

THEY LIE IN WAIT TO DECEIVE

by Robert L. & Rosemary Brown

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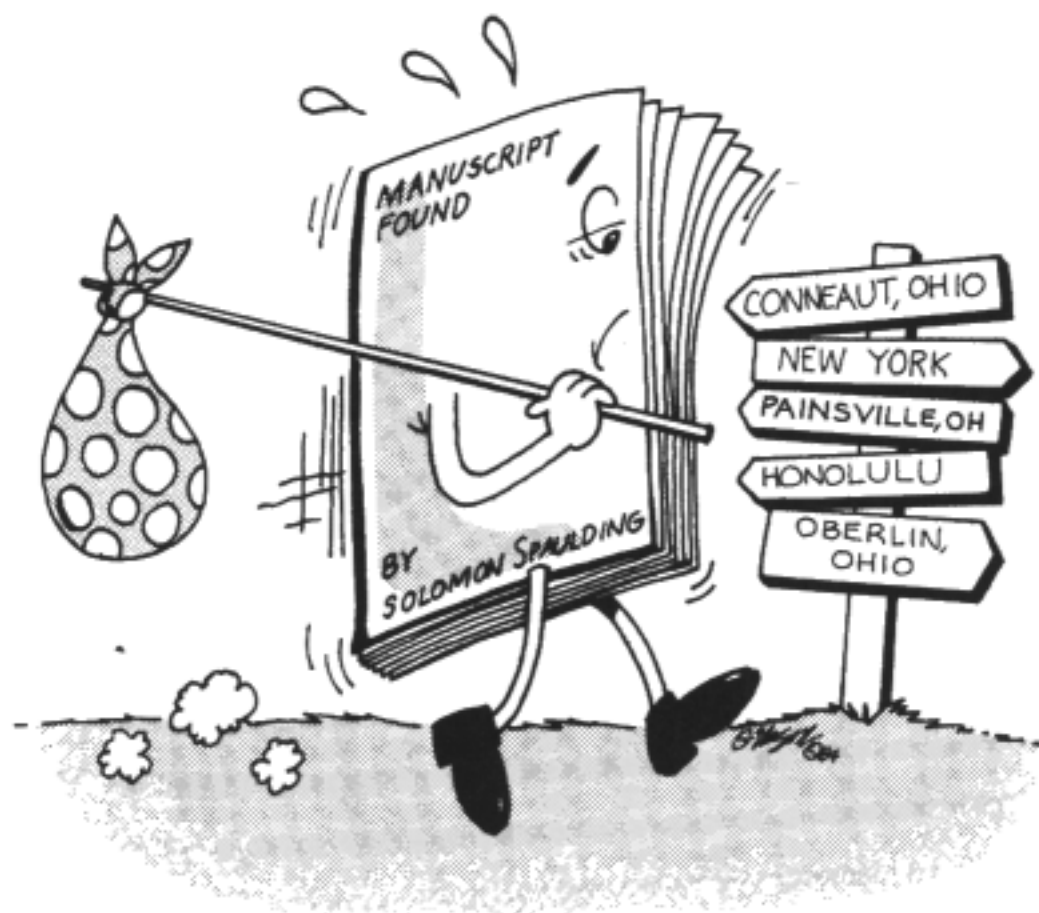
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CHAPTER SIX

**SPAULDING'S MANUSCRIPT — ITS
JOURNEY FROM SPAULDING TO
OBERLIN COLLEGE, OHIO**



OBJECTIVES

- To prove that letters from "eight witnesses" of Conneaut, Ohio, connecting Spaulding's manuscript with the Book of Mormon do not qualify as affidavits — most are not dated, none are witnessed, or signed.
 - To prove that of the "eight witnesses" mentioned above, who were supposed to be quite familiar with Spaulding's manuscript written between 1809 — 1812 in Conneaut, Ohio, Ashtabula County, six do not appear at all in the 1810 census for the State of Ohio. Only two appear in Ashtabula County in the 1820 census.
 - To prove that both Mrs. Spaulding Davison (Solomon Spaulding's widow remarried a Davison) and her daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, always refer to only **one** Spaulding manuscript.
 - To prove that Mrs. Spaulding Davison gave the manuscript to D.P. Hurlburt to examine in 1834.
 - To prove that Hurlburt then gave the manuscript to E.D. Howe, author of the anti-Mormon book, **MORMONISM UNVEILED**.
 - To prove that possession of the Spaulding manuscript, was transferred from E.D. Howe to L.L. Rice when Howe sold his business to Rice.
 - To prove that L.L. Rice found the Spaulding manuscript in 1884 and donated it to Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, where it resides today.
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CHAPTER SIX

SPAULDING'S MANUSCRIPT — ITS JOURNEY FROM SPAULDING TO OBERLIN COLLEGE, OBERLIN, OHIO

Solomon Spaulding wrote a romance between 1809 - 1812 about the Indians of Kentucky and Ohio. He died in 1816. His widow and daughter packed up all their belongings and went to visit Mrs. Spaulding's relatives. **Spaulding's manuscript never was on display to the public after he died until it reached its final resting place at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio.** In 1830, when the Book of Mormon appeared, stories were circulated all around that area that it was similar to the "Manuscript Found" written by Spaulding some 14 years previously.

The Manuscript Found had been stored in an old trunk from 1816 - 1834 when D.P. Hulburt borrowed it from Mrs. Spaulding Davison to check it against the Book of Mormon. Hurlburt promised to return it. When it didn't resemble the Book of Mormon at all, he gave the manuscript to E.D. Howe with the instructions to return it to Mrs. Spaulding Davison. Instead of returning it, E.D. Howe placed it with other papers in his shop, the Painesville Telegraph, and forgot about it. L.L. Rice bought the Painesville Telegraph, Painesville, Ohio, from E.D. Howe. Along with the printing presses, etc., was a large collection of books and manuscripts, one of which was found to be Spaulding's. Mr. Rice had the Manuscript for about 46 years and didn't know it.

While the manuscript was on its journey from Mrs. Spaulding to Mr. Rice, and hidden from public eyes, letters and affidavits sprang up all over connecting Spaulding's manuscript to the Book of Mormon. Book of Mormon names such as Lehi, Nephi, Moroni, and Mormon were remembered with regularity. When Spaulding's manuscript was found in approximately 1885, and was determined to be entirely alien to the Book of Mormon, the Spaulding theory seemed to fade away.

In Dav,Cow,Sca's book, WRWTBOM, the Spaulding theory was resurrected again. They expended quite a bit of energy in attempting to prove that Sidney Rigdon stole a "second" manuscript by Spaulding from a printshop, gave it to Joseph Smith, and it became the basis for the Book of Mormon. It's pure speculation, again. In the first chapter, you saw the deception used by Dav,Cow,Sca in trying to prove their case by connecting the handwriting of Solomon Spaulding in the manuscript at Oberlin, Ohio, to that of the Unidentified Scribe of the Book of Mormon. In this chapter, you will see that they have no case at all in claiming that there was a **second** manuscript.

EARLY "WITNESSES" AGAINST THE BOOK OF MORMON

The deception by Howard Davis, Wayne Cowdrey, and Donald Scales against the LDS Church is not an invention of the 1980's. In the early days of the Church, a few people, mainly self-styled ministers with much the same reasons for deception as Davis, Cowdrey, & Scales, spread deception with phony letters and affidavits and anything else they could come up with. Books were written, such as *MORMONISM UNVEILED* by E.D. Howe, which quoted these phony letters. Davis, Cowdrey, & Scales used some of these same letters to support their case in their book. There are letters from "eight witnesses" who relate what they remember about Spaulding's manuscript. These letters **conveniently** remember names and dates included in the Book of Mormon with regularity. **However, most are not dated, witnessed, or signed. All the letters are typewritten with typewritten signatures.** (Where are the original letters with signatures, if there are any?) An example of one of the eight letters is shown below, purported to be from John Spaulding, Solomon Spaulding's brother. The author of this letter has a remarkable memory for details after 35 years (1816 - 1851):

John Spaulding made a similar statement in *The Yankee Mahomet* (quoted in *American Review*, June 1851, p. 554), which was corroborated by his son Daniel and many other acquaintances:

Solomon Spaulding was born in Ashford, Conn., A.D. 1761. He graduated at Dartmouth College, and was afterwards regularly ordained a minister. After preaching three or four years, he gave up his profession, and commenced mercantile business, in partnership with his brother Josiah, in Cherry Valley, N.Y., where he soon failed. In 1809 he removed to Conneaut, Ohio, where he engaged himself in building an iron forge; but in this business also he soon failed. Casting about him for some method of retrieving his losses, he conceived the design of writing a historical romance upon a subject then much mooted in the scientific world, the origin of the Indian tribes. This design he carried into execution between 1809 and 1812, and the produce of his labors was a novel entitled the 'Manuscript Found'. In this work he mentioned that the American continent was colonized by Lehi, the son of Japheth, who sailed from Chaldea soon after the great dispersion, and landed near the isthmus of Darien. Lehi's descendants, who were styled Jaredites, spread gradually to the north, bearing

NO DATES
NO SIGNATURES
NO WITNESSES

with them the remains of antediluvian science, and building those cities the ruins of which we see in Central America, and the fortifications which are scattered along the Cordilleras. Long after this, Nephi, of the tribe of Joseph, emigrated to America with a large portion of the ten tribes whom Shalmanezzer led away from Palestine, and scattered among the Midian cities. This remnant of Joseph was soon after its arrival divided into two nations, the Nephites and the Lamanites. These nations made war constantly against each other, and in the year A.D. 420, a great battle was fought in western New York, which terminated in the destruction of the armies of both the belligerent parties, and the annihilation of their power. One man only was left; Moroni, the son of Mormon, who had the records of the Nephites near Conneaut, Ohio, previously at his death.

