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978-1-108-01094-8 - A Century of Bibles: The Authorised Version from 1611 to 1711

W. J. Loftie

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A Century of Bibles

William John Loftie (1839–1911) wrote prolifically on topics related to travel, art, architecture, and history. In this 1872 work, his stated desire was to investigate those editions of the Authorized Version published in the century following the initial 1611 text. Noting that other historians had ‘stopped short’ when reaching that acknowledged culmination of English biblical scholarship, he went further, claiming it was ‘no exaggeration to assert that our modern Bible is altered throughout from its original, for the better in some places, for the worse in some.’ His catalogue and discussion of the various texts involved included those from the British and Bodleian Libraries together with additional lists from scholars Lea Wilson and Francis Fry. Surveying English editions of the Bible published during a sometimes contentious century, Loftie’s work reveals how printing and editing practices did, over time, affect even the seemingly static Authorized Version of the Bible.

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[More information](#)

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or the Authorised Version from 1611 to 1711
to which is added William Ritburne's Tract
on Dangerous Errors in the late printed Bibles
1659 with Lists of Bibles in the British
Museum Bodleian Stuttgart and other li-
braries compiled by the reverend W. J.
Loftie B. A. F. S. A.



London Basil Montagu Pickering
196 Piccadilly 1872.

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[More information](#)

P R E F A C E.



THE many deficiencies of the following list, especially in the Scottish editions and the New Testaments, will be in part supplied by the enumeration in the Appendix of examples in several collections, public and private. The compiler has endeavoured to see every book named in his work: but this was often impossible; and in such cases references are given to the authorities on which they are inserted.

Four sizes have been fixed upon as generally applicable: folio, quarto, octavo, and duodecimo. Quarto and octavo bibles count usually in four signatures and four blanks; in some catalogues, that of the British Museum, for example, the two sizes are often confounded. Some duodecimos, again, count in five signatures and seven blanks, other in six and six; and there is no standard by which to distinguish 12mo. 16mo. 24mo. and 32mo. In the following list, therefore, a rough division is made into "12mo." and "12mo. small," and

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[More information](#)

this, it is hoped, may suffice for the identification of any example.

The compiler is glad to have this opportunity of thanking Mr. Francis Fry for the kindness to which any measure of completeness attained by the present work must be attributed. Mr. Fry at one time contemplated forming a catalogue of his own collection, and most obligingly gave up the materials he had gathered.

Sir William Cope's loan of his list of the Stuttgart collection must also be warmly acknowledged. It will be found to contain some bibles not easily identified with any in the present work; but the compiler did not obtain it until the greater part of his book was printed.

The books most often referred to are, "Cotton's List," 8vo., Oxford, 1852, Second Edition; "Lea Wilson's Catalogue," 4to., London, 1845; "Fry's Description of the Great Bible," folio, London, 1865; and "Lee's Memorial for the Bible Societies, 8vo., Edinburgh, 1824;" and Appendix, 1826. Sale Catalogues have also been examined, especially that of the late Mr. Offor's Collection, on which, however, little dependence can be placed, as many of his bibles were wholly made up of different editions.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.

	Page
 NTRODUCTORY . . .	1
Kilburne's Tract . . .	31
Catalogue.	51
British Museum List: Bibles . . .	211
British Museum List: Testaments	221
Mr. Lea Wilfon's List: Bibles	221
Mr. Lea Wilfon's List: Testaments	225
Lambeth List	226
Canterbury Cathedral List.	226
Bodleian Library List	228
Mr. Francis Fry's List: Bibles	234
Mr. Francis Fry's List: Testaments	245
Royal Library, Stuttgart	247

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978-1-108-01094-8 - A Century of Bibles: The Authorised Version from
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[More information](#)

