

## THE EARLIEST COLLECTION OF PAUL'S EPISTLES

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A study of the making of the New Testament indicates the presence of different stages through which the Scriptures passed before coming to their final form. First came the time of writing; but before all the writings were completed the period of collection had already begun; and finally the era of canonization provided the final form for the collections.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this study is to essay the evidence for the earliest collection of Paul's epistles and, coming to a realization of the paucity of notices concerning the first collection, to offer suggestion by analogy and inference that would seem both probable and assist in treating other problems associated with the writings of Paul.

Failure to differentiate between the two periods of collecting and canonizing has led to frequent misinterpretation of detail. Although the concept of the canon antedated the actual use of the term, it was not until the time of Athanasius (296-373) that the phrase "canon of Scripture" was employed to mean the list of books reckoned as Holy Scripture.<sup>2</sup> As far as our records go, it is not until the decade 170-180 that the church undertook seriously the task of drawing up such lists, e.g. the Muratorian Canon.<sup>3</sup> Discussion concerning these lists continues to the time of the Synods at Carthage in 397 and 419.<sup>4</sup> Harnack describes the activity of the church in this period as that of "selection."<sup>5</sup> In these years, he maintained, the church was selecting which books belonged to the Bible and which did not. Zahn, however, was opposed to this concept of selection in the sense that the church was granting authority to the books by the decisions of the councils; but Zahn emphasized the idea of "growth."<sup>6</sup> As each book of Scripture was written it was immediately received as divinely authoritative by those to whom it was directed and remained authoritative as the writing began to circulate and was incorporated into collections. Whereas Harnack's concept of "selection" is misleading in describing the work done in the period of the canon, it can also be pointed out that Zahn's emphasis upon "growth" is more appropriate for the periods of writing and collecting rather than the technical period of canonizing

1. The major problem of the New Testament Canon is ascertaining the stages of development, interpreting these stages, determining the authority of these writings at each stage and establishing the source of authority. Kurt Aland, *The Problem of the New Testament Canon* (1962), esp. pp. 8-13, represents the Liberal approach seated in human authority and maintaining a right to select a new canon within a canon for today. Herman Ridderbos, *The Authority of the New Testament Scriptures* (1963), no less aware of stages of development, represents acceptance of the New Testament Canon upon divine authority and closed.
2. See F. F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments* (1950), p. 94. Also *Journal of Theological Studies*, 49 (1948), 17-27.
3. B. F. Westcott, *The Canon of the New Testament* (1881<sup>5</sup>), pp. 211ff.
4. K. Aland, *op. cit.* p. 11.
5. A. Harnack, *The Origin of the New Testament* (1925). See also E. C. Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence* (1948), p. 35.
6. Th. Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons I* (1888-89).

in the years 180-397 when this growth would have already been complete.

A better word to characterize the period of the canon is "protection." This is the period when a wall was built around the village that had already been there for years; but now, both to protect the original, inspired inhabitants and to keep out uninspired newcomers, the protection of the canonical wall is erected to assure safety and preservation. Authority was not gained by including a book in the sacred list but it appeared in the list of Scripture because its authority had already been acknowledged throughout the earlier periods of writing and collecting.<sup>7</sup>

The period of collection is not so clearly marked off as that of the canon. Different parts of the New Testament belonged to different collections, some made earlier than others. The Diatessaron is one example of the Gospel collection that must have been brought together years earlier than the Diatessaron's publication c. 150; for Tatian used for his consecutive narrative these four canonical Gospels, no more and no less. Also the epistles of Paul must have been collected as soon or sooner than the Gospels as witnessed by early references and usage. Earlier than the work of Tatian is the collection of books used as Scripture by Marcion.<sup>8</sup> This included Luke and ten epistles of Paul, known as the Gospel and Apostle. Similar designation had already been used by Ignatius.<sup>9</sup> Another striking reference comes from the conglomerate Jewish-Christian writing, *The Testaments of the XII Patriarchs* (Benj. 11)<sup>10</sup> where it is told under cover of an *ex post facto* prophecy that the "work and word" of Paul (Warfield notes this is confessedly the book of Acts and Paul's Epistles),<sup>11</sup> "shall be written in the Holy Books" i.e., as is generally accepted, made a part of the existent Bible.<sup>12</sup> Another interesting reference is found in the Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs (c. 180) where the contents of the satchel of the martyr Speratus are described as "books and epistles of Paul a just man."<sup>13</sup> The "books" may or may not refer to the Gospels and Acts but the second designation is explicitly the epistles of Paul. Just as the old Scriptures were the "law and the prophets"

