and not " <b>words of making</b> ".	A7v 19- 20

- The author contends that if Christ did make his body of bread it was done before he broke the bread and said, "**This is my body**"; in words of blessing or "**of giving of thanks**" rather than in words "**of giving**". The author notes that the Bible gives no words of creation in the blessing or thanksgiving. A7v 22-  
A8r 2
- If the body of Christ is made from bread, it must have been done earlier, or Christ is lying when he says, "**This is my body**". The author likens it to saying, "**This is my hand**" when it is not. If he says this when it is not true logically he is a liar. A7v 30-  
31
- If men knew how to create Christ's body from a substance such as bread, they would "**wax great maysters about Christe.**" A8r 4-8
- The author discusses what the Roman doctrine of the eucharist claims to happen at the consecration: "**by the wordes of consecracion or els makynge**" when said over the bread by the priest, the bread becomes nothing but "**an heap of accidentes.**" A8r 15-  
25
- Objections to this essential element of transubstantiation introduced by the author. A8r 25
- If the bread is the human body of Christ, then the body must grow and shrink according to the number of communicants. A8r 25  
A8v 4-9
- What is not to be regarded as God today may be called God tomorrow, despite the Christian belief that God is eternal and immutable. A8r 30-  
A8v 4
- The words "**This is my body**" imply to the listener that the celebrant is in some sense standing in place of Christ. If this were true any morally unworthy person may be said to represent the person of Christ at the eucharist, whereas Christ represents human nature perfected. This is a most important point which strikes at the basis of late mediaeval eucharistic practice and imagery where the priest is in **locum Christi.** A8v 14-  
20
- In all scripture there is nothing written of the creation of Christ's body. Therefore no man can have the power or authority to make Christ's body. This is supported by a credal paraphrase asserting the role of Christ in Creation through the Trinity. A8v 20-  
Blr 12

Man cannot create other creatures as God did, Blr 12-  
despite the words of creation recorded in 29  
**Genesis** 1: why should man then be able to  
create the body of Christ, one who was himself  
involved in the process of Creation?  
The "crafts" of the priests is feigned, the  
result of blindness and human pride.

Roman eucharistic doctrine represents the Blr 29-  
"worst sin" - idolatry - and is compared to Blv 3  
the worship of the golden calf by the  
Israelites.

Practical problems arising from Blv 3ff  
transubstantiation are introduced for discussion.

When is the body of Christ made? Once or Blv 4-  
twice? 12  
Why are the bread and wine consecrated separately?  
This is particularly relevant because the Roman authorities  
insist that the consecrated bread  
becomes the whole substance of the body of Christ  
(ie. both flesh and blood). This was the  
justification for the practice of communion in  
one kind which the author seems to regard as an  
abuse.

If the bread is the whole substance of Christ's Blv 12-  
body, should the practice of adoring the as-yet 15  
unconsecrated wine at the elevation of the  
consecrated bread be regarded as idolatry?

If the bread is the whole substance of Christ's Blv 15-  
flesh, and the wine the whole substance of the 28  
blood, then the humanity of Christ is divided  
and created at two separate times. This is against  
the credal faith.  
Since the flesh and blood of Christ ascended to  
heaven, the adoration made by the "**innocent**  
**people**" to the consecrated elements is idolatry.

The author attacks the practice of communion Blv 28-  
in one kind: either the people are deprived B2r 9  
of the full body of Christ because the wine/  
blood is withheld; or if the traditional  
doctrine is true they are led into idolatry by  
the practice of giving unconsecrated wine, or  
wine and water or water after communion.

The adoration of bread and wine is unscriptural B2r 6-9  
and contrary to the teaching of the Creeds. B2r 12ff

The author re-states the orthodox belief B2r 15-  
concerning the person of Christ, basing 20  
himself upon the **Nicene Creed**.

The "**many false wayes to begile innocent** B2r 20ff  
**people and sleightes of the fynde**" are discussed.

The metaphor of the broken mirror: a face can be seen in every piece of glass " <b>complete and not parted</b> ". This is applied to the manner of Christ's presence in the eucharistic bread.	B2r 22- 31
The author objects that what is seen in the glass is not the <b>substance</b> of the face, but its mere reflection or likeness.	B2r 33- B2v 5
"So the breade is the fygure or mynde of Christes body in earth."	B2v 12
The metaphor of many candles all lit from a single flame. The single flame is deemed to be multiplied but not numerically increased.	B2v 15- 22
The author objects that the flame is clearly increased when more than one candle burns.	B2v 22- 25
If the metaphor was true for the presence of body of Christ in the eucharistic bread, then God would be multiplied and numerically increased. Polytheism is forbidden by the First Commandment.	B2v 25- 29
Man cannot touch the physical body of Christ, or increase it, or make it, for it is ascended to heaven in a spiritual form.	B2v 29- 33
None, not even Mary Magdalene with her sins forgiven has touched the spiritual body of Christ.	B2v 33- B3r 2
"Therefore all the sacramentes that be lefte here in earth be but myndes of the body of Chryst for a sacrament is no more to saye, but a sygne or mynde of a thyng passed or a thyng to come." This statement is developed with examples from Judaism and the Early Church: The sacraments of the Woman in <b>Revelation</b> 17:3; Circumcision. Notable parallels with other Wycliffite sources.	B3r 3-7
The author suggests that the mere outward performance of sacramental rites is insufficient for spiritual security. Biblical examples are again used to support this view: <b>I Peter</b> 3:21 - on baptism. Moral reform is to be seen as a constituent part of a sacramental act.	B3r 11- 16 B3r 18
	B3r 23- 24
	B3r 25
	B3r 26- 27

The author returns to his earlier "sceptical-materialist" objections to transubstantiation through a discussion of the relationship between Christ and John the Baptist, together with Christ's description of the Baptist as <b>"more than a prophete"</b> :	B3v 5
How can an ordinary man be worthy to make and hold Christ's body when he is so much less than a prophet?	B3v 5-7
The author sees contemporary ecclesiastical practice as idolatry. The Church teaches the laity to worship the sacrament or <b>"mynde"</b> of Christ for Christ's body itself - a confusion of physical and metaphysical categories?	B3v 8-15
<b>"The breade that Christe brake was leftte to vs for mynde of thynges passed, for the bodye of Christe, that we shoulde beleue he was a very man in kynde as we be."</b>	B3v 17-20
A memorialistic doctrine of the eucharist appears to be developed here, again backed by scriptural references and quotations. The author is particularly keen to place emphasis upon the humanity of Christ, while fully accepting that he was <b>"very god and man together"</b> and thus is physically in heaven.	B3v 25 B3v 26-28
The author explicitly states that the doctrine of real, substantial presence of Christ's body in the eucharist is the <b>"worste synne"</b> and the <b>"abhominacyon of dyscomforte"</b> . This connects with the earlier quotation from Daniel 11.	B4r 7 B4r 9 A3v 2ff
Discussion of the eucharistic cup begins. This is principally concerned with linguistic problems and metaphor in particular.	B4r 16
The author asks whether the cup which Christ said <b>"is the newe testamente in my bloude"</b> [Luke 22:20] is to be seen as a <b>"materiall cuppe in whyche the wyne was"</b> , or metaphorically as <b>"his moost blessed body in whyche the blessed bloude was kepte tyll it was shed out."</b>	B4r 12f  B4r 19 B4r 21-22
Biblical examples are used to illustrate the way in which Christ speaks metaphorically in the Gospels, eg. when he describes <b>"his suffering in body a cuppe when he prayed to his father"</b> [Matthew 26:39], and the story of <b>"the mother of zebedeus sonnes"</b> where <b>"he calleth his passion a cuppe"</b> [Matthew 20:20].	B4r 26 B4v 8-20
The author explains that Christ was not speaking here of the material cup <b>"in which he had gyuen his disciples drinke"</b> .	B4r 30-32

Somewhat out of sequence, it would appear, the author makes what is almost a concluding, or at least conclusive point concerning the eucharistic bread as the body of Christ: B4v 5-8

"So he spake of his holy bodye, when he sayd this is my body that shalbe geuen for you, and not of the materiall bread which he had in his hande."

A further apparently concluding section appears: B4v 25-31  
"And thus ye may se that Chrst speke not of the materiall cup neyther of him self nor of his apostles neyther of material bred neyther of material wyne. Therefore let euery man wysely wyth meke prayers & great study and also charitye read the wordes of god and holy scriptures ..."

The exhortation to prayerful reading of scripture, the words of God, is reminiscent of the opening section of the **Wicket** and does not seem to fit with the following section. B4v 28-31

The author develops the theme of the ignorance or lack of understanding of the "**mother of zebedeus sonnes**": as she "**wotest not**" what she asked, so people now "**wotenot**" what they ask or do - for if they did they would not blaspheme against God and "**set vp an alien god in stied of the lyuinge god.**" B5r 1-4

The author returns to his earlier theme of metaphorical language used by Christ and discusses his use of the word **Vine** [John 15:1]: B5r 4-

"Then yf Chryste became not a material ... vine .... So neyther the materiall breade was changede frome hys [ie. its] substaunce to the fleshe and bloude of Chryste." B5r 10-15

The theme is developed further by discussion of Christ's words, "**caste downe this temple.**" B5r 15-30

The eucharistic theme is taken up and the whole discussion of metaphor is related back to the central issue of Christ's words at the Last Supper. B5r 30

Just as the Jews were deceived into thinking that Christ spoke of the Temple in Jerusalem, so now the priests misunderstand and misapply his words at the Last Supper, and so falsely teach that he spoke of the bread when in reality he spoke of his material or physical body. B5v 1-9

This mis-belief is the abomination of discomfort spoken of by **Daniel** and referred to by the author at several points in the text, eg. A3v 2-25; A4r 32ff. B5v 9-13



The author begins a concluding exhortation to prayer to God:	B5v 13
"That this euell tyme maye be made shorte, for the chosen men ..."	B5v 14-15
Reference is made back to the title of the book [ie. <b>Matthew</b> 7:13-14], the narrow way to be followed by true believers:	
"[that the] <b>large and brode waye ... may be stopped, and the strayte and narowe way that leadeth to blysse may be open by the holye scriptures.</b> "	B5v 17-20
Concluding prayer.	B5v 21-29

WICKLIEFFES WICKET

THE TEXT

Wickliefes

Wicket. Faythfully ouerseene  
and corrected after the originall and first co-  
pie. The lacke wherof was cause of innu-  
5 merable and shamfull erroures in the other  
edicion. As shall easily appeare to them  
that lyste to conferre the one wyth the  
other. Here vnto is added an Epi [1]  
stle to the reader. With the pro  
10 testacion of Ihon Lassels [2]  
late burned in Smyth-  
felde: and the Te- [3]  
stament of Wylliam Tra-  
cie Esquire, expounded  
15 by Willyam Tyn-  
dall and Ihon [4]  
Frythe.

(\*)

(\*)

(\*)

20 Ihon the. vi. chapiter. [5]  
I am the lyuinge bread which came  
downe from heauen: who so eateth of  
this breade shall lyue for euer. And  
breade that I wyll gyue is my flesshe, [6]  
25 whiche I wyll gyue for the lyfe of the  
worlde. [7]

Alr

1 - C reads: **Herevn to is added an Epi-**

The editorial material associated with **Wickliefes Wicket** and the **Protestacion** by John Lassels found in texts C and D is that written by Miles Coverdale. The **Preface** to the **Testament** of William Tracy is taken from the 1535 Antwerp edition.

2 - **Protestacion** written by John Lassels, Sewer to Henry VIII and Gentleman of Furnivall's Inn as an explanation of the eucharist. His doctrine was condemned and he was burnt as an heretic at Smithfield on 16th July 1546.

3 - **Testament of Master William Tracy**, composed as a legal document by William Tracy of Toddington, Gloucestershire in October 1530. John Frith and William Tyndale each composed Expositions of this work which due to its author's denial of prayers for the dead, the necessity of mortuary payments and his espousal of justification by faith had caused the ecclesiastical authorities to exhume and burn his corpse. The **Testament** was first printed with both Expositions in 1535 by H. Peetersen van Middelburc at Antwerp. It subsequently appeared in the 1546 edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** (A and B) with Tyndale's **Exposition** only, and in versions C and D with both **Expositions**.

4 - C: **Tyn- [/] dall, and Ihon ...**

5 - **John 6:51**

The text of **Wickliefes Wicket** may appear to be an explanation or expansion of this text in Wycliffite terms. The close parallels with the standard form of the Wycliffite sermon should be noted. It is probable that the **Wicket** was intended more for instruction than as a sermon in the context of formal worship.

6 - C: **fleshe**

7 - C: **worlde**

I besech you brethren in the lorde Christ  
Iesu, and for the loue of his spirite to pray  
with me, that we may be vessels to his laud  
& prayse what tyme so euer it pleaseth hym  
5 to call vpon vs. Roman. xv. Chapter. [1]

For asmoche as oure sauour Iesus  
Christ (when he walked here on earth,  
with the prophetes which were before  
hym, and the apostles which were pre-  
10 sently wyth hym, whom also he lyfte after  
hym, whose hertes wer molifyed with ye ho  
ly ghoste) warned vs, & gaue vs knowlege  
that there were two maner of wayes, the  
one to lyfe, the other to death, as Christ say  
15 eth in the Gospell. How strayght & narowe [4]  
is the way that leadeth to lyfe, and there be  
but few that fynde it. But howe large and  
brode is the way that leadeth to dampnaci- [5]  
on, and there be manye that enter in therat.  
20 Therefore praye we hertely to God that he [6]  
of hys mere mercye wyll so strengthen vs  
with the grace and stedfastnes of his holye  
sprite, to make vs stro[n]ge in spirituall liuing  
after the Euangelicall Gospell so that the [7]  
25 worlde, no not the very infideles papistes & [8]  
apostates can gather any occasio[n] to speake

euyll of vs, but that we may entre into that [9]  
strayte gate, as Christe oure sauyoure and  
all that folowe hym haue donne, that is not  
30 in ydle lyuynges, but in diligent labourynges, [10]  
yaa in great sufferance of persecutyon [11]  
euen to the death, & that we fynde the waye

A3r

1 - **Romans 15:30** - paraphrased. Additional information on Scriptural quotations and references used in the **Wicket** is contained in the table at the conclusion of the text.

Texts A and B open at this point and insert at head:

**A verye brefe diffinition of these wordes,**

**Hoc est corpus meum.**

The text from Romans at the head of C and D should not be taken as the text upon which the thought of the **Wicket** is based. It is related to the opening prayer for inspiration and enlightenment A3r 20 - A3v 2.

2 - **Lrfte:** probably a mis-spelling of the verb to **Leave** (past tense **Left**). Recurs at **Wicket** A6v 5.

A reads: **lefte**.

3 - **Molified:** from Middle English verb **Mollifien**. In conjunction with **hertes** this verb carries a sense of ceasing resistance to an external force or a submission to an external force or power. The **Middle English Dictionary** suggests that the word was in common use by ca. 1450.

A3r 13 **Two** reads **two** in C.

4 - **Matthew 7:13-14**

A and B omit **in the Gospell**.

This passage provides the key to the title of **Wickliefes Wicket**, the wicket being the narrow gate leading to salvation. The text implies that the eucharistic doctrine contained in the **Wicket** and attributed to Wyclif is that which will lead to salvation.

5 - **Luke 13:24**

**Entre in therat** reads **go into it** in A and B.

A3r 19 **The:rat** reads **ther at** in C.

6 - A3r 20-21: opening prayer again recalls usual structure of Wycliffite sermons. The implicit emphasis upon grace in the process of justification as shown by **mere mercye** should be noted.

7 - **Euangelicall**: used here in the sense of good tidings, the teaching of the New Testament. The title **Doctor Evangelicus** given to Wyclif by his admirers should be noted with its implication that he alone of contemporary theologians had made the scriptures intelligible. **Euangelicall** is found in other Wycliffite writings - cf. ed. Arnold, **Sermons**, II, 339.

A3r 24 C punctuates - **Euangelicall Gospell: so that...**

8 - A3r 25: C and E punctuate: **infideles, papistes & apostates.**

**Infideles** - from Latin root, meaning those lacking faith or the spiritually weak. The **Middle English Dictionary** suggests a late emergence for this word.

**Papistes** - the **Middle English Dictionary** provides no listing for this word and it seems to have emerged in the early Sixteenth Century. It should be noted that the passage stands complete without **Papistes**.

**Apostates** - used from the mid-Fourteenth Century for one who has abandoned true religion. Wyclif's ecclesiology made it clear that the unfaithful, the eternally reprobate could be found within the visible church - cf. **De Ecclesia** (London 1886), 2, 7, 63, 102-3, 139.

If **Papistes** is accepted as a Sixteenth Century insertion (intended to give a contemporary gloss to the terms **Infideles** and **Apostates**) the passage remains as a typically Wycliffite pairing of complementary and mutually explanatory terms.



9 - But **that** reads **whereby** in A and B. D's reading makes better sense of this passage.

10 - **Ydle**: this adjective can carry an ethical sense of worthless or sinful, in addition to its modern sense. Cf. MED.

11 - AEr 31 reads: **yea in great, sufferance...** in C.

of euerlastynge lyfe, as he hathe promysed  
where he sayeth. He that seketh fyndeth, & [1]  
he that axeth receyueth, and to him that knoc-  
keth it shalbe openyd. Also Christe sayethe:  
· 5 If thy sonne axe the bread wylt thou geue [2]  
hym a stone? or yf he axe the fyshe, wylte  
thou geue hym a serpent, yf ye (whyche are  
ewyl-) can geue good thynges to your chyl-  
dren how moch more shal your heauenly fa-  
10 ther geue a good spirite to them that axe it  
of hym. Saynt Iames sayethe: If any man [3]  
lacke wysdom let him axe it of God whyche  
geueth to all men yf they axe in faith, and  
vphraideth none, for he that doubted is like  
15 to the waues of the see, that ar borne about  
wyth euery blast of wind. Thynke not that  
such shall receaue any thyng of the Lorde.  
For a man double in soule is vnstable in all  
his wayes, as it is wrytten, wherfore let vs [4]  
20 pray to God that he kepe vs in the houre of  
temptacion that is coming in all the world.  
For as oure sauour Chryst sayeth. When [5]  
ye se that abhominacion of desolacyon that  
is spoken of by the prophete Daniell stan-  
25 dinge in the holy place, as Christe sayeth (he  
that redeth let hym vnderstande.) But for bi [6]  
cause that euery man can not haue the boke  
of Daniel to knowe what his prophesy is.  
Loc his words. towarde the last days the [7]

30      Kynges of the northe shall come, and the ar-  
mes of hym shall stande, and shal defyle the  
sanctuarye, and he shall take away the con-  
tinuall sacrifice, and he shall gyue abhomi-

A3v

1 - Matthew 7:7-11.

The use of connected Biblical texts in an extended series, in this case culminating in the substantial quotation from Daniel, is a particular feature of this text. This may indicate that the author made use of a concordance when constructing his argument as can be demonstrated in a number of Wycliffite texts.

& he that **axeth** reads: & that **axeth** in A and B.

A3v 2-7 C reads: He that **seeketh fyndeth**, he that **axeth receyueth**...Also **Christe saythe**: ....or yf he **axe** the **fyshe**, **wylte thou geue hym a serpent?**

2 - Luke 11:9-13

3 - James 1:5-8. This quotation is used to demonstrate that faith is the foundation of the right relationship between man and God.

A3v 13 C reads: **axe** it in **faith**.

A3v 15 **borne** reads **brone** in C.

A3v 18 **double** reads **doble** in C.

4 - Revelation 3:10

5 - Matthew 24:15

A3v 22 **Chryst** reads **Christ** in C. It should be noted that the printer of C shows a preference for using "i" where D and in many cases A and B use "y". This appears to be a matter of personal preference on the part of the printer and does not affect the meaning or sense of the words thus changed. Accordingly only those instances where a substantial change in meaning is involved will in future be noted.

A3v 23 C reads: **abhominacion of desolation**.

6 - A3v 26-28: a frequently encountered Wycliffite device of providing an important quotation in extended form for the

benefit of readers who did not have access to a text of the Bible.

What his prophesy is reads what is hys prophesy in A and B.

7 - Daniel 11:31-39. This quotation bears a close resemblance to the form of this passage in the first Wycliffite Bible.

Loo his wrdes reads Danyell sayde in A; Danyell saide in B.

A3v 29 C reads: Towarde - with capital.

nacion into desolation & wycked men shall  
find a testame[n]t gilfully, but they that know [1]  
theyr God shal holde and do, and the lerned  
men in the people shal teach full many men,  
5 and they shall fall on the sweward into fyre [2]  
and into captiuite many dayes, and when  
they fall downe they shall be araysed by a [3]  
lytell helpe, and full many shall be ioynede [4]  
to them gylfully, and some learned men shal  
10 fall through the[m] and be all one with the[m]. And  
the chosen shalbe together, and shalbe made  
whyte tyll a tyme determind. For yet ano-  
ther tyme shalbe, and the kynge shall do by  
hys wyll, and then he shalbe raysed and ma-  
15 gnified against ech god, & against the god of  
goddes shall he speake great thynges and he  
shalbe raysed tyll the wrathfulnes before de-  
termined be perfectly made, and he shall not  
regarde the god of hys fathers, and he shal  
20 be in the concupisence of women and shall [4]  
not regarde anye of the goddes for he shall  
ryese agaynst all thynges. Forsoth he shall  
honour the god Moazim in his place, and he [5]  
shall worshyp a god who[m] hys fathers knew  
25 not with golde, with siluer, precious stones  
And wyth precious thynges. And he shal do  
make stronge the god Moazim wyth the a- [6]  
lyent or straunge god whych he knewe, And  
he shall multyplye hys glorye, and he shall

30

gyre to them power in manye thynges, and  
he shal departe the lande at hys wyl. Hither-  
to be the wordes of Daniel. Who maye se a  
greater abhominacyon then to se the peo-

[7]

A4r

1 - **Gylfully**: deceitfully, fraudulently, dishonestly.

Cf. First Wycliffite Bible, Vnpitous men shuln feyne gylfully a testament. M.E.D.

But they that know theyr God shal holde and do reads: but ye that know youre god shall holde and doo in A and B.

Lerned reads vntaughte in A and B.

2 - **Into fyre** reads and in flame in A and B.

A4r C reads: **swearde**.

3 - **Fall** reads **shall** in A and B.

**Araysed**: raised up. M.E.D.

4 - **Icyned** reads **Applied** in A and B. This substitution is significant as an older word, **Applied** has been replaced by a more modern term. It should be noted that **Applied** is found in this place in the First Wycliffite Bible.

And some learned men shal fall through them and be all one with them reads: and of learned men should fall to them that they buylde together in A and B.

5 - **Against ech god** reads at each god in A and B.

6 - **Wrathfulnes before determined be perfectly made** reads: **wrathfulnes before determined is perfectly made** in A and B.

7 - **He** shall not regarde the god of hys fathers reads: **he** shall not inheryte the god of his fathers in A and B.

8 - **Concupisence** reads **Compaigne** in A and B. **Concupisence** is a more modern word, probably derived from the technical terms of moral philosophy and unlikely to be in common use before 1500. **Compaigne** however, had been in use since ca. 1300 in order to express a sexual relationship as in this context.



He shal be in the concupisence of women and shall not regarde anye of the goddes reads: he shal be in the companyes of women and he shall not chaunge anye thynges of goddes in A and B.

A4r 22 C reads: **reyse**. The reading of D is to be preferred.

9 - **Moazim**: A and B read **Mason**. The **First Wycliffite Bible** uses the form **Moazim**. **Moazim** and **Mason** both appear to be phonetic renderings of the original Hebrew.

A and B read: **god of Mason**.

10 - **Alyent or straunge**: alien or foreign. In a theological context **alyent god** refers to a false deity. The coupling of **alyent** with the more modern word **straunge** should again be noted. The **alyent or straunge god whych he knewe, And he shall mulytplye hys glorye, and he shall gyue to them power in manye thynges** reads: **thalyent or straunge god whych he knewe not, And he shall mulytplye glorye, and he shall gyue to hyme power in manye thynges** in A and B.

C reads: **alient**.

11 - The author makes clear that the quotation from Daniel has been concluded. The passage is crucial to the development of the author's argument with regard to the eucharist. The passage is used to emphasize the dangers of idolatry implicit in the contemporary doctrine of the eucharist. This theme is developed in Wicket A4r 33 - A4v 3:

Who maye se a greater abhominacyon then to se the people to be led awaye frome God, beyng taughte to worshyppe for God, that thing that is not God nor sauoure of the worlde.

ple to be led away frome God, beyng taughte to worshyppe for God, that thing that  
 is not God nor sauoure of the worlde. For [1]  
 though it be theyre god as is wrytten by  
 . 5 a prophet saynge. The Lordes comminge [2]  
 shall make lowe the goddes of the earthe,  
 whiche are theyre goddes that beleue in the[m],  
 whiche maye not make them safe, as it is  
 wrytten by sainte Paule. Ye men of Athe[n]s [3]  
 10 I perceyue that in all thynges you are vayne  
 worshypers of Idolles, for I passed  
 by and sawe youre mawmetes and founde [4]  
 an aulter in the whiche was wrytten to the  
 vnknowne God. Therefore the thing which  
 15 you knowe not ye worshype as god. This  
 thyng shew I vnto you: God which made  
 the world and al thynges that be in it. This  
 forsooth, he is the Lorde of heauen and of earth  
 and he dwelleth not in the temple made wyth  
 20 handes, nether hath he neade of any thing,  
 for he gyueth lyfe to all men and breathe e-  
 uerye where, and he made of one all kyn- [5]  
 des of men to inhabyte on all the face of the  
 earthe: Determyng tymes ordayned and  
 25 termes of the dwellinge of them to seke out  
 God. Yf peradventure they myght fynde  
 hym, althoughe he be not farre frome eache  
 of you. And agayne he sayeth: ye shall not [6]  
 thynke that the liuinge God is lyke to gold,

30

syuer, eyther any grauen thyng, or payn-  
ted by crafte, eyther taughte of man, for  
God despysethe the tyme of the vnknowen  
thynges.

A4v

1 - **Beynge taughte** reads **and they be taughte** in A and B.  
C reads: **thoughte**. The reading of A,B and D is to be preferred.

2 - **Zephaniah 2:11**

**Comminge** reads **goynge** and **goddes** reads **God** in A and B.

3 - **Acts 17:22-25**

4 - **Mawmetes**: a representation of a pagan deity. Sometimes found coupled with **idole**. Used in this way by Wycliffite writers **Mawmetes** can be made to refer to images sanctioned by the Church.

It should be noted that there are very few typographical changes made in the scriptural passages quoted in C and D. In this passage from **Acts** C makes the following changes: A4v 14: **vnknowe**; A4v 27: **feare**; **eche**.

5 - **Acts 17:26-27**. This quotation is used to demonstrate the omnipotence of God: God has created all things and, the author argues, it follows that God cannot be restrained or contained by any action of his creature, man.

6 - **Acts 17:29-30**. This passage is used to re-enforce the warning against idolatry implicate in the preceding quotation from **Daniel 11**. It is clear that in **Wickliefes Wicket** the concept of idolatry is applied to the theology and practice of the Mass as celebrated in the contemporary Church. The adoration or worship of the elevated host after consecration is the fundamental abuse attacked by the author who explains later in the text that this practice leads simple people to worship a piece of bread as God. Cf. **Wicket**, A5v 23-25; Dix, G., **The Shape of the Liturgy**, London 1945, 484.; 620-1.

Ye shall not thynke that the liuinge God is lyke to gold reads:  
ye shall not thynke that the God liuinge is not lyke to gold in  
A and B. C and D give a clearer reading .

And he sheweth euerye where that all men  
 shoulde doo penaunce, and here of the cler- [1]  
 kes of the lawe haue greate neade whyche [2]  
 haue ben euer agaynste God the Lorde both  
 5 in the olde lawe and in the newe to sley the  
 Prophetes that speake to them the wordes  
 of God, Yea they spared not the sonne of  
 God euen when the temporall iudge would  
 haue delyuered hym and so forth: of the A-  
 10 pistles and martyres that haue spoken tru-  
 ely the worde of God to them, and they say  
 it is heresy to speake of the holye scripture [3]  
 in Englyshe, and so they woulde co[n]dempne  
 the holy gooste that gaue it in tongues to the  
 15 Apostles of Christe, to speake the worde of [4]  
 God in all languages that were ordayned  
 of God vnder heauen as it is wrytten. And [5]  
 the holy Gooste descended vpon the heathe[n] [6]  
 as he dyd vpon the Apostles in Ierusalem,  
 20 as it is wrytten. And Christ were so mercy- [7]  
 full to sende the holy Gooste to the heathen  
 men, makynge them partakers of hys bles-  
 sed worde, why shoulde it then be taken a-  
 way from vs that be chrysten men?  
 25           Consyder you whether it be not all one [8]  
 to denye Chrystes wordes for heresy and  
 Chryste for an heretyke. For yf my worde  
 be a lye, then am I a lyar that speake the  
 worde.

Therefore yf my wordes be heresy then am  
I an heretike that speke the worde, therfor  
it is all one to condempne the word of God  
in any language for heresy and God for an

A5r

1 - **Penance:** this word can carry a moral sense of reformation of life in addition to its usual meaning of the sacrament of penance. It is not clear whether the author is referring to the formal administration of penance as a sacrament of the Church, but the context suggests that this is the case. This is a significant factor suggesting that **Wickliefes Wicket** pre-dates the Lutheran controversies of the early Sixteenth Century.

2 - **Clerkes of the law:** priests involved in the administration of canon law - a popular theme for attack by Wycliffite writers. Note the analogy drawn between contemporary canon lawyers and Old Testament Pharisees. The writer wishes to indicate that the spiritual concerns of the priest are irreconcilable with the secular interests of the lawyer in much the same way that Wyclif has attacked the **Caesarian** hierarchy. Cf. *De Civili Dominio*, ii, 145ff; iii, 59, 60ff, 217, 445ff; *De Ecclesia*, 371-2.

**Yea they spared not** reads **ye see that they spared not** in A and B. **Euen [A5r 8]** is omitted in A and B.

3 - The author attacks the prohibition placed upon vernacular scriptures by the ecclesiastical authorities. This places the date of composition of **Wickliefes Wicket** after 1407-8, the date of Archbishop Arundel's **Constitution** forbidding the translation of the Bible into the vernacular.

4 - A5r 15. A and B insert as it is written to speake the worde...

5 - Acts 2:4

6 - **Heathen:** in this context used to mean **Gentile**.

7 - **Joel 3:9**



**Makyngē them reads & he made them** in A and B.

7 - A5r 25-33: the writer develops his objections to the prohibition of vernacular scripture by the application of logic. If the Gcspel in English is to be counted as heresy does this not make Christ himself an heretic, just as a lie makes the speaker a liar?

**Consyder you whether it be all one reads consyder you whether it is not all one** in A and B.

heretyke that spake the worde, for he & hys  
worde is all one and they maye not be sepe-  
rated, and yf the worde of him be the lyfe of [1]  
the worlde as it is wrytten. Not onely by  
the breade lyueth man, but in euerye worde [2]  
that cometh out of the mouth of God, and  
euery worde of God is the lyfe of the soule  
of man, as sayth saynt Iohn. You haue an  
pntyng of the holy goost, and nede not of [3]  
any man to teach you in all thynges whych  
is hys blyssed worde where in is all wysdo[m] [4]  
and connyng, & yet ye be alwayes to lerne  
as wel as we. Howe may any antechrist for [5]  
dread of god take it awaye from vs that be  
christen men, and thus to suffer the people [6]  
to dye for hunger in heresy and blasphemy  
of mannes lawe that corrupteth and sleyth  
the soule, as pestilence sleth the body, as Da-  
uid bereth witnes where he speaketh of the [7]  
Chayre of pestilence, and moost of all they  
make vs beleue a false lawe that they haue [8]  
made vpon the secrete hoost, for the falsest  
beleue is taughte in it. For where fynde ye  
that euer Chryst or any of his disciples or a  
postles taughte any man to worshyp it. For [9]  
in the masse crede it is sayd I byleue in one [10]  
God only oure Lord Iesu Christ the sonne  
of God only begotten and borne of the fa-  
ther before al the world, he is God, of God,

30

lyght of lyght, very God of very God, be-  
gotten and not made and of substaunce eue[n]  
with the father, by whome all thynges be  
made. And in the psalme Quicunq[ue] vult it

[11]

[12]

A5v

1 - Matthew 4:4

2 - John 6:33

A and B read: **Not onely by breade.**

3 - I John 2:27.

**Oyntyge:** blessing of the Holy Spirit - M.E.D.; cf. **First Wycliffite Bible**, I John 2:20; 2:27.

The quotation from I John 2:27 is used by the author in an anticlerical sense: the man who is filled with or blessed by the Holy Spirit has no need of any other man to teach him the way to salvation. This clearly undermines the accepted view of the place of the clergy in man's quest for salvation as understood by the contemporary Church.

4 - **Where in** reads **in whome** in A and B.

5 - **Antechrist:** used here in the sense of one actively opposed to Christ. The word is found in many of Wyclif's works where it usually refers specifically to the pope, the institution of the papacy or the administration of the Church which betray their status by acting contrary to the tenets of scripture and by claiming usurped powers. Cf. **De Potestate Pape**, 102-4, 106-7, 108-9.

6 - A5v 15-18: the writer believes that the lack of vernacular scriptures leads ordinary people into heresy and irreligion through ignorance. Man's law, that is canon law, is contrasted with divine law, the law of the Gospel. The author contends that canon law, an invention of man, kills the soul of the believer.

7 - **Psalm 1:1.** The **chayre of pestilence** is a literal translation of the Vulgate's **Cathedra pestilentiae**, the bench of

infamy. The English phrase had been used by Rolle in his translation of the Psalms.

8 - A5r 21-22: **False lawe** is a reference to the doctrine of transubstantiation, a metaphysical explanation of what occurs at the point of consecration in the Mass accepted by the Church at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

**Secrete host:** E renders this sacred host. The earlier form found in all previous versions may be correct and could contain an implicit reference to the **secretum**, the formerly silent prayers said over the host prior to its consecration. The Fifteenth Century Mass would have given a greater impression of mystery than its modern form and it is possibly this context which prompted the author of the **Wicket** to use the word **secrete**, intending thereby to convey a reproach against the contemporary liturgical practices.

9 - **worshyp:** the author refers to the adoration of the consecrated host at the elevation.

10 - **Massse creede:** the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, incorporated into the Mass in the West from the Seventh Century. Cf. Dix, E., **The Shape of the Liturgy**, London 1945, 487.

11 - **Of substaunce** reads **of a substaunce** in A and B.

A5v 29 C reads: **the God, of God...**

12 - **Quacunque vult:** the Athenasian Creed. The author here makes use of the Creed's exposition of the Trinity in the development of his eucharistic argument.

is said the father is God, the sonne is God [1]  
the holy Ghoste is God. Vnmade is the fa-  
ther, vnmade is the sonne, & vnmade is the  
holy gost. And thou the[n] that art an earth-  
5 ly ma[n], by what reason mayst thou say that [2]  
thou makest thy maker. Whether maye the  
made thyng saye to the maker, why haste  
thou made me thus? Or may it turne again  
and make hym that made it (God forbyde).  
10 Now aunswerest thou and sayest that eue [3]  
ry day thou makest of bread the body of the  
Lorde the fleshe & bloud of Iesu Christ god  
and man. Forsoth thou aunswerest greatly  
agaynst reason by these wordes that Christ [4]  
15 spake at hys supper on Serethursdaye at [5]  
nyght that Christ toke bread and blessed it & [6]  
brake it and gaue it to hys disciples and a- [7]  
postles, and sayd, take ye, and eate ye, thys  
is my body whych shalbe geuen for you. Al-  
20 so he takynge the cuppe gaue thankes, and [8]  
gaue to them sayinge: drynke ye all here of,  
thys is my bloude of the newe testamente  
which shalbe shede out for many into the re  
mission of synnes, as sayeth Luke. Wha[n] Ie  
25 sus had taken breade, he gaue thankes and  
brake it to them, and sayde, take ye, eate ye,  
this is my bodye that shalbe geuen for you,  
do ye thys in the reme[m]braunce of me. Now  
vnderstand ye the wordes of our sauour

30 Christ, as he spake them one after an other. [9]  
For he toke bread and blessid, and yet what [10]  
blessyd he. The scripture sayethe not that  
Chryst toke bread and blessed it, or that he

A6r

1 - A and B read: **God is the father, God is the sonne, God is the holye Ghoste.**

2 - A6r 5-9: the author appears to address an un-named interlocutor, posing a question which is markedly similar to statements extracted from Lollard suspects at Coventry in 1511. Cf. Fines, J.F., "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, 1511-12", **J.E.H.** 14 (1963), 160ff.

