How *The Book of Mormon* Came to Pass

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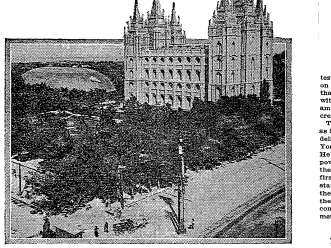
MUSEUM WALLS PROCLAIM FRAUD OF MORMON PROPHET

Sacred Books Claimed to Have Been Given Divinely to the First Prophet Are Shown to be Taken from Old Egyptian Originals, Their Translation Being a Work of the Imagination---What a Comparison with Metropolitan Museum Treasures Shows.



The Mormon Temple.
(Courtesy of Underwood & Underwood.)

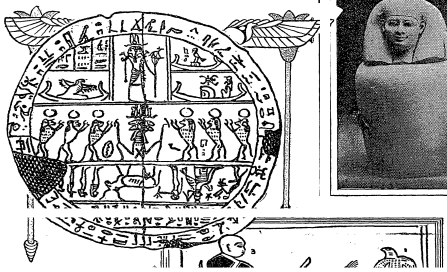


PLATE NO. 1—FROM THE BERLIN MUSEUM COLLECTION.
Magic Disc for use against women's ailments, translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith as "The Pearl of Great Price."

THE sacred books of the Mormon Church, which this wholly American cult proclaims to have been given divinely to the first Mormon prophet as a solemn addendum to the known Scriptures, have now been in circulation in Mormondom for about seventy years. On their faith that the texts were really produced through the gift and power of God, hundreds of thousands of devotees have hailed Joseph Smith as the "prophet, seer, and revelator" of God, and God's spokesman on earth. His successor, Joseph F. Smith, the present prophet, they hail by the same title, and so strong is their faith that the prophet wields unlimited power in politics, in finance, and in religion in at least two Western States.

Within three months the only one of these sacred writings to which the test of scholarship could be applied has been submitted to such a test, and its authenticity has been destroyed completely. The walls of the Egyptian rooms of the Metropolitan Museum proclaim it to be a fraud. Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, Curator of the Egyptian department, voices unequivocally the condemnatory evidence of the mute Egyptian drawings and hieroglyphics. Two eminent scholars in England, two scholars in Germany, and four of the most noted Egyptologists in this country join, without a dissenting paragraph, in the condemnation.

The sacred Mormon text was susceptible of accurate and complete analysis from the simple fact that it was taken from a genuine Egyptian original. The translation was a work of the Mormon prophet's curious imagination.

Within a few weeks all leading officials of the Mormon Church will receive from the St. Rev. F. S. Spalding, Episcopal Bishop of Utah, the results of an extended inquiry among the scholars of the world as to the accuracy of the Prophet Joseph Smith's work on ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. Bishop Spalding has collected the opinions of the scholars for distribution among the Mormons themselves. He writes to the Mormons in a kindly mood, and describes the ideas of their prophet and founder as "self-delusions," instead of using a shorter and an uglier word.

Much of Bishop Spalding's work was done in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in this city. The ten rooms of the Egyptian collection yielded proof in such abundance that any layman, even in Egyptology, can take the drawings as published in the sacred Mormon record, and reproduced on this page of THE TIMES, and find dozens of duplicates of certain figures in them on the walls of the Museum and in its cases of Egyptian objects.

A certain picture in the Mormon work representing Abraham "sitting on the throne of Pharaoh by the politeness of the King," really represents a scene depicted in the Museum's hieroglyphics a score or more of times. Father Abraham, therefore, must have been one of the best known Egyptian characters.

If a bit of Egyptian writing, again, represents what the Mormon prophet says it does, then practically every mummy that has been dug out of Egypt had a bit of the writings of Abraham tucked away beneath its head, and the mummy, buried with a religious service calling for the worship of many gods, was thus put to rest with a reverential prayer made to the one God whom Abraham recognized.

The "Sacred" Writings.

