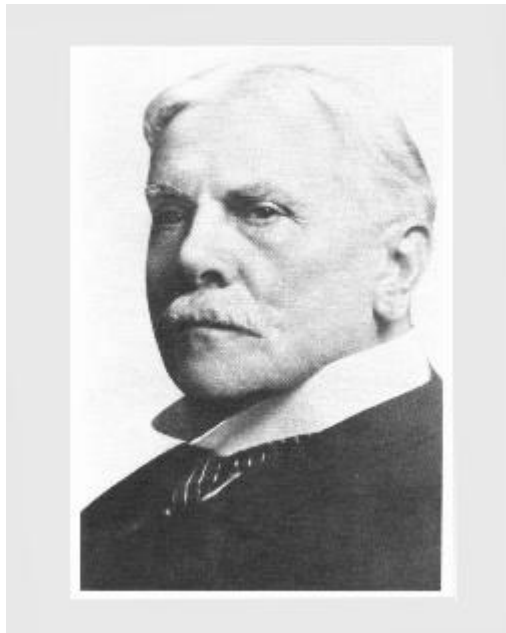


Scofield: The Man Behind The Myth

This is a short biographical sketch revealing little known facts about the celebrated dispensationalist saint Cyrus Ingerson Scofield, author of the *Scofield Reference Bible*. We are grateful to Joseph Canfield for his book [The Incredible Scofield and his Book](#) and to Dave MacPherson for providing a good portion of the documentation.



Generally speaking, dispensationalists tend to cherish his teachings without any concern whatsoever for what kind of man Scofield really was. For some reason, his admirers consider it unethical or possibly even contemptible to expose embarrassing little known secrets about the man. Facts should not be buried because they make people feel uncomfortable. Neither C.I. Scofield nor his work are above reproach and considering the impact he has had on Christendom, his life should be examined. The type of person that he really was will have a major influence on the theology that he taught.

Former Dallas Theological Seminary President and student of Scofield's theology John F. Walvoord, has written concerning the *Scofield Reference Bible*:

This edition of the Bible, which has had unprecedented circulation, has popularized premillennial teachings and provided ready helps of interpretation. It has probably done more to extend premillennialism in the last half century than any other volume. This accounts for the many attempts to discredit this work...The reputation of the Scofield Bible is curious because each succeeding writer apparently believes that his predecessors have not succeeded in disposing of this work once and for all. This belief apparently is well-founded, for the Scofield Bible continues to be issued year after year

in greater numbers than any of its refuters.^[i]

This is the general consensus among dispensationalist leaders that because his work is around in such great quantity it must be correct, so they plug it. These men, however, through their heavy promotion of Scofield's work, are largely responsible for the popularity of it (they exhibit circular reasoning).

When giving the qualifications of a bishop, Paul states in 1 Timothy 3:2,4

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

Did Scofield meet the qualifications for a leader in the church? His friends and colleagues have tried to hide the fact that he was married twice, had two daughters with his first wife and was divorced by her due to how he treated her and their daughters. Scofield began courting his future second wife Hettie van Wark before the divorce was finalized and they got married only three months after it was.^[ii] Below is a copy of the divorce decree filed by the court in Atchison County Kansas. His divorce was finalized at least four years after he became 'born again'.

Vs

C. I. Scofield

Defendant

Now comes the plaintiff by her attorneys Tomlinson and Griffin and the defendant enters for appearance and files answer and makes no further appearance.

And thereupon this cause came on for hearing upon the pleadings and testimony and was argued by counsel upon consideration whereof the Court does find that the defendant has been guilty of wilfull abandonment of the plaintiff for more than one year prior to the commencement of this action.

It is therefore adjudged and decreed by the Court here that the marriage relation heretofore existing between the said parties be and the same is hereby set aside and wholly annulled and the parties wholly released from the obligations of the same.

It is further ordered and decreed that the custody nurture education and care of the said minor children Abigail Scofield and Helen Scofield be and the same is hereby given to the said plaintiff and the said defendant is hereby forever enjoined from interfering with or disturbing the said plaintiff in the custody care nurture and education of the said above named children until the further order of this Court.

Scofield abandoned his wife and children and refused to support them. I Timothy 5:8 says “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

When his first wife Leontine originally filed for divorce in July 1881, she listed the following reasons:

“ (he had)...absented himself from his said wife and children, and had not been with them but abandoned them with the intention of not returning to them again...has been guilty of gross neglect of duty and has failed to support this plaintiff or her said children, or to contribute thereto, and has made no provision for them for food, clothing or a home, or in any manner performed his duty in the support of said family although he was able to do so.”^[iii]

Below is a photo of the gravestone of Leontine in Mt. Calvary Cemetary in Atchison, Kansas. This is the woman that Scofield pretended never existed (he never referred to her

publicly after he became famous).



