

FACSIMILE TEXTS.

THE FIRST PRINTED  
ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT.

TRANSLATED BY

WILLIAM TYNDALE.

PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHED FROM THE UNIQUE FRAGMENT, NOW IN  
THE GRENVILLE COLLECTION, BRITISH MUSEUM.

EDITED BY  
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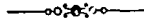
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TO THE

REV. JAMES STRATTEN.



IN PERPETUAL TESTIMONY

OF HIS

Sacred Eloquence,

Wight and Insight in the Scriptures,

AND A

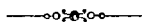
Most faithful and fruitful Ministry

of upwards of Forty-two Years,

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY

INSCRIBED.

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Printed by PETER QUENTEL at Cologne, between March and July 1526 64

# The First Printed English New Testament.

TRANSLATED BY  
WILLIAM TYNDALE.

"THE true seruaunt and Martyr of God . . . Whose his notable paynes and trauell may well be called the Apostle of England in this our latter age."—JOHN FOX; *Actes and Monumentes*, p. 1224, *Ed.* 1570.

He "put forthe certaine bookes of the olde Testament and the hole newe Testamēt into the Englyshe tongue . . . whereby sence thanks be geuen to God, the dore of lyght into the scriptures, hath and daile is more and more opened unto vs, the whiche before was many yeares closed in darkenes."—ANONYMOUS WRITER: *Idem*, p. 514, *Ed.* 1563.

## PREFACE.

**W**ITH reverence, almost with awe, we here offer to the reader the photographic likeness of a priceless gem in English literature. It is the *unique* Fragment of that first and fontal edition of the English New Testament, to which Mr. Anderson refers as "the veritable origin of all those millions of English Scriptures now being read in so many different and distant parts of the globe-parts, utterly unknown to our immortal Translator, when he sent the sheets to the press-parts, then untrodden by any Englishman-parts, then undiscovered." <sup>1</sup>

The first PRINTED portions of any part of the English Scriptures were the Gospels of Matthew and Mark; probably separately printed by Tyn-  
dale, somewhere on the Continent,<sup>2</sup> in 1524-5. While there is abundant evidence of the former existence of these two Gospels? no copies of them whatever are now known to be extant. After these, in time, came simultaneously his first two editions of the New Testament—one in Quarto, with glosses or marginal notes.; the other in Octavo, without glosses—one of which, perhaps both, were in England in March 1526. Of the Quarto edition, there is only the Fragment, here photo-lithographed, known; of the Octavo, there is one perfect text in the library of the Baptist College at Bristol, and a portion of another in that of St. Paul's Cathedral, London. These three copies, all denuded of their title pages, are the earliest impressions of any portion of the printed Bible in the English tongue, now known to be in existence.

<sup>1</sup> 'Annals of the English Bible.' vol. i., p. 74, *Ed.* 1845.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. R. Demaus, who is writing a *Life of Tyn-dale*, which is to appear this year, has noticed that no printer is known to have been at Hamburg about these years.

Looking over the present photo-lithographed Text, the reader will readily mark the total absence of all those distinctions which have always been used for the separation of books, and the discernment from each other of their several editions. It wants the names of TRANSLATOR or EDITOR, of the **PRINTER**, and the **PLACE** of printing, together with the **DATE** of printing. As we now have it, it is an unowned, unavowed fragment of black letter English. There is however an accumulation of evidence, perfectly overwhelming, which assures us, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that this fragment is verily and indeed a part of the *earliest* edition of the *New Testament*, ever printed in the English language. It is our duty here to exhibit this evidence.

At the outset, however, we must limit this testimony to these first two editions only. Afterwards came 'thicker and threefold' into England, editions both of the New Testament and of the Bible. Some of these attempted an accurate authenticity, being produced solely from a love to God and Truth ; others were surreptitiously and often carelessly produced by speculators, for the mere sake of money. All these can only be rightly analysed and adjudged in a thorough and complete 'History of the English Bible, both manuscript and printed.' A work yet to be written ; though the way has been made smoother by such pioneers as Rev. J. **FORSALL**, Sir F. **MADDEN** ; **Revs. J. LEWIS, H. COTTON, D.C.L., Canon B. F. WESTCOTT** ; Messrs. **LEA WILSON, C. ANDERSON, G. OFFOR, F. FRY**, and others. Such a work would be based upon deep sacred interest. It would record a marvellous story of human heroism and self denial, of untiring effort and labour. It would catalogue all known editions, all accessible early copies, and point out their various differences. And, with it, would be largely interwoven the political and social history of what may be looked upon as our Biblical Century—that hundred years, roughly speaking, of incessant Biblical translation and revision, which was crowned with that literary marvel, the present authorized version. What Froude has done for the Court and Political History of our Reformation ; what Macaulay for twenty years later on in our National History ; might, with even a more interesting subject—the most interesting of all literary subjects to many—be done for the Story of the Word of God in English. Is any man so bold, so earnest, so devout, as to attempt this work ?<sup>1</sup>

In adducing this Testimony from original sources, and in eliminating it from the confusion of many conflicting and perplexing statements, it will be convenient to quote each passage, once for all., in its principal place ; though it may occasionally anticipate somewhat in time, or contain extraneous matter.

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<sup>1</sup> Such a worker may consult with advantage the manuscript transcripts and notes of Mr. **Offor**, now *Add. MSS.* 26,670-5, in the British Museum.

## WILLIAM TYNDALE'S ANTECEDENT CAREER.

We may group the evidence—

AS IT RELATES TO THE FIRST TWO EDITIONS.

AS IT VERIFIES THE FRAGMENT, HERE REPRODUCED.

As to the two editions, it may be arranged under—

- I. *William Tyndale's antecedent career.*
- II. The **printing at Cologne.**
- III. *The printing at Worms.*
- IV. *William Roy's connection with these editions.*
- V. *The landing and distribution in England.*
- VI. *The persecution in England.*

As relates to the existing fragment ; there is possibly, only—

VII. *Typographical and Literary evidence.*

We must also premise, that, in judging of moral actions by the use made of money, we have followed the usual estimate, in a matter so hard to determine absolutely; that the multiple of Fifteen approximately represents the increased power of the same standard coin in purchasing the necessaries of life (food, raiment, rent, books, and the like), in the reign of Henry VIII., as compared with the present day. So that £10 then, represents £150 now; 16s. 4d. then, £12 5s. 0d. now; and so on. We have inserted the modern equivalent, upon this estimate, within [ ], after every sum mentioned.

### I. *William Tyndale's antecedent Career.*

1. Tyndale is believed to have been born either at STINCHCOMB or NORTH NIBLEY, in the hundred of Berkeley, in the county of Gloucester, not earlier than 1484-6;<sup>1</sup> where his family, during the wars of the Roses, had for a time adopted, probably for the sake of concealment, the name—variously spelt—of *Hitchins* or *Hotchyns*.

2. The authority for the early life of our great Englishman is John Fox; in the editions of his *Actes and Monumentes, etc.*, published during his lifetime, viz., 1563, 1570, 1576, 1583; and in the account partly extracted therefrom and prefixed to *The Workes of Tyndale, Frith, and Barnes*, 1573, fol.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Oade Roberts, of Painswick [d. 1821] in Lysons' Topog. Coll. Add. MSS. 9458. *Plut.* fol. 63-66; in the British Museum. Mr. Roberts thought that Richard Tyndale, who purchased, in

1561, the estate of Melksham's Court, Stinchcombe, from Thomas, Lord Wentworth, was the Translator's nephew.