

EDITING HUGH NIBLEY: THE MAN AND HIS LEGACY

Shirley S. Ricks

My personal experience of working with Hugh Nibley's books and manuscripts began in the late 1980s when there was a big push to get several books out in time for the upcoming year when the Book of Mormon would be the focus for our Gospel Doctrine classes.

Our family had spent the 1987–88 year in Jerusalem, so other than working on cleaning up a bibliography for Nibley's dissertation in Ireland (where we spent a couple of summer months on our way home), I probably didn't do a great deal on Nibley projects until our return to the States. It was around this time that I became more fully engaged in working on the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley.

The focus at this time was on source checking the multitudinous notes for these early volumes. My husband, Stephen Ricks, was, in my opinion, a Nibley source checker supreme. Not only did he know the exact location for most of the sources and could go directly to them, but he could also rattle off call numbers for many of them. He was very persistent in solving note problems. In any event, he often led me to many of the sources or instructed me on how to solve a particular source checking mystery. John Gee in this period spent much of his time working on the foreign language sources that were—for most of the student workers—still foreign. I present here many quotations and ideas from a review I wrote of Ron Huggins's critique of Nibley's footnotes.¹

Since checking Nibley's notes has been a matter of considerable interest to friend and foe alike, let me explain some of the background and circumstances involved. One charge that has been leveled at Nibley's footnotes—namely, that of sloppy, botched,



Figure 1. Shirley Ricks in her office at the Maxwell Institute, 2017, with copies of the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley behind her.¹¹⁵

or incomplete citations—actually has merit. Anyone who has source checked Nibley’s footnotes will grant that there is some truth to this claim. Nibley made just about every kind of error possible in those citations: wrong page numbers,² wrong years, even wrong authors, incomplete information, lack of article titles, and so forth, but, more often than not, when a particularly intractable source was finally located, Nibley’s citation made some sense, with typographical errors often bearing some blame.

In a review of volume 17 in the *Collected Works of Hugh Nibley—Eloquent Witness: Nibley on Himself, Others, and the Temple*³—Jeff Needle, a non-Latter-day Saint, acknowledges:

I am not unaware of the criticisms that have been hurled at Dr. Nibley, both before and after his death. . . .

And I know that some have questioned the quality of Nibley’s scholarship. Did he tend to be sloppy in his research? Were his footnotes a nightmare to verify? Did he make stuff up out of whole cloth? All of these charges have been hurled at him. His defenders ignore the charges. His detractors thrill at the thought of bringing down this most prominent of Mormon scholars.⁴

One indication that the issue of the accuracy of Nibley’s footnotes has been around for some time is the fact that the following question was posed and responded to on a FAIR Web site: “I’ve heard that Hugh Nibley really just faked or distorted most of his footnotes. Is there any truth to this?” A thoughtful response follows,⁵ which shows that Needle’s claim that “his defenders ignore the charges” is not true.

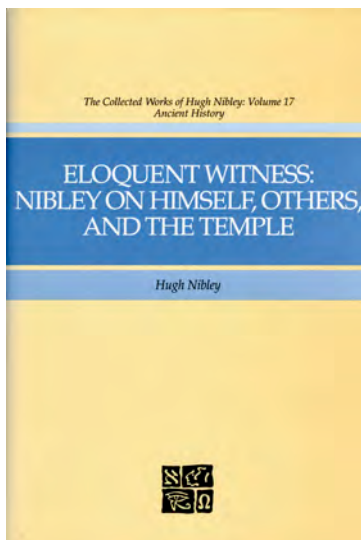


Figure 2. “Did he tend to be sloppy in his research? Were his footnotes a nightmare to verify? Did he make up stuff out of whole cloth?”¹¹⁶

The Functions of Footnotes

Authors are expected to give information in their footnotes that is complete, clear, and relevant so a future reader or researcher can find the original sources and thereby validate (or question) the author's claims and perhaps build upon that research in advancing scholarship or improving knowledge.

Accuracy of Footnotes in General

Generally speaking, authors retain ultimate responsibility for their citations. Regarding footnote accuracy, I find such statements as "Please check every footnote to ensure substantive and technical accuracy. Any statement of fact or law should have a footnote."⁶ "Confirm that the list of references has been checked carefully for accuracy and that each of the references has been read by at least one of the authors."⁷

Clearly, these statements placing the responsibility with the authors reflect the ideal world. Anyone who has even briefly checked the notes of submitted papers has usually muttered (or worse) about authors who can't seem to get it right. As an editor myself, I identify with the sentiments of this copyeditor:

Anyone who has spent any time copyediting scholarly manuscripts . . . would not be surprised at all by this information about the high rate of incorrect citation. At first, as a beginning editor, I was appalled to find so many mistakes in the footnotes of senior scholars. . . . Who knows how many scholars have been spared from embarrassment by their copyeditors working quietly behind the scenes to repair their flawed writings?⁸

Accuracy of Nibley's Notes

What this boils down to is the accuracy of Nibley's notes on two levels: the botched, incomplete citations and the misrepresentations. Perhaps here would be an appropriate place to review the source-checking process that has been used in attempting to verify Nibley's notes. According to John W. Welch, whose vision was crucial in the inception and completion of the *Collected Works of Hugh Nibley*:

We assigned editors to begin working on each of the first ten volumes. One of the most important functions was to source check all of Nibley's quotes and footnotes. To do this, each editor made use of a large team of source checkers, who became known as the "Collected Workers of Hugh Nibley," wearing a t-shirt with that name.⁹ Many of the source checkers were volunteers, but the mainstay of the source-checking effort were people who were hired as BYU students or friends of FARMS. . . . We were able to move expeditiously to put together a large temporary team, and between 1984 and 1989 we brought out nine volumes of the Collected Works, an unprecedented publishing feat.¹⁰

In 1988 Fran Clark joined the project to assist in transcribing, organizing, and managing the electronic versions of the materials, a massive task; Welch considers her arrival an answer to prayer. Clark also worked closely with Nibley himself as he made dictations for the long-awaited *One Eternal Round*.¹¹ As one of Clark's 1988 journal entries reveals, Nibley wasn't always the easiest person to work with:

In time, I learned that if I wanted to make a change (one I knew would later need to be fixed), I would do it without consulting him. If it were one he needed to correct—like sentence form or a necessary footnote—I'd say, "I think *we* need a reference here," or "I think *I've* made a mistake." That way, he was still in charge, which he had to make clear to me from day one. After that was settled, he relaxed and we worked well together.¹²

About this time James V. Tredway was asked to track the progress of each volume and keep the project moving along.¹³ He relates in remarkable detail some of his experiences in source checking Nibley materials, which recollections also reveal interesting insights into Nibley the man:

Once in a while I would get stuck with a recalcitrant footnote that no one else could find and then it was my responsibility to approach Dr. Nibley about its citation information, which I can honestly say he loathed. He would say to me every once in a while that I did not have to footnote everything, but then when he was working on something new he would sometimes



Figure 3. Nibley home at 285 East 700 North in Provo, Utah.¹¹⁷

stop by Ancient Studies and ask me where a particular citation was located; . . . he wanted to have it right.

On another occasion when Matt Roper and I were sourcing his four *Ensign* articles on the atonement, . . . we came across an essential quote that neither of us could find, so with some fear and trepidation we proceeded to Nibley's little green house. I knocked on the door, and he answered. I asked him where that quote was from, and he said, "Any fool knows where that quote is from!" Taken aback a bit by his abrasiveness and not knowing what else to say, I said, "Well I must not be a fool 'cause I can't find it." That stopped him dead in his tracks, and he grabbed the manuscript and went back into the house in a huff.

We stood there for what seemed like an eternity while we could hear papers rattling and books coming out of his bedside library tossed here and there, and there was a continuous angry mumbling that played in the background like a cello. Finally, he returned to the door more sheepishly than I had ever seen him and said he couldn't find it and would have to get back to us. Matt and I were biting our lips by then. I reminded Nibley that we needed it by the weekend. Before the weekend was upon us, the manuscript appeared with the new citation

inserted. Matt and I rushed to the stacks to check, and sure enough, it was exact. We were flabbergasted, thinking that he would not be able to find such a quote, but he did.¹⁴

This experience demonstrates a couple of facts: When Nibley was alive, source checkers used every avenue possible to solve a citation problem by themselves, but if they still couldn't resolve the issues, they did approach Nibley, who begrudgingly (because it took him away from whatever he was concentrating on at the moment) directed them to the source. Phyllis Nibley reports that her husband worried a lot about his notes and was quite meticulous in formulating them.¹⁵

One of the team of source checkers, Janet Carpenter, gives her recollection of the process:

I can say that I can personally vouch for the accuracy of the footnotes. We went through with a fine-tooth comb and verified everything. I remember as we would wrap up a book, there would be some we couldn't find that then would be dealt with, but the number of problems was minuscule compared to the volume that we did find. Nibley's accuracy was amazing. When we couldn't find something, it was always our fault or a typist's problem in the original manuscript.¹⁶

Mistakes were not always attributable to Nibley, the typists, or the source checkers. Sometimes editors or publishers seemed to introduce errors in the notes, as well as in the text. Tredway continues:¹⁷

When we got to doing *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass*,¹⁸ it turned out to be very problematic as many of the citations appeared to be wrong. So Matt and I went to Church headquarters and xeroxed every anti-Mormon book that Nibley cited. We brought that mass of manuscripts home and began the daunting task of searching through all those books for every single quote, going page by page. . . . Thanks to Matt's incredible patience and industry, we were able to locate every single quote and in doing so we discovered that all the citations were actually there, but they were jumbled.¹⁹ Apparently the editor had mixed them all up somehow, and when the galleys came I guess Hugh never checked to see if they were kept intact but rather focused only on the text. I also learned pretty

quickly that Hugh did not like editors at all. They were forever making little changes that altered his point without realizing what they had done.²⁰

Additionally, in some of Nibley's writings, few or no references were given. Source checkers, if they were unable to find the quotations, would sometimes take off the quotation marks and supply a reference that seemed to cover the same territory.²¹ These manufactured notes may have been inadequate compared to what Nibley himself might have provided (had he been persuaded to revisit an earlier project).²²

In the following comment, Tredway mentions the (in)famous Nibley pencil marks in books that source checkers were always delighted to find (that meant they had found the very book Nibley had used, which made it easier to locate and verify the quotations). Nibley often penciled little notations in the margins to emphasize a point (his notes could be pictures, shorthand symbols, or words and phrases in any number of languages)—library patrons would be in big trouble today if they indulged in this habit. Tredway relates:

As far as the thousands upon thousands of footnotes that we checked, I remember no glaring errors. . . .

