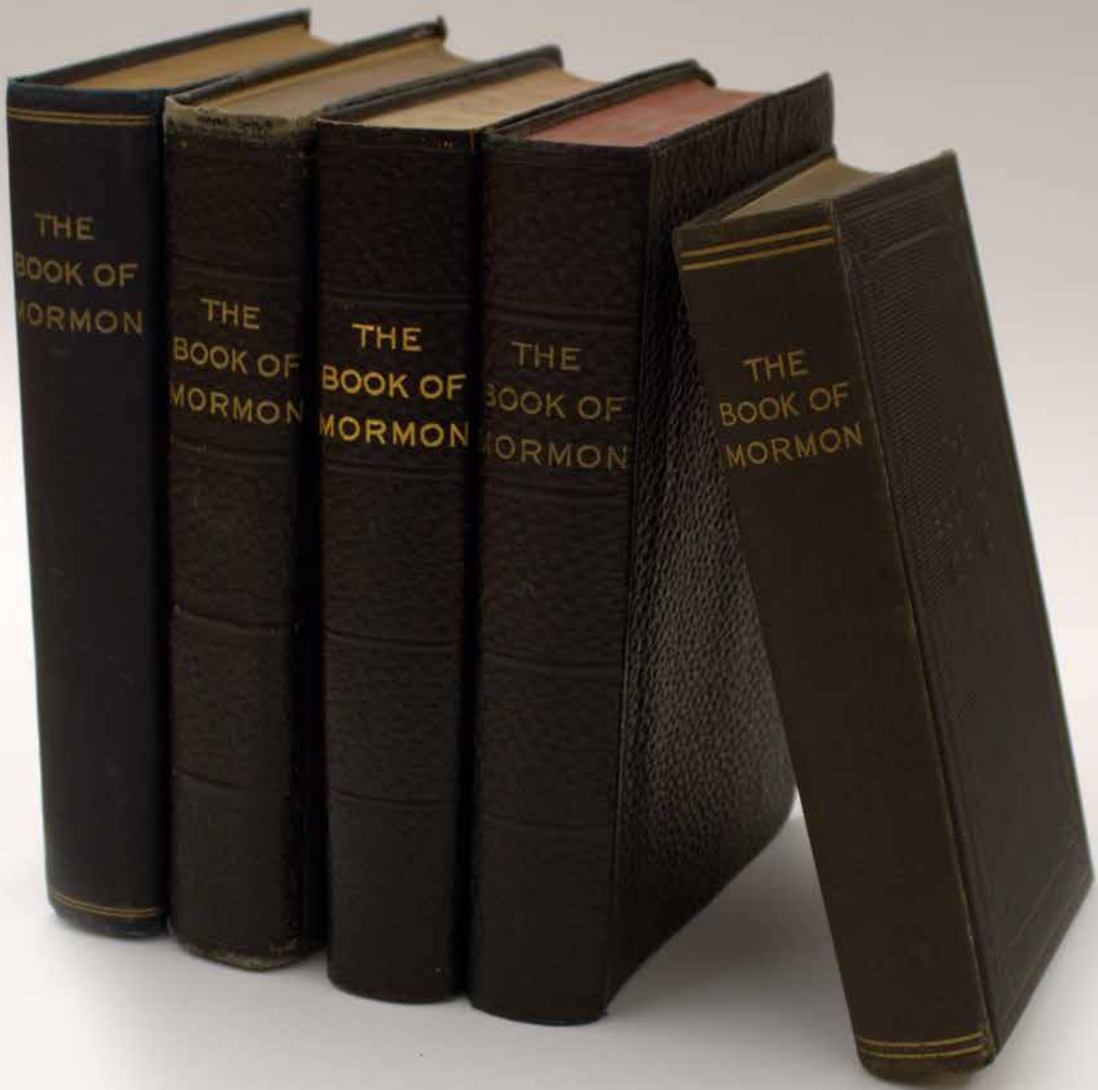


W. W. Phelps Society & GREG KOFFORD BOOKS



The
1920 EDITION *of the*
BOOK OF MORMON

*a centennial adventure
in Latter-day Saint book history*

Richard L. Saunders

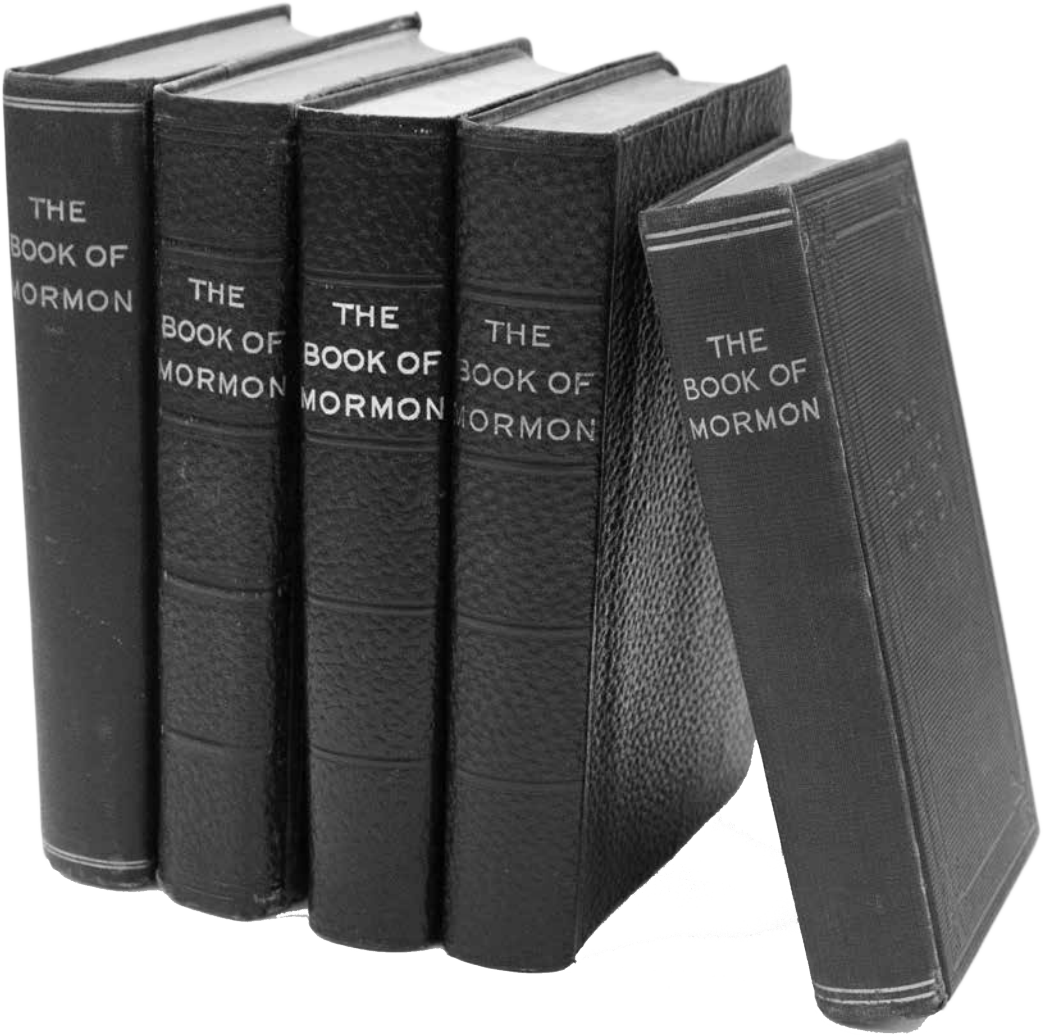
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a W. W. Phelps Society publication

GREG KOFFORD BOOKS
SALT LAKE CITY, 2021



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And Carrie, of course. Always Carrie.

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Introduction

MEMBERS OF THE Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints tend to see the Book of Mormon through the lens of personal use, as a single textual and scriptural monolith—*the* Book of Mormon. That is somewhat natural, since we tend to have at hand and in-use, only the copy or version in our language needed to study it for inspiration. In the process, the point tends to get overlooked that while we may accept the text as inspired, the physical embodiment of that text—the *Book* of Mormon—is a mortal reality. The text can be communicated in different formats and are subject to challenges similar to what we fellow mortals face: rough handling and neglect can result in marred print, torn and dog-eared pages, and broken bindings. The Book of Mormon, while it has a “spirit,” also has a mortal “body” (or rather, *bodies*) existing in space and time. As such, it has a history—and because it comes to us in the form of a book, it also has a book history. Book history is rendered in terms of decisions and outcomes and picky details embodied in print. This little study is a personal confection of mine: a history of one English-language edition of the Book of Mormon.

My first book on Latter-day Saint print culture opened by observing that print is the medium through which Western cultures organize and perpetuate themselves.¹ It is no great stretch to appreciate that without a Book of Mormon there would likely not be much of a Mormonism. Latter Day Saints are with fellow Christians, Jews, and Muslims, *Ahl al-Kitāb*—a “people of the book” or “a people of scripture.” The Book of Mormon is the centerpiece of the Restoration not only doctrinally, but socially as well, because it has given us a book around which to *be* a people. Both the Latter Day Saint tradition and Latter-day Saints are very much people of the book: missionary tracts, doctrinal treatises, personal narrative in terms of diaries and letters, personal history in the form of both biography and autobiography, institutional history in records of all sorts, and now manuals and study guides have all joined scripture as the documentary basis and reflection of participation in this belief structure.

Let me point to the obvious: the mundane realities of writing, printing, and books serve an essential social function. Books and written records exist in the world in ways that doctrine and testimony do not. Study in both is inherently subjective, and historians risk reading present sensibilities onto past realities. Book history shares similar interpretive problems, but at least offers a fundamental materiality to inform the scholar as well. We may argue that people were or were not influenced by a particular book in their thinking, but if that book is reprinted often, we then have a basis to assert that no matter how the book may have been used, it was or was not in demand. Print, decoration, printing, typography, bookselling, frequency of editions, and distribution then become a barometer

1. *Printing in Deseret: Mormons, Politics, Economy, and Utah's Incunabula, 1849–1851* (Univ. of Utah Press, 2001), ix.

of the adoption of ideas and commerce within a culture—imperfect, perhaps, but harder to gainsay than focusing solely on texts.

Social history helps us understand believers and their actions. Intellectual history circumscribes ideas. Literary history provides windows into texts. Book history sits quietly to one side, helping us understand the mechanics of a text's transmission over time and space, its popularity, how it is disseminated, and what it meant to the people who handled and read it. Book history, therefore, may be informed by the minutia that seems to make up bibliography, print culture, and book collecting, but it is a cousin in the family, essentially a materially informed branch of intellectual, literary, and social history.

I've introduced the idea of a book having both a spirit and body. To put that idea into a more abstract, book history sense, scripture (like any book) is composed of two elements: a *text*, being the ideative or conceptual book, and a *format*, or physical rendering of the text. The texts tend to change over time as corrections are made (every text needs them), versification is added or changed, reference notes appear and disappear, and explanatory material is added or deleted. The nature of the text at any given time is part of the book's history. The Book of Mormon is one of the most widely printed and reprinted books in human history, ranked alongside the countless editions of other scriptures such as the Koran, Bible, Bhagavad Gita, and Analects of Confucius. Hundreds of thousands of copies of the Book of Mormon circulate annually in over a hundred languages, and millions of copies have been produced since the book's initial publication in 1830. Scripture tends to be textually stable, so that changes to the text are afforded attention that a straightforward text rarely attracts. Designation as scripture confers on a book a host of cultural expectations; whether one accepts and believes the book's message or dismisses the book's origin is irrelevant. Part of book history traces changes in the text, but that is only one of the paired elements of *the Book of Mormon* and cannot meaningfully be studied in isolation except as literary history. Texts may be studied because they must be reduced to a transmissible form. Oral scriptures exist among some cultures, but in general, text must be rendered and exist in a physical, transmissible form to be scripture. Physical formats are, themselves, strictly mortal creations. Because no single edition of a text is ever reproduced in numbers sufficient to meet demands for it over time, the physical forms of scripture—the layout, type, typesetting, printing technology, paper used, sewing or binding structure, covers or casing, and decoration—occupy specific places within time and therefore also have a history. The scriptural text is rendered in print, which makes it both a technological and an historical document.

The Book of Mormon in its various early forms has long attracted attention among modern LDS book collectors. However, other than “firsts,” books and book production prior to the twentieth century provide variation and history that, as a rule, is much more interesting to students of book history. Cross into the twentieth century and one's interest becomes more of a study of reading or of social development. The story involving the Book of Mormon has been no exception. Much attention is paid to variation within the initial edition, and to the production and distribution of early translations. At some point as one approaches the present, the interest and resulting scholarship flattens out, and even scripture becomes just an old book. For a long time, the 1920 American English-language edition of the Book of Mormon has been just an old book. With its centennial now celebrated, the edition begins to be of an age that people can talk about the work with renewed

interest. Unfortunately, the LDS book history that provides high spots attracting collectors' attention has largely ignored this edition. What is generally understood about the book is typically badly misunderstood. At this point in human history, anyone with an Ebay or Amazon account can hock books, and many do so without any idea of what exactly it is they are converting into cash flow. The study you hold, this personal confection of Latter-day Saint book history, had its origin in the frustration experienced as I sifted through abysmally poor online descriptions looking for suitable volumes for my own book collection. You, therefore, profit from my fit of admittedly self-righteous bibliographic pique.

To understand the 1920 American English-language edition of the Book of Mormon, one must understand the place the volume occupies. *Place* in this context is not geography and not quite biography, though it is closer to the latter. The context of *place* in this sense is more akin to bookish genealogy, the context of Latter-day Saint administrative history, and the Church's book history of the twentieth century. At the time of its production, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was still largely an American church of the intermountain West. Even though this edition was produced by the leading quorum of the Church under the direction of the First Presidency, the volume is quite correctly identified as an American edition of the book. This particular edition does not seem to have been adopted until much later by the rest of the Church's English-speaking membership, which included Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand; I have not yet figured out whether the Latter-day Saint population in Canada were given an opportunity for adoption or not. Irrespective of its distribution, the book's production was an important step in the consolidation of church publication and its modernizing centralization.

This study is divided into three parts. The first part is a straightforward history of the edition's editing, production, and manufacturing processes. It examines key points in the re-print history of the book, following important factors in the subsequent impressions of the work across nearly thirty years of re-impressions, corrections, transfers, and one new format. The narrative crowded into chapters one through four together leave Part II to catalogue the bibliographic minutia that is the beating heart of analytic book history and which provides entertainment for true-blooded bibliophiles. The details contained in the production and manufacturing contracts and coupled to the typographical evidence explained in Part III, together resolve once and for all the question of what constitutes the 1920 edition and what does not. Part III provides the hard evidence to separate any (re)printing of the 1920 edition from the output of a resetting that occurred after World War II. That chapter explains the differences between the two editions in detail, hopefully drawing an irrevocably bright, hard bibliographical line between the 1920 edition and the intentionally transparent new edition of the scripture produced and published without public notice in 1948.

I remind readers that while this history is *an* explanation or accounting for known facts, it is not *the* explanation. Too much is inferred, conjectured, or simply remains unknown for this confectionary snippet of Latter-day Saint book history to be the whole story of anything. Hopefully, some key documentary sources will eventually become available. Whether or not they actually ever do, the story will stretch into different shapes as others factor its evidence and conclusions into their work.

So, this is it for now. Sit back, and we'll begin the tale with some background on the book and its text.

