

BH ROBERTS
BOOK STUDY

A BOOK OF MORMON STUDY

Introductory:

I.

LITERATURE AVAILABLE TO JOSEPH SMITH AS A
GROUND-PLAN FOR THE BOOK OF MORMON.

A number of years ago ~~thirteen years ago, to be~~
~~exact~~ in my treatise on the Book of Mormon under the general
title ^a "New Witnesses for God", I discussed the subject
"Did the Book of Mormon antedate works in English on
American antiquities, accessible to Joseph Smith and his
associates". The object in considering the question at that
time was to ascertain whether or not the alleged historical
incidents of the Book of Mormon and its subject matter
generally, were derived from speculations regarding the
origin, migrations, customs, religion, language, or other
lore of the American race, published previous to the coming
forth of the Book of Mormon; or if the Book of Mormon
truly indicated the source of those American Indian tra-
ditions and antiquities. Of course the discussion recognized
the fact that such publications must not only exist before
the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, but must also be
accessible to Joseph Smith or his associates, in order
to be of any force in the supposition that such publications
might have furnished the material from which the Book
of Mormon was constructed, or its general outlines suggested.

Exhibit 1

*Views of the Hebrews
or the Tribes of Israel in
America,*

Second, the little book by Ethan Smith, published in Vermont, ^(first edition 1823), second edition in 1825, which I pass for the present without comment, and reserve it for special consideration later.

Third, "The History of the American Indians", by James Adair, published in England 1775, and much quoted in America. Mr. Adair confines the scope of his work to the North American Indians among whom he was a trader for many years.

Fourth, the translation of some parts of Baron Von Humboldt's works on "New Spain", published first in America and England, between the years 1806 and 1809; and later ^{John} Black's Enlarged translation of it in New York, 1811. It was a work frequently quoted by American writers, both before and immediately following the publication of the Book of Mormon.

The writer at the time being considered did not take sufficiently into account the work of Josiah Priest ^{on} "American Antiquities", since it was not published-the first edition of it-until 1833, several years after the publication of the Book of Mormon. It should then have been observed, however, that the material of Priest's book was much in evidence throughout New England and in New York before it ^{was} *American "Antiquities"* was crystalized in his publication. For years such materials as were then found and discussed, theories as to the origin

II.

ETHAN SMITH'S BOOK, "VIEW OF THE HEBREWS", AS STRUCTURAL MATERIAL FOR THE BOOK OF MORMON: UNITY OF THE AMERICAN RACE: AMERICAN LANGUAGE FROM ONE SOURCE-THE HEBREW.

It is now time to consider the book, "View of the Hebrews": or "The Tribes of Israel in America", by Ethan Smith.

This book was published and ~~printed~~ by Smith and Shute, Poultney, Vermont ~~in an adjoining county to the one in~~ 1825. ~~This, however, was the date of the second edition. I have not been able, so far, to ascertain the date of the first edition, but certainly it would not be more than two or three years before the date of the second, as interest in the subject was keen, and the author in the preface to the second edition refers to "the speedy sale of the first edition". Certainly then, we must assume that the first edition was published not above five years before the publication of the second. That would be~~ ~~in or about 1820.~~

This is supposed to be the date of the first edition. I have not been able, so far, to ascertain the date of the first edition, but certainly it would not be more than two or three years before the date of the second, as interest in the subject was keen, and the author in the preface to the second edition refers to "the speedy sale of the first edition". Certainly then, we must assume that the first edition was published not above five years before the publication of the second. That would be in or about 1820.

Mr. Ethan Smith was a pastor of a church in Poultney, Rutland County, Vermont; in the county adjoining on the west the county of Windsor, in which the Prophet Joseph was born, and in which he lived with his parents until he was about ten years of age, when the family removed to the State of New York and settled at Palmyra, and a little later in the township of Manchester.

This study supposes that it is more than likely that the Smith family possessed a copy of this book by Ethan

Exhibit 2

Smith, that either by reading it, or hearing it read and its contents frequently discussed, Joseph Smith became acquainted with its contents. The date of the publication of the

second edition would even make this possible.

