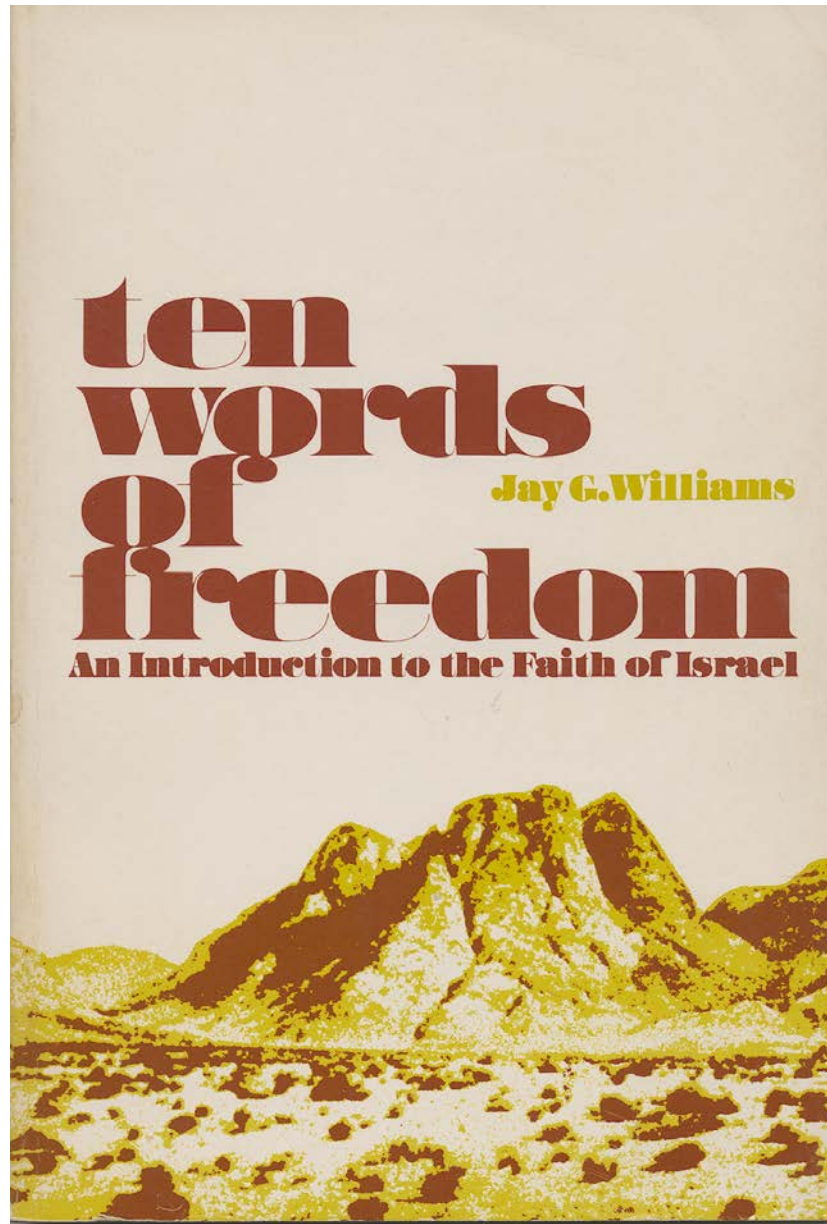


## Books

1. My first book, of course, was my dissertation, *The Life and Thought of Benjamin Whichcote*, published by Ann Arbor microfilms. Initially I had thought of publishing it in regular book form but for reasons I cannot quite recall I never even contacted a publisher. Eventually I published some of the information in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* but much of the work remains only in microfilm form. The topic is still significant, for Whichcote was the founder of the Cambridge Platonist school, a liberal, less dogmatic form of Protestantism that appeared in 17<sup>th</sup> century England. Whichcote was John Locke's favorite preacher but several of his followers, such as Henry More and Ralph Cudworth often took issue with Cartesianism and the general trend of philosophy of that age. As I reach the end of my career as a teacher I am drawn to return to that era for another look at a part of the history of philosophy seldom mentioned in textbooks..





2. One reason why I did not initially follow up on my study of Whichcote was that I had become enamoured with Biblical studies. By 1970 I had produced my first printed book, published by Fortress Press, *Ten Words of Freedom*. It was a study of the ten commandments and their relation to the whole exodus story. It bears the clear influence of Paul Tillich's philosophy and a kind of Biblical archaeology that sought to prove the Bible factual. Although I still agree with Tillich about many matters, I certainly no longer accept some of the arguments used about the factuality of the exodus event. Therefore there are many parts of the book with which I now thoroughly disagree.

# Understanding The Old Testament

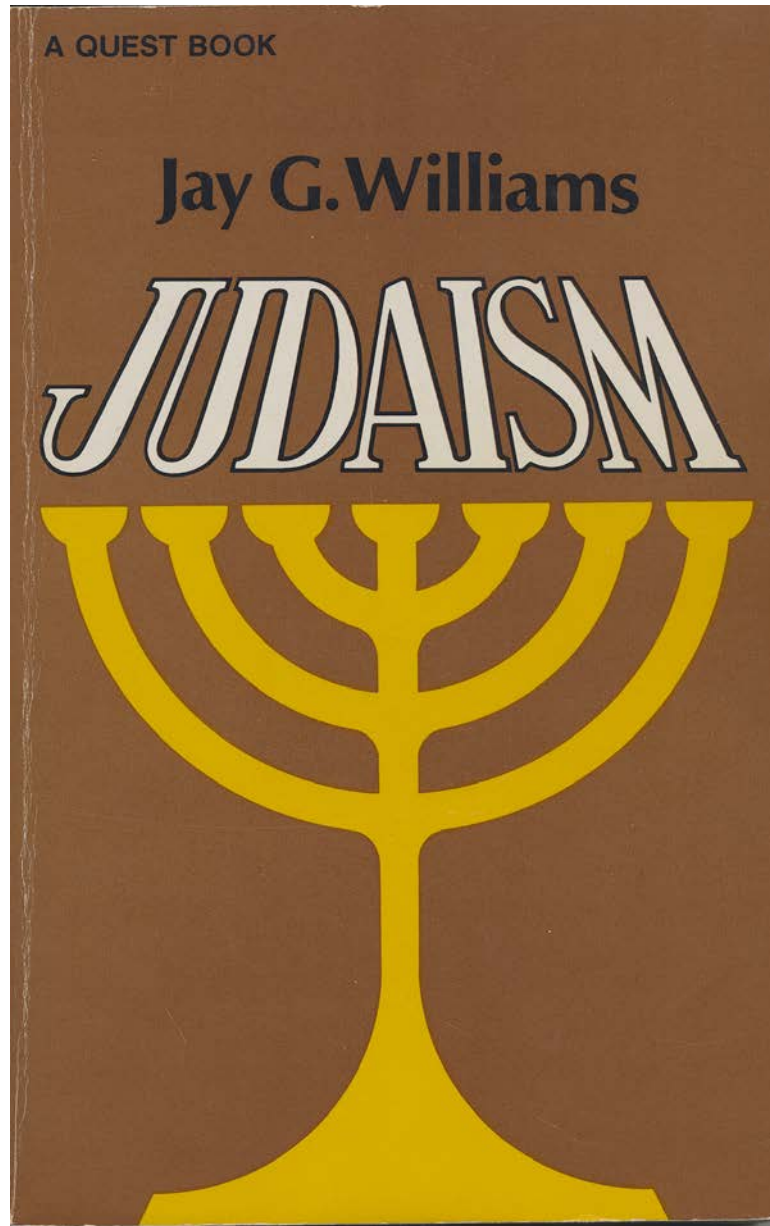


Its literature, history, impact on Western culture and  
relevance to our contemporary society by Jay G. Williams

