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English Translations of Homer

By

J. N. DOUGLAS BUSH

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XIX.

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF HOMER

LIKE others whose work happens to lie in the classics as much as in English, I have been indebted to Professor F. M. K. Foster's *English Translations from the Greek* (Columbia University, 1918) and the deeper one sinks into bibliographical quagmires the more one appreciates the labor, as well as the infinite possibilities of error, involved in compiling such a list. I say this because it is a rather easy and ungracious thing to pick holes in one section of a bibliographical manual covering a wide field. An independent survey of Homeric translations, which I undertook in the course of an attempt to trace the history of classical themes in English verse, discloses a number of omissions and some apparent mistakes in Dr. Foster's section on Homer. In presenting this supplement to his work I abide (except in one or two items) by his own principles, and confine myself to literal translations, excluding excerpts, adaptations, paraphrases and the like. In the following chronological list the numbered items refer to Foster's book; those without numbers are additions:

"2. Penelopes Complaint: Or, A Mirrour for wanton Minions. Taken out of Homers Odissea, and written in English Verse, by Peter Colse. 1596. 4^o." (Foster, p.62).

This is far from a literal translation of Homer, being a free adaptation and paraphrase of some passages. It should not therefore be included.

"8, The strange, vvonderfull and bloody Battell betweene the Frogs and Mise: . . . Paraphrastically done into English Heroycall verse by W. F. CCC. 1613. 4^o." (Foster, p.63).

This also is not a translation, but a free, expanded paraphrase. The date quoted is probably a misprint for 1603.

"11. The Crowne of all Homers Workes Batrachomyomachia Or the Battaile of Frogs and Mise. His Hymn's—and—Epigrams Translated According to ye Originall. By George Chapman. [1624?] Fol.

Reprinted: [Introduction by S. W. Singer] 1818; [Edited by Smith] 1858; [Edited by Richard Hooper] 1887." (Foster, p.64).

I do not know any edition of Chapman's pieces by Smith. Hooper's edition was published in 1858, not 1887, and bears the imprint "London: John Russell Smith, Soho Square, 1858."

"12. Homers Iliads and Odisses, translated. . . by John Ogelsby [Licensed to Master Thom. Tycroft, April 18, 1656.]

Reprinted: [Iliad only] 1660; [Odyssey only] 1665; 2 vol. 1669." (Foster, p. 64).

I do not know of any editions of Ogilby's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* earlier than those of 1660 and 1665, although Dr. Foster calls them reprints. 1660.—"The First Booke of Homer's Iliads. Translated by Thomas Grantham, M. A. of Peter-House in Cambridge. . . London, 1660."

The first book is translated into heroic couplets. The writer does part of the second book, but the catalogue of the ships is too much for him, and he explains: "I see no reason why I should afflict my Brain any further in translating a Buttery-Book, which will be irksome to the Reader; therefore I will *acquiesce* for the second Book, and go on to the third, by the help of my Almighty God, to whom be glory for ever." There follows the translation of the third book, which however shows no internal evidence of divine aid.

1726.—"The Iliad in a Nutshell: or Homer's Battle of the Frogs and Mice. [Translated in verse, and illustrated with notes by S. Wesley.] . . . London, 1726. 8°"

"25. Iliad, Book I. H. Fitz-Cotton. 1749. 8°." (Foster, p.66).

This is a travesty, and should not be included.

1755.—"An Essay towards a translation of Homer's Works. In blank verse. With notes, by J. N. Scott . . . London, 1755. 4°."

Dr. Foster may have omitted this because it consists of translations of excerpts, but there are so many of these that it seems worth mentioning.

"30. Hymn to Venus. [Translated by W. Congreve] [In Johnson's English Poets].; 1779-81." (Foster, p.67).

In a chronological table this surely ought to appear under its original date, 1710 (*Works*, Tonson).

1781.—"Homer's Hymn to Ceres, translated in English verse, by R. Hole . . . Exeter, 1781."

Hole is named by Dr. Foster (p.65), but only as one of a number of translators in an American reprint of 1872.

"36. Homer's Works in English. 12 vol., 1805-06. 8°." (Foster, p. 67).

This is one of a good many items for which the bibliographer does not supply enough details for identification.

1810.—"The Frog-and-Mouse-Fight, translated from the Greek by Edward, Lord Thurlow . . . [1810?] .4°. *Forming pp. 28-50 of some larger work apparently written by the second Lord Thurlow.*"¹

¹ Quoted from the Brit. Mus. Cat. My titles are taken almost wholly from the titlepages of books in the Brit. Mus., or from the Museum Catalogue.

