

# ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM

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Edited by  
Daniel H. Ludlow

*The History, Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure  
of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

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spoken plainly unto you," Nephi says, "that ye cannot misunderstand" (2 Ne. 25:28). "My soul delighteth in plainness," he continues, "for after this manner doth the Lord God work among the children of men" (2 Ne. 31:3). Yet Nephi also delights in the words of Isaiah, which "are not plain unto you" although "they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy" (2 Ne. 25:4). Containing both plain and veiled language, the Book of Mormon is a spiritually and literarily powerful book that is direct yet complex, simple yet profound.

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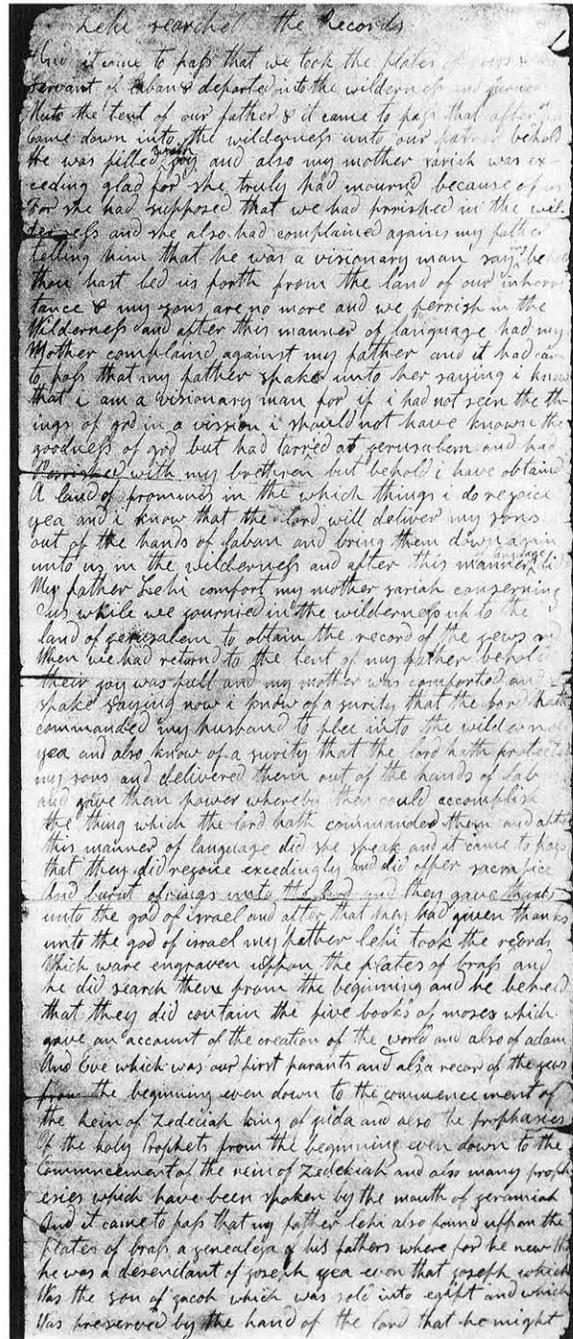
RICHARD DILWORTH RUST  
DONALD W. PARRY

## BOOK OF MORMON MANUSCRIPTS

The printed versions of the Book of Mormon derive from two manuscripts. The first, called the original manuscript (O), was written by at least three scribes as Joseph SMITH translated and dictated. The most important scribe was Oliver COWDERY. This manuscript was begun no later than April 1829 and finished in June 1829.

A copy of the original was then made by Oliver Cowdery and two other scribes. This copy is called the printer's manuscript (P), since it was the one normally used to set the type for the first (1830) edition of the Book of Mormon. It was begun in July 1829 and finished early in 1830.

The printer's manuscript is not an exact copy of the original manuscript. There are on the average three changes per original manuscript page.



A page from the original Book of Mormon manuscript, covering 1 Nephi 4:38–5:14. It shows how fluent Joseph Smith's dictation was. He did not change or revise the text as he dictated. Oliver Cowdery, one of his scribes, stated, "Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth . . . a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven."

