

2/8/11

Editing Hugh Nibley: From Manuscript to Book

FAIR Conference, 5 August 2010

Shirley S. Ricks

With the completion of the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley (19 volumes in all) and the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Nibley's birth this year, I felt it would be a good time for me to share some of the experiences I had while editing Nibley's books. My personal experience of working with his books and manuscripts began in the late 1980s when there was a big push to get several books out in time for the Gospel Doctrine Book of Mormon classes. The focus at this time was on source checking the multitudinous notes for these early volumes. I extract here some quotations and ideas from a recent review I wrote of Ron Huggins's critique of Nibley's footnotes.ⁱ

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, 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,ⁱⁱ 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.

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 has been posted and responded to on a FAIR website: "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.ⁱⁱⁱ

Footnotes in General

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.

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."^{iv} And even the Maxwell Institute style guide for the *FARMS Review* asks the author to sign the following statement: "I have verified the accuracy of all quotations from other sources (including scriptures) that I have cited in my review."

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.

Accuracy of Nibley's Notes

What we need to examine is the accuracy of Nibley's notes on two levels: the botched, incomplete citations and the possible 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, general editor 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.^v 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.^{vi}

In 1988, Fran Clark joined the project to assist in transcribing, organizing, and managing the electronic versions of the materials, a massive task. Clark also worked closely with Nibley himself as he made dictations for the long-awaited *One Eternal Round* (which was to see the light of day 22 years

later). 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.^{vii}

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

On [one] 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.^{ix}

This experience demonstrates a couple of facts: While Nibley was still 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.^x

Mistakes, however, 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 tells of his experience in working on *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass*. “All the citations were actually there, but they were jumbled.^{xi} 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.”^{xii}

I can vouch for the fact that Nibley really was not fond of editors. In this inscription on the flyleaf of Stephen’s copy of *Enoch the Prophet*, of which Stephen was the editor, Nibley wrote “Hail to Stephen Ricks, the Editor does it all! From Hugh Nibley who rambles amid the brambles.” Stephen reports that Nibley was fussing about some of the minor editorial changes that had been made while preparing the book for publication.

Source checkers were always delighted to find the (in)famous Nibley pencil marks in books; 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.^{xiii} Tredway relates that Nibley tracks were found in books in the Harold B. Lee Library, the Berkeley Library, and in books that came in on loan from Harvard, Princeton, and Stanford.

Here we have one clue why some of Nibley’s citations may have been inaccurate—he read extremely widely and took notes on three-by-five cards without the benefit of modern computers or copy machines. Anyone making that volume of notes by hand is bound to make some mistakes.

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, on the rare occasion, we were ultimately unable to find a quotation, we always knew it existed somewhere. My husband, Stephen, and I spent many hours doing

source checking for Nibley notes in libraries around the country: the Library of Congress, the Widener Library at Harvard, the Young Research Library at UCLA, the Berkeley Moffitt Undergraduate Library, the Northern Regional Library Facility in Richmond, California, and the University of Chicago Regenstein Library. (In Chicago I took pictures with my camera of some pages that were too large to photocopy.)

Charge of Misrepresentation

The grievance that Nibley misrepresented his sources or took things out of context must be examined.^{xiv} 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.

(Mis)translations

The issue of whether Nibley manipulated translations to his own needs finds sympathetic company from Martin Luther, who defended himself and his translation of the Bible:

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.^{xv}

Obviously, Nibley's style of translation is not necessarily literal.^{xvi} 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.^{xvii}

Enough of Nibley footnotes. I will now share some of my Nibley stories and experiences over the years we have worked with Hugh and Phyllis to complete the Collected Works.

Speaking Engagement

It was in November of 1988 that Stephen and I had the opportunity to take Phyllis and Hugh 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. Stephen and I had to chuckle and decided to leave at a later time. 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.^{xviii}

Nibley Festschrift

The year 1990, when Nibley turned 80, marked the completion of the two-volume festschrift in his honor. 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. . . .

