



Chap. xv.

The Latter-day Saint Edition of the King James Bible

Fred E. Woods

During the early 1970s, a practical need arose for a Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible. As explained by George A. Horton Jr., director of curriculum production and distribution for the Church Educational System, three different Bibles were in circulation among Church members—one for adults, one for seminary students, and one for Primary children. Not only did this system create an element of chaos, but it also increased costs.¹ About this time, the Spirit of the Lord seemed to be hovering over several people in various organizations within the Church. Two of these people were Horton and his colleague Grant E. Barton, who was then serving as a member of the newly formed Meetinghouse Library Committee.² Horton and Barton were neighbors who carpooled together to the Church Office Building, using the occasion to discuss a desire to have one Bible as well as teaching aids for an LDS edition.³ Barton, Horton, and another colleague decided to survey various organizations of the Church to help them decide “what the ideal characteristics/features would be of the ideal Bible that would be used by all.” Barton, who led out on the survey, noted:

We put together a survey that showed . . . various alternatives of page widths, margin widths, whether to include concordance, maps, whether to have cross-referencing of various kinds, and had them do multiple-choice

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selections as to what they thought would be ideal. Finally, the results came back, and I took the results to Daniel Ludlow, the director of Church correlation at that time. He apparently had been thinking along similar lines, . . . was very accepting of the results, and then . . . made a proposal to the Brethren that maybe the time had come when the Church ought to produce its own Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible. . . . Reportedly it went to the Missionary Department, and Elder McConkie was on the Missionary Committee. It was chaired by Spencer W. Kimball. . . . Spencer W. Kimball reportedly said, "But where did the survey come from?" So they traced it through and so on, but I guess the damage had been done and the wheels had been put in motion.⁴

THE BIBLE AIDS COMMITTEE

William James Mortimer, then the general manager of Deseret Book and soon to be appointed as the secretary of the Bible Aids Committee, shed light on what was happening at Church headquarters when the question was raised about an LDS edition of the Bible: "At the outset it wasn't certain whether there would be a new Latter-day Saint version of the Bible published, or whether there would just be materials prepared that would make Bible study much easier for Latter-day Saints. This was all happening at about the same time that the Brethren determined that the standard works would become the textbooks for the adult curriculum of the Church."⁵

Soon after this decision, the Bible Aids Committee was formed, which originally consisted of Elder Thomas S. Monson as chair and Elders Boyd K. Packer and Marvin J. Ashton as members. However, when Elder Bruce R. McConkie was sustained as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, he was assigned to this committee, and Elder Ashton was given a different assignment.⁶ The Bible Aids Committee then had the responsibility to carry out their charge to improve gospel scholarship by selecting others who could assist them with their task.⁷

Brigham Young University religion professor Ellis T. Rasmussen, the first scholar assigned to work under the apostolic leadership of the Bible Aids Committee, explained, "In the beginning, as the phrase goes, a letter came from President Spencer W. Kimball, . . . October 27, 1972. He was

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Elder Thomas S. Monson (1927–), who chaired the committee that oversaw creation of the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible.

at that time President of the Council of the Twelve. He called me, and a similar letter called Bob Patch [Robert C. Patch], and later [a] similar letter called Bob Matthews [Robert J. Matthews].” According to Rasmussen’s letter, these three BYU professors of ancient scripture were tasked “to prepare a King James Bible which would include a standardized concordance, dictionary, atlas, and index, and would have footnotes and cross-references related to the other LDS scriptures.” In the first meeting with the professors, Elder Monson also charged, “Your task will be to help people understand the Bible.” Elder Packer admonished, “I can reduce your assignment to one word, simplify.”⁸

President Packer, later reminiscing about the three Apostles overseeing the project, noted, “Elder Monson, he was a printer. And he was an expert in printing. That’s what he did for a living. So he had that pattern. Bruce McConkie was the expert on the doctrine, and I was somewhere in

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between them on my concern . . . to have them printed in such a way that the ordinary man could afford them and could handle them.”⁹

Robert J. Matthews also reflected on the work of these three gifted Apostles:

President Monson was experienced as a printer, plus possessed a marvelous judgment; Elder Packer, a teacher, well versed in scripture, also possessed a marvelous judgment; and Brother McConkie, . . . extremely familiar with scripture, great expounder, and likewise, good judgment. Those three Brethren supervised the entire project, and then they had different assignments for the rest of us who were on the committee. For instance, the page layout, the format, the style of type and everything, that was . . . one of [Elder Monson’s] responsibilities. The Topical Guide was done by a committee of three men, but they worked precisely with President Packer. The footnotes and the chapter headings and the JST and the [Bible] Dictionary we did under the direction of Elder McConkie.¹⁰

As part of his stewardship, Elder McConkie was asked to provide some samples of chapter headings to be included in the new LDS Bible for the Brethren to review. Mortimer recalled, “He was willing and anxious to do that because he felt strongly the need to do that type of thing. He did such a good job on the samples that he ended up with the assignment to do the whole thing. . . . All of the chapter heading materials that he wrote were taken to the temple meeting for the Brethren to approve. . . . Everything, before it was set in type, was officially approved by the Brethren.”¹¹

