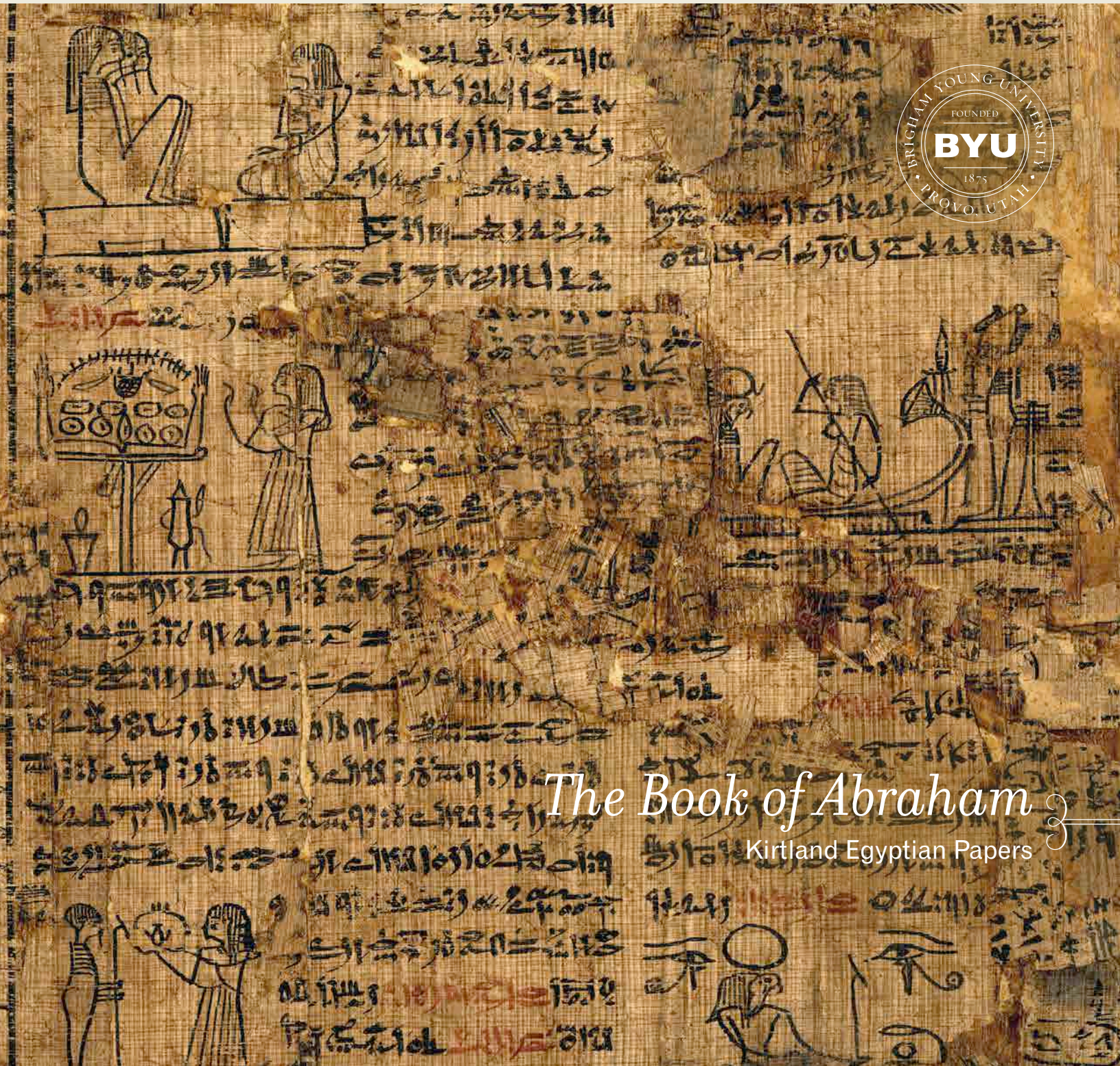


BYU RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WINTER 2017

REVIEW

CALENDAR ✕ COMMENTS ✕ INTERVIEWS & SPOTLIGHTS ✕ STUDENT & TEACHER UPDATES ✕ BOOKS



The Book of Abraham
Kirtland Egyptian Papers

Many Gifts, One Spirit



I RECENTLY ATTENDED A CONCERT WHERE THE BYU Philharmonic Orchestra performed. It is always amazing to me how all the instruments—each with its own unique function and sound—combine together to make incredible music. Likewise, people with different talents, training, and abilities often unite to produce something greater than the sum of the individual parts.

Such is the case with Religious Education at BYU. As I walk down the halls, visit classes, and read publications, I am amazed by the quality of our faculty and students. Each brings incredible intellectual and spiritual abilities. Each has a unique contribution to make, but working together they can and do produce something special. This issue of *Religious Education Review* is a prime example of that. There is a wide a variety of topics in the articles contained herein—representing the entire spectrum of what we do in Religious Education and the broad interests of you, our readers. There are other individual contributions to the quality of this publication, and our overall success that may not be as visible as those of authors and

editors. Behind the scenes are student research assistants, source checkers, copy editors, graphic designers, technical support, and office staff who make the rest of us look good and ensure the quality of this publication and other Religious Studies Center endeavors.

As the Apostle Paul taught the Corinthian Saints, “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:4). Paraphrasing, we can also say, “There are diversities of givers, but the same unity of purpose.” Like the combined talents of individual musicians and unique sounds of instruments in an orchestra, the consecration of many individual gifts makes possible religious scholarship that enlightens the mind and shapes the soul. Also, generous donors have given of their means to support the work of the Religious Studies Center. Those consecrated gifts—whether large donations or widows’ mites—allow us to extend the influence of Religious Education beyond the Provo campus, helping to build the kingdom and strengthen faith and knowledge throughout the world. I express my deep appreciation for all the gifts and my sincere admiration for all the givers. ✂

Brent L. Top
Dean, Religious Education



Religious Education

REVIEW BYU Religious Education Review
A Publication of the Religious Studies Center

WEB: rsc.byu.edu/review

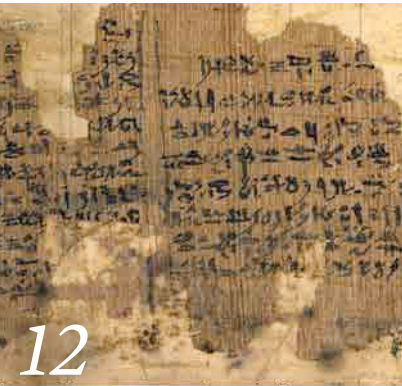
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Kirtland Egyptian Papers
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OUTREACH

The Community of Christ and Other Restorationist Movements
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Cover photo: Egyptian papyri 7, MS 2339, CHL. Fragment from the Book of the Dead of Ta-sherit-Min. Bottom right image copied to restore the partially damaged Facsimile 2. Courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

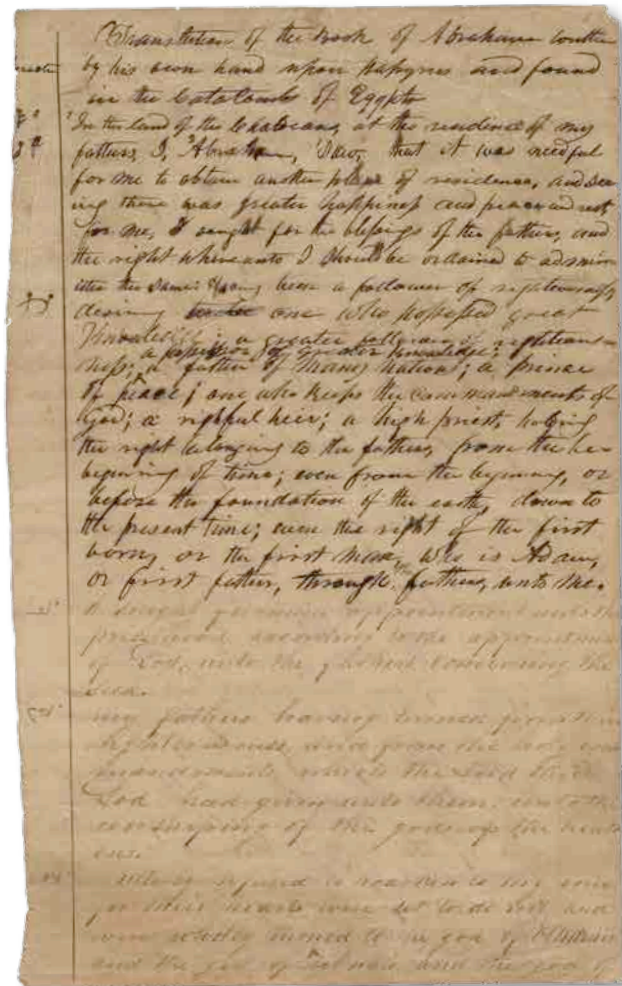
RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER Founded in 1975 by Jeffrey R. Holland Director Brent L. Top Associate Director Dana M. Pike	Publications Director Thomas A. Wayment REVIEW STAFF Editor Thomas A. Wayment Managing Editor Brent R. Nordgren	Executive Editor Devan Jensen Subscriptions Manager Joany O. Pinegar Photographers Brent R. Nordgren Richard B. Crookston	Editorial Interns Tyler Balli Mandi Diaz Leah Emal Kimball Gardner Shannon K. Taylor	DESIGN & PRODUCTION Hales Creative, LLC Creative Director Kelly Nield Designer Kahli Flake
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BOOK OF ABRAHAM AND MORE

THIS ISSUE OF THE *Review* magazine focuses primarily on research being conducted relating to early Latter-day Saint history and documents, with highlights on recent research into the Book of Abraham papyri, the Council of Fifty minute books, and current collaborative efforts to encourage and promote conversations with the Restorationist churches. Gerrit Dirkmaat, a faculty member in the Department of Church History and Doctrine, assisted in publishing the records from the Council of Fifty, and in this issue he surveys some of the contents of the three volumes containing the minutes of the council. Early Mormon documents and beginnings continue to draw the attention of our faculty in Religious Education, and with this increase in interest has come a wealth of new insights and perspectives. Some of these new insights and perspectives are highlighted in this issue, and we hope that you will enjoy reading about these exciting and engaging topics.

