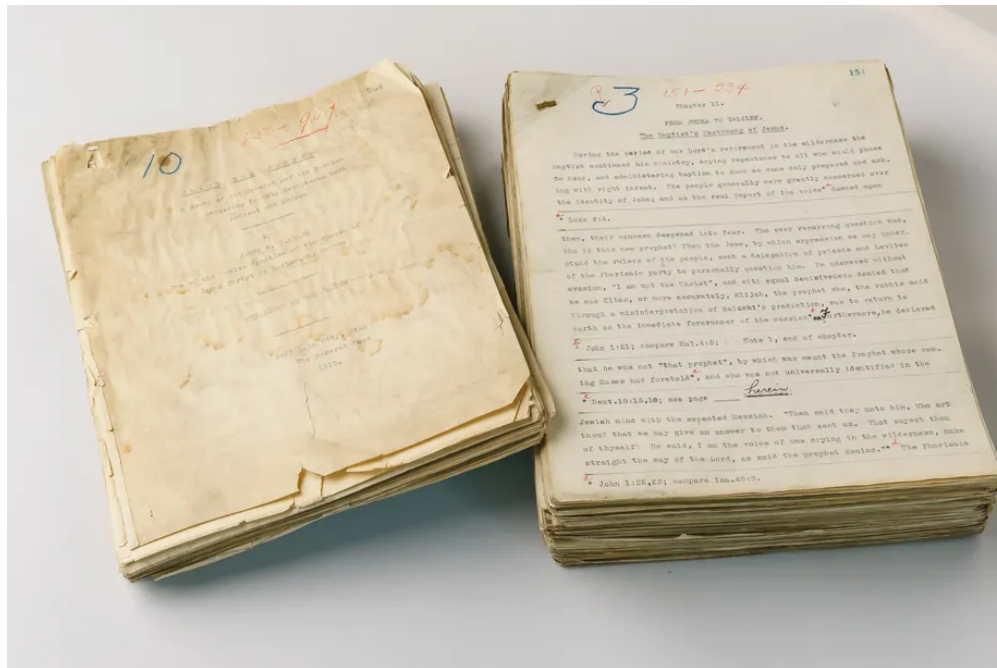


FAITH UTAH

11 fascinating images of Latter-day Saint artifacts

By Trent Toone | Apr 1, 2021, 3:29pm MDT



This early typescript of "Jesus the Christ" by Elder James E. Talmage is owned by Brent Ashworth, a collector in Provo, Utah. | Cordale Ottley

When co-authors Casey Paul Griffiths and Mary Jane Woodger told people they planned to publish a book with images and stories featuring 50 relics of the Latter-day Saint Restoration, everyone asked the same question.

“Are the gold plates in this book?”

Unfortunately, the answer is no — Joseph Smith returned the gold plates to the angel who oversaw the translation of the Book of Mormon.

But Griffiths and Woodger, professors in the Department of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University, did find a multitude of treasures highlighting the global history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Their list in “50 Relics of the Restoration” includes scripture, documents, weapons, rare coins, clothing, artwork, handmade items and other precious objects dating from the earliest days of the church to recent history.

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“Just as early Christians sought out pieces of the cross or searched for the location of Noah’s Ark, it is natural for Latter-day Saints to seek to interact with their history,” the co-authors wrote in the book’s introduction. “The objects in this book constitute a glimpse at the richness of our history.”

Griffiths and Woodger clarified that while the church loves its history, it doesn’t worship relics.

“The objects in the book are interesting because of the events they were involved with. The power to cause miracles comes from God and not from a particular object, no matter how special it is,” Griffiths told the Deseret News. “But objects like the ones featured in the book can provide a new perspective on some well known historical events.”

Here are 11 images and brief explanations from “50 Relics of the Restoration.”

