

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

THE VERSION OF 1611: FROM 1911 TO 2011



In his excellent bibliographic introduction (pages 5–53), Alfred W. Pollard outlines the development of English translations preceding the version of 1611, then provides background of the version itself and a few comments on the history to its third centenary in 1911. This essay intends to cover the history of the version of 1611 up to its fourth centenary in 2011.

First a word about terminology: Most English readers know the version of 1611 as “The King James Version” or “The Authorized Version.” The original title page, reproduced in this facsimile, uses neither title. It is “The Holy Bible, / Conteyning the Old Testament, / and the New.” Four lines later we read “Appointed to be read in Churches.” The last line has the date “Anno Dom. 1611.”

Because he was the reigning King of England and because he sanctioned and supported this revision of the English translations, it is natural to associate this Bible with King James. Just be aware that James did not translate or edit any of its contents. However, the royal family of England has perpetual Crown Copyright of the version of 1611 and still receives royalties within the British Commonwealth.

Most of the English Bibles of the sixteenth century were printed under royal license, starting with Coverdale's second edition and Matthew's first edition in 1537. Although no documentation exists for formal authorization or licensing in the case of the version of 1611, the well-documented involvement of King James himself makes this a moot point. As F. F. Bruce comments:

If it be asked by what body its authorization was effected, the answer is best given in the words of Lord Chancellor Selborne, in the correspondence columns of *The Times* for June 3, 1881: “nothing is more probable than that this may have been done by Order in Council. If so, the authentic record of that order may be lost because all the Council books and registers from the year 1600 to 1613 inclusive were destroyed by a fire at Whitehall on the 12th of January, 1618 (O.S).”¹

1 Quoted in F. F. Bruce, *History of the Bible in English* (New York: Oxford University Press, 3rd edition: 1978), pages 99–100.

MAINTAINING AND PUBLISHING THE VERSION OF 1611 UP TO 2011

The version of 1611 (hereafter the KJV) is the standard by which all other English Bible translations are measured. However, until the advent of modern photo-mechanical printing processes and digital data archiving, no two printings of the KJV were precisely the same. English spelling was fluid in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and even a pronoun as simple as the masculine singular could be spelled “he,” “hee” or “hie.” Printers, often scholars in their own right, saw no problem in changing spelling and punctuation as they typeset their editions. This practice of intentional changes, as well as the introduction of unintentional errors, led to significant official revisions in the last three centuries. As Pollard notes in his introduction:

It must be remembered that no copy of the version of 1611 had been ‘sealed’ as a standard, as was done in the case of the Prayer-book, and these attempts to increase consistency and to remove errors were wholly laudable.²

F. H. A. Scrivener lists several important editions of the KJV he used in developing *The Cambridge Paragraph Bible* of 1873,³ including “two considerable efforts to improve and correct our ordinary editions of Holy Scripture, made in 1762 by Dr Paris . . . , and by Dr Blayney, whose labours were published in 1769.”⁴ Paris’s edition was published by Cambridge University (as was Scrivener’s), while Blayney’s edition was published by Oxford.

Scrivener’s collation of the variations in KJV editions that preceded him fill thirty-seven pages of Appendices. But his seven years of focused research and careful documentation did not settle the text of the KJV once and for all. David Norton, editor of *The New Cambridge Parallel Bible*, believes Scrivener unnecessarily revised the text (beyond correcting printers’ errors) and unhelpfully reverted to archaic spellings and wording.⁵ After collating three 1857 Bibles issued separately by the British and Foreign Bible Society, Cambridge and Oxford, Norton concludes that by the nineteenth century, the KJV was essentially standardized to Blayney’s edition.⁶ But entering the twentieth century, and its explosion of Bible publishing, it is well

² Page 53.

³ *The Cambridge Paragraph Bible* (Cambridge University Press, 1873), pages xi–xxiv.

⁴ *Ibid.*, page xx.

⁵ *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pages 122–125.