We also introduce to you in this issue the Book of Mormon academy, which although it was formed several years ago, is starting to show



William W. Phelps and Warren Parrish Copy of Abraham Manuscript, Summer–Fall 1835 [Abraham 1:1–28]. Courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

signs of activity in Book of Mormon scholarship being done by the faculty of Religious Education. They have an impressive volume on Abinadi planned for publication in early 2018 (RSC), and they continue to advance

the academic study and discussion of the Book of Mormon. The interview published herein provides some important information about how they began, what they hope to achieve,

and a brief glimpse at where they plan to go in their studies.

Another item of interest will be the publication, after a decade of research, writing, and presenting, of Fred Wood's history of the community at Kalaupapa, Hawaii. The book tells a fascinating and engaging story of community faith and struggle. Fred shares some thoughts on the project, and the brief report he provides traces the journey of a scholar who came to see a story through different eyes.

We are grateful to all of our readers and donors who help make Religious Education a vibrant place to work and teach. The RSC exists, in part, to promote and advance the research that is carried out by Religious Education in all of its many faceted endeavors. The *Review* magazine is one of the ways that we advertise and promote current and ongoing research and publication. ✂

Thomas A. Waymont
Publications Director
Religious Studies Center

calendar of events

Open to the campus community and the general public

FEBRUARY 2017–NOVEMBER 2018

JESUS WEPT: EMOTIONS IN THE SCRIPTURES

New exhibition at the Education in Zion Gallery in the Joseph F. Smith Building

Can you imagine life without emotions? Emotions create texture and richness that illuminate our everyday lives and punctuate our mortal experience. Learn about the wide range of emotions found in the scriptures, universal emotions across time and cultures, and emotional coping tools. Visit <http://emotionsinthescriptures.byu.edu> for more information.

APRIL 2017

BYU EASTER CONFERENCE

Friday, 14 April 2017

This Easter Conference will be held on Good Friday in the Joseph Smith Building (JSB) auditorium beginning at 7:00 p.m. The keynote speaker will be President Kevin J. Worthen, president of Brigham Young University. The other two speakers are Camille Fronk Olson, chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture at BYU, and Hank Smith, assistant professor of ancient scripture. Each speaker will talk about various aspects of the Savior, his life, his mission, the Atonement, and his influence on our lives today. Plan to bring a friend or loved one and come early. For more information, visit <http://rsc.byu.edu/easterconference>.

OCTOBER 2017

SIDNEY B. SPERRY SYMPOSIUM

Friday and Saturday, 27–28 October 2017

The 46th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium will be held in the Joseph Smith Building (JSB) auditorium on BYU campus. The theme is "Prophets and Prophecies of the Old Testament." Presentations will cover the Savior's restoration of foundational truths, doctrines, and covenants. For more information, visit <https://rsc.byu.edu/sperrysymposium>.

These events are free of charge and registration is not required. Some event details are subject to change. For more details, please visit us online at rsc.byu.edu/conferences or contact Brent Nordgren at 801-422-3293.



Faculty Highlight: Byran Korth

BYRAN KORTH (byran_korth@byu.edu) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.



FOLLOWING A MISSION TO MEXICO in 1988–90, Byran Korth received his bachelor's and master's degrees from BYU in family sciences (1993 and 1995, respectively). In 2000 he completed a doctorate in human development and family studies from Auburn University. He joined BYU in 2004 as a faculty member in the early childhood teacher education program in the David O. McKay School of Education, preparing university students to be teachers of young children. His new position in the Department of Church History and Doctrine (2016) includes teaching "The Eternal Family" course and engaging in academic and gospel scholarship. His research interests include parenting and family relationships as well as early childhood development and learning. With his new role in Religious Education, he is combining his prior experience and expertise in new areas of study addressing early childhood religious education and the spiritual development of young children. His wife, Sheia, completed her bachelor's in elementary education at BYU, where they met. She currently teaches preschool. They have three children (Kayden, nineteen; Karissa, thirteen; and Kyler, twelve) with his oldest serving in the Japan Kobe Mission. ✂

Faculty Highlight: David F. Boone

DAVID F. BOONE (david_boone@byu.edu) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.



DAVID F. BOONE WAS BORN IN FLORIDA, THE TENTH OF FOURTEEN CHILDREN (eleven boys and three girls). His master's degree from BYU was in history, emphasizing the pioneer frontier west. Later, he earned a doctorate in educational leadership and foundations. Research interests include the Southern States Mission and LDS pioneering and colonization in the US Southwest. A natural connection between the two diverse areas is that many Saints converted in the South, then immigrated to and colonized Arizona, New Mexico, California, and neighboring states. He and Cathy Ellis have coedited *Pioneer Women of Arizona*, to be published in 2017 by the Religious Studies Center, containing more than two hundred sketches of pioneer women colonizers of Arizona Territory, including a few members of other faiths. Their annotated biographies, coupled with notes, maps, and appendices, feature information on geography, illnesses, and transportation. It includes frequent interaction with visiting Church leaders and Native Americans, chronicling everyday toils and blessings of pioneer life. ✂

Faculty Spotlight: George A. Pierce

GEORGE A. PIERCE (george_pierce@byu.edu) IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.



GEORGE A. PIERCE GREW UP IN A BAPTIST HOUSEHOLD IN FLORIDA. He received a BA in history from Clearwater Christian College, an MSc in Archaeological Information Systems from the University of York, an MA in biblical studies from Wheaton College, and a PhD in Near Eastern languages and cultures from UCLA, where he joined the Church in June 2009. He has also served as research faculty at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beer Sheva, Israel. Additionally, he is certified in architectural and mechanical drafting from the state of Florida. He has excavated in Florida, Scotland, the West Bank, and Israel. His research focuses on regional settlement patterns, historical geography, and computer applications in archaeology. He and his wife, Dr. Krystal Pierce, have two children: Victoria and George III. ✂

Faculty Highlight: Hank R. Smith

HANK R. SMITH (hank_smith@byu.edu) IS AN ASSISTANT TEACHING PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.



HANK R. SMITH GREW UP IN St. George, Utah. He received a bachelor's degree in business administration from Dixie State University (2002), his MBA (2005) from Utah State University, and his PhD in educational leadership (2014) from BYU. His studies focused on the development of high trust educational organizations and their impact on student achievement. Prior to joining the religion faculty at BYU, he worked for fourteen years with Seminaries and Institutes of Religion as an instructor. He loves to teach from the scriptures, especially to the youth and young adults of the Church. He also enjoys consulting work with school districts and corporations centered on creating a high trust culture. He has addressed audiences in almost every state through seminars and keynote speaking engagements. His outside interests include marathons, history books, and hiking with his family. He and his wife, Sara, are the parents of five children and reside in Mapleton, Utah. ✂

The Mormon Experience in Kalaupapa

BY FRED E. WOODS (*fred_woods@byu.edu*), A PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.

THIS ARTICLE OFFERS A GLIMPSE INTO A FASCINATING story of a unique settlement on the Hawaiian island of Molokaʻi known as Kalaupapa.¹ Here, patients afflicted with leprosy (now known as Hansen’s disease) were forced to separate from society; yet, working together, they forged a loving, united community from which sacred space emerged.

In 1969, the same year that Neil Armstrong took a giant step onto the moon, the Hawaiʻi Board of Health finally made the move to permanently end the isolation of all patients—but many chose to remain. This book helps explain why they wanted to stay and emphasizes the Mormon experience encountered on that hallowed ground.

In 1980, the US Department of the Interior and National Park Service established the Kalaupapa National Historic Park to preserve the historic buildings and heritage of this unique community. One of the stipulations of creating the park was that patients would be able to live at Kalaupapa as long as they wanted and that their lifestyle and privacy would be protected. The year 2016 marked the sesquicentennial of the moment when the first dozen “inmates” were outcast to this island prison.

I felt the tug of Kalaupapa long before I ever visited there. My wife, JoAnna, and I had been researching the Hawaiian Islands in preparation for a research and anniversary trip to Oʻahu in 2003. I asked her where she would like to visit after my research was completed. “I don’t care whatever else we do, but we must visit Kalaupapa,” she said. As is our pattern, her impression set me on a decade-long passion and changed our lives forever.

It was high adventure just getting to that remote peninsula. The destination necessitated a precarious mule



Kalaupapa peninsula. Courtesy of author.

ride down the highest sea cliffs in the world.² At last we heard the thunderous pounding of the Pacific reverberating against the northern coastline, and we inhaled deeply at our safe arrival. Our small caravan spilled us out onto the flat four-mile terra firma peninsula that I would one day consider consecrated.

Scope of Documentary Efforts

Over the years, the phrase “Saints of Kalaupapa” has come to have a broader meaning for me, reaching beyond my view of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) who reside at the settlement. I have often thought about the community as a whole and the general composition of its inner goodness. Among other things, I have learned that the literal translation of Kalaupapa may be rendered “flat plain” or “flat leaf.”³ In either case, I discovered through much reading, many interviews, and multiple firsthand encounters that

Kalaupapa is a leveling experience: one crosses the boundaries of one’s own acknowledged beliefs and ethnicity into a larger realm of brotherhood and compassion. For it is in Kalaupapa where religious denominations and cultural divides vanish—where the love of God and mankind manifest themselves in a truly magnificent way.

After over a decade of research, interviews, expeditions, and contemplation, I believe I’ve unearthed the settlement’s secrets. It is the story of community—community unlike anywhere else in the world—not a space divided by borders and barriers or fences and enclosures, but a place which beckons every race and religion, every color and creed. Kalaupapa is proof that community is possible, though not without price. The cost was suffering—suffering together.

My experiences and research have prompted me to write the recently released book *Kalaupapa: The Mormon Experience in an Exiled Community*. This book reveals the impact the Kalaupapa community had on Mormon patients who lived at or visited the settlement and reveals that their experiences were quite similar to others who had any contact with this unique peninsula of sacred space, regardless of race or religion. What makes this book unique is that it is the first book ever written that emphasizes the Mormon experience at Kalaupapa whose LDS members made up an average of about 10–20 percent of the total population of the patients during the time it was an active settlement.



Royal Portrait of King Kamehameha V. Photo retouched by JJ Williams.

It also depicts how this sacred space touched people who came into contact with this extraordinary community.

Methodology

The book relies heavily on primary historical sources so readers can capture the authentic, historical voice of the past and, above all, the divine touch of Kalaupapa. To ensure that this touch is *experienced*, the book includes excerpts from scores of interviews to capture the messages of people from all walks of life who were deeply moved by the Kalaupapa experience either as patients in the settlement or those who have visited this sacred turf.