WRWTBOM
p. 34-35

Although Lehi and the Jaredites are mixed together above, they are actually separated by about 1500 years in the Book of Mormon. Much of this letter does, however, reflect some knowledge of the Book of Mormon. In fact, nearly all of the letters from the "eight Conneaut witnesses" show a fair knowledge of the Book of Mormon; which was, of course, necessary to prove their connection between Spaulding's manuscript and the Book of Mormon. Almost all of the letters were written in 1833, three years after the publication of the Book of Mormon. Those typewritten letters with typed signatures show a remarkable memory after 20 years. (Remember the last time anybody could have heard the manuscript read was before Spaulding's death in 1816) John Spaulding's letter just quoted recalls:

“. . . that Nephi, of the tribe of Joseph, emigrated to America. . . . This remnant of Joseph was soon after its arrival divided into two nations, the Nephites and the Lamanites. These nations made war constantly against each other, and in the year A.D. 420, a great battle was fought in western New York, which terminated in the destruction of the armies of both the belligerent parties, and the annihilation of their power. One man only was left; Moroni, the son of Mormon, who had the records of the Nephites . . .

For those of us who know the story of the Book of Mormon, it is obvious that whomever wrote this letter had a good knowledge of the Book of Mormon. Could you remember details like this after 20 years? **Try to remember names and dates in a book you read last year.** On the last page of the Book of Mormon it gives the last date of its history as "Between A.D. 400 and 421." John Spaulding conveniently remembered the last date to be 420 A.D. He did say in another "affidavit," on p.

33 of WRWTBOM, that Solomon Spaulding “read several passages” of his manuscript to him. For only **hearing** a few passages, John Spaulding had a remarkable memory to remember names and dates didn’t he? The letter quoted on p. 218 had no signature. Letters like this would never hold up in a court of law; they are too easy to fabricate. As you will see in the next chapter, **this similarity of content** between the letters of these “eight Conneaut witnesses” are suspect by several anti-Mormons, too. This author wonders why the original letters aren’t ever shown so we could compare the signatures. Perhaps there aren’t any originals.

WHERE WERE THE EIGHT WITNESSES WHEN SPAULDING WAS SUPPOSED TO BE READING HIS MANUSCRIPT TO THEM?

D.P. Hurlburt provided eight witnesses to verify that they were familiar with Spaulding’s manuscript; familiar enough to recall similarities between it and the Book of Mormon about 14 or 15 years later. You would assume, wouldn’t you, that these witnesses were not just casual visitors to Spaulding’s house. A casual or very brief encounter with Spaulding’s manuscript would not leave such a lasting impression of its contents. Surely it would be somebody that lived as a neighbor or at least within a reasonable vicinity of Solomon Spaulding’s residence in Conneaut, Ashtabula County, Ohio. That the witnesses are supposed to be in Conneaut is shown in the heading on p. 211 of **WHO REALLY WROTE THE BOOK OF MORMON?** by Davis, Cowdrey, & Scales:



Appendix

**The Eight
Witnesses at Conneaut**

In the past, Mormon critics of the Rigdon/Spaulding thesis have alleged that those witnesses who provided affidavits in support of the thesis were untrustworthy. Some Mormons have even said that the witnesses in Conneaut were around only who would lie just to get attention.

We have carefully investigated the backgrounds of the various witnesses and have found, based on the evidence, that those witnesses, especially the Conneaut ones, were completely above reproach in all of their conduct and could be trusted to testify to what they actually knew. As an example of the outstanding moral character of the witnesses we have presented, we have reproduced here character references for the eight witnesses from Conneaut. These testimonials are examples of the high

This author checked the United States census records for Conneaut, Ashtabula County, Ohio, from 1810 to 1860, and 1880, in an effort to verify the existence of the eight witnesses in Conneaut. The U.S. census is taken every 10 years and is not considered to be 100% accurate because people can change residences between the census years, and it is possible to miss someone. However, census records for the most part have been quite accurate. This author finds it significant that **only two** of the eight witnesses can be found in Ashtabula County when they were supposed to be. (see p. 225) Next, consider "one of the most important" testimonies by Henry Lake:

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account for the numerous antiquities which are found upon this continent, and remarked that, after this generation had passed away, his account of the first inhabitants of America would be considered as authentic as any other history. The Mormon Bible I have partially examined, and am fully of the opinion that Solomon Spaulding had written its outlines before he left Conneaut.⁵

Of the eight witnesses whose testimony confirms the existence of *Manuscript Found* in Conneaut, Ohio, during the period of 1809-12, perhaps one of the most important is Henry Lake, Solomon's business partner at the iron forge. He borrowed a copy of Smith's "Golden Bible" some twenty years after his partnership with Solomon, and thereby chanced on the same manuscript he had known so well in Conneaut.

According to Henry Lake:

I left the State of New York, late in the year 1810, and arrived at this place [Conneaut], about the first of January following. Soon after my arrival, I formed a copartnership with Solomon Spaulding, for the purpose of rebuilding a forge which he had commenced a year or two before. He very frequently read to me from a manuscript which he was writing which he entitled the "Manuscript Found," and which he represented as being found in this town. I spent many hours in hearing him read said writings, and became well acquainted with its contents. He wished me to assist him in getting his production printed, alleging that a book of that kind would meet with a rapid sale. I designed doing so, but the forge not meeting our anticipations, we failed in business, when I declined having anything to do with the publication of the book.

This book represented the American Indians as the descendants of the lost tribes, gave account of their leaving Jerusalem, their contentions and wars, which were many and great. One time, when he was reading to me the tragic account of Laban, I pointed out to him what I considered an inconsistency, which he promised to correct: but by referring to the Book of Mormon, I find, to my surprise, that it stands there just as he read it to me then.⁸ Some months ago, I borrowed the Golden Bible, put it into my pocket, carried it home, and thought no more of it. About a week after, my wife found the book in my coat pocket, as it hung up, and commenced reading it aloud as I lay upon the bed. She had not read twenty minutes, till I was astonished to find the same passages in it that Spaulding had read to me more than twenty years before, from his "Manuscript Found." Since that, I have more fully examined the said Golden Bible, and have no hesitation in saying that the historical part of it is principally, if not wholly, taken from the "Manuscript Found." I well recollect telling Mr. Spaulding that the so frequent use of the words "And it came to pass," "Now it came to pass," rendered it ridiculous. Spaulding left here in 1812, and I furnished him the means to carry him to Pittsburgh, where he said he would get the book printed and pay me. But I never heard any more from him or his writings, till I saw them in the Book of Mormon.

(Signed)

Henry Lake⁶

Hiram Lake, Henry Lake's son, provides his testimony to the truthfulness of what his father wrote. Among other things, Hiram Lake says, "I am sixty-nine years of age, and have lived all my life in Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio. My father, Henry Lake, was partner with Solomon Spaulding, in 1811 and 1812, in a forge in Conneaut (then Salem)." **This author found that neither Henry Lake nor any of his family is in the census for Ashtabula County for 1810 or 1820.** He can be traced elsewhere in Ohio from 1830 on. Therefore, the testimonies of Henry Lake and his son, Hiram Lake, are suspect.

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This is in complete agreement with the eight witnesses in Conneaut who have already been quoted. Nahum Howard, for example, agreed that, concerning *The Book of Mormon*, he believed it to be "the same as Spalding wrote, except the religious part.⁸ As the town physician, Howard would have had ample opportunity to converse with Spalding, who was continually in poor health.

In our first looks at Spalding and his writing, we presented the testimony of Henry Lake, Spalding's partner, and his conviction that *The Book of Mormon* was taken from Spalding's work. In 1880, Lake's son, Hiram, provided his own testimony concerning his father, Aaron Wright, John Miller, and Nathan Howard. He said:

I am sixty-nine years of age, and have lived all my life in Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio. My father, Henry Lake, was partner with Solomon Spalding, in 1811 and 1812, in a forge in Conneaut (then Salem). About 1834, when I was about twenty-three years of age, I remember that there was a great excitement concerning Mormonism in Conneaut. My father read the "Book of Mormon," or heard it read, and was familiar with its contents, and he told me it was unquestionably derived from a manuscript written by his former partner, Solomon Spaulding, called "Manuscript Found; or, the Lost Tribes." I believe my father, about this time, made an affidavit to the same effect, which was published. Since 1834 I have conversed with Aaron Wright, John N. Miller, and Nathan Howard, old residents here, now deceased, all of whom lived here in 1811 and 1812, and who had heard Spaulding's manuscript read, and they told me they believed the "Book of Mormon" was derived from Spaulding's "Manuscript Found." Some or all

⁸Ibid., pp. 285-86.

