

Melvin Grove Kyle and the United Presbyterian Contribution to Evangelical Scholarship

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Abstract: This article deals with Melvin Grove Kyle (1858-1933), an eminent scholar, apologist, and archaeologist who did much to defend and advance the cause of conservative Presbyterianism and Evangelical Christianity.

In 1925, when J. Gresham Machen and his Princeton Seminary colleagues were launching the League of Evangelical Students (LES), no PCUSA seminary presidents came to their aid. However, the president of the nation's oldest and most enthusiastically evangelical Presbyterian seminary, Xenia, decided to support Machen and the LES from the start. Xenia was founded in 1794 and was one of two United Presbyterian seminaries in America. While other Presbyterian seminary administrators spurned Machen's efforts, the spirited United Presbyterian, Melvin Grove Kyle, embraced them wholeheartedly. Tall and skinny the sixty-seven-year-old Kyle was an advocate of evangelical Presbyterian scholarship and the bold stands of Machen. Kyle, who was perhaps the most scholarly Presbyterian seminary president in America was a volcano of energy and there was no doubt where he stood in the great theological debates of his era. Kyle wrote several books, edited a leading Christian academic journal, participated in many excavations, taught and lectured on biblical

archaeology widely, established a Bible lands museum that still exists today, and belonged to various academic societies. He was learned and diplomatic, but unwavering in his theological stance and his commitment to evangelical Presbyterian scholarship.

Melvin Grove Kyle was born on May 7, 1858 on a farm in Harrison County, Ohio, a rural and sparsely populated area in the Eastern part of the state. Kyle was from Scotch-Irish and German descent and raised in the United Presbyterian Church of North America.¹ In 1881 he graduated from the UP's Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio. Retrospectively, Kyle claimed that Muskingum was at the time "one of the most conservative [Christian] institutions in the land."² Nevertheless, Kyle claimed that he and his Muskingum students spent lots of time at the college discussing skepticism and liberal ideas. Kyle argued that they did this so much that he and his fellow classmates "must have seemed to our betters an unbelieving lot." According to Kyle he talked to his father and minister about the new ideas. Kyle noted:

When we returned occasionally to our homes, we began to air some of our sophomoric wisdom and our fathers peered over their glasses at us and said, "Tut, tut." And we "tutted!" Then perhaps we spoke to our old pastor about our intellectual qualms and he said sympathetically, remembering his own student days, "Oh well, after a while, these ideas will not trouble you so much." He knew they were only growing pains. So we subsided.³

¹ "Kyle, Melvin Grove," John Leonard ed., *Who's Who in Pennsylvania* (New York: L.R. Hamersly and Co., 1908), 418.

² Melvin Grove Kyle, "If The Foundations Be Destroyed, What Can the Righteous Do?," *The Evangelical Student* (April 1932), 26.

³ Kyle, "If The Foundations Be Destroyed, What Can the Righteous Do?," 26.

Based on the evidence it appears that whatever intellectual issues troubled Kyle he appeared to resolve them. His questioning in college as he said “subsided” and he pursued further education at Muskingum and in the United Presbyterian’s Xenia Seminary in Xenia, Ohio. After two years of study at Xenia, Kyle, the seminarian, transferred to the other United Presbyterian seminary, Allegheny, on the north side of Pittsburgh. The reason for the transfer is unclear. In 1884 he earned an M.A. from Muskingum and in 1885 Kyle graduated from Allegheny. He was licensed to preach by the UPCNA in 1885, but he did not enter ministry immediately.⁴ He returned to Xenia for a further year of post graduate study. Xenia in the 1880s was known for its commitment to the fundamentals of the faith, and Xenia did have some scholars with substance. For instance, Xenia’s apologetics professor, David McDill, was a specialist in seeking to refute liberal Old Testament criticism and he wrote widely on the subject. In seminary education the United Presbyterians were taking an evangelical scholarly path and Xenia’s stamp was firmly imprinted on Kyle’s mind and life.

Kyle was ordained in May of 1886 and became the pastor of Seventh United Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. The 1890s were traumatic and extremely troubling years for the young pastor. In 1891 tragedy struck when Kyle’s wife died with twin daughters.⁵ He married again in 1895, but a few years later his second wife died leaving Kyle with a little daughter to raise. During these difficult years, Kyle was becoming better known in the UPCNA and in 1894 Kyle received an honorary D.D. from the UP’s Cooper College

⁴ “Kyle, Melvin Grove,” Thomas M. Gilliland ed., *Truth and Love* (Maryville, TN: United Presbyterian Conservancy of North America, 2008), 285-286.