PART I
AN EDITION'S HISTORY

THE
BOOK OF MORMON:

AN ACCOUNT WRITTEN BY THE HAND OF MOR-
MON, UPON PLATES TAKEN FROM
THE PLATES OF NEPHI.

Wherefore it is an abridgment of the Record of the People of Nephi; and also of the Lamanites; written to the Lamanites, which are a remnant of the House of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile; written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of Prophecy and of Revelation. Written, and sealed up, and hid up unto the LORD, that they might not be destroyed; to come forth by the gift and power of God, unto the interpretation thereof; sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the LORD, to come forth in due time by the way of Gentile; the interpretation thereof by the gift of God; an abridgment taken from the Book of Ether.

Also, which is a Record of the People of Jared, which were scattered at the time the LORD confounded the language of the people when they were building a tower to get to Heaven; which is to shew unto the remnant of the House of Israel how great things the LORD hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the LORD, that they are not cast off forever; and also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL God, manifesting Himself unto all nations. And now if there be fault, it be the mistake of men; wherefore condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment seat of CHRIST.

BY JOSEPH SMITH, JUNIOR,
AUTHOR AND PROPRIETOR.

PALMYRA:
PRINTED BY E. B. GRANDIN, FOR THE AUTHOR.

1830.

Title page to the initial impression of the Book of Mormon, handset character by character through over 500 pages of straight text.

Anticipation

A Context for the Edition

LIKE ANY DEVELOPMENT in the broad book history of a single historical title, the 1920 American edition of the Book of Mormon was both a culmination and a beginning. Even as we clip its story out of time as a bibliographic curiosity, we do well to remember that this edition fits in the middle of many things and at the beginning or end of many others. Publication of the scriptures by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the early twentieth century was one facet of the Church's structural change out of nineteenth-century practices and towards the administrative modernization described by Tom Alexander.¹

If we look at the history of books and publishing, not necessary for their own sake (though it is, I admit, a bit of fun) but as windows into the practices and necessities of a time and place, then together this story within the Church's book history helps us understand the transition of the Church as a functional human organization. The pioneer period was closing, and a new modern age (and its demands) was beginning to dawn. The book's production is a discrete event within time and place; because that production falls in the midst of the larger sweep of Latter-day Saint book history, understanding the nature of early twentieth-century publishing and bookselling among the Mormons is helpful.

Textual and Contextual Origins

The early history of the Book of Mormon has been related many times by other writers, but context is useful to have on hand as this work approaches a later and little-studied facet of its book history. The *editio princeps* Book of Mormon was published to the world in English by a small-town printer in upstate New York. It was a long book, as books go, nearly six hundred pages of uninterrupted text. The original text had no consistent divisions. Most chapters, paragraph breaks, and virtually all punctuation were supplied by typesetter John Gilbert, not by Joseph Smith—the named “Author and Proprietor”—nor by his amanuenses or copyist.² All versification was the work of later generations.³ At the time, a typical press-run amounted to a few hundred copies of a work. Many titles were printed in much smaller numbers. A very large press run of a book might stretch to a thousand copies, and virtually no book (except Bibles, of course) appeared in more than two

1. Thomas J. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930*, 3/e (Greg Kofford Books, 2012).

2. *Revelations and Translations* v.3 pt.1–2, Joseph Smith Papers, eds. Royal Skousen and Robin Scott Jensen (Church Historian's Press, 2015) provides a facsimile and transcription of the printer's manuscript of the Book of Mormon showing the addition of initial chapter and paragraph breaks inserted in the manuscript to direct typesetting.

3. Richard E. Turley Jr. and William W. Slaughter, *How We Got the Book of Mormon* (Deseret Book, 2011), 81–91.

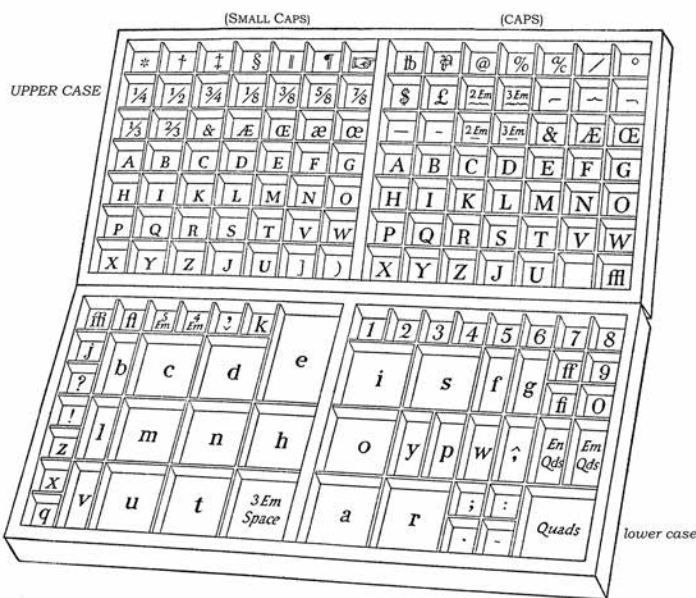


Figure 1.1 A Hamilton double book-and-news case for a single type font, ca.1906. The cases used by Grandin would have been laid differently, but not by much.

thousand copies, yet the first edition of this curious volume amounted to an astronomical five thousand copies. It was such a large undertaking for the printer that he invested in an entirely new news-and-book font of foundry type to ensure enough type was on hand to print the work. The purchase would have involved hundreds of thousands of individual letters, weighing between three-quarters and a full ton of type, cast by hand letter by letter and space by space in a compound of lead, tin, and antimony.

A printed page of straight text is composed of hundreds of letters, punctuation marks, and spaces. Using foundry type, each one was a separate piece or *sort*.⁴ Word spaces and *quads* (wider spaces in several sizes) were not as tall as type. Inserting a lead space created a blank between letters. Whether space or character, the individual lead pieces—each tiny squared stick topped with a reversed letter or punctuation mark (or nothing, if a space)—were picked individually by hand from the case and set in place in a composing stick set to the width of the text line on the page. Type is placed in a stick upside down but still read left to right, so it is possible for a skilled typesetter to read type backwards and upside down, reading “down” a page of type from bottom to top. When the stick was full, the lines were moved to a long tray—a *galley*—for temporary storage. Once the galley was full, the type was inked, a piece of paper was laid over it and a proof pulled, and the proof read against the manuscript and the type corrected. Most typesetting errors tended to be caught and corrected at the proof stage. Inevitably, a few errors escaped to be noticed as the sheets were in press; often, these were fixed as “press corrections” in the midst of printing, but not

4. The frustration of finding one's self short of letters while typesetting provides the origin of the term of feeling *out of sorts*. Really.

all were corrected. Some typographical errors slipped notice to greet readers when bound volumes were delivered in March and April of 1830.

Once in print, the Book of Mormon text was not static. Joseph Smith himself revised the text slightly twice, making clarifying word-choice changes. A new edition of the book was published in Ohio seven years after its initial release. In 1840, he revised it further. In 1841, a copy of the second edition was used as a text from which the first British edition was executed. This detail is important: it means that the British edition lacked Smith's changes made for the 1840 edition. The British edition became essentially the textual basis for all later volumes until 1981. Once the Latter-day Saints moved westward, the Church lacked the capacity for large-scale book publication and ceased publishing the book in the United States for over thirty years. It was simply cheaper to import British printings; most of the copies in Utah came with individual emigrant converts, whether English or Scandinavian.⁵ The first edition of the scripture published in Utah, the 1871 Salt Lake City edition, imposed no changes at all to the basal text from the 1852 reprinting.

For its first five decades, the Book of Mormon was published as straight text. The lack of cross-references stood in the way of its being an effective scriptural or study text comparable to the Bible. Apostle Orson Pratt re-divided the Book of Mormon's chapter structure and divided the text into verses for the 1879 edition published in Liverpool, England. By doing so, Pratt and the Latter-day Saints chose not to follow the numbered-paragraph structure first imposed on the book by Franklin D. Richards in 1852 or the first versification created by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1867. The editions produced by the Restoration denominations thus have no relation to each other, and scriptural references are not useful outside their specific volumes.⁶

The Church as Printer and Binder

The Mormons' church printing in Utah of the 1910s was a successor within the state's printing history. In 1849, two years later after its first settlement, a small handpress was acquired from Boston and dragged overland specifically to produce a newspaper.⁷ The first reasonably modern printing press brought to Utah in 1864 was a used Bullock sheet-fed press, formally (if not absolutely) ending Utah's handpress period.

Completion of the transcontinental railroad line in 1869 connected the eastern and western American seaboard and points along the route. The railroad ended the Mormons'

5. Peter Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church*, 3v. (BYU Religious Studies Center, 1997–2012), v.1 entries 1, 35, 83, 98. For a textual comparison of the first three editions see *The Parallel Book of Mormon: The 1830, 1837, and 1840 Editions*, ed. Curt Bench (Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2008). The subsequent British editions through 1857 are considered in Crawley's *Bibliography* v.2 entries 415, 688, and v.3 entries 876, 928. *A Mormon Bibliography, 1830–1930*, 2/e, ed. Chad J. Flake and Larry Draper (Religious Studies Center, 2004) lists British editions after 1857 under numbers 606, 615, 617, 621, 623, 626, 630, 633, 639, 654, 670, 689. To the English-language editions should be added Danish, Swedish, Welsh, and German editions of the time.

6. This summary book history is drawn from the single broad resource, Turley and Slaughter, *How We Got the Book of Mormon* (2011).

7. Richard L. Saunders, *Printing in Deseret: Mormons, Politics, Economy, and Utah's Incunabula, 1849–1851* (Univ. of Utah Press, 2001).

self-imposed geographic isolation and reconnected them directly with eastern manufacturing. Heavy printing equipment could be acquired for nearly any town in Utah simply for the asking. Both book production and newspaper publication exploded.⁸ In terms of book history, the railroad brought to the Intermountain West a supply line that could (and did) deliver machinery too heavy or delicate for ox-drawn freight wagons, including modern printing and binding equipment, but also more books. It is somewhat ironic that as it became easier and cheaper for the saints to produce their scriptures locally, the railroad provided access to Eastern printers and book houses, so there was also less reason for them to do so. At the same time, the British Mission continued commissioning its own printing on behalf of the saints and the missionary effort in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, creating what amounts to an independent publishing program and therefore a separate book history and print culture.⁹

Apostle and experienced printer George Q. Cannon organized a print shop independent of the Deseret News in 1879. Cannon's publishing concern was technically a private business, printing material of use to the Deseret Sunday School Union, but its product line and the publisher's status as a long-time member of the First Presidency made the firm a quasi-official Church entity. Geo. Q. Cannon & Sons divided at its sale in 1900. The Deseret Sunday School Union subsumed *The Juvenile Instructor* periodical; book publishing and selling functions went to the Deseret News Company, forming the basis of the Deseret News Press. The succeeding company was not particularly profitable. Throughout its existence, the concern was sustained by the Church's good will and occasional infusions of cash. For example, in 1885 manager Thomas E. Taylor wrote his father, John Taylor, about compensation for John Nicholson. Discussions had settled on him an annual salary of \$1,800 but, wrote Taylor, "We are still owing Smith, Winchester & Co., one thousand dollars . . . in three equal payments. We will not be able to meet this from our in-come."¹⁰ The sale and division of Geo. Q. Cannon & Sons left fewer competing publishing concerns in the Salt Lake City market, each appealing to the small market of Latter-day Saint books and reading, but still a competition.

At the turn of the twentieth century, book printing in Utah could still operate only on a relatively small scale. The consolidated publishing concern did not acquire a Linotype machine until 1901, when most other firms already relied heavily on mechanization.¹¹ The Deseret News Company operated a book department, but by the 1910s a major problem facing the Latter-day Saints was binding large press-runs. Nearly any local printshop had

8. J. Cecil Alter, *Early Utah Journalism* (Utah State Historical Society, 1938). Alter's collection of extracts and summaries of newspaper articles about publications and printing provides the best record of the spread of printing across the state, though his book focuses on newspapering rather than book publishing.

9. David J. Whittaker, *Early Mormon Pamphleteering*, Dissertations in Latter-day Saint History (Joseph Fielding Smith Institute of Church History, 2003).

10. Thomas E. Taylor to John Taylor and George Q. Cannon, 8 May 1885, First Presidency Correspondence (John Taylor), 1885, CR 1/180 14:11, CHL. The newspaper's history has been treated in Wendell J. Ashton, *Voice in the West* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1950) and Monte Burr McLaws, *Spokesman for the Kingdom: Early Mormon Journalism and the Deseret News, 1830–1898* (BYU Press, 1977). Both focus on the newspaper; neither examines book production adequately.

11. Samuel Roskelley, *Personal Writings of Samuel Roskelley*, ed. Richard L. Saunders (Caramon Press, 2018), 365 (11 Nov 1901).

the equipment to produce the sheets that became books, but binding technology had progressed from stab or flat-stitched to saddle-stitched (through the folds), and then to staples. That was adequate for short runs of small publications like brochures or court documents. Anyone who paid a local printer could get a book produced—novels, poetry, devotional works, doctrinal treatises, small biographies, and autobiographies. Binding structures changed as well, from tight-back to hollow-back, both of which were often hand-finished onto the text block, and from hollow-back to case bound, a sure symbol of machine-automated mass production.

Though binding equipment was bought by the territory's larger printers, by the late 1910s binding was beginning to separate from the printing industry. As binding sophistication progressed or print-run size increased, Church work tended to be contracted to ever more distant firms, either those specializing in individual manufacturing processes or companies large enough to handle everything. Industrial book production capacity was scattered across the country and abroad.

The Church as Publisher and Distributor

If Salt Lake City lacked the capacity for large-scale book production, contracting production work beyond the state's borders still allowed the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to remain as "publisher" for its printing needs, and it often did so. There were complications, of course. The Church was organized and functioned much differently in the opening decades of the twentieth century than it does in the same decades of the twenty-first. Organizationally, the Church was still mired in the decentralization which had happened during the anti-polygamy raids of the 1880s. During that generation, a group of related special-interest "auxiliary" organizations were founded by well-placed Church members specifically to appeal to the activity and social needs of demographic groups within the Church membership: the Deseret Sunday School Union, the Relief Society, the gender-specific Mutual Improvement Associations, the Primary Association, and Utah Genealogical Society. That administrative growth was complicated as the Church separately incorporated its various arms to complicate the job of federal anti-Church law enforcement. By the 1920s, Church auxiliaries remained official offices but functioned as quasi-independent entities. Today the divisions function within the organizational mainstream; in 1919 each functioned, accounted, and was staffed on its own organizational authority. Governance was by independently appointed boards of directors; although apostles typically served on boards of directors, none of the bodies were directly accountable to the Church's First Presidency.¹²

12. Outside the church auxiliaries were a host of church-owned and partly owned businesses, such as ZCMI, Amalgamated Sugar, and Beneficial Life Insurance. Individual stakes and wards operated dozens of local farms, canal companies, and tithing yards (Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 3/e, 79–98). At the time, two formal joint meetings were held in conjunction with the church's annual and semi-annual general conference sessions in April and October, with mid-year meetings spaced roughly evenly in early January and early July. Of course, the groups met both independently and together much more regularly; Talmage's diary records attending Quorum meetings more frequently than weekly, though he leaves no clue whether they were full Quorum meetings or only of those who happened to be in the city. The records which might resolve the question are unavailable.

