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Charles Williams's Theology of Publishing

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Charles Williams's Theology of Publishing

Michael J. Paulus, Jr., Seattle Pacific University

Western Regional Conference on Christianity and Literature

Santa Barbara, Calif., May 16, 2014



Who Was Charles Williams?



**CHARLES
WALTER STANSBY
WILLIAMS**

Poet

**20 Sep. 1886
15 May 1945**

UNDER THE MERCY

Amen House, Oxford University Press



“The Masque of the Manuscript”

THE MANUSCRIPT:

To fill up a certain *lacuna* is my aim.
I am called *A Short Treatise on Syrian Nouns*
As used in the Northern and Sub-Northern Towns
In Five Hundred B.C., with two maps and three charts:
By Walter Lackpenny, poor Mater of Arts.

“The Masque of Perusal”

THYRSIS:

I am an author and a publisher,
And doubly in me the great longings stir
To write, to print, and to proclaim aloud,
Here in the outer world and to the crowd,
A wisdom so far hidden ...

“The Masque of Termination of Copyright”

TITYRUS:

... since the Book's own being, even as ours,
Was set to serve and praise the loftier powers,
Behold, when the predestined time is come,
How she is gathered from that heathendom
Of greed, oblivion, tyranny, and sin ...

Sayers and Williams on Work

Why Work?

1. Humans are created for work, which is a medium through which one serves God.
2. There is no truly secular vocation.
3. A worker's first duty is to serve the work, not the community.

A theology of publishing:

1. Publishing is a creative medium that serves the ends of God.
2. Publishing manifests the creative, redemptive, and transformative work of God.
3. Publishing participates in divine communication that leads to communion with God and others.