

## **Reformed Egyptian And The Book of Mormon**

Compiled by Glen W. Chapman- September 2001 from various sources

**Ryan Williams (E-mail)**

"Could you explain to me what Reformed Egyptian is and why Book of Mormon writers chose it?"

This is a very good question. Let's start by asking another question, what language were the Brass Plates written in? I believe most people are surprised when they realize the Brass Plates were written in Egyptian NOT Hebrew.

Mosiah 1:3,4

3 - "And he (King Benjamin) also taught them (his sons) concerning the records which were engraven on the plates of brass, saying: My sons, I would that ye should remember that were it not for these plates, which contain these records and these commandments, we must have suffered in ignorance, even this present time, not knowing the mysteries of God."

4 - "For it were not possible that our father, Lehi, could have remembered all these things, to have taught them to his children, except it were for the help of these plates; for he having been taught in the language of the Egyptians therefore he could read these engravings, and teach them to his children, that thereby they could teach them to their children, and so fulfilling the commandments of God, even down to this present time."

We can learn a lot from these two verses. In addition to realizing that the Brass Plates were written in Egyptian we find that Lehi taught his children Egyptian and that he expected them to teach their children in Egyptian.

In 1 Nephi 1:2 we read that Nephi made a record "in the language of my father, which consisted of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians." We will talk about "the learning of the Jews" in another discussion but notice that Nephi says "and the language of the Egyptians" NOT and the language of Reformed Egyptian. There is no reason to think Nephi was writing in Hebrew or Reformed Egyptian at this point in time he was clearly making a record writing in Egyptian which had been taught to him by his Father and was the language used in the Brass Plates.

Then how come people are always looking for Hebrew in the Book of Mormon?

Well for starters Nephi and his brethren definitely knew Hebrew and we can assume it was their native language (spoken). In fact, Hebrew appears to have carried on as the spoken language of the Nephites for some time after their arrival. In Mormon 9:33 Moroni says "And if our

plates had been sufficiently large we should have written in Hebrew...". This is roughly 1000 years after they left Jerusalem and apparently Moroni still feels more confident of his abilities to write Hebrew than he does Egyptian, "...And if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, you would have no imperfection in our record." Even though the Nephite record was not kept in Hebrew it should not be surprising to find Hebrew names in the Book of Mormon since Hebrew was still present as the spoken tongue. This is even more true among those who were known as Mulekites who we would assume were also speaking Hebrew and probably had little or no schooling in Egyptian.

So what is Reformed Egyptian?

Reformed Egyptian is not mentioned until approximately 1000 years after the Nephites left Jerusalem, in Mormon 9:32 we read: "...in the characters which are called among us the reformed Egyptian, being handed down and altered by us, according to our manner of speech." In other words the Book of Mormon was not written in reformed Egyptian in the beginning Nephi wrote in pure Egyptian but after time as the characters were handed down over the years changes were made according to "our manner of speech" and this resulted in what became known as reformed Egyptian.

So what was the language being spoken which would have altered the Egyptian?

This is a little tougher question. We know from the next verse that knowledge of Hebrew was still evident but I doubt it was being spoken by more than the highly educated since we are talking a time lapse of 1000 years. Archaeologically we know that there were various dialects of Mayan being spoken in Mesoamerica at this time period. We propose that reformed Egyptian was a handed down form of Egyptian mixed with the spoken Maya languages of the area.

Do we find any Mayan words in the Book of Mormon, how about Egyptian and Hebrew?

The answer to this is yes, yes and yes. Maya, Egyptian and Hebrew words are all prevalent in the Book of Mormon just like we would expect. For fear of turning this email into a novel we will wait until next week to talk about specific examples of each of these languages in the Book of Mormon.

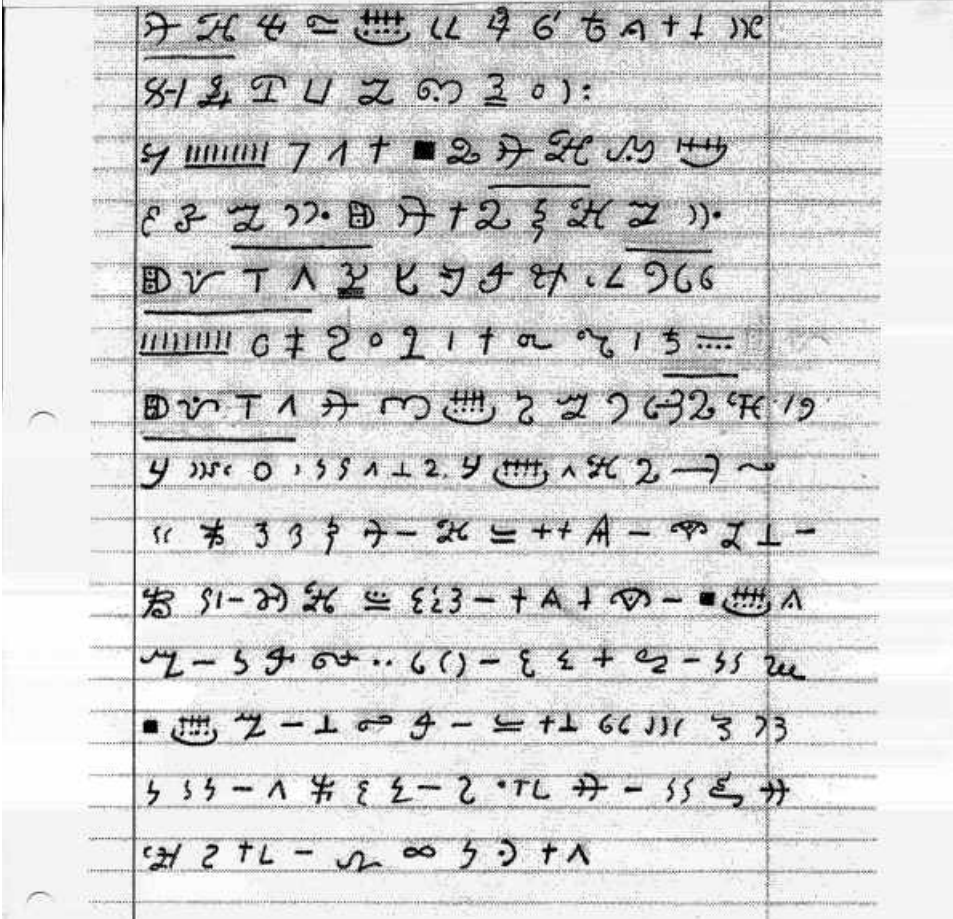
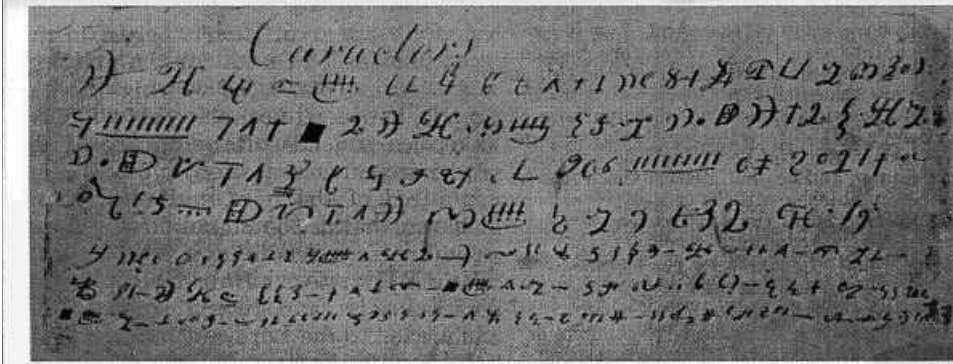
Summary/Conclusion

The Book of Mormon, like the Brass Plates, was written in Egyptian. Over time the spoken language of the area where the Nephites lived made an impact on the record keeping language and altered it to the point where it became known as Reformed Egyptian.