Although the apostolic overseers were kind and considerate of those who reported to them, Rasmussen recalled, “It was quite a challenge to present things to those Brethren and give substantiation and rationale for it. But the good news was they made the decision. They had the insight, and they had inspiration and the revelation to do what needed to be done. It was a marvelous privilege to work under their direction.” He further reflected, “The greatest privilege and pleasure with reference to the whole project was associating with them, and seeing how efficiently and effectively they work.”¹²

Fortunately, Rasmussen kept a record of the early years of the committee meetings titled “Bible Aids Project Log January 1973–December 1976.” The first entry notes that the initial meeting of the Bible Aids Committee

was held on January 3, 1973. At this meeting, both Rasmussen and Patch were given half-time leave from their administrative and teaching responsibilities. Rasmussen noted this specific charge: "Do all that can be done in one and one-half years, but do not feel constrained to limit the project to a set time."¹³ Nine days later, Roy W. Doxey, dean of Religious Instruction at BYU, told the full-time religion faculty about the project and invited them to support Rasmussen and Patch in a preliminary survey of the task at hand. Rasmussen explained that during the months of January and February 1973, "the program for collecting data was developed for building the cross-reference system, a subject index system, and the concordance system. It soon became evident that computer assistance in the collection of the information, collating, sorting, and printing out the organized data would be helpful." Rasmussen then contacted the BYU Language Research Center as well as the BYU Translation Services Department, both of which proved to be helpful. In addition, Daryl Gibb of Translation Services arranged for computer specialist Steve Howes to work with Rasmussen on this unique project.¹⁴

COMPUTER ASSISTANCE

Robert J. Matthews reflected on the importance of computer technology as well as Howes's expert skills in working closely with Rasmussen as a contributor to the Bible Aids Committee:

In 1971 and '72 when we were first beginning, computers were not as much in evidence as they are now. . . . So we began . . . thinking of the footnote system that we would record in longhand, the footnotes we wanted to use on 5×7 cards, and we're storing them in shoebox[es]. We soon had several shoeboxes full of cards. That was more than the human mind could keep track of. . . . The person that I remember had more to do with the development of those footnotes was Ellis Rasmussen, and he was working with a young man by the name of Steven Howes, and Steven was an expert in computer science. Ellis would tell me, . . . "I talked to Steven and I'd say, 'Can we do this?' And Steven would say, 'Well, we've never done it that way with a computer, but I think we can work it out.'" And time after time, I saw Ellis come back to the meeting

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and say, “Steven is a wonder. He is able to develop on a computer things that we have been trying to do with longhand or with our own minds.”¹⁵

Howes, describing the large BYU computer as an IBM 360 variety that cost millions of dollars, noted, “It was one that took a whole room inside of the administration building and had a bunch of tape drives, big things.” He also recalled, “I remember that we had a bank of memory that was a whole megabyte and it was as big as a car. And nowadays you can put that on something you can’t even see.”¹⁶ Howes explained the process of loading information into the computer and the benefit of using a complete electronic database of the LDS scriptures, a database that had already been compiled by Eldin Ricks, a BYU religion professor from 1949 to 1981.¹⁷

We used key punch, which is a lot like a typewriter. Each card contained eighty characters and a nice interesting mechanism that would feed them through, and you would put things in at most eighty characters per card, and then that would be a lot of cards. Eldin Ricks had a project wherein he arranged to get . . . all four standard works on punch cards, and that consumed racks and racks and racks and racks of punch cards. . . . I took all of that data actually and put it onto a disk so that we could access it directly in the program. And part of the data entry for this program was, we had a computer terminal, very rudimentary, but nonetheless we had that. And one of our operators would sit down and key in a scriptural reference, and that scripture would then come up on the computer screen, and they would highlight how much of it that they wanted to include in . . . a cross-reference or whatever and capture that. The end result . . . was that we were able to, at the end of this project, produce a computer printout that we sent to Cambridge and [that] they could just read off. . . . The scripture itself was right there, and then they would know exactly where to put in the callout symbol and so on.¹⁸

Howes also commented about his computer work on the LDS Bible project: “I’m a lark. I like to work through the night. So I typically would get there between midnight and one a.m. . . . I was a BYU employee at the time, and my normal working shift was about midnight/one o’clock until about ten in the morning. . . . I did most of the computing. The processing

we would process in the earlier hours, from one until five or whatever.” Because Howes often worked on this project between one and five a.m., he reduced the cost of computer usage by about 90 percent.¹⁹

Howes also related his belief in a divine timetable for the LDS Bible project:

I saw the hand of the Lord in everything that we did. . . . Ellis would come to me and say, “Can you do this?” . . . [Sometimes my] first thought would [be], “I’m not sure.” And then it would come to me. . . . The hand of the Lord was everywhere apparent in the technology that was just becoming available that allowed us to do this project. . . . The technology had evolved to a point that allowed this project to happen—the timing of this project, not only in that, but as a precursor to the work that has been done since then. This was the right time, the technology was there. The Lord prepared all of the technology for this to happen at that time. I just happened to be available.²⁰