I was amazed at the accuracy of his transcriptions as we checked the sources against them. . . . I can't imagine how he read so widely because there were Nibley tracks (notations) in so many books in the Harold B. Lee Library that it seemed no one could have read that much, and that was only one library. When I went to Berkeley to find some of his sources, I found Nibley tracks scattered all over there too. It had been rumored that he started on the first floor and went through every book of interest to him all the way to the top floor of the library, which was many floors (maybe as many as nine).²³ And we got books through Interlibrary Loan from Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, and a bunch of other universities with those same tracks. To think that he typed each quote by hand on a card with that old manual typewriter and indexed them without any computer was mind boggling.²⁴

Here we have one clue why some of Nibley's citations may have been inaccurate—he read extensively and took notes on three-by-five-inch index cards without the benefit of modern computers or

copy machines. Anyone making that volume of notes by hand is bound to make some mistakes. Tyler Moulton, one of the Collected Workers, reports on his experience in source checking Nibley footnotes:

Having spent hundreds of hours poring over thousands of Nibley's footnotes, I will agree that Nibley was at times sloppy. His legendary methodology of keeping his research notes on 3 x 5 cards in shoeboxes did not always lend itself to absolute accuracy—either in context or reference. In *Brother Brigham Challenges the Saints*,²⁵ for example, Nibley made frequent use of the *Journal of Discourses*, among other sources. Andy Hedges and I were tasked with tracking down as many of the remaining “mystery footnotes” from this volume as we could. Our methodology was to work through every variation of the given footnote numbers until we stumbled upon the source, and in almost every instance we eventually found the correct combination. Far from being an example of fabricating sources, the frequent transposition of numbers caused me to occasionally joke about Nibley's apparent dyslexia.²⁶

Tredway relates that when he was having difficulty locating some of the sources for “Paths That Stray,”²⁷ he went in desperation to Nibley's house, where he was taken upstairs and shown a huge cardboard box filled with scraps of articles. He found “in that box every single quote and every single citation for the entire manuscript. Not a single one of them was misquoted, out of context, or inappropriately cited.”²⁸

I will include here one more reminiscence from Tredway, which reveals that seeming inaccuracies actually turn out to be correct:

A group of us researchers used to try to find something that Hugh was off base on. It was kind of a game we played to make the time pass. On one occasion we found something—I think it was in the Pearl of Great Price articles, a Masonic symbol as I recall—and we were sure Hugh had got his description all wrong. We set out to find everything we could on that topic. After much work, to our surprise and chagrin it turned out he was right on target and we were dead wrong. And this happened over and over, and after some time it became the rule not to prejudge Nibley before you had done your homework

because he turned over every rock on the stream bed before he put pen to paper.²⁹

John Gee relates a similar experience in discovering Nibley's uncanny accuracy:

Nibley, in a throwaway line, compared an Egyptian text with a passage in the Talmud about alabaster.³⁰ When I checked the given source, I thought that although the source said what Nibley said it said, that Nibley was guilty of free association. Doing research for a graduate seminar that focused on the same passage in the Talmud, I discovered that there was actually a rather bizarre connection between the two passages, which I discuss in my article "The Keeper of the Gate."³¹

Charge of Fabricated Notes

Those of us who have spent hours tracking down Nibley sources have become firmly convinced that nothing was made up or fabricated. Even if we were ultimately unable to find a quotation, we always knew it existed somewhere. Sometimes we serendipitously ran across something that solved a different problem than the one we were researching. Gee recalls:

I think all the source checkers have stories like this. Some of the problems were not Nibley's fault. I remember discovering a recalcitrant source that was cited dozens of times but which we could not find in the library (Urk. VI). I was looking for another book in the stacks when a book caught my eye. Pulling it out and looking at it, I discovered that it was the long-lost source. The library had rebound the book and mislabeled it on the cover and the spine. Nibley had dutifully written the correct bibliography in pencil inside the cover.

Another time, we looked everywhere for weeks for Georgius Cedrenus and Georgius Syncellus without any luck. On a whim, we looked in the card catalog under "George" and found that the library had two copies of both authors within ten feet of where we were working.³²

No, Nibley did not fabricate his notes! According to Welch,

Many people also continued to parrot mindlessly the unfounded criticism that Nibley's footnotes were all made up or

were not reliable. Our source checkers, quite to the contrary, found Nibley's sources were, for the most part, very insightfully interpreted and accurately reflected. Many of the footnotes were cryptic and incomplete and so a lot of work was required to make them clear, but to an informed, intelligent reader even the early citations should have been comprehensible and seen as credible.³³

Gee reaffirmed this claim in an email correspondence to Huggins:

I still stand by [my] two statements [made earlier]. . . : "I have never seen any case where Hugh Nibley ever fabricated or made up a source. After looking up thousands of citations, I have seen him make just about every mistake I think one could make, but I have never seen him make up anything." "In no case could I determine that any of the errors in the footnotes were intentional or that any of the footnotes were fabrications."³⁴

Moulton asserts that when he was working on the article "Science Fiction and the Gospel,"³⁵ several source checkers had been unable to locate Nibley's sources (after all, this was given as a talk and probably didn't have fleshed-out footnotes).

For days I searched in vain for any evidence of the referenced authors or titles. (This was in the dark era before the internet.) In a couple of instances I had found stories resembling Nibley's descriptions, but neither author nor title matched. Not knowing what else to do, I substituted the references I discovered for those given by Nibley. But in most cases I could find nothing. I was about ready to give up and turn the manuscript back in when, late one night while perusing the stacks in the HBL, I randomly stumbled upon an anthology of science fiction pieces bearing Nibley's telltale shorthand scratchings in the margins. A quick perusal confirmed that many of the authors and titles I had been searching for were indeed there, and similar anthologies (with similar chicken scratches) uncovered the rest. (I discovered that the stories I had encountered previously were indeed the stories Nibley had referenced, but as was common at the time, they had been republished in different places under different pseudonyms and titles.)³⁶

Moulton makes a good point that "some of the blame for inadequate or misleading references must fall to us—the compilers, editors, and

source checkers—since it was well known at the time that in a great many cases Nibley agreed only grudgingly and after serious protestation to the publication of much of this work”—in other words, he hadn’t written it with publication in mind. Perhaps “what we prepared for general scholarly consumption was, in more than a few instances, originally intended only as his latest musings for informal gatherings. Our insistence on making as much as possible of Nibley’s work available has perhaps brought on the unintended consequence of weakening the perception of his scholarship.”³⁷

For example, Nibley never intended for the book *Approaching Zion* to be published.³⁸ Tredway gathered up the various articles and proposed it as a book to Stephen Ricks, who subsequently sold John Welch on the idea. Nibley was not fond of that book when it came out because it was a collection of talks and not as scholarly as some of his writing—he apparently told his Book of Mormon students not to buy it. However, it subsequently became a bestseller. A book that he never wanted published has reportedly changed the lives of countless individuals, while no one seems to have made that claim about his scholarly work in the *Ancient State*.

In one recent volume of the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, we were faced with the situation of adapting Nibley’s class notes from the fifties into a book form. We published *Apostles and Bishops in Early Christianity*³⁹ in 2005 with over seventy notes saying tersely, “Source unidentified.” However, Douglas F. Salmon, working on his own initiative, has located over 60 percent of those sources.⁴⁰ To reiterate, Nibley does not fake his sources.

This brings me back to the question posed on the FAIR Web site: “I’ve heard that Hugh Nibley really just faked or distorted most of his footnotes. Is there any truth to this?” The summary response given here says: “There is no question but that Hugh Nibley was an absolutely brilliant scholar. He was also very creative and sometimes overaggressive in his use of sources, and sometimes he was wrong about things, as are all scholars and indeed all human beings. But the notion that he just made up his footnotes is simply ridiculous.”⁴¹ The full response includes quotations from a source checker (anonymous), Boyd J. Petersen (Nibley’s son-in-law and biographer), Kent P. Jackson (who offered a less-than-positive critique of volume 1 of the Collected Works), and John Gee (who,

along with Stephen Ricks, “has probably checked as many or more of Nibley’s footnotes than anyone alive”). Gee’s conclusion is that “the vast majority of his footnotes are correct and that only a few are questioned; even fewer would be seen as questionable. . . . Those of us checking footnotes spent more of our time dealing with problems (a correct footnote takes only a minute or so to check, while fixing a problem may take hours), and that makes us inclined to vastly overestimate the number of problems.”⁴²

Charge of Misrepresentation

The grievance that Nibley misrepresented his sources or took things out of context must be examined.⁴³ Because of Nibley’s wide background reading, I believe that he grasped the big picture and could interpret things in ways that unsettled some of his readers who may have been unaware of the context in which he wrote. Again, Tredway renders an opinion:

It seems a bit ironic to me that they would accuse Nibley of taking things out of context when in many cases such a context did not even exist when he wrote them. Conversely, having said that, I am also not so sure that those so-called scraps of ideas that seem to be found all over the world are in fact not related. I think it remains to be seen just how related they turn out to be. We are constantly finding new connections that we did not know existed yesterday and if Nibley had any gift at all it was an uncanny ability to see connections or trends where most saw nothing but chaos.⁴⁴

Don Norton, who has edited much of Nibley’s writings, questions whether Huggins recognizes a proportion between what Nibley got wrong versus what he got right:

Huggins notes what he thinks are liberties with sources but fails to acknowledge where and how overwhelmingly often Nibley was right. He glibly sets up some sweeping (and very questionable) allegations, offers a few examples, and then alleges these are but a drop in the bucket to Nibley’s offenses. Few scholars could survive such shabby treatment, certainly not Huggins himself.⁴⁵

Michael Rhodes, who was the coauthor of Nibley's *One Eternal Round* manuscript for publication, echoes Norton's thoughts: "My experience in checking on thousands of Nibley's footnotes is that more than 90 percent of the time he is completely accurate. In the remaining cases, for the most part, there is some trivial discrepancy. In rare cases, he does get it wrong. He was, after all, human like the rest of us and could make mistakes. What is impressive is that his mistakes are so few."⁴⁶

Glen Cooper, one of the Collected Workers, describes his experience in checking Nibley's notes:

I have had extensive experience checking Nibley's footnote references in the Graeco-Roman classics and church fathers. . . .