1810.—“The battle of the Frogs and Mice; from the *Batrachomyomachia*: with miscellaneous translations *Cambridge*, [1810.]

This book includes a translation of part of *Iliad* i.

1810.—“A Translation of the first seven books of the *Odyssey* of Homer. [In verse. By Charles Lloyd.] *Birmingham*, 1810. 8°.”

“41.—*Odyssey*: [Translated into English verse.] 1811. 12°.” (Foster, p.68).

The meagre information leaves one uncertain what work is referred to.

1818 ff.—Shelley’s translations of Homeric hymns. Dr. Foster mentions Shelley only as forming part of an American reprint of Parnell in 1872 (Foster, p.65).

“49. The First Book of the *Iliad*, translated by [William John] Blew. 1831.” (Foster, p.68).

This book contains also translations of the *Batrachomyomachia*, the *Hymn to the Delian Apollo*, and *Iliad* ii.

1833.—“A Literal Translation of Homer’s *Iliad*. Prepared according to the text of Doctor Kennedy’s edition. By a Graduate of the University. New edition, etc. 3 vol *Dublin*, 1840-33. 12°”

In the Brit. Mus. copy vols. 2 and 3 are dated 1833, and vol. 1, 1840.

1834.—“Homerics [being a translation in verse of *Odyssey* Book V and *Iliad* Book III: attempted by Archdeacon Wrangham [Chester? 1834] 8°”

1835.—“A Literal Translation of the first, second, third, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth books of Homer’s *Odyssey*. By a Master of Arts *Dublin*, 1835. 8°.”

Reprinted, *London*, 1845.

“53. Homer’s *Iliad*. 1841.” (Foster, p.68).

I do not know what work is referred to.

1841.—“The first six Books of Homer’s *Iliad*, with an interpagged translation, line for line, and numerous notes. By the Author of “The first six Books of Virgil’s *Aeneid*” on the same plan *London*, 1841. 12°.”

1842.—“The Hymns to Apollo, to Aphrodite, to Pan, and others, translated into English verse by W. M. W. Call *Lyra Hellenica*, 1842. 8°.”

1843.—“Translations of two passages of the *Iliad* [iii.234-244 and vi. 394-502 and a fragment of Kallinos. [By E. C. Hawtre] *London*, 1843. 4°.”

This may have been omitted as coming in the category of excerpts, but Dr. Foster does not adhere strictly to his own rule in that regard (see numbers 26, 38, 42, 57), and one is inclined to make an exception of Hawtre’s famous hexameters.

1844.—“The Iliad of Homer. [Book I.] Faithfully rendered in Homeric verse from the original Greek. By Philhellen Etonensis. [i. e. L. Shadwell] . . . London, 1844. 8°.”

1845.—The Iliad of Homer. Faithfully rendered in Homeric verse from the original Greek. By Lancelot Shadwell. Books i-ix. 371 . . . London, 1844 (-45). 8°.”

Book i. is the same as the preceding work of 1844. The books have separate paper covers. Books i., ii., iii., are dated 1844; books iv. and v., 1845; books vi., vii., viii., lack cover and date, and book ix. has a cover but no date.

“54. Homer’s Iliad. 3 vols. 1846.” (Foster, p.69).

I do not know what work this is.

“56. Iliad, translated by T. S. Brandreth. 1849.” (Foster, p.69).

The Brit. Mus. copy consists of two volumes bound together, with separate titlepages, both dated 1846, not 1849.

“57. Homeric Ballads [from the Odyssey]; with Translation and notes by the late W. Maginn . . . 1850. 8° . . .” (Foster, p.69).

Maginn wrote ballads taken from the Iliad as well as the Odyssey. A collected edition appeared in 1856, edited by Shelton Mackenzie. 1850.—“The First Iliad of Homer. [Translated into English verse by W. G. T. Barter.] In *Poems, original and translated, etc.*, 1850, 8°.” 1850.—“The Iliad of Homer, the First, Second, and Third Cantos: translated . . . in a metrical version most conformable, though not identical in construction, with the original Greek Hexameter . . . London, 1850. 6°.”

“60. The Iliad of Homer, literally rendered in Spenserian stanzas by W. G. T. Barter, 1857.” (Foster, p.69).