The sacred writings of the Mormons which Bishop Spalding holds up to the merciless light of modern scholarship is known among Mormons as "The Book of Abraham," and is published in a sacred volume entitled "The Pearl of Great Price." The other two books which the Mormons consider sacred are "The Book of Mormon," which purports to be a history of the American Indians and a white race which formerly dwelt on this Continent with them, and "The Doctrine and Covenants."

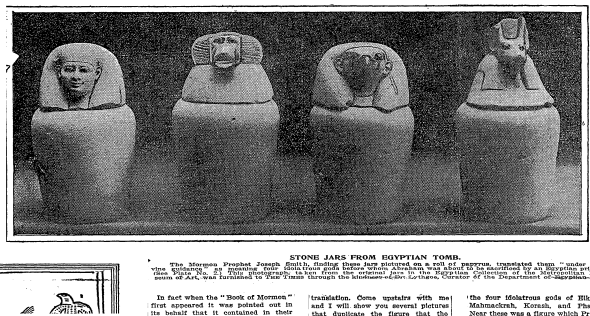
The "Doctrine and Covenants" consists of the laws which God, in His infinite wisdom laid down directly by word of mouth to the Prophet Joseph Smith. No witnesses were called in to testify that any of its messages from on high were actually delivered, so that the Mormons accept this work, with its divine order authorizing polygamous marriage, upon their general credence in their prophet.

The "Book of Mormon" was written, as Smith proclaimed, from golden plates delivered to him from a hill in New York State by an Angel of the Lord. He translated those plates by divine power, as he asserted, and then gave the original back to the Angel. But, first, to give his book a creditable standing, he had three men look over the golden plates, left them, and hear the words of the Angel of the Lord concerning them. Also he had eight men look over the plates and heft them, but he did not admit them to the presence of the Angel. Each group made affidavits, and in Mormondom they are famed as "The Three Witnesses" and "The Eight Witnesses."

Their testimony is printed in the prefatory pages of the work with each edition as a notice to the world of its importance. The third sacred book, "The Pearl of Great Price," differs from the others in that it at least has a source that is traceable, and is taken from documents that are capable of translation by scholars in the field of Egyptology.

The reason why it took seventy years for this text to be applied to this important Mormon writing, which has attracted hundreds of thousands of devout believers to the Mormon cult, is explained by Bishop Spalding in a simple manner. When the Mormon prophet published his translation and proclaimed it divine, there was no one to challenge him because there was no Egyptian scholarship existing, to anything at that time. The working out of the Egyptian alphabet was a matter of more recent accomplishment, and the scholarship that has grown up in its wake has not had an opportunity to overhaul and submerge the Mormon claim to the divine origin of its sacred work.

It should be mentioned that in addition to their own particular three divine works the Mormons accept the King James version of the Bible, but with the proviso that they accept it only "so far as it is translated correctly." Their other sacred books they accept without any qualifications whatever.



STONE JARS FROM EGYPTIAN TOMB.
The Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith translated these here pictured, as a part of papyrus, translated them "under direction of the spirit of revelation," and published them in the Mormon Bible as being a scroll to be sacrificed to an Egyptian priest. Dr. Lythgoe, Curator of the Egyptian Department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, was furnished by THE TIMES through the courtesy of Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, Curator of the Department of Egyptian Art.

