

Sunday, January 9, 2022— Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
 Lesson 162 The Work in Progress Documents: Analyzing the Pre-1611 Evidence for The Text

Introduction

- Before our holiday break, in [Lesson 161](#) we sought to establish a general timeline for how the various companies of translators conducted their work. In general, we established the following general working timeline.
 - Stage 1 (1604-1608)—six companies produce draft translations.
 - Lambeth Palace MS 98 represents the stage of text during Stage 1.
 - Bod. 1602 bridges the gap between MS 98 and what was reviewed at the General Meeting(s).
 - Stage 2 (1609-1610)—General Meeting(s) review the company drafts and establish the text to be printed.
 - Notes of John Bois bear witness to this process.
 - Stage 3 (1611)—two men, Thomas Bilson and Myles Smith, work with the King’s printer, Robert Barker, to see the text through to the press.
 - Two printings of the 1611 text bear witness to the final decisions of the translators.
- Having established this general working timeline, I would like to consider the three work-in-progress documents in greater detail. While we have mentioned these in our studies previously, they are each worthy of their own consideration. Once again, the three documents are 1) MS 98, 2) Bod. 1602, and 3) the notes of John Bois.
- Until very recently, King James advocates and defenders have been largely ignorant of these three documents and how a working knowledge of their contents illuminates one’s understanding of what took place between 1604 and 1611 as well as the final product. Please recall that on Sunday, October 18, 2020, I taught a lesson titled “[A Brief History of the King James Only Movement](#)” in which I argued that the King James Only movement that developed in the 20th century did so without an awareness, much less a working of knowledge, of the relevant primary sources i.e., the three work-in-progress documents discussed in this lesson.
- Adam Nicolson, author of the 2003 book *God’s Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible*, drives this point home regarding these three documents when he wrote:

- “It was an intense, competitive and vitalized world. But the question remains: how did this Bible emerge from it? How did the selected men deliver? After the initial flurry of documents, there is a dearth of evidence almost until the final printed volume appeared in 1611. Once the king had decided it should happen; once Bancroft had disseminated the Rules; and once the Translators had been chosen, almost the entire process drops from view. A few tiny glimpses remain. In November 1604, the ubiquitous Lancelot Andres was asked to attend a Society of Antiquaries to which he had been elected in the same summer. He sent a note to Mr. Hartwell, secretary of the society, to excuse his absence because ‘this afternoon is our translation time.’ As the Oxford antiquary, Anthony Wood, recorded, some of the Oxford translators began meeting once a week in John Reynold’s rooms in Corpus Christi College, and ‘there it is said, perfected the work, notwithstanding the said Doctor, who had the chief hand in it, and all the while sorely afflicted with gout.’ Beyond that, of the beginning of the process, there was for centuries almost nothing to say. More recently, though scholars had made discoveries which throw some real light on the process, in particular three long-hidden manuscripts [Nicolson’s statement is made in reference to MS 98, William Eyre’s 1608 letter covered in Lesson 161, and Bod. 1602.]” (Nicolson, 147-148)
- While Nicolson’s comments cited above do not extend to the Notes of John Bois, a topic we will cover later in this lesson, they do draw to the surface the notion that the scholarly world at large was unaware of MS 98 and Bod.1602 and how they might impact one’s understanding of how the King James Bible came about.
- Over the next couple of Lessons, we want to look at each of the three primary work-in-progress documents in terms of the following points:
 - Scholarly Awareness & Published Access
 - Physical Description & Contents
 - Impact on the readings found in the King James Bible

Scholarly Awareness & Published Access

- In this section I want to look at when the scholarly community was aware of each document’s existence as well as when the public was granted access to the document in question via published works. We will address the work-in-progress documents in the following order:
 - MS 98
 - Bod. 1602
 - Notes of John Bois (Will be covered in Lesson 163)