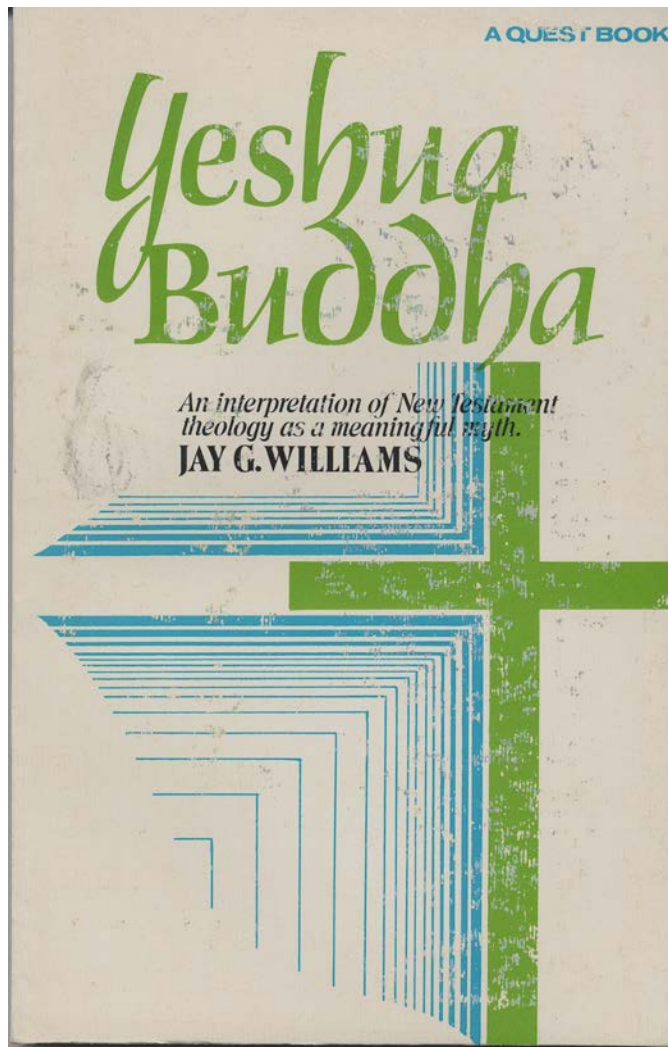
Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

\$2.95

3. Somebody must have liked *Ten Words of Freedom*, because I was invited shortly after its publication to write an introduction to the Old Testament for Barron's Educational Series.. This I did and by 1972 *Understanding the Old Testament* was in print. Admittedly some chapters are better than others. Certainly many Biblical scholars would have emphasized different matters. I think, however, that as an introductory textbook it does what an introduction should do. It informs the reader without overwhelming anybody with too much technical material. It also introduces some of the basic questions that every reader of the Bible ought to ponder. It is a positive book without being dogmatic about either theological or historical questions.

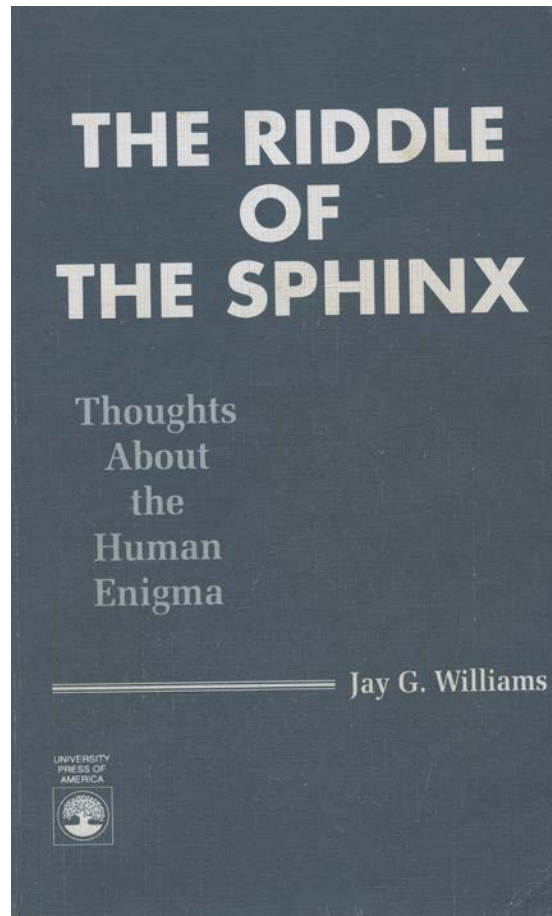


4. Barron's liked my book very much and before long I was invited to participate in the writing of another one, this time about the history of Judaism. A rabbi had submitted a manuscript for a book, but the publisher did not think much of his historical work. So I was asked to write the historical section while the rabbi's work was confined to Jewish life and practice. This I did, but when the rabbi heard that a Gentile was involved in the project he backed out, leaving me with half a book. Happily, I was able to flesh out the narrative more fully and add some documents in an appendix at the end. I had to wait for sometime before I found a publisher but eventually it was accepted and published in 1980 under the title *Judaism* by the Theosophical Publishing House. Although it is relatively brief, the book does, I think, cover the basic thinkers and movements within Judaism in an unbiased way. I have received several complimentary letters about it from Jewish readers.

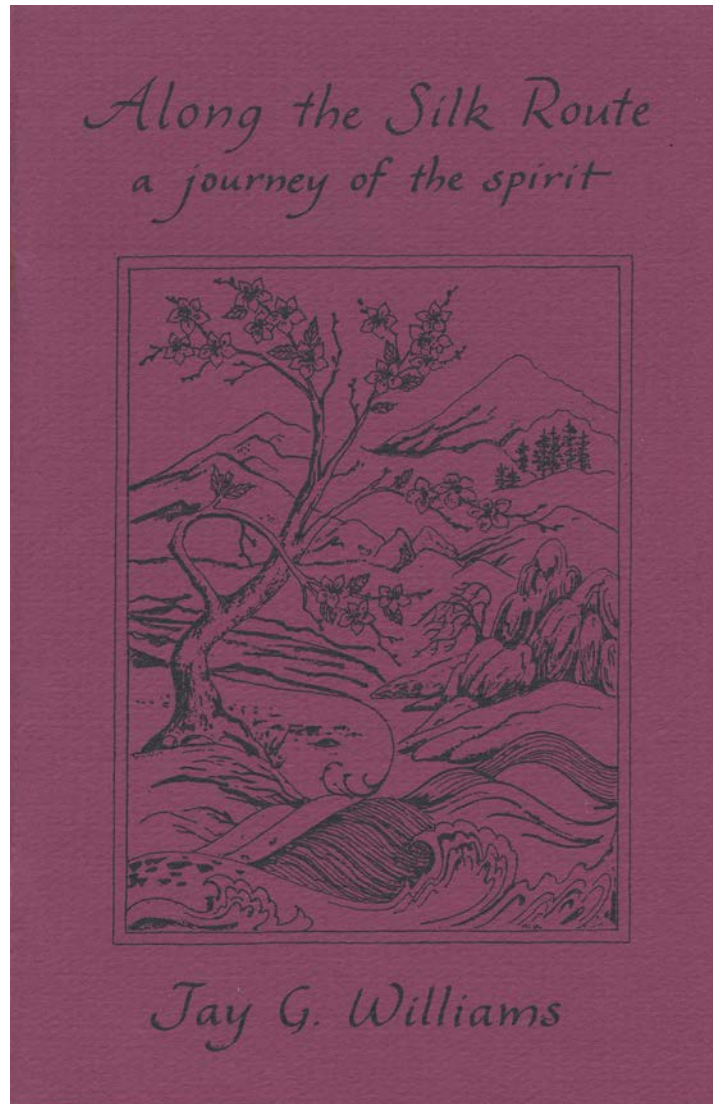


5. In the meantime, I had headed off intellectually in a new direction. Not only had I begun exploring Chinese philosophy; I had introduced a course on Mahayana Buddhism. This, of course, led me to rethink the whole meaning of Christianity and how it relates to other spiritual traditions. Out of this work came *Yeshua Buddha*, an attempt to imagine how the gospels would have been read and interpreted by someone who began with Nagarjuna or Vasabandu rather than Plato and Aristotle. Much to my surprise I found that Mahayanists could make very good sense out of the gospels, possibly better sense than could a Platonist. Though this book was written after *Judaism*, it was actually published in 1978, two years before *Judaism* was in print.