These changes appear to be natural scribal errors; there is little or no evidence of conscious editing. Most of the changes are minor, and about one in five produce a discernible difference in meaning. Because they were all relatively minor, most of the errors thus introduced into the text have remained in the printed editions of the Book of Mormon and have not been detected and corrected except by reference to the original manuscript. About twenty of these errors were corrected in the 1981 edition.

The compositor for the 1830 edition added punctuation, paragraphing, and other printing marks to about one-third of the pages of the printer's manuscript. These same marks appear on one fragment of the original, indicating that it was used at least once in typesetting the 1830 edition.

In preparation for the second (1837) edition, hundreds of grammatical changes and a few textual emendations were made in P. After the publication of this edition, P was retained by Oliver Cowdery. After his death in 1850, his brother-in-law, David WHITMER, kept P until his death in 1888. In 1903 Whitmer's grandson sold P to the REORGANIZED CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS, which owns it today. It is wholly extant except for two lines at the bottom of the first leaf.

The original manuscript was not consulted for the editing of the 1837 edition. However, in producing the 1840 edition, Joseph Smith used O to restore some of its original readings. In October 1841, Joseph Smith placed O in the cornerstone of the NAUVOO HOUSE. Over forty years later, Lewis Bidamon, Emma SMITH's second husband, opened the cornerstone and found that water seepage had destroyed most of O. The surviving pages were handed out to various individuals during the 1880s.

Today approximately 25 percent of the text of O survives: 1 Nephi 2 through 2 Nephi 1, with gaps; Alma 22 through Helaman 3, with gaps; and a few other fragments. All but one of the authentic pages and fragments of O are housed in the archives of the LDS Historical Department; one-half of a sheet (from 1 Nephi 14) is owned by the University of Utah.

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ROYAL SKOUSEN

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## BOOK OF MORMON NAMES

The Book of Mormon contains 337 proper names and 21 gentilics (or analogous forms) based on proper names. Included in this count are names that normally would not be called proper, such as kinds of animals, if they appear as transliterations in the English text and not as translations. Conversely, proper names that appear only in translation are not included, such as Bountiful and Desolation. Of these 337 proper names, 188 are unique to the Book of Mormon, while 149 are common to the Book of Mormon and the Bible. If the textual passages common to the Book of Mormon and the Bible are excluded, 53 names occur in both books.

It would seem convenient to divide the Book of Mormon collection or listing of names (onomasticon) into three groups because it mentions (1) JAREDITES, (2) the community founded by LEHI (which might be termed "Lehites"), and (3) the people referred to as the people of Zarahemla (who might be called "Mulekites"), each of which contributed to the history of the Book of Mormon and therefore to the list of proper names (*see* BOOK OF MORMON PEOPLES). While this grouping can be made with some degree of accuracy for Jaredite names, it is not easy to maintain the distinction between Lehite and Mulekite, because a portion of the Lehites united with the Mulekites sometime before 130 B.C.; practically nothing is known about Mulekite names before that time. For the present, Lehite and Mulekite names must be treated together. Given this grouping of the Book of Mormon onomasticon, 142 of the 188 unique Book of Mormon names are Lehite-Mulekite, 41 are Jaredite, and 5 are common to both groups.

Much preliminary work remains to be done on the Book of Mormon onomasticon. The transliteration system of the English text must be clarified: does the j of the text indicate only the Nephite phoneme /y/ or can it also represent /h/ in the name "Job," as it does once in the King James Version? A reliable critical analysis of the text is needed: what is the range of possible spellings of Cumorah that might indicate phonemic values? Linguistic phenomena beg explanation: there are no exclusively Book of Mormon names that begin with /b/; but several begin with /p/. Q and x do not occur in any Book of Mormon name. V, w, and y do not occur in any exclusively Book of Mormon name. D, f, and u do not begin any exclusively Book of Mormon name.

The Lehite-Mulekite names often show great-