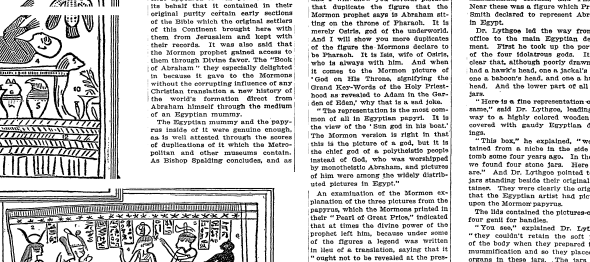


PLATE NO. 2—FROM "THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE."
Mormon Prophet's Translation.
Fig. 1. The hand of the Lord, Abraham fastened upon altar. The idolatrous priest of Elkenah attempting to offer up Abraham as a sacrifice. Fig. 2. Represents the head priest, standing before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and Pharaoh. Fig. 3. Represents the king, Pharaoh. Fig. 4. The idolatrous god of Libnah. Fig. 5. The idolatrous god of Mahmackrah. Fig. 6. The idolatrous god of Korash. Fig. 7. The idolatrous god of Pharaoh. Fig. 8. Represents the Lord God, standing in the presence of Abraham, stationed by the Egyptians. Fig. 9. Represents the Lord God, stretching forth His hand, as in the act of speaking, in relation to this subject, the Egyptians standing in the presence of Abraham, on a bank, or the heavens, answering to the Hebrew word Shaumayeem.

PLATE NO. 3—FROM "THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE."
Mormon Prophet's Translation.
1. Abraham sitting upon Pharaoh's throne, by the politeness of the King, with a crown upon his head, representing the Priesthood of Heaven, with the sceptre of Justice and Judgment, in his hand.
2. King Pharaoh, whose name is given in the characters above his head.
3. Signifies Abraham in Egypt, referring to Abraham, as given in the sixth number of the Times and Seasons. Also as given in the first fac simile of this book.)
4. Signifies the Land of Egypt, as it is called by the Egyptians.
5. Signifies one of the Prince's principal waiters, as represented by the character above his head.
6. Signifies a slave belonging to the Prince.
Abraham is reasoning upon the grand principle of astronomy in the King's court.

In fact when the "Book of Mormon" first appeared it was pointed out in its behalf that it contained in their original purity certain early sections of the Bible which the original editors of this Continent brought here with them from Jerusalem, and kept with their records. It was also said that the Mormon prophet gained access to them through Divine favor. The "Book of Abraham" they especially delighted in because it gave to the Mormons without the corrupting influence of any Christian translation a new history of the world's formation direct from Abraham himself through the medium of an Egyptian mummy.

The Egyptian mummy and the papyrus inside of it were genuine enough, as is well attested through the scores of duplications of it which the Metropolitan and other museums contain. As Bishop Spalding concludes, and as Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, head of the Department of Egyptian Art of the Metropolitan Museum, and other Egyptologists agree, there is nothing so certain as that the Mormon prophet got hold of pictures showing the common mortuary ritual of the Egyptians and that these pictures recur time and time again throughout the whole period of Egyptian burials.

When the Mormon prophet obtained his mummy and the papyrus that went with it his followers were in a frenzy of delight over his power as a divine translator. The mummy, in fact, was brought to him because of his reputation as a translator, gained through the use, as a boy, of his "peer stone" in place of a water witch to locate wells, and through the production of his "Book of Mormon."

As his followers already had a good deal of new scripture in his own special revelations, and from his writing translation. Come upstairs with me and I will show you several pictures that duplicate the figure that the Mormon prophet says is Abraham sitting on the throne of Pharaoh. It is merely Osiris, god of the underworld. And I will show you more duplicates of the figure the Mormons declare to be Pharaoh. It is Isis, wife of Osiris, who is always with him. And when it comes to the Mormon picture of God on His Throne, signifying the Grand Key-Words of the Holy Priesthood as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden,' why that is a sad joke.

"The representation is the most common of all in Egyptian papyri. It is the view of the 'Sun god in his boat.' The Mormon version is right in that this is the picture of a god, but it is the chief god of a polytheistic people instead of God, who was worshipped by monotheistic Abraham, and pictures of him were among the wide-spread distributed pictures in Egypt."

An examination of the Mormon explanation of the three pictures from the papyrus, which the Mormons printed in their "Pearl of Great Price," and dedicated that at times the divine power of the prophet left him, because under some of the figures a legend was written in lieu of a translation, from which it "ought not to be revealed at the present time," and "will be revealed in the fullness of the Lord." A "sacred" concluding line after one part of the translation was this: "**The Book of Revelation is given so far as we have any right to give it at the present time.**" Under another section was this: "**This ought not to be revealed; if the world can find out these numbers let it be. Amen.**"

The things that puzzled the inspired Mormon translator were no puzzle at all to Dr. Lythgoe. They were simply sketches of a hymn to the Sun god inserted on every flat disk that was put, for its magical effect as a charm, under the head of the ordinary mummy. The pictures were very badly drawn in the Mormon version, but still were near enough to the originals for their character to be known.