After 1980 there appears to be an hiatus in my work. Actually during the 1980s I wrote two scholarly works, "Time, Space, and Power" a work that grew out of my new, very popular beginning course, and "The Stupa, the Lingam, and the Cross," a study of three major religious symbols. Neither saw the light of day. I think I should have worked harder to find a publisher, but initial rejections encouraged me to set them aside to be redone at a later time. That time has never arrived.



6. By 1990 I was back on track publishing a book that I have used quite regularly in my introductory class. It is a collection of quotations by both eastern and western thinkers (including me) about major questions of human life. Although it is a work with many voices, the choice of voices and hence the central argument of the book is very much mine.



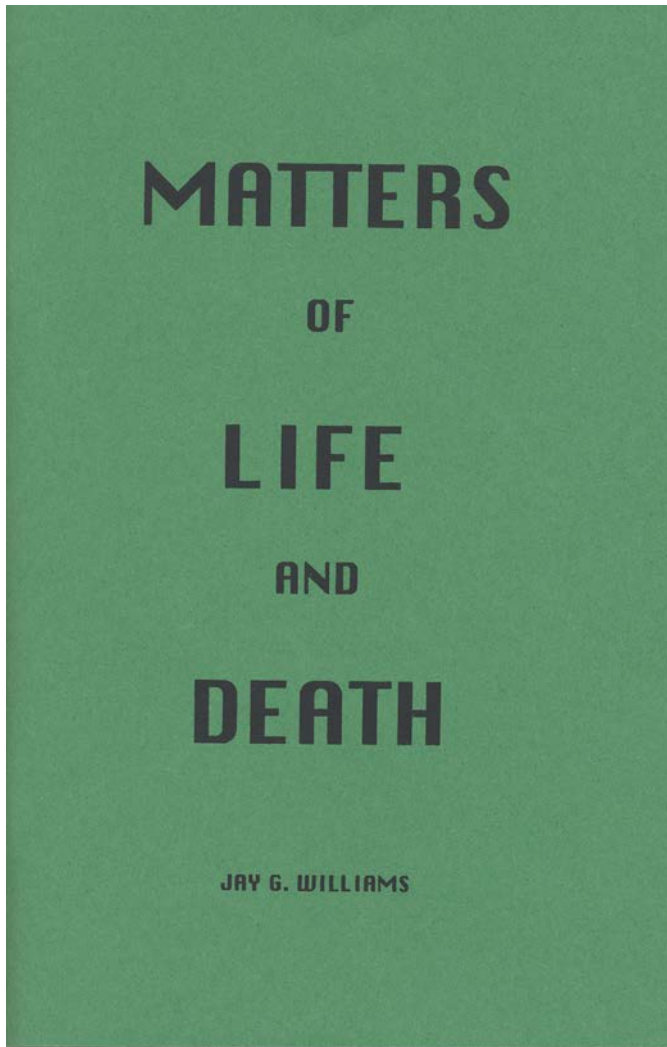
7. Then I turned to poetry, producing my first chapbook in 1991. It is a book that takes the reader around the world with poems with both western and eastern themes. A stop in a Sufi tavern will have to suffice as an illustration of what the book contains.

#### The Tavern

In the tavern  
On the Way  
Drinking wine  
From dusk till dawn.  
Others hurry  
On their way,  
Bearing burdens  
Pressing on.  
I abide here

In the night  
Unaware of  
Travelers gone  
Here the Path ends,  
Here I stay.  
Bless me, pour  
Another One.





8. That was soon followed, in 1993 by another chapbook, *Matters of Life and Death*. Again, one poem from the collection will have to suffice.

REVERIE

It is the time of the birds.

Strangely,

The wing turns

Like death in the forest.

It is the time of the birds;

And slowly.

Autumn slowly,

The moon-set whirrs.

It is the time of the birds;

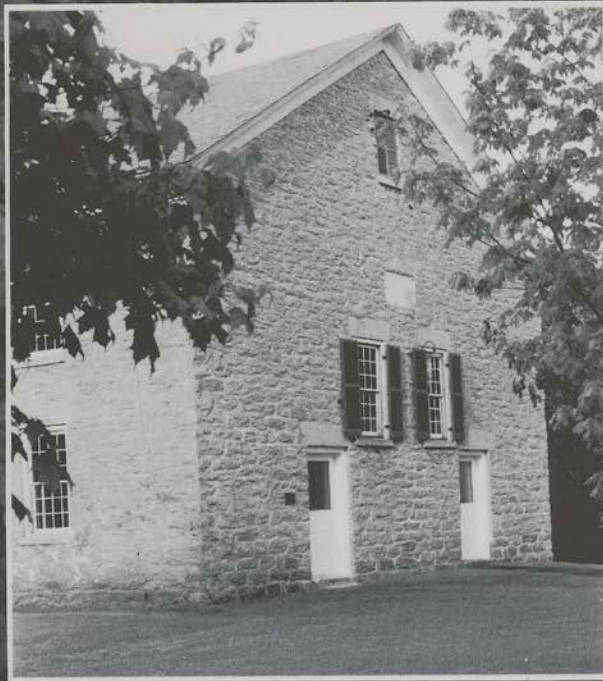
For now.

Even now,

As the wing turns,

Do not awaken me.

# memory stones



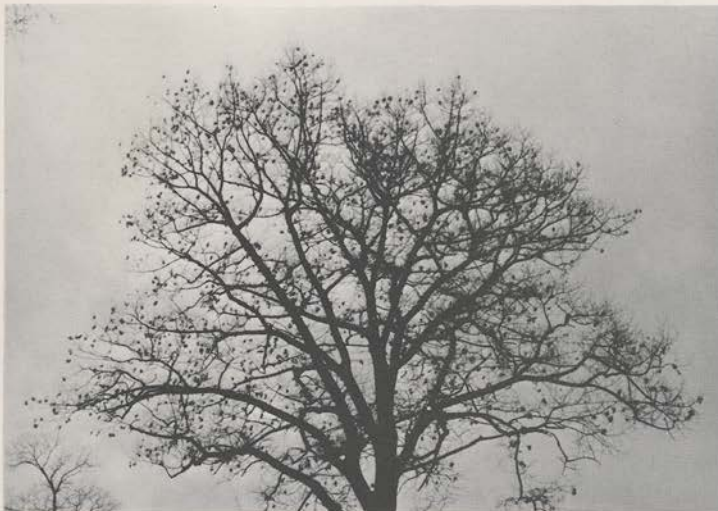
A History of Welsh-Americans in  
Central New York and Their Churches

by Jay G. Williams III

9. In the same year, 1993, my son published a book called *Memory Stones*, a very fine history of Welsh churches and Welsh culture in central New York. The book is very much his, but I was asked to photograph all sorts of sites, sometimes very obscure, sometimes well known. In any event, for good or for ill, examples of my photography are found all through this work. The cover will have to serve as an example of my work.



DARK TREES  
and  
EMPTY SKY



A PHILOSOPHICAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY

10. That was followed in 1996 by another photographic book. It was an attempt to combine photography and poetry as a reflection on life. All the trees of winter were photographed in black and white on the Hamilton College Campus.