BIBLE AIDS

Along with the timing for the right technology, there was also the proper timing to assign individuals who not only were gospel scholars but were no doubt raised up to help shepherd this project under apostolic leadership. Ellis Rasmussen oversaw several aspects of the project and used his knowledge of Hebrew to clarify passages from the Old Testament, while Robert Patch used his skills in the Greek language to elucidate passages from the New Testament. Both Rasmussen and Patch have left their editorial fingerprints on many pages of the LDS Bible, where we find the abbreviations HEB for an alternate translation of the Hebrew and GR for an alternate translation of the Greek.

When work commenced in early 1973, Rasmussen described the day-to-day work schedule and the place where he and Patch labored on the new Bible project:

The first year we had leave time, half-time off to work on it. So we would go to BYU and do our work for the morning—we were both in some administrative callings. The law school had just been created, and until the present facility for the law school was built, the law school was

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housed in the St. Francis School, a former Catholic elementary and secondary school on Ninth East in Provo. We needed to have a place where we could be free from interruptions and also have space to spread our materials out, and there was space enough for us also there. Brother Patch and I thought it was appropriate that, like a couple of monks, we were housed in what had been part of the convent where the sisters had worked at St. Francis. . . . We then spent the rest of the day there working shoulder to shoulder.²¹

Soon after Rasmussen and Patch began assisting the Bible Aids Committee, Robert Matthews was also invited to join the group. Under the committee's leadership, especially that of Elder McConkie, Matthews used his broad gospel knowledge to create and develop the Bible Dictionary in the LDS Bible. Rasmussen noted, "When it came to creating footnote material, and the topical guide material, and [Bible] Dictionary material, and so forth, having to do specifically with the Old Testament, or the New Testament, or the dictionary, then we did have a division of labor. . . . Brother Matthews, when he came in, worked particularly on the dictionary phase of it, . . . but we all shared everything so that we could have the benefit of our interplay and interchange of thought."²² Shortly after the new Bible was published in late August 1979, the Church announced via one of its publications, "The Bible Dictionary, all 196 pages and 1,285 entries of it, was mainly the responsibility of Brother Matthews." The article also explained, "The Church received permission from the Cambridge University Press to use its dictionary—the one appearing in missionary editions—as the base."²³ Mortimer also noted, "Cambridge had a fairly good Bible dictionary. There were many things that had to be changed, but they were willing, and they gave us permission to use their Bible dictionary and make whatever amendments we needed to make. . . . And this was a great concession on their part." In addition, he recalled, "That saved an awful lot of time because most of it was all right. Bob Matthews added to it the Latter-day Saint aspect."²⁴

Matthews explained the process of adding the LDS content as follows: "Cambridge University . . . gave us permission to take a copy of their Bible dictionary and do anything we wanted with it, use any part we wanted to preserve and cut out anything we wanted to cut out, modify whatever we

wish. So I took a large photographic copy of the Bible dictionary that was in the old Missionary Bible, and . . . crossed out everything that according to Latter-day Saint revelation was incorrect. . . . Then I went through and made notes on everything that I thought from Latter-day revelation we ought to include.”²⁵ In another interview, Matthews noted:

I went through it, day after day after day, removing anything that we felt was not doctrinally consistent with the Restoration of the gospel. For instance, in talking about the Fall of Adam in that Cambridge Bible Dictionary, they indicated that that was a gross mistake in the plan, that the plan of God went awry, and we couldn’t settle for that. Also, in the entry that they had on John the Revelator, or John the Beloved as he’s called, and they told about how he died near Ephesus about AD 100. We know better than that from latter-day revelation. So in going through this *Cambridge Bible Dictionary*, I just crossed out everything that seemed to not be consistent with what we knew from Latter-day revelation, and then there were other items that are important to us that they didn’t talk about. One is Aaronic Priesthood, the other is Melchizedek Priesthood. Another one had to do with the Second Coming, the Millennium, the spirit world, the sign of the dove that was given to John the Baptist by which he recognized Jesus—a number of things that are doctrinally important to us but were never mentioned in there.²⁶

Matthews also explained that after he “got the whole thing ready and before it was set in type or anything, there was a working copy. Brother Rasmussen and I worked very closely on it. Occasionally Brother Patch. . . . So they were aware of what I was doing. Then the whole thing was given to Elder McConkie, and he made a few observations, but relatively few.” Matthews also clarified that Patch produced the segment in the LDS Bible Dictionary on the harmony of the four Gospels, noting that Patch “had already worked out a harmony of his own long before the Bible project was done.”²⁷

Concerning the sources used in writing the dictionary entries, Matthews further noted: “We used *Mormon Doctrine* considerably. We didn’t make a lot of cultural and historical [changes]; there didn’t need to be. The Cambridge Bible Dictionary is pretty good on historical and cultural things. So if we had some question, we would consult several major Bible dictionaries,

