Waw Consecutive with the Imperfect Used as a Pluperfect?

Adams, John. Sermons in Syntax or Studies in the Hebrew Text. Edinburg, 1908.
pp. 180-182

✓ Isa. xxxix.1 is scarcely a case in point. The R. V. renders, not as a plu-
perfect, had heard, but simply as a fresh circumstance suggested to the mind of
the prophet, and rightly introduced at this point by the help of vav consecutive
with the imperfect - "For he heard that he had been sick." Nevertheless, the
actual report of Hezekiah's sickness must have been prior to the sending of the
Babylonian embassage; and since the pluperfect sense is found in the parallel
passage in 2 Kings xx.12, the suggestion made by Delitzsch and others is probably
to be accepted as correct that וישמע is a copyist's error for כי שמע , "for
he had heard." Cf. 1 Sam. ii.21, where we have a similar confounding of the two
letters כ and) . The accepted reading, כי פקד , yields no intelligible sense,
and must be corrected into ויפקד with the LXX. Emended in this way, Isa. xxxix.1
is not to be regarded as a case of vav consecutive at all.

And yet on other grounds it is of the highest possible interest to the Hebrew
student. It has broached the question how far the imperfect with strong vav can convey
the meaning of a Pluperfect?   There is, of course, no doubt that the formula may
denote the continuation of a pluperfect, as Gen. xxvi.18, xxxi.34, xxxix.13, etc.
But can it introduce it? Can it, instead of conducting us forward to a succeeding
act or detail, lead us back to one which is chronologically anterior? Driver, in
his exhaustive note, has gone over all the passages, and concluded, like Böttcher, in
the negative - - quoting Dr. Pusey in the "Minor Prophets," who remarks on Jonah iv.5,
"Some render, contrary to grammar, 'and Jonah had gone.'" Strange to say, the Jewish
grammarians were unanimously in favour of this construction; and the A.V., in follow-
ing their example, has inserted the reading "had" in a great variety of passages.
But in the R. V. every instance has been corrected or emended, with the exception of
1 Kings xiii.12, Isa. xxxviii.21, 22, Zech. vii.2, Neh. ii.9; and even in these in-
stances the student will experience little difficulty in finding another and equally