⁶ *Ibid.*, page 126.

to remember Pollard's statement on page viii that there is no official 'sealed' standard.

Shortly before this facsimile edition was originally published in 1911, a significant new edition of the KJV was also issued by Oxford University Press. The *Scofield Reference Bible* first appeared in 1909, with a second edition in 1917. This edition, and many other study Bibles produced in the twentieth century, helped perpetuate the KJV as the standard English Bible throughout that century.

Advances in computer technology coincided with the explosion of new Bible translations in the 1960s and 1970s. Public ventures, like Project Gutenberg, and private publishers began creating digital books to archive electronically. As exciting as this concept was—and is—one of its main problems is the lack of standardization. Publishers digitized whatever they felt was their standard edition, and individuals typed up a book or chapter from whatever edition they had on hand to contribute to publicly-shared databases. If Norton is correct in his assessment that the Blayney edition of the KJV was the de facto standard of the mid-nineteenth century, by the mid-twentieth century these various popular and proprietary efforts had (re)introduced many variants into the text. Of the several electronic texts this writer has compared book-by-book, no two are the same. Add to this the introduction of self-pronouncing spellings, new in-text headings, red letter text for the words of Jesus, and reference systems, and it would seem that there are as many as KJV texts as there are publishers. Again, these differences are mostly in details of spelling, punctuation, italics, formatting and footnotes (when included); differences in wording are rare.

In 1994 Cambridge University Press wanted to establish "a respectable, defensible and (reasonably) consistent text we can use for all our AV [Authorized Version] editions,"⁷ and so commissioned David Norton to prepare what became *The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible*. Norton established guidelines "to remove all unnecessary appearance of oddness in the Bible's English without changing the English itself."⁸ As with previous deliberate editions, many of these changes involved spelling and punctuation and would only be noticed by comparing the text to other editions. More noticeable at first glance are the changes in presentation, specifically paragraphing, poetry and other special textual formats not used in the edition of 1611. Most radical is the rejection of italics, a typesetting convention used since the 1560 Geneva Bible to note words supplied in translation and

7 Ibid., page 132.

8 Ibid., page 148.

followed to this day in such versions as the New American Standard and the New King James Version. At the time this essay was written, only the original 2005 printing of *The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible* had been issued. It is too early to say if this will influence the standardization of the KJV as it enters its fifth century.

SOME MAJOR EDITIONS OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE: 1881 TO 2011

Among the reasons for scholars to propose a new translation of the Bible, two stand out: changes in the common language and advances in biblical scholarship. Although the common English of the late nineteenth century was hardly the language of the English Bible translations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the KJV had established and maintained the vocabulary and idiom of the English-speaking church. But there had been major advances in biblical scholarship in the nearly three centuries since the KJV had first been published.

So in 1870 when Dr. Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester, proposed an official revision of the KJV, the proposal was adopted by both Houses of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury and work on the revision began. The New Testament of the Revised Version was published in 1881, the Old Testament in 1884 and the Apocrypha in 1895, jointly by the University presses of Oxford and Cambridge. A parallel committee in the United States produced the American Standard Version, published in 1901 without the Apocrypha.

The Revised Version maintained much of the language of the KJV, with its archaic pronouns and verbal inflections. It was also a verse-formatted Bible, but did set Job, Psalms and Proverbs, Wisdom and Sirach, and other passages of poetry in poetic line structure. Most radical was the adoption of Westcott and Hort's *Greek New Testament* in place of the Erasmus text of the sixteenth century that had formed the basis of all English translations leading up to the KJV. Because Westcott and Hort's work was based on much older Greek manuscripts than those available to Erasmus, there were thousands of differences. Some were as simple as reading "Christ Jesus" instead of "Jesus Christ" in 2 Corinthians 1:1, but others were as noticeable as omitting "the Three Witnesses" passage in 1 John 5:7-8. Many saw this as an attempt to remove orthodox theological content from the New Testament and condemned the new version. This type of criticism remains to this day and has been levelled against all translations of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. However, the majority of biblical scholars and the rest of the church have come to agree with the general opinion that the older Greek manuscripts are closer in time *and* content to the original New Testament and that no major

doctrine of the church is lost due to variations between these manuscripts and those available to the KJV translators.

