

Bible IN America™

Newsletter

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HBU's Bible Museum – a Legacy and Challenge from President Hodo

After almost 19 years as President of Houston Baptist University, Dr. E.D. Hodo has announced his service in that capacity will conclude effective June 30, 2006. In recent remarks he said, "I am just changing addresses to continue doing what the Lord has called me to do." For the last five years President Hodo focused much of his energy on raising funds for the Cultural Arts Center, which includes space for an expanded Bible Museum. The Cultural Arts Center and the Bible Museum are important parts of the legacy Hodo leaves the University.

The genesis of the Bible in America Museum was in 1992, when President Hodo and Dr. Jerry Wiles, then Assistant Vice President of Church Relations, attended the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis. Wiles was a friend of Craig Lampe, who had a partnership in collecting rare Bibles with Jonathan Byrd. Byrd is an Indiana entrepreneur involved in everything from cafeterias to Indy races, as well as Bible collecting. When Hodo and Wiles visited Byrd's Bible collection in Greenwood, Indiana, Hodo had never seen such a collection of rare Bibles. To be able to handle, touch, and turn the pages of Bibles two centuries old or more reinforced his appreciation for the Bible's timeless influence.

Hodo immediately thought that since HBU was a school of the Book, it ought to have such a collection of the Book. If the University was to integrate the Word in its studies, a collection such as this would be a great asset for University research and exhibits for the wider community. Mr. Byrd had his collection of American Bibles for sale, and organizations in Florida and Colorado were interested in purchasing the collection. However, only HBU was able to raise funds for the project. HBU Trustee Bruce Belin was influential in the purchase of the collection. While appraised at \$1.3 million, the University purchased the Byrd collection for \$800,000. The Byrd collection of rare American Bibles became the nucleus of HBU's Bible Museum.

At about this time, the concept of the Cultural Arts Center had begun to take shape, and a Bible Museum seemed a perfect addition to the center. The Cultural Arts Center will bring many people from the community to the HBU campus, and the Bible Museum will be one way of displaying the centrality of the Bible and its message to the University's mission and goals.

Hodo envisions a Bible Museum which will teach people the dramatic story of how the Word came to us and how the Word has influenced America. He expects the new museum to have dramatic video portrayals of Wycliffe, Tyndale, Erasmus, and



others important to the story of the Bible. He wants some of the less rare Bibles to be out of the cases so that people can actually feel the pages printed centuries ago. He also would like to see the Museum develop co-operative programs with other libraries, collections, and institutions to create exhibits on the Bible's story. The Bible Museum's collection can be an important resource for research and study by HBU students and faculty as well as by visiting scholars. As Hodo often says, all this is so people will come to know Jesus and know Him better. Without Jesus, nothing else is important. In the Bible Museum President Hodo leaves HBU not only a legacy, but a challenge for the future.

1660 King James Bible Comes to Museum

The 1660's brought epic changes to England – a Civil war, execution of a King, experiments and reforms in church organization and government, and a monarchy both restored and



King Charles II in Coronation Robes

limited. Throughout this time of political and social upheaval, the King James translation of the Bible made at the beginning of the century gained in acceptance, helping mold the thought and speech of the nation.

When the monarchy was restored and Charles II became King in 1660, printer John Ogilby issued a Bible to honor the new King. Ogilby's folio Bible was presented to Charles II when he first came to the Royal Chapel at Whitehall in 1660. Dr. Jon Redmond, pastor of First Baptist Church, Pasadena, recently presented the Bible Museum with a similar 1660 Bible. This magnificent two-volume folio Bible is bound in leather with gold stamped decoration.

This Bible was originally printed by John Field, under the sponsorship of the Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University, John Worthington. Worthington wanted to ensure a supply of well printed editions of the Bible for use in church and libraries. Printing a Bible, especially one of this size and distinctiveness, was a major project and could take two to three years. Thus, the New Testament title page is dated 1659, but the title page for the completed two volumes is dated 1660. In that day, buyers often purchased the printed Bible then took the pages to a binder to have the pages bound. They could then choose which supplements and illustrations they wished bound with their Bible. Early owners of the Museum's Bible also had the text ruled in red, a popular display of wealth begun in the 1500's. A scribe used a straight edge and a quill with red ink to make straight-line borders around every page of the Bible.