[Following some remarks,] Hugh then had a chance to respond, which he did in a typical rambling fashion. He related some hilarious experiences about a daughter who tried to go into a dorms 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 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 story 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.^{xix}

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*. 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 the essay "Genesis of the Written Word" [which eventually found their way into subsequent volumes]^{xx} but convinced him to keep the Sophic and Mantic materials. Nibley 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 was—a bunch of note cards flung in the reader's face.^{xxi}

Hugh often complained to us that no one would want to read his books that we were so insistent on publishing. And yet, *Approaching Zion*, which he never intended for publication, became one of his bestsellers.

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 seemed to care 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*), 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!”^{xxii}

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: *Prolegomena to the Book of Abraham: Getting Ready to Begin; A New Look at the Pearl of Great Price; Getting Ready to Begin: An Introduction to Any Study of the Book of Abraham; Preliminary Studies of the Book of Abraham; Unlocking the Book of Abraham; 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* (again); 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*. You guessed it—the final title was simply *An Approach to the Book of Abraham*.

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

Volume 12: Temple and Cosmos

The next experience occurred when we were working on volume 12: I took a copy of the 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 DIs 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.”^{xxiii} We always enjoyed our visits with Hugh and Phyllis and tried not to overstay our welcome.

Illustrations by Michael P. Lyon

Perhaps this is a good point at which to share some memories of working on the illustrations for the Collected Works volumes with my good friend, Michael Lyon. Michael is, in my mind, the best religious

iconographer in the Church. Michael's first brush with the genius of Nibley came in his high school years^{xxiv} when he skipped his own classes to go up to BYU to sit in on some Nibley class lectures.

His direction of the illustrations for the Collected Works, which meant that he literally researched and drew most of them and composed their captions, began with *The Ancient State*. By the time we got to *Temple and Cosmos*, Michael had really warmed up and was flooded with ideas for images that would clarify and elucidate Nibley's text. He began by carefully reading the manuscript for a given volume and making notes for possible illustrations. My task was to sit down with him and craft a list of proposed illustrations and to say no as gently as I could when I felt the number of illustrations was excessive and might delay a book indefinitely. His ambition seemed to know no bounds.

Perhaps typical of someone with an artistic temperament, Michael let several deadlines come and go. At times it seemed to us that no progress was being made, but Michael was extremely meticulous in his research. At times he showed genuine excitement when he "serendipitously" came up with the very illustration that Nibley was describing in the text. Finally, when the push was really on, the illustrations began to dribble in. Occasionally he drafted other individuals, such as Tyler Moulton or his relatives, to help with the illustrations, but mostly he wanted to honor Nibley by doing the work himself. Michael would visit the Nibleys and present his suggestions—he was always relieved when Nibley approved the figures.

If a given illustration called for perspective of a building or some other object, Michael would often build a model, take pictures of it, and proceed from there. He was a perfectionist—even when something looked adequate to our eyes, he would redo something until he was satisfied.

When we neared the end of a project, Michael and I would sit down to compose the figure captions. We worked on them, often rewriting them until Michael was satisfied that all the pertinent details had been mentioned and until I was satisfied that they were as concise and succinct as possible.

And what never ceased to amaze me was when Michael would enhance later volumes by identifying earlier illustrations that were applicable so we could add a reference to that in a note. I hope you join with me in extending my thanks to Michael Lyon for greatly improving the value of the Collected Works through his illustrations and insights.

Volumes 14 and 16: *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 early Egyptian books. We felt that by preparing newer, better editions of *Abraham in Egypt* and *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri* they would lead into his ultimate Egyptological work, *One Eternal Round*. In 1993 we did finally receive his approval to republish *Abraham in Egypt*, 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, and it was truly 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, etc. 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. [Phyllis must not have been home because] 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.^{xxv}

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.^{xxvi} 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 *When the Lights Went Out: Three Studies on the Ancient Apostasy*. Again in 2006 we met to reevaluate the remaining materials.^{xxvii} Our goal became the completion of the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley by the hundredth anniversary of his birth on 27 March 2010.

