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(*b.* London, England, 1586; *d.* London, January 1652)

## *Mathematics.*

Turner was the son of Dr. Peter Turner and Pascha Parr, and the grandson of [William Turner](#), the physician and naturalist and dean of Wells. He received his B.A. in 1605 and M.A. in 1612 at Oxford, and became a fellow of Merton College in 1607. Turner was the second Gresham professor of geometry (1620–1630) and second Savilian professor of geometry (1630–1648), in both cases succeeding [Henry Briggs](#). He retained his Merton fellowship, going to London for his Gresham lectures in term time. In 1629 he was appointed to a commission charged with the revision of the Oxford statutes. The final draft was largely the work of Brian Twynne, but it was polished for the press by Turner, who was noted for his Latin style.

He was one of the first scholars to enlist for King Charles in 1641. He was captured at the battle of Edgehill and imprisoned for a time. He was ejected both from his fellowship and his professorship by the Parliamentary Visitors in 1648, and retired to live in straitened circumstances with his widowed sister in Southwark. Both Turner and the Savilian professor of astronomy, John Greaves, were replaced by Cambridge men—Turner by [John Wallis](#), and Greaves by Seth Ward.

It is impossible to judge Turner's abilities in mathematics. He left no mathematical writings, and, indeed, seems to have been noted rather as a Latinist and a linguist, being skilled in Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic. According to Wood he destroyed many of his writings, being of too critical a mind. Further, his effects at Oxford were seized during the [Civil War](#). Some translations from Greek to Latin of the church fathers in the possession of his colleague Mr. Henry Jacobs; Latin poems to the memory of [Sir Thomas Bodley](#) (1613); and the preface to the revised Oxford Statutes (1634) are all that are known to have survived.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Turner's life can be found in John Ward, *Lives of the Professors of Gresham College* (1740; Johnson repr., Sources of Science, no. 71). See also C. E. Mallet, *A History of the University of Oxford*, II (Oxford, 1924–1928; repr., [New York](#), 1968); and the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, during the reign of Charles I.

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