After a decade of Puritan rule, King Charles II restored both the monarchy and the practices of the Church of England. The 1660 Bible published by Field was among the first after the Restoration to again include the Book of Common Prayer with the Bible. The Prayer Book is preceded by a full page engraving of



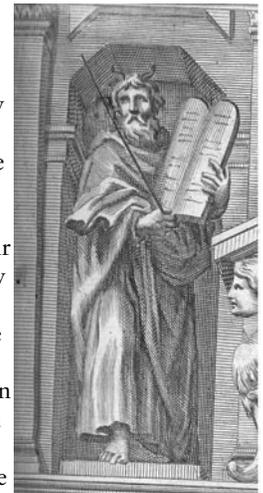
King Charles II's coat of arms and a dedication to the new King signed by John Ogilby.

John Ogilby, a strong supporter of the monarchy, arranged many of Charles II's coronation celebrations and was commissioned to write poetry for the event. As a printer, he bought up John Field's printed Bible pages and added illustrations, which he called "Choreographical Sculpts." The title page of the 1660 Bible, shown here, shows King Solomon on his throne with lions at his feet and his subjects standing about (compare with the Bible's description in I Kings 10:18-19). King David with his lyre

is above the title with Moses and Abraham on his left and Aaron and David (with his slingshot) on the right. Interestingly, Moses is shown with horns (like Michelangelo's statue of Moses). This is based on Jerome's mistranslation in the Latin Vulgate of the Hebrew word *qaran* in Exodus 34:29. Jerome translated that Moses "grew horns" as he talked with God, rather than that his face shone or "emitted rays."

The famous diarist Samuel Pepys alluded to this edition of the Bible in his Diary for May 27, 1667: "There came Richardson, the

bookbinder, with one of Ogilby's Bibles in quires for me to see and buy, it being Mr. Cade's my stationer's; but it is like to be so big that I shall not use it." Early owners of the Museum's copy of the Bible were John and Sarah Harris. In the Bible they noted that their son Thomas was born the 25th of March 1717 about seven o'clock in the afternoon, while their daughter Sarah was born the 16th of July 1719.



Acquisition of this fine English Bible is in keeping with the Museum's goal of expanding its collection beyond American Bibles. The story of the Bible in America cannot be separated from the dramatic story of the English Bible, the Bible of the Reformation, and the Bible manuscripts preserved through the centuries.

We've Been Asked: What's a Polyglot Bible?

Several have contacted us with the question, "What is a Polyglot Bible?" Most simply, a Polyglot Bible is one in many languages. Usually the Bible text is arranged in several parallel columns so that the text of a particular passage can be compared in the various languages. Only fragments remain of one of the earliest polyglots, the *Hexapla* of Origin from the third century. Origin's *Hexapla* compared various versions of the Old Testament. Arranged in six columns, Origin included the Hebrew text, a Greek transliteration, and four Greek translations, including the Septuagint.

With the advent of printing, several important Polyglot Bibles were published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first of these magisterial Bibles was the Complutensian Bible, printed in Spain in 1502-1517 under the direction of Cardinal Ximenes. The Complutensian, published in 1520 "to revive the languishing study of the Sacred Scriptures," was printed in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Cardinal Ximenes strove for great accuracy in his printed texts, knowing they would have a more numerous and wider distribution than manuscripts. The Greek of the Complutensian New Testament was more accurate than Erasmus' Greek New Testament, which was rushed into print slightly before the Complutensian.

In 1822 Samuel Bagster printed a Polyglot Bible in London in eight languages – Hebrew, Greek, English, Latin, German, Italian, French, and Spanish. Bagster's Polyglot Bible included over 60,000 Scripture cross-references.