3 - A6r 10: the author responds to an implicit point made by the un-met questioner. The reference to the idea that the priest **makes** the body of Christ is significant and again recalls the beliefs of the Coventry suspects in 1511.

**And [A6r 10] reads that** in A and B.

4 - The author invokes reason to counter the doctrine of transubstantiation. Cf. Dickens' "sceptical-materialist" objections to transubstantiation described in Dickens, A.G., **Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York, 1509-1558**, Oxford 1959, 36.

A and B read: **the body of the Lorde fleshe & bloud [A6r 12].**

5 - **Serethursdaye:** Maunday Thursday - M.E.D.

A6r 15 C reads: **speake.**

6 - **Matthew 26:26-28**

7 - **Mark 14:22-24**

A6r 19-21 reads A and B: **And also he takynge the cuppe & did thankes, and gaue to them & saide...**

8 - **Luke 22:19-20**

9 - A and B insert **as Christ spake them** at end of sentence.

10 - A6r 31-33: the author contends that Christ did not bless or consecrate the bread and wine at his Supper, but rather the disciples who were with him. The writer appears to take this



point as the foundation of the church, the body to be left behind after the completion of Christ's personal ministry. The argument is supported by scriptural authority.

blessed the bread whyche he had taken.

Therefore it semeth more that he blessed hys [1]  
disciples and apostles, whom he had orday-  
ned witnesses of his passion, and in them he  
5 lyfte his blessed worde whyche is the bread  
of lyfe, as it is wrytten not only in the bread [2]  
lyueth man, but in euery worde that proce-  
dith out of the mouth of God. Also Christe  
sayethe I am the breade of lyfe that came [3]  
10 downe from heauen, and Chryste say the al-  
so in Ihon, the wordes that I haue spoken  
to you be spiryte and lyfe. Therefore it se- [4]  
meth more that he blessed hys discyple, in  
whome the breade of lyfe was leftte moore [5]  
15 then in materyall breade, for the materyall  
breade hath an ende as it is wrytten in the [6]  
gospell of Mathewe, that Christ sayde all  
thynges that a man eateth goeth downe in-  
to the wombe, and is sente downe into the  
20 draughte away, and it hath an ende of rot-  
tyng but the blessinge of Chryste kept hys [7]  
discyple and apostles both bodely and go-  
stely. As it is wrytten, that none of them pe-  
ryshed but the sone of perdicio[n] that the scri- [8]  
25 ptures myght be fulfilled. And the scripture  
saith that Iesu toke bread and brake it and  
gave it to his discyple, and sayde, take ye, [9]

eate ye. This is my body that shalbe geuen  
for you. But he sayde not thys bread is my  
30 body or that the bread shoulde be geuen for  
the lyfe of the worlde, for Chryste sayeth.  
What and yf ye shall se the sonne of man  
ascend vp, where as he was before. It is the

[10]

A6v

1 - A6v 2-8: the author argues that the blessing implicit in the Supper was more the ordination of the Apostles as witnesses of the Passion and vessels of his Word which was to be the spiritual food of the world, than the consecration of the bread and wine. This re-introduces the theme of the Johannine passage printed on the title page [**John 6:51**] which seems to underlie the argument of **Wickliefes Wicket**.

2 - **Matthew 4:4**

3 - **John 6:35**

**Chryste say the also in Ihon reads: Chryste saith often in Mathew** in A and B. The scriptural reference made by the author is to **John**.

4 - **John 6:63**. Scripture is stressed as the basis of the Christian life.

A and B insert **and also hys apostles following discyples**.

5 - The writer implies that the agency of the Apostles (inspired by the Holy Spirit) was more beneficial to the propagation of the Gospel than the consecrated bread of the eucharist.

6 - A6v 16-17: **Matthew 15:17**. A favourite Wycliffite argument is used to dispute the philosophy behind the doctrine of transubstantiation. Consecrated bread is subject to the same digestive processes as ordinary food, with precisely the same result. If the consecrated bread was truly the substantial body of Christ, this natural process would at least constitute an affront to Christ's divinity. Cf. John Badby's opinion, quoted in Tanner, C.S. 4th ser. 1977, 45; also Hudson, A., "The Mouse in the Pyx: Popular Heresy and the Eucharist", **Trivium** 26 (1991), 45.

7 - The transient "blessing" bestowed by consecrated bread is contrasted unfavourably with the eternal blessing with which Christ sustains his Apostles in body and spirit.

8 - **Sone of perdicion:** a mediaeval phrase commonly used to refer to Judas Iscariot - cf. M.E.D.; **John 17:12.**

9 - **Mark 14:22**

A6v 30 C reads: **geued.** The reading of D is to be preferred.

10 - **John 6:62.** Christ's physical body has ascended to heaven, an event recorded by scriptural witness. The author denies that Christ stated that his body and the bread at the Supper were identical, or that it was the bread alone which was to be counted as the spiritual food of the world.

spiryte that quyckeneth, the fleshe profi- [1]  
 teth nothyng. Chryst sayeth also. Uerely ve [2]  
 rely I say vnto you: Except the whet corne  
 fall into the grounde and dye. It bydeth a-  
 5 lone, but yf it dye, it bryngeth forthe muche  
 fruite. Here men may see by the wordes of  
 Chryste that it behoued that he dyed in the  
 fleshe, and that in hys death was made the  
 fruyte of euerlastynge lyfe for all them that [3]  
 10 beleue on hym, as it is wrytten. For as by [4]  
 Adam al dye, euen so by Chryst shall al lyue [5]  
 and euery ma[n] in hys owne order, for as one [6]  
 clernes is in the so[n]ne, another in the mone, [7]  
 and a sterre in clerrnes is nothyng in com-  
 15 paryson to the sonne. Euen so is the againe [8]  
 rysynge of the dead men, for we be sowen [9]  
 in corruption and shall ryse agayne incor-  
 ruptyble, we are sowen in infyrmyte and [10]  
 shal ryse agayne in strength, we are sowen  
 20 in naturall bodyes, and shall ryse agayne [11]  
 spyrituall bodyes. Then yf Chryste shall [12]  
 change thus oure deadly bodyes in death, [13]  
 & God the father spared not in his owne so[n]ne  
 as it is wrytten, but that death shoulde rey- [14]  
 25 gne in hym as in vs, and that he shoulde be [15]  
 tra[n]slated into a spirituall bodye the fyrste a- [16]  
 gaine risynge of dead men: then how say the  
 Hipocrites that take on the[m] to make our lor [17]  
 des body? Loo ether make they the glori [18]

30      fied bodye ether make they agayne the spi-  
rituall body which is rysen from deathe to  
life eyther make they the fleshely body as it  
was before he suffered deathe, and yf they

A7r

1 - John 6:64. Cf. First Wycliffite Bible: It is the spirit that quyckeneth; the fleysch profiteth nothing.

A7r 1 C reads: quyckeneth.

2 - John 12:24

A7r 3 C reads: Except ye wheat corne.

A reads: Also Chryst sayeth; B reads: Also Chryst sayeth in the gospell.

3 - John 6:47

4 - Beleue on hym: the obsolete on was interchangeable with in, of. Cf. John 1:12 where First Wycliffite Bible uses Believe in, and Tyndale uses Believe on.

5 - I Corinthians 15:22

6 - I Corinthians 15:41

7 - Clernes: a bright light, or the quality of brightness in a light. In use from ca. 1300 - M.E.D.

C reads: clernes [A7r 13]; clearnes [A7r 14].

8 - I Corinthians 15:42

9 - I Corinthians 15:43

10 - I Corinthians 15:44. A and B Strength reads Vertue. This follows the text of the passage in the Wycliffite Bible [L.V.].

11 - Matthew 27:50

12 - Mark 15:37

13 - Luke 23:46 A, B and C in death reads: by death; A and B omit in A7r 23.

14 - Romans 8:32

15 - Acts 26:23

16 - I Corinthians 15:20. The lengthy series of quotations on the theme of death, resurrection and the nature of the body



after death again suggests the use of a concordance by the author.

17 - **Hipocrites:** here used in the sense of those who uphold the doctrine of transubstantiation.

18 - A7r 29-33: the writer produces a crucial argument, which appears to be a refined version of an argument against transubstantiation favoured by the Lollards of Coventry: those who accept the doctrine of transubstantiation are called upon to explain which of Christ's bodies is found under the accidents of bread and wine in the Mass. It must either be that of the glorified ascended Christ; or the spiritual body which rose from the grave; or the physical body which lived on earth as a man. Once it is accepted that the body of Christ in the Mass must fall into one of these categories, the author can develop from each implications which will destroy the logical credibility of the doctrine of transubstantiation. The writer's argument fails to deal with the metaphysic of transubstantiation in the correct philosophical terms and again reflects Dickens' "sceptical materialist" approach to the Mass. Cf. Dickens, A.G., **Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York, 1509-1558**, Oxford 1959, 36.

A and B **ether** reads **whether**.

saye also that they make the spiritual body  
of Christe it maye not be so, for that thyng  
that christ sayd & dyd it as he was at [1]  
supper before he suffered his passion, and it [2]  
5 is wrytte[n] that the spiritual body of Christe  
rose agayne fro[m] death to lyfe. Also he asce[n]-  
ded vp to heauen, and that he wyll abyde [3]  
there tyll he come to iudge the quycke and  
the dead? and yf they saye that they make [4]  
10 Christes body as it was before he had suf-  
fered his passion, the[n] must they nedes grau[n]t  
that Christ is to dye yet (for by al holy scri-  
ptures he was promised to dye, and that he  
shuld gyue lordshyppe of euerlastinge lyfe.) [5]  
15 Furthermore yf they say that Christ ma-  
de hys bodye of breade? wyth what wordes  
made he it? not with these wordes Hoc est [6]  
corpus meu[m] that is to say in Englysh, thys  
is my body. For they be the wordes of gy- [7]  
20 uynge & not of makynge whych he sayd af-  
ter that he brake the bread then departynge [8]  
it amonge his disciples & apostles. Therefore  
if Christ had made of that bred his body, he [9]  
had made it in his blessing or els in giuinge  
25 of thankes & not in the wordes of gyuynge,  
for yf Christe had spoken of the materiall  
bread that he had in his handes as when he  
sayde, (Hoc est corp[us] me[um]) this is my body  
the[n] had it ben made before, or els the worde [10]

30 had bene a lye. For yf I say this is my ha[n]de [11]  
and it be not my hand then am I a lyar, ther [12]  
fore seke it busely yf ye can fynde two wor-  
des of blessinge or of gyuynge of thanckes

A7v

1 - A and B read: **for that thynge that Chryst sayde & dyd he dyd it as he was at supper**

2 - **Matthew 28:6**

3 - **II Timothy 4:1** Up to reads into in A and B.

4 - After his death and resurrection, Christ's body ascended to Heaven. The author argues from this position that it is therefore impossible for Christ's ascended body to be present under the accidents of bread and wine in the Mass.

A7v 9 C reads: **the deade? And yf...**

5 - If the upholders of the doctrine of transubstantiation contend that the body which exists under the accidents of bread and wine in the Mass is identical with Christ's physical body the author claims this invalidates Christ's Passion and death and contradicts scripture.

A and B omit **shuld**, A7v 14. C reads: **lordshyp**, A7v14.

6 - The use of the Latin words of consecration, Hoc est corpus meum and the provision of an English translation of these words indicates that the text was composed for readers used to hearing the Mass in Latin and indicates a date of composition prior to the translation of the Mass into English in 1548-9. Although not officially celebrated in English until 1548 there are clear indications that in some parts of the country the Mass had been celebrated in English on a regular basis since the 1530s, as at Hadleigh, Suffolk: cf. Wriothesley, **Chronicle**, I, 83; Oxley, J.E., **The Reformation in Essex**, 139.

There are some indications that Lollard groups occasionally indulged in eucharistic rites using an English liturgy but any relationship between these and the clandestine English Masses

under Henry VIII is not clear due to a lack of detail in the sources. Cf. Hudson, A., **The Premature Reformation**, 137,151,195.

7 - The author develops an argument based upon an analysis of the language of the words of consecration. He contends that these are words of donation rather than creation: Christ gives the bread to his disciples with the words **This is my body** in order to symbolize the gift of his body on the cross, made for the redemption of mankind rather than to show that he has made his body from bread. Cf. the linguistic arguments found in the two sermons discussed in Hudson, A., "A Wycliffite Scholar of the Early Fifteenth Century", **Studies in Church History, Subsidia 4** (1985), 301-15.

8 - **Departynge**: to divide or split up. A Fourteenth Century verb usually used in connection with property - M.E.D.

9 - A and B omit **he**, A7v 23.

A7v 23-5 C reads: **if Christ had made of ye breade his body, he had made it in his blissing or elles in giuinge of thankes....**

10 - **Then had it ben** reads **and it was** in A and B.

11 - A and B read: **For yf ye say .... and if it be not.**

12 - A7v 30ff: The preceding linguistic argument is developed. It is noted that there are no words recorded in scripture which could be construed as words signifying the transformation of bread into Christ's body. Logic is applied to the situation: if Christ said that the bread was his body but had not previously transformed the bread into his body (and there is no scriptural record of such a transformation), then he was a liar in just the way that a man who says his hand is a piece of bread is a liar.

A and B use numeral [ii] in place of **two**, A7v32.

wherwith Christ made his body and bloude [1]  
of the breade and wine. For if ye might ones [2]  
findout those wordes, the[n] shulde you wax  
great maysters aboue Christe. And then ye  
5 myghte be gyuers of his substaunce, and as  
fathers and makers of him & that he should  
worshyppe you, as it is wrytte[n]. Thou shalt [3]  
worshyppe thy father and mother. Of such  
as desyre such worshyppe agaynste goddes  
10 lawe, speaketh saynt Paule of the man of  
synne that enhaunseth him selfe as he were [4]  
God. And he is worshypped ouer all thyn-  
ges as God & sheweth him selfe as he were  
god. Whether our charg be gilty in this, de- [5]  
15 me ye, or they that knowe[n] mooste. For they  
say that when ye haue sayd: Hoc est corpus [6]  
meum, that is to saye this is my bodye, the  
which ye cal the wordes of consecracion or  
els makynge, and when they be sayde ouer  
20 the bread, ye say that there is left no bread,  
but it is the body of the lorde, so that in the  
bread there remayneth nothing but an heap [7]  
of accide[n]tes as whytnes, ruggednes, rounde  
nes sauor, touchynge, & tastynge and such o  
25 ther accidentes. Than yf thou sayeste that  
the fleshe and bloud of Christ, that is to say [8]  
his manhode, is made more or encreased by  
so moche as the ministracion of breade and  
wyne is, the which ye minister yf ye say it is

30      so, then muste you neades consente that the  
         thynge that is not God to daye shalbe God  
         to morow, yea & that thynge which is with-  
         out spirite of lyfe, but groweth in the felde

A8r

1 - wherwith Christ made his body and bloude of the breade and wine. For if ye might ones find out those wordes ...

A reads: the whyche Chryste dyd, & that the clerkes of the earthe knowethe not, for yf ye myghte fynde or knowe it those wordes ...

B reads: the whych Christe dyd, & that a the clerkes of the earth knoweth not. The passage as found in A and B is likely to be closer to the original text. The suppressed passage includes an anticlerical aside claiming that the contemporary clergy do not know of any phrase by which Christ made his body and blood from bread and wine. The version found in C, D and E concentrates upon the attack on transubstantiation and does not complicate the argument with the original attack upon the clergy.

2 - A8r 2-7: the author suggests that if any man could create the body of Christ from bread and wine, that man would possess a position superior to that of Christ. Such a man would be as God himself, and as creator or maker of Christ's body he would be honoured and worshipped by christ, just as a human child honours its parents.

A8r 2-3 C reads: For if ye might once finde out those wordes, then should you wax great...

3 - Exodus 20:12

4 - II Thessalonians 2:3-4.

**Enhaunseth**: derived from the Middle English verb **Enhauncen**, to make proud or arrogant; to be proud, superior or to assume superiority. In C and E this word is replaced by a more modern rendering **A[d]vanceth**, a word which perhaps conveys much of the original sense, but which lacks the nuance of the original - cf.



**M.E.D.** E's following of C should be noted as it demonstrates that Jackson had access to a copy of C when compiling his edition.

5 - **Our charg:** rendered by C as **Our clargie** and by E as **Our Cleargie**. The earlier form, **Charg** derived from the Middle English noun **Charge**, an accusation, is to be preferred to the anticlerical elaboration of C and E. A and B confirm this by rendering the word **Charge**. Once again the editor of E can be seen to be following the text of C.

6 - A8r 15-19: the author states his belief that the Church's eucharistic theology implies that the words of consecration, **Hoc est corpus meum** are the words **Of making** which create Christ's body and blood from bread and wine. The linguistic implications of the words **Hoc est corpus meum** have already been explored by the author - A7v 15ff.

7 - A8r 22-25: the author seeks to ridicule the doctrine of transubstantiation by presenting a radical outline of the theory: after consecration the Church claims that the substance of bread, **panitas**, is completely annihilated, leaving behind a mere **Heap of accidentes** or outward appearances and qualities of bread.

A and B read: **but truelye there is nothing but an heap of accidentes.**

**Accidentes:** philosophical term used in explanation of transubstantiation to stand for the outward appearance and qualities of bread perceived by the senses.

**Sauor:** from the Middle English noun, **Savour**, meaning taste as an inherent property of matter. In use by ca. 1400 - **M.E.D.**

A and B read **sauery**.

This passage demonstrates the writer's familiarity with the terms of contemporary eucharistic theology. A parallel is found in both wording and argument between this passage in **Wickliefes Wicket** and one in the **Reply of Friar Daw Topias in Political Poems and Songs**, ed. Wright, T.S., **Rolls Series 14 (ii)** (1861), 39-114: **"There [in the consecrated bread] is not Christis bodye, but roundnesse and whitenesse and accident without suget [subject]."** **Rolls Series 14(ii)**, 107.

**Rolls Series 14(ii)**, 106-110 gives an interesting Wycliffite account of the Mass in terms of **"figure"** which recalls the terms of the argument advanced in the **Wicket**. The Editor dates this text to 1401 and regards it as contemporary with and probably related to **Jacke Upland** - cf. *ibid.*, 16-38.

**So that in the bread there remayneth nothing** is rendered in A and B: **but truelye there is nothing...**

8 - A8r 26: A and B omit **the**; A8r 27 reads **be** in A and B.

by kinde, shalbe God another tyme. And we [1]  
all oughte to beleue that he was wythoute  
begynninge, and wythout endinge, begotte[n] [2]  
and not made, for yf the manhode of Christ  
5 were encreased euerye daye by so moche as  
breade and wyne draweth to that ye miny-  
stre, he should wax more in one day by carte  
lodes than he dyd in. xxxii. yeaes when he  
was here in earth. And yf thou makeste the [3]  
10 body of the lorde in those wordes: Hoc est  
corpus meum, that is to say. This is my bo-  
dy. And yf thou mayst make the body of the  
Lorde in those wordes, thys is my bodye,  
thou thy self must be the person of Chryste  
15 or els there is a false God, for yf it be thy [4]  
body as thou sayest, then it is the body of a  
false knaue, or of a dronke[n] man, or of a thef,  
or a lecherour or full of other synnes, &  
then there is an vncleane body for any man  
20 to worshyp for God. For and Chryste had [5]  
made there his body of materiall bread in ye  
sayd wordes, as I know they be not ye wor-  
des of makinge, what earthly man had po-  
wer to do as he did, for in all scripture [6]  
25 from the beginninge of Genesis to the ende  
of the Apocalips, There be no wordes writ-  
ten of the makinge of Chrystes body, but [7]  
there bene wrytte[n] that Chryst was the so[n]ne

of the father, and that he was conceyued of  
30 the holy gooste, and that he toke fleshe and  
bloode of the virgin mary, and that he was  
dead, and that he rose agayne from death  
on the thyrde daye, and he ascended to

A8v

1 - A8r 25- A8v 1: the author heaps further ridicule upon the theory of transubstantiation by attacking the logic of the claim that each piece of consecrated bread is a piece of Christ's body. If this was to be accepted as true then by logic the author argues that Christ's body must be expanded to enormous proportions in order to provide sufficient for each celebration of the eucharist throughout Christendom.

**Kinde:** [A8v 1] from Middle English meaning the properties of an object, its nature. Cf. **Second Wycliffite Bible, Prologue to Isaiah, 226, The kyndis of vnreasonable beestis.**

2 - **Matthew 1:18-23**

**Luke 1:31**

A8v 3: A and B read: **without endynge, and in hys manhode begotten and not made ...**

3 - A8v 4-9: the author uses a logical materialism to attack transubstantiation. If each piece of consecrated bread is to be regarded as a portion of Christ's physical body, then logically in one day the body made from pieces of consecrated bread will far exceed the dimensions of Christ's body as it existed during his life. Cf. Hudson, A., "The Mouse in the Pyx", **Trivium** 26 (1991), 45, quoting **Foxe IV, 233.**

A8v 5: B, C and D insert a marginal reference to **Psalm 169.** The passage to which this reference is appended does not make any reference to the Psalms and the marginal note remains obscure.

A8v 8: the writer's reference to the thirty-two years of Christ's life on earth may represent an unusual exegesis of **Luke 3:23.**

A and B read **by so moche as the breade** - A8v 5-6.

4 - A8v 15-16: **for yf it be thy body** reads **for yf it is thy body** in A and B.

5 - A8v 9-20: further argument against the logic of transubstantiation. The writer develops the implications of **Hoc est corpus meum**: the bread becomes my body, ie. that of the celebrant. The mediaeval eucharistic practice of regarding the priest as being **in loco Christi** provides the author with a typically Wycliffite cause for criticism of the church. If the priest at the altar is to be regarded as being in some sense a figure of Christ and the bread on the altar therefore in some sense his (the celebrant's and Christ's) body, the laity might be led to worship for God the bodies of the immoral. For a discussion of the symbolic role of priests and bishops in the celebration of the eucharist as developed by St. Ignatius cf. Dix, G., **The Shape of the Liturgy**, 28-9.

6 - A8v 24 C reads: **all holy scripture**

7 - A8v 20-27: the author notes that there is no reference in scripture to the creation of Christ's body. All that is known is contained in the Creeds [A8v 28 - B1r 5], but even if this revealed the words with which the body of Christ was created, no human has the same creative power as God.

heauen verye God and man, and that we  
shulde beleue in all scriptures that ben wryt  
ten of him and that he is to come to iudge  
the quicke and the deade, and that the same  
5 Chryste Iesu kynge and sauoure, was at [1]  
the begynnyng wyth the father and the ho  
ly gooste makynge all thynges of noughte,  
both heauen and earth and all thinges that  
bene in it workinge by vertue of his worde [2]  
10 for he said, be it do, and it was done, whose  
workes neuer earthlye man myght compre-  
hend eyther make. And yet the wordes of ye [3]  
makynge of these thinges ben wrytte[n] in the  
beginning of Genesis, euen as God spake [4]  
15 the[m] & yf ye can not make the worke that he  
made, & haue the worde by whyche he made  
it, how shall ye make hym that made ye wor  
kes and you haue no wordes of auctoritye  
eyther power lefte you on earth by whyche  
20 ye shoulde do thys, but as ye haue fayned  
this crafte of youre false erroures, whyche [5]  
some of you vndersta[n]d not, for it is prophe-  
cied, they shall haue eyes and se not, and [6]  
eares and heare not, and shall se prophecies  
and shall not vnderstande lest they were co[n]  
25 uerted, for I hyde them from the hertes of [7]  
those people, theyr hertes are greatly fatted  
and this thinge is done to you for the wyc-  
kednes of your erroures in beleue. Therfor [8]

30        be ye conuerted from the worste synne as it        [9]  
is written, whe[n] Moyses was in the mou[n]te        [10]  
Synay with God. The people made a calfe  
and worshipped it as God. And God spake

Blr



1 - **Hebrews 1:10**

2 - **Workinge by vertue of his worde** reads in A and B: **worchynge by worde of hys vertue**. While the sense of the phrase has not been changed it has been clarified in the later texts. Word in this context must be taken as a reference to the Johannine **Logos**, the **Word of God**: cf. **John 1:1; 1:3**. This gives an indication of the basis of the writer's Christology.

**Vertue**: from the Middle English and Latin, meaning power, or in some contexts peculiar property, quality; cf. **M.E.D.**

3 - The author develops his Christology from Credal formulae [A8v 28 - B1r 4] and supports this with references to Biblical sources [B1r 5 - 15]. Particular attention is paid to the role of Christ within creation, and by making use of **Hebrews 1:10** and the reference to Johannine Christology the author is able to argue that it is illogical to claim that a creature (the priest) can create the body of a Person of the Trinity so vitally involved in the process of creation (Christ).

4 - **These thinges ben wrytten** reads in A and B: **These thinges by me wrytten**. The implication of the earlier texts that the author of the **Wicket** was the same as the translator of **Genesis** is interesting and may represent a conscious attempt to endow the text with an "antique authority" by linking it with the biblical translation. The earlier version of the passage might equally be seen as a typographical error corrected by subsequent editors.

**Genesis 1:3-2:3**.

5 - **Crafte**: from the Middle English noun **Craft**. In the present context the word carries a distinctly pejorative sense of skill in deception or trickery. It is encountered in this

sense in other Wycliffite texts such as **Lantern of Light** 52/13:  
**with this craft they cacchen away the goodis of celi widowis.**

Having argued that man cannot create the body of his creator, the author now strengthens his case by suggesting that priests have neither the power nor the authority to make Christ's body. This contention contains fundamental implications for the understanding of orders and the place of clergy relative to the laity. Thus the author can say that the clergy have **fayned this craft of youre false erroures** in order to increase their own power and prestige and to lead the people away from the true worship of God.

6 - **Isaiah** 6:9-10. A and B read **ye** for **they**: Blr 23.

7 - Blr 25-28: **Isaiah** 13:5; **Matthew** 13:14; **Mark** 4:12;  
**Luke** 8:10.

8 - **Beleue** reads **vnbeleue** in A and B.

9 - **Be ye conuerted from the worste synne**: the purpose of the **Wicket** is underlined. The author intends to turn people away from what he considers to be the idolatrous doctrine of transubstantiation. The people must choose, make a conscious decision to follow the true worship of God based on the scriptures rather than subscribe to transubstantiation which is here for the first time explicitly likened to idolatry.

10 - **Exodus** 20:3. **Was in mounte Synay with God** reads in A and B: **Was in the hyll with God**. It should be noted as significant that both versions of the **Wycliffite Bible** use the word **hyll** for Mount Sinai throughout the **Exodus** account from **Exodus** 19:20ff.

to Moyses, go for the people haue done the  
worst synne to make and worshyppe a false  
god. But nowe I shall aske you a worde, [1]  
aunswere ye me, whether is the body of the  
5 lorde made at once or at twyse, is bothe the  
flesh and the blood in the hoost of the bread  
or elles is the fleshe made at one tyme and  
the bloud made at an other tyme, yt is to [s]ay  
the wyne in the chalyce? yf thou wylte saye [2]  
10 it is ful and hole the manhode of Christe in  
the hoost of breade bothe fleshe and bloude,  
skynne, heare, and bones, then makest thou  
vs to worshyppe a false god in the chalyce,  
which is vnco[n]iured, when we worshyp the [3]  
15 bread. And yf ye say the flesh is in the bread  
and the bloud in the wyne, then thou muste  
graunte, yf thy crafte be true (as it is not in  
dede) that the manhode of Christe is depar- [4]  
ted and that he is made at two tymes: for first  
20 thou takest the hoost of bread other a piece  
of bread and makest it (as ye saye) and the  
innocent people worshyp it. And then thou  
takest to the, the chalice and lykewyse mar-  
rest (makest I wolde haue said) the bloud in  
25 it, and then they worshyppen it also, and yf  
it be so as I am sure, that the flesshe and  
bloude of Christe ascended, then be ye false [5]  
harlottes to God and to vs. For when we  
shall be housled, ye brynge to vs the drye [6]

30 flesh, and let the bloud be away, for ye gyue  
vs after the breade, wyne and water, and  
sometymes cleane water vnblested (rather  
coniured) by the vertue of your crafte. And

[7]

Blv

1 - **False god** reads in A and B: **Alyen goddes**. The editor of the later texts C and D has substituted a more modern word for the original Middle English **Alyen** meaning foreign or strange. Cf. A4r n.6 above where in the extended quotation from **Daniel** the word **Alyen** is retained.

2 - The theory of transubstantiation as adopted by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 stated that "**the body and blood [of Christ] are truly contained in the Sacrament of the Altar under the species of bread and wine, the bread having by the power of God been transubstantiated into the body and the wine into the blood...**" [Fourth Lateran Council, cap.I in **The Teaching of the Catholic Church**, ed. Rahner, K., Regensburg 1965]. The Church was able to justify by this theory the practise of communion in one kind which had developed in the West during the Twelfth Century [cf. **Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church**]. The author of the **Wicket** clearly objects to the established teaching of concomitance in a way which recalls the objections of the Hussite Utraquists. Cf. Hudson, A., "The Mouse in the Pyx", **Trivium** 26 (1991), 43-4, quoting Salisbury, **Reg. Langton** ii.f.42 and **Foxe** IV, 229.

B1v 10 C reads: **ful and whole...**

3 - **Coniured**: from the Middle English verb, **Coniuren**. The word was frequently used in the context of magic and necromancy [M.E.D.] and in this text it is used by the author to indicate that he regards the consecration of the elements as nothing better than magical "hocus pocus".

**We** reads **ye** in A and B.

4 - **Departed**: from Middle English, **Departede**, to divide or separate.

5 - Blv 20-28: the author concentrates his attack upon the liturgical practice of the contemporary Church. The bread and wine are consecrated separately and each is elevated and adored as the flesh and blood of Christ. Scripture records Christ's physical ascension into heaven, and so the author believes that the adoration of the consecrated elements is nothing short of idolatry: the adoration of mere creatures as though they were God. The situation in the early Sixteenth Century in England is described by Cranmer, *A Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine*, iv.9; *Remains*, ed. Jenkyns, Oxford 1833, 442:

What made the people to run from their seats to the altar, and from altar to altar, and from sacring (as they call it) to sacring, peeping, tooting and gazing at that thing which the priest held up in his hands, if they thought not to honour the thing which they saw?...What was the cause of all these, and that as well the priest and the people so devoutly did knock and kneel at every sight of the sacrament, but that they worshipped the visible thing which they saw with their eyes and took it for very God?

Blv 27: **false harlottes**: a term of abuse - scoundral, knave, rogue, reprobate [M.E.D.].

**Sure** reads **sured** in A and B - Blv 26.

6 - **Housled**: reads **Housholde** in A and B. From Middle English verb **Houselen**, to partake of the eucharist. In use from ca. 1300, but it should be noted that the M.E.D. quotes no example of its use after 1425.

7 - Blv 28-33: the author refers explicitly to the eucharistic practise of the contemporary Church. The concentration upon the consecrated host which followed upon the

Church's teaching of concomitance naturally led to what could be dangerously idolatrous interpretations of the Mass. Thus it was not just eucharistic doctrine but liturgical practice to which the Wycliffites objected as here in the **Wicket**.

yet ye saye vnder the hooste of breade is the  
ful manhode of Christe, then by your owne  
confession must it nedes be that we wor-  
shyppen a false God in the chalice whyche  
5 is vnconiured, when we worshyp the bread  
and worshyppe the one as the other, but [1]  
where fynde ye, that euer Christe or any of  
his disciples taught any man to worshyppe  
thys breade or wyne? Therfore what shall  
10 we saye of the Apostles that were so muche  
wyth Christe, and were called by the holye  
gooste, had they forgotten to set it in the [2]  
crede whe[n] they made it that is christen men-  
nes beleue, or elles we myght saye that they  
15 knewe no suche God, for they beleue in no  
more goddes but in hym that was at the be-  
gynnyng, and made of naughte all maner [3]  
thynges, visible and invisible. This Lorde [4]  
toke fleshe and bloude in the vyrgyn  
20 the same God. But ye haue many false [5]  
wayes to begyle the innocent people & sleigh-  
tes of the fynde. For ye saye that in euerie  
hooste eyther piece is the hole manhode of  
Christe eyther ful substance of hym. For ye  
25 saye as a man may take a glasse, and breake [6]  
the glasse into many pieces & in euerye piece  
properly thou mayeste se thy face, and thy  
face not parted. So ye saye the Lordes  
bodye is in eache hooste eyther piece and



30 hys bodye not parted. And thys is a  
full subtyll questyon to begyle an inno- [7]  
cent foole, but wyll ye take hede of thys  
subtil question, how a ma[n] may take a glasse

B2r

1 - The author argues that if, as the Church teaches, the full substance of Christ's physical body is contained under the accidents of the consecrated bread the laity worships a false god when it adores the unconsecrated chalice when the host is elevated and **[we] worshyppe the one as the other** [B2r 6]. The objection again springs from the practise of the late mediaeval church.

2 - **Had they forgotten to set it**, reads A and B: **Had they forget it to set it**. Again the editor of the later texts has tidied-up the English of the earlier texts.

The author deplores the adoration of the consecrated host as being without scriptural or credal authority.

B2r 11-12: **holy gooste** reads **goly gooste** in A and B. The earlier version is likely to be a typographical error.

3 - **Hebrews** 1:1-10. A and B insert a marginal reference to **Psalm 16**, but in common with other references made to the **Psalms** in A and B this cannot be traced.

4 - The creeds carry greater authority than later human tradition. The adoration of the host as the full substance of Christ's physical body is without scriptural or credal authority.

B2r 18-19: **This Lorde toke fleshe and bloude in the vyrgyn** reads in A and B: **Whych Lorde toke fleshe and bloude beynge in the vyrgyn**. The word **beynge** is here used in the sense of nature, as in "human being". C follows A and B reading **fleshe and bloude beinge**. The removal of the word in D appears to have no particular significance, but does suggest that text C is more closely related to texts A and B than is text D.

5 - The author believes that the clergy have may deceptive methods by which to lead the innocent or uneducated laity astray. Behind this anticlericism lies an implicit attack upon the methods of the scholastic theologians who have developed the theory of transubstantiation. The attack becomes explicit in the ensuing discussion of the two metaphors of mirrors and candles [B2r 24 - B2v 25].

6 - **Glasse**: used here in the sense of a mirror or looking-glass. Used in this sense throughout the Fifteenth Century and beyond - M.E.D.

