

Notes

1. Hendrik Hartog, "Lawyering, Husbands' Rights, and 'the Unwritten Law' in Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of American History* 84 (June 1997): 67–96.

2. May 1, 1865 minutes, Box 3, Folder 44, General Church Minutes, CR 100 318, Church History Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

3. April 28, 1842 minutes, Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, Church History Library, <http://josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/nauvoo-relief-society-minute-book> (accessed December 8, 2011).

Proofed, Typeset, and Bound for Glory: The Material History of the Book of Mormon

Richard E. Turley Jr. and William W. Slaughter. *How We Got the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 2011. 154pp. Hardback: \$34.99. ISBN-13: 978-1-60908-062-4

Reviewed by Karen D. Austin

The appearance of Richard Turley and William Slaughter's *How We Got the Book of Mormon* suggested that the volume's intended audience might be investigators, new members and teens seeking to know more about the material history of this modern scripture. I opened the book with a bit of a knowing smirk, expecting that as a lifelong member of the Church and an avid reader, I would not find much new information. However, as I read the book cover to cover and dug through their footnotes, I learned many new things about the translation and printing process of the Book of Mormon. Turley and Slaughter present this information in a way that balances a compelling narrative with instructive images and persuasive archival detail.

Their book contains ten chapters, beginning with Mormon's compilation process, then describing the translation process performed by Joseph Smith and his scribes, and concluding with the publication history of the following editions: the first edition, 1830; the second edition, 1837; the third edition, 1840; the first European edition, 1841; the 1920 edition; and the 1981 edition.

Although the authors focus on the material history of these editions, Turley and Slaughter also give substantive attention to the people involved in the book's evolution—Joseph and his scribes as well as various editors and printers. One fact new to me was how portions of the Book of Mormon were first published not by Joseph Smith but by Abner Cole, a friend of the printer, Edgar Grandin. Cole had found uncut sheets of the Book of Mormon in Grandin's print shop and ran them in his (Cole's) newspaper, *The Reflector*, under his pen name Obadiah Dogberry. Early church leaders first confronted Cole and then had to seek arbitration in order to stop him from this piracy. I knew prior to reading this book that the first edition of the Book of Mormon did not break the text into verses. However, I had the mistaken notion that the Book of Mormon was broken down into chapter and verse just one time in a subsequent edition. Turley and Slaughter give a clear and systematic explanation for how the Book of Mormon was broken into smaller, more easily accessible chunks of text over a period of several editions—moving to smaller and smaller verses and then adding double columns for ease-of-reading and for parallel appearance to the Bible. I also learned that some of the chapter summaries were actually written by Joseph's scribes and can be found in the original manuscript. I thought all chapter summaries were a product of the 1920 edition. This book helped clarify the chapter summaries' origins.

The most important new information I gleaned was about the change of 2 Nephi 30:6 from "white and delightsome" to "pure and delightsome" in the 1981 edition. Not having studied the several earlier editions of the Book of Mormon, I thought this change was just an alignment with the 1978 revelation that eased discrimination by race in the church. Turley and Slaughter explain with clarity how the change from "white" to "pure" was actually made by Joseph himself as part of the many corrections he made to the 1840 edition. Unfortunately, the chaos suffered by the early saints during persecution, the formation of splinter groups and migration caused them to lose possession some of the earlier manuscripts. For years, the first European edition served as the source for republication, and that was based on the 1837 second edition. During the 1970s, officials from Church headquarters in Salt Lake worked with the Community of Christ (then

called the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) to exchange key documents, allowing access to Joseph Smith's corrections and clarifications.

The 154-page book contains over eighty images, including full-page representations of various translations as well as pictures of people and buildings central to the publication process. These images not only enrich the text but tell a story on their own. A reader might move through the whole book, just viewing the pictures and their captions and still walk away with a wealth of information. For example, a photo of the first and second editions, placed snugly next to each other, illustrates the benefits of moving from a bookshelf-sized edition to a pocket edition. This change helped missionaries more easily carry the Book of Mormon—both for their own reflection and for transporting additional copies for distribution.

Examining the footnotes also presented an interesting way to learn from the book. Turley works as an Assistant Church Historian and Recorder for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Slaughter works as an archivist and photograph historian for the LDS Church History Department. Their familiarity with the archives is apparent. They cite diaries, letters, newspapers, biographies, and autobiographies. They also consult contemporary scholarship that reviews the publication process in greater depth and focus. Extensive notes provide the serious amateur historian with an entry point into more scholarly work.

The footnotes also reveal the book's devotional nature. Most of the notes in the prologue, for instance, refer to the Book of Mormon, which would not be accepted by many non-LDS readers as adequate evidence for the discussion of this book's origins. Also, many passages throughout the book that refer to archival detail include a matter-of-fact reference to the numinous: the proclamation of angels, the unexpected pliability of Ebenezer Robinson (printer of the third edition, 1840), and the presence of many mysterious strangers who aid the early saints (implying perhaps aid by one of the three Nephites) among other events. In fact, as the book progresses, the narrative seems to shift in a pattern that suggests the Weberian "routinization of charisma": miracles that assisted the early, resource-poor saints diminish and the machinery of the larger, bureaucratic institution emerges. By the

time the 1920 and 1981 editions are published, the Church not only has the economic means to publish that the early saints sorely lacked; these last two editions have teams of editors, publishers, and scholars that add several layers of study aids to contextualize the content brought forth during the more charismatic and revolutionary beginnings of the church.

The book is by no means exhaustive. Topics such as the various translations of the book of Mormon into other languages, versions for the blind or deaf, oversized and pocket-sized versions are not addressed. Nevertheless, the authors present a work that highlights not only the faith but the works required to produce these six editions of the Book of Mormon. I recommend *How We Got the Book of Mormon* as a good overview of the process.

Part of a Bigger Story

Craig H. Harline. *Conversions: Two family stories from the Reformation and Modern America*. Yale University Press, 2011. 320pp. Hardcover. \$27.50. ISBN 9780300167016.

Reviewed by Wilfried Decoo

Craig Harline, professor of history at Brigham Young University, needs little introduction. His award-winning previous books on European religious history include *The Burdens of Sister Margaret*, *A Bishop's Tale*, and *Miracles at the Jesus Oak*. Together with *Sunday: A History of the First Day from Babylonia to the Super Bowl*, these books have established Harline as an international authority. His latest book, *Conversions*, is part of a Yale University Press series, "New Directions in Narrative History." Already named a Top Ten Book in Religion for 2011 by Publishers Weekly, it was also a finalist for the Mark Lynton History Prize, part of Harvard University's Nieman Foundation annual awards in journalism and non-fiction.

I. Your story in their story

The Yale series is "intended for the broadest general readership" to "speak to deeply human concerns about the past, present, and future of our world and its people" (ii). This Harline certainly