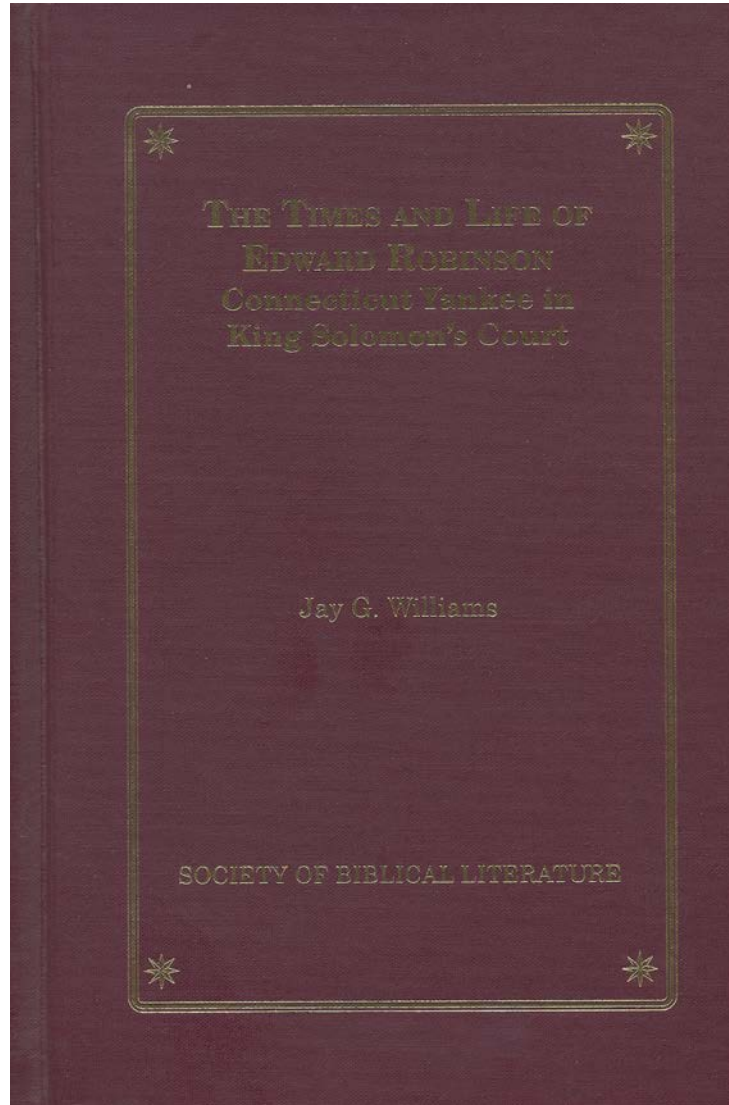
One page will have to suffice as an example of what is within:



VI. Filling the Universe,  
Glowing with  
The Lightness of Emptiness:  
Blessing all.

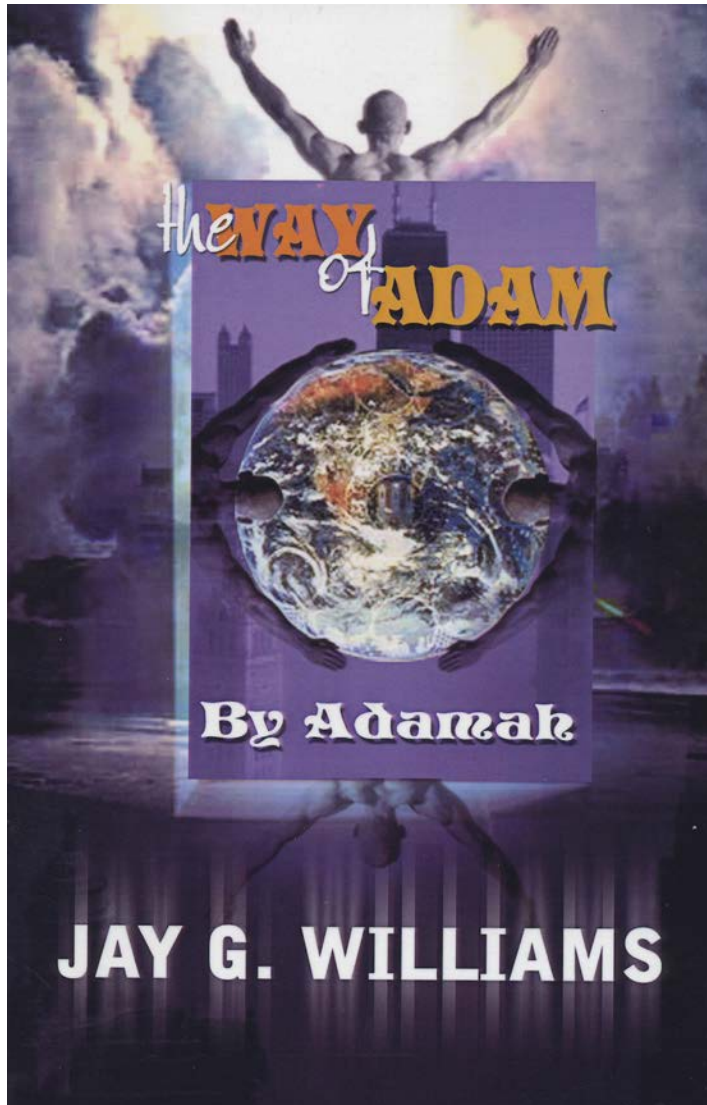
11. Also in 1996 I published a work based upon lectures I had given at the Krotona Institute in California. The book was published under the title *A Reassessment of Absolute Skepticism and Religious Faith* and is a working out of the implications of what I call absolute skepticism for human life. By absolute skepticism I mean that skepticism that is not based upon some other certainty or intellectual commitment. Nagarjuna, who offers “the destruction of all views” is my primary example of such skepticism.

Unfortunately, the cover of the book is just a dark blue and has no writing on it so no cover is reproduced here. Nevertheless, I believe that this is one of my more important contributions to the philosophy of religion.