I never found anything that indicated less than integrity on Hugh's part in reporting others' work, or in attributing sources. In fact, I was always impressed by his sincerity in his use of sources, as well as the strength and conviction of his testimony of the gospel and church. . . . If he had a fault as a scholar, perhaps it was haste and impatience. He was the genius with the vision; the work of other scholars had to be accounted for—that is the scholar's responsibility after all.⁴⁷

(Mis)translations

Huggins contends that Nibley manipulates translations to his own needs, adding things that don't exist in the Greek⁴⁸ or creating translations that differ from those of other experts. In his article, Huggins focuses on translations of early Christian documents, which approach makes sense, since that is his field of expertise.⁴⁹ Nibley's reading and writings, however, extend over a much wider range than this narrow area. Evangelical scholars Carl Mosser and Paul Owen concede that

whatever one may think about Nibley's conclusions, the breadth of learning displayed in these lectures [that ultimately appeared in *The World and the Prophets*,⁵⁰ CWHN 3] is intimidating. In them he discusses hundreds of texts from Papias, Clement, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius, Augustine, and Chrysostom (among others). In classic Nibley style, all references are personally

translated from Greek and Latin originals; rarely are translations listed for modern German, French, or Italian works.⁵¹

Huggins, in developing his case against Nibley's interpretations, always seems to cite the translations of others in comparison to Nibley's and never seems confident enough to translate the primary sources himself.⁵² In defending himself and his translation of the Bible, Martin Luther puts things in perspective:

Yet why should I be concerned about their ranting and raving? I will not stop them from translating as they want. But I too shall translate, not as they please but as I please. And whoever does not like it can just ignore it and keep his criticism to himself, for I will neither look at nor listen to it. They do not have to answer for my translation or bear any responsibility for it.⁵³

So when Huggins turns to a consensus of experts, does that establish a claim, or is it possible that "Nibley actually got it right in contradiction to all the experts"?⁵⁴ Moulton relates an experience in checking one of Nibley's translations:

I will say that in the one instance in which I had the responsibility to check a translation in a language in which I had personal expertise (Spanish)—a language, moreover, that Nibley had little experience with—I was surprised by his translation. I began by consulting the original and making my own translation, then compared what I had come up with against Nibley's. They were wildly different. But as I went back through it carefully, it quickly became apparent that Nibley's understanding of Spanish nuance (based, I assume, on his command of Latin) far exceeded my own, and his translation, while unconventional, was far superior to my own, capturing far more accurately both the tone and the meaning of the original. From my perspective, Nibley's skills in translation were nothing short of prodigious.⁵⁵

In addition to the possibility that Nibley was a genius with languages, let's examine some additional potential reasons Nibley's translations may differ from those of others.

- Nibley was using a more ancient and therefore more accurate text to translate from.

- Nibley's wide reading and understanding of the entire milieu gave him a better understanding of how the passage should be translated, but this is not common knowledge (broader hermeneutics).
- Nibley had a better grasp of English than other translators did.⁵⁶
- Nibley did not feel bound by some of the rules that some translators use that often result in stilted translations.
- Nibley was careless in his placement of quotation marks on his note cards.
- Nibley was not competent in Greek or Hebrew (or any of the other languages he translated).⁵⁷

Some of these ideas are more plausible than others. I am willing to grant all but the last option, but given that Nibley was able to quote passages at length (from memory) in the original language and then translate on the fly, one becomes convinced that he was indeed very competent in these languages and was brilliant in decoding what the author meant. Kristian Heal, a Syriac expert, comments on Nibley's unique translation of the first line of the *Hymn of the Pearl* as "In my first primeval childhood."⁵⁸

The first line of the *Hymn of the Pearl/the Soul* is rendered by the two earliest translators, William Wright (1871) and A. A. Bevan (1897), as "When I was a little child." This is an accurate translation of the Syriac, though "young child" may be better since the Syriac seems to suggest the innocence and simplicity of the child.

Nibley's rendering is obviously highly evocative for Latter-day Saints⁵⁹ and casts the hymn squarely as an allegory of pre-mortal and mortal life. I would characterize it as an elegant, poetic, but thoroughly tendentious translation that seeks to reinforce his interpretation of the poem as a whole. I have no doubt that Nibley understood the text. To my mind, it would have been desirable to indicate the more literal rendering in a footnote.⁶⁰

Obviously, Nibley's style of translation is not necessarily literal.⁶¹ Here is his own description of the process of translation:

You translate with the book closed. You decide exactly what the original writer had in mind. Unless you know, don't leave his

text; stay with him until you decide you know what he means. Then close the book—never translate with it open—and put down in your *own* words what you think the author had in mind, what you have gotten from the text. No two people are going to get the same thing.⁶²

In this same article, he also says that “the translation is a commentary—what the translator thinks the writer had in mind.” He explains that “every word is a password. Not only is the text loaded, every word is loaded, and every translation is an interpretation. It is a paradox.”⁶³ So whatever the explanation for the differences in translation between Nibley and the commentators, did his “mis-translations” (as described and identified by Huggins) send Nibley’s arguments and conclusions so far afield that they lost all validity? How has his work stood the test of time? Norton explores Nibley’s translations further:

Nibley did have two major and often unappreciated things going for him. First, he simply knew so much! Thus, in the interest of space, he often translated or cited sources in a context rarely available to the mostly pedestrian (and usually far *more* “prejudiced”) scholarly community. For example, when he cited an early church father, it was in the context of his having read *all* the early church fathers, in their original languages. . . . He also remained mute on countless views and doctrines—you get only a hint here and there of all he knew. His knowledge was largely private, the result of his passion to satisfy his own personal curiosity, as he used to often say.

Second, he had a reliable frame of reference: the restored gospel and access to the Spirit.⁶⁴

I find Norton’s last suggestion very intriguing. Richard Lloyd Anderson, in an examination of the Olivet Prophecy and Joseph Smith’s translation of Matthew 24 in the Pearl of Great Price, concluded that Joseph Smith did not work with any original language to prepare his “translation.” “In fact, Greek variant readings simply do not exist for most changes made, whether here or elsewhere in the Inspired Version. Such evidence proves that Joseph Smith worked on the level of meaning and doctrinal harmonization, not narrow textual precision. . . . This suggests that the Prophet used his basic document . . . as a point of departure instead of a translation

guide. . . . One may label this as ‘translation’ only in the broadest sense.”⁶⁵ Without going so far as to grant prophethood to Nibley, it does not seem impossible or implausible that he could have relied on the Spirit to aid in his “translation” efforts. Luther, referring to his own translation of the Bible into the language of the people, proclaimed: “Ah, translating is not everyone’s skill as some mad saints imagine. It requires a right, devout, honest, sincere, God-fearing, Christian, trained, educated, and experienced heart”—in other words, a person cognizant of and sensitive to the Spirit (in fact, he holds “that no false Christian or sectarian spirit can be a good translator”).⁶⁶

As I conclude my thoughts on the value and veracity of Nibley’s footnotes, I wish to quote Norton once more, who reminds us of Nibley’s opinions of his own writing:

I’ve never done intensive comparison of what Nibley cited from sources and what the sources actually said. I guess I’ve just had implicit faith that Nibley was being as responsible as humanly possible. I am aware that he often quoted from memory (especially the scriptures) and was not always precise in writing down the exact wording and page numbers of sources, though virtually always the right meaning. Over the years, I’ve talked to many who *have* done source checking, and they say they have rarely found Nibley taking any liberty with a source. Quite the contrary. Nibley would be the first to admit to human error on his part, but his breadth of learning and sheer genius make such shortcomings seem insignificant. I don’t think his critics have much of an idea of the competence he brought to his work—but his scholarly peers were certainly overwhelmed by his knowledge and abilities.⁶⁷

Scholars have recognized that Nibley was unique in his preparation and his knowledge. Mosser and Owen call him the “father of Mormon scholarly apologetics,” as they describe his “seemingly endless stream of books and articles covering a vast array of subject matter. Whether writing on Patristics, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Apocrypha, the culture of the Ancient Near East, or Mormonism, he demonstrates an impressive command of the original languages, primary texts, and secondary literature.”⁶⁸ They go on to recognize that “the few evangelicals who are aware of Hugh Nibley

often dismiss him as a fraud or pseudo-scholar”; Mosser and Owen recommend that those who would dismiss his writings should pay heed to Truman Madsen’s warning: “Ill-wishing critics have suspected over the years that Nibley is wrenching his sources, hiding behind his footnotes, and reading into antique languages what no responsible scholar would ever read out. Unfortunately, few have the tools to do the checking.”⁶⁹ Mosser and Owen continue in the same vein:

No doubt there are flaws in Nibley’s work, but most counter-cultists do not have the tools to uncover them. Few have tried. . . . Whatever flaws may exist in his methodology, Nibley is a scholar of high caliber. Many of his more important essays first appeared in academic journals. . . . Nibley has also received praise from non-LDS scholars such as Jacob Neusner, James Charlesworth, Cyrus Gordon, Raphael Patai, and Jacob Milgrom.⁷⁰ The former dean of the Harvard Divinity School, George MacRae, once lamented while hearing him lecture, “It is obscene for a man to know that much!”⁷¹

Nibley on His Own Writings and Publication in General

Here I quote some gems, in chronological order, from the grand master himself about the things he has written:

I refuse to be held responsible for anything I wrote more than three years ago. For heaven’s sake, I hope we are moving forward here. After all, the implication that one mistake and it is all over with—how flattering to think in forty years I have not made one slip and I am still in business! I would say about four-fifths of everything I put down has changed, of course. That is the whole idea; this is an ongoing process.⁷²

It may seem churlish to cite sources to which the reader has no access, but the purpose of such is to silence critics who are eager to call everything into question, and rightly so. If they want to run the stuff down they are cordially invited to do so—that is part of the game.⁷³

What I am working on now is far more interesting than what has gone before. And so I tend to let all the rest of it go. What is worth saving will probably be saved, but that can't be very much, and in this world it is vain to pin one's hopes on the survival of anything for long. What belongs to the eternities will not be lost; the rest does not interest me very much.⁷⁴

Going back over things I wrote years ago, in taking an inventory of the garage, I find that some of it is not so bad, and that time has been very kind to some of my more ambitious articles. Wherefore, I am now aspiring to produce one thing which at least will not be very, very bad. For this, I look to the future, and as far as I am concerned, the past stuff must by its very nature be inferior, since it came forth in my perpetual *jāhiliyyah* ("time of ignorance").⁷⁵