1. Brown seer stone

Joseph Smith likely used this egg-sized stone while translating the Book of Mormon. When the translation was completed, the stone was given to Oliver Cowdery. Phineas Young, Brigham’s brother, obtained the stone from Cowdery’s widow after he died in

1850. The church published photographs of the seer stone in 2015 as part of the Joseph Smith Papers project.

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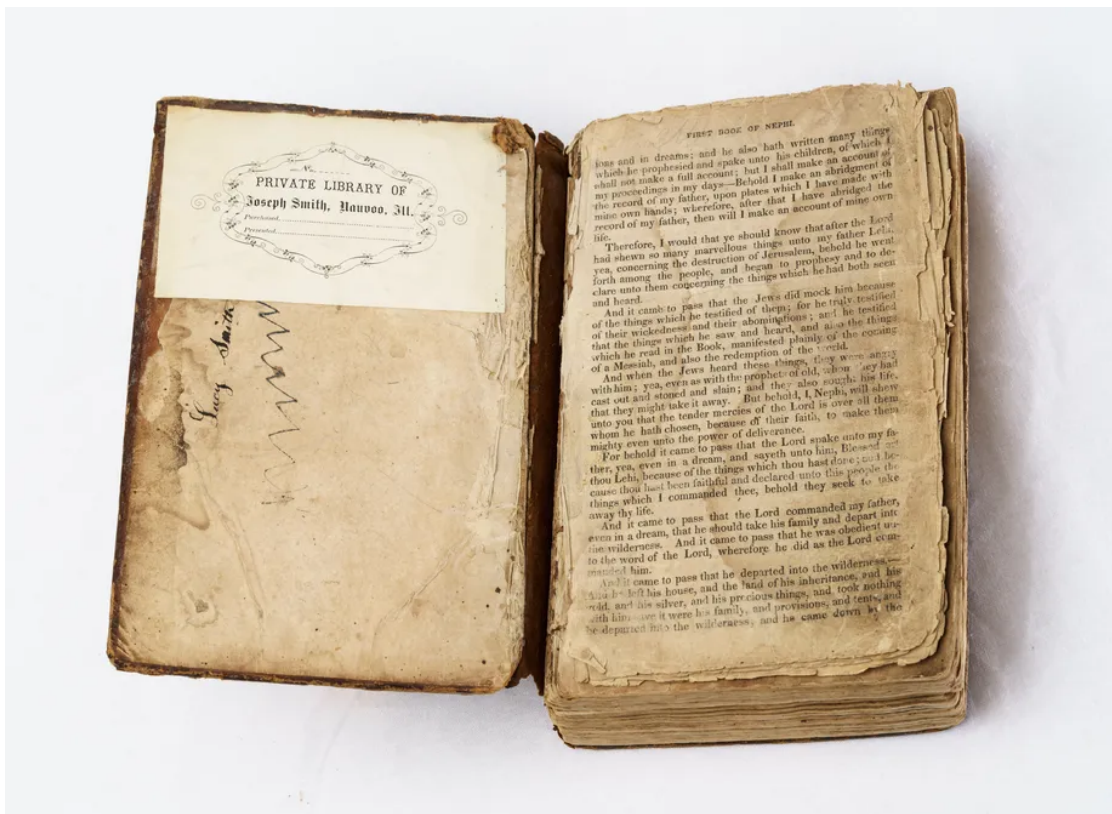
Joseph Smith likely used his brown seer stone while translating the Book of Mormon. His wife, Emma Smith, is believed to have made the leather pouch for the stone's safekeeping. | Church Museum of History and Art

2. Lucy Mack Smith's 1830 Book of Mormon

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LDS Church announces publication of the printer's manuscript of the Book of Mormon

When the Book of Mormon was first published in 1830, Lucy Mack Smith, the prophet's mother, was among the first to get a copy. She studied and treasured the book the rest of her life. This tattered copy, which bears her signature, was handed down through the Smith family until it came into the possession of the Community of Christ.



Lucy Mack Smith's 1830 copy of the Book of Mormon is in possession of the Community of Christ. | Cordale Ottley

3. Liberty Jail door

During the winter of 1838-39, Joseph Smith and other Latter-day Saints were imprisoned in Missouri's Liberty Jail. The structure was a jail until about 1856 and then was used as an icehouse. Joseph Smith III, then president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (now Community of Christ), visited the crumbling building in 1887. One of his associates located the old jail door and eventually placed it in the Community of Christ temple in Independence, Missouri, where it stands today. The door is 29 inches wide, 63 inches tall and 3 inches thick.