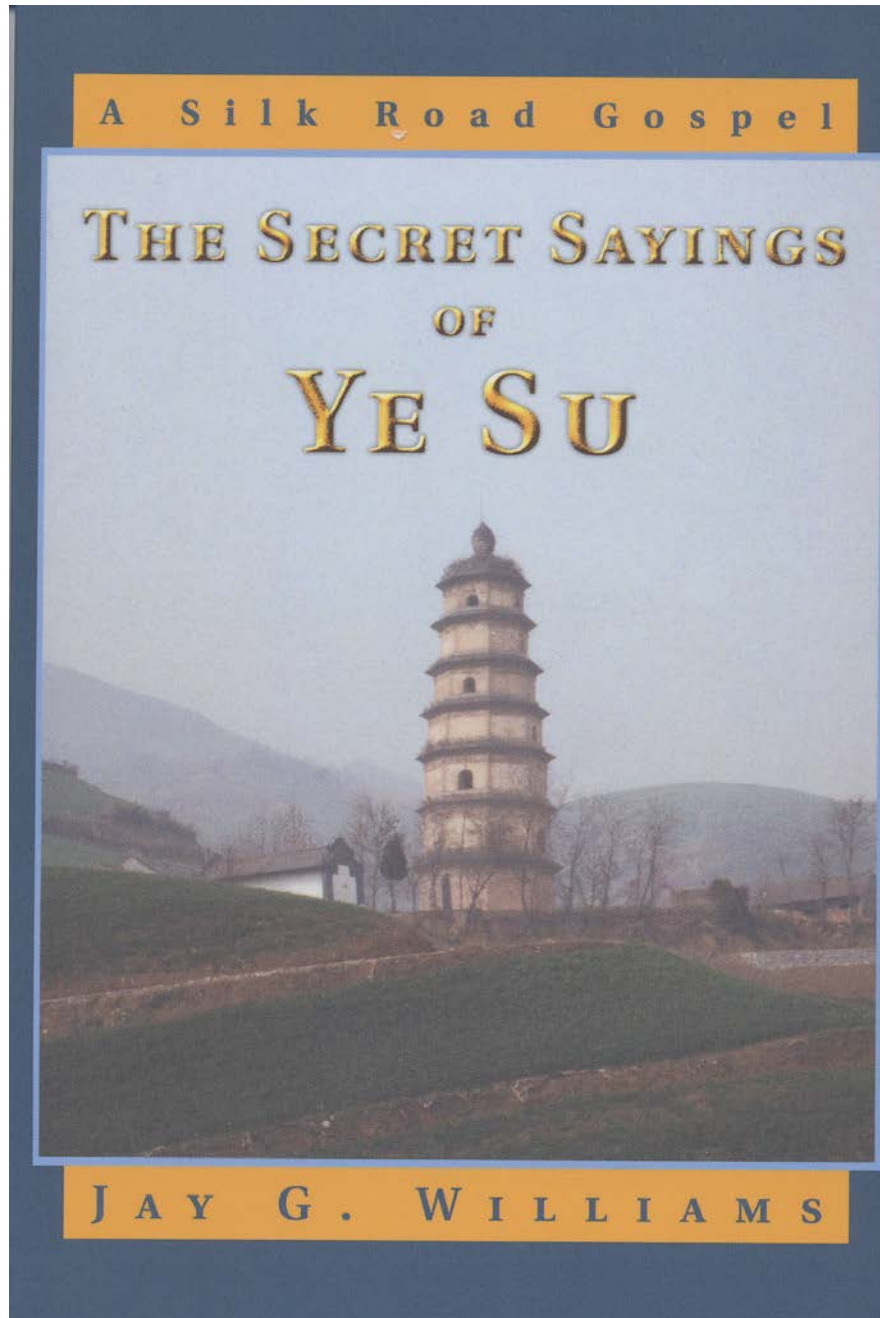
12. In the meantime, something most extraordinary occurred. Through a series of unpredictable incidents, I came into contact with the Edward Robinson family of New Jersey, the present Edward Robinson being the direct descendent of the famous Biblical scholar who graduated from Hamilton in 1816. Quite unexpectedly I was given huge quantities of material related to the life and work of that great scholar. Because of my connections with both Hamilton and archaeology, I seemed to be the best person to do the job. With the massive help of Hermine who spent untold hours deciphering his very difficult handwriting, I was able to write the first full-length biography of Robinson, placing him with the time period in which he wrote. While other scholars worked almost

exclusively with ancient language and texts, Robinson actually went to the Holy Land and located many of the ancient sites of which the Bible speaks. Somewhat later, Hermine published a biography of his second wife who was an extraordinary writer and scholar in her own right.



13. My thirteenth book is undoubtedly my strangest and is quite unlike any of the others. It is all the result of a dream I had in 1972. In that dream I was visited by a very lovely woman, whose name I never learned, and given a book to read. The next morning I went to my office to do some work and suddenly lines from the book began to return to my memory. Setting aside everything else, I began to write down poems. That morning, before lunch, I had written 18 poems. The book, however, did not stop there and over the next few weeks I was able to write down the whole book that consisted not only of poetry but of a story of a quest by a strange assortment of men. Woven into the text are many of my interests at that time: Tarot, astrology, Lao Zi, the Bible, kabbalah.

Quite frankly, I did not know what to do with this work, so I put it in my desk drawer and did nothing. It was only in 2000 that I pulled it out, reread it and decided that whether anyone else ever read it or not I should publish it, if only to honor the woman in the dream who gave it to me. Some people have read it and found it quite difficult to decipher, but those with an esoteric bent have found it moving.



14. *The Way of Adam* certainly arrived in a strange way, but then so did *The Secret Sayings of Ye Su*. I was attending a Buddhist-Christian Studies conference when two Chinese men approached me while I was sitting in the residence hall lounge waiting for



dinner. What they showed me was a photograph of a manuscript in Greek of a “gospel” that apparently was found in China. Needless to say I was excited, but I also doubted my ability to translate it well. They must have read *Yeshua Buddha*, however, and insisted that I could do it.

I took the text home with me and over the summer was able to translate the seventy-two short sayings. I sent my translation and the text back to them, as I had promised to do, thinking that they would publish the text. Their word of thanks for my work was the last that I heard from them. They simply disappeared, leaving me with only a copy of my translation and a few notes.

After waiting several years, I finally decided to publish the work, because it seems very significant to me. Some doubt my veracity about the project, and I really can't say I blame them, but I know that the meeting and the translation did occur. My guess is that this document came from the Christian community that began in China in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. It is clearly Christian but also reveals many influences from both Buddhism and Daoism.

The cover shows, in a photograph I took, a Christian pagoda located about fifty miles from Xian that I visited while in China with a group of Hamilton students. Not far away is a very ancient Daoist temple and complex. *The Secret Sayings of Ye Su* was published in 2004.

# Around the Quad



## Thoughts and Memories about Hamilton College

Jay G. Williams '54

15. In 2006 I put out a work privately that is hardly esoteric or inexplicable at all. *Around The Quad* is a series of “poems” about Hamilton College as I remember and have experienced her. It has been quite popular among some alumni. Two poems will help to set the mood:

### An Evening Stroll

Sometimes, as evening wanders toward the valley,  
I take to wandering myself  
Along the old cemetery walks,  
Past all those men I once knew  
Who still speak to me  
Gravely  
Of that past long ago.

There lies David Ellis, a fountain of

Historical facts,  
And Marcel Moraud who fought, he said,  
With the Underground in France,  
And his colleague, Frank Hamlin,  
Who always made you feel he spoke only to you,  
And David Millar and Bob Browning,  
Robert Barnes Rudd and Digger Graves,  
Win Tolles, and even Bob McEwen,  
The college Prexy for so long.

All came from elsewhere  
To lie, together  
With Sam Kirkland, Skenandoah  
And the Roots,  
Here on a sloping hillside  
In the Hamilton Cemetery  
With only stones to remind the world  
Of the glories that once were.

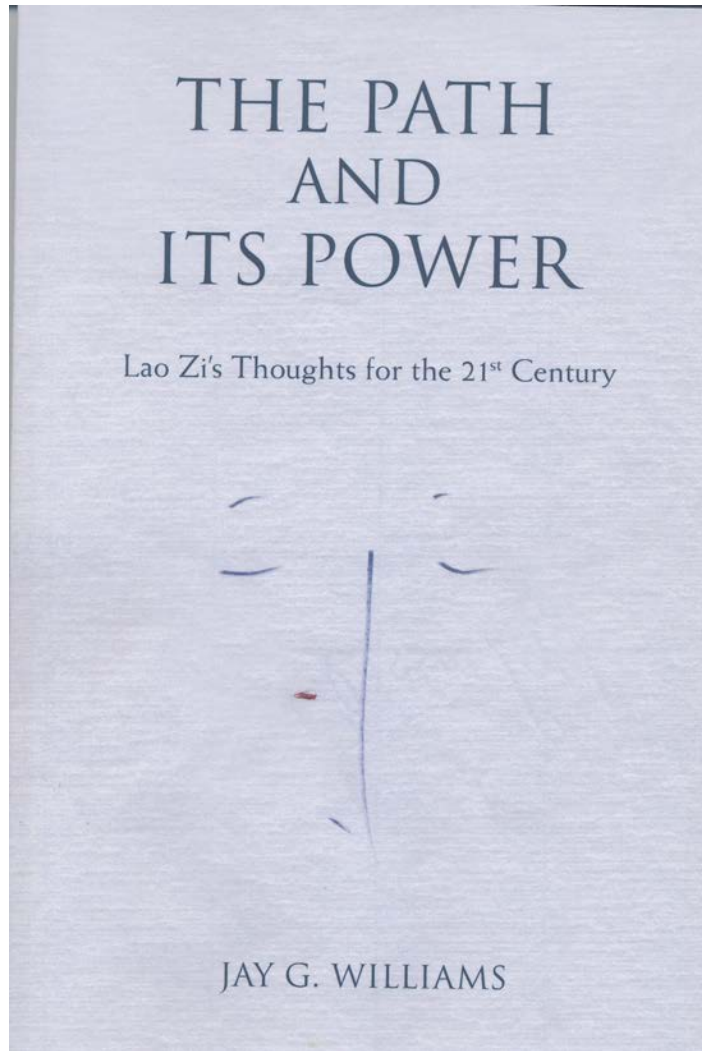
Wally Johnson

You could see him at faculty meetings  
On the second floor of Buttrick  
Craning his neck to take attendance,  
But he spent most of his time traveling,  
Having dinner with old alums wherever he went.  
He knew everyone, or so they said.  
One time an FBI agent arrived to do  
A background check on an alumnus.  
Let us call him Fred Jones.  
The problem was everyone knew Fred  
Was a heavy drinker and so they didn't say much  
Except, "Wally Johnson will be able to tell you."  
As the Dean and the agent left the office,  
Win spotted Wally.  
"Wally, you remember Fred Jones, don't you?"  
"Why of course," said Wally taking the agent's hand,  
"It's so nice to see you again."