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these persons made affidavits to this effect, which were published in a book called "Mormonism Unveiled," edited by E. D. Howe, of Painesville, Ohio.
HIRAM LAKE^b

Several testimonies gathered by Hurlburt verify the previous testimonies of other people. (This is why some anti-Mormons of today suspect Hurlburt of writing the testimonies.) Lorin Gould verifies what Hiram Lake said. **Lorin Gould isn't in the census for Ashtabula County until 1840;** then he is listed on every census thereafter until 1880. Missing out on three census records is stretching things too far — this author doesn't believe he lived in Conneaut when he said he did. This testimony is certainly suspect!

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Not only did Hiram confirm the testimonies of Lake, Wright, Miller, and Howard, but Lorin Gould confirmed Hiram's statement with his own statement on the same date (December 23, 1880, in Conneaut):

I have resided in the neighborhood of Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio, sixty-six years. During all that period I have known Hiram Lake, whose statement dated December 23d, 1880, I have read. This statement I believe to be true. I was acquainted with Henry Lake, Aaron Wright, John N. Miller, and Nathan Howard, the persons named in Hiram Lake's statement, and about 1834-35, the time of the excitement concerning Mormonism, I heard them all say that the "Book of Mormon" was undoubtedly taken from a manuscript written by Solomon Spaulding, which they had heard Spaulding read in 1811 or 1812, called "The Manuscript Found; or, the Lost Tribes."

(Signed)

Lorin Gould^d

A table showing the census records of the "eight witnesses at Conneaut," follows. Spaulding wrote his novel about 1809-1812. The Spauldings moved to Pittsburgh about 1812, so the witnesses at Conneaut would need to appear on the 1810 or 1820 census. The "eight Conneaut witnesses" are supposed to be very familiar with Spaulding's manuscript. Notice how few of them live anywhere near Spaulding. Do you suppose that Hurlburt made up most of them?

Residences in Conneaut, Ashtabula Counties of the "Eight Witnesses"
 as recorded in WHO REALLY WROTE THE BOOK OF MORMON? by Davis, Cowdrey, and Scales
 SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS RECORDS

	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1880	COMMENTS
JOHN AND MARTHA SPAULDING	NO	NO	NO (Ohio)	NO (Ohio)	NO (Ohio)	NO	There was a John living in Cuyahoga County, Ohio (about 70 mi. away)
HENRY LAKE	NO	NO	ASH*	NO (Ohio)	NO (Ohio)	NO	— MISSING WITNESS — No record living in Ohio before 1830. Lake was elsewhere in Ohio in 1840 and 1850 census.
JOHN N. MILLER	NO	NO (Erie, Pa)	NO (Erie, Pa)	NO	NO (Ohio)	NO	Erie, Pa., is just across the river from Conneaut, Ohio. Possible connection with S. Spaulding.
AARON WRIGHT	NO	ASH	NO (Ohio)	ASH	NO (Ohio)	NO	Probably lived in Ashtabula County when S. Spaulding lived in Conneaut.
OLIVER SMITH	NO	NO (Ohio)	NO (Ohio)	NO (Ohio)	ASH	NO	Not in Ashtabula County until 1850. Was in 1820, 1830, and 1840 census elsewhere in Ohio.
NAHUM HOWARD	NO	ASH	ASH	ASH	ASH	NO	Probably lived in Ashtabula County when S. Spaulding lived in Conneaut.
LORIN GOULD	NO	NO	NO	ASH	ASH	ASH	— MISSING WITNESS — No record of Lorin Gould in Ohio before 1840. He missed three census records.

*ASH: Ashtabula County (Conneaut)

D.R. AUSTIN COMPOSED THE LETTER PURPORTED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY MRS. SPAULDING DAVISON

On pp. 43-46 of WHO REALLY WROTE THE BOOK OF MORMON?, there is a long letter purported to have been written by Mrs. Solomon Spaulding Davison (Spaulding's Widow). It actually is a letter written by a man named Austin, and was not signed by Mrs. Davison. It implicates Sidney Rigdon with copying Spaulding's manuscript. After this letter was published in *The Boston Recorder*, in 1839, Sidney Rigdon fired off a letter in reply to Mrs. Davison's letter and denied the charges saying, "It has always been a source of no ordinary satisfaction to me to know that my enemies have no better weapon to use against me, or the cause in which I am engaged, than lies; for, if they had any better, they would certainly use them. . . . The only reason why I am assailed by lies is that my opposers . . . try, therefore, to keep the public from investigating, by publishing and circulating falsehoods. This I consider a high encomium (a formal expression of praise) on both myself and the cause I defend." **If you will recall, these are our very sentiments expressed in this book. It seems times haven't changed much when contending with those whose intent is to deceive!** Sidney Rigdon's letter is reproduced at the end of this chapter in case you might be interested in reading the whole letter.

This is the Austin-Davison letter as given in WRWTBOM. As you read it, be aware of the references to Spaulding's manuscript. **They are all in the singular tense** — it, his manuscript, this work, etc. There are over **30 references** referring to just **one** manuscript. Even though Mrs. Davison's letter was composed by Austin, it can be used to show that at this time the current feeling was that there was **only one** Spaulding manuscript.

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between her late husband's novel and the fledgling Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The following was her published statement in *The Boston Recorder* of 1839:

ORIGIN OF THE "BOOK OF MORMON,"
OR "GOLDEN BIBLE."

As this book has excited much attention, and has been put by a certain new sect in place of the sacred Scriptures, I deem it a duty which I owe to the public to state what I know touching its origin.

That its claims to a divine origin are wholly unfounded, needs no proof to a mind unperverted by the grossest delusions. That any sane person should rank it any higher than any other merely human composition is a matter of the greatest astonishment; yet it is received as divine by some who dwell in enlightened New England, and even by those who have sustained the character of devoted Christians. Learning recently that Mormonism has found its way into a church in Massachusetts, and has impregnated some of its members with some of its gross delusions, so that excommunication has become necessary, I am determined to delay no longer doing what I can to strip the mask from this monster of sin, and to lay open this pit of abomination. Rev. Solomon Spalding, to whom I was united in marriage in early life, was a graduate of Dartmouth college, and was distinguished for a lively imagination and a great fondness for history. At the time of our marriage he resided in Cherry Valley, New York. From this place we removed to New Salem, Ashtabula county, Ohio, sometimes called Conneaut, as it is situated upon Conneaut creek. Shortly after our removal to this place, his health sunk, and he was laid aside from active labors. In the town of New Salem there are numerous mounds and forts, supposed by many to be the dilapidated dwellings and fortifications of a race now extinct. These ancient relics arrest the attention of the new settlers, and become objects of research for the

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curious. Numerous implements were found, and other articles, evincing great skill in the arts. Mr. Spalding being an educated man and passionately fond of history, took a lively interest in these developments of antiquity, and in order to beguile the hours of retirement and furnish employment for his lively imagination, he conceived the idea of giving an historical sketch of this long lost race. Their extreme antiquity of course would lead him to write in the most ancient style;^h and as the Old Testament is the most ancient book in the world, he imitated its style^h as nearly as possible. His sole object in writing this historical romance was to amuse himself and his neighbors. This was about the year 1812. Hull's surrender at Detroit occurred near the same time, and I recollect the date well from that circumstance. As he progressed in his narrative, the neighbors would come in from time to time to hear portions of it read, and a great interest in the work was excited among them.

It is claimed to have been written by one of the lost nation, and to have been recovered from the earth, and assumed the title of "Manuscript Found". The neighbors would often inquire how Mr. Spalding progressed in deciphering the "manuscript", and when he had a sufficient portion prepared, he would inform them and they would assemble to hear it read. He was enabled from his acquaintance with the classics and ancient history to introduce many singular names, which were particularly noticed by the people, and could be easily recognized by them. Mr. Solomon Spalding had a brother, Mr. John Spalding, residing in the place at the time, who was perfectly familiar with this work, and repeatedly heard the whole of it read.

From New Salem we removed to Pittsburgh, Pa. Here we found a friend in the person of Mr. Patterson, an editor of a newspaper. He exhibited his manuscript to Mr. P., who was very much pleased with it, and

this historical
romance

in his narrative

It

the title of "Manu-
script Found"
the manuscript

hear it read

this work
it

his manuscript
it

^h Elizabethan English was also the style of *The Book of Mormon*.