7 - **Full**: in text A this is rendered **Foole**, while B has **Foule**. Phonetically each version of the word could represent the form found in versions C and D, **Full**. Thus reading **full**, the sense of the phrase would be "a very subtil question". However the form **Foule** found in B should alert the reader to the possibility that once again the later editor has "cleaned-up" the language of the original text. **Foule** could be derived from the Middle English **Foul**, thus giving the sense, "this disgustingly/ wickedly subtil question". The element of moral judgment contained in this reading would not be out of place in the context and would parallel other instances of the use of this word in Wycliffite texts. Cf. **Wycliffite Bible [E.V.]**, **Isaiah 13:22**.

and beholde the verye lykenes of hys owne  
face and yet it is not hys face, but the lyke-  
nes of hys face, for & it were his verye face,  
then he must nedes haue twoo faces, one on  
5 his body and another in the glasse. And yf  
the glas were broke[n] in many places, so ther  
shoulde be manye faces, moore by the glasse  
then by the body and eche ma[n] shall make as  
many faces to them as they wolde. But as [1]  
10 ye may see the mynde or lyckenes of youre  
face whiche is not the very face, but the fy-  
gure there of: so the breade is the fygure or  
mynde of Christes body in earth, and ther- [2]  
fore Chryst said. As oft as ye do thys thing [3]  
15 do it in mynde of me. Also ye saye as a man  
may lyght many candels at one candell and  
the lyght of that candell neuer the more nor  
neuer the lesse. So ye say that the ma[n]hoode [4]  
of Chryst descendeth into eche parte of eue  
20 ry hoost, and the manhoode of Chryste ne-  
uer the more ne lesse, wher then becommeth  
youre ministracions? For yf a man lyghte  
many candels at one candle as long as they  
brenne there wylbe many candels lyghted &  
25 as well the laste candle as the fyrste, and so  
by thys reaso[n], yf ye shall fetche your worde [5]  
at god, and make god, there muste nedes  
be many goddes and that is forbydden in ye [6]  
fyrst co[m]maundement. And as for makynge

30 more eyther makynge lesse of Chrystes ma[n]-  
hoode it lyethe not in youre power to come  
there, nyghe, neyther touche it, for it is asce[n]-  
ded into heaue[n] in a spirituall body. whyche [7]

B2v

1 - The metaphor suggests that just as a man can see his face in a mirror, so when the mirror is broken into many fragments the number of images of the face is increased to the same number as the fragments. The two metaphors of the mirror and the candle seem to be directly related to the problem of the mode of Christ's presence in the eucharistic elements. This question has been touched upon earlier in the text [A8r 25 - A8v 9] but is here dealt with in a more academic fashion. The argument is possibly aimed against Aquinas' comments in *Summa*, III, Q.lxxvi.IV: Whether the body of Christ is in this sacrament as in a place.

It should be noted that the metaphor of the mirror is adopted by Thomas More writing against Frith's *The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ*. Frith responds to More's metaphor in nearly the same words and certainly the same spirit as that found in *Wickliefes Wicket*:

for even as the glass doth represent the very face of man,  
so doth this sacrament represent the very body and blood  
of Christ....But every man knoweth right well, that though  
the glass represent my face, yet the substance of the  
glass is not my very face, neither is my very face in the  
glass...

Frith, J., *Answer unto M. More's Letter [The Mind and Exposition of the Old Doctors upon the Words of Christ's Maundy]*, in *The Work of John Frith*, ed. Wright, N.T., Sutton Courtenay 1978, 401-2. Editorial comment, 58 points to this and other parallels between *Wickliefes Wicket* and the works of Frith.

B2v 11: **whiche** reads **and** in A and B.

2 - **Mynde**: from the Middle English noun **Mind(e)**; also found in form **Mind(e of**, as frequently in **Wickliefes Wicket**, to mean a particular memory or thought of something, a preserved memory, or the people's remembrance of a particular event. Cf. **M.E.D.** . Found in **Second Wycliffite Bible**, **Luke 22:19** as in quotation below in **Wicket**.

**Fygyre**: Latinate term, frequently encountered in Wycliffite texts to mean an object having symbolic significance, a symbol or prefiguration - **M.E.D.** - Cf. Wyclif, **De Eucharistia**, ed. Battles, F.L., in **Advocates of Reform**, Library of Christian Classics XIV, London 1953, 69, 79, 82, 87-8. It is clear that Wyclif derived his notion of fygyre from scholastic theology and the Fathers, in particular Ambrose, **Decretum** pars III, dist. II,c.74, I, 1344f and Peter Lombard, IV **Libri sententiarum**, IV, dist. X, par.3, PL, 192:860.

3 - **Luke 22:19**

4 - A similar metaphor to that of the mirror is outlined, this time using the image of a lighted candle. The problem under discussion is again the mode of Christ's presence in the consecrated bread and wine.

5 - **Fetch...at**: a phrase encountered in the Fifteenth Century meaning to oppose. Cf. Pecock, ed. Myers, A.R., **English Historical Documents 1327-1485**, 1969, 872.

6 - The church claims that each consecrated host contains the totality of Christ's body, and that at the same time Christ's body is neither expanded nor diminished. The author argues by the candle metaphor that this implies that just as there are many individual candles all lit from one original (although they all look alike), so with many consecrations each creating the

totality of Christ's body under the accidents of bread and wine, there must be a multiplication of deities. Thus John Badby argued at his trial in 1409: **Then there are twenty thousand gods in England.** Cf. Wilkins, D., *Concilia*, London 1737, iii, 327.

7 - **Exodus** 20:3

8 - **Matthew** 28:1-7



he suffred not Marry Magdaleyne to tou- [1]  
che, when her synnes were forgeuen to her.  
Therefore all the sacramentes that be lefte  
here in earth be but myndes of the body of  
5 Chryst for a sacrament is no more to saye,  
but a sygne or mynde of a thyng passed or  
a thyng to come, for when Iesu spake of  
the breade and sayde to his disciples: As ye  
do thys thyng, do it in mynde of me, it was [2]  
10 set for a mynde of good thynges passed of  
Christes body, but when the Aungell shew- [3]  
ed to Ihon the sacramentes of the woman,  
and of the beast that bare her, it was set for  
a mynde of euell thynges to come, on the fa  
15 ce of the earth, and great stroyinge of ye peo [4]  
ple of God. And in the olde lawe there were  
many figures or mindes of thinges to come [5]  
For before Chryste the circumcison was  
commaunded by a lawe. And he that kepte [6]  
20 not the lawe was slayne. And yet Saynte  
Paule sayeth neyther is circumcisi[n] that  
is openly in the fleshe but he that is circum- [7]  
cised of the hert in spirite. Not ye letter (whose  
perusinge is not of men) but of God. Peter  
25 sayth also That baptyme of lyke forme ma [8]  
keth vs not safe, by the puttyng awaye of  
fylthynes of the fleshe, but in the hauynge of [9]  
good conscience in god by the agayne rising  
of our Lorde Iesu Chryst from death that

30

we shoulde be made heyres of euerlastyng  
lyfe, he yeade into heauen, and Aungells &  
powers and vertues, ben made subiects to  
him. And also the scriptures saye of Ihon

[10]

B3r

1 - **Matthew 28:1-7; John 20:17**

The text concentrates upon the fact that Christ's natural body ascended to heaven after the resurrection. Thus just as Mary Magdalen was not allowed to touch the glorified body of Christ, so it follows that the clergy cannot be allowed to touch Christ's body. It should be noted that this argument is precisely repeated in **An Epitome and Short Rehearsal...Showing in What Points Frith Dissenteth From Our Prelates** appended to Frith's **Answer To M. More's Letter**, in **The Work of John Frith**, ed. Wright, N.T., 442. The authenticity of the **Epitome** is questioned by the editor.

This argument recalls the position adopted by Zwingli in the Eucharistic Controversy whereby he stated that "we are certain of this, that Christ's body is 'seated at the right hand of God' and that he cannot be bodily here....so I know that it is not possible that the body of Christ is in this sacrament, or else we should have to reject that article of the creed which has been quoted." Cf. Potter, G.R., **Huldrych Zwingli**, London 1978, 94-109. It has been suggested that Frith was indebted to Zwingli for his eucharistic theology, but the parallels with **Wickliefes Wicket**, a text in existence prior to Zwingli's work, must put this in question. Cf. **Introduction to Frith's Exposition of Tracy's Testament**, below.

2 - **Luke 22:19**

3 - **Revelation 17:3-8**

4 - **Stroyinge**: destruction or suffering. Rendered **stroiyng** in C.

B3r 15 **earth** reads **death** in A and B. The reading of C and D is to be preferred.

5 - Note the use of the device of coupling a technical, Latinate word [**Fygyre**] with a more accessible Middle English word [**Mynde**].

The author develops a theologically sophisticated argument based upon typological analysis of the Bible. It is argued that all sacraments are representative of divinely ordered things which have passed or are yet to come. Thus the rites of the Old Testament can be interpreted as sacraments prefiguring the coming of Christ, while the institution of the eucharist is seen not as a promise of Christ's continued physical presence in the consecrated bread but as a reminder [**Mynde**] of the benefits for mankind derived from Christ's Incarnation and resurrection. It is thus stressed again that the sacrament of the altar cannot physically contain the totality of Christ's natural body.

B3r 21-23: A and B read **Paule sayeth and neyther it is circumcision .... but he that is circumcised of hert in spirite.**

6 - **Genesis** 17:10-14; **Jeremiah** 9:25. Both references are general.

7 - **Romans** 2:28-9

C omits brackets (but not text in parenthesis) B3r 23 and B3r 24

8 - **I Peter** 3:21-2 C reads **baptisme**, B3r 25.

It should be noted that the author of the Wicket has changed the wording of this text as it appeared in the **Wycliffite Bible** [L.V.]: **Baptyme of lijk forme makith vs saaf; not the puttyng awei of the filthis of fleisch...** The change is curious and appears to have been made in order to give an increased moral emphasis to the text. On close examination it will be seen that the actual sense of the Biblical text is preserved.

9 - **Fylthynes**: from the Middle English term **Filth**, meaning anything which corrupts morals or gives occasion for sin. Often found to have sexual connotations. The form **Fylthynes** found in **Wickliefes Wicket** appears to be Sixteenth Century and the **New English Dictionary** and the **O.E.D.** (2nd ed.) vol. V cites this as the first recorded use. Also found in Tyndale, I **John** 8.

B3r 27: A and B read: **but in the axynge of good conscience.**

10 - **Yeade**: found from Twelfth Century. Middle English past tense of verb **To go, Yode, yede.** North East Midland dialect form, but uncommon by late Fifteenth Century, meaning went, went away, proceeded, took his course. Cf. **O.E.D.**, 2nd ed., Vol. xx.

Baptyste that he preached in wyldernesse [1]  
 and sayde: a stronger then I shall come af-  
 ter me, and I am not worthy to knele down  
 and vnlace hys shoe, and yet Christe sayde  
 5 that he was more then a prophete. Howe [2]  
 maye ye then saye that ye be worthy to make  
 hys body and yet youre workes beare wit-  
 nesse that ye be lesse then prophetes. For yf [3]  
 ye were not ye shoulde not teache the peo-  
 10 ple to worshyppe the sacramentes or myn-  
 des of Christe for Christe hym selfe, which [4]  
 sacramentes or fygyres ben lefull as God [5]  
 taughte them and lefte them vnto vs, as  
 the sacrifices other myndes of the olde  
 15 lawe were full good as it is wrytten. They [6]  
 that kepe them shoulde lyue in them, and so [7]  
 the breade that Christe brake was lefte to  
 vs for mynde of thynges passed, for the bo-  
 dye of Christe, that we shoulde beleue he  
 20 was a very man in kynde as we be. And  
 god in vertue, and that manhode was  
 susteyned in foode as oures be. For saynte [8]  
 Paule sayeth he was very man, and in ha-  
 byte he was founde as man. And so we  
 25 muste beleue that he was very god and ma[n] [9]  
 together, and that he styed vp very god and  
 man to heauen, and that he shall be there  
 tyll he come to deme the worlde. And that [10]  
 we maye not se hym bodely beyng in thys

30 lyfe, as it is wrytten. For he sayeth, whom  
ye haue not ye loue, into whom ye nowe, [11]  
not seyng, beleue. And Iohn sayeth in the  
fyrste gospell, no man sawe God none but [12]

B3v

1 - **Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:1-4**

2 - **Matthew 11:9**

3 - If Mary Magdalen and John the Baptist both acknowledged their unworthiness to touch the body of Christ, then modern priests who clearly rank lower than prophets blaspheme when they claim to touch and make the body of Christ.

B3v 8-9: reads A and B: **ye be no lesse then prophetes. For yf ye dyd ye shoulde not teache the people...** The reading of C and D is to be preferred.

4 - The author continues his argument by stating that the clergy should not teach the people to worship the sacrament of the altar for Christ himself when it is but a figure of Christ. Contemporary eucharistic worship is seen as an abuse which both helps to form and buttress the author's argument against transubstantiation. Cf. Maurice Keen's comments upon the development of Wyclif's eucharistic theology, "Wyclif, The Bible, Transubstantiation" in **Wyclif in His Times**, ed. Kenny, A., Oxford 1986, 11-16.

5 - **Lefull:** lawful. The author argues that the sacraments or figures of Christ are lawful in the form in which they were established for the Church by God in the same way that the ceremonies of the Old Testament were lawful because they were instituted by God.

C reads **lawful**.

6 - B3v 15: **were** reads **was** in A and B.

7 - **Romans 10:5**

**Then** reads **those** in A and B; B3v 20-21 A and B read: **very man in kynde as we be as god in vertue, and that hys manhode was**



**susteyned**.... The punctuation and editing of C and D helps to clarify the sense of this phrase.

8 - **Philippians 2:7**

9 - **Styed**: from **Stede** [?]. Context makes meaning stayed clear. Found in **First Wycliffite Bible**, I **Samuel 1:22** .

10 - **Deme**: from Middle English verb **Deem**, to judge. Cf. **M.E.D.**

11 - **I Peter 1:8**

12 - **John 1:18**. It should be noted that the author refers to St. John's Gospel as the first Gospel.

B3v 33: **none** reads **no** in A and B.

the onelye begotten sonne that is in the bo-  
some of the father he hath tolde it out. And  
Iohn sayeth in hys Epistle the. iii. chapter. [1]  
Euery man that synneth seeth not hym ney  
5 ther knoweth hym, by what reason then  
saye ye that be synners that ye make God,  
truly thys muste nedes be the worste synne, [2]  
to saye that ye make God, and it is the ab- [3]  
hominacyon of dyscomforte that is sayde  
10 in Daniell the prophete standynge in the ho-  
lye place, he that readeth lette hym vnder-  
stande. Also Luke sayeth that Christe toke [4]  
the cup after that he had supped and gaue  
thankes and sayde. Thys cuppe is the new  
15 testament in my bloude that shall be shedde  
into the remission of synnes for many, now  
what saye ye, the cuppe whyche he sayde is  
the new testame[n]te in my bloude, was it a  
materiall cuppe in whyche the wyne was  
20 that he gaue hys disciples wyne of, or was  
it his moost blessed body in whiche the bles-  
sed bloude was kepte tyll it were shed out [5]  
for the sinnes of them that shoulde be made  
safe by his passion, nedes must we say that [6]  
25 he spake of his holy bodye, as he dyd when  
he called his passion eyther sufferyng in bo-  
dy a cuppe when he prayed to his father or  
he went to his passion and said. Yf it be pos [7]  
sible that this cup passe fro[m] me, but yf thou

30 wylte that I drynke it thy wyl be done. He  
spake not here of the material cup in which  
he had gyuen his disciples drinke for it trou  
bled not hym, but he prayed for his greate

B4r

- 1 - I John 3:4
- 2 - **The worste synne**: the author has earlier used this phrase to refer to what he regards as the idolatrous tendencies implicit in contemporary eucharistic theology and practice [Blr 29ff].
- 3 - Daniel 9:26; Mark 13:14
- 4 - Luke 22:20. B4r 16 **many** reads **man** in A and B. Either reading makes sense of the passage.
- 5 - C reads: **kepe**.
- 6 - The author moves his discussion from the treatment of metaphor as a means of explaining or illustrating theological concepts to an examination of the use of metaphor in the scriptures. Thus he argues that just as Christ did not refer to a physical cup when he prayed at his Passion, "**Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me**" [Luke 22:42], so at the Supper he spoke of the cup figuratively to represent his body in which ran the blood which he would shed for the salvation of the world. In this final stage of the development of his argument against transubstantiation the author addresses the difficulties of expressing religious truths within the limitations of language. Cf. Hudson, A., "The Mouse in the Pyx", *Trivium* 26 (1991), 46-50. Hudson identifies as a key element in Wyclif's eucharistic teaching the understanding of **Esse** in the Mass. This passage reflects concern with this point at a less sophisticated level.
- 7 - Matthew 26:39

sufferau[n]ce & bytter death the which he suf- [1]  
fred for oure synnes and not for his. And yf  
he spake of his body and passion whe[n]  
he sayd. This cup is the newe testament in [2]  
5 my bloude. So he spake of his holy bodye,  
whe[n] he sayd this is my body that shalbe gi-  
uen for you, and not of the materiall bread [3]  
which he had in his hande. Also in another [4]  
place he calleth his passion a cuppe, where ye [4]  
10 mother of zebedeus sonnes came to hym, &  
axed of hym that her twoo sonnes when he [5]  
came to his kyngdom might syt one on his  
ryght syde and one at hys left syde. And he [6]  
aunswered and sayde, woman thou wotest  
15 not what thou axest, then he sayde to them:  
may ye drinke of the cup that I shal drinke  
and they sayd ye lorde. And he sayde ye shall [7]  
dryncke of my cup, but to syt on my ryghte  
hande or leftte hande is not myne to gyue,  
20 but to the father it is proper. But in that he  
sayd ye shall dryncke of my cup, he promised  
them to suffer tribulacion of thys world as  
he dyd, by the whych they shulde enter into  
lyfe euerlasting, and to be both on his right  
25 ha[n]de. And thus ye may se that Christ spake  
not of the materiall cup neyther of him self  
nor of his apostles neyther of material bred  
neyther of material wyne. Therefore let eue  
ry man wysely wyth meke prayers & great

30 study and also charitye read the wordes of  
god and holy scriptures, but many of you [8]  
be lyke the mother of zebedeus sonnes, to  
whom Chryst sayde, thou wotest not what [9]

B4v

1 - **Hebrews 2:9; Hebrews 9:14**

**Sufferafice:** rendered **Sufferaunce** in A and B; **Sufferance** in E. The form found in C and D is a surprising composite of **Suffering** and **Sacrifice**. This may represent a curious attempt to obscure the notion of sacrifice which might have been found in connection with the Mass in the original text.

B4v 1 A and B omit **the**; B4v 3 A and B insert **holy body**.

2 - **Luke 22:20**

3 - The author applies the argument previously used with reference to the metaphor of the cup to that of the eucharistic bread, arguing that when Christ said "**This is my body**" he was referring to his physical body which was to suffer "**For oure synnes and not for his**" and not to the bread which he held in his hand.

4 - **Matthew 20:22**

5 - **Matthew 20:20-21.** B4v 12-13 A and B read **syt one of his ryght syde**.

6 - **Matthew 20:22-23**

7 - **Ye lorde** reads **Yea lorde** in A and B. In this instance the earlier reading is to be preferred as making better sense of this exclamation.

8 - B4v 28ff: from this point to B5r 4 the text appears to be a concluding passage. The discussion of the metaphors of the vine and the temple after B5r 4 seem to be superfluous to the author's argument: his point has already been made by discussion of more directly relevant material. The evangelical exhortation [B4v 28-31] should be noted.

9 - **Matthew 20:22**

thou axest. So many of you wot not what  
 ye axe or what ye do, for yf ye dyd, ye wolde  
 not blaspheme god as ye do, to set an alien  
 god in stied of the lyuinge god. Also Chryste [1]

5 sayeth I am a very vyne. Wherefore wor-  
 shyppye ye not the vyne for God as ye do ye  
 bread? Wher in was Christ a very vyne, or  
 wher in was the bread Chrystes body? In  
 figuratiue speache, which is hyd to the vn- [2]

10 derstandynge of synners. Then yf Chryste  
 became not a material eyther an earthly vi-  
 ne, neyther materiall vyne became the body  
 of Christe. So neyther the materiall breade [3]

15 fleshe and bloude of Chryste. Haue ye not  
 reade when Chryste came into the temple, [4]

they axed of him what token he wold shew,  
 that they might beleue hym. And he answe  
 red vnto them, caste downe this temple and [5]

20 in thre dayes I shall rayse it agayne which  
 wordes were fulfilled in his risinge againe  
 from death, but when he sayd vndo this te[m]  
 ple, in that he sayd thys, they were dys  
 ceuyed for they vnderstode it fleshlyly, and [6]

25 had wente that he had spoke[n] of the temple  
 of Ierusalem, for because he stode in it. And  
 hereof they accused hym at hys passyon ful [7]

falsely, for he spake of the te[m]ple of his bles-  
 sed body, whiche rose agayne in the thyrde [8]



30

daye. And ryght so Christ spake of hys holy bodye when he sayde, thys is my bodye whych shalbe geuen for you whych was geuen to deathe, and into rysynge agayne to

[9]

B5r

1 - **John 15:5**

B5r 1 C reads: **wote not**. C uses upper case for **Vyne**, B5r 5 and B5r 6.

2 - **Figuratiue**: this term as applied to speech appears to have emerged in the course of the Sixteenth Century. Used by Coverdale, **Hope**, xxvii (1568) - cf. **New English Dictionary**.

The author states that figurative speech is hidden from the understanding of sinners ( perhaps to be understood in this context of those who accept the doctrine of transubstantiation and who are thus guilty in the author's eyes of idolatry). The sense in which the true understanding of scripture is dependent upon moral well-being is interesting for its implications about the Church as a moral community of the saved or predestined. Cf. Wyclif, **De Ecclesia** (London 1886), 2,7, 107, 111.

3 - The author explores a further scriptural metaphor, the vine. Just as when Christ said "I **am the vine**" [John 15:5] he did not mean that he was in a literal sense a vine, so the material bread is not transformed into the substance of Christ's physical body but remains as a symbol of that body.

For Wycliffite understanding of *Esse* in relation to the Mass, see Hudson, A., "The Mouse in the Pyx", **Trivium** 26 (1991), 46-50; also note 6, pg. 95 above.

The metaphor of the vine was discussed by More and Frith in their controversy: cf. **An Answer unto M. More's Letter**, 401, ed. Wright, N.T., **The Work of John Frith**, Sutton Courtenay 1978 and editorial comment, *ibid.* 58.

B5r 11 A and B read **early vine**; B5r 13-14 A and B read: **so neyther the bread materiall breade was not chaunged frome hys**

**substance.** The editor has clarified the sense of this passage in C and D by removing the repetitious and redundant words.

4 - **John** 2:18

5 - **John** 2:19

6 - **John** 2:20

**Fleshlyly:** "according to the flesh", literally. The author uses this word in an attempt to explain the two senses in which a sentence may be understood - in this case the literal sense.

C reads: **fleshly.**

B5r 27 C reads: **therof.**

7 - **Matthew** 27:40

8 - **John** 2:21

A and B substitute numeral [iii] for **thyrde.**

9 - **Luke** 22:19

blysse for all that shalbe saued by hym, but  
 lyke as they accused hym falsely of the tem-  
 ple of Ierusalem]. Right so now a dayes they [1]  
 accusen falselye agaynste Chryste and saye  
 5 that Christ spake of the bread that he brake  
 amongst his Apostles, for in that Chryste  
 sayd thus, they ben deceyued, take it fleshly [2]  
 and turne it to the materiall breade as the [3]  
 Iewes dyd to the temple, and on this false  
 10 vnderstandynge they make abhominacyon [4]  
 of discomfort, that is sayd of Daniel ye pro  
 phete, sta[n]dyng in the holy place, he that rea [5]  
 deth let hym vnderstande. Nowe therfore [6]  
 pray we hertely to God that this euel tyme [7]  
 15 maye be made shorte, for the chosen men as [8]  
 he hathe promised in hys blyssed Gospell.  
 And the large and brode waye that leadethe  
 to perdicion may be stopped, and the straye [9]  
 and narowe waye that leadeth to blysse may  
 20 be made open by the holye scryptures. [10]  
 that we maye knowe whych is the  
 wyll of God to serue hym in  
 syckernes and holynes in the [11]  
 dreade of God that we  
 25 maye fynde by hym  
 the waye of [12]  
 blysse  
 euerlastynge.

- 1 - B5v 3: A and B omit **so**.
- 2 - Just as the Jews and Pharisees used a false understanding of Christ's words in order to secure his condemnation, so too the contemporary Church is guilty of wilfully misinterpreting Christ's words at the Supper. Thus the words which Christ spoke of his own body are applied to the bread, and the people are led, through the teaching of the Church, into idolatry, the very abomination of discomfort [**Daniel** 9:27].
- 3 - **Matthew** 27:40
- 4 - **Daniel** 9:27
- 5 - **Matthew** 24:15
- 6 - **I Thessalonians** 5:17
- 7 - **This euel tyme**: the themes of the concluding passage relate closely to those of the Introduction written by the editor of C and D, but the presence of the conclusion but not the Introduction in A and B appears to exclude a connection or dependence. If it is accepted that the concluding passage belongs to the original text the euel tyme referred to must be a period of persecution following the enactment of **De haeretico comburendo** in 1401. If a date nearer that of the printing of the text is preferred for the composition of the concluding passage then the euel tyme must be the period of limited persecution and great uncertainty following the enactment of the **Six Articles** in 1539.
- 8 - **Chosen men**: this term recalls the language of the Introduction to C and D. The term was frequently applied in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries by Lollards to their fellow believers and it recalls the evangelical strain of exclusiveness

which is found in the ecclesiology of the **Wicket**. Cf. Wyclif, **De Ecclesia** (London 1886), 2, 7, 107, 111, etc.

9 - **Matthew** 7:13-14

C reads: **perdition**.

10 - The image of the two ways to heaven is re-introduced [cf. A3r 12-29] in the context of a prayer which strongly recalls the way in which the author has previously used this image. The author appears to develop a position of **sola scriptura** in relation to the Christian search for truth and salvation - cf. Gordon Leff's comments on Wyclif's ecclesiology "Wyclif and Hus: A Doctrinal Comparison", in **Wyclif in His Times**, ed. Kenny, A., Oxford 1986, 110f; also Hurley, M., "'Scriptura sola' Wyclif and His Critics", **Traditio** 16 (1960), 175-352; de Vooght, P., "Wyclif et la 'Scriptura sola'", **Ephemerides Theologicae Lovaniensis** 39 (1963), 50-86.

B5v 20: A and B omit **the**.

11 - **Syckernes**: truth - **New English Dictionary**. E inserts marginal note explaining the meaning of this word which appears without qualification in all other texts but was presumably obsolete by 1612.

12 - **The** is rendered **a** in A and B.

## A Table of Scriptural Quotations found in Wickliefes Wicket

In this Table Scriptural references are given together with the page on which they occur in **Wickliefes Wicket**. In the right-hand column an indication is given of any discernible parallel with the **Wycliffite Bible**. The **Early Version [EV]** or **Later Version [LV]** is indicated as appropriate. In some cases the passage is insufficiently long for any conclusion to be drawn as to which version - if either - the author used as a basis for his text. These references are marked E. It should be noted, however, that many references are of such a general or thematic nature that a precise parallel cannot be indicated. Such references are shown by the abbreviation G.

Of 101 references found in the text, 50 can be traced with reasonable certainty to the **Later Version** of the **Wycliffite Bible** as described by Forshall and Madden. Only 4 appear to have been drawn from the **Early Version**. However 26 examples are insufficiently specific to allow of a positive allocation but clearly owe their origins to the Wycliffite Scriptures, and 20 are general or thematic references which do not bear any particular resemblance to the Biblical text. On the basis of this evidence it is possible to conclude that the bias towards the **Late Version** of the **Wycliffite Bible** is statistically very significant. In other words it appears that the author of the **Wicket** referred to a version of the **Wycliffite Bible** which was very close to that which Forshall and Madden describe as the **Late Version** when he composed his text.

<b>Genesis</b> 1:3 - 2:3	B1r	G
<b>Exodus</b> 20:3	B1r B2v	G G
<b>Exodus</b> 20:12	A8r	E
<b>Psalms</b> 1:1	A5v	E
<b>Psalms</b> 169 [this ref. makes no sense]	A8v	-
<b>Isaiah</b> 6:9-10	B1r	E
<b>Isaiah</b> 13:5	B1r	EV
<b>Daniel</b> 9:26	B4r	E
<b>Daniel</b> 9:27	B5v	LV
<b>Daniel</b> 11:31-39	A3v - A4r B4r B5v	LV LV LV
<b>Daniel</b> 12:11	A3v B4r B5v	LV LV LV
<b>Joel</b> 3:9	A5r	E
<b>Zephaniah</b> 2:2	A4v	LV
<b>Matthew</b> 1:18-23	A8v	G
<b>Matthew</b> 3:11	B3v	E
<b>Matthew</b> 4:4	A5v A6v	LV LV
<b>Matthew</b> 7:7-11	A3v	EV
<b>Matthew</b> 7:13-14	A3r B5v	E E
<b>Matthew</b> 11:9	B3v	E
<b>Matthew</b> 13:14	B1r	LV
<b>Matthew</b> 15:17	A6v	E
<b>Matthew</b> 20:20-23	B4v	LV
<b>Matthew</b> 20:22	B4v	E
<b>Matthew</b> 24:5-34	B5v	LV
<b>Matthew</b> 24:15	A3v	LV



	B4r	LV
	B5v	LV
<b>Matthew 26:26-28</b>	A6r	E
<b>Matthew 26:39</b>	B4r	LV
<b>Matthew 26:61</b>	B5r	E
<b>Matthew 27:40</b>	B5r	LV
	B5v	G
<b>Matthew 27:50</b>	A7r	G
<b>Matthew 28:1-7</b>	B2v	EV
	B3r	EV
<b>Matthew 28:6</b>	A7v	G
<b>Mark 1:4</b>	B3v	LV
<b>Mark 4:12</b>	B1r	E
<b>Mark 13:14</b>	B4r	LV
<b>Mark 14:22</b>	A6v	E
<b>Mark 14:22-24</b>	A6r	LV
<b>Mark 15:37</b>	A7r	G
<b>Luke 1:31</b>	A8v	G
<b>Luke 8:10</b>	B1r	LV
<b>Luke 11:9-13</b>	A3v	LV
<b>Luke 13:24</b>	A3r	E
<b>Luke 22:19</b>	B2v	LV
	B3r	LV
	B5r	LV
<b>Luke 22:19-20</b>	A6r	LV
<b>Luke 22:20</b>	B4r	LV
	B4v	LV
<b>Luke 24:46</b>	A7r	G
<b>John 1:18</b>	B3v	LV?
<b>John 2:19-21</b>	B5r	LV
<b>John 6:33</b>	A5v	G
<b>John 6:35</b>	A6v	E

<b>John</b> 6:47	A7r	G
<b>John</b> 6:51	A1r	LV?
<b>John</b> 6:62-63	A6v	LV?
<b>John</b> 6:64	A7r	LV
<b>John</b> 8:44	A7v	G
<b>John</b> 12:24	A7r	LV
<b>John</b> 15:5	B5r	E
<b>John</b> 17:12	A6v	E
<b>John</b> 20:17	B3r	G
<b>Acts</b> 2:4	A5r	G
<b>Acts</b> 17:22-27	A4v	LV
<b>Acts</b> 17:26-27	A4v	LV
<b>Acts</b> 17:29-30	A4v - A5r	LV?
<b>Acts</b> 26:23	A7r	E
<b>Romans</b> 2:28-29	B3r	LV
<b>Romans</b> 8:32	A7r	G
<b>Romans</b> 9:20	A6r	LV
<b>Romans</b> 10:5	B3v	E
<b>Romans</b> 15:30 [loose paraphrase]	A3r	E
<b>I Corinthians</b> 15:20	A7r	LV
<b>I Corinthians</b> 15:22-23	A7r	LV
<b>I Corinthians</b> 15:41-44	A7r	LV
<b>Philippians</b> 2:7	B3v	E
<b>I Thessalonians</b> 5:17	B5v	G
<b>II Thessalonians</b> 2:4	A8r	LV
<b>II Timothy</b> 4:1	A7v	E
<b>Hebrews</b> 1:1-10	B2r	G
<b>Hebrews</b> 1:10	B1r	E
<b>Hebrews</b> 2:9	B4v	LV

<b>Hebrews 9:14</b>	B4v	LV
<b>James 1:5-8 [edited]</b>	A3v	LV
<b>I Peter 1:8</b>	B3v	LV
<b>I Peter 3:21-2</b>	B3r	LV
<b>I John 2:27</b>	A5v	LV
<b>I John 3:4</b>	B4r	LV
<b>Revelation 3:10</b>	A3v	E
<b>Revelation 17:3-8</b>	B3r	G

THE PROTESTACION AND CONFESSION OF JOHN LASSELS, 1546

COVERDALE'S INTRODUCTION FROM TEXTS C AND D

THE TEXT

To the christyan reader.

IN like maner as the Romish church  
taketh occasion at these wordes of  
Chryste (Hoc est corpus meum) to  
teache the transubstanciacion of the breade  
5 into the body of Chryst: so haue many take[n]  
occasion at the wordes of thys protestacio[n],  
to affirme that Chryst (speakyng these wor  
des) poynted to hys body which suffered on [1]  
the morow. Which assercion as it is voyed  
10 of all wytte and learnynge: so is it contra-  
ry to ye true meaninge of the wordes of this  
godly man. For he intending to declare that [2]  
Christ hath ended all sacrifice: sayeth. But  
yf men wyll loke vpon saynt Paules wor-  
15 des well, they shalbe forced to say as saynte  
Paule sayth The lorde Iesus saide it. And [3]  
ones for all whiche onely was the fulfyller  
of it. For these wordes (Hoc est corp[us] me[um])  
were spoke[n] of his naturall presence whiche  
20 no man is able to denye. Here oure goostely [4]  
aduersary the deuyll (knowynge that suche  
men as beleue not the transubstanciacion,  
wolde gladly haue some thing to contra [5]  
ry) putteth the[m] in minde that this godly ma[n]  
25 (which spared not his owne life for the veri  
tye of the Lordes supper) meaned by these  
wordes, that Chryst (when he sayed. Thys  
is my body) poynted to hys bodye that sate

there presente at the table. By thys subtile  
30 traine doth ye aduersary pul the godly min-  
des of the weake brothers frome the true

B6r

1 - Such criticism is made by Robert Parsons in his **Treatise of Three Conuersions of England from Paganism to Christian Religion**, 1603, 498. See **Protestacion** B8r 25ff.

2 - **Godly man**: John Lassels

3 - **Romans** 6:10

**Hebrews** 12:2 - both references are general

4 - **Goostely**: spiritual adversary, the devil.

5 - The Editor recognises that men are attracted to certainty. Thus if men reject the doctrine of transubstantiation they wish to replace it in their minds with something equally concrete and defined. The simplistic explanation - that Christ pointed to the bread in his hand when he said, "This is my body" - which those who have misunderstood Lassels' words have put forward provides just such a theory.

5 - Robert Parsons contends that this view is derived from the teaching of Carlstadt. For a discussion of Lassels' eucharistic theology see Vol. I, 137-143.

beleue of the supper of the Lorde, causinge  
them to reason so fou[n]dely, that al the world  
shall haue them in contempte and derisyon,  
for that they do so fondely fantasye euerye  
5 folish assercion that may seame to impugne  
the thinge they mislyke. And so shall ye papi  
stes be establyshed in theyr erreure, by the [1]  
rasshenesse of the[m] that endeuoure to eschewe  
ye same, And the other broughte into no lesse  
10 erreure then they were before. For as they [2]  
(that affirme Chryste to haue altered the  
bread so by his worde that it was turned in  
to his body) do deny it to be a visible signe,  
wherby our conscie[n]ces are certifyed of our  
15 redemption by him: euen so do they that af-  
fyrme him, not to haue spoken of it at all.  
For yf he spake not of it: what shuld we do  
with it more the[n] with co[m]mon bread? How  
shoulde we certifye our conscience wyth all  
20 yf Chryst had spoken nothyng of it? No-  
doubt he spake of it, & declared therby, that  
hys bodye, whiche was there present, was  
none other thyng than a sacrifice appoyn-  
ted to be offered for the synnes of all them yt  
25 shulde beleue. And that is it that thys godly [3]  
wrytter (Ihon Lasseles) meaneth when he  
sayeth, these wordes Hoc est corpus meum,  
were spoke[n] of the natural presens of christ.