In terms of books and publishing, “the Church” did not commonly act as a publisher of its cultural material, but Church auxiliaries and Church-owned or Church-related businesses did. Beyond the leading quorums at the Church Administration Building of 47 E South Temple Street, the Church’s auxiliary organizations each functioned with a high degree of independence and autonomy. Each organization seems to have published and distributed its own instructional material under its own name. Most had a magazine, and two of them operated independent bookstores. If an auxiliary’s printing and binding was done locally, the only “publisher” of note was the *Deseret News*. More often than not, the paper performed the role of a production house, providing design, production, and manufacturing services. The missions functioned nearly independently, and mission presidents had a high degree of autonomy in practical matters. In 1905, mission presidents in the United States secured permission to organize an independent publisher for mission material, a story that will be explored later.

No matter how much we enthuse about the remarkable growth of the Church, by the twentieth century, servicing the Mormon population in the United States with print material meant publishing for a very small and completely unique market. For Mormon-market publishing to work, books had to sell. Small-run specialized publication was possible in the nineteenth century; it was progressively more expensive and difficult to justify in the twentieth. Though Salt Lake City had its share of newspaper and commercial printers and printshops, it was never a city of publishers in the sense that Nashville, Chicago, San Francisco, or New York were. As printing and binding equipment grew increasingly mechanized and progressively more expensive to equip adequately, publication decisions rested ever more heavily on ever smaller margins.

Cannon’s book printery generated the first locally-produced devotional literature for the Mormon population of the Intermountain West. It was the production platform needed when the Book of Mormon was published for the first time in Utah in 1871, chiefly for sales within the Mormon corridor. David Calder published another edition of the book in 1874. The *Deseret News* Press finally leapt into the act after Brigham Young’s death, cranking out editions over its own imprint in 1881, 1882, 1883, and 1885, and Cannon’s Juvenile Instructor Office returning to publishing in 1888.¹³ Thereafter, the *Deseret News* issued many reprints, some for the *Deseret Sunday School Union*, but most over its own imprint.¹⁴

Fewer editions of the Book of Mormon were published in the 1890s, probably due partly to economic downturns in 1893 and 1897. Independent printing and manufacturing for Church publication was a luxury expensive to maintain. The answer to reducing up-front equipment costs was for the Church to commission printing outside of the state. The Book of Mormon published in *Deseret* script was produced in New York City in 1869, due largely to the need to cut an entirely new typeface. Even the domestic edition in 1888, while published by the church “in” Salt Lake City, was produced and manufactured in New York (publication credit follows the publisher, not the printer/manufacturer). Printing for substantive

13. Flake/Draper 618, 619, 620, 622, 624. Some or all of these could well have been printed and bound outside the state.

14. Those dating after 1900 and before 1920 (by Flake/Draper number) include: 1900 (634), 1903 (640), 1904 (643, also in a triple combination), 1906 (652a) and large-print edition (653), 1907 (659), 1914 (686), 1918 (691); and 1905, 1907, 1908, 1916, 1918? pocket editions (647, 660, 664, 687, 691a).

Church publications (in the United States, at least) was simply cheaper done in markets with the capacity to handle large print jobs routinely. By the second decade of the twentieth century, printing for LDS material was regularly consigned to plants as far afield as Kansas City, Chicago, and New York. The Temple Square Visitors Bureau of Information secured copies of the Book of Mormon in batches of five hundred and a thousand, probably from Etten & Co. Surely these were not separate printings but simply orders filled from regular stock. An example of this would be a 1907 volume in the BYU collection that has a separately printed slip pasted over the Northern States mission information on the title page.¹⁵

Even with the Deseret News and Cannon & Sons operating viable book concerns, Utah lacked substantive book infrastructure. In practical terms this meant that when the Church or others acted as a publisher, most actual book production was contracted to a printer beyond the Salt Lake Valley. It was simply cheaper to do so. The Church's officers maintained a long-term relationship with the Chicago printer Henry Etten & Co. (which was Hillison & Etten by 1913). Etten produced commercial publications for Church-related Utah authors as early as George Reynolds's 1888 book *The Story of the Book of Mormon*. The firm produced work by regional notables including apostle Joseph Fielding Smith, Ben E. Rich (*A Scrapbook of Mormon Literature*, ca. 1911), Nels Nelsen (*Scientific Aspects of Mormonism*, 1918), and James E. Talmage (*The Great Apostasy*, 1910). The printer's work included Church-related material in both English and in foreign languages, including the Deseret Sunday School Union's hymnbook in Hawaiian, *Na Mele o Ziona* (1909), and Hugh Cannon's missionary pamphlet in German, *Lieb brüder, was soll ich tun, das ich selig werde?* (1909). Besides printing for cultural materials, Etten & Co. printed and bound a cluster of missionary issues of the Book of Mormon between as early as 1905 and as late as 1912. Utah's publishers did not effectively recapture the Church's printing business until the 1920s, and it wasn't until the 1930s that they really began to develop a platform for trade publishing. The LDS-interest publishers along the Wasatch Front, which came later in the century—Nicholas G. Morgan Foundation, Bookcraft, and Stevens & Wallace—were yet to be organized.

This fragmented arrangement in Utah publishing available to the Church seems beyond reason to a modern reader used to buying a book from an online seller, shipped from a warehouse in suburban Chicago, which may have been typeset in New York and printed in China. To be fair, the early twentieth-century printing industry and book distribution existed and labored under different realities than today. In a city of small publishers and printers, Deseret News Press was the largest. It printed books and in a few years would be the contract printer for a historical journal published in the state's behalf, the *Utah Historical Quarterly*. Still, it was not yet a large concern, as it would become in another three decades.

During the 1910s and the midst of this shift, the major Latter-day Saint publisher in the United States was well beyond the Wasatch Front. In 1905 Northern States Mission president German Ellsworth secured permission from Church leadership and arranged to publish the Book of Mormon for distribution through the proselyting missions within the country. Ellsworth contracted with the Chicago firm of Henry Etten & Co. to handle

15. Benjamin Goddard, "Report of the Bureau of Information, From Aug. 1902 to April, 1908," with Benjamin Goddard to C. W. Nibley, 6 May 1908, First Presidency Administrative Files, 1878–1918 (CR 1/169), CHL. Flake/Draper 658a.

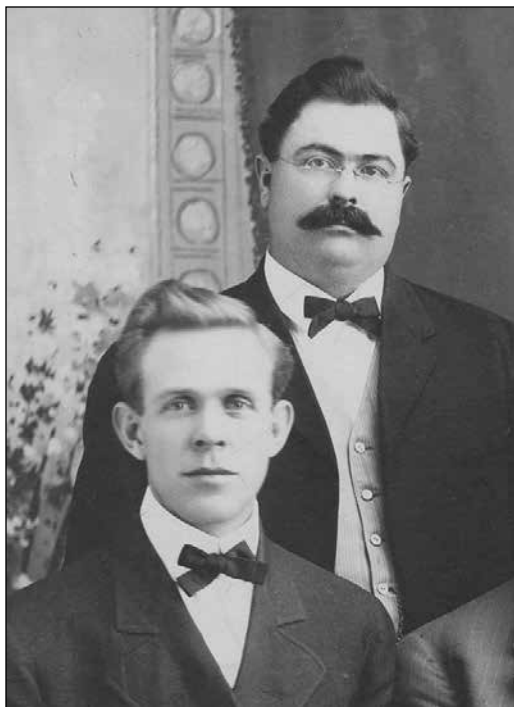


Figure 1.2 Mission presidents German E. Ellsworth (Northern States; front) and Samuel O. Bennion (Central States), ca. 1908. Both men were instrumental in Book of Mormon publishing in the United States during the early part of the twentieth century.

typesetting, printing, and binding.¹⁶ Two years later, mission periodicals of the Southern states and Central states missions consolidated. A new firm, Zion's Printing & Publishing Company, was formed in Independence, Missouri, with Central states mission president Samuel O. Bennion at its head and as manager, an organization affected primarily to produce distributable literature for the missionary effort. This firm took over publication of the Southern states mission periodical *Elders' Journal*, merged it with their own, and continued publication as *Liabona: The Elder's Journal*. Beyond its newspaper, Zion's Printing began producing the bulk of religious tracts for the American and Canadian mission offices. Other than for the Temple Square Information Center, the Deseret News Press was not producing missionary material for the Church. Missions abroad tended to produce their own pamphlets as necessary.¹⁷ Outside the US, the British Mission still produced works for Great Britain and many European missions. That branch of Latter-day Saint publishing history constitutes a separate and independent story.

For several years, Zion's Printing & Publishing Co. contracted its actual print production to one or more local printers in Independence. Under Ellsworth's leadership, LDS presence in western Missouri, identified eighty years earlier as "the land of Zion," re-solidified. Construction of a chapel on Pleasant and Walnut streets was approved in 1912. In 1913, the Church loaned the mission presidents' firm \$7,500 to establish its own printing plant in a rented building.

16. Stocks, 77 (note 34); R. Jean Addams, "Zion's Printing & Publishing Company: From the Redemption of Zion to Corporation," *Journal of Mormon History* 46, n.2 (2020): 46–73.

17. Central States Mission history (1897–1909), p.184, LR 1562/2, CHL. The combined mission magazine had a circulation of about 13,500, as reported in *Ayer's American Newspaper Annual and Directory* (N.W. Ayer & Son, 1914), 510.

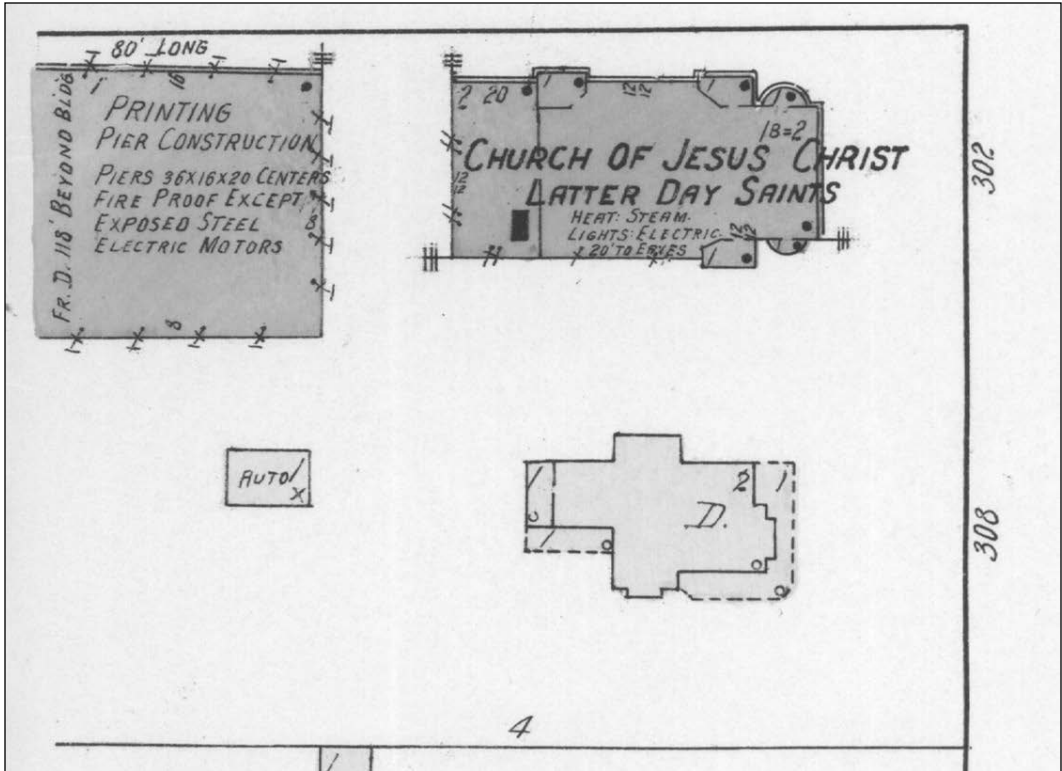


Figure 1.3 A Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of Independence, Missouri, showing the newly constructed chapel and Zion’s Printing & Publishing Company printing plant, ca. 1918.

While Etten & Co. continued busily producing its own impressions of the Book of Mormon for the Church, the chapel in Missouri was dedicated in 1914, but the building lot had sufficient real estate to shoehorn a printing facility directly behind the structure. Zion’s Printing’s management constructed its own building adjacent to the mission office over the next year, upgrading its printing equipment at the same time. In describing the new venture, the *Liabona* noted that Zion’s “prints all the small books and tracts used by the various missions of the United States, as well as the Book of Mormon.”¹⁸ More detail on the book later.

It is possible, and perhaps likely, that the expansion in Zion’s printing operation was intended specifically to produce the Book of Mormon, a key product in missionary work, which the company seems to have successfully taken over from Etten.¹⁹ It would have been

18. R. Jean Addams, “The Return of the LDS Church to Jackson County (1900–1907) and the Redemption of Zion,” *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 38, no.2 (Fall/Winter 2018): 46–78; “Printing Plant Home: S. O. Bennion Got Appropriation from General Conference,” *Jackson Examiner* (Independence, MO), 16 April 1915; “New Home of Zion’s Printing and Publishing Company at Independence, Jackson Co., Missouri,” *Liabona* 13, no. 19 (2 November 1915): 11–13, both quoted in R. Jean Addams, “Zion’s Printing & Publishing Company: From the Redemption of Zion to Corporation,” *Journal of Mormon History* 46, no. 2 (April 2020): 46–73.

19. Etten & Co. produced books for the various missions between 1905 and 1912. These included issues (by Flake/Draper number) of the Book of Mormon for the missions in 1905 (648–652),

1910						1920					693
1909						1919				692a 692b	
1908		662, 666– 669				1918	691			691b 691c	
1907	659	658, 658a, 661				1917				690a 690b	
1906	652a	655				1916				688a 688b	
1905		648– 652				1915					
1904	643					1914	686				
1903	640					1913					
1902			638			1912					
1901						1911		672	673		
	Deseret News Co.	Etten & Co.	Burd & Fletcher	Zion's Printing	Conkly Co.		Deseret News Co.	Etten & Co.	[Unknown]	Zion's Printing	Conkly Co.

Table 1. LDS issues of the Book of Mormon in the United States by date and printer, 1901–1920 (omitting pocket and large-print editions), listing impressions by Flake/Draper number.

a natural move. The Book of Mormon was then, as it is now, a centerpiece of the Latter-day Saint missionary message. The press's other products, pamphlets and report forms, produced a very narrow profit on a comparatively low demand. Books, including the Book of Mormon, offered perhaps a slightly better margin.²⁰

The initial "Independence Edition" of the Book of Mormon was a corrected edition rather than a straightforward reprint. In 1915 Joseph Fielding Smith sent Zion's Printing a copy of the 1902 Chicago Mission printing with "corrections" marked in it, an edition that, besides the corrections, "would answer for [printer's] copy."²¹ A corrected volume would only be useful if the Book of Mormon was being re-set to produce a new edition. Using its

1906 (655, 658, 658a, 661), 1907 (661), 1908 (662, 666–669), 1911? (672–673), 1912? (675). Greater complexity exists than even the Flake/Draper catalogue reveals, documented by changes to mission addresses which (as Joan Nay correctly points out) could merit its own book-history study. The last printing is the issue used as a basal text for the revision resulting in the 1920 edition.

