

The Typeset Errors within the 1837 Book of Mormon

An evaluation on errors and other anomalies found
within the Kirtland, Ohio Edition

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Abstract:

Typeset errors and other anomalies within the 1837 Book of Mormon have not been addressed as much as analysis regarding the 1830 text. However, there still are typeset errors and other printing anomalies in the 1837 text that are worth studying. A review of this edition has been completed in order to capture the errors of the 1837 Book of Mormon in general.

The following is a brief description of the printing process in the late 1830's, the list of errors and other reference materials specifically regarding the 1837 printing.

Background on the 1837 Printing Process

As the Saints moved to the new church headquarters of Kirtland Ohio, there became a need for additional copies of the Book of Mormon. Joseph and Oliver Cowdery took an active part in editing, as they took an 1830 copy of the Book of Mormon and made edits to the Printer's Manuscript in preparation for the 1837 print run. Parley P. Pratt and John Goodson assisted in the printing and are listed in the title credits.

The printers had a plan to join the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants together, however, there is a note in the back of this printing stating that the publishers abandoned the effort, realizing that the combined content would create an unwieldy volume to carry around. However, the printers were, by then, committed to page size and layout for this printing which resulted in this volume as a pocket edition that was still small but thick by itself.

The print quantity for this 1837 edition was 3000 copies, which was a smaller print run than that of the 5000 originally created in 1830. Over time, this printing has not survived well and it's a common thought that there are less surviving copies of the 1837 text, than what's surviving of the 1830 printings.

The Joseph Smith Papers, online 1837 published volume

As part of the Joseph Smith Papers project, a copy of the 1837 Book of Mormon was included in the project. This copy came from Church History archives and is also found as a scanned image in the Church Catalog as M222.1 B724 1837.

The JSP also created an online accompanying transcription in addition to a text only transcript. Both the online comparison and the transcript were evaluated and compared to the text/image set of the 1837 Book of Mormon. This text now becomes the benchmark for all other comparisons for the 1837 Book of Mormon in general.

Typeset Errors & Anomalies within 1837 volume

Within the 1837 Book of Mormon there are typeset errors and anomalies found within the pages. This is not derogatory nor negative, as the printing process in the late 1830's was cumbersome and prone to human error. Because of this, each page of the JSP copy was reviewed to find errors and anomalies in order to record all the known errors.

Typeset errors within the 1837 JSP volume are categorized in the following ways:

Misspellings

This is where the typesetter would misspell a word outright, either from distraction or haste. This would also be when a wrap around hyphenated word is used. Typesetters also had to set in reversed mirrored format, so it could also result in all the right letters, but in incorrect order. In contrast, a list of archaic words that might not be misspellings but used in the 1830's is separately included in this paper.

Examples of this are: Page 15 line 47, "sevant" instead of servant, Page 254 line 9 "fiirst" additional letters, and Page 87 line 37/38 "deliber-erately" a wrap hyphenated around word.

Proper Spellings, but Wrong Picked Type

This is where a typesetter would pull from the right upper and lower case bin to pull letters, but the wrong type letter was in the bin to begin with. This would be a common issue as typesetters had to remove the type when finished and put them back into appropriate bins, but maybe replace them incorrectly and thereby picking up a wrong letter from the right bin for the next printing plate setup. Examples of this would be a "c" in an "o" bin, an "b" in an "h" bin, "n" and "u" in wrong bins, and vise versa.

Examples of this are: Page 11 line 22, "bebold" a "b" instead of "h", Page 13 line 33, "behold" an "i" instead of "l" Page 319 line 2 "returued" a "u" instead of "n"

Dropped Letters and Variances

This is where the type is set properly, but over time a letter gets loose from the printing plate and drops completely, or fades enough for it not to print clearly

Examples of this are: Page 479 line 15 “m ght” dropped “i” and Page 539 line 1 “orth” dropped “f”.

These examples are labeled with an “!” to signify special attention for additional research pending other copies and alternative sources.

Conclusion

Unlike the 1830 printing where the printing process was stopped, corrections were made and then added to pages containing errors, it's assumed the 1837 printing had very little, if any “stop the presses” changes. Therefore at this time, it's appropriate to consider these errors as found within most/all copies of the 1837 edition.

While there are many scanned copies of the 1830 Book of Mormon to compare, it's not so prevalent to find various scanned copies of the 1837 Book of Mormon. Therefore it's difficult to review various 1837 volumes and cross compare to verify if there are variances between copies. It essentially becomes an ongoing “work in progress” to confidently obtain a full list. However, at the time of this paper, the following is the first comprehensive list of typeset errors and anomalies found within the 1837 edition of the Book of Mormon.

