

**THE "MANUSCRIPT
FOUND":
MANUSCRIPT STORY**

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The "Manuscript Found": Manuscript Story by Solomon Spaulding

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SOLOMON SPAULDING

**THE "MANUSCRIPT
FOUND":
MANUSCRIPT STORY**

THE "MANUSCRIPT FOUND."

MANUSCRIPT STORY,

BY

Rev. Solomon Spauling,

DECEASED.

Printed from a Verbatim Copy, made (expressly for this edition)
from the Original, now in the possession of
President James H. Fairchild, of
Oberlin College, Ohio.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH,

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

FOR the last fifty years the "Manuscript Found" has been the staple stock in trade of almost every objector to the genuineness of the Book of Mormon. When every other imaginable theory and hypothesis were overthrown, this reputed romance was the unfailing refuge to which they fled. It could not be found, so their baseless assertions could not be disproved by an appeal to itself. But unfortunately for all such who make lies their refuge, this long-lost treasure has, at last, most unexpectedly to all parties, been brought to light, and is now given to the world with all its inanities, absurdities and inaccuracies. After carefully perusing both books, we believe we can truthfully assert that there is not one sentence, one incident, or one proper name common to both, and that the oft boasted similarity in matter and nomenclature is utterly false. No two books could be more unlike; in fact Mr. Spaulding's "Manuscript Story" no more resembles the Book of Mormon than "Gulliver's Travels" is like the Gospel of St. Matthew.

The history of the discovery of the Manuscript can be told in a few words. D. P. Hurlbut, an apostate, the originator of the fabrication that the Book of Mormon originated in Mr. Spaulding's tale, wrote a bitter assault on the Latter-day Saints in 1836, entitled "Mormonism Unveiled," which was published in the name of, and by E. D. Howe, of Painesville, Ohio. During the time Hurlbut was gathering material for this work, he obtained from the family of the then deceased clergyman the original of the "Manuscript Story," but discovering that it would, if published, prove fatal to his assumptions, he suppressed it; and from that time it was entirely lost sight of until about two years ago, when a Mr. L. L. Rice,

residing at Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, found it among a numerous collection of miscellaneous papers which he had received from Mr. Howe, the publisher of Hurlbut's "Mormonism Unveiled," when in 1839-40, he, with his partner, purchased from that gentleman the business, etc., of the Painesville *Telegraph*.

In 1884 President James H. Fairchild, of Oberlin College, Ohio, was paying a visit to Mr. Rice, and he suggested that the latter look through his numerous papers, in the hope of finding amongst them some anti-slavery documents of value. In his search he discovered a package marked in pencil on the outside, "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek," which, to their surprise, on perusal, proved to be the veritable, long-lost romance of Dr. Spaulding, to which so much undeserved importance had been ignorantly or maliciously given. After retaining the manuscript some time Mr. Rice presented it to Oberlin College, but before doing so, made an exact copy, with all its peculiarities of style, errors of grammar and orthography, alterations, erasures, etc., which copy he placed in our hands with the distinct understanding that it should be printed and published exactly as he had copied it.

We have endeavored to faithfully carry out our part of the agreement, and now present to the world this wishy-washy production, with all its peculiarities of spelling and grammar, whose only conceivable value is that it utterly dispels and demolishes a long existing error, and compels those who will not acknowledge the divinity of the Book of Mormon to seek in other directions plausible excuses for rejecting its truths.

Those portions of the work altered or erased by Mr. Spaulding have, in the following pages, been printed in italics and between brackets.

THE "MANUSCRIPT FOUND."

MANUSCRIPT STORY.

INTRODUCTION

Near the west Bank of the Coneaught River there are the remains of an ancient fort. As I was walking and forming various conjectures respecting the character situation and numbers of those people who far exceeded the present race of Indians in works of art & ingenuity I hapned to tread on a flat Stone. This was at a small distance from the fort: & it lay on the top of a 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 leaver 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 on examining that its Sides were lined with * * * 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 prepared myself with necessary requisites for that purpose and decended to the Bottom of the cave—Observing one side to be perpendicular

nearly three feet from the bottom, I began to inspect that part with accuracy; Here I noticed a big flat Stone fixed in the form of a door, I immediately tore it down & Lo a cavity within the wall presented itself—it being about three feet in diameter from side to side and about two feet high. Within this cavity I found an earthen Box with a cover which shut it perfectly tight—The Box was two feet in length one & half in breadth & one and three inches in diameter. My mind filled with awful sensations which crowded fast upon me would hardly permit my hands to remove this venerable deposit but curiosity soon gained the ascendancy & the box was taken & raised to open * * * When I had removed the cover I found that it contained twenty eight sheets of parchment. & that when * * * * * appeared to be manuscripts written in an elegant hand with Roman Letters & in the Latin Language

They were written on a variety of Subjects. But the Roll which principally attracted my attention contained a history of the authors life & that part of America which extends along the great Lakes & the waters of the Mississippi.

Extracts of the most interesting and important matters contained in this Roll I take the liberty to publish — —

[Gentle Reader tread lightly on the ashes of the venerable dead — Thou must know that this Country was once inhabited by great & powerful nations considerably civilized & skilled in the arts of war, and that on ground where thou now treadest many [an hard fou] a bloody Battle hath been fought—& heroes by the thousand [have been] made to bite the dust.

In the history given of these nations by my Author you will find nothing but what will correspond with the natural sentiments we should form on viewing the innumerable remains of Antiquity which are scattered over an extensive Country. This is an evidence of the authors impartiality and veracity. But if any should pretend that the whole story is fictitious or fabulous,]

To publish a translation of every particular circumstance

mentioned by our author would produce a volume too expensive for the general class of readers. But should this attempt to throw off the veil which has secluded our view from the transactions of nations who, for ages have been extinct, meet the approbation of the public, I shall then be happy to gratify the more inquisitive & learned part of my readers by a more minute publication. Apprehensive that sceptical, illiberal or superstitious minds may censure this performance with great accrimony I have only to remark that they will be *deprived* of a great fund of entertainment *which those* of a contrary disposition will obtain. My compassion will be excited more than my resentment and there the contest will end.

Now Gentle Reader the Translator who wishes well to thy present & thy future existence entreats thee to peruse this volume with a clear head a pure heart & a candid mind—If thou shalt that thy head & thy heart are both improved it will afford him more satisfaction than the approbation of ten thousand who have received no benefit. — —

[And now permit me to admonish thee that if thou shouldst reside in or travel thro' any part of the Country]

CHAPT I

An Epitomy of the Authors life & of his arival in America—

As it is possible that in some future age this part of the Earth will be inhabited by Europeans & a history of its present inhabitants will be a valuable acquisition I propose to write one & deposit it in a box secured * * * * so that the ravages of time will have effect upon it. That you