7. See F. F. Bruce, *op. cit.*, pp. 94, 95. See also B. B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible* (reprint 1948), pp. 411-16. Warfield's emphasis in his study of the canon could be characterized by the word, "extension," for he focuses on the new Scripture as a continuance or extension of the old.

8. G. Bardy, "Marcion," *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, Supplement, 5, fasc. 27 (1954) 862-77; A. Harnack, *Marcion* (1921); J. Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament* (1942).

Contemporary also to Marcion's time is the Gnostic *Gospel of Truth* which van Unnik maintains gives evidence of a New Testament canon similar to our own already in existence. See *The Jung Codex*, F. L. Cross, ed. (1955), pp. 81-129.

9. *Ad Philad.* 5. See B. B. Warfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 413, 414.

10. "Until the consummation of the age shall he be in the synagogues of the Gentiles, and among their rulers, as a strain of music in the mouth of all. And he shall be inscribed in the holy books, both his work and his word, and he shall be a chosen one of God for ever."

11. Warfield, *loc. cit.*

12. See also II Clement 14 ("the books and the Apostles").

13. See Blackman, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

so the new were the Gospel and the apostles,<sup>14</sup> but it is impossible to say how early these collections were made.<sup>15</sup>

As far back as our extracanonical, datable Christian literature goes, Christians were using the epistles of Paul. It is noteworthy that when Clement of Rome wrote to the Corinthians, he did not neglect to mention Paul's epistle to them (I Clement 47.1), when Ignatius wrote to the Ephesians, he referred to the epistles of Paul (Ephesians 12:2), and when Polycarp wrote to the Philippians he too draws attention to the epistles of Paul (Philip. 11.3). In fact every time an Apostolic Father wrote to a place which had received an epistle of Paul, they made reference to the apostle and his letters.<sup>16</sup> In the writings of Polycarp, one finds evidence of all of the epistles of Paul except I Thessalonians, Titus and Philemon.<sup>17</sup> The use of Paul's epistles in the Apostolic Fathers leads one to a conviction that the collection of his epistles must have been made prior to their period.<sup>18</sup> But this brings one into the very period of the writing of the New Testament books for the collecting of Paul's epistles. The question remains, how early in the first century was the collection made?

In II Peter 3:15, 16 direct reference is made to "all of Paul's epistles." And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

Since this passage not only indicates that Paul's epistles have been collected but that they are also considered as Scripture, this notice is particularly troublesome to those who would insist that these books must wait for the period of the canon for the church to select them. But in order to surmount this testimony the Liberal must deny the authorship of Peter to this second epistle and relegate it to the second century to fit

14. Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 6.11.88; Tertullian, *De Praes. Haer.* 36. See B. B. Warfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 413, 14.

15. Streeter traces four stages of the Roman *Corpus Paulinum* beginning with I Clement, A.D. 96, *The Four Gospels* (1951), p. 526f. A gradual process over a period of years is advocated by Harrison, *Polycarp's Two Epistles to the Philippians* (1936), pp. 236ff. K. Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of Paul* (1927), pp. 256ff.

16. Furthermore they speak of Paul in a more revered way than his contemporary and equal, Peter speaks of him ("our beloved brother"); "the blessed and glorious Paul" (Polycarp, *ad Philad.* 3); "the blessed Paul" (I Clement, 47.1; Polycarp, *ad Philad.* 11); "the sanctified Paul...right blessed" (Ignatius, *ad Eph.* 12.2).

