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Ph. D.





WILLIAM ROY: A STUDY IN EARLY
SIXTEENTH-CENTURY PROTESTANT-
LOLLARD RELATIONSHIPS

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
DONALD O. FRIES
1969



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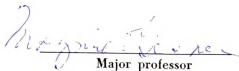
William Roy: A Study of Sixteenth-Century
Lollard-Protestant Relationships.

presented by

Donald O. Fries

has been accepted towards fulfillment
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Ph.D. degree in History

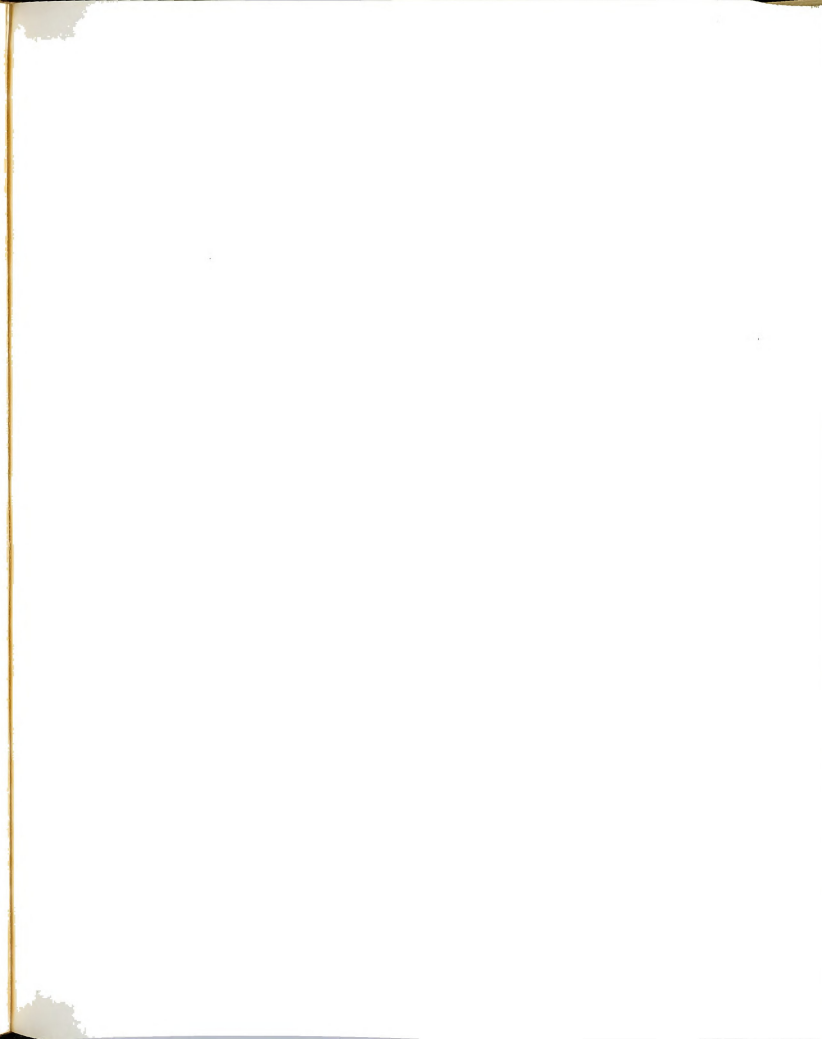

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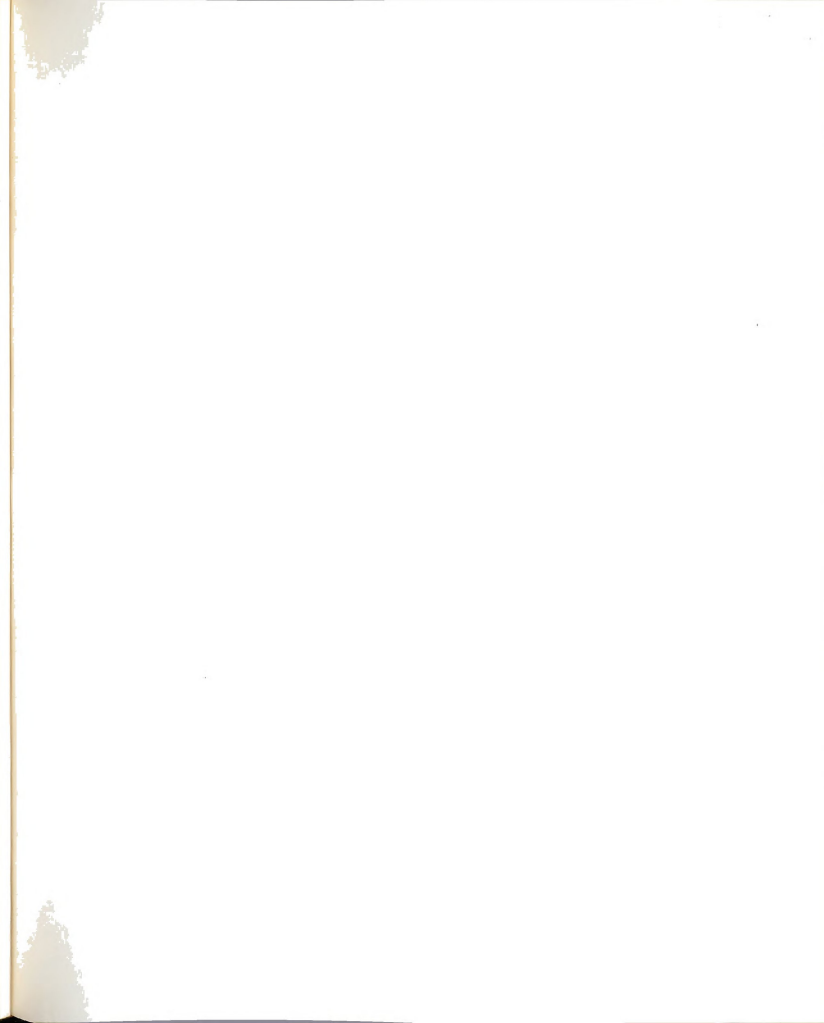
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ABSTRACT

WILLIAM ROY: A STUDY IN EARLY SIXTEENTH- CENTURY PROTESTANT-LOLLARD RELATIONSHIPS

By

Donald O. Fries

One of the unsolved problems of the early English Reformation is the relationship between the Protestants and the traditional English heresy. The Lollards had existed within England since the last part of the fourteenth century. This group, cut off from any clerical or intellectual support, retained at least an approximation of what John Wycliffe had taught. When the Reformation began in Germany certain non-Lollard Englishmen were attracted to the new heresy. These men, educated clerics for the most part, began to preach, within England, doctrines which were similar to those of the Lollards. The English ecclesiastical authorities, clamping down on these heretics forced some to recant and others to flee the country. In the third decade of the sixteenth century some of these exiles began an appeal to the English people, but especially to the Lollards, hoping to attract this ready-made basis of support to the doctrines of Continental Protestantism.

In the beginning the leader of this movement to attract the Lollards to the new heresy was William Roy. Roy, an

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educated Londoner and subsequent observant friar at the Greenwich monastery, fled England in 1525. After studying for a time with Luther at Wittenberg, Roy joined William Tyndale in Cologne. He aided the translator in the completion and printing of the English version of the New Testament. Tyndale and Roy soon parted, and Roy travelled to Strasbourg where he lived for three years. During this time he issued a number of publications which made him famous in England and turned him into a fugitive, hunted by the English authorities. Because of certain attacks on Cardinal Wolsey, the Lord Chancellor co-ordinated a search for Roy which took on international aspects and which put the ex-Franciscan into extreme jeopardy. With Wolsey's fall the search was allowed to lapse, and Roy continued to issue Reformation tracts. These included the first English translation of a complete tract by Luther and the first statement in English of Protestant doctrine. This latter statement represents the first Zwinglian doctrinal statement to be sent into England. Toward the end of his life Roy realized the need to united Lollardy and Continental Protestantism. His last two works were republications of Lollard treatises.

By studying Roy's life it is possible to see that while the English New Testament played a large role in attracting the Lollards to Protestantism, the work of men

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like Roy did even more to unite the two dissident groups. His work indicates that he saw the need for a union between the two groups, as the Lollards provided not only a home-based reform movement, but also gave the Protestants an ancient pedigree.

Finally, Roy was the first publicist for the Reformation in England. His works were designed for the semi-educated layman. They contain simple statements of doctrine and point out what he thought to be the evils of the Roman Church. While certainly neither highly intellectual nor learned, his writings are attempts to popularize and to convert the English lower classes.

This study chronologically traces Roy's life. Although dealing in part with his birth and education, it is primarily a study of his career as a reformer, translator, and author of Reformation literature. It is also an attempt to show how the Lollards as a group were won over to the Reformation. By analyzing Roy's writing and tracing their effect in England, this study gives some insight into Roy's contribution to the English Reformation.

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By

Donald O. Fries

A THESIS

Submitted to

Michigan State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Although writing a dissertation is often an extremely frustrating and trying experience I was very fortunate to have a doctoral committee who aided me in many ways.

Dr. Marjorie Gesner, my major professor, was most helpful in giving me guidance and encouragement. Her patience with my mistakes and problems was most appreciated. While giving me full freedom to express my ideas she tempered my foibles with mature scholarly opinion. Her great knowledge of sixteenth-century England gave me valuable insights in the writing of this thesis.

To Dr. Thomas Bushell I also owe a debt of gratitude. His most valuable comments on content and style and his careful testing of the logic of my conclusions have certainly aided me greatly. Professor Richard E. Sullivan has also taken time from his busy schedule to read and make corrections in my manuscript.

I also wish to acknowledge my wife, Grace, who, through working to support us during the whole of my study, made my research trip to England, and in the final analysis, the whole doctorate possible. Her unfailing patience and understanding are also most appreciated.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Before the biography of any historical personage can be written, something must be known of the times in which he lived. It is impossible to trace the lives of men such as Sir Francis Bacon or James I until something is known of the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages. Sir Robert Walpole is a complete enigma unless one understands early eighteenth-century England. If this is true of great and influential personages, it is perhaps even more true of the lesser known, those men who flit across the pages of history from time to time, men whose import is not easily understood. It would be very difficult to understand the life of a man like William Roy unless we know something of the background which influenced him and his fellow reformers. We could also never begin to uncover any contribution which he might have made to the history of the English Reformation unless we realize the background in which he worked. If William Roy's writings appear vulgar, it is because he appealed to a vulgar audience. If he seems violent, it was because he lived in a violent time. Perhaps it is because he was a man

both of and appealing to the people that historians have made him to be one of the "bad men" of the English Reformation. If, however, Roy is viewed in the light of his own times, if we could discover what might have influenced him or to whom he appealed, then we might be able to assess his true worth and his true contribution to the Reformation. Thus, the introduction to this thesis will consist of an account of the forces which moved England toward some sort of religious upheaval well before Henry VIII sought to rid himself of a barren wife so that he might have a male heir. Hopefully this account will provide the necessary background information so that in subsequent chapters we shall be able to make some estimate, not only of Roy's character, but also of his worth and contribution to the history of the Reformation.

I

Sir F. Maurice Powicke once stated: "The one definite thing which can be said about the reformation in England is that it was an act of State."¹ What Powicke meant by this statement is that Roman ecclesiastical authority was overthrown in England through certain acts of the monarch and Parliament. Beginning in 1529, the second Tudor,

¹Sir F. Maurice Powicke, The Reformation in England (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), 1.

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Henry VIII, by using his prerogative, his Parliament, and his indomitable will, forced Roman authority out of the English Church, thus ending a connection which had existed since 663 A.D. What Henry attempted to do between 1529 and 1543 was not to institute those reforms which Continental reformers deemed necessary in order to "purify" the church, but rather to leave the basic structure of the English Church intact. The king was more than willing to leave the dogma and practices of the church alone and only insisted that he, rather than the pope, was the supreme head of the church in England. It is certainly true that during Henry's reign some ecclesiastical innovations were begun. The Ten Articles only listed three sacraments and an English translation of the Bible was approved.² However, before his death, the king had not only reinstated the seven sacraments, but had also forbidden the marriage of priests and had outlawed indiscriminate Bible reading by the laity.³ When Henry died in 1547 the English church was hardly more than

²C. H. Williams, English Historical Documents: 1485-1558 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1967), 795 and 823.

³The Six Articles finally set the religious format for Henry's reign. They can be found in: Henry Gee and William J. Hardy, Documents Illustrative of English Church History (London: MacMillan & Co., 1896), 303-319.

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the Holy Catholic Church of his father, except the king and not the pontiff was supreme head.

At first glance, then, the English Reformation seems, as Gairdner stated, to be a "contest, not of the English people, but of the king and his government with Rome."⁴ Even though there is some truth in both Powicke's and Gairdner's statements, the Reformation in England was certainly, "no sudden movement forced upon the church by an obscure student in Germany, or by an aristocratic sovereign in England," but was actually a culmination of various factors which had existed for a long time and which ultimately made some form of reform inevitable.⁵ In fact a case could plausibly be made for the argument that there were two Reformations in England during the first half of the sixteenth century. On one hand there was the Henrican Reformation, truly an act of state. On the other hand there was a movement for a change, not only in church government, but in dogma, practices, and forms of worship. This second Reformation for the most part worked "underground", as it were, first being deemed heretical by the Roman authorities and later held in contempt by the Henrican church. This

⁴James Gairdner, Lollardy and the Reformation in England, I (London: MacMillan & Co., 1908), 5.

⁵R. S. Arrowsmith, The Prelude to the Reformation (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1923), v.

movement for reform, while attracting some intellectuals like Tyndale, Bilney, and Barnes, was primarily made up of the commonalty. The people of the middle and lower classes, the merchants and laborers who had little voice in government seemed to feel antagonism toward both the Roman and the Anglican churches.

These two reform movements, one sponsored and nurtured by the state and the other often hunted and harassed, existed side by side during the latter half of Henry's reign. These movements were united during the short reign of Edward VI, when Archbishop Cranmer, no longer held in check by Henry's power, was able to initiate a state church embodying many of the tenets held by those who advocated a thorough-going reform. For six years these united reform movements attempted to create an English Protestant church along Continental lines. The reigns of Mary I and Elizabeth I again drove the reform movements apart, and the state church evolved into Anglicanism, while the thorough reformers became what history has known as Nonconformists.

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If one were to write a history of the English Reformation, he would be forced to begin, not with Martin Luther, or with Henry VIII, but with a group of men whose history it is impossible to fully relate. These men were the

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Lollards. The word Lollard apparently was of German origin and meant mumblers or mutterers of prayers. This word was first applied to the followers of John Wycliffe by an Irish Cistercian, Henry Crump.⁶

Wycliffe (1324-1384) was a fellow at and subsequently master of Balliol College, Oxford, who began, about 1377, to attack certain tenets of the church. From that date to his death in 1384 he strongly advocated church reform.⁷ He preached against the growing secularization of the clergy as manifested by their increasing desire for temporal wealth and possessions.⁸ He declared that by obtaining worldly possessions the church had impoverished the people and the state had every right to seize all ecclesiastical tenures and should use this confiscated property for the benefit of the poor.⁹ One of the main goals of his reform was the use of church wealth to alleviate the mounting tax burdens of the poor. Wycliffe's hatred for the secularization of the English

⁶A. G. Dickens, The English Reformation (London: Botsford Ltd., 1964), 23.

⁷Sidney Lee (ed.), Dictionary of National Biography, XLIII (London: Smith and Elder and Co., 1900), 203.

⁸Ibid., 206.

⁹James MacKinnon, The Origins of the Reformation (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1939), 84.

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clergy and the demand for the seizure of ecclesiastical properties were not in themselves heretical. The pope, himself, referred to Wycliffe's teachings as only errors and not as heresies. Even though not heresy, Wycliffe's plan for a state, rather than an ecclesiastical, reform of the church was certainly original in England during the late fourteenth century.¹⁰

Wycliffe's errors soon turned into heresies. He became concerned with the ignorance of the laity in regard to the essentials of religion. To combat this ignorance Wycliffe sent preachers into the parishes to work as educators.¹¹ Believing that a literal interpretation of scripture was the only sure way to religious truth, Wycliffe began an English translation of the Bible.¹² Continuing his attack on ecclesiastical practices, he demanded that the church return to a pre-Constantinian, non-papal condition.¹³ Wycliffe maintained that the pope was neither the head of nor more powerful than any other bishop.¹⁴

¹⁰ DNB, LXIII, 209.

¹¹ MacKinnon, 55.

¹² Ibid., 90.

¹³ Ibid., 102.

¹⁴ John Foxe, The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe, II (London: Seeley and Burnside, 1837), 799-800.

By late 1380 Wycliffe had swung away from his attack on church practices and had begun an attack on dogma. He taught that the church was in error in its teachings on the Eucharist.¹⁵ He concluded that "the consecrated host which we see on the altar is neither Christ nor any part of him, but the effectual sign of him."¹⁶

Wycliffe was a university man, and in the beginning his movement was sustained by university people. For a short time after his death, men like John of Gaunt and Sir John Oldcastle gave powerful lay support to the movement. However, after Henry V became king in 1413 persecution of the Lollard heresy began in earnest. In 1414, after an abortive attempt at rebellion, Oldcastle was burnt and Lollardy lost its last important champion. Not only did Lollardy lose its powerful lay support, but also all its ties with intellectuals and with the universities were severed.¹⁷ Wycliffe's teachings, however, did not die, but were only cut loose from the intellectual and ruling members of society. Cut loose, these teachings drifted to lesser men, to the artisans and lower classes. After 1414, Wycliffe's teaching remained

¹⁵DNB, LXIII, 212.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Arthur Ogle, The Tragedy of the Lollards Tower (Oxford: Pen in Hand Publishing Co., 1949), 22.

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alive only in those people who he himself had endeavored to instruct, the mass of common people.¹⁸ Although a bit harsh, Gairdner is perhaps expressing some truth in assessing the Lollard movement when he paraphrases Reginald Pecock:

In short, a movement which sprang among purer minded men, touched by the wonderful beauty and sweetness of Holy Writ in their mother tongue, had, for want of proper control, lent itself greatly to the guidance of men who were not pure minded or pure in morals either for it encouraged an unreasoning hatred, both of the clergy and of the established institutions of religion.¹⁹

The Lollards who lived after Wycliffe, many of them illiterate, had no central organization or educated priesthood to guide and bind them together. They existed in isolated groups bound only by family ties and by a set of beliefs which had originally come from Wycliffe, but which had been changed and modified through oral transmission during the fifteenth century.²⁰ Under such conditions, it is really surprising that Lollard traditions could remain alive and almost intact. But except for some obvious cases

¹⁸K. B. McFarlane, John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity (London: English Universities Press, Ltd., 1952), 187.

¹⁹Gairdner, I, 222.

²⁰John Thomson, The Later Lollards, 1414-1520 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 2.

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of fanaticism, the Lollards all seem to have held similar beliefs.²¹

If there was one statement of beliefs to which they all clung, that statement was the Twelve Conclusions presented by the Lollards to Parliament in 1395. The first of these conclusions criticized the English church for following the Roman practice of dwelling on temporalities while "faith, hope, and charity," had disappeared. Secondly, the Lollards believed that the existing priesthood was begun by Rome and was not the priesthood ordained by Christ and his apostles. Thirdly, the laws of celibacy were a source of evil. Fourthly, the Eucharist was only a "pretended miracle" which led one to idolatry. The fifth held that the practices of exorcism and benedictions over bread and wine were more suited for necromancy than for theology. The sixth conclusion railed against the policy of the episcopacy serving as secular servants to the monarchy. The seventh and eighth spoke out against prayers for the dead and pilgrimages to crosses and roods. The ninth denied the need for auricular confession said to priests; while the tenth declared warfare and capital punishment to be contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. The eleventh maintained that the practice of women becoming nuns only leads to sin. The final

²¹For examples of these, see John Foxe, III, 134-178.

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conclusion decries extravagant and sinful ecclesiastical practices.²² Along with these conclusions, the Lollards always maintained a love and desire for the scriptures to be in English.²³

If the above conclusions were the embodiment of the basic elements of Lollardy, its greatest advertisement is to be found in the Wycliffe Bible and in a book known as Wycliffe's Wicket. Wycliffe's Wicket, although not written by the Oxford reformer, enjoyed a wide popularity throughout Lollard circles. The author of this tract writes:

They say it is heresy to speak of the holy scriptures in English and so they would condemn the Holy Ghost that gave it in tongues to the apostles of Christ to speak the word of God in all languages....Consider you whether it be not all one to deny Christ's words for heresy and Christ for an heretic.²⁴

This tract proved so popular that it was reprinted in England as late as 1548.

The Lollard heresy enjoyed a peculiar history in England. If the number of cases of heretics brought before the

²²For these conclusions see: Gotthard Lechler, John Wycliffe and his English Precursors (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1884), 447-448.

²³Wycliffe's Wicket, (STC 25590), 1546, [Aviii].

²⁴Ibid., Av.

ecclesiastical courts is examined, a rather strange pattern emerges. Between 1414 and 1450 many instances of Lollard persecution occur. Between 1450 and 1485 there are so few cases that it appears that Lollardy was dead. After 1485 the cases again grow to surprising proportions. The Lollard heresy may have been stifled only to revive again during the last quarter of the fifteenth century. It is also possible that the increase of Lollard activity after 1485 is only an illusion caused by the fact that records were better kept during the Tudor period.²⁵ It is perhaps sufficient to state that beginning in 1485 there was a great number of abjurations by people accused of Lollard beliefs. Not only John Foxe, but diocesan registers, record a great number of heresy trials during this period. A. G. Dickens has counted at least seventy cases of heresy between 1510 and 1522 in London alone.²⁶ Coupled with this is the figure of eighty cases in Buckinghamshire during the same period.²⁷

It is perhaps not too strong a conclusion to state that in certain areas the Lollard heresy was extremely

²⁵Thomson, 3.

²⁶A. G. Dickens, "Heresy and the Origins of English Protestantism," Britain and the Netherlands, II (Groningen, J. B. Wolters, 1964), 55.

²⁷John Foxe, III, 123-124.

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widespread throughout the lower orders of English society during the last quarter of the fifteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth centuries. This group, without influence or fortune, did represent a group of people who were highly discontented with the existing ecclesiastical order and who were bent on resistance to the established church. If this group had no influence on the church or on the newly formed Tudor government, it did have a profound effect on the reception of reform ideas in England.

III

There were, however, other Englishmen besides the Lollards who had begun to feel that something was amiss within the church during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. These men, mostly churchmen, were interested in change, not in doctrine, but in church practice. Most of these men had no contact with the Lollards, and one, Reginald Pecock, was a vociferous enemy of the heretics. Yet these men preached a program of clerical reform to which the Lollards could easily subscribe. At least three of these men, Reginald Pecock, Thomas Gascoigne, and Dean John Colet, are worth mentioning as examples of members of the ecclesiastical establishment who felt that something ought to be done to reform church practices. It must be stated

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at the outset that these men had no desire to create a new church. They only wanted to reform the old one.

Reginald Pecock (1395-1460) is perhaps the most remarkable of this group of people who believed that something should be done to reform the church. He was the Bishop of St. Asaph, who in a book entitled The Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy, published in 1455, strongly argued against the Lollards. In this attack he attempted to prove that eleven Lollard tenets were erroneous and he did it so effectively that he was translated from St. Asaph to the Bishopric of Chichester.²⁸ However, the very next year he published a tract entitled, Book of Faith, in which he maintained that scripture contains the ultimate authority for religious truth. He also maintained that where reason is certain it should be obeyed even in defiance of the church. Pecock does add that reason is seldom sure, and when one is in doubt authority should be taken as a guide to truth.²⁹ In the Repressor Pecock went so far as to state that reason is even a higher authority than scripture in cases where discrepancy exists between the two.³⁰ Finally,

²⁸ DNB, XLIV, 200.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Reginald Pecock, The Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy (London: Longmans, Green, 1860), 10.

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in a series of works at the end of his life Pecock denied that the apostles had written the Creed.³¹ He was charged with heresy and forced to recant.

Pecock was certainly not a heretic in the Lollard vein, but his appeal to reason was an appeal which the Lollards could understand, as was his statement that the scriptures represented ultimate authority.³² In John Foxe's Acts and Monuments, Pecock emerges as a strong advocate of reform.³³ Perhaps the importance of Foxe's statement lies not in its veracity, which in this case is doubtful, but in the fact that the martyrologist considered Pecock worth mentioning as one who led the way to the Reformation. Connected in no way with Lollardy, Pecock is certainly connected with a desire for the reform of some of the teachings of the church.

If Pecock was interested in the use of rationality and scriptures to define religious truth, Thomas Gascoigne (1403-1458) was vehement in his denunciation of the clerical practices which existed during his life. Gascoigne was Chancellor of the University of Oxford and a popular preacher and teacher during the second quarter of the fifteenth century. He was a man of integrity who was "vehement in

³¹DNB, XLIV, 200.

³²Thomson, 244.

³³John Foxe, III, 733.

his hostility to the Wycliffe movement and as unsparing as Wycliffe himself of the evils in the Church whenever he found them.³⁴ He defended the authority of the holy scripture and the right of the king's prerogative. He also fought against non-residence, pluralities, and neglect of clerical duties. He, himself, refused any benefice to which he could not minister personally.³⁵ Foxe includes only one reference to Gascoigne, but in this brief quotation, a glimpse of the tenor of Gascoigne's writings can be seen.

I have found it alleged out of Thomas Gascoin in Dictionario Theologico whose plain words be these 'A.D. 1414, Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, was so stricken in his tongue, that he could neither swallow or speak for a certain space before his death, much like the example of a rich glutton; and so died upon the same. And this was thought by many to come upon him for that he so bound the word of the Lord, that it should not be preached in his day'.³⁶

Gascoigne summarizes his beliefs and teachings in the above mentioned Dictionarium Theologicum which contains both a theological discussion and a discussion of his view of the condition of church and state between the years 1403 and 1455. Unfortunately, this interesting work has never been

³⁴DNB, XXI, 42.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶John Foxe, III, 404.

translated into English, but portions of it were printed by J.E.T. Rogers in 1881.³⁷ In this work Gascoigne, Chancellor of Oxford, learned and educated, has no patience with worldly bishops. He advocates piety and chastity.³⁸ He maintains that the pope "misleads and is misled."³⁹ Turning to church practices Gascoigne writes:

Modern sinners say 'I do not care what and how many sins I commit in God's sight because I can easily and speedily get a plenary remission granted me by the pope, whose writing and grant I have bought for fourpence or sixpence, or for a game of tennis'.⁴⁰

Gascoigne also rails against the bishops, crying that they received their benefices through court intrigue and through simony. He maintains that the people were more than discontented with episcopal practices. Everywhere could be heard the people crying "away with the bishops who grow

³⁷James E. T. Rogers, Loci E Libro Veritatum, Passages Selected from Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1881).

³⁸Ibid., lxii.

³⁹Ibid., 152.

⁴⁰Ibid., 123. "Consimilter jam moderni peccatores dicunt 'non curoquae et quot mala fecero coram Deo quia facillime et citissime habeo remissionem plenariam cujuscunque culpa et poenae per absolucionem et indulgenciam concessam michi a papa cujus scripturam et concessionem emi pro iv denariis vel pro sex denariis, velper lusum ad plum'."

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wealthy, who wish to be called lords...and will do nothing about preaching to save men's souls."⁴¹

In a sermon delivered to the University of Oxford, Gascoigne continued his attack on the short comings of the clergy by listing seven evil conditions of the church. Four of these conditions dealt with the practices of bishops and priests in their worldly lives and their demands for secular gain. The final three dealt with abuses in absolution, indulgences, and dispensations.⁴²

Although these criticisms by Gascoigne would appear to put him firmly in the Lollard camp, he was never associated with the Lollards. He had little desire for doctrinal change but wanted reform of ecclesiastical practices. He did not like Lollards and would have been shocked to have been given their label. However, there was very little which Gascoigne wrote with which a Lollard, if he could have read it, would not have agreed. Thus, in fifteenth-century England we can readily see two separate strains moving toward a reform. These strains, one clerical and the other heretical, were neither connected nor even very vociferous. The majority of Englishmen were content with

⁴¹ Ibid., 41.

⁴² Ibid., 53-54.

the church; most people were convinced that the church was functioning as well as possible. But those voices which were heard were perhaps preparing the way for the religious upheaval of the sixteenth century.

The third member of the trio who pointed out what he considered to be grave defects in the church was also an educated Oxford doctor and a churchman who gave great impetus to the nascent reform movement. This man was John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral. Colet (1467-1519) belonged to that rather ephemeral group of intellectuals known sometimes as the Oxford reformers and other times as the English humanists. This group consisted of men like Sir Thomas More, Linacre, Grocyn, Colet, and of course, Erasmus himself, when he was in England. Sir Thomas More called Colet his spiritual director and the Dean stood very near the top of the liberal intellectual circle of early sixteenth-century English humanists.⁴³ Even Henry VIII was reported to have said of Colet: "let every man have his doctor as he liketh, this shall be my doctor."⁴⁴

While at Oxford, Colet began to give public lectures on St. Paul's epistles to the Romans and Corinthians. In these

⁴³DNB, XI, 322.

⁴⁴Foxe, IV, 248.

lectures Colet attempted to show the human side of the saint and each lecture also contained some attack on the condition and practices of the church.⁴⁵ For example, in one of his lectures Colet maintained that when St. Paul tells us that the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, he means that possessions are not necessary or even helpful in attaining eternal life. Churchmen, he adds, have become very eager for worldly gain, and he ends by stating:

...you will find nothing that has befallen the church to have done more mischief than possessions, and titles of meum and tuum, and power of claiming property. Hence have sprung avarice and greed of money, a disease that has now grown to such strength in the Christian Church...that, unless Christ have mercy on his own Body and aid it in its peril, it assuredly cannot be far off from being doomed to destruction.⁴⁶

After receiving his D.D. from Oxford in 1505, Colet was, in that same year, installed as Dean of St. Paul's in London, where he became a popular preacher. The Lollards are reputed to have been his most attentive and avid listeners.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ DNB, XI, 325.

⁴⁶ John Colet, Joannis Coleti Enarrationin Epistolam S. Pauli ad Romanos (London: Bell and Daldy, 1873), 118.

⁴⁷ DNB, XI, 325.

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In 1511 a convocation was called in the Southern Province of England to consider ways of ending the growing Lollard heresy. For some reason Archbishop Warham, a close friend, and subsequent protector of Colet, chose the Dean of St. Paul's to preach the opening sermon. This sermon was a critical attack on ecclesiastical practices and is certainly worth reading as an example of a declaration of the state of the church, made by an orthodox churchman in pre-Reformation England.

...But we wish that once, remembering your name and profession ye would mind the reformation of ecclesiastical affairs. For assure yourselves there never was more need of it, the state of the church did never more desire your endeavours....

And first to speak of pride of life: how much greediness and appetite of honour and dignity is seen nowadays in clergymen....

The second secular evil is carnal concupiscence and hath not this vice grown and increased in the church so far that in this most busy age the far greater numbers of priests mind but what doth delight and please their senses.

Covetousness is the third secular evil.... This abominable pestilence hath so entered in the minds of almost all priests, hath so blinded the eyes of their understanding that we see nothing but that which seems to bring unto us some gains....

The fourth secular evil that spotteth the face of the church is continual secular occupation, wherein priests and bishops nowadays doth busy themselves, becoming the servants rather of men than of God....

Now the way whereby the church may be reformed into better fashion is not for to make new laws...but that those that are made already be well kept....

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The clergy and spiritual men being thus once reformed in the church, we then may with a just order proceed to the reformation of the lay part, which truly will be very easily done if we first reform ourselves.⁴⁸

Hopefully, this lengthy quotation will indicate the state to which some orthodox ministers felt the church had descended. Colet's sermon was preached in Latin, but an English translation soon appeared which was very popular in London. The Dean was charged with heresy, but Archbishop Warham dismissed the charges against him.⁴⁹

It can be seen from the previous examples that there was some discontent with the existing ecclesiastical practices during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. If this discontent was not widespread, it was certainly loud. Men like Colet and Gascoigne had no wish to destroy the existing order. The idea of a change in doctrine would have repelled them, but they did want to see a thorough reformation of the existing practices of the clergy.

Whether church practices were as corrupt and evil as these men maintained is a question beyond the scope of this study. But what is important to note is the fact that there

⁴⁸The first English translation of this sermon preserved in the British Museum is: John Colet, A Sermon of Conforming and Reforming made to the Convocation at St. Paul's Church in London (Cambridge: J. Field, 1661).

⁴⁹DNB, XI, 325.

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were in England groups of people who were not only highly discontented with the existing clerical situation, but who were openly attempting to improve it. These men, along with the Lollards, were perhaps preparing a way, or at least a fertile seedbed, for the revolution which was to occur.

It cannot be overemphasized, however, that with all the fervor of men like Gascoigne and Colet, this group of reformers was extremely small. There was no real unity or even necessarily any sympathy between the people who spoke out for reform. If the church had evils, it also had strengths, and to most men--even men like Sir Thomas More, Bishop Fisher, and Archbishop Warham--the strengths far outweighed the evils. Perhaps if men like Gascoigne and Colet had lived through the religious confrontation of the 1530's, they would, like Fisher and More, have chosen the block over the prospect of a reform which ultimately spelled destruction to a system they understood and sought to improve.

IV

By the year 1500 all these forces demanding reform in England had more or less coalesced. The center of this turmoil, this evergrowing movement to end clerical abuses, was in London. It is not difficult to explain the reasons why the capital became the focal point for English reform. It

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had long been the largest city in England. It was the center of trade and abounded with foreigners. If anywhere in England there was to be found a great exchange of ideas, that place was London. It was probably against the London heretics that Reginald Pecock directed his Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy, as various references to the city are found throughout this work. It was in London that Dean Colet preached his anti-clerical sermons. Throughout the period when Lollard persecution was in abeyance there were apparently Lollards in considerable numbers living there.⁵⁰

During the first twenty-five years of the sixteenth century the persecution of Lollards was carried out with great vigor in the capital city. Cuthbert Tunstal, Bishop of London, conducted a heresy proceeding in 1527-1528, and from this proceeding it is evident that a group of people holding Lollard views had been active for some time.⁵¹

Between 1509 and 1527 John Foxe lists at least ninety-two people who were accused of heresy in the city.⁵² These

⁵⁰William Page (ed.), The Victoria History of London (London: Constable and Co., 1909), 233.

⁵¹John Stacey, John Wycliffe and Reform (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), 134.

⁵²John Foxe, IV, 174-176, 200-244.

people were accused of the usual Lollard heresies which included the reading of such books as The Four Evangelists; Wycliffe's Wicket; A Book of the Ten Commandments of Almighty God; and The Revelation of St. John and the Epistles of Paul and James.⁵³ Most of these Lollards were of the lower and lower-middle classes. There were a number of tailors, carpenters, weavers, and servants, with only an occasional man of substance. Between 1510 and 1520 two goldsmiths were apprehended, while the case of Richard Hunne, merchant tailor, has been well publicized by Arthur Ogle. The London Lollards appear to have been of the same social classes as were the Lollards throughout England. The centers of London Lollardy appear to have been in Coleman and Wood streets, near Aldersgate.⁵⁴ Inspired by the seemingly ubiquitous "Father" John Hacker, water bearer, no less than six heretics were named during this period who dwelt in Coleman Street. This area in northwest London was populated with weavers and artisans.

One point which set the citizens of London apart from the rest of the English was the bitter anti-clerical feeling existing within the city. The causes of this ill-feeling lay in an old dispute about the payment of tithes. From

⁵³Ibid., 176.

⁵⁴Ibid., 239.

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1457 on, this dispute smoldered and occasionally broke out into the open.⁵⁵ All these factors--the existence of a large Lollard fraction, centered in the northwest corner of the city; the existence of a long-standing tithe dispute and subsequent anti-clerical feeling on the part of the populace; and the existence of a small group of educated men who spoke out against clerical abuses--served to make London a fertile ground for Reformation ideas.

It is not surprising that when the foreign merchants, especially those from Germany, began to bring Protestant ideas with them into England, they found willing listeners in London. It is also not surprising that London became the center of an illicit trade in prohibited Protestant books during the third decade of the sixteenth century. Nor is it surprising that certain men, living in or near London, were, at an early date, infected with the ideas of the Reformation. Some of these men fled to Germany and Switzerland where they wrote tracts, appeals, and even a new English translation of the Bible, all of which appealed to the Lollards and other anti-clerical elements of the city, who avidly desired to hear and read of the marvelous Reformation which must have seemed to them as the beginning of the fruition of all they had held so long.