MS 98

- Adam Nicolson states the following regarding the original placement of the document in the Lambeth Palace Library.
 - “It belonged at one stage of its life to William Sancroft, the passionate Emmanuel undergraduate who later became Archbishop of Canterbury. He gave it to the library housed above the cloisters of the Archbishop of London’s palace at Lambeth, where Richard Bancroft had established it—England’s first public access library—in 1610.” (Nicolson, 148)
- The Lambeth Palace Library Database of Manuscripts and Archives online offers a bit more details on the “custodial history” of the document.
 - “In the Library by 1647. Cambridge shelf mark: bundle 4, no. 23 (Tanner MS. 274, f. 29r: ‘Epistles of St Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude, Anglice’, with Archbishop Sancroft’s addition of the new shelf mark, folio vol 98). That MS. 98 was in the library by 1647 (implying that it was in the collection of either Archbishop Richard Bancroft or Archbishop George Abbot) was not known to Ward Allen and other scholars (e.g. Nicolson, ‘Power and Glory’, p. 148, suggests that Sancroft gave it to the Library).” ([Online Palace Archive](#))
- From this we learn the following, 1) the document was logged and in possession of the Lambeth Palace Library by the year 1647, and 2) important scholars such as Ward Allen and Adam Nicolson were not aware of this fact when they authored their respective works on the topic.
- According to Adam Nicolson the document lay in the library’s keeping “uninspected and unvalued” for nearly three centuries until 1955.
 - “This manuscript, number 98, remained in the library, uninspected and unvalued, until a Californian scholar, E.E. Willoughby, recognized it for what it was in 1955. It is still there today and can be requested from the shelves by anyone who walks in off the Embankment. Why is it not more famous? Why not more treasured? It should be, because this, very nearly uniquely is as near as any of us will ever come to a manuscript of the King James Bible.” (Nicolson, 148)
- Edwin Elliott Willoughby is the author of the extremely rare and expensive 1956 publication *The Making of the King James Bible: A Monograph with Comparisons from the Bishops Bible and the Manuscript Annotations of 1602, With an Original Leaf from the Great "She" Bible of 1611*. According to Penn Libraries of the University of Pennsylvania, only 290 copies were ever printed for sale. The board of GLBC approved me picking up a copy of this rare and expensive book using funds from the printing ministry. In the Preface dated August 29, 1955, Willoughby states the following:

- “The present monograph has been taken from a larger work upon which I have been engaged since 1938.

For an opportunity to spend a year in England during which time I discovered the two documents of the translators of the 1611 King James Bible I thank the Trustees of the Folger Shakespeare Library and its director, Dr. Louis B. Wright.

. . . To the Bodleian Library I am equally grateful for permission to reproduce a page of the 1602 Bishops Bible into which changes by the translators of the King James Bible had been copied before they were revised.

I thank also Miss I.J. Churchill, the former Librarian of the Lambeth Palace Library, for calling this manuscript of the Epistles to my attention and Mr. L.W. Hanson, Reference Librarian of the Bodleian Library for directing me to the 1602 annotated Bishops Bible. (Willoughby, unnumbered Preface)

- A photo of Romans 1 in MS 98 was included by Willoughby on page 24. This is the same image that is visible on the Lambeth Palace Library website. There is also some light discussion of the manuscript’s significance on pages 26-28.
- Regarding the significance of these two finds, Willoughby writes the following on page 21:
 - “Its has long been thought impossible to evaluate the work performed by these revisers. This was all the more noteworthy because two documents which would show what these revisers had done had been lying for centuries in two libraries in England. And these two libraries were those to which one would naturally turn for evidence upon the early English Bible—The Bodleian Library at Oxford and the Lambeth Library attached to the palace of the Archbishop of Canterbury, London.

The usual opinion has been that the revisers did little more than to prepare and edit for the printer the copy prepared by the translators. Actually, however, they polished the copy and provided considerable of the beauty of the King James version. The revisers converted a version much like the Bishops Bible (which, by following the rules of King James, the translators had produced) into the present noble literary monument.” (Willoughby, 21)

- Having been recognized by Willoughby in 1955 for its true value, it would take another two decades before a published work granted public access to the insights found within MS 98. In 1977 Ward Allen published *Translating the New Testament Epistles 1604-1611: A Manuscript of King James’s Westminster Company* for Vanderbilt University Press. Allen’s work is a full collation of MS 98 against both a 1602 Bishops Bible and a 1611 Authorized Version. Today, one can view select pages of [MS 98](#) on the Lambeth Place Library website.

