

The Eyes of the Blind Shall See: The Braille Bible  
By Rebecca Rizotti

On a table in the Dunham Bible Museum sits a book, open to public eye, empty of ink but filled with raised dots. To an uninformed passerby, it may appear a mere curiosity, yet there is a story of incredible suffering, perseverance, and patience behind that book – not only of one, but of many. This book of dots represents the suffering and perseverance of two people in particular: Louis Braille and Helen Keller. I and illuminate lives in the midst of great difficulty.

This book would not exist without the ingenuity and endurance of Louis Braille (1809-1852) of Coupvray, France. At three years old, he stabbed himself in the eye with one of his -making tools, and within months, an infection spread to the other eye, leaving him completely blind. In en Tf1 0 0 1 72.024 30rTf1 0 0 1 151.58 336.8Coupvray, France.



Almost sixty years after the Braille alphabet was first developed, Helen Keller lost her sight and hearing at nineteen months to an illness now believed to be scarlet fever (Keller, *Help*,

4). She understood most of what

Helen used a raised-letter Bible for many years before one in Braille became available to her. The first Braille Bible was published in 1924 by Robert Atkinson, through the Braille Institute of America (founded in 1919). In 1931, the American Bible Society gave Helen a copy of their first Braille version of the Bible. -

published by the Braille Bible Foundation. While the large size prohibits an entire Bible being published in one volume, the holdings of the Dunham Museum include I and II Chronicles, Ezra, Job, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Epistles of John. A notice

Louis Braille and Helen Keller surmounted great difficulties for the benefit of others, persevering in times of great trial. The Braille Bible, which Louis made possible and Helen found comfort in, gives new meaning to the verse, For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, *not an iota, not a dot,* (Matt. 5:18, emphasis added).

## Works Cited

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Severance, Diana. Email correspondence to Rebecca Rizzotti. March 13, 2021.