

Building Nauvoo

With the exodus from Missouri many church members traveled east to the state of Illinois. One of the first actions was at a church conference held at Quincy, Illinois, on March 17, 1839 where some members who testified at Justice Austin King's preliminary hearing were excommunicated from the church. It appears that they were not present at the meeting. Those excommunicated included Sampson Avard, John Corrill, George M. Hinkle, Reed Peck, William W. Phelps, and Burr Riggs.¹

Joseph Smith arrived in Quincy on April 22 and shortly afterwards church leaders purchased land at Commerce (later named Nauvoo). Dimick B. Huntington recalled that, when Joseph Smith came to town on the Quincy ferry, he was dressed "in an old Pair of Boots full of Holes, Pants Torn, Tucked Inside of boots, Blue Cloak with collar Turned up, wide Brimd Black hat, Rim S[l]oped Down, not been Shaved for Some time <Looked Pale & Hag[g]ard>." Still Dimick recognized Joseph:

When I got within about 16 ft of him he Raised his head. I Exclaimed My God it is you Bro Jos[eph] he Raised his hand & Stop[p]ed me Saying Hush Hush. He then asked where is my family. I told him they were 4 miles East at Judge Clevelands in a Room I had Provided for them. I asked him if he wished to see his father & mother as they were in Quincy. He said no it would be to[o] Great a Shock they are old & cannot bear it. Take me to my family as Quick as you can. In Passing Through the Back Streets of Quincy a number of men Knew him, an[d] arivind [arrived] At the House where his family was Emma Knew him as he was Dismounting from his Horse. She met him Half way to the Gate. Joseph not [k]nowing the universal frienaly [friendly] feelings that Existed, in Quincy, was fearfull he might be ar[r]ested again.²

Six months later on October 29, Joseph Smith and his companions left Nauvoo for Washington, D.C., seeking redress for wrongs inflicted on church members in Missouri. Part of the time Smith and Sidney Rigdon traveled incognito for fear of enemies.³ Joseph Smith met with President Martin Van Buren a month later. The President told Smith in essence, "What can I do? I can do nothing for you! If I do anything, I shall come in contact with the whole state of Missouri."⁴ While waiting for the Saints' petition to be presented to Congress, Joseph Smith visited Philadelphia on December 21. A few months previously in September, Benjamin Winchester came to Philadelphia and preached in the city. On October 1 baptisms were

¹ "Extracts of the Minutes of Conferences," *Times and Seasons* 1 (November 1839):15, Commerce, Illinois.

² Statement of Dimick B. Huntington, circa 1855, CHL.

³ Robert D. Foster to Joseph Smith III, February 14, 1874 in *True Latter Day Saints' Herald* 22 (April 15, 1875):226.

⁴ Joseph Smith Jr. and Elias Higbee to Hyrum Smith, December 5, 1839 as cited in *History of the Church* 4:40.

performed in the Delaware River. Among those baptized was William Small, “the first candidate baptized in Philadelphia,” and Samuel Bennett who became the first branch president.⁵ The Philadelphia Branch was organized on December 23, 1839 by Joseph Smith.⁶ Apostle Orson Pratt wrote to his wife Sarah:

I went to Philadelphia on Saturday the 21st of December, there I found President J[oseph]. Smith jr.; he had just arrived from Washington city, where he had been about 3 weeks - 4 or 5 days after, Judge Higbee, with Porter Rockwell, came to Philadelphia; they are well. . . . I staid [stayed] with brother Smith, in Philadelphia, about 8 days; we then took the rail road, and went some 35 or 40 miles, to a large branch of the church in Monmouth co. N[ew]. J[ersey]. Which numbers 90 members: there I left him on new year’s day . . . Elder Winchester had when I left Philadelphia, baptized 45 in that city.⁷

Sidney Rigdon and Dr. Robert Foster arrived in the city by the time of the January 13, 1840 Philadelphia Branch Conference. Benjamin Winchester mentioned the conference held in the city: “We had a conference here the first [part] of Jan. 1840, J[oseph]. Smith, Jr. S[idney]. Rigdon, Orson, P[arley]. P. Pratt, and many other elders, were present. . . . J[oseph]. Smith, jr. bore testimony to the coming forth of the book of mormon which was the means of doing much good.”⁸ At the conference Parley P. Pratt spoke about the possibility of printing an edition of the Book of Mormon in New York. The minutes state that, in the afternoon,

Brother Joseph Smith Jr dilated [expanded] at some length on the offices of the Priesthood and on the duties of Elders, Bishops, Priests, &c and directed it should be intered [entered] on the minutes as the injunction of the Presidency that travelling Elders should be especially cautious of incroaching [encroaching] on the ground of stationed & presiding Elders and rather direct their efforts to breaking up and occupying new ground and that the Churches generally refuse to be burthened with the support of unprofitable and dilatory labourers. It was unanimously resolved that this be received as the will and wish of the Conference.⁹

Evidently the day after the branch conference Joseph Smith preached at the pulpit of the Universalist Church at Fourth and Lombard Streets.¹⁰ Apostle Parley P. Pratt recalled about this

⁵ Walter W. Smith, “The History of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Branch,” *Journal of History* 11 (July 1918):362.

⁶ Philadelphia Branch Minutes, 2, typed copy, CCLA.

⁷ Extract from letter of Orson Pratt to Sarah Pratt, January 6, 1840, *Times and Seasons* 1 (February 1840):61, Nauvoo.

⁸ Benjamin Winchester to “Dear Brother in the Lord,” February 10, 1840, *Times and Seasons* 1 (May 1840):104. Winchester listed Orson Pratt as being present but he was probably not in Philadelphia at the time.

⁹ Philadelphia Branch Minutes, January 13, 1840, 3-4. See Richard P. Howard, “Values in Old Minute Books,” *Saints Herald* 123 (December 1976):48.