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.^{xxviii} 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.^{xxix} 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.^{xxx} We were rather reluctant to 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 blue, yellow, pink, or orange). 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.^{xxxi} 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 4,000 footnotes). John Gee's source-checking experience on earlier Collected Works volumes was invaluable—he knew the sources inside and out and had many of them in his office.

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

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—on the beds, the tables, the floors, etc. This was 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.^{xxxii}

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 the material from his four upstairs bedrooms.

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 was 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 that night softened 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.^{xxxiii}

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 23 February 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 coauthor could pull this volume together.^{xxxiv}

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.^{xxxv} From that time, Mike took charge of the numerous electronic files and spent months and years to distill the approximately 1600 pages down to a manageable 600. 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.^{xxxvi} 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 weeded out, and Michael Lyon and I worked and reworked a list of illustrations to enhance the book. Often, when I would regretfully tell him we couldn't use one more picture, Michael 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.

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.^{xxxvii} 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.^{xxxviii} 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 (assuming Michael and I had finished writing them) 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 the book wasn't ready to be sent off for printing until 21 January 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 in the Collected Works 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 e-mail message to her to tell her that he was not the editor but that 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 from the previous book and made a couple of changes without paying attention to my text. Talk about getting in under the wire!^{xxxix}

In the last few weeks, we also had to finalize the cover design and text. Of course you know the striped design itself was determined by precedence, with the exception of *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*.

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 27 March 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,^{xi} and otherwise enjoy an evening together.^{xii} In honor of this last book in the series coming out, several of us gathered at our home to celebrate.

Conclusion

My close work in preparing volumes 9–19 in the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley for publication has allowed me to associate with this brilliant but humble man. I was constantly amazed at his insights and his ability to glean the big picture from the thousands of sources he read (and remembered).

I was particularly attracted to Nibley’s writings in *Approaching Zion*, his articles on the temple, and little gems that seemed to resonate with my soul in *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri*. It was such a pleasure to interact with someone whose own enthusiasm for the gospel was only bolstered by what he found in his research and studies. To him, his discoveries meant that a divine hand was directing the happenings in the universe. He and the Lord had a quiet understanding about where he could best serve, and he never sought for positions of power or influence. In fact, he was often astonished at the effect some of his writings had on others. Brother Nibley was sometimes asked how we could live the law of consecration in these days, and his reply was, “That is between you and the Lord.”

Along with Brother Nibley, who entered mortality just over one hundred years ago, I trust that we will use the gifts we have been given to solve the problems we face and thereby bring joy into our lives.

ⁱ See Shirley S. Ricks, “A Sure Foundation,” *FARMS Review* 20/2 (2008): 253–91, a review of Ronald V. Huggins, “Hugh Nibley’s Footnotes,” *Salt Lake City Messenger* 110 (May 2008): 9–21.

ⁱⁱ “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, 6 June 2005.

ⁱⁱⁱ See “Hugh Nibley/Footnotes,” at en.fairmormon.org/Hugh_Nibley:Footnotes (accessed 8 September 2008).

^{iv} See www.usfca.edu/org/mlj/submissions/index.html for *Maritime Law Journal* submissions (accessed 8 September 2008).

^v 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, Janet Carpenter (Hovorka), 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 reads the manuscripts and makes excellent suggestions before they are published. A final tally for those who were recognized in the front matter for work on the CWHN: 13 scholarly editors, 4 illustrators, 3 who wrote forewords, 10 individuals at Deseret Book, Pat Ward, Phyllis Nibley, and 76 students or staff.

^{vi} John W. Welch, e-mail correspondence, 11 August 2008.

^{vii} Fran Clark (Hafen), journal entry, 7 August 1988, 1.

^{viii} According to Glen Cooper, personal communication, 8 October 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."

^{ix} James V. Tredway, personal communication, 11 August 2008, 6–7.

^x Phyllis Nibley, personal conversation with Shirley Ricks, 11 September 2008.