Themes of Charity, Service, and Community

The charity and uncommon service rendered at Kalaupapa is relevant in any age and serves as a reminder of the importance of erecting bridges instead of barriers, finding common ground instead of a battleground, and in valuing one another regardless of ethnicity and religiosity. It provides a vivid illustration of the need for Latter-day Saints and others to not only join hands, but to look outside the circle of their faith’s community to embrace the universal message to love one another, regardless of our differences. Such an ecumenical philosophy of inclusiveness seems to be desperately needed in a world that suffers from societal diseases such as selfishness, pride, bigotry, and prejudice. In addition, it is hoped that the message of the Kalaupapa community will serve as a reminder of the acute need for each of us to generate light instead of heat and to apply the Latin maxim: “In the essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity.” ✕

Note: The author also just published *Reflections of Kalaupapa*, which is a compilation of interviews and personal narratives he gathered over the past decade.

1. Kerri A. Inglis, *Maʻi Lepera: Disease and Displacement in Nineteenth-Century Hawaiʻi* (Honolulu: University of Hawaiʻi Press: 2013), xiii. In her dissertation, Inglis uses the strict definition of Mākanalua for the peninsula of the north shore of Molokaʻi generally. However, I prefer to use the more commonly known name of Kalaupapa to refer to the entire peninsula.
2. These cliffs are nearly two thousand feet tall.
3. Emmett Cahill, *Yesterday at Kalaupapa* (Honolulu: Editions Limited, 1990), 2.

A New Voice from the Past: The Council of Fifty Minutes

By Gerrit J. Dirkmaat

GERRIT J. DIRKMAAT (gerrit_dirkmaat@byu.edu) IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE COUNCIL OF FIFTY MINUTE books by the Joseph Smith Papers Project is one of the most profound achievements of the years-long effort by the Church History Department to make available to everyone all of Joseph Smith's papers. The Council of Fifty minutes have never before been published or made publicly available but can now be accessed readily by both academics and interested Church members alike. Many nonacademics will likely have never even heard of the Council of Fifty, for it was effectively in operation in the Church for only a very brief time.

By late 1843 and early 1844, it had become apparent to Joseph Smith that the Latter-day Saints would not be able to live peaceably inside the boundaries of the United States. Mormons had been massacred and brutalized in Missouri in 1838 and had all of their property confiscated without remuneration. Efforts to obtain redress of their grievances were pursued at the local, state, and federal levels, with even the president of the United States refusing to intervene on the Mormons' behalf. In Nauvoo, the growing Mormon population and their subsequent power were engendering the kind of anti-Mormon sentiment that had led to the Missouri expulsion a few years earlier. Joseph Smith had personally written to the various presidential hopefuls of the Democratic and Whig Parties, asking if they would work on behalf of the Mormons to help them obtain the land taken from them. Each responded by stating they either could or would do nothing for the Mormons in their plight. As a result, Joseph Smith declared himself a candidate for president in hopes that such a move might bring more attention to their cause.

Yet by February 1844 Joseph had apparently already made the decision that the Mormons needed to move outside of the borders of the United States. His journal recorded, "I instructed the 12 to send out a delegation—and investigate the Locations of Californnia & oregon & find a good Location where we can remove after the Temple is completed & build a city in a day and have a government of our own in a healthy climate."¹

By late 1843 and early 1844, it had become apparent to Joseph Smith that the Latter-day Saints would not be able to live peaceably inside the boundaries of the United States.

A few weeks later, on 11 March 1844, Joseph Smith organized the group that would come to be known as the Council of Fifty. The council's purpose was to "look to some place where we can go and establish a Theocracy either in Texas or Oregon or somewhere in California . . . and [form] a constitution which shall be according to the mind of God and erect it between the heavens and the earth where all nations might flow unto it."² The council was to begin to establish the political kingdom of God on earth just as the Church worked to bring to pass the religious purposes of God, preparatory to the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. During the second meeting of the council, Joseph Smith received a revelation declaring the name of

the council to be "The Kingdom of God and his Laws, with the keys and power thereof, and judgement in the hands of his servants. Ahman Christ."³

The long-term goal of the council was to establish a government that would be prepared for Christ to assume the head of once he returned and began his millennial reign. The short-term goals surrounded organizing the electioneering efforts for Joseph Smith's presidential campaign and seeking out a place where the Saints could move to set up their own government and flee persecution.

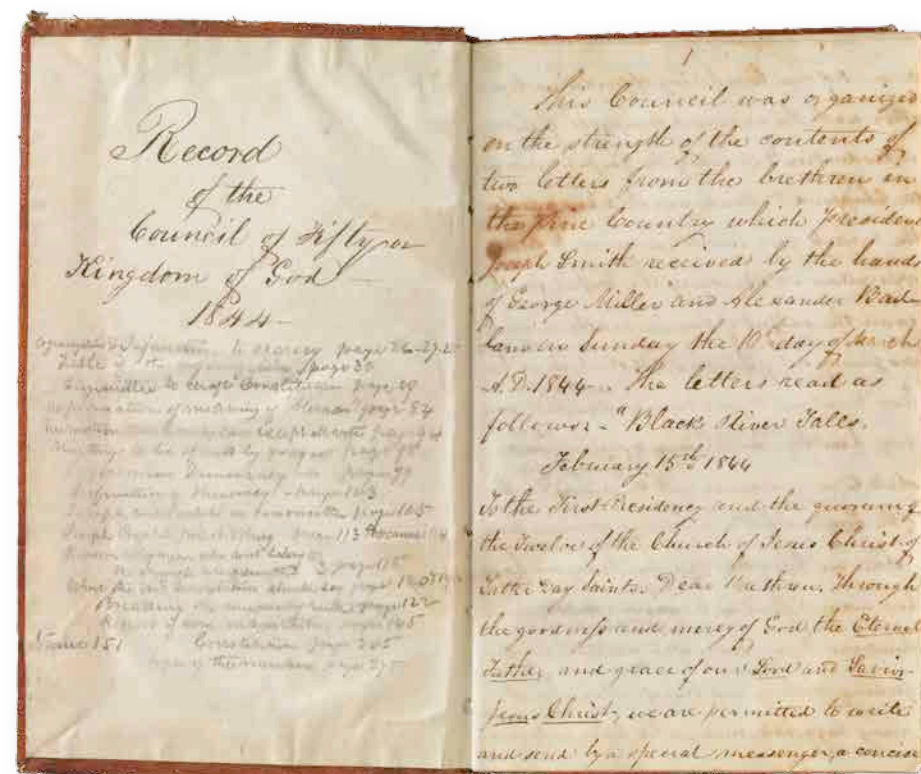
The council, for instance, initiated negotiations with President Sam Houston of the Republic of Texas in the spring of 1844. Houston for a time seemed to seriously consider allowing the tens of thousands of Mormons to settle in the sparsely populated west Texas. He saw the Mormons as a potential buffer to continual Mexican military incursions and to the constant threat that Mexico might settle its own internal political discord long enough to mount a sustained campaign against the renegade province, whose independence they did not recognize. The council also sent emissaries to negotiate with several different Indian tribes for two reasons. Not only were they considering settling on Indian land, at least temporarily, but they also anticipated sweeping success spreading the gospel among the Indians as the latter embraced the Book of Mormon as a story of their ancestors.



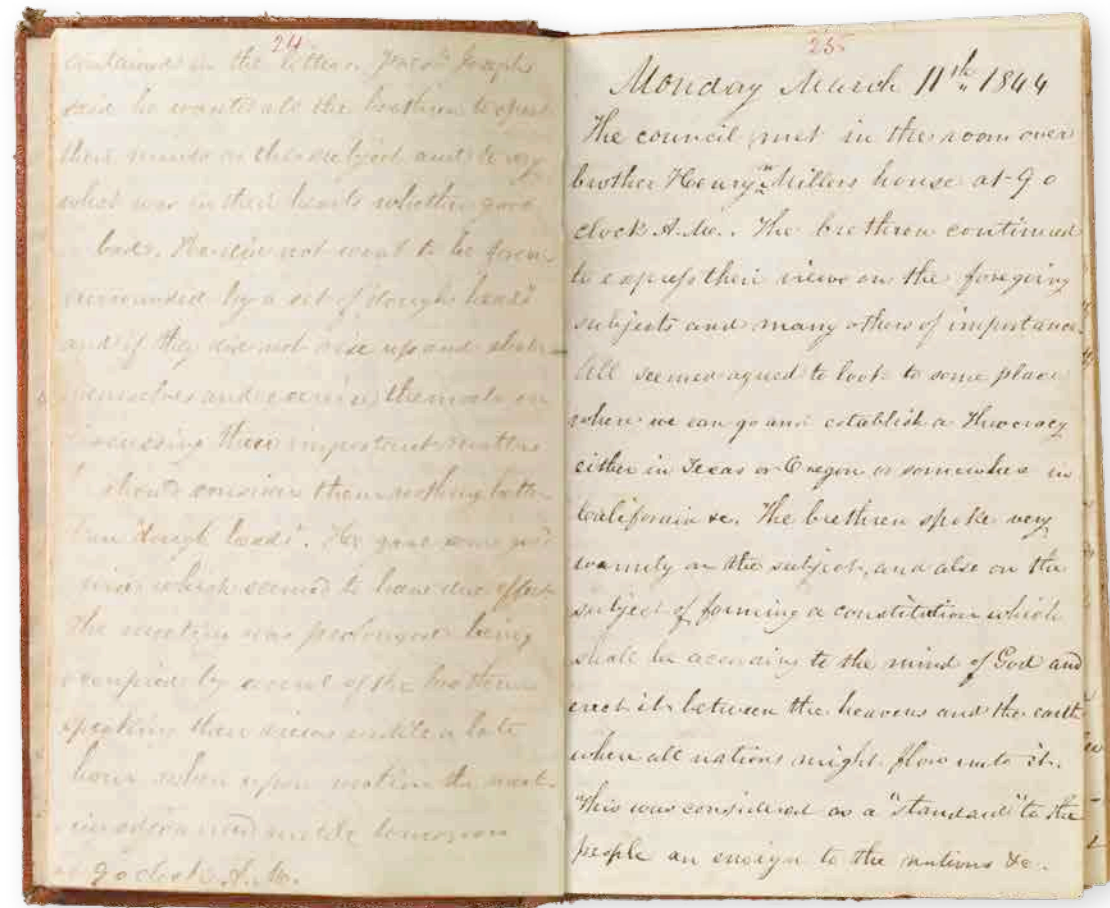
Council of Fifty minute book.
Photos courtesy of Church History Library.

The council was to begin to establish the political kingdom of God on earth just as the Church worked to bring to pass the religious purposes of God.

