

Sunday, February 23, 2025—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
Lesson 255 Assessing the Printed History of the King James Text (Blayney & The 1769 Oxford Text)

Introduction

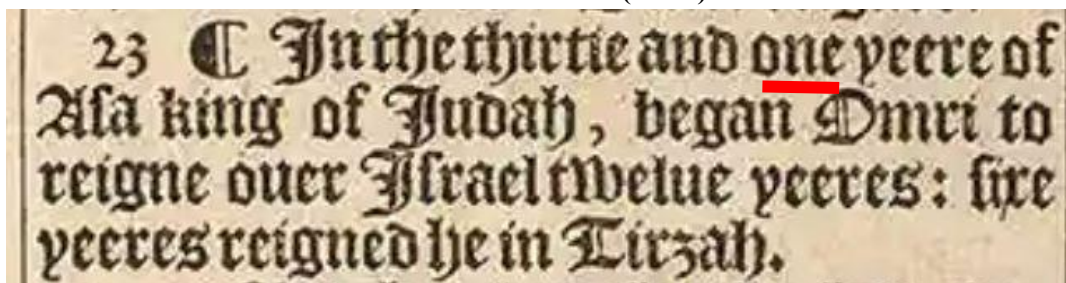
- In [Lesson 254](#) we began looking at the editorial work that Benjamin Blayney conducted for Oxford University Press in preparation for their 1769 edition. In doing so, we considered the following categories of revision:
 - Changes To The Number Of A Noun
 - Changes In Verb Tense & Usage
 - Restoration Of 1611 Readings
 - Correction of Printer's Errors
- Please note that for all the examples listed below we checked the readings in all the following editions:
 - 1611 London Folio (H309)
 - 1629 Cambridge Folio (H424)
 - 1638 Cambridge Folio (H520)
 - 1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780)
 - 1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)
 - 1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)
- To save time and space I have **not** provided photographic evidence for every example from all the editions listed above, but only what is necessary to explain each example. That said, every edition listed was checked for each example.
- In this Lesson we will consider the following additional points:
 - Word Changes, Modern Forms, & Idioms
 - Changes In The Use of Definite Articles
 - Apostrophes & Possessive Forms

Word Changes, Modern Forms & Idioms

- Recall from [Lesson 251](#) that F.S. Parris is attributed incorrectly with being the first to change “fourscore” to “eightieth” in I Kings 6:1, according to Gordon Campbell in *Bible: The Story Of The King James Version, 1611-2011*. (Campbell, 135) The change had been made previously in the 1683 Cambridge Quarto (H780) edition prior to the work of Parris.
- Later, when discussing Blayney’s work, Dr. Campbell mentions a similar type of change to I Kings 16:23.
 - “And, just as Parris corrected an ordinal number, so Blayney substituted ‘first’ for ‘one’ (I Kings 16:23).” (Campbell, 140)
- Professor David Norton discusses this example from Blayney on page 110 of *A Textual History Of The King James Bible* in a lengthy paragraph on English word changes.

I Kings 16:23

1611 London Folio (H309)



1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

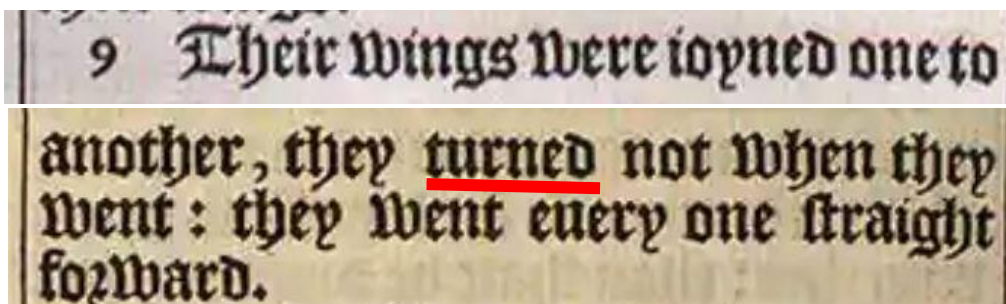
23 ¶ In the thirty and first year of Afa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years : six years reigned he in Tirzah.