^{xi} According to Matthew Roper, "When I started checking the footnotes for *Mythmakers* 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."

^{xii} Tredway, personal communication, 11 August 2008, 7–8. 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, 3 October 2008.

^{xiii} On 15 July 2010, in an office at the conservation room in the new Church History Library in Salt Lake City, I saw this notice posted: “Make your mark in the classroom, not in Harvard books.”

^{xiv} 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 (accessed 7 October 2008).

^{xv} 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.

^{xvi} Cooper, personal communication, 8 October 2008, 1, admits that “occasionally he would read a source in an idiosyncratic way, but that’s the scholar’s prerogative.”

^{xvii} Hugh Nibley, “Translation,” notes from a presentation, 11 February 1975, Salt Lake City, Utah, 3.4. In this particular passage, he was referring to translating poetry.

^{xviii} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 10 November 1988. Stephen and I also had the opportunity to attend other lectures, presentations, and dinners by or in honor of Hugh Nibley: recognition banquet at Deseret Book at which Hugh was presented the Excellence in Writing award for the year (February 1989); Nibley’s fifth lecture on “One Eternal Round” (1 August 1990); dinner in honor of Nibley’s 80th birthday as well as the completion of the *Festschrift* volumes (already mentioned above, 7 September 1990); last Nibley lecture on “One Eternal Round”

(26 September 1990); Nibley awarded the Orton Award for LDS Literature (and the associated \$5000 check) at the FARMS house (24 August 1995); dinner at the Provo Park Hotel in conjunction with the International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls (16 July 1996); open house honoring Phyllis and Hugh Nibley on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary (18 August 1996); lecture in the Assembly Hall in Salt Lake City (28 October 1999); presentation at BYU by Nibley on temples everywhere (Nibley left before the lunch, 4 December 1999); dinner party in the Skyroom of the Wilkinson Center for Hugh Nibley's upcoming 90th birthday (he was a bit late because he had to go home to get his teeth so he could enjoy the dinner; 23 March 2000); open house for Hugh Nibley at the Women's Council Center put on by Nibley's family (25 March 2000); dinner and program in the president's dining room followed by a brief ceremony and ribbon cutting at the library for the Hugh Nibley Ancient Studies room (14 November 2001); and funeral at the Provo Tabernacle, also attended by Elders Dallin Oaks, Jeffrey Holland, Merrill Bateman, and Cecil Samuelson (2 March 2005).

^{xix} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 7 September 1990.

^{xx} The book reviews appeared in *Eloquent Witness: Nibley on Himself, Others, and the Temple* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2008), 93–107, and “Genesis of the Written Word” in *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS), 450–90.

^{xxi} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 26 October 1990.

^{xxii} Hugh Nibley, “The Faith of an Observer: Conversations with Hugh Nibley,” in *Eloquent Witness*, 154–55.

^{xxiii} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 26 September 1991.

^{xxiv} Although Michael and I both attended Provo High School, we were barely acquainted then.

^{xxv} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 13 December 2000.

^{xxvi} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 3 May 2000.

^{xxvii} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 22 November 2006.

^{xxviii} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 8 December 1999.

^{xxix} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 9 May 2001.

^{xxx} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 18 May 2001.

^{xxx} 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 west basement of the Smith Family Living Center before it was torn down.

^{xxxii} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 31 May 2002.

^{xxxiii} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 19 August 2002.

^{xxxiv} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 23 February 2005.

^{xxxv} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 24 February 2005.

^{xxxvi} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 5 February 2009.

^{xxxvii} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 28 August 2009.

^{xxxviii} For example, she corrected “rights of passage” to “rites of passage.” Another change she caught was “well-known Egyptian heads [should have been “beads”] of Egyptian faience and coated with Egyptian blue glaze” in the barrows of Salisbury Plain near Stonehenge.

^{xxxix} Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 20 January 2010.

^{xi} In my copy of *Abraham in Egypt* is written: Hugh Nibley scripsit SR fix it.

^{xli} See, for example, Shirley S. Ricks, journal entry, 11 June 1992.