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Harper's, and the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, and *Hasting's Bible Dictionary*, and well, there's a number of good Bible dictionaries and commentaries. So we consulted them frequently on historical items. But on the doctrinal items, *Mormon Doctrine*, the writings of President Joseph Fielding Smith, the standard works, the *Church History*, and *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*.”²⁸

THE JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION

In addition to his work on the Bible Dictionary, Matthews also had a leading role in selecting which excerpts to include from Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible. When it was determined to include excerpts in footnotes, a decision had to be made concerning how to identify them. Joseph Smith and his contemporaries called his Bible revision the “New Translation” (see also D&C 124:89). But for the Bible publication, the abbreviation “NT” could not be used, because it usually refers to the New Testament. Thus the title “Joseph Smith Translation” was invented, with the acronym JST. All of the excerpts were approved by the Brethren. Matthews recalled that as the Bible Aids Committee faced the issue of limited space for the LDS Bible, Elder McConkie told Matthews, “Let's have more JST and less Bible Dictionary.”²⁹ Matthews also noted the criteria he used for such an important selection: “It was anything that was doctrinal, anything that was necessary in the Old Testament to help us understand the New Testament, anything that bore witness of Christ, anything that bore witness of the Restoration. Those kinds of things. . . . Also anything that clarified the role of the tribe of Joseph . . . paramount to the work of the Lord in the last days.” Further, “there was one other item, and that is anything that was clarified in the JST which no other scripture would clarify.”

After receiving approval to move forward on these criteria, Matthews bought two copies of a King James Bible and two copies of the RLDS *Inspired Version*. The *Inspired Version* is an edited printing of Joseph Smith's translation in Bible format, first published in 1867 by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (now Community of Christ). Matthews noted, “I would cut out the page from the King James Version and paste it on a sheet of paper. And then cut out the corrections in the

corresponding verse from the Joseph Smith Translation and paste it next to it in a parallel column.”³⁰

Before this work of making a selection, Matthews had already taken an important step which led to the RLDS Church granting permission for the LDS Church to use the selected material. Beginning in 1967, Matthews was given permission to research the original manuscript of the JST in the RLDS Library-Archive. Because of the relationship that he had developed with RLDS colleagues as a result of his JST research, and because of good relationships that had been developed between other LDS and RLDS scholars as a result of cooperation in the Mormon History Association and the John Whitmer Historical Association, when the LDS Church asked for permission to publish the selections that Matthews had chosen, the RLDS Church willingly gave approval.³¹ Mortimer explained the process of obtaining these permissions. After making contact with the RLDS Church’s publishing arm, Herald House, Mortimer received a phone call from one of their staff, who informed him that there was a mixture of good and bad news regarding his request to use the selected JST extracts. The caller said, “The good news is that the First Presidency of our [RLDS] church has give[n] permission for you to use this material. . . . The bad news is that there’s a fee attached . . . [of] one dollar,” which made it a legally binding contract.³²

WORKING WITH CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The same kind of congeniality shown by the RLDS Church was exhibited by the Cambridge University Press staff in their association with the LDS Church over several decades. Mortimer commented that there was “an excellent relationship with Cambridge on the missionary Bibles that they had been producing for us. They didn’t want to lose the business, and so they were very anxious to continue to work with us, because it meant a pretty good-size volume of business for them.”³³ Mortimer further explained that in the 1920s, Elder James E. Talmage and President Heber J. Grant had established a relationship with Cambridge University Press when the Church had produced an earlier edition of scripture. “Elder Talmage prepared what was to become the ready reference, . . . a collection by Brother Talmage of scripture from the Bible that supported a number of Latter-day Saint doctrines. . . . This was about the only thing available for

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maybe . . . upwards of fifty years that tied LDS doctrine to the KJV. . . . Deseret Book published this version of the Bible and referred to it as the missionary edition during this period of a half century.”³⁴

Cambridge University Press found a unique challenge in the invitation to assist with printing an LDS edition of the Bible, despite Cambridge’s sterling reputation for printing and publishing Bibles for nearly four hundred years. Roger Coleman, publishing director of Bibles and religious books at Cambridge, listed several obstacles, including deadlines and project size. In addition, he noted that Cambridge “rarely set a new Bible for a completely new version” and that this was probably “the first time we have ever set and produced a Bible in collaboration with and under the primary direction of an outside publisher.” Notwithstanding, Coleman could see the synergistic combination of Cambridge University Press working with the Church on this unique project. He noted that this arrangement of “[an] experienced Bible publisher and [a] church with ultimate authority over its own scripture is particularly fruitful because the combination of the two qualities means a better result than either could achieve alone—one plus one equals three, as it were.”³⁵