For from the Smith family
~~be insisted upon that the Smith family, the State of Vermont~~

before the publication of the "View of the Hebrews" ~~at least of the second edition~~ such was the universal interest in the subject, and being published in a locality near which for so long the family had resided-in the adjoining county-the Smiths would most likely have interest enough in the book

to obtain it in their new home. The book then, was in ~~existence from eight to~~ *first and second editions respectively - seven and* years before the publication ~~for~~

of the Book of Mormon, and was written and published by a man residing in a county adjoining that in which the Smith family lived-not more than fifty miles from Sharon, as the crow flies. It had a wide circulation in New England and in New York, running through two editions in a few years. Contact with it, and knowledge of its contents, by the Smiths, is in every way a great probability. And even if that were not so, as to this particular book- if the Smiths never owned the book, never read it, or saw it, still its contents-the materials of which it was composed- would be, under all the circumstances, matter of "common knowledge" throughout the whole region where the Smiths lived from the birth of Joseph Smith in 1805, to the publication of the Book of Mormon in 1829-30.

Smith's View of the Hebrews
Title Page of Ethan Smith's View of the Hebrews. 1st Edition.

View of the Hebrews;

Exhibiting

The Destruction of Jerusalem

The Certain Restoration of Judah and Israel:

and

The address of the Prophet Isaiah Relative to their Restoration.

By Ethan Smith, Pastor of a Church in Poultney, Vermont.

"There be the days of Vengeance". Christ.

Yet a Remnant shall Return. Isaiah.

Poultney (Vermont) Printed & Published by Smith & Shute.

Copied by B. H. Roberts from copy in 1st Edition, New York City
Library.

The second Edition (1825) is about one third larger than the first.

Exhibit 3

The Title Page of Star in The West

A Star in the West

OR

A Humble attempt to discover the long lost Ten tribes of Israel.
Preparatory to their return to their beloved City, Jerusalem. By
Elias Boudinot L. L. D.

"Who is wise, & he shall understand these things? Prudent and he
shall know them. For all the ways of the Lord are right, & the just
shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein." Hosea.

"And the Lord answered me & said, write the vision & make it plain,
upon a (writing) table that he may know who readeth it-; for the
vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak
& not lie; tho it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come.
It will tarry not." Habbak

Trenton, N. J. Published by D. Fenton S. Hutchinson and J. Dun-
ham. George Sherman, Printer-1786- 312 pages in above work.

Quotations from Boudinot--

"We are driven back " said an old Warrior "until we can go no fur-
ther-our hatchets are broken-our bows are snapped-our fires are
nearly extinguished-a little longer and the white man will cease to
persecute us for we will cease to exist".

Boudinot St. of the West,
Preface PXXI

Boudinot states in his Ten Lost Tribes Theory from same (lines
as Ethan Smith but he in 1816) viz. Esdras 11. 13th Ch. Supposed
as an Apochryphal book to have been written about 100 A.D. Introdu-
ction P.28.

Authors quoted by Boudinot: "Colden, Brainerd, Edwards, Jun. (this
would be Jonathan) in the languages of the Mohegans (this also

the information of the Rev. Dr. Beatley Bartram and others of their personal observations of the Indians. Introduction PP 30-31

Moses Du Pratz

Author of

History of Louisiana, written about 1730.

Star of the West P133.

Natches named for tribe of Indians of that name.

Boutinot makes much of "O-E-A" or Yo-he-vah (as does Ethan Smith) see Star of the West P 178 et sq.

"Much is to be done who when the signal is set up among the nations; and these children of God's watch, free providence, shall be manifestly discovered, i e lost tribes they are to be converted to the faith of Christ, & instructed in their religious prerogatives, and prepared and assisted to return to their own land & their ancient city, even the city of Zion, which shall become a praise to all the earth.....Who knows but God has raised up these U. S. in these last days for the very purpose of accomplishing his will in bringing his beloved people to their own land".

Star of the West P.297.

Title Pages to Dr. Jedidiah Morse's Geography.

"Geography Made Easy"

being an

Abridgment of the American Universal Geography

Containing

Astronomical, Geography, Discovery and General Description of
America.

General View of the United States.

Particular Accounts of the United States of America and of all
the Known Kingdoms, States and Republics of the Known World.

In Regard to their Boundaries, extent, Rivers, Lakes, Mountains,
Productions, Population, Character, Governments, Trade, Manufact-
ures, Curiosities, History, etc., to Which is added An Improved
Chronological Table of Remarkable Events, from the Creation to
the Present Time.

