

Sunday, November 7, 2021— Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*  
Lesson 155 The Hampton Court Conference: Attendees

### Hampton Court: Attendees

- Exactly, how many men attended the Hampton Court Conference is difficult to discern. In his dissertation, *The Kings Own Conference: A Reassessment of Hampton Court*, William Craig suggests that as many as sixty men attended the meeting. Therefore, it is safest to stick with the names of those whose attendance can be verified in the extant sources.
- To that end, Timothy Berg presents the following chart in his post titled “[Hampton Court—Attendees](#)” on the [King James Bible History](#) blog. Please note that the names of the Puritan speakers are highlighted and the names of eventual translators are underlined.

Known Hampton Court Conference Attendees						
Royalty	Privy Council Members	Bishops	Deans	Puritan Speakers	Civil Lawyers	Other
King James	Sir Thomas Egerton	John Whitgift (Archbishop of Canterbury)	<u>George Abbot</u> (Winchester)	Laurence Chaderton, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge	Sir John Bennet	Richard Field, Royal Chaplain
Prince Henry (8 years old)	Charles Blount	<u>Richard Bancroft</u> (London),	<u>Lancelot Andrewes</u> (Westminster)	John Knewstub, Rector of Cockfield, Suffolk	Sir Daniel Dun (Donne)	Patrick Galloway (Probably only on the second day)
	Sir Thomas Sackville	Gervase Babington (Worcester)	<u>William Barlow</u> (Chester)	<u>Dr. John Rainolds</u> , President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford	Sir Thomas Crompton	John King, Archdeacon (Nottingham)
	Lord Robert Cecil	<u>Thomas Bilson</u> (Winchester)	<u>Richard Edes</u> (Worcester)	Dr. Thomas Sparke, beneficed at Bletchley, Buckinghamshire	John Drury	Roger Wilbraham, a Master of Requests
	Lord Thomas Ellesmere	Thomas Dove (Peterborough)	John Gordon (Salisbury)		Sir Richard Swale	Dudley Carleton
	Charles Howard	Tobie Matthew (Durham)	James Montagu (the Chapel Royal)			Sir John Harrington
	Lord Henry Howard? (Probably only first day, if at all)	Henry Robinson (Carlisle)	<u>John Overall</u> (St Paul's)			
	Sir Thomas Howard	Anthony Rudd (St David's)	<u>Thomas Ravis</u> (Christ Church, Oxford)			
	Sir John Popham	Anthony Watson (Chichester)	<u>Giles Tomson</u> (Windsor)			
	Edward Somerset					

- All told, the names of the attendees at Hampton Court who had a hand in the creation of the King James Bible were as follows:
  - King James I
  - Bishop of London Richard Bancroft (later Archbishop of Canterbury)
  - Bishop of Winchester Thomas Bilson
  - Dean of Winchester George Abbot (later Archbishop of Canterbury)
  - Dean of Westminster Lancelot Andrewes
  - Dean of Chester William Barlow
  - Dean of Worcester Richard Edes

- Dean of St. Paul's John Overall
  - Dean of Christ Church Thomas Ravis
  - Dean of Windsor Giles Tomson
  - Laurence Chaderton
  - Dr. John Rainolds
- Regarding the four men representing the Puritan delegation at Hampton Court (Chaderton, Knewstub, Rainolds, and Sparke) Berg states the following regarding how these men should be viewed.
    - “How do we rightly think of these men? They are often referred to as the Puritan “delegates” or “representatives,” but this can in fact be a bit misleading. As this conference was taking place, somewhere not far away, some thirty of the less moderate Puritans were meeting at the same time, who had not been invited to the conference. In one of his earliest treatments of the conference, the veteran historian of Puritanism, Patrick Collinson, explained, “Not a hundred miles from the Privy Chamber at Hampton Court, ‘at the conference but not in place’, there was a gathering of some thirty ministers representing eleven counties and four towns.” (pg. 37-38). These men included Author Hildersham, who, as we have seen, likely drafted the Millenary Petition, Thomas Wilcox, Stephen Egerton, and Henry Jacobs.