¹⁰ Smith, “The History of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Branch,” *Journal of History* 11 (July 1918):363. The First Independent Church of Christ (Universalist) treasurer’s book contains the

meeting, “a very large church was opened for him to preach in. . . . Brother Rigdon spoke first, and dwelt on the Gospel, illustrating his doctrine by the Bible.” Parley Pratt wrote that Smith bore “testimony of the visions he had seen, the ministering of angels which he had enjoyed; and how he had found the plates of the Book of Mormon, and translated them by the gift and power of God.”¹¹ Parley wrote afterwards: “While in Philadelphia, I had the happiness of meeting with Elders J. Smith, Jun., and S. Rigdon, who had come from the west [Nauvoo] on a mission to the seat of government, to lay before Congress and the President of the United States, the facts of the Missouri persecution. From them I received much precious instruction, in which I shall always rejoice.”¹² Smith traveled back to Washington, D.C. and was back in Nauvoo by the first of March 1840.

In April, near the end of the month, two individuals visited Joseph Smith and had an interview with him. Smith showed them “several frames, covered with glass, under which were numerous fragments of Egyptian papyrus, on which, as usual, a great variety of hieroglyphical characters had been imprinted.” They talked about his visit to President Martin Van Buren:

The conversation turned upon his recent visit to Washington, and his talk with the President of the United States. He gave us distinctly to understand that his political views had undergone an entire change; and his description of the reception given him at the executive mansion was any thing but flattering to the distinguished individual who presides over its hospitalities.

Before he had heard the story of our wrongs, said the indignant Prophet, Mr. Van Buren gave us to understand that he could do nothing for the redress of our grievances lest it should interfere with his political prospects in Missouri. He is not as fit said he, as my dog, for the chair of state; for my dog will make an effort to protect his abused and insulted master, while the present chief magistrate will not so much as lift his finger to relieve an oppressed and persecuted community of freemen, whose glory it has been that they were citizens of the United States.¹³

John Cook Bennett, an ambitious man who was, at the time, quarter master general of the state of Illinois, wrote a series of letters to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. Bennett seemed obsessed with joining the church. Near the end of August 1840 he arrived in Nauvoo to lend a hand in its establishment as a city. Shortly afterwards Bennett was baptized into the church and probably received the first patriarchal blessing given under the hands of Hyrum Smith, the new

entry on renting the building, “1840 January 14 For use of the Church from Rev. J. Smith by G. H. McCully \$13.63.” See John Shiffert, “Site of Joseph Smith’s 1839 [sic; 1840] Philadelphia Sermon Identified,” *Ensign* 23 (May 1993):101. This article quotes from Parley P. Pratt and says that he refers to the last week in December 1839. This is incorrect since the meeting was in January 1840. The building is currently used by the Jewish Yaron Chapel of Congregation Keshet Israel, 412 Lombard Street.

¹¹ *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, 260.

¹² Editor, “Sketch of Travels in America, and Voyage to England,” *Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star* 1 (July 1840):51, Manchester, England.

¹³ *Quincy Whig* 3 (October 17, 1840):1.

patriarch on September 21. (Joseph Sr. had died September 14 after conferring the office on Hyrum.)

At the church conference held in October, John C. Bennett, together with Joseph Smith and Robert B. Thompson, were appointed to a committee to draw up a bill for the incorporation of Nauvoo and other purposes. It was resolved "that Dr. J. C. Bennett, be appointed delegate to Springfield, to urge the passage of said bill through the legislature." The published conference minutes state:

Dr. Bennett then, made some very appropriate remarks on the duty of the saints in regard to those, who had, under circumstances of affliction, held out the hand of friendship, and that it was their duty to uphold such men and give them the[i]r suffrages, and support.¹⁴

In December Bennett, writing under the pseudonym "Joab, General in Israel," explained that the act for incorporation the City of Nauvoo passed the Illinois State Legislature with provisions to establish a Nauvoo Legion and a University of the City of Nauvoo.¹⁵ Most but not all of the articles contained in the charter were patterned after the Springfield, Illinois, city charter. The act was signed by Governor Thomas Carlin. Elections for city government was held on February 1, 1841. Bennett was elected mayor. Vilate Kimball told of one happy event that occurred at the end of 1840:

Our people had bought a boat; they have named her Nauvoo. the last trip she made up the river, President Smith went with her, and when he returned who should accompany him but John F Boynton and his wife, and Lymon [Lyman] Johnson. They made it there [their] home to Joseph Smiths all the time they were here.

I never saw Joseph appear more happy; said he, I am a going to have all my old friends around me again; they both bought lots and calculate to build and move here the ensuing Season. as to their faith, I have not heard much about it, but I conclude they have got some, or they [would?] have no object in comeing here. I never saw any body that appeared glader to see me than John[']s wife, they all called brother, and sister, and appeared as friendly as I ever saw them!¹⁶

Religiously Joseph Smith's longest revelation was given on January 19, 1841. This document referred to projected church projects such as building a temple and constructing a boarding house for the Smith family and visitors to the city. Joseph's older brother Hyrum who had been ordained by his father in September 1840 was confirmed as church patriarch. Sidney Rigdon was to continue to be a counselor, and William Law was appointed to the first presidency to receive the oracles for the church. The Quorum of the Twelve, a church high council, and various priesthood quorums composed the central organization.¹⁷

¹⁴ "Minutes of the general conference," *Times and Seasons* 1 (October 1840):186.

¹⁵ "Editors of the Times & Seasons," *Ibid.* 2 (January 1, 1841):266-67.

¹⁶ Vilate Kimball to Heber C. Kimball, December 8, 1840, CHL.

¹⁷ Marquardt, *Joseph Smith Revelations*, 309-310; LDS D&C 124:125-145.

