

Humphrey Monmouth and the Monmouth Society

David Parish and Richard Higginson reveal how business people have risked their fortunes and even their lives to support ventures in bringing the truth of Christianity to ordinary people. They trace the life and adventures of Henry Monmouth, who supported William Tyndale through finance and business organisation. The Monmouth Society in the USA finances equivalent enterprises today.

Monmouth: Merchant Draper, Bible Smuggler and Reformer

Although the name Humphrey Monmouth may not be familiar to you, he played a very important role in 16th century history, an influence with lasting effects. Without him the New Testament translated by William Tyndale would not have been distributed as effectively in England as it was.

Monmouth was born in Worcester and the family name has connections with the Welsh town of Monmouth. The first record we have of him is when in his late teens he came to London to be apprenticed to Edmund Bruge, a member of the Drapers Livery Guild. He became a Freeman of the Company¹ in 1503. His business must have thrived because 20 years later he had a home in Buntingford in Hertfordshire and a London home in Barking. He may also

have had business premises in Cheapside which was as wide as it is today, but instead of being lined with coffee shops and corporate offices it was home to London merchant traders. 'Cheap' is a corruption of the Saxon 'cheop-' a shop. There would have been living space above the shop and the ground floor would have been open during the day and closed with shutters at night.



Cheapside in the 1520s

Photo: jstor.org