⁵ “469.-Rev. Melvin Grove Kyle,” *McNary Family with Trees and History* (Pittsburgh: McNary & Simpson, Printers, 1907), 130.

in Sterling, Kansas. Earlier in 1889 Kyle had become a member of the UPCNA's board of foreign missions and would serve in this capacity for thirty-three years. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the UPCNA had a strong missionary presence in Egypt and this proved to be crucial in Kyle's scholarly development and his interest in Egyptology. While serving as pastor at Seventh United Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia Kyle had parishioners who did missionary work in Egypt and Kyle also did missions work there, but he was doing more. As a pastor, Kyle had developed a relationship with the famed scholar, Max Mueller, professor of Egyptology at the University of Pennsylvania. Mueller was aware of Kyle's missionary activity in Egypt and asked him to research archaeological data for him.⁶ Kyle did this work for Muller, the two became friends, and Kyle became a member of the University of Pennsylvania's archaeology club, or as one profile from 1907 listed "department."

Kyle the aspiring scholar sought to connect himself to leading archaeologists. He became a friend of Sir Flinders Petrie, the famed British Egyptologist, and worked on excavations and explorations with him. In 1905 the veteran UP minister and author, James Price, wrote that the forty-seven-year-old Kyle was a "scholarly man and a close student" who "has for years been devoting attention to archaeological studies with the laudable aim of illustrating and defending the Holy Scriptures."⁷ Kyle's studies led him to publish a 1905

⁶ Nancy Lapp, "Archaeology and the James L. Kelso Bible Lands Museum," James Arthur Walther ed., *Ever a Frontier* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 238.

⁷ James Price, *The History of Seventh United Presbyterian Church, Frankford, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Privately Published, 1905), 137-138.

pamphlet *Egyptian Sacrifices: A Study of Scenes in Painting and in Sculpture*.⁸ In 1906 William McEwan, pastor of Pittsburgh's Third United Presbyterian Church, labeled Kyle one of the "first archaeologists."⁹ Kyle appears to have been developing a reputation as a pioneering Christian archaeologist because of his writing and field work.

In the winter of 1908, it was reported that Kyle was on an archaeological dig with Edouard Naville—a professor from the University of Geneva and a specialist in large monuments and temples.¹⁰ Naville was Swiss, but had close connections to British evangelicalism and once served as president of the Evangelical Alliance.¹¹ Kyle became close to Naville and later he dedicated his 1920 book *Moses and the Monuments* to his Swiss friend. In 1908, at age 50, Kyle's growing reputation as a scholar led to his appointment as permanent lecturer of biblical archaeology at Xenia. Kyle would serve Xenia one semester per year in this role until 1915 when he became a full professor. Significantly, Kyle noted that Xenia "was the first Theological Seminary in America to give distinct recognition of the new science of biblical archaeology as a separate Department of Seminary work."¹² Up until 1916 most Xenia Seminary graduates were from UP colleges, but by 1916 half of the graduating class were from Moody Bible Institute where Kyle sometimes taught summer school.¹³ During this time Xenia also educated several African American students from

⁸ Melvin Grove Kyle, *Egyptian Sacrifices: A Study of Scenes in Painting and In Sculpture* (Paris: Librairie of Emile Bouillon, 1905).

⁹ William McEwan, "Address Introductory to that By President Hall," *The Bible Champion* (June 1906), 439.

¹⁰ Melvin Grove Kyle, "Archaeological Department: Notes from the Field," *The Bible Champion* (March 1908), 197.

¹¹ H.R. Hall, "Edouard Naville," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, vol. 13, No. 1/2 (April, 1927), 4.

¹² Melvin Grove Kyle, "The Bible in the Light of Archaeological Discoveries," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. 74 no, 293 (1917), 2.

¹³ "A Special Summer Course," *Moody Monthly*, vol. XXII no. 10 (June 1922), 1065.

nearby Wilberforce College—an A.M.E. institution. These two associations reveal, to some degree, the populist orientation of the United Presbyterians in the early part of the 20th century. While Egyptology and archaeology were mostly associated with the more elite American universities, Harvard and Penn, Kyle sought to make the impoverished and humble Xenia a center of archaeological scholarship, but could it be done?

