

PREFACE

To attempt to summarise the contribution of Professor Bruce Manning Metzger to the study of the New Testament would be an impossible task. Without doubt he is one of the foremost New Testament text critics whose contribution to this field of study is immeasurable. But, this contribution is not restricted to this field of study alone; it extends to almost every aspect of the New Testament. This fact can be seen very clearly from his bibliography and curriculum vitae, initially printed in the *Festschrift* edited by *Eldon Jay Epp* and *Gordon D. Fee*, which appeared in 1981 at the Clarendon Press, and is updated in this present volume.

For us it is a great privilege and honour to have Professor Metzger as the guest of various South African universities. We felt that the most fitting way to express our gratitude and pleasure towards such an eminent scholar for visiting various universities in South Africa would be by means of a *Festschrift* in his honour, containing essays by some of the leading New Testament scholars in South Africa.

The essays in this present volume cover a wide range of New Testament topics and are not restricted to one area of the study of the New Testament. This may leave the impression that the *Festschrift* lacks homogeneity. However, in not restricting the topics of these essays, a much better view could be given of the present state of New Testament scholarship in South Africa. At the same time one can note the basic issues which are being discussed and studied at the various centres where the New Testament forms an aspect of study in this country.

By presenting this *Festschrift* to Professor Metzger, we express, firstly, our gratitude to him for visiting South Africa, and, secondly that our best wishes accompany him and his wife on their tour of South Africa. Through this personal encounter it is hoped that all will be greatly enriched in their scholarship and investigation of the New Testament. May this volume constantly remind him of the time spent in South Africa.

The editors' responsibilities were restricted to the *technical aspects* of the essays, and the authors, therefore, take total responsibility for the contents. The editors express their gratitude to Dr. Keith Elliott for his valuable suggestions, Mrs. Nardine Bothma for the typing of the manuscript and Mr. Jan Botha for his help in the proofreading of the manuscript.

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