The Voyage of Life  
The Collected Poetry  
OF  
Jay G. Williams



16. That was followed in 2007 by *The Voyage of Life*, a collection of my poetry.. I had wanted to include all four of Thomas Cole's paintings known together as the voyage of life, but eventually I settled upon using only his first picture for a cover.



17. For years I had wanted to write a book about perhaps my favorite thinker, Lao Zi, but every time I tried I felt frustrated in my attempts. How could one write a learned book about someone so opposed to “learning?” One day, however, my poetic imagination took hold and I created a “new” *Dao De Jing* for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

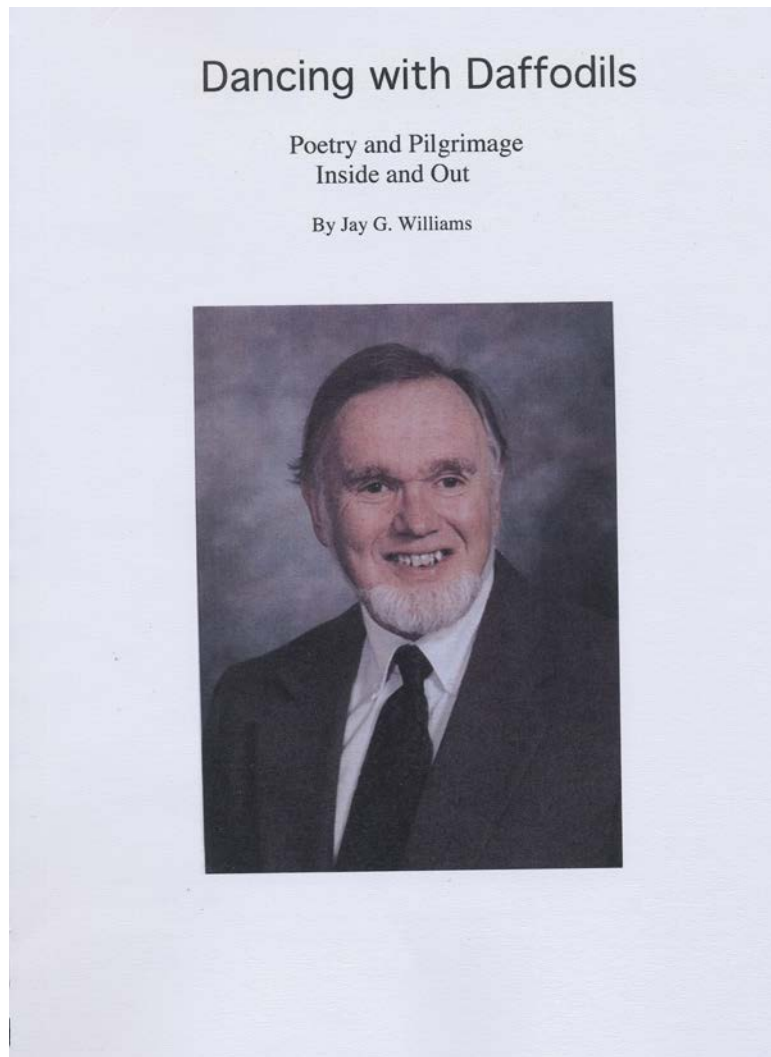
The poems and the illustrations are mine, but the essential ideas come from the Old Master himself. Here is one chapter”

### **30. Be Rooted**

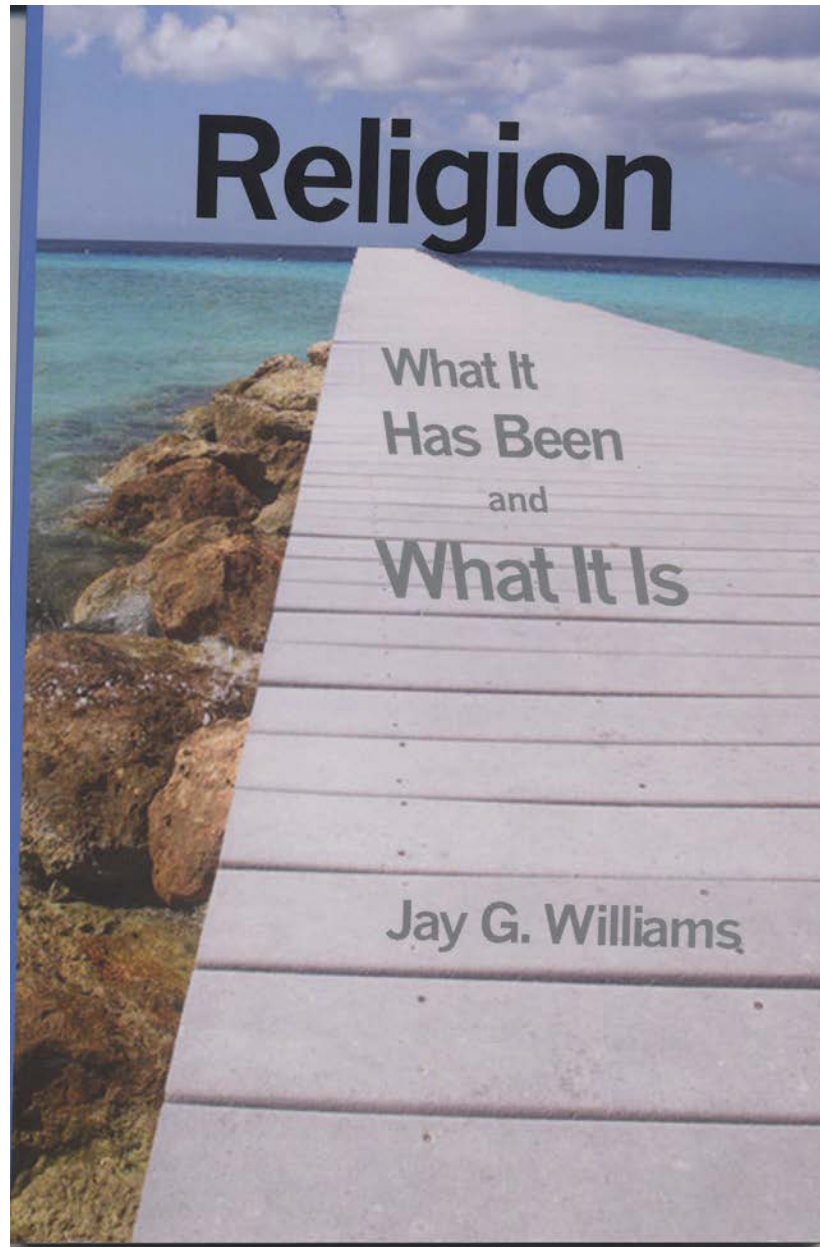
The myriad of things manifest and embrace  
The yang and the yin  
And these two together make  
One turning whole,  
But the cosmos is born  
From No Thing  
At every moment.

