



RICK GRUNDER — BOOKS

Box 500, Lafayette, New York 13084-0500 – (315) 677-5218
www.rickgrunder.com (email: grunderbooks@gmail.com)



OCTOBER 15, 2025

HOFMANNIA

Forty years since the bombings.

"On the morning of Oct. 15, 1985, a homemade bomb went off at the Judge Building in downtown Salt Lake City and killed financial consultant Steve Christensen, who collected historical documents. A short time later, a second bomb went off in Holiday, killing Kathy Sheets, the wife of Christensen's former boss.

"A day later, a bomb went off in a car parked in downtown Salt Lake City, seriously injuring document dealer Mark Hofmann and setting off an investigation that lasted more than a year."

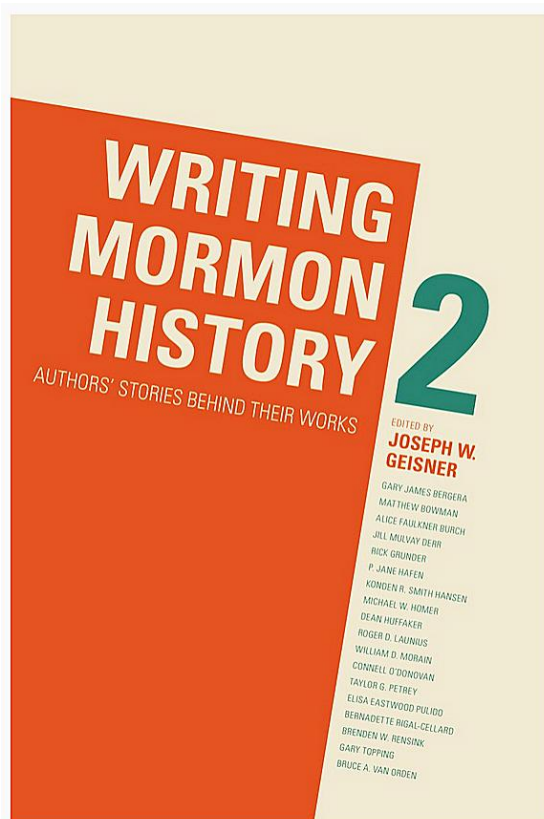
– "'Murder Among the Mormons' brings the story of infamous Salt Lake City bombings to Netflix. The story of Mark Hofmann and the LDS Church is a true-crime drama centered on religion." *Salt Lake Tribune* [article online](#), Feb. 24, 2021.

"Over a five-year period, starting in 1980, Hofmann would 'find' nearly four hundred and fifty Mormon documents, which he would sell to the church for hundreds of thousands of dollars. Nearly all of them were sensational documents that shed important new light on Mormon history. To other dealers working in the field it appeared that Hofmann had almost magical powers. 'I called him the Magic Man,' confided Rick Grunder, a rare documents dealer who specializes in Mormon manuscripts and knew Hofmann in Salt Lake City. 'He was like a nondescript Richard Cory, fluttering pulses when he said, "Good Morning," glittering when he walked. Not by his appearance or by his manner. He didn't stand out. I never heard him raise his voice or exhibit any kind of bravado. The charisma he enjoyed was because of what we thought he had. He convinced us that he knew something we did not, that he had access to things we could otherwise never hope to find. There I was, grubbing around in piles of old paper, and not getting very far. Mark

seemed to just wave his wand and this amazing stuff turned up. He was the Mormon Indiana Jones who could lead us to impossible treasures of information and wealth."

Simon Worrall, *The Poet and the Murderer: A True Story of Literary Crime and the Art of Forgery* (New York: Dutton, 2002), 114-15.

FREE SHIPPING & INSURANCE ON ALL ITEMS



—AND FOR SOMETHING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT - with essays by nineteen people telling how they came to create works on Latter-day topics:

WRITING MORMON HISTORY 2

"Joseph Geisner has outdone himself with volume 2 of *Writing Mormon History*. He has managed, yet again, to bring together the best and the brightest of the Mormon history community and convinced them to pull back the curtain to offer readers rare glimpses into the stories behind the stories that they tell. This tantalizing collection includes essays from seasoned veterans as well as up-and-coming scholars who are already making their own mark on the field. Mormon studies enthusiasts will embrace this compilation and be left wanting more." —W. Paul Reeve

Published by [Signature Books](#) and available at [Amazon](#). Includes my chapter, "The Spirit and the Bride: Writing Mormon Parallels and 116."