One Cambridge editor who assisted with the LDS scripture project was especially noteworthy. Derek Bowen, a British veteran who had lost his hearing after a serious injury in World War II, played a catalytic role. Elder Packer explained that after this hearing loss, Bowen “devoted his remarkable compensating abilities to editing, typesetting, and printing Bibles. He was, perhaps, the one man in the world who could direct such a printing project.”³⁶ Geoff Green, designer at Cambridge University Press from 1970 to 1980, described Derek Bowen in this way: “Derek Bowen was an old-school editor. . . . He was an academic. He was profoundly deaf. I think, as I understand it, he lost his hearing during the Second World War from some shell [that] exploded near him. . . . Derek, though, was an astonishing copyeditor of the Bible. There was very, very little he didn’t seem to know, and he was meticulous and fastidious. He was a joy to work with, . . . an old-fashioned gentleman.”³⁷

Mortimer, who made several trips to Cambridge, was also impressed with Bowen’s abilities and keen interest in the project. Mortimer described Bowen as a very interesting man:

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He never married, he lived alone in an apartment, rode a bicycle, [and] never drove a car. But through the years with his employment at Cambridge, he had become an expert in the King James Bible, and Cambridge made him available to us to proofread, edit, to watch over the work that was being done. Derek and I had some very interesting conversations about the Church. He was very interested in what we were doing and how we were approaching this particular Bible project, which was something he had not ever been involved with—that type of thing we were doing. I sent him many books and materials about the Church, which he assured me that he had read and that he was very interested in. . . . He took a great interest in our work, was very careful, meticulous. He was a detail man right from the word *go*.³⁸

Mortimer also noted that “only three minor typographical errors have been found in the King James text—a real tribute to Derek’s skill.”³⁹

There were also other editors who assisted with the LDS KJV project. One of those editors was Eleanor Knowles, who was also the executive editor at Deseret Book. Sheri Dew described Knowles’s reputation at Deseret Book as “absolutely remarkable.” Dew also explained Knowles’s role in the LDS KJV project and Knowles’s legacy, noting: “She basically became the editor, the proofreader, and Eleanor will go down as one of the finest editors we’ve ever known in our culture in the dispensation. She was spectacular and very, very well suited. If you could pick anybody, anywhere to have edited your work, it would be her. Nobody’s better than she. I think she spent many long stints in Cambridge, holed up in small rooms in her hotel room proofreading, if you can imagine, line by line. Everything from the Topical Guide to the various editions of the scriptures, making sure everything was absolutely, precisely perfect.”⁴⁰ Knowles herself recalled, “I served in two capacities—as a member of the Topical Guide committee, where I served as secretary and helped the committee members prepare the final manuscript, and as an employee of Deseret Book, where I was liaison with Cambridge University Press as page proofs were sent to me.” She also noted, “To facilitate the final proofreading and correction work, I also spent a total of thirteen weeks—in 1978, 1979 (Topical Guide), and 1981 (Triple Combination)—working directly with the editors and proofreaders there [in Cambridge].”⁴¹

THE HOLY BIBLE

CONTAINING THE
OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

TRANSLATED OUT OF THE
ORIGINAL TONGUES: AND WITH THE
FORMER TRANSLATIONS DILIGENTLY COMPARED
AND REVISED, BY HIS MAJESTY'S
SPECIAL COMMAND
AUTHORIZED KING JAMES VERSION
WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES AND
CROSS REFERENCES TO THE STANDARD WORKS
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

But among all our joys, there was no one that more filled our hearts, than the blessed continuance of the preaching of God's sacred Word among us; which is that inestimable treasure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth; because the fruit thereof extendeth itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that eternal happiness which is above in heaven.

Then not to suffer this to fall to the ground, but rather to take it up, and to continue it in that state, wherein the famous Predecessor of Your Highness did leave it in, to go forward with the confidence and resolution of a Man in maintaining the truth of Christ, and propagating it far and near, is that which hath so bound and firmly knit the hearts of all Your Majesty's loyal and religious people unto You, that Your very name is precious among them: their eye doth behold You with comfort, and they bless You in their hearts, as that sanctified Person, who, under God, is the immediate Author of their true happiness. And this their contentment doth not diminish or decay, but every day increaseth and taketh strength, when they observe, that the zeal of Your Majesty toward the house of God doth not slack or go backward, but is more and more kindled, manifesting itself abroad in the farthest parts of Christendom, by writing in defence of the Truth, (which hath given such a blow unto that man of sin, as will not be healed,) and every day at home, by frequenting the house of God, by cherishing the Teachers thereof, by caring for the Church as a most tender and loving nursing Father.

There are infinite reasons, which may be offered, to declare Your Majesty's affection in Your Majesty; but none so forcible to declare it to others

1979

Title page, 1979 Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible; note that the first part of the text is based on the 1611 title page but lacks the words "appointed to be read in churches."