William Clayton took careful minutes of the meeting, and the resulting record is a treasure trove of statements and insights from early Church leaders, including Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. Joseph Smith, for instance, spoke several times at length on the principles of religious freedom and admonished the men present to never allow



Title page of the first minute book.



Sample spread
from the
minute books.

themselves to be intolerant of the religious views of others. Well known for his willingness to allow pastors from other religions to preach in Nauvoo and frustrated that their religion had so often been maligned and attacked by bigots who refused to let them worship as they chose, Joseph Smith did not want such intolerance to ever manifest itself among Mormons building the kingdom of God. He explained to the men, “When I have used every means in my power to exalt a mans mind, and have taught him righteous principles to no effect [and] he is still inclined in his darkness, yet the same principles of liberty and charity would ever be manifested by me as though he embraced it.”⁴ Joseph explained further that “God cannot save or damn a man only on the principle that every man acts, chooses and worships for himself.”⁵ One quality often manifested by Joseph was his love of people and how much he treasured friendship. At one point, in what could be seen as a premonition of his own rapidly approaching demise, Joseph said, “The only thing I am afraid of is, that I will not live long enough to enjoy the society of these my friends as long as I want to.”⁶

*We know we have no more justice here,
no more than we could get at the gates
of hell, and the only thing we have got to
do is to take care of ourselves.*

On another occasion, Brigham Young gave a passionate oration on the importance of accepting and following Joseph Smith as the prophet of the Church. In so doing, he taught a principle about the way revelation is given: “He supposed there has not yet been a perfect revelation given, because we cannot understand it, yet we receive a little here and a little there. He should not be stumbled if the prophet should translate the bible forty thousand times over and yet it should be different in some places every time, because when God speaks, he always speaks according to the capacity of the people.”⁷

The Council of Fifty minutes contain many discussions about methods and means of escaping the growing violence and animosity directed toward the Church. That

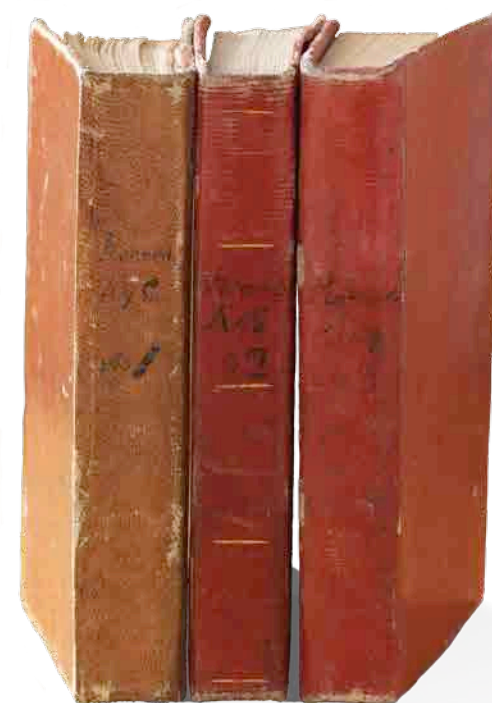
violence culminated in the assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, something that William Clayton bitterly reflects upon in the book. He also narrates the events that occurred leading up to their murders and provided a description he had garnered from eyewitnesses about what occurred in Carthage Jail that day. This account is a previously unknown description of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith.

After Joseph’s murder, the feeling among the council members that the Church must escape the boundaries of the United States in order to have peace was only magnified, and several of the men reflected bitterly on the loss of their prophet and on the continued threats of violence. John Taylor, himself savagely wounded in Carthage Jail while under the promised protection of the state of Illinois, expressed his frustration, “In regard to the situation of the world as it now exists I don’t care a damn because they are as corrupt as the devil. We have no benifit from the laws of the land. . . . Some cry out it will bring persecution, but they cannot lie about us, nor persecute us worse than they have done.” Fully supporting the plan to leave the nation and find refuge, Taylor asserted, “We know we have no more justice here, no more than we could get at the gates of hell, and the only thing we have got to do is to take care of ourselves.”⁸

For many of these men and for many Mormons outside of the council, American democracy had failed them. As a despised minority group, the Mormons were

always at the mercy of the tolerance of the majority populations in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. When antagonism led to violence, the Saints found time and again local and state authorities unwilling to intervene to protect them in their perceived rights and unwilling to fully allow the Mormons to defend themselves from such violence. That failure of democracy was poignantly visible as the bullet-ridden, murdered bodies of Joseph and Hyrum Smith were returned in a wagon from Carthage only days after having surrendered to the governor’s troops with the promise that their lives would be protected. As Clayton wrote in the minute book of the reaction to the murders, “I need not state the sorrow of this people when informed of the fact the following morning, an universal feeling of gloom and anguish prevailed.”⁹

The Council of Fifty minutes published in *Administrative Records, Council of Fifty, Minutes, March 1844–January 1846* by *The Joseph Smith Papers* provides readers insights into the personalities, fears, ideas, and faith of the men in the council. The volume offers a rare look into the discussions and debates of prominent Church leaders during one of the most volatile periods of early Church history. The volume will not only provide a better understanding of the events and decisions that led to the exodus from Nauvoo but also allow readers to better know the men involved in these meetings and feel in some measure their passions, their anxieties, and their desire to build up the kingdom of God on earth.¹⁰ ✕



1. Andrew H. Hedges, Alex D. Smith, and Brent M. Rogers, eds., *Journals, Volume 3: May 1843–June 1844*, 20 February 1844, 181.
2. Matthew J. Grow, Ronald K. Esplin, Mark Ashurst-McGee, Gerrit J. Dirkmaat, and Jeffrey D. Mahas, eds., *Council of Fifty, Minutes, March 1844–January 1846*, 11 March 1844, 42.
3. *Ibid.*, 14 March 1844, 48.
4. *Ibid.*, 11 April 1844, 100.
5. *Ibid.*, 97.
6. *Ibid.*, 100.
7. *Ibid.*, 18 April 1844, 119.
8. *Ibid.*, 1 March 1845, 264–65.
9. *Ibid.*, Events of June 1844, 204.
10. The Religious Studies Center plans to publish in 2017 a collection of essays examining how the Council of Fifty changes our understanding of Mormon history. This book will examine some of the key items covered in the minutes in a more digestible, narrative way. It is tentatively entitled Matthew J. Grow and R. Eric Smith, eds., *The Council of Fifty: What They Did and Why It Matters*.

THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM AND TRANSLATING THE SACRED

BY BRIAN M. HAUGLID

BRIAN M. HAUGLID (brian_hauglid@byu.edu) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.

MORE THAN 136 YEARS AGO, THE PEARL OF GREAT Price was formally accepted as canonical scripture during the October 1880 general conference.¹ Significantly, it contains miscellaneous revelations and other documents Joseph Smith received but were never canonized during his lifetime. These revelations and other documents directly related to his revision of the Bible (the Book of Moses and Joseph Smith—Matthew), his biographical history (Joseph Smith—History), his correspondence with a newspaper editor (Articles of Faith), and his work on the Egyptian papyri he purchased in Kirtland, Ohio (Book of Abraham).

Two new book projects, both involving BYU Religious Education faculty member Brian Hauglid, seek to engage the growing interest in the historical and documentary evidence related to the Book of Abraham, as well as searching for how the Book of Abraham came to be. The first will be published as a part of the Joseph Smith Papers Project and is tentatively titled *The Abraham/Egyptian Papers, Revelations and Translations*, vol. 4 of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Brian M. Hauglid and Robin Scott Jensen (see article by Robin Scott Jensen). The second publication, tentatively titled *Mummies, Manuscripts, and Making Scriptures: The History and Controversies of the Pearl of Great Price*, by Terryl Givens and Brian M. Hauglid, addresses the interpretive history of the book while building upon the publication of the Book of Abraham documents.

In recent years, the discussion of the translation of the Book of Abraham and its relationship to the papyri purchased by Joseph Smith during the Kirtland period has, to put it mildly, become quite polarized, and it has become a challenge to the faith of many Latter-day Saints. Manuscript copies of portions of the Book of Abraham dating from the mid-1830s and 1842, the surviving fragmentary papyri, and the grammar and alphabet documents that the Prophet and his scribes produced, present researchers and believers with a bewildering array of questions: What is the relationship between the Book of Abraham and the papyri? Did Joseph Smith translate characters directly from the papyri? Did the Prophet use the papyri primarily as a springboard to revelation? Were translation aids such as the Urim and Thummim or seer stone used in the translation process? If Joseph Smith thought he was translating the papyri but he wasn't, what, then, does Joseph Smith's inspired translation process really mean?

While these questions cannot be adequately addressed in this short note, here are a few brief insights I have gained over the past ten years working on the physical evidence related to the coming forth of the Book of Abraham.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM AND THE PAPYRI?