- 1 **ABRAHAM papyrus** (fraudulently attributed by Mark Hofmann to the mythical McLellin Collection). A tiny **FRAGMENT OF PAPYRUS** accompanied by a small roughly-torn strip of paper bearing a **PENCILLED NOTE IN THE HAND OF MARK HOFMANN**: "13 Aug 85 From #3" [Salt Lake City, mid-September 1985].



A minuscule scrap of blank papyrus, approximately 1 cm. long X 2 mm. wide, plus another much narrower strand of equal length. The piece of paper bearing Hofmann's identification, printed in pencil, measures about $\frac{3}{4}$ X $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

\$1,200

Multum in parvo. This curious artifact has been in my custody for a third of a century, since August 1992 when it was sent to me by a longtime friend and trusted collector for evaluation. He explained to me at that time, thirty-three years ago, that Hofmann gave him this note and fragment in mid-September 1985. He now supplies his signed letter to accompany these items, and writes as follows:

The fragment of papyrus with note in pencil written by Mark Hofmann identifying it as coming from Facsimile #3 of the Book of Abraham, was presented to me by Hofmann in mid-September, 1985 at a time he was marketing a large papyrus and a spurious document signed by Solomon Spaulding and Sidney Rigdon, as proof that it was a portion of what he proclaimed to be the William McLellin collection that he was planning to sell to the LDS Church. I remember thinking how generous he was to give me a fragment of Facsimile #3 of LDS scripture, even a small

fragment. Of course, the papyrus is an authentic Egyptian piece that Hofmann had purchased from manuscript dealer Ken Rendell but it had no LDS connection. He was likely trying to create a buzz about the reality of the document stash, although, as we later discovered, he did not have such a collection and plans to forge such items never came to fruition.

Another very longtime friend supplies indirect context for the above in his noted work *Victims: The LDS Church and the Mark Hofmann Case*. The setting is the 1986 preliminary hearing of evidence against Hofmann for forgery and murder . . .

By the evening of April 21, . . . [Dallin Oaks'] doubts had withered. Summing up what he had heard about the hearings, Oaks wrote, "The evidence against Hofmann has been very damning."

"Tell us where you were and who, if anyone, brought that document to your attention," Bob Stott instructed witness Steven G. Barnett the following morning after showing him the Spalding-Rigdon document.

"I was at my desk in the rare book room and Mark Hofmann brought it to me," said Barnett, who was the rare and used book buyer of Cosmic Aeroplane Books, a Salt Lake City bookstore. Hofmann offered the document to the store for two thousand dollars. Barnett said he would like to research the document, and Hofmann left it with him.

That evening, Barnett testified, he learned that the Solomon Spalding familiar to Latter-day Saints had died several years before the date on the document. Barnett assumed the document was authentic but that the signature of Spalding belonged to a different man of the same name. . . .

Next to take the stand was Kenneth Rendell, the Massachusetts dealer who had been engaged before the bombings to evaluate the authenticity of the salamander letter. . . .

.

Rendell also testified that his office sent Hofmann two pieces of papyrus on consignment in mid-September 1985. Hofmann neither paid for nor returned them, he said. When D'Elia showed him a piece of papyrus, Rendell said the exhibit was only a segment of one of the pieces he had sent Hofmann. Later, he testified that cutting up papyrus reduces its commercial value."¹

AT LEAST THREE POINTS of detail fascinate me here:

1) Why did Hofmann date the presentation of this small gift (now offered for sale here) to a time *more than a month before the fact*, and equally prior to the actual

¹ Richard E. Turley, Jr., *Victims: The LDS Church and the Mark Hofmann Case* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 275-76. For more about Hofmann's spurious Spalding-Rigdon document, see [item 14 \(Pinnock\)](#) in this catalog.

date when he is said to have obtained papyri on consignment from Rendell (on September 16, 1985²)?