As mentioned previously, John C. Bennett was able to obtain the charter for the city of Nauvoo. In January 1841 the First Presidency wrote concerning Bennett:

He addressed us a letter, tendering to us his assistance in delivering us out of the hands of our enemies, and restoring us again to our privileges, and only required at our hands to point out the way, and he would be forthcoming, with all the forces he could raise for that purpose—He has been one of the principal instruments, in effecting our safety and deliverance from the unjust persecutions and demands of the authorities of Missouri, and also in procuring the city charter—He is a man of enterprize, extensive acquirements, and of independant mind, and is calculated to be a great blessing to our community.¹⁸

The saints were told in the revelation of January 19:

Again, let my servant John C. Bennett, help you in your labor in sending my word to the kings and people of the earth, and stand by you, even you my servant Joseph Smith, in the hour of affliction, and his reward shall not fail, if he receive counsel; and for his love he shall be great; for he shall be mine if he do this, saith the Lord. I have seen the work which he hath done, which I accept, if he continue, and will crown him with blessings and great glory.¹⁹

A third edition of the Book of Mormon was published in 1840. In one of the passages in 1 Nephi, Joseph Smith gave additional clarification by adding the words "or out of the waters of baptism" to the text of Isaiah 48:1:

Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, (or out of the waters of baptism,) who swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel.²⁰

Ebenezer Robinson recalled that Joseph made this change in the text.²¹ The 1840 edition (third edition) of the Book of Mormon contained some textual revisions. The title page included the words "Carefully revised by the translator." Robinson was involved in having stereotyped plates made. The Book of Mormon was printed by Shepard and Stearns in Cincinnati, Ohio. The first run of 2,000 copies was finished in October.²² A number of items, including the original

¹⁸ "A Proclamation, To the Saints Scattered Abroad," *Times and Seasons* 2 (January 15, 1841):275.

¹⁹ Marquardt, *Joseph Smith Revelations*, 301; LDS D&C 124:16-17.

²⁰ 1840 BOM, 53; LDS 1 Nephi 20:1; not in RLDS 1 Nephi 6:8. This reading is not reflected in the Isaiah Dead Sea scroll 1QIs^a which would not be expected since this is an interpretation of a text. See *The Dead Sea Scroll Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English*, Translated and with Commentary by Martin Abegg, Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999), 349.

²¹ Robinson, "A Historical Reminiscence," *Saints Herald* 30 (March 10, 1883):146.

²² Robinson, "Testimony on the Book of Mormon," *Saints Herald* 33 (December 11, 1886):778-81. See Kyle R. Walker, "'As Fire Shut Up in My Bones': Ebenezer Robinson, Don Carlos

manuscript of the Book of Mormon, were placed in the southeast cornerstone of the Nauvoo House on October 2, 1841. Warren Foote wrote: "Joseph Smith came up with the manuscript of the Book of Mormon and said that he wanted to put that in there, as he had had trouble enough with it."²³

A preacher from St. Louis in company with a friend told of his visit to Nauvoo and his interview with Joseph Smith on November 3 and mentioned, "The Prophet was asleep, in his rocking chair, when we entered. His wife and children were busy about the room, ironing, &c., and one or two Mormon preachers, lately returned from England, were sitting by the large log fire." Concerning the influence Smith had in Nauvoo, Joseph replied:

I bought 900 acres here, a few years ago, and they all have their lands of me. My influence, however, is ecclesiastical only; in civil affairs, I am but a common citizen. To be sure, I am a member of the City Council, and Lieutenant General of the Nauvoo Legion. I can command a thousand men to the field, at any moment, to support the laws. I had hard work to make them turn out and form the "Legion," until I shouldered my musket, and entered the ranks myself. Now, they have nearly all provided themselves with a good uniform, poor as they are.²⁴

It was at Nauvoo that Joseph Smith published the Book of Abraham. In early 1842 Joseph Smith and Reuben Hedlock worked on restoring three illustrations. They are known as Facsimile Numbers 1, 2, and 3. From the Egyptian Alphabet and Smith's explanations, we know that he thought they represented teachings about astronomy. For Facsimile No. 1, the hieroglyphics in the columns on the original document were omitted and the damaged papyrus restored. Facsimile No. 3 which would have been on the inside of the roll was better preserved. The head of Figure 6, "a slave belonging to the prince," was altered and included the preserved Egyptian characters. In Facsimile No. 2, the round object was now a complete circle with restored portions including characters from the Egyptian papyrus used in the Translation Manuscripts. These reproductions were included with the printing of the Book of Abraham.

Joseph Smith spent additional time working on the Book of Abraham and preparing his explanations of the three restored Facsimiles. These were published in the *Times and Seasons*. Apostle Wilford Woodruff set some of the type for the Book of Abraham. He wrote a summary statement in his journal:

Joseph the Seer has presented us some of the Book of Abraham which was written by his [Abraham's] own hand but hid from the knowledge of man for the last four

Smith, and the 1840 Edition of the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Mormon History* 36 (Winter 2010):1-40.

²³ Autobiography of Warren Foote, CHL. The list of items placed in the cornerstone was recorded in the Book of the Law of the Lord. See a photograph published in Joseph F[ielding]. Smith, "The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon," *Improvement Era* 10 (June 1907):575 and "Book of Mormon Manuscript Put in Nauvoo House Corner Stone," Church Section, *Deseret News*, August 8, 1931.

²⁴ "Mormons and Mormonism," *St. Louis Republican* 20 (November 25, 1841), St. Louis, Missouri. On the military uniforms of the Nauvoo Legion, see Glen M. Leonard, "Picturing the Nauvoo Legion," *Brigham Young University Studies* 35, no. 2 (1995):95-135.

thousand years but has now come to light through the mercy of God. Joseph has had these records in his possession for several years but has never presented them before the world until now. But he is now about to publish it to the world or parts of it by publishing it in the *Times & Seasons*, for Joseph the Seer is now the Editor of that paper & Elder [John] Taylor assists him in writing while it has fallen to my lot to take charge of the Business part of the establishment.²⁵

The March 1 issue of the *Times and Seasons* states, "This paper commences my [Joseph Smith's] editorial career, I alone stand responsible for it." The manuscript draft of the editorial contains the following: "In the present no. will be found the commencement of the Records discovered in Egypt. Some time since. as penned by the hand of Father Abraham. which I shall continue to translate & publish as fast as possible till the whole is completed."²⁶