20. Addams, "Zion's Printing."

21. Joseph Fielding Smith to Samuel O. Bennion, 16 September 1915, CR 100/39, CHL. The resulting Book of Mormon cited is Flake/Draper 688b.

own equipment, probably for the typesetting and certainly for the printing, the firm issued its initial Book of Mormon in March 1916 for distribution by American missionaries. The initial issue bound in a separate section of references by Joel E. Ricks. The press's presumption of associating a named individual with the scriptures drew swift First Presidency censure, and the guide was dropped from the book. The press in Independence produced at least eight typographically identifiable printings of the book between 1916 and 1919.²² At the same time that Zion's Printing & Publishing Co. was reproducing the "Independence Edition" of the Book of Mormon, the Deseret Sunday School Union independently commissioned its own editions. Thus, Etten & Co. was the contract printer for books "[p]ublished by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" during this two-decade window.²³

Table 1 illustrates the American activity in Book of Mormon publishing between the turn of the century and the 1920 edition. Note that a good portion of the publishing is contracted outside the state and to non-Church firms. That is interesting by itself, but we have no basis on which to form a picture of the scale or competitive activity of publishers within the comparatively small LDS book market. Competition must have been a reality, despite the separate target consumers. Thus, within the United States, the Book of Mormon was in print and circulating from at least three locations and "published" by at least three Church entities by 1919. Outside the United States, the British Mission also still published its English-language editions for distribution in the Empire, which probably included Canada. Latter-day Saint book production, even for its scriptural standard works, hardly represented the autocratic monolith in the way Mormonism was popularly portrayed.

A dispersed publishing practice worked against market principles of reducing costs by creating economies of scale. The Deseret Sunday School Union operated its publishing arm consistently at a loss. At former businessman Heber J. Grant's ascension to the presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1919, the First Presidency assigned apostle James E. Talmage to create efficiency among the Church's money-losing ventures. In April 1919, the same month that Grant was sustained in General Conference as President of the Church, Talmage recorded a meeting with the new First Presidency in which he "spent considerable time as chairman of a committee appointed to investigate the feasibility of combining the Deseret Sunday School Union Book Store with the Deseret News Book Store. There were many details to be considered."²⁴ I'll bet.

22. Zion's began printing the Book of Mormon with the "First Independence edition" (Flake/Draper 688a). The other identifiable printings by 1919 include (by Flake/Draper number): 688a, 688b, 690a, 690b, 691b, 691c, 692a, 692b. The 1978 edition of Flake, *A Mormon Bibliography* grouped the editions under a uniform-title date of 1913 (relying on the date from Sabin) but inserts a note that they date 1913–1918. The 2004 Flake/Draper edition numbers the printings separately as stated here, but does so without offering firm evidence on which to assign the datings. BYU Library cataloguing dates the printings between 1915 and 1919. Hugh Stocks has generously shown me a printed certificate in his possession, distributed with the initial impression, which positively dates its issue to March 1916. Truthfully, in the absence of production or administrative records we don't know precisely when the remaining Zion's Book of Mormon printings were produced. Bound-book production for other book titles issued by Zion's do not date before 1916, either.

23. Flake/Draper 686 (1914), 687 (1916), 691 (1918), 691a (a pocket edition, 1918).

24. Talmage diary, 25 April 1919.

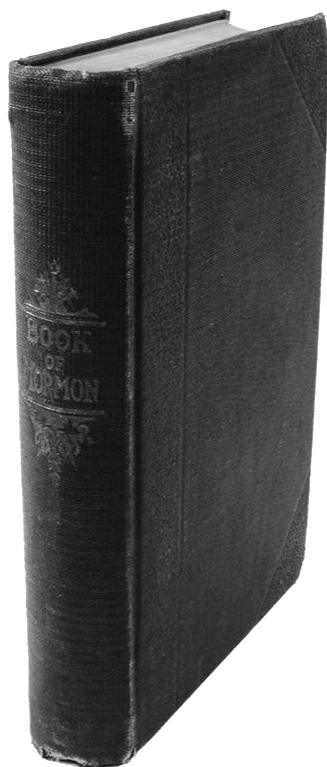


Figure 1.4 The Talmage binding dummy.

Discussing Zion's Printing & Publishing Co. impressions of the Book of Mormon leads naturally to one of the puzzles of modern Latter-day Saint book history: an undated binding dummy retained by Talmage.²⁵ The book is made up of mostly blank sheets, but I am convinced that the dummy predates the 1920 editorial efforts, for reasons both historical and material. The dummy in turn leads to the broader context in Latter-day Saint book history, and one in which it represents an important antecedent to the 1920 edition. Yes, I know this work is about that later edition of scripture, but this binding dummy deserves attention meted out more carefully here than might normally be given to what is essentially a blank book. Yet, as interesting as it may be, the question stands why the dummy survives in the first place, and why Talmage ended up with it?

James E. Talmage was a central figure in LDS book history of his time whose work has been largely unheralded. Though trained as a geologist and ordained an apostle late in 1911, by 1915 Talmage was clearly the apostle most experienced with both writing and publishing. His *The Articles of Faith* (1899) was published to local acclaim. A year later in 1900, and long before his calling to the apostleship, Talmage was requested to direct a revision of the Pearl of Great Price. In 1910 he was involved in settling on name pronuncia-

25. The dummy (MS 20767, CHL) clearly came from the Talmage papers: a BYU Library bookplate is pasted into the front indicating the provenance (figure 1.5), and the volume carries a numerical stamp consistent with BYU Library practice (97799; another private binding of the Book of Mormon is stamped 97800; the committee copy is stamped 97786).

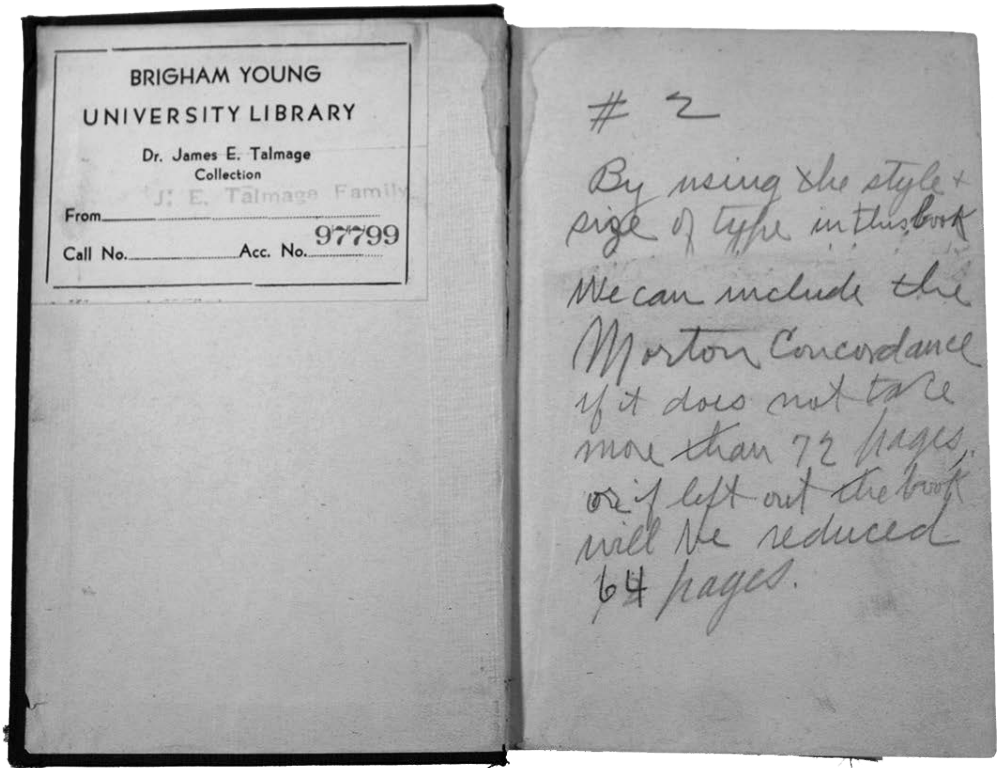


Figure 1.5 Notes in the binding dummy.

tions in the Book of Mormon and producing a guide to them. It was at his suggestion that the Church generated the first illustrated description of a temple interior in *The House of the Lord* (1912), and he was commissioned as its author. A few years later, Talmage's landmark *Jesus the Christ* (1915) was written at the request of the First Presidency. According to his own diary, Talmage also drafted the doctrinal treatise issued by the First Presidency, *The Father and the Son* (1917). He was deeply involved in the Book of Mormon revision in 1920 and a comparable revision of the Doctrine and Covenants completed in 1921. As will be seen a bit later, he superintended the creation of the Church's retail book firm and thereby the inadvertent consolidation of key printing businesses. He also authored a long-running, nation-wide series of newspaper articles on the Church and its doctrines. In addition to managing corrections and reprints of his own works, Talmage travelled the country in the managerial interest of both his own and the Church's publishing. He inspected the Zion's Printing & Publishing plant expansion in 1916, pursued an LDS edition of the Bible (discussed below), and talked through improvements to missionary pamphlets and distribution. In truth, for the first third of the twentieth century and until the Latter-day Saint edition of the scriptures was produced under Spencer W. Kimball in the late 1970s, editing and revision of Latter-day Saint modern-day scripture and key aspects of its broad print culture revolved around Talmage.²⁶

26. Anthon H. Lund, *Danish Apostle: The Diaries of Anthon H. Lund, 1890–1921*, ed. John P. Hatch (Signature Books, 2006), 80, 81, 82 (entries for 20, 27 March, 17, 19, 26 April 1900); Clyde

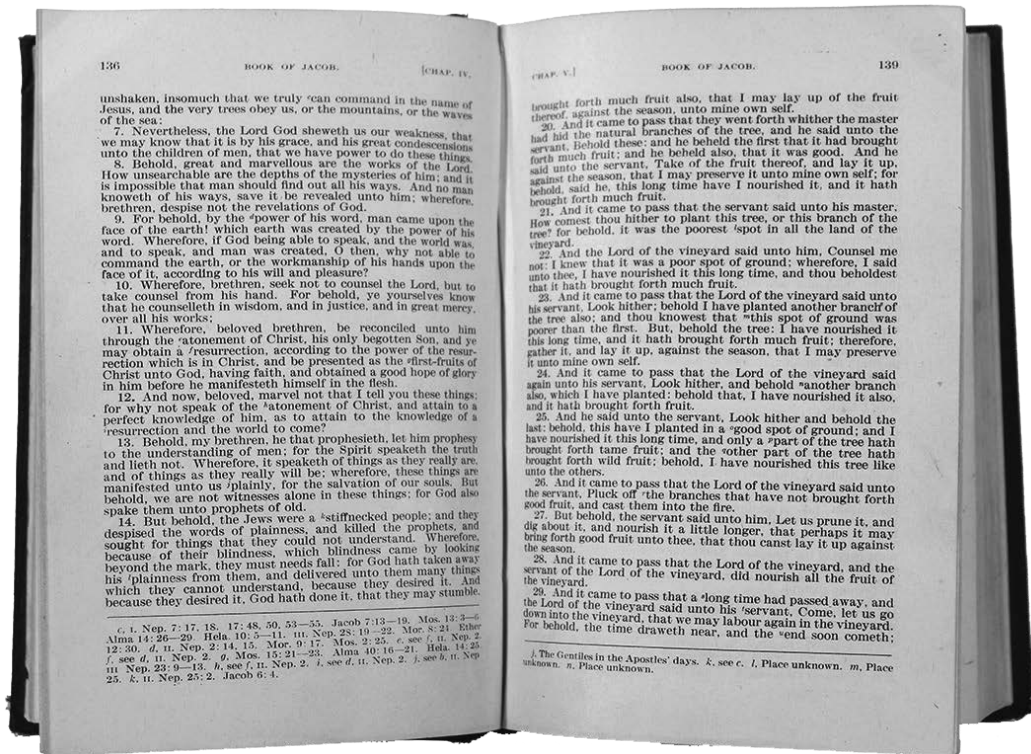


Figure 1.6 The binding dummy text. Facing the first verso (p.136) is recto p.139; on the two successive spreads, the pages display as 140/137 and 138/141, suggesting that in the dummy page order was less significant than overall text length—it was a typesetting sample.

Material evidence about the dummy must be extrapolated but has the benefit of being at least physical. Of importance is the binding, which is a case binding built of the same fabric and with cover stamping identical to volumes of the “Independence Edition” produced by Zion’s Printing & Publishing Co. between 1916 and 1919. A second factor is the blank paper stock, which is quite generic but compares well with the Independence Editions. Its leaf count matches the Independence Editions as well. On material grounds alone, the volume is fairly conclusively the work of Zion’s Printing & Publishing Co. rather than from one of the other printers, either Etten or Deseret News.

The documentary evidence surrounding the dummy is fragmentary, at best, but important. There are no contemporary records available to provide context, but fortunately there are enough scattered clues to allow some confident inferences. First, it turns out that we know roughly when the binding dummy was created. A typed page inserted in the volume carries a place-holding title page spread comparable to earlier volumes: [verso] “Book of Mormon,

D. Ford, “Modernism and Mormonism: James E. Talmage’s *Jesus the Christ* and Early Twentieth-century Mormon Responses to Biblical Criticism,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 41, n. 4 (2008): 95–120; James E. Talmage: *The Story behind Jesus the Christ* (Three Coin Productions, 2015); David Rolph Seely, “Explaining the Temple to the World: James E. Talmage’s Monumental Book, *The House of the Lord*,” *FARMS Review of Books* 12, n.2 (2000): 415–425.

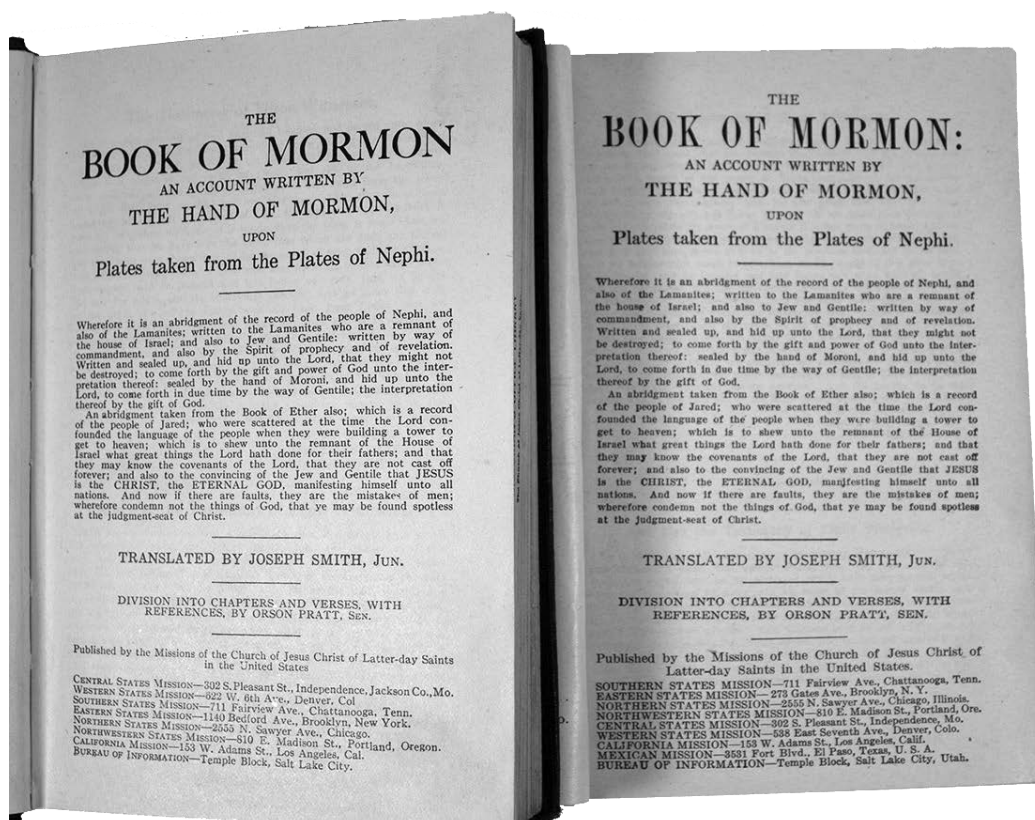


Figure 1.7 Title pages of the Fifth Independence and Sixth Independence editions.