2) Since Hofmann was claiming that the mythical McLellin collection contained the original papyrus of the Book of Abraham hypocephalus (Facsimile 2), why did he identify the present fragment as coming from Facsimile 3 instead?

3) Is there any relationship between the August 13, 1985 date written by Hofmann on the slip accompanying the present fragment - and the fact that just the day before that, on August 12, he had signed an agreement to buy a half-million-dollar home overlooking Salt Lake City?³ Five thousand dollars in earnest money was due, and another \$195,000 at closing scheduled for October 15 (ultimately the day his bombs would kill Steve Christensen and Kathy Sheets).

BY SEPTEMBER 23, Hofmann was trying desperately to peddle the larger Rendell papyrus portions to Deseret Book, Brent Ashworth and no doubt others. Hofmann's financial straits were tightening by the hour. Then he learned that Rendell was coming to Salt Lake City soon, and would likely visit Steve Christensen and other people who would be eager to show him Hofmann's supposed Book of Abraham remnants which Rendell would immediately recognize as his own now-mutilated property having nothing to do with Abraham.

Ironically, this notion of breaking up a precious ancient Egyptian artifact connects to a personal memory I recorded in 2021 in *Reminiscences*. It is the sort of odd thing one could hardly forget:

I [Grunder] personally remember Hofmann asking me on two different occasions (separated by a number of weeks or months), what a piece of papyrus would cost. Each time, I told him that a generic sample of papyrus bearing unremarkable writing from around two thousand years ago might work out to approximately one hundred dollars per square inch. On the second occasion when I gave him that answer, he smiled. My rough valuation was intended merely as a basis to calculate what a larger example might cost. It turned out that those puzzling conversations partook much more of the picaresque than I had reason to imagine at the time.⁴

² Hofmann chronology by David J. Whittaker, available online at:

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/the-mark-hofmann-case-a-basic-chronology>

³ Whittaker chronology.

⁴ *Reminiscences of Lyn Richard Jacobs*, [1987 with notes and commentary by Rick Grunder. (South Jordan, Utah: Bear Hollow Books, 2021), 80-81, n.54. For this book, see item 13 in this catalog.

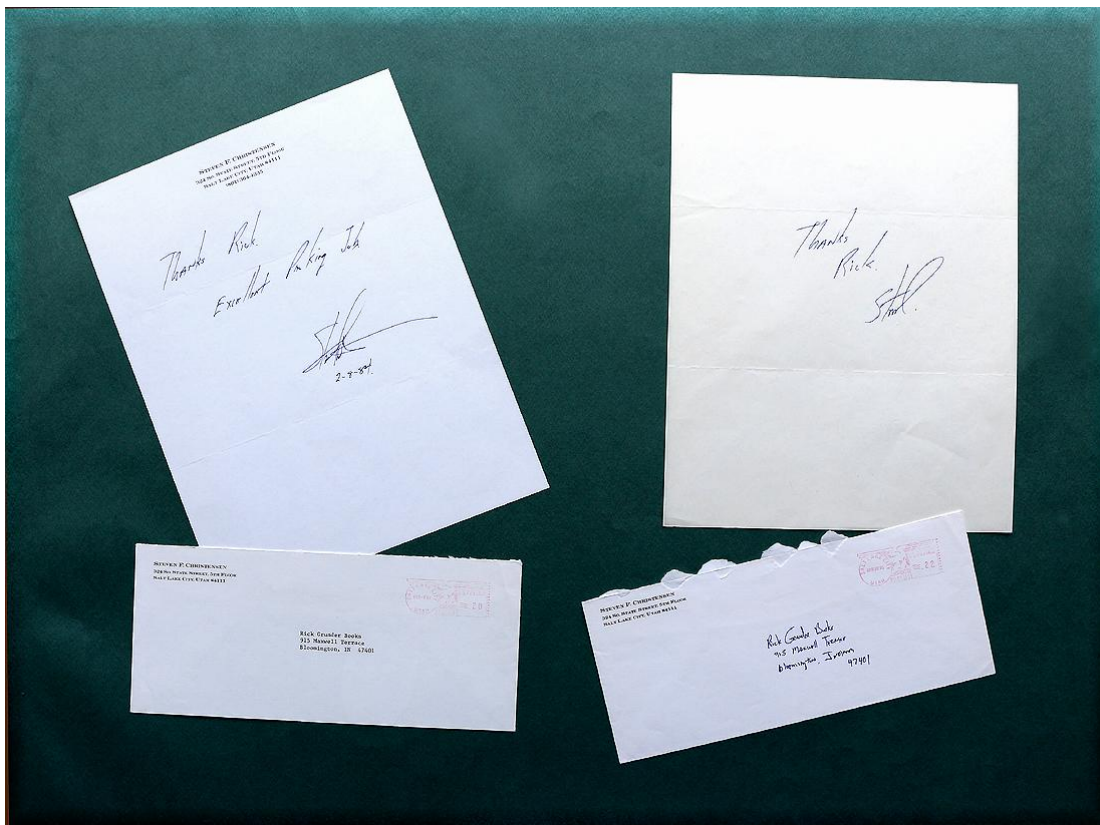
- 2 **CHRISTENSEN, STEVEN F.** AUTOGRAPH NOTE SIGNED on his personal letterhead stationery. Salt Lake City, February 8, 1984.

