

John de Wycliffe

John de Wycliffe, born about 1324, styled the “Morning Star of Reformation,” was an English divine, whose piety and talents procured for him one of the highest ecclesiastical positions of honor. Having openly preached against the corruptions of the Roman Church, he was displaced, the pope issuing several bulls against him for heresy. Accordingly, he was examined by an assembly, but made so able a defense that it ended without determination. Continuing to denounce the papal corruptions, and power, he was again summoned before a synod, but was released by order of the king’s mother. It is remarkable that although he continued his vehement attacks upon vital of Romish doctrine, he escaped the fate of others similarly accused; but over forty years after his death, which occurred in 1384, his bones were exhumed, burned, and cast into the River Swift, which bore them through the Severn to the sea, his very dust thus becoming emblematic of his doctrine, now diffused the world over. His most important work was the first English version of the Bible.