

## THE QUAYLE RARE BIBLE COLLECTION

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**W**ILLIAM ALFRED QUAYLE was born June 25, 1860, somewhere near Parkville, Mo., as his parents migrated from Ohio to Colorado. In 1885 he received a B.A. degree from Baker University, Baldwin City. He soon returned to Baker as professor of Greek and vice-president and in 1890 he became president of the school.

In 1894 Quayle resigned as president of Baker and for the next 14 years held pastorates at several Methodist Episcopal churches. In 1908 he was named a bishop by the church and served in that capacity for 16 years. He retired to his farm near Baldwin City in 1924 where he died March 9, 1925.<sup>1</sup>

**D**URING his life Quayle wrote 28 books. The sale of these books brought him royalties which he applied toward the purchase of rare books, especially Bibles. His travels as a much-acclaimed orator, minister, author, and college president aided Quayle in his search for the finest examples of man's workmanship. His collections also included other works of literature, but his most consuming passion was his collection of rare and valuable editions of the Bible.<sup>2</sup>

During his lecture tours throughout the country, Quayle always found time to browse in bookstores and to contact dealers in rare books. These contacts led Quayle to the acquisition of many of his unique and rarest of Bibles and manuscripts. Many of the purchases, due to his widespread fame, were made through a third party in order to make the purchases possible on his limited financial means.<sup>3</sup> The now-famous collection includes such rare examples as the 1469 Eggestyn Latin Bible, one of the rarest Bibles in existence; the

Rodt et Richel Bible, one of only five of these 1470 Bibles known to still be in existence; and the Synagogue Roll, perhaps the oldest manuscript in the collection believed to be from about the 13th century.<sup>4</sup>

At the time of his death in 1925, Bishop Quayle's beloved collection passed to his alma mater, Baker University, where they "may be always before the eyes of students to the end that thereby they may be incited to scholarly love of books and deep enjoyment of them and abiding love of God."<sup>5</sup> The collection is now permanently housed in the Baker University Library.

Since 1962 the Quayle Bibles have been displayed in the Spencer-Quayle wing of the library. Kenneth and Helen Spencer, having been acquainted with Quayle's work and his valuable Bible collection, recommended to the Spencer Foundation in 1959 that a suitable room be built in the proposed new Baker library to house the Quayle Bible Collection.<sup>6</sup> Construction on the windowless structure of steel and stone began in early 1960 and was completed the following year.

**W**HILE the collection is far too extensive to list in detail here, it is imperative that at least a mention be made of some of the approximately 700 volumes and manuscripts included in the collection. It contains early Bibles handwritten by monks, a copy of the first edition of the King James version, and many other famous Bibles.

Included in the displays are three exhibits dating back into the days before Christ. The Terra Cotta Cone, circa 2060 B. C., is inscribed in cuneiform characters from about the time of Abraham.<sup>7</sup> It includes a short biography of Libit-Ishtar, King of Babylon. A second exhibit from about 2000 B. C. is the cuneiform tablets which give information concerning business

1. For additional biographical information on Bishop Quayle, see M. S. Rice, *William Alfred Quayle, the Skylark of Methodism* (New York, Abingdon Press, 1928); and A. Bower Sageser, "William A. Quayle: Methodist Leader," *Kansas and the West* (Topeka, Kansas State Historical Society, 1976), pp. 162-171.

2. Despite other printed accounts to the contrary, Bishop Quayle's collection did not include the Chinese coins also housed at the Baker library. That extensive collection was a bequest of the long-time missionary to China, Rev. Arthur Coole.

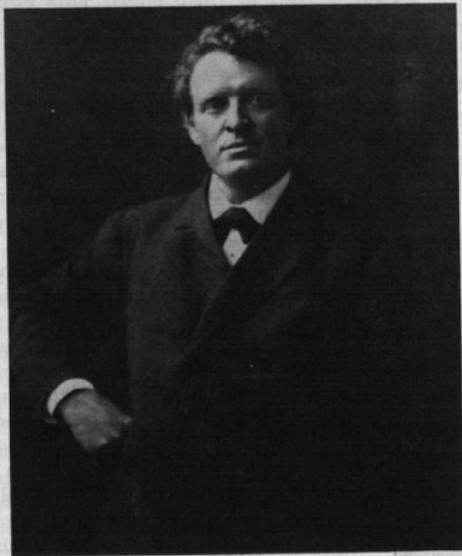
3. Statement by Ray Firestone, Baker University director of libraries, personal interview, April, 1978.