They were the ones pressing upon the king for change. They had drawn up a list of instructions for the spokesmen at Hampton Court to follow. Yet, as Collinson concludes, “This robust statement was not adequately expressed, or represented, by the four spokesmen who appeared for the Puritans” at the conference. These men had not even been allowed to decide who would be at the conference to give voice to their concerns. The king and bishops it seems rather most likely made this choice, quite intentionally picking some of the most moderate voices. These “hotter” Puritans (especially Henry Jacobs) later complained that they had not been represented accurately at the conference. Yet this was no mistake or oversight; it was likely by design. The four men who voiced Puritan concerns at the conference are thus better thought of as “spokesmen” than as representatives or delegates.

In any case, the two men who really shone at the conference, especially on the second day most relevant to the KJB, were John Rainolds, the leading Puritan spokesman, and Richard Bancroft, the ultimate Anti-Puritan.” (Berg, 12/9/20)

- As we will see in the next Lesson, when it came to the matter of the English Bible, it was Rainolds and Bancroft who square off on opposite sides of the matter. Consequently, a bit of background and historical context is in order.

### *John Rainolds*

- Volumes have been written about Rainolds' background and his hand in the creation of the King James Bible. In the interest of brevity we will limit our comments to those provided by Timothy Berg in his summary.
  - “John Rainolds (1549-1607) seems to have been sent to Oxford at the age of eight (though probably he was sent back home shortly). He returned as a student in 1562, first at Merton College, then at Corpus Christi College. He came to Oxford as a Catholic, like his father and much of his family. But over the course of several years, he gradually converted to Protestantism, becoming in the late 60's a Puritan in every sense of the word, though a moderate one. This was a status held with enough conviction that he was entrusted with tutoring young Richard Hooker, who would go on to become perhaps the most influential theologian of the Church of England. He graduated MA in 1572 and was elected Greek reader at Corpus. His lectures were immensely popular, but he resigned the position in order to devote more time to the study of theology.

He slowly emerged as the face of the Puritan moment at Oxford, getting caught up in a number of controversies along the way. He agitated Queen Elizabeth I on a few occasions, who saw him as a bit too extreme. He labored to refute both the Catholic Bellarmine, arguing against accepting the Apocrypha as Scripture, and the eccentric controversialist Hugh Broughton, with his precise and detailed chronological reading of Scripture. The latter fight followed him for nearly a decade.

In 1598 he was installed as Dean, and then as president, of Corpus Christi, a post he held until his death, greatly increasing the future of Corpus. By the time of the Hampton Court conference, he had become one of the most widely respected Puritan leaders in England. It was only natural then that he would become a kind of informal spokesman for the Puritan cause at the conference. As Mordechai Feingold notes, “Rainolds's name appeared on every list of puritan candidates that had been circulated the previous summer and autumn. When the historic occasion arrived, it was he who led the puritan delegation.” Feingold goes on to explain that Rainolds, in the midst of controversy after the conference, proceeded,

in what he clearly regarded as the most important project of his career—and the only tangible result of the Hampton Court conference—the new translation of the Bible. The task was divided among six groups, and Rainolds was part of the one charged with translating both major and minor prophets. Although officially headed by John Harding, the regius professor of Hebrew, the group met at Rainolds's lodgings at Corpus three times a week, a practice that continued even during the last weeks of the president's life.

Joseph Hall spoke of the towering genius of Rainolds shortly after his death, saying, “He alone was a well furnished library, full of all faculties, full of all studies, of all learning; the memory, the reading of that man, were near to a miracle.” (Berg, 12/9/20)

### *Richard Bancroft*

- Opposing Rainolds’ suggestion for a new Bible at Hampton Court was the ambitious Bishop of London, Richard Bancroft. By January 1604, it was clear that Bancroft was well positioned to be the next Archbishop of Canterbury following the death of John Whitgift (who died in February, 1604).
  - “Richard Bancroft came to Cambridge as a slightly older man than was common in that day, but graduated BA in 1567, and proceeded MA from Jesus College in 1572. Known for his reputation in boxing, wrestling, and other competitive sports, he developed a firm no-nonsense tone that seemed to cross over into his academic work. He was soon ordained priest in the diocese of Ely at the age of thirty. He was admitted DTh at Cambridge in April 1585. He curried royal favor, becoming treasurer of St. Paul’s Cathedral by royal prerogative in 1586, and becoming a canon of Westminster in 1587.