Blossom in the world,

But be rooted  
In the great mystery.  
Flowers cut off from their root  
Soon perish.



18. I had been working on *Dancing with Daffodils* for quite a long time. It is my autobiography, complete with many pictures and poems. Of course it isn't finished yet, but I decided it was time to get copies to my family and so I "self-published" it. Whether it will be of any use to anyone remains to be seen. Whatever other people think, I enjoyed putting it together. A second, more complete edition was printed in 2016.

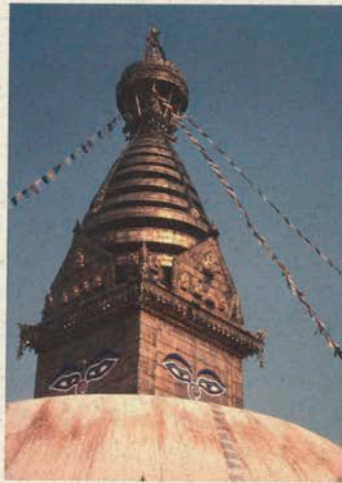


19. After all that personal matter, I returned to somewhat more scholarly writing, publishing *Religion: What It Has Been and What It Is*. The work, in really a very few pages, sketches out the social purposes and the history of human religion. In it I develop what I think is a rather unique perspective on what religion really is.

# The Stupa

Buddhism in Symbolic Form

By Jay G. Williams

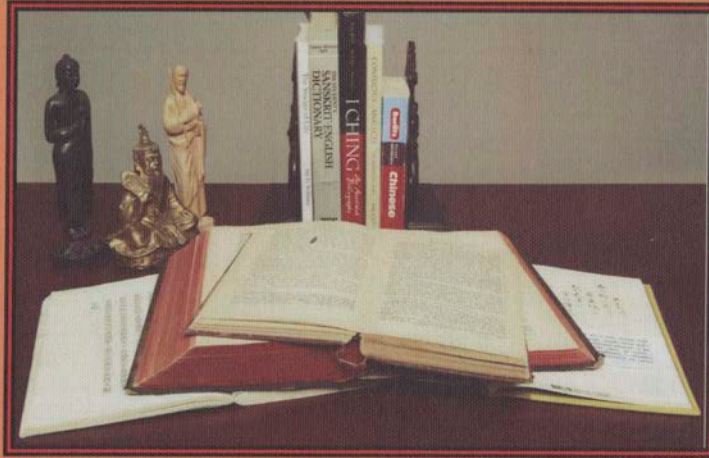


Gwenfrewi Santes Press  
"Wherever the head rolls"

20. I had been working on the Buddhist Stupa for a long time, but never published anything. Several publishers liked my manuscript but would only publish it in black and white. Finally I decided to publish it myself in a very limited edition that is available primarily in the college store. Copies have been sent to several libraries including Hamilton's.



## HOW TO DETERMINE THE MEANING OF A SACRED TEXT



21. My next book is a compilation of essays that I have published in a great variety of journals. *How to Determine the meaning of a Sacred Text* was not my original title, but the publisher (Edwin Mellen Press) decided it would sell more copies than my own first choice. In any event, the work contains articles on everything from mythology to the Bible to Buddhist sutras. It is also available as an ebook.

# THOMAS NAST: AMERICA'S GREATEST POLITICAL CARTOONIST



**BY JAY G. WILLIAMS**

22. Like several of my other books, my work on Thomas Nast is being published by the Edwin Mellen Press. It is filled with examples of his work from his first days until his last, post-Harper's work.

After the big Nast book was well under way I began working on books really just for myself. The first was a book of photographs entitled *Pollock at Hamilton*. Although the photographs are of “real” objects the work raises questions about the real distinction between “realism” and what is often thought of as abstract or “unreal.”

23.

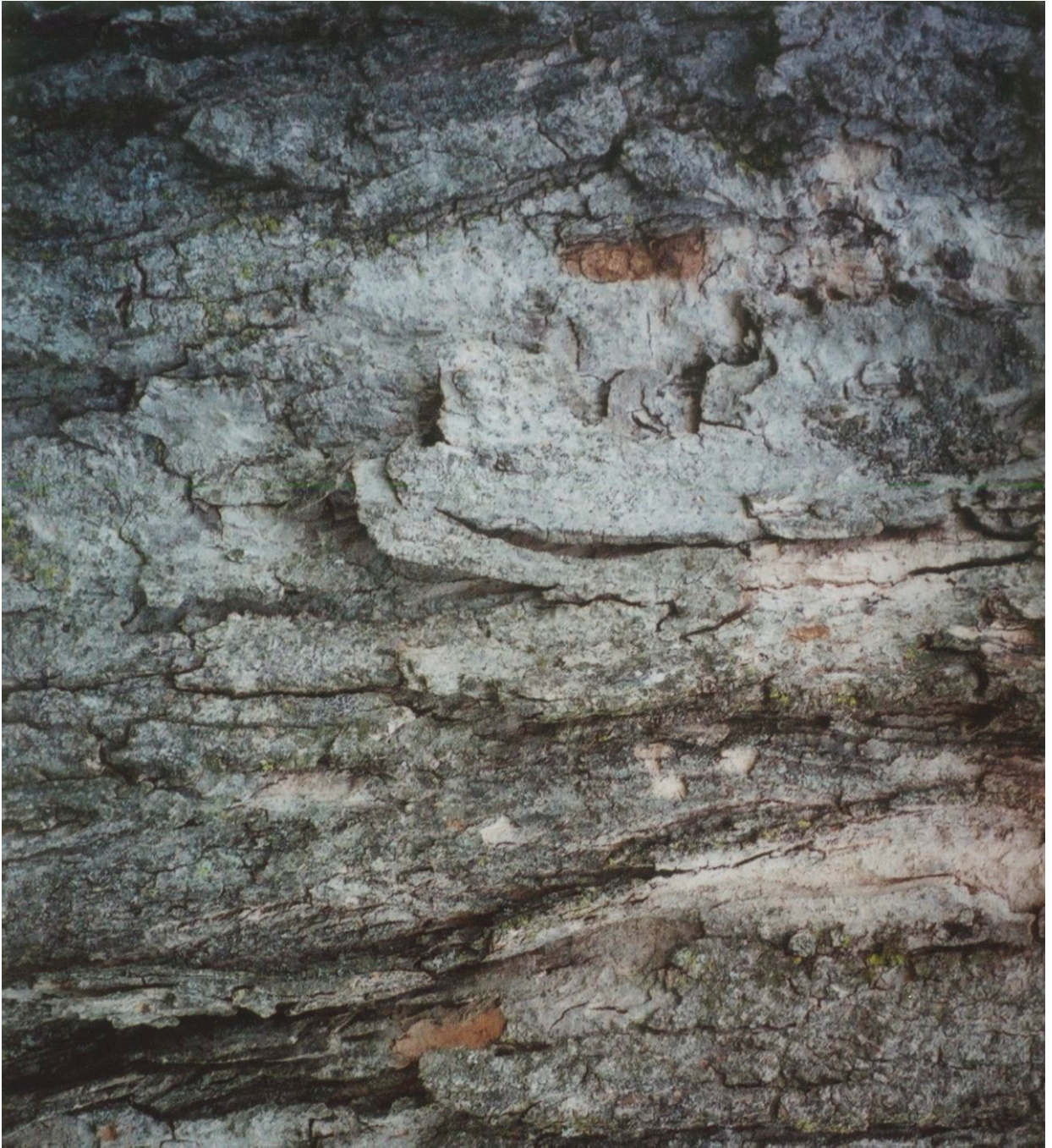
## **Pollock at Hamilton**

**By Jay G. Williams**



**Gwenfrewri Santes Press  
2013  
“Wherever the head rolls”**

A couple of pictures from the book:





24. That was followed by a book of philosophical questions along with poetry and photographs: a “multi-media” creation.

# The Quest

## Questions, Questions, Questions

By Jay G. Williams

25. Then came a series of photographic books. The first was *America the Beautiful* and contains some of the many photographs I have taken in National Parks.