17. A. Wikenhauser, *New Testament Introduction* (1963), p. 30.

18. See *The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* (1906).

preconceived notions of naturalistic development in the church and its writings.<sup>19</sup>

One might enquire, however, what if this epistle is taken to be just what it purports to be, an epistle by Peter,<sup>20</sup> and just as the church has judged it to be from the beginning through nineteen centuries,<sup>21</sup> and see what this would suggest of the earliest collection of Paul's epistles?<sup>22</sup>

At the outset this testimony of the collection of Paul's epistles before the end of Peter's life (c.68) would rule out the frequently expressed notion that the first collection was made in the nineties. This is a common date given both by Goodspeed and his followers in America<sup>23</sup> and by other on the continent<sup>24</sup> although they do not follow Goodspeed's theory of what happened. According to Goodspeed's hypothesis a man of Colossae supposedly read the newly published book of Acts and having visited the places named in Acts found that Paul had written to some of them and having collected these epistles, he wrote a cover epistle as if by Paul and it came to be known as Ephesians.<sup>25</sup> Even if there were no notice in II Peter to the contrary, it would be incredible to maintain that

19. E.g., A. E. Barnett insists (*The Second Epistle of Peter, Interpreter's Bible* [1957], p. 164) that such a reference to Paul's letters (II Peter 3:15, 16) is "an anachronism which forms an indubitable water-mark of the second century." On the other hand, E. M. B. Green maintains: "...the only real difficulty lies in one apostle's regarding the letters of another as Scripture. In view, however, of the apostolic assertion that the same Holy Spirit who inspired the Old Testament writings was active in their own (I Cor. 2:13), and the claims of Paul to have the mind of Christ (I Cor. 2:16) and to lay down rules for all the churches (I Cor. 7:17) which are equated with the commandment of Christ (I Cor. 14:37) and rejection of which will bring rejection by God (I Cor. 14:38 RSV), this possibility cannot be excluded." J. D. Douglas, ed. *The New Bible Dictionary* (1962), p. 979.
20. "There can be no doubt that the author intends his readers to understand that he is the apostle Peter." D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction, Hebrews to Revelation* (1962), p. 143.
21. "Although the external evidence is not so strong and early as for other New Testament books, Guthrie can still say: "It would seem a fair conclusion to this survey of external evidence to submit that there is no evidence from any part of the early Church that this Epistle was ever rejected as spurious, in spite of the hesitancy which existed over its reception." *Op. cit.*, p. 142.
22. In support of the Petrine authorship of II Peter, see also T. Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II (1909), pp. 194ff.; C. Bigg, *St. Peter and St. Jude* (1902); E. I. Robson, *Studies in II Peter* (1915); E. M. B. Green, *II Peter Reconsidered* (1961).
23. See the theory and variations: E. S. Goodspeed, "The Place of Ephesians in the First Pauline Collection," *Anglican Theological Review*, 12 (1930), 189-212. *New Chapters in New Testament Study* (1937), chapters 1-3. *An Introduction to the New Testament* (1937) pp. 210-39. *The Meaning of Ephesians* (1933), pp. 82ff. *The Key to Ephesians* (1956), pp. vff. C. L. Mitton, *The Formation of the Pauline Corpus of Letters* (1955). A. E. Barnett, *Paul Becomes a Literary Influence* (1941). J. Knox, *Philemon Among the Letters of Paul* (1935).
24. Feine, Behm, Kummel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (1966<sup>14</sup>), p. 338. Also K. L. Carroll, "The Expansion of the Pauline Corpus," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 72 (1953), 230-37.
25. Goodspeed waxes so bold as to suggest that Onesimus is the author of Ephesians and the first collector of Paul's epistles. *Introduction to the New Testament* (1937), p. 239.