Sixth Independence Edition [sic], Press of Zion's Ptg & Pub Co., Independence, Mo.”; [facing recto] “The Book of Mormon, Title Page. Mission Addresses.” Taken at face value, this note suggests that the dummy was a precursor to Flake/Draper 691c, which obviously dates after the first dated Independence Edition of 1916 and before the seventh and eighth “editions” likely printed in 1919. The dummy contains a second handwritten clue as well. Onto the dummy’s front free endleaf, someone penciled a note of book history significance (shown on page 15) that reads: “#2 By using the style & size of type in this book we can include the Morton Concordance if it does not take more than 72 pages, or if left out the book will be reduced 64 pages.” Evidently someone was calculating page counts for a new edition of the Book of Mormon, including a major structural addition. That’s not all. When one places ordinarily identified examples of Independence Edition Book of Mormons side-by-side and then includes the binding dummy in the lineup, it becomes clear that something bookishly major had happened in the late 1910s that has been hiding in plain sight.

First, one notices that the section of typeset material in the binding dummy does not match either the Fifth or Sixth Independence Edition—in fact, it does not match *any* Independence Edition. Both the Fifth Independence Edition and the binding dummy text start at the top of page 136 (a verso) with the last three lines of Jacob 4:6 and run through six pages to the bottom of page 141 (a recto). There is, however, an important difference. The Fifth Independence Edition ends on page 141 in the middle of verse 45, while the text

in the binding dummy ends with verse 50—more than half a page of text has been pulled back, even though the type-area dimensions of both pages are identical (though no effort has been made in the dummy to match the footnote-reference callouts to the content of the notes on the page). In short, the text in the dummy is set in a different font than both Independence editions of the Book of Mormon.

Looking a little closer, one also notices that the Fifth Independence Edition typography does not match the type of the Sixth Independence Edition either—a point that becomes glaringly visible on the title pages (shown on page 17). The intent of the note penciled in the front of the binding dummy then becomes clear—Zion's Printing & Publishing Co. has completely reset the entire Book of Mormon between the Fifth and Sixth editions. That fact suggests the binding dummy was quite likely a demonstration worked up by Zion's Printing for the benefit of Talmage and the First Presidency, who were making publishing decisions based on the space taken up by a castoff of the "Morton Concordance," presumably an unpublished manuscript by noted Latter-day Saint inspirational writer William A. Morton.²⁷

The final contextual clues are left by Talmage in his diary. Talmage was typically quite circumspect about detailing his apostolic service, and his activities were described in no more detail than involvement in "committee assignments," which does not offer us much help. However, in 1916 and 1917 Talmage recorded his efforts made toward securing a standard edition of the Bible bound with a new Latter-day Saint reference work, *Ready References*, produced for the Church by himself and Joseph Fielding Smith. In November 1916, Talmage approached the American offices of both Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press. Each press published an edition of the Authorized or King James Version of the Bible and had long sold scriptures to Church bookstores. In April 1917, the James Pott Company (which printed and bound the second and successive editions of *Jesus the Christ*) produced sample copies of the commissioned volume using the Cambridge Bible. By May 1917, sample copies of the reference work bound with the Oxford Bible were available as well. However, before either book was on the market, even before a contract was negotiated, Talmage received a letter from Oxford University Press withdrawing their sample and declining to accept a contract. The Press received such criticism from its denominational customers that its officers decided to protect their other business by declining to provide their Bible edition to the Latter-day Saint community with *Ready References* bound in. Cambridge had no similar concerns. Within two years Cambridge secured the church's business, producing Bibles for the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" as noted by title-page imprints.²⁸ Holding the one of these Bibles today means cradling the

27. Besides writing inspirational stories for young Latter-day Saints and missionary tracts, Morton also compiled *Book of Mormon Ready References* (Cannon & Sons 1903; Millennial Star Office, 1903; Deseret News, 1909), which may be the "concordance" mentioned, unless the latter was another resource that was never committed to print.

28. Talmage to Joseph F. Smith & Council, 20 November 1916, Talmage papers, CHL; Talmage diary, 3 March, 6 November 1916, 16 May, 20 June 1917. The "ready references" text is probably Flake/Draper 489c or 490: *Ready References: A Compilation of Texts Subjectively Arranged with Annotations, Designed Especially for the Use of Missionaries and Other Students of the Scriptures* (Church, 1917). Talmage submitted a registration correction to the Copyright Office 25 April 1917, which documents the book as written by Talmage and Joseph Fielding Smith. A comment

oldest identified ancestor in the direct LDS Biblical family line. A short exploration about contemporary Bible printing and marketing may be found in the Appendix.

When the scattered pieces are considered together—the clues in Talmage’s diary, the corrected Book of Mormon copy cited in the 1915 letter by Joseph Fielding Smith, the separate reference section in the First Independence Edition, the reference-supplemented edition of the Bible, the binding dummy, and the typesetting evidence in the Independence Editions of the Book of Mormon—a broader context for the 1920 edition of the Book of Mormon becomes clear: as early as 1917, the First Presidency was interested in improving scripture study among the Latter-day Saints by improving study editions of the Standard Works.

Using those scattered facts as inferential reckoning points, here is what I think happened: Zion’s Printing & Publishing Company set up its own printing plant in 1915, releasing the first Independence Edition for missionary work the following year. This was the time of the scholarly movement toward “higher criticism” of scripture within Biblical studies, which key apostles saw as an all-out attack on Christianity.²⁹ Into the back of the initial issue of the “Independence Edition” Book of Mormon was bound a study guide published over the name of University of Chicago graduate student Joel E. Ricks. Including a reference work over an individual’s name in a volume of scripture was unacceptable since it lent any named author cultural authority the Church did not want to bestow formally or informally. On the other hand, including a reference work in the scriptures was clearly a good idea. As a first step in encouraging closer personal study of the scripture among the Latter-day Saints, the First Presidency (Joseph F. Smith and counselors Anthon H. Lund and Charles W. Penrose) seem to have commissioned Talmage to explore options for improved study tools for the Latter-day Saints: an Oxford or Cambridge Bible to be bound with the Latter-day Saint study aid compiled by Talmage and Smith, and a similar resource for the Book of Mormon. In that context, the binding dummy suggests the Church was gauging the physical effects of a comparable study-edition option for the Book of Mormon.³⁰

If these inferences are correct, the dummy positively dates after 1916 and before 1918, and therefore *could not* be a dummy for the 1920 edition. After a Latter-day Saint edition of the Bible appeared, though a comparable reference was not yet available for a companion Book of Mormon study edition, the Sixth Independence Edition of the scripture was reset as planned (making the Sixth through Eighth an entirely separate edition from the Fifth and earlier Independence Editions). The LDS study edition of the Bible and failed

by Mrs. George W. Coleman, “Recent Developments in Mormonism,” *Missionary Review of the World* n.7 (July 1918): 539 erroneously claimed that the presses had been producing the work for “five years” in the case of Cambridge University Press. Since Talmage’s enquiry had been made only the year before, this statement was probably based on incorrect information. The Talmage/Smith reference work was later integrated in the first Bibles produced by Cambridge for the Church. *Ready References* was a regular feature of the LDS editions between the 1920s and 1978. See also Chapter 4 and Appendix.

29. Harry R. Boer, *The Bible and Higher Criticism* (Eerdmans, 1981) provides an overview of the general conflict. The challenge and counter-challenge within LDS culture is addressed in Philip L. Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion*, updated ed. (Oxford Univ. Press, 2013).

30. cf. Talmage diary, 11 June 1919, 28 January 1920.

study edition of the Book of Mormon set the stage for what became the entirely revised 1920 American edition.

In May 1919, Talmage's diary notes that its writer made an extended trip to the Southern States Mission. Upon his return in June, two months after the April 1919 meeting about retail book sales, Talmage closeted again with the still-new First Presidency. His diary provides one other possible clue under the date of 11 June 1919, where he records that he "[h]ad an important conference with the First Presidency relating to our publication work."³¹ Though he did not elaborate in his journal, it is possible that this concern about "our publication work" intimates the first discussions of the Church's lack of control over its scripture, production problems in the various volumes, competition between Church-related publishers, and the advisability of publishing a new Book of Mormon edition to consolidate distribution into the Church's hands without effecting an outright ban. Unfortunately, we may never know for sure, since even the Church History Library does not have good records for the Grant presidency. The Grant papers (Ms 1233) are reportedly limited to mostly personal rather than Church material. A month after his meeting with the First Presidency, Talmage reported to himself, "In the afternoon I attended a committee meeting of which I am chairman, for further consideration of the proposition to combine the Church book stores."³²

In her corporate history of Deseret Book Company, Eleanor Knowles noted that on 2 October 1919, Talmage reported to the leading quorums on merging the Deseret Sunday School Union and Deseret News bookstores. A week later, he recorded another meeting at which the new manager of the unified book concern delivered a report. Zion's Printing & Publishing Co., operated in the Church's interest in Independence, Missouri³³ (though with a small list of non-Church publications as well), was not involved. The book concern in Salt Lake City was moving forward under its new arrangement, and Church publishing was clearly a subject of discussion. In late January 1920, Talmage reported a long discussion with the manager of the book concern—but a day later, he also met with officials of Zion's Printing & Publishing Co. Characteristically his diary gives no details on what was discussed, but Deseret Book Company was incorporated immediately and Zion's remained an independent publisher of Church literature for another three decades.³⁴

Bookselling might not have anything to do with commissioning and production of a new Book of Mormon edition, but given the recent attempts to generate study editions of the scriptures, it might have, too. Something bookish was clearly on the table.

31. Talmage diary, 11 June 1919. Both Oxford and Cambridge presses established business addresses in the United States beginning in 1896. Daniel Raff, "New York," in William Roger Louis, ed., *The History of Oxford University Press*, v.3 1896–1970 (Oxford University Press, 2013); David McKitterick, "The American Branch," *A History of Cambridge University Press: New Worlds for Learning, 1875–1972* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

32. Talmage diary, 7 July 1919.

33. Though the company had been incorporated by mission presidents, within a year the church began buying up its stock and eventually owned the company outright.

34. Talmage diary, 8 October 1919, 27, 28 January 1920; Eleanor Knowles, *Deseret Book Company: 125 Years of Inspiration, Information, and Ideas* (Deseret Book, 1991), 23, 27, 34.

PART II
AN EDITION'S CATALOGUE

Description

Identifying the Details of Printings and Bindings for Issues in the Edition

HUGO PALTSITS ONCE remarked that “anyone can compile a list, many can make a catalogue, but few can agonize to bring forth a bibliography.”¹ This little study certainly has enough agony in it to merit Paltsits’s epigram. It is not exactly a bibliography, though it might be close enough to pass for one today. Few actually use real bibliography anymore. Bibliography, and descriptive bibliography particularly, was developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries before microfilm or digital imaging brought images easily to hand. Bibliography allows scholars to describe printed works in sufficient detail that another scholar could compare and identify whether a book under their eyes was the same or not. In an analog age, long before books could be simply scanned for comparison, description provided a basis for communicating and ultimately deciding what kind of “not” the book was. Its conventions are most useful for the intricacies and oddities of works produced during the handpress period, roughly 1450 to 1850. You’ll notice that the 1920 American edition Book of Mormon doesn’t exactly fit that time span. It is a creature of mass production. By the twentieth century, most of the purpose of descriptive bibliography for manual composition and handpress printing had been rendered obsolete by stereotype, electrotype, large-scale printing methods, and publishers’ trade bindings. The kind of variation that descriptive bibliography catalogues simply isn’t there.

Yes, modern book production and marketing maintains a few details to tease out, but they are hardly enough to merit descriptive bibliography. And so, I have pulled from descriptive bibliographic standards what I feel is useful. The result is a shorthand description. The catalogue comprising Chapter 6 lists and describes all identifiable and questionable issues and bindings of copies of the Book of Mormon issued by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the United States dating between publication and 1948—everything associated with this specific edition. You will find them grouped by date, thereunder by binding style. A second section addresses the undated issues.

Terminology

Now, about the language and descriptive conventions that I have used. Human communication rests inherently on the negotiable shared meanings of words, and both persuasion and categorization are grounded in description. That requires that words (which can have many meanings), become terms (which have only a single meaning). That linguistic

1. Quoted in Howell J. Heaney, “Thomas W. Streeter, Collector, 1883–1965,” *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 65, n.3 (1971): 243–56.

shift happens only when the meaning is commonly agreed upon and used consistently. Using words as terms helps knowledge to be codified and expressed by a writer, then to become meaningful information in a reader's mind.

Much ink is thrown around arguing about description and terms in book history. Scholars of an earlier generation tended to use the term *descriptive bibliography* imprecisely, invoking it where they meant something much closer to "annotated bibliography." Elbowing into the conversation from the side is another language belonging to libraries and librarianship. While a general shared language exists to describe printing and book arts in general, virtually everyone who does this sort of thing finds that bibliography and book history is a discipline entirely apart from what libraries do. Very few book collectors and virtually no professionally trained library cataloguers genuinely understand the descriptive intricacies of book history and bibliography. In fact, it was not until I gave up slavish devotion to library cataloguing standards that I really began to develop an informed understanding of the field of book description. If you consider that statement a cheap shot leveled at my discipline, you're dead right. I have spent thirty years as a special collections librarian and began my career in special collections as a rare-book and ephemera cataloguer. As I began dealing with the intricacies of book history and bibliographic description, it took me years to unlearn my professional training in library description. From long, frustrating personal experience, I find professionally credentialed library cataloguers to be among the *least* competent practitioners of accurate or useful book description, and often they can be downright obstructive. For that reason, there is merit in devoting space to properly defining edition, impression, version or format, issue, variant, and state.²

Edition is a term that correctly includes all printed work produced from a single setting of type, even when that setting is used or corrected after the initial impression. The term applies most usefully to the period of printing from handset foundry type, such as the 1830 Book of Mormon. Because the 1920 edition was reproduced exclusively from electrotype plates, it is *not* the electrotype plates that determine the edition, but the hot metal type slugs set by the W. B. Conkey Co. compositors from which the electrotype plates were reproduced.

The word *edition* gets used rather more loosely in relation to twentieth-century publishing; used properly, it does not have the slightest thing to do with the paper used or bindings around works. In a modern context, the term could also relate to the new impressions run by offset lithography; though the text would be identical, the presswork would create a format change that is often described (incorrectly) as a new edition. James Talmage uses the term incorrectly throughout his diary merely to refer to printed works that look different from each other. Following the traditional use and not the common use of the

2. Taken from, among other sources, Sidney E. Berger, *Rare Books and Special Collections* (Neal-Schumann/American Library Association, 2014), 261–262. For a more measured challenge to cataloguing see G. Thomas Tanselle, "Descriptive Bibliography and Library Cataloguing," *Studies in Bibliography* 30 (1977): 1–56, which invokes an earlier comment by Andrew D. Osborn, "The Crisis in Cataloging," *Library Quarterly* 11 (1941): 393–411. An excellent comment on the practical complexities of descriptive bibliography by the master himself is made in Fredson Bowers, "Certain Basic Problems in Descriptive Bibliography," *Papers of the Bibliographic Society of America* 42, n.3 (Third quarter, 1948): 211–228.

term, this study concerns all the diverse versions of what is properly a single *edition*. This study is a book history of a single edition, no matter what the books look like.