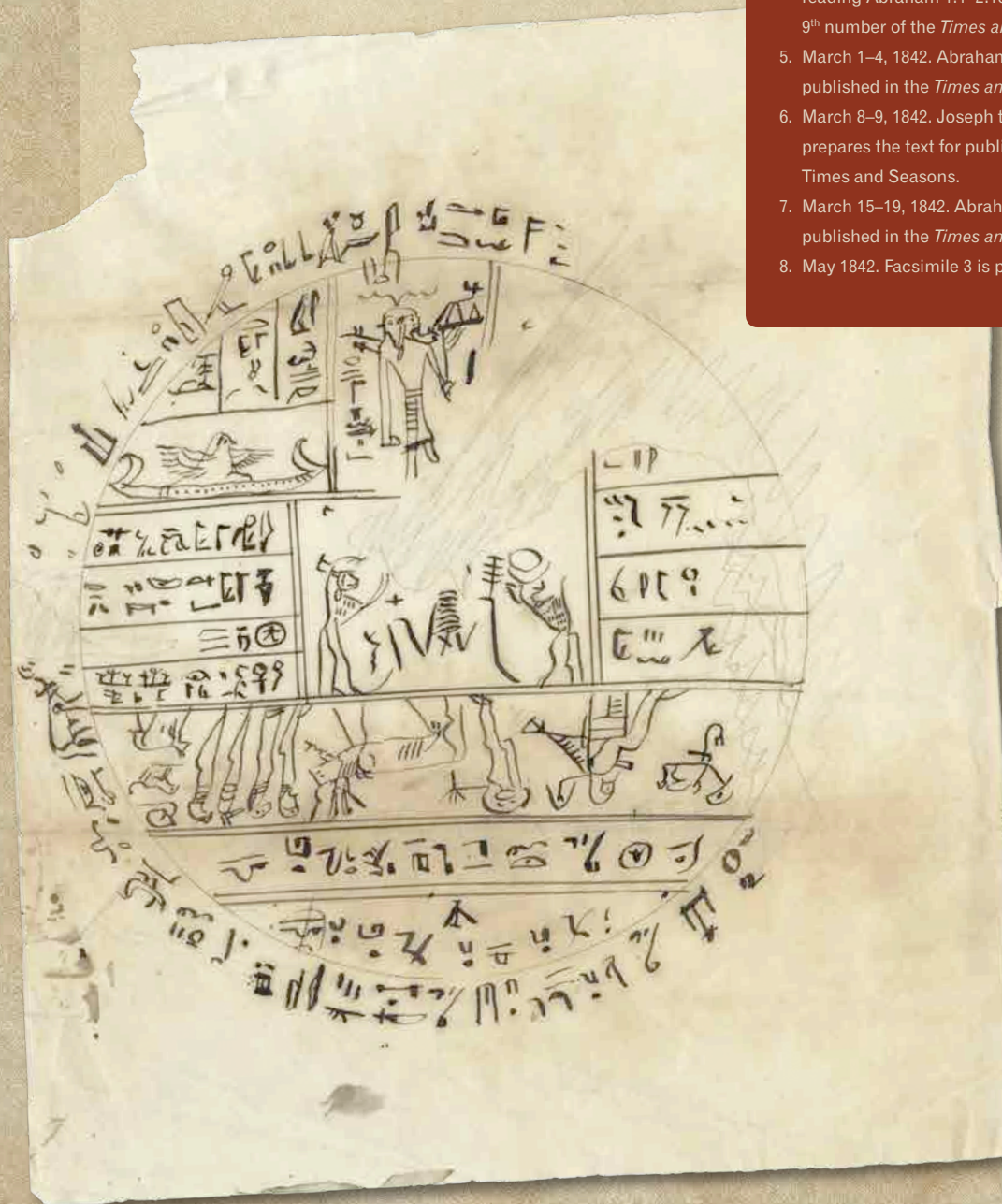
In contrast to the notion that the Prophet translated the entire Book of Abraham (and more) in July 1835, my research suggests that the historical record highlights two separate translation periods that produced the current Book of Abraham, one in 1835 (Abraham 1:1–2:18) and the other in 1842 (Abraham 2:19–5:21; see sidebar). Further light is shed on the situation when the 1835 Egyptian alphabet and grammar created by Joseph Smith and his scribes, are added to the discussion.²

Another quite forceful thought has arisen out of this research—the Abraham and Egyptian documents provide excellent evidence for Joseph Smith following the scriptural injunction to study questions out in his mind before receiving divine confirmation (D&C 9:8).

A PROPOSED CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF TRANSLATION

Mindful of the range of divergent viewpoints, and a rather problematic historical record, I offer a brief chronological translation outline informed by my own research:

1. Late June/Early July 1835. Joseph Smith purchased four mummies and several papyrus rolls from Michael Chandler while living in Kirtland, Ohio.
2. Summer/Fall 1835. Joseph Smith translated Abraham 1:1–2:18, which produced three Abraham manuscripts (Abraham 1:1–2:18) and the Egyptian alphabet and grammar documents.
3. Nearly seven years pass without any new translation activity on the Book of Abraham.
4. February 1842. Joseph returns to Abraham and begins proof-reading Abraham 1:1–2:18 in preparation for publication in the 9th number of the *Times and Seasons*.
5. March 1–4, 1842. Abraham 1:1–2:18 and Facsimile 1 are published in the *Times and Seasons*.
6. March 8–9, 1842. Joseph translates Abraham 2:19–5:21 and prepares the text for publication in the 10th number of the *Times and Seasons*.
7. March 15–19, 1842. Abraham 2:19–5:21 and Facsimile 2 are published in the *Times and Seasons*.
8. May 1842. Facsimile 3 is published in the *Times and Seasons*.



◀ Line drawing of the second-century BC Egyptian hypocephalus (i.e., under the head) upon which Facsimile 2 is based. Joseph Smith (and his scribes) restored the missing portions from parts of other papyri fragments (see Egyptian papyri 7 on page 15). Photos courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

► **Printing Plates of Facsimiles of Papyrus Drawings, Early 1842.** Reuben Hedlock carved these lead plates for publication of the facsimiles in three separate installments of the *Times and Seasons*.

The image displays three fragments of ancient Egyptian bronze reliefs. The top fragment is a large circular medallion, likely a pectoral or a decorative plate, featuring a central scene of a seated figure (possibly a deity or a high official) flanked by two standing figures. The entire scene is enclosed within a circular border filled with hieroglyphs. The bottom-left fragment shows a seated figure and a standing figure, with hieroglyphs below. The bottom-right fragment shows a seated figure and a standing figure, with hieroglyphs below.

1. H. Donl Peterson, *The Pearl of Great Price: A History and Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 22–23.
2. Brian M. Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham: Manuscripts and Editions*, Studies in the Book of Abraham, vol. 5 (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship).

[illegible]

The second part first degree

- A. Ahmose God without beginning or end ^{to be born}
- V. Heph in the beginning with God the Son of
- X. Elbeth Angels or disembodied spirits ^{to be}
- W. Elbeth Angels in an unchangeable minister ^{state}
- by A. Elbeth ministers of God high preachers
- L. Elbeth ministers of God under or the lps
- L. Elbeth ministers not ordained of God Sin
7. Elbeth ministers who are lps sinners ^{of}
7. Baeth the nurse of all mankind man or
2. Baeth the Adam or the first man or first ^{born}
2. Baeth the next from Adam - one ordained ^{born}
2. Baeth the third patriarch
5. Baeth the fourth from Adam
2. Baeth the

This image shows a fragment of an ancient Egyptian papyrus scroll. The scroll is made of yellowish-brown papyrus bark and is covered with hieroglyphs and illustrations. The hieroglyphs are arranged in horizontal columns, with some larger, more decorative symbols interspersed. The illustrations include several figures: a seated figure on the left, a standing figure in the center, and a small boat with a sail on the right. The scroll is damaged, with some parts missing and the edges frayed. The overall appearance is that of an ancient document, possibly a religious or administrative text.

14 BYU RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REVIEW

THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS AND THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM

BY ROBIN SCOTT JENSEN

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In 1835, Joseph Smith and others purchased four Egyptian mummies with two scrolls and other fragments of ancient papyri. Around the time of the purchase, discoveries of Egyptian artifacts prompted an intense interest of all things Egypt throughout Europe and America. While this widespread interest helped bring the mummies and papyri to Kirtland, Ohio, it was Joseph's own interest in ancient language that motivated the purchase. Joseph likely sought out the artifacts in hopes of finding ancient truths hidden in the writings. Once purchased, the mummies and scrolls were displayed, and many reported seeing them in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. But Joseph Smith and his associates did more than display

the artifacts—they tried to decipher the ancient language. Following a period of studying some of the papyri, Joseph dictated a manuscript containing the Book of Abraham, which he believed was a translation of the papyri. While significant portions of the papyri collection are missing, the extant papyri in fact contain relatively common Egyptian funerary texts.

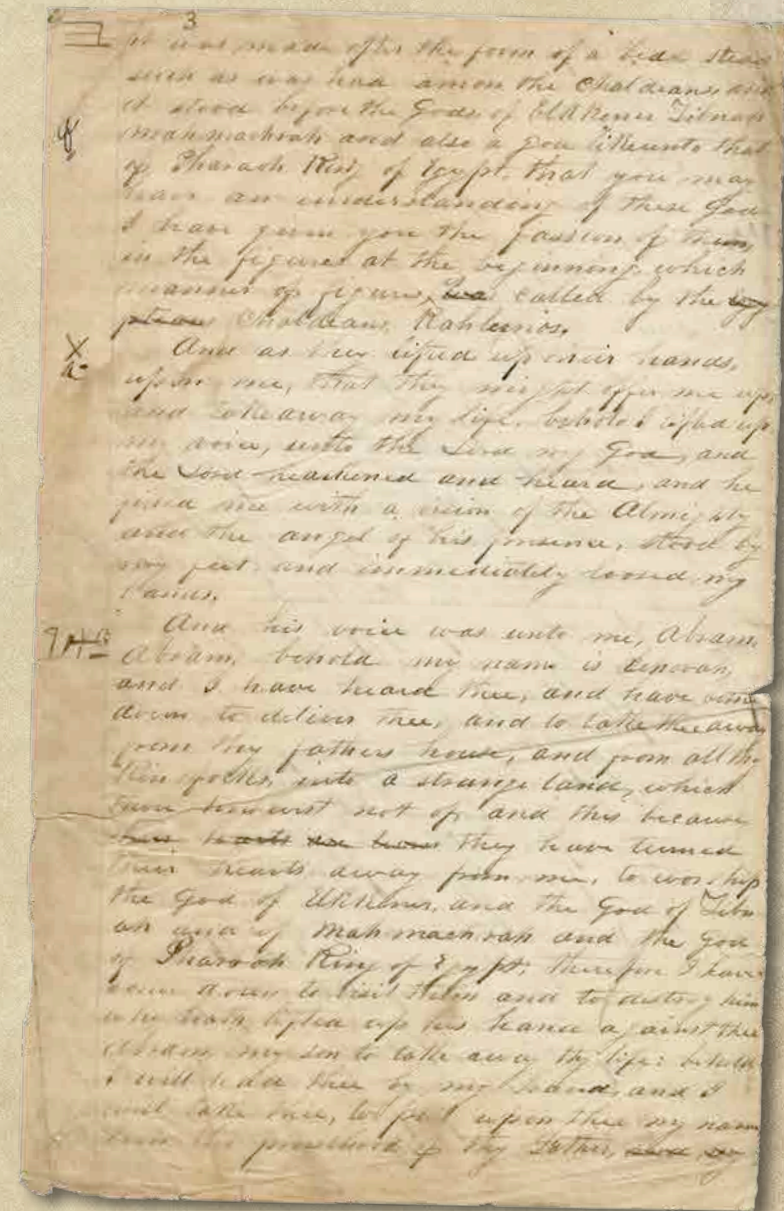
While it does not appear that Joseph Smith or his associates drew directly upon earlier scholarship regarding ancient Egypt, they shared with such scholars assumptions about the Egyptian language. For instance, they believed the language was mysterious, symbolic, and closely linked to Hebrew and other languages that reflected a more refined and “pure” language. The documents that were produced as part of Joseph Smith's attempt to understand Egyptian—including those termed the Alphabet documents and the Grammar and Alphabet

◀ A Fragment from the Breathing Permit of Hor (also known as Joseph Smith Papyri XI). The first three lines of the right column of this fragment have been copied into the left margin of the three 1835 Abraham manuscripts (Abraham 1:1-2:18). The copied characters suggest that the Prophet and his scribes were working with this part of the papyrus (see image on page 17).