The Revised Version was met with great enthusiasm, but its often woodenly literal renderings did not commend it to the general reader. It did not displace the KJV as the preferred Bible of the English-speaking Church, but it did open the doors for the flood of new Bible translations in the twentieth century. Only a few can be mentioned.

The New Testament of the Revised Standard Version (RSV) appeared in 1946, the Old Testament in 1952 and the Apocrypha in 1956. A second edition of the New Testament was published in 1971 and an expanded, eighteen-book Apocrypha in 1977. The RSV used a more contemporary English than did the Revised Version, but it did retain archaic English when addressing God in prayer or praise.

The Revised Version and Revised Standard Version were "official" translations sponsored by or endorsed by many church bodies. So was the New English Bible of 1961 and 1970, which was briefly popular, but is no longer in print. Its successor, the Revised English Bible of 1989, did not capture popular attention. Also published in 1989 was the well-publicized revision of the RSV, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). The NRSV has been widely accepted in scholarly circles and has replaced the RSV in many of the denominations for which that earlier edition had become standard.

In addition to these official, ecumenical translations, other English translations were sponsored by Bible societies or publishing houses. The New American Standard, sponsored by the Lockman Foundation, was translated by conservative Protestants to provide an alternative to the RSV. The New Testament first appeared in 1963 and the Old Testament in 1971. An updated edition, that did not use archaic English to address God, was published in 1995.

The American Bible Society published an easy-reading translation New Testament in 1966 under the title *Good News for Modern Man*. The Old Testament was completed in 1976 and the Apocrypha in 1979. Also called Today's English Version, a second edition was published in 1992.

The International Bible Society (originally the New York Bible Society), in response to committees from the Christian Reformed Church and the National Association of Evangelicals in 1965, undertook a new English translation in 1967. The New Testament of the New International Version (NIV) was published in 1973 and the Old Testament in 1978. A revised edition appeared in 1983.

Thomas Nelson Publishers sponsored an update of the KJV into twentieth-century English. The New Testament of this New King James Version (NKJV) was published in 1979 and the Old in 1982.

Unlike the KJV of 1611, there was no Apocrypha. Those who most value the KJV did not see the NKJV as a desirable replacement.

The twentieth century also saw many private translations by individuals. The Living Bible, paraphrased by Kenneth Taylor, was certainly the most successful private version of the English Bible ever produced, published in sections between 1962 and 1971. The first edition of the New Living Translation was released in 1996 and immediately replaced the Living Bible as a bestseller. A second, significantly updated edition appeared in 2004. The New Testament of Eugene Petersen's *The Message* was first published in 1993 and the full Bible in 2002. It remains a popular paraphrase or free translation.

There were significant Catholic translations in the twentieth century: The Jerusalem Bible of 1966; its revision, The New Jerusalem Bible of 1973; and The New American Bible of 1970, with revised New Testament in 1986 and Psalms in 1991 (a revised Old Testament is expected in 2010). Of course, these fine Roman Catholic translations did nothing to displace the KJV in Protestant churches.

How did this explosion of new translations affect the KJV? For many readers, the new translations were at first used alongside the KJV. But as their popularity grew, sales of the KJV began to decline in the 1980s. By 1986, the NIV had surpassed the KJV in new Bible sales and remained the best selling English translation, followed by the KJV, with the Living Bible (succeeded in 1996 by the New Living Translation) and the NKJV. By the end of the century, these four translations accounted for as much as 85% of new Bible sales in the United States.