11 X 8½ inches. Written large in blue ink with an excellent large signature and hand-numbered date. On substantial bond paper, formally printed with his name (no business listed) at 324 So. State Street, 5th floor, Salt Lake City. Condition as new; two horizontal folds for mailing (not affecting the signature).

\$250

Reading simply, "Thanks Rick! Excellent Packing Job. [signature] 2-8-84."
:: WITH :: the original mailing envelope (my address typed), postmarked February 9, made of quality paper, neatly opened.

Steve would call in response to my catalogs and very humbly, quietly order a long list of both expensive and ordinary research items. He once apologized for calling slightly late in the day. I assured him that in his case, he would be welcome to call even at 3:00 a.m.



ITEM 2 (at left) and ITEM 3 (right)

- 3 [another example] **CHRISTENSEN, STEVEN F.** AUTOGRAPH NOTE SIGNED on a plain sheet of typing or copy paper (without letterhead), No date, but with the original mailing envelope present and postmarked April 30, 1985.

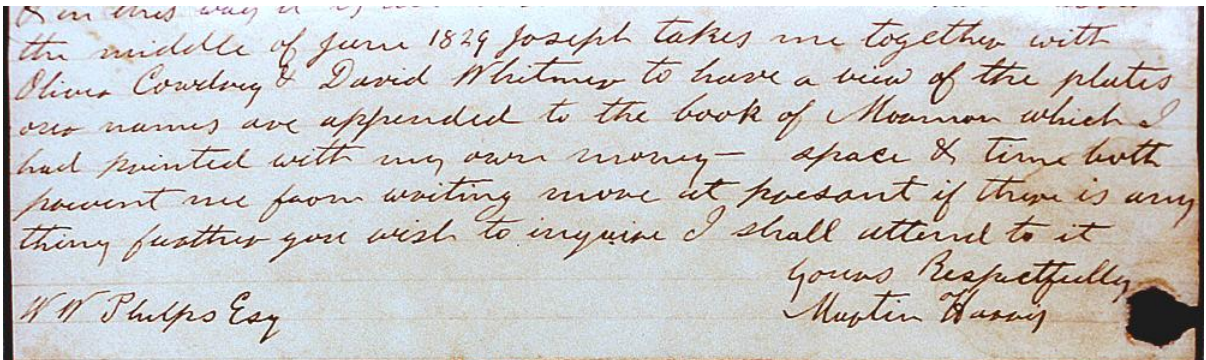
11 X 8½ inches. Written large in blue ink in the center portion of the otherwise blank page, between the two horizontal mailing folds. In fine, clean condition. The envelope has been somewhat roughly opened. It is printed with Steve's return address as in the example above, but my address has been hand-printed in blue ink (quite possibly Steve's hand). **\$200**

"Thanks Rick. [signature]" This would have contained Steve's payment for his purchases from my *Mormon List Ten* (April 1985) from which he bought four items by or related to Hosea Ballou; also, the *Constitution of the American Bible Society* (printed pamphlet, 1816); a minister's biography c. 1833 with a brief allusion to salamanders; a modern edition of Seaver's *Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison*; and Israel Worsley's *View of the American Indians . . .* (London, 1828; first edition).