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borrowed it for perusal. He retained it for a long time and informed Mr. S. that if he would make out a title page and preface, he would publish it, and it would be a source of profit.ⁱ

This Mr. S. refused to do, for reasons which I cannot now state. Sidney Rigdon, one of the leaders and founders of the sect, who had figured so largely in the history of the Mormons, was at this time connected^j with the printing office of Mr. Patterson, as he is well known in that region, and as Rigdon himself has frequently stated. Here he had ample opportunity to become acquainted with Mr. Spalding's manuscript, and to copy it if he chose. It was a matter of notoriety and interest to all who were connected with the printing establishment. At length the manuscript was returned to its author,^k and soon after we removed to Amity, Washington County, Pa., where Mr. S. deceased in 1816. The manuscript then fell into my hands, and was carefully preserved. It has frequently been examined by my daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, of Monson, Mass., with whom I now reside, and by other friends. After the "Book of Mormon" came out, a copy of it was taken to New Salem, the place of Mr. Spalding's former residence, and the very place where the "Manuscript Found" was written. A Mormon preacher appointed a meeting there, and in the meeting read and repeated copious extracts from the "Book of Mormon". The historical part was immediately recognized by the older inhabitants as the identical work of Mr. Spalding in which they had been so deeply interested years before. Mr. John Spalding was present, who is an eminently pious man, and recognized perfectly the work of his brother. He was amazed and afflicted that it should have perverted to so wicked a purpose. His grief found vent in a flood of tears, and he arose on the spot and

borrowed it
retained it
publish it
it would be a
source of profit

Mr. Spalding's
manuscript
copy it

the manuscript
its author

The manuscript
It

the "Manuscript
Found"

identical work of
S.S.

the work
it

ⁱAs other testimonies recorded, this money would have been welcomed, enabling Spalding to pay his debts.

^jPerhaps as a part-time tanner.

^kThis was a guess on her part.

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expressed in the meeting his deep sorrow and regret that the writings of his sainted brother should be used for a purpose so vile and shocking. The excitement in New Salem became so great that the inhabitants had a meeting and deputed Dr. Philaster Hurlbut, one of their number, to repair to this place and to obtain from me the original manuscript of Mr. Spalding, for the purpose of comparing it with the Mormon Bible to satisfy their own minds and to prevent their friends from embracing an error so delusive.

the original manu-
script
it

This was in the year 1834. Dr. Hurlbut brought with him an introduction and request for the manuscript, signed by Messrs. Henry Lake, Aaron Wright and others, with all of whom I was acquainted, as they were my neighbors when I resided in New Salem.

manuscript

I am sure that nothing could grieve my husband more, were he living, than the use which has been made of his work. The air of antiquity which has been thrown about the composition, doubtless suggested the idea of converting it to purposes of delusion. Thus an historical romance, with the addition of a few pious expressions and extracts from the sacred Scriptures, has been constructed into a new Bible, and palmed off upon a company of poor deluded fanatics as divine.

his work

it
an historical ro-
mance

I have given the previous narration, that this work of deep deception and wickedness may be searched to the foundation and its author exposed to the contempt and execration he so justly deserves.

(Signed)

Matilda Davison

Rev. Solomon Spalding was the first husband of the narrator of the above history. Since his decease she has been married to a second husband, by the name of Davidson. She is now residing in this place, is a woman of irreproachable character, and a humble Christian, and her testimony is worthy of implicit confidence.

A. Ely, D.D.

Pastor of the Congregational Church, Monson.

D.R. Austin, principal of Monson Academy.⁹

Monson, March 1, 1839.

The first time this Davison letter was published, the name D.R. Austin was not mentioned:

The Rev. Solomon Spaulding was the first husband of the narrator of the above history. Since his decease she has been married to a second husband, by the name of Davidson. She is now residing in this place, is a woman of irreproachable character, and an humble Christian, and her testimony worthy of implicit confidence.

A. K. Y., D. D.,
Pastor Congregational Church, Monson.
 D. R. K. Y.,
Principal of Monson Academy.

If you accept the previous undated, typed, letter with the typed signature then perhaps you should give at least as much credibility to the following undated, unsigned conversation of Mrs. Spaulding Davison and her daughter Mrs. McKinstry. This article appeared in the QUINCY ILL. WHIG shortly after the Davison article came out. This article exposes the Davison letter as a fabrication of D. Austin, of Monson, Mass.

In 1840 a booklet was written by B. Winchester, entitled THE ORIGIN OF THE SPAULDING STORY, CONCERNING THE MANUSCRIPT FOUND, published in Philadelphia. On pages 16-17, we find the WHIG letter in which Mrs. Davison explains how D. Austin took down some notes from her, and proceeded to devise a letter purportedly to be from her. She says she didn't ever see the letter until after it was published in *The Boston Recorder*, and that it was never brought to her to sign. Regardless, if it was written by Austin, it was **his** thoughts and ideas and read the way **he** wanted it to! The WHIG letter is typeset below so you can read it better; however, the original copy is in Winchester's booklet in the Appendix on p. 429.

THE BOGUS AFFIDAVIT

The next noteworthy person who entered upon the crusade against the Book of Mormon was a Congregationalist minister of Holliston, Massachusetts, named Storrs.

This man was greatly annoyed at the loss of some of the best members of his congregation through the preaching of the everlasting gospel, and in his anger published to the world what he asserted was the affidavit of the widow of Solomon Spaulding, but which she afterwards repudiated, as shown from the following article published in the Quincy, Ill. *Whig* shortly after the appearance of the bogus affidavit:

A CUNNING DEVICE DETECTED

"It will be recollected that a few months since an article appeared in several of the papers, purporting to give an account of the origin of the Book of Mormon. How far the writer of that piece has effected his purposes, or what his purposes were in pursuing the course he has, I shall not attempt to say at this time, but shall call upon every candid man to judge in this matter for himself, and shall content myself by presenting before the public the other side of the question in the form of a letter, as follows:

Copy of a letter written by Mr. John Haven, of Holliston, Middlesex, Co., Massachusetts, to his daughter, Elizabeth Haven of Quincy, Adams Co., Illinois.

"Your brother Jesse passed through Monson, where he saw Mrs. Davison and her daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, and also Dr. Ely, and spent several hours with them, during which time he asked them the following questions, viz.:

Question — 'Did you, Mrs. Davison, write a letter to John Storrs, giving an account of the origin of the Book of Mormon?'

Answer — 'I did not.'

Q. — 'Did you sign your name to it?'

A. — 'I did not, neither did I ever see the letter until I saw it in the *Boston Recorder*, the letter was never brought to me to sign.'

Q. — 'What agency had you in having this letter sent to Mr. Storrs?'

A. — 'D.R. Austin came to my house and asked me some questions, took some minutes on paper, and from these minutes wrote that letter.'

Q. — 'Have you read the Book of Mormon?'

A. — 'I have read some in it.'

Q. — 'Does Mr. Spaulding's manuscript and the Book of Mormon agree?'

A. — 'I think some few of the names are alike.'

Q. — 'Does the manuscript describe an idolatrous or a religious people?'

A. — 'An idolatrous people.'

Q. — 'Where is the manuscript?'

A. — 'D.P. Hurlburt came here and took it, said he would get it printed and let me have one half of the profits.'

Q. — 'Has D.P. Hurlburt got the manuscript printed?'

A. — 'I received a letter stating that it did not read as he expected, and he should not print it.'

Q. — 'How large is Mr. Spaulding's manuscript?'

A. — 'About one third as large as the Book of Mormon.'

Q. — 'To Mrs. McKinstry. How old were you when your father wrote the manuscript?'

A. — 'About five years of age.'

Q. — 'Did you ever read the manuscript?'

A. — 'When I was about twelve years old I used to read it for diversion.'

Q. — 'Did the manuscript describe an idolatrous or a religious people?'

A. — 'An idolatrous people.'

Q. — 'Does the manuscript and the Book of Mormon agree?'

A. — 'I think some of the names agree.'

Q. — 'Are you certain that some of the names agree?'

A. — 'I am not.'

Q. — 'Have you read any in the Book of Mormon?'

A. — 'I have not.'

Q. — 'Was your name attached to that letter, which was sent to Mr. John Storrs, by your order?'

A. — 'No, I have meant that my name should be there.'

'You see by the above questions and answers that Mr. Austin, in his great zeal to destroy the Latter day Saints, has asked Mrs. Davison a few questions, then wrote a letter to Mr. Storrs in his own language. I do not say the above questions and answers were given in the form that I have written them, but these questions were asked, and these answers given. Mrs. Davison is about seventy years of age, and somewhat

broke.’

“This may certify that I am personally acquainted with Mr. Haven, his son and daughter, and I am satisfied they are persons of truth. I have also read Mr. Haven’s letter to his daughter, which has induced me to copy it for publication, and I further say, the above is a correct copy of Mr. Haven’s letter.

A. Badlam.”

Notwithstanding the above refutation and expose the opponents of “Mormonism” have continually from the time of its publication, copied, re-published and harped upon this forged affidavit of Mrs. Davison. Their ears have been ever deaf and their eyes blind when the refutation of the slander has been presented to them. They did not then, and do not now want it; they prefer the lie which one of their number has concocted and spread broad-cast through the world.

The important details to emerge from this WHIG article are the following:

Concerning the story in the *Boston Recorder*, Mrs. Spaulding Davison says “I did not (sign it), neither did I ever see the letter until I saw it in the Boston Recorder, the letter was never brought to me to sign.”

Austin interviewed her, took notes, and then he wrote the letter.

She had read some of the Book of Mormon and “I think some few of the names are alike.”

The manuscript found was about an idolatrous people. (However, the Book of Mormon is about a religious people.)

Hurlburt took the Manuscript Found from the trunk, and was going to print it and share the profits with Mrs. Davison.

Hurlburt wrote Mrs. Davison a letter saying that the manuscript didn’t read as he expected, and he decided against printing it.