Ezekiel 1:17

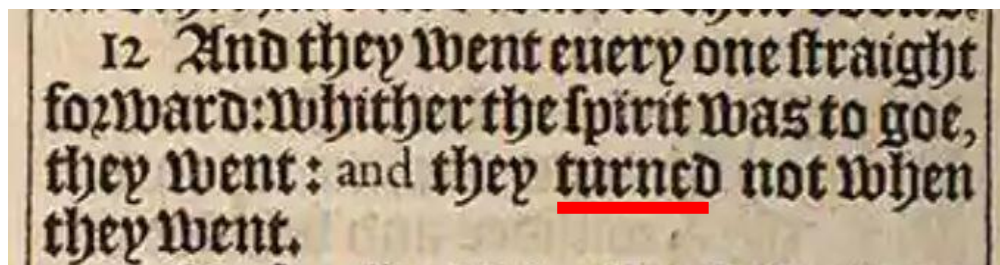
- Professor Campbell also discusses a change made by Blayney to Ezekiel 1:17.
 - “In the prophetic passage about the wheel in the middle of the wheel, he changed ‘they returned not when they went’ to the clearer ‘they turned not when they went’.” (Campbell, 140)

- Dr. Norton also lists this example in the paragraph on word changes found on page 110 of his *Textual History*.
- What neither Campbell nor Norton mention is that this change made by Blayney in 1769 brought Ezekiel 1:17 into alignment with verses 9 and 12 of the same chapter. Please consider the following images from the 1611.

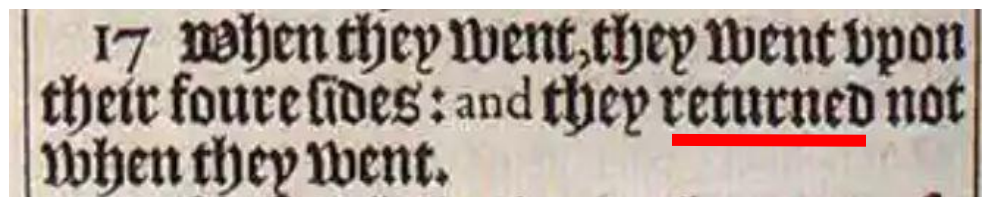
Ezekiel 1:9



Ezekiel 1:12



Ezekiel 1:17



- According to Campbell and Norton, this change to verse 17 was first made by Blayney in 1769. Let's check that against some important prominent editions.

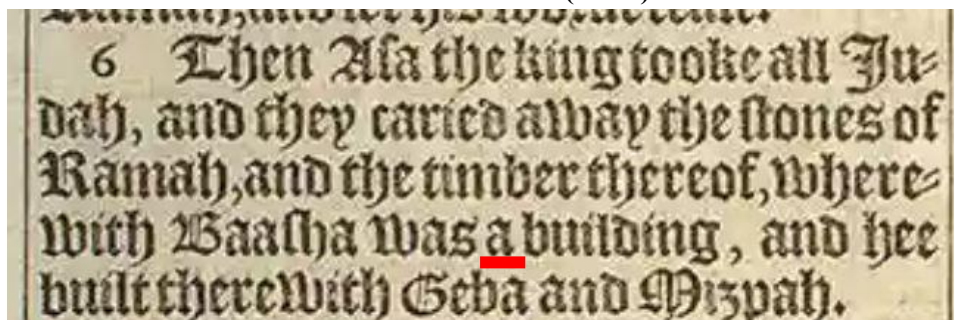
1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