In the first years of the twenty-first century, four major versions and revisions have risen as the ones to watch. The Holman Christian Standard Version, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention, was published in 2000 and 2004. The English Standard Version (ESV), a revision of the RSV sponsored by Crossway Publishers was released in 2001, with an update in 2007. The Apocrypha of the ESV was published by Oxford in 2008. *The Message* was published as a whole Bible in 2002. Today's New International Version, a revision of the NIV, was published 2002 and 2005. None of these new versions has cracked the top four, though *The Message* and the ESV have seen the greatest commercial success. The KJV remains the second best-selling English translation to the NIV.

Despite the passing of four centuries, the rise of dozens of versions and hundreds of unique editions, the version of 1611 remains the most influential English Bible of all time and continues as a best-seller at the start of its four hundredth year.

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

THE APOCRYPHA IN THE KING JAMES VERSION



Modern readers of the King James or Authorized Version may be surprised to learn that for the first two hundred years of its publication, most editions of this well-known translation included the books of the Apocrypha. These fourteen (sometimes numbered as fifteen) books and portions of books have a long history in the Church and were a point of contention between the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformers. This introductory essay surveys the origin of these books, the history of their inclusion in Greek and Latin manuscripts, and their inclusion in early English translations.

THE ORIGIN OF THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS

The word *apocrypha*, which means “hidden” or “secret,” is used to distinguish religious writings that are not considered authoritative from those that are. The authoritative books are called “canonical.”

The books commonly labelled apocryphal in Protestant translations of the Bible are of Jewish origin. Josephus, the famous Jewish historian, writing in the first century A.D. notes:

For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another [as the Greeks have], but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine; . . . It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; . . .¹

Josephus’ “twenty-two books” are the same as the thirty-nine books of the Protestant Old Testament.²

1 Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. *The Works of Josephus : Complete and Unabridged*. Apion 1.37–41. Peabody: Hendrickson.

2 The twelve “minor prophets” are counted as one book in the Hebrew canon. That reduces the number from 39 to 28. The eight books 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah are considered as four combined books, bringing the total to 24. Some scholars assume he combined Judges with Ruth and Jeremiah with Lamentations to bring the total to 22, the same number as letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

The books of Jewish “history [that] hath been written since Artaxerxes” certainly refers to at least some of the books that are found in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. This translation, commonly called the “Septuagint,” was the Bible of Greek-speaking Jews in Egypt in two centuries before Christ and later became the Bible of the Jews of the Diaspora and of the early Christians. Scholars debate whether Greek-speaking Jews considered these books outside the Hebrew canon to be canonical in their communities. But they are not treated with the same authority as the books of Hebrew canon in later and contemporary Judaism.

THE BOOKS OF THE APOCRYPHA
IN EARLY TRANSLATIONS

By the fourth century A.D., Latin was replacing Greek as the language of the churches of the west, especially the church in Rome. When the Roman Church wanted a standard Latin Bible, Pope Damasus commissioned the great scholar Jerome to do that translation. Because of his high regard for the Hebrew Old Testament, Jerome at first refused to translate books outside the Hebrew canon. However, translations of these extra-canonical books did eventually make their way into the new Latin translation, now known as the Vulgate or “common” Bible.

Because these extra books were translated from the Greek Septuagint, they appeared in the Latin incorporated into and among various books of the canonical Old Testament. Before mechanized printing, no two manuscripts of Greek or Latin were identical in content because they were copied by hand. There are differences in books that are included, as well as the arrangement of these books. The current standard edition of *Biblia Sacra Vulgata* includes the following books not found in the Hebrew canon (see the chart on page 6):

Tobit (following Ezra-Nehemiah)

Judith

Esther (containing additions from the Greek)

Wisdom (following the Song of Songs)

Sirach or Ecclesiasticus

Baruch (following Lamentations), including chapter 6, which is often published separately as The Letter of Jeremiah

Daniel (containing three additions from the Greek)

1 and 2 Maccabees

Following the books of the New Testament, five additional books are included in an Appendix:

The Prayer of Manasseh

3 Ezra (1 Esdras in the King James Version and others)

4 Ezra (2 Esdras in the King James Version and others)

Psalm 151

The Letter to the Laodiceans

Other than the last book, a non-canonical book from the third or fourth century A.D., these thirteen books (sometimes separated and numbered as sixteen) have found their way into various Bible translations, including early English translations.³

THE BOOKS OF THE APOCRYPHA IN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

The earliest known translations of the whole Bible into English are associated with John Wycliffe (or Wyclif) and his followers. These are usually dated between 1380 and 1388. Because the Wycliffite Bible was translated from the Latin Vulgate, it includes the books of both Testaments and the Appendix. So from the beginning, the English Bible was translated with the Apocrypha.

When Martin Luther translated the Bible into German in 1534, he put the books outside the Hebrew canon into a separate section, agreeing with Jerome that they were not part of the Old Testament. This became the standard for most English translations of the Bible.

The first complete Bible printed in English was translated and edited by Miles Coverdale and published in 1535. It contained William Tyndale's pioneering translation work on the New Testament and Pentateuch and Coverdale's translation of the rest of the Old Testament and Apocrypha from the Latin Vulgate and Luther's German Bible.

Coverdale introduced the Apocrypha, in a separate section, with a perspective he shared with the other Reformers:

These books (good reader) which are called Apocrypha, are not judged among the doctors to be of like reputation with the other scripture, as you may perceive by St Jerome in 'Episola ad Paulinum.' And the chief cause thereof is this: there be many places in them, that seem to be repugnant unto the open and manifest truth in other books of the Bible.⁴

3 Daniell, David. *The Bible in English*, pages 47, 63, 78, 80. New Haven: Yale University Press.

4 Cited in Daniell, pp. 187–188.

The major English translations and revisions that followed Coverdale in the sixteenth century—Matthews (1537), the Great Bible (1539), the Geneva Bible (1560), the Bishops' Bible (1568)—all included the Apocrypha as a section separate to the Old Testament. Interestingly, the Geneva Bible puts the Prayer of Manasseh after 2 Chronicles, as Manasseh's repentance and prayer are noted in 33:12–13, although "The Argument," introducing the Genevan Apocrypha, rejects these books for public reading and preaching or for proving doctrine.

In 1546 at the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic Church declared the books listed on page 2 to be "deuterocanonical," meaning these books were of equal authority to the other books of the Old Testament that were recognized as canonical earlier ("proto-canonical"). In 1563 the Church of England's Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion listed the canonical books of the Old Testament and distinguished them from "the Other books" (the Apocrypha), which the Church could "read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine."⁵ Thus the differences between the Roman Catholic and Protestant Old Testaments were firmly established in writing. (See the chart on page 5.)

The version of 1611, following its mandate to revise and standardize the English Bible tradition, included the fourteen (or fifteen) books of the Apocrypha in a section between the Old and New Testaments. (See the chart on page 6.) Because of the Thirty-Nine Articles, there was no reason for the version of 1611 to include any comments as to the status of these books, as had the earlier English Bibles.

In the year before the Authorized or King James Version was published, the first English Bible translated by Roman Catholics was completed. Translated from the Latin, the New Testament had been published at Rheims in 1582, and the Old Testament in Douai (or Douay) in 1610. Following the Vulgate, the Old Testament included the books that had been declared "deuterocanonical" by the Council of Trent. These continue to be included, with some variations in order, in all modern Catholic translations. (See the charts on pages 5–6.)

The fourteen-book (or fifteen-book) Apocrypha continued as the standard list of books outside the Hebrew canon, included in English translations, until the Revised Standard Version added Psalm 151 and 3 and 4 Maccabees to its "Expanded Apocrypha" in 1977, an eighteen-book list continued in the New Revised Standard Version of 1989. (See the charts on pages 5–6.)