Hopefully this helps explain a little about the language of the Book of Mormon. Please send questions and comments by replying to this

email and we will talk more about it next week. Help us make this an active discussion group by passing this on to your friends. Thanks,

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Book of Mormon Facsimile. Transcribed by Joseph Smith, Jr. sometime between December 1827 and February 1828 from gold plates discovered near Palmyra, New York. Photo image of the original document from *The Restored Church*, by William Edwin Berrett, Deseret Book Company, 15th Edition, 1973, page 33. Handcopied to enlarge the characters, and portions underlined indicating a repeated pattern either on this document or on another inscription.

## Reformed Egyptian

-- William J. Hamblin

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*Critics of the Book of Mormon maintain that there is no language known as "reformed Egyptian."*

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### What is "reformed Egyptian?"

Critics who raise the objection seem to be operating under the false impression that *reformed Egyptian* is used in the Book of Mormon as a proper name. In fact, the word *reformed* is used in the Book of Mormon in this context as an adjective, meaning "altered, modified, or changed." This is made clear by Mormon, who tells us that "the characters which are *called among us* the reformed Egyptian, [were] handed down and *altered by us*" and that "none other people knoweth our language" (Mormon 9:32, 34). First we should emphasize that Mormon is describing Egyptian characters, or what we today would call a script or writing system. It is the form or shape of the characters or symbols that was altered by the Nephites. Nephite reformed Egyptian is thus a unique script. It derived from the Egyptian writing systems but then was modified and adapted to suit Nephite language and writing materials.

The fact that modern linguists and philologists don't know of a script known as reformed Egyptian is irrelevant, since Mormon tells us that the script was called reformed Egyptian "by us," that is, by the Nephites; they may have been the only people to use that descriptive phrase. For example, both the terms *cuneiform* and *hieroglyphics* are non-Egyptian terms for the scripts of ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt.<sup>[1]</sup> The Mesopotamians did not call their writing system cuneiform, nor did the Egyptians call their writing system hieroglyphics.<sup>[2]</sup> Nevertheless, we would not insist that the Mesopotamians and Egyptians never existed because they did not call their writing systems by the same names used by modern historians, philologists, and archaeologists.

Does the Book of Mormon's assertion that the Nephites took Egyptian characters and modified them to write Hebrew words make historical and linguistic sense?<sup>[3]</sup> It is a common phenomenon for a basic writing system to undergo significant changes in the course of time, especially when written with new writing materials.<sup>[4]</sup> Turning specifically to Egyptian, there are numerous examples of modified (or reformed) Egyptian characters being used to write non-Egyptian languages, none of which were known in Joseph Smith's day.

### Examples of "reformed Egyptian"

**Egyptian hieratic and demotic.** The Egyptian language was written in three related but distinct scripts. The oldest is hieroglyphic script, dating to around 3000 B.C.; it was essentially a monumental script for stone inscriptions. Hieratic, a second script, is a modified form of Egyptian hieroglyphics used to write formal documents on papyrus with brush and ink, and demotic is a cursive script.<sup>[5]</sup> Thus, both the hieratic and demotic scripts could be considered "reformed" or modified versions of the original hieroglyphic script. These are both examples of writing the Egyptian language in reformed versions of the Egyptian hieroglyphic script; there are also several examples of the use of reformed or modified Egyptian characters to write *non-Egyptian* languages.

**Byblos Syllabic texts.** The earliest known example of mixing a Semitic language with modified Egyptian hieroglyphic characters is the Byblos Syllabic inscriptions (eighteenth century B.C.), from the city of Byblos on the Phoenician coast.<sup>[6]</sup> This script is described as a "syllabary [that] is clearly inspired by the Egyptian hieroglyphic system, and in fact is the most important link known between the hieroglyphs and the Canaanite alphabet."<sup>[7]</sup> Interestingly enough, most Byblos Syllabic texts were written on copper plates. Thus, it would not be unreasonable to describe the Byblos Syllabic texts as a Semitic language written on metal plates in "reformed Egyptian characters,"<sup>[8]</sup> which is precisely what the Book of Mormon describes.

**Cretan hieroglyphics.** Early forms of writing in Crete apparently developed from a combination of "Egyptian hieroglyphic, Mesopotamian cuneiform and Phoenician native signs into one single, new pictographic script."<sup>[9]</sup> Note again that there is a mixture of Semitic (Mesopotamian and Phoenician) and Egyptian writing systems, precisely as described in the Book of Mormon.

**Meroitic.** Meroitic, the script of ancient Nubia (modern Sudan), "was first recorded in writing in the second century B.C. in an 'alphabetic' script consisting of twenty-three symbols, most of which were borrowed or at least derived from Egyptian writing....The script has two forms, hieroglyphic and cursive."<sup>[10]</sup> Meroitic hieroglyphic signs were "borrowed from the Egyptian...[and] the cursive script derived mainly from the Egyptian demotic script."<sup>[11]</sup>

**Psalm 20 in demotic Egyptian.** Scholars have also recently deciphered an Aramaic version of Psalm 20:2-6 that was written in demotic Egyptian characters.<sup>[12]</sup> This is precisely what the Book of Mormon claims existed: a version of the Hebrew scriptures in the Hebrew language, but written using Egyptian characters.

**Proto-Sinaitic and the alphabet.** Semitic speakers of early second millennium B.C. Syria and Palestine seem to have adopted reformed or modified versions of both Egyptian hieroglyphs and Mesopotamian cuneiform into syllabic and alphabetic systems of writing. Ultimately, this reformed Egyptian script became the basis for the Phoenician alphabet, from which nearly all subsequent alphabets derive.<sup>[13]</sup> "The Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions were written in a Semitic language, and...their letters were the prototypes for the Phoenician alphabet. The letters are alphabetic, acrophonic in origin, and consonantal, and their forms are derived from Egyptian hieroglyphs."<sup>[14]</sup> "Since the Canaanite/Phoenician syllabary formed the basis of the Greek alphabet, and the Greek in turn of the Latin, it means, in the words of Gardiner, that 'the hieroglyphs live on, though in transmuted [or could we not say reformed?] form, within our own alphabet.'"<sup>[15]</sup> In a very real sense, our own Latin alphabet is itself a type of reformed Egyptian, since the ultimate source of our characters is Egyptian hieroglyphics.