About the Author

Robert Messick is the director of the Book of Mormon Census Project, which goals are to provide a proper copy count of early copies of the book of Mormon by the 2030 Anniversary and to record condition details. He is a family man and an independent, private researcher, living in Arizona. He can be reached at BoMEditions@gmail.com

The List

1837 Book of Mormon Typeset Errors and Anomalies

Page 9 line 6, “abridgement” archaic?
Page 9 line 18, “wickednes”
Page 11 line 22, “bebold”
Page 13 line 33, “behoid”
Page 15 line 47, “sevant”
Page 24 line 24 “dilligence” (3 times error) 30 times elsewhere proper “diligence”
Page 25 lines 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 “baptise” 9 instances, all other times it’s “baptize”
Page 28 line 23 “baptised”
Page 49 line 38/39 “assunder”. 2 times in text as “assunder”, 4 times “asunder”
Page 52 line 11 “wich”
Page 53 line 13 “thht”
Page 58 line 32 “shoufd”
Page 65 line 24 “shll”
Page 71 line 18 “rigbteous”
Page 74 line 11 “Wherefere”
Page 85 line 17 “stireth” used once, 3 other instances as “stirreth”
Page 86 line 10 “cannnot”
Page 87 line 37/38 “deliber-erately”
Page 101 line 46 “warior” page 391 lists “warriors”
Page 115 line 15 “seige”, 5 other instances as “siege”
Page 133 line 16 “dilligence” (3 times error) 30 times proper “diligence”
Page 117 line 23 “eatheth”
Page 150 line 21 “spreaking”
Page 154 line 44 “cymeter” used once, all others as cimeter(s) (10 times)
Page 155 line 5 “stiff-necked” (unusual use of hyphen), all others as stiffnecked
Page 159 line 7 “heaarken”
Page 167 line 17 “grievious” all others as grievous
Page 175 line 21 “dependant” archaic?
Page 175 line 46 “retaing”
Page 181 line 19/20 “peo-pel”
Page 183 line 46 “asssuredly”
Page 184 line 28 “thands”
Page 197 line 42/43 “chatise-ment”
Page 201 lines 2&6 “devlish” 4 other times in text it’s devilish
Page 215 line 18 “wildesness”
Page 220 line 36 “Mulok” instead of Mulek
Page 227 line 16 “withhim” (no spacing)
Page 229 line 45 “tanslated”
Page 229 line 47 “fouud”
Page 230 line 25 “whlch” a lower case L instead of an i
Page number 235 as 335
Page number 236 as 336
Page number 237 as 337
Page 238 line 35 “commiting” other instances in text as committing
Page 241 line 17 “mightly” proper “mightily” on line 23
Page 247 line 17 “untoyou” no spacing
Page 248 line 23 “immtorality” instead of immortality
Page 252 line 19 “desirious”
Page 254 line 9 “fiirst”

Page 256 line 32/33 "king-gom"
 Page 261 line 43 "existance" elsewhere "existence" in text
 Page 276 line 32 "sufice" 13 proper instances as "suffice" in text
 Page 278 line 35 "martydom"
 Page 280 line 31 "mightly"
 Page 280 line 38 "acccording"
 Page 281 line 21/22 ex-ceeding"
 Page 284 line 17 "ws"
 Page 283 line 46/47 "Ammoni-hahits"
 Page 284 line 3 "carcases"
 Page 287 line 35 "desecendant"
 Page 288 line 16 "wickednesss"
 Page 296 line 12 "blesseed"
 Page 312 line 5 "wildeness"
 Page 319 line 2 "returued"
 Page 319 line 20 "abhorence" proper abhorrence p 275
 Page 333 line 3 "stubborness" proper stubbornness 3 times elsewhere
 Page 338 line 25/26 "sac-ficc"
 Page 339 line 38 "darknesss"
 Page 343 line 6 "destsoyed"
 Page 345 line 12/13 "begin-nig"
 Page 351 line 28 "bloood"
 Page 351 line 36 "forgivenss"
 Page 354 line 45 "assension" proper ascension 3 instances elsewhere
 Page 357 line 36 "mankid" proper "mankind" line 39
 Page 362 line 19 "Mantl" capital l in alternative font
 Page 362 line 40 "exceedinly"
 Page 366 line 30 "soldier"
 Page 368 line 25 "nnto"
 Page 368 line 28 "preceive"
 Page 370 line 5 "dissention"
 Page 370 line 28 "notwsthstanding" 2 proper notwithstanding on page
 Page 372 line 23 "rememember" proper "remember" on same page
 Page 373 line 35 "covenant" 2 proper covenant on same page
 Page 375 line 23 "Amalickhiah" 7 other times proper on same page
 Page 376 line 39 "liying"
 !Page 379 line 11 "againrs" fading t?
 Page 390 line 34 "hoasts"
 Page 396 line 46 "themelves"
 Page 397 line 2 "begining" this instance, all other times it's "beginning"
 Page 401 line 27 "rerurned"
 Page 402 line 3 "druken"
 Page 402 line 17 "heheld"
 Page 413 line 7 "recived"
 Pate 415 line 1 "land" capital i,
 Page 418 line 30 "exceding" 4 proper instances on same page
 Page 418 line 47 "despersed"
 Page 422 line 38 "accordidg"
 Page 426 line 47 "javaline" 2 other instances as "javelin"
 Page 427 line 33 "ciy"
 Page 433 line 42 "affer"
 Page 437 line 42/43 "assunder" 2 times assunder, 4 times asunder
 Page 438 line 34 "commannments"
 Page 441 line 37 "rememher" 6 proper instances on same page