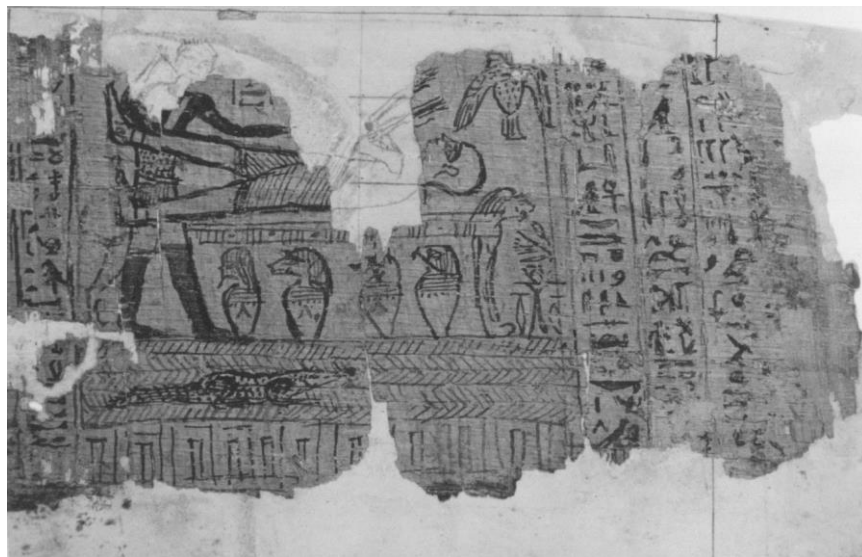
Facsimile No. 1

Ancient Egypt espoused a belief in many deities. The vignette (or illustration) drawn on this papyrus was for Horus who was deceased. This illustration shows the deceased (identified with Osiris, god of the underworld) lying on a lion-shaped funerary bier while Anubis (the jackal-headed god of embalming) stood ready for the mummification process. Below the bier are four conopic jars which held the vital organs of the deceased. This papyrus is known as the Book of Breathings, Book of Breathings Made by Isis, or Breathing Permit. It was a late rendition and condensed version of what is called the Book of the Dead.

Sometime after the papyrus was purchased it was glued to the backing paper and a head and a knife were drawn to fill the damage area where part of the standing figure (number 3) appeared. It is possible that this was done prior to moving to Nauvoo. With preparation for the publication of the illustration, the final result was that figure 3 had a head similar to figure 2. Joseph Smith's explanation of figure 3 is: "The idolatrous priest of Elkenah attempting to offer up Abraham as a sacrifice."

²⁵ Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal* 2:155, February 19, 1842. The text of the Book of Abraham was published in *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 9 (March 1, 1842):704-706, paragraphs 1-13 (LDS Abraham 1:1-2:18, written in November 1835) and *ibid.*, 3, no. 10 (March 15, 1842):719-22, paragraphs 14-32 (LDS Abraham 2:19-5:21, written in March 1842).

²⁶ *Times and Seasons* 3 (March 1, 1842):710. The draft editorial is in the handwriting of Willard Richards. Joseph Smith Collection, CHL. A portion of this editorial (first paragraph reworded) was published.



First vignette of Breathing Permit of Horus (Original in CHL). Original papyrus of Facsimile No. 1. Damage continued in the writing to the left of this drawing. Joseph Smith represented this as a complete picture when published.

The characters on the side of the illustration were omitted in order to fit on the page without turning the page sideways. Though the original was damaged, the lead plate was prepared by Reuben Hedlock under the direction of Joseph Smith and printed as though the illustration was complete and not damaged.

Various newspapers reproduced Facsimile 1 from the published illustration in the *Times and Seasons*. While there was interest in what Smith was doing, the newspapers did not take him seriously. Joseph Smith regarded the illustration as representing Abraham on an altar about to be sacrificed by a standing black figure with a white face like Abraham's.

Joseph Smith in his explanation said the bird (Figure 1) was the angel of the Lord with the "Idolatrous Priest of Elkenah attempting to offer up Abraham as a sacrifice" (Figure 3), before five idolatrous gods. The original vignette was damaged in the area of the body of the lying figure. As indicated a head for the standing figure was drawn in after the papyrus was glued to the backing paper. The proposed reconstruction had the head facing sideways and a knife in the hand of the priest. When printed in the *Times and Seasons*, the illustration appeared to be complete.

A FAC-SIMILE FROM THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM.
NO. 1.



Times and Seasons 3, no. 9 (March 1, 1842):703, first page of issue. The head of figure 3 was added. Compare with original. The black figure is Anubis. Columns of hieroglyphic characters on both sides were omitted when published. The size of Facsimile 1 is close to the size of Facsimile 3 being from the same scroll.

Facsimile No. 2

In publishing Facsimile No. 2, careful attention was devoted to filling in the missing areas on the round illustration or Egyptian hypocephalus (meaning under the head, where the object was to be placed for the deceased). The damaged parts were filled in from papyri in order to make the round object appear whole or complete in its recovered state. The hypocephalus contains elements that are Egyptian but from various sources. To the common person, it would look like a complete, undamaged picture, although persons who saw the original would have seen it fragmented.

The Book of the Law of the Lord, kept in Nauvoo by Willard Richards, recorded for March 4, 1842, the following activity of Joseph Smith: "Exhibiting the Book of Abraham, in the original, To Bro Reuben Hadlock [Hedlock]. . . . also gave instruction concerning the arrangement of the writing on the Large cut. illustrating the principles of Astronomy."²⁷ This was

²⁷ Jessee, *Papers of Joseph Smith* 2:366. Regarding Facsimile No. 1, Richards recorded that Joseph Smith was at "the printing office correcting the first plate or cut. of the Records of father Abraham. prepared by Reuben Hadlock [Hedlock] for the Times & Seasons." *Ibid.*, 2:363-64, March 1, 1842. The next day Smith "Read the Proof of the 'Times and Seasons' as Editor for the first time, No.9-Vol 3d in which is the commencement of the Book of Abraham." *Ibid.*, 2:364.

Facsimile No. 2 and appeared in the *Times and Seasons* as a large fold-out page. Though it was represented to be "A Fac-simile from the Book of Abraham," the illustration was larger in size and not from the same scroll as Facsimiles 1 and 3, as it is an Egyptian hypocephalus, not a breathing permit. Also the name of the deceased is not Horus.