- Given the fact that MS 98 had been lost to history until 1955 and not publicly accessible until the publication of Ward Allen's book in 1977, we must reiterate our point that the American King James Only movement left the station in the mid-20th century without an awareness or working knowledge of this important primary source.

Bod. 1602

- The second work-in-progress document that commands our attention is Bod. 1602. As I have said many times in this class, Bod. 1602 is a 1602 Bishops Bible in the possession of the Bodleian Library at Oxford containing the handwritten annotations of the translators in the margin. Its importance to understanding the translation process utilized by the King James translators cannot possibly be understated.
- The *Annals of the Bodleian Library Oxford* edited by William Dunn Macray notes receipt of the volume in 1646 via the following entry.
 - "Item, for a large Bible wherein is written down all the Alterations of the last translation." (Macray, 102)
- More than 200 years later a short discussion of Bod. 1602 can be found in B.F. Westcott's 1863 publication *A General View of the History of the English Bible*. Pages 156 and 157 contain the following footnote clearly referencing the document.
 - "It is remarkable that none of the many copies of the Bishops' Bible used for the revision have yet been discovered. There is an interesting volume in the Bodleian Library (Bishops' Bible, Barker, 1602), which is commonly supposed to be one of the copies prepared for the press.

The text is corrected throughout some books to the Royal Version; and in some cases (g, j, t) which appear to indicate the sources from which the corrections were derived. Mr. J. Wordsworth, Fellow of Brasenose, has kindly given me the following summary of the extent of the corrections:

Gen i.-xxv with g, j, t, and perhaps another letter.
 Gen. xxvi. To Joshua inclusive with g (j again for Deut. xxxii. To end).
 Judges-Is. iv. Corrected with added letters; and so also
 Jer. i-iv.
 Ezech. i.-iv.
 Dan. i.-iv.
 The Minor Prophets.
 St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke St. John xvii to the end.
 There are also two notes on Eph. iv. 8, 2 Thess. ii.15.

From the collation which I owe to the great kindness of Rev. H. O. Coxe, the Bodleian Librarian, it is certain that ‘g’ marks corrections obtained from the Genevan Version. The material which I have are not as yet sufficient to identify ‘t’ and ‘j.’

The history of the book is unknown; but the occurrence of the reference-letters is at least a certain proof that it was not designed for the press. In all probability it contains simply a scholar’s collation of the of the Royal and Bishops’ texts, with an attempt to trace the origin of the corrections.

The corrections throughout the O.T. are apparently in the same hand: those in the N.T. are in a different hand and ‘considerably more modern’.” (Westcott, 156-157)

- There is no doubt that Westcott is talking about Bod. 1602 in these footnotes from pages 156-157. That said, a couple observations are in order. First, the existence of the document was known to people in the scholarly world of 19th century England. In addition, to Westcott, at least two other people were aware of its existence namely a Mr. J. Wordsworth and Rev. H. O. Coxe, the Bodleian Librarian. Second, Westcott is clearly relying on secondhand information and not a firsthand examination of the document. So, while the existence of Bod. 1602 was known to the scholarly world of 19th century England it remained largely unstudied and its true significance largely unappreciated.
- Willoughby talks about this very fact in this 1956 monograph.
 - “The nineteenth century editor of the New Testament, Brook Foss Westcott, later Bishop of Durham, was misled by these remarks. In this *General View of the History of the English Bible*, he referred to John Wordsworth, later Bishop of Salisbury, who had examined this volume for him. “in all probability” Westcott, following Wordsworth, concluded, “it contained simply a scholar’s collation of the Royal and the Bishops texts with an attempt to trace the origins of these corrections.”

Had Bishop Westcott actually examined this volume he would have realized that the final revision committee exercised a much greater influence than this over the work, not only of individual translators, but of the translating companies as well. He would not, we can be sure, have concluded: “It is not likely that this committee did more than to arrange the materials already completed but, whatever their work was, it was completed in nine months. . . .” (p. 118 and n. 3)” (Willoughby, 22)

- Two decades later, in February 1888 a Nicolas Pocock wrote an article for *The Athenaeum Journal of Literature, Science, The Fine Arts, Music, and Drama* titled “The Bishops’ Bible of 1568, 1572, and 1602” in which Bod. 1602 is explicitly discussed (Willoughby is unaware of this mention of Bod. 1602 as he refers to Macray’s entry in *The Annals of the Bodleian Library* as “the only other notice of this Bible known to me.”). The following screenshots are taken from pages 244-245.