He increasingly became known as the major spokesman for conformity. He waged a battle throughout his career against Catholics on the one hand, and Puritans on the other. In his famous St. Paul’s Cross sermon in 1589, which drew battle lines talked about for decades, he controversially argued against the Puritans that episcopacy (church structure built on bishops, who rule in an administrative capacity over multiple churches and over other lower ministry positions, grouped together into dioceses, under the king as true head of the church) was not only a biblically acceptable model, it had in fact continued since apostolic times with apostolic authority as the only approved model. In that sermon he reacted sharply against the charges of the anonymous Martin Marprelate;

Bishops have had this authority, which Martin condemmeth, ever since the evangelist S. Mark’s time. Besides, in the most flourishing time of the church, that ever happened since the apostles’s days, either in respect of learning, or of zeal, Martin and all his companions opinion hath heerin been condemned for an heresy. Lastly, there is no man living, as I suppose, able to show, where there was any church planted ever since the apostle’s times, but there the Bishops had authority over the rest of the ministry.”

[Spelling/punctuation updated slightly in all citations of Bancroft.]

By a striking association, he connected the Puritans with both modern schismatics and ancient heretics, condemning them all alike as those who, “by schism and heresy divided themselves from the church of God, and rent in sunder by their factions the peace thereof.”

Beyond just Martin, Cranfield explains, “Bancroft’s homily had another intended target: those who exalted the word of God to the point that it became the sole authority that, by preaching and prophesying, threatened the balance within a church that set greater store by the use of sacraments” (pg. 4). These he denounced as false prophets. While some reformers were proposing the principle of Sola Scriptura, arguing that every man – even those not ordained and trained in the church – had a right to read the Scriptures for himself, Bancroft denounced them as missing the Augustinian principle that, “faithful ignorance is better than rash knowledge.” Indeed, “It falleth not within the compass of every man’s understanding to determine and judge in matters of religion...but of those who are well experienced and exercised in them.” As Cranfield insightfully recognizes, Erasmus and Tyndale had hoped the ploughboy in the field would each have the Scriptures to read for themselves. But for Bancroft, such democratized readers would only become, in his words, “the prattling old woman, the doting old man, the brabbling sophister.” They think they are understanding Scripture by reading it, but since they do so without the aid of the ordained bishop, they actually, “tear it in pieces, and take upon them to teach it before they have learned it.” He had little interest in such ploughboys reading Scripture for themselves.” (Berg, 12/9/20)

- Bishop Bancroft was a staunch defender of the political/religious status quo within the Anglican Church, earning him the title of “the arch Anti-Puritan.”
  - “Bancroft’s ministry was largely marked by the campaign against Puritanism and a related defense of episcopacy. In 1597 Bancroft assumed the role of the Bishop of London, increasing his reach. While he maintained some personal friendships with several of the more moderate Puritans, he was, as Collinson terms it, “the arch Anti-Puritan.”

Nowhere does this become more clear than in his actions and comments at the Hampton Court Conference. He immediately opposed the suggestion for a new translation, and yet, as we will see, was soon placed by the king as head over the entire project of creating it. Alister McGrath suggests that part of the reason for this reversal must have been because he saw the importance of protecting the interests of the Church of England from both Catholics and Puritans. His position of oversight would further allow him the right of limiting the translators in their freedom.

Bancroft had realized that it was better to create a new official translation that he could influence than to have to contend with the authorization of the Geneva Bible. It was decidedly the lesser of two evils. He was in a position to exercise considerable influence over the new Bible, by laying down rules of translation that would ensure that it would be sympathetic to the position and sensitivities of the established Church of England. And finally, he would be in a position to review the final text of the translation, in case it needed any judicious changes before publication.