As thoughe he shoulde haue sayde. Whan  
30 Christe spake these wordes, Hoc est corpus  
meum, He spake them not because he had  
chaunged the breade into his bodye, but be-  
cause, he woulde declare hys beyng in the  
B6v

1 - The Editor contends that those who advance radical and extreme doctrines of the eucharist bring reform into disrepute and harden **papistes** in their opposition. For further discussion of calls for moderation in dealing with questions of eucharistic doctrine see Vol. I, 337-339.

Cf. Coverdale, M., **Introduction** to Calvin's **Treatise on the Sacrament of the Altar**, Parker Society, **Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale**, Cambridge 1844, 426.

2 - **They:** those who believe in transubstantiation.

3 - The Editor offers a clarification of Lassels' text: Christ's words refer to his body which was present at the table and which was to be offered as a sacrifice on the cross for the redemption of the faithful. The faithful should participate in Christ's redemption just as they ate the bread at his supper.



fleshe, to be none other thyng then a sacri-  
fice wherof all the faythful shoulde be par-  
takers, euen as they were partakers of that  
bread. And by this al they thynke these

[1]

5 wordes to be of suche force, that when so e-  
uer they shall be pronounced ouer the bread,  
they shall turne the same into the bodye of  
Chryste, that it maye be offered vp in sacri-  
fice: are deceiued. For it foloweth. The acte

[2]

10 was finyshed on the crosse. And as the sto-  
ry doth plainely manifest to them that haue  
eyes: now is this bloody sacrifice made an  
ende of. &c.

[3]

Thus haue I (most dearely beloued in ye  
15 lorde) thought it my duytie, to take awaye  
the occasyon of erreure in thys godly prote-  
stacion, desyriuge you all (euen for the lorde  
Iesus sake) to accepte my diligence therin,  
iudgyng me to haue done it of none other  
20 purpose, but that the professours of goddes  
veritye, should eshew all thynges that maye  
be derogacion to the same. Beynge so migh-  
tye both in wordes and operacions: that the  
enemyes may be confounded whan they be-

25 holde such perfection in vs whom they  
take for the destroyers of all god-  
ly order. The spirite of the ly-  
uynge God, the geuer of

[4]

all goodnes: leade

30

you into all  
truth.  
So be it. finis

B7r

- 1 - All those who have faith in Christ will be saved.
- 2 - **Philippians 2:8-9**
- 3 - The Editor refers directly to Lassels' text: B8r 29-32.
- 4 - The Editor returns to his theme of confounding the critics of reform. See note B6v n.1 above.

THE PROTESTACION AND CONFESSION OF JOHN LASSELS, 1546

THE TEXT

The protestacion and confession of Ihon  
Lasselles where vppon he suffered in smyth- [1]  
fielde at London. Anno. M.cccccc.xlvi.

Saynt Paule bycause of the sectes & dis [2]  
5 centions amonge the Corinthians wrote  
this Epistle & in lyke case (concernyng  
my power symple conscience) I do here

protest my whole hert on ye most blessed sup [3]  
per of the lorde wherin I truste in God to

10 brynge nothings for me, but that I shalbe  
able with goddes holy worde to declare and [4]

manifeste, & herin wyll I take occasion to re-  
cite ye saying of saint Paule to the Corin-

thians. That which I deliuered to you I re [5]  
15 ceuyed of the Lord, for the lorde Iesu ye sa-

me nighte on the whyche he was betrayed,  
toke bread thanked & brake, and said, take ye-

eate ye, this is my body whiche is broken for  
you, here me semeth saynt Paule durst not

20 take vpon him his lord his maisters authori-  
ty, for as at goddes hande the breaking of ye

moost innocent & immaculate body & bloude [6]  
of Christ is the quyetnes of all mens consci-

ences, and the onely remedy of our synnes,  
25 and the whole redemption of mankynd, which

is called in the scripture that dayly offringe:  
so the masse which is the inuention of men, [7]

whose whole author is the pope of Rome,  
119

as it doth appere in polidorus & many other [8]

30 The masse I saye is the vnquietnes of all  
Christendom, a blasphemy to Chrystes bloud  
and a shame to all chrysten prynces. And as [9]

B7v

1 - Found in texts C and D of **Wickliefes Wicket**, edited by Miles Coverdale and printed at London by John Day in 1548 and 1550. **S.T.C.** 25591; 25591a. Lassels was born near Worksop in Nottinghamshire but had been a Gentleman of Furnivall's Inn, Holborn and a Sewer in the King's Camber from ca. 1540. Burnt at Smithfield on 16th July 1546 with Anne Askew, Hemmysley an Observant Friar from Richmond and Hadlam, a tailor from Colchester as a result of conviction of sacramentary heresy in the wake of an heretical sermon preached by Dr. Edward Crome on 11th April 1546 in which transubstantiation was denied. Cf. **Foxe**, V, 548 (unreliable account); Foxe, J. **Acts and Monuments**, ed. Pratt, J., 4th ed., V, 550-53; Wriothesley, **Chronicle**, 1, 168-9 [Camden Soc. Vol. 77]; **Chronicle of the Greyfriars of London**, 51 [Camden Soc. Vol. 53]; Louthe, J., in **Narratives of the Days of the Reformation**, 345ff [Camden Soc. Vol. 77]; Bale, J., **The first examinacyon of Anne Askew ...**, [Wesel, D. van der Straten], 1546; Bale, J., **The lattre examinacyon of Anne Askewe ...**, [Wesel, D. van der Straten], 1547; **Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic from the Reign of Henry VIII**, 21.1: 790, 823, 848, 1013, 1181(590), 1182; 21.2: 645(n.).

2 - **I Corinthians** 1:10-14. The Christian's loyalty is to the teaching of Christ rather than to any mediator or teacher. Thus the Mass is described as "the inuention of men, whose whole author is the pope of Rome" [B7v, 24-5].

3 - The **Protestacion** is to be an exposition of Lassels' beliefs with regard to the eucharist. The use of the term **Supper of the Lorde** [B7v 5-6] with reference to the eucharist should be noted for its implied rejection of the whole basis of

the mediaeval doctrine of the Mass and a move towards a memorialistic interpretation of the eucharist. This parallels the terms adopted by Zwingli, Tyndale and Frith in their eucharistic writings.

4 - Lassels states that his doctrine is entirely in accord with scripture, and that he has added nothing to the scriptural record of the institution of the Supper.

5 - **I Corinthians 11:23-4.** This passage forms the basis for the development of the **Protestacion.**

6 - The memorialistic theme is developed: the eucharist is a remembrance of the physical suffering and death of Christ on behalf of mankind. Christ is the "**only remedy of our synnes**" [B7v 21] and the "**whole redemption of mankynd**" [B7v 22]. The parallels with Zwingli's **Sixty-Seven Theses** should be noted: cf. Potter, G.R., **Huldrych Zwingli**, London 1978, 21-25; 32-4.

7 - The scriptural basis of Lassels' eucharistic theology leads him to reject the practise of the contemporary Church as incompatible with the New Testament.

8 - **Polidorius:** Polydore Vergil, author of **Anglica Historia**, 1534. Lassels may refer to edition printed by Thomas Langley in April 1546.

9 - **The masse I saye is ... a shame to all chrysten prynces:** Lassels believes that the Christian prince should play an active role in the cleansing of the Church. Cf. Wyclif's teaching with regard to the role of the prince in the dissolution of the Church as an independent corporation - **De potestate Pape**, 89, 102, 198, 341; **De Civili Dominio**, i, 330-1, 470-78; ii, 18-25; iii, 25; **De Ecclesia**, 337-45. Comments by Leff, G., "Wyclif and

Hus: a Doctrinal Comparison", in *Wyclif in His Times*, ed. Kenny, A., Oxford 1986, 115-7.



Daniell calleth it the abhominable dissolaci- [1]  
on as the scrypture shall here after more ma-  
nifest it. Saynt Paule (of lyke) was to ler-  
ne of the Romaynes churche the maner of ye  
5 consecracion (as they call it) wyth the brea-  
thyngue ouer the hoste and other ceremony-  
es, besydes that he durst not take vppon  
hym to saye. Hoc est corpus meum. But I [2]  
wyll admytte thys, it was the lorde Iesus  
10 that made the supper whyche also dyd fy-  
nyshe it and made an ende of the onely acte  
of oure saluacyon not onelye here in thys  
worlde, but wyth hys father in heauen as  
he declareth him selfe. That he wyll drinke [3]  
15 no more of thys bytter cuppe tyll he drynke  
it new in hys fathers kyngdome where all  
bytternes shalbe takenawaye. Nowe yf a-  
nye man be able to fynyshe the acte of oure  
saluacion not onely in breakyng of his bo-  
20 dy and in shedyng of hys bloude here, but  
also to fynysh it wyth the father in heauen  
then let hym saye it. But I thynke yf men [4]  
wyll loke vppon saynt Paules wordes wel  
they shalbe forced to saye, as saynte Paule  
25 sayethe. The Lorde Iesus sayde it and ones  
for all, whyche onely was the fulfiller of it.  
For these wordes, Hoc est corpus meum  
was spoken of hys naturall presens which [5]  
no man is able to denye, bycause the acte

30

was fynyshed on the crosse, and the storye  
dothe plainely manifest it to them that haue  
eyes. Nowe thys bloody sacryfyce is made  
an ende of, the supper is fynyshed.

B8r

1 - **Daniel 11:31-39; Daniel 12:11; Matthew 24:15.**

The use of the phrase **Abominable dissolacion** as an apocalyptic image expressing the idolatrous nature of the Mass as celebrated by the contemporary Church should be noted. Through the apocalyptic writing of Anne Askew's first biographer John Bale this image was to become one of the enduring foundations of the English Puritan school. Cf. Christianson, P., **Reformers and Babylon: English Apocalyptic Visions from the Reformation to the Eve of the Civil War**, Toronto and London 1978.

2 - The Mass as celebrated by the contemporary Church is attacked as the invention of the local church at Rome. In this view Lassels paraphrases and simplifies Wyclif's historical critique of the Mass as it had come to be understood by the mediaeval church. Cf. Keen, M., "Wyclif, The Bible, Transubstantiation", in **Wyclif**, 12-13.

3 - **Matthew 26:9; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18**

4 - Lassels argues that mankind owes salvation to Christ, for he not only died upon the cross but justified man with God. No other man could accomplish this for it depends uniquely upon the Incarnation.

5 - Justification is found at the point of Christ's death rather than at the Supper. The significance of the Supper is that there with the words "**This is my body**" Christ showed that through the death of his physical body mankind should be redeemed. Thus the words "**Hoc est corpus meum**" apply to Christ's physical presence [**naturall presens**, B8r 27] rather than to the bread which he held in his hand. Critics claimed that Lassels' words showed that he believed that as Christ said "**This is my**

body" he pointed to his body - cf. Parsons, R., **Treatise of three Conversions of England from Paganism to Christian Religion**, 1603, 498. The **Introduction** to the **Protestacion** printed in C and D show that earlier critics had made the same accusation against Lassels and further suggests that the text had been circulated in England prior to its first printing in 1548. The Editor draws the attention of his readers to the explanation of these words offered in his introduction by means of a marginal note in C and D.

For as moche as Chryste had ones suffred,  
the iuste for the vniuste for to brynge vs to [1]  
God and was kylled concerninge the flesh,  
and hath entred in his owne bloud ones for  
5 alle into the holy place and founde eternall  
redemption.

Here nowe foloweth the ministracion of  
the supper of the Lorde, which I wyll take  
at Christes handes after the resurrection al  
10 thoughe other men wyll not be ashamed to  
brynge theyr wycked counceles and foolyshe  
inuentions for them. And it came to passe as [2]  
Christe sat at meate with them he toke bread  
in his handes, blyssed, brake it, and gaue it  
15 to them, and theyr eyes were opened & they [3]  
knew hym in breaking of breade. Here also  
it semeth to me Thappostles to folow their  
mayster Chryst and to take the right vse of  
the sacrament and also to teache it to those  
20 that were conuerted to Chryst, as mencyon  
is made in the actes of the Apostles, where  
as is sayd. They continued in the Apostles [4]  
doctrine and felowshyppe in breakinge of  
bread and prayer &c. And they continued day- [5]  
25 ly wyth one accorde in the temple and brake  
breade in euerye house and dyd eate theyre  
meate together with gladnes and singlenes

of herte praysynge God, and had fauoure  
wyth all people. And saynt Paule folo-  
30 wyng the same doctrine doth playnly shew  
the duytie of the minister. And also of them [6]  
that shall receyue it. As often as ye shal eate  
of this breade and drynke of thys cuppe ye

B8v

1 - **I Peter** 3:18

2 - The eucharist should be celebrated in a way which conforms to the records of scripture and the early church. Lassels develops his argument with scriptural references.

3 - **Luke** 24:30-31. It should be noted that Lassels refers to the supper at Emmaus where the disciples recognized the risen Christ when he broke the bread. This provides Lassels with a Dominical pattern for the celebration of the eucharist and shows that the Christian comes to recognize Christ through the broken bread at the eucharist - cf. Clr 6-9.

4 - **Acts** 2:42

5 - **Acts** 2:46-47

6 - The derivation of the term Minister from the latin for servant should be noted as it implies that the celebrant of the eucharist is in some sense the servant or instrument of the congregation. Lassels' rejection of the term priest with its connotations of the repeated sacrifice of Christ upon the altar should also be noted.

shall shew the lordes death tyl he come. Here [1]  
do I gather that the minister hath no fur-  
ther authoritye then to preache & pronounce  
the lordes death, or els to say, the Lorde Ie- [2]  
5 su sayd it. Which dyd fulfyll it euen on the  
crosse. Furthermore I do stedfastlye beleue  
that when the bread is broken accordyng to  
the ordinaunces of Christ the blissed and im-  
maculate lambe is present wyth the eyes of  
10 oure fayth and we eate his fleshe & dryncke  
hys bloude whych is to dwel with god and  
god with vs, and in this we are sure which [3]  
dwell with god in that he hath geuen vs his  
holy spiryte, euen as oure forefathers that [4]  
15 were afore Chrystes tyme dyd presently see  
the lordes death, and dyd eate hys body and  
dryncke hys bloud. In this I do differre from  
the popes church that the priestes haue au-  
thority to make Christes natural presens in  
20 the breade. For so dothe he more then oure  
Lorde and sauoure dyd as the examples is  
manifest in Iudas which at Christes handes  
receyued the bread and wyne, and for lacke  
of beleue (whyche maketh the presence of  
25 Chryste) the Deuell entred into Iudas all [5]  
though he receyued the same wyne & breade  
that the other Apostles dyd. But the pope  
oure byshoppes of Rome and their ordy- [6]



naunces be euen they whom Daniell spea-  
30 keth of, sayinge: he shal set men to vnhalow [7]  
the sanctuary to put downe the dayly offe-  
rynge, and to set vp the abhominable deso-  
lacion &c. Yea they of Rome shal speke mar [8]

Clr

- 1 - I Corinthians 11:26
- 2 - Lassels defines the role and duties of the eucharistic **minister** as making known to the people Christ's death and God's redemption of mankind.
- 3 - Lassels appears to develop a Zwinglian understanding of the eucharist: "**Christ the blisshed and immaculate lambe is present with the eyes of oure fayth**" [Clr 8-10]; but Judas, who lacked faith "**whyche maketh the presence of Chryste**" [Clr 24-5] was possessed by the devil rather than Christ. Lassels' words clearly echo Zwingli's letter To Thomas Wittenbach (1523) and his tract **Religion, true and false** (1525). Cf. **Huldreich Zwinglis Samtlich Werke**, ed. Egli, E., **Corpus Reformatorum**, 1905, VIII 85-6; III 773-87.
- 4 - The true Church is the body of people who live in spiritual union with God by faith in Christ demonstrated by the participation in the eucharist. This is subtly different to Wyclif's doctrine of the church as the **congregatio predestinatorum**, the eternally elect who exist alongside the **presciti**, the eternally reprobate within the visible church [De Ecclesia, London 1886, 2,7, 107, 111]. Lassels' ecclesiology comes closer to that of Zwingli in the **Sixty Seven Theses** (1523) - cf. Potter, G.R., **Hudrych Zwingli**, London 1978, 21-5.
- 5 - The eucharist is not efficacious **ex opere operato**. The example of Judas' unprofitable reception of the bread and wine at the hands of Christ is addressed. Cf. **Wickliefes Wicket** A6v 23; Zwingli, **Religion, true and false** in **Corpus Reformatorum**, 1905, III, 773.

6 - Clr 27-8 is best understood by the insertion of a comma, thus: **the pope[,] oure byshoppes of [the Church of] Rome and theire ordynaunces...** . The qualification of the bishops is perhaps intended to distinguish between those still obedient to Rome such as Bonner and those favourable to reform such as Shaxton who was accused of sacramentary heresy at the same time as Lassels.

7 - **Daniel** 11:31-9

8 - An apocalyptic theme based upon the text from Daniel is developed. Lassels' use of the text is loose and phrases are inserted to make his interpretation explicite [eg. **they of Rome** - Clr 33].

[mar]uelous thynges agaynste the god of heauen  
 and god of all goddes wherin he shall pros-  
 per so longe tyll hys wrathe be fulfylled for  
 the conclusyon is deuysed already. He shall  
 5 not regarde, the god of heauen nor the god  
 of his fathers. Yea in his place shall he wor-  
 shyp the mighty ydolles, and the god whom  
 hys fathers knew not of, which is called ye  
 god Moazim. For lack of tyme I leaue the [1]  
 10 commemoration of the blyssed supper of the [2]  
 lorde, and the abhominable Idoll, the masse  
 whyche is it that Daniell meaneth by the  
 god Moazim. Reade the seconde and laste  
 chapters of Daniell. The seconde chapter [3]  
 15 to the Thessalonians the second and xxviii.  
 of Mathewe, Marke the xii, Luke the xxi.  
 where they recyte the abomination of  
 dissolation which Mathew sayeth standeth  
 in the holy place which is the conscience of  
 20 men, Marke sayeth. Where it oughte not to [4]  
 stande, whych is a playne denial of all inuen-  
 cions of men. Further Luke sayth. The time [5]  
 is at hand. Paule saith. The mistery of ini- [6]  
 quitye worketh already. Yea and shal conti-  
 25 nue tyll [t]he appearaunce of Chryst. Whiche  
 in my iudgement is at hand. Now for ye sup-  
 per of the Lorde I do proteste to take it as  
 reuerently as Chryst left it, and as the holy

30           Apostles dyd vse it accordynge to the testi-  
monyes of the prophetes, the Apostles and  
our blessed Sauioure Iesus Chryst, which  
accordynge as saynte Paule to the Ephesi-  
ans doth recite. Now wyth quyetnes I do

[7]

C1v

- 1 - **Ye god Moazim**: Lassels use the same form of this noun as that found in the same extended quotation from Daniel in **Wickliefes Wicket** [A4r], and which is itself the same as that found in the **First Wycliffite Bible**. **Moazim** appears to be a phonetic rendering of the Hebrew noun in **Daniel 11:39**.
- 2 - Commemoration of the blyssed supper of the lorde: appears to mean the maner in which the eucharist, the Supper of the Lord should be celebrated in order to conform to scripture. The term **Commemoration** represents a development upon the thought of **Wickliefes Wicket** where the eucharist is discussed in terms of **fygure** [ie. figurative representation of man's salvation - cf. discussion of metaphor, **Wicket B4r- B5v**]. Lassels seems to envisage a communion service something like that introduced at Zurich by Zwingli in 1525 - cf. **Form or manner of the Last Supper** in Potter, G.R., **Zwingli**, 34; Bullinger, H., **Reformationsgeschichte nach dem Autographon herausg.** von Hottinger, J.J. und Vogeli, H.H., Frauenfeld 1838, I, 265.
- 3 - The **Protestacion** was written in the last days or hours of Lassels' imprisonment as a confession of faith before his execution. The **catena** of scriptural references to which Lassels refers his reader for elucidation of his argument is as follows: **Daniel 2; Daniel 12:11; II Thessalonians 2:4; Matthew 28:20; Mark 12; Luke 21:5**.
- 4 - **Mark 13:14**
- 5 - **Luke 21:8**
- 6 - **II Thessalonians 2:7**
- 7 - **Ephesians 1:3-23**. If Lassels' reference to **Ephesians** is thus interpreted, he intends to remind his reader that the

eucharist is to be seen as a commemoration of Christ's saving death.

committe the whole worlde to theyr pastoure [1]  
and heardman Iesus Christe the onely Sa  
uiour and trewe Messias. And I commytte  
my soueraygne Lorde and mayster the kyn-  
5 ges maiestie kyng Henry the eyght to God  
and to our Lorde Iesus Christe. The quene [2]  
and my Lorde prynce wyth his whole domi-  
nion, euen to the innocent and immaculate  
lambe & that the bloud of him maye wasshe  
10 and purifie theyre hertes and soules from al  
iniquities and syns to goddes glorie and the  
saluacion of theyr soules. I do protest  
that the inner parte of myne herte  
doth grone for this, & I doubt  
15 not but to entre into the holy  
Tabernacle whiche is a-  
boue and to be wyth  
God for euer-  
more.

20 Iohn Lasselles seruaunt late to the kyng [3]  
and now I trust to serue the euer-  
lyuyng God wyth the testi-  
mony of my bloude in  
Smythfelde.  
25 Farewell all in Christ  
C2r Iesu.



- 1 - This strong and effective pastoral image possibly alluding to **Hebrews** 13:20 or **I Peter** 5:4 emphasises that Christ alone is the mediator of salvation. Cf. Zwingli, **Sixty Seven Theses, XIX- XII**, in ed. Potter, G.R., **Zwingli**, 23.
- 2 - Queen Katherine Parr and Edward, Prince of Wales. Cf. **Introduction** for discussion of evidence linking Katherine Parr to Lassels and Askew. **Foxe**, V, 550.
- 3 - The concluding paragraph indicates that the **Protestacion** was written as a signed confession of faith, possibly intended for circulation among fellow-believers in London [**Farewell all in Christ Iesu**].

THE TESTAMENT OF MASTER WILLIAM TRACY, WITH EXPOSITIONS  
BY WILLIAM TYNDALE AND JOHN FRITH - THE TEXTS

The testa- [1]  
ment of maister Wyllyam Tra-  
cie Esquyer, expounded by Wyllyam Tyn  
dall, wherin thou shalt perceyue with what  
charite the chaunceler of Worcester [2]  
Burned, when he toke vp the dead  
carkas and made ashes of  
it after it was buried.  
M.D.XXXU. [3]

To the reader.

Thou shalt vnderstande moost [4]  
deare reader that after Wyl-  
lyam Tyndall was so Iudas  
ly betrayed by an Englishman,  
5 a scholer of Louain, whose na  
me is Philipes, there were cer  
tayne thynges of hys doynge founde which  
he had entended to haue put forth to ye fur-  
theraunce of Godes worde. Amongest whiche  
10 was this Testament of mayster Tracie ex-  
pounded by him self, where vnto was anne  
xed ye exposition of the same of Ihon Friths  
owne doynge & owne hande writing, which  
I haue caused to be putte in Prynte, to the [5]

15 intent that al the world shuld se how earnest  
ly ye canonistes & spiritual lawyers (whych  
be the chefe rulers vnder bysshoppes in eue  
ry dioces, in so moch that in euery cathedral  
churche the deane chaunceler & archdeaken are  
commenly doctoures or bachelers of lawe) do

[6]

C2v

1 - Tracy was born ca. 1480 and died October 1530. Landowner from small hamlet of Toddington, Gloucestershire, three miles North East of Winchcombe. High Sheriff of Gloucester in 1513. Second son, Richard, by his wife Margaret Throckmorton was noted Protestant writer in 1540s and 1550s, intimate of Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester and agent to Thomas Cromwell. Cf.

**Introduction to Testament and Dictionary of National Biography.**

2 - Chancellor of Worcester, Dr. Thomas Parker, Vicar General of absentee bishop, Jerome de Ghinucris (bishop 1522-35), charged with execution of judgement delivered by Archbishop Warham in Convocation on 27th February 1531 that Tracy's body be removed from consecrated ground. These instruction were exceeded when Parker burned the remains. For this he lost his position and, according to Hall's **Chronicle**, was fined £300. There is no record of the exhumation of Tracy's corpse in the slight Registers kept by Parker at Worcester.

3 - The date 1535 appended to the title of the **Testament** in all texts [A,B,C and D: **S.T.C.** 25590; 25590.5; 25591; 25591a] appears to relate to the events described in the extended title, but in fact is reproduced from the original 1535 edition printed at Antwerp by H. Peetersen van Middelburch, **S.T.C.**24167. The title has been reproduced **verbatim** in all subsequent editions, including that of the Parker Society in 1848.

4 - The Preface [C2v - C3r 15], like the title, is reproduced from the 1535 Antwerp edition of the **Testament**. Circumstantial detail contained in this Preface suggests that it was written by someone acquainted with Tyndale in his exile. John Rogers is the

most suitable candidate to be both author of the Preface and editor of the 1535 edition of the Testament. Cf. further discussion in **Introduction**; Mozley, J.F., **William Tyndale**, London 1937, 294-301; 303-8; 314; 317-18; 320-23.

5 - The Preface suggests that the **Exposition** was a manuscript ready for the press. Several factors indicate that Tyndale may not have intended immediate publication: a reluctance to enter into controversy is evident in his latter years; it is unlikely that he would have wished to expose any difference of opinion or emphasis with John Frith after the latter's death in 1532; in the period up to 1534 Tyndale was preoccupied in the preparation of his **Genesis** and revision of the **New Testament**. Cf. Smeeton, D.D., **Lollard Themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale**, Vol. VI Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, Ann Arbor 1986, 70-74.

6 - The editor directs his anticlericalism specifically at those clergy trained in Canon Law. The implicit contrast between human (Canon) law and Divine (Scriptural) Law should be noted - cf. Wyclif, **De Veritate Sacre Scripture**, i. 29, 50, 53, 195. The anticlericalism found in this Preface is interesting for the specific nature of its attack and its anti-intellectual flavour which recalls the way in which Wycliffite protest, moving away from its University origins in the early Fifteenth Century came to regard academic training of clergy with a degree of suspicion. Cf. Smeeton's discussion of the Wycliffite movement, **Smeeton**, 28-35.

endeuer them selues iustly to iudge & spiri-  
tually to geue sentence according to charyt, [1]  
vpon all the actes & deades done of theyr dy  
ocessanes, after the ensample of the chaun-  
5 celer of Worchester, whyche after mayster  
Tracie was buried (of pure zeale & loue har  
dely) toke vp ye dead carkas & burnt it. Wher  
fore he dyd it, shall euidently appeare to the  
reader in this lytel treatyse, read it therefore  
10 I beseche the & iudge the spirites of our spi  
ritualty, & praye that the spirite of him that  
reased vp Chryst, may ones inhabyte them,  
and mollifye theyr hertes, and so illumyne [2]  
them, that they may both se & shew true light,  
15 & no longer resiste god nor his truith amen.

The Testament it selfe. [3]

In the name of God Amen  
I William Tracie of Todington in the  
counte of Glocester Esquyer, make  
20 my testament & last wyl, as here after  
foloweth. Fyrst & before all other [4]  
thinges I commit me vnto god, & to his mer-  
cy, trusting without any doubte or mistrust,  
that by hys grace and the merites of Iesus  
25 Christe, and by the vertue of his passion, & of  
his resurrection, I haue and shall haue remis

syon of my synnes, & resurrection of bo-  
dy and soule, accordynge as it is wrytten.

I beleaue that my redemer lyueth, and that  
30 in the last daye I shall ryse out of the earth,  
and in my fleshe shall se my sauouure, thys  
my hope is layed vp in my bosome.

[5]

C3r



- 1 - The editor adopts an ironical tone to emphasize the uncharitable way in which the ecclesiastical authorities judged William Tracy. The emphasis upon Charity recalls the theme of the second half of the **Testament** and the emphasis given to Christian living in John Frith's theology. Cf. Wright, N.T., ed., **The Work of John Frith**, Sutton Courtenay 1978, 44-48.
- 2 - **Mollifye**: from Middle English verb **Mollifien**. In conjunction with **Hertes** the verb carries the sense of ceasing resistance to an external force, or the submission to an external force or power. Cf. **Middle English Dictionary**.
- 3 - A **Testament** in a legal context is distinct from a **Will**. A testament deals with non-heritables: it does not detail the distribution of property. Thus William Tracy's **Testament** is an explanation of the principles which guided his division of his estate which includes a clear statement of his Christian beliefs. Again the practical or moral effects of Christian faith should be noted.
- 4 - The **Testament** is composed in several clauses or sections. In the first [C3r 22- 32] Tracy commits his soul to God. He trusts that his sins will be remitted through faith in the sufficiency of the grace obtained for mankind through Christ's death.
- 5 - **Job** 19:25-6

And touchyng the wealthe of my soule, the  
 fayth that I haue taken and rehersed, is  
 sufficient (as I suppose) with out any other [1]  
 mannes worke, or workes. My ground and  
 5 my belefe is, that there is but one God and [2]  
 one mediatour betwene god and man, which  
 is Iesus Christe. So that I do accept none  
 in heauen nor in earth to be my mediatoure  
 betwene me & god, but onely Iesus Christe,  
 10 al other be but petitioners in receyuyng of [3]  
 grace, but [n]one able to giue influence of grace.  
 And therefore wyl I bestowe no parte of my [4]  
 goodes for that entent that any man shoulde  
 saye, or do, to healpe my soule, for therin I  
 15 trust onely to the promise of god, he that be- [5]  
 leueth and is not baptized shall be saued and he  
 that beleueth not not shalbe damned.  
 And touchyng the buryinge of my bodye, it  
 auayleth me not what be done therto, where  
 20 in saynt Austen de cura agenda pro mortuis [6]  
 sayeth, that they are rather the solace of them [7]  
 that lyue, then wealthe or comferte of them  
 that are departed, and therefore I remytte it  
 onely to the discrecion of myne executours.  
 25 And touchyng the distribution of my tem-  
 porall goodes, my purpose is by the grace of  
 god to bestowe them, to be accepted, as frui [8]  
 tes of faith. So that I do not suppose that

my merite is, by good bestowyng of them  
30 but my merite is the fayth of Iesus Christe  
onely: by whom suche workes are good ac-  
cordyng to the wordes of our Lorde. I was [9]  
hongry, & thou gauest me to eate. And it fo-

C3v

1 - Tracy rejects good works as a means to salvation. Faith alone without any works by either the faithful or any other Christian will be sufficient for salvation.

2 - **I Timothy 2:5**

3 - All men are equally petitioners before God. All are in need of the divine initiative of grace, for all are equally participators in original sine. Tracy rejects the traditional understanding of the intervention of the Saints, C3v 11.

4 - Tracy refuses to leave any part of his estate to pay for prayers or masses for his soul. Contemporary arrangements had become increasingly complicated as seen in the bequests of William, Lord Lovell in an early English will of 1455 to establish a chantry in the Greyfriars' Church at Oxford. Cf. **E.E.T.S. OS Vol. 149, 70-87.**

5 - **Mark 16:16**

6 - Tracy refers to Augustine's **De cura pro mortuis gerenda ad Paulinum Liber Unus**, **Patrologiae Cursus Completus**, ed. Migne, J.-P., Paris 1847<sup>1</sup>, 40 **S.A. Augustini Opera Omnia**, Vol. VI (1861), Col. 594.c.II.4. in order to justify the contention that funeral arrangements have no bearing upon the eternal well-being of the soul.

7 - Augustine, **Op.cit.:** **Proinde ista omnia, id est, curatio funeris, conditio sepulturae, pompa exsequiarum, magis sunt vivorum solatia quam subsidia mortuorum.**

Protests against funeral pomp and ceremony are distinguished by McFarlane as an important characteristic of early Fifteenth Century Wycliffite wills: cf. McFarlane, K.B., **Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights**, Oxford 1972, 207-220; esp. 210.

8 - Tracy leaves his temporal goods to be bestowed as fruites of faith rather than as a means of securing merit for his soul. C3v 27-30 show that Tracy regarded his merit not to be any action of his own, but only his faith in Christ's saving grace. Justification is by faith alone for Tracy.

9 - **Matthew** 25:35. Tracy refers to the corporal acts of mercy which had formed the basis of the mediaeval Church's theological contention that charity attracted grace and merit to the charitable. Tracy reverses the accepted position and argues that the Christian secures justification through his faith in Christ's saving death, thus freeing his sinful nature to perform good works and live according to God's law.

loweth, that ye haue done to the least of my  
bretherne ye haue done to me. &c. and euer  
we shoulde consyder the true sentence, that [1]  
a good worke maketh not a good man, but  
5 a good man maketh a good worke, for faith  
maketh the man both good and ryghteouse,  
for a ryghteouse man lyueth by fayth. And [2]  
what soeuer spryngeth not out of fayth, is [3]  
synne.

10 And al my temporal goodes that I haue not [4]  
gyuen, or delyuered, or not gyuen by wry-  
tyng of myne owne hande bearyng the date  
of thys present wrytynge, I do leaue & gyue  
to Margarete my wyfe, and to Rycharde [5]  
15 my sonne whom I make myne executours,  
wytnes thys myne owne hande, the. x. daye  
of October, in the. xxii. yere of the raigne of [6]  
Kynge Henry the. viii.

Tyndall. [7]

20 Nowe let vs examen the partes of  
this Testament sentence by sentence  
Fyrste to commytte oure selues to [8]  
God aboue all, is the fyrste of all  
preceptes, and the fyrst stone in the funda-  
25 cion of our fayth, that is that we beleue and [9]  
put oure truste in one God, one all true, one

almyghtie, yea all good, & all mercyfull, cle-  
uyng fast to his trueth, myght, mercye, and  
goodnes, suerely certified, and fully persua  
30 ded, that he is oure god, yea oures, & to vs al  
true, without falsehead and gyle & cannot

C4r

1 - The source of this passage which appears to be a quotation has not been traced. It was not attributed in any text of **Wickliefes Wicket**, nor in Foxe's edition of the **Testament** printed by John Day in 1572/3.

2 - **Romans** 1:17

3 - **Romans** 14:23

4 - **By wrytyng of myne owne hande bearynge the date of thys present wrytynge:** this suggests the existence of another document detailing the distribution of property, of which the text under consideration is an explanation.

5 - The **Testament** mentions only Tracy's wife, Margaret Throckmorton, the daughter of Sir Thomas Throckmorton of Corse Court near Malvern (not the staunchly Catholic senior branch of that family of Coughton Court, Warwickshire), and his second son, Richard, who was to become a Protestant writer, owner of former monastic estates and agent to Thomas Cromwell. William Tracy's elder son, another William, had married the daughter of Sir Simon Digby of Coleshill, Warwickshire, but had apparently pre-deceased his father, possibly in 1530. Cf. Genealogical note to **Introduction; Victoria County History, Worcester, III, 571; Britton, J., Graphic Illustrations, with Historical and Descriptive Accounts, of Toddington, Gloucestershire, The Seat of Lord Sudeley, London 1840; Sudeley, Transactions of Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 88 (1969); The Sudeleys Lords of Toddington, ed. Sudeley, Manorial Society 1987, 101 .**

6 - 22 Henry VIII: 21st April 1530 to 20th April 1531. Thus the **Testament** was signed on 10th October, 1530.



7 - In all printed editions [A - Foxe] of the **Testament** Tyndale's **Exposition** follows the text of the **Testament** itself. In editions A and B it is only Tyndale's **Exposition** which is found. Tyndale adopts the method of sentence by sentence analysis for his **Exposition**.

8 - Commitment to God is seen as the foundation of the Christian faith and life.