It now remains for me to give a brief description of the copy of the folio edition of 1602 which is in the Bodleian Library. Bibliographers have just noticed that it is one of the copies used by the revisers for the new translation of 1611,

which is now called the Authorized Version, though it is quite impossible to say on what authority its general use rests. It is a large folio, with the leaves uncut, which has been profusely annotated in the margin with the alterations adopted in 1611. This is as regards the Old Testament, for in the New there are frequent suggestions which have not been adopted by the revisers, and also many suggestions made and afterwards erased in favour of others which have been adopted. This can only reasonably be accounted for on the supposition that this copy was used as a rough draft, though it could not have been the copy sent to the press, because large portions both of the Old and New Testament have been left untouched. The only attempt at describing these corrections that I have seen is in Dr. Westcott's valuable 'History of the English Bible,' where he observes truly that the handwriting of the notes in the New Testament is different from that of the Old. He also observes that it is a considerably more modern hand. This observation, I think, must be pronounced to be very doubtful. It is a curious fact that the Major Prophets should have been noted only for the first four chapters of each, and that there are only two notes on the Epistles and Revelation, and none to the first sixteen chapters of St. John's Gospel. The writing on the inner margin must have been done when the sheets were loose, and some one must have found the sheets in the condition in which they now are and had them bound up some time about the beginning of the present century. In the seventeenth chapter of St. John the suggestions are exactly as represented in the text of the Authorized Version. A specimen of other suggestions not adopted is the following :—

(1) St. Matt. ii. 5. "In the" is erased before "land."

(2) ii. 11. "Found" is suggested for "saw," following the Greek reading *εὑρον* and the Genevan version. Also "offered" for "presented" for *προσήνεγκαν*, in accordance with nearly every version that had preceded except the Genevan.

(3) iv. 1. "Led up" is changed into "led away," but the revisers recurred to "led up."

(4) iv. 19. "Follow me" of the Bishops' and Authorized is here "Come ye after me," agreeing with Wyclif and Rheims.

(5) vi. 26. The suggestion of "and" for "yet" of the Bishops' version is not adopted in A. V. The same may be said of "What shall we put on?" instead of "Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" which is the reading of most versions.

(6) viii. 9. "I also myselfe" has been altered into "I also," following most versions, whereas A. V. has dropped the word "also."

(7) ix. 1. "Whole" of Bishops' and A. V. is rendered "strong," *ισχύοντες*, with the Great Bible.

(8) ix. 24. "Get you hence" is suggested from the Greek Bible or the Genevan, but A. V. keeps to the Bishops' version.

(9) ix. 26. "This fame" is suggested for "the fame of it," which was altered in A. V. to "the fame hereof."

(10) x. 11. "I say unto you" is changed into "But I say unto you," instead of "And I say unto you," agreeing with no previous version.

(11) xi. 28. The word "heavy" has been introduced by A. V. against the suggestion in the margin.

(12) xv. 26, 27. The readings "little dogs" and "yes" were both left unaltered, but the revisers changed them to "dogs" and "truth."

(13) xviii. 2-5. The word "little" before "child" and "children" is four times omitted, agreeing with Tyndale and the Great Bible, whereas it is kept from the Bishops' in A. V.

(14) xviii. 9. The substitution of the word "send" for "cast" is scarcely justifiable, and so it is no wonder that the A. V. recurred to the older form of "cast."

(15) xviii. 9. "The everlasting fire" was not adopted by any version, though manifestly more correct, and only reappears in the Revised Version of 1881.

Such is a specimen of a few out of many suggestions made by the reviser in St. Matthew's Gospel which were not finally adopted by the company. Many of them will bear a comparison with those of any other version, and indicate good scholarship and independent thought on the part of him who made them. It should be added that in some cases the original suggestion was erased and the reading finally adopted substituted in the same handwriting.