Cyrus Scofield had several other incidents of a downright dishonest nature after he supposedly became saved. The fact that in 1892 he began calling himself Doctor Scofield without producing any Doctorate degree from any Seminary or University is the least of his devious activities. Even the details he gave in his story of conversion are proven to be fabricated, including the time, place and other particularities, thereby placing doubt on the whole story.[\[iv\]](#)

He was a self-promoter in every sense of the word, even lying about being able to comfort and calm the entire city of Belfast, Ireland with a sermon he delivered there the Sunday after the Titanic sunk.[\[v\]](#) His behind-the-scenes handlers saw to it that his swindles and schemes were swept under the rug and that only a positive image of him was promoted, especially an exaggeration of his Biblical knowledge and wisdom. Men like 33rd degree freemason George Bannerman Dealey owner of the *Dallas Morning News* and member of Scofield's church contributed greatly to the cause. But occasionally, newspapers who weren't loyal to his cause would put out damaging information on him. Here is an excerpt from the Topeka newspaper *The Daily Capital* dated August 27, 1881:

CYRUS I. SCHOFIELD IN THE ROLE OF A CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER

“Cyrus I. Schofield, formerly of Kansas, late lawyer, politician and shyster generally, has come to the surface again, and promises once more

to gather around himself that halo of notoriety that has made him so prominent in the past. The last personal knowledge that Kansans have had of this peer among scalawags, was when about four years

ago, after a series of forgeries and confidence games he left the state and a destitute family and took refuge in Canada. For a time he kept undercover, nothing being heard of him until within the past two years when he turned up in St. Louis, where he had a wealthy widowed sister living who has generally come to the front and squared up Cyrus' little follies and foibles by paying good round sums of money. Within the past year, however, Cyrus committed a series of St. Louis forgeries that could not be settled so easily, and the erratic young gentleman was compelled to linger in the St. Louis jail for a period of six months.

Among the many malicious acts that characterized his career, was one peculiarly atrocious, that has come under our personal notice. Shortly after he left Kansas, leaving his wife and two children dependent upon the bounty of his wife's mother, he wrote his wife that he could invest some \$1,300 of her mother's money, all she had, in a manner that would return big interest. After some correspondence he forwarded them a mortgage, signed and executed by one Chas. Best, purporting to convey valuable property in St. Louis. Upon this, the money was sent to him. Afterwards the mortgages were found to be base forgeries, no such person as Charles Best being in existence, and the property conveyed in the mortgage fictitious..."[\[vi\]](#)

Below is a picture of the court house in St. Louis. The center of which contained the jail where Scofield spent six months on a forgery conviction. He had stolen his mother-in-law's last \$1,300 one year after his conversion:



THE FOUR COURTS BUILDING

In all honesty, I consider the above information about Cyrus Ingerson Scofield trivial in comparison to the tampering he did with the word of God. The Lord gave more than one warning about doing that:

Deuteronomy 4:2

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Proverbs 30:5-6

Every word of God is pure : he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.
Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

Revelation 22:18-19

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add
unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:
And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

One of Cyrus's first suspicious moves involved in producing his Reference Bible was to take an unnecessary trip to the British Isles for research. He immediately sought out the controversial scholars Westcott and Hort in London. These two polecats guided him in how to alter the King James Bible so that it would be compatible with the dispensationalist teachings

he was recruited to promote. Scofield preferred the Revised Version of the Bible, which was largely the product of his mentors Westcott and Hort and was based on corrupted manuscripts born in Alexandria, Egypt and espoused by the Vatican. (There is much information available concerning the Occultic beliefs and activities of Westcott and Hort).

However, he knew that if he coupled his notes with the RV they wouldn't sell very well because the KJV far surpassed the RV in popularity. Even today the KJV greatly outnumbers the Revised Version. So he used the KJV, but in many areas where the two versions differed doctrinally, especially where his doctrine was concerned, he placed a footnote giving a supposedly more correct rendering, which almost always agreed with the RV. The serpent asked "yea hath God said?" in the garden. Scofield took after his father by placing doubt on the word of God and offering a shameful substitution. (Some of these dishonorable changes are documented in my articles [Dispensationalist Timeline](#) and [Dispensationalism and the King James Bible](#) and more examples can be found at [The Not Deceived Network](#)).

Scofield's work continues to be praised and utilized today by men with questionable motives. His closely guarded reputation remains intact and this information provided will only be useful to the truth-seekers, which represents a relatively small percentage of Christendom. At least two scriptures are applicable at this point:

For there is no respect of persons with God. -- Romans 2:11

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. -- Matthew 7:20

Endnotes

[i] John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1959) p. 12 -- quoted by Tim LaHaye, *Revelation –Illustrated and Made Plain* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973) p. 288

[ii] Joseph Canfield, *The Incredible Scofield And His Book* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1988) p. 100

[iii] Quoted from the papers in case No. 2161, supplied by the Atchison County Court – reproduced by Joseph Canfield, *The Incredible Scofield And His Book*, p. 89

[iv] Canfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-68

[v] Canfield, *op. cit.*, p.239-240

[vi] Canfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80 – as taken from the files of the Kansas State Historical Society