## Conclusion

There are thus a number of historical examples of Semitic or other languages being written in "reformed" or modified Egyptian script; the Book of Mormon account is entirely plausible on this point.

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[1] The term *cuneiform* was first used in the nineteenth century, while *hieroglyphics* was the Greek term for the Egyptian writing system.

[2] For a general introduction on hieroglyphics, see W. V. Davies, *Egyptian Hieroglyphics* (London: British Museum Publications, 1987).

[3] John Gee summarizes the evidence and analysis on the subject, arguing for a Hebrew-based language written in an Egyptian-based script in his "La Trahison des Clercs: On the Language and Translation of the Book of Mormon," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/1 (1994): 79-83, 94-99.

[4] Michelle P Brown, *A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), provides examples of the wide array of scripts of the Roman alphabet, many of which are unrecognizable without training.

[5] Davies, *Egyptian Hieroglyphics*, 21-24.

[6] For basic summary and bibliography, see David Noel Freedman, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 4:178-80. For a detailed linguistic study and translation, see George E. Mendenhall, *The Syllabic Inscriptions from Byblos* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1985). The original publication with full plates and transcriptions is M. Dunand, *Byblia Grammata: Documents et recherches sur le developpement de l'écriture en phénicie* (Beirut: Direction des Antiquités, 1945); photographs and transcriptions of all the documents can be found on pp. 71.

[7] *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 4:178b.

[8] Hugh W. Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert; the World of the Jaredites; There Were Jaredites*, vol. 5 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988): 105.

[9] Jan Best and Fred Woudhuizen, eds., *Ancient Scripts from Crete and Cyprus* (Leiden Brill, 1988), 4.

[10] Davies, *Egyptian Hieroglyphics*, 61.

[11] Jean Leclant, "The Present Position in the Deciphering of Meroitic Script," in *The Peopling of Ancient Egypt and the Deciphering of Meroitic Script* (Ghent: Unesco, 1978), 112.

[12] Stephen D. Ricks, "Language and Script in the Book of Mormon," *Insights* (May 1992), 1; Charles F. Nirns and Richard C. Steiner, "A Paganized Version of Psalm 20:2-6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983): 261-74; Richard C. Steiner, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script: The Liturgy of a New Year's Festival Imported from Bethel to Syene by Exiles from Rash," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111/2 (1991): 362-63; For a full bibliography, see Gee, "La Trahison des Clercs," 96-97, n. 147. See also John A. Tvedtnes, "Linguistic Implications of the Tel-Arad Ostraca," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology* 127 (1971): 1-5.

[13] Joseph Naveh, *Early History of the Alphabet* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1982). I. J. Gelb, *A Study of Writing*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), x- xi, provides a chart illustrating the derivation of the Phoenician and all subsequent alphabets from Egyptian hieroglyphics.

[14] Benjamin sass, *The Genesis of the Alphabet and Its Development in the Second Millennium B.C.* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1988), 106.

[15] Davies, *Egyptian Hieroglyphics*, 60. The same page provides a chart illustrating the transformation of hieroglyphics into alphabetic symbols of our Latin alphabet.

## EVIDENCES FOR "REFORMED EGYPTIAN" IN BOTH THE OLD & NEW WORLD

By DaRell Thorpe

It seems logical that if the English language has gone through different stages of development, then other languages could also, including Egyptian. What is "reformed Egyptian?" It may be Egyptian writings that has been changed & developed into another type of language, which has the Egyptian language as its base-root. The language may have been merged with another language to become the parent of another language in & of its self. For example, if a man from one nation, enter into marriage with a woman from a different nation. It is very possible that their children might grow up speaking a blend of both languages.

A.S. Yahuda, wrote that the patriarchs had taken with them from Babylonia to Canaan an Aramaic dialect which had been strongly sprinkled with Akkadian elements. This in turn influenced the Canaanite dialect which they then adopted. Some of the Hebrews in Egypt had retained some elements of this influence, but under the influence of the Egyptian language, it was expounded, enriched, & developed to the point in which the literary language of the Pentateuch finally came about. (See: A.S. Yahuda's, *The Language of the Pentateuch in Its Relationship to Egyptian*, p. 35-6.)

It seems that the different nations' languages were influenced when they came in contact with each other, & in time, perhaps they had blended certain elements of their languages, as they began to communicate with each other, & as they began to understand each other better. As a number of them on both sides, from both separate nations, had begun to learn each others' languages, a mixture of the 2 languages could have been born. A good example of this, at least for me, is in my own attempts to learn, a little at a time, different words in Spanish. I have come across, & have worked with different ones who have come from Spanish speaking countries. They are in the process of learning English. I have been able to communicate with them to a certain extent, & we have been able to understand each other to a certain extent, with the help of a blend of both Spanish & English. I would present what little Spanish I had learned, while filling in the gaps with English words. In a similar manner, they would mix both Spanish & the little bits of English that they knew or had learned. Thus we began to understand each other more & more as we taught each other. I suppose that this blend of Spanish & English could be unofficially called "Spanglish." Again my point in relating this situation, is to point out that the same sort of thing could have happened in other cases anciently. The Egyptians could have learned a little Hebrew, & the Hebrews or the Israelites could have also learned a little Egyptian, & thus both of them could have blended their languages, which also may have influenced & modified them to the point where a new form or version could have been developed over the process of time. Thus, a similar situation may have created an ancient setting in which "reformed Egyptian" could have slowly been developed.

In the case with Nephi, in the book of Mormon, he wrote "...I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews & the language of the Egyptians...." ([TBOM] 2 Ne. 1:2.) Nephi's father, Lehi, had taught him a language that consisted of the learning of the Jews, & the language of the Egyptians. When the Hebrews had been slaves in Egypt, both the Hebrews & the Egyptians must have learned each others' languages in order to be

able to communicate with each other. This knowledge must have been brought out of Egypt with them at the time of the great exodus in Moses' time. Surely this knowledge must have been passed to later Israelite descendants of Lehi's time. Nephi wrote about 600 B.C., around the area of Jerusalem in the old world. His father must have learned a combination of both Hebrew & Egyptian, & thus taught it unto his children, including Nephi. Perhaps the time frame for this is any where from about 630-600 B.C. or some where near about that time.

Lehi, Nephi, (& the others that came with them from the Jerusalem area, to the ancient americas,) had brought with them their own writings, plus a record written on "brass plates." In Mosiah 1:4, we read that Lehi was able to remember the Egyptian language that he had learned, from having first dwelt at the Jerusalem area, because they had a good sample of the language as it was written on the brass plates. For Lehi, "...he having been taught in the language of the Egyptians therefore he could read these engravings" (the brass plates), "and teach them to his children, that thereby they could teach them to their children, & so fulfilling the commandments of God..." (Mosiah 1:1-4). Thus, the knowledge of the 'learning of the Jews' & 'the language of the Egyptians' must have been preserved to a certain extent in the ancient americas.