4. *Ibid.*

5. William A. Quayle, "Last Will and Testament" (unpublished papers, Baker University, Baldwin City, 1925).

6. "Will Build Room for Quayle Bibles in New Library," *Baldwin Ledger*, December 3, 1959.

7. Firestone interview.



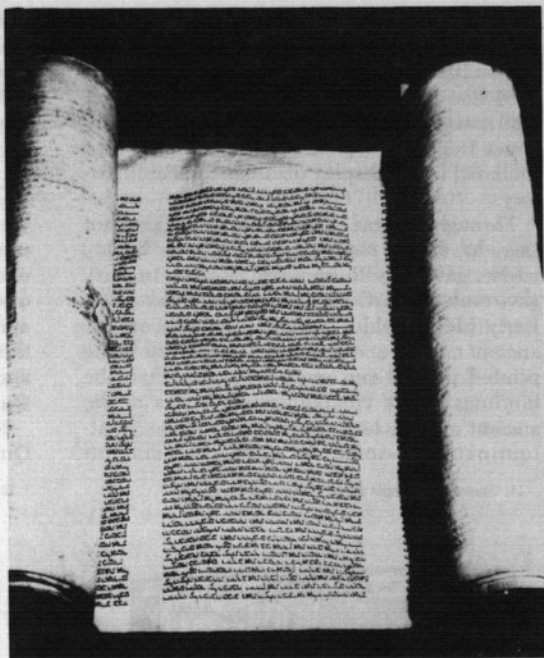
### A Church Leader's Legacy to His State

William A. Quayle (1860-1925), president of Baker University, Baldwin, and later bishop of the Methodist Church.



Latin Codex Bible from the 13th century, has a French repousse silver binding which is several hundred years old. Photographs courtesy of the Quayle Bible Collection, Baker University.

The Synagogue Roll, perhaps the oldest manuscript in the Quayle Bible Collection, dates from about the 13th century. Containing the first five books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch), it is made from 37 animal skins sewn together into a long roll. The scroll is three feet wide and about 100 feet long and contains no book or chapter divisions. Photograph *courtesy*, Quayle Bible Collection, Baker University.



transactions of the Chaldees. These clay remnants exemplify the early writings of the Egyptians using a form of hieroglyphics imprinted into soft clay and then baked into hard tablets, some showing remnants of clay covers. The third exhibit includes fragments of papyrus containing Egyptian hieroglyphics from about 1500-1100 B. C.

There are several manuscripts on display from the Middle Ages (A.D. 476 to 1450). Included in this time period are the Synagogue Roll and the Latin Codex. The roll, or scroll, contains the entire Pentateuch (first five books of the Old Testament) and is made from 37 animal skins sewn together into a long roll. It is three feet wide and about 100 feet long and contains no book or chapter divisions. The names Jeremy Cohen and Joseph Cohen are carved on the handle cylinders.<sup>8</sup>

The Latin Codex (leaves of uterine parchment stacked one on top of the other and bound like today's books) of the 13th century is bound in French repousse silver and was done

in a number of colors on abortive parchment by an Italian copyist.<sup>9</sup>

Following the invention of the printing press with movable type, Bibles were produced by many printers. There are 13 samples of these early printings in the Quayle collection. The earliest one, dated 1469, is from the Eggestyn press in Strassburg and is believed to be his second edition of the Latin Bible, one of the rarest Bibles in existence.

Another early edition, printed by Coberger at Nuremberg about 1475, is a first edition from this famous press.<sup>10</sup>

Beginning with the advent of the English Bible around 1380, the Quayle display includes several notable examples of this time period. The earliest English Bible in the collection is from 1550. Another issue, the Geneva Bible, 1560, was influential in American history as the version brought by the Pilgrims to the new world. A first-edition King James "he"

8. Harriet Osborne, *The William Alfred Quayle Collection of Bibles* (Baldwin City, Baker University, n. d.), p. 3.

9. Margaret Stutzman, *The William Alfred Quayle Bible Collection* (Baldwin City, Baker University, 1962), p. 14.

10. Firestone interview.

Bible dated 1611 is also included in the display.<sup>11</sup>

The Bible in America is revealed from the 1661 first New Testament in an American Indian language to the 1949 "World" Bible by Bruce Rogers. A typical "family" Bible is also included in the display of American Bible history.