I am ashamed to admit how ignorant I was when I got two doctorate degrees—one, you might know, is honorary—but if you are alert in the ways of scholarship you should know that people are to be judged only by what they produce, and that is to be judged not by the credentials of the author but by your own estimate of what he says. My efforts are heavily loaded with footnotes to take the heat off me and shunt the reader to the sources he should consult. For in the field of ancient history I regret to say I was not privileged to be present at any of the events recorded—that is why I must cravenly refer the reader to others.⁷⁶

My long delay in answering you is due to the months of soul-searching to determine, if I could, why on earth anybody would want to hear from me. I am a crashing bore, and that is why I plaster everything I write so heavily with footnotes, turning the conversation over to more interesting people.⁷⁷

At one juncture in his paper, Huggins mentions that although "his literary output was enormous, Hugh Nibley seldom published in scholarly journals outside Utah, and even less in ones dedicated to the study of ancient Judaism, Christianity, and the Bible."⁷⁸ He conjectures that this may partially be a result of Nibley's "propensity for misquotation" (p. 16). Fortunately, on Nibley's choice of where to publish we can turn to his own explanation:

But to be taken seriously one must publish, and I soon found that publishing in the journals is as easy and mechanical as getting grades: I sent out articles to a wide variety of prestigious journals, and they were all printed. So I lost interest. What those people were after is not what I was after. Above all, I could see no point to going on through the years marshalling an ever-lengthening array of titles to stand at attention some day at the foot of an obituary. That is what they were all working for, and they were welcome to it. But there were hints I could not ignore and answers I must seek for my own peace of mind.⁷⁹

Ironically, the first rejection of a piece for publication came from the church-published periodical *The Instructor*. Nibley must have been most astonished that the editor, Lorin F. Wheelwright, had the audacity to reject a solicited article on “Archaeology and Our Religion” for a series entitled “I Believe.”⁸⁰ Since Nibley believed that “archaeological evidences were a particularly shaky form of proof,” he unexpectedly “delineated the overall weaknesses of archaeology as a science.”⁸¹ Upon receiving the rejection, Nibley wrote a rather scathing five-page response in which he said that he, of course, was “beyond all doubt the world’s foremost authority” on what he believed.⁸²

This last, and quite lengthy, quotation is Nibley’s description of what is essential in writing and publishing in graduate school. Here he proposes the ideal circumstances of preparing a paper for publication.

Question: You have said that a paper must be first of all authentic. What do you mean by that?

Answer: Two things—but they are really the same: it must be accurate, and it must be complete. Without the highest standards of accuracy, even the most ingenious and learned study may be not only useless—since the work will have to be done all over again—but actually pernicious, since it will lead the unwary astray.

Question: But isn’t perfect accuracy impossible?

Answer: Yes, slips can be detected in the most careful work, but they are not characteristic of such work—they are recognizably slips. It is when inaccuracy is due to lack of familiarity with one’s subject, usually when one has bitten off more than

one can chew, sliding over into related areas with which one has only limited acquaintance, that inaccuracy becomes disastrous. Accuracy is actually a much rarer quality than we think. It requires patient and meticulous covering of *all* the ground. That is the sort of drudgery with which the “grand old man” or the “authority” in his field is liable to have diminishing patience with over the years, and with which the young student eager for success and recognition may have no patience at all. The temptation to cheat is very great—who is going to go to all the trouble of looking up one’s footnotes? Not even the reviewers. Inaccurate documentation may go undiscovered for years. Being accurate requires doing a thoroughly thorough job. That is why we say that accuracy and completeness are really the same thing in research.

Question: If there is no such thing as perfect accuracy, how complete is complete?

Answer: More complete than you think: where any information at all is lacking, no conclusions can ever be trusted; how often has just one bit of evidence changed the whole picture? No stone can be left unturned; since there is no way of knowing what an unexamined source might contain, to leave any source unexamined is to ignore material that may, and often does, refute one’s entire thesis.

Question: Do you mean that an ordinary student must examine *every* piece of evidence on a subject?

Answer: Yes. Not to use all available evidence is to defeat the whole purpose of research, which is to add to the fund of existing knowledge. How can you add to it if you don’t know what is already there and what is missing? No future progress is possible where past progress is ignored. What is the advantage of centuries of writing and research that others have put into my subject if I intend to consider only ten percent of it? By what right do I presume to ask others to give my work the respectful attention which I deny to theirs? We cannot honestly add a word to historical writing until we know what needs to be added.

Question: Do you mean that an ordinary student must examine every source in every library in the world before he considers his work done?

Answer: Exactly. I grant you it isn’t easy (there is no such thing as an ordinary student, by the way); in the past, it has been all but impossible, and for that reason real scholars were

few and far between. But today the whole structure of university research activity is based on the assumption that complete research is possible. . . .

Question: Should ten, twenty, or thirty references be required for a term paper?

Answer: I have heard that question before at the BYU and hardly believed my ears. On the old Library Committee we used to discuss by the hour how many titles would be necessary for the library of a college with five thousand, ten thousand, or fifteen thousand students. It would make as much sense to ask how many volumes of an encyclopedia are needed by a small school, a middle-sized school, or a large school, or how many ingredients should go into a one-pound, a two-pound, or a three-pound pudding or cake. The answer is always the same: no matter how *much* of a thing you want to make, you must always put into it *all* the ingredients its nature requires. For a given paper one must have *all* the references necessary for an honest presentation—whether that means two or two hundred is entirely beside the point. . . .

Question: Isn't it both exhausting and discouraging to try to buck the fierce competition in the scholarly journals?

Answer: There is no competition! The press is large and hungry—overexpanded, in fact, and the constant complaint of editors is that they almost never get anything that is informed, original, and significant. The editors are pathetically eager to welcome any good material from any source.⁸³

Based on Nibley's recommendations, it is likely that few publications meet these rigorous standards. Nibley was one of the few scholars who could come close to claiming that he had covered "*all* the ground." His incessant and insatiable drive to read and to learn allowed him to acknowledge that some of what he wrote should be rejected, changed, or built upon. He was always ready to confess shortcomings, but he never lost the thrill of gaining and sharing new insights. I have always pictured him in the hereafter meeting with Abraham or some other prophet or scholar in earnest conversation: "Tell me how things really were when you were on the earth," "Oh, so that's what really happened," or "That principle now makes perfect sense." He would then promptly debunk, in typical fashion, all he had written in mortality. I submit, however, that inasmuch as his writings continue to influence people for good he

has not written in vain and that any existing errors in his corpus do not negate the overall good he has done and continues to do. Nibley, I propose, has built “upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God.” He realized, along with Helaman, “that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall” (Helaman 5:12).⁸⁴

Going beyond the technical aspects of editing Nibley’s materials, my husband and I often had personal experiences with Hugh and Phyllis Nibley that gave us glimpses into his eccentricities and genius.

Speaking Engagement

In November of 1988 Stephen and I had the opportunity of driving Hugh and Phyllis Nibley to Salt Lake City for one of a series of lectures he was giving there. “When Stephen talked with Phyllis to arrange a time to leave Provo, she sounded a little uncertain when he suggested a good, early time. Later Hugh called and talked to me and said that the last thing he wanted was to be there early. We had to chuckle and decided to leave later. Hugh spoke for about one and a half hours on the atonement, something he had been preparing for the last month. It was a marvelous compilation of thoughts and insights. . . . Nibley was much more expansive on the way home as he was able to relax.”⁸⁵

Nibley Festschrift

The year 1990, when Nibley turned 80, marked the completion of a two-volume Festschrift in his honor—*By Study and Also by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*.⁸⁶ John Lundquist and Stephen Ricks were the scholarly editors of these volumes. In September a dinner was held to commemorate the completion of the volumes:

Perhaps two-thirds of the contributors were in attendance as well as several administrators and Neal Maxwell. The

first humorous moment of the evening came when Daniel [Peterson] was giving the opening prayer and the blessing on the food. As he was going back to his seat, Brother Nibley muttered, "You didn't bless the food." So, in great embarrassment, Daniel (who claimed he had) returned to the podium to say a few words and bless the food.

After a lovely dinner . . . , Stephen made introductions for those in attendance. His mistake there consisted of forgetting to mention Daniel as one of the contributors, so he made a joke out of it by saying that if Daniel could forget to bless the food then he could forget to mention Daniel.

Then John Lundquist made some very appropriate comments about all those who had been influenced by Nibley and how honored Cyrus Gordon and Raphael Patai were to have been asked to contribute something toward the festschrift. John stressed that the festschrift was in the nature of a gift to Nibley for all he has done for others. . . .

Hugh then had a chance to respond, which he did in a typical rambling fashion. He related some hilarious experiences about a granddaughter who tried to go into a dorm cafeteria with long pants on but was turned away. When she returned in the shortest skirt she could find, there was no question about letting her in.

Nibley had lost his faculty card. He went to the Lost and Found to try to retrieve it. Although he was there in person, they wanted further ID before they would return it to him.

And the one which seemed the funniest to me was when Phyllis was in the Bookstore trying to cash a check. She didn't have her driver license with her and asked if they would accept her temple recommend for identification. A few minutes later, the person returned and said, "I'm sorry, Sister Nibley, but we can't accept your recommend. It expired a week ago."

Woven into Nibley's words was his overpowering testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon and the importance of the gospel in his life. It was really very touching and beautiful.⁸⁷

What is evident to me from the number of individuals who contributed to this Festschrift is that Nibley was widely admired in scholarly circles.

Volume 10: The Ancient State

Let's turn to volume 10 of the Collected Works: *The Ancient State*.⁸⁸ It was our custom to give galleys of an upcoming book to Hugh for his final approval. We weren't always sure how carefully he looked

at them, but, when he did, he made sure we knew about it. When Hugh was ready to return the galleys for this book, Stephen reported that

Hugh wanted to trash half the book, including the Sophic and Mantic portion and the book reviews. Stephen relented on the book reviews and “Genesis of the Written Word” [which eventually found their way into subsequent volumes]⁸⁹ but convinced him to keep the Sophic and Mantic materials. He wanted the “Paths That Stray” part to be an addendum so people didn’t think it was a serious writing effort. He wanted them to recognize it for what it is—a bunch of notecards flung in the reader’s face.⁹⁰

Hugh often complained to us that no one would want to read his books that we were so insistent on publishing.