A final reason that was “significant to his thinking” likely further motivated this reversal. That is, his own career ambitions. As McGrath goes on to explain;

To support the new translation would be to win the royal favor. Whitgift, the ailing archbishop of Canterbury died in February shortly after the conclusion of the Hampton Court Conference. His successor would be appointed from among the present bench of bishops. Bancroft was the front runner for preferment. Yet promotion lay in the king’s gift, precisely because of the royal supremacy that Bancroft so persuasively espoused. From February onward, Bancroft knew that he had no option if he wanted to secure the see of Canterbury. He would have to make sure the king’s new translation project went ahead smoothly—whatever his personal views on the matter.

Bancroft was politically on the rise, with his eye sharply upon the Archbishop’s chair, a role which he likely assumed unofficially behind the scenes even before Whitgift passed. If his plan was to use the new translation to please the king in order to firmly secure his coveted see, it worked. He was formally confirmed as Archbishop of Canterbury on 10 December 1604. He was then able to more thoroughly, “reconstruct the English Church,” from a place of power, in the phrase that shaped Usher’s classic title.” (Berg, 12/9/20)

### *King James*

- Of the attendees of Hampton Court, King James was by far the most important figure. After all, he is the reason for the meeting in the first place.
  - “King James I himself, was, of course, the most important attendee of the conference. He had appointed himself moderator, everything that happened was ultimately centered around him, and all final decisions were his. It was, as Craig terms it in the title of his dissertation, “The King’s Own Conference.” James was in control, in every way someone could be. Fincham explains that, “All in all, this was a singularly unusual conference, dominated by the king who acted, at different times, as prosecutor, witness, judge, and jury, and used the discussions to demonstrate his theological learning and caustic wit” (pg. 3-4).

We have examined already some of the details of the life of James and his rise to the English throne. It suffices here to note that while the circumstance that he came from presbyterian Scotland likely gave the Puritans some hope that they would find favor in his eyes, his actual history fighting the presbyterians in his first kingdom made virtually the exact opposite the case, at least at first. He was as committed to episcopacy as anyone else in the English Church, because of how it bolstered his own ideas of the Divine Right of kings. He was thus less interested in moving the Church in a Puritan direction than he was in dealing with what he saw as a pesky problem that needed a preemptive strike to bring a peaceful resolution. While he would come later to have a more balanced perspective on Puritans and at least some of their demands, they had the misfortune of appearing at the conference, in his eyes at least, to be yet another manifestation of the

obstacles to his power raised by presbyterians in Scotland like Andrew Melville. As Jenny Wormald explained (pg. 37), the conference “was held too early in the reign” to produce the positive results the Puritan spokesmen wanted.

James was challenging hardline Elizabethan attitudes too soon for success; and he had not yet fully realized how different from his Scottish presbyterians were the English puritans he met at Hampton Court. Hence his furious and famous outburst, ‘no bishop, no king’; in the heat of debate, he was surely seeing not John Rainolds and his associates, moderate men all, but in response to Rainolds’s unlucky use of the word ‘presbytery’, seeing Andrew Melville and his extremist supporters. Hence his lack of opposition to Bancroft’s extensive deprivations of puritan clerics in 1605–6; deprivation was a weapon he had used in Scotland himself. Nevertheless, Hampton Court was a landmark of importance, in the longer if not the immediate term.

The presence of these three men – James, Rainolds, and Bancroft – at the Hampton Court conference would end up profoundly shaping the final product. The KJB ended up being caught in the middle of an ecclesiastical tug-of-war. Rainolds and the Puritans he spoke for pulled the translation in one direction, representing Puritan interests, while Bancroft, with much more power, pulled it in another, directly opposing those interests and supporting episcopacy. James controlled it all, ensuring that Bancroft had final decisions. It would end up being Bancroft’s Bible, far more than it would Rainolds’s. And that, as we will see, made all the difference in the end.” (Berg, 12/9/20)

### Works Cited

Berg, Timothy. “[Hampton Court: Attendees](#)” on King James Bible History. December 9, 2020.