Christians would wait over thirty years before attempting to gather the writings of Paul.<sup>26</sup> To answer this objection Goodspeed proposes that Paul fell into disfavor in these thirty years and only at the gain of popularity was the collection made. Goodspeed's only attempt to justify this belief is to maintain a lack of use of Paul's epistles in the Christian literature of the period.<sup>27</sup> What Goodspeed fails to make clear is that there is *no* datable Christian literature from this period except the New Testament, and if the epistles of Paul are alluded to there, as they are in II Peter, then Goodspeed insists that work must be relegated to a later time than 90. Certainly the absence of reference to Paul's epistles in the book of Acts, whatever the explanation may be, cannot be attributed to a feeling of disfavor toward Paul in a book so dedicated to the work of this apostle.

That the Apostolic Fathers use the New Testament writers in a different way from the usual quotation of the Old Scriptures does not mean the authors of New Testament writings were in disfavor nor lower in authority. Those living so close to the apostolic age, e.g., as Irenaeus said of Clement "with the preaching of the apostles still ringing in his ears,"<sup>28</sup> did not wish to relinquish their contemporaneity with apostolic beginnings by quoting as ancient authority those who were contemporary or almost contemporary authority.<sup>29</sup>

The most common attempts to reconstruct the earliest collections of Paul, some striving to remain within the bounds of the II Peter reference to Paul's epistles and some ignoring these limits, have emphasized the role of the local churches in the work of collection.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps at

26. Harnack points out that references within the epistles themselves establish the contemporary recognition of Paul's writings: II Corinthians 10:10, Paul's opponents acknowledge his letters are 'weighty and powerful,' II Corinthians 3:1, 10:9 admits his skill in letter-writing, I Corinthians 7:17 involves communication with 'all the churches,' II Thessalonians 2:2; 3:17 evidently indicate false letters which would point up the high repute of Paul's genuine letters. *Die Briefsammlung* (1926), pp. 7, 8. Paul gave instruction that his epistle be read "to all the brethren" (I Thessalonians 5:27), and instruction for the exchange of epistles (Colossians 4:16).

27. "Before the publication of Luke-Acts nobody knew them (epistles of Paul); after the appearance of Luke-Acts (about A.D. 90) everybody knows them." Goodspeed, *Introduction to the New Testament* (1937), p. 211, Mitton adds the supposed argument that dislocations and interpolations in the extant Pauline Epistles show an early period of neglect for Pauline writings. His examples of alleged interpolations and disorder, however, are not established and his very principle of textual variation spelling neglect is inconclusive. Mitton, *op. cit.* pp. 25ff, cf. D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction, The Pauline Epistles* (1961), p. 261.

28. Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.* 3.3.3.

29. Furthermore an absence of quotations cannot be interpreted that these writings were not in existence, were not known, or were not collected. Guthrie warns against those theories which assume that non-quotation must indicate non-circulation. "If Clement, for example, cites few of Paul's Epistles it is precarious to assert he must have been ignorant of the rest."

30. See D. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 257ff.

Ephesus,<sup>31</sup> perhaps at Corinth,<sup>32</sup> the earliest full collection was made.<sup>33</sup>

It is possible, however, that the earliest collection is to be traced, not to the activity of the churches which received the epistles, but to the dispatching end of the epistles. Guthrie suggests that Timothy may have been responsible for putting together these inspired writings soon after Paul's death because he had access to the copies of these epistles that would have been kept by Paul.<sup>34</sup> But if this were the case, the reference in Peter would indicate a still earlier collection, for during the lifetime of Peter, and one would also then assume, during the lifetime of Paul, a collection had already been made.

Another name which suggests itself as a likely candidate for the earliest collector of Paul's epistles is Luke. Here was a personal companion of Paul, a skilled writer, and one anxious to present the "work and word" of Paul to the churches.

In antiquity to retain copies of letters dispatched to far places was customary. Because of the uncertainty of the postal system and because of the desirability to have a dependable record of what was originally written in case question should later be raised about the correspondence—both of these reasons fully justified the common practice of making copies of correspondence.<sup>35</sup> When Ignatius was passing through Asia Minor on his way to death in Rome, he wrote seven epistles. The Christians at Philippi wanted a collection of these letters and sent to Polycarp, requesting them. Polycarp complied with their request and sent a cover epistle under his own name to accompany them. In this transaction enough time had not elapsed for the particulars of Ignatius' death to have arrived.<sup>36</sup> It is highly unlikely that it was necessary to travel to each church to secure copies of their letters. In fact the amanuensis, Burrhus, who had accompanied Ignatius was from Ephesus<sup>37</sup> and was the logical one to provide copies of that which had been written along the way.