Nibley and Book Titles

Whenever it was time to come up with a title for the various volumes, Nibley was creative and came up with numerous possibilities. Early titles for *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass* included *Defending the Kingdom* and *The Gossip Mill*.

Sometimes Nibley cared very much about a title. Truman Madsen relates a telling story about the title of a book published by the BYU Religious Studies Center:

This is the title that we ultimately came up with for this book [*Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless*⁹¹], but have you heard the story on what the original title was? I thought it would please him. It was going to be called *The Nibley Legacy*. And I had it all mocked up, and I invited him to my house. I had it on the coffee table. And he comes up with Phyllis, and I say, “There’s the book!” And I thought it was like announcing it with trumpets and he would jump for joy, and he just said, “Oh no, you can’t do that! I don’t like it! It won’t do!” I said, “Well, why not?” “Well, for one thing it sounds like I’m dead and gone, and I’m not, and for another thing, *Legacy, Legacy*, what does that mean?” So I finally said, “Well, I’ll call you tomorrow and maybe we can brainstorm.” In the meantime, I checked, and when I called him I thought I had him. I said, “Hugh, it’s on the spine, it’s on the cover, it’s on the jacket, and it’s on every

page of the galleys. And if we change it now it will cost eleven hundred dollars.” I thought he’d say, “Okay, go ahead.” You know what he said? It’s typical Nibley: “Change it and take it out of my royalties.” Then I gasped, and I said, “Hugh, do you care that much about a title?” He said, “No, I care that little about royalties!”⁹²

After Nibley’s death we sometimes struggled to come up with just the right title for some volumes, specifically for volume 18. Nibley was no longer around to shower an embarrassment of riches on us. Proposals from both our office and Deseret Book included: *A Guided Tour of the Book of Abraham*, *The Book of Abraham—the Big Picture* (which was temporarily the top title), *Preliminary Studies of the Book of Abraham*, and *Taking the Book of Abraham Seriously*. The next round went to *The Book of Abraham: Getting Ready to Begin* then *An Approach to the Book of Abraham: Getting Ready to Begin*. The final title was simply *An Approach to the Book of Abraham*.⁹³

Fortunately for us, volume 19 had long and appropriately been known and anticipated as *One Eternal Round*, so that decision was simple.

Volume 12: Temple and Cosmos

I took a copy of galleys for *Temple and Cosmos* to “the Nibleys and enjoyed a few pleasant moments with them. While we were talking, Phyllis turned to Hugh and noticed the dreadful tie he was wearing—narrow and almost chewed up at the end—and said, ‘Why are you wearing that tie? I thought I threw it out a long time ago.’ ‘I found it this morning [in the Deseret Industries bag]. Since I knew I wasn’t going to be seeing anyone, I didn’t want to waste one of my good ties.’ We had a good chuckle about that.”⁹⁴ We always enjoyed our visits with Hugh and Phyllis and tried not to overstay our welcome.

Hugh actually approved most of the contents for *Temple and Cosmos* with the exception of one article, “Notes on Ancient Ordinances.” I was actually pleased about that because I felt that it wasn’t a finished piece either.⁹⁵

Volumes 14 and 16: New Editions of *Abraham in Egypt* and *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*

It took a bit of convincing for Nibley to give us permission to republish some of his earlier Egyptian books. We felt that newer, better editions of *Abraham in Egypt* and *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri* would better lead into his ultimate Egyptian work, *One Eternal Round*. In 1993 we did finally receive his approval to republish *Abraham in Egypt*,⁹⁶ which was an exciting step forward. By the time we finished, however, he had added quite a bit of new material from his “New Look at the Pearl of Great Price” *Improvement Era* series,⁹⁷ and it was really a new edition.

Completing the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley

As I worked on various volumes in the Collected Works, it was not unusual for me, often with Stephen, to visit the Nibleys every month or so to ask him to give a lecture or write a paper, to pass on galleys or contracts, to pick up proofs, and so forth. At one point,

I called the Nibleys . . . to see if I could visit them to talk about the new mini-series we were planning to do. Brother Nibley answered the telephone. I said, “This is Shirley Ricks, and I would like to know if I could visit with you and Phyllis.” He replied, “No, I’m busy. I don’t think I’ll have time.” I said, “Oh, are you working against a deadline?” And he said, “Yes.” “And what are you working on?” “Oh, the Abraham book.” “Oh, yes, Brother Nibley, I’ve heard of that. We’re looking forward to getting that from you. Well, if today won’t work, would tomorrow be a possibility?” “No, every day is worse than the last. Just talk to Phyllis. You can visit with Phyllis. I’m late; I’ve got to get to the office.” I could tell a brush-off when I got one. However, about an hour later, Pat Ward from the Ancient Studies office called and said Brother Nibley would like to talk with me. He basically apologized and said he thought I was Judy Ricks or someone else. Because he gets so many calls from people wanting to speak with him (5 or 6 a day), he just has to shut them off. At some point after our earlier conversation he must have realized it was I who had called, so he sheepishly said, “Of course, you can visit with me and Phyllis. What time would you like to come?” I was very amused and just rocked with laughter after I hung up the phone.⁹⁸

In the spring of 2000, Jerry Bradford, Jack Welch, Stephen, and I met to move forward on the remaining Collected Works. We needed to determine what was not yet published that should be and how the material should be organized into volumes.⁹⁹ This was the beginning of the last big push to get the series completed. Around this time, we also worked on creating a mini-series with Nibley favorites—the only volume that actually came out in this series was a reprint of *When the Lights Went Out: Three Studies on the Ancient Apostasy*.¹⁰⁰ Again in 2006 we met to reevaluate the remaining materials.¹⁰¹ Our goal became the completion of the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley by the hundredth anniversary of his birth on March 27, 2010.

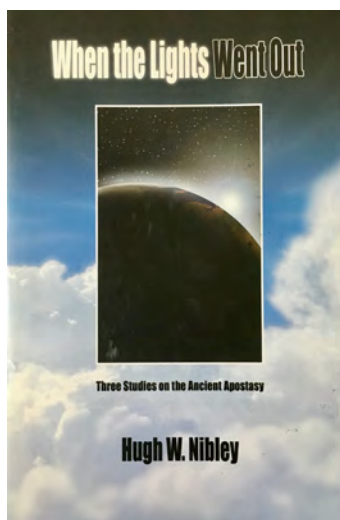


Figure 4. "Nibley favorites."¹¹⁸

Volume 19: One Eternal Round

As early as October 1991, Nibley gave us some materials from his forthcoming book, *One Eternal Round*. We just filed them, as we figured he was still working on them. Again in 1999, he said that he wanted to put his book out piecemeal as separate papers.¹⁰² Our fear, of course, was that he wouldn't be able to give up chapters and really be through with them.

In 2001, in the spring, Brother Nibley came to visit me in my office and indicated that his book [*One Eternal Round*] was in three parts—historical and literary, geometrical, and the world of Abraham. Again he assured me that he would like us to start working on the geometry materials to get that ready to publish.¹⁰³ The problem was that his ideas hadn't yet been fully committed to paper. He had tinkered with numerous geometric analyses of Facsimile 2, but he hadn't yet written a lot of text to support it.

I also had a chat with Pat Ward, the secretary in the Ancient Studies office, and we tried to concoct a plan to get his book away from him in a piecemeal fashion.¹⁰⁴ We were rather reluctant to

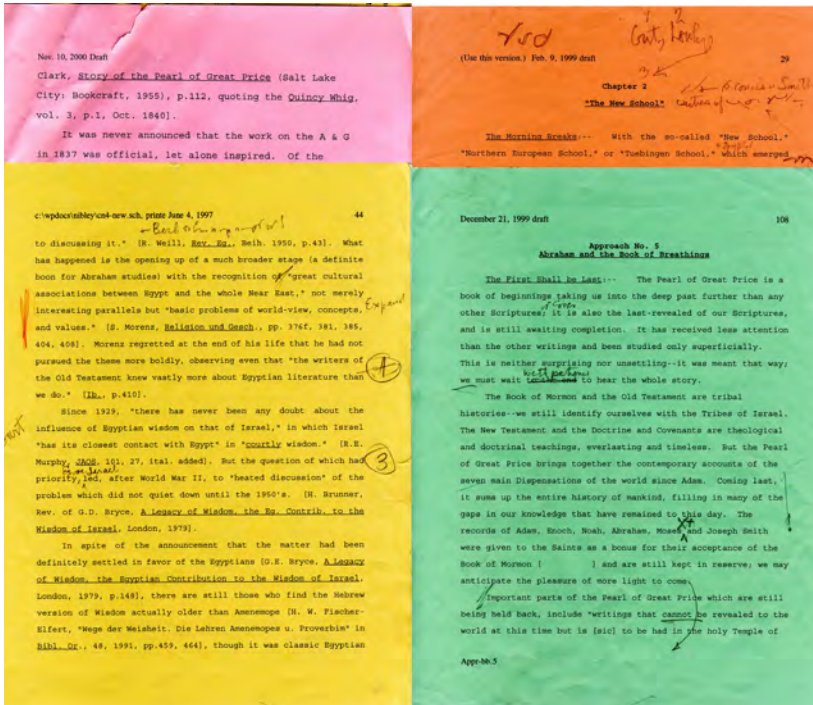


Figure 5. "In an attempt to get him to commit to one version, she would gently suggest that she would print all the current files out on green paper (or salmon, blue, or pink)."¹¹⁹

insist that he turn over the entire manuscript because we were convinced that work on this volume was keeping him alive. Pat, who was calm and peaceful and took Nibley's eccentricities in stride, prepared computer files from Nibley's dictation. She faithfully made every change Nibley requested and saved backups of all the old files. In an attempt to get him to commit to one version, she would gently suggest that she would print all the current files out on green paper (or salmon, blue, or pink). The idea was for him to ignore every other scrap of paper. However, Nibley couldn't bring himself to do that and would often come in with a different color of paper and tell her this part simply must be reinstated or deleted or changed. Pat's patience with Nibley deserves a medal.

It was during this period that serious work on a new edition of *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri* was going on.¹⁰⁵ Without a doubt, this was the most challenging volume I have ever edited in

terms of scope, content, format, and number of notes (it had over four thousand footnotes). John Gee's source-checking experience on earlier Collected Works volumes was invaluable—he too knew the sources inside out and had many of them in his office.