Knowles also remembered that the Cambridge University Press staff members were superb in their craft and that “we simply couldn’t get that quality of work anywhere else.” She further commented, “The typesetters are real artists. When you think what kind of a challenge it is to set the text so that all of the references come out on the same page without juggling, resetting, and refitting, you can see why we wanted them. And they’re so experienced in working on the Bible that they could catch errors as quickly as the proofreaders.”⁴²

At least one minor error did slip past all of these workers, but it did not escape the experienced editorial eye of Elder Monson, a former printer. He noted one memorable visit to the Cambridge printing plant in England: “As I walked along the press line, pausing briefly at the delivery end of each press, I removed from one a printed sheet. My eyes observed a horizontal rule that had been misplaced, making the text confusing to the reader. The press was stopped. The error was corrected. I paused to thank my Heavenly Father.”⁴³

OTHER HELPERS

Besides editors and printers, other project workers included the members of the Topical Guide Committee. At this time, most of the committee members were full-time Church employees; the one exception, Alma Gardiner, was a retired Church Educational System employee. Horton summarized the division of labor among the members of the committee: “Alma, . . . being the chairman of the committee, took care of all the general things. Ed Brandt did a lot of the straightforward stuff in the concordance. . . . My assignment was on the proper names and places. . . . Bruce Harper would go through and edit, make his refinements, then Alma was the one who was to look at it as the final critiquer.”⁴⁴ Concerning the team’s camaraderie, Horton explained, “Our committee got along famously well. . . . I cannot think of one single item we had a difference of opinion on that was significant. . . . We usually either all agreed, or we cast it out. There was no debate. It was a very congenial committee.”⁴⁵

Not only was there unity on the Topical Guide Committee, but there also appears to have been additional help from on high. One incident occurred after Cambridge University Press had set a limit of five hundred pages for the entire Topical Guide. Just when it came time to print,

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Cambridge “found a thinner paper, and they were able to expand that to six hundred pages.”⁴⁶ Horton was particularly struck by his assigned work on the topic of Jesus Christ for the Topical Guide. He finished this particular assignment with eighteen pages, including fifty-eight categories, of information on Jesus. Overwhelmed by what he had experienced, Horton asked rhetorically, “How could anyone in this world ever accuse a ‘Mormon’ of not being a Christian? We were the ultimate Christians, and that was one reflection of it. This Topical Guide reflects the central message of the standard works, the atonement and mission of Jesus Christ.”⁴⁷ In the fall of 1982, when Elder Packer spoke on the coming forth of the new editions of the scriptures (both the LDS Bible and the new triple combination, completed in 1981), he noted, “These references from the four volumes of scripture constitute the most comprehensive compilation of scriptural information on the mission and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ in the history of the world. The work affirms an acceptance of, a reverence for, and a testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.”⁴⁸

In addition to the RLDS Church; the Cambridge University Press staff; the computer assistants; the Topical Guide Committee; and Professors Rasmussen, Matthews, and Patch, many other volunteers assisted with the LDS Bible project under the direction of Elders Monson, Packer, and McConkie. Rasmussen recalled, “We chose to work with students on [BYU] campus in gathering data, and then later on with seminary and institute teachers up and down the Wasatch Front—because they were [within] relatively easy communications distance.” Rasmussen added, “People like Tom [Sederberg] and Kelly Ogden came to be helpers who went right on through to the end. They were very useful in culling out the excess and in adding necessary material.”⁴⁹ Ogden checked thousands of cross-references for several years and also helped with the Topical Guide. He explained that while working on the Topical Guide, “I went through all of those scriptures. In fact, at one point my wife and I took a year and three months, we went through every scripture under every topic and after we’d done that we knew . . . how valuable that would be to members of the Church in being able to prepare talks and lessons.”⁵⁰ Sederberg volunteered on the project for six years, then married and also recruited his wife as a volunteer. Every week, Sederberg worked on his assignments for five to ten hours, donating between 1,300 and 2,000 hours overall.⁵¹

CONCLUSION

A quarter of a century ago, Elder Monson predicted, “History will ultimately record the details, the triumphs, and the struggles of this publishing saga, but for the present, may I simply say that through great personal effort on the part of many individuals over a long period of time, coupled with modern technology and, especially, divine guidance, the Church now has new editions of the sacred scriptures available for all to use.”⁵² This statement aptly summarizes the process of producing the LDS edition of the King James Bible. Horton, Barton, and their colleague set the wheels in motion with their survey about the features that should be part of an LDS edition. Once the Church officially took up the project, the three Apostles on the Bible Aids Committee led the way, with the ultimate goal of giving Latter-day Saints the tools to better know the Bible. This process was enormously aided by new computer technology and the work of dedicated technicians. Other expert help came from several BYU professors who helped clarify the original textual languages, compile the Bible Dictionary, and choose excerpts from the Joseph Smith Translation to include. All of this work was double-checked by dedicated editors from Deseret Book and Cambridge University Press. Meanwhile, the Topical Guide committee worked together amazingly well, and many volunteers helped put together the Topical Guide and lists of cross-references. While the project owes much to all who contributed, they did not work alone. As Paul said, “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:6–7). Hopefully, this historical treatment has helped fulfill President Monson’s prediction by contributing some detail to the great achievement wrought through the creation and publication of the LDS edition of the King James Bible.⁵³