The role of the amanuensis in both supplying copies and sharing in collections is in evidence in the case of another famous letter writer,

31. B. H. Streeter, *The Primitive Church* (1929), p. 160, E. Goodspeed, *New Solutions of New Testament Problems* (1927), pp. 1ff.

32. A. Harnack, *Die Briefsammlung des Apostels Paulus* (1926), 1, 4, 88ff and 73, n. 11, 12. Wikenhauser, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

33. Schmithal's supposition that the earliest collection was at Corinth around 80 and included only seven of his epistles has only an arbitrary exclusion of Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon ("Zur Abfassung und ältesten Sammlung der paulinischen Hauptbriefe," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft*, 51 [1960], 225ff.

34. D. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-9.

35. R. L. Archer maintains that Paul kept copies or partial copies of all his letters. "The Epistolary Form in the New Testament," *Expository Times*, 63 (1951-52), 296ff.

36. J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*. Part II, Sec. II (1885), p. 933.

37. J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*. Part II, Sec. II (1889), p. 34. See Ignatius, *Philad.* 11.2: "I am writing thence to you by the hand of Burrhus, who was sent with me by the Ephesians and Smyrnaeans as a mark of honour." Also *Smyrn.* 12:1.

Cicero. The earliest collection of his epistles was made by Tiro, his chief secretary, either before Cicero's death or soon after.<sup>38</sup> Although it is not likely that such figures as Cicero or Seneca would have been the example to provide direct impetus leading to the collecting of Paul's letters,<sup>39</sup> nevertheless the known Roman practice of the role of the amanuensis in preserving copies and sharing in the task of collections may throw light upon the way the corpus of Paul's writings was first begun.

Paul had more than one amanuensis who might have aided in a collection, but there are additional considerations which point toward Luke. A relationship has long been noted between the book of Acts and the Pauline epistles. One looks to Acts in order to gain an understanding of the way the writing of these epistles fits into the life of Paul. But why consider this an accident? Why should this not be considered a deliberate motive in the selection of material covered by Luke in Acts?

Paul writes to the Romans that he has preached the gospel of Christ unto Illyricum; but one reads nothing in Acts about Illyricum. On second thought, Paul did not write an epistle to Illyricum; but Luke tells especially of those places where Paul *did* write: Galatia, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. This leaves only the Colossian epistle unaccounted for among the Pauline church epistles. Luke does not tell of Paul's association with Colossae; but it is highly doubtful that Paul worked personally in Colossae. Among the noteworthy purposes in writing Acts, perhaps the place of a cover work to introduce the epistles of Paul should be included.

Another possible motive in writing Acts has been associated with the pending trial of Paul in Rome.<sup>40</sup> What better preparation for a case than to be able to present to the magistrate a document such as Acts telling of the activity of Paul in his work as an apostle of the Lord. But to this might be added further valuable testimony, a collection of the very writings of Paul to these churches that are described in Acts. Then the writings available for the information of the court would include both the work and words of Paul, the Acts and his epistles.

Is there any indication that the book of Acts expected such a continuation? For years scholars have struggled with the question of a possible third volume to accompany the two volumes Luke-Acts.<sup>41</sup> The

38. For a treatment of epistolography, see A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies* (1901), 3-59; esp. on Cicero, p. 30. See also for bibliography, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (1949), pp. 497f, 190f; A. Wikenhauser, *op. cit.* pp. 346-51; Feine, Behm, Kummel, *op. cit.*, pp. 176ff.

39. So R. L. Archer maintains that Seneca with his insistence that a worthy collection of letters should set forth a philosophy was the impetus for the first collection of Paul's epistles. *Op. cit.* pp. 296ff.