⁵⁵Page, The Victoria History of London, 249.

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Even though men like Dean Colet did rail against the church practices of his time, it was really the Lollards who prepared England for the Reformation. E. G. Rupp is correct when he states that "any due assessment of the causes and consequences of the English Reformation must take into account the survival of Lollardy."⁵⁶ The work of men like Rupp and Professor A. G. Dickens have left little doubt that the English Reformation was greatly influenced by the Lollards. The Lollards had converted some of the lower classes to their beliefs and had ingrained their ideas, if not their heresies, in many others. Dickens has gone so far as to state that the English lower classes of the early part of the reign of Henry VIII were all Lollards or near-Lollards. He adds: "...heretics and people on the fringe of heresy were more numerous in the earlier half of Henry VIII's reign than [James] Gairdner's generation would ever acknowledge."⁵⁷

Most Englishmen apparently cared very little for the doctrinal changes demanded by the Lollards, but they did seem vitally concerned with what they thought were clerical

⁵⁶E. G. Rupp, Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition (Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1949), I.

⁵⁷Dickens, "Heresy and the Origins of English Protestantism," Britain and the Netherlands, II, 65.

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abuses. Professor Dickens insists that an anti-clerical feeling grew among English laymen in the three decades before the Reformation. He sees Lollard propaganda as the nourisher and spreader of this feeling.⁵⁸ Richard Hunne's case is a perfect example of the hatred which was felt toward the clergy. Hunne, after all, was a Lollard--a heretic, a man with whom the populace at large should not have even bothered. Even though he possessed some wealth and social standing, his heresy should have denied him all association with the Christian people of London. On his death, however, lay London was extremely incensed.⁵⁹ The clergy were vilified, and as late as 1528 William Roy mentioned Hunne's name in his satire on Cardinal Wolsey. If Dickens is correct, it was this anti-clerical feeling long recorded in Lollard circles, which in the first thirty years of the sixteenth century spread throughout the populace and made the Reformation possible.

Besides instilling an anti-clerical feeling in the people, the Lollards were responsible for many other aspects of the preparation of England for a reform. The Lollards'

⁵⁸Ibid., 61.

⁵⁹The best discussion of the controversy over Hunne's death is, of course, Arthur Ogle. John Foxe gives a more contemporary Protestant account, while Sir Thomas More in his Dialogue Concerning Heresies and Matters of Religion... presents the contemporary Catholic view.

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great desire to have the scripture in English and their tenet of scriptural authority made them the most demanding purchasers of the English New Testament, when it reached England in 1526. They were willing listeners and avid advocates of the new ideas which spread through England. They were the original "fifth column" of English heretics who, with the aid of writings of perhaps more daring Englishmen who had fled the country, prepared England for the day when the Protestant cause would triumph. Whether the English Reformation was an act of state or an act of men attempting to do what they thought was necessary to purify the church is still debatable. But no Reformation, either as an act of state or as a movement from below could have been successful in England unless a great number of people were willing to accept it. Not even Henry VIII, with all his power, could have transformed the church in England into the Church of England unless he could count on the acquiescence of most of the populace. This acquiescence was, to a large extent caused by the work of the Lollard propagandists, and it was perhaps this group which enabled Henry VIII to make a religious revolution with very little open hostility.

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Although recently the Lollards have obtained a great deal of credit for the role they played in preparing England for the Reformation, it is still necessary, before one can truly understand the English Reformation, to trace the ways in which Lollards and Protestants were connected. It is certainly true that the English New Testament was one great link between the old heresy and the new Protestant thought. However, there are other links between the two. English Protestants during the early part of the sixteenth century openly sought Lollard aid. That the Protestants appealed to the Lollard heretics hopefully will be shown in the following pages. It appears that if a link can be found between the two groups, that link must be sought in this appeal. More than one tract was written as a thinly veiled appeal to the Lollards, perhaps to convince them that the new heresy was the old writ large.

Not only were appeals written to the Lollards, but also the Reformation had to be popularized in England. Controversialists such as Martin Luther, William Tyndale, Huldreich Zwingli, and Sir Thomas More were engaged in rather heady theological debates, while the common man little understood what was occurring. Certain writers endeavored to facilitate the assimilation of the reform ideals by the



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common people. These men wrote treatises on and made translations of the doctrinal theories being expressed by Luther and Zwingli. These writers were able to bring, through skillful translations, the ideas of the great reformers down to a level which the common people could both understand and appreciate. No Reformation could have taken place in England if the common man had not understood what the theologians said. The men who translated and simplified the work of the great reformers served as popularizers who spread Reformation principles to a people who were, at best, barely literate. Quite often these writings were vulgar and perhaps sometimes even erroneous, but they did, in their time, serve the purpose of informing and making understandable those ideas which were perhaps too complex or were in a language not understood by the common sixteenth-century Englishman.

One of the men who labored throughout his career as a reformer to popularize the Reformation both through an appeal to the Lollards and through a simplification of Reformation ideas was William Roy. Roy has never been properly understood. Although quoted by almost every Reformation scholar since Gairdner, he has most often been relegated to a minor and even dishonorable role in the English Reformation. Admittedly, Roy is a shadowy character,

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appearing and disappearing through the history of the early years of the Reformation. He was always on the move, always hunted; he was the heretic most sought after by the English authorities during the 1520s. Because he was often vituperative; because he was perhaps a braggart; and because there is some question as to just what he did and did not write, William Roy's contribution to the English Reformation has been underestimated. William Roy did, however, make a contribution to the Reformation. In the final analysis perhaps it was men like William Roy, who really made the Reformation in England possible.

[illegible]

CHAPTER II

WILLIAM ROY TO 1524

The Roy family was not native English stock. They apparently came to England from various Continental locales at various times. In England, although found as far north as York, most of them were to be found in the London area. The family, if indeed one can speak of a single family named Roy, was never one of prominence in England, though occasionally a member would rise to a position of some wealth and social standing. Most of the people named Roy, who appear in sixteenth-century records, apparently were of the middle and lower-middle classes: weavers, merchants and brewers.¹ Solid citizens, many were of some wealth, but none were members of the aristocracy. A rather curious point about the family, a point which would lead one to believe that there was some connection between the various

¹J. S. Brewer (ed.), Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1920), I, No. 145 and Addenda No. 327. Also see the writ of William Roy, Merchant, against the sheriff of York in Great Britain, Public Record Office Early Chancery Proceedings, Class C 1, Bundle 708, No. 17, 1532.

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members in England, is the reoccurrence of the names John and William.² The Roys also apparently had some Continental ties as the name has been found in Calais, Brabant, and Spain.³

During the first twenty years of the sixteenth century there were three men named Roy mentioned in the records. The first, John Roy, was one of Henry VII's gentleman ushers. He was a man of some standing with the king, for in 1502 he was made Tronater of Wool for the City of London, and in 1504 Henry granted him forty marks a year from the Exchequer.⁴

²In 1416 a grant was made to John Roys, while in 1405 a John Roy had two sons, William and Ralph; see A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds in the Public Record Office, III, Numbers 677, A4, and A9169. In 1473 a William de Roy was at Cambridge; see Stanley Leathes, Grace Book A, Containing Proctors Accounts and Other Records of the University of Cambridge, for the Years 1454-1488 (Cambridge: Deighton Bell and Co., MacMillan and Bowes, 1897), 94. There were also William and John Roys living in York, Northampton, and London.

³See the letter from the Mayor of Calais to Henry VIII in Great Britain, Public Record Office, Group Letter SP, Class I, Piece No. 54, fol. 97, [1514]. Also references to the Roys' coming from Brabant and Spain can be found in L&P, I, No. 1083, Listing 29, and in W. P. Phillimore (ed.), Calendars of Wills and Administrations in the Consistory Court of Lichfield and Coventry 1516-1652 (London: British Record Society, 1892), listing No. 50, and Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Elizabeth, Vol. II 1560-1563 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948), 458.

⁴Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry VII, Vol. II, 1494-1509 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1916), 264 and 390.

John Roy apparently never served the crown after the first Tudor's death in 1509, but he was granted loans of the sum of three thousand pounds by Henry VIII in 1512.⁵ How John Roy used this money, or where he lived, or who his children were, is unfortunately unknown, but it was most likely this John Roy who died at Northampton in 1524.⁶

The second Roy of some prominence was William Roy, native of Brabant, who was granted denization in 1512.⁷ Many historians, including W. A. Shaw in the Dictionary of National Biography, have assumed that this was the father of the reformer.⁸ This, however, is not the case, for the William Roy who was granted denization in 1512 lived in St. Katharine's without Aldgate, and when he died in 1520, he left a will.⁹ This will leaves money and goods to his wife,

⁵ L&P, II, 1456-1457; and see also British Museum, Add. MSS, 21481, fol. 291.

⁶ Great Britain, Public Record Office, Inquisition of John Roys in the County of Northampton.

⁷ William Page (ed.), Letters of Denization and Acts of Naturalization for Aliens in England, 1509-1603 (London: Huguenot Society of London, 1893), 210.

⁸ DNB, XLIX, 370.

⁹ J. Challener and C. Smith (eds.), Index of Wills Proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Wills 1383-1558 (London: British Record Society Ltd., 1893), 457.

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Marion, and to his daughter, the wife of Antony Anthony, but there is no mention of a son, William.¹⁰

The third Roy who gained some notoriety during the first part of the sixteenth century was neither a John nor a William, but a Peter Roy. Peter Roy was a citizen of Calais and some historians believe that he was the reformer's father.¹¹ He was a ne'er-do-well, a gambler, a man who was in trouble for cheating at cards. He was accused in 1514 by one Thomas Thacker, a merchant of the staple at Calais, for having, along with Peter Denegroo and Bartholomew Castapolegrino, won money "by deceit with the connivance of the controller and mayor."¹² The deputy mayor of Calais was so concerned about this allegation that he personally wrote Henry VIII of the matter in 1515.¹³ Peter Roy and his accomplices denied the charge stating that they had "played with many noblemen in England."¹⁴ Peter Roy even

¹⁰Great Britain, Probate Registry, Somerset House, The Will of William Roye, proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1520 (five Maynwaring).

¹¹Rupp, 52.

¹²L&P, II, No. 2970.

¹³Ibid., No. 242.

¹⁴Ibid., I, No. 3567.

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offered to go to London with Thacker to answer to the charges.¹⁵

It has long been assumed that one of these three men was the father of William Roy, the reformer. Older historians assumed it was William Roy, native of Brabant, while more recently Peter Roy, gambler of Calais has been picked as Roy's father. In fact it was neither of these two, nor was it John Roy, the gentleman usher of Henry VII. William Roy's father was Pety Roy. Pety Roy was well known in his own day. He was so well known that in Antwerp in 1529 William Roy could be referred to merely as "the son of Pety Roy."¹⁶ He was so well known that William Roy, himself, could write in 1528:

Yea and where as they [i.e., the Bishop of London at St. Paul's Cross] had no thing whereon to ground themselves against us [i.e., Tyndale and Roy] they were not ashamed falsely to defame them which long before that time were dead and rotten, as my father. Thinking that defaming of him they should quench and darken the clear and evident light of God...as a thing against their bellies most noyous and contrary, saying, his father would eat no pork, what fruit can such a tree bring forth.^[17] But knowing that

¹⁵Letter from Mayor of Calais to Henry VIII [1514].

¹⁶"Personen te Antwerpen in de XVI eeuw, voor het 'feit van religie' gerechtelijk vervolgd--lijst en Ambtelijke bijhoorige stukken," Antwerpsch Archievenblad, VII (Antwerp: Drukkerij Guil. Van Merlen, undated), 177.

¹⁷Only E. G. Rupp, 52, mentions the possibility of Roy coming from Jewish stock. There is certainly no evidence for this beyond Roy's own denial, which must be accepted.

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the innoncy, both of my father and also of me is not unknown (in that behalf) unto all the nobles of the realm, I little regard their heady indiscretion.¹⁸

Roy declares here that all the important people in the realm of England knew his father and could attest to his Aryanism.

Finally, Pety Roy was so well known that in 1545, over thirty years after the death of Henry VII, Stephen Gardiner was to write, "Mary as Pety Roy, as I have heard told, spake of love to King Henry VII, it was too much he said, he would have half in love and half in money...."¹⁹

It is one of the curious accidents of history that this man, apparently familiar to almost everyone in England during his own and his son's time, has now been almost completely forgotten. Pety Roy, William Roy's father, was a servant of Henry VII. He was a groom of the chamber who was mentioned in the first Tudor's will.²⁰

Although Pety is obviously a sobriquet, it is not a sobriquet for John Roy. In the section of Henry's will in which Pety is mentioned, John Roy's name also appears. Most

¹⁸ Adolf Wolf (ed.), "William Roy's Dialogue Between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son," Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna, Philosophisch-hist. Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, LXXXVI (1874), 423.

¹⁹ L&P, XX, Pt. II, No. 775.

²⁰ Ibid., I, No. 20.

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historians have assumed that Pety is a shortened form of Petite, but it is certainly possible that Pety or Petie, as it was sometimes written, does not stand for Petite, but is a sobriquet for Peter Roy. However, Peter Roy was a gambler and one would hardly find such a person at the rather austere court of Henry VII. On at least two occasions Pety is listed as Petite.²¹ Not only is this true, but Petite Roy was also the sobriquet of the reformer and it can be assumed that it came to him from his father.²² Other references to Pety Roy are rare though he probably aided the king in transporting cannon to France in 1513.²³ William Roy's father, then, was a minor, but rather intimate, servant of Henry VII. Apparently the family lived in Westminster, most likely in St. Margaret's Parish where an Agnes Roy lived as late as 1553.²⁴ Living in Westminster, in the

²¹He is called Petite both in the Antwerpsch Archievenblad, VII, article listed above and in L&P, I, No. 2256.

²²Great Britain, Public Record Office, Miscellaneous Letters of the Reign of Henry VIII, fol. 75.

²³British Museum, Cotton MSS, Caligula D IV, fol. 33.

²⁴Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Edward VI, 1550-1553, IV (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1916).

service of the king, the Pety Roys were probably rather well to do.²⁵

Although the record of William Roy's birth has not been preserved it can with some certainty be placed around 1500. He was probably between the ages of sixteen and eighteen in 1516 when he was ordained exorcist by the Bishop of London, so a birthdate between 1495 and 1500 would be tenable.²⁶ Thus, William Roy was born during the time when the Lollard heresy was again being vehemently persecuted in England. He grew up during the years when the Lollards were being harassed and when Richard Hunne was arrested. William Roy perhaps saw the execution of those few Lollards who refused to recant or who were detected a second time; and he was old enough to remember Richard Hunne's case. In 1528 in the dialogue entitled Rede Me and Be Nott Wrothe, Roy and his friend and co-author Jerome Barlow wrote:

Jeffrey: They maye well both ban and cours
But they cannot do moche wors
Then they did to Hun the marchaunt

²⁵ It is known that William Roy's mother lived in Westminster in 1529. Although no Pety Roy can be traced to this area before that date, there are, in the Church Warden's Accounts for St. Margaret's Parish, various Roos, and Rays after 1510, and it can be assumed that the family had lived in Westminster for some time before 1529.

²⁶ Guildhall Library (London) MSS, Diocese of London, Episcopal Registers: Fitzjames 1506-1522, fol. 172.

Watkins: Did they eny grievance to hym?

Jeffrey: Out of this lyfe they did hym trymme
Because he was goddis servaunte.

Watkins: He did some faulte gretly notory?

Jeffrey: No thinge but for a mortuary
The prestes agaynst hym did aryse
No maner faulte in hym was fownde
Yet was he hanged, brent, and drownde
His goodes takyn up for a prise
As an herityke they hym toke
Because he had many a boke
In Englysshe of holy scripture
Also he worshipped no ymages
And wolde not go on Pilgremages
Usyng none others to periure.²⁷

As late as 1528 Hunne's death was remembered, and England was reminded of the fate of a man who would keep holy writings in English.

It was also while Roy was growing up in Westminster that the king was enjoying the first fruits of his reign. Roy grew up in a London which knew extreme poverty and great wealth. Connected with the court, the family must have witnessed the great spectacles of the early reign of Henry VIII. Roy must have also been aware of a young cleric who was achieving a meteoric rise in Henry VIII's government. This man, Thomas Wolsey, perhaps knew Roy's father, for it was during the French War of 1513, managed by Wolsey, that Pety

²⁷William Roy and Jerome Barlow, Rede me and be nott Wrothe, for I say no thinge but trothe (reprinted by Edward Arber, 1871), 104.

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Roy brought English cannon to the Continent. Roy saw and learned to hate the pomp of men such as Wolsey and when he fled England in 1525 he took this hatred with him.

There is no way of determining why William Roy entered the Franciscan order. Perhaps he was a younger son. Perhaps he actually felt a sense of dedication and a desire to serve the poor and ignorant who abounded on the London streets. For whatever reason, he entered the Franciscan Observant house at Greenwich shortly before 1516.

II

The Franciscans had long been in England. In 1222, the first English Franciscan house was founded at Oxford.²⁸ By 1225 a second house, at Cambridge, was initiated.²⁹ Strangely enough a William de Roy was among the first Franciscans to arrive at Cambridge in 1225.³⁰ According to the rule of their order the Franciscans were to live among the poor. They were mendicants, who administered to the less

²⁸British Museum, Harleian MSS, 7048, fol. 69.

²⁹John R. H. Moorman, The Greyfriars in Cambridge, 1225-1538 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 39.

³⁰J. S. Brewer (ed.), Monumenta Franciscana, I (London: Longmans, Brown, Green, & Roberts, 1858), 16.

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fortunate members of society. They were prohibited from living in settled communities, but, were rather supposed to wander from community to community doing the Lord's work. In following the second rule of St. Francis, "in no wise they receive coin or money either themselves or through any interposed persons."³¹ In the early days of their ministry in England they were very similar to Wycliffe's poor preachers. It was only during the later fourteenth century that the Franciscans began to build large convents and to amass wealth.³²

There were, in fact, two groups of Franciscans. The older group was made up of the original followers of St. Francis, while the newer or observant Franciscans found their way to England only in the fifteenth century. The observants came first to Scotland in 1447 and did not reach England until a papal license empowered King Edward IV to establish an observant house at Greenwich on January 4, 1481.³³ They were supposed to follow the strict rule of

³¹Edward Hutton, The Franciscans in England, 1224-1538 (London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1926), 219.

³²Ibid., 239.

³³A. Bonnar, "The Greenwich Franciscans in the Sixteenth Century," Transactions of the Thirty-fifth Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Record Society, (1942), 10.

St. Francis, though the lower classes of sixteenth-century England felt that perhaps this was not the case. Roy and Barlow were not kind to their former brethren.

Fryers? Nowe they are worst of all
 Ruffian wretches and rascall
 Lodesmen of all knavishness
 Though they be no possessioners
 Yet are they intollerabill beggers
 Lyvyng on rapyn and disceyte
 Worshipful matrons to beguyle
 Honorable virgins to defyle....³⁴

This passage perhaps does more than reflect the ideas of two disgruntled apostate friars. In the English popular mind of the sixteenth century the mendicant orders were open to some criticism. Friars such as Friar Tuck, companion of Robin Hood, and those of Barlow's and Roy's account illustrate the popular conception of the mendicants.

The monastery at Greenwich was one of the observant houses. It had a very special relationship to the crown. Founded by Edward IV, it soon had support from the Tudors. Under Henry VII and Henry VIII Greenwich became the chief observant house in England.³⁵ Its proximity to the royal palace at Greenwich ensured that the brothers would be near, if not always dear, to the hearts of the early Tudors. In

³⁴Rede Me, 72.

³⁵Hutton, 241.

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1486 Henry VII confirmed Edward IV's foundation on land adjoining the royal palace.³⁶ Henry VIII was born at Greenwich in 1491, and that palace, with its Franciscan Monastery, became one of his favorite residences. Katharine of Aragon also favored the monastery. She often attended midnight devotion with the inmates, and one of the brothers, Father John Forrest, became her confessor.³⁷ Not only was the monastery one of Henry and Katharine's favorite establishments, but it was also a stopping place for travellers to and from London. Erasmus probably visited there, and it is known that Dean Colet dined at the house on at least one occasion.³⁸

It was perhaps not unnatural that the son of a servant of Henry VII would enter this order at the king's favorite religious house. Thus it was that William Roy entered the monastery at Greenwich, some time before 1516, most likely in 1515. Apparently Roy intended to become a priest for he proceeded quite rapidly through the minor orders of the clergy. In 1516 he was ordained both exorcist and acolyte

³⁶Rev. Daniel Lysons, The Environs of London, IV (London: T. Cadell, 1796), 464.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸L&P, III, No. 303.

by the Bishop of London.³⁹ For some reason he left the Greenwich house and resided at Richmond for one year. He was at Richmond when he was ordained subdeacon in March, 1517.⁴⁰ In September, 1518, he returned to the Greenwich house where he became a deacon.⁴¹ He proceeded no further toward the priesthood. He may have heard of the news of the Lutheran revolt in Germany and so had paused and reconsidered his intentions. Or he may not have found clerical life to be all he had hoped. Or perhaps he became interested in a different calling, that of a scholar. It can only be established that Roy did not rise any further up the clerical ladder and that he never became a priest.

Although the monastery at Greenwich was orthodox in sympathy, it had several inhabitants who were to play an important part in the forthcoming Reformation. No list of monks survives, as all records of the house were destroyed in the dissolution, but from other sources it is fairly certain that between 1514 and 1524 the Membership of the Greenwich Monastery included John Laurance, John West, John Forrest, Richard Lyst, William Peto, Jerome Barlow, William

³⁹ Guildhall Library (London) MSS, Diocese of London, Episcopal Registers: Fitzjames, 1500-1522, fol. 172.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 173.

⁴¹ Ibid., 176.

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Roy, William Renscroft, and a certain William Tyndale.⁴² Of these nine men, three, Roy, Barlow, and Richard Lyst were connected with the reform; and, three, Laurance, West, and Forrest, were actively opposed to it.

The year 1515, when William Roy entered the monastery, was a rather important one, for it can be seen as the end of one era and the beginning of another. In 1514 Richard Hunne was murdered. He was not the last Lollard to die in England, but he was the last important martyr to an obscure cause. The Lollards remained hunted, and Lollardy remained the heresy of ignorant and poor men. But after 1515 they could find supporters, if not adherents, all over Europe. When William Roy was at Richmond, another friar, Martin Luther, was preparing his ninety-five theses, a document which was to shake all Christendom. The obscure English heretics were unaware of this act which was to cause a gigantic religious upheaval and was to bring to their cause support and preachers

⁴² John Laurance and John Forrest are listed as brothers of Greenwich in L&P, V, No. 1525. William Peto and Richard Lyst are included by Hutton, 241. John West is mentioned as a brother there in British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vitellius B X, fol. 188. Barlow and Roy are listed as brothers by Tyndale in his preface to the Parable of the Wicked Mammon, Taken out of the Sixteenth Chapter of Luke with an exposition there upon lately corrected (Marlborough: Hans Luft, 1528). Mozley has pretty much proven that the William Tyndale of the Grey Friars was not the same man as the Bible translator; see J. S. Mozley, William Tyndale (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1937). Renscroft is listed in John Gough Nichols (ed.), Chronicle of the Grey Friars of London (London: Printed for the Camden Society, 1852), 34.

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from the very highest intellectual circles. After 1517, the Lollards in England provided a ready-made sub-strata of society willing and eager for the "good news" from the Continent.

The members of the observant house at Greenwich certainly must have been cognizant of the forces of reform beginning to spread throughout the Continent. Situated near London, the brothers must have learned from the foreign merchants, artisans, and tradesmen what Luther and his adherents were instigating. The very rule to which each friar was bound linked him with the forces advocating reform. The friars observant were bound by their rule to live penniless and to minister to the poor. This rule tied them to the lower classes and may have led some of them to the verge of heresy. It would be an overstatement to maintain that the friars minor were Lollards or even Lollard sympathizers. But the friars who were conscientious about their ministry certainly must have been fully aware of the Lollard heresy; and especially those in and near London must have encountered a great amount of hostility on the part of the poor against the wealth of the church, the "evil" practices of the clergy, and the great pomp of men like Wolsey, "Carter of Yorcke, the vile butcher's sonne."⁴³ It is not

⁴³ Rede Me, 20.

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at all unlikely that part of this hostility was picked up by some of the brothers at Greenwich. It is most significant that of the nine brothers listed above two, Roy and Barlow, became connected with the radical reform, and only Lyst supported the King's cause. Those brothers who remained loyal to the Church were as vehement in their denunciation of the reform as the reformers were of the Church.⁴⁴ The significance of this fact is that the observant house at Greenwich became a house divided in the early 1520's. Much of England was soon to follow in this.

III

If by 1520 the Greenwich monastery was beginning to be in a turmoil over the new reform ideas, William Roy was soon to dwell in a place which was even more in the convulsions of reform. During 1520 or 1521, Roy entered Cambridge University. Unfortunately there is no extant record of the

⁴⁴ Richard Lyst was a spy for Thomas Cromwell (see Bonnar, 12), while John Forrest attempted to have John Laurance removed from the house for backing the King's divorce (L&P, V, No. 1525).

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dates of his attendance there, but probably it was after he had been in the monastery for at least some time.⁴⁵

All monasteries had the education of the brothers as one of their goals. The Church was very eager for bright young men to attend the university, and in the early part of the sixteenth century the student bodies of English universities remained primarily clerical. There was a Frater de Roy at Cambridge in 1473, but this man would have been much too old to have lived the active life of the reformer in the 1520's.⁴⁶ More significant perhaps, but equally vague, is the reference in Grace Book B which lists a Father Petitte being conferred with the degree of Bachelor of Canon Law in 1520.⁴⁷ Even though Roy was called Petitte after his father, this was at best a sobriquet; and although Roy himself was to use this curious name in the future, it is highly unlikely

⁴⁵It is a very interesting fact that although Roy's name does not appear anywhere in the Grace Book of Cambridge or in any other contemporary source of Cambridge students, historians, beginning with Charles and Thompson Cooper in Athenae Cantabrigienses, 1500-1585, I (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell & Co., 1858) have listed Roy as a student there. He also appears in J. and J. A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses, III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924) and all subsequent historians have assumed his attendance.

⁴⁶Leathes, Grace Book A, 94.

⁴⁷Mary Bateson, Grace Book B, Part II, Containing the Accounts of the Proctors of the University of Cambridge, 1511-1544 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), 93.

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that a degree would be conferred on him under an alias. It must, however, be concluded that because Roy was an educated man, especially in languages, the assumption that he attended Cambridge is most likely true.

Another fact which reinforces the theory that Roy studied at Cambridge comes from a rather curious source. In 1516, Erasmus published his Greek New Testament. There was some controversy over this translation; and among those people most vehemently against it was one Henry Standish. Standish was an observant friar who was, in 1505, a warder of the Greyfriars house in London. He first gained notoriety when, in 1515, the bill against the benefit of the clergy was being renewed by Parliament. This bill had first been passed in 1489 and had been renewed in 1512. The original act stated in part:

Whereas upon trust of privilege of the church divers persons lettered hath been the more bold to commit murder, rape, robbery, theft, and all other mischievous deeds, because they have been continually admitted to the benefice of the clergy as oft as they did offend.... be it enacted... that every person not being within orders, which once had been admitted to have the benefice of his clergy, eftsoons arraigned of any such offence, be not admitted to have benefice of privilege of his clergy.⁴⁸

When this bill came up for renewal the church mounted a strong attack against it in the hope that it would be rejected by

⁴⁸ Statutes of the Realm, 1377-1503, II (London: Record Commission, 1831), 538.

Parliament. Henry Standish, who was, by this time, provincial of his order, violently opposed the church on this subject, and in a series of debates with the Abbot of Winchcomb, Richard Kidderminster, Standish so well served the crown, that Henry VIII had him named to the Bishopric of St. Asaph in 1518.

Even though he took a stand against the church in this matter, Henry Standish was no reformer. In fact, he was violently opposed to any movement for reform. He denounced both Colet and Erasmus. He especially denounced Erasmus' edition of the New Testament in a book, since lost, entitled, Treatise Against Erasmus, His Translation of the New Testament.⁴⁹ In arguing with Erasmus, Henry Standish made use of a Greek manuscript now known as the Montfort Codex. The Montfort Codex is, in fact, a copy of the older Leicester Codex, both of which were owned by the Franciscan house at Cambridge in the early part of the sixteenth century. Erasmus had borrowed the Leicester Codex in making his own Greek translation.⁵⁰ The Montfort Codex was copied in the early 1520s and certain changes were made which differed from the original and which would indicate Erasmus' translation to be in error.

⁴⁹DNB, LIII, 472-473.

⁵⁰Moorman, 123.

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In studying the Montfort Codex scholars have discovered that its first owner was a Friar Froye, and that Froye owned the manuscript at the time of its first mention, sometime between 1519 and 1522. In 1887, James Rendel Harris studied both the Leicester and the Montfort Codices and concluded that Froye was actually the name of the copier of the Montfort Codex. Harris went on to assume that since the name Froye does not appear in any sixteenth-century Franciscan or Cambridge records, perhaps the name Froye was a misspelling of Fratis Roye. It was Harris' theory that when Roy's name was transcribed the copyist read f. roye as froye.⁵¹ This interesting theory is born out only by the fact that Roy was well known for his interest and proficiency in languages, and the man who was the author of the Montfort Codex would have had to know Greek to make the copy. Roy did know Greek as he later translated the prologue to Erasmus' edition of the New Testament which he and Standish sought to discredit. Also later in his life, he had to

⁵¹James Rendel Harris, The Origins of the Leicester Codex (London: C. J. Clay & Sons, 1887), 47-48. Harris' assumption is fairly well argued except for his footnote which states "Is it a priori likely that at the same date there would be in the same religious order both a Froye and a Roye?" (48), Of course this could be very likely, but because of Roy's subsequent interest both in languages and in the New Testament, I would tend to believe that Harris has identified the true copier of the Montfort Codex as William Roy.

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convince William Tyndale that he was capable of doing biblical translation, and the fact that he could pass himself off as an expert copyist of Greek manuscripts may well have convinced the translator of Roy's merits.

If Roy did make the copy, in all probability it was Standish who encouraged him. Roy had little love for the Bishop of St. Asaph. The fact that Standish probably talked Roy into this task, which included a forgery, may have soured the reformer on the Bishop. Roy and Barlow saved some of their most bitter invective for the Bishop of St. Asaph.

The wholly bissop of Saynct asse
 A poste of Satans jurisdiction
 Whom they call Doctour Standisshe
 Wone that is nether flesshe nor fissue
 At all tymes a commen lyer.
 He is a bablynge Questionist
 And a mervelous grett sophist
 Som tyme a lowsy graye fryer
 Of stommake he is fearce and bolde
 In braulynge wordes a very scolde
 Menglynge vennem with sugre
 He despyseth the trueth of god
 Takynge parte rather with falcehod
 Forto obtayne worldly lucre.⁵²

The last three lines may well be a reference to the forgery in the Montfort Codex. If this portrait of Standish has been colored by Roy and Barlow's evident dislike for him, it does indicate the depth of feeling they had against the

⁵²Rede Me, 117.

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Bishop. Perhaps Roy's feeling that he had been "used" by Standish caused him to include the venomous attack quoted above.

If Roy attended Cambridge he lived at the Greyfriars house there. This house was originally located in a vacated synagogue, but later the observants moved their house to the site where Sidney College now stands.⁵³ The house was used primarily as a hostel for the brothers attending the University. It was also well known as a center for the study of the Bible. Peter Brinkley, a Franciscan of the Cambridge house, remained at the University at least until 1518, teaching Greek and Hebrew.⁵⁴

After 1518 Cambridge began to be infected with the Lutheran heresy, but the Franciscan house was only slightly affected. The majority of Franciscans resident there feared the new heresy, for they were essentially connected to the older forms of worship and would lose their very existence if a "reformation" was instituted in England. However, even though most members remained loyal some did have sympathy for the reform. Friar William Call and Gregory Basset, both at Cambridge when Roy was there, flirted with reform ideas but retained their orthodoxy. Shortly after Roy's departure

⁵³British Museum, Harleian MSS, 7048, fol. 69.

⁵⁴Moorman, 121-122.

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in 1524, one Friar Bartholomew Traheron came to Cambridge. He was as eager as Roy for the Protestant cause and must have created some stir within the house.⁵⁵ Of course, the most famous adherent of the reform to dwell at the Cambridge house was Roy himself. It must have been extremely interesting to have been a resident of this house during the 1520s. With men like Roy and later Traheron, both of whom were rather outspoken in their beliefs, in residence, life at the Greyfriars house in Cambridge must have been most challenging.

Even though the Franciscan house and the University as a whole remained orthodox during the 1520s, Cambridge did have a large "underground" of dissidents who were very avid reformers. Beginning about 1485 humanistic studies were stressed at Cambridge. By 1511 when Erasmus first came to lecture in Greek and divinity, Cambridge had "blossomed forth so as to rival the leading modern schools and now contains men of such quality that in comparison, those of the old time appear mere shadows of theologians."⁵⁶ Although Erasmus had left the University by the time Roy began his studies there, humanistic studies, in part founded by the Dutch humanist, certainly were being continued. The stress

⁵⁵Ibid., 126.

⁵⁶D. F. S. Thomson (ed. and trans.) Erasmus and Cambridge, The Cambridge Letters of Erasmus (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 195.

on the "new learning" and on Greek and classical Latin, on art and music, and an emphasis on the dignity rather than the depravity of man, certainly made Cambridge into a most intellectually stimulating and challenging center of study.

Under the chancellorship of the Bishop of Rochester, John Fisher, who himself founded three colleges, Cambridge became the center of English humanistic studies.⁵⁷ Fisher was the man who persuaded Erasmus to come to Cambridge in the first place, and the great humanist had nothing but praise for the Chancellor and the University. As late as 1520 when Roy was attending Cambridge, Erasmus wrote to Juan Luis Vives.

Three years ago a man [Fisher]...told me how it stands in the University of Cambridge... he said, instead of sophisticated refinement, sober and sound discussions are held nowadays among the theologians, and from these they depart not only learned, but better men.⁵⁸

With an environment which promoted free discussion on theology and a biblical criticism based on Erasmus' own Greek New Testament, it is not hard to discover the reasons why Cambridge was the first center of English reform.

Drawn to this intellectual center were many men who were later famous for their activities in the reform. Most

⁵⁷ Ibid., 188.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 202-203.

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of the men who instituted the reform in England, both clandestinely and with the approval of the crown, had studied at Cambridge. And, one Cambridge man, John Fisher, suffered martyrdom for his adherence to the Church.

Reading a list of the Cambridge scholars who were active in the reform is like reading a martyrology. Of the reformers who studied at Cambridge, Thomas Bilney, Robert Barnes, who got his doctorate in 1523, and William Tyndale stand out.⁵⁹ On the king's side were Thomas Cranmer, Miles Coverdale, Hugh Latimer, Cuthbert Tunstal, Stephen Gardiner, and Henry Standish.⁶⁰ If the latter three were not avid reformers, at least Tunstal and Gardiner did support the king's actions during the 1530s, and Standish supported the crown in the benefit of clergy dispute. Besides the reformers mentioned above, John Frith, John Rogers, Nicholas Ridley, Richard Bayfield, and William Jerome were also Cambridge

⁵⁹Barnes is listed in Grace Book B, Pt. II, 94. For the record of Thomas Bilney attending the University see Catalogus Cancellariorum, Proconcellariurum, ad gradum Doctoratus aspirauerunt ab an Dom 1500 et an Henry VII, XV usq. ad an Dominja Elizabeth Angliae Reginie XIV (1572).

⁶⁰British Museum, Add. MSS 5960.

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students.⁶¹ These men, many of whom attended Cambridge during the time that Roy was there, began to assimilate and to preach Reformation ideas while at the University.

The reformers discussed their views at an inn called the White Horse "which for despite of them, to bring God's work into contempt, was called Germany."⁶² Robert Barnes, the warden of the Augustinean house at Cambridge was more or less the leader of this group. It is impossible to state exactly which students attended the meetings at the White Horse, but it is certainly possible that William Roy was among them. Between 1518 and 1524 Roy was converted to Protestantism. Cambridge and the White Horse tavern may well have been the locale of his conversion.

It is impossible to discover the college which Roy attended, and he must be put in that rather ephemeral

⁶¹Marcus Loane, Pioneers of the Reformation in England (London: The Church Book Room Press, 1964), 3 and 93. Ridley's name is mentioned in Add. MSS 5845, fol. 418. E. G. Rupp, 197, has constructed a list of Cambridge men who were martyred for their Protestant beliefs.