The Manuscript Found was about one-third the size of the Book of Mormon. **This is the size of Spaulding’s manuscript resting in Oberlin, Ohio, today.**

Mrs. McKinstry, her daughter, commented:

When she was about twelve she read parts of the Manuscript Found for diversion.

“I think some of the names agree” (with the Book of Mormon). But when asked if she was positive she replied, “I am not.”

The Manuscript Found was about an idolatrous people, not a religious people.

The above statements from Mrs. Spaulding Davison and Mrs. McKinstry have some support in an affidavit from Hurlburt that he did in fact receive the manuscript. In *Scribner’s Monthly*, Vol. XXII, May 1881 to Oct. 1881, New

York, The Century Company, 1881, Hurlburt testified that he obtained the Manuscript Found from Mrs. Spaulding Davison. He gave it to E.D. Howe to return. This verifies what Mrs. Davison said in the Winchester booklet (quoting the WHIG article) when she said Hurlburt obtained it, read it, and decided not to print it because it didn't read as he expected.

SWORN AFFIDAVIT BY D.P. HURLBURT

"GIBSONBURG, OHIO, January 10th, 1881.
 "To all whom it may concern: In the year eighteen hundred and thirty-four (1834), I went from Geauga County, Ohio, to Munson, Hampden County, Massachusetts, where I found Mrs. Davison, late widow of the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, late of Ceneast, Ashtabula County, Ohio. Of her I obtained a manuscript, supposing it to be the manuscript of the romance written by the said Solomon Spaulding, called the 'Manuscript Found,' which was reported to be the foundation of the 'Book of Mormon.' I did not examine the manuscript until I got home, when upon examination I found it to contain nothing of the kind, but being a manuscript upon an entirely different subject. This manuscript I left with E. D. Howe, of Painesville, Geauga County, Ohio, now Lake County, Ohio, with the understanding that when he had examined it, he should return it to the widow. Said Howe says the manuscript was destroyed by fire, and further the deponent saith not.

"(Signed) D. P. HURLBURT.

"Sworn to and subscribed before me this 10th day of January, 1881.

"(Signed) J. KISSNER,
 "Mayor of the Village of Gibsonburg, Sandusky County, Ohio."

Scribner's Monthly
 Vol. 22 May 1881 to Oct. 1881,
 New York, The Century Co., 1981

MRS. MCKINSTRY (SPAULDING'S DAUGHTER) MENTIONS ONLY ONE MANUSCRIPT

As you can see from the Austin-Davison letter, both are under the impression that there is but **one** manuscript. Obviously his widow should know. And so should his daughter. They are the ones that were the closest to him. Next, let's examine the dated, signed, and witnessed affidavit of Mrs. McKinstry, Solomon Spaulding's daughter. **You will see that she mentions only one manuscript 34 times in this one letter.** They mention only one because **there was only one.**

When you finally compare the Spaulding Manuscript with the Book of Mormon, you will find that there aren't the similarities mentioned by Mrs. McKinstry. This letter is dated April 3rd, 1880, and she said she hadn't seen the manuscript since she was 11 years old; **69 years previously.** She states that neither she nor her mother "ever saw, or in any way communicated with the

Mormons, save Hurlburt as above described; and while we have no personal knowledge that the Mormon Bible was taken from the 'Manuscript Found,' there were many evidences to us that it was and that Hurlburt and the others at the time thought so." This author believes that it was all this judicious prompting described above that influenced her into remembering some names from the Book of Mormon. Nevertheless, it is easy to see that she was under the impression that there was only one manuscript, too. Notice the number of references to "it," "this manuscript," "the Manuscript Found," etc.

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McKinstry's Rebuttal

We may use this exchange between Rigdon and Mrs. Davison to show the extent of the controversy in the early days of Mormonism. The Spalding theory was not something newly contrived in the twentieth century, but was a volatile issue from the very beginning of Mormonism. By way of rebuttal, let us allow Mrs. Davison's daughter to reply to Rigdon as our investigation of the Conneaut period closes.

Washington, D.C., April 3rd, 1880.

So much has been published that is erroneous concerning the "Manuscript Found," written by my father, the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, and its supposed connection with the book, called the Mormon Bible, I have willingly consented to make the following statement regarding it, repeating all that I remember personally of this manuscript, and all that is of importance which my mother related to me in connection with it, at the same time affirming that I am in tolerable health and vigor, and that my memory, in common with elderly people, is clearer in regard to the events of my earlier years, rather than those of my maturer life.

During the war of 1812, I was residing with my parents in a little town in Ohio called Conneaut. I was then in my sixth year. My father was in business there, and I remember his iron foundry and the men he had at work, but that he remained at home most of the time and was reading and writing a great deal. He frequently wrote little stories, which he read to me. There were some round mounds of earth near our house which greatly interested him, and he said a tree on the top of one of them was a thousand years old. He set some of his men to work digging into one of these mounds, and I vividly remember how excited he became when he heard that they had exhumed some

The "Manuscript Found"
its

it
this manuscript

it

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human bones, portions of gigantic skeletons, and various relics. He talked with my mother of these discoveries in the mound, and was writing every day as the work progressed. Afterward he read the manuscript which I had seen him writing, to the neighbors and to a clergyman,^f a friend of his, who came to see him. Some of the names that he mentioned while reading to these people I have never forgotten. They are as fresh to me today as though I heard them yesterday. They were Mormon, Maroni, Lamenite, Nephi. We removed from Conneaut to Pittsburgh while I was still very young, but every circumstance of this removal is distinct in my memory. In that city my father had an intimate friend named Patterson,^g and I frequently visited Mr. Patterson's library with him, and heard my father talk about books with him. In 1816 my father died at Amity, Pennsylvania, and directly after his death my mother and myself went to visit at the residence of my mother's brother William H. Sabine, at Onondaga Valley, Onondaga County, New York. Mr. Sabine was a lawyer of distinction and wealth, and greatly respected. We carried all our personal effects with us, and one of these was an old trunk, in which my mother had placed all my father's writings which had been preserved. I perfectly remember the appearance of this trunk, and of looking at its contents. There were sermons and other papers,^h and I saw a manuscript, about an inch thick,ⁱ closely written, tied with some of the stories my father had written for me, one of which he called, "The Frogs of Wyndham." On the outside of this manuscript were written the words, "Manuscript Found."^j I did not read it, but looked

the manuscript

a manuscript

this manuscript
it

The Spalding Saga / 53

through it and had it in my hands many times, and saw the names I had heard at Conneaut, when my father read it to his friends. I was about eleven years of age at this time.

After we had been at my uncle's for some time, my mother left me there and went to her father's house at Pomfret, Connecticut, but did not take her furniture nor the old trunk of manuscripts with her. In 1820 she married Mr. Davison, of Hartwicks, a village near Cooperstown, New York, and sent for the things she had left at Onondaga Valley, and I remember that the old trunk, with its contents, reached her in safety. In 1828, I was married to Dr. A. McKinstry of Monson, Hampden County, Massachusetts, and went there, to reside. Very soon after my mother joined me there, and was with me most of the time until her death in 1844. We heard, not long after she came to live with me—I do not remember just how long—something of Mormonism, and the report that it had been taken from my father's "Manuscript Found"; and then came to us direct an account of the Mormon meeting at Conneaut, Ohio, and that, on one occasion, when the Mormon Bible was read there in public, my father's brother, John Spaulding, Mr. Lake and many other persons who were present, at once recognized its similarity to the "Manuscript Found," which they had heard read years before by my father in the same town. There was a great deal of talk and a great deal published at this time about Mormonism all over the country. I believe it was in 1834 that a man named Hurlburt came to my house at Monson to see my mother, who told us that he had been sent by a committee to procure the "Manuscript Found" written by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, so as to compare it with the Mormon Bible. He presented a letter to my mother from my uncle, Wm. H. Sabine, of Onondaga Valley, in which he requested her to loan this manuscript to Hurlburt, as he (my uncle) was desirous "to uproot (as he expressed it) this Mormon fraud." Hurlburt represented that he had been a convert to Mormonism, but had given it up, and through the "Manuscript

it
it

"Manuscript Found"

the "Manuscript Found"

the "Manuscript Found"
it

this manuscript

the "Manuscript Found"