James Norman wrote that the signs & symbols that ancient writers have used to record their thoughts or speech "...have often been modified by the writing tools & materials they had at hand. An illustration of this is the changes in Egyptian writing over tens of centuries...." Mr. Norman goes on to make reference to the development of the later Egyptian writings derived from the earlier hieroglyphs. The Hieroglyphic form was replaced centuries later by "the Egyptian hieratic script." This style was not based so much on the artistic type of symbols as the earlier form had. And yet, even from this form of Egyptian writing, another form was developed later on, called demotic. "...It was a simpler, more popular form derived from the hieratic style...." Norman gives a small sample for us to consider, & dates it at different times than other writers have suggested. (Ancestral Voices, (Decoding Ancient Languages), by James Norman, 1975, Pub. by Four Winds Press, N.Y., N.Y., p.13-14.)

Dr. Huger Nibley suggests that the language that Lehi must have learned was a form of Egyptian writing called "demotic." Lehi lived with in the time frame in which this type of form was known. He cites from Spiegelberg who has defined "demotic" as having been the cursive form of writing developed some time between about the 8th -- 4th centuries B.C., an abbreviation of the hieratic. Nibley went on to explain some of the stages in which the language developed over time, from the picture form called hieroglyphic style, which later was developed into a shorthand form of Egyptian writing called "hieratic," which later developed into a shorthand of that shorthand, the "demotic" style of egyptian writings, as first named by Champollion about 1828. (Temple & Cosmos, by Dr. Huger Nibley, 1992, p.217-8, & n.7, p.260. William Spiegelberg, Demotische Grammatik (Heidelberg: Winter, 1952), 1.)

Prof. Hubert Grimme, showed that some ancient engravings on the Sinai peninsula, (dating back to about 1500 B.C.), were in the pure Hebrew language but the script was hieratic Egyptian that had been some what changed. Prof. Grimme also showed that the Incas & Mayas had used a Egyptian hieratic script by slightly altering it. (Evidences of the Divine Authenticity of The Book of Mormon, [an unpublished research paper at this time], by Allen Richardson, of Utah. p.6, & 11, citing from: Hubert Grimme, Prof. of Semitic Language at Munster Un. pub. in "Althebraische Inschriften vom Sinai," (See A. Churchward, The Origin & Evolution of Religion, 1924. Also: E.A.W. Budge, Papyrus of Ani, N.Y., Putman, 1913, Vol.I, p.50; Th. Noeldeke, Die Semitischen Sprachen, Leipzig, 1899, p.34. Ed. Meyer, Geschichte des Altertums, 1927, I, 2.

p.297; and Wm.F. Albright, *The Vocalization of Egyptian Syllabic Orthography*, New Haven: Am. Or. Soc. 1934.)

G. Elliot Smith suggested that the ancient Americans adapted their language from Egyptian, which the pre-columbian civilization originated from. (Richardson, op. cit., p.6 & 11, citing from: *Science*, Vol.44, p.190-95, Aug. 11, 1916.) Steven Frimmer wrote that some languages are "transformed" while others are discarded, while others are said to have been atrophy. The Egyptian hieroglyphics remained in use for some time, even after the development of the later demotic writing system. (*The Stone That Spoke, (And other Clues to the Decipherment of Lost Languages)*, by Steven Frimmer, 1969, Pub. by G. P. Putnam's Sons, N.Y., p.173.)

We have examples, & samples of the different forms of Egyptian writing on different artifacts, relics, & ancient manuscripts. For example, a letter was found at Tell el Amarna, the writing on it is hieratic. A fragment of the ancient plans for Ramesses IV's tomb, (the coffin room (Museo Egizio, Turin), has the same sort of hieratic form of Egyptian writing. (*Life & Death of a pharaoh Tutankhamen*, by Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, 1963, George Rainbird Lim., N.Y., Graphic Soc., p.111, fig.55, letter #27, Staatliche Mus., Berlin. See also p.260, fig.165.)

There is also evidence that some of the Israelite about 600-598 B.C., had used a form of writing that had Egyptian influences in it. For example, "...in the royal administration of both Judah & Israel (Samaria), hieratic numerals were used, striking new evidence for the influence of Egyptian prototypes in the Israelite administration..." (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, Vol.31, Feb. 1968, No.1, p.12-15, fig.9 & 10, see also n.5 on p.15, *Basor* No.184, (Dec., 1966), p.13-19, Pub. by The American Schools of Oriental Research, Jer. & Bagdad.)

Demotic writing was found on an ancient Egyptian mummy shroud, dating back to about 2nd century A.D. The writing in this case was said to be a "...prayer in demotic script, a simplified form of hieroglyphics,..." (*Biblical Archaeology Review*, Vol.16, #3. May/June 1990, p.448-9, article entitled: *Six Fingers & Toes, Polydactylism in the Ancient World*, by Richard D. Barnett.)

Philip E. Cleator, wrote that there was a cursive script of Egyptian style writing that was an offshoot from the hieroglyphic form of Egyptian writing. He wrote that this cursive form was known to the Greeks, & was a style that was developed into another shorter form about the time of the 25th (Ethiopian) dynasty, "...when there was evolved from the hieratic writing a still more rapid & abbreviated hand, termed demotic. Thus it came about that, during the Greko-Roman period, three distinct styles of Egyptian writing were simultaneously employed, each more or less restricted as to its use-- the hieroglyphic for sacred inscriptions on the walls of monuments & temples; the hieratic for priestly purposes; & the demotic for the needs of daily life." He went on to point out that the demotic characters had been modified to the point to where it had little resemblance to the original hieroglyphs.

Cleator wrote concerning a series of official decrees that date back to about 238-237 B.C., concerning some of the "spiritual leaders of the land," Ptolemy III Euergets I. The ancients had inscribed their decrees on stone in Greek & Egyptian, "...in both demotic & hieroglyphic..." It was copied & issued in 196 B.C., when Ptolemy V Epiphanes received the coronation ceremony. During the reign of a 26th dynasty, during the reign of Amasis II, about 569-525 B.C. The Greek tongue was brought to Egypt by merchants & artisans. Bilingual inscriptions were drafted in Greek, in which the demotic form was also used. In time, the Egyptian speech was expressed in Greek characters, but some more modification had to be done in order to meet the needs of the native language, thus "...seven additional symbols were taken from the demotic & hieratic scripts.

A composite alphabet, consisting of 31 letters, thus came into general use." Later the Coptic Egyptian Christians continued to use this form. For the "...Egyptian language,... expressed by the 31 characters of the expanded Greek alphabet, continued to be employed in this, its Coptic form--so-called because of its use by the Christianized Egyptians, or Copts." [Towards the end of about the 4th century A.D.]