Thomas Bilney	Robert Barnes	John Hullier
Richard Bayfield	Thomas Garrard	George Marsh
Thomas Dugate	William Jerome	John Cardmaker
William Roy	George Wishart	John Bradford
John Frith	John Rogers	Robert Glovers
William Tyndale	Laurance Sanders	John Bland
John Lambert	Rowland Tayler	Hugh Latimer
Richard Yeoman	Robert Ferrar	Thomas Cranmer
		Nicholas Ridley

⁶²John Foxe, V, 415.



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category "of the University" along with men such as William Tyndale. It is also impossible to discover what he studied while at Cambridge, but with his subsequent activities as a translator and as "one both to write and to help me to compare texts together," it would be most probable that he studied Greek, Latin and possibly Hebrew.⁶³ He was so well known for his linguistic ability that later, when he was the subject of an international manhunt, he could be identified merely by the fact that he spoke all manner of languages.⁶⁴

In examining Roy's writings and translations, it soon becomes evident that besides an ability with languages, he also possessed a good knowledge of English history and of scholastic and classical philosophy. That Cambridge had become a center, not only for classical languages, but also of philosophy is attested to by Erasmus in 1521.

Both at Paris and at Cambridge, the study of philosophy is flourishing as it never flourished before. What's the reason? Why, that theologians are adapting themselves to the age, which was turning itself in another direction; that they don't repel, as if they were enemies, this better literature which

⁶³Tyndale, Wicked Mammon, preface.

⁶⁴In 1529, John West identified Roy, after an informer described him as "how he does speak all manner of language," L&P, IV, No. 5667.

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tries to break in even by force, but welcome it genially, like hosts.⁶⁵

Besides languages and theology, William Roy was also familiar with English verse and with much of the Reformation literature of Luther, Zwingli, and Wycliffe, as well as with Erasmus' work. He was not a humanist, at least not in the same vein as were Erasmus, Tunstal, and More. Roy was much more interested in church reform than in humanism, but he did reap the benefits of a humanistic education at Cambridge and he imbibed the humanist's love for languages.

At the beginning of 1524 Roy's studies were suddenly interrupted.

The XVI day of January [1524], before the Bishop of St. Asaph [Standish] and doctor Ally [Allen] and other officers belonging to the said legate [Wolsey] did begin their visitation at the observants at Greenwich.⁶⁶

Because so many of the friars were absent, the visitation could not continue. The friars were all called home for interrogation. Appalled at the absence of so many of the brothers, Standish ordered that John Forrest preach at St. Paul's Cross the following Sunday, and that Forrest should pronounce those friars who were unwilling to return

⁶⁵D. F. S. Thomson, 204.

⁶⁶Grey Friars Chronicle, 31.

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to the monastery as accursed.⁶⁷ After Forrest's sermon some of the friars returned to the house and were later sent to the Cardinal's palace at Hampton Court where they were detained in the porter's ward. One brother, William Renscroft, proved so intransigent that he was sent to prison in the London Greyfriar's house.⁶⁸

Obviously those friars who were out in the world, and especially those who were in the process of obtaining an education, were extremely upset over this development. The visitation of 1524 was probably the catalyst which drove William Roy into active rebellion against the Church. For he never forgave those men who visited the Greenwich house. The three visitors, Wolsey, Standish, and Allen come in for castigation in Roy and Barlow's Rede Me. It is Allen who received the brunt of the attack for the 1524 visitation.

Jeffrey: Besyde this to tell thee more newes
He [Wolsey] hath a payre of costly shewes
Which sildom touche eny grownde....

Watkins: And who did for thes shewes paye?

Jeffrey: Truly many a ryche abbaye
To be easied of his visitacion

Watkins: Doth he in his owne persone visit?

Jeffrey: No, another for hym doth it
That can skylle of the occupacion.

⁶⁷Ibid., 34.

⁶⁸Ibid.

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A felowe nether wyse nor sadde
 But he was never yett full madde
 Though he be frantyke and more
 Doctor Alyn he is named
 One that to lye is not asshamed
 If he spye avauntage therfore.⁶⁹

Early in 1525, soon after the date of Wolsey's visitation, William Roy left England. He left under cover, for where he intended to dwell, no orthodox Englishman could live; and what he intended to do, no Franciscan friar could do. He left England the son of Pety Roy; he was to return as the most famous and sought after of all the English reformers, an arch-heretic considered more dangerous than Tyndale. He was to defy his church, his king, and perhaps at that time even more dangerously, he was to defy and insult the most powerful man in England, Cardinal Wolsey. When he left England he carried with him a burning zeal for reform, a desire for a new Jerusalem. He left with a great love for the Bible and a belief that the Bible was a sacred book, which all men should be able to read for themselves. Roy also left England with an intense dislike for the prelacy and their tools.

At the time of his departure from England, William Roy was about twenty-five years old. He was small in stature, perhaps of dark complexion, and sometime during his youth he

⁶⁹Rede Me, 57.

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had been stricken with smallpox or some other disease which had left his face disfigured. He was armed with a knowledge of Greek, Latin, probably Hebrew, and he possessed a sound background in traditional theology. Some place, perhaps from the streets of London, he had come into contact with Lollardy. He certainly knew something of its history and he left England steeped both in the traditional English heresy and in the recent opinions of Luther. He was to use all these tools in his new life as a hunted heretic.

It was not easy for Roy to flee England and to face, almost alone, a life of extreme peril, the only possible end of which could be the stake. In 1525 only one Englishman, William Tyndale, had gone to the Continent to take up the reform cause. Roy was among the first and, in his own day, the greatest to flee what he considered to be the evils of the Church and to go to the open embrace of what he considered to be the truth. There was no turning back after the initial step. Behind him lay the security of the monastery and of a respectable name; before him lay nothing but peril, infamy, and, most likely, death. For what he considered to be the truth, William Roy made his choice and left England.



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CHAPTER III
ROY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT
1524-1526

Cambridge was not the only hot-bed of reform ideas. The whole realm was becoming infected with the Lutheran heresy. Outside of Cambridge, London, the center of the realm, was also the center of the reform movement. When Roy left the monastery in 1525 he found men in London who shared his views. For the most part these supporters were drawn from the ranks of the lower and middle classes. The Lollards were widely recognized as the most eager beneficiaries of the Lutheran heresy. They certainly welcomed any person or group who attacked the Church. Lutherans and Lollards were not particularly close on much of their respective dogmas, especially on the Eucharist and on the stress placed by Lutherans on justification by faith, but the two groups were sufficiently close and sufficiently attractive to one another to increase the alarm of the authorities. There was no decrease in the number of Lollards who abjured and who were tried during the early 1520s. In 1522 an event occurred

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which increased the harassment of the heretics. On September 4, 1522, Cuthbert Tunstal was named Bishop of London.¹

Tunstal, after studying at both Oxford and Cambridge, became one of the leaders of the English humanistic movement, counting as his friends Sir Thomas More, Archbishop Warham, and Erasmus. Even though he was a humanist and a follower of Erasmus, Tunstal was, like More and John Fisher, terribly afraid of the Lutheran movement. He encouraged Erasmus to denounce the Lutheran heresy as early as 1520.² In 1523, frightened by the growing contact between Lutherans and Lollards, he wrote to Erasmus, "it is no question of some pernicious novelty, it is only that new arms are being added to the great band of Wycliffite heretics."³ Tunstal proved to be a most active foe of the London Protestants.

It would certainly be an overstatement to declare that London was on the verge of a Protestant revolution in 1525, but by that date there were many men, both clerical and lay, who were becoming increasingly active in the reform. The

¹British Museum, Harleian MSS, 421, fol. 443.

²DNB, LVII, 311.

³G. M. Trevelyan, England in the Age of Wycliffe (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1925), has translated this passage on page 349.

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Lollard heresy had belonged to a group which was almost completely made up of uneducated laymen, but suddenly, after 1517, a new group of men, educated and even wealthy, became attracted to heresy. If these men were not Lollards in doctrine, they did share with the heretics certain beliefs, and especially the belief that existing Church practices were corrupt and evil. They were interested in working with and through the Lollards in order to realize a reformation of the Church in England. These men, working with the Lollards at home and with the English reformers abroad, became known as the Christian Brethren.⁴

When William Roy left the monastery in the early part of 1525, he contacted one of the leaders of the Christian Brethren, Humphrey Monmouth. Monmouth was a wealthy draper living in the parish of All Saints, Barking, London.⁵ According to Foxe, he was also an alderman of London, who was put in the Tower "for the gospel of Christ" and for "maintaining them that favored the same."⁶ This wealthy merchant, who was later accused of having Luther's books translated into English, was very eager to help Roy escape his

⁴For a discussion of the Christian Brethren see pages 92-95 below.

⁵British Museum, Harleian MSS, 425, fol. 8.

⁶Foxe, IV, 617.

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monastery.⁷ He was apparently impressed with Roy's linguistic ability and with his knowledge of theology, for he sent Roy to the Continent to aid in the translation of the Bible.

In the spring of 1525, Monmouth financed Roy's escape. He was first sent to the Brethren's representative in Antwerp, Richard Harmon. Harmon was the liaison man between Tyndale and Roy and the Brethren in England.⁸ Both Harmon and Monmouth were to get into a great deal of trouble for their part in sending Roy to the Continent. They were arrested and tried, but were released when the marriage of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn brought a different religious climate to England.

Following in the footsteps of Tyndale, who had gone before him, William Roy made his way from Antwerp into Germany, through Saxony to Wittenberg. He may well have stopped at Hamburg where Tyndale was already working on his translation of the New Testament. Monmouth admitted that in the spring of 1525 he sent Tyndale ten pounds through one Hans Collenbeke of the Stillyard. It is very likely that Roy

⁷British Museum, Harleian MSS, 425, fol. 8.

⁸Antwerpsch Archievenblad, VII, 177.

[illegible]

travelled with Collenbeke and met Tyndale at that time.⁹ If the two did meet in Hamburg no record of it exists. Roy was to appear next at Wittenberg.

There were not many Englishmen in Wittenberg in the 1520s. Fortunately the lists of Wittenberg scholars who signed the registry have been preserved.¹⁰ Of all the students there between 1520 and 1526 only three were from England. The first was a "Guillelmus Daltici ex Anglia," who signed the registry on May 27, 1524.¹¹ It is now believed that this signature was a anagram for William Tindal, the syllables having been reversed and the N changed to a C in an attempt to disguise Tyndale's true identity.¹² There is no doubt, however, about the second English signature in the Wittenberg registry. It reads "Guilhelmus Roy ex Landino, 10 Ju[ne] 1525."¹³ William Roy has been accused of many faults since his death in 1531, but he has never been accused

⁹ John Strype, Ecclesiastical Memorials Relating Chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of it and the Emergence of the Church of England Under King Henry VIII, King Edward VI and Queen Mary I (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1822), I, Part ii, Number 89.

¹⁰ Charles E. Foersterman (ed.), Album Academiae Vitebergensis, I (Leipzig: Charles Tauchnitz, 1841).

¹¹ Ibid., 121.

¹² Preserved Smith, "Englishmen at Wittenberg in the Sixteenth Century," The English Historical Review, XXXVI (1921), 422.

¹³ Album Academiae Vitebergensis, I, 125.

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cowardliness. Once he joined the reform, he joined it irrevocably. He saw no need to hide his name at Wittenberg as did Tyndale and Barnes.¹⁴ He saw no need to hide his conversion to the reform, but sought to publicize it, defending himself with what he thought was the unassailable truth.

The University of Wittenberg was founded by Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, in 1502.¹⁵ Martin Luther had taught there since 1508. After the Diet of Worms and Luther's subsequent hiding in the Wartburg Castle, he had emerged as the leader of the new force of Protestantism, which was beginning to sweep Northern Europe. Beginning in 1521, while Luther was in hiding, Carlstadt reformed the churches at Wittenberg. The altars were pulled down, poor relief was increased, the mass was abandoned, and the monasteries were opened up.¹⁶ Luther, himself, was not particularly happy with these reforms, but iconoclasts all over Europe, including men such as William Roy, must have rejoiced over the happy tidings of this "reformation."

¹⁴Neelak S. Tjernagel (ed.), The Reformation Essays of Dr. Robert Barnes (London: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), 12.

¹⁵Franz Funck-Bretano, Luther (London: Jonathon Cape, 1936), 47.

¹⁶Preserved Smith, The Life and Letters of Martin Luther (London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1911), 135-136.

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By 1525 the University had become a haven for those students attracted by the Lutheran heresy. Scholars who were deeply interested in reform had begun to flock to Wittenberg. During the year 1525 the city was alive with the news of the great peasant revolt in Germany, which Luther railed against. Luther's marriage was also causing considerable comment. When Roy signed the registry on June 10, it was only three days before Luther married Catharine von Bora,¹⁷ This wedding of a priest to an ex-nun excited all Europe, and perhaps it was because of Luther's marriage that Roy decided to translate the German reformer's treatise on the seventh chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, which advocates clerical marriage.

When Roy entered the University, not only Luther, but also Melancthon, was teaching Greek and the Bible. In 1525, Luther lectured on Deuteronomy and began his lectures on the minor prophets.¹⁸ No doubt Roy was present at some of these lectures. It was also while Roy was at Wittenberg that Luther was in the midst of his controversy with Henry VIII. In 1521 Luther had printed a book entitled, The Captivity of the Church at Babylon, and Henry had written a small answer

¹⁷Smith, The Life and Letters..., 174.

¹⁸Ibid., 185.

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which he called Assertio Septum Sacramentorum adversas Martinum Luterum and which had gained for the English monarch the title "Defender of the Faith." In 1523 Luther had answered Henry's treatise using extremely strong language. Henry refused to answer again until 1528 when he now wrote against Luther, Roy, and Tyndale.¹⁹ Roy, upon reaching Wittenberg, was assuredly questioned as to Henry's reaction to Luther's answer of 1523.

William Roy remained at Wittenberg for only a short period of time. By August, 1525, he was with Tyndale, who had moved from Hamburg to Cologne. Thus, it is probable that Roy stayed at the Reformation school in Wittenberg for no longer than two months. His subsequent writings and translations show little interest in Lutheran theology, and his experience at Wittenberg may have disillusioned him with the brand of protest known as Lutheranism. Although in the future he made use of at least one of Luther's writings, he was, in all his works, definitely not a Lutheran. His interests appear to have been more in the older Lollard and in the Zwinglian heresies. Roy never wrote anything which was anti-Lutheran, apparently always attempting to maintain the fiction

¹⁹Henry VIII, A Copy of the Letter, wherein the most redoubted and mighty prince... Henry the eight, ... made answer unto a certain letter of Martin Luther (London: Richard Pynson, 1528).

that the Continental Protestants were united. But in all his writings there is little evidence of Lutheranism. Roy was interested in making a reformation in England, but as he envisioned this reformation, it would be one which was much closer to the Lollard beliefs. Before he could begin his own work on the reform he had to fulfill the task on which he had been sent by Monmouth and Harmon, that is, to aid Tyndale in the translation of the Bible.

II

To state that William Tyndale was the first man to translate the Bible into English would obviously be incorrect. The whole Bible had been translated by Wycliffe and his followers. Even before Wycliffe, however, the Bible, or at least parts of it, had been translated. In the British Museum there are a number of translations or partial translations of the Bible which were both pre-Wycliffe and also acceptable to the authorities. Some of these date back to the ninth century. However, it must be pointed out that three of these translations are in Anglo-Saxon and the others are in Anglo-Norman. There is a fourteenth- and a fifteenth-century translation, but only the psalter and

canticle have been rendered into English.²⁰ There are no English translations of the entire Bible extant in the Museum earlier than the Wycliffe translation dating from near the end of the fourteenth century. There are at least three extant copies of the entire Wycliffe Bible and at least two copies of the New Testament, all of which date from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries.²¹ It is apparent that during the high-middle ages the Bible did exist in England in the vernacular, but it was either in the old Anglo-Saxon language which had gone out of usage, or was in the Anglo-Norman dialect of the upper classes.

²⁰The following pre-Wycliffe biblical translations are in the British Museum:

- a) Cotton MSS, Vespian A I, Ninth-Century Anglo-Saxon and Latin Bible.
- b) Cotton MSS, Tiberius C VI, Eleventh-Century Latin with Anglo-Saxon gloss.
- c) Cotton MSS, Claudius B IV, Eleventh-Century Bible with Anglo-Saxon gloss.
- d) Royal MSS, I C III, Fourteenth-Century, Anglo-Norman (Genesis to Tobit only).
- e) Arundel MSS, 158, Fourteenth-Century Psalter, English and Latin.
- f) Add. MSS, 17376, Mid-Fourteenth-Century, non-Wycliffe prose.
- g) Harleian MSS, 1896, Mid-Fifteenth-Century Psalter in Latin and English.

²¹The Wycliffe versions in the British Museum are:

- a) Arundel MSS, 254, Fourteenth-Century Wycliffe Bible in English.
- b) Egerton MSS, 617, Fourteenth-Century Wycliffe Bible in English.
- c) Add. MSS, 41,175, Fifteenth-Century Wycliffe Bible in English.
- d) Egerton MSS, 1175, Fifteenth-Century Wycliffe New Testament in English.
- e) Egerton MSS, 1165, Fifteenth-Century Wycliffe New Testament in English.

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Until Wycliffe's time there was no great demand for such a translation. Most of the lower classes could not read, and educated men were able to read Latin or Anglo-Norman and probably could have, if they desired, procured a Bible at least on a temporary basis. Wycliffe's reform movement, with its emphasis on a Bible for every man, created a desire for an English Bible. By 1525 this desire was not limited to those people who were considered Lollards. Sir Thomas More, in a critical article on Tyndale's Bible declares that the English mutter against the clergy for not having the Bible in English "for in all other countries of Christendom the people have the scriptures translated into their own tongue and the clergy there find no such fault therein."²²

Wycliffe's Bible was very popular and fragments of it were kept by Lollards and non-Lollards alike. It has even been asserted that this Bible without the prologue was sometimes found in monasteries.²³

Wycliffe's concern for the Bible in English also had the effect of forcing the ecclesiastical authorities to be extremely nervous about future translations. In 1408 Archbishop

²²Sir Thomas More, Workes (London: John Cawod, John Wall, and Richard Tuttel, 1557), 214.

²³Margaret Deanesly, The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Bible Versions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 371.

Arundel presided over a council held at Oxford on the whole problem of the vernacular Bible. In brief this council decided that:

The holy scripture is not to be translated into the vulgar tongue, nor a translation to be expounded until it shall have been duly examined under pain of excommunication and stigma of heresy....

Moreover it is a perilous thing to translate the text of holy scripture from one idiom into another inasmuch as in the translations themselves it is no easy matter to keep the same meaning in all cases.... We therefore enact and ordain that no one henceforth on his own authority translate any text of holy scripture into English or other language by way of a book, pamphlet or tract and that no book, pamphlet, or tract of this kind be read, either already recently composed in the time of said J. Wyclif, or since then...under pain of greater excommunication, until the translation itself shall have been approved by the diocesan of the place or if need be by a provincial council.²⁴

It was this prohibition which created in the English popular mind of the sixteenth century the fiction that the Bible in English had been banned. The universality of this belief, obviously emanating from Lollard circles, indicates the effectiveness of their propaganda. In fact, the prohibition does not proscribe either extant or future translations. It does make such translations extremely difficult, but not at all impossible. Sir Thomas More examined the

²⁴ Alfred W. Pollard (ed.), Records of the English Bible (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), 80.

whole problem in the Dialogue Against Heretics. In this dialogue, set up between a messenger and More, various heretical subjects are treated and, as More hoped, refuted. The messenger, who is obviously no heretic, but one who is questioning the recent ban on Tyndale's translation, maintains that the Tyndale New Testament had been banned to keep "out of the peoples hands all knowledge of Christ's gospel and of God's law, except so much only as the clergy themselves list now and then to tell us."²⁵ More maintains that this is incorrect; that there is no law to keep the English scripture away from the people. He mentions the prohibition of the Council of Oxford, but maintains that the prohibition was ordained to fight against the heretical translation of John Wycliffe. More also states that "the whole bible was long before his days of vertuous and well learned men translated into the English tongue."²⁶ More further states that on seeing how the reading of Wycliffe's version led people astray, the authorities had to ban it. Very interestingly, he adds:

but myself have seen and can show you bibles
fair and old written in English which have
been known and seen by the bishop of the

²⁵More, Workes, 214.

²⁶Ibid., 233.

diocese and left in laymen's hands and womens to such as he knew for good and Catholic folk that used it with devotion and soberness.²⁷

If More saw these English Bibles, they have not been preserved and the commonalty of More's day certainly believed that no approved English translation existed or could ever lawfully exist. Not only did the laymen of More's time consider English translations of the Bible to be prohibited, but even some of the clergy were of this opinion. In 1525, Edward Lee, the king's almoner, wrote to Henry VIII:

All our fore fathers, governors of the Church of England hath with all diligence forbade and eschewed publication of English Bibles as appeareth in constitutions provincial of the Church of England.²⁸

Although More was theoretically correct in his statement that all vernacular Bibles were not prohibited, the majority of Englishmen believed that they were forbidden by the 1408 provisions.

William Tyndale, however, was one man who not only knew what the prohibition of 1408 actually stated, but also wished to test it. He was a country priest, who was first attracted to the idea of an English translation when he found that he could not teach the people any truth unless they

²⁷Ibid., 234.

²⁸British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vespian C III, fols. 210-211.

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could see it for themselves in the scriptures "plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue."²⁹ Tyndale had excellent qualifications for the task ahead of him. He was educated both at Oxford and Cambridge and apparently knew Greek and Latin as well as German.

By Tyndale's own admission he got into trouble with the authorities of his diocese over his proposed translation and was forced to leave the area because the priests in his diocese were ignorant, knew no Latin, and "when they came together to the alehouse, which is their preaching place, they affirm that my sayings are heresy."³⁰ As he looked for a place within England, where he might peacefully work on the translation, it occurred to him that if he were to gain the patronage of Cuthbert Tunstal he would be able to undertake his task. Tunstal, newly named Bishop of London, was according to Erasmus, a great patron of learning and very learned in biblical studies himself.³¹ There was, however, no room for William Tyndale in the Bishop's house. He remained in London for about a year, living part of that

²⁹Pollard, 95.

³⁰Ibid., 96.

³¹Ibid.

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time with Humphrey Monmouth. In 1524 Tyndale perceived that with all the pomp of the London prelates "not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England."³²

Humphrey Monmouth first met Tyndale at St. Dunstan's Church in London, where the reformer was preaching. As Tyndale had no place to live, Monmouth took him home and the priest resided for six months in the Draper's house where he "lived like a good priest."³³ Tyndale later departed for the Continent with ten pounds lent him by Monmouth. He left behind two copies of the Enchiridion, one of which the draper lent to a friar at Greenwich.³⁴ This friar was most likely Roy, who was at that time probably considering following Tyndale to Germany. Monmouth also sent money to Tyndale and seems to have been the financial mainstay of the translator.

After leaving Monmouth, Tyndale first went to Wittenberg where he remained a short while studying under Martin Luther. By the end of the year he had begun his translation of the New Testament, had left Wittenberg, gone to Hamburg, and

³² Ibid., 98.

³³ Strype, I, 364.

³⁴ Ibid., 365.

finally settled in Cologne. How much of his work he had finished by the middle of 1525 is not known, but by the end of that year he was nearing the completion of it. In less than two years he had completed the rather herculean task of translating the New Testament from the Greek and Latin into English.

Toward the end of his work, Tyndale felt that he was unable to continue his task alone. Such a translation would have been an enormously difficult task for the best scholar of any time. That Tyndale did it almost alone is nearly unbelievable. The gigantic proportions of his task must never be under-appreciated. Tyndale, apparently using Greek, Latin, and possibly German, almost single-handedly created the English Bible. Tyndale's New Testament was neither a copy of Luther's nor a mere modernization of the heretical Wycliffe version. It was a new Bible in English, which was to become the basis of all future English editions. English-speaking people of all creeds owe William Tyndale a huge debt for the excellent work he did in creating the first really readable English translation.

Although his work justly deserves praise and commendation, he was not entirely alone in his labors. He had the benefit of an excellent secretary, a man skilled in languages, and a great believer in the necessity of the English

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translation. In late 1525 William Tyndale needed an assistant very badly. He was at a point in his work where he needed someone to copy, to help proof-read the final manuscript, and to aid in the mechanics of printing. Evidently Tyndale sent to England for someone whom he refers to simply as "a faithful companion."³⁵ This companion was unable to join him, and Monmouth probably instructed the translator to hire Roy. The Franciscan certainly must have known of Tyndale's work before he left England. Both Monmouth and Harmon were aware of it, and both men aided in Roy's escape to the Continent in 1525. At any rate Roy offered Tyndale his help, and for want of a better, Tyndale accepted the apostate Franciscan.

William Tyndale did not get on well with Roy, whom he characterized as being "somewhat crafty when he cometh unto new acquaintances and before he be thoroughly known and namely when all is spent."³⁶ Most likely the two men had an altercation over certain passages of the translation. Tyndale certainly would brook no opposition to his work, while Roy felt that some verses could be translated somewhat differently. Both men believed themselves excellent linguists, and it is perfectly natural that they might disagree.

³⁵ Tyndale, Parable of the Wicked Mammon, preface.

³⁶ Ibid.

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Roy hints that this might be the reason in 1529 when he translated An Exposition into the Seventh Chapter of the first Pistle to the Corinthians. In this little treatise, Roy differs with Tyndale on a number of verses.³⁷

That in our English text we do here read,
withdraw not yourselves one from another, it
soundeth rather after the Greek and Latin
examples if it should be translated word for
word 'Defraud you not' or 'deceive you not
one another'.³⁸

Roy, however, always used restraint when referring to Tyndale and to the translation. He felt that bitterness and animosity between the reformers would only lead to division and would aid their opponents. To the above statement Roy was quick to add:

Nevertheless our English text doth right well
and expressly shew the sense and meaning of
this place like as it doth excellently well
of all other points.³⁹

Feeling that even this was not enough to placate those who would enjoy a chance to point out that the translators

³⁷In the nineteenth century George Offar, on reading this tract, compared the scriptural references in it to the Tyndale translation. He found that Roy differed with Tyndale on twenty passages. Offar penned these differences on the flyleaf to Roy's work which is now in the British Museum.

³⁸William Roy, An Exhortation to the Diligent Study of Scripture made by Erasmus Roterdamus and Translated into English: An Exposition into the Seventh Chapter of the first Pistle to the Corinthians (Marburg?: Hans Luft?, 1529), fol. Ci.

³⁹Ibid.

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themselves could not agree on the correct translation, Roy hastens to add:

And moreover to blank and confound our pharisees and enemies of the truth, which if they once hear that I do interpret this place other wise than it standeth written in the English translation of the testament should peradventure begin to rail, slander and speak evil... for such both is and ever hath been their nature and demeanor of me and of the good man which it translate saying: low they contrary themselves one another, how mad therefore are ye to believe them.... I have shewed you by reasons manifest and authority sufficient that we do not vary or contrary one another.⁴⁰

He goes on to reiterate that although his translation is the correct one, the one done by Tyndale certainly contains the meaning implied in the passage.

Tyndale must have been of the opinion that Roy claimed too much of a role in the translation, and his attack on Roy in the Wicked Mammon may have been the translator's way of setting the record straight. Roy, however, never claimed to have played a large role in the work. He had had a part in it and he was extremely proud of that part. He realized the revolutionary aspect of the work and justly took pride in it, but he never over-emphasized or enlarged upon his role. In his Dialogue Between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son, Roy not only tells of his role in the translation, but also of his respect for Tyndale.

⁴⁰ Ibid., fol. Cii.

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It is not unknown to you all..., howe that this last yere, the Newe Testament of our Saveour, was delyvered unto you, through the faythful and diligent stodye of one of oure nation, a man no doute, ther unto elect and chosen of God, named William Hitchyns [i.e. William Tyndale] unto whome I was (after the grace given me of the lorde) as healpe felowe and parte taker of his laboures.⁴¹

"Healpe felowe and parte taker," exactly describes what Roy was to Tyndale, and he claimed no more. He places the credit for the New Testament where it belongs and is sure that the translator is of the elect. Tyndale answers this encomium by declaring that Roy was crafty, hard to manage, and one who "promissed more a great deal than I fear he will ever pay."⁴²

III

By August, 1525, Tyndale and Roy were finishing up the translation of the New Testament. The proofs had been read and a prologue written which is certainly Protestant in tenor. Glosses had been added which included "and all goode workes after outward appieraunce with oute faith ar syn: contrarie wyse where faith is there must the veary goode

⁴¹ Roy, Dialogue Between a Father and His Son, 422.

⁴² Tyndale, Wicked Mammon, preface.

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workes folowe."⁴³ It is no wonder that the English ecclesiastical authorities were upset over this translation. In September, 1525, the first modern English translation of the New Testament was sent to the printer, Peter Quentell of Cologne.⁴⁴ Quentell began the printing and had proceeded as far as quarto K when a disaster temporarily ended his work.⁴⁵

Tyndale and Roy had been working quietly on their translation. The authorities in Cologne and in England apparently had no intimation of what was occurring. Financed by the Christian Brethren, Tyndale and Roy were able to print some of the books. They had hoped to have six thousand copies printed, but Quentell only printed three thousand.⁴⁶ In late September, 1525, their scheme was discovered. John Dobneck, who called himself Cochlaeus and who was Dean of the Church of the Blessed Virgin in Frankfurt, was living in Cologne. Cochlaeus was an implacable foe of Luther and of Protestantism. He, along with men like John Eck, dedicated his life to the defeat of the Lutheran heresy. He was in

⁴³ William Tyndale and William Roy, The New Testament in English (Cologne: Peter Quentell, 1525). In the British Museum, this is listed under both Tyndale and Roy's names.

⁴⁴ John Dobneck, "Commentaria Johannis Cochlaei de Actes et Scriptio Martini Lutheri Saxonis Chronographica ex ordine ab anno Domini 1517 usque ad annum 1546 inclusive fideliter." See Pollard, 105.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 107.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 104.

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Cologne attempting to have certain works by a former abbot of Deutz printed which would confute Luther. Unfortunately for Tyndale and Roy, Dobneck went to Peter Quentell to have these works printed.

By all this business Dobneck had become pretty intimate and familiar with the Cologne printers when one day he heard them boasting confidently over their wine that like it or no all England would soon be Lutheran.⁴⁷

Of course, Dobneck became very interested in this statement, and on questioning the printers, he learned that two Englishmen, "learned, skilled in languages and ready of speech" were hiding in Cologne.⁴⁸ He attempted to see them, but Roy and Tyndale were warned of his intentions and remained in hiding. Still not too sure of how England was to become Lutheran, Dobneck invited the printers to the inn where he was staying and by plying them with wine got the story from them.⁴⁹ Hearing the news that the New Testament in English

⁴⁷ Ibid., 107.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Historians beginning with Mozley, in his book on Tyndale, and copied by J. D. Mackie, The Earlier Tudors, 1485-1558 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), have maintained that Roy had put Dobneck on the trail of the discovery of the printing of the New Testament by bragging ("Driven from Cologne when the imprudence of Roy attracted the watchful Cochlaeus." Mackie, 343). This allegation is, of course, groundless. The only source for the discovery of the New Testament in Cologne is Dobneck's own. Dobneck states that he could never meet the two translators and that it was the printers and not Roy who were bragging about the English New Testament.

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was already finished and was being printed for secret distribution in England, Cochlaeus became "alarmed and bewildered." He rushed to the house of Herman Rinck, one of the Privy Councillors of the city of Cologne, told him of the whole affair, and demanded that the printing be forbidden. Rinck, being a cautious man, told Dobneck to wait while he ascertained the facts. He then sent a servant to Quentell's shop to search for the translation. When the servant reported Dobneck's allegations were true, Rinck got the Senate of Cologne to forbid further printing.⁵⁰

Tyndale and Roy by this time had gotten word from Quentell that the authorities were stopping the printing. Fearing for their lives the translator and his secretary quickly gathered up their translation and the quires already printed and fled up the Rhine by boat. They disembarked at Worms, where they again began printing the New Testament. Dobneck and Rinck hastened to inform Wolsey, King Henry VIII, and Bishop John Fisher of the translation. However, Dobneck and Rinck were not the only one to alert the king of the impending English New Testament. On December 2, 1525, shortly after Dobneck wrote to the king about this matter, Edward Lee, the king's almoner wrote to Henry from Bordeaux.

⁵⁰Dobneck, 107-108.

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Please it your highness moreover to understand that I am certainly informed as I passed in this country that an Englishman your subject at the solicitation and instance of Luther, with whom he is, hath translated the New Testament into English.... I need not advertise your grace what infection and danger may ensue here by if it be not withstood. This is the next way to fulfill your realm with Lutherans, for all Luther's perverse opinions be grounded on bare words of scripture....⁵¹

If the English authorities prepared any reception for the English New Testament it has not been recorded, but they were, at least, alerted. Both Dobneck and Lee were quick to point out that Luther had a hand in Tyndale's translation. Actually, he did not. Tyndale had made up his mind to translate the Bible before he left England and his work was through and through an English and not a Lutheran book.⁵²

Meanwhile Roy and Tyndale established themselves at Worms. They were extremely angry with Cochlaeus, and Roy never forgave the priest's meddling into the printing of Tyndale's translation. In Rede Me and Be Not Wrothe, Roy's vehicle for all his frustrations, Dobneck comes in for some choice invective.

Jeffrey: Nevertheless amonge this araye
Was nott theare one called coclaye?
A littell praty foolysse poade,
But allthough his stature be small

⁵¹British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vespian C III, fols. 107-108.

⁵²Rupp, 49.



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Yett men saye he lacketh no gall
More venemous then any toade.

Watkins: No for he had a nother occupacyon
Wryting to the Englysshe nacyon.

Jeffrey: To Englonde? In good tyme
I trowe the urchyn will clyme
To some promociion hastely.

Watkins: Or els truly it shall cost hym a fall
For he is in favoure with theym all
Which have the gospell in hate
Continually he doth wryte
Ever laboryinge daye and nyght
To upholde Antichristes estate
Of papistes he is the defender
And of Luther the condemner
The gospell utterly despysing
To forge lyes he has no shame....⁵³

Although Roy does not say anything about Dobneck's part in discovering the translation in Cologne, he forthrightly singles out this rather unpleasant character for special condemnation.

In Worms, Tyndale decided not to go ahead with the printing which Quentell had already begun, but rather to issue a completely new edition. However the quarto edition which had been begun in Cologne was later smuggled into England. This edition consisted only of the prologue and the first twenty-two chapters of Matthew, with a gloss and one wood cut. Fortunately, one of the original copies has been preserved in the British Museum. The extant copy of the

⁵³ Rede Me, 43-44.

Cologne Fragment, as it is called, is made up of only eight quartos; that is, it ends with quarto H rather than K, as Dobneck maintained.⁵⁴ Dobneck wrote his account in 1547, twenty-two years after he had discovered Tyndale and Roy's translation, and it may be he had forgotten exactly how many quartos had been published. It is also possible that three quartos have been torn off the copy belonging to the British Museum. It is certain, however, that the one in the Museum is the 1525 Cologne edition because of the woodcut, which is known to have been used by Quentell because of the prologue; and by the fact that it is a quarto edition. The three thousand copies of this quarto edition were apparently shipped to England along with the completed New Testament printed in Worms.

Tyndale and Roy again set to work to have the translation printed. They contacted Peter Schoeffer, a printer in Worms who printed the new edition on octavo sheets. Tyndale dropped the prologue, although he did add a short address to the reader at the end of the work.⁵⁵ Because in Worms "the people are all mad on Luther," Tyndale and Roy were able to complete the printing of the New Testament, and the modern

⁵⁴Tyndale and Roy, The New Testament (Cologne Fragment).

⁵⁵R. Mercer Wilson, Tyndale Commemoration Volume (London: Lutterworth Press, 1939), 229.

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English Bible became a reality. In January or February, 1526, the book was finished--the book, which Dobneck believed would cause "all the people of England, whether the king liked it or not...[to] become Lutherans," was ready for England.⁵⁶

IV

An English New Testament now existed, the work of its translators nearly over. The next task was to convey it into England. Tyndale had worked on the translation for two years. Although most of that time he worked alone, Roy was to help him for about six months. The translators had to live; they had to have money to commission the printing; and they had to pay their travel expenses to Wittenberg, Hamburg, Cologne, and finally to Worms. All these things necessitated a financial backing and also an organization to sponsor, hide, protect, and encourage them. Besides this, an organization was needed to import and to sell the book when it was completed. That such an organization existed is apparent. John Foxe called it the Christian Brethren.⁵⁷ It has always been rather mysterious and very few sources concerning it exist. It was most likely made up of merchants. In every major city on the Continent a group of English merchants resided.