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Found," wished to expose its wickedness. My mother was careful to have me with her in all the conversations she had with Hurlburt, who spent a day at my house. She did not like his appearance and mistrusted his motives, but having great respect for her brother's wishes and opinions, she reluctantly consented to his request. The old trunk, containing the desired "Manuscript Found," she had placed in the care of Mr. Jerome Clark of Hartwicks, when she came to Monson, intending to send for it. On the repeated promise of Hurlburt to return the manuscript to us, she gave him a letter to Mr. Clark to open the trunk and deliver it to him. We afterwards heard that he had received it from Mr. Clark, at Hartwicks, but from that time we have never had it in our possession, and I have no present knowledge of its existence, Hurlburt never returning it or answering letters requesting him to do so. Two years ago, I heard he was still living in Ohio, and with my consent he was asked for the "Manuscript Found." He made no response although we have evidence that he received the letter containing the request. So far I have stated facts within my own knowledge. My mother mentioned many other circumstances to me in connection with this subject which are interesting, of my father's literary tastes, his fine education and peculiar temperament. She stated to me that she had heard the manuscript alluded to read by my father, was familiar with its contents, and she deeply regretted that her husband, as she believed, had innocently been the means of furnishing matter for a religious delusion. She said that my father loaned this "Manuscript Found" to Mr. Patterson, of Pittsburg, and that when he returned it to my father, he said: "Polish it up, finish it, and you will make money out of it." My mother confirmed my remembrances of my father's fondness for history, and told me of his frequent conversations regarding a theory which he had of a prehistoric race which had inhabited this continent, etc., all showing that his mind dwelt on this subject. The "Manuscript Found," she said, was a romance written in Biblical style, and that while she

send for it
the manuscript

it
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it
the "Manuscript Found"

the manuscript
its contents

this "Manuscript Found"
it
it
it
it

the "Manuscript Found"
a romance

The Spalding Saga / 55

heard it read, she had no special admiration for it more than other romances he wrote and read to her. We never, either of us, ever saw, or in any way communicated with the Mormons, save Hurlburt as above described; and while we have no personal knowledge that the Mormon Bible was taken from the "Manuscript Found," there were many evidences to us that it was and that Hurlburt and the others at the time thought so. A convincing proof to us of this belief was that my-uncle, William H. Sabine, had undoubtedly read the manuscript while it was in his house, and his faith that its production would show to the world that the Mormon Bible had been taken from it, or was the same with slight alterations. I have frequently answered questions which have been asked by different persons regarding the "Manuscript Found," but until now have never made a statement at length for publication.

(Signed)

M. S. McKinstry.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 3rd day of April, A.D. 1880, at the city of Washington, D.C.

Charles Walter, Notary Public.¹¹

it

the "Manuscript Found,"

CHRONOLOGY OF THE JOURNEY OF THE "MANUSCRIPT FOUND" FROM SOLOMON TO HURLBURT

Using portions of the letter of Mrs. McKinstry (Spaulding's daughter), it is easy to trace the journey of "Manuscript Found."

During the war of 1812, I was reading with my parents in a little town in Ohio called Conneaut. I was then in my sixth year.

He talked with my mother of these discoveries in the mound, and was writing every day as the work progressed.

We removed from Conneaut to Pittsburgh.

In 1816 my father died at Amity, Pennsylvania and directly after his death my mother and myself went to visit at the residence of my mother's brother, William H. Sabine, at Onondaga Valley, Onondaga County, New York.

We carried all our personal effects with us, and one of these was an old trunk, in which my mother had placed all my father's writings which had been preserved.

On the outside of this manuscript were written the words, "Manuscript Found."

After we had been at my uncle's for some time, my mother left me there and went to her father's house at Pomfret, Connecticut, but did not take her furniture nor the old trunk of manuscripts with her.

In 1820 she married Mr. Davison, of Hartwicks, a village near Cooperstown, New York, and sent for the things she had left at Onondaga Valley, and I remember that the old trunk, with its contents, reached her in safety.

I was married to Dr. A. McKinstry of Monson, Hampden County, Massachusetts, and went there, to reside. Very soon after, my mother joined me there and was with me most of the time until her death in 1844.

There was a great deal of talk and a great deal published at this time about Mormonism all over the country.

I believe it was in 1834 that a man named Hurlburt came to my house at Monson to see my mother, who told us that he had been sent by a committee to procure the "Manuscript Found" written by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, so as to compare it with the Mormon Bible.

He presented a letter to my mother from my uncle, Wm. H. Sabine, of Onondaga Valley, in which he requested her to loan this manuscript to Hurlburt . . .

The old trunk, containing the desired "Manuscript Found," she had placed in the care of Mr. Jerome Clark of Hartwicks, when she came to Monson, intending to send for it.

On the repeated promise of Hurlburt to return the manuscript to us, she gave him a letter to Mr. Clark to open the trunk and deliver it to him.

We afterwards heard that he had received it from Mr. Clark, at Hartwicks, but from that time we have never had it in our possession, and I have no present knowledge of its existence.

JOURNEY FROM HURLBURT TO E.D. HOWE

We will reproduce Hurlburt's affidavit again to remind the reader that in Hurlburt's own words, he gave the manuscript to Howe with instructions to return it to Spaulding's widow.

SWORN AFFIDAVIT BY D.P. HURLBURT

"GIBSONBURG, OHIO, January 10th, 1881.
 "To all whom it may concern: In the year eighteen hundred and thirty-four (1834), I went from Geauga County, Ohio, to Munson, Hampden County, Massachusetts, where I found Mrs. Davison, late widow of the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, late of Conneaut, Ashtabula County, Ohio. Of her I obtained a manuscript, supposing it to be the manuscript of the romance written by the said Solomon Spaulding, called the 'Manuscript Found,' which was reported to be the foundation of the 'Book of Mormon.' I did not examine the manuscript until I got home, when upon examination I found it to contain nothing of the kind, but being a manuscript upon an entirely different subject. This manuscript I left with E. D. Howe, of Painesville, Geauga County, Ohio, now Lake County, Ohio, with the understanding that when he had examined it, he should return it to the widow. Said Howe says the manuscript was destroyed by fire, and further the deponent saith not.

"(Signed) D. P. HURLBURT.

"Sworn to and subscribed before me this 10th day of January, 1881.

"(Signed) J. KINNIGER,
 "Mayor of the Village of Gibsonburg, Sandusky County, Ohio."

Source:

Scribner's Monthly,

Vol. 22, May 1881 to Oct. 1881, New York

The Century Co., 1881

JOURNEY FROM HOWE TO L.L. RICE TO OBERLIN COLLEGE

E.D. Howe had Spaulding's manuscript in his print shop when he sold the business to L.L. Rice in 1839. In this transfer, Rice inherited some old books and papers. Among those old papers, 46 years later, Rice discovered the Spaulding Manuscript. Mr. Rice contacted Joseph Smith III, president of the Reorganized LDS Church, and gave him the Manuscript Found. When the Reorganized Church published the Manuscript Found (copy in appendix), they also printed several letters that were written by L.L. Rice immediately after the discovery of the Manuscript Found in Honolulu. These letters are most interesting and help us to follow the journey from Howe to Rice. There are several important points to be aware of when you read these letters:

1. On the last page of this manuscript is a certificate and signature, giving the names of several persons known to the signer, who have assured him that to their personal knowledge the manuscript was the writing of Solomon Spaulding.

*The Writings of Solomon Spaulding Proved by Aron Wright
Oliver Smith, John N. Miller and others. The testimonies of the
above Gentlemen are now in my possession.*

Signed

D.P. HURLBUT

2. Somewhere during its journey, Manuscript Found lost the cover page. Someone had penciled lightly "Manuscript Story — Conneaut Creek" on the wrapper.
3. Some other explanation of the origin of the Book of Mormon must be found, if any explanation is required.
4. It is certain that this Manuscript is not the origin of the Mormon Bible.
5. It is unlikely that any one who wrote so elaborate a work as the Mormon Bible, would spend his time in getting up so shallow a story as this, which at best is but a feeble imitation of the other.
6. My opinion is, from all I have seen and learned, that this is the **only** writing of Spaulding, and there is no foundation for the statement of Deming and others, that Spaulding made another story, more elaborate, of which several copies were written, one of which Rigdon stole from a printing office in Pittsburgh, and etc.
7. IT DEVOLVES UPON THEIR OPPONENTS TO SHOW

THAT THERE ARE OR WERE OTHER WRITINGS OF SPAULDING — SINCE IT IS EVIDENT THAT THIS WRITING IS NOT THE ORIGINAL OF THE MORMON BIBLE.

4 The "Manuscript Found."

to Pittsburgh, Connessut, and to the very pen of Solomon Spaulding, has by the providence of God been furnished us, and that, too, by those not of the Church, we take pleasure in exhibiting in the sunlight of solid facts, this hob-goblin of the pulpit, this "nigger-in-the-woodpile" of the press and the forum, that with which they have fooled and frightened the masses and blinded those inquiring into the origin and character of the Book of Mormon.

This seeming huge hindrance and insurmountable obstacle which is always thrown in the way of the investigator with all the skill and power that craft and cunning and malice and fear and blind zeal can invent and command, vanishes from the presence of this original witness in the case; for when it speaks it reveals the flimsiness and falsity of the claim that it was in any way or in any sense the origin of the Book of Mormon, or that there is the least likeness between the two. This newly found "missing link" completes the chain of evidence which proves that the "Manuscript Found" never was and never could be made the occasion, cause, or germ of the Book of Mormon.

Mr. Spaulding has been exalted by the opposers of the Latter Day Saints to the very pinnacle of fame, as a very learned, very moral, and very pious man. It is fortunate that his true measure and worth in respect to his learning, his morals, and his piety, is now furnished us in this "Manuscript Story." God judges men by their works, and it is wise for men to judge of each other after this manner. And when we estimate Mr. Spaulding by the character of his work as exhibited in this document, we must grade him down to a very low level, whether in respect to scholarship, mental power, moral purity, or pious attainments and tendencies.

The "Manuscript Found."