Kyle taught seminarians, participated in excavations, and also in scholarly organizations that were committed to the Bible's trustworthiness. He was active in the Bible League of North America and in this organization's publications. He served as an associate editor of *The Bible Teacher* which later changed its name to *The Bible Champion*. He served in this role with his southern Presbyterian colleague William McPheeters, an Old Testament professor at Columbia Seminary and an ardent critic of liberal trends in the PCUS.¹⁴ Kyle also served as the archaeology editor of the *Sunday School Times* and developed a higher academic profile as editor of *Bibliotheca Sacra*—a long standing academic journal founded in 1844 and previously published by Oberlin College, but by 1922 under the auspices of Xenia Seminary. Kyle worked with evangelical groups and publications, but in 1911 he became a member of the Society of Biblical Literature and wrote for the *Journal of Biblical Literature*. Kyle worked hard to operate in both evangelical and in more mainstream academic forums. By 1916 G. Fredrick Wright of Oberlin College noted in his autobiography that “Professor

¹⁴ See McPheeters see Sean Michael Lucas, *For a Continuing Church* (Philipsburg, N.J.: P&R Publishing, 2015).

M. G. Kyle” has been “recognized as an authority on the archaeology of Egypt the world over.”¹⁵ Kyle’s reputation was growing through his pen and spade.

The UP’s populist orientation led its scholars to engage, learn from, but also turn away from radical liberal scholarship. Five of the six UPCNA colleges were in rural areas, many UP General Assemblies were held in small towns, and in many ways the UPs were contributing and aligning themselves with the wider evangelical movement. In the 1926 commencement address at the UP’s seminary in Pittsburgh, the institution’s president, the venerable John McNaugher, told students “[t]he immediate risk to which you are exposed is the popularized evolutionary view of religion.” He added, “Between its bloodless categories and the orthodoxy in which you have been reared there is an unbridgeable gulf,” and he noted that “[m]odernism, it is but a thinly veiled form of Unitarianism, that is rotten from the floor to the roof.”¹⁶ Where did this UP anti-modernism come from? The UP’s biblical convictions and populist orientation had led them to promote what they regarded as the fundamentals of the Christian faith against their critics. To be sure, four writers of *The Fundamentals* (1910-1915) who have often been identified as “Presbyterians” were in fact individuals from the United Presbyterians tradition. The four writers include Kyle and William G. Moorehead of Xenia Seminary and the Scottish UP theologian James Orr and the Scottish UP pastor/scholar Thomas Whitelaw. Despite being numerically smaller, the United Presbyterians were equally well represented in *The Fundamentals* as were their mainline Presbyterian brethren. Perhaps the amplification of *evangelical* United Presbyterian

¹⁵ G. Fredrick Wright, *The Story of My Life and Work* (Oberlin, OH: Bibliotecha Sacra Company, 1916), 397.

¹⁶ John McNaugher quoted in *Theological Monthly*, vol. vi no. 7, July 1926, 204.

scholarship was the result of the fact that one of the editors for the project was Louis Meyer, a former Jew who had become a Reformed Presbyterian. The Presbyterian Seceder and Covenanter traditions were playing a role in public theological and intellectual debate and their populist sympathies were intentionally and strategically quite noticeable.

In his book *Old Testament Critics*, Whitelaw argued, “The every-day religious man who has studied the Word of God under the teaching of the Spirit of Christ is an expert of another and, some hold, of a higher order than merely language and literature.”¹⁷ The greatest UP scholar of the period was James Orr and his specialty, which he had developed over seventeen years as a parish pastor, was mastering the arguments of German scholars in an effort to defend classical Christian truth. Orr’s mature scholarship combined with an overt populism led him to conclude that “simple minded” people actually had a superior ability to grasp religious truth.¹⁸ Orr noted that “[w]hen Jesus introduced His religion into the world He did not choose “scholars.” Extreme radical critics according to Orr were “closet recluses” and not connected to “experimental religion.”

The populist instincts and scholarship of UP scholars led them to spurn radical higher criticism of the Bible. To be sure, Kyle, Orr, Whitelaw, and other UP scholars all wrote weighty books analyzing liberal Old Testament criticism. In 1920 George L. Robinson, a professor at McCormick Seminary, argued that “[a]ll fair minded readers... will, because of its thoroughness rank Kyle’s volume [MATMon] alongside that of James Orr’s “The Problem of the Old Testament” (1906), as another formidable stroke against the

¹⁷ Thomas Whitelaw, *Old Testament Critics* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. LTD., 1903), xx.