9 - Tyndale offers a strikingly Lutheran definition of faith: we beleue and put oure truste in god ... cleauyng fast to his trueth ... and fully persuaded, that he is oure god. Cf. Luther's **Preface to the Epistle to the Romans** (1522), in **Works of Martin Luther**, ed. Jacobs, H.E., Philadelphia 1943, 447ff.

fayle in hys promyses. And to vs almyghty  
 that hys wyll cannot be let to fulfyll all the  
 trueth that he hath promised vs. And to vs  
 all good, and all mercyfull, what so euer we  
 5 haue done, and howe so euer greuously we [1]  
 haue trespassed, so that we come to him the  
 waye that he hath appoynted, whyche way  
 is Iesus Christe onely, as we shall se folo-  
 yngly. This fyrst clause then is the fyrst com- [2]  
 10 maundement, or at the leaste, the fyrste sen-  
 tence is the fyrste commaundement, and the  
 fyrste article of our crede.  
 And that thys truste and confidence in the  
 mercy of God is thorowe Iesus Christe: is  
 15 the seconde article of our crede confirmed  
 and testified thorow out al scripture. That [3]  
 Christe bryngeth vs into thys grace, Paule  
 proueth: sayinge. Iustified by fayth we are [4]  
 at peace wyth god, thorowe Iesus Christe  
 20 our Lorde, by whom we haue entrynge in  
 vnto thys grace in whyche we stande. By [5]  
 whom sayeth Paule we haue a bloude en-  
 trynge in, thorowe the fayth that is in hym  
 and in the seconde of the sayde epistle, By  
 25 him we haue an entryng in vnto the father  
 and a lytle before in the same chapter, he is [6]  
 our peace. And Iohn sayeth, Beholde the [7]  
 lambe of god which taketh away the synne

of the worlde, whiche was the busshe that  
30 stoped the entryng in, and kepte vs out, and  
the swerde wherewyth was kepte the en-  
tryng vnto the tree of lyfe from Adam and  
all his offsprynge.

[8]

C4v

1 - God is all-merciful, for however grievously man has offended he is acceptable to God provided that he comes to God through faith in Christ's saving death. God enters into a covenant relationship with the Christian. Cf. Smeeton, D.D., **Op.cit.**, 129-131; 150-157.

2 - The first clause of the **Testament** is to be seen as an affirmation of the First Article of the Christian Creed and of the First Commandment in the Old Testament Law.

3 - Similarly the second clause of the **Testament** which confirms Tracy's faith and trust in Christ's saving death corresponds to the Second Article of the Creed.

4 - **Romans** 5:1-2

5 - This reference is not a clear quotation and may refer to either of two passages: **Romans** 5:9; or **Ephesians** 2:13.

6 - **Ephesians** 2:14

7 - **John** 1:29

8 - **Genesis** 3:24. Christ is that which removes the obstacle of sin placed between man and God by reason of Adam's disobedience. Cf. **Smeeton**, 124-127, discussion of Tyndale's theology of Election; Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society Vol. I, 95. Smeeton has pointed to the difference of emphasis between Tyndale and Luther when writing about Election and Soteriology in general: for Tyndale (as for the earlier Wycliffite writers) there is no undue concentration upon personal **Anfechtung**.

"Tyndale did not advocate an attitude of mourning over sin, but rather of recognizing it, abhorring it and turning from it to receive God'd forgiveness"

Knox, D.B., **The Doctrine of Faith in the Reign of Henry VIII**, London 1961, 23; quoted by Smeeton, 124.

"Tyndale elaborated no doctrine of the atonement, and he minimized the idea that God's wrath needed to be appeased .... Without speculating on how God credited man with salvation, Tyndale stressed the fact that God did so. In giving God the credit for the initiative in salvation, Tyndale, like the Wycliffites, was consciously antipelagian."

Smeeton, D.D., *Op.cit.*, 124. Smeeton quotes **Sermon XXXIV** in **Select English Works of John Wyclif**, ed. Arnold, T., Oxford 1869-71, I, 91 in support of his view of Wycliffite theories of Election.

And Peter sayeth, whiche bare oure syn- [1]  
nes in his bodye, and by whose stryppes  
we are made hole. By whom we haue redemp [2]  
cyon thorowe his bloude euen the forgyue-  
5 nes of oure synnes. He was delyuered for [3]  
our synnes and rose agayne for our iusty-  
fyenge.

And concernynge the resurrection, it is an [4]  
article of our fayth, and prouid there suffi-  
10 entlye, and that it shall be by the power of  
Christe, is also the open scripture.

Thys is the wyll of my father whiche sent [5]  
me that I lose nothyng of all that he hath  
gyuen me, but that I rayse it vp agayne in  
15 the last day, and agayne I am the resurrec- [6]

tion. That this lyuely fayth is sufficient to  
iustificacion wyth out addynge to of anye  
more helpe, is this wise prouid. The promi [7]  
ser is god of whom Paule sayeth. Yf God [8]

20 be on our syde what matter maketh it who  
be agaynst vs. He is therto al good, al mer-  
ciful, al true, and almyghty. Wherefore suf- [9]  
ficient to be beleued by his othe. More ouer  
Christ (in whom the promes is made) hath

25 receyued all power in heauen and in earth.  
Marke the laste. [10]

He hath also a perpetual preesthode, & ther-  
fore able perpetually to saue. Hebr. vii. [11]

And that there is but one mediator, whiche [12]  
30 is Christe. And by that worde vnderstande  
an attonemaker, a peace maker and bryn- [13]  
ger in to grace and fauour, hauynge ful po-  
wer so to do. And that Christe is so, is pro-

C5r

1 - **I Peter 2:24**

2 - **Ephesians 1:7**

3 - **Romans 4:25**

4 - The issue of the general resurrection came to be closely linked with the problem of how souls existed after the death of their mortal bodies [C5r 12-14]; this became a matter of serious dispute between Tyndale and George Joye in 1534. The question hinged upon the translation of **Anastasis**, which Tyndale rendered **Resurrection**, while Joye preferred **Life after this**. Cf. **Smeeton**, 72-3; Joye, G., **An Apology to W. Tindale, 1535**, Arber, E., ed., Birmingham 1882; Mozley, J.F., **William Tyndale**, London 1937, 268ff; Butterworth, C.C., and Chester, A.G., **George Joye, 1495?-1553: A Chapter in the History of the English Bible and the English Reformation**, Philadelphia 1962, 180.

5 - **John 6:39**

6 - **John 11:25**

7 - Tyndale shows that faith or trust in God's promises made through Christ is sufficient to secure man's salvation without resort to good works or the prayers of other men. This is done by reference to a series of scriptural quotations. God, the eternally faithful and almighty, has made his promise or covenant with man through Christ, in whom he has vested all power in earth and heaven. Cf. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society, I, 54-6; 95; 111; 121; **An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue**, ed. Walter, H., Parker Society III, 196-7; **Smeeton**, 126-134. It should be noted that for Tyndale (unlike Luther), faith and justification by faith has strong moral imperatives for mankind. The covenant is a two-



sided relationship in which God takes the initiative and counts man to be righteous, but man has a responsibility to live a good life. Cf. Tyndale, **An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue**, Parker Society III, 95; **Smeeton**, 131 n.43.

8 - **Romans** 8:31

9 - **Hebrews** 6:17-18

10 - **Matthew** 28:18. **Marke the laste**: an instruction to the reader to note the preceeding point well, rather than a citation for the previous quotation which is clearly from Matthew's Gospel rather than that of Mark.

11 - **Hebrews** 7:24-5

12 - **I Timothy** 2:5

13 - Tyndale defines his use of the term **Mediator**: one sufficiently empowered to bring mankind to divine **grace and fauour**; one who restores peace between God and man; the Atoner. Given the reality of man's sinfulness and his consequent inability to take the initiative in his own salvation, it is clear that the mediation is effected through the Incarnation by which God reaches down to mankind. The Covenant theme of Tyndale's soteriology becomes clear when it is understood that only God can take the initiative in salvation. Cf. Tyndale, **Exposition of the Fyrst Epistle of Seynt Ihon**, Parker Society II, 183-4; **Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans**, in Parker Society I, 508-9.

ued at the ful. It is wrytten. The father lo- [1]  
 ueth the sonne, and hath gyuen all into hys  
 hande.  
 And he that beleueth the sonne hath euerla- [2]  
 5 stynges lyfe, and that beleueth not the sonne  
 shall not se lyfe, but the wrath of God by- [3]  
 deth vpon hym. All thynges are gyuen me [4]  
 of my father And al who so euer call on the [5]  
 name of the Lorde shal be saued Of his ful- [6]  
 10 nes haue we all receyued. There is none o-  
 ther name in whych we muste be saued. And  
 agayne, vnto his name beare all the prophe- [7]  
 tes recorde, that by hys name shall all that  
 beleue in hym receyue remission. In hym [8]  
 15 dwelleth all the fulnes of God bodily. All [9]  
 what so euer my father hath are myne.  
 What so euer ye axe in my name that wyll [10]  
 I do for you. One lorde, one fayth, one bap- [11]  
 tysme, one God and father of all, whiche is  
 20 aboute all thorow all and in you all. There is  
 but one whose seruaunte I am, to do hys  
 wyll. But one shal paye me my wages,  
 there is but one to whom I am bound, ergo  
 but one that hath power ouer me to damne [12]  
 25 or saue me, I wil adde to this Paules argu  
 ment. God sware vnto Abraham foure hu [13]  
 dreth yeres before the law was gyuen, that  
 we shoulde be saued by Christe. Ergo the [14]

lawe gyuen foure hundreth yeres after can  
30 not disanull that couenaunt. So dispute I  
Christe when he had suffered hys passion,  
and was rysen agayne and entred into hys  
glorie, was sufficient for his Apostles, wyth

C5v

1 - **John** 3:35

2 - The source of the quotation in C5v 4-7 is obscure. It received no attribution in Foxe's edition of 1572/3.

3 - **Luke** 10:22

4 - **Acts** 2:21

5 - **John** 1:16

6 - **Acts** 4:12

7 - **Acts** 10:43

8 - **Colossians** 2:9

9 - **John** 16:15

10 - **John** 14:13

11 - **Ephesians** 4:5-6

12 - Tyndale argues that the Christian is bound in service only to Christ [through the promises made at baptism] and that Christ pays the Christian his due wages. Christ alone has the power to save or to damn, but once saved in Christ, there are moral obligations upon the Christian. This is a distinct development upon Lutheran theology which had emphasised the futility and depravity of all human works. Cf. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 105; **An exposition vpon the.v.vi.vii. chapters of Matthew**, Parker Society II, 6; 93-4. Laughlin, P.A., "The Brightness of Moses's Face: Law and Gospel, Covenant and Hermeneutics in the Theology of William Tyndale", unpublished Ph.D. thesis Emory 1975, 221, quoted by Smeeton, 151. Smeeton argues for a Wycliffite source for this distinctly un-Lutheran theme of Covenant in Tyndale's Soteriology. Cf. Greenhough, G.H., "The Reformers' Attitude to the Law of God", **Westminster Theological Journal** 39 (1976), 81-

99; also Moller, J.G., "Beginnings of Puritan Covenant Theology", *J.E.H.* 14 (1963), 46-67; Hudson, A., **English Wycliffite Sermons**, I, Oxford 1983, 277/46-53; 278/72-3; 310/40-41; Hudson, A., ed., **Selections from English Wycliffite Writings**, Cambridge 1978, 78/123-25; 92/136-41.

13 - A general reference to Paul's argument concerning the Mosaic Law in Galatians 3. This work may have inspired Tyndale's elaboration of the Covenant relationship between God and man, for here Paul writes of the covenant between God and Abraham, which predated the Mosaic Law. Cf. Tyndale, **Prologue to Matthew**, Parker Society I, 471; **Smeeton**, 155-6.

14 - C5v 28 - C6r 3: Tyndale argues that since God entered into a covenant with man **Foure hundreth yeres before the law was gyuen**, Christ's death must be sufficient to secure man's salvation without recourse to works performed under the law. Thus the intercession of the Saints is to be considered at best superfluous to man's justification. Cf. Tyndale, **An exposition vpon...Matthew**, Parker Society II, 6; **Prologue to Matthew**, Parker Society I, 471.

out any other meane or helpe, ergo the holy-  
nes of no saynt syns hath diminished ought  
of that his power. But that he is as ful suf  
ficient nowe, for the promyse is as deaplye [1]  
5 made to vs as them. Moreouer the treasure  
of hys mercy was layed vp in Christe for al  
that should beleue, ere the world was made  
ergo nothing that hath happened syns hath  
chaunged ye purpose of the vnuariable god.

10 Moreouer to exclude the blynde imaginati- [2]  
on falsely called fayth, of them yt gyue them  
selues to vice wythout resistence, affirming  
that they haue no power to do otherwyse,  
but that God hath so made them, and ther-  
15 fore muste saue them, they not entending or  
purposyng to mende theyr lyuyng, but syn-  
nyng wyth whole consent and full lust, he  
declareth what fayth he meaneth. ii. maner  
wayse. Fyrste by that he sayeth, who so euer [3]  
20 beleueth and is baptized, shall be saued. By  
whyche wordes he declareth euidently, that  
he meaneth that fayth, that is in the promes  
made vpon the appoyntment betwene God  
and vs, that we shoulde kepe hys lawe to  
25 the vttermost of oure power, that is he that  
beleueth in Christ for the remission of sinne,  
and is baptized to do the wyll of Christe,  
and to kepe hys lawe of loue, and to mortifi-

30           fie the flesh, that man shalbe saued, & so is the  
          imaginacion of these swyne yt wil not leue           [4]  
          wallowyng them selues in euery myre & po-  
          del, cleane excluded, for god neuer made pro-  
          mes but vpon appointment or couenaunt vn-

C6r

1 - C6r 3-9: God's salvation through Christ alone is an eternal promise which has endured from the beginning of time. God is immutable and nothing can happen to change the divine purpose of salvation for those who have faith. Cf. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 95; 111; Tyndale, **Introduction to Romans**, Parker Society I, 508; **Smeeton**, 129-30.

2 - C6r 10-19: Tyndale distinguishes between true and false faith. Cf. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 121; Tyndale, **The Obedience of a Christian Man**, Parker Society I, 224; **Smeeton**, 130.

3 - **Mark** 16:16. The Christian enters the life of Christ through baptism. He must mortify his own will and flesh, subjecting himself to the law of Christ [C6r 27-9]. The covenant between God and man is two-sided, and although faith is passive, it requires an active response. Cf. Tyndale, **An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue**, Parker Society III, 196; **Smeeton**, **Op.cit.**, 131 n. 43.

4 - C6r 29 - C6v 2: note Tyndale's picturesque language, C6r 30-32. Those who believe that the saving faith in Christ imposes no moral obligations upon them will be excluded by God. They fail to understand the nature of God's covenant relationship with man whereby salvation is freely given through faith and inspires a response of love and moral improvement in man:

When we say faith only justifieth ... we mean not faith which hath no repentance, and faith which hath no love unto the laws of God again, and unto good works, as wicked hypocrites falsely belie...



Tyndale, **An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue**, Parker Society III, 196. Also Tyndale, **Introduction to I John**, Parker Society I, 194.

der which who so euer wyll not come can be  
no partaker of the promes. True fayth in [1]  
Christ gyueth power to loue the law of god  
for it is written. He gaue them power to be [2]  
5 the sonnes of god in that they beleue in hys  
name. Now to be the sonne of god, is to loue [3]  
righteousnes, and hate vnrighteousnes and  
so to be like thy father. Hast thou then no po  
wer to loue the lawe? so hast thou no fayth  
10 in Christes bloude. And we set vp or mayn- [4]  
teyne the law thorow fayth. Why so? For [5]  
the preaching of fayth ministreth the spirite  
& the spirite lowseth the bandes of Sathan, &  
giueth power to loue ye law, & also to do it.  
15 For (sayeth Paule). Yf the spirite of hym yt [6]  
rayned vp Iesus dwel in you, then wyll he  
that rayned vp Iesus quicken your mortall  
bodies by the meanes of his spirite dwel-  
lyng in you. A wel (wylt thou say) yf I [7]  
20 must professe the law & worke, ergo fayth  
alone saueth me not. Be not deceyued wyth  
sophistrie: but withdraw thyne eares from  
wordes & consider the thyng in thyne harte.  
Fayth iustifieth the: that is bringeth remis- [8]  
25 sion of all synnes, & setteth the in the state  
of grace before al workes, & getteth the po-  
wer to worke ere thou couldest worke, but  
yf thou wylt not go backe agayne, but conti-

new in grace, & come to the saluacion & glo-  
30 rious resurrection of Christe, thou muste  
worke & ioyne workes to thy fayth in wyll  
& dede to, if thou haue tyme and leasure, &  
as ofte as thou fallest set the on thy fayth

C6v

1 - True faith enables the Christian to cleave to the Law of God and to do his will. This is in contrast to Lutheran teaching which held that "**Life is as wicked with us as with the Papists**", and that the Christian was counted as righteous but could never perform works which were in themselves good in God's eyes. Cf. Luther, **D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe**, Weimar, 1883ff, Tischreden 1 no. 624, cited by Oberman, H.A., **Forerunners of the Reformation: The Shape of Late Medieval Thought**, trans. Nyhus, P.L., New York 1966, 10; quoted by Smeeton, 131 n.43.

2 - **John 1:12**

3 - C6v 6-14: faith makes the Christian love God and so fits him to do good works and live according to God's law. Preaching the Gospel imparts the Holy Spirit which defeats Satan, re-enforces faith, and gives power to love the law and live the life of Christ. Cf. Tyndale, **Introduction to I John**, Parker Society I, 194 - description of the progression from faith to love and works; Smeeton, 132 quotes a Wycliffite parallel, "Of Faith, Hope and Charity", **The English Works of Wyclif Hitherto Unprinted**, ed. Matthew, F.D., E.E.T.S. (O.S.) 74, London 1902, 349. On Tyndale's theology of the Holy Spirit cf. Smeeton, 140-44, especially 141 n.93. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 54-5; 78-89.

4 - **Romans 3:31**

5 - **Galatians 3:5; II Corinthians 3:3**

6 - **Romans 8:11**. The quotation is used to emphasise that the Christian must live a moral life according to God's law by vertue of grace imparted by faith in Christ's saving death. Cf.

**Smeeton**, 144-5; 147-8. Smeeton draws attention to the differences between Tyndale and Luther with regard to the place of Law in Christian life. Commenting on Tyndale C6v 8-14 Smeeton writes: "By His Spirit, God works with His word when it is preached and applies it to the heart of the elect. When faith comes, the power of God frees the heart from its captivity to sin and binds it to the will of God. In doing so, God forgives, changes, and cleanses the person, giving him power to love what he could not love before. With the human will coupled to the divine will, one's life brings forth good works and fulfillment of the law." Smeeton, 147-8.

7 - C6v 19-23: Tyndale anticipates the response of his reader: if a Christian must live a godly life, then he is not saved by faith alone but in part by good works. Tyndale considers this argument to smack of sophistry or scholastic nicety. This is not a matter to be argued in words by scholars, but is experienced in the hearts of faithful Christians. Thus elsewhere Tyndale writes of the faithful Christian "lusting" for God's law: "Good works are a natural manifestation of an inward condition. Such works were not the result of demanding external constraints, but the expression of a strong inward desire"; Smeeton, 147

8 - C6v 24 - C7r 1: Tyndale describes the effects of faith. It justifies, brings remission of sins and through grace enables the Christian to live a moral life under God's law. Cf. Tyndale, **The Obedience of a Christian Man**, Parker Society I, 223. See note 6 above.

agayne without healpe of workes. And al-  
though when thou arte reconciled and resto [1]  
red to grace workes be requyred, yet is not  
that reconcilynge, and grace the benefyte of  
5 the workes that foloweth, but cleane contra-  
ry that forgyuenes of the synnes and resto-  
ryng to fauour deserue the workes that fo-  
lowe. Though when the kynge (after that [2]  
sentence of death is gyuen vpon a murthe-  
10 rar) hath pardoned him, at the requeste of  
some of his frendes, workes be required of  
hym that he hence forth kepe the kynges la-  
wes, yf ye wyl continewe in his graces fa-  
uour in whiche he nowe standeth, yet the be-  
15 nefyte of his lyfe procedeth not of deser-  
uing of the workes that folowe, but of the  
kynges goodnes and fauour of his frendes  
ye and that benefyte and gyfte of his lyfe  
deserue the workes that folowe. Though [3]  
20 the father chastice the childe, yet is the child  
no lesse bounde to obeye, and do the wyl  
of the father. If when the father pardoneth  
it, the workes that folowe deserue that fa-  
uour, then must the workes that folowed the  
25 correction haue deserued fauour also. And  
then was the father vnryghtwyse to cha-  
stice it. All what so euer thou arte able to do [4]  
to please God wyth all is thy dutye to do,

though thou haddest neuer synned, yf it be  
30 the dutie how can it then be deseruyng  
of the mercye and grace that wente before?  
Nowe that mercye, was the benefyte of  
God thy father thorowe the deseruyng of

[5]

C7r

1 - C7r 1-8: When the faithful person is reconciled to God through faith, works are required of him. The initial reconciliation is not however dependent upon works; rather the reconciliation effected by God's initiative should move the faithful man to live a more moral life out of honour for God and in recognition of his mercy.

2 - C7r 8-19: Tyndale illustrates his argument with a secular metaphor easily understood by his readers: when a king pardons a murderer at the petition of his friends, the criminal must perform good works in order to demonstrate his conformity to the law and to ensure the continuation of grace and favour towards him. The gift of continued life deserves the good works which follow it and good use must be made of such a reprieved life. Tyndale's personal position as a fugitive from almost certain death at the hands of Henry VIII renders this metaphor particularly poignant. **This same metaphor was used by Tyndale in his Exposition of Matthew, Parker Society II, 7.**

3 - C7r 19-27: a further secular metaphor is employed to illustrate the difference between free acts and acts of duty.

4 - Tyndale believes that it is the Christian's duty to do all that he can to please God. As such works are owed to God as a duty of obedience and love, part of man's side of the covenant of election, it cannot be said that they deserve the reward of divine mercy which follows on from man's faith. Cf. Tyndale, **Prologue to Matthew, Parker Society I, 470.**

5 - C7r 32 - C7v 2: Tyndale holds that God's mercy was aroused by the propitious though undeserved suffering of the sinless Christ: it was **"boughte wyth the pryse of his bloude"**



[C7v1-2]. Cf. Tyndale, *Prologue to Matthew*, Parker Society I, 471:

"Also you see that two things are required to be in a christian man. The first is a stedfast faith and trust in almighty God, to obtain all the mercy that he hath promised us through the deserving and merits of Christ's blood only, without all respect to our own works. And the other is, that we forsake evil and turn to God, to keep his laws, and to fight against ourselves and our corrupt nature perpetually ..."

Tyndale, *Prologue to Matthew*, quoted by Smeeton, 156.

the Lorde Christe whiche hath boughte the  
wyth the pryse of his bloude. [1]

And agayne when he sayeth that he purpo- [2]  
seth to bestow his goodes, to be accepted as  
5 fruites of fayth, it is euident that he mea-  
neth that lyuyng fayth whyche professeth  
the law of god, and is the mother of al good  
workes, yea and nurse therto.

Another cauillation whyche they myghte [3]

10 make in the seconde parte, where he admit-  
teth none other mediatour but Christe one-  
ly, nor wyll gyue of hys goodes, to bynde a-  
ny man to anye fayned obseruaunce for the  
healpe of hys soule, when he was hole in  
15 the kyngedome of Christe cleane delyuered  
both bodye and soule from the dominion of  
Sathan, (as the scripture testifyeth all that  
dye in Christe to be) is thys, they wyll saye,  
that he helde that none shoulde praye for

20 him saue Christ, and that we are not bound  
to praye one for another, nor oughte to de-  
syre the prayers of another man. That he ex- [4]  
cludeth, in that he sayeth all other be but pe-  
titioners. By whyche wordes he playnlye  
25 confesseth that other maye and oughte for  
to praye, and that we maye and oughte to de-  
syre other to praye, for vs: but he meaneth yt [5]  
we may not put our trust and confidence in

30 they prayers, as though they gaue of them  
selues that whyche they desyre for vs in  
theyr petitions, and so gyue them the tha-  
nkes, and ascribe to theyr mercies that which  
is gyuen vs in the name of oure mayster

C7v

1 - Cf. **Acts** 20:28; I **Corinthians** 6:20.

2 - C7v 3-8: Tyndale returns to his analysis of Tracy's **Testament** at the section in which Tracy deals with the distribution of his goods. Tracy's hope that his wealth will be seen as **Fruites of fayth** is taken as evidence that it was that living faith which accepts the law of God and which acts as the inspiration of all good works. This is taken by Tyndale as further evidence that Tracy was among God's elect [C7v 14-15]. Cf. **Smeeton**, 138 for comments on this passage and discussion of the Wycliffite and Lutheran background to the image of good works as fruits of faith. On the role of good works in demonstrating election, Cf. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 77; Idem, **Exposition of I John**, Parker Society II, 201.

3 - **Cauillation**: cavillation, a captious objection.

C7v 9-22: Tyndale outlines a possible attack which might be made upon Tracy as a result of his denial of Purgatory and the necessity to establish a chantry or endow masses for his soul. Tyndale claims for Tracy a **sola fide** view of justification and salvation: all who die as faithful members in Christ will be united with Christ in Heaven. Tracy's critics falsely say that he did not consider it necessary for a Christian to pray for his fellow men.

4 - Tyndale shows that such an interpretation of Tracy's words is false [C7v 22-7]. All but Christ are equally petitioners before God and thus it is clear that Tracy believes that all Christians should pray for their fellow men. For Tyndale prayer flowed naturally from faith: cf. **The Parable of**

the Wicked Mammon, Parker Society I, 118; The Obedience of a Christian Man, Parker Society 1, 300.

Cf. Smeeton, 200:

"It is the prayer from the heart which is acceptable to God. Prayer did not make one righteous, but right praying was an expression of rightness with God. Prayer resulted from a right relationship with God for, in Tyndale's mind, prayer was closely allied with moral living."

5 - C7v 27 - C8r 1: Tyndale explains Tracy's argument further. The Christian cannot put total trust in his brother's prayers made on his behalf, for his brother has not the power to grant that for which he prays. Thus the Christian should not give to his brother thanks and honour which is due to God for a prayer answered. It has been answered in the name of Christ and by the vertue or power of his redeeming blood.

Christe, at the deseruynges of his bloude.

Christe is my lorde, and hath deserued and [1]

also obtayned power to gyue me al that can  
be desyred for me. And all other desyre for

5 me: that is desyred in Christes name and gi-  
uen at the merytes of his bloude. All the ho-  
noure then, truste, confidence, and thankes,  
perteyne to his also.

Some wyl haplye saye, howe sholde I de- [2]

10 syre another to praye for me, and not truste  
to hys prayer. Uerely euen as I desyre my  
neyghboure to [h]pelpe me at my nede, and yet  
truste not to hym, Christ hath commaunded  
vs to loue eche other. Now when I wyl go

15 to desyre helpe, I put my truste in god, & com-  
playne to god fyrste, and saye. Lo father, I  
go to my brother, to axe helpe in thy name,  
prepare the herte of hym agaynste I come,  
that he maye pitie me, and helpe me for thy

20 sake. &c. Nowe yf my brother remembre hys  
dutye and helpe me, I receyue it of god, and [3]

gyue god the thankes which moued the herte  
of my brother, & gaue my brother a corage  
to helpe me, & wherwith to do it, and so hath

25 holpe me by my brother. And I loue my bro-  
ther agayne, & say. Lo father, I went to my  
brother in thy name, and he holpe me  
for thy sake: wherfore O father be thou as

mercyfull to hym at his nede, as he hath ben  
30 to me for thy sake, at my nede, Lo nowe as  
my brother dyd hys dutye when he holpe me  
so do I my dutye when I praye for hym  
agayne: and as I myghte not haue put my

C8r

1 - C8r 2-8: Christ has been granted, by reason of his divinity and his innocent death, power to grant petitions made in his name. Thus all the Honoure ... truste, confidence and thankes must be given to Christ when a petition made in his name by a Christian is granted. Cf. **Smeeton**, 200 for discussion of Tyndale's theology of prayer. Note the emphasis on the equality of all Christians in thye face of God:

"The trueth is that we are al equally beloued in Christe and God hath sworne to all indifferently. Accordinge therefore as every man beleveth Gods promises longeth for them and is diligente to praye vnto God to fulfill them so is his prayer herde: and as good is the prayer of a cobler as of a Cardinall ... and the blessinge of a baker that knoweth the trowth is as good as the blessinge of our most holy father the Pope."

Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, Parker Society I, 258, quoted by **Smeeton**, 200.

2 - Tyndale anticipates that critics may not be able to understand how the Christian can expect others to pray for him and yet not put his full trust in such prayers. Homely examples [C8r 11 - C8v 9] are furnished to amplify this point.

3 - The primary position of God in Tyndale's theology is preserved. All help comes from God: God prepares the heart of the Christian's neighbour in response to prayer, and moves the neighbour to offer succour. Thus the Christian must thank God for the mercy and assistance which has been rendered to him by his neighbour. Through his gracious initiative to sinful man, God is the initiator of all good works.



"Prayer is the frute effecte deede or acte of faith & is no thinge but the longinge of the herte for those thinges which a man lacketh and which God hath promised to geve him."

Tyndale, *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, Parker Society I, 118; quoted by Smeeton, 200-1.

trust and confydence in my brothers helpe, [1]  
so maye he not in my prayers. I am sure yt  
God wyll helpe me by hys promes, but am  
not sure yt my brother wyl helpe me, though  
5 it be his dutye, so am I sure that God wyl  
heare me whatsoeuer I axe in Chrystes na-  
me by hys promes, but I am not sure yt my  
brother wyll praye for me, or that he hath a  
good herte to god.

10 No, But the saynctes in heauen can not [2]  
but praye and be herde, no more can the sayn-  
ctes in earth, but pray and be hearde neither  
Moses, Samuel, Daudid, Noye, Elyas, E-

15 lizeus, Esaias, Daniel, and all the Prophe- [3]  
tes prayed, and were hearde: yet was none  
of those wycked that wolde not put theyr  
trust in god, accordynge to theyr doctrine &  
preaching: partaker of their prayers in the  
ende. And as damnable as it is for the poore [4]

20 to truste in the ryches of the rychest vppon  
earth, so damnable is it also to leue the co-  
uenaunte made in Christes bloude, and to  
trust in the sayntes of heauen. They that be [5]  
in heauen knowe the electe that trust in chri-

25 stes bloude and professe the lawe of God &  
for them onely pray: and these wycked Ido-  
latres which haue no trust in the couenaunte  
of God, nor serue God in the spiryte nor in

ye gospell of Christes bloude, but after their  
30 blynde Imaginacion, chosynge them euery  
man a sondry saynct to be theyr mediatour,  
to trust to, and to be saued by their merites,  
do the sainctes abhore vtterlye. And their

C8v

1 - The Christian cannot place absolute confidence in the prayers or help of his brother. Although God will hear whatever is asked in the name of Christ, the Christian cannot be sure that his brother will pray for him, or that he stands in a right-relationship with God.

2 - Tyndale defines saints as those acceptable to God in both Heaven and on earth. In this Tyndale seems to come close to Wyclif's understanding of the Church as the body of the eternally elect, or those who have been saved from the beginning of time. Cf. Wyclif, *De Ecclesia* (1886), 2, 7, 107, 111.

3 - The saints and prophets who prayed to God and were heard put their trust in God alone. If they had failed to put their trust in God alone they could not be saints because their faith would be impaired. For Tyndale the saints could be invoked as a useful example of moral living, but honouring of godly lives should not be allowed to displace worship of God himself. Cf. Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, Parker Society I, 184. The similarity between Tyndale's teaching and that of the Lollards should be noted. Cf. *Smeeton*, 194-5 and n. 200-203; Davis, J.F., "Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation", *JEH*, 33 (1982), 227.

4 - It is damnable for men to abandon the covenant promise made between God and men in Christ's blood by placing trust in the traditional saints of the Roman Church. Tyndale illustrates his argument by suggesting that it would be equally foolish for the poor to place their trust in the riches of the richest man on earth to relieve their poverty.

5 - C8v 23-33: the saints in Heaven pray only for the stedfastness of the Elect on earth who have put their trust in Christ's saving death and who live according to God's law. Those who do not have total trust and faith in Christ's unique role as saviour but place their trust in a particular saint hoping to be saved by that saint's merit and intercession with God are utterly abhorred and abandoned by the saints who have above all realised that all grace is dependent upon God alone. Cf. discussion of the invocation and cultus of the saints, Dix, G., **The Shape of the Liturgy**, London 1945, 345ff.

prayers and offerynges, are to the sayntes  
as acceptable & pleasaunt, as was the pray-  
er and offerynge of Simon Magus to [1]  
Peter. Moreouer the sayntes in theyr  
5 most conbraunce are moost comforted & moost  
able to comfort other, as Paule testifyeth. In [2]  
so much that S. Steuen, & S. Iames prayed [3]  
for them yt sleue them. S. Martyn preached [4]  
& comforted his desperate bretherne euen vnto  
10 the last breath, & likewise (as storyes make  
mention) dyd innumerable mo[re]. Yea & I haue [5]  
knowen of simple vnlearned persones and  
that of some that were great synners which  
at the hour of death haue fallen flatte to the  
15 bloud of Christ, & gyuen no rowme to other  
mennes, either prayers or preachynges: but  
haue as strongly trusted in Christes bloud,  
as euer dyd Peter or Paule, & haue therto  
preached it to other, and exhorted other so  
20 myghtely that an angel of heauen coulde not  
mende them. Who then should resist god that  
he myght not gyue the same grace to master  
Tracie, whiche was a learned man, & better  
sene in the workes of saynt Austen. xx. yeres [6]  
25 before he dyed, then euer I knew doctour in  
Englande, but that he must then faynte and  
shrynke, when most nede is to be strong, and  
feare the popes purgatory & trust to the pray

er of priestes dearlye payed for. I dare saye  
30 that he prayed for the priestes when he dyed  
yt god woulde conuert a great meny of them, [7]  
& if he had knowne of any good man amonge  
them that had neded, he woulde haue gyuen [8]  
& yf he had knowen of any lacke of priestes

Dlr

1 - Tyndale likens the prayers of those who place their trust in the mediation of saints to the simony of Magus described in **Acts** 8:18-22. Tyndale shared with the Lollards an objection to the payments which had come to be made for the prayers of priests or poor men retained for the purpose. Cf. **Selections from English Wycliffite Writings**, ed. Hudson, A., Cambridge 1978, 26/85-7; Tyndale, **Exposition of Matthew**, Parker Society II, 32; **The Obedience of a Christian Man**, Parker Society I, 245.

2 - **II Corinthians** 1:4

The term **Conbraunce** [Dlr 5] appears to be derived from the Middle English **Cumbrit** and implies a sense of the saints' burdens or trials . Thus through the example of their devotion to Christ and God's law despite all tribulations, the saints can comfort and inspire the Christian community. Cf. Tyndale, **Exposition of I John**, Parker Society II, 216.

3 - **Acts** 7:59-60; **Acts** 12:2 or **James** 5:13.

Tyndale produces Biblical examples of saints who have offered prayers for their fellow Christians or their persecutors such as Stephen and James. The reference to James is not clear in that the reference to his martyrdom in **Acts** does not mention prayer for the oppressors. The Epistle of James, however, does concentrate upon the concept of mutuality which seems appropriate in this context.

4 - The example of St. Martin, Bishop of Tours [316/35 - 397] is produced as a post-Biblical example in support of Tyndale's argument that saints inspire their fellow men.

5 - Dlr 11-29: Tyndale recounts the power of conversion to faith in the blood of Christ even at the hour of death. It is



presumptuous for critics to suppose that God did not sustain William Tracy in his faith at the time of his death. Tracy's faith was sufficiently strong for him not to place any trust in purchased prayers and masses [Dlr 28-9]. Tyndale dismisses Purgatory as **The popes purgatory** [Dlr 28], using the phrase to imply that Purgatory is a non-scriptural invention of the Church.