Cleator also points out that Clement of Alexandria had made reference in his *Stromateis* to 3 different kinds of Egyptian writings styles. In 1636 a Jesuit Athanasius Kircher, published a work on Coptic in which he had been convinced that it preserved, in alphabetic guise, the language of the ancient Egyptians. However, he was unable to bridge the gap of time between the development of the later descendant of the Egyptian script, (the Coptic), & the earlier hieroglyphic writings. And thus he failed to discover the meaning of the Egyptian hieroglyphic form, which meanings had been lost by that time. Some time in August 1799, some French soldiers discovered a slab of stone, which would become known as "the Rosetta Stone." This stone had been discovered near the Rosetta mouth of the Nile in Egypt. It contained 3 forms of writing, two of which were unreadable at that time, while the other was in Greek. It was later taken to Deptford, England in 1802. Scholars discovered that the 3 languages were about the same subject matters, & thus with the help of the Greek, they were able to get a good idea of what the other scripts meant. The demotic Egyptian form was one of languages on the Rosetta Stone, & attempts were made to decipher it. In 1802 Sylvestre de Sacy had succeeded in recognizing several names, but he was unable to establish an alphabet. Others attempted to take up the problem from where Sacy had left off. J.D. Akerblad, worked on the demotic version, with some success, but with erroneous conclusions in some areas. A decade past by in which different speculations & theories were developed. Dr. Thomas Young made some progress in 1814, but there was still a lot of guess work involved. Young's discoveries were published in the 1819 edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

Jean Francois Champollion, published his *De l'écriture Hieratique des Anciens Egyptiens*, in 1821. "...He showed that the hieratic writing was merely a modification of the hieroglyphic..." form.

Thirty-six years, after 1814, or by about 1850, H. K. Brugsch was able to show that he had mastered the true principle of the demotic interpretation, & "...it was not until 1880, (by which time the hieroglyphics had been virtually deciphered), that E. Revillout published his *Crestomathie demotique*," [written in French], "in which the entire text was subjected to a word-by-word analysis, accompanied by its Greek rendering & its French equivalent." Mr. Cleator mentions others who were involved in attempting to discover the meaning of the other 2 languages on the Rosetta Stone. He also gives some examples of the different Egyptian forms of writings that have developed over the years. (*Lost Languages*, by Philip E. Cleator, 1959, Pub. by The John Day Co., N.Y., N.Y., chap. 11, p.30-60, & 97, plate 1, & pl.5 & 6-9. See also: *The Last Two Million Years*, p.303.)

Like the Egyptians, some of the ancient Americans were also known to have used a similar form of "picture writings," in some cases. For "...such methods of communication were in use among certain tribes of North American Indians. They appear to have been so among many races in various regions." (See: *Encyc. Britannica*, Vol. 1, p.678, on p. 678-684). See also the chart that shows different "evolutions" of different alphabetic symbols. On p. 679, "Table II" is a "Chart showing the evolution of the alphabetic symbols from hieroglyphic signs to early Greek letters." Thus we see that the later Greek could be considered as being a sort of "reformed Egyptian" in some ways, or at least a later generation & descendant of the Egyptian language. In some cases, there

has been a blending process of different languages to make reformed types & altered versions, of the 2 or more languages. Evidences of this can be found in a 1916 research paper, the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, Vol.3, (1916), p.I ff., by Dr. Alan Gardiner. This paper deals with certain inscriptions discovered in 1906 by Sir W. Flinders Petrie at the Sinaitic peninsula, in which Dr. Gardiner saw a stage of writing intermediate between Egyptian hieroglyphic & the Semitic alphabet. The script appears to be fully alphabetic, & the date of the inscriptions is no later than 1500 B.C. These inscriptions have also been dealt with by Hans Bauer (Zur Entzifferung der neuentdeckten Sinaischrift, Halle, 1918), who is inclined to see in the script a prototype of Semitic alphabets, independent of Egypt. There is "...no doubt of the close connection of the symbols of the Sinai script with certain Egyptian hieroglyphics, & it is scarcely probable that identical picture symbols would have developed independently in Egypt & so near to its borders as to be in use in the Sinai peninsula. The close intercourse between Egypt & regions lying beyond Sinai render complete independence of script unlikely. On the other hand, of 32 separate characters apparently employed in the Sinai inscriptions, 17 are unintelligible, not being found to correspond sufficiently closely either with Egyptian hieroglyphic characters on the one hand nor letters of the Semitic alphabets on the other.... Dr. Alan Gardiner... shows the relationship between the Egyptian hieroglyphs, the Sinai script, the alphabet of the Moabite Stone, the south Semitic alphabets, & that of early Greece...." (Encyc. Brit. Vol.1, p.680, op. cit.)

Henry James Reynolds, M.D., wrote that Egypt was influenced by environmental conditions, as a common trade routes were established. This created an environment which helped in the formation of language. Thus a language was developed which was common to all. "...As in the case of other countries, too, the language here was many times subjected to foreign contamination by invasion as the ages went by.... In the various stages of its progress throughout all these centuries, the ancient Egyptian remained the one language that was common to all."

Reynolds continued by acknowledging the fact that "...from the dawn of history down until the beginning of the Christian era, in Egypt, it is true, what are frequently spoken of as three different languages, namely, the ancient Egyptian, the Demotic, & the Coptic. All three were, however, primarily & essentially one & the same language. The most ancient was what was known as the old Egyptian... "hieroglyphics." "...From quite early times, however, they had in Egypt also a form of the hieroglyphics which was used for ordinary writing, as for commercial purposes & the like. This was known as the "Hieratic," the parallel of which in our own day would be the ordinary running or long hand, or such as we of today use in writing. The hieroglyphics remained in use in Egypt until about the 3rd century A.D....In about the 8th century, B.C. the Demotic language came into use in Egypt.... this language was simply what was left of the old Egyptian, with, however, a new alphabet...." [Which] "...was not wholly new, for it was taken from the hieratic or writing form of the hieroglyphics. Briefly as possible, this was the Demotic language. It remained in use more or less until about the 4th century, A.D." Mr. Reynolds also presented some examples of these different forms of Egyptian writings. (See: The World's Oldest Writings, by Henry James Reynolds, M.D., 1938, Pub. The Antiquities Corp., Chicago, p.28-33, fig.5, 6, 7, & 8.)

In the book: The Last Two Million Years, by Reader's Digest History of Man, 1973, p.303. We read that a "...simplified form of hieroglyphs the so-called hieratic, or 'priestly' script -- was developed for speedier writing on papyrus, & was used mainly for religious texts." This book goes on to say that another style of hieroglyphs had developed from the hieratic script & was being used side by side with it, by the 7th century B.C. "...This was the demotic or 'popular' script, in which the pictorial quality to the hieroglyphs was sacrificed for faster writing. It was used up to the 5th century A.D." (See also: The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, op. cit., p.1664-7.)

In "...the Phoenician city of Byblos... the Byblos script are written on stone & bronze objects, found in the 1920's, & contain 114 different symbols, nearly half of which are similar to Egyptian hieroglyphs." (The Last Two Million Years, p.303, see also: Voices In Stone, Doblhofer op. cit., p. 220-226.) Robert Claiborne wrote that several tablets in Byblos are of stone, while 6 are reported here to have been of "bronze." The script has been called "pseudo-hieroglyphic" because some of the signs are said to "...vaguely resemble Egyptian hieroglyphs & cuneiform signs...". Some have dated this type of writing to come from about 2100 B.C. while others have placed it at 1300 B.C., others at 1800 B.C. to 1400 B.C. Scholars have discussed the different theories concerning the devise of what appears to be a Sinaitic Semites alphabet under the Egyptian influence. (The Birth of Writing, Claiborne, op. cit., p. 118-120.)