¹⁸ Glen Scorgie, *A Call for Continuity*, 144.

Oxford School of Modern Criticism.”¹⁹ In his first book Kyle wrote that he would “neither take the toplofty way of those who assume the higher criticism to be the sum of all wisdom, nor the imprecatory way of those who proclaim it [higher criticism] as a ‘doctrine of devils.’”²⁰ For the UPs destructive higher criticism could be rebutted by Christian scholarship of the Bible, but also by biblical archaeology. In 1906 James Orr had even argued that “[n]othing in the whole course of the last century is more remarkable than the recovery of the knowledge of ancient civilizations through the labors of explorers and the successful decipherment of old inscriptions.”²¹

Despite the rapid growth of biblical archaeology in the late 19th and early 20th centuries Kyle demonstrated in 1912 how archaeology had been omitted from almost all the great Bible encyclopedias and dictionaries. Kyle noted, “Since encyclopedias have little or nothing to say on the subject of archaeology and criticism, it is to be expected that critics, who are contributors to all the encyclopedias, will have as little to say in their own individual writings. The expectation is not disappointed.”²² Kyle considered this a major blunder by liberals and in his mind liberal “Higher criticism” of the Bible was guilty of “circling round and round in its enclosed basin” of the biblical text. Literary criticism of the Bible was not enough, and archaeology provided a new way to deal with critical issues and James Orr even predicated that archaeology would “before long, [come] to control both criticism and history.” Orr’s agreement with Kyle’s scholarly agenda is detected in the fact that Orr—his

¹⁹ George L. Robinson, Review of *Moses and the Monuments*, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. 77, 1920, 345.,

²⁰ Kyle, *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments*, 6.

²¹ James Orr, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, 395.

²² Kyle, *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments*, 13.

Scottish UP brother—wrote the “Introduction” to Kyle’s 1912 book *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism* noting that Kyle’s historical arguments for the trustworthiness of Scripture have been made “with much clearness and success.” Indeed, Kyle wrote that his greatest debt was “certainly to none more than to Professor James Orr.”²³ In 1913 Luther Townsend, professor emeritus of Boston University, argued that Kyle was a “Egyptologist with perhaps no equal in this country.” Writing in *The Bible Champion* Townsend held that Kyle had “buttressed the old theology at points where the new theology men had thought everything had been demolished.”²⁴ In an era of heated debate about the historical trustworthiness of the Bible Kyle’s goal was to use archaeology as a new tool to carefully as he said “answer the questions of the critics.”

Yet not all was well in Kyle’s scholarly efforts. George Barton of Bryn Mawr College was not impressed with Kyle’s scholarship and in 1913 criticized Kyle’s book *The Deciding Voice in Biblical Criticism* in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*. Barton claimed that “those who seek by means of archaeology to overthrow criticism are following an *ignis fatuus* [a deceptive hope].” He alleged various places where Kyle had made archaeological mistakes and argued that “archaeological evidence in favor of critical views exists.” In order to turn the tide against skeptical and liberal scholars—like Barton—the UPs promoted archaeology, but they also sought to provide a feast of scholarship that could counter the critics. Despite having help from Kyle, Orr worked himself literally to death on his last project the massive *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)*, released in 1915). The goal of this work was to

²³ Kyle, *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments*, xii.

²⁴ L.T. Townsend, “Where are the Straight Books?,” *The Bible Champion* (September 1913), 93.

help pastors, laypeople, and scholars deal with attacks on the trustworthiness of Scripture. In this enduring encyclopedia dedicated to what Orr termed “reasonable conservatism” the goal was to provide “fairness of statement on all subjects” and counter anti-supernatural scholarship which “eviscerates Christianity of most of the vital truths which the Church, resting on Scripture, has always regarded as its essence.”²⁵ Kyle wrote numerous articles in the *ISBE* and Orr thanked him and noted that Kyle “unselfishly aided in the production of this work.”²⁶ Ultimately, Kyle became the revising editor of *ISBE* seeking to make the work even more conservative.