THESE MANUSCRIPTS, PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY OTHER WORK OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS SCRIPTURE, PROVIDE INSIGHTS INTO HOW JOSEPH SMITH PROCEEDED WHEN TRANSLATING ANCIENT RECORDS.

volume—have been of interest to scholars for several generations. In addition to these documents, manuscripts of the Book of Abraham from the Kirtland era as well as the Nauvoo era survive. These manuscripts, perhaps more than any other work of Latter-day Saints scripture, provide insights into how Joseph Smith proceeded when translating ancient records. These two sets of manuscripts—the language study documents and the Book of Abraham documents—show a prophet and his associates following precedents (that of translating the Book of Mormon, for instance) and the scriptural mandate to “study it out in [their] mind[s]” (D&C 9:8). The resultant publication of the Book of Abraham in 1842 prompted interest from Latter-day Saints throughout the country.

For generations, the papyri, the various manuscripts of both the Egyptian language and the Book of Abraham, and the first published version of the Book of Abraham have either not been available, or their scarcity has prevented thorough study (original copies of the *Times and Seasons*, for instance, are difficult to acquire). The recent publication of these documents on the website of the *Joseph Smith Papers* (<http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/intro/introduction-to-book-of-abraham-manuscripts>) has already prompted discussion and scholarly investigation. An upcoming volume of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers* coedited by myself and BYU religion professor Brian M. Hauglid will offer readers not only the transcriptions and images of each of these important Joseph Smith-era documents but also a thorough introduction and contextualization of them. Unanswered questions remain regarding the relationships between and among the various manuscripts and regarding the assumptions Joseph and his associates had while attempting to decipher Egyptian and while dictating or copying the Book of Abraham. But the availability of these documents will assist scholars in analyzing the revelatory process of Joseph Smith. ✕



▲ Warren Parrish Copy of Abraham Manuscript, Fall 1835 [Abraham 1:4-2:2],” p. 3. Characters on this page drawn from the first line on the right column of the Breathing Permit of Hor fragment (see figure on page 16). Photos courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

THE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST AND OTHER RESTORATION MOVEMENTS

By Keith J. Wilson, Richard G. Moore, and Devan Jensen

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DEVAN JENSEN (*devan_jensen@byu.edu*) IS EXECUTIVE EDITOR AT BYU.



Speakers at the annual Book of Mormon Conference held at the Remnant Church in Independence, Missouri. Those in attendance included 350 members from six or seven different branches of the Mormon faith. Photos courtesy of Keith J. Wilson.

Jensen: How did you get involved with the Community of Christ and Restorationist movements?

Wilson: I wrote a question to someone online with a website. I asked about the different dissenting RLDS groups and the Community of Christ. This individual started to correspond with me, and before long he invited me to speak at one of

their symposia. They have a group that had coalesced around the Book of Mormon and keeping the Book of Mormon strong amongst their following, so I thought, “You know, this is good outreach.” I asked one of my other colleagues, and he said yes at first, but then he withdrew. I thought, “Who can I get that would be willing?” I went down the hall, and there was Rich Moore. He was here as a seminary and institute instructor on loan

to BYU. I asked, “Rich, do you want to go to Independence with me?” and he said yes. Rich, had you been involved in RLDS studies up to that time?

Moore: Yes, I wrote a book comparing the Community of Christ and the LDS Church, and I had received a lot of help from Community of Christ scholars and leaders because I had some of them go over each chapter to make sure I was representing them correctly.

After it was published, they invited me to attend the John Whitmer Historical Association conference to participate in a session called “The Author Meets His Critics.” I went out there pretty nervous about the whole thing, but my wife and I had such a good experience and made so many friends that we have continued to attend the conference each year since then. Eventually, I was asked to be on the board of directors of the John Whitmer Historical Association, and have been serving on that board for the past two years. That was how I became involved with Community of Christ. It was about a year after my first JWHA conference that Keith came to my office and said, “Do you want to go out to a Book of Mormon conference in Independence?” And that is when I got involved with the other Restorationists.

J: For our readers, can you help us understand some of the sweeping changes that have taken place? Just a thumbnail sketch of some of these changes?

M: I’ll start. I think that most LDS Church members are at least aware of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, now called Community of Christ, which had its beginnings in the 1850s but didn’t officially become an organized church until April 6, 1860, with Joseph Smith III as its president. Over the years it grew through missionary efforts, and branches were established in the United States and in many parts of the world. But about mid-twentieth century, their leadership began to make some significant changes.



Left to right: First Counselor of the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ with Fred Larson, a literal descendant of Joseph Smith Jr., attending the Book of Mormon Conference at the LDS stake center.

W: What happened was they galvanized around the principle of lineal succession through Joseph Smith III. His son and second president was Fredrick Madison Smith. But then Fredrick Madison did not have any male heirs, so they followed the Smith lineage laterally, and they appointed Frederick’s younger brother Israel. But Israel didn’t have capable male descendants, so they passed the leadership to a younger half brother from Joseph III’s third wife. This was not a polygamous wife but simply a marriage after the deaths of his first two wives.

What happened then was that the line of descent diffused some, and men who never dreamed that they would ever be in church leadership were called to be in the First Presidency and eventually became the President of the Church. Feeling very inadequate, these leaders naturally delegated lots of responsibility

to secondary leadership. And what happened then was that these secondary administrators often were not well grounded in the Restoration, and some even had Protestant backgrounds and leanings. They then began to introduce Protestant doctrine back into the RLDS Church. In the ’60s the Church rewrote the Articles of Faith and republished them. During this time the leadership even had some Protestant theologians come from a seminary in Kansas City and doctrinally instruct the First Presidency and Quorum of Twelve! So lots of changes came into the church through this impetus of these outside sources. By the time you get to Wallace B. Smith, who was the grandson of Joseph Smith III, he introduced in 1984 the revelation extending the priesthood to worthy women. This action produced the first of many fractures in the RLDS Church.

By 1990 it became really intense, and some of these dissenting members started to form different groups. In the '90s and the early 2000s, you have three major groups forming. The first is a group that coalesced around the powers vested in the elders of the church, and they took the title of Conference of Restoration Elders. The second major group formed about 2001 when Fred Larson, a maternal descendant of Joseph III, formed the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. And finally in 2005 a group emerged out of a collection of independent branches that formerly were members of the RLDS Church. Today they are known as the JCRB, or Joint Council of Restoration Branches.

J: What is your interaction with these Restoration movements?

What are your goals and hopes?

M: Well, I think when we attended our first Book of Mormon conference in Independence and became friends with people from other Restoration churches, suddenly, for me, it was this realization that there are people outside The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who are firm believers in the Book of Mormon, who are believers in Joseph Smith, who are believers in the Restoration, and are very faithful, good people. We started associating with them, thinking, “There have been such bad feelings for so many years—such bad blood; and this should not be the case.” For example, when we were first invited to go back and speak, there were people from a number of groups that said they would not attend if there were LDS people there.

But we seem to have moved past that, and now we’ve become pretty good friends with people from the various groups. My basic goal is just to open up lines of communication so that we have a better understanding and appreciation of each other, to develop associations and friendships. We have more in common than we have differences. We recognize and are aware of the differences, but we don’t focus on them. We focus on the similarities of our beliefs and the common goals we all have. This has made for really warm relationships, not only with the various independent restoration churches, but also with members of Community of Christ. Keith and I are part of a group that meets with Community of Christ leaders and scholars in an ongoing dialogue to improve the relationship between the two churches.

We have also made friends in other schisms of the church founded by Joseph Smith. For example, within the Church of Jesus Christ (Cutlerite) and the Church of Jesus Christ (Bickertonite), we have some very good friends. My wife and I went to Independence about a year ago and spent an entire month there for the sole purpose of building relationships and making friends. We went out with no particular plan and not knowing beforehand the things which we should do, you know?¹ But we were busy every day, involved with many different groups. And we have made some really good friends. That has been my major focus—just the relationship building and the tearing down of walls that have separated us for many years.

W: Mine has been just a little different tack because I am associated with the university still full time and can’t go out and do the kinds of things that Rich has been able to do. Mine has been to use the resources of BYU—particularly Religious Education—but all scholars in the Church who have written quality materials on the Book of Mormon, and I share those materials with the goal of strengthening their belief in the Book of Mormon. So that’s been very fun to do because we have so much that’s cutting-edge information. We’ve been able to take some of our colleagues and, they have been well received. When Rich and I presented at our first conference, all the other groups were watching closely as to whether or not we would teach the “Brigham version” of Mormonism. We did well in that first encounter. Afterwards in the foyer, a lady came up to me and said they had been thinking, “Oh no, here come the Mormons, and what are they going to do?” And they liked us because we didn’t really teach them about our particular brand of the Restoration but talked just about the Book of Mormon. To this day, every time we have a great Book of Mormon symposium back there, they always come up and say, “You know, we have our differences, but when we are together we feel the Spirit so much, and we just love that.” That is so exhilarating to have them feel the Spirit through the Book of Mormon, and it becomes a common bridge for all. We obviously still have our individual differences, but we have much more and in common, and we celebrate that when we are together.



Robert Millet speaking at the annual Book of Mormon Conference held at the Remnant Church in Independence, Missouri.



Roundtable discussion at the Independence Stake Center. Those present include Restorationists, Community of Christ Scholars, LDS scholars, Baptist pastors and Book of Mormon enthusiasts.

M: One of the most spiritual experiences of my entire life took place at a Book of Mormon conference. We met on a Friday night in the historic Stone Church (RLDS), and the next night we met in our LDS stake center. The LDS stake center is just across the road from the Community of Christ temple. I didn’t speak at the

conference, but I conducted the meetings. The speakers were all very good. Brother Robert Millet was the concluding speaker, and his words truly brought us all together. The Spirit was so strong that when the congregation sang the closing hymn with the choir, which was “The Spirit of God,” I was overcome. I looked around that room filled with people

of different Restorationist beliefs, all joined together—some people who would have never entered an LDS Church door before that time.

J: So really we’re talking about, in a big sense, mending some fences that have been in need of repair for some time. And you are also building friendships that will produce fruits.

W: Yes. The fences quite honestly began right back in the nineteenth century with Brigham Young and Emma Smith. And it was very difficult for the first one hundred years, you know.