17 When they went, they went upon their four sides: *and* they turned not when they went.

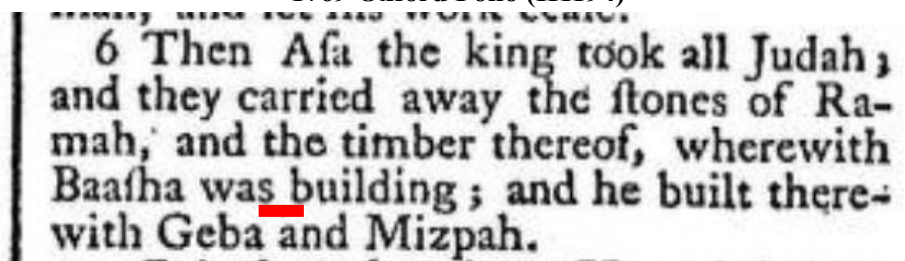
II Chronicles 16:6

- Professor Campbell also notes the modernization of an idiom in Blayney’s 1769 text at II Chronicles 16:6.
 - “He [Blayney] also modernized archaic idioms, so ‘was a building’ becomes ‘was building’ (2 Chronicles 16:6).” (Campbell, 140)
- Dr. Norton also notes this change on page 111 of his *Textual History*.

1611 London Folio (H309)



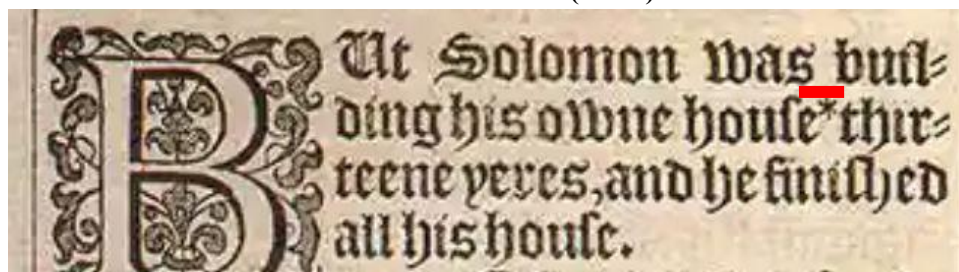
1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)



- This change to II Chronicles 16:6 might have been made to match a parallel verses in I Kings 7:1 that read “was building” in 1611.

I Kings 7:1

1611 London Folio (H309)

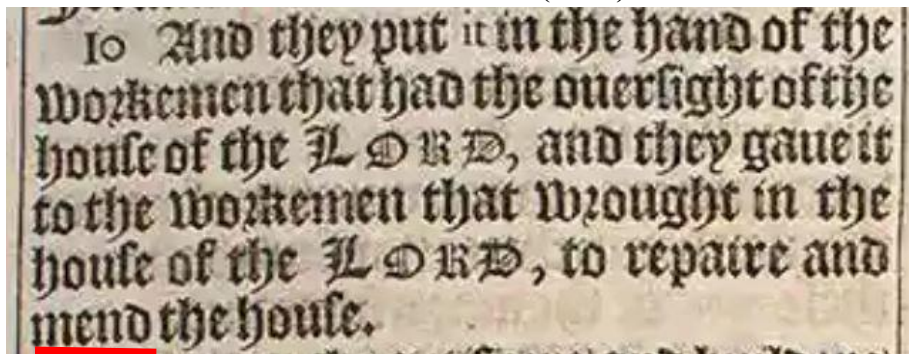


- Once again, Campbell and Norton's account is incomplete because they only looked at the flagship folio editions. My friend and fellow researcher Christopher Yetzer has found evidence of the change in question at II Chronicles 16:6 being made before Blayney's work in 1769.
 - [1661 London Quarto RF \(H672\) Barker](#)
 - [1676 London Quarto RF \(H728\) Barker](#)
 - It is in several others, as well in 1677, 1700 etc.

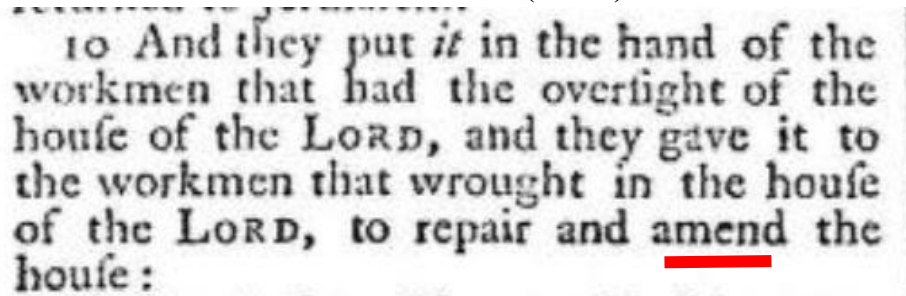
II Chronicles 34:10

- II Chronicles 34:10 is listed by Dr. Norton on page 110 of *A Textual History Of The King James Bible* as an example of a word change by Blayney.