In 2002, Nibley instituted some visits in his home from some of us to work on his book. Occasionally he wanted us to record what he said, or he just talked. He had become pretty rambling by then. On one of my visits to the Nibley home, Hugh turned over some folders to me.

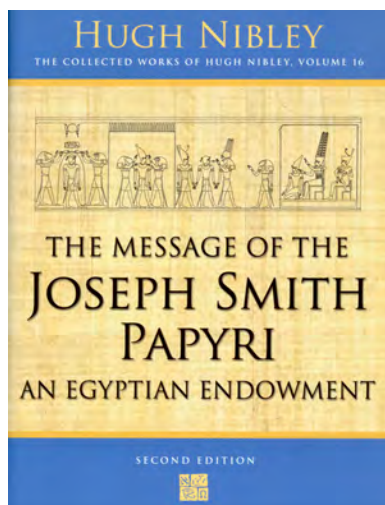


Figure 6. A second edition.¹²⁰

For some reason, he decided it was time to give me a tour of the inner sanctum—the four upstairs bedrooms. We passed through the kitchen, through a storage room, and up the back stairs to the bedrooms. He had piles of papers in every conceivable location—the beds, the tables, the floors, etc. This is going to be some task to try to get them put into a book! I gently asked him if it would be helpful if we sent someone to help file his papers. He quickly shook his head and declined, saying, “No, I don’t think so.” I took that to mean that he didn’t want anyone meddling with his “filing system,” whatever that may be.¹⁰⁶

About three months later, Brent Hall, John Gee, Michael Rhodes, Pat Ward, Vanessa Hansen, and I were in the Nibley home by his invitation. He started rattling off ideas about the geometry of Facsimile 2 and explained how various shapes can be superimposed on the hypocephalus. I asked him if he had written down this information, and he replied “Not all of it. That’s why you are here.” I’m not sure how it came about, but somehow we were headed upstairs to take his note cards, papers, and other material from the four bedrooms.



Figure 7. *What is the purpose of everything? “He paused, and replied, ‘Joy.’”¹²¹*

Sometime during our conversation, Brother Nibley said he didn’t sleep a wink last night and that he knew where he was going and what the purpose of everything was. Brent ventured to ask, “So, Brother Nibley, can you share with us what that purpose is?” He paused, and replied, “Joy.” He then went on to explain that the glory of God is intelligence, that we have great intelligence when we pass on, that intelligence allows us to solve problems, which, in turn, brings us joy. He told us not to worry a minute about what was going to happen after this life. He is actually looking forward to it. He said at one point, “I could go this evening, or even tomorrow.” He sounded very pleased with the prospect.

So I guess whatever happened to him last night is softening his heart to allow us to take this book (or what will eventually become a book) from his house and his hands. We worked methodically through the four bedrooms to put the piles of papers in folders and boxes in an organized fashion. We also took dozens of shoeboxes filled with note cards. There was so much dust around that several of us started sneezing. We pretty much cleaned things out. . . .

I am very concerned, however, that it will be months and years before we can make heads or tails of the material he has given us. It will require someone’s careful attention and time to

sort through to find the kernels. I don't have any time to devote to this project this year, but we don't know how much time Brother Nibley has left to advise us on what he really wants.¹⁰⁷

In 2003 and 2004, Nibley became increasingly confined to his home and eventually to a hospital bed in his living room, but we continued our visits. On the afternoon of February 23, 2005, John Gee, Jack Welch, Michael Rhodes, Brad Kramer, Tom Nibley, Boyd Petersen, Phyllis Nibley, and I met in the living room of the Nibley home. Nibley was present in body, although he dozed the entire time. We discussed the status and lack of progress on *One Eternal Round*. I think we were all overwhelmed at the magnitude of the project. We finally concluded that we needed an outline of the numerous versions of the existing electronic files and that only a co-author could pull this volume together.¹⁰⁸

Michael Rhodes spent an agonizing night until he finally knew he had to complete this book for Hugh. He called me the next morning to let me know of his decision. Shortly thereafter we learned that Hugh had passed away that morning—perhaps he knew he could relax and let go of his book and that it would get completed and published.¹⁰⁹

From that time, Mike took charge of the numerous electronic files and spent months and years to bring the approximately sixteen hundred pages down to a manageable six hundred. It fell to Mike to reduce duplicate material and select the best versions. He organized and ordered the chapters and prepared a table of contents. In early 2009 Mike turned over his files for *One Eternal Round* to me.¹¹⁰ The biggest treat for me as an editor was that most of the source checking had been done by Mike and a team of source checkers. In comparison to early source-checking efforts, the availability of electronic sources greatly simplified the process.

I then went over the manuscripts to format them and create a uniform style throughout. I still found some duplication that needed to be removed, and Michael Lyon and I worked and reworked a list of illustrations to enhance the book. Often, when I would regretfully tell Michael we couldn't use one more picture, he would reply, "Well, it will be in my copy." So if you are interested in the fully illustrated editions of the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, you'll have to speak with Michael.

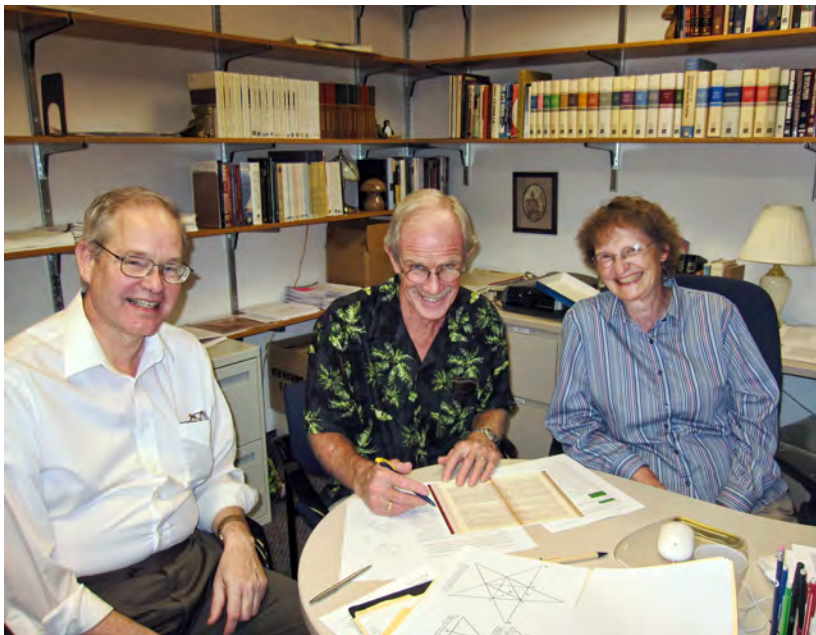


Figure 8. Michael Lyon, Michael Rhodes, and Shirley Ricks consult on the text for One Eternal Round, 2009.¹²²

Nearing the end, Michael, Mike, and I met together to consult on that elusive geometry chapter. We finally had to delete some sections that weren't clear or illustrative of a point Nibley was trying to make.¹¹¹ When the chapters were fully edited and proofread, I passed them on for typesetting, which was capably handled by Jacob Rawlins and Alison Coutts. Usually at this stage, we would pass on a copy of the manuscript to Phyllis for her to read through, for she always found little things that would improve the book. She enjoyed performing that task. However, for this volume, she was recovering from surgery and couldn't concentrate much on the text. We were sorry not to fully involve her on Hugh's magnum opus.

After the typeset text was proofread and cleaned up, the next step was to insert the illustrations and captions to get a final pagination. And then the indexing process began in earnest. After spending several long days, Alison and I had marked the indexing terms, run the indexes, cleaned them up, and passed the electronic files of the volume to Deseret Book by early November 2009. However, the process stalled for a while in Salt Lake and wasn't ready to be

sent off for printing until January 21, 2010. Just the day before that deadline, I experienced a tender mercy. I had asked an intern

to work over the Nibley bibliography, especially adding the recent books that had not yet been included. She returned the file with the additions, and I thought I would just take a quick glance. As I did, I noticed that she had put John Gee's name as the editor on *One Eternal Round*. I thought that was a bit strange and sent back an email message to her to tell her that he was not the editor but Michael Rhodes was the coauthor. She eventually wrote back to let me know that John Gee's name was listed on the title page. I sat bolt upright in my office chair, went over to the final proofs, and checked the title page. Sure enough, his name was listed! I headed immediately to Alison's office, and we knew we had to get to Deseret Book right away. I checked the file I had sent up for the front matter, and my file was correct, so I surmise that the typesetter for the front matter had just used the title page for the previous book and made a couple of changes without paying attention to my text. Talk about getting in under the wire—the book goes to be printed tomorrow.¹¹²

In the last few weeks, we also had to finalize the cover design and text. The striped design itself was determined by precedence, but the covers of the volumes of the Collected Works were also coded by color. Early on in the process Jack Welch had worked out with Deseret Book a topical color scheme.

We were all grateful that *One Eternal Round*, volume 19 of the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, was out in time for his birthday anniversary on March 27, 2010. For several of the earlier volumes, we had gathered for a celebratory party when a book came off the press—those who had worked on the book would have pizza and root beer, ask Hugh to autograph their copies of the book, and otherwise enjoy an evening together.¹¹³ In honor of this last book in the series coming out several of us gathered at our home to celebrate.

On Testimony

I conclude here with words from Nibley himself. After all, why did he write so voluminously?



Figure 9. "I have a testimony of the gospel."¹²³

I have a testimony of the gospel which I wish to bear. Again, as Brigham Young says, because I say it's true doesn't make it true, does it? But I know it is, and I would recommend you to pursue a way of finding out. And there are ways in which you can come to a knowledge of the truth.

When is a thing proven? When you personally think it's so, and that's all you can do. . . . Then you have your testimony, and all you can do is bear your testimony and point to the evidence. That's *all* you can do. But you can't impose your testimony on another. And you can't make the other person see the evidence as you do. Things that just thrill me through and through in the Book of Mormon leave another person completely cold.

And the other way around, too. So we can't use evidence, and we can't say, I know this is true, therefore you'd better know it is true. But I know it is true, and I pray our Heavenly Father that we may all come to a knowledge of the truth, each in his own way.¹¹⁴

Shirley S. Ricks is a senior editor at Brigham Young University's Religious Studies Center. She was hired in 1989 as an editor at the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, which became the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship at BYU. Ricks received three degrees from Brigham Young University in home economics education (BS and MS) and family studies (PhD). Ricks has published articles in various Festschrift volumes, the Ensign, Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship, the FARMS Review, and the Encyclopedia of Mormonism. Her position as editor at FARMS and the Neal A. Maxwell Institute provided her the opportunity of editing several volumes in the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley and of serving as the first production editor for the FARMS Review of Books and the Journal of Book of Mormon Studies.