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⁵ The Thirty-Nine Articles are in *The Book of Common Prayer* to this day. Pages 868–869 have the listing of the canonical books and "the Other books."

The Roman Catholic Old Testament

Genesis
 Exodus
 Leviticus
 Numbers
 Deuteronomy
 Joshua
 Judges
 Ruth
 1 Samuel
 2 Samuel
 1 Kings
 2 Kings
 1 Chronicles
 2 Chronicles
 Ezra
 Nehemiah
*Tobit (3)**
*Judith (4)**
 Esther
*with Greek Additions (5)**
*1 Maccabees (14)**
*2 Maccabees (15)**
 Job
 Psalms
 Proverbs
 Ecclesiastes
 Song of Solomon
*The Wisdom of Solomon (6)**
*Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus (7)**
 Isaiah
 Jeremiah
 Lamentations
Baruch (8)
*including the Letter of Jeremiah (9)**
 Ezekiel
 Daniel
*with Greek Additions (10, 11, 12)**
 Hosea
 Joel
 Amos
 Obadiah
 Jonah
 Micah
 Nahum
 Habakkuk
 Zephaniah
 Haggai
 Zechariah
 Malachi

Protestant/Ecumenical Old Testament

Genesis
 Exodus
 Leviticus
 Numbers
 Deuteronomy
 Joshua
 Judges
 Ruth
 1 Samuel
 2 Samuel
 1 Kings
 2 Kings
 1 Chronicles
 2 Chronicles
 Ezra
 Nehemiah

 Esther

 Job
 Psalms
 Proverbs
 Ecclesiastes
 Song of Solomon

 Isaiah
 Jeremiah
 Lamentations

 Ezekiel
 Daniel

 Hosea
 Joel
 Amos
 Obadiah
 Jonah
 Micah
 Nahum
 Habakkuk
 Zephaniah
 Haggai
 Zechariah
 Malachi

*Deuterocanonical books are in *italics* and are keyed to the Protestant/Ecumenical Apocrypha.

Protestant/Ecumenical Apocrypha

Presented in the order of the 1611 King James or Authorized Version
and the 1957 Revised Standard Version

1. 1 Esdras (not in the Roman Catholic canon)
2. 2 Esdras (not in the Roman Catholic canon)
3. *Tobit*
4. *Judith*
5. *The Additions to the Book of Esther*
6. *Wisdom of Solomon*
7. *Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach*
8. *Baruch*
9. *The Letter of Jeremiah*
The Additions to the Book of Daniel:
10. *The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews*
11. *Susanna*
12. *Bel and the Dragon*
13. The Prayer of Manasseh (not in the Roman Catholic canon)
14. *1 Maccabees*
15. *2 Maccabees*

Note: In the King James Version Apocrypha, *Baruch* and *The Letter of Jeremiah* are one combined book, bringing its total to fourteen. The 18-book "Expanded Apocrypha" of the Revised Standard and New Revised Standard Versions adds Psalm 151 and 3 and 4 Maccabees.

There are 46 books in the Roman Catholic Old Testament canon and 39 in the Protestant/Ecumenical Old Testament canon. The seven-book difference actually involves twelve books and portions of books in the Protestant/Ecumenical Apocrypha:

Seven books appear in their entirety:

- Tobit* (3)*
- Judith* (4)*
- 1 Maccabees* (14)*
- 2 Maccabees* (15)*
- The Wisdom of Solomon* (6)*
- Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus* (7)*
- Baruch* (8)*

Three books, canonical and deuterocanonical, are supplemented with five additions:

- Esther is supplemented with
The Additions to the Book of Esther (5)*
- Daniel is supplemented with
The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews (10)*
Susanna (11)*
Bel and the Dragon (12)*
- Baruch* (8)* is supplemented with
The Letter of Jeremiah (9)*

*Deuterocanonical books are in *italics* and are keyed to the Protestant/Ecumenical Apocrypha.