40. H. J. Cadbury, "Roman Law and the Trial of Paul" in *The Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. 5, esp. p. 298; D. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 319f. Strongest resistance to this possibility has been raised by those advocating a late date for Acts (See Feine-Behm-Kummel, *op. cit.*, p. 114).

41. See *The Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. IV, p. 349. Also D. Guthrie, *op. cit.* p. 309.

opening Acts uses the word "*proton*" in referring to the Gospel narrative (Acts 1:1). This is invariably translated "former," but by strict classical grammar it should be rendered "first" (*proteron* would be "former").<sup>42</sup> If Luke referred to his Gospel account as the first volume instead of former, it would expect a third volume since he would be comparing the work with more than one other.<sup>43</sup> If the wording expects a third volume, what has happened to it? Numerous suggestions have been made: the author died, the work was suppressed, the work was lost or abandoned, or the intention was never begun in reality. Few have been satisfied with any of these answers. The position, however, that Luke collected the epistles of Paul and published them provides a solution for Luke's third volume. Luke both expected to publish a third volume, and he did, and it is extant today. The earliest collection of Paul's epistles may well be the third volume of Luke's work.

Another question that has puzzled many who study the contents of Acts is that nowhere in its pages does one find any mention of Paul's epistles. How could Luke omit at least a mention of the writing of these vital documents?<sup>44</sup> This too can be explained by Luke's awareness that he was going to publish Paul's epistles as a third volume. In the second volume, Acts, the absence of reference to the earthly life of Jesus is notable. Luke neither repeats nor adds to the material he has given in the first volume concerning the life of Christ except in the opening chapter where he links the close of the first volume to the opening of the second and in the recording of speeches. This was careful separation of material to the respective volumes. In the same way the epistles of Paul are not mentioned in the second because they are to occupy the third.

If Luke made the earliest publication of Paul's epistles, what was the extent of this collection? This would depend somewhat upon the time of publication. The abrupt ending of the book of Acts is best explained by the dating of its writing at the time of the last event recorded in Acts.<sup>45</sup> But if the third volume had already been assembled for use in the near future, this then would allow three or four years from Luke's possible collection to the time of Peter's statement (II Peter 3:15, 16) which alludes to "all of Paul's epistles." But if the collection were made this early, the Pastoral Epistles would not yet have been written. Only ten

42. W. M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen* (1898), pp. 27ff. Although the distinction between *proton* and *proteron* was weakening in the Hellenistic period, Luke was exacting in his use of the Greek.

43. The absence of any reference to Theophilus at the close of Acts is an additional note which might expect a third volume. It was customary to close the final volume with a mention of the person addressed as well as opening each individual volume with a reference to him. This was not a hard and fast rule, however. See *The Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. IV, p. 349.

44. See Guthrie, *op. cit.* pp. 260f n. 5. Whether ignorance, deliberate neglect or an interest in adventure, not theology, is offered as an explanation of the silence, none has satisfied the critics.

45. So Harnack finally concluded: *The Date of Acts* (1911), pp. 90-125. Also F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of the Acts* (1955), pp. 22ff; F. M. Blaiklock, *The Acts of the Apostles* (1959) support the early dating of Acts.



epistles of Paul had been issued by the time of his release from his first Roman imprisonment.<sup>46</sup> One might ask why Luke-Acts and ten epistles of Paul are not found circulating together if this is an early three volume work. In defense it might be noted that nowhere does one find Luke and Acts coupled together either alone or in collections. Yet there would have been an early time prior to their arrangement in other collections when they must have been together. It is noteworthy, however, that one does find Luke associated with the ten epistles of Paul in the Gospel-Apostolicon of Marcion.<sup>47</sup> This is not a case of Marcion's making the first collection of Paul's epistles, nor his cutting out the Pastorals from a full Corpus,<sup>48</sup> but perhaps his utilizing the earliest collection of Luke which lacked the Pastorals.<sup>49</sup> Marcion's omission of Acts from the trilogy is understandable, arising from his aversion to anything Jewish and because of Acts' division of material between Paul and Peter, between apostles to the Gentile and to the Jew.