A picture that Prophet Joseph Smith declared to stand for "the earth in its four quarters" was found to stand, in fact, for the four genii of the Egyptian—the four sons of Horus. Horus pictures occur time and time again—one with the head of a hawk, one with the head of a baboon, one with the head of a jackal, and one with the head of a human. The familiar "hawk of Horus" of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, which was used always to symbolize the soul, became to the Mormon prophet, in one instance, the angel engaged in presenting the Holy Ghost as a sign to Abraham by God's order, and, in another instance, it became an Angel of the Lord, hovering near Abraham as he was fastened upon an altar.

The first of the three pictures from the Mormon work submitted by THE TIMES reporter to Dr. Lythgoe was that of Abraham about to be sacrificed on an altar, with a figure bending over him, knife in hand. Beside the altar, in the Mormon version, stood four figures which Prophet Smith styled the four idolatrous gods of Elkenah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and Pharaoh. Near these was a figure which Prophet Smith declared to represent Abraham in Egypt.

Dr. Lythgoe led the way from his office to the main Egyptian department. First he took up the portraits of the four idolatrous gods. It was clear that, although poorly drawn, one had a hawk's head, one a jackal's head, one a baboon's head, and one a human head. And the lower part of all were furs.

"Here is a fine representation of the same," said Dr. Lythgoe, leading the way to a highly colored wooden box, covered with gaudy Egyptian drawings.

"This box," he explained, "we obtained from a niche in the side of a tomb some four years ago. In the box we found four stone jars. Here they are." And Dr. Lythgoe pointed to the jars standing beside their original container. They were clearly the originals that the Egyptian artist had pictured upon the Mormon papyrus.

The lids contained the pictures of the jars, built for handles.

"You see," explained Dr. Lythgoe, "they couldn't retain the soft parts of the body when they prepared it for mummification and so they placed the organs in these jars. They were part of every well ordered burial. We have quite a number of sets of them here."

Wrong Period of Development.

Dr. Lythgoe led the way to other sets, varying in size, but only in design when they represented radically different periods of Egyptian development. There were three stages of this development. In the earliest, when Egyptian art consisted of things made from Nile mud, the jars had ordinary flat lids. Afterward they contained the head of a single human as a stock design for the lid, and afterward the heads of the four sons of the mythological god, Horus, appeared on the lids.

But Dr. Lythgoe pointed out that every feature of the Mormon drawings indicated that they belonged to the late period of Egyptian life. For one thing, the men in the earliest period wore a short skirt, and in the later period a longer skirt, and were so represented in all the art of each period, respectively. In the Mormon pictures the skirts were long, corresponding to the kind of characters shown upon the covers of the funeral jars, or sinister-tous gods to whom Isaac was being sacrificed, according to Prophet Smith.

The figure of "Abraham upon the altar" of the Mormon version, Dr. Lythgoe explained, was merely the usual scene of the mummy upon its bier. The idolatrous priest bending over him, to sacrifice him, according to the Mormon version, was, Dr. Lythgoe explained, merely the familiar figure of the god Anubis, "protector of mummies." Dr. Lythgoe pointed out the figure on a papyrus showing the process of one Ani of the eighteenth dynasty toward final judgment by Osiris, god of the underworld. The picture of the god Anubis was almost the same picture where the mummy was shown, and always he was leaning over it in a position as if to keep it from harm.

To make very clear just how great a hoax the Mormon prophet perpetrated upon his people, it was only necessary to gain a slight knowledge of the use the Egyptians made of their funeral papyri.