The present writer had no time during a hurried visit to Oxford to pursue the investigation as far as he could have wished. Perhaps some other person may be induced to take up the subject.

NICHOLAS POCOCK.

- It is important to note the following from this piece by Pocock. First, he has read Westcott's description of the document from his 1863 publication *A General View of the History of the English Bible* (See above). Second, Pocock speculates that Bod. 1602 might have served as a "rough draft" for the Authorized Version noting annotations signifying various stages of revision. Thirdly, he offers fifteen examples of readings from Bod. 1602 and how their revisions impact the King James. Lastly, he confesses that his visit to Oxford was "hurried" and that he was unable "to pursue the investigation as far as he could have wished."
- Pocock's piece in *The Athenaeum* demonstrates an awareness of Bod. 1602's existence in the Bodleian Library in the late 19th century. That said, by Pocock's own admission, the document remained largely unstudied and underappreciated in terms of its significance. It would not be until nearly a century later that its true importance was realized.
- As in the case of MS 98, it was Dr. Edward Willoughby in the 1950s who identified Bod. 1602 as instrumental to the translation work of the King James Bible. Once again, Adam Nicolson tells the story.

- “The third document is more intimate with the process of translation than either the Lambeth manuscript or the Eyre letter. It is a record of a scholar in the very process of translating. It too had been lying ignored for centuries in a famous British library and it too was discovered by the indefatigable Dr. Willoughby on his great 1950s trawl. He found it in the Bodleian Library in Oxford . . . The book which Dr. Willoughby discovered was an edition of the Bishops’ Bible printed in 1602. This, of course, was the Elizabethan version of the English Bible on which Bancroft’s Rules required the Translators to base their own. Forty copies, in unbound sheets, were said to have been acquired for their use and distributed to them. The Bodleian volume was probably one of those sets, later bound together. It was acquired by the library in 1646 for 13s 4d and catalogued as ‘a large Bible wherein is written down all the Alterations of the last translation.’ What no one realized at the time, or for another three centuries, was that this Bible was not only an account of the alterations made; it was an instrument in the translation itself.” (Nicolson, 151)
- Published access to the treasure that is Bod. 1602 was not granted until 1995 when Ward S. Allen and Edward C. Jacobs published *The Coming of the King James Gospels: A Collation of the Translators’ Work-in-Progress* for the University of Arkansas Press. This important volume provides a complete collection of Bod. 1602 with the 1611 text for the gospels.
- Once again, at the risk of sounding like a broken record, we must point out that the American King James Only movement enunciated a position in the mid-20th century without an awareness much less a working knowledge of this important primary source.

Notes of John Bois

- We will discuss this document in Lesson 163.

Conclusion

- The two work-in-progress documents discussed in this lesson were largely lost to history until they were rediscovered by scholars in British libraries in the 1950s. Published works notifying the public as to their important content were not available until 1956 in the case of Willoughby’s cursory comments, 1977 (MS 98), and 1995 (Bod. 1602). Given the publication dates for the first wave of King James Only books published in the United States, these so-called leading lights of the King James only movement were largely ignorant of the work-in-progress discussed in this lesson.
 - 1930—*Our Authorized Bible Vindicated* by Benjamin J. Wilkinson
 - 1955—*God Wrote Only One Bible* by Jasper James Ray
 - 1964—*The Bible “Babel”* by Peter S. Ruckman
 - 1970—*The Christian’s Handbook of Manuscript Evidence* by Peter S. Ruckman

- 1970—*Which Bible?* by David Otis Fuller
- These books by Wilkinson, Ray, Ruckman, and Fuller set the content for the King James Only Movement going into the 1970s, 80s, 90s, and early 2000s. As a result, things were said about the King James Bible that were not true and devoid of any factual basis that were then repeated in an uncritical manner in later pro-King James literature. Even today, many so-called leading lights in the King James Only movement refuse to acknowledge or engage with these work-in-progress documents.
- Over the next couple of lessons, we will look at what these documents can tell us about the translational process utilized by the King James translators as well as consider any insights they might provide into the readings found in the King James Bible.

Works Cited

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