By about the time I deposited Steve's check, he would have little more than five months left to live.

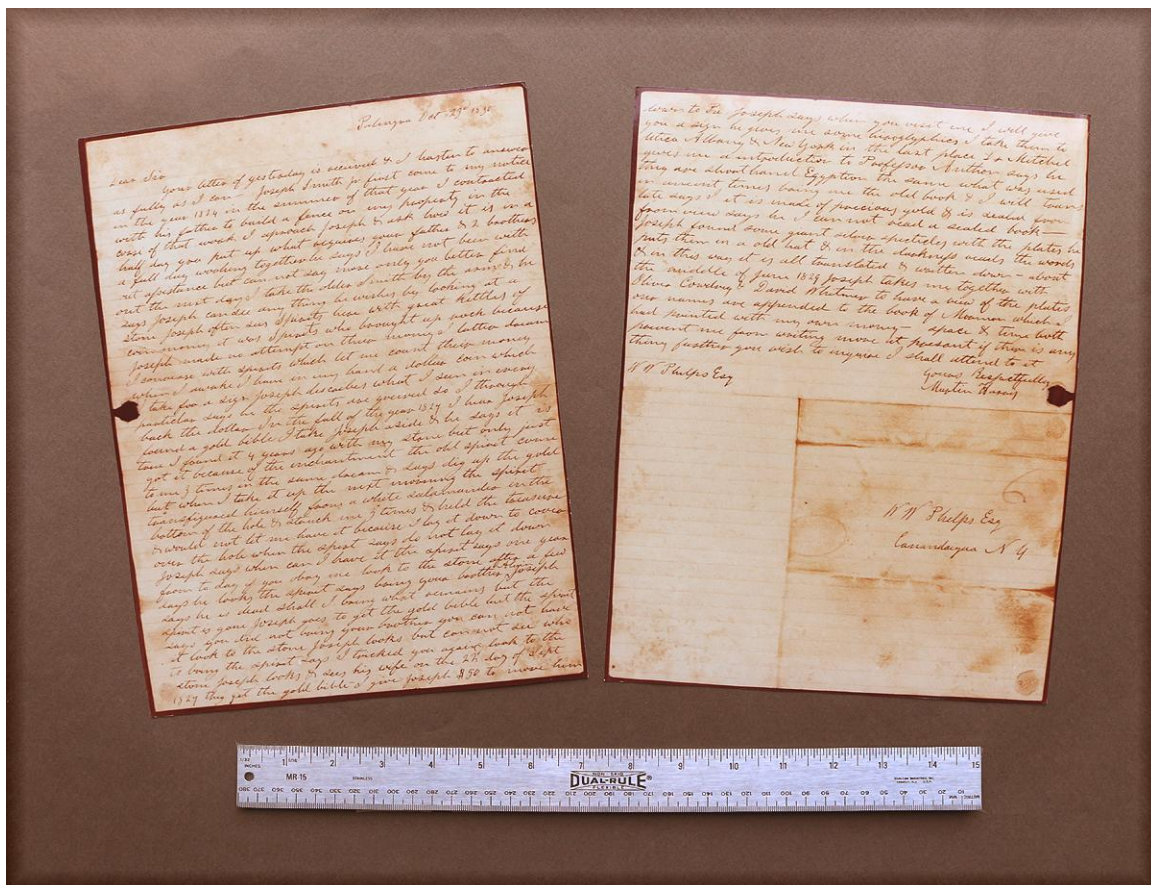
4 [HARRIS, Martin (forged by Hofmann)] Large COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS of the SALAMANDER LETTER, ca. 1984.