⁵⁶Dobneck, 104.

⁵⁷Foxe, V, Appendix XIII.

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These merchants looked after English trade, dealt with the export and the import of goods, and formed a communication link among Englishmen abroad. It is difficult to view these men as some sort of zionistic underground, but apparently they approached just that. In what manner they became converted to Protestantism is not known, nor is it known how many of the merchants in each city were Protestants, nor is it known if all European trading centers had Protestant English traders dwelling in them. However, it is clear that they were in Antwerp, Cologne, Frankfort, and most likely in Worms.⁵⁸

In 1526, only nine years after Luther had begun the Protestant revolt, the Christian Brethren were well enough organized to smuggle books in great quantities into England. These merchants were willing to risk fortune and life for the idea that religious truth could only be found in the scriptures. There was no money to be made from prohibited books. A book hunted by the crown and despised by the clergy would hardly turn a profit. There certainly was no profit to be had from financing men such as Tyndale and Roy. The men who made up the Christian Brethren were dedicated Protestants endangering their wealth and risking their lives, so that the English might have the New Testament in their own tongue.

⁵⁸Antwerpsch Archievenblad, VII, 177.

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Dobneck maintained that Roy and Tyndale were being supported by the English merchants.⁵⁹ Roy himself admits that the translators had outside help.

Watkins: Howe had the gospel fyrst entraunce
Into Englonde so farre of distaunce
Where to rede hym, no man maye?

Jeffrey: Good christen men with pure effecte
Of God singularly ther to electe
With cost hym thether conveye.⁶⁰

The English authorities apparently agreed with Roy, because both Humphrey Monmouth in London and Richard Harmon in Antwerp were accused of having been,

Privy and of council, or hast given help thereunto, that the New Testament was translated into English by Sir William Hochin or Tyndal, and Friar Roye, and printed and brought into this realm as well with glosses as without glosses.⁶¹

Dobneck's story of the smuggling of the New Testaments elaborates, but does not conflict with the above statements.

Dobneck says that Tyndale and Roy were to send the New Testament to England "under cover of other goods," and that the translators were being supported by "English merchants who meant secretly to import the work."⁶²

⁵⁹Dobneck, 104 and 107.

⁶⁰Rede Me, 117.

⁶¹Strype, I, 489.

⁶²Dobneck, 104 and 107.

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In the spring of 1526 this well organized plan began to function. The New Testament was being received in England. It was received with joy by some, but to the authorities it was treated as a plague visited upon them by the machinations of the devil. Lollardy had established in the minds of the prelacy a great fear of vernacular scriptures, a fear so great that Tyndale's New Testament was hunted, burnt, and its authors became the subject of an international manhunt. The Lollards formed an eager public for the work, as did many other Englishmen of all classes and education. The translation was well done, and the public was eager for it.

When the books arrived the prelacy immediately took action. Their measures against the book took three forms: firstly, the denunciation and forbidding of it; secondly, the persecution of those who bought, sold, or read the book; and thirdly, the hunting down and prosecution of its translators and printers. The English New Testament was denounced openly at St. Paul's Cross in the spring of 1526. Tunstal issued the decree which accused the translators of being "children of iniquity maintainers of Luther's sect, blinded through extreme wickedness;" and he further charged that in this translation had been included "many heretical articles, and erroneous opinions, pernicious and offensive, seducing

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the simple people."⁶³ After reading the proclamation and preaching a sermon of denunciation, Tunstal had the New Testament publicly burned. The penalty for any purchaser not turning in the books within thirty days was excommunication and the "suspicion of heresy."⁶⁴

Meanwhile, the clergy were examining and criticizing the translation and soon found errors enough. Tunstal's chaplain, Robert Ridley, wrote to Warham's chaplain about the translation in early 1527. Ridley had seen both the Cologne Fragment with the prologue and the Worms edition and he wrote a violent criticism of both. The authors were denounced as "damned and precise heretics."⁶⁵

In all these early proclamations and denunciations Roy is listed along with Tyndale as co-author. Ridley writes:

Master Gold, I heartily command me unto you as concerning this common and vulgar translation of the New Testament into English done by M. William Hichyns otherwise called M. W. Tyndale and frear William Roy, manifest Lutheranes heretics, and apostates.⁶⁶

⁶³British Museum, Add. MSS, 26,674, fol. 1b.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵British Museum, Cotton MSS, Cleopatra E V, fol. 362.

⁶⁶Ibid.

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Again, in a proclamation dated October 24, 1526, Tunstal declared:

...ust moneat omnes qua denms in fra XXX dic-
cum spastium tradent libros novi testamenti
in indiomate vulgare translos per fratrem
Marthium Lutherum estius ministerio viz. W.
Tyndale alias Hochin et fratrem Wm. Roy
apostates anglo.⁶⁷

The authorities knew who the culprits were and every effort was made to secure them.

Tunstal's proclamation had given the laity thirty days in which to surrender their copies of the New Testament. This proclamation was not particularly effective, for beginning in 1526 the ecclesiastical authorities began searching into the distribution of the book. Upon search they discovered how the books had been brought into England. They found that Scottish ships had brought in many of them. The Scots traders smuggled them into Scotland from whence they filtered into England.⁶⁸ Others were shipped through Harmon directly to London. Once in London they were given to Protestants to be sold. Dr. Robert Barnes, Simon Fish, and Richard Bayfield seem to have been the purveyors of the Testaments.⁶⁹ Fish was even accused of buying his books

⁶⁷British Museum, Harleian MSS, 7048.

⁶⁸British Museum, Cotton MSS, Galba B VI, fol. 4.

⁶⁹Fish is listed as a seller of New Testaments in Strype, I, Appendix XXII, 44, and Barnes is mentioned in Harleian MSS, 421, fol. 35.

directly from "Mr. Harmond an English man being beyond sea."⁷⁰

From London these books were sold throughout the country.

Robert Necton sold twenty or thirty in Suffolk and at least two copies to Bayfield. Necton also sold them at Lynne.⁷¹

John Tyball at Bumstead bought copies from Barnes.⁷²

The fact that the New Testaments were being freely transported and sold throughout England, but especially in London, incensed the authorities. Beginning in February, 1527, Tunstal began instituting a series of inquiries and heresy proceedings against a great number of men who possessed, had possessed, or had sold the New Testament.

The majority of the purchasers who were charged with heresy had long been of that intellectual subculture known as Lollards. John Tyball, John Pykas, and Robert Necton were all accused of Lollardy. Tyball confessed to having been familiar with Wycliffe's Wicket before going to Barnes for the New Testament. In fact, Tyball even carried Lollard treatises with him to Barnes to show the reformer that the traditional English heresy also had a written literature. Dr. Barnes had little regard for these works, maintaining

⁷⁰Strype, I, 63.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²British Museum, Harleian MSS, 421, fol. 35.

that the Tyndale translation was "of more cleaner English."⁷³ Robert Necton had been converted by "father" John Hacker, water bearer of Coleman Street, and was accused, although he denied it, of possessing the Wicket and the Lollard version of the Apocalypse.⁷⁴ John Pykas was apparently converted by his mother and gave her his copy of the New Testament after he learned that it had been forbidden.⁷⁵

These confessions not only show that the Lollards were eager purchasers of the New Testament, but they also indicate that the reformers, men with doctorates like Barnes and learned men such as Simon Fish and Richard Bayfield, were not uninterested in selling and preaching and teaching to the Lollards. Even though these heretics had no direct ties in 1526 with the intellectual side of the Continental reform, the reformers were willing to work with them and through them in order to further the cause of the Reformation.

Besides prosecutions and proclamations the Bishop of London attempted one further tactic to stop the continuing sales of the New Testament in England. Even though the authenticity of the story has been doubted, Edward Hall

⁷³ Strype, I, 54.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 64.

⁷⁵ British Museum, Harleian MSS, 421, 17.

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recorded in his Chronicle how one Augustine Packington, a merchant of London, who was also a Protestant, told Tunstal that if he wished Packington would buy all the New Testaments; that is, the whole printing for Tunstal so that he might burn them. Packington got a great number of them and turned them over to Tunstal. In this way, according to Hall, Packington aided Tyndale in that the translator obtained money to correct and re-issue the New Testament, while the "whole world cried out upon the burning of God's word."⁷⁶ There is some evidence as to the veracity of this tale, because part of the clergy apparently felt that they had procured all the copies of the New Testament. In May, 1527, Richard Rawlings, Bishop of St. David's, wrote to Warham that he had heard that all the copies of the New Testament had been purchased by the Archbishop for a sum of sixty-two pounds, nine shillings, four pence. Rawlings congratulated the primate and offered to contribute to the payment for the books.⁷⁷ Of course, neither the Archbishop nor the Bishop of London had acquired all the books, and the traffic in New Testaments continued throughout the year after it first made its appearance.

⁷⁶ Edward Hall, Chronicle containing the history of England during Henry the Fourth and the succeeding Monarchs to the end of the Reign of Henry VIII (London: J. Johnson, 1809), 762-763.

⁷⁷ British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vitellius B IX, fol. 131.

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The final means of combatting the New Testament was to capture the authors and to attempt to have further printing of the heretical document stopped. This part of the search took on international aspects. From the moment William Roy and William Tyndale finished the printing in early 1526, they became hunted men. Antwerp was where the search for the printers and distributors of the New Testament centered. Even though the books had been printed in Worms, the embarkation point was Antwerp, and it was in that city that the English authorities attempted to bring the printers and sellers to justice.

The English envoy in Antwerp was John Hackett. Hackett was extremely zealous in attempting to up-root the now heretical New Testament. In a letter to Wolsey, Hackett declares that he has discovered two men in Antwerp who both printed and sold Tyndale's book. Hackett had been to the Antwerp authorities to have this stopped and had been assured of their co-operation.⁷⁸ Hackett hoped to be able to buy many for Wolsey to destroy.⁷⁹ Of course, Hackett had received mis-information about the printers of the New Testament, but he was correct about the fact that they were

⁷⁸Letter from John Hackett to Cardinal Wolsey, Public Record Office MSS, Group SP, Class 1, piece 50, fol. 21.

⁷⁹Ibid.

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being distributed from Antwerp. In a further communication Hackett relates that the English New Testament could not be banned in Antwerp unless it violated the laws of the Empire.

In February, 1527, Hackett requested a commission to be sent which would indicate why the New Testament should not be sold in Antwerp, for the authorities there had told him that without a commission "they may not punish, neither make correction upon the foresaid [printer and sellers] neither upon their goods."⁸⁰ After again explaining the whole business to the lords of the town of Antwerp and especially explaining to them in great detail why the books had to be prohibited and burned, Hackett received a judgment from the council.

But considering that such business as this is touches both life and goods, the said lords of Antwerp declared unto the foresaid council that they thought not in no wise to judge upon the example of another's judges judgement, without they having perfect knowledge upon the foundation and reason, that they may do it. Desiring the said council that they might have the said books translated into Latin or Dutch so that they might understand the language.⁸¹

Much frustrated by this decision Hackett implored Wolsey to send evidence against the books. Wolsey had not answered Hackett's pleas, and on May 23, the envoy again

⁸⁰British Museum, Cotton MSS, Galba B VI, fol. 4.

⁸¹British Museum, Cotton MSS, Galba B IX, fol. 37.

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⁸²Ibid., 1

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wrote the Cardinal. By this time the envoy was extremely alarmed, for he had been to the fair at Macherling and had found English New Testaments being openly sold there and had learnt that there had been two thousand of them sold at the last Frankfurt fair.⁸² Even though the latter was most likely an exaggeration, it does indicate that the English New Testament was freely available both at home and on the Continent.

Meanwhile, Hackett had been busy trying to locate the sellers of the translation. He finally came upon one of the culprits in the person of Richard Harmon. It was not until August or September, 1528, that Harmon was arrested. His house was searched and incriminating evidence was discovered, which led to a trial before the Dutch authorities.⁸³ While he was in prison Harmon wrote the Emperor pleading for his release. He claimed to have been arrested "for having received books from a German merchant and sold them to an English merchant who has had them conveyed to England." Harmon claimed that he was unaware that he had done any wrong "because he [Harmon] is no clerk."⁸⁴

⁸²Ibid., 58.

⁸³L&P, IV, No. 4964.

⁸⁴This letter, written in Flemish, has been translated in Edward Arber (ed.), William Tyndale, The First Printed English New Testament (London: Edward Arber, 1871), 39.

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Even though this letter makes Harmon sound innocent enough, he was much more involved in the New Testament translation than the above quotations would imply. In 1534 after a different religious climate had begun in England no less a personage than the Queen herself pleaded for Harmon. In a letter written May 13, Anne Boleyn wrote to the Chancellor:

Trusty and right well beloved, we greet you well and where we be credibly informed that the bearer here of, Richard Harmon, merchant and citizen of Antwerp in Brabant was in the time of the late Lord Cardinal, put and expelled from his freedom and fellowship of and in the English house there for nothing else...but only for that he did both with his goods and policy, to his great hurt and hindrance in this world help to the setting forth of the New Testament in English.⁸⁵

On January 22, 1529, Harmon was tried for aiding "William Tandeloo and the other, the son of Petit Roy" in the publication of the New Testament in English.⁸⁶ It was not until October of the same year that the New Testament in English was finally banned in the Empire.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ British Museum, Cotton MSS, Cleopatra E V, fol. 350.

⁸⁶ Antwerpsch Archievenblad, VII, 166.

⁸⁷ State Papers Published under the Authority of Her Majesty's Commission, King Henry the Eighth, Part V, Foreign Correspondence, 1473-1527 (London: Publisher not given, 1849), No. CCLX.

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The clergy had attempted to stem the tide of the English New Testament, but it was a miserable failure. The book had been banned and burned; its authors, printers, and distributors had been hunted and persecuted; but all to no avail, for the situation in England was growing desperate. Hall writes:

...the New Testament translated into the English tongue...the common people used and daily read privily, which the clergy would not admit for they punished such persons as had read, studied, or taught the same, with great extremity but because the multitude was so great, it was⁸⁸ not in their power to redress their grief.

Tunstal became so worried that he asked Sir Thomas More to write against the heretics. He even licensed More to read heretical writings in English so that he might aid in putting down the "Wycliffian and Lutheran heresy."⁸⁹ Finally Henry himself mentions the New Testament in a letter published in 1528 criticizing Luther.

And thereupon without answer had from us, [Luther] not only published the same letter....but also fell in device with one or two lewd persons, born in this our realm, for the translating of the New Testament in English as well as with many corruptions of that holy text.⁹⁰

⁸⁸Hall, Chronicle, 771.

⁸⁹This license is quoted in David Wilkins (ed.), Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae, ab anno MCCCL ad Annum MDXLV, III, (London: R. Gosling, F. Gylser, T. Woodward, C. Davis, 1737), 711.

⁹⁰Henry VIII, A Copy of the Letter, wherein the most redoubted and mighty prince...Henry the eight,...made Answer unto a certain letter of Martin Luther... (London: Richard Pynson, 1528).

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All these things, including its damnation by both the highest ecclesiastical and secular authorities in England, could not stem the tide of the New Testament. It continued to be distributed throughout England and with it spread the fame of the translators. William Tyndale was no longer a back country priest, and William Roy was no longer a member of the friars minor. Rather they had become the most infamous of English heretics, men whose names had become familiar not only with the laity, but with the highest of English ecclesiastical and secular authority.

Tyndale and Roy remained together as long as necessary, but after their work had left Germany, printed and bound, to be smuggled and dispersed through all of England, the two translators parted, as Tyndale put it "for our two lives and as they say a day longer."⁹¹

The two men were almost forced to part; their temperaments were entirely different and their views on the course of the Reformation were miles apart. Tyndale was primarily a Lutheran in belief. He was a scholar and a theologian. He sought to appeal by scholarly theological arguments to the educated clergy and laymen of England. His concern was not primarily with the common man, except for his burning

⁹¹Tyndale, Wicked Mammon, preface.

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desire that the Bible be readily accessible to all men. His subsequent writings and translations were on a rather high plane, and he refused to resort to satire and railing rhymes to convert the English people. Roy, on the other hand, soon grew away from Luther's tutelage and began to lean toward the Zwinglian view of the Reformation. He became convinced of the spiritual rather than the corporal presence in the Eucharist and sought to expound this view. William Roy also believed that the ecclesiastical establishment in England could not be changed to incorporate Reformation ideas. He concluded that the establishment must be destroyed or at least drastically altered. He became convinced that the people must be converted to do this task, although the crown's support was necessary for the cleansing of the church. Roy was apparently fully cognizant of the existing clerical and lay situation in England; and he became convinced that an appeal to the lower classes, and especially to those lower classes already in or on the verge of heresy, was necessary in order to give the reform a broad base on which the crown could build a new Jerusalem in England.

William Roy dedicated the remainder of his life to three tasks. The first was to decry the burning of the English New Testament; the second was an attempt to popularize, to make palatable the reform ideas to the English lower

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classes; and the third was to attempt to convince the Lollards, the existing English heretics, that the Continental reform was in full agreement with their own views. Besides these tasks he hoped to unite, by his writings and translations, all forces for reform in England so that what he considered to be a cleansed and reformed church could be established.

Tyndale and Roy both went on to greater things than the first translation of the English New Testament. Tyndale was to remain a hunted man, a heretic who was to meet his end at the stake. Roy was to become the most famous and sought after of the early English reformers. His name was to become the most hated to the ecclesiastical authorities. The highest secular and clerical personage in England, Cardinal Wolsey, was to institute an international manhunt for the apostate Franciscan friar from the Greenwich monastery.

CHAPTER IV
THE FIRST WORKS
1526-1528

In the spring of 1526, after the New Testament had been safely printed and the first shipments were on their way to England, William Roy and William Tyndale parted company. Unfortunately, the only source for Roy's actions between the time he left Tyndale and the time his first works were making a rather unfavorable impression with the English authorities, is Tyndale's own account in the preface to the Parable of the Wicked Mammon. Tyndale writes:

After we were parted he [Roy] went and got him new friends which things to do he passeth all that ever I knew and there when he had restored him of money he got him to Argentine [Strasbourg] where he professed wonderful faculties and maketh boast of no small things.¹

Exactly where Roy went before he settled in Strasbourg remains a mystery, but most likely he contacted the source of income for English Protestants on the Continent, that is, the Christian Brethren. Roy left Worms in need of funds and without prospects for employment on the Continent. He could

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not return to England for his name was already being linked with Tyndale's as one of the translators of the Bible. He must have returned to Antwerp to beg aid from Harmon. Harmon apparently contacted Humphrey Monmouth on this subject, for in 1528 Monmouth was accused of being,

privy and council of certain detestable books late printed beyond the sea in English against penance and all other observances of holy church and those against blessed sacrament of² the alter and the observing of the holy Mass.

The Christian Brethren decided to subsidize Roy as he was able to go to Strasbourg and to carry on his work.

Roy not only obtained money, but he also "got him new friends." Both Tyndale and Roy had studied at Wittenberg and had, in the beginning followed Lutheran doctrines. Roy however soon grew away from Lutheranism, becoming increasingly attracted to the doctrines of Zwingli. As Professor Knappen has shown, most early sixteenth-century English reformers, once they "went beyond Erasmus, they naturally accepted Luther as their leader...but when, on the Continent, they met with Swiss ideas most of them were quick to shift the allegiance."³ Roy became the first of a long line of

²British Museum, Harleian MSS, 424, fol. 8. These books were Roy's Rede Me and Be not Wrothe and The Dialogue between the Christian Father and His Stubborn Son.

³M. M. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, A Chapter in the History of Idealism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 21.

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English Protestants to find Luther's views both confusing and too orthodox to suit their ideas of a thorough reformation. The new friends which Tyndale credits to him were men of Zwinglian, rather than Lutheran, persuasion.

After obtaining money, William Roy journeyed to Strasbourg. Strasbourg must have seemed like a Mecca to the young Franciscan, for the city was in the throes of an internal upheaval which was to reform thoroughly its churches by 1530. Both Lutherans and Zwinglians were active in this upheaval, and not only was a conflict with the Catholics raging, but also there existed an internal Protestant rivalry. However, throughout the 1520s, the Strasbourg ministers tried to maintain a middle and even a mediating role between the two Protestant doctrines.⁴

The leaders of the Strasbourg reform were Martin Bucer, Matthaus Zell, Caspar Hedio, and Wolfgang Capito. All of them sought to retain Protestant unity in the face of Catholic pressure. Bucer was the greatest of the Strasbourg Protestants. His concern was with the word of God. He stressed that there must be preachers who would preach the

⁴Robert Kreider, "The Anabaptists and the Civil Authorities of Strasbourg, 1525-1555," Church History, XXIV, (1955), 100.

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gospel.⁵ Dogma, such as the corporal versus the spiritual presence of Christ in the Eucharist, was not important to him, as he thought it would be best to leave these questions vague, stressing rather the teaching of the pure word of Christ.⁶ Capito and Hedio were humanists turned reformers, though they did not reject humanism. Zell was Strasbourg's most popular preacher. If these men leaned slightly toward Zwingli's position, they still maintained good relations with the Lutherans.

Thus, Strasbourg was an excellent place for Roy to take up residence. The attitude of the governing body gave him the freedom to undertake his writings and translations, while he could watch the process by which the Reformation was effected. Roy was present during this ecclesiastical revolution which took place between 1526 and 1529. He probably witnessed the momentous and swift changes which ended Roman authority in the city. Obviously Roy was impressed with the ending of the Mass in Strasbourg and he hoped something similar could be instituted in England. He saw the way events were leading in Strasbourg, and even though the

⁵Miriam U. Chrisman, Strasbourg and the Reform (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 85-86.

⁶Ibid., 86-87.

Mass was not officially abolished within the city until 1529, in 1527 Roy and Barlow constructed their dialogue Rede Me around the idea that the Mass was a human who had died in Strasbourg and had to be interred.

Strasbourg was to be Roy's home until 1529. It was while in this city that he published his first works. It was in Strasbourg that he met an old friend who aided him in preparing one and most likely two tracts. This friend "Jerome" or William Barlow is probably the most enigmatic creature of the early Reformation. If William Roy is sometimes a mystery, Barlow always is. It is impossible to determine who he was, or for that matter, even his real name. Barlow was not an uncommon name in England; and a William Barlow rose to some heights in the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the later part of Henry VIII's reign.⁷ Historians have long considered the man who became Bishop of St. David's and the man who was with Roy in Strasbourg to be identical. Evidence for this is strong albeit circumstantial. Both men answered to the name William: both were extreme Protestants; both had red hair; and both were about the same age. It can be shown, however, that the Bishop was not the same man as Roy's companion.

⁷Thomas Wright (ed.), Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries (London: Printed for the Camden Society, 1843), 183.

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Roy's accomplice was called Friar Jerome (Hierome) by both Tyndale and More. Tyndale states:

A year after that, and now twelve months before the printing of this work [i.e. 1527] came one Jerome, a brother of Greenwich also through Worms to Argentine...which Jerome with all diligence I warned of Roye's boldness and exhorted him to beware of him.⁸

In 1528 while searching for Roy and Friar "Jerome," John West discovered that his surname was Burlowe or Barlow.⁹ Herman Rinck also referred to Barlow as Jerome Barlow.¹⁰ All sources point to the fact that Roy's accomplice, and the co-author of Rede Me, was an apostate Franciscan friar of the Greenwich monastery named Jerome Barlow. All sources, that is, except one. In 1533 a letter was sent to Henry VIII by a William Barlow. This letter amounts to the apology and recantation of a man who was a heretic and who had been beyond the sea. Even though William Roy is not mentioned in this letter, it is obvious that the author was Roy's accomplice.

I have greatly swerved, wrapping myself in many fold errors and detestable heresies against the

⁸ Tyndale, Wicked Mammon, preface.

⁹ Letter from John West to John Hackett, Public Record Office MSS, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 50, fol. 75.

¹⁰ Arber, The First Printed English New Testament, 33.

doctrines of Christ and determination of the holy church in so much that I have made certain books and have suffered them to be imprinted as the treatise of the burial of the mass [Rede Me], A dialogue between the gentleman and husbandman.¹¹

This recantation identifies William Barlow as the same man who was on the Continent with William Roy. Since the man who later became the Bishop of St. David's was also named William it has been assumed that the Bishop and Roy's companion were the same man. However, Bishop Barlow is known to have been advanced through the auspices of Anne Boleyn.¹² In fact, Anne Boleyn was so solicitous of Barlow that in 1528 she thanked Wolsey for "the gift of the benefice for Master Barlow."¹³ Thus at the very time that Roy's accomplice was on the Continent, living in Strasbourg, Anne Boleyn was procuring benefices for a friend by the name of Barlow. It is most likely that this was the man who became a bishop and that Roy's accomplice was a minor Franciscan friar named Jerome or William who sank into obscurity after his return from the Continent.

¹¹British Museum, Cotton MSS, Cleopatra E IV, fol. 146.

¹²Rupp, 67.

¹³British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vespian F III, fol. 155. Rupp, 63-72, makes a very good case for the Bishop and "Jerome" Barlow being different people, but he overlooked this source in his proof.

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In spite of Tyndale's warning against Roy, Friar Jerome did meet and work with his old friend in Strasbourg. It was a perfect match as Barlow supplied Roy with all the current news from England, while Roy informed his fellow apostate as to the recent occurrences on the Continent. Tyndale was angered by the whole affair:

Nevertheless, when he [Jerome] was come to Argentine William Roye (whose tongue is able not only to make fools stark mad, but also to deceive the wisest, that is at the first sight and acquaintance) gat him to him.¹⁴

Shortly after their meeting, the two friars set to work on two tracts in English which were to make their names synonymous with the anti-Christ to those who held ecclesiastical preferment in England. Tyndale describes their work in the following manner: Roy "set him [Barlow] to work to make rhymes, while he himself translated a dialogue out of Latin into English."¹⁵ Tyndale is referring to the two publications issued by Roy and Barlow in 1527 and 1528, that is A Dialogue Between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son and Rede Me and Be Nott Wrothe, for I Speak Nothing but the Trothe.¹⁶

¹⁴Tyndale, Wicked Mammon, preface.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Rede Me and Be Nott Wrothe, is the title by which this work has been referred to in recent times. Contemporaries always referred to it as "The Burial of the Mass."

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Recently, a great argument has developed over who really wrote the dialogue Rede Me. Tyndale intimates that Barlow wrote this dialogue while Roy worked alone on the other tract. Some modern historians have felt that Roy had nothing to do with it and in reality hired Barlow to do the writing.¹⁷ However, on a detailed inspection of the work it becomes obvious that Roy was involved in its writing. If Barlow manufactured the rhymes and some of the content, Roy certainly supplied the initial idea, the main structure, and much of the subject matter.

The dialogue begins with a prologue, which proves Roy had a hand in the work. William Roy was often referred to as Pety Guilermo, and the initials, P. G., are included in the opening sentence of the work: "To his singular goode frendt and brother in Christ Master P. G., N. O. desyreth grace and peace from God the father."¹⁸ P. G. must stand

¹⁷This allegation was apparently first put forth by A. Kozul, "Was Bishop William Barlow, Friar Jerome Barlow?" The Review of English Studies, IV (1928), 25-34. Rupp amplified this view, 55. Rupp bases his theory on the fact that in one edition of Rede Me there is a footnote by the editor which quotes the preface of the Wicked Mammon to state William Roy "gat him to hire" (William Roy, "Rede Me and be not Wrothe...", printed in Harleian Miscellany, IX (London: White and Cochrane, 1812)). This footnote must be a misprint as a check of the 1528, 1547, 1548, and 1549 editions of the Wicked Mammon show that Tyndale wrote "gat him to him." Rupp also credits Barlow's confession as proof that Roy did not have a hand in Rede Me, but Barlow's confession does not disprove that Roy had something to do with the tract.

¹⁸Rede Me, 21.

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for Pety Guilermo. John West writing about Rede Me in 1528, calls Roy, "Pety Guilirm," perhaps in an attempt to indicate just who P. G. was.¹⁹ The prologue addressed by N. O. to P. G. goes on to state that since P. G. sent him the "lyttle worke" which he had examined, he thought it fit to publish. On the last page of the prologue the authors are referred to as "we" which may also indicate a dual authorship.²⁰

Internally, the work is filled with references which only Roy could have added. Included in the work is an attack on Standish and Dr. Allen, men in England whom Roy disliked. Also there is a strong attack on John Dobneck, who Barlow would have had no reason to hate, but who Roy hated vehemently. The work also contains references to Strasbourg and the decrease of the Mass there, which Barlow, a newcomer, could not possibly have known. It appears that Roy supplied much of the detail for the work, while Barlow composed rhymes for the whole satire.

Externally there is also ample evidence for Roy being involved in the authorship of the tract. While Tyndale apparently points toward Barlow as the author, the whole preface of the Wicked Mammon is a denunciation of Roy and of

¹⁹Letter from John West to John Hackett, Public Record Office MSS, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 50, fol. 75.

²⁰Rede Me, 25.

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the use of railing rhymes. Roy, not Barlow, comes in for castigation from Tyndale's pen. Besides Tyndale, all other contemporary sources indicate Roy to be one of the authors of the tract. Sir Thomas More credited Roy and Barlow with the work. In his Supplication of Souls, More writes:

"Then came soon after out in print the dyalogue of Frere Roy and Frere hyerome between the Father and the son agaynst the sacrament of the alter and the blasphemous book entitled the burying of the Mass."²¹ In 1528 after he had read the Wicked Mammon, More referred to Tyndale's version of the authorship of Rede Me, "And afterward he [Jerome] left him [Tyndale] and went unto Roy which is as I think ye know another apostate by whose counsel Tyndale saith, the friar jerome made the book."²² Even in this passage, More does not refute Roy's part in the authorship, but merely intimates that Barlow wrote the rhymes on Roy's counsel.

John West, in searching the Continent for heretical books, wrote "that Pety Guelirm Roy and Jerome Burlowe...

²¹Sir Thomas More, The Supplycacyon of Soulys made by Syr Thomas More (London: William Rastell, 1529), fol. 20.

²²W. E. Campbell (ed.), "The dialogue of Sir Th. More... wherein he treated Diverse Matters as of Veneration and Worship of Images and Relics, praying to saints and going on pilgrimages, with many other things touching the Pestilent sects of Luther and Tyndale [1528]," The English Works of Sir Thomas More, II (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1931), 212.

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hath made this book that was last made against the king's highness and my lord Cardinal."²³ Herman Rinck, in denouncing the books does not even mention Barlow's name, but accuses Roy and Hutchins, in that order, of writing the books full of slander against the Cardinal.²⁴ Finally in Bale's Illustrium Majoris Britannia of 1548, Roy is listed as the author of the satire against Wolsey.²⁵

Modern writers from C. S. Lewis to William Clebsch have agreed that Roy was either the author or co-author of Rede Me.²⁶ The overwhelming consensus drawn from internal and external evidence and from recent scholarly opinion leads to the conclusion that both Roy and Barlow were involved in the authorship of the satire.

Rede Me and Be Not Wrothe is one of the most extraordinary dialogues ever written in the English language. It is not a work of deep theological content, but one of humor, satire, and bitter invective. It was designed for a semi-

²³Letter from John West to John Hackett, Public Record Office MSS, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 50, fol. 75.

²⁴Arber, First Printed English New Testament, 32.

²⁵John Bale, Illustrium Majoris Britanniae Scriptorum hoc est Anglia (Ipswich: J. Overton, 1548).

²⁶See C. S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), 331; and William Clebsch, England's Earliest Protestants, 1520-1535 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 231, for recent opinions on the authorship of Rede Me.

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educated audience which was unable to comprehend serious theological debates. The authors dealt with almost every aspect of English life, thus making the work an invaluable guide for a glimpse of early sixteenth-century England.

The satire is, in composition, not one, but four short works. There is a prologue of five pages; then, a short dialogue between the treatise and its author in which they argue over the value of letting the treatise out into the world; thirdly there is a seven-page lamentation on the burial of the Mass; and, finally, the dialogue between two servants of a priest, Jeffrey and Watkins, is included. The prologue was most likely written by Roy; the dialogue between the author and the treatise was written by Barlow. The lamentation on the burial of the Mass may well have been a translation of an existing work. It does not mention Strasbourg, England, and the English prelacy; and it must be considered to have been translated by Roy and included in this work as a basis around which the dialogue that follows it was constructed.

The dialogue between the two servants makes up the bulk of the work. It is based on the fiction that two servants to the same priest have met somewhere outside of England and are discussing the amazing events of the Reformation. One, Watkins, has been on the Continent for

some time; while the other, Jeffrey, has just recently come from a long sojourn in England. Watkins is full of news about what has transpired on the Continent, but especially in Strasbourg; while Jeffrey tells of occurrences within England.

Quite often in sixteenth-century dialogues the fictitious participants possess the first names or initials of the author or authors. Barlow makes use of this device in his dialogue against Lutherans, written after his recantation.²⁷ In Rede Me, the two speakers are Watkins and Jeffrey. Watkins could very well stand for William Roy while Jeffrey could stand for Jerome Barlow. This is borne out by the fact that Watkins evinces an intimate knowledge of the Strasbourg Reformation and Roy had been in Strasbourg for over a year when Barlow arrived. Jeffrey, like Barlow had only recently arrived from England and knew much of the recent occurrences there.

The dialogue begins with Watkins telling Jeffrey how the Mass had died in Strasbourg, killed "with a sharpe two edged sworde which as they saye was goddes worde draune

²⁷ William Barlow, A Dyalogue describing the original ground of these Lutheran factions and many of their abuses (London: William Rastell, 1531). In this work Barlow, by this time calling himself William, uses the initial "W" to identify himself.

oute of the holy gossell."²⁸ When Jeffrey asks where the Mass was killed, Watkins replys, "In strasbrugh that noble towne, a cyte of most famous renounce wheare the gospel is frely preached."²⁹ And when Jeffrey queries as to who killed the Mass, Watkins replys:

Truly there where clarkes many one
And gretly learned every chone
Whose names my memory do passe
Howe be it Hedijs, Butzer, and Capito...
Indede were reputed the chefe.³⁰

Roy credits the Strasbourg reformers with the death of the Mass. Watkins goes on to explain to Jeffrey that although all the great defenders of the Mass, men like John Faber, Emser, Mornes and even Eck, used many boastful words, they did not even dare to appear at its defense. Erasmus was too busy making man's will free to appear, and "Coclaye" (John Dobneck) was much too preoccupied with writing flattering letters to highly placed people in England to come to its aid.³¹ Up to this point in the dialogue Watkins has been the main speaker and the news has been mainly about occurrences in Strasbourg. However, at this point Jeffrey

²⁸Rede Me, 38.

²⁹Ibid., 39.

³⁰Ibid., 40.

³¹Ibid., 42-43.

asks where the Mass is to be buried, and the scene of the dialogue begins to shift. From being the main speaker, Watkins becomes the listener as Jeffrey begins a long explanation as to why England would be the best place for its interment.

The remainder of the dialogue becomes a series of invectives pronounced by Jeffrey on the state of religion in England. There are two main themes in Rede Me. Firstly, there is a scathing attack on the English clergy as led by Cardinal Wolsey; and secondly, there is an attack on those members of the clergy who publicly denounced, banned, and burned the English New Testament. Jeffrey begins his attack on Wolsey in a way which must certainly have made the authors unpopular with the crown.

Jeffrey: Fyrst as I sayd there is a Cardinall
Which is the ruler principall

Watkins: Have they not in Englonde a kynge?

Jeffrey: Alas manne speake not of that thyng
For it goeth to my very harte
And I shall shewe the a cause whye
There is no prynce under the skye
That to compare with hym is able
A goodly person he is of stature
Endued with all gyftes of nature
And of genttlylness incomparable
In Sondry sciences he is sene
Havyng a ladye to his Qwene
Example of womanlyke behaveoure
Not withstandynge for all this
By the Cardinall ruled he is
To the distayninge of his honoure.³²

³²Ibid., 49.

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This statement, which also seems to have been the verdict of history, is followed by page after page of sometimes clever rhymes full of colorful language, puns, and pure invective. Wolsey is accused of ruining England, of putting the land into a miserable state, of having the Duke of Buckingham executed, and of advocating a divorce between the king and queen, because the queen was past child bearing age.³³ The Cardinal has founded a college, but:

What is it to se dogges and cattles
Gargell heddes and Cardinall hattes
Paynted on walls with moche cost
Which ought of dute to be spent
Apon poure people indigent
For lacke of fode utterly lost.³⁴

Roy and Barlow are enormously critical of Wolsey. The invective mounts in fury as it progresses. The attack against Wolsey ends with Jeffrey giving "a brefe oration dedicated unto his statlynes."