1611 London Folio (H309)



1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)



- Blayney's change to II Chronicles 34:10 matches the reading found in the 1560 Geneva Bible.

1560 Geneva Bible (H107)

10 And they put it in the hands of them
that shulde do the worke & had the ouer-
fight in the house of the Lord : and they
gaue it to the workemen that wroght in
the house of the Lord, to repair & amen-
de the house.

- Judith 2:20 is also tagged by Professor Norton on page 110 as a verse that received editorial revision by Blayney in 1769.
 - 1611—“A great **multitude** also of sundry countries came with them, . . .”
 - 1769— “A great **number** also of sundry countries came with them, . . .”

Changes In The Use of Definite Articles

- On page 108, Norton addresses changes made by Blayney in the use of definite articles.
 - “Most of the remaining corrections for literal accuracy deal with articles, most commonly inserting an omitted definite article.” (Norton, 108)
- In footnote 12, Norton ascribes five such changes to the work of Benjamin Blayney in 1769.
 - “¹²Deut. 20:7 (restoring a 1629 reading); Ps. 99:2; Isa. 44:13; Acts 18:5. . . 1 Cor. 10:28.” (Norton, 108)

Deuteronomy 20:7

1611 London Folio (H309)

7 * And what man is there that hath
betrothed a wife , and hath not taken
her : let him goe and returne vnto his
house, lest he die in battell, and another
man take her.

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

7° And what man *is there* that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her:

- This change by Blayney is arguably a harmonization to make Deuteronomy 20:7 match verses 5 & 6.

1611 London Folio (H309)

5 ¶ And the Officers shall speake vnto the people, saying, what man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it: let him goe and returne to his house, lest hee die in the battell, and an other man dedicate it.

6 And what man is hee that hath planted a Vineyard, and hath not yet † eaten of it: let him also go and returne vnto his house, lest he die in the battell, and an other man eate of it.

7 * And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her: let him goe and returne vnto his house, lest he die in battell, and another man take her.

Psalm 99:2

1611 London Folio (H309)

2 The LORD is great in Zion:
and he is high above all people.

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

2 The LORD is great in Zion; and he is
high above all the people.

- Blayney's change to Psalm 99:2 reinstated the reading of the Geneva Bible at this verse.

1560 Geneva Bible (H107)

2 The Lord is great in Zion, & he is high
above all the people.

Isaiah 44:13

1611 London Folio (H309)

13 The carpenter stretcheth out his
rule: he maketh it out with the line: he
fitteth it with planes, and he marketh
it out with the compasse, and maketh it
after the figure of a man, according to
the beautie of a man; that it may re-
maine in the house.

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

13 The carpenter stretcheth out *his* rule;
 he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it
 with planes, and he marketh it out with
 the compass, and maketh it after the figure
 of a man, according to the beauty of a
 man; that it may remain in the house.

- Christopher Yetzer has once again furnished evidence of this change having been made before the work of Blayney.
 - [1635 Cambridge Quarto RF \(H497\)](#)
 - [1679 London Octavo RF \(H747\)](#)
 - [1638 London Duod. RF \(H528\)](#)
 - [1683 London Duod. RF \(H785\)](#)

Acts 18:5

1611 London Folio (H309)

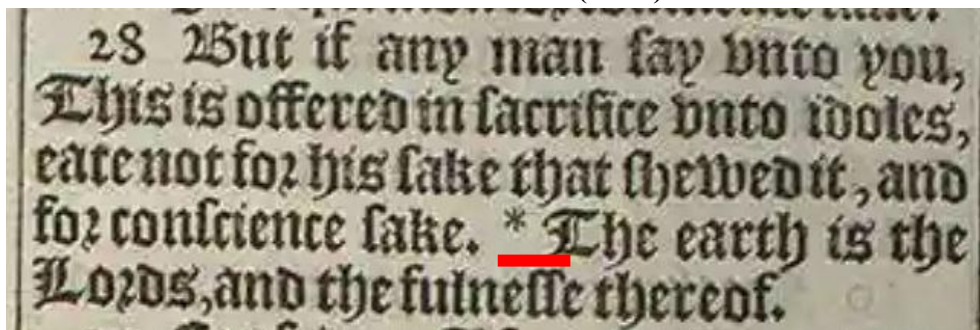
5 And when Silas and Timotheus
 were come from Macedonia, Paul was
 pressed in spirit, and testified to the
 Jewes, that Jesus was Christ.