M: Several years ago, I attended the Joseph Smith Senior–Lucy Mack Smith Family Reunion. Neither my wife nor I are members of the Smith family, but we were invited to attend the family reunion with them in Independence. The family consists of members of various Restoration churches, but they are united as one family. On a Saturday morning, there was a meeting where Lachlan Mackay (currently an Apostle in Community of Christ) and I were the speakers. I spoke about Emma and Brigham, and I was nervous because there are still some sensitive feelings there. After the meeting, a woman who was the descendant of Emma came up and just shook my hand and said that she agreed with everything I said, and that it was just right. Just right. I was so relieved. These kinds of things open up communication and friendships. Perhaps the first time when something like this happened was when we first spoke at the Book of Mormon Conference. Keith and I and others spoke in the Remnant



Literal descendant of Joseph Smith Jr. holding a first edition copy of the Book of Mormon for the first time. His name is also Joseph Smith.

Church's gathering place. After my presentation, there was a break. As I walked off the stand, a man came up to me quickly. He approached and got right in my face so quickly that it almost scared me. He said, "You are a Brighamite! I am a Josephite." Then he paused and said, "But today I call you brother," and he shook my hand. It was great moment.

J: Fantastic. Well, now that we have established what friendships you're forming, where do you see this going from here? I mean, it's hard to anticipate what will happen, but do you have any feeling of what can happen in the next few years? Maybe continue the same kind of

work or involve other people in this work?

W: We want to continue our outreach. In fact, we have been on the phone today organizing this next year's conference, and we want to reach as many of these Book of Mormon believing groups as we can. It is rather challenging, I can tell you, because they also have feelings about the other groups, and there is sense of territorialism. So we want to involve as many of those as we can. And there are ten or fifteen possible groups right in the Independence area. Some are quite small, and the larger groups are not really wild about taking on some small group that might be seen as sort of a fringe element. But I think that

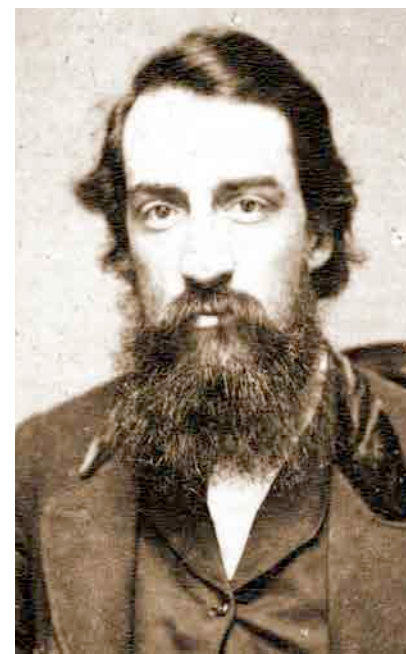
our purpose is so well served if we keep as our main objective to witness of the Book of Mormon and let the Book of Mormon convert people as it will. Let it take them where it takes them, because I just believe that as Joseph Smith said, a man will get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than any other book. So we don't have to have a reconciliation of the churches in order for this outreach to be extremely successful.

J: I think it is an important point that you're basically trying to reinforce their testimony of the Book of Mormon and then allow them to make the decisions that will lead them.

W: For the longest time in the Church, we have espoused the idea that if you believe in the Book of Mormon it will testify simultaneously of the Prophet Joseph Smith and of the truthfulness of LDS Church. That works in most parts of the world, but it does not work in Independence, Missouri, because there are a lot of Book of Mormon believers of different stripes in that area. So I think we have to go beyond the belief that the Book of Mormon is simply testifying of the Church, and we have to go to that concept that the Book of Mormon is bringing people to Christ. And somehow I believe deeply that he will mend our differences during the latter stages of the Restoration. And I don't have to worry about whether or not their name appears on our membership rolls in order to really minister and try to just extend resources about the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon to them.

J: So, in a sense, as our readers would perhaps suggest, our flock is much bigger than we think of, with the Shepherd at the center, and there are many, many flocks that are out there worshipping him.

M: That is a good way to put it. My involvement with other churches has increased my faith in the Lord and his love for all of us. We are all children of God. There are some tremendously faithful people in these other churches; devout in their faith. It is an everyday thing, not a Sunday only thing. They go to church on Sunday, but they also go to Wednesday night testimony meetings every week, and they have study sessions together. When my wife and I were there, we met with a group that studies the Book of Mormon every week in a lady's home. We had the chance to meet with them and study with them. These are some good and sincere people. It has caused me to examine



Joseph Smith III.

my own personal commitment to the gospel.

The Community of Christ officially still considers the Book of Mormon as one of their standard works. They have the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants. It is likely that many of their leaders do not believe that the Book of Mormon is a translation of an ancient record. They see it as more of a creation of Joseph Smith. But there is no official stand taken on this, so members are welcome to believe what they want. This is troubling to some of the other Restoration groups who still have a firm belief in the plates and the antiquity of the Book of Mormon.

J: So what you're saying is even though the larger Community of Christ doesn't accept that that way, there are individuals in each of those traditions who say, "Hey, I still believe this is what it says it is."

W: And plenty of people who are still affiliated with the Community of Christ themselves (not just the break-off groups) still believe, and they will come to these sessions. We have had an Apostle from the Community of Christ speak at these sessions. So this outreach is just all about whether or not you accept the Book of Mormon as scripture and with that as a basis, then, we push forward. And even if they don't accept the historicity of the Book of Mormon, we still believe that as scripture, it will bless their lives. For us there are some real inconsistencies to have the scriptures yet to not accept them as historical; the book becomes almost like uplifting literature to us. Many in the

Community of Christ view the Book of Mormon as true but not factual. For them, scripture is anything that lifts and that helps you to feel the Spirit. So we do have differences there, but where we have our commonalities, that is where we build.

J: Let's close with one last thought that you would like to share.

W: I have been touched and continue to be touched by the goodness of these people. They really are not only our cousins in terms of our religious faith, but they are our brothers and sisters, and I want to do anything I can to support them in their faith in the Restoration. I just feel like it is such a privilege to be at BYU with all our resources and to be able to extend just a hand of support. And I'm grateful for these core things that unite us and that give us our common beliefs.

M: I have been sincerely surprised at the direction my life has taken in the last few years. I did not see any of this coming. I am so thankful to Keith for inviting me to go with him and I am also grateful for my involvement with JWHA and being part of BYU's Office of Religious Outreach. My wife and I count these things as tremendous blessings. To a great extent, we feel that this is part of our life's mission right now. And I still can't get over the fact that our involvement with people of the various Restoration churches has resulted in not just acquaintances but deep friendships. That is such a blessing to us. ✂

1. See 1 Nephi 4:6.

THE BOOK OF MORMON ACADEMY AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

By Tyler Balli

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ABOUT THREE YEARS AGO, INFLUENTIAL BOOK OF Mormon scholars from Brigham Young University were in the midst of concluding their careers. With the prospect of these scholars' departure, Drs. Robert L. Millet, Paul Y. Hoskisson, Dennis L. Largey, and Camille Fronk Olson discovered a need for a formal organization, the Book of Mormon Academy (BOMA), that encouraged and supported a rising generation of Book of Mormon researchers at BYU. The work of these researchers would ultimately benefit the general membership of the Church, providing members with accessible, first-rate resources that would deepen their understanding of the Book of Mormon.

Dr. Olson hoped that this organization would help faculty members "grow deep roots in Book of Mormon scholarship." She said, "Because there is no postdoctoral program at any university for our faculty to attend to achieve content mastery on the Book of Mormon, and because the faculty who achieved such mastery over twenty years ago were retired, we wanted to offer a professional-development venue to select faculty with serious interest in Book of Mormon studies." The academy seeks to be a resource for faculty members, asking them, "How can we help you in your academic career if you want to specialize in Book of Mormon research and teaching?" Dr. Olson said that members "could elect self-directed agendas, collaborate with others on projects, or invite experts in Book of Mormon scholarship to instruct them." The first chair of the academy (a rotating position that periodically changes) was Dr. Shon D. Hopkin, an

assistant professor in the Ancient Scripture Department. His duties as chair included facilitating, supporting, and encouraging periodic meetings among members in which they could discuss collaborative projects, develop new methods of teaching their Book of Mormon classes, and listen to lectures given by Book of Mormon researchers. The organizational structure and support provide what Dr. Kerry Hull, the second chair of BOMA and a professor of ancient scripture, described as "a training ground for the group to increase their knowledge in areas of Book of Mormon research," further elevating scholars' research.



Restored translation table that Joseph Smith used in his home to translate the Book of Mormon. Photo by Alexander L. Baugh.

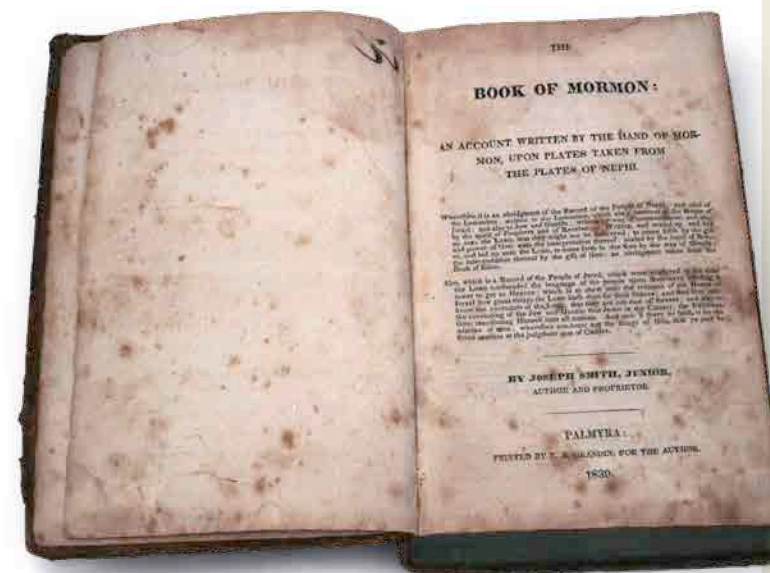
COLLABORATING WITH OTHER FACULTY

While no one has a PhD in Book of Mormon studies, the Religious Education faculty comprises experts in many different fields. One of the purposes of BOMA is to bring together scholars of different skills and areas of expertise that also share a common interest in the Book of Mormon, creating what a BOMA pamphlet calls "a supportive and collegial environment where fellows of the Academy can exchange ideas and information about the Book of Mormon." Dr. Olson described the different areas of expertise that members of the academy bring from their graduate studies, "such as Hebrew, biblical studies, Mesoamerican studies, nineteenth-century American literature, pedagogy, instructional design, philosophy, and New Testament studies." This diversity among members allows them to bring together their expertise and provide to their audience fuller and deeper scholarship about many aspects of the Book of Mormon, from the theological interpretation of a passage of scripture to the historical context surrounding the translation process.