6 - The observation that William Tracy was better versed in the works of St. Augustine **Than euer I knew doctour in Englande** is of great significance and implies that Tyndale knew Tracy some **xx. yeres before he dyed**, presumably during the period Tyndale spent as tutor and chaplain in the household of Sir John Walsh at Little Sodbury. Walsh was associated with both Thomas Poyntz and William Tracy in the discharge of his duties as a knight of the shire, and Smeeton's discussion of Tyndale's time at Little Sodbury makes clear the probability of personal association between the two men with a common interest in reform. Cf. **Smeeton**, 50-53, esp. 51, n.98. It should be noted that if Tyndale's chronology is correct, William Tracy was already pursuing religious questions which led him to study Augustine by 1510. This would preclude Luther as his inspiration.

7 - Tyndale's use of the term **Conuert** suggests an inward process of the soul wrought by God alone. Cf. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 111.

8 - Dlr 32 - Div 1: Tyndale stresses that as a charitable man living by God's law, had William Tracy known of any good priests in need of support, or any community denied spiritual support, he would have provided for them from his estate.

he wold haue geuen to manteine moo. But  
now since ther be no mo then ynowe, & haue mo  
re then euery man a sufficient lyuinge, howe  
shoulde he haue geuen them but to hyre they  
5 prayers of pure mistrust in christes bloude? [1]  
if robbinge of wydowes houses vnder pre- [2]  
tence of longe prayers be dampnable: then  
is it dampnable also for wydowes to suffer  
them selues to be robbed by the longe pattring  
10 of hypocrites thorow mystrust in Christes  
bloud. Yea & is it not damnable to mainteyne  
such abomination? Now whan this damnati-  
on is spred ouer all, how can we geue them  
that haue ynough already, or how can they  
15 that haue ynough already take more vnder  
the name of prayinge, & not harden the peo-  
ple more in this damnable dampnation?  
And concerning the burieng of his body he al-  
legeth S. Austen, neyther is there any man [3]  
20 (think I) so made to affirme yt the outward  
pompe of the body shuld helpe the soule. Mo  
reouer what greater sygne of infidelitye is  
ther, then to care all ye time of death w[ith] what  
pompe the carkas shalbe caryed to the graue?  
25 He denieth not but yt a christen man shuld be  
honorably buryed, namely for the honour &  
hope of ye resurrection, & therefore he commit  
ted that care to his deare executoures hys

son and his wyfe, whych he wylde do in  
30 that parte sufficient, and leaue nothyng of  
the vse of the countrie vndon, but the abuse.

And the bestowinge of a great part of hys [4]  
goodes, whylle he yet liued, vpon ye poore, to  
be thankfull for the mercy receuied, w[ith]out by

Dlv

1 - Dlv 1-5: Tyndale argues logically: since there are sufficient priests adequately provided for, had Tracy left money to them it could only have been to hire their prayers, which, as has already been argued, would be a blasphemous denial of the sufficiency of Christ's saving death. Cf. Tyndale, **The Obedience of the Christian Man**, Parker Society I, 245.

2 - **Matthew 23:14.**

Tyndale develops his argument against the "purchase" of prayers for the departed [Dlv 6-12]. It is damnable for priests to practise such rapacity upon the poor, but equally it is foolish of the bereaved to suffer such behaviour in obedient silence. Tyndale recognises that the problem is circular and self-perpetuating, but to support such **Mystrust in Christes bloud** is itself damnable [Dlv 12-17]. The case of Richard Hunne [1512-15] who became embroiled in a protracted and ultimately fatal legal battle with the ecclesiastical authorities in London over mortuary dues may provide the background to Tyndale's strong language. Cf. Vol. I, 188 n.6 for further discussion. Tyndale made specific reference to the Hunne case in his **An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue**, Parker Society III, 146, 166-7.

3 - Dlv 18-31: Tracy's use of Augustine's **De cura pro mortuis gerenda** as an authority against planning an elaborate funeral is discussed. Cf. **Testament**, C3v 19.

Tyndale does not believe that anyone could be so foolish as to believe that funeral ceremonies will help the soul to reach Heaven. As death approaches the Christian should have more weighty matters on his mind than the rites of his funeral.

Tyndale's use of the word **Carkas** should be noted, recalling as

it does the language and attitude of the Lollard wills discussed by McFarlane with their "strongly contemptuous language towards the body". Cf. McFarlane, K.B., **Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights**, Oxford 1972, 207-220, esp. 210-11.

4 - Tyndale explains Tracy's motives for bestowing goods upon the poor during his lifetime [D1v 32- D2r 12]. It was not his intention to use charity to bargain with God, nor to bind those who received his charity to pray for his soul. Rather such charity was partial recognition of the thanks and love due to God for the salvation of mankind through the blood of Christ. Charity or good works were part of Tracy's duty and sprang from his inner faith and right-relationship with God. Good works were part of Tracy's covenant relationship with God and his gifts to the poor were a partial discharge of his duties under that covenant. Cf. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 90. For a discussion of Tyndale's understanding of the place of works in the Christian's life, cf. **Smeeton**, 135-40

yng & selling w[ith] god, yt is without binding  
those poore vnto any other appoynted pray  
ers than god hath bounde vs alreedy, one to  
pray for another one to helpe another, as he  
5 hath helped vs, but paciently abydinge for  
ye blessinges that god hath appoynted vnto  
all maner good workes trustinge faythful-  
ly to hys promes, thankyng as ye maye se by  
his wordes, ye bloude of Christe for the re-  
10 ward promised to his workes & not ye good  
nes of the workes as thoughe he had done  
more then hys dutye, or all that: And assyg- [1]  
ned by wrytyng vnto whom an other part  
shoulde be distributed, and geuyng the rest  
15 to hys executoures, that no strife should be.  
which executours were by right ye heires of  
all yt was leafte to them: These thinges I say  
are signes eudent not only of a good christen  
man, but also of a perfect christen man, and of  
20 such a one as neded not to be agast & despe-  
rate for feare of the paynful paynes of pur  
gatory, which who so fearith as they sayde [2]  
it can not but vtterly abhore death: seing yt  
Christ is ther no longer thy Lorde, after he  
25 hath brought the thither, but arte excluded  
from his satisfaction, & must satisfy for thy  
selfe alone, & that w[ith] suffering payne onlye  
or els taryng the satisfyng of them that

shall neuer satisfy ynough for them selues or  
30 gaping for ye popes pardons, which haue so [3]  
great dowtes & dangers, what in the mynd &  
entent of the graunter, & what in the purcha-  
ser ere they can be truely obteyned w[ith] all due  
circumstances, and much les certitude yt they

D2r

1 - D2r 12-22: Tracy's conduct of his affairs is for Tyndale a sign that he is among God's elect. His charity and his efforts to avoid disputes among his heirs are acts of love which flow naturally from his inner faith in Christ and fulfill God's law to "**beleue in Christe and loue thy neyboure**". cf. Tyndale, **Exposition of I John**, Parker Society II, 188.

2 - **Sayde** [D2r 22] reads **Feigne** in Foxe's edition of 1572/3. The latter reading makes better sense of the passage: those who are foolish enough to believe in the invented Purgatory are right to fear death, for in Purgatory Christ is no longer Lord. If a soul was to find its way to the limbo of Purgatory it is excluded from the justification wrought by Christ's death and must rather make satisfaction with God by its own efforts through the pains and torments of that place, through the prayers of others who cannot give satisfaction for themselves, let alone for others, or by craving papal indulgencies.

3 - Documents relating to the theory of Indulgences are given in Kidd, B.J., **Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation**, Oxford 1911, esp. I, II and VI. Tyndale's comments on indulgences and papal pardons are characteristically logical and un-elaborated and form an interesting comparison to Luther's arguments on the same subject in the **Ninety-Five Theses** [1517] - cf. Kidd, **Documents**, XI. Tyndale argues that the intention of the granter of pardons is suspect, and those who receive and purchase the pardons may not well understand what they do. In any case the necessity for such pardons is questionable, for the existence of Purgatory itself is doubtful [D2v 28-34].

Cf. Wyclif, **De Ecclesia**, cap. 23.



haue any authoritie at al. Paule trusted to  
be dissolued & to be with Christ. Steuen de- [1]  
syred Christe to take his spirite, the prophe-  
tes desyred god to take theyr soules from them  
5 & al the sayntes went with a lusty corage to  
deth, neither fearyng or teaching vs to feare  
any such crudelitie. Where hath the church [2]  
then gotten authoritie to bynde vs from be-  
ynge so perfyth, from hauyng any suche fayth  
10 in the goodnes of god oure father, and lorde  
Christ, & to make suche perfytnes & fayth of  
al heresies the greatest? Salomon sayeth [3]  
iii. are insaciable, & the fourth sayeth neuer,  
It is ynoughe. But there is a fyth called  
15 dame auaryce, with as greadye a gutte, as  
melynge a mawe, as wyde a throte, as ga-  
pynge a mouth, & with as rauenyng teeth as  
the beast, which the more she eateth, the hon-  
gryer she is. An vnquiet euyl, neuer at rest, a  
20 blynde monstre & a surmising beast, fearing  
at the fall of euerye leafe. Quid non morta- [4]  
lia, pectora cogis, auri sacra fames? What  
doth not yt holy honger compel them that loue  
this worlde inordinately, to committe? Might [5]  
25 that deuyls bealy be once ful, trueth shoulde  
haue audience, & wordes be construed a ryght  
& taken in the same sence, as they be ment.  
Though it seme not impossible haplye that [6]

there myghte be a place, where the soules  
30 might be kepte for a space, to be taught and  
instructe: yet that there shoulde be suche a  
Iayle as they Iangle, and suche facions as  
they fayne, is playne impossible & repugnant  
to ye scripture: for when a man is translated vt-

D2v

1 - Tyndale questions the legitimacy of belief in Purgatory: the saints, especially Paul and Stephen all died confident in their faith and trusting to be united with God. They did not fear Purgatory, nor does scripture teach Christians to fear such a place. It should be noted that as when discussing other theological questions, Tyndale turns first to scripture as his authority. Cf. **Acts** 7:59; **II Corinthians** 5:1. Tyndale, **Introduction to Genesis**, Parker Society I, 398; **Practice of Prelates**, Parker Society II, 333.

2 - Tyndale questions the authority of the Church to enforce belief in Purgatory because there is no Biblical basis for the doctrine. He recognises that by enforcing belief in Purgatory the Church prevents the faithful from placing their whole trust and confidence in the merciful goodness of God and the saving death of Christ. Indeed the Church has so departed from the truth that it declares those such as William Tracy who place their faith in Christ alone to be the greatest of heretics.

3 - **Proverbs** 30:15

4 - Vergil, **Aeneid**, iii, 56.

D2v 14-24: Tyndale expands upon the avarice of the clergy first discussed D1v 6ff. Avarice is described in allegorical terms which recalls both the language of **Proverbs** and **Revelation**. Cf. Tyndale's use of "**vnsaciable covetousness**", **The Obedience of a Christian Man**, Parker Society I, 146.

5 - D2v 24-27: The devilish appetite of the clergy for money obscures the truth even when the clergy preach it Cf. Tyndale, **ibid.**, 146: **Because your living and your preaching are so contrary and because they grope out in every sermon your open**

and manifest lies, and smell your insatiable covetousness they believe you not when you preach truth.

6 - D2v 28-34: Tyndale accepts that there might be a "third place", neither Heaven nor Hell in which souls might be kept for a space after death for their instruction. However it is inconceivable that it should be the sort of gaol suggested by the doctrine of Purgatory, for such a place has no foundation in scripture. It is possible that the dispute between Tyndale and George Joye over the understanding of the Greek **Anastasis** forms the background to Tyndale's discussion and tone in D2v 28-31. Cf. **Smeeton**, 73; n.227.

terly out of the kyngdome of Sathan, & so [1]  
confirmed in grace that he can not synne, so  
burnyng in loue that his lust can not be pluc  
ked from gods wyll, & beynge partaker wyth  
5 vs of the promises of god, & vnder the com-  
maundementes: what coulde be denyed him in  
that depe innocencie of his most kynde fa-  
ther, that hath leafte no mercy vnpromysed,  
& axinge it therto in the name of his sonne,  
10 Iesus, the childe of his hertes lust, which is  
our lorde, & hath leaft no mercy vnderued  
for vs? namely when god hath sworne yt he [2]  
wil put of rightuousnes, & be to vs a father  
& that of al mercy, and hath slayne his most  
15 deare sonne Iesus to confirme his othe.  
Finallye seyng that Christes loue taketh  
al to the best, & nothing is here that may not  
be wel vnderstanded, (the circumstaunces decla  
ryng in what sence al was ment) they ought [3]  
20 to haue interpreted it charitablye, yf oughte  
had ben founde doubtful or semyng to sounde  
a mysse. Moreouer yf any thinge had bene [4]  
therin that coulde not haue be[n] taken wel, yet  
theyr parte had bene to haue interprete it as  
25 spoken of ydlenes of the head by the reason  
of syckenes, for as muche as the man was  
vertuous, wise, & wel lerned, & of good fame  
& report, & founde in the fayth while he was

a lyue, but yf they say he was suspect when  
30 he was a lyue, then is theyr doynge so much  
the worse, & to be thought yt they feare his  
doctrine when he was a lyue and mistrusted  
theyr owne parte, their consciences testify-  
inge to them yt he helde none other doctrine

[5]

D3r

1 - Tyndale argues that once a man has been released from **the kyngdome of Sathan** by virtue of his faith in Christ he is **so confirmed in grace that he can not synne**. This is a clear departure from the Lutheran **simul iustus et peccator** and reflects more the teaching of Wyclif and his followers. Cf. Hughes, P., **The King's Proceedings, Vol. I of The Reformation in England**, London 1954, 142; **Select English Works of John Wyclif**, ed. Arnold, T., Oxford 1869-71, III:25, "The Prayer of Habakkuk"; Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 111.

The point Tyndale wishes to make is not so much that a state of sinless perfection is possible here on earth. Rather he wishes to stress once again that following on from election the faithful Christian will be moved by love and the Holy Spirit to live according to God's law [D3r 3]. Cf. Smeeton, 124-44. If Tyndale accepted Wyclif's metaphysical framework (which is never entirely clear, but cf. Tyndale, **Pathway**, Parker Society I, 14-15), he would naturally conclude that the predestined could not fall from grace. They were eternally and ontologically distinct: cf. Keen, M., "Wyclif, The Bible, Transubstantiation" in **Wyclif**, 3; Leff, G., "Wyclif and Hus: A Doctrinal Comparison" in **Wyclif**, 112.

The use of the term lust [D3r 3] is typical of Tyndale's treatment of law, love and the Spirit: cf. Smeeton, 147.

2 - God has sworn to forgo the rightful punishment which should be man's lot and has condescended to be **to vs a father & that of al mercy**. The covenant relationship between God and man is sealed with Christ's blood on God's side and by faith and

works of love on man's; it is thus inconceivable to Tyndale that such a God should have such a foul place as the Purgatory taught by the Roman Church. Cf. Tyndale, **Exposition of I John**, Parker Society II, 183-4. Wycliffite parallels are suggested by Smeeton who quotes **Selections from English Wycliffite Writings**, ed. Hudson, A., Cambridge 1978, 54/78-9, 54/95-55/98.

3 - Tyndale argues that it is imperative that the ecclesiastical authorities should judge the actions of Christians with charity. All true Christians will naturally strive to live by the law of God which included charity to one's neighbour as a result or out-flowing of their faith. cf. Tyndale, **The Parable of the Wicked Mammon**, Parker Society I, 77. In failing to observe God's law, it may be assumed that the Church has departed from Christ.

4 - Tyndale contends that any dubious or apparently heretical passages in the **Testament** should have been attributed to mental sloth as death approached for it was common knowledge that Tracy was a virtuous and wise man, of sound faith and life. This view, probably based upon personal knowledge [cf. Dlr n.6 above], contrasts with the description of Tracy given by Robert Joseph. Cf. **The Letter Book of Robert Joseph, Monk-Scholar of Evesham and Gloucester College**, Oxford, 1530-3, ed. Aveling, H., and Pantin, W.A., Oxford 1967, Letter 72, 100-2.

5 - Tyndale argues that if the ecclesiastical authorities claim that Tracy's views were suspect during his lifetime, their action after his death are the worse, for it appears that they were afraid of the truth of his teaching and dared not act while he was alive. It is possible that in truth the authorities were intimidated by Tracy's social position rather than the force of



his arguments. Thomas More acknowledged this when he commented:  
in some places the heretykes waxed so strong, & wolde not be  
arrested for them [their civil protectors]. Cf. **The Complete  
Works of St. Thomas More**, Yale 1979, : **The Apology**, ed. Trapp,  
J.B., IX, 161.

in longe penury, skant left at their departing  
a halfe peny. Thou wilt peradventure say, yt  
they shal suffre ye greuous paines of purga-  
tory, be it so, yet may they be quenshed both  
5 w[ith] lesse cost & labour, ye popes pardone is re- [1]  
dy at hande, where both ye crime & ye peine are  
remitted at once, & verily there is such a plenty  
of them in al places, yt I can skantlye beleue yt  
there lyueth any man yt is worth an halfe pe- [2]  
10 ny, but yt he is sure of some pardons in store  
And as for this man he had innumerable.  
Not w[ith] standing this distribucion is not of ne-  
cessite (for vnto him yt is dampned it profiteth  
nothinge. And he yt is not dampned is sure of  
15 saluacion) why are ye so hote agaynst thys [3]  
man, are not his goodes in his owne power,  
he shall gyue a rekenynge of them vnto god, &  
not vnto you, here you may se, of how light  
iudgement you haue condempned these thinges,  
20 nowe let vs ponder the residewe.

What hath he here offended which re-  
herseth nothing but ye wordes of S. Austen [4]  
yf you improue these thinges, then reprove  
you S. Austen hym selfe. Nowe if you can  
25 fynde ye meanes to alowe S. Austen & chary  
tably to expounde his wordes, why do you  
not admitte the same fauour vnto your bro-

D6v

ther, specially seeing charitie requireth it. Be  
sydes yt, no man can deny, but yt these thinges  
are true, althoughe S. Austens authoritie  
were of no reputacion w[ith] you, for yf these [1]  
5 thinges were of so great value before god,  
then Christ had euil prouided for his martyrs  
whose bodyes are commonly cast out to be con-  
sumed w[ith] fyre, & wilde beastes, not w[ith]standing  
I wolde be afrayed to say yt they were any  
10 thing the worse for the burning of their bo-  
dies or tearinge of it in pieces. Be therfore  
charitable towardes your brother and pon-  
der his wordes (whiche are rather saynte  
Austens) some what more iustly.

D7r

1 - Frith does not accept that the pope can issue indulgences and pardons which free the sinner both from the guilt of the sin he has committed and from the punishment arising from that sin in return for the payment of money to the Church. Frith's argument might be compared with that of Luther in the **Ninety Five Theses** (1517), ed. Kidd, B.J., **Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation**, Oxford 1911, II. Zwingli's position with regard to indulgences is described by Bullinger, **Reformationsgeschichte nach dem Autographon herausg.** von Hottinger, J.J. und Vogeli, H.H., Frauenfeld 1838-40, I, 14-18. Frith's opposition to indulgences is not fully developed in this text, but it is clear that his doctrine of justification by faith, "Justification by grace, in Christ, through faith", Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 31, would not find indulgences necessary: the man saved by faith through God's good grace has no need of the pope's indulgences.

2 - Frith argues that because papal indulgences are so common, William Tracy must have acquired **Innumerable**. This assertion does not appear to reflect a personal acquaintance with William Tracy during his life and should be contrasted with Tyndale's clearly personal reminiscence of Tracy, Dlr 25.

3 - Wealth is in the gift and control of the owner, held in trust from God. It is to God that an account must be made of its use. Frith believed that all goodness comes from God and that his gifts may be used to give glory to God; the Christian, who by faith lived in Christ would naturally employ his wealth charitably to the good of his neighbours. Cf. **A Mirror, or Glass, to Know Thyself**; Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 47-9. Wright

had perceived by experience, how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue...

For a discussion of Tyndale's view of the role of the laity in the Church, cf. **Smeeton**, 167-72.

4 - The ecclesiastical authorities exceed their authority by counting whatever displeases them or threatens their worldly interests as heresy. Cf. Tyndale, **An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue**, Parker Society III, 94; **The Practice of Prelates**, Parker Society II, 249; **Smeeton**, 175-8 for discussion of "prelacy" as a concept in Tyndale's work and Wycliffite parallels, cf. **Sermon CLXXIX in Select English Works of John Wyclif**, ed. Arnold, T., Oxford 1869-71, II, 118; "Of Prelates" in **The English Works of Wyclif Hitherto Unprinted**, ed. Matthew, F.D., E.E.T.S. (O.S. 74), London 1902, 52ff.

5 - It is the duty of the true believer to pray earnestly for the conversion of the ecclesiastical authorities from worldly to spiritual concerns which may be known through scripture. Cf. Tyndale, **The Obedience of a Christian Man**, Parker Society I, 258. Prayer on behalf of one's neighbour was a Christian duty springing from faith and love for God and his law as part of every Christian's covenant relationship with God.

6 - Cf. **Isaiah 2:3**; **Revelation 7:17**. Tyndale draws his imagery from these passages rather than quoting them **verbatim**.

John Frith's Exposition of Master William Tracy's Testament -  
The Text.

IT is merueyll but here be somewhat yt [1]  
they improue for their myndis be so in  
toxicate that there is nothing but they wyll  
note it with a black cole, & yet all may be e- [2]  
5 stablished by the testimony of scripture, for  
fayth is the suer persuasion of oure mynde [3]  
of god and his goodnes towards vs. And  
where as is a suer persuasion of the mind,  
there can be no doubting or mistrust, for he  
10 that doubteth is lyke the floude of the sea [4]  
which is tossed with windes & carried with  
vyolence, and let not that man thynke that  
he shal obtayne any thing of God. And ther  
fore Sainte Austyne sayeth, yf I doubtte I [5]  
15 shall be no holye seede. Furthermore  
where as he loketh thorowe the grace and [6]  
merytes of Christe to optayne remission of

D4r

his synnes, surely it is a faythfull sayinge, [1]  
and worthy to be commendid, for it is euyne  
ye same that Peter professed. Where he sai  
eth, vnto him do al the prophetes beare wit [2]  
5 nesse, that thorowe hys name as manye as  
beleue in him shal receyue remission of their  
synnes. Moreouer in that he trusteth tho- [3]

rowe Christ to haue resurrection of bodye  
and soule they haue no cause to blame him,  
10 for thus doeth Paule argue, yf Christ be ri  
sen, then shall we also ryse, and yf Chryste [4]  
be not rysen, then shal not we ryse, but christ [5]  
is rysen, for his sowle was not leftte in hel,  
therefore shall we also ryse (whome Chryste [6]  
15 shall brynge with hym) & be immortal, boeth  
body and soule. And therefore he doeth righ-  
tuously and godly deduce his resurrection  
by chrystes, by whom the father hath geuen  
vs all thinges, or els should not be, But  
20 there are some, that gather of hys wordes,  
that he shoulde recounte the soule to be mor [7]  
tall. Whiche thinge after my iudgement is  
more suttelly gathered then eyther truely or  
charitably, for seyng ther was neuer Chri  
25 sten men that euer so thoughte (not the ve-  
ry pagaynes) what godly zele, or brotherlye  
loue was there which caused them so to sur-  
mise, for a good man wolde not once dreame  
such a thinge: but I pray you why shoulde [8]  
30 we not say that the soule doeth verely ryse  
which thorow Christe rying from ye fylth  
of synne, doeth enter wyth the body into a  
new conuersation of lyfe, which they shall  
leade together wyth out possibilitie of syn-

**D4r:**

- 1 - In the original text [C and D] the editor reproduces passages from the Testament. In this edition these passages which have been edited above have been omitted.
- 2 - The contemporary ecclesiastical authorities are so filled with a sense of their own power that they will even condemn teaching which accords with scripture.
- 3 - Faith is the certain disposition of the mind towards God and the absolute certainty of God's goodness towards the Christian.
- 4 - **James** 1:6-7. Cf. use of the same passage, **Wickliefes Wicket**, A3v 14-17.
- 5 - **Augustine**. A precise origin for this quotation cannot be traced. It seems likely, on stylistic grounds, to be from **Confessions** - possibly a general ref. to **Confessions** Bk.7.10. It should be noted that neither Foxe nor Wright does not produce a source for this quotation in their respective editions.
- 6 - Tracy hopes to obtain remission of sins by the grace secured for mankind through the death of Christ. Frith believes this to be a "faythfull sayinge" [D4v 1] which represents true Christian teaching.

**D4v:**

- 1 - **I Timothy** 1:15
- 2 - **Acts** 10:43
- 3 - Frith states that Tracy's belief accords with St. Paul's teaching, therefore the ecclesiastical authorities have no case against him.
- 4 - **I Corinthians** 15:13-17



5 - **Acts 2:31**

6 - Tracy was correct to deduce his own resurrection from that of Christ: without resurrection all faith is in vain. Frith bases his argument on St. Paul [**Acts 2:31-36; I Corinthians 15:13-17**]

7 - The words to which some critics had taken exception were:  
**Trusting without any doubte or mistrust, that by hys grace and the merites of Iesus Christe, and by the vertue of his passion, & of his resurrection, I haue and shall haue remissyon of my synnes, & resurrection of body and soule accordynge as it is wrytten. I beleue that my redemer lyueth, and that in the last daye I shall ryse out of the earth ... [C3r 23-32]**

The critics had attempted to fasten upon Tracy the belief that the soul "slept" between death and the general resurrection. Cf. comments by Wright, N.T., **The Work of John Frith**, Sutton Courtenay 1978, 45, 565 n.6; Clebsch, W.A., **England's Earliest Protestants**, Yale 1964, 108, 129, 219ff. The issue of the state of the soul after death was particularly discussed among English Protestant writers and was a source of controversy between William Tyndale and George Joye - cf. Smeeton, D.D., **Lollard Themes in the Reformation Theology of William Tyndale**, Ann Arbor 1986, 72-3.

8 - D4v 29 - D5r 13: Frith argues that the soul rises through the resurrection of Christ because when the soul is joined to Christ through faith it rises from the sinfulness of its former life. Before this it **seemeth to lye secret** [D5r 5]. The comments show a caution and reluctance to be drawn into the "soul-sleep" controversy. Cf. Wright, **Frith**, 45 where he states

that Frith suggests" a way round the problem while refusing to take sides openly in a debate which might have seen a real breach between Tyndale and himself.

ning, we say also of god (by a certaine phra  
se of scripture) yt he ariseth, when he openith  
vnto vs his power, & presence. And why may  
we not say ye same thinge of the soule whi-  
5 che in the meane ceason semeth to lye secret  
& then shall expresse vnto vs (thorow Christ)  
her power and presence, in takynge agayne  
her natural body. Why shoulde ye then con  
dempne these thynges. There is no man yt  
10 can receyue venom by those wordes, except  
he haue suche a spyderouse nature that he  
can turne an hony combe into perelous poy  
son. Therefore let vs loke on the residewe.

Here he onely clea-

15 uith to god, & his mercy, beyng surely per-  
swaded that accordinge to the testimony of  
peter, who so euer beleuith in him, through [1]  
his name shall receyue remission of synnes.  
Paule also affirmeth, yt who so euer tru- [2]  
20 steth in him shal not be confounded. And who  
can denye but thys is most true, when it is  
vnderstande of that fayth which is formed  
w[ith] hope & charitie, which the apostle calleth, [3]  
fayth, that worketh by charite. Now sythe [4]  
25 these thinges maye be expounded so purely,  
forsouth he vttereth his owne enuy which  
woulde otherwyse wrest the mynde of the  
maker of this testament. And as touching

the addition of thys particle wyth out any  
30 other mannes worke, or workes: it semith yt  
he had respecte vnto the sayinge of Peter,

[5]

D5r

- 1 - **Acts** 10:43
- 2 - **I Peter** 2:6. Frith wrongly attributes this text to Paul.
- 3 - **Galatians** 5:6
- 4 - **Sythe:** from Middle English **Sipen**, after, since - M.E.D.
- 5 - Frith returns to the detailed examination of the **Testament** at the clause beginning **Wyth out any other mannes worke.**

whych declareth yt there is no nother name [1]  
vnder heauen geuen vnto men, in whiche we  
should be saued. Besides yt S. Paule com-  
mitteth ye power of sanctifying to Christe [2]  
5 only. Where he sayeth, boeth he yt sanctifi-  
eth (that is to say Christ) & they that are san-  
ctified (yt is to say ye faithful) are all of one  
(that is god) & surely yf we laboured to pre-  
cell ech other in loue & charite, we shoulde [3]  
10 not condempne this innocent. But we should  
rather measure his wordes by ye rule of cha-  
ritie, in so much yt a thing ye at first sight  
dyd appeare wickid, yet shuld we take it in  
the best sence, not iudging wyckedly of our  
15 brother, but referringe ye secrete iudgement [4]  
vnto Christ which can not be deceiued by ye  
pretence of charitie, yet therin they maye re-  
ioyce, & therefore they wold be loth to condemp-  
me ye innocent, but let vs passe these thinges,  
20 & se what folowith.

Why loke  
you so sowerly good brothern? why do you [5]  
not rather gyue him great thanckes? syth he

1 - **Acts 4:12**

2 - **Hebrews 2:11.** Frith provides an exegesis of this text, D5v 5-8.

3 - Frith believes that William Tracy was condemned because the ecclesiastical hierarchy lacked Christian charity or **caritas.**

4 - God alone knows the inner motives of men; Christians must judge the actions of their fellow men with charity. Frith condemns the ecclesiastical authorities by implication for their attempt to judge men's inner faith.

5 - **Good brethern:** probably intended in an ironical vein to refer to Frith's "brother Christians" the persecutors of William Tracy.

hath openid vnto such a proper distinction by ye which you may escape ye scholati call snares & mases, he only deseruith ye name of a mediator, which beinge god became  
5 man to make men gods. And who can by right be called a mediator betwene god & man, but he yt is both god & man, therfor sith we haue such a mediator, whiche in all pointes hath prouid our infirmiti (sauing only in synne)  
10 which is exalted aboue ye heuains, & sitteth on the ryght hande of god, & hath in all thinges obtayned ye nexte power vnto hym, of whose impery all thinges depende, let vs come w[ith] suer confidence vnto ye throne of grace.  
15 Al other he callith petitioners which receue grace, but are not able to empresse & power therof into any other man, for yt doeth onely god distribute w[ith] his finger (yt is to say, the spirite of god) throw christ, I merueyl that  
20 you are angrye w[ith] hym that hath done you such a great plesure, how beit I do ascribe thys condempnation rather vnto ye canonistes then vnto deuines. For the godly diuines  
25 proper sayinges, but paraduenture thys might moue their pacience, yt he wyll distribute no porcion of his goodes, for ye intent that any man shuld say or do for ye weale of his soule

[1]

[2]

[3]

[4]



are you so sore afrayed of youre market?

30

Be not afrayed, ye haue alues ynough to

souple that sore, ye know yt he is not bounde

[5]

vnder payne of dampnation to distribute hys

goodes on that facion, for then those holy fa-

thers were in shrewd case which continuing

D6r

- 1 - **Scholasticall snares and mases:** Frith refers to the doctrine of Purgatory as taught by the late mediaeval Church. His thought parallels the argument of his **A Disputation of Purgatory**, printed in 1531. The language recalls the **Snares of Antichrist** found in Frith's translation and adaptation of Luther's **De Antichristo** published in 1528. For discussion of Frith's doctrine of Purgatory see Wright, **Frith**, 34-5; 39-41. **Mases** should be read as mazes, referring to the complex arguments of the scholastic theologians, rather than as Masses, referring to the complex system of memorial masses and obit days developed by the late mediaeval Church as a result of its doctrine of Purgatory. Frith may have chosen his words with a deliberate ambiguity so as to suggest to his reader an attack upon both the theory and practice of the contemporary Church.
- 2 - **Hebrews** 4:15-16. D6r 6-19 demonstrates the interdependence of Frith's doctrinal teaching: scripture, justification, Christology and soteriology are all brought to bear upon the concept of Purgatory. Cf. Wright, **Frith**, 21-4.
- 3 - The image of the **Spirite of god** as a **Finger** is derived from **Luke** 11:20.
- 4 - Frith suggests that the condemnation of Tracy's Testament is due to the clerks trained in canon law rather than the theologians. Theologians he argues could not condemn teaching supported by such orthodox authorities; they might, however, join with the parish priests in objecting to the attack upon their income implicit in Tracy's denial of the need for mortuary bequests to the clergy.

5 - Frith argues that Tracy cannot be bound under pain of damnation to leave money to the Church, for if it was heresy not to bequeath money to the Church the Fathers who lived such impecunious lives and who could leave the Church nothing must certainly be damned.

in longe penury, skant left at their departing  
a halfe peny. Thou wilt peradventure say, yt  
they shal suffre ye greuouse paines of purga-  
tory, be it so, yet may they be quenshed both  
5 w[ith] lesse cost & labour, ye popes pardone is re- [1]  
dy at hande, where both ye crime & ye peine are  
remitted at once, & verily there is such a plenty  
of them in al places, yt I can skantlye beleue yt  
there lyueth any man yt is worth an halfe pe- [2]  
10 ny, but yt he is sure of some pardons in store  
And as for this man he had innumerable.  
Not w[ith] standing this distribucion is not of ne-  
cessite (for vnto him yt is dampned it profiteth  
nothinge. And he yt is not dampned is sure of  
15 saluacion) why are ye so hote agaynst thys [3]  
man, are not his goodes in his owne power,  
he shall gyue a rekenynge of them vnto god, &  
not vnto you, here you may se, of how light  
iudgement you haue condempned these thinges,  
20 nowe let vs ponder the residewe.

What hath he here offended which re-  
herseth nothing but ye wordes of S. Austen [4]  
yf you improue these thinges, then reprove  
you S. Austen hym selfe. Nowe if you can  
25 fynde ye meanes to alowe S. Austen & chary-  
tably to expounde his wordes, why do you  
not admitte the same fauour vnto your bro-

D6v

ther, specially seeing charitie requireth it. Be  
sydes yt, no man can deny, but yt these thinges  
are true, althoughe S. Austens authoritie  
were of no reputacion w[ith] you, for yf these [1]  
5 thinges were of so great value before god,  
then Christ had euil prouided for his martyrs  
whose bodyes are commonly cast out to be con-  
sumed w[ith] fyre, & wilde beastes, not w[ith]standing  
I wolde be afrayed to say yt they were any  
10 thing the worse for the burning of their bo-  
dies or tearinge of it in pieces. Be therfore  
charitable towardes your brother and pon-  
der his wordes (whiche are rather saynte  
Austens) some what more iustly.

D7r

1 - Frith does not accept that the pope can issue indulgences and pardons which free the sinner both from the guilt of the sin he has committed and from the punishment arising from that sin in return for the payment of money to the Church. Frith's argument might be compared with that of Luther in the **Ninety Five Theses** (1517), ed. Kidd, B.J., **Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation**, Oxford 1911, II. Zwingli's position with regard to indulgences is described by Bullinger, **Reformationsgeschichte nach dem Autographon herausg.** von Hottinger, J.J. und Vogeli, H.H., Frauenfeld 1838-40, I, 14-18. Frith's opposition to indulgences is not fully developed in this text, but it is clear that his doctrine of justification by faith, "Justification by grace, in Christ, through faith", Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 31, would not find indulgences necessary: the man saved by faith through God's good grace has no need of the pope's indulgences.

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comments that Frith's teaching on Christian stewardship owes much to Augustine. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 49.

4 - Augustine, *De cura apro mortuis*, quoted in **Testament**, C3v 19ff.

William Tracy has merely repeated the teaching of St. Augustine which is approved by the Church. Frith argues that Tracy's words should thus be judged by the Church with charity. The almost ethical imperative of charity which runs through the remainder of Frith's **Exposition** should be noted: it is the natural end of faith and the objective of the Christian's life.