Notes

1. See Shirley S. Ricks, "A Sure Foundation," *FARMS Review* 20, no. 2 (2008): 253–91, a review of Ronald V. Huggins, "Hugh Nibley's Footnotes," *Salt Lake City Messenger* 110 (May 2008): 9–21. Some of the material for this paper also comes from a presentation, "Editing Hugh Nibley: From Manuscript to Book," I gave at a FAIR conference in August 2010.
2. "I found a few more answers to my questions and was particularly pleased to find the quoted phrase from the 1938 *Revue du Caire* that Nibley had cited Mayassis as citing from Drioton—it was just on a different page." Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, June 6, 2005.
3. Hugh Nibley, *Eloquent Witness: Nibley on Himself, Others, and the Temple* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 2008)
4. Jeffrey Needle, review of *Eloquent Witness: Nibley on Himself, Others, and the Temple*, www.ldsbooklovers.com/bookreview.asp?rid=199&bid=2298&pid=0.

5. See “Hugh Nibley/Footnotes,” at en.fairmormon.org/Hugh_Nibley:Footnotes.
6. See www.usfca.edu/org/mlj/submissions/index.html for *Maritime Law Journal* submissions.
7. Andy Guess, “Cite Check.”
8. Sandy Thatcher, director, Penn State University Press, July 8, 2008, at www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/07/08/citation.
9. I hesitate to begin naming names, for surely some will be left out, but some of the Collected Workers were Glen Cooper, James Fleugel (now deceased), John Gee, Fran Clark (Hafen), Andrew Hedges, Gary Keeley, Jill Keeley, Darrell Matthews, Daniel McKinlay, Janet McNeely, Brent McNeely, Tyler Moulton, Shirley Ricks, Stephen Ricks, Matthew Roper, Morgan Tanner, James Tredway, and John Welch. I should also mention here that Phyllis Nibley, Hugh’s wife, always read the manuscripts and made excellent suggestions before they were published.
10. John W. Welch, email message to author, August 11, 2008.
11. Hugh Nibley and Michael D. Rhodes, *One Eternal Round* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 2010).
12. Fran Clark (Hafen), journal entry, August 7, 1988, 1.
13. According to Glen Cooper, personal communication, October 8, 2008, 3, “James Tredway played a key role as the coordinating editor for a number of volumes for several years. The work would never have been finished without his bull-headed dedication to the project and his cantankerous determination.”
14. James V. Tredway, personal communication, August 11, 2008, 6–7.
15. Phyllis Nibley, personal conversation with Shirley Ricks, September 11, 2008.
16. Janet Carpenter (Hovorka), email message to author, October 16, 2008. She goes on to say: “You have to remember the amazing part of this is that it was pre-internet and pre-database. I remember Tyler Moulton and Andrew Hedges slogging for months through the *Journal of Discourses for Brother Brigham Challenges the Saints*. It wasn’t very long before you could just type a search on that into a database. But back then you couldn’t. And of course when Nibley wrote it, you couldn’t do anything of the sort. That is what is so amazing. Brother Nibley amassed and congealed the research. We had a tough time just following it.”
17. John Gee relates two amusing stories about the mistakes that editors have made with Nibley’s materials. “The first was the editors at the *Ensign* who, in dealing with Nibley’s piece ‘A Strange Thing in the Land,’ ran across reference to the book of *1 Jeu* and changed it to *1 Jew*. The other one is a typist who accidentally changed a word that she was unfamiliar with. Nibley stated that ‘there is no eschatology without protology,’ which was changed by the typist to ‘there is no eschatology without proctology’; this was amusingly corrupted further as ‘there

- is no scatology without proctology.” Gee, personal communication, October 3, 2008.
18. Hugh Nibley, *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass: The Art of Telling Tales about Joseph Smith and Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1991).
 19. According to Matthew Roper, “When I started checking the footnotes for *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass* it seemed that about half of the references were incorrect. Upon investigating, however, I found that in most cases the footnotes had either the correct page number with the wrong title or the correct title with the wrong page number. Before the updated volume was published, we had been able to correct all but about 2 percent of the references. This exercise, which I enjoyed very much, suggested to me that Nibley had read through the sources but had been in somewhat of a hurry. Having spent a lot of time reading and rereading and scouring the words of Ann Eliza, I gained a better appreciation for Nibley’s wit and humor as well as the patience of Brigham Young.”
 20. Tredway, personal communication, August 11, 2008, 7–8.
 21. Cooper discusses one of the rules the source checkers developed: “If we searched for a note or quotation and could not find it after a reasonable length of time, we agreed to give up and simply remove the quotation marks and the footnote. But in my experience this was rare. . . . With a bit of sleuthing, the correct reference could be found.” Cooper, personal communication, October 8, 2008, 2, 1.
 22. Thanks to James Tredway for reminding me of this issue.
 23. See Hugh Nibley’s description of this phenomenon in “An Intellectual Autobiography,” 23 (this volume).
 24. Tredway, personal communication, August 11, 2008, 8–9.
 25. Hugh Nibley, *Brother Brigham Challenges the Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1994).
 26. Tyler Moulton, personal communication, September 25, 2008, 1. The difficulty in locating these sources would have been circumvented with current internet technology.
 27. Hugh Nibley, “Paths That Stray: Some Notes on Sophic and Mantic,” in *The Ancient State: The Rulers and the Ruled* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1991), 380–478.
 28. Tredway, personal communication, August 11, 2008, 9–10.
 29. Tredway, personal communication, August 11, 2008, 10.
 30. Hugh Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 2005), 201.
 31. Gee, personal communication, October 3, 2008; see John Gee, “The Keeper of the Gate,” in *The Temple in Time and Eternity*, ed. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 235.

32. Gee, personal communication, October 3, 2008.
33. Welch, email message to author, August 11, 2008.
34. John Gee, email message to Ronald Huggins, July 12, 2006, referring to statements of John Gee, email message to Boyd Petersen, March 14, 2005, and January 13, 2005 (p. 20).
35. See *BYU Speeches*. 13 February 1969. <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/hugh-nibley/science-fiction-gospel/>.
36. Moulton, personal communication, September 25, 2008, 1–2.
37. Moulton, personal communication, September 25, 2008, 2. Cooper, personal communication, October 8, 2008, 2, corroborates this view: “I heard Hugh many times complain that FARMS had published something of his that embarrassed him because it represented an earlier perspective that he had surpassed in his scholarly growth.”
38. Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1989).
39. Hugh Nibley, *Apostles and Bishops in Early Christianity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 2005).
40. Douglas F. Salmon, letters to John W. Welch, March 22, 2005, and January 15, 2008.
41. See “Hugh Nibley/Footnotes,” especially all the footnotes that lead to other sources.
42. See John Gee, “Hugh Nibley/Footnotes,” personal communication to FAIR wiki editors, August 10, 2007. Louis Midgley addresses this topic in his review of *Eloquent Witness*, by Nibley, *FARMS Review* 20, no. 2 (2008): 296. “There is also a tall tale being circulated that has become a favorite of one sectarian anti-Mormon zealot. His argument is that Nibley both roundly distorted the sources he cited and faked his footnotes. . . . I did the source and quotation checking on two of his more complicated essays [“Beyond Politics” and “Treasures in the Heavens”], and I was eventually able to track everything down. The many problems I had finding the sources he cited, I discovered, were the result of my own ignorance. And whatever tiny mistakes I found were either transpositions of page numbers or the obvious result of his having relied on his shorthand notes. This is not, of course, to say that I would put exactly the same spin on all the passages he cited or quoted. But my mastery of the languages and literature he consulted and cited is at best rudimentary. Of course, Nibley got some things wrong. And, of course, subsequent LDS scholarship has not always supported some of his hunches. That is to be expected. It happens to everyone who ventures away from routine, safe paths. It is time that critics cease attacking the man and deal, instead, with relevant substantive issues. When some of Nibley’s critics have tried to do this, they have floundered at times because they lack his command of the relevant languages and cannot match the scope of his learning.”

43. Nibley seems to be in good company here. Regarding his translation of the Bible into German, Martin Luther was “charged by the enemies of truth that the text has been modified and even falsified in many places.” In response, Luther wrote an open letter on translation in which he makes such statements as “If I, Dr. Luther, had expected that all the papists together were capable of translating even one chapter of Scripture correctly and well into German, I would have gathered up enough humility to ask for their aid and assistance. . . . However, because I knew . . . that not one of them knows how to translate or speak German, I spared them and myself the trouble. . . . I know quite well how much skill, hard work, sense and brains are needed for a good translation.” Martin Luther, “Ein Sendbrief D. M. Luthers. Von Dolmetschen und Fürbit der Heiligenn,” in *Dr. Martin Luthers Werke* (Weimar: Böhlhaus, 1909), 30.2.632–46, available online at www.bible-researcher.com/luther01.html.
44. Tredway, personal communication, August 11, 2008, 10–11.
45. Don Norton, personal communication, August 13, 2008, 2. It might be informative to check the footnotes to one of Huggins’s own articles, perhaps even the one under review.
46. Michael Rhodes, email message to author, August 8, 2008.
47. Cooper, personal communication, October 8, 2008, 1. (As an undergraduate, Cooper earned national awards in Greek translation and Latin composition.)
48. On adding a word in German that wasn’t in the original, Luther explains that “it conveys the sense of the text—if the translation is to be clear and vigorous, it belongs there.” Luther, “Ein Sendbrief D. M. Luthers.”
49. Even so it is not apparent that Huggins’s readings of the primary sources in the original language is as extensive as Nibley’s. Huggins criticizes an unusual translation of a Greek phrase by Gee because he was using a different sense of the word than other commentators or than what one might find in a New Testament Greek dictionary (p. 11 n. 14). Huggins does not translate the phrase independently. He seems to ignore the fact that Gee knew it was an unusual translation and explained his reasoning. Is not scholarship presenting one’s point of view and then defending it?
50. Hugh Nibley, *The World and the Prophets* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1987).
51. See Carl Mosser and Paul Owen, “Mormon Scholarship, Apologetics, and Evangelical Neglect: Losing the Battle and Not Knowing It?,” *Trinity Journal*, n.s., 19, no. 2 (1998): 196. My thanks to Tredway for reminding me of this source.
52. I am unaware of the languages Huggins may have studied or of what level of competence he may have achieved in them (he does mention