The Phoenicians homeland is said to have been a narrow strip along the coast of Syria which included the ancient seaports of Tyre & Sidon. The Phoenicians built ships & sailed the Mediterranean sea, & as traders, they set up mercial centers & may have even sailed in a clockwise direction round the whole continent of Africa, as commissioned by Pharaoh Necho, some time between 609 BC & 593 BC. The Phoenicians also developed an alphabet, in the which "...they took the hieratic script of ancient Egypt & transformed & modified it into a form suited to Semitic languages. From this point the Phoenician alphabet was still further modified by the Greeks, who inserted vowels & made other changes. The role of the Phoenicians in the evolution of writing from the ancient pictograms to the forms practised today cannot therefore be over emphasized." This book also shows a sample from Carthage to consider.

It seems that the greek language also has it's roots in the Egyptian writing system also. The Minoans are said to have had three different phases in the evolution of their writing system. Sir Arthur Evans showed that the first phase consisted of pictograms analogous "to the Egyptian hieroglyphs, which was followed by a more cursive or flowing form which seems to have been an early form of Greek..." Michael Ventris & John Chadwick, worked to decipher the "Linear B" a fragment of a late Minoan tablet. (See: The Mediterranean (Cradle of Western Culture), by Richard Carrington, 1971, A Studio Book, The Viking Press, N.Y., p.112 & see also the heading: "The Ancient Greek World.").

The writers of The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, tell us that the native script of pharaonic Egyptian appears in 3 forms, the hieroglyphic, which, according to this source means in greek "sacred carving," (hieros glyphe). And a form called "hieratic" which in greek means "priestly," (hieratikos). And the 3rd being the demotic or "popular," (demotikos), form of Egyptian writing. The other two forms, the Hieratic & the demotic are said to have been adaptations of the early form, the hieroglyphics. This book goes on say that the hieratic script is a cursive form of hieroglyphic writing which had been reduced to formal symbols which was no longer pictorial, & was thus for ease of rapid writing. The demotic is said here to have been an even more rapid & abbreviated form of hieratic handwriting that is said here to have first developed some time in the 7th century B.C., & lasted until about the 5th century A.D. This book described the sample of demotic writing as found on the Rosetta Stone as being "...an abbreviated & modified form of Egyptian hieratic..." (The Illustrated Bible Dictionary, op. cit., p.1664-1667, see also: The Birth of Writing, by Robert Claiborne, op. cit., p.40-1.)

Margaret Wheeler also wrote of the different forms of Egyptian writings, while presenting a general short history of the "Rosetta Stone" discovery, etc., thus the "cursive form of hieroglyphic writing,..." is considered here. And the "demotic" form is also described as being "...the conventional, abbreviated & modified form of the Hieratic character, or cursive form of hieroglyphic writing, which was in use in the Ptolemaic Period...." The Coptic Christians of

Egypt had translations of the Scriptures, & other sacred writings which they made from Greek into their native tongue, & which are said to have used a Greek script "...supplemented by 7 characters derived from Demotic...." (History Was Buried, Margaret Wheeler, 1967, op. cit., see pages 247-258.)

Magnus Magnusson also describes the different writing forms as found on the Rosetta Stone. Two of the three types of writing systems found on the stone were "...forms of the ancient Egyptian language that no one could decipher at the time-- demotic (a popular cursive script) & hieroglyphic (picture-writing, literally `sacred carved signs')...." Magnusson also wrote that "...Coptic was the last phase of the ancient Egyptian language, & was written in the Greek script with a few extra letters derived from hieroglyphs to represent sounds which could not be expressed in Greek." (Introducing Archaeology, by Magnus Magnusson, 1972, p.44-7.)

Thomas Garnet Henry James described the demotic form of writing on the Rosetta Stone as being "...a cursive script, later to be called Demotic,..." The "...Demotic script was very cursive; it had developed from the earlier hieratic, a cursive script itself which,... bore the same kind of relationship to hieroglyphics as hand-writing does to printing. Hieratic as used by professional scribes writing on papyrus became more & more unrelated to hieroglyphics as time went on, & by the time it had developed into Demotic the relationship with hieroglyphics was too remote to be at all obvious. Demotic was, therefore, the successor of hieratic as the regular script used for writing on papyrus, for non-religious documents. The names given to these scripts are not strictly accurate, Demotic meaning `popular' & hieratic `priestly'; but time & usage have made them into technical terms in Egyptology." (The Archaeology Of Ancient Egypt, by Thomas Garnet Henry James, 1972, Pub. Henry Z. Walck, Inc., N.Y., see pages 68-95, & 120-128.)

Gertrude Hartman tells us that the picture writing methods were very slow. As mankind began to write more & more rapidly they learned how to present the idea in a shorter way. For example, instead of drawing a house, he would draw a peak of a roof. "...In natural ways like these the pictures gradually changed so that they no longer looked like the originals they were meant to imitate, & picture writing developed into a system of signs for expressing ideas." (The World We Live In & How It Came To Be, by Gertrude Hartman, 1931, & 1961 -- 18th printing, The Macmillan Co., N.Y., p. 115-118.)

Frank J. Cappelluti, Associate Professor of History, St. Peter's College, & Ruth H. Grossman, Associate Professor of Education City Un. of N.Y., suggest that the later demotic Egyptian form of writing was an easier writing style than the earlier styles had been. (The Human Adventure, (A History of Our World), Pub. by Field Social Studies Program, 1970, p.105-7.)

Edward McNall Burns, also mentions the different forms of Egyptian writing styles. "...The Egyptians developed their first form of writing during the pre-dynastic period. This system, known as the hieroglyphic, from the Greek words meaning sacred carving, was originally composed of pictographic signs denoting concrete objects. Gradually certain of these signs were conventionalized and used to represent abstract concepts. Other characters were introduced to designate separate syllables which could be combined to form words. Finally, 24 symbols, each representing a single consonant sound of the human voice, were added early in the Old Kingdom. Thus the hieroglyphic system of writing had come to include at an early date three separate types of characters, the pictographic, syllabic, & alphabetic." (Western Civilizations, (7th Ed.), by Edward McNall Burns, Vol. 1, see p.47-8, Pub. by W.W. Norton & Co., N.Y., first pub. in 1941.)

"A form of complex picture writing is found in Egypt. It is familiarly known as hieroglyphic writing, and many excellent specimens are to be found on monuments, mummy cloths, temple walls, etc.... Another form of hieroglyphic writing existed in Egypt and which was used by the priests is known as hieratic writing. It is much simpler and the characters take on a flowing form, like our script. This type of writing was used in letters, in the keeping of accounts, the writing of psalms, deeds, etc.... The Phoenicians took the one feature of Egyptian writing which could be universally applied, disentangled it from the jumbled mass of signs and pictures, made of it a unit, and created therefrom a system, or method, of writing based upon an alphabet. They achieved the greatest step forward in the art of writing.