O miserable monster most malicious
Father of perversity, patron of Hell
O terrible tyrant to God and man odious
Advocate of Antichrist to Christ rebell
To the I speake o Caytife Cardinal so cruell.³⁵

With this gentle admonishment Jeffrey ends his diatribe against Wolsey.

³³Ibid., 52.

³⁴Ibid., 54.

³⁵Ibid., 114-115.

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It was a violent time, filled with violent men who spoke in a way hardly acceptable today. But the above quotation was not acceptable then, not acceptable, that is, to the learned, the intellectual, and the humanist. The fishmongers, waterbearers, and poor artisans, who thronged the muddy streets of London, cursing and shouting, understood this type of language very well indeed. To the men of the wharves, the laborers, brewers, and inn keepers, this language was entirely acceptable. To those men in England who had little or nothing, Roy and Barlow directed their attack; and that the clergy saw the danger inherent in the direction of this attack will be shown below. Tyndale could criticize Roy and Barlow for the rhymes in Rede Me, but the lower classes, who saw and resented the pomp of Wolsey, could appreciate the invective. It was this segment of the people which the two apostates saw as the backbone of the Reformation. It was this group which the two authors hoped to swing over to the reform, so that when the crown began to back the gospel there would be a large lower-class basis of support.

The main theme in the dialogue is, of course, the attack on Wolsey. However, the work is a polyglot of criticisms of the establishment, as well as a personal attack upon the Cardinal. The next most important theme in the treatise is the shock and horror on the part of the

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authors over the burning of the English New Testament. Jeffrey opens the discussion regarding the New Testament with a short monologue on how the authors of the translation, with great meekness, created the work with no errors or offensive opinions.³⁶ When the New Testament appeared in England, Henry Standish brought it before the Cardinal and the bishops, stating:

Pleaseth youre honourable grace
 Here is chaunced a pitious cace
 And to the churche a grett lacke
 The gospels in our English tonge
 Of laye men to be red and songe
 Is nowe hidder come to remain
 Which many heretykes shall make
 Except youre greace some way take
 By youre authority him to restrayne.³⁷

The Cardinal, however, saw no fault in the translation, but "bishop Caypas," that is, Cuthbert Tunstal, Bishop of London, pointed out to him that if the gospels were not condemned the clergy's vices would be known to all. Thus Wolsey, like Pilate, washed his hands of the whole affair and condemned the English New Testament to the flames.

William Roy never recovered from the blow of the burning of the New Testament. He mentions it in most of his works, and it can certainly be used as a test in determining his hand in the writing of certain tracts of questionable

³⁶ Rede Me, 117.

³⁷ Ibid., 118-119.

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authorship. Rede Me has long been correctly thought of as powerful invective against Cardinal Wolsey. However, the vituperative attack which Roy and Barlow mounted against the Cardinal was so overwhelming that modern historians have failed to see that the treatise is also a great lamentation against the burning of the English New Testament. However, Sir Thomas More appreciated this fact to such an extent that he even points to it as one of the main themes of the dialogue.³⁸

After the New Testament was condemned by the Cardinal, it was openly denounced at St. Paul's Cross in London. Jeffrey tells Watkins that it was denounced as heresy, and the translators of it were labelled "heretics execrable."³⁹ Jeffrey explains to the astounded Watkins that the reason the New Testament was burned was that the Bishop of London maintained he had found at least three thousand errors in it. For example, Jeffrey goes on, Tunstal stated that the translation declared that common women would go to heaven as

³⁸ Campbell, 211. Sir Thomas More's full statement is, "since that time another book made in English and imprinted as it saith in Almain, a foolish railing book against the clergy and much part made in rhyme, but the effect thereof was all against the mass and the holy sacraments. In this book the maker railleth upon all them that caused Tyndale's translation of the New Testament to be burned saying that they burned it because that it destroyed the mass."

³⁹ Rede Me, 46.

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soon as those who were virtuous. When Watkins questions this, Jeffrey explains that in a "certayne prologe" they write that through Christ even a prostitute can be saved.⁴⁰ This prologue was the one which Tyndale and Roy had included in the first edition of the New Testament which was printed in Cologne.⁴¹ This part of Rede Me was written by Barlow who must have been present at the sermon at St. Paul's Cross. He must also have seen the prohibition issued by Tunstal against the New Testament, for some of it is quoted in the dialogue.⁴²

Jeffrey continues his attack on the burning and banning of the New Testament throughout much of the work. Roy was very bitter over this "sacrilege." Even though Barlow must have assured him that the Cardinal had played Pilate in this affair, Roy felt that it was burnt on Wolsey's instigation. It is true that Wolsey could have stopped the destruction if he had wished, but he probably had very little to do with Tunstal's proclamation. It can even be argued that the burning of the New Testament was the reason

⁴⁰ Ibid., 47.

⁴¹ William Tyndale and William Roy, Cologne Fragment, prologue.

⁴² Rede Me, 48. For the original prohibition see Guildhall Library (London) MSS, Diocese of London, Episcopal Registers: Tunstal, 1522-1530, fol. 128.

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the dialogue was composed. The motives behind Roy's desire to attack Wolsey may well be found at the very beginning of the work:

O my treatous it is goddes judgement
 So to recomence their madde blasphem
 Seynge they burned his holy testament⁴³
 Thorowe the prowde Cardinal's tyranny.

The two servants discuss why the gospel should be in English. Watkins asks how truth can be found and Jeffrey replies that if one takes the gospels without adding or taking away anything, he shall need no other test for truth. The truth which will set you free is contained in the Bible and should be available for all men to read in their own tongues. This is the reason for the treatise; this is the reason behind the attack on Wolsey. For if the vernacular gospel was banned, the people would be unable to learn the truth. By banning the New Testament, Wolsey, according to the authors, had not only committed blasphemy, but he had also kept the truth from the people. Watkins, however, assures Jeffrey that although the word has been burnt, the prelates cannot keep God's truth out of the hearts of true Christian men.⁴⁴

⁴³Rede Me, 27.

⁴⁴Ibid., 48.

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Besides the attacks on Wolsey and on those who caused the New Testament to be burnt, a number of other themes are included in Rede Me. The authors also make a thinly veiled appeal to the Lollards. In the prologue, N. O. writes to P. G. that the work is good and should be sent into England. N. O. then states:

I...will not be negligent to put my brethren in remembrance (though they partly know them themselves and are stablyshed in the present truth) of those things whereby they maye the more evidently note the deceatfulness of mortall man and the better come unto the knowledge of the immortal god.⁴⁵

This passage sets one of the themes of this and of all Roy's other works. He was obviously interested in appealing to those members of society already in ecclesiastical revolt, that is, the Lollards. The reviewer, N. O. says men should read this work to remember what they already partly know, how man is deceitful and God is powerful.

Even though most Lollard doctrine was, by 1526, being taken up by the Continental Protestants, some of the criticisms found in Rede Me appear to be a direct appeal to the existing English heretics. The authors, for example, lay great stress on the theory of Wycliffe that the goods of the Church should be confiscated and redistributed among the poor. The poor labor, and the fruit of their sweat is eaten

⁴⁵Ibid., 22.

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up by the prelacy, the monks, and the friars.⁴⁶ "The goodes of the churche are [in Strasbourg] taken away, geven to pour folkes soffrynge indigence."⁴⁷ By adopting another doctrine of Wycliffe, the authors declare that the only way the wealth of the Church can be taken away and given to the poor is with the crown's authority.

Watkins: What were best then to be done?

Jeffrey: To break theym in peces a none
a monge pour folke to be distributed....

Watkins: What shulde we do with their ryches?

Jeffrey: Give it to the poor men in almes.⁴⁸

The authors are certainly concerned with the poor and especially with the advantages taken of them by the clergy. Rede Me is filled with allusions to the clergy "milking" the poor for their own benefit. Friars, especially, come in for condemnation. Both Roy and Barlow had been friars and had become disgusted with what they thought to be an idle life. Barlow, especially, was concerned with this, and the references in Rede Me dealing with the poor are obviously written by him. He told Tyndale in 1527 that he wanted "to

⁴⁶ Various references to the church sitting as some monstrous parasite on the labor of the poor can be found in Rede Me, 50, 61, 67 and 94.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 36.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 111.

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get his living with his hands and to live no longer idle and of the sweet labor of thos captives which they had taught not to believe in Christ, but in cuttshose and russet coats."⁴⁹ This concern of Barlow's for the poor, who slave for the idle clergy, pervades all the works which he authored or co-authored, including his dialogue against the Lutherans written after his return to England. Jeffrey deals with friars by calling them hypocrites, drunkards, and debauchers who dwell like parasites on the poor. Grasping the goods of the less fortunate for their own gluttony, the inhabitants of the cloisters are worse than those of any brothel. The monks practice all manner of perversions, sodomy being pointed out as one of their chief crimes.⁵⁰

Roy and Barlow could not resist blaming all the evils of English society on the Church. The clergy had robbed the poor of all their goods. In fact, according to Jeffrey, there were once in England many rich farmers, but now:

Of ryche farmer places and halles
 Thou seist nothyng but bare walles
 The roses fallen to the grownde
 To tourne fayre houses into pasture....
 A new waye they do invent
 Lettynge a dosen farmes under one
 Which one or two ryche francklyngis

⁴⁹ Tyndale, Wicked Mammon, preface.

⁵⁰ Rede Me, 96.

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Occupyinge a dozen mens lyvynges
Take all in their owne hondes a lone.⁵¹

There is no doubt that this lamentation against enclosures was well understood by the authors' English compatriots of the lower classes. The church became a convenient scapegoat for enclosures, an evil which was to plague England throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

After rehearsing in some detail all the evils the ecclesiastical establishment, and especially the monasteries, had perpetrated on the poor of England, Roy and Barlow offered a solution, which was to recur in their writings and was to become the theme of the 1530s. The solution was to obtain from the king a licence to destroy the clerical establishment.

Yet had we the kings licence
We would with outen dissydence
Their golden shrynes in peces break.⁵²

The idea of using royal power to break the church was in pure Lollard tradition. Wycliffe, himself, hoped that the crown would seize the wealth of the church and redistribute it to the poor. While the idea of state authority being

⁵¹Ibid., 99-100. It is interesting to note that R. H. Tawney and E. Power have used this quotation as an illustration of the popular outcry against sixteenth-century enclosures in their Tudor Economic Documents, III (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1924), 20-22.

⁵²Rede Me, 111.

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higher than the spiritual was not unknown on the Continent, Roy and Barlow, in the above passage, were in fact making an appeal with which all Lollards were familiar. The idea of a redistribution of clerical wealth, although a royal doctrine in the 1530s, was a Lollard idea in 1527. Roy and Barlow obviously were attempting to make the common people realize that only if they had royal support could they destroy the evils of the Church. If the people attempted this task on their own they would be labelled heretics, but if they could obtain royal support, nothing could stand in their way. To reinforce this argument, Jeffrey points out that although the Bible instructs man to obey God's laws, the clergy obey "nether spretual nor temporall to the common weallis fortheraunce."⁵³ While people of England are always willing to place themselves and their goods in jeopardy to serve their king in war, the clergy obey no laws, and if the king attempts to force them into obedience, they flee to those who will excuse them from all temporal jurisdiction.⁵⁴ Jeffrey goes on to state that while the clergy are subject to no law, they own much land in England; for example, he erroneously declares that the black monks alone own more land in England than all the nobles.

⁵³Ibid., 91.

⁵⁴Ibid., 92.

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From the above paragraphs it is evident that Roy and Barlow's satire was by and large an attack on Wolsey, the clergy, and the burning of the New Testament. The authors were interested in pointing out the evils of the existing ecclesiastical establishment. While the tract is highly critical, there is little doctrinal exposition included. It was an appeal to the English nation against Wolsey and the clergy. The authors made little attempt to convert or to argue either Protestant or Lollard dogma. Yet there is enough discussion of doctrine to brand the whole treatise heretical even without the vituperative attack on the clergy. These references to doctrine, however, are made in passing and are never explained or given any elaboration. The authors seem to be appealing to an audience not only well aware of Protestant doctrines, but also one which accepted them.

The doctrinal references allude to the spiritual presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the "manufacturing" of new sacraments, the "feigning" of purgatory, and perhaps most importantly:

They bid us in oure workes to trust
Whereby they saye that we must
Deserve oure salvacion
Faith litell or nothyne the repute.⁵⁵

⁵⁵Ibid., 74.

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This is most important in that even though it is only a passing reference, the idea of justification by faith is mentioned. Faith alone was the only major doctrinal tenet held by the Continental Protestants which was not held by the Lollards. All the other doctrinal references in Rede Me are as much Protestant as they are Lollard. Justification by faith was alien to the Lollards, and it is important that the authors include it in the treatise. It is more important, however, that the authors never come out strongly for this belief, only mentioning that the friars view faith as of small account in the matter of salvation. The two apostates refuse to enter into an elaboration of the subject and they also do not deny the efficacy of good works.

Even though the treatise Rede Me is not intended to be a discussion of doctrine, the authors do include a reference to the Eucharist. Their stand on the sacrament seems to be both non-Catholic and non-Lutheran, though it is one which perhaps the Lollards would accept. The Eucharist is only mentioned in passing, as Roy writes of it in greater length in another tract. Watkins, in talking about Erasmus, states:

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That he wolde lever dye a marter
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That Christ is not theare corporally present
In bredde, wyne, and water.⁵⁶

⁵⁶Ibid., 43.

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Roy and Barlow's stand on the Eucharist appears more Zwinglian than Lutheran.

The treatise Rede Me and Be Nott Wrothe stands as one of the most remarkable early sixteenth-century literary productions. It was written in a style and with a dash which captivates even today. Two further editions of this work appeared, one in 1546 and the other in 1871.⁵⁷

Rede Me has long been considered a vituperative attack on Wolsey and has been much quoted as an illustration of contemporary views on the Cardinal. But it attempted more than an attack on the Cardinal; it was also a criticism of the clergy and the monasteries; and it was a vindication, perhaps even a declaration of independence, for the English poor. Besides invective, it contains humor, satire, and some doctrine. It should be studied for what it is, an attempt to expose what the authors thought were the evils, and the causes of these evils, in the England of Henry VIII. Moreover, it was also an appeal to the English nation, an appeal for the New Testament in English, and a lamentation against the "sacrilege" of burning God's holy word.

⁵⁷ Rede me frynde and be not wrothe for I say no thyng
but the troth (Wesell: Henry Nicolson, 1546). Edward Arber
printed the 1871 edition.

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In his preface to the Parable of the Wicked Mammon, Tyndale states that Barlow made rhymes, while Roy "translated a dialog out of Latin into English."⁵⁸ This dialogue translated by Roy was published about the same time as Rede Me. Roy called his work A Dialogue Between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son, and it has had a curious history. Condemned by More and the English authorities, it was long believed lost. Nineteenth-century English historians often lamented the fact that this dialogue, and especially the prologue, had not survived the campaign against it by contemporary ecclesiastical authorities. It was not until 1874 that it was discovered, and then not in England but in Vienna. The irony of this whole story lies in the fact that this work had been republished in England in 1550 by G. Walter Lynne. Lynne had dropped the original prologue, added a new introduction, and issued the dialogue under the title The True Belief in Christ and His Sacraments, Set Forth in a Dialogue Between a Christian Father and His Son.⁵⁹ This tract, certainly not uncommon in England, had never, until

⁵⁸ Tyndale, Wicked Mammon, preface.

⁵⁹ G. Walter Lynne, The True Belief in Christ and his Sacraments set forth in a Dialogue Between a Christian Father and his Son, very necessary to be learned of all Men of what estate soever they be (London: G. Walter Lynne, 1550).

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The Dialogue between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son represents a very important stage in English Reformation history. Even though the Bible had been rendered into English, and even though there were remnants of Wycliffe's theology in England, there was no real statement in English of Protestant doctrine. While scholars like Barnes and Bilney could read of the Reformation in the Latin and German works emanating from the Continent, the common man had little, except word of mouth, to instruct him in Protestant ideology. William Roy saw the need for a doctrinal statement in English, and though this dialogue is probably not an original composition of his, it is a skilled translation of a statement of beliefs meant to instruct and to popularize Continental Protestantism in England.⁶⁰ Published in September, 1527, it became the first statement in English of Reformation doctrine.

The prologue is addressed to the citizens of Calais. Why Roy addressed it to this audience is a mystery which has led some historians to believe that Roy's family was living

⁶⁰ Roy and Tyndale both state that this dialogue was translated out of Latin. Most historians have agreed with this statement, but since the original has never been found, the possibility that it was Roy's own work cannot be completely discounted.

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⁶¹L&P,

⁶²Roy,

⁶³Ibid

in that city. Although the name Roy may be of French origin, his family, or what was left of it, was in 1527, living in London.⁶¹ A more likely explanation of why the treatise is addressed to the people of Calais is that that city had become one of the main centers of the Christian Brethren and of their illicit book trade. The prologue begins:

To the right noble estates and to all wother
of the town of Cales, William Roye desyreth
grace and peace from God the father and from
the lorde Jesus Christ.

It is not unknown to you all my lordes
and masters, and all wother my singuler good
friends and Bretheren in Christ.⁶²

Thus, Roy is appealing not only to the estates and people of the city, but also to the Brethren in Christ. Perhaps the English merchants of Calais, like those of Antwerp, had become a source of income for Roy.

The prologue is especially interesting, because Roy states some of the tenets of his own belief. The beliefs which Roy declares are justification by faith and the theory of the elect. These are both good Lutheran as well as good Zwinglian doctrines on which most Continental Protestants agreed in 1527. Roy writes:

What the anchor of faith is which is eternal
predestinacion and aspercion of Christ's beloved
wherewith alonely we are cleansed from sin.⁶³

⁶¹L&P, IV, Number 5043.

⁶²Roy, Dialogue between a Father and His Son, 422.

⁶³Ibid., 424.

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Roy was convinced that faith was the only sure way to salvation and that the elect would be saved, the elect being those who believed in Jesus Christ and who had faith in his salvation. The scriptures were, to Roy, the vehicle by which man learned of God's truth. As such they had to be available to all men so that everyone could benefit from this truth. In this prologue, Roy also makes statements which led Tyndale to declare, "in whose prologue he promised more a great deal than I fear me he will ever pay."⁶⁴

The Dialogue between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son is worth some study in that it gives its reader an insight into the ideas to which the English Protestant was exposed, and it can also be viewed as William Roy's own declaration of faith. Even though Roy was to assist in another dialogue, was to translate works of both Erasmus and Luther, and was to compose at least one more small tract, it is only in this dialogue that he expounds in detail a doctrine which he had adopted. The dialogue takes the form of a discussion between a father and son. There is a curious twist in this, because in most dialogues of this type the father represents the old established order and the son the new reformed revolutionary ideology. In Roy's dialogue just the opposite is true. The

⁶⁴Tyndale, Wicked Mammon, preface.

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father is the "Christian," that is, the Protestant; while the son represents the old "erroneous" views of Catholicism.⁶⁵

The dialogue begins with an attack on Church practices.

The father denounces such things as singing, reading in church, confessions, pardons, pilgrimages, fasting, Mass, and "shortly to conclude, all things that the outward church hitherto hath brought up an kept."⁶⁶ In fact, the father goes on to say that not only are these of no effect, but institutions of laws which require these things are from the doctrine of the devil.⁶⁷ Instead of obeying these silly laws, men should obey the laws of their rulers which are instituted "for the common weal."⁶⁸ This theme, also present in Rede Me, stresses that the supreme power in a nation lies not in the church, but in the crowned head. The king should be obeyed because he risks his goods and his person for the common good and he rightfully requests men to place themselves in danger for the commonwealth. On the other hand

⁶⁵ Charles H. Herford, Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1866), 44. Herford was the first to point this out. Although he admits he never saw this dialogue and thought it had been lost, Herford was astute enough to realize the father represented Protestantism rather than the son.

⁶⁶ Roy, Dialogue between a Father and His Son, 42.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 43.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 44.

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⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Ibid

there is the Church with its monks, nuns, and friars, all of whom obey their own laws and do nothing for the good of all. Roy seems to be saying that these people must be destroyed so that the nation can profit from the labor of all its people. Of course, no direct connection can be proven, but the medieval Lollards and, later, Thomas Cromwell developed similar ideas.

In the dialogue, the father amplifies these ideas when he criticizes idols, saying that the power exists which can cleanse the Church "from all abominations as are dumb stones, blind statues, and deaf parts with all such painted mammettes on boards or pillars."⁶⁹ When the son asks where this power lies, the father replies:

to our temporal lords, rulers, and superiors....
For they by God's word and ordinance have
received the sword temporal wherewith to
chasten, put down, and disanul all that
against God and his holy word is.⁷⁰

Again the Lollard theme, that it is the state which must carry through the Reformation, appears. Roy makes it very explicit where the power lies when he adds that "wherefore, dear child this power [to reform] belongeth to no man saving only to our temporal lords and rulers."⁷¹

⁶⁹ Ibid., 47.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

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⁷²Ibid., 5

⁷³Ibid.,

There is no deep theological discussion in this work, but it is a simple statement of faith by which the English Protestants could live. After the attack on the outward practices of the Church, dogma is discussed. The father maintains that man must pray, not to saints, but to God and to Christ. We should pray, because God commanded us to and also because we are guilty of "the old Adam," the flesh is evil, original sin being the cause.⁷² Even though we are guilty of original sin and have no hope for salvation through our own works, we can be sure of our salvation through faith. One must set aside all worldly things and only hope and trust in and, above all, follow Christ.

The son asks the father to declare his other beliefs, the first being faith alone justifies man for salvation. The father then gives a small catechism of belief. The Apostles Creed, in English, is the center of this belief along with brief explanations of the various passages.

We deserved punishment and death and He which never committed offense suffered it, the righteous for the unrighteous.⁷³

The most important thing is the fact that Christ suffered death for man's sins and in doing so overcame both death and hell. He did this because he loved man. Faith in this

⁷²Ibid., 50.

⁷³Ibid., 52.

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⁷⁴ Ibid., 5

⁷⁵ Ogle, 18

sacrifice becomes the next most important thing in the dialogue. Faith alone, to the father, as it had been with Luther, was the means by which we are justified. Salvation comes through Christ, but only by faith could man be worthy of Christ's love. Christ ordained the salvation of man from the very beginning. We are "reserved by his eternal preordination and Godly wisdom either to death everlasting or else predestined unto life eternal."⁷⁴ We will not learn of our salvation or damnation until the last day.

In pre-Reformation England a Lollard was not really a heretic unless he held unorthodox views on the Eucharist.⁷⁵ The orthodox Catholic view of the sacrament was that the bread and wine upon consecration was no longer bread and wine, but that they became the actual physical or corporal body and blood of Christ. In his attack on the Church, Wycliffe drew away from this belief. In the time between the Oxford reformer's death and the beginning of the Reformation, the Lollard idea of the Eucharist often took strange forms. Even though the Lollards held varying positions on this subject, all Lollards rejected the corporal presence of Christ in communion. During the time that the Lollard heresy was driven underground, deprived of any

⁷⁴Ibid., 54.

⁷⁵Ogle, 18.

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⁷⁶ Ibid., .

⁷⁷ Roy, Di.

⁷⁸ Ibid., .

intellectual leadership, and only living in the hearts of the poor and the down-trodden, the idea of the Eucharist was transformed into one in which Christ was only spiritually present. According to Ogle, it was the denial of the orthodox dogma which caused the Lollards to be considered heretics.⁷⁶

The father also wrestles with the problem of the Eucharist. The father states that Christ is only with us spiritually now, but that he will return bodily on judgment day.⁷⁷ This leads the son to question the accepted Catholic view on communion and the belief in the corporal presence of Christ therein. After rehearsing the arguments that the bread and wine are a remembrance and that the scriptures state that Christ ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God, the father declares that Christ never meant that he was corporally present in the Eucharist. He finally declares his belief in what the Eucharist is:

He [Christ] gave his body and blood spiritually unto his disciples to be eaten and drunk.... that thereby the new and everlasting testament... might be among God's elect published.⁷⁸

⁷⁶Ibid., 23.

⁷⁷Roy, Dialogue between a Father and His Son, 54.

⁷⁸Ibid., 56.

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79 Ibid

80 Ibid

81 Ibid

The son then makes a remarkable statement. In order to clarify the father's explanation of the Eucharist, the son declares that according to what his father stated the communion should only be a "remembrance how that Christ freely gave his body and blood for the redemption of as many as God his father from the beginning of the world had predestinate."⁷⁹ The father, of course, did not state that it was only a remembrance of Christ, but apparently to broaden the appeal the passage on the remembrance was included. The father reiterates the spiritual rather than the corporal presence of Christ in communion, but the son is still not convinced. He states doubtfully, "the words are marvously plain, this is my body and again this is my blood."⁸⁰ The father explains that the Lord's words are to enlighten the understanding of the simple, and since this is true, we must not look at the dead letter, but rather at the living word of God. The Lord meant to aid us spiritually with his word; and in communion Jesus only meant a spiritual presence. The father maintains that no priest can make his Lord out of a piece of bread.⁸¹

⁷⁹Ibid., 56.

⁸⁰Ibid., 57.

⁸¹Ibid., 58-59.

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Later in the treatise the father returns to the Eucharist, and points out that "we here with bread and wine affirm and testify to be done indeed for the remission of our sins. And thus spiritually we eat thy body and drink thy blood."⁸² Thus, the Eucharist becomes truly a remembrance and truly a vehicle by which sins are forgiven. As such we should partake in it, understanding the dual nature of the sacrament, but always remembering that it is only in a spiritual way that Christ is present. This stand on the Eucharist is nearly the same as that of Zwingli. In maintaining it, Roy turns away from the Anabaptists, who claimed only a remembrance, and also from the Catholics and Lutherans, who insisted on some sort of corporal presence. By adopting the Zwinglian view on the Eucharist, Roy also was following Lollard tradition. His view on the sacrament must have made the treatise very appealing to this group. Perhaps Roy chose this doctrine because he knew that it would appeal to many of his compatriots at home.

In very simple terms the father states his belief in one church under one head, which is Christ Jesus who is the one and only mediator for man. This church is made up of ministers, true shepherds to their flocks, and also of good Christian people. The Holy Spirit is what links Christians

⁸²Ibid., 73.

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together into this church and it is this spirit which enables a man to be a Christian. Good works avail nothing; to believe and to have faith are sufficient.⁸³

After he stated the above, the father, not being too sure he has been understood, returns to the sacraments. He maintains that they are a vital part of the church, but only as tokens of spiritual things. Recognizing only two sacraments, the father points out that baptism is no different from the Eucharist in its spiritual nature; "and because they know that they live only by faith, they first use the sign or token thereof, that is to say, baptism."⁸⁴ This sacrament should be given to all those whom it is reasonable to believe will belong to God. But to dissuade Anabaptists, the father adds that baptism is a covenant, and that infants should be baptised so that they will not be excluded from this covenant. There is nothing binding man to baptise infants, but it should be done as a remembrance of God's promises to man that he is the merciful father.⁸⁵ In this statement, the father rejects the Catholic position that unless a baby is baptised it cannot enter heaven. After denying the orthodox view, the father returns to the

⁸³Ibid., 62.

⁸⁴Ibid., 68.

⁸⁵Ibid., 69.

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Anabaptists, who were, in 1527, pouring into Strasbourg. The son questions those who think that infant baptism causes evils. The father states that such types are never satisfied. If the baptism is deferred until the child comes of age, he is no better for it, for if a person is rooted in unbelief he might pretend conversion through his adult baptism and soon fall back and poison the "pure flock of Christ's sheep."⁸⁶

Thus, the church consists of those who believe and who take part in communion and baptism. These true believers become a holy company of saints. Those people who are heretics, Jews, heathens, and open sinners are not of this company as those are not who bring up sects and invent "new learnings" not grounded on scripture and not approved by the company of saints. This is, of course, an attack on those who referred to the Reformation as new learning. The early Protestants maintained that they were following the old, true form of Christianity, and that the Roman Church was, in reality, filled with innovation. Such "new learning" as papal pardons and remissions of sin mean nothing and serve no good except to make men's faith waver and to take away the fruits of their hard labor.⁸⁷ Absolution and

⁸⁶ Ibid., 71.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 76.

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penance mean nothing, as forgiveness can only come through the power of the Holy Spirit, which pours belief into man's heart. Confession is good and right but not as it is practiced. Man can only confess directly to God and can do penance by reconciling himself with his brethren and by openly acknowledging himself to be a sinner.

Thus far, the treatise is a translation. It is most likely that this dialogue represents Roy's own belief. A belief which was certainly neither orthodox, nor Lutheran. William Roy had become a Zwinglian and in doing so he set the stage for many others to follow. Roy not only was a Zwinglian in 1527, but the very first Protestant doctrinal statement in English was both Zwinglian and Lollard in nature. It must be assumed that Roy was attempting to give the English populace a doctrinal statement, which the Lollards could appreciate and understand. No Lollard could have accepted Luther's view on the Eucharist. However, they could accept Zwingli's doctrine almost entirely. Whether Roy was influenced by this fact is difficult to say, but it remains that he attempted to press Zwingli's views on the commonalty of England.

The Dialogue Between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son ends with some of William Roy's own thoughts. It would be possible to identify Roy's hand in this treatise

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⁸⁸ Ibid.,

⁸⁹ Ibid.

even if he had not put his name to it. Roy always, in all his works, included a reference to the reading of scripture. At the end of this dialogue he inserts a bit of his own composition which deals with his favorite topic. He instructs the son on what to study. He exhorts him to read the New Testament in English, to read works which will instruct him as to the evils of the world, and to read such works as will teach him how to behave himself under the laws of his temporal lords.⁸⁸ Finally, the son should, like the father before him, learn Hebrew, Greek and Latin in order that he might further understand the scriptures. The son questions his ability to learn so many languages. Roy-- that is the father--answers that it is easy, "for one tongue healpeth and garnisheth another."⁸⁹ Roy did not want his readers to forget his abilities as a linguist.

Thus, in two treatises William Roy sought to give the English people a doctrinal statement and to mount an attack on the English prelacy. Both works were strongly Protestant in character and were written as means to instruct and to popularize the Reformation at home. Rede Me rehearsed recent happenings both in London and in Strasbourg, while the Dialogue between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son

⁸⁸Ibid., 84.

⁸⁹Ibid.

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sought to instruct in simple terminology, the commonalty of England. These works were to have a great impact on England. An impact so large that Roy became the most hunted of all English heretics and no effort was spared to secure him and his writings. His very name became an anathema to Cardinal Wolsey, who spent much of his valuable time directing the search for the apostate Franciscan. Roy was able to elude this search and was to remain for the rest of his brief life the subject of one of the greatest of all sixteenth-century manhunts.

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CHAPTER V
THE HUNT FOR THE HERETICS

1528-1530

The two tracts by Roy and Barlow were destined to cause much excitement in England and the authors were fully cognizant of this fact. In the dialogue between the treatise and the author which begins the tract Rede Me, Roy and Barlow wrote:

Alas yett in their outragious furoure
They shall coursse and banne with cruel sentence
All those which have to me eny favoure
Ether to my sayngge geve credence
In hell and heaven they have preeminence
To do as they lyst with free liberty.¹

After Roy had finished the Dialogue between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son, and he and Barlow had completed the Burial of the Mass, they sent the manuscripts to John Schott to be printed. Schott was a well known printer in Strasbourg who was very active in printing Protestant works and had by 1527 printed such books as the German New Testament of Luther.² Apparently Roy and Barlow were unable to finance

¹ Rede Me, 28.

² Francois Ritter, Catalogia des Incunables et Livres du XVI^e Siecle de la Bibliotheque Municipale de Strasbourg (Strasbourg: P-H Heitz, 1948), 506.

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the printing, but Schott agreed to do the work on the promise of the co-authors that the English merchants would eventually finance the whole thing. None too sure of the authors' financial resources, Schott only printed a thousand copies of each book.³

Schott finished the printing in early 1528, and some of the books must have reached England by mid-summer. Cardinal Wolsey was incensed over these works, being especially upset about Rede Me. He was so angry that he spared no expense to secure the authors. The Cardinal began his search by sending John West to the Continent to discover and capture the authors of the books. John West was also an observant friar from Greenwich, who apparently knew Roy very well. West became a diligent agent for Wolsey on the Continent and later in England. He tracked Roy all over Europe and searched for him at home. Wolsey also found an agent in the person of Herman Rinck. Rinck was a councillor and senator of the Empire who lived in Cologne. He had long been an agent for the crown of England. Being a banker, he had backed Henry financially when the English king sought the Imperial crown in 1519. He had also been Henry's agent in an abortive attempt to wed the Emperor Charles to the English

³British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vitellius B XXXI, fol. 43. A translation of this can be found in Arber, The First Printed English New Testament, 32-36.

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⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Letter from

Princess Mary.⁴ These two, West and Rinck, were to conduct Wolsey's search for Roy.

When the books first began to trickle into England, the authorities were not even sure who the authors were. Tyndale was first accused, and his preface to the Wicked Mammon was most likely the translator's attempt to exonerate himself. He certainly had enough trouble without being blamed for the creation of vituperative rhymes against the most powerful man in England. Roy and Barlow apparently did not share Tyndale's trepidation.

Wolsey procured a copy of Rede Me in early summer, 1528, for he sent West to the Continent sometime during that summer. West first worked with John Hackett in Antwerp, helping him apprehend Richard Harmon and seeking the authors of the books.⁵ It was not until September 2 that West was able to discover the authors and printers of the two treatises. Through diligent searching, questioning, and bribes, West was able to learn from Francis Bryman, a book binder of Antwerp, that "Petyguelirm Roye and Jerome Burlowe, friars of our religion plus Hutchyns otherwise called Tyndale hath made this book that was last made against the kings

⁴Ibid.

⁵Letter from John West to John Hackett, 2 September, 1528.

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⁶ Ibid. 7
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highness and my Lord Cardinal."⁶ West immediately left Antwerp for Cologne to obtain aid from Rinck. After he had left, Hackett wrote to Wolsey. In this letter, Hackett implies the extent to which Wolsey had been driven in his desire to capture Roy. Hackett wrote: "I shall furnish the said [Friar West] according to your Graces desire of all such money as he shall require."⁷ Wolsey would spare no expense to capture the authors of the treatise against him.

Once the identity of the authors was discovered, West proceeded to hunt them down. He devised a plan for their apprehension which became the first of many such plans. West had heard that the books were in Frankfurt and thought that if money were sent through Rinck to buy them, perhaps "Roye with the other two" would come to Cologne to receive payment. If they did Rinck and West could capture them.⁸

"Roye with the other two"--already Roy's name had come to the top of the list of pernicious English heretics.

⁶Ibid. This source also appears in L&P, IV, No. 4593. When Brewer edited the Letters and Papers he made a mistake which led a whole generation of historians to add a third name to the authorship of Rede Me. The editors read "Petyguilerm" as "Petygnele." However the manuscript in the Public Record Office reads plainly Petyguilerm Roye.

⁷British Museum, Cotton MSS, Galba B IX, fol. 186.

⁸Letter from John West to John Hackett, Public Record Office MSS, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 50, fol. 75.

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Tyndale was being held responsible for the English New Testament, and Barlow for aiding Roy; but William Roy had emerged in the minds of the English ecclesiastical authorities as the most dangerous heretic of the group. Although future historians of the Reformation were to relegate Roy to an insignificant place, his contemporaries saw him in a much different light. To them, he was one of the leaders of the rebellion against all that was sacred within the Church. He was apostasy personified. In all the orders and requests from both Rinck and West, William Roy's name heads the list of heretics. Roy had emerged, if not the leader of the English exile reformers, at least the most sought after by the authorities. He was to retain that position until shortly before his death in 1531.