The door from the Liberty Jail, where Joseph Smith and other Latter-day Saints suffered during the winter of 1838-39. | Cordale Ottley

4. Joseph Smith handkerchief

During the Saints' settlement of Nauvoo, Illinois, Joseph Smith performed several miraculous healings. A man with sick twin children approached the prophet and requested that he heal them. Joseph asked Wilford Woodruff to go heal the children. Before he left, Joseph handed his friend a red handkerchief and instructed him to wipe the children's faces when he administered to them and added, "As long as you keep that handkerchief, it shall remain a league between you and me." Woodruff, who later became the fourth president of the church, did as instructed and healed the children. He kept the handkerchief the rest of his life. The handkerchief eventually passed from the Woodruff family to the church and is now preserved in the Church History Museum.



This red handkerchief was a gift from Joseph Smith to Wilford Woodruff. | Church Museum of History and Art

5. Joseph Smith's Masonic apron

During the Nauvoo era, Joseph Smith and other church leaders sought ways to gather allies in hopes of preventing hostilities like they faced in Missouri. Some church members already belonged to the Freemasons, “so reaching out to the group seemed like a natural way for the Saints to recruit important and influential allies,” the authors wrote.

Joseph's Masonic apron, used in the initiation rites in Nauvoo, remained with family after his death and the Saints' departure for Utah. The unique family heirloom has been passed down through the family and is now in the possession of the Community of Christ.



Joseph Smith's Masonic apron, used in the initiation rites, is now in the possession of the Community of Christ. | Casey Paul Griffiths

6. Pepperbox pistol

There is documentation that this Allen & Thurber Grafton-style pepperbox pistol was found in the room when Joseph Smith and others were attacked in the Carthage Jail and Joseph and his brother Hyrum Smith were killed. It was later sent to John Taylor. It is not known when it was donated to the Church History Museum. For many years its location was unknown and it was believed to be stolen. It was rediscovered in 1996 and has been on display in the Church History Museum since 2015.



This pepperbox pistol was found in the room where Joseph and Hyrum Smith were martyred in 1844. | Church Museum of History and Art

7. Manti Temple hair wreath

For many years this hair wreath adorned a wall in the Manti Utah Temple. Mary W. Wintch, a member of the Manti South Ward, designed the wreath and wove together strands of hair from women in the Relief Society. Inscribed on the artwork is the phrase, “These locks of hair, O Lord, thou hast seen us wear, so now we commit them to Thy Holy Temple’s care,” demonstrating the members’ unity, dedication and sacrifice in building and serving in the temple. Today the hair wreath is housed in the Church History Museum.



This wreath, made of hair from women in the Manti South Ward Relief Society, used to hang in the Manti Utah Temple. | Joshua Lynch

8. Temple swimsuit

Most Latter-day Saints wouldn't associate a swimsuit with a temple, but there is a true account with a unique connection. In 1952, the church needed to raise money to build the Los Angeles California Temple. Local leaders turned to Rose Marie Reid, an active Latter-day Saint and one of the most famous swimsuit designers in the fashion world. Reid had already made a personal donation, but came up with the idea to design a new swimsuit and pay women in the Relief Society to handsew sequins — small, shiny beads — on each suit. The women could then donate their wages to the temple fund. This “temple swimsuit” has remained in possession of Reid's family.