In 1919 Kyle gave the Stone Lectures at Princeton Seminary on archaeology and the Pentateuch. On several occasions in the 1920s Princeton Seminary professors J. Gresham Machen and Robert Dick Wilson lectured at Xenia and in 1927 and 1928 Kyle lectured at Princeton. On May 24th, 1929 *The Cedarville Herald* reported that Kyle and Machen, who was just days away from leaving Princeton, were lecturing together at the Cedarville Bible Conference in Ohio.²⁷ Just a few years earlier, in 1925 when Machen and Princeton Seminary students founded the League of Evangelical Students, Kyle immediately joined the LES board and spoke, along with Machen, at the first LES national convention held at Calvin College. In 1926 the first edition of the LES publication *The Evangelical Student* featured an abbreviated version of Kyle’s address at Calvin.²⁸ Despite the prominence of

²⁵ James Orr, “Preface,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1930), viii.

²⁶ *ISBE*, xi.

²⁷ “College Conference Attracting Ministers,” *The Cedarville Herald*, May 24th, 1929, 1.

²⁸ Melvin Grove Kyle, “The Story of Ancient Sodom in Light of Modern Science,” *The Evangelical Student*, vol. 1 no. 1 (April 1926), 10-12.

other speakers, such as Machen, the only professor to have work profiled was Kyle's paper on biblical archaeology. In 1926 Kyle made an invitation and was successful in bringing the LES national convention to Xenia. While Machen was being marginalized for his LES work, Kyle was made Moderator of the UPCNA in 1927. Significantly, Machen and Kyle were the only Presbyterians to serve on the LES board in its early years. Kyle spoke at various LES national conventions and his books were promoted in *The Evangelical Student* and shortly before his death in 1933 Kyle contributed his views on how evangelical students should deal with the skepticism of other students and the various ways in which biblical Christianity was being attacked. Kyle's commitment to the UPCNA and the LES were undeniable, but he was also trying to influence mainstream scholarship.

In 1921 Kyle served as a lecturer at the American Schools of Oriental Research in Jerusalem and taught there again in 1926, 1928, 1930, and 1932.²⁹ On Kyle's first visit ASOR's director, the famed William Foxwell Albright, found Kyle to be a charming and tolerant biblical scholar who never argued.³⁰ Perhaps this is why he was invited back and a good friendship formed between Albright and Kyle. While at ASOR Kyle and Albright pursued exploration and excavation and together did work in 1924 in the southern coastal part of the Dead Sea and in 1926, 1928, 1930, and 1932 at Tell Beit Mirsim. Later, Albright wrote,

The writer used to meet Dr. Kyle occasionally, before coming to Palestine in 1919, at learned society meetings. In those days, the fact that we were

²⁹ "Melvin Grove Kyle," Moshe Davis, *America and the Holy Land* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), 171.

³⁰ Leona Glidden Running and David Noel Freedman, *William Foxwell Albright* (New York: Two Continents Publishing Group, LTD, 1975), 90.

apparently at antipodes with regard to most crucial biblical and oriental problems seemed to preclude all real friendship. In the spring of 1921 Dr. Kyle came to Jerusalem... for a stay of several weeks as lecturer in the School, during the writer's year as acting director. The acquaintance then developed soon ripened into friendship. . . . We seldom or never debated biblical questions, but there can be no doubt that our constant association with the ever-recurring opportunity for comparing biblical and archaeological data has led to increasing convergence between our views, once so far apart. To the last, however, Dr. Kyle remained staunchly conservative on most of his basic positions, while the writer has gradually changed from the extreme radicalism of 1919 to a standpoint which can neither be called conservative nor radical, in the usual sense of the terms.³¹

Kyle and Xenia with the help of Albright successfully put themselves on the scholarly map of archaeological research. Their work in pottery chronology became well known in the discipline and artifacts from these excavations were displayed prominently at Xenia—and laterally at Pitt-Xenia and now housed as the Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. The origins of this museum are clearly attributable to Kyle's "evangelical U.P. scholarship" and to his devoted protégé James Leon Kelso, also an evangelical UP archeologist, who taught at Xenia, Pitt-Xenia, and Pittsburgh Seminaries from 1923 to 1963—the only person to teach at all three distinctively different institutions.

³¹ William Foxwell Albright, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 51 (September, 1933), pp. 5, 6.

More importantly for the history of archaeology, it appears that Kyle is to some degree responsible for moving Albright down a less radical scholarly path that held to the Bible's historical trustworthiness.