- having taught Latin in private Christian schools), but he seems unwilling (or unable) to translate these passages for himself (see note 43 above). I would think that demonstrating a personal knowledge of the languages would be essential in making his arguments. Why did Huggins select the translations he did? “Do they better explain the meaning or experiences of the people of that time when compared to Nibley’s translation? Translation is a fluid conversion of one culture to another and is done with many factors in mind.” James V. Tredway, email message to author, September 24, 2008.
53. Luther, “Ein Sendbrief D. M. Luthers.” He continues: “I have learned by experience what an art and what a task translating is, so I will not tolerate some papal donkey or mule acting as my judge or critic. They have not tried it. If anyone does not like my translations, he can ignore it. . . . If it needs to be criticized, I will do it myself. If I do not do it, then let them leave my translations in peace. Each of them can do a translation for himself that suits him—what do I care?” I have a feeling Luther and Nibley would get along well together.
 54. Moulton, personal communication, September 25, 2008, 3.
 55. Moulton, personal communication, September 25, 2008, 3.
 56. “Hugh was a great stylist in English; his command of the language and skill at argument will long remain vibrant and powerful even after the content of his scholarship may have faded, or at worst, become antiquated.” Cooper, personal communication, October 8, 2008, 2–3.
 57. Suggestions from James V. Tredway, email message to author, August 20, 2008, and Gee, personal communication, October 3, 2008.
 58. Nibley, *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*, 488.
 59. See “O My Father,” *Hymns*, no. 292, verse 1.
 60. Kristian Heal, email message to author, October 7, 2008.
 61. Cooper, personal communication, October 8, 2008, 1, admits that “occasionally he would read a source in an idiosyncratic way, but that’s the scholar’s prerogative.”
 62. Hugh Nibley, “Translation,” notes from a presentation, February 11, 1975, Salt Lake City, 3.4. In this particular passage, he was referring to translating poetry.
 63. Nibley, “Translation,” 3.3–4.
 64. Norton, personal communication, August 13, 2008, 2.
 65. Richard Lloyd Anderson, “Joseph Smith’s Insights into the Olivet Prophecy: Joseph Smith 1 and Matthew 24,” in *Pearl of Great Price Symposium: A Centennial Presentation* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1976), 50; my thanks to Tredway for suggesting this source and this idea.
 66. Luther, “Ein Sendbrief D. M. Luthers.”
 67. Norton, personal communication, August 13, 2008, 2.
 68. Mosser and Owen, “Mormon Scholarship,” 183.

69. Mosser and Owen, "Mormon Scholarship," 183, quoting Truman G. Madsen, foreword to *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless: Classic Essays of Hugh W. Nibley* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1978), xiv.
70. See the contributions by these men in volume 1 of the Festschrift published in Nibley's honor, *By Study and Also by Faith*, as well as a second essay by Neusner in volume 2.
71. Mosser and Owen, "Mormon Scholarship," 183–84, quoting from Philip L. Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 147n105. This note also describes "the prolific Hugh Nibley, whose genius is unquestioned . . . but whose methods remain controversial."
72. Hugh Nibley, "The Facsimiles of the Book of Abraham: A Response," *Sunstone*, December 1979, 49; reprinted in volume 18 of the Collected Works, *An Approach to the Book of Abraham* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 2009), 494.
73. Hugh Nibley, letter to Susie Timko, Provo, Utah, October 19, 1979.
74. Hugh Nibley, letter to David H. Mulholland, Anaheim, California, June 26, 1981.
75. Hugh Nibley, letter to Pam Lane, Simi Valley, California, June 22, 1982.
76. Hugh Nibley, letter to David L. Parkos, Parker, Colorado, December 2, 1983.
77. Hugh Nibley, letter to Irene Horsley, Kearns, Utah, May 22, 1985.
78. I'm not sure what point Huggins is trying to make here—a quick glance at "Hugh Winder Nibley: Bibliography and Register," comp. Louis Midgley, in *By Study and Also by Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1990), 1:xv–lxxxvii, reveals that Nibley published in at least the following periodicals: *American Political Science Review*, *Christianity Today*, *Church History*, *Classical Journal*, *Concilium: An International Review of Theology*, *Historian*, *Jewish Quarterly Review*, *Revue de Qumran*, *Vigiliae Christianae*, and *Western Political Quarterly*, as well as in *Encyclopedia Judaica*. He was offered the distinguished position of departmental editor for the encyclopedia for sections dealing with Christian Latin biblical exegesis (it sounds to me like they had a pretty high opinion of Nibley's linguistic talents), but he regretfully declined when he couldn't clear his busy schedule. See Boyd Jay Petersen, *Hugh Nibley: A Consecrated Life* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2002), 299–300. I see listed on Huggins's own bibliography very few publications in academic journals; the rest of his writing seems to concentrate on criticizing the faith and teachings of the Latter-day Saints.
79. Nibley, "An Intellectual Autobiography," 15–16.
80. "This, in fact, is the *first* article I have ever had rejected, which makes it most interesting—especially since the rejection is by an LDS publication which requested it in the first place!" Hugh Nibley, letter to

- Loren F. Wheelwright, September 16, 1965. Interestingly, during his years of being in charge of music in the Salt Lake City School District, Wheelwright was partially responsible for encouraging Phyllis Nibley to take up the cello in the sixth grade.
81. Petersen, *Hugh Nibley*, 300–301. This article was eventually published in Hugh Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1986), 21–36.
 82. Nibley, letter to Wheelwright, September 16, 1965.
 83. Hugh Nibley, “Writing and Publication in Graduate School,” 5–6, 10, 11.
 84. Tom Caldwell, who was instrumental in rescuing some of Nibley’s works from the “underground” and who made services and copy equipment available for the source-checking project, describes Nibley’s Sunday School classes: “He always gave us fresh perspective on the scriptures, and he bore testimony of the gospel as one who was a true witness. This was testimony based on experience, not just on theory and book learning. We learned that by carefully reading the scriptures we could find the answers to any questions they brought up (usually within the next couple of verses). Nibley paid attention to the smallest of details, especially when it came to the scriptures. We weren’t just fed from the scriptures—in his classes, we were served a feast fit for the greatest of kings.” Nibley’s testimony was “From what I’ve seen and heard, the gospel is true. Amen.” Caldwell, email message to author, October 9, 2008.
 85. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, November 10, 1988. Stephen and I also had the opportunity to attend other lectures and presentations by and dinners in honor of Hugh Nibley.
 86. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, eds., *By Study and Also by Faith*. 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1990).
 87. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, September 7, 1990.
 88. Nibley, *Ancient State*.
 89. The book reviews appeared in *Eloquent Witness*, 93–107; and “Genesis of the Written Word” in *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1992), 450–90.
 90. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, October 26, 1990.
 91. Hugh W. Nibley. *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless* (Provo, UT: Bookcraft, 1978).
 92. Hugh Nibley, “The Faith of an Observer: Conversations with Hugh Nibley,” in *Eloquent Witness: Nibley on Himself, Others, and the Temple* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2008), 154–55.
 93. Nibley, *Approach to the Book of Abraham*.
 94. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, September 26, 1991.
 95. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, October 10, 1991.

96. Hugh Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 2000).
97. Hugh W. Nibley, "A New Look at the Pearl of Great Price," *Improvement Era*, 1968–70; reprinted in *Abraham in Egypt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, Brigham Young University, 1990).
98. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, December 13, 2000.
99. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, May 3, 2000.
100. Hugh W. Nibley, *When the Lights Went Out: Three Studies on the Ancient Apostasy* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2001); originally published by Deseret Book in 1970. <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/mi/99/>.
101. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, November 22, 2006.
102. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, December 8, 1999.
103. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, May 9, 2001.
104. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, May 18, 2001.
105. I also listened to recordings of Nibley lectures made by Lloyd Newell at this time to check their accuracy. Occasionally I got to go to the studio and work with him on rerecording some parts, including some German words. We were some of the last individuals to ever grace the sound studio in the basement of the Smith Family Living Center before it was torn down.
106. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, May 31, 2002.
107. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, August 19, 2002. Gary Gillum, Harold B. Lee Library Ancient Studies Librarian, and his students "filled 294 archival boxes of his stuff and counted enough 3 x 5 cards that they would be as tall as BYU's Kimball Tower if piled on top of each other. (By the way, preceding the processing we had to do an inventory of everything.) Finally, I found research materials in 31 different languages." Gillum, email message to author, July 23, 2020. Gillum and his students also cleared out 105 boxes of Nibley's books from his home and garage and got them properly archived.
108. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, February 23, 2005.
109. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, February 24, 2005. See also Rhodes, "Egyptology," 367 (this volume).
110. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, February 5, 2009.
111. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, August 28, 2009.
112. Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, January 20, 2010.
113. See, for example, Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, June 11, 1992.
114. Mormon Scholars Testify, at <https://fairmormon.org/testimonies/scholars/hugh-nibley>.
115. Photo courtesy of Shirley S. Ricks. Photo ID: Shirley in office at the Maxwell Institute 2017.jpeg.
116. Courtesy of Stephen T. Whitlock. Photo ID: STW015.jpg.

117. The home has now been torn down and replaced by an apartment building. Courtesy of Shirley S. Ricks. Photo ID: Ricks SS Nibley home on 700 N-E.jpg.
118. Courtesy of Shirley S. Ricks. Photo ID: When the Lights Went Out2.jpeg.
119. Courtesy of Shirley S. Ricks. Photo ID: Colored Manuscripts.png.
120. Courtesy of Stephen T. Whitlock. Photo ID: STW016.jpg.
121. Photo by Stuart Johnson, from Carrie A. Moore, "Revered LDS Scholar Hugh Nibley Dies at 94," Deseret News, February 26, 2005, <https://www.deseret.com/2005/2/26/19879192/revered-lds-scholar-hugh-nibley-dies-at-94>. Photo ID: Nibley photos-Deseret News-700457859.jpeg. Used with permission from the Deseret News and thanks to Karrie Lasater.
122. Photo courtesy of Shirley S. Ricks. Photo ID: Michael Lyon, Mike Rhodes, Shirley Ricks One Eternal Round-E.jpg.
123. Photo copyright Brent C. Orton, probably taken 14 April 2001. Used with permission. Photo ID: Nibley01.jpeg.