



William

Bennett

Bizzell

Bible

Collection

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The Collection

B

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complete Bibles and separate New and Old Testaments, the Bizzell Bible Collection includes commentaries and interpretations, textual studies, books of illustrations, geographies and histories of the Holy Land, works on the life of Christ, prayer books, and hymnals. Some of the Bibles date from the 1400s. Most are English language editions of the seventeenth century, but the collection also includes editions in languages as diverse as Muskogee and Swahili. Printers' errors and other curiosities have attracted popular attention, and many Bibles have become known by their distinguishing features.



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historical significance, poetry, and charm, few works can surpass the Bible. It is one of the oldest and most widely printed and translated books in the world. Rare and unique editions are highly prized, and no great book collection is complete without at least a selected few. With 665 Bibles and related works, many notable and rare, the William Bennett Bizzell Bible Collection is a national treasure.

William Bennett Bizzell

President of the University of Oklahoma from 1925 to 1941, Dr. Bizzell brought vision and accomplishment to the campus. Under his leadership, the university prospered, even in the midst of the Depression. His love for books and scholarship is reflected in his drive for the completion in 1930 of the new library, now known as Bizzell Memorial Library and recognized as one of the finest university libraries of its time.

A Rare Find

Dr. Bizzell began collecting Bibles when, as a Columbia student, he paid one dollar for an interesting old Bible at a Boston bookshop. That Bible turned out to be a first edition of the rare "Breeches" Bible, so-called because its Puritan translators described Adam and Eve wearing fig-leaf breeches. Collecting Bibles became one of Dr. Bizzell's lifelong avocations.

Cultural Treasures, Works of Art

Many Bibles in the Bizzell Collection are significant cultural artifacts, testifying to historical and political events and the history of printing, as well as the cultural heritages of devout peoples. Many are also works of art, reflecting the skill and artistry of master craftsmen. Elegant typeface, tooled leather binding, fore-edge painting, and woodcut illustrations (some from designs by Hans Holbein the Younger) attest to the fine workmanship exhibited in these Bibles.

Some notable editions in the Bizzell Bible Collection

Koberger Latin, Nuremburg, 1479
Folio, half pigskin and vellum.
Oldest Bible in the Collection.

"Breeches" or Puritan Bible, Geneva, 1560
Printed by Puritans exiled in Switzerland.
First Bible to use roman type.
First Bible to divide the chapters into verses.

The Great Bible, Rouen, 1566
Translated at the behest of Oliver Cromwell by Miles Coverdale.

The Bishop's Bible, London, R. Jugge, 1572, 2nd edition
Folio, bound in dark cowhide.
Produced by a company of divines, mostly bishops led by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Doves Press Bible, Hammersmith, 1903–1905, 5 volumes
Folio, bound in white vellum.
Elegant type, faultless press work.
Famous for its "perfect design and balance."

Gutenberg Bible, Leipzig, 1913–1914, facsimile edition, 2 volumes
Bound in white pigskin.
Limited edition of 300 copies.
Spectacular color illuminations.