In 1924 Kyle gave a lecture on archaeology and the Pentateuch in London at the Victoria Institute. After Kyle presented his paper various people responded. Dr. Alfred Schofield, a London Harley Street medical physician, noted:

For many years the clearness of the Americans has much impressed me. At Harley Street, if I had an American patient I got an intelligible and orderly statement of symptoms, quite different from any English sufferer. To what to attribute this valuable characteristic, so marked in the able paper to-day, I know not. Whether it is due to the clarity of the atmosphere, producing a corresponding clearness of mental vision, or whether it springs from some more recondite source, I know not. Of its charm and value there is happily no doubt...It is delightful to find as I do week by week the most valuable and quite new testimony coming from America on Bible subjects of the first importance, and proving by quiet argument the authenticity and accuracy of Holy Writ, in refreshing contrast to the *ex parte* and unbalanced statements subversive of Scripture, heard here in much unwearied repetition.³²

It is interesting to note that Schofield like Albright found Kyle to be charming. A.H. Finn, a British Old Testament Scholar, seemed to agree with Kyle and said that "the general trend of

³² Alfred Schofield quoted in *Journal of Transaction of the Victoria Institute*, vol. LVI, 1924, 37.

the argument is forcible.”³³ In 1952, Donald Wiseman, a leading British evangelical archaeologist, reminded members of the Victoria Institute of Kyle’s memorable lecture.

One admirer of both Machen and Kyle was Joseph P. Free. In the 1930s, Free was troubled by Presbyterian liberalism and sided with Machen. Free became a committed evangelical Presbyterian and developed a great enthusiasm for biblical archaeology. He began teaching biblical archaeology at Wheaton College in 1936 and continued for several decades. In a 1956 Wheaton College biblical archaeology brochure, Free featured Kyle’s name and Kyle’s view that the evangelical approach to the discipline “seeks not merely to discuss problems, but to solve them.”³⁴ Indeed, in an April 1932 edition of *The Evangelical Student* Kyle argued that his archaeological goal was “to answer those questions” he had many years ago at Muskingum.³⁵ It appears that Free’s approach to archaeology was influenced by Kyle and Free cited Kyle’s work and Albright’s commendation of Kyle in Free’s 1950 work *Archaeology and Bible History*. In addition, Kyle’s influence extended to Robert McQuilkin who had studied privately under Kyle for his UPCNA ordination and in 1923 founded Columbia Bible College and helped develop evangelical and fundamentalist movements in the American south. At Westmont College in Santa Barbara, Kenneth Munroe, who had earned a Xenia Th.D. under Kyle in 1929 taught at the school for several decades, a school that was partially founded by former Biola professor and evangelical UP clergyman and linguist, Elbert McCreery. The famed Baptist fundamentalist A.C. Dixon

³³ A.H. Finn quoted in *Journal of Transaction of the Victoria Institute*, vol. LVI, 1924, 39.

³⁴ Kyle’s words in Wheaton College Archaeology brochure quoted by Timothy Larsen in, “Joseph P. Free and the Romance of Biblical Archaeology,” John Monson and Daniel Master eds., *Dothan I* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 5.

³⁵ Kyle, “If The Foundations Be Destroyed, What Can the Righteous Do?,” 26.

recognized Kyle's scholarship and took him to China on a tour defending historic Christianity.³⁶ J. Oliver Buswell noted that he once heard Kyle give his personal testimony. Buswell, a Wheaton College president, noted that Kyle "took his Bible between his hands and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, this book is true. I have taken it and lived with it in the very cities of ancient Canaan, and it has proved to be true at every point of testing."³⁷ For Kyle archaeology was no enemy of faith. At his death in 1933, Kyle was simultaneously lecturer in biblical archaeology at Pitt-Xenia, Louisville, and Dallas seminaries.

Melvin Grove Kyle was a humble evangelical United Presbyterian scholar, and biblical archaeology was his passion along with his personal faith in Christ and his word. For those who Kyle felt were in error on biblical, archaeological, and theological issues Kyle sought to, as he said, "answer their questions." Many of their questions had been his questions. Kyle was able to establish Xenia as a center for archaeological research and scholarship and this continued in both Pitt-Xenia and at the current Pittsburgh Seminary.³⁸ As we think of Old Princeton we need to remember the Princeton-Xenia alliance and the friends that conservatives in the PCUSA found in the UPCNA. Kyle appears to have been winsome, and Albright noted that Kyle was excellent at making "ill wishers into friends." Kyle was an evangelical United Presbyterian who lived out the UP motto "The Truth of God—Forbearance in Love."

³⁶ Thomas Larsen, *The Company of Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1998), 737.

³⁷ James Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 213.

³⁸ Also, David P. Livingston, a 1954 graduate of Pitt-Xenia, founded Associates for Biblical Research, a more conservative evangelical biblical archaeology organization.