Impression identifies the relative outputs of one individual pressrun over another, printed at distinctly different times or places from a single setting of type and sometimes corrected type—basically, everything run through the press at one time. The intent of the term was, again, to describe the work of publishing practice across the fifteenth through nineteenth centuries. With that limit in mind, the term breaks down in the technological expediencies of the twentieth. There are far more impressions of books than there are editions. Today we commonly call them *printings*. Technology complicates this term's use. Part of the challenge is that multiple presses ran material from duplicate electrotype plates. So, what constitutes an impression of this book? The octavo sheets divided between the library, keratol, and half-keratol bindings in 1920 stand as one impression, and the sextodecimo sheets for the Missionary issue printed from the same plates are a separate impression. It gets harder with later printings. In one sense, all the printing presses spitting out different forms at the same time would generate a single impression, but then the work of each individual press could also be described as an impression. In reality, this catalogue plays a descriptive game against an unknown number of bibliographically significant players. There is no adequate way to track flaws from individual plates across thousands of volumes, so as used here the term will refer to the printed output commissioned at any one time, no matter how many presses were used—or how many plate flaws can be identified.

Issue traditionally refers to partial releases of printed sheets from a particular impression for binding and selling, a fancy way of saying that only part of the sheets from an impression were bound, and that some were bound later. Precedence between issues of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century books is often based on the absence or presence of ads in a commercial book, or on binding details. In this book, the term is used in place of *edition* in its widest sense: the varieties of dressings in which a finished book was made available.

Version or **format** is perhaps less used among the bookish but is appropriately used to describe significant physical changes to a work. Changes in text or type would be a separate edition or issue. Properly, a change from letterpress to offset production would create a new version rather than a new edition—but the term carries baggage from literary criticism limiting its usefulness as a term in descriptive bibliography. Still, in this study the word is used for exactly that purpose in describing changes in technology that do not reflect intentional changes in the edition.

Variant is much more sympathetically used to describe something that happened to a work that doesn't really matter in terms of a book's sales, such as differences between cover material or paper. It is also used when a particular detail cannot be generalized to be the result of intent. A unique copy is not correctly identified as a true variant unless more copies can be found.

State is a word similarly difficult to employ correctly in terms of the 1920-edition Book of Mormon unless it is limited to describing bindings. When properly used, *state* refers to differences resulting from changes that should not have happened (like damaged type), or that happened when a work was in press (such as press corrections), or that was

changed without notice (like a blurb or price on a partial run of a dust jacket). Sometimes it is incorrectly used interchangeably with *issue*.

In this book, look for me to use the broadest term that accurately describes the circumstance.

Description

For the descriptive content of entries, the paragraphs below lay out the elements I have chosen to employ from descriptive bibliography as laid out in Fredson Bowers's classic, *The Principles of Bibliographic Description*.³ First off, be aware that paragraphs group details relating to the printing and binding matters and are presented in the same order in each entry. I choose not to follow Bowers's format and bibliographic practice exactly. Readers should be glad. Real bibliographic description is little used in the modern world, and it is not used at all among book collectors I know personally, but anyone who aspires to understand books really should have at least a working familiarity with its intricacies, shorthand, and quirks. In most cases, a close adherence to bibliographic standards amounts to descriptive carpet bombing. This study deals with a single edition and its varying reprints. It is easy to get lost in needless details that simply carry repetitively from one printing to another.

I have instead chosen elements from Bowers's codification that are most useful in understanding this group of books and their production. With a little attention, the detail provided here should be sufficient to tell one printing from another without undue effort. Because the printing plates are identical and because so many of the bindings are similar, the description is rendered somewhat in shorthand. The explanations in the following paragraphs contain the actual descriptions; entries for the individual print and binding runs in Chapter 6 refer back to this section. Terms appearing in small capitals in Chapters 6 and 7 properly refer back to this descriptive chapter for explanation and examples.

Each catalogue description consists of the following sections and paragraphs:

Issue and Number

Since this bibliography catalogues different manifestations of the same book, each issue is identified by a descriptive number. This numbering convention is intended to serve as shorthand identifiers to individual issues. Elements in the bibliography numbers include issue date on the title page or verso (preceded by *F* in terms of the false-dated entries and a *U* for undated ones), then by an *L*, *M*, or *S* for sheets of the library, missionary, or scripture issues specifically. There is also one *A* for a single reduced-format volume issued in 1943 under specific circumstances; the reason for that one is handled under its entry. If one thinks carefully, one will notice that these reflect the type of paper and binding style used for the issue. The uniquely Latter-day Saint "triple combination" volumes are described as scripture issues or *S* rather than separately as a *T*. These basic divisions are complicated by reprints, bindings, and some non-bibliographic issues. Separate or sequential printings with the same title-page dates but bibliographically significant differences (such as changes

3. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1949). For an overview to the ideas of bibliography see G. Thomas Tanselle, "A Description of Descriptive Bibliography," *Studies in Bibliography* 45 (1992): 1–30.

made in plates to signature signings, printer marks, and imprint dates) are given a decimal number. Differences in binding styles are indicated by capital letters to specifically identify them, though bindings are not traditionally included in bibliographic description.

In a few cases, a physical detail (usually the date-code stamp that seems to have been applied to identify binding runs) gives reason to wonder about further numbering for separate issues. Since bibliography is a record of printing, the alphanumeric stamps are described in a separate paragraph under the “Binding” rather than listing differently stamped volumes as separate printings or issues, for which there is no firm evidence. For the sake of those who collect exhaustively, this should provide enough data to identify differences. Of course, as time passes other date-coded volumes are sure to appear.

Paper and Text Block

A descriptive comment about the paper used in printing, if known, with details of block and trim size given in imperial measurements and edge treatments. Unlike traditional bibliography, which pays particular attention to deducing sheet sizes, the 1920 Book of Mormon had its birth well into the modern era of papermaking. As early as 1894, one major encyclopedia of printing had to admit that “paper is now made of all sizes, and any width desirable can be produced upon the machine,” and “the specific names [for sheet dimensions] are nearly all lost in common usage.”⁴ In the few cases for which we have actual information, mostly from the benefit of having the actual production contracts at hand, the dimensions of the trim dimensions in imperial measurements. In the rest of the cases, this note amounts to a subjective description of appearance.

Printing

This section includes several paragraphs reporting different types of physical context, but uniformly begins with a statement of the *format* (the way sheets are folded) and an abbreviated collational formula. Of “the format,” Fredson Bowers notes that “format is based on the full sheet, no matter what its size or shape, without regard for cutting.”⁵ Bowers’s description (formula) was crafted chiefly to describe the products of the handpress period. His rules best fit the early world of handcrafted paper and print, but in the mechanical age, the only merit to knowing sheet size is to estimate wastage. The demands of different printing presses saw huge web rolls cut to order by paper mills. By the 1920s, printing was buried under standard practical arrangements for mechanical reproduction. As a result, I have tinkered with Bowers’s collational formula somewhat. Historically, printers used the Latin alphabet to sign printed sheets for pre-binding gathering. In the modern world of commercial book production, it was much more expedient to sign sheets with numerals. Printings of the Book of Mormon that carry signature marks at all uniformly use numbers. Where signatures are unsigned, a place-holding number is supplied in brackets. A superscript number implies the number of leaves (*not* pages) resulting from sheets regularly folded, gathered, and trimmed for binding, including blanks. Unfortunately, careless or poor pressroom practice in one of the production plants results in a confusing ragout of

4. “Dimensions of paper,” *American Dictionary of Printing and Bookmaking* (1894; Gale Research Co., 1967), 141–142.

5. Bowers, *Principles*, 194.

<p>crucifixion, 415-8; rebuilt, 456-8. Zedekiah, king of Judah, 1-4, 10-13, 130-15; Mulek, son of, 373-10; sons of, except Mulek, slain, 380-21.</p>	<p>verts from among, given land, 285-14; become Lamanites, 301-4; made captains of Lamanites, 316-5; lead Lamanites away, 401-29.</p>
<p>COMPOSITION, ELECTROTYPING, PRINTING AND BINDING BY THE W. B. CONKEY CO., HAMMOND, IND.</p>	
<p>crucifixion, 415-8; rebuilt, 456-8. Zedekiah, king of Judah, 1-4, 10-13, 130-15; Mulek, son of, 373-10; sons of, except Mulek, slain, 380-21.</p>	<p>verts from among, given land, 285-14; become Lamanites, 301-4; made captains of Lamanites, 316-5; lead Lamanites away, 401-29.</p>
<p>PRESS OF ZION'S PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO., INDEPENDENCE, JACKSON COUNTY, MO., U. S. A.</p>	
<p>Lachoneus gathers his forces in, 23; land southward called, 495-31. Zarahemla, city of, burned at time of the crucifixion, 415-8; rebuilt, 456-8. Zedekiah, king of Judah, 1-4, 10-13, 130-15; Mulek, son of, 373-10; sons of, except Mulek, slain, 380-21.</p>	<p>cast out by, 284-6, 8; prepare for war against people of Ammon, 285-10; converts from among, given land, 285-14; become Lamanites, 301-4; made captains of Lamanites, 316-5; lead Lamanites away, 401-29.</p>
<p>Lachoneus gathers his forces in, 23; land southward called, 495-31. Zarahemla, city of, burned at time of the crucifixion, 415-8; rebuilt, 456-8. Zedekiah, king of Judah, 1-4, 10-13, 130-15; Mulek, son of, 373-10; sons of, except Mulek, slain, 380-21.</p>	<p>against people of Ammon, 285-10; converts from among, given land, 285-14; become Lamanites, 301-4; made captains of Lamanites, 316-5; lead Lamanites away, 401-29.</p>
<p>Printed in the United States of America</p>	
<p>crucifixion, 415-8; rebuilt, 456-8. Zedekiah, king of Judah, 1-4, 10-13, 130-15; Mulek, son of, 373-10; sons of, except Mulek, slain, 380-21.</p>	<p>verts from among, given land, 285-14; become Lamanites, 301-4; made captains of Lamanites, 316-5; lead Lamanites away, 401-29.</p>
<p>receive an inheritance, 64:30; rebellious shall not inherit, 64:35; to be an ensign unto the people, 64:42; nations of the earth to tremble because of, 64:43;</p>	<p>Zombre, John Johnson called, 104:24, 34. Zoramites, knowledge of Savior to come to, 3:17.</p>
<p>PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE U.S.A. BY THE DESERET NEWS PRESS</p>	
<p>receive an inheritance, 64:30; rebellious shall not inherit, 64:35; to be an ensign unto the people, 64:42; nations of the earth to tremble because of, 64:43;</p>	<p>133:18, 56. Zombre, John Johnson called, 96:6, 104:24, 34. Zoramites, knowledge of Savior to come to, 3:17.</p>
<p>PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE U.S.A. BY THE DESERET NEWS PRESS</p>	

Figure 5.1 Printer marks in most of the most commonly dated issues of the edition. Deseret News Press practice in triple combinations varies too widely to be usefully illustrated.

missed signings, substituted signings, and double signings from completely different impositions (one of which is necessarily false). All of the books were printed in octavo or sextodecimo impositions. The electrotype printing plates initially carried signings for octavo imposition. Because most normal people have no idea how to read the formula's minutia, I have taken the time to create and include tables of signings by page number when they are present, just because I could. To lessen confusion (I hope), the page numbers of false signings are listed in italics. Double signings are indicated in the list, so that the first number in the table is the one further left on the printed page.

This descriptive paragraph also includes subsections of distinguishing elements (printed details identifying a particular printing, including printer's marks), stated signatures, and type errors (which should be self-evident). The stated signatures must be read carefully, as both signings and false signings appear in the books, which makes for genuine confusion for the uninitiated. Unnumbered pages and unsigned signatures are numbered into the series by including the appropriate number in brackets as a placeholder. False signings appearing on pages are listed alongside actual signings for the sake of documentary clarity.

With a few exceptions, I opt not to document type flaws (usually damage to the type or plate) and printing flaws (various blots, strikes, and stray marks). Of type flaws, there are both too many books extant and too few immediately available to draw conclusions authoritatively or even fairly by tracking damage to the plates. Suffice it to say, signatures printed from a struck plate likely date later than a seemingly identical book with a page that does not show the strike. Printing flaws tend to be copy-specific. Again, there are both too many and too few books available to specify an order.

The heading has a separate paragraph identifying distinguishing marks. These must be typographic entities and are listed sequentially by page number. Typically included are title page date(s), signings, and the presence (or absence) of a printer mark. Though they are somewhat complicated, distinguishing marks are helpful to pinning down a book's temporal place in the edition history. I need to treat each briefly.

Missionary-issue books prior to 1932 carried the date on the title page or title-page verso. The copyright date *is not* the same as the printing date; it appears in every book produced between 1920 and 1948. It is not bibliographically significant by itself.

The following generalities apply across the entire edition:

- Books dating between 1920 and 1924 always carried a dated title page and must carry a W. B. Conkey Company printer mark. No book with a Zion's Printing & Publishing Company mark or lacking a printer mark can be honestly described as the "original" issues, though it is perfectly true that they are from "the 1920 edition." *Caveat emptor.*
- Books without a date printed on the title page or title page verso positively and unequivocally date after 1931.
- Books with a Zion's Printing mark and no dated title page unequivocally date between 1932 and 1948. Ignore the copyright date.
- The absence of a 1948 copyright notice *and* printer mark complicates things somewhat but generally dates a volume to 1932–1948.

The onset of the Great Depression probably prompted both printers, Zion's Printing and the Deseret News Press, to look for cost-saving measures. Printer marks disappeared from the work of both presses during the darkest years of depression and never really returned. The Depression also eliminated title-page dates for Zion's Printing's inexpensive Missionary-issue books, as the date was not a valuable part of the volume. Dropping a date from the title page meant that the press no longer needed to incur the expense of a new slug or plate for each printing.

The second paragraph under this heading indicates signature signings where they are used. In beginning this project, I was convinced that signings were on the electrotype plates, but that printers re-imposed the plates without regard to the signings. In fact, actual use of signings is all over the place, even including double signings. It is possible, then, that the signings existed on type slugs which were placed below the plate margins.

A third separate paragraph under the heading lists relevant type errors. The edition carries three type errors, illustrated on page 54. The presence or absence of the first and last narrow the range of dates in which the volume could have been printed.

- Page 5, running head: "I Nephi, 3." rather than "1 Nephi, 3." This error was corrected no earlier than 1928.
- Page 17, 1 Nephi 10:18: "to-day" rather than "today." This hyphen is not marked in the committee copy, which means it was missed in editing. Since it was not marked, it was not caught in proofreading. The antique orthography remained in every printing of the edition; in fact, it passed into the 1948 and 1981 editions and was corrected only in the 2013 edition. Since the error appears in every book, there is no point to record its presence in individual descriptions.
- Page 298, Alma 41:1: "connot" rather than "cannot." This error was corrected in the plate for the 1923 and all later issues.

In addition, two type anomalies or flaws that are not typographic errors must be pointed out because they are relevant to identifying the edition as a whole. As noted in Chapter 3, each issue in this edition uniformly displays two distinct type anomalies:

- Page 19, 1 Nephi 11:30, line 1, second *s* in *pass* falls below the baseline
- Page 513, folio, 3 falls below the baseline

The dropped characters (see page 54 of this study) means simply that the matrices were slightly out of position when the slugs were cast; neither oddity is a typographic error, and if it was noticed, no correction was ever made. Duplicate electrotype plate sets made from the type and still later, reproduction proofs, ensured that this type flaw was perpetuated, meaning that it appears in every printing of the edition until the 1948 resetting. No book lacking the page 19 or 513 anomalies can be considered "a 1920 edition" book—period. There may be other type errors or anomalies, but I have not yet found them. Since type anomalies are uniform across the entire edition, they are not listed in descriptions but should be understood to be present.