Page 450 line 22 "unpuished"
 Page 452 line 19 "bave"
 Page 463 line 3/4 "destrustruction"
 Page 463 line 17 "robers"
 Page 466 line 12 "proyhesy"
 Page 468 line 7 "thay"
 !Page 479 line 15 "m ght" dropped "i"
 Page 479 line 16 "notwitstanding"
 Page 480 line 40 "passsed"
 Page 485 line 8 "deliever"
 Page 492 line 5 "dilligence" (3 times error) 30 times proper "diligence"
 Page 497 line 1 "sothward"
 Page 499 line 47 "hehold "
 Page 501 line 40 "concernig" 2 times proper on same page
 Page 504 line 28 "hithero" proper "hitherto" on line 30
 Page 505 line 11 "haptized"
 Page 507 line 38 "ler"
 Page 509 line 31 & 36 "rainment" archaic?
 Page 511 line 28 "eyss"
 Page 512 line 1 "Bohold"
 Page 512 line 27/28 "Jeru-rusalem"
 Page 515 line 5 "Jesusalem"
 Page 519 line 25 "destry"
 Page 526 line 46 "unbelif"
 Page 528 line 1 "hanhs"
 Page 537 line 10 "generaticn"
 Page 538 line 33 "uttter" proper "utter" line 34
 Page 537 line 10 "generaticn"
 !Page 539 line 1 "orth" dropped "f"
 !Page 539 line 23 "thinge" fading "e" but there
 Page 540 line 22 "mght"
 Page 546 line 7/8 & 17/18 "Gaddianton" other times it's Gadianton
 Page 546 line 30 "wbich" proper which on
 Page 547 line 30 "ahd"
 Page 548 line 26 "Gaddianton"
 Page 550 line 7 "thoudands"
 Page 551 line 16 & 21 "Gaddianton"
 Page 553 line 33 "Lamanttes"
 Page 556 line 24 "abridgement"
 Page 583 line 38 "sware" should be swore and not swear
 Page 588 line 2 "bofore"
 Page 588 line 35 "beeause"
 Page 591 line 14 "balf" proper "half" on line 13
 Page 591 line 29 "rejcted"
 Page 592 line 26 "kearken" proper "hearken" on line 1
 Page 594 line 42 "heheld"
 Page 595 line 24 "I" , a lower case L in stead of capital i
 Page 599 line 12 "exceeding"
 Page 600 line 28 "wildernes" no dropped letter, proper wording 4 times on same page

Additional Details,

Outside the scope of typeset errors

Archaic Words

Examples where words don't match modern usage, but were used in 1837, archaic in nature, or alternative spellings at the time of printing. They are usually consistent in spelling, even if incorrect in today's vocabulary.

angles
arrogancy
annoint/annointed 3 instances, proper anoint/anointed 9 times
befal
armour
arriven
burthensome
changable (unchangable), 5 instances
cimeter/cimeters
councelled
defence
dependant
digged
engraven
fatling
fraid (terrified)
fulfil
harrass
heighth
journied
lustre
marvellous 11 instances, marvelous 43 times
moulten
offence
phrensied
purifyer
Saviour
savour (taste)
sceptre (sceptres)
sepulchre
shewn
shouldst
skilful
threatnings, 9 instances, 2 instances of threatening(s)
travelling
stiffneckedness/stiffnecked
vapour
wilfull/wilfully/wilfulness

"eth" ending words, usually present tense verbs, such as knoweth, speaketh, heareth

"est" ending word, usually past tense verbs, such as beholdest, knowest,

"ings" words, like workings, groanings, sayings, disputings, proceedings

Online Available Sources

Very few copies have been digitized for online review. This makes comparison difficult as there's not much source material. However, as more images are archived as well as submitted to the Book of Mormon Census, there is opportunity to compare various details.

Joseph Smith Papers and Church History Library

The Church History library lists nine or more copies of the 1837 volume within their library. It seems copies are listed as "no.2" "no. 3" etc up to "no. 9" listed, and the copy that was digitally archived is assumed to be copy number 1 in the catalog.

A volume is listed as M222.1 B724 1837 in the Church History Catalog and can be found at:

<https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/record/2e9ca3ee-3143-4801-b53e-7ca2a360297c/0?view=browse&lang=eng>

The Joseph Smith Papers project used this volume and published their images to the project.

These can be found online at:

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/book-of-mormon-1837/1>

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/book-of-mormon-1837/1#full-transcript>

Internet Archive

an online document archive, it's imaged from the same copy as the Church History/JSP copy.
<https://archive.org/details/BookOfMormon1837KirtlandEdition>

Book of Mormon Online facsimile

Sourced from the Joseph Smith Papers Project

<https://bookofmormon.online/fax/1837>