Because of its obvious simplicity and its universal application, this form of alphabetic writing quickly spread. It was carried everywhere. It spread over the whole Asiatic continent. It found its way to Crete, to Thera, to Greece, to Italy. It passed on into Europe and firmly established itself there. It became, in a word, the writing system of the whole civilized world." (The Customs Of Mankind, by Lillian Eichler, Pub. Nelson Doubleday, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1924, pp.288, & 291.)

### **EVIDENCES FOR FORMS OF HEBREW & EGYPTIAN WRITINGS IN THE ANCIENT TO LATER AMERICAS**

In the americas, forms of Egyptian based writings have been discovered, for example "Micmac hieroglyphics." (Encyclopedia of Indians of the Americas, Vol.6, p.203-4, etc., Pub. by Scholarly Press Inc., 1974, Mic., first printing 1981.)

Dr. John L. Sorenson cautions us to be careful about the statements in the Book of Mormon that mention Hebrew & Egyptian languages. He points out that their have been different interpretations on how different LDS scholars have looked at Nephi's opening statements in (1 Ne.1:2). He points out that Lehi & Nephi must have known Hebrew, in order to have known of the "things of the Jews" & the manner of the Jews. (2 Ne. 25:5.)

Sorenson suggests a few possible elements that could have created a setting for Egyptian/Hebrew languages as having been used in both the Old & the New World. He suggests that Nephi had used modified Egyptian signs to write his Jewish/Hebrew materials. He points out that there are other languages in which modified characters came about when different cultures came in contact with each other. In the case with Mesoamerica's glyphic writing the principle elements are similar to Egyptian writings. He notes some examples also in the Hebrew & the Mayan, in which their are some similarities.

Sorenson mentioned a work by Berry Fell, entitled: America B.C., published in 1976. He wrote that Fell's work contained some serious errors, but that the "...inscriptions he has collected do constitute a challenge yet to be examined carefully & explained adequately by conventional scholars." Some of the inscriptions that Fell has claimed to have found, if some of these examples are authentic, is a form of Egyptian writing called "Micmac." (An Ancient Setting For The Book Of Mormon, by Dr. John L. Sorenson, 1985, Pub. by Deseret Book, Co. & F.A.R.M.S., Provo & S.L.C., see: p.74-81, & notes p.363-364, n.28-39, etc., mentions: Dr. Huger Nibley's Lehi In the Desert & The World of the Jaredites, p.13-19, & Sidney Sperry's Our Book of Mormon, p.30-33, Pub. by Bookcraft, 1950. See also: A Comparison of Maya & Egyptian Hieroglyphs, by Linda Miller Van Blerkom, (Katunob 11 Aug. 1978: 1-8. Sorenson wrote in his notes on p.364, note 39,

that he had reviewed Barry Fell's book: *America B.C.: Ancient Settlers in the New World*, "too optimistically," in a *BYU Studies* (Summer 1977). Later, Sorenson must have had second thoughts about Fell's conclusions, for he suggests that the review by E.S. Rowlett in *Archaeology* 31 (March-April 1978): 64-5 agrees generally with his current judgment concerning Fell's book. Sorenson must have reconsidered his former review in order to have changed his views on Fell's work.)

Berry Fell wrote of these different inscriptions, which he claimed were written in various European & Mediterranean languages in alphabets that he says dates from about 2,500 years ago, (about 525 B.C.). Some of these inscriptions speak of not only ancient voyages by ships, but of colonies that stayed here from the Celts, Basques, Libyans, & even the Egyptians. These inscriptions are found on buried temples, tablets, gravestones, & cliff faces. He suggested that Phoenicians & Egyptian miners had become apart of the Wabanaki tribe of New England. To the south of this, he suggested that Libyan & Egyptian mariners had entered the river that is now known as the Mississippi river, from the Gulf of Mexico. They were able to go as far as what is now called Iowa, & the Dakotas, & westward along the Arkansas & Cimarron River. Leaving behind inscribed records of their presence. Fell claimed that a stone tablet with engravings on it was found in 1836, at the depth of 60 feet in a large burial mound at Grave Creek, West Virginia. It was later consider to be Phoenician,-- basically Semitic. Other discoveries are considered to have Hebrew & Egyptian origins. Mr. Fell presents ideograms of the different languages, & suggested that "...the Micmac people were familiar with metals,..." The Micmac people also had used the same "...hieroglyphs for silver & for gold as were used by the ancient Egyptians." He compared Micmac with Egyptian & noted the similarities, "...of closely comparable Micmac & Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, the former all taken from the Micmac manuscript begun by the Abbe Maillard in 1738 & continued until his death in Nova Scotia in 1762. A preliminary study suggests that several thousand of the Micmac hieroglyphs are derived from Egyptian models. As the modern decipherment of Egyptian began only in 1797, when Zoega deduced the meaning "name" for the cartouche sign, it is evident that the Micmac hieroglyphs must already have been transmitted to North America more than 2000 years ago, when they were still in use in Egypt." Mr. Fell also wrote that the "...Micmac are a tribe of Algonquian Indians inhabiting Acadia, the eastern provinces of Canada, & they are closely related to various tribes of Maine commonly called the Wabanaki, or Men-of-the-East...."

Mr. Fell makes reference to Schoolcraft's great work on the America Indians, concerning a report that was made to Congress in 1851, which claimed that "reading & writing are altogether unknown to them" (the Algonquian Indians). This statement, combined with a recorded claim by an 18th century French priest, named Pierre Maillard, who, according to the record, had personally invented the Micmac hieroglyphs. This may have at first seemed to established the reputed modernity of the writing system. But, Fell continued to point out, & ask: Had this Mr. Mallard, then, studied Egyptian hieroglyphs in order to invent his Micmac system? Fell went on to point out that this could not have been the case, because, for Maillard died in 1762, 61 years before Champollion had published his first decipherment of the Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Fell continued to look for additional information, & with the help of others they studied a copy of a 450-page book in Micmac hieroglyphs, the work of Father Maillard, which contained much of the Catholic order of the Mass, a catechism, a religious history, & translations of psalms & hymns, & which was printed in Vienna during the years 1863-1866 from original manuscripts bequeathed by Father Maillard to the Micmac Indians at the time of his death in 1762. The book contained hundreds of different hieroglyphic signs, which Fell claimed had considerable portions

of which are clearly derived from, or even identical with ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, or their hieratic equivalents.

Fell was convinced that the Micmac writing system & parts of their, (the Micmacs') language had been derived from the ancient Egyptian. He asked who this could be possible? For surely Maillard could not have secretly deciphered the Egyptian language himself. Father Maillard had not really invented the micmac writing system, but rather he had borrowed & adapted a system of writing already in use among the Indians at the time when Cardinal Richelieu had first sent out missionaries to do work among the Canadian Indians. The Christian missionaries had noticed that the these Indians' children had appeared to have made signs on birchbark. The children explained that they were writing down some of their sermons. They explained that a five-pointed star represented heaven, & a circle was symbolic of earth, & so forth. The missionaries also noticed that these Indians had the customs of writing on bark, trees, & stones, etc., certain signs with sharp arrows, & stones, & other instruments. In some cases, they wrote on bark, different messages to other tribes. Rt. Rev. Bishop Colin F. MacKinnon, Bishop of Arichat, explained that the Indian chiefs had sent out circulars, which had been made in the same manner, & which was written to the men of war. [Compare Alma 22:27 & Alma 60.]