The suggestion that Luke is the earliest collector of Paul's epistles and published them as a third volume has implications in many questions relating to special introduction as well as text and canon. For example, if Luke wrote Acts to provide a background for the destination of the epistles, the Galatian epistle is undoubtedly addressed to the churches of the Roman province which are described in Acts, the so-called South Galatian theory. As an example of textual implications, the assured conclusion that Marcion used the Western Text<sup>50</sup> introduces the possible relationship of the Western Text with the earliest editions of Luke's

46. On Paul's release, see D. Guthrie *op. cit.* p. 210-13.

47. The order of Marcion's arrangement for the ten epistles is not that common to later collections. The most frequently used explanation is the anti-Jewish prejudice that prompted his putting Galatians first. On the order, see T. Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons*, II, (1890-92), pp. 344ff. K. Lake, *Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* (1911), p. 356. I Corinthians heads the lists in the Muratorian Canon and in Tertullian. Mitton maintains that the original collection would probably have been issued in two rolls and that Ephesians and the two Corinthians epistles could have filled the first roll. C. H. Buck, "The Early Order of the Pauline Corpus," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 68 (1949), pp. 351-357, objects to the Goodspeed-Knox hypothesis for the order of the Epistles using Ephesians first as cover epistle. No such listing is extant. Jack Finegan insists that stichometry explains the order in each case and that the variant orders result from differing methods of counting stichoi. *Harvard Theological Review* 45 (1956) 85-103.

48. There are those who give undue place to Marcion in the initial collection of Paul's epistles. See F. C. Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (1911), pp. 318f. Cf. K. and S. Lake, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (1938), p. 96. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction: The Pauline Epistles* (1961), p. 255.

49. Perhaps the supposed omission of the Pastorals from the Chester Beatty Codex is related to another use of Luke's early collection of Paul's epistle before the Pastorals were written.

50. "Harnack has established beyond the possibility of doubt that the text Marcion used was a Western text. . . The main result of Harnack's study of this problem is to have proved that the great majority of readings which were formerly held to be Marcionite corruptions are not Marcionite at all, but simply come from the Western text as Marcion found it." E. C. Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence* (1948), pp. 50, 51.

trilogy: Luke-Acts-Epistles.<sup>51</sup> In the study of the making of the New Testament, in fields of canon, inspiration, and authority, the presence of the figure, Luke, inspired historian, moved by the Holy Spirit, might then be counted not only as the author of over one fourth of the New Testament writing, but important in the collecting of over another fourth of the New Testament. The traditional role of the scribe, Ezra, in the making of the Old Testament, both as an author of Scripture and significant to the work of collecting Scripture would be paralleled in the New Testament by the inspired author and amanuensis, Luke.<sup>52</sup>

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51. One should consider the possibility that Luke not only made the earliest collection of Paul's ten epistles but later, perhaps after the death of Paul, revised his collection to include the Pastorals. This may have been the occasion for a revision of Acts as well.  
"Since the latter part of the eighteenth century it has more than once been suggested that we have for Acts two editions, both alike from the original author of the book. This view was again urged. . . by Blass, beginning in 1894, and was adopted by Zahn. . ." J. H. Ropes, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Foakes Jackson, Lake eds., vol. III, p. ccxxvii. Ropes, however, discounts the theory. See D. Guthrie, *op. cit.* p. 344f. See also C. S. C. Williams, *Alterations to the Text of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (1951), pp. 54-82; G. Zuntz, *The Text of the Pauline Epistles* (1953).
52. That tradition has not preserved the name of Luke in association with the earliest collection of Paul's epistles should not be surprising since so little has been retained concerning the particular circumstances under which the epistles were even written, let alone collected. Even the places of writing remain doubtful if they cannot be inferred from the text. "It would also seem that the Christians of the second and later centuries knew no more about it than we do, for the short prefaces to the Epistles found in some Greek and Latin manuscripts are merely deductions from the context." Lake, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (1938), p. 100. The very fact that the circumstances of the initial collection of Paul's epistles remain so obscure is another indication of its very early origin.

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