Approx. 29.6 X 22.7 cm. (about 11½ X 9 inches). 2 leaves of substantial glossy photograph paper, each printed on one side only, in color. In fine, clean condition. **\$1,500**



EARLIER than the 1992 illustration in *Victims*⁵ (which shows the original forged document, ostensibly dated October 23, 1830, after a top corner area of blank paper had been excised for forensic analysis). I presume that these are from a batch created for Steve Christensen while researching the letter. I have owned them for so many years that I cannot recall where I got them. They may have been among the papers of Lyn Jacobs, which I inherited in 1995. Illustrated below:

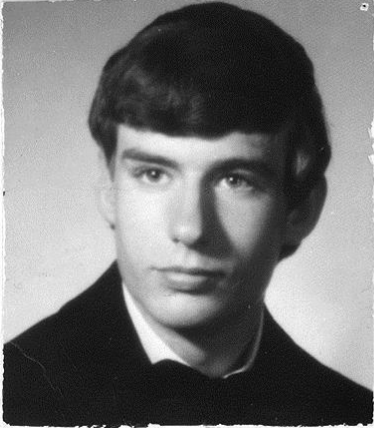
⁵ *Victims*, 81.



Hofmann

Mark William

January 25, 1974	January 25, 1976
Portsmouth	January 26, 1974
Dorset D.L.A.	May 18, 1974
Cockett	August 24, 1974
Roath D.L.C.	Nov. 6, 1974
Caerphilly	Nov. 16, 1974
Southmead D.L.	January 18, 1975
Bath D.L.	June 14, 1975
Cwmbran	Dec. 12, 1975



Salt Lake City, Utah

- 5 [HOFMANN, Mark William] Original PHOTOGRAPH PRINT of Hofmann's apparent high school graduation picture mounted on the blank side of an ordinary lined INDEX CARD USED ON HIS MISSION HOME'S ORGANIZATIONAL BOARD, with corner

pinholes from posting in various positions including district leader in Bath for six months. [Bristol; England Southwest Mission], 1974-76.

2¼ X 2 inches (photograph); 3 X 5 inches (index card mount); verso blank. Very good. Very slight creasing (noticeable by holding the card at an angle in bright light), presumably caused by inserting the card in typewriters to add each new assignment location and date. **\$2,000**

I have owned this fascinating item continuously since the 1980s when I obtained it from Shannon P. Flynn, who in turn obtained it from from Mark's wife Dorrie following Mark's incarceration in the Utah State Prison. It is surely among the best primary sources extant recording the precise dates and districts where Hofmann served during those two years. Kept privately until 2021 when I used it as an illustration in the Jacobs *Reminiscences* book, p. [50] (see [item 13](#) in this catalog).

- 6 **[HOFMANN, Mark William]** Original PHOTOGRAPH STRIP OF THREE SUCCESSIVE PORTRAIT IMAGES of Hofmann at age nineteen or twenty in coat & tie with "missionary" haircut, taken by an automatic photo booth machine in common use at the time. England? 1974-75?

15.2 X 4 cm., each image (arranged vertically on the strip) measuring approximately 2 X 1½ inches. A fourth image, no longer present, was excised from the bottom of the strip, most likely for use on a British identity card. (I have a nearly identical photo strip of my own, also with a fourth image removed for use on my French *carte de séjour*, taken in a booth machine in Paris in September 1967.) In fine, clean condition.

\$1,000

Like item 5 above, I obtained this through Shannon Flynn in the 1980s and kept it privately until 2021 when I used one of the three images (shown clearly, AT RIGHT) to illustrate the Jacobs *Reminiscences* book, p. [66] (see item 13 in this catalog). IF YOU WOULD LIKE two pictures of young Hofmann that still *have never been published*, here they are. The one at the top is slightly better than the one I published, having a little less glare to the eyeglasses. The other (blurred AT BOTTOM, here) is much different, with a slightly open-mouth smile showing a few teeth, and looking more friendly. These are nonetheless more serious, with mature demeanor, a somewhat fuller face and hair more conservatively combed, than in an image of



Mark in *Salamander*⁶ (its illustration 18 following page 298) which is captioned "Elder Mark Hofmann prepares to leave the Salt Lake International Airport on January 24, 1974, for an LDS mission to England." The present photo strip may therefore have been taken at some later point during his mission when renewing his identity card. (The photo-paper company logo on the verso includes the printed company or brand initials P.M.I. Verso otherwise blank.)

- 7 **HOFMANN, MARK W[illiam]**. An Express Mail Service customer receipt form (USPS, Next Day Service; accomplished in manuscript) HAND-PRINTED BY "MARK HOFMANN" and ADDRESSED TO LYN JACOBS (in Cambridge, Massachusetts). Salt Lake City, December 19, no year given [but presumably 1984].