A current BOMA project is a perfect example of the kind of in-depth, collaborative, and multifaceted scholarship the academy is capable of. The project is a book-length volume that focuses exclusively on Abinadi, which the Religious Studies Center will publish in 2018. The book capitalizes on the strengths and areas of expertise of each contributing author, delving deep into Abinadi's relatively short appearance among the people of King Noah. It uses several different lenses to provide new insight and understanding, including literary, intra-textual, intertextual, cultural, historical, and theological perspectives.

HELPING STUDENTS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Ultimately, the biggest beneficiaries of Book of Mormon expertise among BYU faculty are the general members of the Church. The aims of the academy state the organization's desire to "facilitate effective teaching of the Book of Mormon" and to have its members "be better able to provide students with a rigorous examination of the Book of Mormon." Dr. Olson added further, "We want to encourage Book of Mormon expertise among academy members that will equip us to respond to questions and needs among our students and within the Church if and when we are called."



Title page of a first edition of the Book of Mormon.

Dr. John Hilton III, the current chair of the academy, mentioned that one of the questions that members of the academy have asked themselves is "How do [we] talk about potentially difficult issues with students?" Students, who have easy access to mountains of information that could potentially challenge their faith in the Book of Mormon, will no doubt have many questions for professors teaching them about the Book of Mormon. Dr. Olson said, "Whether the questions be on Book of Mormon history, doctrine, translation, languages, the authors and abridgers, or the various arguments for and against the Book of Mormon's authentic ancient voice, we want to support members of the academy with the needed resources to be equipped to answer accurately, faithfully, and appropriately."

The translation process of the Book of Mormon might be one of those potentially difficult issues, and members of the academy have recently accomplished excellent work on that topic. For example, in 2015, Dr. Michael H. MacKay coauthored *From Darkness unto Light: Joseph Smith's Translation and Publication of the Book of Mormon*, and this past year he and Dr. Nicholas J. Frederick (another BOMA member) authored *Joseph Smith's Seer Stones*, which Deseret Book has listed as one of its best-selling books from 2016.¹ Highlighting the importance of Dr. MacKay's and Dr. Frederick's work, Dr. Hilton said that "those [books discuss] topics that could easily come



The Grandin Smith Press that was used to print the first edition of the Book of Mormon in 1930. Photo by Brent R. Nordgren.

up in the first two or three periods in a Book of Mormon class that would be important for teachers to give a faithful, scholarly, and accurate response to.”

Dr. Frederick has also done extensive research on the presence of the New Testament in the Book of Mormon, which Dr. Hilton called “another important issue for students to recognize and grapple with.” Dr. Hilton also described how Dr. Frederick presented his findings to the academy and then members collectively discussed how to use this research effectively in the classroom and “share it in a meaningful way with students.” This process is invaluable. After all, these scholars don’t just spend their time poring over dusty records in archives; they have the opportunity to influence and shape the views of hundreds of students over the course of their careers. And as Dr. Olson said, “Our students should enjoy the fruits of professors who can answer their questions based on reputable sources.” Dr. Hopkin believes that teaching BYU students more expertly will benefit more people than just the students themselves: “We hope that teaching BYU students as effectively as possible will have a ripple effect as those students later become gospel teachers.”

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE
BOOK OF MORMON ACADEMY

Shon Hopkin, Amy Easton-Flake, Tyler Griffin, Kerry Hull, Nick Frederick, Michael MacKay, Joseph Spencer, Mark Wright, John Hilton III

MOVING FORWARD

Moving forward, the Book of Mormon Academy is now trying to publish more of the products of their scholarship and collaboration, extending its influence beyond BYU’s campus. “As we produce teaching resources, we hope that those will be useful for gospel teachers outside of BYU, such as gospel doctrine instructors and S&I faculty,” Dr. Hopkin said. One such resource that the academy is currently working on is an annotated bibliography of what Dr. Hull called “must-read sources” for those interested in scholarly studies about the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon is more than a topic of academic and spiritual interest. The Prophet Joseph Smith once called the Book of Mormon “the key stone of our religion.”² About 140 years later, President Ezra Taft Benson expounded upon that statement, calling it “the keystone in our witness of Christ . . . , the keystone of our doctrine . . . , [and] the keystone of testimony.”³ If this book of scripture truly is a keystone of everything that the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Benson said, then it needs to be a preeminent focus of our study and our scholarship. The Book of Mormon Academy is playing an important role in BYU’s focus on this keystone, helping faculty, as Dr. Olson said, to “think deeply about the Book of Mormon as more than simply one of our core classes that we teach”—which is indeed a worthy goal. ✂

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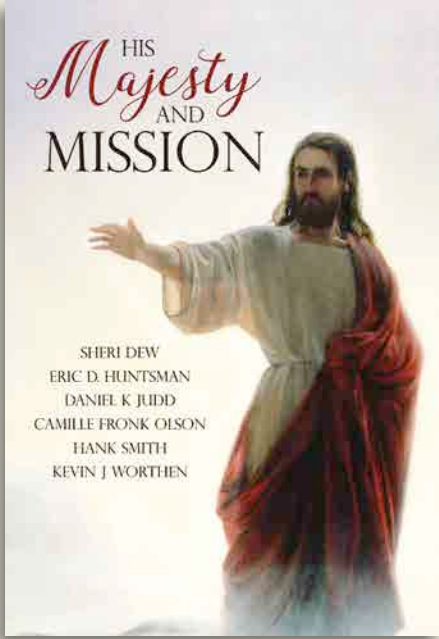
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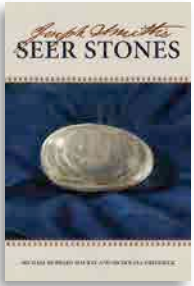
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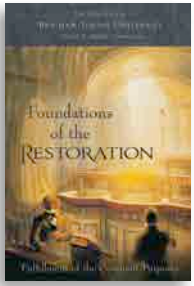
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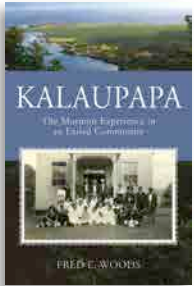


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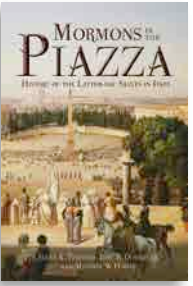
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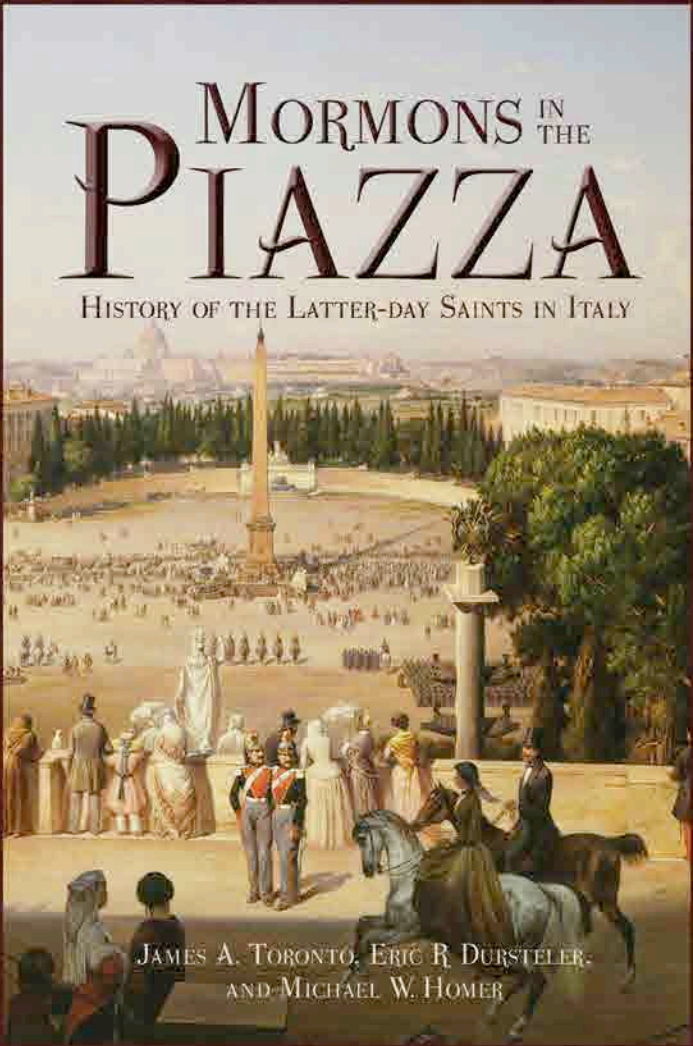
In addition to designing individual books, Carmen has redesigned a newsletter, helped the

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Carmen says her work has given birth to a new dream: "I've typeset so many books about Church members from other countries. I want to save up and travel everywhere," she says. For now, though, she simply wants to keep improving as a designer and playing with her children.

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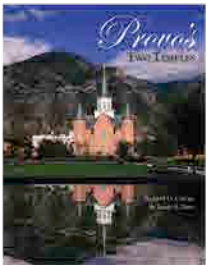
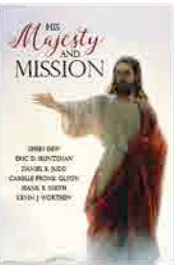
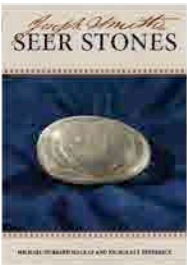
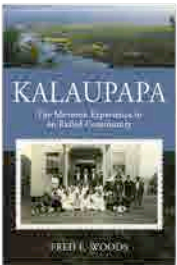


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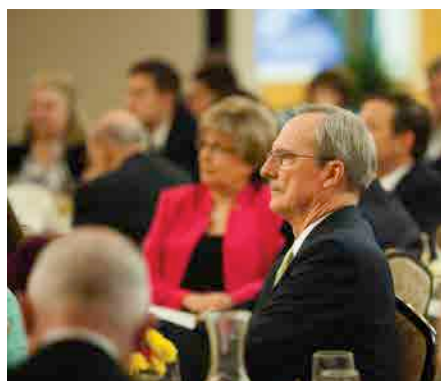


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