

Fall History & Heritage -- #2 (September 24)

This 2nd fall post combines entries (summaries/Q&A) based on our customary *Almanac* and *Tabletalk* readings with thoughts on 20th-century Britain's Enoch Powell.

Episkopos --- (R.C. Sproul; *Tabletalk*, July 2012)

As translated in *1 Peter 2:25* in the classic King James Bible (1611), **this Greek noun** underscores Jesus' role as "bishop" of the souls of the redeemed? In the ancient world the title was used for a military man of high rank, one who periodically visited and inspected troops for combat readiness. Combining its prefix with its root, its literal meaning suggests an overseer or superintendent charged with bringing scrutiny of an intense order to something or somebody.

Doctrine --- (R. Scott Clark; *Tabletalk*, July 2012)

This English word, derived from an ancient Latin root, signifies "that which is taught," in Christian usage basic instruction about God, man, Christ, salvation, and the like? The Latin root was used over a hundred times in the Vulgate (the standard medieval Bible dating back to St. Jerome), while its English derivative first appeared in Wycliffe's 1382 translation. The 1611 King James Version, inarguably the most influential work to appear in English literature, uses the word about 50 times.

The Protestant Reformation --- (R. Scott Clark; *Tabletalk*, July 2012)

This 16th-century (1500s) religious movement, less a struggle over moral corruption in the church than erroneous doctrine, led to Western Christianity's severest schism? One party to the dispute insisted the justification of sinners (God declaring them righteous) was all of grace, all of Christ's doing, and all of faith. Their opponents countered by adding good works to the mix (to grace, Christ, & faith), in effect saying God declared no man righteous until he was indeed, in himself, righteous.

John Cage --- (*Almanac*, Sept. 4)

"Just as beauty is all in the eye of the beholder, so then noise is all in the ear of the hearer." So said **this avant-garde American composer (1912--1992)**, born in Los Angeles, in support of his odd belief that all sounds, irrespective of their source or occasion, constitute music? A proponent of random and sometimes bizarre improvisation, his *Four Minutes and Thirty-three Seconds* (1952) featured a performer seated merely in silence at a piano bench for the aforementioned time.

Enoch Powell --- (Christopher Sandford; *Chronicles*, June 2012)

This British parliamentarian (1912--1998), a classics scholar and Conservative Party stalwart, was without doubt the most polarizing political figure of postwar Europe? A speech of his in 1968 provoked thousands to rally, many in his defense (mostly working class Brits) and no small number to demand his arrest (the BBC likened him to Hitler). What shook up folks was the statesman's dire warning about how high levels of non-European immigration were destroying the nation's "historical and social composition."

What Powell Said --- (Christopher Sandford; *Chronicles*, June 2012)

Here's a little of what British parliamentarian Enoch Powell said in the aforementioned 1968 address:

We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependents, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant-descended population. It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre. . .

I am filled with foreboding; like the Roman, I seem to see "the River Tiber foaming with much blood." . . . Only resolute and urgent action will avert it even now. Whether there will be the public will to demand and obtain that action I do not know. All I know is that to see, and not to speak, would be the great betrayal.

By the way, Powell was a bit too modest in his demographic analysis. He predicted there'd be about 2 million such immigrants settled in Britain by the year 2000, but the real figure was closer to 5 or more million. And, yes, the land of Shakespeare---with its common and identifiable ethnic makeup, history, faith, and culture---is being destroyed.

Mass immigration and the immigrants themselves, of course, are not the sole or main cause of Britain's death. They're merely finishing off what the once proud English began and did to themselves, chiefly by forgetting who they are (or were). In other words, it's a matter more of suicide than murder.

Enoch Powell was the only child of a provincial school teacher and the grandson of a coal miner. He excelled in academics, graduated from Cambridge with a first-class degree in Greek and Latin, and in retirement made Hebrew his twelfth tongue. He was a poet too, the author of a volume somewhat along the lines of his mentor, A.E. Housman. His verses, says Christopher Sandford, are "transparently honest," the gateway to a long lost world "where patriotism, dedication to a cause, devotion to duty, and service to one's fellows have not been tainted by irony or satire."

Powell did have, in addition to many foes, some sympathizers and backers in high places, though usually away from the glare of the press. Among those who spoke out in his defense were rock star Eric Clapton and Labour Party leader, Michael Foot, who called it "tragic" that such "an outstanding personality" had been widely misunderstood.

Lastly, Lady Thatcher, in a 1991 interview after leaving the prime ministership, said "Enoch [had] made a valid argument, if in sometimes regrettable terms."