The reasons behind Roy's emergence into this position are twofold. Obviously, Cardinal Wolsey was deeply bothered by the treatise against him. He was, however, a most powerful man, and it is difficult to discover why he would become so apoplectic over a diatribe by two minor ex-Franciscan heretics writing in Strasbourg. The truth is, however, that by 1528, Wolsey had begun to feel the first tremors in the structure he had so arduously built over the years. He remained at the height of his power, but the king's divorce was beginning to go badly and perhaps he could see the impending disaster. Recent scholarship has shown that the

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king had, in 1527, already begun to mistrust the Lord Chancellor. The Cardinal was becoming paranoid about his position.⁹ Roy and Barlow were minor figures, but to Wolsey they represented the articulation of a great mass of popular discontent with him. Wolsey was hated by the aristocracy for his lower-class origins and his role in the execution of the Duke of Buckingham. He was also criticized by all classes because of Henry's divorce. Catherine of Aragon was rather popular and the commonalty believed the whole divorce was Wolsey's work. All of these themes are emphasized in Roy and Barlow's tract. The treatise represents a strong attack on Wolsey's position and by the date of its publication, the words were more stinging than they would have been five years previously. Perhaps Wolsey considered Roy's satire to be the beginning of the series of foreshocks which led to his downfall in 1530. For these reasons, Wolsey was plainly annoyed with Roy and with Rede Me.

Another reason the English authorities worked so hard for Roy's capture is perhaps more subtle and harder to discern. William Roy, by issuing these two treatises, was attempting to bring Continental Protestantism home to the English people. When Roy and Barlow's works appeared in England early in 1528, they were the first new heretical

⁹J. J. Scarisbrick, Henry VIII (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 158.

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works to appear in England since Wycliffe's time, except for Tyndale and Roy's New Testament. At the time of their publication, Rede Me and the Father and Son were not only the clearest, but the only English statements of Continental Reformation doctrine.

Not only is this true, but Roy's works with their emphasis on the evils of the clergy, their stress on the spiritual nature of the sacraments, and their plea for Bible reading were also designed as an appeal to the English Lollards. These tenets were doctrines which would appeal to many Continental Protestants. However, Roy does not stress certain points in Protestant theology which might not appeal so strongly to the English heretics. Although stressing justification by faith, he does not make a particularly strong case against good works. Rede Me, especially, is more of a diatribe against the establishment than a statement of doctrine. The Lollards of the 1520s had no well defined dogma; they held similar beliefs but there certainly were dogmatic differences between individuals as well as groups. Roy's treatise between the father and the son can be viewed as an attempt to provide a unifying statement of doctrine for both Lollards and English Protestants. The authorities, especially those in London, were aware of this. Already worried about a growing heresy at home, the prelacy must have viewed Roy's work as fuel added to the fire.

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West contacted Rinck relating to him that the books were in Frankfurt, so the banker journeyed there in order to purchase them. By doing this, he may have upset West's plans to have the authors come to Cologne to pick up the money. However, surely Roy had had enough of Cologne and of Herman Rinck. He and Tyndale had been driven from the city, and, being no fool, Roy was not likely to venture there again. He was certainly much safer in Strasbourg. Rinck found the books at the Frankfurt fair and also found that they had been pawned to the Jewish money-lenders of the city. The Senator immediately set to work to procure them for Wolsey. He contacted Schott, who by this time realized that he had better cooperate with Rinck. Schott maintained that he had not seen the authors and only wanted expenses for his labors. Exacting a promise from the Strasbourg printer to print no more of these treatises, Rinck turned to the Frankfurt authorities and was able, through bribes, to purchase the books. He gathered copies of the two treatises from at least four different places in Frankfurt and sent them to Cologne to be kept for the Cardinal.¹⁰

¹⁰British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vitellius B XXXI, fol. 43.

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¹¹ Ibid.

¹² L&P, IV

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Schott claimed to have printed a thousand copies of each treatise, and Rinck believed that he had obtained all the copies in Frankfurt. However, he had not. Some copies had come into England before the Frankfurt fair. West was sent to the Continent in the summer of 1528. He took letters with him from Wolsey, dated August 5, and he must have known of the books well before that time. West was sent to buy English books and to apprehend the authors.¹¹ Furthermore, when Rinck presented his bill for the purchasing of the books it only came to sixty-three pounds four shillings.¹² This was hardly enough to pay for two thousand books, the interest to the pawnbrokers, and the "gifts and presents" paid to the Frankfurt authorities.¹³

The authorities in England would certainly not have been so incensed if the tracts had been completely suppressed. But, of course, this was not the case, for not only did Wolsey continue to search for them, but Roy's name and his works were included on almost every list of prohibited books from 1529 to 1555. Even Sir Thomas More mentioned them in his Supplication of Souls.¹⁴ More also alludes to Rede Me in a

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² L&P, IV, No. 5402.

¹³ British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vitellius B XXXI, fol. 43.

¹⁴ More, Supplycacyon of Soulys, 19.

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work written in 1528.¹⁵ The works of Roy and Barlow were prevalent enough in England, so that More and the authorities were very anxious to discredit them. Roy remained the most damnable of heretics and the authorities were extremely frightened that his works might do damage.

Beginning in 1530, Roy's name appears near the top of every proclamation denouncing heretical authors or books. Proclamations were issued in 1529, 1530, 1531, 1542, 1546, and 1555. The 1529 list only prohibits books such as Tyn-dale's Obedience of a Christian Man, The Wicked Mammon, and Roy's Dialogue between a Father and His Son.¹⁶ The list of 1530 was the most interesting. In May of that year a conference was called which was attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury and by some of his bishops and representatives from the universities. Henry VIII attended in person, and a number of treatises were presented for judgment. Seven books were found to be in error and prohibited.¹⁷ In 1531, this list was expanded to include many foreign as well as English works. The first book on the 1531 list was the Dialogue between a Father and His Son and the seventh was The Burying of

¹⁵Campbell, 211.

¹⁶British Museum, Landsdowne MSS, 947, fol. 33.

¹⁷Scarisbrick, 252-253.

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the Mass in English in Rhyme.¹⁸ In 1542 and 1546 Roy's name is mentioned as being a prohibited author.¹⁹ Finally in 1554 and 1555, Queen Mary Tudor reinstated the prohibitions set up under Henry VIII. In the prohibition of 1555, Roy's name is again listed as a heretical author.²⁰ All these prohibitions would indicate that the treatises were not all procured by Wolsey's agents, and that they had made enough of an impact in England to be worrisome to the authorities. Finally, the fact that both treatises were reprinted in the 1540s indicate that laymen did have copies of them.

The copies which were brought into England most likely came into the country in the usual way. During this period and for some time to come, the English merchants were sending books into England. Herman Rinck gives the most graphic description of how this operation took place.

¹⁸F. Furnivall (ed.), Political, Religious and Love Poems (London: The Early English Text Society, 1866). This work contains a list of prohibited books which include the following by Roy: 1) The Disputation Betwixt the Father and the Son, 2) The Burying of the Mass in English in Rhyme, 3) An Exposition in the Seventh Chapter to the Corinthians, 4) A Book by Friar Roye against the seven sacraments, 5) A Dialogue Betwixt the Gentleman and the Plowman.

¹⁹For the 1542 list see L&P, XVII, No. 172, and for that of 1546 see C. Wriothesley (W. D. Hamilton, ed.), A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors, From A.D. 1485 to 1547, I (Westminster, Printed for the Camden Society, 1875), 168-169.

²⁰Edward Cardwell, Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1839), 165.

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The New Testament had been smuggled into England in this way, and Roy's works arrived in the same manner.

After purchasing some of the books in Frankfurt, Rinck gave two copies to West, who had joined him, and stored the remainder in his Cologne residence, while both men continued the search for Roy. This search centered around Frankfurt. Although Roy was still in Strasbourg in September, 1528, the English agents did not feel that they could pursue him in that Protestant city. West's plan was to lure Roy from his refuge in order to capture him and to bring him back to England. Hackett worked toward this end in Antwerp. While attempting to obtain a ban on heretical books, he also petitioned the council to have heretics seized. In 1528, he was able to communicate to Wolsey that the council had promised him that all "true heretics," after having been examined, would be arrested.²² The council also instructed Hackett to have Wolsey send a learned Englishman to Antwerp to aid in the examination of English heretics. Hackett and

²¹British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vitellius B XXXI, fol. 43.

²²British Museum, Cotton MSS, Galba B IX, fol. 143.

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Wolsey were attempting to close all possible avenues of escape for Roy. If he could be isolated in Strasbourg, he would soon run out of funds and be forced to contact the English merchants. When this was done, he could be captured and returned to England for trial. Hopefully, Rinck and West had stopped Roy's books from entering England. Hackett had procured the arrest of Richard Harmon and had temporarily closed the Netherlands to the heretics. He had cut off Roy's source of income and had secured provisions by which it was very dangerous for the ex-Franciscan to journey to any part of the Lowlands. Wolsey could believe that it was only a matter of time before the arch-heretic would be captured.

Wolsey probably felt that he had drawn a ring so tightly around Roy that the heretic could not possibly escape. Roy, however, was soon to make Wolsey's elaborate plans crumble. After the Frankfurt fair, West had returned to England for the winter. It was in London that he heard the first rumor that Roy had returned to England. While West was on the Continent searching for him, Roy had slipped past the Imperial and English agents and journeyed to London.

The Greenwich monastery was known throughout the 1520s for its orthodoxy. Although Roy and Barlow became apostates, most of the brothers of the house remained loyal to the Church. In the late fall of 1528, during West's absence, Roy arrived at Greenwich. Rather than inform the officials,

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the friars apparently welcomed the Franciscan. Roy preached to the monks and made so good an impression that many of them became hostile to West on his return. The Warden of the Greenwich house, Father William Robinson, was so impressed with Roy's teachings that he journeyed into London to complain about West. Robinson asked Wolsey to dissolve West's commission and would not let the friar leave the monastery. West complained of all this in December, 1528, maintaining that Greenwich was filled with Lutherans.²³ If Roy did convert some of the monks, it was only a temporary conversion for they soon returned to orthodoxy, and West was allowed to leave the house.

After visiting Greenwich, Roy saw his mother at Westminster and apparently spent much of the winter there. While at Westminster, he most likely gathered some old Lollard tracts which he was to use in later works. He had little trouble with the authorities during his stay in London. West, who was being held in the monastery, could only wait. Roy remained free in England.

Early in 1529, Wolsey began what he thought would be the final stage in the capture of Roy. In carrying out his

²³British Museum, Cotton MSS, Vitellius B X, fol. 188. This manuscript is very badly damaged by fire, so much so that it is impossible to tell to whom West writes. Brewer in L&P, IV, No. 5043 thought it was to Brian Tuke.

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commission, John West had travelled to the Continent. He had been in Antwerp and at Frankfurt assisting both Hackett and Rinck. In the autumn of 1528, West had returned to England bringing with him two copies of Roy's and Barlow's works. Now in February, 1529, apparently believing Roy had returned to Strasbourg, he once more journeyed to the Continent to search for Roy and Tyndale. He requested letters from Wolsey to continue his search. His plan was to return to the Frankfurt fair and purchase any further English heretical books. He also asked Wolsey for money so that he could pay Rinck for the books he had purchased from the Jews in 1528, and he hoped to enlist the banker's continuing aid. He had decided to attack Roy in his lair. He requested letters from Wolsey to the Archbishop of Mainz that Roy and Tyndale might be delivered to the English.²⁴ Finally, he requested that his clerical garb be dispensed with so that he might be able to travel in Protestant areas dressed as a layman.

West apparently made a very quick trip to the Continent, for he was back in England in April. While on the Continent, however, he learned that Roy had returned to England and was hiding somewhere near or in London. He also learned that the books had not been picked up in Cologne, but that Rinck still had them. In April, 1529, he sought an audience with

²⁴L&P, IV, No. 5402.

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²⁵ Lett
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²⁶ Lett
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Wolsey to inform him about all the details on Roy, Tyndale, and Barlow.²⁵ It is doubtful that West ever obtained this audience, as the Cardinal had many other worries besides William Roy.

Wolsey, however, was still concerned with Roy's capture. In June, he again sent West orders to search for the heretic. Roy had apparently left England in February, but had returned with Barlow shortly thereafter. In June they left London and began to journey north toward Yarmouth looking for a way back to the Continent. Wolsey's spies informed him of this and the Cardinal sent West and a fellow Franciscan from Greenwich, Friar John Laurance, on the heretics' trail.²⁶

West first went to the Grey Friars' house in Yarmouth, but they knew nothing of the apostates. Searching through the taverns of the city, West came upon a schoolmaster who reported that Roy and he had drunk ale together between Lowestoft and Yarmouth. This man reported the only description extant of William Roy. Even this is rather vague. West writes that the schoolmaster described to them the features and "also the probable secret marks of his face, also the

²⁵Letter from John West to Wolsey, Public Record Office MSS, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 53, fol. 201.

²⁶Letter from John West and John Laurance to Cardinal Wolsey, Public Record Office MSS, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 54, fol. 97.

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manner of his speaking, how he does speak all manner of languages....and so describing him so in every property that by all appearances it should be he."²⁷ These secret marks may have been smallpox marks or perhaps a birthmark. Roy always insisted on showing off his linguistic talents. Perhaps it would have been much better if he had kept quiet on that score while in England. It was well known as his trademark, so to speak, and those men who knew Roy personally certainly could identify him by his boasting of his ability with languages.

The schoolmaster and Roy apparently had a long conversation. A man of Roy's learning was probably an uncommon visitor in the Yarmouth area. In their conversation, the schoolmaster asked him from where he had come. He replied from beyond the sea and that he was travelling north.²⁸ It is surprising that Roy would discuss with this stranger his true plans since he must have expected to be followed. But he apparently felt safe because he was free and thought himself far enough from London to escape being apprehended.

Whatever the reason, Roy told the Yarmouth schoolmaster the truth, for he and Barlow did flee to the north. West and Laurance were soon on their trail. Guessing that the

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

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²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

heretics had gone to Norwich, the pursuers headed in that direction. They were close on Roy's heels by this time. Reaching Langley Abbey, they questioned a man who had been in Lincolnshire two days before. This informant told the friars that he had seen two men answering Roy and Barlow's description on the road. On his approach the man who fitted Roy's description left the highway and hid his face while, "the fellow with the red head....which by all likelihood should be Jerome Barlow" asked the traveller the way to Lynne.²⁹ The apostates went toward Lynne with great speed. On learning this, the pursuers, being on foot, journeyed to the Abbey of St. Bennetts of Holme and demanded horses. The abbot bade them rest, while he sent a servant to Lynne and another to Walsingham to inquire into Roy and Barlow's whereabouts. The servant who went to Walsingham found nothing, but the one who went to Lynne returned with the news that Roy and Barlow had been there but had taken ship to Newcastle. West ends his letter to Wolsey describing these events: "great as the labor is, we endure it for Christ's sake."³⁰

Roy's sojourn in England is first mentioned by West in December, 1528. In February and April, 1529, he again wrote to Wolsey on this subject and on June 12, he was searching

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

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for Roy and Barlow in the north of England. It is impossible to discover if Roy was present in England during the entire winter and spring of 1528-1529. Most likely, however, the linguist made more than one trip to see his mother. He was in England during the winter of 1528 where he translated the two small tracts on Bible reading and clerical marriage. On finishing these works he took them to Antwerp to be printed by Johannes Hoochstraten. By 1529, there was, in Antwerp, a Protestant press which specialized in printing heretical English works. William Tyndale was involved in its publishing activities. The English reformers used the pseudonym, Hans Luft, and the city of Marburg to cover the real printer which was Hoochstraten in Antwerp.³¹

Roy had apparently been in London by himself during the winter but met Barlow in Antwerp in February, 1529, and they returned together to England. Roy, who seems to have been in England from December to February, left London for Antwerp in that month to deliver the tracts to the Protestant printers and then returned to London while the work was being printed. Having to oversee the final printing of the works would have necessitated his return to Antwerp. When West and Laurance were searching for Roy and Barlow in June, the two reformers were on their way to take ship from Lynne, not to Newcastle,

³¹ J. K. McConica, English Humanists and Reformation Politics Under Henry VIII and Edward VI (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 114.

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The two apostates' visit to England was over. Roy was never to return, while Barlow, after making his apology was allowed to return home. While in England, Roy and Barlow gathered information and recent news. They probably also picked up some Lollard tracts and perhaps even a copy of Langland's The Vision of Piers Plowman. Roy certainly was in contact with the Lollards while in London. He would have been welcomed in their circles, and he saw that he and Barlow might be able to incorporate some Lollard works into a tract he was planning. Finally, Roy also worked on two translations while visiting his mother.

The trips to England had been one of extreme daring and even foolhardiness. For an arch-heretic to leave his sanctuary in Strasbourg and to journey to the place where his capture was most desired was a supreme act of coolness. The very audaciousness of the trip insured its success. No one would have expected him to return and to remain in London under the noses of Wolsey and the king. In undertaking this journey, Roy showed nerve and a dash not often found in exiled Protestants of his day. No one Henry VIII ever searched for, not even Cardinal Pole, dared to take the risks that Roy took when he returned home to England.

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Shortly after their return to the Continent in June, 1529, the search for Roy and Barlow was dropped. Wolsey was far too busy defending himself to pursue it further. With the Cardinal's fall Rede Me did not appear so vicious. Although the crown never dropped the prohibitions against the book during Henry's reign, it certainly had lost much of its sting when it was reprinted in June, 1546. What had happened after June 1529 was that Wolsey abandoned the search for Roy and for the books; and the crown, perhaps wishing to discredit the Cardinal, had let the search for the books and their authors lapse. West and Laurance disappear from history; while Roy was free to travel the Continent; Harmon was released; and the great drive to apprehend the English Protestant exiles was over.

II

Meanwhile, prohibited books continued to pour into England. There was no stopping the tide which seemed to the English authorities to bring in new books with every ship. Bishop Nix of Norwich complained of them in 1530.³² He stated that the people of his diocese were continually reading these books; and rumor was that the king, himself, wished the people to have them.

³²British Museum, Cotton MSS, Cleopatra E V, fol. 360.

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Roy and Barlow were to contribute a great deal to these prohibited books. Roy was to issue two or three publications, and he and Barlow were to collaborate on a fourth. These books added to the English literature of the Protestant revolt. Protestantism was beginning to spread in England, and as Nix stated in his complaint of 1530, if the books and those that "holdeth these erroneous opinions" are not suppressed "I think they shall undo us all."³³

While in England, under the nose of the English authorities, Roy translated two works, one of which was to prove his most popular. By the winter of 1528, Roy had translated a treatise of unknown authorship; he had collaborated on an original, if not highly intellectual, dialogue; and he had aided Tyndale in the translation of the New Testament. Now he was to translate works of two authors, one of whom supported the Reformation, while the other opposed it. Roy was to turn one of Erasmus' works into English and to translate a treatise by Luther for his fellow countrymen.

If Roy had one goal in life, besides the forming of a reformed church in England, that goal was to make the English scriptures freely available to his countrymen. From the beginning of his work with Tyndale in 1525, until his final publication in 1531, he stressed reading the Bible in

³³Ibid.

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English. All of his works contain this message. In all his translations Roy interpolates his love for the English scripture and his desire to see it in the hands of men everywhere. In June, 1529, he published Erasmus' treatise which he called An Exhortation to the Diligent Study of Scripture made by Erasmus of Rotterdamus. What this was, in fact, was Erasmus' prologue to the Greek New Testament, first published in 1516. Roy was familiar with this work, since he had helped Standish combat the Dutch humanist in 1519, and most likely both Tyndale and he had consulted Erasmus' New Testament while working on the 1526 translation. Because it was so short, Roy added a second treatise by Luther entitled An Exposition into the Seventh Chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.³⁴

Erasmus, the greatest of all humanists, always flirted with the Reformation. He very strongly criticized the vices of the Church in his early writings, and in the beginning reformers like Luther and Zwingli regarded him as one of their own. Erasmus, however, was, like More and Fisher, interested in reform but not in revolution. To these men, the reform should come from, through, and within the Church,

³⁴William A. Clebsch, "The Earliest Translations of Luther into English," The Harvard Theological Review, LVI (1963), 78. In this excellent article Clebsch proves beyond all doubt that Luther was the author of the latter tract and that Roy was its translator.

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rather than through its break up. Even though often critical, the Dutch humanist remained orthodox enough never to fall foul of the Church. By 1528 Erasmus was firmly in the Church's camp. That this fact was recognized by the Protestants is shown by Roy's lampoon of him in Rede Me. However, the reformers were not unwilling to make use of his writings in their desire to comb all sources to find support for the Protestant doctrine. McConica, in his excellent study of English humanism, states: "Certainly the energetic translations of Erasmus' work in the third and fourth decades of the century suggests that his views were thought by some to be strongly relevant to English problems."³⁵ William Roy was the first Englishman to recognize this fact. For he was the first Englishman to invoke Erasmian thought to support the Reformation.

The work is pure Erasmus. The translation is an appeal for the vernacular New Testament. Included in it is a discussion of the Dutchman's famous doctrine of the Philosophy of Christ. Near the beginning of the work Erasmus states his thesis and no doubt Roy concurred fully

And truly I do greatly dissent from those men
which would not that the scripture of Christ
should be translated in all tongues that it
might be read diligently of the private and
secular men and women....I would to God they
were translated into the tongues of all men,

³⁵McConica, 4.

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so that they might not only be read and known of the Scots and Irishmen, but also of the Turks and saracens....I would to God the plowman would sing a text of the scripture at his plowbeam.³⁶

The translation goes on with a discussion of why all men should read the scriptures. The Bible should be in all tongues, plainly and without glosses, so all can read of the Philosophy of Christ. Erasmus' stress on this philosophy, that is, that man should forsake all worldliness and follow Christ's teachings, was certainly echoed by Roy and the other sixteenth-century reformers. The Philosophy of Christ can only be gleaned from the scriptures, and since all other religions have their sacred books freely available to all the people, Christianity should also.³⁷ Thus, for the first time, Erasmus' Philosophy of Christ was made available to the English people. In a simple statement, Erasmus utters the motivating force behind Tyndale's work and Roy's desire for a vernacular Bible.

But rather because I believe...that the very pure and natural philosophy of Christ can be gathered out so fruitfully of no place, as out of the gospels and epistles of the apostles.³⁸

³⁶Roy, The Diligent Study of Scripture, Avi.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., Aii.

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The Exhortation to the Diligent Study of Scripture fared much better with the English authorities than did any of Roy's other works. As it was an excellent translation without embellishment of a work by a loyal son of the Church, the authorities did not prohibit it as they did all of Roy's other work and translations. Even though the second part of this book published in 1529 appeared on most lists of prohibited books, Erasmus' prologue never did. Moreover, this work was incorporated into many editions of the Bible throughout the sixteenth century. It was a fine translation and the English authorities recognized it as such. There was nothing heretical or even offensive included, as no Church practice or dogma was attacked. Roy did not include any of his own heretical ideas in the translation and apparently this work was appreciated for what it was by the English authorities. Henry VIII always had a warm attachment for Erasmus, and he saw no reason to ban a work by the humanist simply because it was translated by a heretic. Unfortunately, because of the onus surrounding Roy's name, he was not given credit for the translation when it appeared as the prologue to sixteenth-century Bible editions. But the fact that Roy's translation was used in the 1536, 1549, 1550, and 1552 editions of the Bible attests to its worth and popularity.³⁹

³⁹ For a list of these editions see Francis Fry, A Bibliographical Description of the Editions of the New Testament, Tyndale's Version in English (London: Henry Sotherton and Co., 1878), 82-86, 124, 137, 145, and 159.

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The second part of the 1529 publication was of a far different character. It consisted of what is now known to be a translation of Luther's Treatise on the Seventh Chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. This treatise is Luther's defense of the right of clerical marriage. He had written this tract before his own marriage to Catherine von Bora. It is in the seventh chapter of Corinthians that St. Paul puts forth his doctrine against marriage. It is also this chapter that the Church used to prove the unlawfulness of clerical wedlock. What Luther and, subsequently, Roy did was to attempt to explain away St. Paul's anti-matrimonial arguments in an effort to vindicate the Protestant idea that all men, even clerics, should be able to marry if they wished.

A celibate clergy had created problems which the Church could never fully answer. Some men and women were not able to completely fulfill the vows of chastity. How much concubinage and homosexuality actually existed within the monastic and clerical orders is difficult to discover, but there was enough to concern Luther and the rest of the Protestants deeply. Erasmus was, after all, the son of a priest and a housekeeper; Zwingli admitted to having had an affair while a priest; and numerous other clerics, especially in the lower orders, were unable to fulfill their vows.

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Cardinal Wolsey reputedly had both a son and a daughter and sometimes the popes themselves were not beyond this vice. Luther realized that the only real way to stifle the lusts of the flesh was by permitting clerical marriage. This idea was adopted by all Protestants, and while never a major Protestant doctrine, it has remained a bone of contention between the Church and the schismatics throughout the history of Protestantism.

William Roy, who never shrank from taking up a cause, wanted to bring the idea of clerical marriage home to the English people. This idea would certainly appeal to the Lollards who were most critical of church practices. However, there may have been another reason behind Roy's translation. Sir Thomas More in his Confutation of Tyndale gives a possible explanation for Roy's action.

Then have thee an exposition also upon the VII chapter of Saint Paul's pistle to the Corinthians, by which exposition in likewise priests, friars, monks, and nuns may be taught that evangelical liberty, that they may run out a caterwauling and so woo and wed and lawfully live in lechery.

That work hath no name of the maker, but some believe it was friar Roy, which when he was fallen in heresy, then found it unlawful to live in chastity and came out of his order.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Sir Thomas More, The Confutation of Tyndale's answer (London: William Rastell, 1532), preface.

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Besides More's statement, there is no evidence of Roy's unchastity. However, he may certainly have been guilty of this, and the fact that he had violated one of the rules of his order and of the Church may have led him, like Zwingli, into a critical revaluation and questioning of the entire Church discipline. If More was correct, this may have been the catalyst which caused Roy to join the ranks of the reform in the first place. This translation may also be Roy's attempt to vindicate his own actions. Though there is no evidence that Roy ever married, there certainly is no reason to believe that he did not. The fact that former clerics were engaging in matrimony certainly appealed to the daring friar.

William Roy's translation of Luther's treatise was the second English translation of a work by the German reformer, Tyndale having done the first.⁴¹ This work, like the one by Erasmus, was, for the most part, a direct translation with one or two additions. The additions of Roy's own composition deal with a criticism of certain passages of Tyndale's New Testament.⁴² Luther writes that marriage drives one to faith, and since only faith makes an individual righteous, marriage is good and proper. It is God's

⁴¹W. Clebsch, "The Earliest Translation of Luther," 77.

⁴²These passages have been dealt with on page 83 above.

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commandment to marry, and no man has a right to violate it.⁴³

Celibacy is then attacked as causing idleness and lechery.

If priests married, they would be forced to support their wives and would have to work for a living. Then in simple terminology, Roy translates what Christian marriage is.

Furthermore, matrimony doth not only govern the heart or inward parts of man before God by faith but also the body outwardly by deeds. So that it requireth both faith and also works making provision both for body and for soul ordering them both well and virtuously, matrimony (I say) is of such an inclination that of the own nature it requireth labor and sweat.⁴⁴

Finally, Luther turns to divorce. He points out that although it is not lawful for divorced persons to remarry, this would certainly be better than to practice fornication. Chastity is a gift from God, and if a divorced person does not have that gift, remarriage is better than damnation.⁴⁵

This passage must have proven interesting to the English people of Henry VIII's day. Translated in 1529, the section on divorce tended to support Henry's side of the raging marital controversy. Although the king, himself, did not care for this work, the passage on divorce may have convinced

⁴³Roy, The Seventh Chapter of Corinthians.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

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Luther's tract was always treated separately from the Exhortation on the Diligent Study of Scripture. While Erasmus' treatise was never prohibited in England, Roy's translation of Luther was considered extremely dangerous by the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In the assembly of clerics called by Henry VIII in 1530, seven books were examined. One of the seven was Roy's translation of Luther.⁴⁶ Among those attending this assembly were Sir Thomas More, Archbishop Warham, Cuthbert Tunstal, Stephen Gardiner, and Hugh Latimer. These men read the works in question and picked out heretical passages which were quoted verbatim so the king would know why the books were condemned.

Roy's work was the last to be examined, but a long list of heretical passages was quoted from its text. Among the ungodly and erroneous sayings contained in a book in English inscribed 'an Exposition into the Seventh Chapter of the

⁴⁶These seven included:

The Wicked Mammon

The Obedience of a Christian Man

The Revelation of Antichrist

The Sum of Scripture

The Book of Beggars

The Prymer

An Exposition into the Seventh Chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

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⁴⁷Wilk

⁴⁸Ibid

First Epistle to the Corinthians'" was "He that is compelled outwardly to abstain from women, inwardly is full of lust."⁴⁷

Some of Roy's statements are indeed shocking: "seeing ye chose not married men to bishops either Christ must be a fool or unrighteous which so did chose or you anti-christs and deceivers," and "thou owest nothing to God, but faith and confession."⁴⁸

In June, 1529, Roy was in Antwerp overseeing the final printing of these two tracts. He could not have known that his career and life were nearing their end. He was about thirty years old, in his prime. He had defied the Church, the crown, and Cardinal Wolsey. He had returned to England a famous and hunted heretic. He had become England's most sought after fugitive. As such, he had shown a daring and dash lacking in most of his contemporary exiles. His works were well translated and well written. He was not devoid of humor or scholarly ability and had done much to instruct the English people on Reformation principles. He was to bring forth one more work which was to be widely read in England, and perhaps to produce a second work; both of these latter were appeals to the Lollards.

⁴⁷Wilkins, III, 733.

⁴⁸Ibid., 734.

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CHAPTER VI

LAST WORKS AND DEATH

1530-1531

Shortly after his return to the Continent in June, 1529 Roy disappeared. The last unimpeachable source for his whereabouts was the letter John West wrote to Wolsey on June 12. After he left England, Roy obviously went to Antwerp, where he and Barlow remained until at least the spring of 1531. For about a year and one half, Roy dwelt in the Flemish port gathering news of the beginnings of the English Reformation and working on two tracts which were to be his final works.

Although there are only the vaguest references to Roy's life after June, 1529, works by him did appear and were sent in great quantities into England. The first to be published was entitled A Proper Dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a Husbandman eche Complayninge to other their Miserable Calamity through the Ambicion of the Clergy.¹ This treatise,

¹William Roy and Jerome Barlow, A Proper Dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a Husbandman eche Complayninge to other their Miserable Calamity through the Ambicion of the Clergy (Marburg: Hans Luft, 1530).

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like Rede Me, was not Roy's alone, but was done in conjunction with his compatriot and companion, William Barlow.

The Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman has not always been credited to Roy, but there is evidence that he aided Barlow in its conception and most likely in its composition. Like Rede Me this dialogue is composed of rhymes, undoubtedly of Barlow's construction. It also deals with those things in which Barlow and Roy were most interested: the poor, the king's ability to overthrow the ecclesiastical structure, and, Roy's favorite topic, the burning of the scriptures. The style, the rhymes, and the references to the poor are obviously Barlow's; while the ideas, the references to the scripture burning and to the necessity of gaining the king's license for reform are Roy's. In short, this dialogue is a repeat performance of Rede Me, written by Roy and Barlow along similar lines. Unfortunately there are no external references to the authorship of this dialogue except Barlow's confession. In this latter document he confesses to writing the work as well as Rede Me.² However, there is no reason to suspect that Roy and Barlow did not have exactly the same relationship in writing this tract as they did in the former one.

²British Museum, Cotton MSS, Cleopatra F IV, 146.

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The tract was written in the first part of 1530, most likely in Antwerp. At this date Roy and Barlow were still together. They were soon to part; Barlow returned home penitent, while Roy journeyed to Portugal. Barlow was to return to England and obscurity, while Roy was to meet death. Barlow was to be considered a traitor to the cause and was to use his meager talents to refute the Protestants, while Roy was to die for the very cause Barlow betrayed. This, however, was in the future. During the winter of 1529-1530, the two apostates worked on the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman, in an attempt to make a further appeal to the English people.

The two heretics were extremely interested in the poor, and their writings reflect these interests. They were determined to show the people of England that the poor were being overwhelmed by the Church. In Rede Me, this interest was reflected, but in the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman the authors wanted to broaden their appeal to all classes. They attempted to show the evil power of the Church over all Englishmen. They hoped to appeal both to the lower classes and to the aristocracy, to the gentry, and the upper-class merchants in England. But even more important, the two ex-Franciscans attempted to make a direct appeal to the Lollards. The Dialogue between a Gentleman and a

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Husbandman is one of the most direct appeals to the Lollards to appear in the sixteenth century.

The work begins with a short poem entitled, "An A.B.C. to the Spirituality."³ This poem is remarkable only for the fact that each line begins with a different letter, all in alphabetical order.⁴ The authors warn the clergy that God will be avenged upon them for their idleness and evil ways. After this poem, a short untitled prologue in rhyme is included. This prologue, addressed to the Christian reader, rehearses the clergy's evils and especially denounces the rejection of the scriptures.

Scripture unto them was first proferyd
Mekely without any provocation
Which to receyue when it was offeryd
They refused with indignacion.⁵

Finally, the Christian reader is exhorted to be patient, for the time is coming when the evils of the clergy would be undone.

The main part of the work is made up of a dialogue between a gentleman and a husbandman in which they both

³In 1871 Edward Arber reprinted this dialogue along with Rede Me, the references to it will be with Arber's pagination.

⁴Roy and Barlow, Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman, 129.

⁵Ibid., 132.

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complain of the clergy. There is little that is new in much of this dialogue. It lacks the dash and the appeal of Rede Me, and much of it is a rehash of the, by-this-time-familiar, Roy and Barlow themes. The dialogue opens with a soliloquy by the gentleman on how the clergy has taken control of much of the wealth of England and driven the people into poverty, where they must die of hunger. In former times there had been plenty for all, but the Church had beggared the nation. Yet,

...whiles to complain there is no remedy
 The worlde they have brought in subjection
 Under their ambitious tyranny.
 No respecte they have to the misery ⁶
 Of us poore gentillmen that be laye.

The husbandman then joins in the dialogue agreeing with the gentleman, but pointing out that as bad as it is for the landowners, the poor people have it even worse. The gentleman asks how come this, and the poor man replies because at least the landowners gave their property away willingly. The gentleman maintains that this is not true, but that they were compelled to give up lands for fear of hell and purgatory. They had been told by the clergy that in exchange for their property, the priests would pray for their souls. All this was for nought, for:

⁶Ibid., 135.

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⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

To the soules departed it is not profitable
 For whye those that are in case dampnable
 No assistance of prayour can attayne
 And as for purgatory ther is none.⁷

The authors next refer to enclosures. As in Rede Me, this evil is blamed on the Church. The husbandman blames the clergy for making one farm out of two or even as many as six, and these new enlarged farms are leased not to poor husbandmen, but rather to gentlemen and even to rich merchants.⁸ The gentleman agrees that this is a very bad state, but excuses it by stating that since the upper classes have been robbed of their own patrimony they must do what they can to live. Roy and Barlow next refer to a theme which Roy had mentioned both in Rede Me and in the Dialogue Between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son; that is, that the clergy refuses to aid their princes or do anything for the good of the commonwealth.⁹ This charge, soon to be echoed by Henry VIII, himself, was one of Roy's favorite criticisms of the clergy.

It is this insistent complaining that fills much of the dialogue. The authors were attempting to point out that all classes in England were in a bad condition because of the clergy. While criticizing the banning of the New Testament

⁷Ibid., 136-137.

⁸Ibid., 139.

⁹Ibid., 140.

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and the idleness of the clergy, the authors do hint at a solution to the whole clerical problem. This solution, however, is not new, as it had been included in both Roy's earlier works, Rede Me and the Dialogue between a Father and his Son. This solution is to petition the king for redress.

HUSBANDMAN

The remedy that I can ymagyne
Were best that we together determyne
To get us to london inconynent
Where as it is here for a surete told
The kinge with his nobles dothe holde
A generall councell or parlament.

GENTLEMAN

What wouldest thou that we shuld do there?

HUSBANDMAN

The constraynte of oure myserye to declare
Under a meke form of lamentacion.¹⁰

The husbandman apparently believed that in this way the king and his Parliament would redress their grievances. It is ironic that Parliament would presently go a long way in creating a new church though the authors had no way of knowing this. It was this Parliament, known to history as the Reformation Parliament, which would create a national, rather than a Roman, church in England. The gentleman, however, was not at all sure that this Parliament would do anything to aid their brethren. Perhaps by 1529, Roy and Arlow had despaired of ever getting the king's license to

¹⁰ Ibid., 144.

