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## Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon

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**Abstract:** This article gives an account about the possibility that David Whitmer or the Whitmer family possessed the original manuscripts of the Book of Mormon.

We give Elder Walker's testimony as above, because it is corroborative of the sentiment of the Prophet Joseph as expressed in what is known as the "inspired translation" of the Bible, in which the verse referred to reads as follows:

Therefore, not leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.

While on this point, a word may be profitably said on the method of "translation" adopted by the Prophet Joseph. It should be remembered that rather than a translation it was a revision; but it can scarcely be called a revision either, and ought rather to be named a partial topical explanation of the scriptures. The method adopted was this: The Prophet had a large German Bible upon the margins of which he made the corrections as he was inspired while studying certain topics of the scriptures. One subject at a time was taken, and every reference to that subject was looked over, and where needed, corrected. But only a very small number of all the subjects were ever thus considered. Some most excellent corrections were made, but perhaps there were a dozen or more subjects or principles in certain chapters where one only was corrected. Hence it is that while one topic, as in the chapter referred to in Hebrews, has been explained, and much light thrown upon it, it does not follow and is not true that the Prophet either "revised" or "translated" the whole chapter or considered every subject therein. And this may be said of nearly all the chapters in the scriptures. But he finished whatever subject he took up; and this interpretation must be placed upon the expression, "finished the translation of the scriptures," found in the history of Joseph Smith.

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#### ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

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As confirming the statement made by President Joseph F. Smith in the November, 1899, number of the ERA, that the orig-

inal manuscript of the Book of Mormon was deposited in the southeast corner of the Nauvoo House by the Prophet Joseph, on October 2, 1841, and was never at any time in the possession of David Whitmer, the following evidence will be of interest: J. S. Black, of Hinckley, Millard County, writes to the editor of the ERA:

“With elders Andrew Jenson and Edward Stevenson, I made a trip to the Eastern States, in 1889. We called at Richmond, Missouri, and were shown the manuscript of the Book of Mormon in the possession of the Whitmers. We then went to the State of New York, and called on Mr. Gilbert, at Palmyra, the printer of the first copies of the Book of Mormon. From certain marks which he described, familiar to Brother Jenson, we were satisfied that what we had seen at the Whitmers was the printer’s copy. Before leaving Salt Lake City, Apostle F. D. Richards showed us a part of what he said was the original manuscript which had been deposited in the Nauvoo House. Upon our arrival in Nauvoo Mr. L. C. Bidaman, the husband of Emma Smith, gave us the remainder of the manuscript in his possession, of which I have quite a roll. When I returned home, I exhibited my manuscript, so obtained, to Lewis Barney, my brother-in-law, and one of the pioneers, who said: ‘I stood near the Prophet Joseph, in Nauvoo, and saw him deposit the manuscript and other articles, and heard him say that it was the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon.’”

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#### NOTES.

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Don’t wait for great opportunities; seize common occasions and make them great.—*Orison S. Marden.*

Literature, medicine, law and other occupations are cramped and hindered for want of men to do the work, not for the work to do. If you wish to test the truth of this statement, hunt up a first-class editor,