Joseph Smith explained Figure 3 at the top right of the reconstructed illustration, filled in from another papyrus, as:

made to represent God, sitting upon his throne, clothed with power and authority; with a crown of eternal light upon his head; representing, also, the grand Key words of the Holy Priesthood, as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden, as also to Seth, Noah, Melchisedek [Melchizedek], Abraham and all to whom the Priesthood was revealed.

Another drawing that has a throne is interpreted as "Representing God sitting upon his throne, revealing, through the heavens, the grand Keys words of the Priesthood; as, also the sign of the Holy Ghost unto Abraham, in the form of a dove." The facsimile was to help present sacred information that was to be revealed in the priesthood endowment ceremony. In May Joseph Smith initiated his brother Hyrum and a few close friends into the Holy Order of the Priesthood or Quorum of the Anointed.

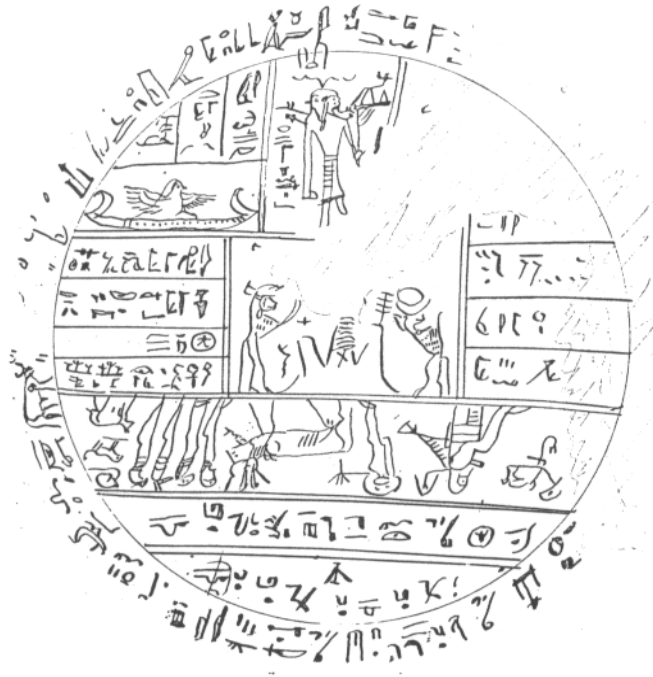
Joseph spent two days on the Book of Abraham text. Willard Richards recorded for March 8 that Smith, "Commenced Translating from the Book of Abraham, for the 10 No of the Times and Seasons." The next day Joseph "continued the Translation of the Book of Abraham . . . with the Recorder [Willard Richards]. & continued translating & revising."²⁸ The same day, March 9, Joseph wrote, "I am now very busily engaged in Translating"²⁹ and Richards told his brother Levi he was "writing the translation of the Book of Abraham in which I am engaged today."³⁰ Jacob Scott Sr. wrote that same month, "The Church is increasing in number daily. Joseph has translated and published in the Times and Seasons a considerable part of the writings of Abraham found on the body of one of the mummies."³¹

²⁸ Ibid., 2:367.

²⁹ Smith to Edward Hunter, March 9-11, 1842 in Jessee, *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 550.

³⁰ Willard Richards to Levi Richards, March 7-25, 1842, as cited in Joseph Grant Stevenson, ed., *Richards Family History* (Provo, Utah: Stevenson's Genealogical Center, 1991), 3:88. This part of letter was written on March 9.

³¹ Jacob Scott Sr. to "My Dear Children" [Mary Scott Warnock and Jane Scott Askin], March 24, 1842, emphasis omitted, as cited in James Wesley Scott, *The Jacob and Sarah Warnock Scott Family 1779-1910* (Otis Orchards, Washington: author, 2002), 15.



The above drawing came from the lost original. It was damaged in certain areas. (Original sketch in CHL).

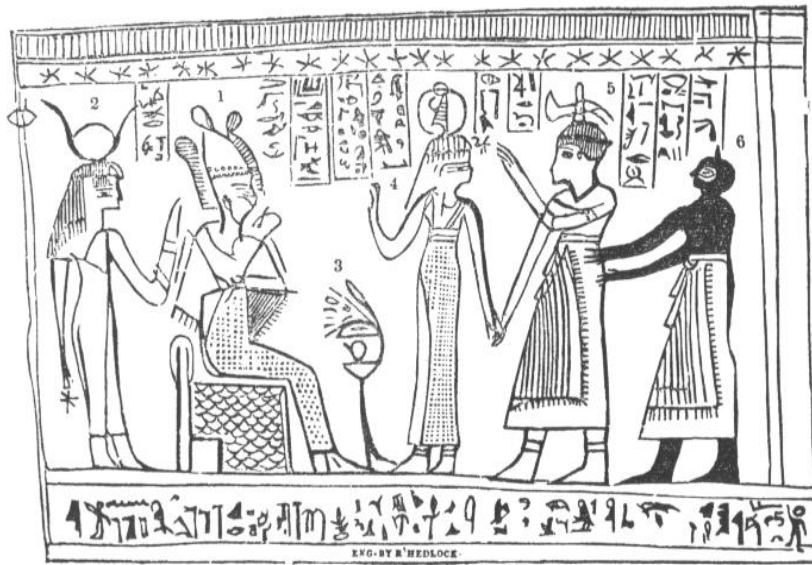
A FAC-SIMILE FROM THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM, NO. 2.



Lower illustration on previous page is from *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 10 (March 15, 1842): foldout page between pages 720 and 721. Notice the filled in parts. Facsimile No. 2 is larger in size and is round. It was made for a different individual than Facsimiles 1 and 3 and would not be considered as being from the same record.

Facsimile No. 3

Joseph Smith's explanation of Facsimile No. 3 indicated that for figures 2, 4, and 5 the written characters, in columns, told who the individuals were.



A FACSIMILE FROM THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM.
NO. 3.