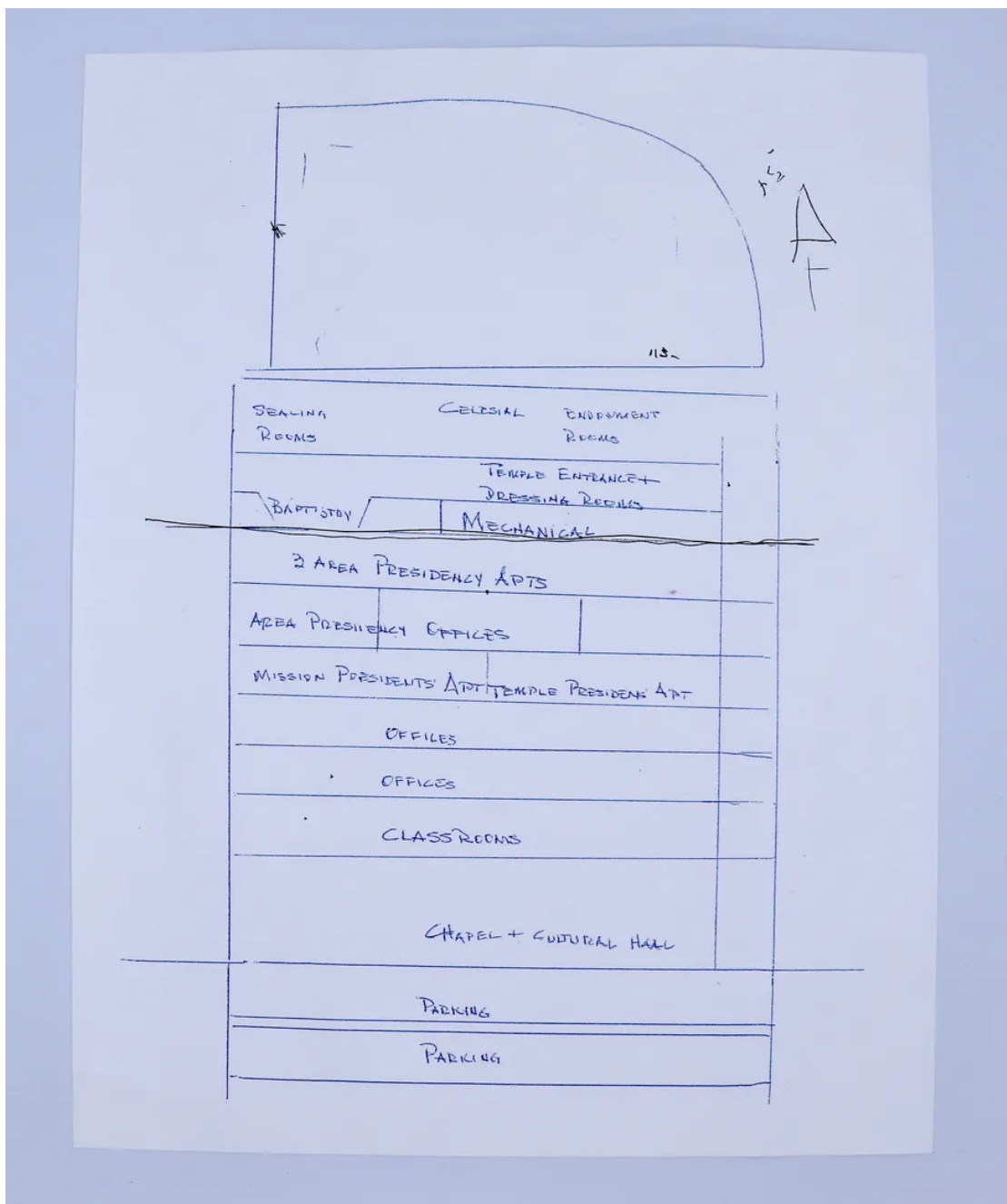
Rose Marie Reid, a Latter-day Saint and a swimsuit designer, helped raise funds for the Los Angeles California Temple in 1952 by designing this swimsuit and paying women in the Relief Society to handsew sequins into each suit. | Cordale Ottley

9. Hong Kong Temple sketch

In July 1992, President Gordon B. Hinckley was in Asia to select a site for the Hong Kong China Temple. After a discouraging day of not finding a site he felt good about, President Hinckley returned to his hotel and went to sleep. Between 2 and 3 a.m., inspiration came in a dream. He felt directed to use property already owned by the church to build a multipurpose structure. He found paper and sketched a design. “If ever in my life I felt the inspiration of the Lord, it was with this building,” President Hinckley later said.