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

5 And when Silas and Timotheus were
 come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed
 in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that
 Jesus was Christ.

I Corinthians 10:28

1611 London Folio (H309)



1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not ' for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake : for ' the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof :

- In the case of I Corinthians 10:28, Blayney's revision matches the reading from the 1560 Geneva Bible.

1560 Geneva Bible (H107)

28 But if any man say vnto you, This is sacrificed vnto idoles, eat it not, because of him that shewed it, and for the conscience (for the earth is the Lords, and all that therein is)

- There is also evidence of I Corinthians 10:28 having been edited before Blayney in 1769.
 - [1657 London Octavo RF \(H655\)](#)
 - [1661 Cambridge Octavo RF \(H674\)](#)
 - [1694 London Duod. RF \(H835\)](#)

Apostrophes & Possessive Forms

- In [Lesson 251](#) we looked at Apostrophes & Possessive Forms in the work of F.S. Parris. In doing so we observed the following from the pen of Gordon Campbell:

- “In the 1611 Bible, possessives were indistinguishable from normative forms, but in the second quarter of the eighteenth-century apostrophes had begun to represent possessive forms. Parris therefore inserted possessive apostrophes throughout the text.” (Campbell, 134)
- The following examples were considered in Lesson 251 of this category of revision from Parris’s work.
 - 1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)
 - Judges 11:2—“wife’s sons”
 - **I Chronicles 7:2—“father’s house”**
 - **I Chronicles 7:40—“father’s house”**
 - Nehemiah 7:61— “father’s house” *
 - Psalm 6:4—“mercy’s sake” *
 - Psalm 31:16—“mercy’s sake” *
 - Psalm 44:26—“mercy’s sake” *
 - Psalm 140:3—“adder’s poison” *
 - Daniel 2:41—“potter’s clay” *
 - **Matthew 14:9—“oath’s sake”**
 - **Mark 6:26—“oath’s sake”**
 - * indicates that the apostrophe was removed in the 1762 Cambridge Quarto & Folio Editions.
 - 1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143) and 1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)
 - **Ezekiel 44:30— “priest’s”**
 - **Wisdom of Solomon 15:4—“printer’s”**
 - **Ecclesiasticus 13:19—“lion’s prey”**
 - Baruch 1:4—“king’s sons”
 - I Maccabees 10:89— “king’s blood”
- Recall from above that Campbell said that “...in the second quarter of the eighteenth-century apostrophes had begun to represent possessive forms. Parris therefore inserted possessive apostrophes throughout the text.” (Campbell, 134) How should we view this category of editorial revision?
 - Option 1: Spelling Change
 - Option 2: Grammatical Update—to reflect modern conventions for distinguishing between possessive and normative forms in the English language.
- I prefer Option 2, either way these are non-substantive changes that possess *verbal equivalence*.