Times and Seasons 3, no. 14 (May 16, 1842):783, first page of issue. The head of figure 6, to the far right, is too small and not the head of a jackal. The black figure is Anubus with an ear showing. The size of the facsimile is close to Facsimile 1. This depiction is from the same scroll and is less damaged because it was on the inside of the roll.

Times and Seasons 3, no. 14 (May 16, 1842):784 contained Joseph Smith's explanation of Facsimile 3:

1. Abraham sitting upon Pharaoh's throne, by the politeness of the king; with a crown upon his head, representing the priesthood; as emblematical of the grand presidency in 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 9th No. of the *Times & Seasons*.
4. Prince of Pharaoh, King of Egypt; as written above the hand.
5. Shulem; one of the king's principle waiters; as represented by the characters above his hand.

6. Olimlah; a slave belonging to the prince.

Abraham is reasoning upon the principles of astronomy, in the king[']s Court.

With Genesis 12:7-13 as a base text Smith told about Abram's journey toward Egypt.³² The story has Abram learning about the stars (the great one is called Kolob), the moon (the lesser light), and the sun (the greater light). The text mentions spirits that are intelligent and have no beginning and no end. The intelligences were organized before the creation of the world. Materials were used to make the earth.

Using the Genesis account of the creation story for a backdrop, Joseph Smith mentioned in his Book of Abraham that a council of Gods was involved in the planning and creation of the earth.³³ This concept was advanced from when he dictated the writings of Moses. When correcting the Bible in June 1830, he used God (singular) in the act of creation.³⁴ Joseph believed in 1830 that there was one God. Genesis 2:11-14 which named the four rivers coming out of Eden (retained in the 1830 revision of Genesis) was not included in the Abraham account because Smith indicated in 1838 that the Garden of Eden was in what is known as Jackson County, Missouri.

The ancient Egyptians had their own ideas concerning their gods that made sense to them. Joseph Smith's view in the Book of Abraham is different in the context of the Judeo-Christian and Islamic belief in one God. One way to understand this is to know that Smith's religious beliefs changed over time. By this time (1842), he taught that there were many gods and that believers could become gods; also that there were Gods who had direction over the creation of this earth.³⁵

The monotheism in the Book of Mormon and Smith's corrections in the writings of Moses in Genesis made it clear his beliefs that there is only one God. The oneness of God was worked on in the lectures on theology (known as the Lectures on Faith). The ideas relating to God developed in the church and moved toward two separate members of the Godhead though there were varying degrees of this teaching. By 1839 Joseph Smith's idea of a governing council of Gods (polytheism) started to formulate. So when Smith worked on the latter portion of the text of the Book of Abraham in Nauvoo he already accepted polytheism, though in LDS terms it is known as the plurality of Gods.³⁶

The concept of a council of Gods of creation was incorporated into Latter-day Saint temple worship in Nauvoo. The endowment ceremony contained the idea of a council of Gods giving direction for the creation of the world. It followed, in part, the Abraham text:

And then the Lord said, let us go down; and they went down at the beginning, and they organized and formed, (that is, the Gods,) the heavens and the earth. And the earth, after it was formed, was empty and desolate; because they

³² Compare Genesis 12:7-13 with LDS Abraham 2:19-25.

³³ Compare Genesis 1:1-2:10, 15-18, 21-25, 19-20 with LDS Abraham 4:1-5:21.

³⁴ Old Testament Manuscript No. 1, 3, CCLA.

³⁵ Marquardt, *Joseph Smith Revelations*, 297, 325; LDS D&C 121:32 (March 20, 1839); LDS D&C 132:19-20 (July 12, 1843).

³⁶ For essays on the Mormon concept of God, see Gary James Bergera, ed., *Line Upon Line: Essays on Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990).

had not formed anything but the earth: and darkness reigned upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of the Gods was brooding upon the faces of the water.

And they said, the Gods, let there be light, and there was light. And they, the Gods, comprehended the light, for it was bright; and they divided the light, or caused it to be divided from the darkness, and the Gods called the light day, and the darkness they called night. And it came to pass that from the evening until morning, they called day: and this was the first, or the beginning of that which they called day and night.

And the Gods also said let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and it shall divide the waters from the waters. And the Gods ordered the expanse, so that it divided the waters which were under the expanse, from the waters which were above the expanse: and it was so, even as they ordered. And the Gods called the expanse, heaven. And it came to pass that it was from the evening until morning, that they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening, that they called day: and this was the second time, that they called night and day.

And the Gods ordered, saying, let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the earth come up dry, and it was so, as they ordered; and the gods pronounced the earth dry, and the gathering together of the waters, pronounced they great waters: and the Gods saw that they were obeyed. And the Gods said, let us prepare the earth to bring forth grass; the herb yielding seed; the fruit tree yielding fruit, after his kind, whose seed in itself yieldeth its own likeness upon the earth; and it was so even as they ordered.³⁷

Joseph Smith's famous King Follett discourse expands upon the topic of many Gods.³⁸ Joseph's understanding while in Nauvoo was different than his revelatory pronouncements in New York and early teachings in Ohio.

After Joseph Smith's death, Lucy Mack Smith continued to show the records and mummies to visitors at Nauvoo. She died in May 1856 and they were purchased by Abel Combs, "From translations by Mr. [Joseph] Smith of the Records, these Mummies were found to be the family of Pharo [Pharaoh] King of Egypt." The bill of sale was signed by Louis Bidamon, his wife, Emma Hale Smith Bidamon, and her eldest son Joseph Smith III.³⁹ Abel Combs died in Philadelphia in 1892. The records were purchased in 1947 by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and transferred to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in November 1967.

³⁷ *Times and Seasons* 3 (March 15, 1842):720-21; LDS Abraham 4:1-11.

³⁸ See Donald Q. Cannon, "The King Follett Discourse: Joseph Smith's Greatest Sermon in Historical Perspective," *Brigham Young University Studies* 18 (Winter 1978):179-92. See also accounts of the April 7, 1844 discourse on plurality of Gods in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 340-62.