FROM: Mark Hofmann
P.O. Box 9282
S.L.C., UT 84109

EXPRESS MAIL
NEXT DAY SERVICE

POST OFFICE
TO ADDRESSEE

B58662984

ORIGIN:

Initials of Receiving Clerk: AJ

P.O. ZIP Code: 84101

Date in: 12-19 Time in: 12:57

Return Receipt Service

☐ To Whom & Date Del.

☐ To Whom, Date & Address of Del.

Weight: 1 Lbs

Postage & Fees: \$9.35

Customer Number: B58662984

TO: Lyn Jacobs
Christ Church Rectory
Zero Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

★ U.S.G.P.O. 1983-400-104 Label 11-B, Apr. 1983

Approximately 3½ X 7¼ inches, verso blank. The receipt is printed in blue and orange, and bears the initials of receiving clerk "AJ" at zip code 84101 on "12-19" at "12:57" (p.m.). Weight is noted as 1 lb., and the fee is \$9.35. In fine, clean condition except for somewhat rough tearing along the perforated edge at right (not near the writing by Hofmann or the clerk). **\$500**

"Mark Hofmann, PO Box 9282, S.L.C., UT 84109" to "Lyn Jacobs, Christ Church Rectory, Zero Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138." This is original hand-printing in blue ink by Hofmann (not an NCR second copy). It is somewhat unusual that he printed his full first name here instead of just his first initial.

I suggest the year date of 1984 above because I believe that was the only December during which Jacobs resided in Cambridge. Lyn attended Harvard

⁶ Linda Sillitoe and Allen D. Roberts, *Salamander: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders . . . with a forensic analysis by George J. Throckmorton*. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988).

Divinity School between January 1984 and April 1985 for his MTS degree (Master's in Theological Studies). To support his education there, he actively bought and sold rare books, including not only Mormon items, but also many first-edition literature titles. "I knew that I would have to eventually sell some of the rare books in my collection," Lyn later reminisced,

to meet future expenses. I left most of my valuable books with Donald Schmidt who was the L.D.S. Church archivist at the time. He placed them on a couple of shelves in the Church Historical Dept. vault for safe keeping. That was a great favor to me since I didn't know where I could store my books where they would be protected from possible damage. Schmidt was as interested in the non-English publications of the Church as I was, and so we had already worked together on many occasions to build both the Church's and my personal collection. I never asked for money from the Church. All of our transactions involved trading. [*Reminiscences*, 14]

- 8 **HOFMANN, MARK W[illiam]**. A plain business-size ENVELOPE HAND-PRINTED BY HOFMANN, ADDRESSED TO LYN JACOBS (in Cambridge, Massachusetts). Salt Lake City, no date or postal markings, but January 1984 – April 1985.

Approx. 4 X 9½ inches. Very good. Apparently once sealed lightly but opened so neatly that only one slight short tear (without loss) occurs in the lifted flap. \$285

M. Hofmann
P O Box 9282
SLC, UT 84109

Lyn R. Jacobs
5 St. Johns Road #20
Cambridge, MA 02138

No stamps or postmark. Perhaps used to contain a check inside an overnight postal or FedEx packet. No contents remain. All hand-printed, on the front (no cursive writing): "M. Hofmann, P O Box 9282, SLC, UT 84109" to "Lyn R. Jacobs, 5 St Johns Road #20, Cambridge, MA 02138."

I have no further knowledge or information regarding this piece, but see the general background I provide for item 7 (above) in this catalog. At this late date, it would not be possible to identify what this envelope contained.

- 9 **HOFMANN, MARK W[illiam]**. A U.S. Registered Mail square receipt (double-copy form with NCR second leaf) accomplished in manuscript hand-printing by Hofmann to Lyn Jacobs (in Cambridge, Massachusetts). Salt Lake City. No date (but January 1984 – April 1985).