- Professor David Norton also discusses the insertion of apostrophes by Parris and Blayney on page 109 of *A Textual History Of The King James Bible*:
 - “Some of these examples cross the line between matters of accuracy and matters of English, as does another group of variants from these editors, apostrophes. Among the variant readings are eighteen apostrophes that survive from Parris, and eight from Blayney. To judge from these and from the lack of contemporary rules, they may well have regarded apostrophes as a matter of ‘mere orthography’.¹⁶ Curiously, all those noted from Parris (except ‘Ptolemeus” 2 Macc. 1:10) are placed before the *s*, whereas Blayney’s usually follow the *s*. Consequently, modern editions have nine singular possessives that should be plural, seven inherited from Parris, two from Blayney, and another six plural that should be singular from Blayney.¹⁷ A century later Scrivener corrected these, but his changes were not adopted.”
 - ¹⁶Robert Lowth’s *A Short Introduction to English Grammar*, which appeared in the same year as Parris’s edition, does not mention possessive apostrophes, nor does Johnson’s dictionary mention them either in the short grammar at the beginning or under ‘apostrophe’.
 - ¹⁷ Parris’s misplaced apostrophes: 1Chr. 7:2, 40; Ezek. 44:30; Wisdom 15:4; Eccclus. 13:19; Matt. 14:9; Mark 6:26; Blayney’s singulars for plurals: Ezra 2:59; Neh. 7:61 (here Parris omitted apostrophes); plurals for singulars: Ps. 6:4; 31:16; 44:26; 140:3; Prov. 31:14; Dan. 2:41. Two of Parris’s errors are corrected in later editions (Baruch 1:4 and 1 Macc. 10:89); Blayney changed Parris’s correct reading at Prov. 31:14, and he changed Parris’s ‘neighbour’s’ to ‘neighbour’ at Deut. 23:25 – here Parris is correct and Blayney defensible. (Norton, 109)
- Norton breaks down his discussion regarding the use of apostrophes into multiple categories:
 - Parris’ Misplaced Apostrophes
 - Blayney’s Singular for Plurals
 - Blayney’s Changes to Parris’s Reading

Parris’ Misplaced Apostrophes

- According to footnote 17 on page 109, Norton says the apostrophes added by Parris were “misplaced” in I Chronicles 7:2, 40; Ezekiel 44:30; Wisdom 15:4; Ecclesiastes 13:19; Matthew 14:9; and Mark 6:26. Note that from the list above, that for these verses (see bolded verses), the apostrophes added by Parris in his 1743 Duodecimo (H1063) were accepted unchanged into the 1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143) & 1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142).
- A comparison of all the verses listed by Norton in this category reveals that Blayney retained all changes. Therefore, I am not sure why Norton calls these apostrophes “misplaced” in his

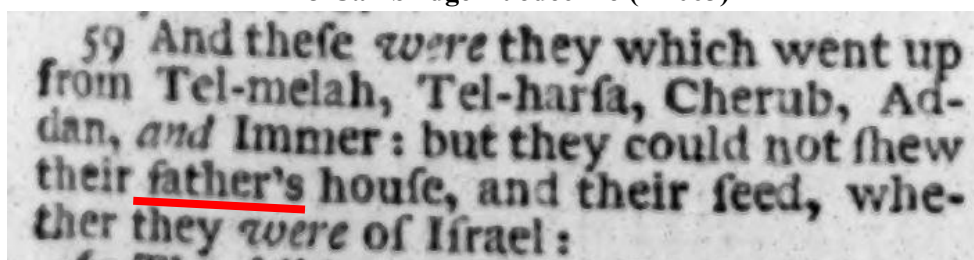
classification system. Blayney agreed with Parris by allowing these apostrophes to stand without further revision. Norton's statement appears to reflect his subjective preference.

Blayney's Singular for Plurals

- In this category, Norton notes two verses for which Blayney included apostrophes whereas Parris omitted them, Ezra 2:59 and Nehemiah 7:61. Unfortunately for Norton this is not the entire story. In the case of Ezra 2:59 Parris originally added an apostrophe to "father's house" in his 1743 Duodecimo (H1063) edition only to remove it later in his 1762 Folio (H1142) and Quarto (H1143) editions. The same could be said for Nehemiah 7:61.

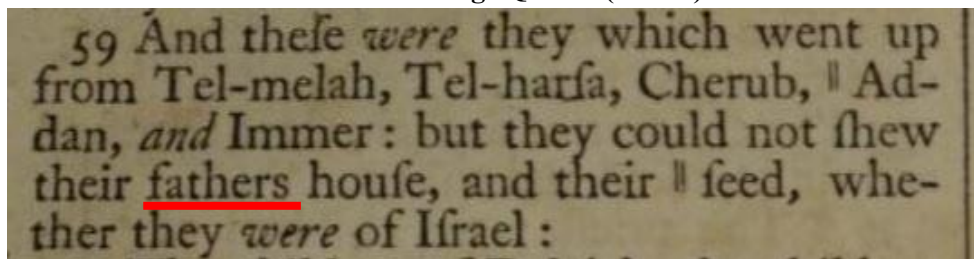
Ezra 2:59

1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)