5

The following Correspondence explains the manner in which the Manuscript was procured and placed in the hands of the present publishers.

This from the Bibliotheca Sacra was republished in many leading journals east and west, among them the Herald of Grinnell, Iowa; the Western Watchman, Eureka, California; the New York Observer, and Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine.

"The theory of the origin of the Book of Mormon in the traditional manuscript of Solomon Spaulding, will probably have to be relinquished. That manuscript is doubtless now in the possession of Mr. L. L. Rice, of Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands, formerly an anti-Slavery Editor in Ohio, and for many years State Printer, at Columbus. During a recent visit to Honolulu, I suggested to Mr. Rice that he might have valuable anti-slavery documents in his possession, which he would be willing to contribute to the rich collection already in the Oberlin College Library. In pursuance of this suggestion, Mr. Rice began looking over his old pamphlets and papers, and at length came upon an old, worn, and faded manuscript of about one hundred and seventy-five pages, small quarto, purporting to be a history of the migrations and conflicts of the ancient Indian Tribes, which occupied the territory now belonging to the States of New York, Ohio, and Kentucky. On the last page of this manuscript is a certificate and signature, giving the names of several persons known to the signer, who have assured him that to their personal knowledge the manuscript was the writing of Solomon Spaulding. Mr. Rice has no recollection how or when this manuscript came into his possession. It was enveloped in a coarse piece of wrapping paper, and endorsed in Mr. Rice's hand-writing, "A Manuscript Story."

"There seems no reason to doubt that this is the long-lost story. Mr. Rice, myself, and others, compared it with the Book of Mormon, and could detect no resemblance between the two, in general or in detail. There seems to be no name or incident common to the two. The solemn style of the Book of Mormon, in imitation of the English

6 The "Manuscript Found."

Scriptures, does not appear in the manuscript. The only resemblance is in the fact that both profess to set forth the history of lost tribes. Some other explanation of the origin of the Book of Mormon must be found, if any explanation is required." Signed, James H. Fairchild.

The letter below was written in answer to our suggestion that the Manuscript be sent for safe keeping to some Historical Society in Chicago, Illinois.

HONOLULU, Sandwich Islands,
March 18th, 1855.

MA. JOSEPH SMITH:
The Spaulding Manuscript in my possession came into my hands in this wise. In 1839-40 my partner and myself bought of E. D. Howe the Palaeolithic Folio, published at Palaeolithic, Ohio. The transfer of the printing department, types, press, &c. was accompanied with a large collection of books, manuscripts, &c. this manuscript of Spaulding among the rest. So, you see, it has been in my possession over forty years. But I never examined it, or knew the character of it, until some six or eight months since. The wrapper was marked, "Manuscript Story—Connessut Creek." The wonder is, that in some of my movements, I did not destroy or burn it with a large amount of rubbish that had accumulated from time to time.

It happened that Pres't Fairchild was here on a visit, at the time I discovered the contents of it, and it was examined by him and others with much curiosity. Since Pres't Fairchild published the fact of its existence in my possession, I have had applications for it from half a dozen sources, each applicant seeming to think that he or she was entitled to it. Mr. Howe says when he was getting up a book to expose Mormonism as a fraud at an early day, when the Mormons had their headquarters at Kirtland, he obtained it from some source, and it was inadvertently transferred with the other effects of his printing office. A. B. Deming, of Palaeolithic, who is also getting up some kind of a book I believe on Mormonism, wants me to send it to him. Mrs. Dickinson, of Boston, claiming to be a relative of Spaulding, and who is getting up a book to show that he

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was the real author of the Book of Mormon, wants it. She thinks, at least, it should be sent to Spaulding's daughter, a Mrs. Somebody—but she does not inform me where she lives. Deming says that Howe borrowed it when he was getting up his book, and did not return it, so he should have done, &c.

This Manuscript does not purport to be "a story of the Indians formerly occupying this continent," but is a history of the wars between the Indians of Ohio and Kentucky, and their progress in civilization, &c. It is certain that this Manuscript is not the origin of the Mormon Bible, whatever some other manuscript may have been. The only similarity between them, is in the manner in which each purports to have been found—one in a cave on Connessut Creek—the other in a hill in Ontario county, New York. There is no identity of names, or persons, or places; and there is no similarity of style between them. As I told Mr. Deming, I should as soon think the Book of Revelations was written by the author of Don Quixote, as that the writer of this Manuscript was the author of the Book of Mormon. Deming says Spaulding made three copies of "Manuscript Found," one of which Sidney Rigdon stole from a printing office in Pittsburg. You can probably tell better than I can, what ground there is for such an allegation.

As to this Manuscript, I can not see that it can be of any use to any body, except the Mormons, to show that it is not the original of the Mormon Bible. But that would not settle the claim that some other manuscript of Spaulding was the original of it. I propose to hold it in my own hands for a while, to see if it can not be put to some good use. Deming and Howe inform me that its existence is exciting great interest in that region. I am under a tacit, but not a positive pledge to President Fairchild, to deposit it eventually in the Library of Oberlin College. I shall be free from that pledge, when I see an opportunity to put it to a better use.

Yours, &c.,

L. L. RICE.

P. S.—Upon reflection, since writing the foregoing, I am of the opinion that no one who reads this Manuscript will give credit to the story that Solomon Spaulding was in any wise the author of the Book of Mormon. It is unlikely that any one who wrote so elaborate a work as the Mormon Bible, would spend his time in getting

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up so shallow a story as this, which at best is but a feeble imitation of the other. Finally I am more than half convinced that this is his only writing of the sort, and that any pretence that Spaulding was in any sense the author of the other, is a sheer fabrication. It was easy for any body who may have seen this, or heard anything of its contents, to get up the story that they were identical.

L. L. R.

HONOLULU, Sandwich Islands.

May 14th, 1885.

MR. JOSEPH SMITH; Dear Sir:—

I am greatly obliged to you for the information concerning Mormonism, in your letters of April 30th and May 2d. As I am in no sense a Mormon, of course it is a matter of curiosity, mainly, that I am interested in the history of Mormonism.

Two things are true concerning this manuscript in my possession: First, it is a genuine writing of Solomon Spaulding; and second, it is not the original of the Book of Mormon.

My opinion is, from all I have seen and learned, that this is the only writing of Spaulding, and there is no foundation for the statement of Dowling and others, that Spaulding made another story, more elaborate, of which several copies were written, one of which Rigdon stole from a printing office in Pittsburgh, &c. Of course I can not be as certain of this, as of the other two points. One theory is, that Rigdon, or some one else, saw this manuscript, or heard it read, and from the hints it conveyed, got up the other and more elaborate writing on which the Book of Mormon was founded. Take that for what it is worth. It doesn't seem to me very likely.

You may be at rest as to my putting the manuscript into the possession of any one who will mutilate it, or use it for a bad purpose. I shall have it deposited in the Library of Oberlin College, in Ohio, to be at the disposal for reading of any one who may wish to peruse it; but not to be removed from that depository. My friend, President Fairchild, may be relied on as security for the safe keeping of it. It will be sent there in July, by a friend who is going there to "take to himself a wife." Hereafter, I have made a literal copy of the entire document—errors of orthography, grammar,

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errors, and all—which I shall keep in my possession, so that any attempt to mutilate it will be of easy detection and exposure. Oberlin is a coastal place, in the vicinity of Connesset, where the manuscript was written.

I have had an idea, sometimes, that it is due to the Mormons to have a copy of it, if they look interest in it enough to publish it. As it is only of interest as showing that it is not the original of the Book of Mormon, no one else is likely to wish it for publication.

Miss Dickinson, whom you call a granddaughter of Solomon Spaulding, represents herself to me as his grandniece: "My great uncle, Rev. Solomon Spaulding," she writes.

Rev. Dr. Hyde, President of the Institute, in this place, for training Native Missionaries for Micronesia, (a very prominent and successful institution), has written an elaborate account of this manuscript, and of Mormonism, and sent it for publication to the Congregationalist, of Boston. I presume it will be published, and you will be interested in reading it.

Very respectfully, yours,

L. L. RICE.

In a postscript Mr. Rice says he found the following endorsement on the Manuscript:

"The writings of Solomon Spaulding proved by Anna Wright, Oliver Smith, John N. Miller and others. The testimonials of the above gentlemen are now in my possession.

(Signed)

D. P. HULLAULT."

COPY OF MR. RICE'S LETTER.

HONOLULU, H. I., June 11, 1885.

PRESIDENT J. H. FAIRCHILD:—

Herewith I send to you the Solomon Spaulding Manuscript, to be deposited in the Library of Oberlin College, for reference by any one who may be desirous of seeing or examining it. As a great deal of inquiry has been made about it since it became known that it was in my possession, I deem it proper that it be deposited for

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safe keeping, where any one interested in it, whether Mormon or Anti-Mormon, may examine it. It has been in my possession forty-six years—from 1829 to 1885—and for forty-four years of that time no one examined it, and I was not aware of the character of its contents. I send it to you enclosed in the same paper wrapper, and tied with the same string that must have enclosed it for near half a century—certainly during the forty-six years since it came into my possession. I have made and retain in my possession a correct literal copy of it, errors of orthography, of grammar, errors and all. I may allow the Mormons of Utah to print it from this copy, which they are anxious to do; and a delegation is now in the Islands, awaiting my decision on this point. They claim that they are entitled to whatever benefit they may derive from its publication; and it seems to me there is some justice in that claim. Whether it will relieve them in any manner, from the imputation that Solomon Spaulding was the author of the Book of Mormon, I do not attempt to decide. It devolves upon their opponents to show that there are or were other writings of Spaulding—since it is evident that this writing is not the original of the Mormon Bible.