The Dunham Family Bible in America Museum has 25 Polyglot Bibles in its collections, yet they are all in English – the King James translation, to be specific. How can that be? Apparently printers published the English of Bagster's Bible and called it the "Polyglot" Bible or the "English Polyglot." They used this title mainly to focus on Bagster's notes and cross-references included in the Bible, rather than the number of languages. Calling a Bible a "Polyglot" Bible was also a

"The Bible is a book of faith, and a book of doctrine, and a book of morals, and a book of religion, of special revelation from God; but it is also a book which teaches man his own individual responsibility, his own dignity, and his equality with his fellow-man."

- Daniel Webster

marketing tool. People felt as if they were getting something a little more for their money if they bought a "Polyglot Bible!"

Thomas Scott Refutes *The Da Vinci Code* and *The Gospel of James*

May 19th, the movie *The Da Vinci Code* will open in theaters across the world. The plot of the best-selling novel of the same name is based on the assumption that the Bible does not tell the true story of Jesus, but there are other ancient writings which divulge Jesus' true life. Today this belief in secret or Gnostic writings is often touted as reflecting the most advanced scholarship, based on the findings at Nag Hamadi in the 1940's. However, this is not a theory based on any new scholarship, but an attack on the Scriptures' authenticity which has an old history. Thomas Scott, an 18th century pastor and friend of John Newton, ably presented evidence for the authenticity of the Scriptures in the "Introduction to the New Testament" found in his 6-volume commentary in the **Bible in America Museum's** collection. The complete introduction can be found at the **Museum's** website (www.hbu.edu/bia), under "Reprints from the Collection, Prefaces." An excerpt follows:

The several books, which now form the New Testament, were early received by the Christian Church, as of divine authority. The greatest part of them are quoted by the most ancient Christian writers, and appealed to, as the standard of truth. A vast proportion of the New Testament might be collected from writers who lived in the first two centuries. They formed catalogues of the several books, and wrote comments on them: both the orthodox and the heretics appealed to them; lectures on several parts of them are still extant; nay, the enemies of Christianity uniformly mention them, as the authentic books of Christians. So that there is the most complete proof, that all the books, now collected in the New Testament, were received, and read in the assemblies of Christians, before the end of the second century...

It should also be observed, that no other books were received by the primitive Church, as a part of divine revelation. Very many other compositions were sent forth, bearing the names of the apostles or primitive teachers: but on careful examination, all except those which now form the New Testament, were rejected as spurious. And this shows, with what scrupulous caution, the canon of Scripture was fixed. The four Gospels were very early received, as the writings of the evangelists whose names they bear. They are mentioned distinctly by the fathers of the second century as "books well known by the name of Gospels, and as such were read by Christians, at their assemblies every Lord's day." (Whitby) Several other Gospels were published, and some gained a temporary credit; but they are either not mentioned in the approved writings of the primitive Christians, or mentioned with disapprobation.

Bibles with Connections

All of the Bibles in the Museum's collection have personal histories, and we hope in time to be able to learn more about some of the owners of the Bibles and how the Bible affected them personally. Recently we learned more about Henry Mackie Fine, the owner of an exquisite 1817 **quarto Bible** printed in New York and now in our collection. Claire Menkel wrote that her ancestor Henry Mackie Fine (1731-1800) was descended on his mother's side from John Peter Zenger, whose famous trial in New York established a precedent for freedom of the press in America. The Fines came to New Amsterdam, later New York, in the mid-1600's and settled in Brooklyn.

A New Testament recently donated to the Museum has a Texas Baptist connection. The **1829 Testament** printed for the American Bible Society belonged to Jane Wright Mercer, who married Kindred Green Mercer in 1842. Jesse Mercer of Georgia, who founded Mercer University, was Kindred's uncle. After Texas Independence in 1836, Protestants and Protestant missionaries were permitted in Texas for the first time. Jesse Mercer financed and supported Kindred, along with several others, as a missionary to Texas. When Kindred and Jane moved from Mississippi to Texas, the **1829 Testament** was in the wagon with them. Once when fording a creek, the water came up in the wagon and got part of the Testament wet; those water stains are still clearly visible today. Jane dried each page with her linen as they rode along in their wagon, with her baby on her lap. The Mercers first settled in Victoria, but