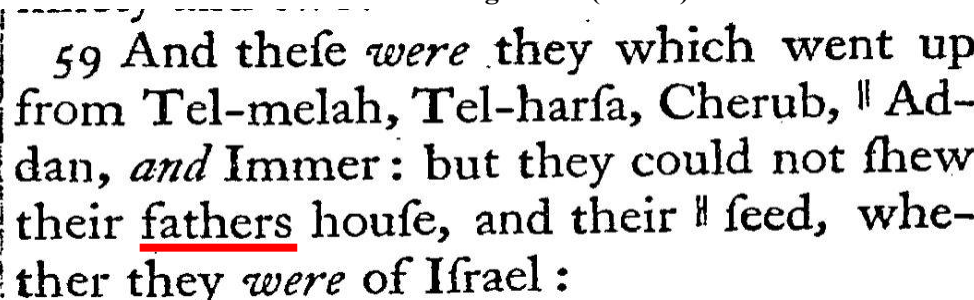
Ezra 2:59

1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143)



Ezra 2:59

1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)



Ezra 2:59
1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

59 And these *were* they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harfa, Cherub, ¶ Ad-dan, *and* Immer: but they could not shew their father's house, and their ¶ seed, whether they *were* of Israel:

Nehemiah 7:61
1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)

61 And these *were* they which went up also from Tel-melah, Tel-haresha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer: but they could not shew their father's house, nor their seed, whether they *were* of Israel.

Nehemiah 7:61
1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143)

61^h And these *were* they which went up also from Tel-melah, Tel-haresha, Cherub, ¶ Addon, and Immer: but they could not shew their fathers house, nor their ¶ seed, whether they *were* of Israel.

Nehemiah 7:61
1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)

61^h And these *were* they which went up also from Tel-melah, Tel-haresha, Cherub, ¶ Addon, and Immer: but they could not shew their fathers house, nor their ¶ seed, whether they *were* of Israel.

Nehemiah 7:61

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

61 *And these *were* they which went up
also from Tel-melah, Telharsa, Cherub,
|| Addon, and Immer: but they could not
shew their father's house, nor their || seed,
whether they *were* of Israel.

Blayney's Plurals for Singulars

- In this category, Dr. Norton includes verses where Blayney changed Parris's singular forms to plurals. These verses include Palms 6:4, 31:16, 44:26, 140:3; Proverbs 31:14; Daniel. 2:41. Once again, Norton is only seeing part of the story. All these verses, with the exception of Proverbs 31:14, were originally possessives in Parris's 1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063) and were subsequently changed in the 1762 Folio (H1142) and Quarto (H1143) editions.

Psalm 6:4

1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)

4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh
save me for thy mercy's sake.

Psalm 6:4

1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143)

4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh,
save me for thy mercies sake.

Psalm 6:4

1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)

4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh,
save me for thy mercies sake.

Psalm 6:4

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul:
Oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

Psalm 31:16

1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)

16 Make thy face to shine upon thy ser-
vant : save me for thy mercy's fake.

Psalm 31:16

1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143)

16^r Make thy face to shine upon thy ser-
vant : save me for thy mercies fake.

Psalm 31:16

1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)

16^r Make thy face to shine upon thy ser-
vant : save me for thy mercies fake.

Psalm 31:16

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

16^u Make thy face to shine upon thy
servant : save me for thy mercies' fake.