# AMERICA, THE BEAUTIFUL

## A LOOK AT SOME NATIONAL PARKS



By Jay G. Williams

26. Then came another photographic work contain pictures I took at Tel Arad and Tel Dan.

## **From Beersheba to Dan**

**Jay G. Williams**



**Gwenfrewi Santes Press 2014**



28. That was followed by a book of photographs taken at a Matsu festival in Taiwan.

# Mazu

## The Celebration



**Text and Photographs by Jay G. Williams**

29. Then I produced a book about pilgrimage sites around the world.

# Places of Pilgrimage

Searching the world of mystery and transformation

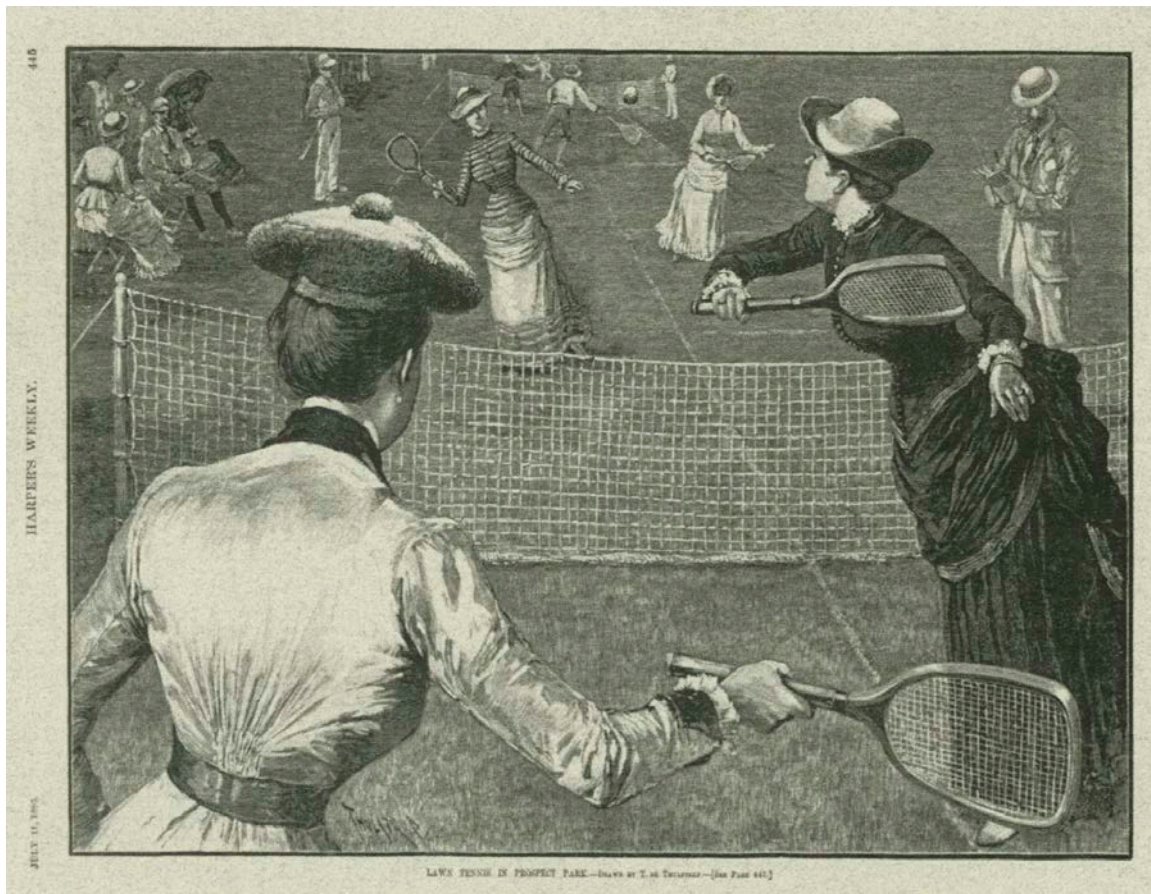
**Jay G. Williams**



30. Then I turned to my collection of illustrations to produce:

# Sports Illustrated

## In late 19<sup>th</sup> Century America



By Jay G. Williams

31. That was followed by:

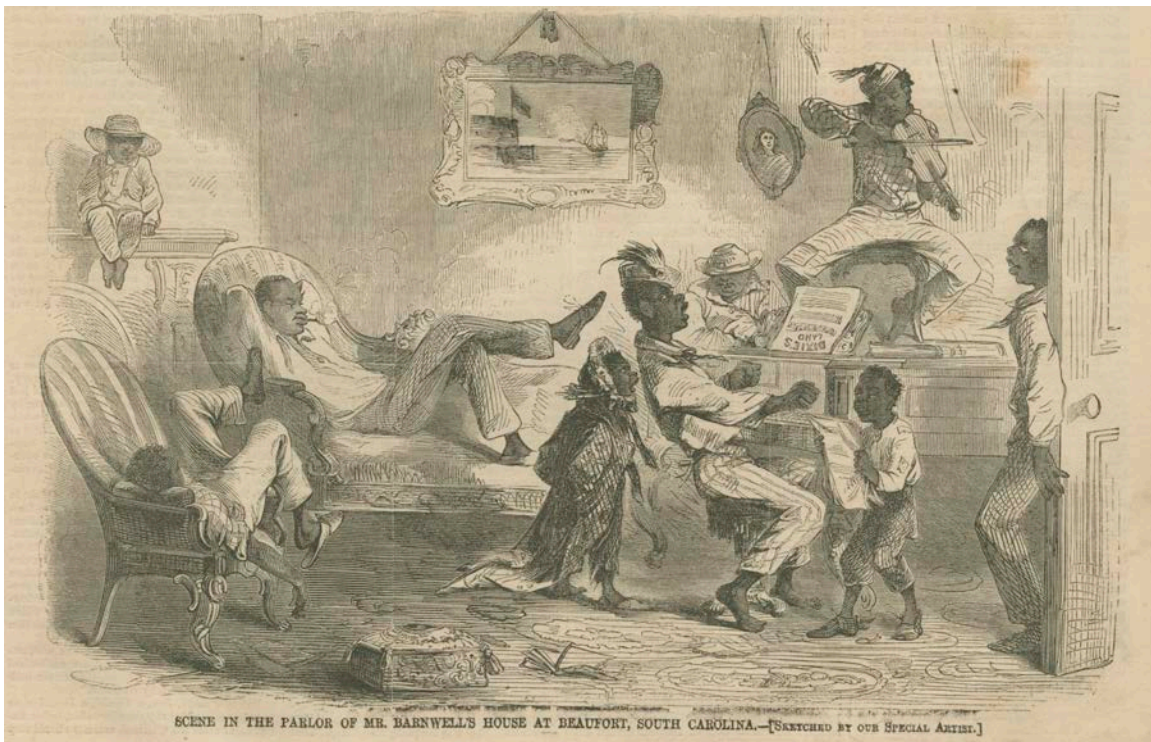
# Artists as Illustrators in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century America



**Jay G. Williams**

32. Then came:

# Picturing Afro-Americans in Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20th Century America



Special Artist *Harper's Weekly* January 18, 1862

Jay G. Williams

33. And then:

# Howard Pyle

and

# His Students



**Jay G. Williams**

34. One of the more recent works is an introduction to Oneida County as it developed and exists today.

# Seeing Oneida County



**Jay G. Williams**

**Gwenfrewi Santes Press**

**35. Reading the Four Gospels**

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# **Reading the Four Gospels**

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**Jay G. Williams**

**Gwenfrewi Santes Press**



**36. People and Places**

# People and Places

A Genealogical look at the past



Daniel, Ruth, Emma, and Andrew

**Gwenfrewi Santes Press 2017**



