³⁹ The bill of sale is dated May 25, 1856, CHL. See Todd, *Saga of the Book of Abraham*, 290; Peterson, *Story of the Book of Abraham*, 203. The bill was printed in "The Mormon Prophet's Mummies," *Daily Missouri Democrat*, June 12, 1857, St. Louis, Missouri.

Since the time of this rediscovery Egyptologists have translated the three facsimiles and the papyrus used in preparing the Book of Abraham Translation Manuscripts.⁴⁰ What follows is the basic reading of the documents in question with restorations of text not in the original included in brackets. Egyptologists interpret the writing and illustrations based upon their experience. The translations produced by Egyptologists provide their understanding as to what the Egyptians meant. No translation uses the same exact words.

The owner of the papyrus was a priest named Horus (or Hôr) who was deceased. His mother, also deceased, was named Taykhebyt (or Taikhibit). The papyrus dates to about the second century B.C.E. The text below is a composite and does not depend on one translation.

Original of Facsimile No. 1

The writing in four columns along the side of the original Facsimile No. 1 reads:

. . . god's servant of Amon-Re, king of the gods, god's servant of Min, who massacres his enemies, priest of Khonsu . . . Horus, justified, son of one of like titles, master of secrets . . . Taykhebyt. May your soul live in their midst. May you be buried [in] the West . . . on the West [of Thebes] . . .

The wrapping instructions of the priest Horus (column 1, previously attached to original of Facsimile No. 1) include the following:

. . . pool of Khonsu [Orisis Horus, justified], born of Taykhebyt, justified after his two arms are put over his heart the Breathing Permit which is made with writings inside and outside, is fastened in royal linen, and placed at left arm near his heart. This having been done at his outer wrapping. If this is made for him, then he will breath like the souls of the gods forever and ever.

Egyptologists agree that this is the basic wording from the Egyptian characters contained in the column 1 of the writings next to the original of Facsimile No. 1. The commencement of the Breathing Permit begins in the next column to the left of the wrapping instructions and is badly damaged.

Restored Facsimile No. 2

As mentioned, the large round illustration published in the *Times and Seasons* was represented as a complete picture (facsimile) with an explanation. Part of the writing was explained by Joseph Smith as follows:

⁴⁰ See Klaus Baer, "The Breathing Permit of Hôr," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Autumn 1968):109-134; Robert K. Ritner, "The 'Breathing Permit of Hôr' Thirty-four Years Later," *Ibid.*, 33 (Winter 2000):97-119; Ritner, "'The Breathing Permit of Hôr' among the Joseph Smith Papyri," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 62 (July 2003):161-80. For a Latter-day Saint translation of the papyrus, see Michael D. Rhodes, *The Hor Book of Breathings: A Translation and Commentary* (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2002), 21, 23 (original of Facsimile No. 1); 24-25 (Facsimile No. 3), and 27-28 (papyrus used for Translation Manuscripts).

Figure 8: “Contains writings that cannot be revealed unto the world; but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God.” Figure 9: “Ought not to be revealed at the present time.” Figure 10: “Also.” Figure 11: “Also. If the world can find out these numbers, so let it be. Amen.”

The Egyptian hieroglyphics as published are read in reversed order for Figures 11, 10, 9 and 8. They read something like: “O God of the Sleeping Ones from the time of the creation. O mighty God, Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Netherworld and his Great Waters, grant that the soul of Osiris Sheshonk may live.”⁴¹ Figure 8 records the name of person for whom this hypocephalus was prepared as Sheshonk (or Shishaq).

On the top right side of the round disk near one o'clock appears in hieratic characters part of Horus's mother name (Taykhebyt) repeated twice — hebyt, hebyt. What this means is that the Horus Papyrus was used to restore the damaged hypocephalus made for a different person. Horus's mother's name was used in preparing the Book of Abraham Translation Manuscripts. A portion of the Horus Papyrus was not lost but has remained on the printed facsimile since 1842.

To further show that the Horus Papyrus was used to fill in a missing area on the hypocephalus is the word “sensen” on the fourth line. It appears at the place labeled Figure 14. These hieratic characters are upside down and backward in comparison to the hieroglyphic text. So we can conclude that the Horus Papyrus was used in preparing the published restored Facsimile No. 2. Joseph Smith's study of Hebrew is also indicated in his explanations of a few of the figures.⁴²

Facsimile No. 3 (ending scene of Horus papyrus)

This facsimile is represented to be from the Book of Abraham. At the bottom of this illustration in Egyptian is the following prayer:

gods of the Caverns, gods of the south, north, west, and east, grant well-being to Osiris Horus, justified, born of Taykhebyt.

The characters above the hand of Figure Number 5 are explained by Joseph Smith as “Shulem, one of the king's principle [sic] waiters, as represented by the characters above his hand.” The Egyptian characters read: Osiris Horus. Rather than being a waiter in Pharaoh's court at a time when Abraham is sitting upon the throne, the characters tell about the deceased priest Horus. The figures in the illustration are as follows:

⁴¹ Michael D. Rhodes, “A Translation and Commentary of the Joseph Smith Hypocephalus,” *Brigham Young University Studies* 17 (Spring 1977):265. In an update Rhodes translates it: “O God of the Sleeping Ones from the time of the creation. O mighty God, Lord of heaven and earth, of the hereafter, and his great waters, may the soul of the Osiris Shishaq be granted life.” *The Joseph Smith Hypocephalus . . . Seventeen Years Later* (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1994), 5.

⁴² In Kirtland Joseph Smith studied the Hebrew language. See Louis Zucker, “Joseph Smith as a Student of Hebrew,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Summer 1968):41-55 and Michael T. Walton, “Professor Seixas, the Hebrew Bible, and the Book of Abraham,” *Sunstone* 6:2 (March 1981):41-43.

Figure 1 is Osiris

Figure 2 is Isis

Figure 3 is an offering stand

Figure 4 is Maat

Figure 5 is Horus (deceased, for whom the papyrus was written)

Figure 6 (black figure) is Anubis.