Through the eras of the Bible's development there have been many changes. The early clay tablets gave way to the scroll which, in turn, gave way to the Codex or modern book form. Early hieroglyphics became scribal work by ancient monks, and this, too, succumbed to the printed page. Even more beautiful than the bindings or the cursive writing styles of the ancient monks, however, are the elaborate illuminations—some in gold—the ancient

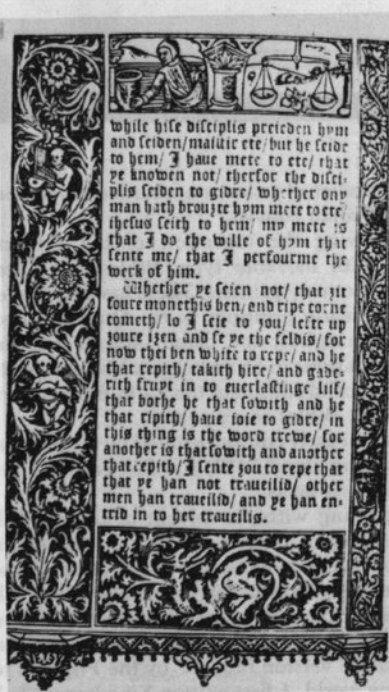
scribes placed by hand in their work. During the first century following the advent of the movable type presses, the monks continued to adorn the pages of the scriptures by marking the names of the books, the chapter divisions or initials in gorgeously illuminated colors.

**T**HE NAMES of some of the former owners taken from the Bibles themselves reads something like a Who's Who. A Gothic Bible once belonged to Robert Southey. Another pair of Bibles once belonged to Robert Browning and his sister Saraina Browning. A fourth was the family Bible of Robert Louis Stevenson, and another was the personal Bible of Bishop Quayle while he was at Baker University.<sup>12</sup>

Many gifts have been added to the original Quayle collection including a two-volume set

11. Stutzman, *Quayle Bible Collection*, pp. 23-39.

12. Osborne, *Quayle Collection*, pp. 10-11.



These pages from the *Biblia Pauperum*, printed in 1885 in London, are examples of the use of illustrations made with wood blocks. Included in this rare Bible are 38 woodcuts illustrating the life, parables, and miracles of Jesus, with descriptions from the original text of John Wycliff. The wood blocks came from Nuremberg and are believed to date from the 15th or 16th century. This volume is No. 226 of the 375 copies printed for America from the blocks. Photograph courtesy, Quayle Bible Collection, Baker University.

of the Bruce Rogers Bible bound in gold tooled green French levant. Another gift was a first-edition of the English translation of the Greek Septuagint, printed by Jane Aitkens in Philadelphia in 1808. Still another addition are Bibles autographed by the U. S. Presidents and contributed to the collection. On-going additions to the original Quayle collection help keep alive Quayle's avocation, the collecting and loving of rare and unusual Bibles.<sup>13</sup>

The Spencers completed the wing of the Baker library with the purchase of a 17th-century English room and the Morgan library display cases which protect the works of art. The special room—Urishay Room—was presented as an appropriate museum room to accent and

beautify the Quayle Bible Collection. It was taken from a fine 17th-century English home, so large and beautiful as to be dubbed a "castle," and was relocated as part of the Quayle wing.<sup>14</sup> The room features a large fireplace and hand-carved oak panels and doors and appears much as it did when it was lived in. The furniture is also from the 17th century.

Adjoining the Quayle display room is a Chapel of Meditation. A gift of the late Dr. Everett R. Finley and Mrs. Finley of Houston, the memorial chapel is of traditional church design and used for individual worship and meditation.<sup>15</sup>

14. Jane Murphy, "The William A. Quayle Rare Bible Collection, a Self-Guided Tour Manuel" (Baldwin City, Baker University, n.d.), p. 3.

15. "Announce Gifts for Proposed Baker Library," *Baldwin Ledger*, October 8, 1959.

13. Firestone interview.