

A NOTE ABOUT THE WURKER BIBLE COLLECTION

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The Wurker Bible Collection, which consists of some 65 Bibles and other rare books, was compiled by Paul Wurker over a period of three decades or more. These works were gathered from France, Germany, Switzerland, Argentina, and the United States.

Included in this collection are the Koberger Nuremberg Bible printed in 1516, the Luther Bible of 1534, and a Paris Bible of 1532. Many of the volumes were obtained in the Eastern Sector of Germany after World War II.

Wurker was born in 1891 in Aue, Saxony, near Zwickau in the southern part of what is now the German Democratic Republic, and not far from the Czechoslovakian border. After World War I, Paul Wurker, like many of his countrymen, migrated to Argentina to escape the aftermath of the war. Argentina offered free land and equipment with which to farm it. In telling the story, Paul related that the parcel of land he obtained was jungle and that the equipment was an axe and a shovel.

After a relatively short time, Wurker moved to the United States, taking up residence in San Francisco, California, where he began placing regular advertisements in the San Francisco *Chronicle* newspaper for old books and Bibles. In the days after World War II and before the "Berlin Wall," he also traveled to the Eastern Sector of Germany to visit relatives, and there was able to collect many of the volumes of this rare collection.

Frequently I have opportunity in lectures and other discussions to share information on this collection and on some of its especially interesting titles—including the famed early English "Breeches Bible." Among volumes on loan to Andrews University are several German Bibles (including those from which pages are shown in facsimile herein) and an early-English-imprint ecclesiastical history. The collection consists, for the most part, of German Bibles of Reformation and early Post-Reformation times; but, as is obvious from the foregoing, there are also English-language publications; and the imprints include several European countries, plus Germantown, Pennsylvania, during the American colonial period. Several volumes have exquisite woodcuts.