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President Gordon B. Hinckley sketched a design for the Hong Kong China Temple in the middle of the night after having an inspirational dream. | Casey Paul Griffiths

10. West African Angel Moroni

In August 1978, a few months after President Spencer W. Kimball received the revelation on the priesthood (Official Declaration 2), the First Presidency sent Edwin Q. Cannon and Merrill Bateman on a fact-finding mission to West Africa. Along with finding many congregations of people interested in the church, they discovered a large statue of the Angel Moroni, carved out of cement, based on a picture appearing on the

cover of paperback copies of the Book of Mormon. The statue, a symbol of the faith of the West African Saints, is now at the Church History Museum.



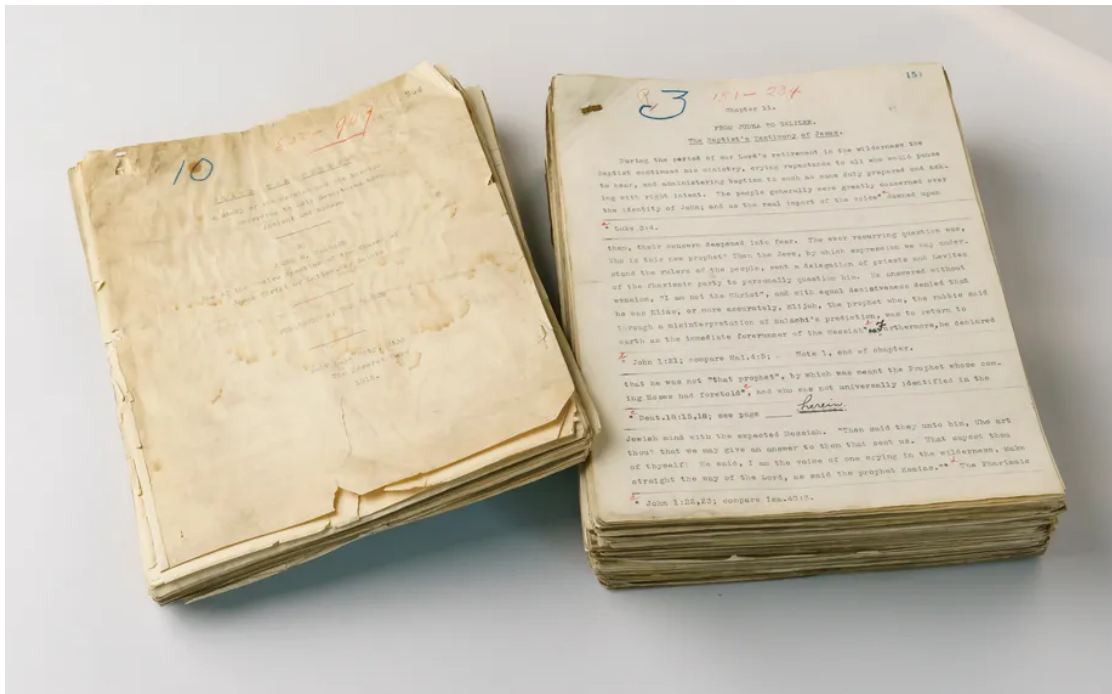
The West Africa Angel Moroni, carved from cement, stands about 4 or 5 feet tall. | Joshua Lynch

II. 'Jesus the Christ' manuscript

As a member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, Elder James E. Talmage completed "Jesus the Christ" in 1915. More than century later it is still published by the church and remains an essential element of most well-stocked Latter-day Saint libraries as a ready resource for learning about the life of Jesus Christ. Next to the standard works, scholars regard it as the bestselling doctrinal work in church history. Using a room in the Salt Lake Temple, Elder Talmage prepared the manuscript in seven months and held weekly reading sessions for all the General Authorities, who offered suggestions and revisions. This early typescript of the book is owned by Brent Ashworth, a collector in Provo, Utah.

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