#### D7r

1 - Frith argues that if it is true that the manner of the burial of a body affects the eternal well-being of the soul, Christ ill-provided for his saints and martyrs whose bodies were destroyed through persecution. Frith believes that Tracy's words must be accepted by virtue of common-sense, regardless of any authority which might be ascribed to Augustine their original author. For Frith death was the conclusion of the process of purging the body of sin after the soul had been cleansed through faith: cf. Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 40-41; as such what happened after death was bound to be irrelevant to Frith. This passage may reflect something of the argument which was to surface between Tyndale and Joye as to the nature of the resurrection of the body in 1535-6. The Christian prejudice in favour of burial as opposed to any other form of disposal of bodies should be noted in this context, cremation only being allowed by canon law in 1965 in the Roman Church and 1969 in the Church of England.

There is no man doubteth but that [1]  
fayth is the roote of the tree, & the  
quickenyng power, out of whiche all good  
fruites sprynge, therefore it is necessary that  
5 the fayth be present or els we shoulde loke  
for good workes in vayne: for w[ith]out fayth [2]  
it is impossible to please God. In so much  
that saynt Austen called those workes that [3]  
are done before fayth, swyft runnyng out  
10 of the way. Moreouer that oure merite can  
not properlye be ascribed vnto our workes  
doth the Euangelist teach vs saying. When [4]  
ye haue done all thinges that are commaunded  
you, say we are vnprofitable seruauntes, we  
15 haue done but our dutie. By the which say  
ing he doth in a maner feare vs from putting  
any confidence in our workes: And so is our  
glorious pryde, & high mynde excluded. Then  
where is our meryte? Harke what S. Au-  
20 sten sayeth. The death of the lorde is my me- [5]  
ryte. I am not with out meryte as longe as  
that merciful lorde fayleth me not. &c. This  
death of the lorde can not profyte me, except  
I receyue it through fayth, and therefore he  
25 reckeneth ryghte well that the fayeth in  
Christe is al his meryte. I meane the fayth  
whych worketh through Christ. That is to [6]  
saye fayth, fourmed with hope and charitie



and not that dead historicall fayth, whyche  
30 the deuyls haue and tremble. Furthermore

D7v

1 - Faith is the root of all good works and is the precondition for the Christian life. Cf. Wright, N.T., Frith, 45-6: writing of Frith's Exposition of the Testament, Wright says, "One of the clearest statements in his own works (as opposed to his translations) of the doctrine of justification by faith, and of the good works which follow from faith .... free forgiveness flows into good works, death is overcome, and the rule of charity must bind all things together in perfect harmony". Similar points are addressed by Frith in A Letter ... to the Faithful Followers of Christ's Gospel; The Bulwark against Rastell; A Mirror, or Glass, to Know Thyself.

2 - The man without faith cannot be saved. Faith, inspired by God's initiative of grace to sinful man, unites the believer with Christ and his atoning death and perfect righteousness. Cf. Wright, Frith, 29-38. Justification has three results: assurance of salvation; understanding of paradoxical nature of Christian life - the Christian becomes righteous not through his own efforts but because through faith he is in Christ; good works flow from faith and show to the Christian and his neighbours that he is of the elect. Faith is the precondition of good works which are themselves a sign of election; good works do not contribute to the believer's righteousness before God or to his justification for Frith endorses a doctrine of *simul iustus et peccator*. This passage demonstrates the unity and complexity of Frith's theology.

3 - Augustine, In Epistolam Joannis ad Parthos, Migne, Vol. 35, Tract.X, col. 2054, 1. ✓

4 - Luke 17:10. Scriptural authority to show that man cannot secure righteousness or justification before God through his own works.

5 - Augustine, In Psalmum LXXXV Enarratio, Migne, Vol. 37, col. 1082, 2.

Christ's death is only meritorious when it is received by the Christian with faith.

6 - Frith defines faith in order to contrast mere belief in the reality of certain historical events (a sterile faith akin to knowledge) with true faith which is shaped and informed by hope and charity. Through union with Christ true faith leads to a "deep cheerfulness of the forgiven sinner", for what is true of Christ becomes true of the believer. True faith is dynamic and active for it enables the believer to live according to God's law and do good works. Cf. Wright, Frith, 21-49. The unity of Frith's thought should be noted.

what saynt Austen iudgeth of our merytes  
he expresseth in these wordes. Marke the  
Psalme, howe proude heads wyll not re-  
ceyue the croune, when he sayeth, he that re- [1]  
5 demed thy lyfe from corruption: which crou-  
neth the (saith the psalme) here vpon woulde  
a man saye, which crouneth the, my merites [2]  
graunte that, my vertue hath done it, I haue  
deserued it, it is not frelye gyuen, but gyue  
10 care rather to his pleasure, for that is but  
thyne owne sayinge, and euery man is a ly-  
er, but here what god sayeth, whiche crou-  
neth the in compassion and mercy, of mercy  
he crouneth the, of compassion he crouneth  
15 the, for thou wast not worthye yt he shoulde  
call the, and whom he shoulde iustify when  
he called the. And whom he shoulde glorifye  
when he iustifyeth the. For the remanautes  
are saued by the election whiche is by grace  
20 and faouore. Nowe yf it be by grace then it  
is not of workes, for then grace were no  
grace. For vnto him that worketh is the re- [3]  
warde imputed not of grace but of dutye.  
The apostle sayth, not of grace but of deu-  
25 tie, but he crouneth the in compassion & mer-  
cye, and yf thy merites haue proceded, god  
sayth vnto the, boult out thy good merytes  
and thou shalte fynde that they are my gyf

tes, this is the ryghtnousnes of God, not  
30 meanyng the ryghtuousnes wherby he him  
selfe is ryghtuous, but the ryghtuousnesse  
wherwyth he iustifyeth them whom he ma-  
keth rightuous, wherfore they were wyc-  
ked. There are Austens wordes.

D8r

1 - Psalm 103:4

2 - Augustine, *Enarratio in Psalmum CIII*, Migne, Vol. 37, col. 1348-9, 15-16.

The passage is used to illustrate the argument developed from D7v 1 above, that all goodness and justification come from God's free grace and favour not through any merit on the part of mankind. Cf. Wright, *Frith*, 29-31.

3 - Romans 4:4

Finally lette not that moue you where  
 he addeth, that a good worke maketh not a [1]  
 good man, but rather a good man maketh the  
 worke good, for there is no man but he is ey  
 5 ther good or euyl. If he be euyl, then can he  
 not do good but euyl, for according to Chri-  
 stes testimony, a rootten tree beareth no good [2]  
 fruite. And agayne he sayeth, howe can you [3]  
 saye well seyng you your selues are euyl.

10 But yf he be good, he shal also bryng forth  
 good fruite at his ceason, howe be it that  
 fruite maketh not the man good, for excepte  
 the man be fyrst good he can not bryng forth  
 good fruite, but the tree is knowen by the [4]  
 15 fruite. And therefore fayth as a quyckenynge [5]  
 roote must euer go before, whych of wicked  
 maketh vs rightwyse & good, whiche thinge  
 our workes coulde neuer bryng to passe, out  
 of this fountaine springe those good workes [6]  
 20 which iustify vs before men, that is to saye [7]  
 declare vs to be very rightuouse, for before  
 god we are verely iustified by that roote of  
 fayth, for he searcheth the hert, and therefore  
 this iust iudge doth inwardely iustify or con-  
 25 dempne, gyuyng sentence according to fayth  
 but men must loke for the workes, for theyr  
 sight can not entre into the herte, & therefore  
 they fyrst gyue iudgement of workes, & are ma

ny tymes deceyed vnder the cloke of hipo-  
30 crisisie. You maye se that here is nothing, but [8]  
that a good man maye expounde it well, all  
be it the chyldren of thys worlde, do seke a [9]  
doubt where none is.

F I N I S.

Ouerseene by. M.C. [10]

D8v



- 1 - Frith refers to **Testament**, C4r 4-9.
- 2 - **Matthew 7:17; Luke 6:43**
- 3 - **Matthew 12:34**
- 4 - **Matthew 12:33**
- 5 - Faith preceeds all good works. Faith makes the believer righteous and good through incorporation in Christ. Good works alone could never reconcile man to God. Cf. **Exposition**, D7v 1 - D8r 34; Wright, N.T., **Frith**, 21-49.
- 6 - Faith is the fountain from which spring good works which serve to justify the Christian before his brethren: "**The good works which are the fruit of faith announce to the believer and to those who observe his life, that he is indeed Christ's**" - Wright, **Frith**, 31. The sinner is justified by faith toward God, and by works before men - Wright, **Frith**, 32.
- 7 - Before God the believer is justified by faith, for God judges the heart whereas men look only at outward works. Cf. Wright, **Frith**, 32.
- 8 - Works may deceive men through hypocrisy. Cf. **Exposition**, D5v 15-18. Some are moved to condemn the Testament and its author because they judge by the standards of the world and not by charity as Christ enjoined.
- 9 - Foxe, J., **The Whole Works of Tyndale, Frith and Barnes**, 1572/3 inserts the following phrase after worlde:

**(which with their wiles deceive them selues entryng  
so presumptuously into God's iudgement)**

It is not clear whether this is derived from a manuscript source consulted by Foxe, or whether it is an elaboration or clarification of the original text by Foxe. The phrase does not

appear in editions C or D of **Wickliefes Wicket** which are the only other Sixteenth Century editions of Frith's **Exposition** to survive.

10 - The initials **M.C.** refer to Miles Coverdale and refer to the editor of the whole compilation printed under the title **Wickliefes Wicket**, rather than to Frith's **Exposition** alone.

Go ye therefore and let [1]  
charitie be your guide, for God is cha-  
ritie, and though our Lawyers hart [2]  
woulde breake, yet must you needes  
5 iudge him a Christen man, which saith  
nothyng but that Scripture confir-  
meth. And verely the iudgement of  
this cause came out of season and euen  
vngraciously vnto our Canonistes,  
10 for they are cleane ignoraunt of Scrip-  
ture & therfore condemne all thinges  
that they read not in their law, wher-  
fore we renounce their sentence and  
appeale vnto the deuines, which will [3]  
15 soone knowe the voyce of theyr shep- [4]  
herd and gladly admite those  
thynges which are allowed by  
the Scripture wherunto  
they are accustomed.

20

F I N I S.

1 - Concluding passage found in Foxe, J., *The Whole Works*, 1572/3 only. It should be noted that the text as it stands in texts C and D of *Wickliefes Wicket* ends somewhat abruptly and this passage may have been omitted in the interests of economy of space by the printer. The attack upon canon lawyers is a development of the theme found in *Exposition*, D6r 21-22. The invocation of Charity as a guiding principle for the Christian life fits well with Frith's theme in the *Exposition*, and the image of the Shepherd might also be used to support an attribution to Frith. Cf. note 4 below.

It is interesting to note that Foxe includes a short introductory notice in his edition which appears to date the text to 1531. The notice suggests that the work was intended to influence the King and Parliament then assembled to pass judgment in favour of Tracy and his *Testament*. This passage is not encountered elsewhere and it is difficult to determine how much authority should be ascribed to it.

2 - Cf. *Exposition*, D6r 21.

3 - Cf. *Exposition*, D6r 22.

4 - Cf. Wright, N.T., *Frith*, 23. The image of the "sheep that knows the Shepherd's voice", the mind illuminated by the Holy Spirit, is distinguished as being characteristic of Frith's work.

APPENDIX I

- i. Coverdale's Introduction to the 1548 and 1550 texts of Wickliefes Wicket.
  
- ii. Jackson's Introduction to the 1612 edition of Wickliefes Wicket.

Miles Coverdale's Introduction to the 1548 and 1550 texts of  
Wickliefes Wicket.

The Text

(P) To the studious readers and professors  
of goddes most sacred word & verite,

1

ELias the Prophete, fleyng the bloody  
fury of the wycked Iesabel, who was  
5 quene of Israel: complayned and said 2  
Lord the chyldren of Israell haue forsaken  
thy conuenautes, they haue ouerthrowen thi  
ne altares, and slayne thy prophetes wyth  
the swearde. I onely haue escaped, & nowe  
10 they laye wayte for my lyfe. Unto whom the  
lorde answered saying. I haue reserued vn 3  
to my selfe. vii.m. men which haue not bow  
ed theyr knees to the ymage of Baale. So  
(good christian readers) though in the day-  
15 es of the Romyshe raygne, the people that 4  
professed the christian name had forsaken the  
conuenaunt of the Lord theyr God, distroy 5  
inge hys aultares (theyr pure, innocent and  
thankfull hertes) employnge them selues ho-  
20 rely to the persecution of the true prophetes 6  
and preachers of hys worde: Yet was not 7  
hys church vtterlye extincted, at any tyme.  
For he had alway hys numbere, as appeareth 8  
by thys lytle boke, which was wrytten well  
25 moste. cc. yeares sence, euen in the chiefe tyme 9  
of Antichristes raygne, and hath bene reser 10  
ued hytherto (not withstandinge the greate  
rage of fyre that hath not seased from that 11

30 tyme hytherto, to deuower as well the pro-  
phetes as theyr bokes, and oughte therefore  
to be the more thanfully receued of euerye  
Christian herte, knowyng for certenty that

12

Alv



God reserueth alwayes hys membres & pre  
sent consolation for them, in spyte of all the  
tyranny of the world. Howe many thousand 13  
bookes of godly mynded mens writtyng haue 14  
5 ben. bourned in thys realme sense thys lytle  
booke was fyrst written? And yet how won-  
derfully, (euen beyonde all hoope) hath the  
Lorde sterred vp his prophetes, to set forth  
and enlarge his trueth so troden downe and  
10 oppressed? Not moch vnlyke is thys (so mi- 15  
ghty a worke of God) vnto the myghty in-  
crease of the Israelites in the captiuitye of 16  
Egypt, wherby (no doubt) this wonderfull  
encrease of the Christian congregation (euen  
15 from the death of Christ, to this daye) was  
prefigured. I meane not by this wonder-  
full encrease of the great nombre of them that  
take vpon them the name of Chryste to be  
called christians: But those onely who no 17  
20 imprisonment, tormentes, or death: coulde  
put to silence so that they shoulde not bold-  
ly profes alwaies the trueth of godes word  
and testament. Amonge whom no one man  
hath more briefly and playnely, declared the  
25 true vnderstanding of the wordes of the lor-  
des supper, than dyd this authoure in thys 18  
treatyse folowyng Declaringe therin, the  
more then beastly blyndnesse of them that 19

do so sturdily bestur them selues with swerd  
30 fagote, and fyre: to compel al men to beleue  
that the wordes which Christ spake of his  
owne body, ought to be taken as spoken of  
the materiall bread that he helde in his hande

20

A2r

And that the same wordes (spoken to declare  
vnder what maner we are partakers of the  
same his body) beyng pronounced then by him,  
& nowe by euery myslyuinge priest: haue the  
5 powre & vertue to tourne the substaunce of  
bread into the substaunce of Christes body,  
& bloude, Here I would wyshe that the chri  
23 stiane reader woulde in no case be so rasshe  
as to say or thynke that this godly wrytter  
10 dyd meane in any part of this treatise, that  
Christ taking the breade dyd poynte to hys  
body saying this is my body: For that were  
an interpretation not onely voyde of all wyt  
& learninge: but also playnely repugnant to  
15 the texte. Wherin it is euident that he went  
not about to declare vnto them that his body  
24 (which they sawe) was his body (For their  
senses gaue them, & they beleued no lesse but  
it was his body, euen as you se & beleue that  
20 a cake is bread) but his intent was to declare  
25 vnto them wherfore he toke that body of the  
immaculate virgine, & what fruite they shul  
26 de haue there by. Be circumspecte therefore  
(most derely beloued in the Lorde) and let  
25 your outragiose talke geue none occasion  
27 to the aduersaries, to misreporte that hea-  
uently spirite which is (in these oure dayes  
the latter dayes of the worlde) so plentuous  
28

lye powred oute vpon all nacions and esta-  
30 tes. The spirite of the lyuinge God, the ge-  
uer of all goodnesse, leade you into all god-  
lye knowledge. So be it.

A2v

1 - **Introduction** from texts C and D of **Wickliefes Wicket** edited by M.C. [Wiles Coverdale] in 1548 and 1550. The substance of the text does not vary between versions, but it is clear that the type was re-set and corrections made when D was printed in 1550. The **Introduction** refers only to **Wickliefes Wicket** and not to the other texts printed along with it.

2 - I **Kings** 19:10; 19:14.

Marginal reference in text C and D given as **III.Reg.XIX.**

3 - I **Kings** 19:18

4 - **Romyshe raygne** refers to the period up to 1532 when Henry VIII embarked upon the legislative programme which culminated in the 1534 Act of Supremacy and which limited the authority of the See of Rome in England. Coverdale uses the phrase to draw attention to his distinction between the true Church, the **Christian congregation** [A2r 14], and the corrupt Roman Church. C reads: **reigne.**

5 - Coverdale's opposition of true and false Christians should be noted. This agrees with Wyclif's ecclesiology: the eternally saved and the eternally reprobate, the **predestinati** and **presciti** are two distinct eternal archetypes which while never changing or mixing may exist side by side within the visible church. For Wyclif the Church was the **congregatio predestinatorum**, the congregation of the elect. It seems that Coverdale was working within a similar ecclesiological framework when he wrote his **Introduction**, although it is not clear that he entirely shared Wyclif's metaphysical background. It is possible that Coverdale had arrived at his position from a study of St.

Augustine's ecclesiology, which in turn had formed the inspiration for Wyclif's work.

Cf. Wyclif, J., **De Ecclesia**, ed. Wycliffe Society, London 1886, 2; 7; 106; 107; 111; 251.

6 - **Holely** appears to be a deliberate word-play characteristic of the author on "wholly" and "holy" intended to highlight the un-holy nature of the persecution of true Christians by those who claim to be the Church. C reads: **wholy**.

7 - The true Church is to be characterized by prophets and teachers; it will be an evangelical church (Alv 21), but it will also be eternal, continuous with its past (Alv 21-2). Coverdale's vision of the Church is clearly based upon the New Testament record of the early church, but also owes something to Wyclif's ecclesiology: the people that professed the christian name and who appear to be members of the visible church take upon themselves the persecution of the true prophets who are eternally chosen by God for himself. Cf. Leff, G., "Wyclif and Hus: A Doctrinal Comparison" in **Wyclif in His Times**, ed. Kenny, A., Oxford 1986, 110-115.

8 - Cf. Romans 9:27

The balanced construction of the text should be noted. Here as in other sections of the Introduction Coverdale uses scriptural passages and paraphrases typologically to refer to the situation in which the contemporary true Church finds itself as the subject of persecution and oppression.

9 - Coverdale believes that **Wickliefes Wicket** was written two hundred years previously. This would make the date of composition c.1348. This should be taken as an indication of the editor's awareness that he was dealing with an antique text rather than as a critical appraisal of its true age. Similar examples of ante-dating can be found in other Wycliffite texts printed in the Reformation period such as the **Praier and Complaynte of the Plowman** which was said to have been written in 1300.

10 - **Antichristes raygne** refers again to the period before the English break with Rome in the early 1530s. The phrase echoes Romyshe raygne found above (Alv 15) and the two were clearly intended to be associated in the reader's mind. Coverdale's branding of the pope as **Antichriste** recalls the similar use of the word by Wyclif in **De Potestate Pape** written in 1379. Cf. Wyclif, J. **De Potestate Pape**, Wycliffe Society, London 1907, 102-4; 105-7; 108-9.

11 - The **greate rage of fyre** which Coverdale says has consumed so many books and prophets of true religion refers to the persecution of heretics by fire which dated from the enacting of **De haeretico comburendo** in 1401 [2 Henry IV.c.15] which was intended specifically to deal with the Wycliffite problem and had for the first time in England allowed condemned heretics to be handed over to the secular arm for execution. In more recent times the level of persecution had been revived by the enactment of the **Act of Six Articles** [31 Henry VIII.c.14]. For detail on **Act of Six Articles**, see Redworth, G., "A Study in the Formulation of Policy: The Genesis and Evolution of the Act of

Six Articles", **JEH** 37 (1986), 42-67. The practice of burning proscribed books was common in the early Sixteenth Century: in July 1546 the owners of books by **Frith, Tyndale, Joy, Roy, Basille, Bale, Barne, Coverdale, Turner, Tracy**, or by any of them were ordered by proclamation to hand the texts over for public burning. Cf. **Tudor Royal Proclamations**, Vol. I, **The Early Tudors (1485-1553)**, ed. Hughes, P.L. and Larkin, J.F., New Haven and London 1964, 373 item 272.

12 - Alv ends at **knowynge** in C.

13 - **Tyranny of the world** is open to two interpretations. On the one hand Coverdale may mean by this phrase the oppression of the Christians who have remained faithful to the gospel by the secular authorities which framed legislation such as **De haeretico comburendo** referred to above (n.10). On the other hand Coverdale may intend to recall the complaints made by Wyclif against the corruption of the "**Caesarian hierarchy**" which had fallen victim to the temptations of the world: Cf. **Opera Minora**, 214; 226; **De Blasphemia**, 61; **De Veritate Sacre Scripture** i.70; **De Civili Dominio**, iii.59, 217. Discussed by Leff, G., "Wyclif and Hus" in **Wyclif**, 113.

Such criticisms of the ecclesiastical hierarchy were not unique to Wyclif and the concept of the oppressive power of the secular world is clearly scriptural in origin: Cf. **John** 15:18-19; **I John** 3:13.

14 - The editor cannot number the many books written by true Christians which have been burned since the enactment of the heresy laws in England (see n.10 above).

15 - Coverdale believes that contemporary "**prophets**" have been inspired by God to lead the people away from false worship, just



as the prophets of the Old Testament stood as an indictment of Israel.

16 - **Exodus** 1:7. The editor again uses the Old Testament as a typological illustration of God's providential care for his chosen people in the contemporary world. A2r 11 - A2r 16.

C omits: **no doubt**); the parenthesis [A2r 14-15] is extended to include **this wonderfull encrease...**

17 - True Christians are distinguished from false hypocrites by their willingness to undergo any torment or privation for the sake of Christ. The inspiration is again scriptural - cf. **Matthew** 5:11; **Romans** 8:35; 8:39 - but may also recall Wyclif's insistence that the true Christian, one who is of the elect, must embrace apostolic poverty and give up all worldly power: Cf. *De Civili Dominio*, iii.60, 242, 444; *Triologus*, 302, 378-83; *De Ecclesia* 184-7; 365.

18 - Coverdale endorses **Wickliefes Wicket** as a true exposition of eucharistic doctrine. Cf. Foxe, J., **Acts and Monuments**, ed. Townsend. S., London 1846, V, 40 for account of Coverdale's early encounter with **Wickliefes Wicket** in Essex in about 1528.

19 - **Beastly blyndneste** may embody a reference to the imagery of Revelation 20:10 and recalls an apocalyptic tone which is developed towards the conclusion of the **Introduction** (A2v 23ff). Coverdale suggests that the Wicket exposes the evil nature of those who employ force to make Christians accept the doctrine of transubstantiation. This may refer to the Act of Six Articles [1539: 31 Henry VIII.c.14] whose first article enjoined acceptance of transubstantiation on pain of death.

20 - **The wordes which Christ spake**: **Mark** 14:22; **Luke** 22:19; **I Corinthians** 11:24. The exposition of Christ's words at the

Supper as recorded in scripture forms the substance of  
**Wickliefes Wicket.**

21 - The same words - ie. **Hoc est corpus Meum**, the words of consecration spoken by the priest at Mass.

22 - **Myslyuinge priest** appears to be a deliberate anti-clerical play upon words: missal-ing priest, a Mass priest; mis-living priest, an immoral priest. A previous example of word-play is discussed in **note 6** above.

23 - A2v 7-18: Coverdale deals with an accusation which was raised against John Lassels when he repeated the eucharistic doctrine of **Wickliefes Wicket** in 1546. Parsons in his **Examen of I. Fox his calendar Saints** printed in 1604 said that Lassels believed that Christ held the bread but pointed to his own body when saying the words "This is my body". Coverdale dismisses this argument as being clearly contrary to the text, but it is interesting to note that the charge was established by 1548. The precise origin of this charge is not clear but it perhaps has its origin in a deliberately literal interpretation of Wycliffite arguments against transubstantiation based on scripture.

24 - The ~~texte~~ referred to seems to be the scriptural account of the Supper rather than **Wickliefes Wicket**.

25 - Coverdale's use of **cake** and **bread** as examples of objects whose nature is known by sensory perception has eucharistic overtones and was probably intended to recall to his readers' minds some of the traditional Wycliffite objections to transubstantiation (Cf. language of Alice Rowley from Coventry, 1511 reported in Fines, J., "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, 1511-12", **JEH** 14 (1963), 163). Wyclif's eucharistic teaching had been largely metaphysical in origin: as an ultra-realist Wyclif could not accept that the accidents of bread and wine could exist apart from their substances, as was the implication of transubstantiation. Instead he believed that the essence of bread and wine, **panitas** and **vinitas** co-existed along with the new substance, the body or blood of Christ which had been engendered sacramentally. The eucharist was "the body of Christ in the form of bread and wine". Cf. *Triialogus*, 149; Lefé G., "Wyclif and Hus" in *Wyclif*, 117. The author of **Wickliefes Wicket**, along with most later Wicliffites bases his objection to transubstantiation upon what Dickens describes as "sceptical materialism": the bread and wine remain just that because it is clear to the senses that they are bread and wine: Cf. Dickens, A.G., *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York, 1509-1558*, Oxford 1959, 36.

26 - Cf. **Luke** 1:42; **Romans** 6:12. The **fruite** derived from the flesh of the Virgin is man's redemption achieved through Christ's death upon the cross. Coverdale holds that the eucharist was instituted to be a reminder of the redemption of man wrought by God through the Incarnation. This point is made by Coverdale in the **Introduction to A Faythful and most Godly Treatise concernyng the most sacred sacrament of the blessed body and bloud of our Sauour Christ compiled by John Calvine**, trans. Coverdale 1547-8, 430-31; in **Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter**, Parker Society, Cambridge 1844.

27 - **Outragiouse talke** refers to the theological speculation in which readers of **Wickliefes Wicket** might feel tempted to indulge. Coverdale warns his readers to be charitable and not to offend their weaker brethren who might be scandalized by incautious tactless or apparently blasphemous talk concerning the eucharist as practised by the Roman Church. This point is made very clearly in Coverdale's **Introduction** to Calvin's **Treatise**, #26, in **Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter**, Parker Society, Cambridge 1844. In 1547-8 many leading ecclesiastics including Cranmer were concerned at the tone of popular debate on the nature of the eucharist, and this was one of the motives behind Cranmer's legislation on the English Communion in 1549 - cf. Dickens, A.G., **The English Reformation**, London 1964, 260; 302-4.

28 - Writing at some point between mid-1546 and 1548 it is possible to see that the months leading up to the death of Henry VIII and the first year of the reign of Edward VI could take on

an eschatological significance for one like Coverdale who had hoped for a more rapid progress to reform in the early 1540s. The heightened pace of reform under Edward must have seemed like the ushering-in of the Godly Society built upon sound evangelical principles in England.

Henry Jackson's Introduction to Wicklieffes Wicket,  
Oxford 1612.

WHOsoever shall with a dilligent 1

minde consider the violent practi-  
ses of Romish factours in all acti- 2  
ons which they vndertake, & how  
malitious they alwaies haue been  
in fastning odious imputations vp-  
on Catholique Professours, that 3  
through their sids they may wound 4

that truth which with reason they cannot weaken; will  
easilie perceiue how necessarie it is for vs to be diligent  
in their defence, especiallie seeing, the cause being com-  
mon, all their scandalous aspersions redound vpon vs,  
and our aduersaries remaine in the gall of bitternes.  
Out of this abundance of their spitefull hearts, their  
mouthes speake the worst they can of the chiefe Pro-  
fessours of the Catholique truth; so that often times  
being as if were swung about vehemently by their pas-  
sion at oppositions against vs, & so amazed, they father  
such villanous and improbable speaches vpon our wor-  
thies of religion, that I cannot perswade my selfe,  
but in their cold bloud themselues mistrust them. I will 5  
set downe a few for brevitie sake. Can it enter into any  
mans thought, that LUTHER (commended of his aduersa-  
ries for sanctitie of life) should professe that he tooke 6

(P)

greater pleasure in eating and drinking ALE and DOUBLE  
BEARE, than in the meditation of Christs PASSION, and RE-  
SURRECTION? yet Mr. FITZHERBERT the Priest will put this 7  
slander upon him, and teach him to speake thus, EGO  
MARTINUS LUTHERUS VIX VILAM CONSOLATIONEM EX MORTE &  
RESURRECTIONE CHRISTI CAPERE POSSUM, EX BONIS AUTEM A DEO AC-  
CEPTIS UT EDERE PANEM, & BIBERE CERVISIAM OPTIME POSSUM. That  
is,

I MARTIN LUTHER CAN HARDLY RECEIUE ANY CONSOLATION OF THE  
DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, BUT I CAN TAKE VERY GOOD  
PLEASURE IN THE GOODS, THAT I HAUE RECEIUED OF GOD, AS IN EATING  
BREAD AND DRINKING BEARE. At which the Esquire 8  
grows so hot, that he is bold to go on, & saie, that LU-  
THER WAS POSSEST WITH THE DRUNKEN DELIGHT OF DOUBLE BEARE  
AND CARNAL PLEASURES, THAT IF A HORSE, OR A MULE, OR A BLACKE  
IACKE, OR A BARELL OF BEARE COULDE SPEAKE, THEY WOULD SHEW AS 9  
MUCH GOOD SPIRIT AS HE. I see now that to be true of these 10  
Romish brckers, which TULLY reports of LUCELLUS, who,  
to perswade men his histories were written by a RO-  
MANE, did mingle them with Barbarismes and soloe-  
cismes. So that a man could not tell whether Mr. FITZ- 11  
HERBERT were a ROMANE Priest or no, if he did not here &  
there bespurtle his faire worke with such fowle crimi-  
nations. LUTHER hath sufficiently testified what comfort  
he hath taken in the faith of Christ, when he saith, IN  
CORDE MEO ISTE UNUS REGNAT ARTICULUS, SCILICET, FIDES CHRISTI,  
EX QUO, PER QUEM, & IN QUEM, OMNES MEAE DIU NOCTUQUE FLUUNT  
& REFLUUNT THEOLOGICAE COGITATIONES, &C. That is, THERE RAIG-



NETH AND BEARETH SWAY IN MY HEART THIS ONE ESPECIALLY ARTICLE,  
TO WIT, THE FAITH OF CHRIST, FROM WHOM, BY WHOM, AND TO WHOM  
ALL MY THEOLOGICAL THOUGHTS HAVE THEIR COURSE AND RECOURSE. 12  
But you will say, Mr. FITZHERBERT cites the booke, where

(P2)

LUTHER saith so much, and therefore incurrs not this  
 reprehension. He cites indeed a booke called COLLOQUIA: 13  
 but the worke is forged, and impudently ascribed to  
 LUTHER, and therefore no credit to bee given to it,  
 although BELLARMINE to make himselfe merry, fetch 14  
 proofes thence; and ULENBERGIUS tels vs that LUTHER 15  
 in his COLLOQUIA MENSALIA affirmes, THAT WE SHALL FOR RECREATI-  
 ONS SAKE PLAY WITH LITTLE DOGS IN HEAVEN. But the day will  
 come, when these popish heretikes shall knowe, that  
 WITHOUT SHALBE DOGS AND ENCHANTERS, AND WHOREMONGERS,  
 AND MURDERERS, AND IDOLATERS, AND WHOSOEUER LOUETH OR MA-  
 KETH LIES But this was not only LUTHERS portion. Their 16  
 forefathers vsed renowned WICKLIFFE no better, but ra-  
 ther worse It is not vnknowne to any meaner skil of 17  
 what execrable opinions they made him the Author;  
 who least they might haue bin refuted, were not con-  
 tent with digging his bones out of the graue, aboue  
 fortie yeares after his burial, and burning them to ashes  
 which were thrown into the river, vnlesse also they had 18  
 burned his bookes: which fact seemed so odious euen  
 to the common sort, that they made songs vpon  
 the ARCHBISHOP OF PRAGE for this barbarous attempt. 19  
 But if they had not done this, they had not showed them  
 selves to be the true offspring of the heathenish ROMANS  
 who were wont to burne MONIMENTA CLARISSIMORUM  
 INGENIORUM IN COMITIO ACORA, ARBITRANTES ILLO IGNE CONSCI-  
 ENTIAM GENERIS HUMANI ABOLERI. Neither did this foolish 20  
 crueltie end here; but they persecuted with fire and

fagot all such as had anie of his bookes. Let vs heare 21

POLYDORVS VERGILII, ILLI, SAITH HE, COMMENTARIJ [WICKLEFFI] QUAM-  
VIS BREVIS. LONGO TEMPORE DURARUNT, UT ETIAM NUNC E MNI- 22

(P3)

BUS PLEBIS AUFERRI NEQUEANT, TAMET SI OB ID SCELUS NONNULLI VI-  
VI INTERDITUM COMBURANTUR CUM SUIS LIBELLIS. THE BOOKES OF  
WICKLIEFFE, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE BUT SHORT, YET THEY ENDURED A  
LONG TIME SO THAT NOW THEY CANNOT BEE TAKEN FROM THE COM-  
MON PEOPLE. ALTHOUGH FOR THIS THEIR WICKEDNESSE [forsooth]  
MANY OF THEM ARE BURNED WITH THEIR BOOKES. Now when  
they thought they had made all sure, they began to put  
vpon him what opinions they could devise, which they  
did set out with that boldnesse, that MELANCHTHON, and 23  
other Protestants haue beene brought also into their  
dissimulation. Hence, out of beleife that these were his  
opinions, the cholerike Monke WALSINGHAM called 24  
WICKLIFFE QUASI WICKEBELEFE: and COCHLAEUS meaning to be as 25  
acute as any cloister Monke, alloweth of this explicati-  
on, and fetcheth it also from the Duch Idiom, where-  
in LEBE, or LEFE, signifies life; WICK, or ZWICHT, signifies  
wicked. But we may endure this better, then that which  
the same Monke saies of WICKLIFFE, that HE BREATHED OUT 26  
HIS SOULE TO HELL. I should not haue thought that Monkes  
in their selles had knowne such mysteries, had not the  
Iesuits more abstracted and sublimated in their appre-  
hensions gone about to perswade me so. For CAMPIAN 27  
saith that UNNUM COELUM NON POTEST CALVINUM, one  
heaven cannot hold CALVINE, and those Princes which  
lived in the time of Poperie. But COSTER wisheth him- 28  
selfe damned with LUCIFER, if ever any LUTHERAN be saved.  
I thinke he rather spake as he wished; for no Papist shal  
ever be able to proue that he knewe so much. Of howe

much better spirit was holy HUSSE, who out of know-  
ledge of WICKLIFFES sanctitie in life and doctrine, which  
God rewardeth with ever happy blisse, wished his soule

(P3)v

there where WICKLIFFES was. UTINAM, saith he, ANIMA  
MEA ESSET IBI, UBI EST ANIMA IOANNIS WICKLIFF. Whose wri-  
tings, maigre the furious attempts of Papists, haue bin  
kept hitherto by Gods louing providence, to convince  
them of crueltie and impudencie. Now amongst some  
of those I present to thy view this little Treatise, called  
WICKLIEFFES WICKET, which hithertofore hath beene so perse-  
quuted with fire and fagot, as I haue noted before out 30  
of POLYDOPE, and thou maist read in M. FOXE his Monu- 31  
ments. In this discourse hee teacheth the true doctrine  
of the sacraments with the now Church of England,  
which he also did in other Treatises, as learned M. IAMES  
hath very well shewed in the 7.Aap. of his Apo. for 32  
WICKLIFFE: Although WALSINGHAM, to make his doctrine of  
the Sacraments odious, reports that WICKLIFFE affirmed,  
that, if in the Eucharist, IBI ESSET CORPUS CHRISTI, IN FRACTIO-  
NE SE POSSE, FRANGERE COLLUM DEI SUI, THERE WERE CHRISTS BODY,  
HE COULD. I tremble to speake it) breake his Gods necke. 33  
But how religiously hee speakes of Gods holy Sacra-  
ments, it will appeare by reading this Treatise; whence  
if thou gather comfort giue the glory to God, who is  
wonderfull in his Saints. I could not wrap this talent in  
a towell and hide it, but put it forth to vse, remembering  
what one said in Tacitus, SUUM CUIQUE DECUS POSTERITAS RE- 34  
PENDIT. FAREWELL, From Corpus Christi College in  
Oxford, JULY 6. MDCXII.

