

EXCEEDINGLY RARE MICROFORM KING JAMES BIBLE CARRIED TO THE SURFACE TO THE MOON AS PART OF THE APOLLO 14 MISSION, ENCASED IN A BEAUTIFUL HANDMADE RELIQUARY CONTAINING OVER 1/2 TROY POUND OF 22 KARAT GOLD AND JEWEL EMBELLISHMENTS, ONE OF ONLY 12 COPIES WITH A CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY SIGNED BY ASTRONAUT EDGAR MITCHELL

(SPACE) (BIBLE). **Microform King James Bible, encased in a modern reliquary. WITH: Letter of authenticity signed.** Cleveland and New York: World Publishing, 1971. Microform piece (1-1/2 inch by 1-1/2 inch) encased in gold, enamel, and bejeweled reliquary. WITH: Letter of authenticity signed, original full calf clamshell box. \$87,000.

Rare microform complete King James Bible, carried on the Apollo 13 mission and to the surface of the moon by astronaut Edgar Mitchell as part of the 1971 Apollo 14 expedition, one of only 12 flight-certified by a member of the expedition,^{1 2} encased in a handmade reliquary made from over 1/2 troy pound of 22 karat gold³ and embellished with jewels, accompanied by a certificate of authenticity signed by James W. Stout of the Apollo Prayer League Committee and astronaut Edgar Mitchell, in a custom velvet and calf clamshell box.

This rare item was one of only 100 microform King James Bibles that were taken to the lunar surface as part of an initiative by the Apollo Prayer League (most of which have now been cut apart)⁴. The Bibles were slated to be taken to the moon on the Apollo 13 mission, but disaster struck and the mission failed to land on the moon's surface. Thus, the Bibles were forced to make a second flight.⁵ Apollo 14 astronaut Edgar Mitchell was entrusted with taking the miniature microform Bibles, each slightly bigger than a postage stamp, aboard the lunar module Antares, which landed on the Fra Mauro Highlands of the Moon on February 5, 1971. Of these 100 Bibles, only 12 were flight-certified by astronaut Edgar Mitchell⁶. This is an entire Bible—many were cut into 50-page fragments. It has been encased in a reliquary containing over 1/2 troy pound of 22 karat gold, jewel embellishments, and red enamel highlighting the words “The First Lunar Bible,” “A.D. 1971,” and “D.F” (the man who commissioned the piece). The item is accompanied by a letter of authenticity signed by James W. Stout of the Apollo Prayer League Committee⁷ and astronaut Edgar Mitchell, carefully housed in a deluxe calf-gilt clamshell box. This is Lunar Bible Copy “14-4.”⁸ A nearly identical piece is part of the prestigious Green Collection, a Bible and biblical artifacts collection owned by philanthropist and president of Hobby Lobby Steve Green. His lunar reliquary has been incorporated into the Green Collection's traveling exhibition “Passages” with scheduled destinations including the Vatican and will eventually be housed at a permanent Bible museum across from the Capitol in Washington, D.C. With an affidavit of authenticity, four lovely display posters, and digital photographic prints of Lunar Bible Copy “14-8” (the Green Bible *in-situ*).

Posted 2014 on a rare books auction site.

¹ The Bibles flown on Apollo 13 were not re-flown on Apollo 13. According to recorded interviews with Rev. John Stout, Founder and Director of the Apollo Prayer League (APL), the 512 Apollo 13 Bibles were retained by the crew and only a handful returned to the Apollo Prayer League. An entirely new reel of 1500 microfilm Bibles was

purchased by the Apollo Prayer League and separate group of 512 Bibles were flown on Apollo 14. Over a hundred lunar Bibles remain in the APL archives.

² The subject Bible 14-4 is not *“one of only 12 flight-certified by a member of the expedition.”* During research for *“The Apostles of Apollo*, author Carol Mersch was personally given twelve (12) Apollo 14 lunar Bibles and two Apollo 13 lunar Bibles by Reverend John Stout which were subsequently flight-certified by Apollo 14 Edgar Mitchell Apollo 13 James Lovell, respectively, and Reverend John Stout. Mitchell informed Peachstate of this in a June 2009 email exchange prior to the 14-4 offering.

³ Master engraver John Franciscus, who Frohman stated designed and engraved his lunar Bible encasements, stated in June 2017 that the encasements he designed for Frohman were 14KT gold plated, not 1/2 toy pound of 22KT.

⁴ According to multiple recorded and written statements by Reverend John Stout, this serial number, 14-4, is not one of the microfilm Bibles that landed on the moon. Rev. Stout stated that he personally engraved a five-digit serial number on all authentic microfilm Bibles immediately after their return and recorded the serial numbers in the official APL Lunar Bible Registry along with the names of their recipients. The subject Bible, purportedly given by Rev. Stout to his brother James, was not engraved by Reverend Stout and is not recorded in the Bible Registry as having ever been released from the APL collection. Peachstate owner, David Frohman, admits engraving the three-digit serial number himself.

Reverend Stout adamantly denies giving his brother James any lunar Bibles before he serialized them. Serial number 14-4 is not recorded as having been distributed in any updated registries, nor is it shown as distributed in James Stout’s own registry, prepared by him for Rev Stout’s review in 2005, which contains the footnote that the first twenty Bibles of the 100 lunar-landed Bibles **“have not been distributed and are in the possession of John Stout.”**

⁵ The lunar Bibles carried on Apollo 13 were not re-flown onboard Apollo 14. According to operating bylaws submitted with APL tax filings, the APL purchased a reel of 1500 microfilm Bibles from Edmund Scientific for the Apollo 14 flight, of which 512 were flown: 100 in Mitchell’s lunar module PPK; 200 in Mitchell’s command module PPK, and 212 stored onboard the command module by NASA support crew microbiologist Harold Hill, who, along with John Stout and Byron Price, comprised the entire governing committee of the APL. Hundreds of unused microfilm Bibles remain on this reel. An additional mutli-focal *“First Lunar Bible”* was wrapped separately and packaged with the 100 lunar module Bibles. The special Bible was developed at the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center using Apollo 1 Ed White’s Revised Standard Version and the King James Version reduced to microfilm and placed front to back. This Bible, referred to singularly as the *“First Lunar Bible”* has never been found.

⁶ See endnote [1] above. The lunar Bible packets were double-sealed in flame-proof packets by APL members before being given to Mitchell for stowing in his PPKs. Per Stout, the packets were returned unopened. There is no conceivable way Mitchell could have known with certainty that the Bibles he certified were among those carried to the surface of the moon without Rev. John Stout’s certification.

⁷ Reverend Stout and his wife, Helen, stated in recorded interviews that James, was a Ft. Worth police officer and not on the APL governing board, nor was he a member of the Apollo Prayer League during the Apollo 14 mission or thereafter.

⁸ See endnote 2.