

II.7.a Historical
data

missionaries moving south in the 600's and the other was by the Roman missionaries from the south approximate to the same time. Details on this work may be gleaned from Bede: ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

By the time of Alfred the Great (ca 900) England as we know it was "christianized." This was also true of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. After 1066 and the time of William the Conqueror, England had a fused culture with the Norman-Saxon mergers and in 1210 survived the interference of the papal office in its support of King John versus the Magna Carta. While the politics in the days of Wycliffe allowed the passage of certain anti-Roman interference laws, the climate of the country was distinctly Roman and remained that way through the early days of Henry VIII. Although there was a certain humanistic influence in the universities, there was nothing in the English religious structure to suggest that the nation was anything less than totally Roman or might in any way break with the established church in favor of a reformation move.

The most interesting church move in the middle ages was that with Wycliffe and the Lollards. Wycliffe gave the English people a Bible in the vernacular and also brought to pass some legal enactments offering greater freedom to the English church. One of these will become enormously important in the actual separation of England from the Roman See. But Wycliffe's work was short-lived as the English politics turned against it after his demise (he was later exhumed and burnt). Those who heard him at Oxford and carried his ideas back to Bohemia saw a more permanent work accomplished in the ministry of John Hus. But Wycliffe gave a fair demonstration of what a Bible could mean in the hands of the people.

No further moves were seen until the century of the Reformation. The first mover in this century was Wm. Tyndale (1494-1536). Affected by the Oxford humanism and impressed with the Greek work of Erasmus, Tyndale felt the ignorance of the English clergy and laity was due to a lack of the Word of God in the tongue of the nation. He determined that what was needed was a translation of the Bible into English...one that would give the population a means of study to alleviate the pressing ignorance. He received virtually no support from the English church community and was practically "on his own." His