Water-stained Bible of pioneer Baptist Missionaries to Texas

the family moved with Kindred's missionary work to Mission, Cedar Bayou, Moscow, and Montgomery, Texas. Kindred and Jane had 11 children. The **1829 Testament** brought to Texas was left to the youngest daughter, Sarah. Her daughter, Zula Tucker West, continued to use the Testament. A Sunday School teacher at Houston's First Baptist Church, Zula loved to read her grandmother's Testament to her teenage class, feeling her grandmother was still witnessing for Christ when her Bible was read. God's plan of salvation given so fully in John 3:16 continued to speak to generations of Texans. Zula asked that her children give her grandmother's New Testament to Houston Baptist University. She wrote its history inside the cover and concluded, "Now will you dear reader bow in prayer, thanking God for the Holy Spirit's ever growing, spread of this gospel in Texas and throughout the world."

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The New Testament, Recovery Version, 1991 Donated by Bibles for America.

The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments, Richmond, Virginia: B.F. Johnson & Co., 1886. Donated by Sandra Hoskin.

The Holy Bible ... John Field, printed to the Universities: Cambridge, 1660, 1659. Donated by Dr. Jon Redmon.

The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: New York: Stereotyped by A. Chandler for "The American Bible Society," 1829. Donated by West Reaves.

Bible Heartsease – A Daily Text-Book of Comfort and Rest by the author of *Morning and Night Watches* London, Belfast, & New York: Marcus Ward & Co., c. 1884. and *Bible Stories or Little Picture Bible.* New York. Wells, Brownson & Co., c. 1840's by Gordon and Gloria Rouze in honor of Caryn Powell.



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“I THOROUGHLY BELIEVE IN UNIVERSITY
EDUCATION FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN,
BUT I BELIEVE A KNOWLEDGE OF THE
BIBLE WITHOUT A COLLEGE COURSE IS
MORE VALUABLE THAN A COLLEGE COURSE
WITHOUT THE BIBLE.”

— William Lyon Phelps
Yale professor, 1901 to 1933.

Please notify us of any changes or corrections in your address. We also welcome hearing from our readers and Museum visitors. If you would like to receive the *Dunham Family Bible in America Museum* Newsletter by e-mail and save the University postage, send your e-mail address to dseverance@hbu.edu.

For Mothers Day: “My Mother’s Bible”



A number of Bibles in the Bible Museum’s collection have tucked within their pages newspaper clippings of a poem called “My Mother’s Bible” by George Morris. In 1841 Henry Russell wrote music for the song, which was a popular sheet music piece for several decades:

This book is all that’s left me now.
Tears will unbidden start!
With faltering lip and throbbing brow.
I press it to my heart,
For many generations passed
Here is our fam’ly tree!
My mother’s hands this bible clasped,
She dying gave it me.

Ah, well do I remember those
Whose names these records bear!
Who round the hearth-stone used to close,
After the ev’ning prayer;
And speak of what this volume said,
In tones my heart would thrill;
Though they are with the silent dead,
Here are they living still!

My father read this holy book
To brothers, sisters dear!
How calm was my poor mother’s look,
Who learned God’s word to hear!
Her angel face! I see it yet!
What thronging mem’ries come!
Again that little group is met
Within the halls of home!

Thou truest friend man ever knew!
Thy constancy I’ve tried!
When all were false I found thee true,
My counselor and guide.
The mines of earth no treasures give,
From me this book could buy;
For teaching me the way to live,
It taught me how to die.

*Visit the Dunham
Family Bible in
America Museum*

- Museum Hours, September-May:
 - o Tuesdays, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.
 - o Thursdays, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
 - o 2nd Saturday of the month, noon – 5 p.m.
- Tours at other times, including group tours, are available by appointment.
- A curriculum packet is available for teachers, designed for grades 7 and up.

For appointments or more information, contact
Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287 or dseverance@hbu.edu.