Illustrated with Maps of the Countries described.

Calculated particularly for the Use and Improvement of Schools
and Academies in the United States of America.

By Jedidiah Morse D. D.

Fifth Edition corrected by the Author.

Published according to Act of Congress.

Printed at Boston. May 1796.

Above book in Municipal Museum of Rochester, copies by B. H.

Roberts, June 7, 1922.

In the New York City Library there are three Editions of this

Work. 1st Edition, New Haven, Conn. 1784. 2nd Edition,

abridged by the Author, Boston 1791. 3rd Edition, Boston 1791.

Notes from Morses' Geography Made Easy--(Ed. of 1791)

Describing Aborigines:-

"They many times torture their prisoners in the most shocking & cruel manner; generally scalp them, & some times broil & eat them. A great part of the aborigines of America are gross idolaters and worship the sun, moon & stars.

*Of Isra-
el*

It is the opinion of many learned men, supported by several well established facts that the Indians of America are the remains of the Ten Tribes of Israel, and that they came to this continent in the manner hereafter mentioned." (page 31)

That is, they came from the North East parts of Asia (see Id. p. 33). From these and other circumstances (the nearness of the continents of the New World and the Old at Behring's Strait) it is rendered highly probable that America was people d from the North East parts of Asia. (Id. p. 33)

Josiah Priests' Wonders of Nature and Providence.

*Little
Paper*

The Wonders of Nature and Providence, compiled From Authentic Sources, Both Ancient and Modern; giving an Account of Various Strange Phenomena Existing in Nature, of Travels, Adventures Singular Providence etc.

"Harken,--Stand still and consider the Wonderous Works of Godv Job.

Albany---Published by Josiah Priest, E & E. Hosford Printers, 1836.

Copied from the copy in New York Public Library. The above book bears copyright date of June 2, 1824; preface dated Albany, Aug. 1825.

¶ Important passages from Wonders of Nature and Providence indicated.

From the Preface: The Storms, Tempests and Earthquakes might have suggested Cataclysms in Book of Mormon ^{as taking place in America} America. P. 47-et sq- *by Priest*

¶ An account of the commencement of the Kingdoms of Mexico, also some account of Montezuma the 11 & 9th King of Mexico. Visions of Mont's sisters etc. PP. 173-186, An account of festivals in honor of Idols among the Ancient Mexicans is given. PP. 253-261. Extract from History of Mexico--Customs in Idol Worship--Order of Quetzal coatl Priests, etc. PP. 372-407. Excerpts from Ethan Smith's View of the Hebrews. (Evidently 1st Edition) "Proofs that the Indians of North America are literally descendants of the Ancient Hebrews. He quotes 35 pages in his own work ^{on same subject} ~~words~~ of Ethan Smith's matter (more than Ethan Smith's pages) so that he gets about all the evidence and argument from Ethan Smith's book that sustains the contention that the Indians are descendants of the Hebrews. Priest in his "Wonders" (as later in his Antiquities) approves of Ethan Smith's contention that the Indians are of Hebrew descent, and answers some objections based on the fact of the Indians being darke skinned and ends up by saying;

"These facts(certain facts mentioned), it is believed, are sufficient to remove all doubts arising from the circumstance of the natives being swarthy, and prepares the mind to recognize the wandering tribes of the western, northern, and southern regions as literally descended from the royal house of Abraham." (p 408)

Title Page of Josiah Priest's Work 1841.

Copied by B. H. Roberts, June 7, 1922, in Reynolds Library,
Rochester, N.Y.

American Antiquities

and

Discoveries in the West

Being an exhibition of the Evidence that an Ancient Population
of partially civilized nations differing entirely from those
of the present Indians, peopled America many centuries before
its discovery by Columbus, and inquiries into their origin

With a Copious Description

of many of their stupendous work now in ruins.

With

Conjectures concerning what may have become of them.

Compiled from Travels, Authentic sources and the Researches of
Antiquarian Societies. By Josiah Priest, Fifth Edition,

22000 volumes of this work have been published for subscribers

only. Printed by J. Mansel State St. 1841.