Binding

Printed sheets are made into a text block by folding the flat sheets and stacking, stitching, cutting, and adding other components, including a case and endpapers. Since we have

precious few details about binding material, the paragraph describes the book cloth used on the impression (including any variation of color or cloth pattern), stamping and titling, together with separate identifications for any binding variation identified in the course of research.

Before diving into details of binding itself, let's emphasize the point that endpapers are part of the binding, not of the text block. They have not been through the printing press and as such are not counted as blanks in a collation. Endpapers are almost always of heavier stock than the text and sometimes of different material entirely.

So, before publishers commonly adopted the practice of issuing new books in printed dust jackets, many books were bound in a book cover decorated by stamping or in a book cloth with an original pattern or design, or textured to look like something else, like leather. As a book of its time, the Book of Mormon was no different. All the fabrics used on bindings from this edition are technically *impregnated fabrics*, meaning that a woven substrate had been given a synthetic coating (usually starch, nitrocellulose, or pyroxylin) and a pattern embossed or pressed into the surface. This type of book cloth is commonly known today by its DuPont tradename, *fabrikoid*, which was patented in 1915. Similar artificial leathers (such as pegamoid or duraline) and other fabric types had been used as leather substitutes for publishers' trade cloth bindings, instrument cases, and camera bodies for over five decades. Conkey used an established product, *keratol*, an imitation leather from the Keratol Company of Newark, New Jersey, on its books.

The Conkey contracts also specified "Interlaken cloth." This refers not to a particular book cloth but the manufacturer from which Conkey bought the material, the Interlaken Mills of Fiskeville, Rhode Island. The company's chief competitor in the US book market was the Holliston Mills of Norwood, Massachusetts. Though a few Interlaken sample books survive, none survives from this period, leaving us still in the dark about the designations of specifically which Interlaken book cloths were used. Book cloth sold to binderies across the country was regular stock and is not a reliable means of dating a binding, though it is useful when considered with other data. For the sake of shorthand clarity, the distinguishable textures of the book cloths (set in small caps in the descriptive notes) are identified as:

- **KNIT** pattern: my description for the characteristic pattern on the "black F. L. Interlaken cloth" used by Conkey on the first two Missionary-issue printings. Under close view, the surface resembles the interlocking loops of knitted fabric; the book cloth is not actually knitted.
- **FALSE-QUARTER** pattern: varied textures stamped into the cloth to give the impression of multiple pieces: the cover is made of a single piece of pebble-finished "Interlaken D-pattern" book cloth, the front and back boards are stamped with an irregular striped pattern blocked onto the completed cover before casing the volume (the striated pattern does not appear on the turn-ins where the cloth wraps around the edge of the board onto the square); this blocking gives an impression of a quarter-bound spine and vertical banding. Other than the 1924 missionary issue by Conkey, this binding style positively identifies a volume produced by Zion's Printing & Publishing Co. and therefore dates the book's issue to 1927–ca.1940;

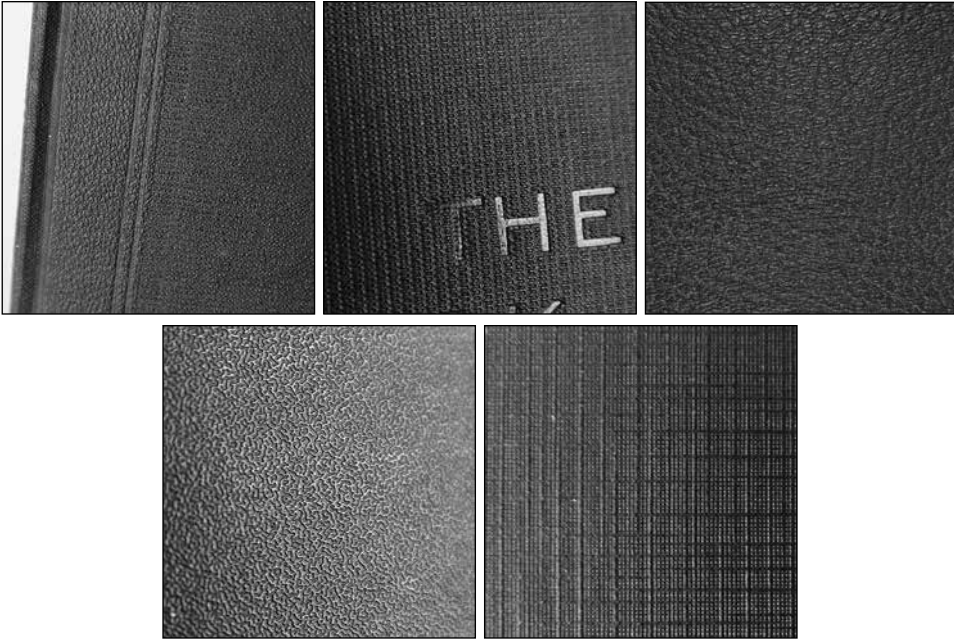


Figure 5.2 Book cloth patterns or textures (left to right, from top row): False-quarter (over the Interlaken D-pattern cloth), Knit (Interlaken F. L. cloth), Hard-grain, Winding-grain, Linen

the latest inscription I have seen in a book covered with this fabric is December 1939.

- WINDING-GRAIN pattern: an Interlaken book cloth with a tiny design of seeming random twists and curves. I've seen this described by library cataloguers as *vermiform*, but that term is so unfortunate that it begs for replacement.
- HARD-GRAIN pattern: a standard replication of a leather surface.
- LINEN pattern: a distinctive finish characterized by the appearance of a flat-woven cloth made from threads of slightly differing widths. The earliest inscription I have seen in a book bound in this material dates to 1941.

There are a few issues of the book bound in real leather, mostly the scripture issues. Technical differences exist between particular types and grades of leather used as cover material, which appear in catalogues and are used (though often misunderstood) by modern collectors. *Sheep* and *calf*, commonly used bookbinding materials, were never binding options on this edition of the Book of Mormon. The catch-all term *hard grain* refers to a leather with the pebbly natural dermal surface intact (as opposed to smooth sheep or calf) and is often incorrectly called by the even more generic term *top grain*. Leather is described by characteristics, which evolved in use depending on its source. *French Morocco* and *Persian Morocco* are actually sheepskin, while true *Morocco* is goat hide initially sourced from that locale and later from India, now more commonly from Nigeria. *Levant* is merely another name for Morocco leather, but *cape Levant* is a subtly different leather produced from a breed of goat raised in South Africa. The industrial term used in the publication contracts is *skiver*. The soft, thinly pared leather used in these bindings (likely sheepskin

but possibly goatskin) will be identified only as “hard-grain” because I lack the technical training to identify the differences, and readers probably don’t care about that level of minutia, anyway.

Cover ornaments and spine titles were stamped into the case cover cloth, either *blind* (that is, without foil or color) or with a color, which was gold leaf on the better-quality bindings or gold ink on the inexpensive Missionary issues. Bindings usually had titling in color and borders and ornaments blind. Ornaments are a noticeable means of identifying particular bindings, though it seems quite possible that a bindery might use more than one blocking plate (and thus, different ornaments) for the expedient sake of using more than one machine at a time to execute the cases. In descriptive terms, the corners and corner ornaments stamped into book cloths, illustrated on page 102, are identified (alphabetically and in no particular order of precedence) as:

- **ANGLES:** eight lines in two sets of four, set at right angles to each other, creating a triangular shape with the point set into the corner of a $3/32$ " single-rule frame on the cover.
- **FEATHER:** three lens or feather shapes in a right-angle of crossed jogged lines, the end of each line having a drop lip at its end; the group creates a triangular shape with the point set in into the corner of a $3/32$ " single-rule frame on the cover.
- **KNOT:** a single outer frame surrounding two lines intersecting at the corners inside the frame; the two inner lines bend and turn into the “knot” shape of the corner, with small hollow triangular shapes and a drop-lip on each side of the “knot,” surrounded by several dots, the knot threading through a stylized floral ornament bisecting the corner.
- **MITER:** a double frame of plain rectangles made of one rectangle of $1/16$ " rules nesting inside another rectangle of $3/32$ " rules.
- **OVALS** (a poor description): a roughly ovular central shape with smaller less oval shapes symmetrically to each side creating a triangular shape, with the point set into the corner of a $3/32$ " single-rule frame on the cover.
- **TEARDROP:** a raised cross of four leaf shapes in a raised circle with eight dots, which is surrounded in a teardrop whose tip points into the board, the sides of which have stylized mirror-image stems creating a triangular shape, with the point set into the corner of a $3/32$ " single-rule frame on the cover.

Fabric color is noted routinely, but pretty much is limited to blue on the library issues and black on the missionary issues.

One complicated matter is recorded for convenience in a separate paragraph: a note on the presence or absence of what is likely a bindery-issue marking, stamped onto the first leaf of the final signature in the case of triple combinations dating 1937–1947. Others will certainly surface once this work is in print. Such detail would not normally appear in a bibliography, but the marks are distinctive and need to be recorded for the sake of a complete description. Though a precise interpretation of the alphanumeric codes is not certain, they help us get a backdoor sense of the market demand for these volumes.

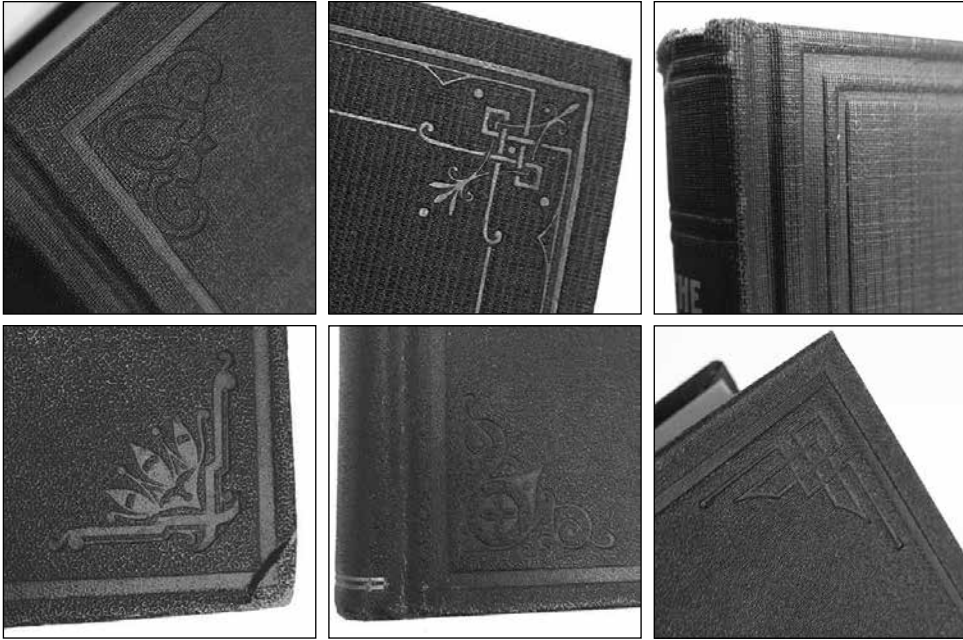


Figure 5.3 Cover stamping corner ornaments (left to right, from top row): Ovals, Knot, Miter, Feather, Teardrop, Angles.

References

Each identified entry carries a number for the sake of convenient reference. My reference appears in the heading and is repeated in the references, followed by citations to any other bibliography in which the work is listed. This can be complicating rather than revealing, as neither of the major published bibliographies provide adequate description of the editions they list.

Examined Copies

The scope of this catalogue is so wafer thin that actual collections of the books are limited to four: two institutional and two private, with key volumes scattered widely among others. Traditionally, a census is given by National Union Catalog (NUC) code assigned by the Library of Congress. In this work, I limit the census to the institutions in which reside copies I chiefly used to compile descriptions rather than a true census. Private collections hold most of these, but they are listed here for the sake of record only when a volume is not held by an institution.

USIC	Church History Library, Salt Lake City
UPB	L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University
Pvt.	Private collection (one of several)

Certainly, individual copies exist in other institutions, but there are no others in institutional collections that I know of. In the case of stamped triple combination volumes, I've chosen to divide the list of examined copies by those stamps.

Returning to the idea behinds Paltsits's epigram, this study has consumed a ridiculous amount of time and effort and will generate very little in return. Why do it? I can only invoke two factors: a personal commitment to pure knowledge even in ridiculously narrow fields, and a serious case of mission creep. Nevertheless, I am in good company. The first major bibliographer of the Latter Day Saint tradition, Dale L. Morgan, stated in his introduction to *A Mormon Bibliography, 1830–1930*, “Draw the dividing line where you will, it cannot suffice in all circumstances. In the final analysis total inclusiveness, with all its burdens and liabilities to error, seems to be the only satisfactory answer.” I must agree. More issues and bindings that should have been listed here will be rediscovered in the future. Yeah, well, that is an unfortunate but real consequence of a bibliographer's life and work.

CHAPTER SIX

Dated and False-dated Issues

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THE
BOOK OF MORMON

An Account Written by

**THE HAND OF MORMON
UPON PLATES**

TAKEN FROM THE PLATES OF NEPHI

Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites—Written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile—Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation—Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed—To come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof—Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by way of the Gentile—The interpretation thereof by the gift of God.

An abridgment taken from the Book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord founded the language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to heaven—Which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever—And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting himself unto all nations—And now, if there are faults they are the mistakes of men; wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment-seat of Christ.

TRANSLATED BY JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.

PUBLISHED BY

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, U. S. A.

1920

Figure 6.1 Title page to the initial issues of the 1920 edition (1920L.A, specifically). Note that the imprint at the foot of the title page is clearly dated.

1920

Introduction

The initial printings of the 1920 American edition Book of Mormon (and there were two, not one) established a group of practical realities governing the rest of the edition. The Flake/Draper and Sabin checklists do not differentiate between the issues or bindings, but the contracts and collations (not the signings) prove incontrovertibly that separate press runs were made. The basal sheets of the two issues (Library and Missionary) were of exactly the same dimensions, but the three-folds octavo imposition for the “Library edition” meant that the printer produced a *two-up* press form: two signatures side-by-side on one sheet, which then would have been cut in half before folding. The decision to reimpose the press form in a four-folds sextidecimo imposition for the Missionary issue was likely one of convenience made by the printer, since it halved the required imposition and collation work but did not affect binding or delivery of the final product. Since the sheet did not change, printing the signature as a sextidecimo rather than octavo makes the signings on the missionary issue irrelevantly incorrect.

Please recall that Chapter 5 lists three typographical errors and a pair of type anomalies, the latter which were never corrected in the edition. Two of the three errors were corrected, but one never was. Both of the type anomalies provide a basis for identifying books in the edition independent of other factors.

Releasing the book dressed in bindings of various qualities (and cost) was an afterthought. The 8 October 1920 contract for the better-quality press run, signed a month after the missionary issue, clearly states “Various bindings” and lists ten options.

LIBRARY ISSUE (CONKEY)

1920L

Paper and text block: Sixty-pound white Argyle English Finish paper, in 25" × 38" sheets; text block: 1-1/16" deep; trim: 7-1/2" × 5-1/4", square corners.