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overthrow the church establishment. To the husbandman's suggestion, the gentleman replies:

So shuldwe be sure of soche answeres
As were made unto the poore beggars
For their pitous supplicacyon...
Wherefore against oure petition, I the tell
They wold bringe out all the devells in hell
For to do us some shameful despyte.¹¹

This is obviously Roy speaking. Barlow may have been satisfied that the king would still grant the license for reform. He even mentions this license in his dialogue against the Lutherans written after his recantation. Since the translation of the Dialogue between a Father and His Son, Roy apparently had given up the idea of ever obtaining royal aid. To outward appearances, even in 1529, Henry seemed as orthodox as ever, and even though the Reformation Parliament had met on November 3, little had been accomplished by the time of the writing of this dialogue. The Supplication of Beggars, written by Simon Fish referred to in the above quotation, had met little approval from the authorities. William Roy could not see what was to occur, and it is not unreasonable to suppose he had given up his expectation of a royal license to put away Rome and to create a truly national English church based on a union between Lollardy and Zwinglian doctrine.

¹¹Ibid.

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The gentleman was also mistrustful of Parliament because of a fact which Henry VIII was soon to discover and remedy.

Thou knowest that in the Parliament
The chefe of ye clergie are resident
In a marvelous great multitude
Whos fearce displeasure is so terrible
That I judge it were not possible
Any cause against them to conclude.¹²

He goes on to state that everyone in the realm, including the king, is afraid to speak out against the clergy, whose power was so great that they had been able to ruin kings in the past. The authors maintain that King John had tried to create a reformation by putting the clergy out of their temporalities. The clergy had retaliated by murdering the king. The gentleman's conclusion is that it is not worth while to approach this Parliament with the grievances of the nation, as the clergy have such a hold on the country that they can even undo kings, and all men quail in front of the almighty power of the church in England.

The husbandman is still not convinced. If the poor present Parliament with arguments from the New Testament, surely they would see the truth and redress their grievances. The gentleman's reply shows the bitterness in Roy's heart.

If the holy gspell allege we shulde
As stronge heretikes take us they would
Unto their churche disobedient
For why they have commaunded straytely

¹²Ibid., 145.

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That none under great payne be so hardye
 To have in englishe the testament
 Which as thou knowest at London
 The bisshop making ther a sermon
 With shamefull blasphemy was brent.¹³

Thus, to the gentleman, there is no real solution for the grievances of the people. The answer lies in the scriptures, but these are banned so that the lay people would not be able to learn of the clergy's iniquity. The treatise ends on this note of pessimism. Having been hunted by Wolsey's agents and harassed by the full power of the crown, the two ex-Franciscans thought never to see the Reformation in England. Barlow must have already been having second thoughts about Protestantism; he was probably hoping to return to England. However, spurred on by Roy, he went ahead and composed the rhymes which make up this treatise. Throughout, there is a sense of the despair felt by both authors that would cause the reader to believe there was no hope for a reformation in England. While not advocating a revolution, the authors maintain that England can never become Protestant as long as the clergy are so powerful that they can control the king. This pessimism on the very eve of the English Reformation perhaps shows less the lack of information on the part of the authors than it does

¹³Ibid., 146-147.

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The Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman is unique in sixteenth-century literature, in that it contains one of the most direct appeals to the Lollards. Roy and Barlow's earlier works were appeals to the lower classes. These works also had much that was Lollard in doctrine. However, their final collaboration was a direct, completely unveiled attempt to win the Lollards over and to convince the English nation that the "truth" had existed in England for some time, only to be found on the Continent at a later date.

This appeal to the Lollards begins, not with Richard Hunne as it did in Rede Me, but with the great lay hero of the sect, Sir John Oldcastle.

Dyd not they so long strive and wrastle
Against the good knight syr Jhon oldecastle
Otherwise called Lorde of Cobham
That from hyghe heresye unto treasone¹⁴
They brought him to fynall destructon.

Following this the authors included a brief history of Lollardy.

In kynge Henryes dayes of that name ye fift
The clergye their pride above to lyft
Persecuted Christian brothers haynously
The gospel of Christ a syde to cast
Which at that tyme prospered fast

¹⁴Ibid., 145-146.

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 Every where they threwe theym in presones....
 Their furious malice never stentyd
 Tyll they had the light oute quenched
 Of gospell and Holy Scripture.¹⁵

The gentleman warns that in those days after the clergy had done this terrible deed, God visited his wrath upon England. Plagues and war occurred. France was lost, and civil war ensued in England--all because the gospel had been burned and true Christian men persecuted. The gentleman concludes that he hopes such a fate will not recur in England because of the clergy's actions; but God always punishes those nations which resist his word.¹⁶

The gentleman mentions to the husbandman that the clergy warn the common people to beware of the Lutheran heresy because it is a "new fangled" sect, and that until recently no one had presumed to hate the clergy or even begrudge their possessions. The husbandman retorts, "that is a starck lie." He maintains that he knows of a treatise which is over one hundred years old in which the author speaks against possessioners and clerical lordships and that the Lutheran deas are not a new heresy.¹⁷ Following this statement, a collard treatise is included. The charge that Protestantism

¹⁵ Ibid., 147.

¹⁶ Ibid., 148.

¹⁷ Ibid., 149.

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was something new was very hard for the reformers to disavow. Fortunately for their cause, the English Protestants could refer their critics to the Wycliffe heresy of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the sixteenth century, the medieval idea of the unworthiness of new ideas remained strong. The Protestants were always very eager to refute this charge, and, naturally, men like Roy and later John Foxe, would turn to the Lollards for support, just as Luther's followers often cited Hus as a precursor of their actions.

The Lollards in England, by this time beginning to merge with Continental Protestantism, being led in that direction by men such as Roy and Barlow, were certainly appreciative of the credit given them by the exiled Protestants. The dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman became very popular in England, largely because in it the old and the new heresies were for the first time united in print. What Instal had feared, that is, new arms being supplied to the old heresy, had come to pass. In all their works, but especially in this one, Roy and Barlow created the illusion that the two heretical groups were one. It is works such as this which provide the link between the two groups. The Lollards read or heard this treatise read, and they became convinced that at least Zwinglianism and Lollardy were not far apart. From this union, on a lower-class level, a new Protestantism was formed, one which took elements from both

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the Lollard heresy and the Continental Reformation. This new Protestantism was Continental in much of its doctrine but retained a distinctive English Lollard glow. Its adherents were to grow and become very strong. They worked outside both the Roman and the English Churches. With Roy and Barlow in the vanguard, this mixture of Lollardy and Continental Zwinglianism, and later Calvinism, was to become English Nonconformism.

Roy and Barlow actually included two Lollard tracts in this dialogue, one in the body of the text and the other as an appendix. The first was meant to be proof that the criticism against the clergy was no new thing, and that in England this criticism had existed for almost a hundred years. The first Lollard tract cannot with certainty be identified as such because the original has not survived. However, there is no reason to believe that it was not as bold as the authors state. It is a very short diatribe using scripture to prove that Christ never meant his ministers to be great landowners and amassers of wealth, but rather to be poor and to live like the lilies of the field.¹⁸ God ordained common men to have all the land and they should provide for the clergy. But the present clergy seize lordships, while the people and lay lords are driven to

¹⁸Ibid., 157.

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poverty.¹⁹ The author even advocates that the nobles of England should retake their lost lands by force.²⁰ All this included as proof that Roy and Barlow's arguments were old and not new.

The Lollard author of this text then turns to a subject, which Roy and Barlow held very dear; the evil of employing clergymen in secular positions. Even though Cardinal Wolsey was not mentioned in this tract and though the news of his fall had reached Antwerp, the two authors obviously include this passage as a warning to the king not to appoint another cleric in a high secular position. It would be precarious to suppose that Henry VIII was influenced by this tract when he appointed Sir Thomas More Lord Chancellor in 1500. The importance of this passage in the dialogue is that the king acted upon it, but rather that some men in England saw the practice of appointing clerical Lord Chancellors to be a great evil. The fact which the Lollard author and, in turn, Roy and Barlow sought to emphasize was that no man can serve two masters at once, or as the author says it, "men may se how perelous it is to ye kyng and secular lordes to withholde any prieste of Christ in secular offices." For a priest by his order becomes the servant of God and anyone:

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 160.

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...that taketh a prieste and putteth him in his secular office breakinge the heest of his lorde god that commaundeth thou shalt coveyt none other mannes servaunte and he withdraweth hym fro the servys of god and fro the kepinge of Christen mennes soules....This parelous doyinge of secular lordes is both against goddes lawe and mannes.²¹

What Roy and Barlow sought to do in this passage was criticize the practice whereby men like Wolsey could obtain in their own hands a tremendous amount of both lay and ecclesiastical power. At his height the Cardinal had been the most powerful man in the realm. He wielded not only supreme ecclesiastical power through his position as legate apostolic and Archbishop of York but also almost supreme secular power in his role as Lord Chancellor.

Roy and Barlow, who never envisioned Henry VIII himself taking on similar powers in the 1530s, only sought to free the realm of such men as Wolsey. What Roy and Barlow envisioned was a pastoral church free from hierarchical control, a church in which each minister would be a true shepherd and a true minister to his people. In this church the people would have a large part in church government and worship. The two ex-Franciscans hoped for a church free of papal and royal control, an autonomous body which owed allegiance to the crown but was not controlled by it.

²¹Ibid., 162-163.

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The second Lollard tract included in the Dialogue Between a Gentleman and a Husbandman was obviously put there by Roy. In both Rede Me and the Father and Son, Roy had stressed the reading of the scriptures in English. He had translated Erasmus' exhortation on the vernacular scriptures and had included references to the necessity of a Bible in English in Luther's dialogue on marriage. Since a further exhortation on this topic did not fit well into the body of the Dialogue Between a Gentleman and a Husbandman, Roy added it as an appendix. Again in an attempt to counter the charge that the demand for vernacular scriptures was a new invention, Roy used this Lollard tract as an illustration that the longing for an English Bible was not a sixteenth-century novelty.

Fortunately, this second Lollard tract has been tentatively identified as having been a tract written by John Purvey around 1431.²² Purvey was a Lollard who had been responsible for revising and making readable the Wycliffe translation of the Bible.²³ It would be very much

²² Margaret Aston, "Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Renewal," *History*, XLIX (1964), 153. Although Aston assigns this work to Purvey, there is a reference in the tract to the death of Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln who died in 1431. The DNB lists Purvey's death around 1427, but he could have lived into the early 1430s and written this work before his death.

²³ DNB, XLVII, 52.

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like William Roy to search out a tract by one of the original translators of the English Bible and include it as an exhortation for the vernacular scripture. Roy never forgot his own role in Tyndale's translation and perhaps even viewed himself as a second John Purvey.

Roy called this tract A Compendious olde Treatyse Shewynge howe that we ought to have the Scripture in Englysshe.²⁴ He had Barlow write a small rhyme in which the treatise's age and language is excused. Roy then wrote a brief prologue. In 1528, Sir Thomas More wrote that biblical translations had never been banned in England.²⁵ Roy, who had obviously read More's work, hoped to disprove his contention by issuing this treatise. In the prologue Roy writes:

I have here put in prynte a tretyse written
about ye yere of our lorde a thousand four
hundryd by which thou shalte playnely perceyve yat
they wolde yet never from the begynnyge admytte
any translacion to ye laye people so yat it is
not ye corrupte translacion yat they withstonde.²⁶

There is no doubt that Roy wrote the prologue and edited this treatise. He begins his prologue in the same way he began the Dialogue Between a Father and His Son, with a

²⁴ A Compendious olde Treatyse Shewynge howe that we ought to have the Scripture in Englysshe (Marburg: Hans

²⁵ See pages 76-78 above for a discussion of More's views.

²⁶ A Compendious olde Treatyse, 171.

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short benediction beginning "Grace and peace....be with the
 and all that thurst ye truth."²⁷ He then turns, as he did
 in the prologue to the Dialogue Between a Father and His Son,
 to those who criticize Tyndale's New Testament as being
 corrupt. He ends the prologue with a prayer that the people
 will be sent rulers who shall understand the truth. Here
 again is a note of despair which the gentleman reflects with-
 in the dialogue. Roy apparently had ceased to believe that
 Henry VIII would ever be swayed to accept the "truth."

The treatise itself is very short and deals with what
 meant to be proof that the scriptures should be in
 English. It is as violently anti-clerical as Rede Me and
 echoes some of the sentiment of Roy and Barlow's diatribe.
 "For as they dampned Christ so now oure bisshopes dampne
 the brene goddes lawe for bycause it is drawn into our
 her tongue."²⁸ With statements such as this, it is no
 wonder Roy was attracted to it. The author, using old
 church fathers and the Bible, gives a rather scholarly case
 in defense of the English scriptures. In many ways, this
 treatise equals and perhaps surpasses that of Erasmus which
 was translated in 1529. The author even points out that the

²⁷ Ibid., 170.

²⁸ Ibid., 172.

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enerable] Bede ledde by the spirit of god translated a
 eat parte of the bible into Englishe whose originalle
 in many abbeyes in England."²⁹ He also recounts that the
 Englishmen who translated parts of the Bible in the past were
 vinced that the scriptures should be in the vernacular.
 er all this, however, the bishops pronounced against the
 nslations of scripture abusing, burning, and destroying
 m.

The author then pleads that the king should devise some
 edy for this.³⁰ This appeal echoed Roy's own sentiments.
 luded within this tract were all the ideas he had been
 ousing since he left Tyndale in 1526. He had probably
 covered this work during his visit to London in 1528-
 9 and must have been pleasantly surprised to find an old
 ct which corroborated his own beliefs so well. By pub-
 ing this tract, he could claim ancient authority for his
 ments. Also, he could use it as an argument that Conti-
 al Protestantism was merely an echo of Lollard teachings.
 his treatise, Roy felt that he had found the final proof
 Lollardy and Protestantism were linked.

²⁹ Ibid., 175.

³⁰ Ibid., 179.

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With the publication of the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman, Roy's career was almost at an end. He was only to publish one more work, though this can only tentatively be assigned to him. In the fourteenth century, William Langland wrote a classic of English literature entitled The Vision Concerning Piers Plowman. Immensely popular in later medieval England, this work with its criticism of the clergy gained new import in the early sixteenth century. It was reprinted at least twice during the next fifty years of that century, and various imitations designed to Langland's time, if not his pen, were published throughout the early Reformation period. These imitations usually took the form of bitter social protests against the church.³¹ They were used by Protestants to appeal to the poorer classes.

One of these imitations has been attributed to William Playne. There is a tract in the British Museum the title of which reads I Playne Piers.³² It has long been believed,

³¹Helen C. White, Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1944), 31.

³²I Playne Piers, Pollard and Redgrave in their Short English Catalogue, list the publishing date of this work as

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albeit never conclusively proven, that Roy wrote this tract.³³ On first glance, it would seem that the attribution of this tract to Roy's pen is the correct one. All the themes usually expressed in his writings are included in this work. There are complaints against the banning and burning of the English New Testament. There are allusions to the author having been in a monastery.³⁴ In 1590, part of this tract was adapted, edited, and rewritten under the title Oh Read Me for I am of Great Antiquity, I Plain Piers which cannot flatter, a Plowman Men me Call.³⁵ This later edition was designed to be a part of the famous Martin Armory's tract, and as such it would have added a great deal of prestige to William Roy's name if he had written the original.

Roy, however, did not write this tract. There are ample references within the document which prove that while it was written in Henry VIII's reign, it was written much too late to have been Roy's work. The closest date which can be fixed to this tract is 1546. The author writes, "What

³³ DNB, XLIX, 371.

³⁴ I Playne Piers, Div and Av.

³⁵ Oh Read Me for I am of Great Antiquity, I Plain Piers which cannot flatter, a Plowman Men me Call (London: No. 1590).

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ve you won this XX years by burning the word of God and
 e maintainers thereof?"³⁶ Since 1526 was the date the New
 testament was first burnt in England, the date twenty years
 nce would have been 1546. William Roy died in 1531, before
 e Henrican Reformation really began. Any references in the
 act to dates after 1531 would, of course, indicate another
 thor. Such references abound. There are allusions to
 ndale's death and Coverdale's banishment.³⁷ There are
 so ample references to events of the late 1530s and early
 rties: "And this is well perceived when at one Parliament
 have, but III sacraments and in another we have VII."³⁸
 is is a reference to the Ten Articles of 1536 which only
 tioned three sacraments and to the Six Articles of 1539
 ch reinstated seven sacraments. There is also a reference
 the King's Book of 1543. "My Lord Bishop we will send to
 ry creature a little book much better for them then [sic]
 gospel.... Wherein they shall be taught to believe of
 our works, our sayings, our VI articles, and this is
 d enough for poor knaves."³⁹

³⁶I Playne Piers, Bi.

³⁷Ibid., Eii.

³⁸Ibid., Cii.

³⁹Ibid.

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The real author of the tract will probably never be known, but it can be concluded that it was definitely not William Roy. It appears to have been an early Nonconformist tract written perhaps by a disgruntled ex-Lollard, who had come to realize that the Church of England did not materialize in the form for which his group had hoped.

There is, however, another tract in the Piers tradition which may have been published by Roy. This work is entitled The Prayer and Complaint of the Plowman unto Christ, Written not long after the Year of our Lord a Thousand and Three hundred. In the first place, although printed in Antwerp in 1531, this work is not a composition of that year but is a republication of a Lollard tract. This would put it in the same category as Roy's A Compendious olde Treatyse. Secondly, there is, in this tract, a prologue which is similar to the one Roy wrote for the Dialogue between a Father and His Son. In this prologue, like that of the Dialogue between a Father and His Son, the author mentions the banning of Tyndale's New Testament. Like the Lollard treatises in the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman the author in this treatise states it is published to

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confound those who say the Reformation is new learning.⁴⁰

This prologue also reiterates the promise made by Roy in Rede Me. In the Prayer and Complaint, the author writes: "and hereafter there shall chance to come into my hands anymore such holy reliques perceiving this to be accepted, shall spare neither labor nor cost to distribute it."⁴¹ In Rede Me Roy wrote:

Wherefore dere brother if eny mo soche smale stickes come unto youre hondes which ye shall judge apte unto the aumtentacion of this fyre, send them unto me... and by goddes grace with all my power and possibilitie I shall so endeavor my sylfe to kyndle them.⁴²

The similarity of these two promises seem to indicate the same author for both.

In all of Roy's works, he made a plea for the secular rulers to conduct a reform of the Church. This Lollard

⁴⁰ William Roy? The Prayer and Complaint of the Plowman unto Christ, Written not long after the Year of our Lord a thousand and Three Hundred (Antwerp: No Publisher, 1531), ii. The full quotation is "The scribes, the pharisees, the shops, the priests, the lawyers, and the elders of the people cried always: 'What new learning is this, These fel-
lows teach new learning there be they that trouble the whole world with their new learning'....Even now after the same manner..., our holy bishops...be of the same sort...they
fame, slander, and persecute the same word and preachers
and followers of it with the selfsame names, calling it new
learning."

⁴¹ Ibid., Aiv.

⁴² Rede Me, 25.

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idea is also present in the Prayer and Complaint.

And lord give our king and his lords heart to
defend thy true shepards and thy sheep from
out of the wolves mouths and grace to know
them that art of the true Christ...from the
anti-Christ that is the son of pride.⁴³

The writer of the prologue next places the date of his writing in Roy's lifetime. Like the prologue to the Dialogue Between a Father and His Son, the prologue to the Prayer and Complaint was dated by its author. The date is "the last day of February, 1531;" thus Roy could have written it before his death, later that year. While the proof for Roy's authorship remains inconclusive, it must be stated that it is much more likely that he published this tract than I Playne Piers.

The tract itself, probably written about the middle of the fifteenth century, is a catechism of Lollard beliefs. Roy hoped that it would give the English people an English reformation doctrine. By publishing the Dialogue between a Father and His Son, which was filled with Protestant Zwinglian doctrine, and this dialogue, Roy showed very clearly the similarities between the two heresies. After referring to the pope as the Anti-Christ, the author attacks penance, showing that the Lord never taught his disciples to hear

⁴³ Roy?, The Prayer and Complaint, Fviii.

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confession and impose penance.⁴⁴ He next turns to the Eucharist and, in Lollard terms, repeats what Roy had translated in the Dialogue between a Father and His Son, "And lord thine disciples neither ordained nor priests principal to make thy body in sacrament, but for to teach the people."⁴⁵ Then pursuing a theme which was to recur in modern times the author states, "And truly lord I know if thou were now in the world and taught as thou didst some time, thou should be done to death, for thy teaching is damned for heresy."⁴⁶

Again echoing the Dialogue between a Father and His Son, the Lollard author criticizes the building of churches. "And Lord God what hearing is it to build thee a church of ad stone and rob thy quick church of her bodily livlihood." Furthermore, "men maketh now great stone houses full of glass windows....and they set in these houses mawmetes of sticks and of stones and to fore them they kneel."⁴⁷ Not only is this an echo of the father speaking in Roy's earlier dialogue, but many of the same words such as "mawmetes of sticks and stones" are repeated in both works. All the

⁴⁴Ibid., Bv.

⁴⁵Ibid., Ci.

⁴⁶Ibid., Ciii.

⁴⁷Ibid.

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ces of the Church are listed, and all the evils perpetuated that body on poor men are blamed on one thing. "And lord
 1 this mischief is come among thy people for that they
 ow not thy word." This passage certainly would have
 pealed to Roy. Concurring entirely with this view, the
 -Franciscan must have relished this tract. Here was proof
 at the Protestant heresy with its demand for a vernacular
 ripture was not new. Here was proof that what the Lollards
 l so tenaciously clung to for so many years was the same
 that which the Protestants were preaching.

In works such as this and the Dialogue between a Father
 His Son, William Roy sought to provide a link between
 two heresies. Men who read these two dialogues would
 the similarities, and those who held Lollard beliefs
 ld be completely won over to the more recent revolt.
 hoped that by providing these treatises in English, the
 ards would read and believe that the time for the true
 ch had come. They would lose their insular view of
 selves as poor men buffeted by the authorities and come
 ealize that they were part of a larger, stronger,
 estant upheaval and that they would no longer refer to
 selves as Lollards, but as Protestant Englishmen
 ging to the great and "true" church and as members of
 s chosen saints." Roy hoped that by linking the Lol-
 with the Continental Protestants in this way, the

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Roman Catholic Church in England would crumble from below. He little expected that when the Reformation came to England it would be under far different circumstances, and that the very people to whom he appealed would reject the Church of England and form their own small groups, hunted and harassed by that church which the crown would institute.

This work, published in March 1531, was Roy's last literary endeavor. Although his works continued to be banned, his name ceased being mentioned in the sources. There are only a few rumors about him until his death was more or less confirmed in November 1531. Although it was reported in more than one work, there is in fact only one source for his death. John Fox writes,

In this year also [1531] as we do understand by divers notes of old registers and otherwise, friar Roy was burned in Portugal, but what his examination, or articles, or order of his death we can have no understanding: but what his doctrine was, it may be easily judged by the testimonies which he left here in England.⁴⁸

at these "divers notes of old registers" were are unknown. Roy's death was reported in these documents, they have since disappeared. It is most likely that Foxe got his story from these old registers but rather from Sir Thomas More. He probably did not wish to give credit for this information

⁴⁸ Foxe, IV, 696.

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a notorious papist. Sir Thomas More in his Confutation Tyndale makes the following statement:

Friar Roy...has since sought many a false unlawful way to live by wherein he made so many changes that as Bayfield, another heretic and late burned in Smithfield told unto me [Roy] made a meet end at last and was burned in Portugal.⁴⁹

More identifies the real source for Roy's death in Richard Bayfield. Bayfield had been a monk of the Benedictine monastery at Bury St. Edmunds, who had been converted to Protestantism at an early date. He had been active in the importation of heretical books and had sold English New Testaments in London. In midsummer and again in November, 1520, he brought many Protestant books into England. The books he brought in November were seized. Among these books was the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman.⁵⁰ Although the books had been seized, Bayfield escaped and went on to import more books in 1531. Easter of that year saw him bringing books from Norfolk into London. Finally in November he was arrested.⁵¹ He was tried as a heretic, at which time he admitted having read the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman, and was sentenced to death.⁵²

⁴⁹ More, The Confutation of Tyndale, preface.

⁵⁰ Foxe, IV, 696.

⁵¹ Rede Me, Arber's preface, 14.

⁵² Foxe, IV, 685.

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During his questioning, More queried him as to Roy's whereabouts. It was on this query that Bayfield confessed Roy had been captured and burnt in Portugal.

There is no real reason to doubt More's statement or for that matter Bayfield's. Bayfield had nothing to gain by telling More lies about William Roy, who had certainly disappeared. The question does not concern the veracity of Bayfield's story, but what Roy, a Protestant, was doing in Portugal in the summer of 1530. Portugal was never a particularly healthy place for Protestants. By 1531, there were many havens of refuge for Protestants on the Continent. Much of Germany, Scandinavia, Switzerland, and the Netherlands were Protestant or at least areas where Protestants could reside in safety. However, there were also areas where no Protestant dared to enter. Italy, much of France, Spain, and Portugal were areas firmly in the Catholic camp.

Even though this is true, William Roy apparently did go to Portugal sometime after the last day of February and before November, 1531. The reasons for this trip are inexplicable. There is, perhaps, a hint in Barlow's later dialogue. Roy and Barlow were together when the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman was produced in 1530. There is no reason to believe that they were not together as late as 1531. Barlow's dialogue against the Lutherans was printed in England July 31, 1531, while Roy's final work

was written on February 28, 1531. During the five months between these two tracts, the two ex-Franciscans may have undertaken a trip even more fantastic than their visit to London. In Barlow's dialogue against Lutherans, he is asked if he was not recently in Rome. Barlow answers yes, but he only "tarried a little while there."⁵³ It is certainly possible that Roy and Barlow, again donning their clerical garb, journeyed to Rome for a quick visit in the winter or early spring of 1531. After their visit, the two apostates split up; Barlow returned home, while Roy decided to visit other areas.

The English heretic may have had family in Portugal which he wanted to visit. The name Roy was found all over Europe, and if not found in Portugal, it was certainly found in Spain. In 1562, John Roy "Spanish subject" was granted denization in England.⁵⁴ While it is impossible to prove that this man was of the same family as the reformer it does

⁵³William Barlow, Dialogue against Lutheran Factions, p. 1. One of the unsolved mysteries about Barlow is while his dialogue against Lutherans was published in 1531, his apology and recantation were not sent to Henry until 1533. It is possible that he remained on the Continent between 1531-1533, hoping for a pardon and was forced to issue the 1533 apology in order to gain the king's pardon and permission to re-enter the kingdom.

⁵⁴Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of the Patent Rolls, Elizabeth, II (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948), 146.



show that there were Roys living in Spain. Perhaps William Roy visited his relatives in Spain, and then made his way through Portugal to the coast to take a ship back to Antwerp, and was apprehended while waiting for this ship. Exactly why Roy was in Portugal will probably remain a mystery, but there is no reason to doubt that he met his end there; a martyr to all in which he believed.

Thus, William Roy's death is almost as mysterious as his birth. Although perhaps a braggart and certainly a proud man he held constant to his beliefs until the end. His career as an active reformer was extremely short, but in those years between 1525 and 1531, he was among the most active of the English exiles. In six years he translated, co-authored, and edited six books which added greatly to the number of Protestant works in English. His life was active, often exciting, and very full. He was for a time the most hunted of all the English exiles, and he was the second man to flee England for his Protestant views. It is true that he was neither a great theologian nor a leader of the Reformation, but as M. M. Knappen wrote of him:

If the assistant [Tyndale's] lacked the learning and patience of his colleague, he was not behind him in courage and deserves to be remembered as one who early put his hand to the plow and never looked back.⁵⁵

⁵⁵Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, 20.

CONCLUSION

William Roy died as he had lived, maintaining his beliefs and espousing a Protestant doctrine to the very end. He was an extremely interesting individual; on one hand, very proud of his linguistic ability, while on the other, very humble about his role as a reformer. He was neither a great theologian nor an original thinker, but he was a skillful translator who early realized the need for an English Protestant ideology. He was never the leader of the Protestant exiles or did he claim to be, but he was extremely active in publishing and promoting Protestant doctrine. He certainly had not the mind of a Luther or Tyndale, but he excelled at making reformation doctrine palatable to the great mass of common people. If he can be accused of publishing scurrilous essays, he can also be commended for his carefully translated doctrinal statements. Looking at his life as a whole, it is possible to view him somewhat as an enigma. He was daring and resourceful, yet boastful and proud. Above all, he was convinced of the truth of Protestantism, a belief from which he refused to swerve.



He was also extremely eclectic. Discovering at an early date the inherent differences between Lutheranism and Zwinglianism, the Franciscan apostate adopted what might be considered the best of each, adding to this Continental Protestantism much that was Lollard in origin. From Luther he adopted a strong belief in justification by faith alone. From Zwingli came the idea of the elect, and from a combination of Zwinglianism and Lollardy, he adopted a view of the Eucharist which would not admit to the corporal presence of Christ. In much of his anti-clerical writings, Roy makes statements which are little more than amplifications of parts of the twelve articles submitted to Parliament by the Lollards in 1395.¹ These statements criticized the Church's possessions, the Roman priesthood, celibacy, the orthodox position on the Eucharist, clerics serving in secular capacities, prayers for the dead, pilgrimages, and auricular confession. Of the twelve articles, the eight above are mentioned over and over in Roy's writings. While perhaps all of these are also criticisms which emanated from the Continent, Roy sometimes was so eager to stress them that he neglected the more detailed Protestant doctrine. He was very much aware of the Lollard criticisms and employed them in his writings.

¹See Chapter I, 10-11 above.



Stemming, perhaps, from his own role in the Tyndale translation, Roy's shock at the prohibition of the New Testament and his demand that it be read by all men certainly was the motivating force behind his work. While accepting most Protestant and Lollard doctrines, his main concern was with the Bible. Between 1525-1531 he wrote and translated six Protestant tracts. In all of them, he mentions either anger at the scripture being burnt or the need for the Bible to be read by all men. Even though other exiled Protestant Englishmen mention and condemn the banning of the New Testament, none, not even Tyndale himself, made it a constant theme of his works. Only Roy felt so appalled over what he thought to be sacrilege that he continued to belabor it for six years. Even in this emphasis, perhaps Roy was attempting to sway moderate Englishmen into Reformation beliefs.

G. Rupp points out that the effect of burning the New Testament "shocked circles by no means avid of the new opinions."² This being the case, Roy sought to add fuel to the fire in order to keep these moderates angry over what they considered to be blasphemy.

Besides his stress on the vernacular Bible, Roy had other goals which he hoped to impart to the English people. He realized that if their ruler was to be convinced of the

²Rupp, 48.



eed for reform, this convincing had to come through pressure from below. It is evident from his writings that one of his major aims was to use simply written tracts to convince those Englishmen of the lower and middle classes that a Protestant reformation, enforced, but not necessarily controlled, by the crown, was necessary. This drive to convert the lower classes took two forms. On one hand, it was an appeal to all the lower classes; and on the other, it was an appeal to certain heretical segment of these classes, the Lollards.

Roy was of the people, and he sought their aid in the reformation. He felt that the Church had such a hold on England that it was not only strangling the country, but also that it could never be changed from within. While the crown had enough power to undertake this task, only the people could convince the crown of the necessity. The people, however, were uneducated; many were illiterate and unable to comprehend the theological discussions emanating from the continent. There were many good Protestant works being written during the early years of the Reformation. Most of them, however, were written either in German or in Latin. Educated Englishmen could read these works in their original languages, but the lower classes were devoid of any instructional material. Besides a few Lollard tracts of ancient vintage, there were no Protestant or heretical documents in English. Roy, fully aware of this, sought to rectify the situation.

aiding Tyndale, who certainly agreed with him on this, the Franciscan helped in providing the first real English-Protestant statement. However, even an excellent translation like Tyndale's retained hard-to-understand passages and difficult statements. Roy, while hoping to put the Bible in every man's hands, felt that certain aids could be provided which would enable the English people to swing toward Protestantism. His writings and translations were attempts to create these aids.

In other words Roy was a popularizer. He sought to read the good news of the Reformation to the English people. Tyndale's and Roy's New Testament and Roy's publications sought to make every Englishman aware of what was occurring on the Continent and of what Continental Protestants believed. Roy, by creating these simple statements of faith, sought to convert and to unify Protestants in England. Perhaps the success of his and other reformer's labors can best be seen in the ease with which the country accepted Henry VIII's revolution.

If Roy and men like him were seeking to form a broad Protestant base, they certainly succeeded, for by the end of Edward VI's reign in 1553, some form of Protestantism had come to England to stay. It is no mere coincidence that most of the people who met death under the Marian persecution were from the lower classes. Roy and his companions had done their

work well. Although there were others who sought to convert the lower classes, Roy must be considered the originator of the idea of using Continental Protestant doctrine to convert the people at home.

When Roy left London in 1525, there was already a group of lower-class heretics in the city. While it is impossible to discover if Roy or any of his family were members of this group, it is known that he was interested in forming some sort of an alliance between the Lollards and the Continental Protestants. He was the first to see that there was a natural union between the two groups, which, if exploited, would give the Lollards new strength and would create for the Continental Protestants an English-based group ready to accept their doctrines.

Even though the Lollards were quite naturally very interested in the Continental Reformation and were the most avid readers of the Tyndale translation, they did not immediately join the ranks of the reformers. Throughout the heresy proceedings of the early 1520s, the Lollards were not charged with the new Lutheran ideas such as justification by faith, but with the old Lollard tenets. It is only in the late twenties and early thirties that Lollardy really began to merge with Protestantism.³

³Dickens, The English Reformation, 29.



However, when foreign Protestant elements began to merge with Lollardy, it was not Lutheran elements which were incorporated. While it is for the most part impossible to discern which elements of Protestantism the later Lollards adopted, there is one element which shows that Lutheran doctrine was little regarded by the English heretics. That element was the Lollard position on the Eucharist. This became the main line of contention halting a union between the Lutherans and Zwinglians. The Zwinglian position of a spiritual presence of Christ in communion was more readily acceptable to the English Lollards than were Luther's vagaries. By 1500, most Lollards believed that a "sacrament is no more to say, but a sign or remainder of a thing passed [sic] or a thing come."⁴ Zwingli's view on the sacraments was almost the same as that of the Lollards. Throughout its later history this group did not change its views on the sacrament, and when the Lollards had been completely submerged into Protestantism they retained this view of the Eucharist.

Thus, if a reformer was searching for a doctrine which would incorporate all the Lollard doctrines, he would naturally turn away from Luther to Zwingli. This is exactly what Roy did. He was the first to see that to provide the Lollards with a Protestant doctrine which would most appeal

⁴ Stacy, 142.



to them, he would have to abandon Lutheranism and espouse Zwingli's doctrine. As William Clebsch points out the Dialogue between a Father and His Son is an "interpretation of New Testament religion after the fashion of Zwingli and his exaggerators."⁵ This dialogue takes a Zwinglian stance on such matters as the Eucharist and baptism, as it maintains that both sacraments provide spiritual, rather than physical, benefits.

In his last two works, Roy even emphasized his affinity with Lollardy to a greater extent than he did in the Dialogue between a Father and His Son. The inclusion of two Lollard treatises in the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman and the publication of a Lollard tract in 1531, were definite attempts to appeal to the Lollards. Roy, more than ever, after his visit to London in 1528-1529, realized the need to create a broad base of Protestantism within England. He could not foresee what Henry VIII's actions would be in the 1530s. Roy's later writings show some despair over the crown ever taking the initiative for the Reformation. By providing Lollard tracts in his last two publications, Roy obviously felt that he was not only arming the Continental

⁵Clebsch, England's Earliest Protestants, 233.

doctrines with an ancient pedigree, but that he was also tying the two heresies together.

Bishop Burnet, who certainly understood the worth of men like Roy, sums up the reasons for this great appeal to the Lollards in the following way:

As these things did spread much in Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, so their books came over into England, where there was much matter already prepared to be wrought on, not only by the prejudices they had conceived against the corrupt clergy, but by the opinions of the Lollards which had been now in England since the days of Wycliffe for about one hundred and fifty years: between which opinions, and the doctrines of the reformers there was great affinity; and therefore to give the better vent to the books that came out of Germany many of them were translated into the English tongue and were very much read and applauded.⁶

Burnet hints at what Roy endeavored. The apostate hoped to use his translations to build a strong appeal to the English Lollards.