The titlepage is dated 1854; the preface, 1853.

1856.—“The Iliad of Homer: First Three Books . . . Literally translated . . . by a Graduate of the University [of Dublin]. New edition. . . . Dublin 1856. 12°.”

These three books, except for some minor changes of revision, are the same as the first three of the 1840-33 set listed above.

1858.—“The Odyssey of Homer: Books i.-ii; construed literally and word for word by the Rev. Dr. Giles . . . 1858.”

1860.—“Homer for the English, Iliad, Book v. The Prowess of Diomed. (Book vi. The Parting of Hector and Andromache) [with an English verse translation] . . . London, Eton [printed]; 1860. 8°.”

Book v. occupies pp.79-108; book vi., pp.109-125. A pencilled note, dated June 13, 1860, on the flyleaf of the Brit. Mus. copy says: “Messrs. Whittaker & Co. state that this is the only part published, although it begins at p. 79.”

1860.—“The Iliad. [A translation, in verse, of Books i.-xii., with a portion of Book xiii.] . . . [1860?] 8°.”

1861.—“The Iliad of Homer, construed literally and word for word, by the Rev. Dr. Giles. 6 vol. [1861-82].”

1861.—“The Iliad of Homer. The First Three Books faithfully translated into English hexameters, according to the style and manner of the original. By . . . F. H. J. Ritso . . . London, 1861. 8^{vo}”

1862.—“The Odyssey of Homer . . . Books i.-vi [vii.-xxiv]. Construed literally and word for word by the Rev. Dr. Giles. 4 vol. [1862-77].

1862.—“Gradus ad Homerum; or, the A.B.C.D. of Homer: being a heteroclitite translation of the first four books of the Iliad into English heroics, with notes. By X.Y.Z. [i.e. William Purton] . . . Oxford, 1862. 8^o.”

This is not exactly a travesty but a serious attempt at a translation in a colloquial style.

1862.—“Homer’s Iliad. Book First. Translated into English hexameters by James Inglis Cochrane . . . London, 1862. 8^o.”

1862.—“The Iliad, Book, I., in English hexameters, according to quantity. By John Murray . . . London, 1862.”

1862.—“Homer Iliad A. Literally translated into English hexameters. By James T. B. Landon . . . Oxford and London, 1862.”

“65. Iliad Books xx-xxii, with a literal translation and English notes. 1862. 8^o.” (Foster, p.69).

I have not succeeded in identifying this work.

“67. Iliad. [Anonymous. In hexameters.] 1862.” (Foster, p.69).

I have not identified this work.

1863.—“Homer Iliad B, Literally translated . . . by J. T. B. Landon . . . Oxford and London . . . 1863.”

1863.—“Batracho-myo-machia: or, The Battle of the Frogs and Mice. An Homeric Fable; reproduced in dramatic blank verse. By T. S. Norgate . . . London and Edinburgh . . . 1863.”

1866.—“Homer and the Iliad. [A translation of the Iliad into English verse, with dissertations, commentary, and notes.] By J. S. Blackie. 4 vol . . . Edinburgh, 1866. 8^o.”

1866.—“The First Book of the Iliad of Homer, etc. [i. e. Il. vi. 407-465 and Il. viii. 542-561] rendered in the heroic couplet by Omega . . . London, 1866.”

1866.—“Translations into English and Latin. By C. S. Calverley . . . Cambridge and London, 1866.”

This book contains a translation of Il. i.-ii.

“74. Iliad translated by Philip Stanhope Worsley. Edit. by Conington. 2 vol. 1868 . . .” (Foster, p.70)

This is not quite correct. Vol. 2, containing Books xiii-xxiv, was translated by Conington, with the exception of twelve stanzas of Book xiii, which are Worsley’s. Vol. 1 is dated 1865.

1868.—“Homeric Studies. [Containing Book i. of the Iliad and extracts from other books, *etc.*, “translated in the Early-English blank verse.”] by E. L. Swifte . . . London, 1868. 4°.”

“79. Iliad. W. L. Collins. 1869. [Ancient Classics].” (Foster, p.70).

This work, the date of which is 1870, is not a translation.

“80. Odyssey. Translated by W. L. Collins. 1870 [Ancient Classics].” (Foster, p.70).

This also is not a translation.

“81. Iliad. Translated by John Graham Cordery. 2 vol. 1870 . . .” (Foster p. 70).

Both volumes of this work appeared in 1871.