Mr. Fell mentions the controversy over a stele which had been found, the "Davenport Calendar stele," which some have claimed contains old world symbols in Egyptian, Iberian-Punic, & Libyan languages. And which was said to have been found in a burial mound in Iowa in 1874 by the Reverend M. Gass. Fell wrote that this so-called stele is in the Putnam Museum in Davenport Iowa. Scholars at Harvard & at the Smithsonian Institution had declared it to be a forgery. Fell attempted to show that it was not. Some critics have rejected some of Mr. Fell's efforts, & claims. But even though Mr. Fell is said to have made some mistakes of one sort or another, or may have come to the wrong conclusions, in attempting to discover the meanings of different scripts, forgeries or not. Over all, his work & writings do seem to provide some valid information for researchers to consider. (See: America B.C., (Ancient Settlers in the New World), by Barry Fell, 1976, Pub. by Wallaby Pocket Books, a Simon & Schuster division of Gulf & Western Corp., N.Y., N.Y., p.3, 7, 21, 57-8, 253-84, 304.)

"...In 1905 Sir Flinders Petrie led an expedition into the peninsula of Sinai, the wilderness where Israel wandered for 40 years before Jericho was taken. In the middle of this wilderness, at Serabit, Sir Flinders found & examined an ancient temple. Here he found side by side with Egyptian hieroglyphs another form of writing in a kind of Egyptian, apparently written by someone who knew both languages as did the Book of Mormon historians. Subsequent expeditions there have found more of this writing & worked at its deciphering. Finally, in 1923, the conclusions of Professor Hubert Grimme, Professor of Semitic Language at Munster University, were published in "Althebraische Inschriften vom Sinai." According to Professor Grimme the Sinaitic writing was adopted from the Egyptian hieratic writing about 1500 B.C. The language is "pure Hebrew," but written in Egyptian hieratic characters somewhat changed! And in America, "the Mayas & Incas...used the hieratic writings of the Egyptians slightly altered, or partially glyphs." (Churchward, p.143, see also: Alan H. Gardiner, Egyptian Grammar, 1927, p.2. And: 7 Claims of the Book of Mormon, (A Collection of Evidences), by John A. Widsoe & Franklin S. Harris, Jr., Aug. 1937, Pub. by Zion's Printing & Pub. Co. Independence, Jackson County, Mo., USA, p.40-5.)

Carl Huger Jones wrote of some rolling stamp "seal" that he suspects just may have some small samples of "reformed Egyptian" on them. In a small article published by F.A.R.M.S., Mr. Jones compares the "Anthon Transcript" with some of the markings on the said stamp-seals. The

Anthon Transcript is said to have been some of the characters that Joseph Smith Jr., had written down from the Gold plates of the original Book of Mormon. These characters were taken by Mr. Martin Harris to Professor Charles Anthon, (thus the name of the transcript = the "Anthon Transcript"). After seeing the characters, Prof. Anthon is reported to have said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, & Arabic. He wrote a certificate to say what the characters were, but later ripped it up, when Mr. Harris later told him how Joseph had obtained the gold plates. He said that there was no such thing as ministering angels, & that if he (Martin Harris), was to bring the plates to him (Prof. Anthon), he would translate them. Mr Harris told him that part of the plates were sealed, & that he was forbidden to bring them. Professor Anthon, replied, 'I cannot read a sealed book.' The prophet Isaiah may have predicted this very situation. (The Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2, verses 63-65; Isa. 29).

Different publications have been made of the characters. Mr. Jones presents one copy that had been published in 1908, & another in 1930. He then notes a few parallels between these versions of the samples of "reformed egyptian" characters on the "Anthon transcript," & inscriptions found on a roller stamp cylinder seal found at La Venta, Tabasco, & another found at Tlatilco in the Valley of Mexico. There are some interesting similarities to consider here. (The "Anthon Transcript" & Two Mesoamerica Cylinder Seals, by Carl Huge Jones, Pub. by F.A.R.M.S. (Jon-70,) reprint., p.1-7, see also: The Improvement Era, Vol. 45, Jan. Feb., & March, 1942, articles by Ariel L. Crowley. And: La Venta, Tabasco: A Study of Olmec Ceramics & Art, by Philip Drucker, 1952, BAE Bulletin 153. Smithsonian Institution: Wash. And: A Cylinder Seal From Tlatilco, by David H. Kelly, 1966, American Antiquity, Vol. 31, No.5, Part 1, (July) pages 744-746. Society for American Archaeology: S.L.C.)

In West Jordan Utah, & on KZZI 1510 A.M. Radio. I, [DaRell D. Thorpe], was the talk-show-host for my own radio show which I had entitled: "Out of the Best Books," (D&C 88:118). On June 11, 1988, I had as my guest, Dr. Bruce Warren. We talked about different evidences for the Book of Mormon, in which a portion of the radio show went into the subject of "reformed Egyptian." Dr. Warren mentioned one of the cylinder seals that had been discovered. The seal has similar inscriptions, some of which are almost the same, if not the same type of characters on it, when compared with the Anthon Transcript's sample of "reformed Egyptian." However, Dr. Warren went on to say that there is not enough on the seal from Tlatilco Mexico to be totally satisfied with.

I might point out here that part of the seal is missing, perhaps even when it was discovered, it was not all there. Also, we don't have a very large sample of what was on the original gold plates that Joseph Smith had, except for that small portion that he copied off for Martin Harris, who took this sample to Prof. Anthon. The original record on gold plates was taken back by the angel Moroni, because a portion of the book was sealed closed. This portion is to come forth in the due time of the Lord. There are some things in that portion that the Lord seems to want to preserve for a later time. (See: [TBOM] 2 Ne.27:1-35; [OT] Isa. 29; [TPOGP] Joseph Smith 2:63-65.) So in this case with the said Tlatilco cylinder seal sample, we don't have a large enough sample to compare it with another sample,-- "the Anthon Transcript."

However, after Dr. Warren had made reference to this sample of "reformed egyptian," he said that there was some rituals that were done, even to this day, by Highland Guatemala Mayan Indians in which they had or would inscribe on the bank of a river in a script which was not Mayan Hieroglyphs, & the only time that you see these inscriptions is during these rituals. Dr. Warren went on to explain to a skeptical caller that they had photographs of these inscriptions, which when compared to the Anthon Transcript, there are some characters which he said were the same.

(Again based on: "Out of the Best Books" radio show, June 11, 1988, KZZI 1510 AM Radio, West Jordan Utah, Hosted by DaRell D. Thorpe, guest: Dr. Bruce Warren.)