A list of Roy's accomplishments would include the fact that he was the first to see the need for an English Protestant statement of doctrine. He was the first Englishman to translate a complete treatise by Luther. He was the first Englishman to embrace and advocate Zwinglianism. He was the first to realize the worth of Lollardy to the reform

⁶ Gilbert Burnet, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England, I (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1865), 67-68.

vement; and the first who saw the need to convert the English commonalty to Protestantism. In six years, he not only translated and co-authored six treatises, but he also provided valuable aid to William Tyndale in his translation of the New Testament. Roy's worth to the Reformation was certainly acknowledged by his compatriots in England, both enemies and friends of the new doctrines. He was, above all, a steadfast and loyal follower of those doctrines which were known as Protestantism. He shared all the risks of persecuted English heretics; he bore the heat and burden of the day in providing readable tracts on Reformation doctrine; and he faced the scorn, ridicule, and pursuit of the whole English hierarchy.⁷

⁷M. M. Knappen, "William Tyndale--First English Puritan," Church History, V (1936), 207.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

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I

PRIMARY SOURCES

The bulk of the primary sources dealing with Roy's life and his thought are found in the British Museum. In addition to my work in this famous center of research scholarship, in the Public Record Office, and in the London Guildhall Library, further research of various other depositories of early sixteenth-century source materials, such as Lambeth Palace Library and the Cambridge University Archives, yielded little or nothing. There are, however, in the British Museum a great number of manuscript sources which bear upon William Roy.

Unfortunately, a careful combing of the primary source materials yielded little on Roy's birth. However, I discovered much on his family. Among the manuscript sources which shed some light on this rather complex problem are the Early Chancery Proceedings, Public Record Office, which contain the application of William Roy, merchant, for a writ against the Sheriff of York. There are Roys listed in A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds in the Public Record

Office, Vol. III (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1900). W. P. Phillimore (ed.), Calendars of Wills and Administrations in the Consistory Court of Lichfield and Coventry, 1516-1652 (London: British Record Society, 1892) lists the will of William Roy of Brabant, while the Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Elizabeth, Vol. II: 1560-1563 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948) and the Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry VII, Vol. II: 1494-1509 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1916) list members of the Roy family who lived in London in the sixteenth century. John Roy, Henry VII's gentleman usher, is mentioned in Additional MSS 21,481, British Museum, while his death is recorded in Chancery Inquisitions, Sixteenth Henry VIII, Public Record Office MSS. William Page (ed.), Letters of Denization and Acts of Naturalization for Aliens in England, 1509-1603 (London: Huguenot Society of London, 1893) lists the William Roy who became a citizen in 1512. J. Challener and C. Smith (eds.), Index of Wills Proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Wills: 1383-1558 (London: British Record Society, 1893) list the will of William Roy, beer brewer, of London. This will is in the Probate Registry, Somerset House. It is most important for it proves that the man often considered to be Roy's father, that is, William Roy of Aldgate and St. Katharine's nigh the Tower, was not

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fact the reformer's father. Miscellaneous Letters of the
ign of Henry VIII in the Public Record Office; the Calen-
er of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office,
ward VI, Vol. IV: 1550-1553 (London: His Majesty's
 Stationery Office, 1916); and the Church Warden's Accounts
for St. Margaret's Parish, Westminster, all list various
 persons who could be members of the reformer's family. It is
 in MS. Cotton MSS, Caligula D IV, in the British Museum, which
 mentions Pety Roy; while Roy, himself, alludes to his father
 in: Adolf Wolf (ed.), "William Roy's Dialogue Between a
 Christian Father and His Stubborn Son," Akademie der Wis-
enschaften, Vienna. Philosophische-hist. Klasse,
Zeitungsbberichte, Vol. LXXXVI (Vienna: 1871). Finally, the
 reformer's father is definitely proven to be Pety Roy in
 "Personen te Antwerpen in de XVI eeuw., voor het 'feit van
 Religie' gerechtelijk vervolged--lijst en Ambtelijke bij-
 behorende stukken," Antwerpsch Archievenblad, Vol. VII (Ant-
 werp: Drukkerij Guil. Van Merlin, undated). It is unfor-
 tunate that this source is in extremely difficult sixteenth-
 century Flemish for it contains the trial proceedings of
 Pieter Harmen before the Antwerp authorities in 1529.

The sources for Roy's life in the monastery are found
 in manuscripts. London Episcopal Registers: Fitzjames, 1506-
 1529, manuscripts belonging to the Guildhall Library, London,



deal with Roy as a resident at the Greenwich monastery during 1516-1518 and his ordination as Acolyte, Exorcist, Subdeacon, and Deacon during those three years. Other sources for the Franciscans in England are Harleian MSS 7048 in the British Museum; and J. S. Brewer (ed.), Monumenta Franciscana, Vol. I (London: Longmans, Brown, Green, and Roberts, 1858). John Gough Nichols (ed.), Chronicle of the Grey Friars of London (London: Printed for the Camden Society, 1852) deals with the visitation of the Greenwich monastery in 1524 at which time Roy was evidently recalled there from Cambridge. His fellow monks at Greenwich are mentioned in Cotton MSS, Vitellius B X, in the British Museum.

Humanistic studies at Cambridge during the sixteenth century are mentioned by Erasmus in D.F.S. Thomson (ed. and trans.), Erasmus and Cambridge, The Cambridge Letters of Erasmus (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963). The sources for Roy's attendance at Cambridge are C. and C. Cooper, Athenae Cantabrigienses, Vol. I: 1500-1585 (Cambridge: Deighton Bell and Co., 1858) and J. and J. A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses, Vol. III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924). While technically drawn from primary sources, these two works do include references to men whose role as students at Cambridge must remain questionable. While Roy remains in this latter category there certainly is every



reason to believe that he was a student at Cambridge between 1518 and 1524. Lists of Cambridge students are to be found in Stanley Leathes, Grace Book A, Containing Proctors Accounts and Other Records of the University of Cambridge for the Years 1454-1488 (Cambridge: Deighton Bell, and Co., MacMillan and Bowes, 1897); Mary Bateson, Grace Book B, Part II, Containing the Accounts of the Proctors of the University of Cambridge, 1511-1544 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905); and Catalogus Cancellariorum, Proconcellariurum, Procuratorum ac Eoroum in Achademia Cantabrigiensi ad gradum Doctoratus aspirauerunt ab an dom 1500 et an Henry VII, XV usq. ad annum Dominja Elizabeth Angliae Reginie XIV (1572). The first two are the justly famous Grace Books which are meticulous copies of the original registers in the archives of the University. A search of the original registers and a discussion with the Archivist and her assistant yielded no further information concerning Roy's attendance at the University. Lists of reformers attending Cambridge about the same time as Roy are to be found in Additional MSS 5845 and 5960 in the British Museum.

While there are few references to Roy for the years between his birth in 1500 and his flight to the Continent in 1525, there are many sources for his career after 1525. From the time he joined Luther at Wittenberg until the middle of 1529, Roy's name was one of prominence within England. The



first and one of the most valuable sources for Roy's life on the Continent is the record of his studying at Wittenberg found in Charles E. Foersterman (ed.), Album Academiae Vitebergensis, Vol. I: ab ach MDII Usque AD a MDLX (Leipzig: Charles Tauchnitii, 1841). This work indicates that Roy was at Wittenberg in June, 1525, closely following Tyndale, who had been there in 1524, and as Neelak S. Tjernagel points out in The Reformation Essays of Dr. Robert Barnes (London: Concordia Publishing House, 1963) Roy was soon to be followed by Robert Barnes. In 1525 Roy fled to Germany. He was aided in his escape by Humphrey Monmouth. Monmouth was later accused of being privy to this crime in Harleian MSS 425, British Museum.

A study of the English Bibles which existed before Tyndale's was valuable for this work. The sources for this study were the various pre-Tyndale Bible editions in the British Museum and an essay on the whole subject by Sir Thomas More in The Workes of Sir Thomas More (London: John Cawod, John Wall, and Richard Tuttel, 1557). In dealing with the New Testament translation and with Roy's part in it, many references are extant. In all early proclamations and exhortations against the New Testament put forth by the English clerical and secular authorities, Roy's name appears. He is listed as co-translator in Cotton MSS, Cleopatra E V,



and in Harleian MSS 7048, both in the British Museum. The ex-Franciscan was also referred to but not actually named as a colleague of Tyndale in Cotton MSS, Vespian C III, and in Henry VIII, A Copy of the Letter wherein the most Redoubted and Mighty Prince, Henry the Eight, made answer unto a Certain Letter of Martin Luther (London: Richard Pynson, 1528). Both of these latter sources are in the British Museum.

Valuable information was found in Harleian MSS 421 and in Additional MSS 26,674, both in the British Museum, on the topic of the search for the New Testament by the English authorities. However, the most important source for the printing and discovery of the English New Testament is Dobneck's account written in 1547: "Commentaria Johannis Cochlaei de Actes et Scriptio Martini Lutherei Saxonis Chronographica ex ordine ab anno Domini 1517 usque ad annum 1546 inclusive fideliter," translated by A. W. Pollard and included in Records of the English Bible (London: Oxford University Press, 1911). While never naming Tyndale or Roy, the Frankfurt priest goes into great detail on how he had discovered and sought to capture the translators and printers. The story of Tyndale and Roy fleeing Cologne for Worms also comes from Dobneck, as does the references to the octavo printing of the Cologne fragment. John Strype, Ecclesiastical Memorials relating chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of it and the Emergence of the Church of England under King

Henry VIII, King Edward VI and Queen Mary I (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1822), 6 vols.; and Harleian MSS 421, both in the British Museum, reprint documents on the trials of men accused of selling the New Testament in England; while Harleian MSS 7048, British Museum, tell how the books made their way into England, that is, the role the merchants played in supplying England with the Tyndale translation. Edward Hall, Chronicle containing the History of England during Henry the Fourth and the Succeeding Monarchs to the end of the Reign of Henry VIII (London: J. Johnson, 1809) also discusses the arrival of the New Testament in England. The curious story of the Bishop of London purchasing all the New Testaments of the 1526 edition is mentioned by Hall and corroborated by Cotton MSS, Vitellius B IX, British Museum.

Turning to the search for the books in Antwerp, the series of letters between John Hackett and Cardinal Wolsey, found throughout Cotton MSS, Galba B IX, British Museum, are most valuable, as is the letter from John Hackett to Cardinal Wolsey, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 50, Public Record Office MSS, and the letters in State Papers Published under the Authority of her Majesty's Commission, Vol. VI: King Henry the Eighth, Part V: Foreign Correspondence, 1473-1527 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1849). This latter correspondence shows how eager Wolsey was to obtain the New Testament and its translators and records the

frustration of the English envoy who was almost over-whelmed by the intransigence of the Antwerp authorities. On the same topic are the two letters concerning Richard Harmon. One of these is printed in Edward Arber (ed.), William Tyndale, the First Printed New Testament (London: Edward Arber, 1871) and the other written by Anne Boleyn in 1534, Cotton MSS, Cleopatra E V, British Museum.

John Hackett's letters show the workings of the Christian Brethren. This group, which still needs much investigation, has only recently begun to be understood. Humphrey Monmouth's part in the organization is dealt with in Harleian MSS 424, British Museum. Finally, there is a great amount of information on the Tyndale New Testament in A. W. Pollard (ed.), Records of the English Bible. Pollard's reference work stands as the briefest, clearest, and most handy book of sources dealing with the Tyndale Bible. Another outstanding work, especially for royal and ecclesiastical proclamations, is David Wilkins, Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae (London: R. Gosling, F. Gyler, T. Woodward, C. Davis, 1737), 4 vols. Wilkins' painstaking copying of manuscript material, much of which has been lost, certainly facilitates any research on sixteenth-century English history. The original prohibition issued against the New Testament by Tunstal in 1526 can be found in Episcopal Registers: Tunstal, 1522-1530, in the Guildhall Library, London. The Cologne fragment,



that is, William Tyndale and William Roy, The New Testament in English (Cologne: Peter Quentell, 1526) adds to the story by presenting the actual book which was the subject of so great a controversy.

The most important source for Roy's life between the time he left Tyndale and the time his first works were being read in England is William Tyndale, Parable of the Wicked Mammon, Taken out of the Sixteenth Chapter of Luke with an Exposition Thereupon lately Corrected (Marburg: Hans Luft, 1528). Even though quite a short work, Tyndale says much about Roy in the preface to this book. Although most of his attack on Roy is extremely unkind to the ex-Franciscan, Tyndale does tell where Roy went and with whom he resided after he left the great translator. This is also the first source to mention Roy living in Strasbourg and tells of the meeting between the two apostates, Roy and Barlow.

The problem of William or Jerome Barlow is mentioned, but not solved, in a number of sources. Thomas Wright (ed.), Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries (London: Printed for the Camden Society, 1843) maintains that Barlow was most likely the later Bishop of St. David's. His full name first appears in the letter from John West to John Hackett, in Miscellaneous Letters of the reign of Henry VIII, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 50, Public



Record Office MSS. This letter refers to him as Jerome Barlow. However, he calls himself William in his confession in Cotton MSS, Cleopatra E IV, British Museum, which is extremely valuable, as it assigns to him a role in two of Roy's most controversial works. Anne Boleyn's letter, found in Cotton MSS, Vespian F III, British Museum, tends to refute the assertion that Barlow the bishop and Barlow the reformer were the same man. While the identity of Roy's friend and colleague certainly needs further investigation, the above sources do shed some light on the whole problem and do indicate that Barlow most likely returned to obscurity after his return to England. One further work known to be by Barlow is, A Dyalogue describing the original ground of these Lutheran factions and many of their abuses compiled by William Barlow, Canon (London: William Rastell, 1531). This work has some value in that it mentions the former apostate being in Strasbourg and following Zwinglian theology, as Roy himself did. It is remarkable that Barlow does not mention Roy's name in this work. Roy was obviously dead, and Barlow must have known the circumstances behind his friend's demise. Yet Roy is never mentioned in either Barlow's dialogue or in his confession.

The most valuable sources for Roy's theology are, of course, his own works. The first two works to come from his pen were the Dialogue between a Father and His Son referred



to above and William Roy and Jerome Barlow, Rede Me and be Nott Wrothe for I say no thinge but trothe (Strasbourg: John Schott, 1528). Rede Me has been controversial in that not only is it a strong attack on church practices and pre-lacy in England, but there also has been some question of Roy's authorship of the tract. Although E. G. Rupp has used Harleian Miscellany, Vol. IX (London: White and Cochrane, 1812) as proof against Roy's authorship, all contemporary sources from Tyndale to More indicate that Roy was at least Barlow's advisor in this work. While More in "The dialogue of Sir Thomas More...wherein he treated diverse matters as of Veneration and Worship of Images and Relics, praying to saints and going on Pilgrimages, with many other things touching the Pestilent sects of Luther and Tyndale," [1528] The English Works of Sir Thomas More, Vol. II, ed. W. E. Campbell (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1931), intimates that Roy was Barlow's counsellor in the writing of Rede Me, he states flatly in The Supplycacyon of Soulys made by Syr Thomas More, knight, counsellour to our soverayn Lorde the kynge and chauncellor of hys duchy of Lancaster agaynst the Supplycacyon of beggars (London: William Rastell, 1529), that Roy and Barlow co-authored the tract. This source is most valuable in assigning Roy as co-author. No less valuable is John Bale, Illustrium Majoris Britanniae Scriptorum hoc est

Anglia (Ipswich: J. Overton, 1548), which credits Roy with the work. Rede Me, while being largely an attack on the Church and on Cardinal Wolsey, also points to the social evils of the time. This fact has been pointed out by R. H. Tawney and E. Power, in Tudor Economic Documents, Vol. III (London: Longman's, Green, and Co., 1924). Roy's and Barlow's tract was popular enough in England to have been reprinted in 1546 under the title Rede me frynde and be not wrothe for I say no thyng but the trothe (Wesell: Henry Nicolson, 1546).

The Dialogue between a Christian Father and His Stubborn Son, was primarily a translation by Roy. This tract is probably the most valuable of all Roy's publications to the historian, as it contains a doctrinal statement which was not only Roy's own but which also must be considered to be the first statement of Reformation doctrine given to the English people. That this statement was Zwinglian rather than Lutheran makes it all the more valuable, for it shows that Roy was the first of a long line of Englishmen to espouse Zwinglian, rather than Lutheran, dogma. Again, as with Rede Me, this tract was reprinted: GWalter Lynne, the true Belief in Christ and his Sacraments set forth in a Dialogue between a Christian Father and his son very necessary to be learned of all men of what estate soever they be



(London: GWalter Lynne, 1550).

Between 1528 and 1529 two more works were published by Roy. An Exhortation to the Diligent Study of Scripture made by Erasmus Roterdamus and Translated into English: An Exposition into the Seventh Chapter of the First pistle to the Corinthians (Marburg: Hans Luft, 1529), represents a fine translation of Erasmus, but perhaps an even more important translation of Luther. The translation of Erasmus was never banned in England and was included in a number of later sixteenth-century English editions of the Tyndale Bible, as is shown in Francis Fry, A Bibliographical Description of the New Testament, Tyndale's Version in English (London: Henry Sotheren and Co., 1878). The translation of Luther is most important to this study for in it Roy gives reasons why he differed with Tyndale. This explanation by Roy, dealing with the translation of certain passages of the New Testament, throws much light on the conflict between the two translators.

The final three works by Roy are most valuable to the historian as they represent a completely unveiled attempt by the reformer to unite Lollards and Continental Protestants. William Roy and Jerome Barlow, A Proper Dyaloge betwene a Gentillman and a Husbandman eche complayning to other their Miserable Calamity through the Ambicion of the Clergy (Marburg: Hans Luft, 1530), is an attempt to link the two



heresies. The appendix to this work, obviously an inclusion by Roy, is A Compendious olde Treatyse Shewynge howe that we ought to have the Scripture in Englysshe. This appendix is a reprint of a Lollard treatise advocating a new English translation of the Bible. Roy used it to show his fellow Englishmen that the vernacular scripture had always been banned in England and to refute More's contention that only heretical Bibles such as Tyndale's were forbidden. Finally, a work, I Playne Piers (London: No Publisher, 1550?), which was reprinted in 1590 as O Read Me for I am of Great Antiquity, I plain Piers which cannot flatter, a Plowman men me call (London?: No Publisher, 1590), has been attributed to Roy, but this work was obviously not by him. A tract which is much more in Roy's style in that it is an appeal for English scriptures and contains a criticism of clerical practices is, William Roy?, The Prayer and Complaint of the Plowman Unto Christ Written not Long after the Year of our Lord a thousand and three hundred (Antwerp: No Publisher, 1531).

An analysis of Roy's works indicates that he was a Zwinglian in theology, had a great love for the vernacular scriptures, and was extremely proud of his linguistic talents. These works also give much insight into the beliefs of an early English Protestant and are most valuable in assessing Roy's worth to the Reformation.



Because Roy issued works which were highly objectionable to the English ecclesiastical authorities, a great search was instituted to capture him. This search, overseen by Cardinal Wolsey, is quite well documented. The main sources for it are in a series of letters written by Friar John West and one Herman Rinck to Wolsey. Rinck wrote a long letter to Wolsey which is found in Cotton MSS, Vitellius B XXXI, British Museum. It is most valuable in that it shows the great attempts made to capture the apostate. West, in two letters to Wolsey preserved in the Public Record Office, Group SP, Class 1, Piece 53 and Piece 54, says that the heretic had returned to England twice during 1528-1529. These letters lend much excitement to the story of Roy's life and are certainly the most valuable source for the reformer's career during the winter and spring of 1528-1529.

Roy's works are listed in many prohibitions made against heretical books during the sixteenth century. Besides the lists preserved in David Wilkins' work these prohibitions appear in Landsdowne MSS 947, British Museum; in F. Furnival (ed.), Political, Religious and Love Poems (London: The Early English Text Society, 1866); in C. Wriothesley, A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors, Vol. I: From A.D. 1485 to 1547, ed. W. D. Hamilton (Westminster: Printed for the Camden Society, 1875); and in Edward Cardwell,



Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1839). These four sources are most useful because they indicate how important Roy and his works were to the English authorities during and after the reign of Henry VIII. His works appear on these prohibitions along with those of such men as Tyndale and Barnes. Roy was certainly considered by the authorities to be a most dangerous heretic. In attempting to ascertain a contemporary view of the apostate Franciscan one must turn to lists and proclamations such as the above.

The reformer's death is mentioned in only one source: Sir Thomas More, The Confutation of Tyndale's answer made by Sir Thomas More (London: William Rastell, 1532). This is a most valuable reference in that it gives the only clue to Roy's whereabouts and the causes of his death. More, however, does not mention any reason why Roy went to Portugal. John Foxe simply copies More in his martyrology but does add the date of Roy's death.

As Roy was not only interested in but also made many appeals to the Lollards, this group had to be investigated in order to write this study. While not depending greatly on original sources for a study of early English Lollardy, I was able to locate some primary sources for this section. Probably the most important source for Lollard activity, one



which has only recently been appreciated, is The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe, ed. Stephen Cattley (London: Seeley and Burnside, 1837), 8 vols. Long abused by historians for his obvious inaccuracies and for his Protestant bias, Foxe has only recently begun to emerge as an authority on the early Reformation years. His lists of Lollard heretics and his statements of the charges against them are, for the most part, authentic. No study of Lollardy can be undertaken without a great reliance on Foxe. One of the best examples of a Lollard tract is Wycliffe's Wicket (Short Title Catalogue 25590) [1546]. The Wicket, as it was called in the sixteenth century, presents a detailed exposition of Lollard thought and doctrine.

While not dealing with Lollardy in general, four other works were used to illustrate the growing discontent of orthodox and learned men with the pre-Reformation-English Church. These are, Reginald Pecock, The Repressor of Over-Much Blaming of the Clergy, ed. C. Babington (London: Longmans, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860); James E. T. Rogers, Loci E Libro Veritatum, Passages Selected from Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1881); John Colet, Joannis Coleti Enarration in Epistolam S. Pauli ad Romanos, trans. J. H. Lupton (London: Bell and Daldy, 1873); and John Colet, A Sermon of Conforming



and Reforming made to the Convocation at St. Paul's Church in London (Cambridge: J. Field, 1661). Pecock's and Gascoigne's works indicate that two violent enemies of the Lollard heresy were interested in reform of the Church. While Pecock appeared to be most interested in a reform of certain dogma and the inclusion of reason as a criterion for discovering truth, Gascoigne thundered in his work against the practices of the English clergy. The two works by Colet illustrate the concern of an English humanist over the "evils" of the Church during the first years of the sixteenth century. Colet's sermon, preached at St. Paul's, is especially interesting because the Dean was preaching before a convocation which had been called solely to put down the Lollard heresy, and in this sermon Colet denounced the evils of Church practice which caused this heresy to exist.

There are also a number of primary sources for Roy's life which are of general utility. The most important is J. S. Brewer (ed.), The Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1920). This work remains the most valuable source dealing with almost all aspects of Henry's reign. Most of the references mentioning Roy in the Letters and Papers deal with his family and with the search for him.



Of lesser importance to Roy's life, but of great value to anyone studying early English-Reformation history, are three sets of documents. The first, Henry Gee and William J. Hardy (eds.), Documents Illustrative of English Church History (London: MacMillan & Co., 1896), is rather old but remains an excellent reference book. The second, C. E. Williams (ed.), English Historical Documents: 1485-1558 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1967), is new and fills a void in a series which has given students of English history a great deal of material never before available outside of England. Finally, Statutes of the Realm, Vol. II: 1377-1503 (London: Record Commission, 1831), remains one of the best sources for the English law.

II

SECONDARY SOURCES

No biography of William Roy has ever been written. His name appears in various works on the English Reformation, usually in conjunction either with the Tyndale version of the New Testament or with his and Barlow's attack on Cardinal Wolsey. Many historians, also, have quoted from Rede Me to illustrate popular discontent with Cardinal Wolsey. Even though this is true, William Roy remained, and



perhaps in some ways always will remain, a rather shadowy figure of the early Reformation period. Recently, however, historians have attempted, if not to revise historical thought on him, at least to shed some light on his worth and contribution to the English Reformation. The first to do so was more interested in later Nonconformity than he was in the early English-Protestant exiles. However, M. M. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism, A Chapter in the History of Idealism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965) and M. M. Knappen, "William Tyndale-First English Puritan," Church History, Vol. V (1936), 201-215, mention Roy, stressing that perhaps his worth to the Reformation had not been properly appreciated and that perhaps Tyndale did not tell the whole story in his attack on Roy in the preface to the Wicked Mammon. Knappen's Tudor Puritanism, especially, was instrumental in creating my interest in investigating Roy. Even though Knappen did excellent ground work on Roy, the first historian really to take a close and objective look at the reformer was William A. Clebsch in England's Earliest Protestants, 1520-1536 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964); and, again, William A. Clebsch in "The Earliest Translations of Luther into English," The Harvard Theological Review, Vol. LVI (1963), 75-86. Clebsch is certainly the first historian to appreciate the contribution of men like Roy and Barlow to the Reformation. While not making a



detailed study of the ex-Franciscans' writings and translations, Clebsch does delve into them far enough to assess their true value. In his article on the first translation of Luther, he proves beyond all doubt that Roy was the translator of the tract on the seventh chapter of First Corinthians.

While Clebsch and Knappen have been extremely objective in their treatment of Roy, other historians have not been nearly so kind. E. G. Rupp, Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition, Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1949), is a study of early English Protestantism. Rupp's section on Roy is very poor in that he uses questionable sources and furthers the fable that Roy, by his bragging, set the Cologne authorities on the trail of the Tyndale edition of the New Testament. This fable is also put forth in J. F. Mozley, William Tyndale (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1937). Mozley has certainly written the most adequate biography of Tyndale, but he attempts to place the translator in too good a light. The erroneous story of Roy having tipped off the Cologne authorities was also parroted by J. D. Mackie in The Earlier Tudors 1485-1558 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962). This is most unfortunate as this book, part of the famous "Oxford History of England Series," is a most widely read study.



Another highly valuable and objective account of Roy deals primarily with Rede Me. This work, Charles H. Herford's Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1866), although old, is the only attempt, before Clebsch, to analyze any of Roy's works. Even though Herford is most interested in the German antecedents of Rede Me, he does give a valuable exposition of the whole treatise. Twentieth-century historians should never reject categorically the work of their eighteenth- and nineteenth-century predecessors. Many of the older works on English history, if perhaps colored by the prejudices of their time, certainly were based on sound scholarship and a detailed study of the materials. The most interesting theory on William Roy emanated from the nineteenth century. This theory is found in James Rendel Harris' The Origins of the Leicester Codex (London: C. J. Clay and Sons, 1887). While unable to prove his theory that Roy copied the Montfort Codex, Harris does a remarkable job in constructing his hypothesis. If he is correct, Roy's role in the Montfort Codex would prove that he was at Cambridge, at least, in 1519 and 1520.

If Roy has been slighted and misunderstood by modern historians, his friend and co-author Jerome or William Barlow has been even more forgotten. Besides a brief exposition



in Rupp's work, only A. Kozul deals with Barlow in his article, "Was Bishop William Barlow, Friar Jerome Barlow?" The Review of English Studies, Vol. IV (1928), 25-34. While Kozul's work is not very convincing, he does wrestle with the whole problem of Barlow's identity and is really the only modern historian to do so.

Aside from the above works dealing with Roy and Barlow, other secondary sources proved most valuable in filling in details on aspects of early sixteenth-century history. Although certainly not a scholar of the Reformation, the giant of English medieval studies, Sir F. Maurice Powicke, wrote a small monograph on what he thought the English Reformation to have been: The Reformation in England (London: Oxford University Press, 1941). By claiming that the English Reformation was an act of state, Powicke certainly unleashed a great amount of discussion and controversy. Perhaps much of the recent literature on the English Reformation has been an attempt to refute this idea. Powicke, however, was not the only historian to view the Reformation as primarily an act of state. James Gairdner in Lollardy and the Reformation in England (London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd., 1908), 4 vols., has also underplayed the Lollards' role in the English Reformation. While Gairdner's four-volume work remains a classic on the English Reformation,



his views on the Lollard contribution to the Reformation certainly have been superseded. Perhaps the historian who has done more than anyone to refute Gairdner's views has been A. G. Dickens. In "Heresey and the Origins of English Protestantism," Britain and the Netherlands, Vol. II (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1964) and in The English Reformation (London: B. T. Botsford Ltd., 1964), Dickens has shown that the Lollards were very influential in preparing the way and in adapting reform doctrine. R. S. Arrowsmith in The Prelude to the Reformation (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1923); James MacKinnon in The Origins of the Reformation (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1900); John Thomson in The Later Lollards, 1414-1520 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965); and Marcus L. Loane, in Pioneers of the Reformation in England (London: The Church Book Room Press, 1964), all advance views similar to Dickens'. These works all attempt to show that the Lollards were in fact a very important group in making the English Reformation possible.

Other works dealing with Wycliffe and the Lollard heresy during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries are, K. B. McFarlane, John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity (London: English Universities Press Ltd., 1952); Gotthard Lechler, John Wycliffe and his English



Precursors (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1884); and John Stacy, John Wycliffe and Reform (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964). These three books give valuable assistance to the student in obtaining an overview of Wycliffe's thought and a history of the transmission of that thought during the fifteenth century. No work on the Lollards, however, would be complete without a reading of G. M. Trevelyan's England in the Age of Wycliffe (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1925). This remarkable book, Trevelyan's undergraduate essay, is the first flowering of that historian's genius.

Turning to a more specific part of early sixteenth-century Lollardy is Arthur Ogle's The Tragedy of the Lollards Tower (Oxford: Pen in Hand Publishing Co., 1949). Even though Ogle's book is very weak in parts, it does represent the only recent study of a problem with which sixteenth-century London was concerned. Another work which deals at least superficially with early sixteenth-century Lollardy is William Page (ed.), The Victoria History of London (London: Constable and Co., 1909). This work is part of the monumental Victoria County Histories which are still being written and revised. The history of England, perhaps, will never fully be learned until these books are carefully studied.



In the study of Roy's life a look at secondary works on the Greyfriars and on Cambridge University proved most valuable. A rather good study of the Franciscans in England is Edward Hutton's The Franciscans in England, 1224-1538 (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1926). This book provides a background on the entire English Franciscan movement and delineates the differences between the observant and orthodox Franciscan houses. Moving closer to those Franciscans which affected Roy's career are John R. H. Moorman in The Greyfriars in Cambridge, 1225-1538 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952); and A. Bonnar in "The Greenwich Franciscans in the Sixteenth Century," Transactions of the Thirty-fifth Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Record Society (1942), 9-15. Moorman's is by far the best study of the two. He includes Roy as a resident of the Cambridge house and points out that there must have been a great amount of conflict within the house during the early 1520s. Despite the title, Bonnar's article deals with the foundation and maintenance of the Greenwich house more than it does with individual members. Another volume, which is part of a general history of London, mentions the foundation of the Greenwich house and points to it as one of the Tudors' favorite religious establishments. This is Reverend Daniel Lysons' The Environs of London, Vol. IV (London: T. Cadell, 1796).



Sixteenth-century Wittenberg and Strasbourg have been discussed in many secondary sources. Luther and Wittenberg have been adequately examined for my purposes by Preserved Smith in The Life and Letters of Martin Luther (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1911). Although beginning to age, Smith's work does remain a classic in the Reformation field. Franz Funk Bretano in Luther (London: Jonathon Cape, 1936) also gives valuable background information. The best work on the Reformation in Strasbourg is Miriam U. Chrisman's Strasbourg and the Reform (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967). This work added much to my knowledge of the Strasbourg reformers and is an excellent study of the reform in that city. Of lesser value, but of some import to the study of the various influences on the Strasbourg reform is Robert Kreider's article, "The Anabaptists and the Civil Authorities of Strasbourg, 1525-1555," Church History, Vol. XXIV (1955), 99-118. Another work dealing with Strasbourg and especially valuable for a discussion of Roy's and Barlow's printer, John Schott, is Franscois Ritter's Catalogia des Incunables et Livres du XVI^e Siecle de la Bibliotheque Municipale de Strasbourg (Strasbourg: P.-H. Heitz, 1948).

The whole question of the Lollard and Tyndale Bibles is discussed by Margaret Deanesly in The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions (Cambridge: Cambridge



University Press, 1920). Miss Deanesly's work was valuable for this study, as it indicates that the Lollard Bible was not as scarce in the early sixteenth century as had been believed. Miss Deanesly points out that without the heretical prologue and glosses the Lollard Bible was sometimes found in monasteries. The Tyndale Bible and Roy's part in it are discussed in both H. Mercer Wilson's Tyndale Commemoration Volume (London: Lutterworth Press, 1939) and Edward Arber (ed.), The First Printed English New Testament (London: Edward Arber, 1871). Arber is very fair to Roy, although he does accept Tyndale's criticism of the apostate without questioning the reasons behind it. Most modern writers have supported Roy's co-authorship of such works as Rede Me. A notable example of this is C. S. Lewis in English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954). Although Mrs. Aston in "Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Renewal," History, Vol. XLIX (1964), 149-170, refuses to give Roy any credit for writing the Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Husbandman, she does point out that work's obvious appeal to the Lollards. J. K. McConica in English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965) gave me a great amount of background on Erasmus and on the English humanists, plus identifying Hoochstraten as the



printer who used the pseudonym Hans Luft. A further discussion bearing upon Roy's later works is to be found in Helen C. White's Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1944). Although the author does not mention Roy by name she does point out that all the later Piers' literature contained strong social protests.

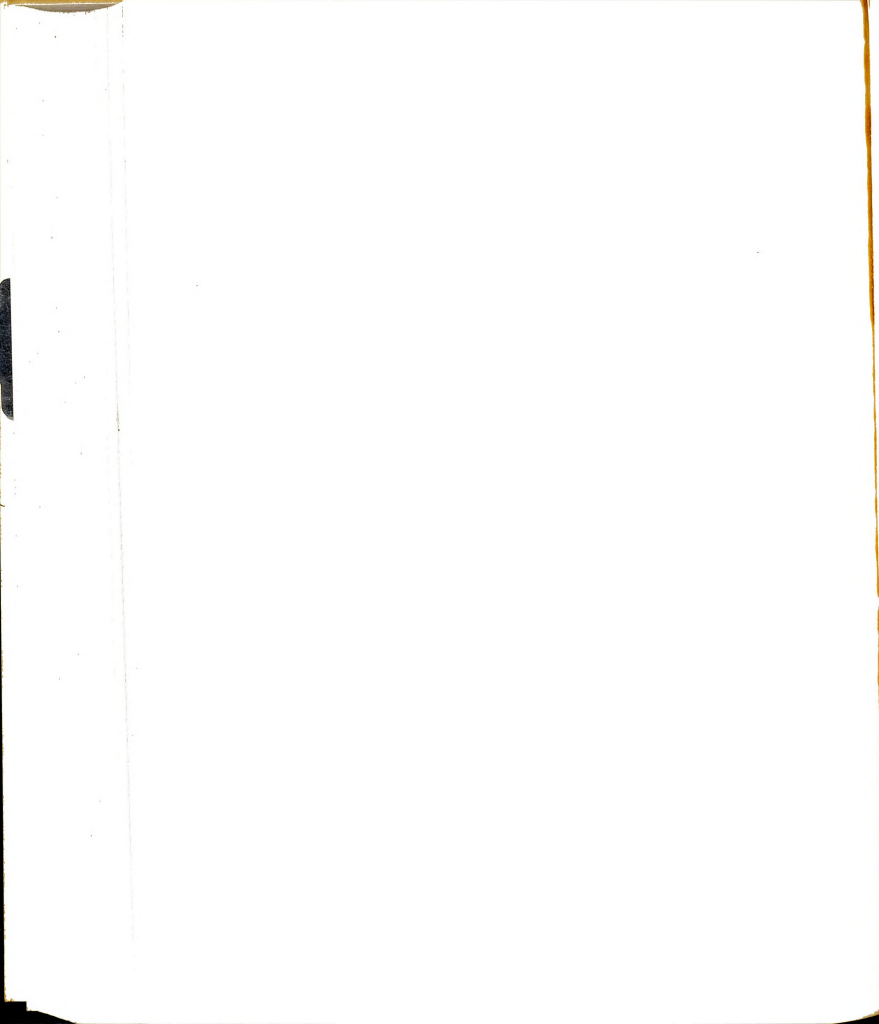
Finally, there are three secondary works which can be placed in the class of books used generally for reference. The first is Gilbert Burnet's The History of the Reformation of the Church of England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1865), 3 vols. Burnet certainly recognized the import of the Lollards to the Reformation and also the role the exiled reformers played in attracting the old to the new heresy. One of the most important reference works to any student of English history is Sidney Lee (ed.), Dictionary of National Biography (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1900), 63 vols. No English historian can work without reference to this work. It proved invaluable to me in producing background information on a great number of men involved in Roy's life. Another book, which, while not extensively used, did provide important background material for the reign of Henry VIII, was J. J. Scarisbrick's Henry VIII (Berkeley: The University of



California Press, 1968). This most recent and best biography of Henry, if not the final word, will certainly be the classic study of him for some time to come.









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