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NOTES

1. George A. Horton Jr., interview by Martin Andersen and Fred E. Woods, George A. Horton home, Provo, UT, December 11, 2008.
2. In Grant E. Barton to Fred E. Woods, October 29, 2008, in author's possession, Barton further explained that at this time he was "on the faculty in Educational Psychology at BYU and had an administrative assignment in the Instructional Research and Development Department."
3. George A. Horton, interview by Chad M. Orton, March 30, 1993, 3, transcript, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
4. Grant E. Barton, interview by Martin Andersen, Grant E. Barton home, Cedar Hills, UT, December 11, 2008. William James Mortimer, "The Coming Forth of the LDS Editions of Scripture," *Ensign*, August 1983, 36, notes, "During 1971 a research paper by Grant Barton focused the attention of the General Authorities on the need for a unified Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible." Grant E. Barton wrote to Fred E. Woods, October 29, 2008: "In consultation with George Horton of CES Curriculum, I made up a questionnaire showing a wide variety of features of various Bibles, such as margins, footnoting, cross-referencing and indexing; and sent the questionnaire to Church departments that used different editions of the Bible. The questionnaire asked them to select the features they would ideally like in a Bible. . . . I subsequently met with Dan Ludlow, director of Correlation Review, and discussed the results of the survey. He then made recommendation that consideration be given to creating an LDS edition of the King James Bible. After the project was completed, Dan Ludlow told me that then Elder Monson asked him to prepare a history of how the LDS edition of the Bible came about. Dan listed my meeting with him as the first item on that history." Furthermore, in a group interview conducted by Fred E. Woods at the Crandall Historic Printing Museum in Provo, UT, on April 18, 2002 (with interviewees D. Kelly Ogden, Tom Sederberg, William James Mortimer, Robert J. Matthews, Ellis T. Rasmussen, and Daniel H. Ludlow), Ludlow recalled that as early as December 9, 1971, a letter to Grant Barton from several CES administrators recommended the kind of standardized Bible they thought the Church should publish for all its auxiliaries. Among other things, the administrators noted that "[this Bible] should be published in pocket size, regular, and large print edition and then it should also be a flexibility in the quality of the Bibles, so it would accommodate the finances of different people. . . . And they mentioned there would [should] be cross-references, standardized, and there would [should] be other types of materials that would be in that particular Bible."
5. William James Mortimer, interview by Chad M. Orton, William James Mortimer home, Sandy, UT, November 1, 1989, 2, typescript, Church History Library.
6. See "Bible Aids Project Log January 1973–December 1976," in appendix of interview of Ellis T. Rasmussen by Chad M. Orton, Ellis T. Rasmussen home, Orem, UT, November 2, 1989, typescript, Church History Library. In this log, on September 21, 1973, 59, Rasmussen notes that "Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council

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of the Twelve had by that time been assigned to oversee the Bible Aids Project.” However, it should be clarified that Elder Monson remained the chair of the committee throughout the project.

7. Mortimer, interview, November 1, 1989, 2.
8. Rasmussen, interview by Orton, Rasmussen home, October 19, 1989, 1–2, typescript, Church History Library. Lavina Fielding Anderson, “Church Publishes First LDS Edition of the Bible,” *Ensign*, October 1979, 9, notes that President Spencer W. Kimball, then serving as Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve under the direction of President Harold B. Lee, charged the original Bible Aids Committee “to assist in improving doctrinal scholarship throughout the Church.”
9. Boyd K. Packer interview by Martin Andersen, LDS Conference Center, Salt Lake City, May 15, 2009. President Packer was also well versed in scripture, having been employed by the Church Educational System as an assistant administrator of seminaries and institutes before his call as a General Authority. See Jay M. Todd, “Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve,” *Improvement Era*, May 1970, 4.
10. Robert J. Matthews, interview by Martin Andersen, Joseph Smith Building Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, April 2, 2009.
11. Mortimer, interview, November 1, 1989, 8.
12. Rasmussen, interview, October 19, 1989, 3.
13. Rasmussen, interview, November 2, 1989, appendix, date of January 3, 1973, 59.
14. Rasmussen, interview, November 2, 1989, appendix, dates of January 12, 1973; January and February 1973, 59.
15. Matthews, interview, April 2, 2009.
16. Steven Howes, interview by Martin Andersen, Joseph Smith Memorial Building, Salt Lake City, April 28, 2009.
17. Richard O. Cowan, “From the Battlefield to the Vatican to the Classroom: The Story of Eldin Ricks,” *Religious Education Review*, Fall 2008, 8–11, provides an overview of the unique life of Eldin Ricks, including his years as a BYU religion professor, and notes his contribution of providing the electronic database for the LDS scriptures.
18. Howes, interview, April 28, 2009.
19. Howes, interview, April 28, 2009.
20. Howes, interview, April 28, 2009.
21. Rasmussen, interview, October 19, 1989, 9.
22. Rasmussen, interview, October 19, 1989, 10.
23. Anderson, “Church Publishes First LDS Edition of the Bible,” 17.
24. William James Mortimer, interview by Martin Andersen, William James Mortimer home, Sandy, UT, December 11, 2008.
25. Robert J. Matthews, interview by Chad M. Orton, office of Robert J. Matthews, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, January 30, 1990, 15–16, typescript, Church History Library. Matthews later recalled that he “used the four standard works plus the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith.” Interview by Fred E. Woods, Provo Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Provo, UT, February 24, 2005.
26. Matthews, interview, April 2, 2009.