Truly, yours, &c.,

L. L. RICE.

P. S.—The words "Solomon Spaulding's Writings" in ink on the wrapper were written by me, after I became aware of the contents. The words "Manuscript Story—Coconaut Creek," in blue pencil, were so now when it came into my possession.

OBERLIN COLLEGE, OBERLIN, O.

July 13, 1885.

I have this day delivered to Mr. E. L. Kelley a copy of the Manuscript of Solomon Spaulding, sent from Honolulu by Mr. L. L. Rice, to the Library of Oberlin College, for safe keeping, and now in my care. The copy was prepared at Mr. Kelley's request, under my supervision, and is, as I believe, an exact transcript of the original manuscript, including erasures, mispellings, &c.

JAS. H. FAIRCHILD,

Pres. of Oberlin College.

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KENTLAND, O., 24th July, 1885.

PRES. W. W. BLAIR, *Lamoni, Iowa*

Herewith I transmit to you the copy of the Spaulding Manuscript prepared by Pres. Fairchild as attested by him, together with his certificate, and photograph sheets.

E. L. KELLEY.

Words and sentences underlined were written out in the Manuscript. Please marked them the copy was illegible.

INTRODUCTION.

NEAR the west bank of the Coconaut River there are the remains of an ancient fort. As I was walking and forming various conjectures respecting the character situation & numbers of those people who far exceeded the present Indians in works of art and ingenuity, I happened to tread on a flat stone. This was at a small distance from the fort, & it lay on the top of a great small mound of Earth exactly horizontal. The face of it had a singular appearance. I discovered a number of characters, which appeared to me to be letters, but so much effaced by the ravages of time, that I could not read the inscription. With the assistance of a lever I raised the stone. But you may easily conjecture my astonishment when I discovered that its ends and sides rested on stones & that it was designed as a cover to an artificial Cave. I found by examining that its sides were lined with stones built in a conical form with down, & that it was about eight feet deep. Determined to investigate the design of this extraordinary work of antiquity, I

STATEMENT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF OBERLIN COLLEGE

OBERLIN COLLEGE, OHIO,
October 17, 1895.

J. R. Hindley, Esq.,

DEAR SIR:—We have in our College Library an original manuscript of Solomon Spaulding — unquestionably genuine.

I found it in 1884 in the hands of Hon. L. L. Rice of Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands. He was formerly State Printer at Columbus, O., and before that, publisher of a paper in Painesville, whose preceding publisher had visited Mrs. Spaulding and obtained the manuscript from her. It had lain among his old papers forty years or more, and was brought out by my asking him to look up anti-slavery documents among his papers.

The manuscript has upon it the signatures of several men of Conneaut, O., who had heard Spaulding read it and knew it to be his. No one can see it and question its genuineness. The manuscript has been printed twice at least — once by the Mormons of Salt Lake City, and once by the Josephite Mormons of Iowa. The Utah Mormons obtained the copy of Mr. Rice at Honolulu, and the Josephites got it of me after it came into my possession.

This manuscript is not the original of the *Book of Mormon*.

Yours very truly,
JAS. H. FAIRCHILD.

IN SUMMARY

The important point of this chapter is that there was only **one** Manuscript Found written by Solomon Spaulding. Because it was hidden from public view from 1816 to 1885, many false stories were circulated about Spaulding's manuscript and the Book of Mormon. We invite you to read Spaulding's manuscript and compare it with excerpts from the Book of Mormon. Both are in the Appendix. See for yourself what similarity may or may not exist.

The journey of Spaulding's Manuscript Found was traced from Mrs. Davison, Spaulding's widow who remarried, to Hurlburt, to Howe, to Rice, to Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio. Both the Manuscript Found and the Book of Mormon are available to the public — no one need be deceived concerning the Spaulding theory ever again. To Walter Martin who said he had believed the Spaulding theory for 25 years — he has believed a lie; to Davis, Cowdrey, & Scales who borrowed much of Walter Martin's Research — they have inherited a lie.

Rigdon's Denial

His reply to Mrs. Davison's statement was written on May 27, 1839, and read as follows:

Messrs. Bartlett & Sullivan:—In your paper of the 18th inst., I see a letter signed by somebody calling herself Matilda Davison. . . . It is only necessary to say, in relation to the whole story about Spaulding's writings being in the hands of Mr. Patterson, who was in Pittsburgh, and who is said to have kept a printing office, and my saying that I was connected in the said office, &c., &c., is the most base of lies, without even the shadow of truth. There was no man by the name of Patterson, during my residence at Pittsburgh, who had a printing office; what might have been before I lived there I know not. Mr. Robert Patterson, I was told, had owned a printing office before I lived in that city, but had been unfortunate in business, and failed before my residence there. This Mr. Patterson, who was a Presbyterian preacher, I had a very slight acquaintance with during my residence in Pittsburgh. He was then acting under an agency, in the book and stationary business, and was the owner of no property of any kind, printing office or anything else, during the time I resided in the city.¹

If I were to say that I ever heard of the Rev. Solomon Spaulding and his wife, until Dr. P. Hulbert wrote his lie about me, I should be a liar like unto themselves. Why was not the testimony of Mr. Patterson obtained to give force to this shameful tale of lies?^m The only reason is, that he was not a fit tool for them to work with; he would not lie for them; for, if he were called on, he would testify to what I have here said.

Let me here, gentlemen, give a history of this Dr. P. Hulbert and his associates who aided in getting up and propagating this batch of lies.

I have seen and heard, at one time and another, by the persecutors and haters of the truth, a great deal about the eminent physician, Dr. Hulbert. I never thought the matter worthy of notice, nor probably ever should, had it not made its appearance in your paper, or some one of equal respectability. And I believe, gentlemen, had you have known the whole

history of this budget of lies, it would never have found a place in your paper. But to my history.

This said Doctor was never a physician at any time, nor anything else, but a base ruffian. He was the seventh son, and his parents called him Doctor; it was his name, and not the title of his profession.

He once belonged to the Methodist Church, and was excluded for immoralities. He afterwards imposed himself on the Church of Latter Day Saints, and was excluded for using obscene language to a young lady, a member of the said Church, who resented his insult with indignation, which became both her character and profession.⁸

After his exclusion he swore—for he was vilely profane—that he would have revenge, and commenced his work. He soon found assistance; a pious old Deacon of the Campbellite Church, by the name of Onis Clapp, and his two sons, Thomas J. Clapp and Matthew S. Clapp, both Campbellite preachers, abetted and assisted by another Campbellite preacher, by the name of Adamson Bentley.⁹ Hulbert went to work catering lies for the company. Before Hulbert got through, his conduct became so scandalous that the company utterly refused to let his name go out with the lies he had collected, and he and his associates had made, and they substituted the name of E. D. Howe.¹⁰ The change, however, was not much better. There were scandalous immoralities about the Howe family of so black a character that they had nothing to lose, and became good tools for this holy company to work with. A man of character would never have put his name to a work which Hulbert was concerned in.¹¹ The tale in your paper is one hatched up by this gang before the time of their expulsion.

It has always been a source of no ordinary satisfaction to me to know that my enemies have no better weapon to use against me, or the cause in which I am engaged, than lies; for, if they had any better, they would certainly use them. I must confess, however, that there is some consistency in our persecutors; for, as truth can never destroy truth, it would be in vain for our persecutors to use truth against us, for this would only build us up; this they seem to know, and lay hold of the only available means they have, which are lies. And this, indeed, is the only weapon which can be, or ever

has been used against the truth. As our persecutors are endeavoring to stop the progress of truth, I must confess that they act with a degree of consistency in the choice of means, namely, lies; but, if truth would do it, they would surely not have recourse to lies.

In order to give character to their lies, they dress them up with a great deal of piety; for a pious lie, you know, has a great deal more influence with an ignorant people than a profane one. Hence their lies came signed by the pious wife of a pious deceased priest. However, his last act of piety seems to have been to write a bundle of lies, themselves being witnesses; but then his great piety sanctifies them, and lies become holy things in the hands of such excessive piety, particularly when they are graced with a few Reverends; but the days have gone by when people are to be deceived by these false glossings of Reverend's sanctions; the intelligent part of the communities of all parts of the country, know that Reverends are not more notorious for truth than their neighbors.

The only reason why I am assailed by lies is, that my opposers dare not venture on argument, knowing that if they do they fall. They try, therefore, to keep the public from investigating, by publishing and circulating falsehoods. This I consider a high encomium on both myself and the cause I defend.

Respectfully,
S. Rigdon¹⁰

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Solomon Spaulding's granddaughter, Mrs. Sonie E. Brittain, joined the LDS Church. Read her moving testimony on P. 455 in the Appendix.