Psalm 44:26

1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)

26 Arise for our help, and redeem us for
thy mercy's fake.

Psalm 44:26

1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143)

26 Arise † for our help, and redeem us
for thy mercies fake.

Psalm 44:26

1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)

26 Arise † for our help, and redeem us
for thy mercies fake.

Psalm 44:26
1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

26 Arise † for our help, and redcem us
for thy mercies' fake.

Psalm 140:3
1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)

3 They have sharpened their tongues like
a serpent: adder's poison is under their
lips. Selah.

Psalm 140:3
1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143)

3 They have sharpened their tongues like
a serpent; ' adders poison is under their
lips. Selah.

Psalm 140:3
1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)

3 They have sharpened their tongues like
a serpent; ' adders poison is under their
lips. Selah.

Psalm 140:3
1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

3 They have sharpened their tongues
like a serpent; ' adders' poison is under
their lips. Selah.

Proverbs 31:14
1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)

14 She is like the merchant ships; she
bringeth her food from afar.

Proverbs 31:14

1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143)

14 She is like the merchant ships; she
bringeth her food from afar.

Proverbs 31:14

1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)

14 She is like the merchant ships; she
bringeth her food from afar.

Proverbs 31:14

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

14 She is like the merchants' ships; she
bringeth her food from afar.

- Norton thinks that this change by Blayney at Proverbs 31:14 altered what he perceived to be the correct reading provided by Parris. (Norton, 109)

Daniel 2:41

1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)

41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and
toes part of potter's clay and part of iron,
the kingdom shall be divided; but there
shall be in it of the strength of the iron,
forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed
with miry clay.

Daniel 2:41

1762 Cambridge Quarto (H1143)

41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and
toes, part of potters clay, and part of iron,
the kingdom shall be divided; but there
shall be in it of the strength of the iron,
forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed
with miry clay.

Daniel 2:41

1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)

41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

Daniel 2:41

1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

41 And whereas thou sawest ^r the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

Blayney's Changes to Parris's Reading

- Deuteronomy 23:25 is the last example of a possessive change attributed to Blayney by Dr. Norton. (Norton, 109) Regarding this change Norton finds the Parris reading to be “correct” and Blayney’s revision “defensible.”
- Alex Bojko and I recently recorded a video on this example titled, [Deuteronomy 23:25 As An Example of Editorial Change \(Chat With Alex Bojko\)](#), interested parties are encouraged to check it out. Alex also prepared a [PDF document](#) that I utilized to prepare this section of the notes.

Deuteronomy 23:25
1611 London Folio (H309)

25 When thou comest into the standing
corn of thy neighbours, * then
thou maiest plucke the eares with thine
hand: but thou shalt not moue a sickle
vnto thy neighbours standing corne.

Deuteronomy 23:25
1677 Cambridge Quarto (H736)

25 When thou comest into the standing-
corn of thy neighbour, ^f then thou mayest
pluck the eares with thine hand: but thou
shalt not move a sickle unto thy neigh-
bours standing-corn.

^f Matth.
12. 1.
Mark
2. 23.
Luke
6. 1.

Deuteronomy 23:25
1683 Cambridge Quarto (H783)

25 When thou comest into the standing-
corn of thy neighbour, ¹ then thou mayest
pluck the eares with thine hand: but thou
shalt not move a sickle unto thy neigh-
bours standing-corn.

- The 1677 and 1683 Cambridge Quarto editions edited by Anthony Scattergood changed “neighbours” from plural to singular “neighbour.”

Deuteronomy 23:25
1743 Cambridge Duodecimo (H1063)

25 When thou comest into the standing-corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand: but thou shalt not move a fickle unto thy neighbour's standing-corn.

- F.S. Parris, in his initial work of 1743, retains the editorial work of Scattergood by keeping “neighbour” singular in Dt. 23:25. (Bojko, 6)

Deuteronomy 23:25
1762 Cambridge Folio (H1142)

25 When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour's, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand: but thou shalt not move a fickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.

- Parris departs from his first reading from 1743 in his 1762 Cambridge Folio edition and makes “neighbour's” possessive. (Bojko, 6)

Deuteronomy 23:25
1769 Oxford Folio (H1194)

25 When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a fickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.

Matthew 18. 1.
Mark 2. 23.
Luke 6. 1.

- Blaney, in his 1769 Oxford Folio, reverts to Scattergood's reading from the 1670s and 1680s in Deuteronomy. 23:25 by making “neighbour” singular not plural. (Bojko, 7)

- Deuteronomy. 23:25 is a clear example of an editorial change not a printer's error. The difference between plural and singular does not change the meaning of the verse as demonstrated by the context and the underlying Hebrew (which is singular in Duet. 23:25). (Bojko, 7)

Works Cited

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