Joseph Smith did not know Egyptian but believed he could translate Egyptian through inspiration. Smith promised to produce more of the Book of Abraham text but had not done so prior to his death. The *Times and Seasons* stated: "We would further state that we have the promise of Br. Joseph, to furnish us with further extracts from the Book of Abraham."⁴³ Some have faith that Smith had an insight into Abraham's teachings, while others know his limited work in this area of his ministry.⁴⁴

In April 1842 Henry Caswall, a clergyman in his early thirties, visited Nauvoo with a manuscript of a Greek Psalter written on parchment intending to test the prophetic abilities of Joseph Smith. As Caswall described his visit there was much interest in the manuscript book he brought with him. In his account Caswall wrote that he stayed at Montrose across the Mississippi River from Nauvoo. On April 19 Henry Caswall crossed the river on his third visit to Nauvoo when he had an interview with the prophet. Caswall reported:

I handed the book to the prophet, and begged him to explain its contents. He asked me if I had any idea of its meaning. I replied, that I believed it to be a Greek Psalter; but that I should like to hear his opinion. "No," he said; "it ain't Greek at all; except, perhaps, a few words. What ain't Greek, is Egyptian; and what ain't Egyptian, is Greek. This book is very valuable. *It is a dictionary of Egyptian Hieroglyphics.*" Pointing to the capital letters at the commencement of each verse, he said, "Them figures is Egyptian hieroglyphics; and them which follows, is the interpretation of the hieroglyphics, written in the reformed Egyptian. Them characters is like the letters that was engraved on the gold plates."⁴⁵

Being asked at what price he would like to sell the manuscript, Caswall declined to sell or lend the manuscript. Caswall told Smith he wanted to see the papyrus which he had previously seen and was interested in Smith's explanations first hand. Caswall wrote: "I pointed to a particular hieroglyphic, and requested him to expound its meaning. No answer being returned, I looked up, and behold! the prophet had disappeared. The Mormons told me that he had just stepped out, and would probably soon return. I waited some time, but in vain: and at length descended to the street in front of the store. Here I heard the noise of wheels, and presently I saw the prophet in his waggon, flourishing his whip and driving away as fast as two fine horses could

⁴³ *Times and Seasons* 4 (February 1, 1843):95, John Taylor, editor.

⁴⁴ See Stephen E. Thompson, "Egyptology and the Book of Abraham," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 28 (Spring 1995):143-60.

⁴⁵ Henry Caswall, *The City of the Mormons; or, Three Days at Nauvoo, in 1842* (London: Printed for J. G. F. & J. Rivington, 1842), 35-36, emphasis in original. It is hard to determine if the poor grammar was really Joseph Smith's or if Henry Caswall was presenting Smith in a bad light.

draw him."⁴⁶ Some religious discussion followed the departure of Smith and finally Caswall said:

["]Your prophet has committed himself to-day, and I will make the fact known to the world. Would you believe a man calling himself a prophet, who should say that black is white?" "No," they replied. "Would you believe him if he should say that English is French?" "Certainly not." "But you heard your prophet declare, that this book of mine is a Dictionary of Egyptian hieroglyphics, written in characters like those of the original Book of Mormon. I know it most positively to be the Psalms of David, written in ancient Greek. Now what shall I think of your prophet?"

Willard Richards replied to Henry Caswall: "Sometimes Mr. Smith speaks as a prophet, and sometimes as a mere man. If he gave a wrong opinion respecting the book, he spoke as a mere man." Caswall responded:

Whether he spoke as a prophet or as a mere man, he has committed himself, for he has said what is not true. If he spoke as a prophet, therefore, he is a false prophet. If he spoke as a mere man, he cannot be trusted, for he spoke positively and like an oracle respecting that of which he knew nothing.⁴⁷

In June 1842, George Moore, a Unitarian minister from Quincy, had a short visit with Joseph Smith. He recorded in his journal:

We conversed about the *gold plates*, wh[ic]h he professes to have dug up and translated into the Book of Mormon. "Those plates are not now in this country," he said—"they were exhibited to a few at first for the sake of obtaining their testimony—no others have ever seen them—and they will never again be exhibited." He showed me some specimens of the hieroglyphics, such as, he says, were on the gold plates.

Smith expounded: "We believe in three Gods, equal in power and glory. There are three persons in heaven, but those three are not one." Rev. Moore described Smith at this time as being "a man of large frame—tending to corpulency—has blue eyes, light complexion, one or two of his front teeth gone—he has a rather benevolent expression of countenance."⁴⁸

In December 1842 Rev. Moore related that a deacon in his church joined the Mormon faith by baptism while in Nauvoo. This individual was Joseph L. Heywood. George Moore recorded in his journal his visit with Heywood:

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 43. Willard Richards recorded Joseph Smith saying in 1843, "'A Prophet is not always a Prophet' only when he is acting as such." Joseph Smith Journal, February 8, 1843, CHL.

⁴⁸ George Moore, Journal, June 3, 1842, emphasis retained, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts. See also "A Visit to Joe Smith," *Times and Seasons* 3 (September 15, 1842):926.

In the course of conversation, he professed to believe that Jo. Smith is the best & purest being on earth, a perfect human being, the prophet of the Almighty. – I asked him what evidence he had of this. He said he had seen & conversed with Mr. Smith, and had heard the testimony of his friends and family who ought to know him best.

Not being impressed Rev. Moore asked for stronger evidence and Joseph Heywood mentioned a couple of miracles. Moore thought that Heywood would regret the step he had taken.⁴⁹

It was during the Nauvoo period that Joseph Smith developed additional concepts relating to God, priesthood, and temple. In his public sermons that are preserved, Smith gave new emphasis to salvation theology. The doctrines and teachings were expounded with special emphasis on obedience to authority.

Like in Kirtland and Far West, internal division was festering in Nauvoo. The organization had its ups and downs. In the church there were growing problems relating to leadership especially that of John C. Bennett who was a friend of Smith. New doctrines and ordinances were expounded to close associates and friends. Joseph Smith became endeared to many at church headquarters. Chapter 22 will look at a number these priesthood ordinances.

⁴⁹ George Moore, Journal, December 20, 1842.