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Romance of the Third Edition of the Book of Mormon

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Abstract: This article gives an account of the efforts of Ebenezer Robinson to arrange the printing of the third edition of the Book of Mormon. It also mentions changes made since the second edition.

How to Keep Young Folks at Home



A QUICK SNACK with a festive air can be served easily and economically — and the “gang” will love it — when you use some of the dainties quickly made with

Lynden BONED TURKEY OR Lynden SLICED CHICKEN

No Work, no Waste
—just Heat and Eat

FOR IMPROMPTU SNACKS

Toasted Sliced Chicken Sandwiches ... for variety, make open-face sandwiches and pour hot cheese sauce on top.

Lynden Chicken or Turkey a la King ... on buttered toast, hot biscuits, corn bread or waffles ... or in patty shells.

Chicken Salad or Turkey Salad ... Delicious heaped in center of molded cranberry jelly ring.

Turkey or Chicken Pot Pie ... with pastry or biscuit dough topping. For satisfied palates, try Turkey or Chicken Souffle ... with creamed mushrooms.

Thin Turkey or Chicken Sandwiches ... hit the spot “after the show” or on weekend get-togethers.

Party “Puffs” ... filled with hot creamed chicken or turkey ... or with chicken salad ... for “at homes.”



ROMANCE of the Third Edition of the Book of Mormon

By ALBERT L. ZOBELL, JR.

EVERY Sunday School lad can recite with some detail how the Angel Moroni brought the plates to the Prophet Joseph Smith, how the Book of Mormon was translated, and how Martin Harris gave \$3,000 in order that the first edition of five thousand copies could be printed. But that is only the beginning of the romance of getting “Mormonism’s” first and most important tract before the peoples of the world.

By 1837 all copies of the first edition were disposed of, and so Parley P. Pratt published a second edition at Kirtland, Ohio, in that year. The second edition is said to be more rare, and hence more sought-after as a collector’s item, than the first.

During the winter of 1838-39, the Prophet Joseph Smith and five companions had been held in Liberty Jail, Missouri, on trumped-up charges.

When the supply of the second edition of the Book of Mormon became exhausted, the Church did not have the money to finance a new edition. In May 1840, Ebenezer Robinson, a prominent Nauvoo businessman and a partner of the Prophet’s brother, Don Carlos Smith, was inspired to go to the Prophet and say: “Brother Joseph, if you will furnish two hundred dollars, and give us the privilege of printing two thousand copies of the Book of Mormon, Carlos and I will get two hundred dollars more, and we will get it stereotyped, and give you the plates.”

Joseph Smith dropped his face into his hands for a moment and then asked Robinson how soon he wanted the money, and two weeks’ time was agreed upon.

Don Carlos Smith and Ebenezer Robinson made an immediate effort to raise their share of the money. They found a brother in the Church who let them have one hundred twenty dollars until April 1, 1841, at thirty-five percent interest which was to be incorporated into the note, and all to draw six percent interest, if the note were not paid when due. A few days later the same man gave them an additional twenty-five dollars on the same terms.

Then Joseph Smith came into the Robinson and Smith printing office and said: “Brother Robinson, if you and Carlos get the Book of Mormon stereotyped, you will have to furnish the money, as I cannot get the two hundred dollars.”

Robinson replied that they would do it if they could have the privilege of printing an edition of four thousand

copies. Although a strenuous effort was made to raise funds for the project, not another dollar was forthcoming in Nauvoo. Meanwhile the one hundred forty-five dollars was a temptation—it could have very easily been used to pay some of Robinson’s and Smith’s debts.

In June, Don Carlos said: “Brother Robinson, you take some money and go to Cincinnati and buy some type and some paper, which we must have to continue publishing the *Times and Seasons*.”

“Yes, I will go,” Robinson replied, “but I will not come home until the Book of Mormon is stereotyped.”

The Prophet and Ebenezer Robinson had taken copies of both the Palmyra and the Kirtland editions and compared them, and Robinson started June 18 for Cincinnati with a marked copy of the book to be given to a printer.

AT Cincinnati, he bought the supply of paper that Don Carlos had wanted and saw it safely on board the river steamer. Then he counted his money. With the Spanish coin that he had accepted in change, and which would be accepted anywhere he cared to spend it, he had \$105.06¼. Even he doubted the conviction that he had come to Cincinnati to get the Book of Mormon printed, but he started inquiring for stereotypers. At the second stereotypers, he entered and asked to see Messrs. Gleason or Shepherd, who owned the business.

Gleason introduced himself, and Robinson said: “I have come to get the Book of Mormon stereotyped.”

Shepherd came from the back of the shop and said: “When that book is stereotyped, I am the man to stereotype it.” After figuring a little he offered to do the job for five hundred fifty dollars. Robinson offered him one hundred dollars cash, with two hundred fifty dollars more in three months, or while he was doing the work, and the remaining two hundred dollars within three months after the work was completed. A contract was immediately signed. Robinson casually mentioned that he needed a bookbinder to bind two thousand copies, and Shepherd

took him to a friend of his who offered to bind the copies in leather at twelve and one-half cents each. This man willingly accepted Robinson's terms—eighty dollars while doing the work, and the remainder within six weeks of completion.

Paper was the next problem, and again Shepherd had a friend. A deal was made for about two hundred fifty dollars' worth of paper, and a contract, similar to the other two, was suggested. The paper dealer said: "Mr. Robinson, you are a stranger here, and it is customary to have city references in such cases." Shepherd calmly replied: "I am Mr. Robinson's backer, sir." He received the paper.

Robinson used the five dollars to engage board and room and had the Spanish six-pence left. He advised Don Carlos, by letter, of what had been done. A campaign was started in the *Times and Seasons* for money. A book was offered for every dollar sent to Robinson while he was in Cincinnati. One hundred twenty books were offered for every one hundred dollars received by September 1. When the books were available on November 1, 1840, they were advertised at one dollar and twenty-five cents retail, one dollar wholesale, and "Extra binding pocketbook fashion for the convenience of traveling elders, one dollar and fifty cents."

Robinson had gone to work for Shepherd, helping set the type and proofreading, for which he received twenty-five cents an hour. The first money he received was a twenty dollar bill from Nauvoo, payable on an Indiana bank. That bank was in good condition, having survived the panic of 1837, and he found the bill was actually worth twenty-two dollars and sixty cents. His own brother and a convert of 1836, sent him ninety-six dollars, which was cashed at the same thirteen percent markup. A convert he had never seen sent him one hundred dollars, which he later repaid. All in all, he paid Shepherd all his money before it was due and had given the binder eighty dollars before he had done any of the work. All the books that were pre-sold were delivered, and he returned to Nauvoo early in October with about one thousand copies.

THE following year Robinson went again to Cincinnati to see Mr. Shepherd. "Mr. Robinson," said the friend, "do you want to know what made me do as I did when you came here last summer? It was no business way; it was not what I saw in you, but," Shepherd pointed to his heart, "it was what I felt here."

(Concluded on page 594)



Today your baby's tiny hands reach out to you. His eyes follow you across the room. He knows that when he's hungry you will feed him. He feels secure . . . because of you.

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