1872.—“Key to the Iliad of Homer. For the use of schools . . . By W. R. Smith. [With the text of the first and sixth books, a large portion of the fifth, and a few select passages from the second.] . . . Philadelphia, 1872. 8°.”

This book has the text, and a translation in heroic verse, of the parts mentioned.

1874.—“Homer’s Iliad. Translated [into English blank verse] by J. B. Rose . . . London, 1874. 8°.”

1878.—“Notes on Homer’s Odyssey, Books ix & x. With a literal translation, by a Graduate in Classical Honours . . . Cambridge, 1875, 4°.”

1876.—“The Odyssey of Homer; construed literally and word for word. Book 17 . . . [1876] by the Rev. Dr. Giles.”

“87. Iliad and Odyssey. Translated by M. Barnard 2 vol. 1876.” (Foster, p.71).

The one-volume *Odyssey* of 1876 does not mention any translation of the *Iliad* either done or contemplated, and I have not found any record of it.

1879.—“The Deeds and Death of Patroclus. Book xvi. of the Iliad, with . . . notes and index, and a literal translation. By H. Dunbar . . . Glasgow, 1879. 8°.”

1880.—“Iliad i. By Charles Wellington Stone. Cambridge: University Press, John Wilson and Son. 1880.”

“95. Iliad, Books xiii and xiv, translated by Herbert Hailstone. 2 vol., Cambridge. 1880.” (Foster, p.71).

Two other small volumes, containing Hailstone’s translation of Books xv and xxi, also appeared in 1880.

“98. Iliad, translated by Herbert Hailstone. 1882. Books xiii and xiv are reprints of No. 95.” (Foster, p.72).

I have not encountered such a complete translation by Hailstone. 1889.—“The Ninth Odyssey of Homer . . . rendered into hexameter verse by A. C. Grylls . . . Cambridge, 1889. 8°.”

“109. Iliad, Book xxii, with notes and translation by John Henry Freese. 1890.

Reprinted: [With Book xxiv] 1894." (Foster p.73).

According to the Brit. Mus. Cat., Books xxii and xxiii, together, appeared in 1890. The B. M. copy is undated.

1890.—"Homer's Iliad. Books xxii & xxiii. Translated into English by H. Hailstone *Cambridge*, 1890. 8°."

1891.—"The Odyssey of Homer, books ix.-xii. Rendered into English blank verse by W. Cudworth [Privately printed] 1891. 8°."

1891.—"The Sixth Book of Homer's Iliad. A prose translation by Hallam Tennyson. See Tennyson (Hon. L) *Lionel Tennyson. A memorial volume*. 1891. 8°."

1898.—"The Odyssey, Book vii, in English Verse *London*, Chiswick Press, 1898."

1899.—"The Homeric Hymns: a new prose translation and essays, literary and mythological, by Andrew Lang *London*, 1899. 8°."

1900.—"The Odyssey, rendered into English prose by Samuel Butler *London*, 1900. 8°."

1900.—"The First Book of the Iliad of Homer done into English by Edward Carpenter. [In verse.] 1900 *The Story of Eros and Psyche, etc.* 1900. 8°."

1908.—"Iliad Book ix. Translated from the text in the Pitt Press series by C. H. Prichard *Cambridge*, 1908. 8°."

1914.—"Hesiod. The Homeric Hymns and Homeric with an English Translation by H. G. Evelyn-White Loeb Classical Library, 1914." Listed by Foster only under Hesiod, p. 61.

In addition to the items queried in the above list, there are two or three other translations named by Dr. Foster which I have not yet been able to identify.

A few translations which have been issued since Dr. Foster's dissertation appeared may be added here for the sake of completeness.

1919.—"The Odyssey, with an English translation by A. T. Murray two volumes Loeb Classical Library, 1919."

1921.—"The Odyssey translated into English, in the original metre, by Francis Caulfeild *London*, 1921. 8°."

1922.—"Thirty-two Passages from the Iliad in English rhymed verse. By C. D. Locock *London*, 1922. 8°."

1922.—"The Wrath of Achilleus. Translated from the Iliad into quantitative hexameters [with a preface on English prosody] by George Ernle *London*. 1922."

1923.—"Thirty-two Passages from the Odyssey. In English rhymed verse by C. D. Locock *London*, 1923."

1924.—"The Iliad with an English translation by A. T. Murray. Vol. I. *London*, 1924."

J. N. DOUGLAS BUSH

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