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27. Matthews, interview, January 30, 1990, 15–16. See Bible Dictionary, “Gospels, Harmony of,” 684–96.
28. Matthews, interview, January 30, 1990, 16.
29. Comment made by Robert J. Matthews in group interview conducted by Fred E. Woods at the Crandall Historic Printing Museum, Provo, UT, April 18, 2002.
30. Matthews, interview, January 30, 1990, 13–14.
31. Richard P. Howard interview by Fred E. Woods, Community of Christ Library, Independence, MO, November 13, 2008.
32. Mortimer, interview, November 1, 1989, 10.
33. Mortimer, interview, November 1, 1989, 17.
34. Mortimer, interview, November 1, 1989, 1. A 1917 edition of the King James Bible prepared for LDS Church members has the notation on the title page, “SPECIALLY BOUND FOR THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS. . . . READY REFERENCES. . . . DESIGNED ESPECIALLY FOR THE USE OF MISSIONARIES AND THE USE OF OTHER STUDENTS OF THE SCRIPTURES.” The copyright information notes, “Copyright, 1917 by Joseph F. Smith Trustee in Trust for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” The date of this copyright suggests that Church leaders had a relationship with Cambridge University Press by 1917. This collection of ready references contains 103 pages of material related to the Articles of Faith and various gospel topics by subject.
35. Quoted in Anderson, “Church Publishes First LDS Edition of the Bible,” 15. One example of the powerful synergism that emerged from these two institutions was the idea to have the footnotes be verse-centric instead of chapter-centric and then restart the lettering for each verse. Commenting on this concept, William James Mortimer said, “We were concerned about the system that had been used in our triple combination. They had ‘a,’ ‘b,’ ‘c,’ and went through, and when they had twenty-six, then they had ‘aa,’ and sometimes they got up to ‘aaa.’ It just seemed like that was cumbersome and the concept came forward to have an a, b, c, system within each verse so that it didn’t multiply all the alphabetical letters all the way through. . . . And that’s a very simple way, and it’s worked out very, very well.” Mortimer, interview, December 11, 2008.
36. Boyd K. Packer, “Scriptures,” *Ensign*, November 1982, 52.
37. Geoff Green, interview by Martin Andersen, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, May 5, 2009.
38. Mortimer, interview, December 11, 2008. Bowen died soon after the LDS Bible and the new triple combination (1981) were completed.
39. Mortimer, “The Coming Forth of the LDS Editions of Scripture,” 37. Coleman noted, “Nothing is perfect in this world, if you will permit me to make a profoundly philosophical observation, but *this* Bible is as nearly perfect as human beings can manage.” Quoted in Anderson, “Church Publishes First LDS Edition of the Bible,” 15.
40. Sheri Dew, interview by Martin Andersen and Fred E. Woods, Deseret Book corporate office, Salt Lake City, March 10, 2009.

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41. Eleanor Knowles to Louis E. Crandall, February 11, 2004, in author's possession. In this letter, Knowles notes that her editorial efforts were augmented by "many freelance proofreaders, typists, and scripture checkers" whose work she reviewed "before sending proofs back to Cambridge." In a group interview, Knowles clarified, "I was able to go over to Cambridge three times, twice on the Bible for a total of nine weeks and then four weeks on the triple combination." Interview by Fred E. Woods, Provo Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Provo, UT, February 24, 2005.
42. Quoted in Anderson, "Church Publishes First LDS Edition of the Bible," 14.
43. Thomas S. Monson, "Come, Learn of Me," *Ensign*, December 1985, 48.
44. Horton, interview, March 30, 1993, 5.
45. Horton, interview, March 30, 1993, 8.
46. Horton, interview, March 30, 1993, 12.
47. Horton, interview, March 30, 1993, 12.
48. Packer, "Scriptures," 52.
49. Rasmussen, interview, October 19, 1989, 10. In his "Bible Aids Project Log January 1973–December 1976," for the date of September 30, 1973, 61, Rasmussen notes, "Brother Daniel Ludlow met with the ten stake presidents at BYU to explain the implementation of the directive from President Kimball and to prepare for the calls to go out to some 110 students in various branches here at BYU."
50. D. Kelly Ogden, interview by Martin Andersen, Joseph Smith Building Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, April 2, 2009.
51. Anderson, "Church Publishes First LDS Edition of the Bible," 13–14.
52. Monson, "Come, Learn of Me," 48.
53. On October 3, 2010, the documentary *That Promised Day: The Coming Forth of the LDS Scriptures* was shown between LDS general conference sessions on BYU Television. This production of BYU Broadcasting and Martin Andersen Productions reveals more of the inspiring story of the coming forth of the LDS edition of the King James Bible, and it is available on the Internet at <http://www.byutv.org/watch/2039-100>.