The Tyndale Family

Estimated reading time: 4 minutes

The Tyndales in Stinchcombe

In 1378 there were two Tyndale families living in the village[1]. One was at Southend on Wick Lane, and the other at Melksham Court. The Southend family in time disappeared from history and there remained only the one at Melksham Court.

[1] Notes on the life and work of William Tyndale by A.H. BRUTON

It is believed that William Tyndale, “architect of the English reformation” and translator of the Bible from Latin into English, was born at Melksham Court in 1494.

There are numerous documented accounts explaining that William Tyndale the translator of the bible into English was, in fact born at Melksham Court in Stinchcombe, not least the ***Tyndale Society*** and ***Wikipedia***.

In 1535, William Tyndale was arrested, jailed in the castle at Vilvoorde outside Brussels in Belgium for more than a year, tried for heresy and treason, and then strangled and burned at the stake in the castle courtyard. Much of his work eventually found its way into the King James version of the Bible in 1611. Among the numerous phrases attributed to him are “let there be light”, “filthy lucre”, “scapegoat” and “the powers that be” – all of which are so well known today.

The Tyndale family also went by the name of Huchyns, (spelt in several different ways) a name taken by Edward Tyndale, a fugitive from the Wars of the Roses (1455 -1485) from Tyneside who settled in the village where he changed his name to Hutchins for reasons of safety, only revealing his true name of Tyndale to his children ***on his deathbed***, when this alias

ceased in 1520.



An inscription on the stalls in St George's church, Cam illustrating link between the two names Huchyns and Tyndale

In 1561, the Tyndale family acquired the freehold when Richard Tyndale purchased the estate from Thomas Lord Wentworth, a descendant of Thomas de Bradeston , who died in 1360. He was a governor of Gloucester Castle and a famous warrior, who held the adjoining manors of Bradeston and Stinchcombe in the reign of Edward III.

The last male Tyndale at Melksham Court was Thomas, whose only child Elizabeth married Robert Thayers of New Mills, Stroud and her daughter, another Elizabeth, married William Townsend. Their eldest son and heir, Henry Tyndale Townsend sold the property to Thomas Morse in 1768, whose family remained there until the beginning of the C20.

There are several memorials to William Tyndale across the world, but the local monument was erected on the hill behind North Nibley village, being second choice because the land on

Stinchcombe Hill was deemed geologically unsuitable. There is a house on Stinchcombe Hill that shows evidence today of the siting of where the monument might have been placed. The actual monument was built some 300 years after Tyndale's death and the foundation stone was laid on 29th May 1863 by the Hon. Colonel Berkeley and was finally inaugurated by the Earl of Ducie on 6th November 1866.

Thomas Tyndale, (died 1671), "a gentleman of the Parliamentary party" was compelled by approaching Royalists in 1645 to flea from his house at Melksham Court and hide in Stinchcombe Wood for three days and nights. From the safety of a large yew tree, he had the misfortune to witness not only his own house, Melksham Court, but also Piers Court burned to the ground by the Royalists. It is believed this is the derivation of the recently closed pub, The Yew Tree, at the end of the Avenue.

- More information on the importance of the Yew Tree is located in the excerpt from the book, **"Ruins and Old Trees".** Associated with Memorable Events in English History by Mary Roberts, (c. 1800)
- For a more modern perspective on this important family, follow the link to the ***Tyndale Society***
- Fom the Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society ***"On the Tyndales in Gloucestershire"*** by J. H. Cooke 1877-78, V ol. 2, 29-46 © The Society and the Author(s)