Thine in Christ Iesus

HENRY IACKSON.

(P)4

1 - Introduction from edition E of **Wickliefes Wicket** edited by Henry Jackson and printed at Oxford by Joseph Barnes, 1612.

2 - **Romishe factours**: agents of the Roman Church, especially Jesuits of the English Mission who are a particular target for the writer of this text.

3 - **Catholique Professours**: the writer refers to eminent Protestant theologians by this title throughout the text, and this reflects a development in Anglican thought which had taken place since the mid-Sixteenth Century. The Church of England now saw itself as holding fast to the scriptural faith of the early church and thus to be the true or catholic church in England. A distinction of this sort between the Roman Church and the Catholic Church had been made by Ockham, Marsiglio of Padua, Wyclif and other writers of the Fourteenth Century Conciliar period. It is likely that this strand of thought was mediated to Anglican theologians particularly through the works of Wyclif and Marsiglio, whose **Defensor Pacis** Cromwell had caused to be printed in English by William Marshall in 1535.

4 - The editor's use of **sids** is not clear. The context shows it to mean an attack or assault, but no other example of its use has been found. It is probably a typographical error and should read **Fibs**. **Redound** [P 12] would also make a better reading if the 'd' is read as 'b': **rebound**. It should be noted that E's reading follows that of C.

5 - Jackson attempts to condemn the Roman authors by quoting from their anti-protestant writings. He hopes to demonstrate that their arguments are exaggerated and fantastic, the product of fanaticism rather than reason.

6 - Jackson's reference has not been traced.

7 - **Thomas Fitzherbert**, Jesuit and controversialist, 1552-1640. Educated at Oxford and entered Jesuit Order in 1613. Ordained priest at Rome in 1602 having previously been involved in a recusant plot against Elizabeth. Cf. **Dictionary of National Biography**.

8 - Fitzherbert, T., **The Second Part of a Treatise Concerning Policy and Religion. Wherin is declared the necessitie of God's Grace, & true religion for the Perfection of Policy**, Douai [P.Auroi] 1610, 465; another edition, London 1610. Jackson appears to have used the earlier Douai edition. The **First Part** of the treatise had been printed at Douai by L.Kellam, 1606. Cf. Grisar, H. **Luther**, ed. Cappadelta, L., London 1917, especially Vol. III, 215-318 for similar material gleaned from the **Table Talk**.

9 - **Blacke Iacke**: a wine bottle or jug made from tarred leather.

10 - Fitzherbert, T., **The Second Part**, Ch. 32, 13.14

11 - Cicero, **Letters to Atticus**, I.16; XIII.16.

12 - Luther, M., **Commentary on Galatians**, ed. Dillenberg, J., **Martin Luther Selections From His Writings**, new York 1961, 108-9.

13 - **Colloquia Mensalia**, or **Luther's Table Talk**. An account of opinions and informal discussion within Luther's household. Jackson appears to refer to Henry Peter Rebenstock's Latin edition printed at Frankfurt in 1571: **Colloquia, meditationes, consolaticnes, consilia, iudicia, sententiae, narrationes, responsa, facetiae D. Martini Lutheri, piae et sanctae memoriae, in mensa, prandii it coenae, et in perigrinationibus observata et fideliter transcripta**. It is interesting to note Jackson's



convenient distrust of the work. The account quoted possibly refers to No. 2849b in **Luther's Works**, ed. Tappert, T.G., Philadelphia 1967, Vol. 54 **Table Talk**, 175.

14 - Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, Jesuit, 1542-1621. Theologian and Archbishop of Capua. Jackson refers to his principal work, **Disputationes de Controversaliis Christianae Fidei** produced in 1586-93 as a vigorous defence of the Roman position against Protestantism.

15 - Kaspar Ulenberg, 1549-1617. Converted from Lutheranism in 1572, ordained priest at Cologne in 1575. Controversialist and translator of the Bible. Jackson refers to the Latin edition of Ulenberg's chief work which had previously been printed in German: **Causae graves et iustae, cur Catholicis in communione veteris ecclesiae veri Christianismi constanter usque ad finem vitae permanendum, cur item omnibus, qui se Evangelicos vocant, relictis erroribus ad eiusdem Christianismi consortium vel postliminio redeundum sit.**

16 - Revelation 22:15. Jackson paraphrases and does not quote from the **Authorized Version** which had been published in 1611.

17 - Jackson draws parallels between the contemporary treatment of Luther by Roman writers, and the treatment of Wyclif and his followers in the early Fifteenth Century by the ecclesiastical authorities.

18 - Bishop Richard Flemyng of Lincoln - a former follower of Wyclif at Oxford - (Cf. Hudson, A., "Wycliffism in Oxford 1381-1411", in **Wyclif in His Times**, ed. Kenny, A., Oxford 1986, 67-77) in accordance with the condemnation of the Council of Constance in 1415 and the bidding of Pope Clement VIII had the remains of John Wyclif exhumed from his grave at Lutterworth in

1428. The bones were burned and the ashes cast into the River Swift in an attempt to extinguish the memory of Wyclif and prevent any honouring of his remains. Cf. Workman, H.B., **The Dawn of the Reformation**, London 1901, I, 245.

19 - Jackson makes reference to Cochlaeus' **Historia Hussitarium**, XII, 1.8. A precise modern refernce has not been traced but it seems that the proletarian discontent referred to was that which erupted in Prague and its University when Archbishop Zbinko condemned Wycliffite teaching. Cf. Milman, H.H., **History of Latin Christianity**, London 1883, VIII, 239.

20 - Tacitus, **Agricola**, II, Loeb ed. London 1954, 170-1.

21 - **Persecuted with fire and fagot**: this closely recalls the language of Coverdale's **Introduction** to the 1548 edition of **Wickliefes Wicket** and may indicate that Jackson was familiar with that text. Cf. Coverdale, **Introduction to Wickliefes Wicket**, 1548, A2r 27-30.

22 - Polydore Vergil, **Anglica Historia**, 1533. The Italian Archdeacon of Wells had written his **Historia** as a justification of the the anti-Roman ecclesiastical policy adopted by Henry VIII. An English translation of this text was produced by Thomas Langley in April 1546 and was undoubtedly influential in shaping opinion in the early years of Edward VI's reign.

23 - Jackson believes that even eminent Protestant writers have been deceived by the Roman propaganda into accepting that Wyclif was an arch-heretic. Dr. Kenny has demonstrated that both Roman and Protestant writers in the later Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries relied upon the articles condemned at the Councils of Rome and Constance for their knowlege of Wyclif's thought, rather than upon his works. Cf. Kenny, A., "The

Accursed Memory" in *Wyclif* 167; also for the Protestant "mythology" of Wyclif, Aston, M., "John Wycliffe's Reformation Reputation", *Past and Present* 30 (1965), 23-51.

24 - Thomas Walsingham, monk of St. Albans, d. 1422(?).

Chronicles of the Fourteenth Century: *Chronicon Angliae 1328-88; Ypodigma Neustriae; Historia Anglicana*. Jackson refers to the *Historia Anglicana* - cf. *Rolls Series*, ed. Riley, H.T., London 1863, 450.

Eodem tempore, ipse vetus hypocrita, angelus Sathanae, Antichristis praebulus, non nominandus "Joannis Wicliffe" vel potius "Wykbeleve"...

25 - Cochlaeus, Roman controversialist, 1479-1552; wrote against Luther from 1520. Jackson makes reference to *Historia Hussitarum, XII Libri*, 1549.

26 - The same Monke is Thomas Walsingham. Cf. *Ypodigma Neustriae* *Rolls Series*, ed. Riley, H.T., London 1876, 340.

27 - Edmund Campian, Jesuit, 1540-1581. Converted from Anglicanism in 1571, joined the Jesuits in 1573 and in 1580 worked with Robert Parsons on the English Mission. Jackson refers to Campian's *Rationes Decem: quibus fritus, certamen adversariis oblulit in causa fidei*, Stonor Park Press, Oxfordshire, 1581.

28 - Francis Coster, Jesuit theologian, born at Mechlin in 1532 and died at Brussels in 1619. Jackson's reference is to Coster's *Apologia adversus Lucae Osiandri haeretici lutherani refutationem octo propositionum catholicarum*, Cologne 1606, Prop. VIII 45.

29 - Jackson refers to the words of Hus spoken at his condemnation during the Fifteenth Session of the Council of Constance 1415. Cf. Hefle-Leclerque, *Histoire des Conciles*, Paris 1915 VII, 307-50; Spinka, M., *John Hus at the Council of Constance* London 1965, 174; John Hus, Letter to Archbishop Zbynek in Defence against the Charges of the Clergy, No. 8 in *The Letters of John Hus*, trans. Spinka, M., Manchester 1972, 31. This letter makes it clear that the accusation that "I wish my soul where Wyclif's soul is" had been made against Hus by August 1408 and was merely repeated at his trial.

30 - Jackson's language again recalls that of Coverdale's 1548 *Introduction to Wicklieffes Wicket*. Cf. n.21 above.

31 - Polydore Vergil, *Anglica Historia*, see n.22 above.

Foxe, Vol. IV, 176; 207; 226; 235; 242-44; Vol. V, 39; 40.

Lollard cases mentioning *Wicklieffes Wicket*.

32 - James T., *An Apologie for Iohn Wickliffe, shewing his conformitie with the now Church of England; colected chiefly out of diuerse works of his remaining in the Publicke Library at Oxford*, Oxford 1608.

This represents the first academic approach to Wyclif's works. Spurred on by accusations such as those repeated by Jackson in his *Introduction*, James attempted to set out what Wyclif had really taught by researching his works. Cf. Kenny, "The Accursed Memory", in *Wyclif*, 167-8. James develops upon his academic work by attempting to show that what Wyclif had taught so too the Church of England now teaches. It should be noted that James did not include the *Wicket* in his survey of Wyclif's work and it seems likely that Jackson believed that he was filling a gap left by his predecessor.

33 - Walsingham, T., *Ypodigma Neustriae*, Rolls Series, ed. Riley, H.F., London 1876, 334.

34 - Tacitus, *Annals*, IV, xxxv. "'To every man posterity renders his wage of honour; nor will there lack, if my condemnation is at hand, those who shall remember, not Brutus and Cassius alone, but me also!' He then left the senate, and closed his life by self-starvation. The Fathers ordered his books to be burned by the aediles; but copies remained, hidden and afterwards published: a fact which moves more to deride the folly of those who believe that by an act of despotism in the present there can be extinguished also the memory of a succeeding age. On the contrary, genius chastised grows in authority; nor have alien kings or the imitators of their cruelty effected more than to crown themselves with ignominy and their victims with renown." The force of the quotation chosen by Jackson is contained more in the lines following the ones quoted in the text. The parallel drawn between the behaviour of the Roman authorities in antiquity and the present with regard to John Wyclif is clear. I am grateful to Gordon Hartley, M.A. for observations on this quotation. Cf. Tacitus, *The Annals*, trans. Jackson, J., London and Harvard 1937, 62-3.

APPENDIX II

The Reconstructed text of the Lollard Ballad printed by Robert Crowley is The Confutation of the Mishappen Answer The Abuse of the Blessed Sacrament, London, Day and Seres, 1548.

An Anonymous Ballad on the Eucharist reconstructed from a version printed in Robert Crowley's *Confutation of the Mishappen Answer The Abuse of the Blessed Sacrament by Day and Seres*, London 1548.

What meaneth this gyse, I woulde faine here  
Straunge sightes in my eies, there do apere  
Defended wyth lies, boeth farre and nere  
Greate ruth<sup>1</sup> it is, [A7r]

I se men honour, Both breade and wyne  
For christ our sauour, which he left for a sign  
To the beleuer, Of hys death deuyne  
Lorde amende thys<sup>2</sup> [A8r]

Wonderful syghtes, I coulde declare  
I loked in the pixte<sup>3</sup> Dome<sup>4</sup> gods I sawe there  
Made of the priests, Which sinners are  
Liuinge amysse.<sup>5</sup> [B2v]

From sinners seperate, Gods son is, saith Paul  
Hygher then heauen seate, Aboue y[e] powers al<sup>6</sup>  
How w[ith] sinful hand make, His body then you shall  
Syr prists tell me thys<sup>7</sup> [B6v]

Thou sayest by thy coninge<sup>8</sup> that y[ou] makest him  
Who hath made of nothyng Both y[e] & thi kyn  
Heauen earth and al thyng, contened ther in  
What lye is thys<sup>9</sup> [B8v]

Thou wylt say with spede, It is not our acte  
The worde in this ded, taketh effecte<sup>10</sup>  
Wyth the I prosede, that thus dooste obiecte  
Answer me this [C1r]

What word hast y[ou] noddy<sup>11</sup>, Wherwith Christ did make  
Of bread his body, As y[ou] dost crake<sup>12</sup>  
Wyth all thy studye, An answer take  
And tell me this.<sup>13</sup> [C2r]

Hoc est corpus Meum, you bryng  
Wher wyth ye cloeke vs, vnder your wyng  
But for your purpose, It serueth nothyng  
Who seyth not thys?<sup>14</sup> [C2v]

To be the worde, Naimely of giuing  
Which christ our Lord, Spake to his beleueing  
Disciples at borde, as they were sitting  
Their faith to encrease<sup>15</sup> [C3v]

He is but a beast, knowyng ryght nought  
Which saith that hoc est, Are wordes to make ought  
Thys is manyfest, In a wyse mans thought  
Wher knowlodge is.<sup>16</sup> [C4v]

If I say to the, This is my head  
It must so be, Before I so sayde  
Or els with a lye, I haue the fed  
Understandest thou thys.<sup>17</sup> [C5v/C6r]  
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Wel the[n] to say lo, Thys is my body  
Hath not made it so, Thou seyest w[ith] small studie  
Wherfore shortely go, Make other wordes redi  
These wyl do no seruice, [C7r]

What if in scripture, Were wrytten one lyne  
Wherewith our sauour, Thy god and myne  
Into thys nature, Dyd tourne bread and wine  
Couldst thou do thys?<sup>18</sup> [C8r]

Thou hast the word, wherwyth god wrought  
Man beast fish burd, And all of nought  
Canst thou good bloud, Therwith make ought  
That vnmade is.<sup>19</sup> [D6r]

Yf w[ith] that scripture Thou canst not make  
The least creature, How wylt thou take  
On thy weake nature, Of bread to create  
The Lorde of blysse.<sup>20</sup> [E1r]

Hauinge no word, of consecracion  
Wherof the Lord, hath made relacion  
Thou teachest abrode thine owne inuencion  
Which is amise.<sup>21</sup> [E2r]

For Christ hath sayd. Thou ca[n]st not shape  
One heare of thy heade, whyte ether blacke.<sup>22</sup>  
How ca[n]st thou of bread, The[n] gods so[n]ne make  
Whyche in heauen is.<sup>23</sup> [F5r]

A better mynde. The Lorde graunt the  
That thou mayst fynd, hys verite  
Which maketh the blind, In soule to se  
What hys myll is.<sup>24</sup> [F6v]

God graunt the, the part of s. Paule to playe  
I meane to conuert, From the Romyshe<sup>25</sup> way  
And with a meke herte, Gods truth to obaye  
Who graunt the this. [F7r]

Lord grau[n]t that our head, king Edward y[e] sixt  
May bury that dead God which is pixte<sup>26</sup>  
And get in his stead, thy supper not mixte  
With abuse popishe.<sup>27</sup> [F8v]

That we may espie In that signe and token  
Wyth spirituall eie, Thy body broken  
And thy bloud plentiously Shed<sup>28</sup> as is spoken  
To bringe vs to blesse.<sup>29</sup> [F9r]

1 - Probably best read as Truth.

2 - The author explicitly rejects transubstantiation as an explanation of the eucharist. The contemporary practice of giving honour to the consecrated elements as being the substance

of Christ's body and blood under the accidents of bread and wine is the object of the writer's attack.

3 - **Pixte** ie. pix or place where the sacrament has been reserved.

4 - **Dome** - dumb. The writer wishes to convey the idea that the reserved consecrated elements are powerless, false gods. This is a typically Wycliffite argument.

5 - The priests of the Roman Church are attacked for "liuinge amyse". This is probably intentionally ambiguous: the priests may be considered to be immoral, failing to live up to the ideal for humanity as exemplified by Christ in the Incarnation (Cf. Wyclif, **De Benedicta Incarnacione**); or they may be failing in their duties through the short-comings of the institution of which they are members (Cf. Wyclif, **Of the Pastoral Office**).

6 - Cf. **Hebrews** 7:26

7 - The writer rehearses another favourite Lollard argument which is also encountered in **Wickliefes Wicket**: if the priests, who are sinful human creatures, truly "make God" at the consecration in the Mass, how can this be? How can a creature make his creator? Can the house make the builder? Cf. Fines, J. "Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield 1511-12", **JEH** 14, 1963, 160-74.

8 - **Coninge** - skill or learning. The **Middle English Dictionary** suggests that the word can have magical overtones.

9 - The argument of the previous stanza is further developed here: how is it possible for a creature to create its creator?

10 - The writer attacks one of the common defences of transubstantiation. The priest has argued against the writer that it is not any action of his own volition which effects the

metaphysical change at the moment of consecration. Rather it is a power contained within the words "Hoc est corpus meum" which is effective. this argument is intended to counter the Lollard worries about an immoral priest "creating his creator".

11 - **Noddy**: fool.

12 - **Crake**: useless, idle, repetitive speech. Here applied to the persistent defence by Roman apologists of transubstantiation as the metaphysical explanation of the Mass.

13 - The author adopts another argument found in **Wickliefes Wicket**: the priests do not know by what word or words God created Christ's body, therefore their previous argument to the effect that the power to create the substance of Christ's body and blood under the accidents of wine lies in the words of consecration rather than in their priestly order is specious. Cf **Wickliefes Wicket**, A7v15 - A8r7: **Seke it busely yf ye can fynde two wordes of blessinge or of gyuyng of thanckes wherwith Christ made his body and bloude of the bread and wine. For if ye might ones findout those wordes, then shulde you wax great maysters aboute Christe. And then ye myghte be gyuers of his substaunce and as fathers and makers of him & that he should worshyppe you ...**

14 - The priest will argue that the words **Hoc est corpus Meum** are the words with which the substance of Christ's body and blood is introduced under the accidents of bread and wine. The writer disputes that these words will not serve his adversary's purpose and proceeds to elaborate the argument in the following stanzas. Cf. Hudson's comments on the centrality of the understanding of **Esse** in relation to the Mass to the Wycliffite

position. Hudson, A., "The Mouse in the Pyx: Popular Heresy and the Eucharist", *Trivium* 26 (1991), 46-7; 48-50.

15 - It is possible that a preceding stanza has been lost in the printed text. The author uses a vocabulary eg. *worde of giuinge and argument* eg. that Christ's words at the Supper were to increase the faith of his disciples rather than to create his body and blood, which strongly recalls that of *Wickliefes Wicket*. Cf. *Wicket* A6r28 - A6v 6: *Now vnderstand ye the wordes of ore sawyour Christ .... Therefore it semeth more that he blessed hys disciples and apostles, whom he had ordayned witnesses of his passion, and in them he lyfte his blessed worde whyche is the bread of lyfe...*

16 - Any man who suggests that the words *Hoc est corpus Meum* are "words of creation" is a *beast, knowyng ryght nought*.

17 - The author develops the first stage of what might be described as a classic Lollard argument against transubstantiation: if Christ said with reference to the bread *This is my body*, it must by some means already have been his body, or else he would have lied to the Apostles. Cf. Fines, J., *JEH* 14 (1963), 160ff; *Wickliefes Wicket*, A7v 22 - A8r 2: *Therefore if Christ had made of that bred his body, he had made it in his blessing or els in giuinge of thankes & not in the wordes of gyuyng, for yf Christe had spoken of the materiall bread that he had in his handes as when he sayde, Hoc est corpus meum ... then had it ben made before, or els the worde had ben a lye. For yf I say this is my hande and it be not my hande then am I a liar...*

18 - The words *Hoc est corpus Meum* have not served the purpose of the author's opponent. The author therefore urges the priest

to look in scripture for other words which might suffice, but at the same time argues that the priest would be unable to use any such words to make bread and wine into the substance of Christ's body and blood. To be able to do this would be to usurp the place of God who is the creator of all things.

19 - The Creation is recounted in **Genesis**, but despite this knowledge man is unable to "make ought That vnmade is". Cf. **Wickliefes Wicket A8v 20 - 27**: For and Chryste had made there his body of materiall bread in ye sayd wordes, as I know they be not ye wordes of makinge, what earthly man had power to do as he did, for in all holy scripture from the beginninge of Genesis to the ende of the Apocalips, There be no wordes written of makinge of Chrystes body ...

20 - The author again stresses that weak, sinful humanity cannot take upon itself to create the flesh and blood of Christ. Cf. **Wickliefes Wicket B1r 12 - 28**: And yet the wordes of ye makynge of these thinges [God's creatures] ben wrytten in the begynning of Genesis, euen as God spake them & yf ye can not make the worke that he made, & haue the worde by whyche he made it, how shall ye make hym [Christ] that made ye workes and you haue no wordes of authoritye eyther power lefte you on earth by whyche ye shoulde do thys ...

21 - Cf. **Wickliefes Wicket, B1r 20 - 22**: ye haue fayned this crafte [consecration] of youre false erroures, whyche some of you vnderstande not ...

22 - **Matthew 5:36**.

23 - The body of Christ has ascended to heaven. The author revives the argument made both by Lollards and the writer of **Wickliefes Wicket**: if Christ's body has ascended, how can it

also be upon the altar in church? Do the priests "make" Christ's physical body or his glorified body? Commonsense logic is applied to demolish metaphysical theory in typically Lollard fashion. Cf. **Wickliefes Wicket** A7r 29 - A7v 14: Loo ether make they the glorified bodye ether make they againe the spiritual body which is rysen from deathe to life eyther make they the fleshely body as it was before he suffered deathe, and yf they saye also that they make the spiritual body of Christe it maye not be so, for that thyng that Christ sayd & dyd it as he was at supper before he suffered his passion .... then must they nedes graunt that Christ is to dye yet...

24 - In the concluding section the author asks that God may enlighten the Christian. This finds its parallel in **Wickliefes Wicket**, e.g. **Wicket** B5v 13 - 28.

25 - **Romysne**: according to the **Middle English Dictionary** this word is not encountered until the early Sixteenth Century. It is possible that this verse is a later addition to the original text if that was written prior to 1500, or the word **Romyshe** may have been substituted for another word when the text was printed in 1548.

26 - The **dead God which is pixte** refers to the contemporary practice of the reservation of the consecrated elements in what was known as a **pix**. This receptacle might be an aumbrey in the wall of the chancel or in some cases in England be found suspended above the high altar. The container used for taking Communion to the sick is also known by this name. Reservation was permitted in 1549 for the purposes of taking communion to the sick but appears to have been removed from the practice of the Church of England in 1552.

27 - This stanza with its contemporary references to Edward VI may be an interpolation into the original text. The author or editor here writes against the background of the controversy which Coverdale lamented in his **Introduction** to Calvin's **Treatise on the Sacrament** in 1548. It would appear from Coverdale's words that in 1547-8 the doctrine of the eucharist had become a source of vulgar debate and ribbald comment. Cf. **Writings and Introductions of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter**, Parker Society, Cambridge 1844, 426.

The author or editor argues that it is now time to discard the Roman practices and instead institute a Communion along reformed lines. This is precisely what happened when Cranmer produced the first official English Communion service in 1547-8. It should be noted that the **Middle English Dictionary** provides no reference for the word **popishe** prior to the Sixteenth Century.

28 - This is the doctrine of the eucharist which the author wishes to see introduced into the Church of England. The bread and wine are to be taken as a signe and token to bring to the minds of the faithful Christ's death which was mankind's redemption. Cf. Coverdale, **Writings, P.S.**, 1844, 431: Here is a plain declaration of the end and purpose of Christ, when he instituted this most sacred sacrament: forsooth, to keep in remembrance his most dolorous death, and precious blood most plentifully shed upon the cross.

Also Wickliffe's **Wicket**, B3r 3ff; B3v 15ff.

29 - **Blesse**: bliss. As is usual in contemporary texts of this nature, the work concludes with a form of prayer to God that his people may be brought to true understanding and faith.



APPENDIX III

Illustrations of the title pages of the Sixteenth Century texts of Wickliffes Wicket.

1. First Edition:

- i. STC 25590 [Text A] London, John Day 1546 - Oxford, Bodleian Library Douce W.21
- ii. STC 25590.5 [Text B] London, John Day, 1546 - Oxford, Bodleian Library B4(1)Med.B.S., bearing the signature of George Joye

2. Second Edition:

- i. STC 25591 [Text C] London, John Day, 1548/50 - Dublin, Trinity College Library, Press B.1.11 No.6
- ii. STC 25591a [Text D] London, John Day, 1550 - Oxford, Bodleian Library B5(1)Med. B.S.

Illustration I:

Wickliefes Wicket, John Day, London 1546.

First Edition, Text A; STC no. 25590.

Bodleian Library, copy Douce W.21

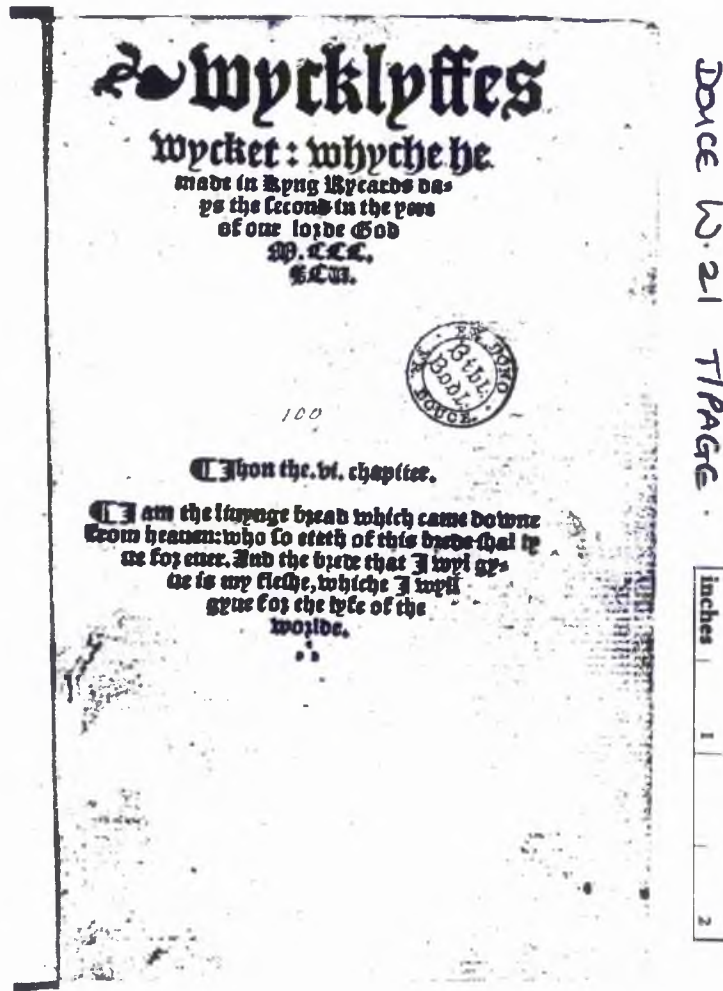


Illustration II:

Wickliefes Wicket, John Day, London 1546.

First Edition, Text B; STC no. 25590.5

Bodleian Library, copy B4(1)Med.B.S. Note signature of George Joye on upper right corner.

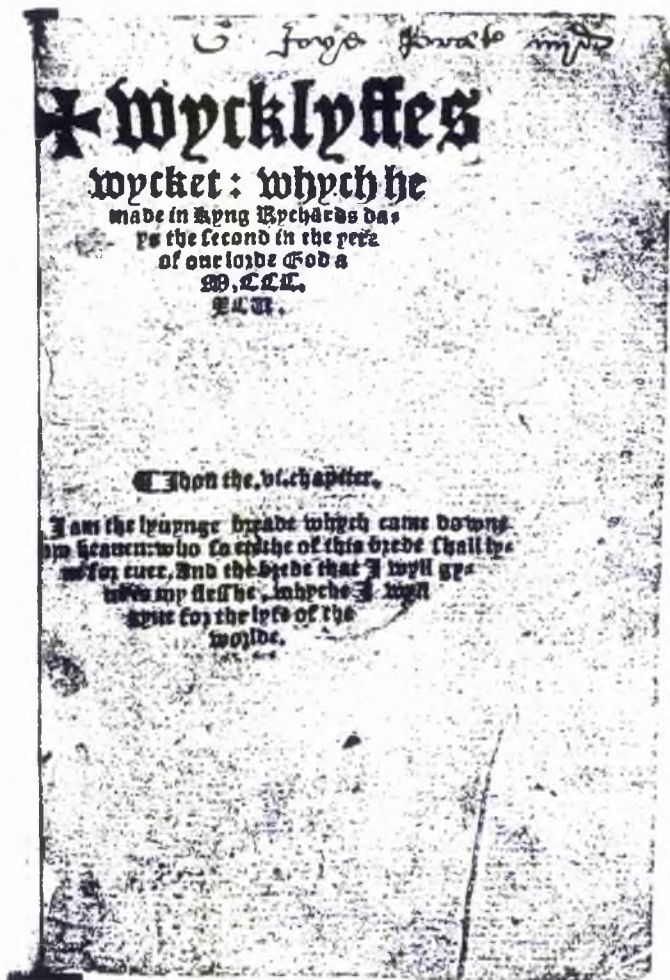


Illustration III:

Wickliefes Wicket, John Day, London 1548 50.

Second Edition, Text C; STC no. 25591

Trinity College Library, Dublin, copy Press B.1.11 No. 5

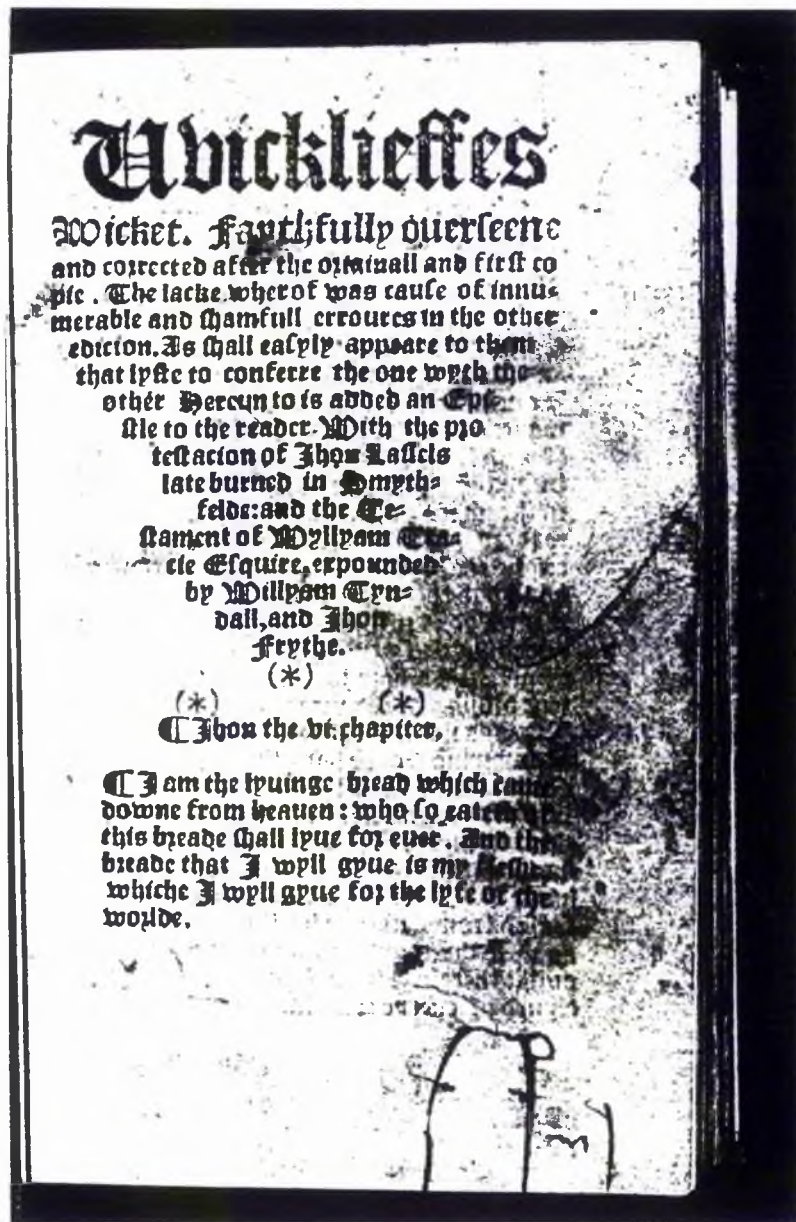
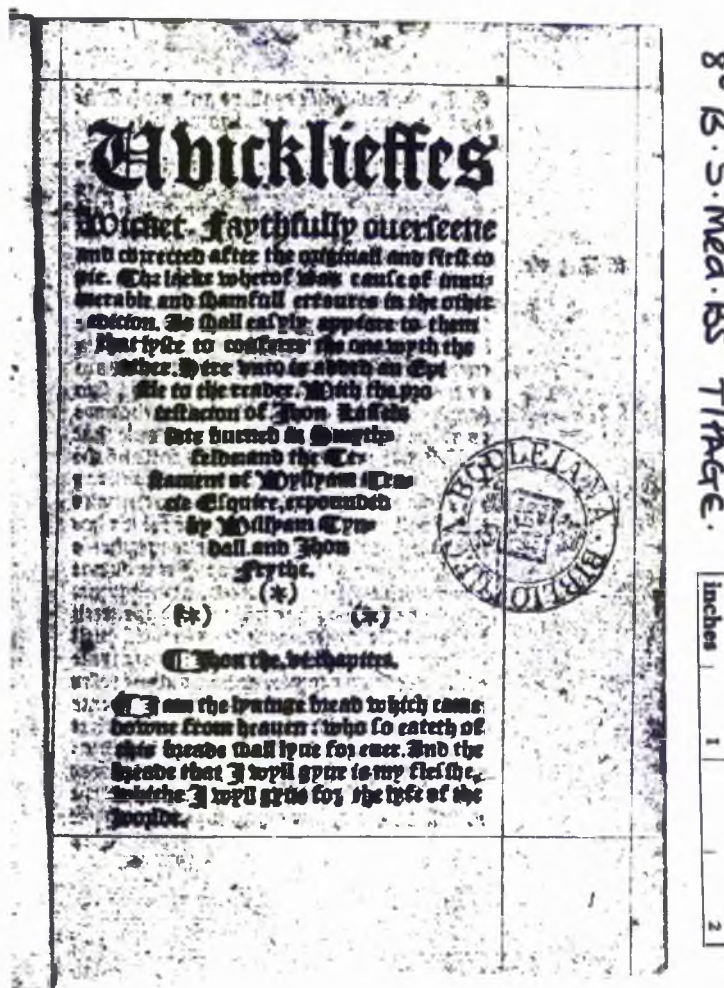


Illustration IV:

Wickliefes Wicket, John Day, London 1550.

Second Edition, Text D; STC no. 25591a

Bodleian Library, copy B5(1)Med.B.S.



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