In the first place, the Egyptian religion grew up along the banks of the Nile. There they saw the jackals prowling about their burial grounds in the desert and saw the hawks flying over them. They observed the baboons in the forests. When it came to making up a religion they made the god of the dead Jackal-headed, and made that flew away from the mummy they placed with the familiar hawk of the burial grounds. In their papyri the Egyptian undertakers provided wicked and stereotyped scenes. Osiris, according to their legends, had been the first mortal to die, and had been revived, partly, and so went to become king of the dead. In seeking an explanation of the whereabouts of the dead they had also to seek an explanation of the whereabouts of the sun during the time it was below the horizon. It grew up in their legends that the sun, between sunset and sunrise, was lighting the caverns of the dead, and so Osiris, king of the dead, came to be known as the king of the west, or king of the underworld.

Each dead person, according to the religious notion, was led before Osiris and his wife, Isis, and there admitted to the company of the Dead after Osiris had passed judgment upon him. The scenes pictured on the papyrus buried with each mummy were the scenes supposed to occur along his progress after death toward final judgment by Osiris. They were thus stock scenes, and had in no way reference to any particular mummy, except in rare instances where Egyptologists had record of their deeds was inscribed on papyrus and buried with them.

Stock Papyrus for Funerals.

The undertaker reserved a space in his stock papyrus for the name of the particular person with whose body it was laid away. Dr. Lythgoe was able to point out such blank spaces with the name in obviously different writing from that comprising the stock scenes

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MUSEUM WALLS PROCLAIM FRAUD OF MORMON PROPHET

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and the characters drawn in as border vignettes.

The usual papyrus begins with a scene of the dead man on his bier. Then follows a picture of the body being drawn on a sledge toward its tomb, with dancing girls, professional mourners, and priests going before it. A picture shows the interment in the tomb, and then begins a series showing the wanderings through the underworld toward the final judgment at the throne of Osiris.

And in the Mormon pictures it was clear that the first one of these stock scenes had been copied off, and also the a scene. And a knife had been drawn into the god's hand. Thus he was made into a shape from which it became possible to glean the idea of the attempted "sacrifice of Isaac."

In the third picture, again, the leading of the dead man's soul before Osiris and Isis contained an incongruity in one of the figures—that of the black man. Dr. Lythgoe explained that the Egyptians in their drawings made the undraped parts of their women in yellow coloring matter and the undraped portions of the men in dark red. He expressed the belief that the Mormon artist had obtained his black figure by making in black what was dark red in the original and that he had also

ceived the mummies and "two or three rolls of papyri" from Michael H. Chandler, who promptly gave a certificate of accuracy when he heard the prophet's translations. This certificate he signed as "proprietor" of the mummies.

"Soon after this," the prophet wrote in his diary, "I commenced the translation of some of the characters of hieroglyphics and, much to our joy, found that one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt. Truly, we can say that the Lord is beginning to reveal the abundance of peace and truth."

"The remainder of the month," the prophet wrote again in 1835, "I was

cipherment of hieroglyphics by European scholars. In publishing these fac similes as part of a unique revelation to Abraham, Joseph Smith was attributing to Abraham not three unique copies but dozens of copies exist, but was attributing to Abraham a series of documents which were the common property of a whole nation of people, who employed them in every human burial which they prepared. The little disks for use under the head did not appear in any Egyptian burials until 1,000 years after the time of Abraham. They were unknown in Abraham's day."

"A Figaro of nonsense," was the way Dr. Arthur Mace, Assistant Curator of

evidence, such as that presented in the Egyptian collection at the Metropolitan Museum, will have open hearts, and so will receive the plain truth presented to them. The breaking up of Mormonism through the desertion of the intelligent part of its membership is the future for the Prophet Smith's church which Bishop Spalding foresees. It is for that reason that he prefers to address the Mormons as his friends rather than to attack them.

Advance copies of Bishop Spalding's exposure of the Mormon prophet's translations, when they reached the dignitaries of the Mormon Church, caused something more than the stir that might normally have been expect-

Figure 30. A front-page article published in *New York Times* (December 29, 1912).