Printing: 8vo: [1] 2–36⁸; type area 5-7/8" × 3-7/8"

Distinguishing elements: p.[i] date “1920” appears at the foot of the title page; page 568 printer mark at the base of the final index page reads, “Composited, electrotyping, printing and binding by the W. B. Conkey Co., Hammond, Ind.” in very small caps.

Stated signatures (by page number):

[i]: [1]	89: 7	185: 13	281: 19
9: 2—N.20	105: 8	201: 14	297: 20
25: 3	121: 9	217: 15	313: 21
41: 4	137: 10	233: 16	329: 22
57: 5	153: 11	249: 17	345: 23
73: 6	169: 12	265: 18	361: 24

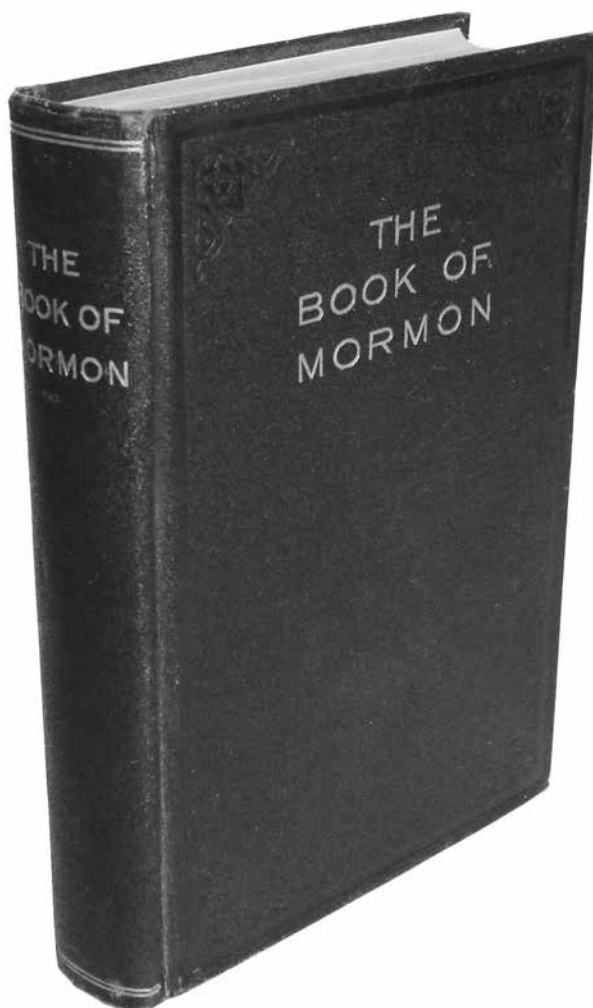


Figure 6.2 Cloth binding of the initial Library issue (1920L.A) with var. 2 stamping.

377: 25	425: 28	473: 31	521: 34
393: 26	441: 29	489: 32	537: 35
409: 27	457: 30	505: 33	553: 36

Type errors: page 5, running head reads “I Nephi, 3.” rather than “1 Nephi, 3.”; page 298, Alma 42:21 line 2, “connot” rather than “cannot.”

References: Saunders 1920L.A–E; Flake/Draper 693, Sabin 83112, Stocks L18a

Notes (issue): The paper for the issue was specified in the 22 October 1920 contract. Talmage notes in his diary under the date of 15 December 1920 that the print run of the “the better, or as we call it the Library Edition . . . is completed and that the total number of copies in this issue is 11,614.” This figure would have included *overage*, or the extra sheets (usually established contractually at 10 percent of the press order) printed to ensure the bindery had enough sheets on hand to gather and deliver the number of finished volumes specified

in the printing contract. Overage allowed for binding set-up, trials, mistakes, misprints, and flaws incidental to automated binding. The paper stock for this edition was contracted at 35¢ and presswork at 6.8¢ per copy, a total contract charge of \$4,180.00 for print stock and presswork for ten thousand copies.

It is important to note that the single printing of the “library edition” sheets was divided between the three bindings and Talmage’s private binding (1920L.A–C, E), so that each binding run might have consisted of as many as 3,500 copies. It is more likely, however, that there were more copies of the half- and full-keratol bindings done, perhaps five thousand of each, and leaving perhaps a thousand bound in full cloth (the work was reprinted but bound only in cloth as early as the following year)—but we really don’t know. Though the two printings were produced on sheets of exactly the same dimensions, each of the bindings in the “library edition” was trimmed to allow slightly wider margins than the lesser-quality “missionary edition.”

Binding States in the Issue

“CLOTH BINDING”

1920L.A

Binding: 7-3/4" × 5-1/8" boards. Blue WINDING-GRAIN cloth over boards; front and back boards are blind stamped identically (see decoration variants described below); front cover is stamped “THE | BOOK OF | MORMON” in centered san-serif caps base aligned 2-3/8" from the top of the board; and similarly on the spine, with gilt double-rule bands at head and tail. Plain white endpapers having a slight wove pattern visible in the sheet and are caught around the first and last signatures (that is, between pages 24/25 and 536/537) and sewn into the block rather than pasted into the gutter and boards. Woven red and yellow head and tail bands.

Decoration variant (1) 3/32" blind single-rule frame border, with FEATHER ornaments stamped blind in each corner, visually squaring the corner of the cover.

Decoration variant (2) 3/32" blind single-rule border, with TEARDROP ornaments stamped blind in each corner, visually squaring the corner of the cover.

Examined copies: var.1) USIC Pvt. var.2) USIC Pvt.

Notes (state): The cloth binding of 1920L.A is either the “Style No. 1” or “Style No. 2” specified in the 8 October 1920 contract. We don’t have a way of determining which. As described, the styles differed only in the use of either a common or “extra color” Interlaken book cloth; lacking Interlaken sample books, there is no way to positively determine which was used, but based on the First Presidency’s later comment to keep retail prices low, it was likely the less expensive common-cloth option. The contract specifies blind stamping to the covers but does not indicate a specific design. The differences in cover cloth and decorations suggest that there may have been two separate binding runs. If so, this in turn would mean that Conkey would have bound only part of the sheets and stored the rest temporarily. If this is the case (and it is only speculation; both could have been produced at the same time by different bindery crews), there is no reliable way to surmise which variant has precedence.

Binding charge for the cloth issues, depending on the quality of book cloth used, was 32.2¢ or 33¢ per volume. The library edition in its full blue cloth retailed at \$1.75. At least one copy has been seen with endsheets and top gilding of the “three-quarter keratol” cased in the library-issue binding, so occasional errors were made.

“THREE-QUARTERS KERATOL” BINDING
1920L.B

Binding: 7-7/16" × 5-1/4" boards; square corners, top edge gilt over red stain beneath; three-quarter black keratol cloth with a HARD-GRAIN finish over the spine and corners, with black Interlaken book cloth over the remaining boards; blind double-rule bands divide spine into five panels, titled in second “The | Book of | Mormon” in gold san serif caps. Endpapers of black coated paper textured to resemble a very tight hair-grain pattern.

Examined copies: USIC UPB Pvt.

Notes (state): Deseret Book Company's printed brochure correctly identifies this binding style, with corners as well as the spine covered in material, as “three-quarters Keratol.” Talmage calls it a “half-keratol binding.”¹ It is close to the contract's “Style No. 5,” but substituting black keratol and Interlaken cloth for the blue specified, without the gilt head, and black rather than purple end-sheets. The contract binding charge was 60¢ per copy. Though the binding material is often misdescribed as “leather” by online booksellers, it is easy to distinguish the book cloth from leather, because wear to the keratol cover shows woven fabric beneath the black finish that tends to look grey (figure 6.4), rather than the orange-red, fibrous matter characteristic of worn leather.

Talmage noted in his diary that the First Presidency set a maximum wholesale price for the hard-cover, half-keratol binding at \$2.25. The Deseret Book Company flyer advertised the same option as hardbound 3/4 bindings at a retail charge of \$3.00.

“FULL KERATOL” BINDING
1920L.C

Binding: 7-7/16" × 5-1/4" boards; rounded corners and edges stained red, full black keratol cloth with HARD-GRAIN pattern over flexible felt boards; a blind single-rule frame on both covers; corners are rounded to match rounded corner on text block; blind double-rule bands divide spine into five panels, titled in second “The | Book of | Mormon” in gold san serif caps. Copies have one of two different endsheet patterns, likely an accommodation by the binder: one is shiny, black coated endpapers with a tiny stippled pattern, and another is a moiré or “watered silk” pattern. No head or tail bands.

Examined copies: USIC Pvt.

Notes (state): This design corresponds to the 22 October 1920 contract “Style No. 7” at a contracted binding cost of 59¢ per copy; the difference in endpapers is not a bibliographi-

1. Deseret Book Company brochure, CHL; Talmage diary, 18 December 1920.

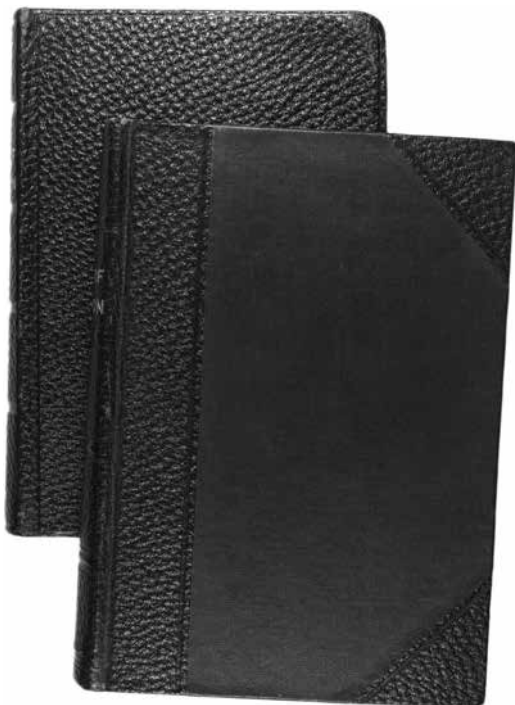


Figure 6.3 Full keratol (1920L.C) and three-quarters keratol (1920L.B) bindings of the library issue.

cally significant variation to the issue. A retail price of \$3.00 for the flex-binding books was set by the First Presidency; the same price appears in the Deseret Book Company brochure, providing buyers both hard- and flexible-binding options at the same price point. See also notes to 1920L.D.

“FULL LEATHER” BINDING 1920L.D

Binding: Full black leather with HARD-GRAIN surface over flexible felt boards, red and gold woven head and tail bands; no cover title; 1/16" blind single border traces text block, including across the spine, where limp edges begin; blind double-rule bands divide spine into five panels, titled in second “The | Book of | Mormon” in gold san serif caps; black polished-stock endpapers stamped with a moiré pattern.

Examined copies: UPB Pvt.

Notes (state): The 8 October 1920 contract lists two flexible leather bindings among its options (styles No. 9 or 10). The Deseret Book flyer priced publicly sold copies of the book in this binding at \$4.00.² At a glance, the leather is nearly identical to the full keratol binding but may be distinguished by wear: abrasions on binding leather reveal a reddish color beneath the surface, while keratol shows grey and eventually reveals the woven fabric used as a substrate when worn deeply enough, as shown in figure 6.4.

2. Talmage diary, 28 December 1920; *Family of Faith*, ed. Richards, 340 (28 December 1920); Deseret Book Company brochure, CHL.

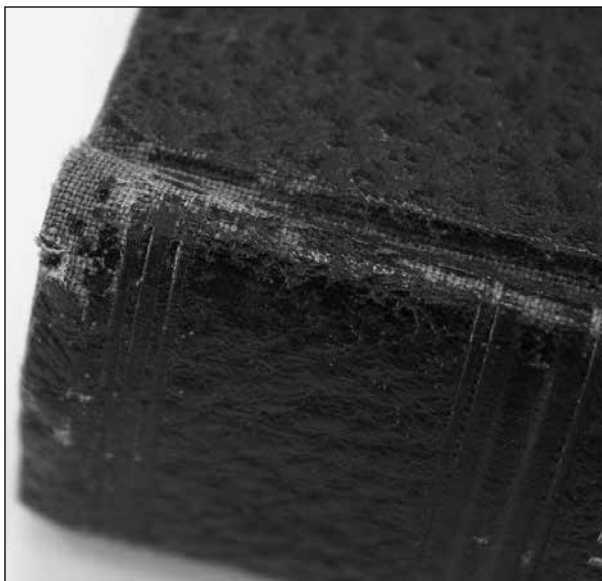


Figure 6.4 Detail showing surface wear on the corner of a keratol binding, revealing the fabric substrate.

Stocks lists it accordingly, but his list did not provide a physical description of it in his treatment of the 1920 edition, because at the time he wrote in the 1980s, no copy was located in an institutional collection. The copy at BYU, presented to George Albert Smith by his “prayer circle,” must have been given by the other apostles, for the inscription is dated (probably falsely) 25 December 1920—a date when the major shipments of the new books had not begun arriving. Copies of the book in this binding were the presentation copies dispatched to “each stake president and each counselor in the stake presidency, to each of the mission presidents in the United States, Canada, and England, and to several others.”³ As the Church had comparatively few stakes or English-speaking missions at the time, that number would not likely have topped more than one hundred books of the binding run.

Of all the initial bindings, this is unquestionably the scarcest. Few copies have survived, likely because the leather is pared so thinly that the bindings typically wear out and may have been discarded relatively quickly, but there may be another possible explanation (see also entry F1920s).

COMMISSIONED BINDING

1920L.E

Binding. Full dark purple HARD-GRAIN leather over flexible felt boards, with widely yapped squares; front and back covers are embossed with rules around all sides; spine is divided into five panels with simulated raised bands, stamped with gilt titling “The Book Of Mormon” text; block is Smyth sewn, with white woven headbands; purple satin endsheets; all text block edges gilt.

Examined copies: USIC Pvt.

3. Talmage diary, 28 January 1921.



Figure 6.5 The binding privately commissioned by Talmage, showing the deep yapped squares and no cover titling. The dark purple of the leather looks almost black in this image.

Notes (state): Talmage recorded in his diary that he commissioned and personally paid for fifty copies of the new book for personal distribution to “my colleagues on the committee, to the First Presidency of the Church, and to others.”⁴ He described them as “bound in best leather, Divinity Circuit style.”⁵ Though this binding is not covered by the Church’s contract, it compares closely with “Style No. 10.” The binding would have cost Talmage about \$1.10 per copy if he was not charged for the sheets from the overage. He received four copies when the first bound samples were handed him on 18 December 1920 by “Mr. Peterson” of the Conkey staff; the remaining forty-six copies probably arrived at his office in the shipment on 7 January 1921. These volumes were personal gifts and never sold.

Regrettably, the thinly pared leather of the yapped edges is particularly unsuitable for sitting on a bookshelf unless the book is lying flat (such as on a table, desk, or pulpit). The squares are usually badly worn and broken; I have not yet seen a really good copy.

If Talmage’s privately bound books had been produced from a different type setting, included a line or comment that did not appear in the other volumes, or was printed on different paper, the volumes would stand as a bibliographically significant issue. However, Talmage specifically noted that the books were bound from the Library-issue overage. As a result, Talmage’s presentation copies are neither a separate edition nor impression, merely a privately commissioned binding variant.

MISSIONARY ISSUE (CONKEY)

1920M

Paper and text block: 40-pound white Huron M.F. paper, in 25" × 38" sheets; text block: 1" deep; trim: 6-15/16" × 4-3/4"; square corners

4. Talmage diary, 15 December 1920.

5. Talmage diary, 7 January 1921.

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