

**Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 1: Manuscript Revelation Books.*** Volume one of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman, general eds. Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2011. 529 pp. Hardback: \$79.95. ISBN: 978-1-60641-909-0.

**Robin Scott Jensen, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Riley M. Lorimer, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 2: Published Revelations.*** Volume two of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman, general eds. Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2011. 726 pp. Hardback: \$69.95. ISBN: 978-1-60641-942-7.

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*Volume 1: Manuscript Revelation Books* includes the same editorial comments and transcriptions as the facsimile edition, published in 2009.<sup>1</sup> This book is the library edition, with the same color code used for the copied text and changes made to the revelations. Twenty color illustrations are included, one on editing marks (513). The book reproduces two manuscripts: A Book of Commandments & Revelations (BCR) and Kirtland Revelations Book (KRB).

One thing of interest is that the errata for the earlier volume in the series, *Revelations and Translations, Manuscript Revelation Books: Facsimile Edition* has been corrected in this volume. The wording of the notes is not always the same as the *Facsimile Edition* and a few omitted. Also, there are some additional footnotes, a few rearranged, and others revised. The scribal directory at the end of the book omits the handwritten characteristics of each scribe.

The following are transcription errors that are not corrected in the two manuscript books:

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<i>Manuscript</i>			
<i>Page &amp; Line No.</i>	<i>BCR Page No.</i>		<i>Text</i>
57	23	43	into this generation = unto this generation BC 34:4 has “unto”
131	18-19	79	to know the place as to them = to know the place or to them BC 51:5 has “or”
209	15	118	appeard unto some = appeared unto some
213	22	120	I come unto my own = I came unto my own

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<sup>1</sup> See my review of *Revelations and Translations, Manuscript Revelation Books: Facsimile Edition*, *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 30 (2010):275-78.

<i>Other MS.</i>		<i>Text</i>	
401	4	[4]	that even = that were
<i>Manuscript Page &amp; Line No.</i>	<i>KRB Page No.</i>	<i>Text</i>	
433	22	10	wherefore verily = wherefore verely
445	15	16	heavenly kings = heavenly [t]hings
487	13	37	cleaveth unto inteligence = cleaveth unto inteligenc
493	9	40	in this last kingdom = in this last kingdon
497	21	42	the voice of thunderings = the voice of thunderngs
509	24-25	48	he glorified God = he glorifed God
575	28	79	possess eternal life = possess eternal Life
577	20	80	Now verily = Now verely
577	23-24	80	lo not in haste = be not in haste

For those who already have *Revelations and Translations: Manuscript Revelations, Facsimile Edition*, you have the important book. *Volume 1: Manuscript Revelation Books* is an updated duplicate of the contents and transcriptions of the *Facsimile Edition*.

*Volume 2: Published Revelations* contains photographs of the 1833 Book of Commandments, revelations published in the *Evening and the Morning Star*; their edited printing in the Kirtland, Ohio, *Evening and Morning Star*; the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants; and seven revelations from the 1844 Doctrine and Covenants which are not in the 1835 first edition. Also included is a selection of marked pages taken from Oliver Cowdery's copy of the Book of Commandments.

The reprinted *Evening and Morning Star* was the first place where “substantive changes to the revelation texts” appear (xxviii). The text which appeared in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants became a church handbook and it contained, as stated in the preface to that edition, “items of principles for the regulation of the church, as taken from the revelations which have been given since its organization, as well as from former ones.”

Pages from the previously published books are printed in “duotone, a format that combines two colors (in this case, Pantone brown 1545 and Pantone yellow 123). While these duotone images do not precisely match the colors of the original pages, they are an

approximate match and convey the richness and depth of the original documents much better than black-and-white images.” (xxxix). This may be correct, but when compared to other reprints, the value of having the page images in duotone makes the pages: (1) appear awkward for a printed book, (2) hard to read for the average reader, and (3) discourages one from seriously considering the text.

These comments are made when compared to Wilford C. Wood’s reprint of the 1833 Book of Commandments (BC) and the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants (D&C) under the title *Joseph Smith Begins His Work Vol. II* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Co., 1962). Herald Publishing House of Independence, Missouri, reprinted in near exact size of the original BC (in 1972) and the D&C (in 1971). Their reproductions are easy to read and study. The earlier printings, when compared to *Volume 2: Published Revelations*, makes the latter look inferior.

Although Oliver Cowdery wrote that the Kirtland, Ohio, reprint would correct typographical and other errors, the *Evening and Morning Star* “actually contained significant changes to the revelation texts” and “very few of the changes in the reprint represent a restoration back to the earliest text” (198-99). A significant part of the book includes a parallel column of the revelations printed in the Independence and Kirtland editions of the *Star* (202-99). For those interested in making a textual study of the variants in the revelation[s], this book will help.

This volume gives good background information on the publication of the BC and the 1835 D&C. The footnotes are usually informative. The value of the book is the detailed comments on the sources for printing the D&C. For example, BC 28 “given in Harmony, Pennsylvania, September 4, 1830,” (compare with LDS D&C 27; RLDS D&C 26), “was greatly expanded when it was printed in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants. The material added to the 1835 version included updated and expanded doctrine on priesthood keys that was not known at the time the revelation was originally dictated” (xxxi).

Revelations were modified and expanded beyond the original text so that what really mattered were the new wording, and not necessary giving background as to date and location of the original text. By making the D&C a source book on doctrine, it became harder to recognize the changing role that was made in human development as the text moved from the early wording, to its modified printed text, and, finally, to its firm position in the D&C.

While some Restoration churches have maintained in the past that the revelations have not been changed or altered when first printed, it is refreshing to have scholars address this issue as evidenced from an examination of manuscripts and comparing the words between the printed revelations. Comments, such as the following, help in our understanding of these revelatory documents.

As had been the case with editorial work on the Book of Commandments, the editors of the Doctrine and Covenants made numerous changes to many of the revelations as well as a small number of substantive changes. In contrast with the earlier work, however, the editors of the Doctrine and Covenants also made a focused effort to update the revelations to reflect changes in church government, structure, and doctrine that had occurred since the revelations were first dictated (306).

A pioneering book that seriously took into consideration textual criticism is Richard P. Howard's *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of their Textual Development*.<sup>2</sup> General readers can appreciate *Volume 2: Published Revelations* because it gives a fuller understanding for the history of these early published works. At the same time for those who love to examine the textual history of Restoration scriptures, volume two is a must to have in their library.

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<sup>2</sup> Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of their Textual Development*, 2nd ed. (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1969), 1995.