7 int. Review
on Boy M. Studios
Submitted to, et. Pres.
XII Epworth, 24 XXX

June 1927

copy to the left
with Gladys



Nearleather[®]

EXPANSIBLE FILE POCKET

Letter- No. 5011

- Size 9 1/2" x 11 1/2" 1/4" Inch Expansion

EXHIBIT 4

Handwritten text on a page, possibly a manuscript or letter, written in a cursive script. The text is arranged in several lines and includes the following legible words and phrases:

Dear
My dear
My dear
P. M. - not yet out
to the
the
the
the
the

Small vertical text or markings on the right edge of the page.

A small handwritten mark or signature at the bottom right of the page.

First Council of the Seventy

201 L. D. S. Church Offices
Salt Lake City, Utah

B. H. ROBERTS
BOM STUDY

Members of First Council

Seymour B. Young
B. H. Roberts
J. Golden Kimball
Ruison S. Wells
Joseph W. McMurrin
Charles H. Hart
Levi E. Young

Salt Lake City, Utah.

President Heber J. Grant and Council
and Quorum of Twelve Apostles
Salt Lake City, Utah

March 15th 1973

Dear Brethren:

You will perhaps remember that during the hearing on "Problems of the Book of Mormon" reported to your Council January, 1922, I stated in my remarks that there were other problems which I thought should be considered in addition to those submitted in my report. Brother Richard R. Lyman asked if they would help solve the problems already presented, or if they would increase our difficulties. My answer was that they would very greatly increase our difficulties, on which he replied, "Then I do not know why we should consider them." My answer was, however, that it was my intention to go on with the consideration to the last analysis. Accordingly, since the matter was already so far under my hand, I continued my studies, and submit herewith the record of them. I do not say my conclusions, for they are undrawn.

In writing out this my report to you of those studies, I have written it from the viewpoint of an open mind, investigating the facts of the Book of Mormon origin and authorship. Let me say once for all, so as to avoid what might otherwise call for repeated explanation, that what is herein set forth does not represent any conclusions of mine. This report herewith submitted is what it purports to be, namely a "study of Book of Mormon

Exhibit 6

origins", for the information of those who ought to know everything about it pro et con, as well that which has been produced against it, and that which may be produced against it. I am taking the position that our faith is not only unshaken but unshakable in the Book of Mormon, and therefore we can look without fear upon all that can be said against it.

While searching for the answers to the questions of Mr. Couch, submitted through Mr. William E. Riter, I came in contact with the material here used, and concluded that while the subject was fresh in my mind to make it of record for those who should be its students and know on what ground *the Book of mormon* it may be questioned, as well as that which supports its authenticity and its truth.

If it is impossible for the General Authorities to consider this whole matter together, then, I submit that it might be referred to the committee you appointed to consider with me the answers to be given Mr. Couch, namely, Elders Ivins, Talmadge, and Widtsoe, with a request that they report on the same. I am very sure that you will find the material herewith submitted of intense interest, and it may be of very great importance since it represents what may be used by some opponent in criticism of the Book of Mormon.

It is not necessary for me to suggest that maintenance of the truth of the Book of Mormon is absolutely essential to the integrity of the whole Mormon movement, for it is inconceivable that the Book of Mormon should be untrue in its origin or character and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints be a true Church.

All which is respectfully submitted.

Very truly your brother,

because in that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts of a people scattered and peeled (the very people of the ancient covenant in manifest descriptions repeatedly given) to the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts, the Mount Zion.....Should it be proved a fact, that the aborigines of our [the American] continent are the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, it would heighten the probability to a moral certainty, that we are the people especially addressed, and called upon to restore them; or bring them to the knowledge of the Gospel, and to do with them whatever the God of Abraham designs shall be done. The great and generous Christian people, who occupy so much of the land of those ^{the aborigines} natives, and who are on the ground of their continent, and hence are the best prepared to meliorate their condition, and bring them to the knowledge and order of the God of Israel, must be the people to whom this work is assigned".

Exhibit 5 (front)

First Council of the Seventy

201 Church Office Building
Salt Lake City, Utah

J. G. KIMBALL
Secretary and Treasurer

Members of First Council

Seymour B. Young
B. H. Roberts
J. Golden Kimball
Rulon S. Wells
Joseph W. McMurrin
Charles H. Hart
Levi E. Young

Salt Lake City, Utah,

Exhibit 5 (back)