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1982 — 555-875

REGISTERED NO.		POSTMARK OF	
Reg. Fee \$	Special Delivery \$		
Handling Charge \$	Return Receipt \$		
Postage \$	Restricted Delivery \$		
Received by		☐ Airmail	
Customer must declare Full value \$ 500.00		☒ With Postal Insurance \$25,000 Domestic Limit	
FROM M. Hofmann PO Box 9282 SLC, UT		ZIP CODE 84109	
TO Lyn Jacobs One Garden Street Cambridge, MA		ZIP CODE	

PS FORM 3806 JUNE 1982 RECEIPT FOR REGISTERED MAIL (Customer Copy) (See Information on Reverse)

Approximately 4¼ X 4¼ inches. With the very clear NCR "carbon" copy page still attached behind (giving you two items for the price of one). Condition essentially as new. **\$350**

Filled out but not actually used or postmarked. The parcel was thus not mailed using this form. Hofmann probably changed his mind and sent the parcel by some other means (perhaps with – or similar to – the overnight USPS Express Mail form, item 7, above, in this catalog).

"M. Hofmann, PO Box 9282, SLC, UT 84109" to "Lyn Jacobs, One Garden Street, Cambridge, MA [no zip code written]." Hofmann checks the "With Postal Insurance" box and stipulates a value of "500⁰⁰." (Maximum "Domestic Limit" coverage possible with this form was \$25,000.) I have no further knowledge or information regarding this piece, but see the general background I provide for item 7 (above) in this catalog.

- 10 **HOFMANN, MARK W[illiam]**. A Western Union "Telegraphic Money Order Receipt" form, NCR second-page COPY, accomplished in manuscript hand-printing and cursive signature by Hofmann, wiring \$500.00 to Lyn Jacobs (in Cambridge, Massachusetts). Salt Lake City, March 2[9?], [1984 or 1985].

5½ X 8 inches. NCR ("carbon") COPY only, but preserving considerable printing and information by Hofmann, including his light (copy) signature. The impressions are light, and the date stamp is too faint to read more clearly than transcribed above. In fine, clean condition. **\$400**

I believe Jacobs was in Cambridge during the months of March in both years I list above. While only the sender's NCR COPY, this form does provide lots of information, though I have no idea what this payment may have been for.

"Mark Mofmann, [residential street number blurred here] E. Marie Ave, SLC, UT 84109" to "Lyn R. Jacobs, 5 St. Johns Road #20, Cambridge, MA 02138." In

addition to this hand-printing by Hofmann, he also signed his name in semi-cursive at the bottom (in the original, of which this is only the NCR copy). Hofmann gives his phone number ending in 2392 (local prefix blurred here).

		Telegraphic Money Order Receipt		Mastercharge and Visa customers may file money orders up to \$1,000.00 by calling toll free: 800-325-6000 800-342-6700 (In Missouri)		PAYMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ <u>528.95</u> RECEIVED	
FILING TIME AND DATE		OFFICE		ACCTG. INFO.		SIGNED	
SENT TIME AND DATE		WORD COUNT		AMOUNT SENT		CHARGE	
OPR NBR		DO NOT WRITE ABOVE THIS LINE		MESSAGE		DELIVERY	
AMOUNT SENT (WRITE IN WORDS)		ANSWER NECESSARY		TAX		TOTAL	
IF RECIPIENT HAS NO ID, QUESTION NECESSARY		RECIPIENT'S PHONE		SENDER'S PHONE		SENDER'S ADDRESS	
RECIPIENT'S NAME		RECIPIENT'S ADDRESS		CITY		STATE	
RECIPIENT'S ADDRESS		CITY		STATE		ZIP	
SENDER'S NAME		SENDER'S ADDRESS		CITY		STATE	
SENDER'S ADDRESS		CITY		STATE		ZIP	
MESSAGE		SEE IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS FORM. PRESS FIRMLY. PRINT CLEARLY. WU 72 (R1-83)		WHEN SIGNED BELOW, THE SENDER ACKNOWLEDGES HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE TERMS OF THIS CONTRACT.		SENDER'S SIGNATURE	

A fun detail: In the space labeled "If recipient has no ID, question necessary," Hofmann has printed "Date of 1st BOM," and in the "Answer Necessary" space he writes "1830." I have no further knowledge or information regarding this piece, but see the general background I provide for item 7 (above) in this catalog.

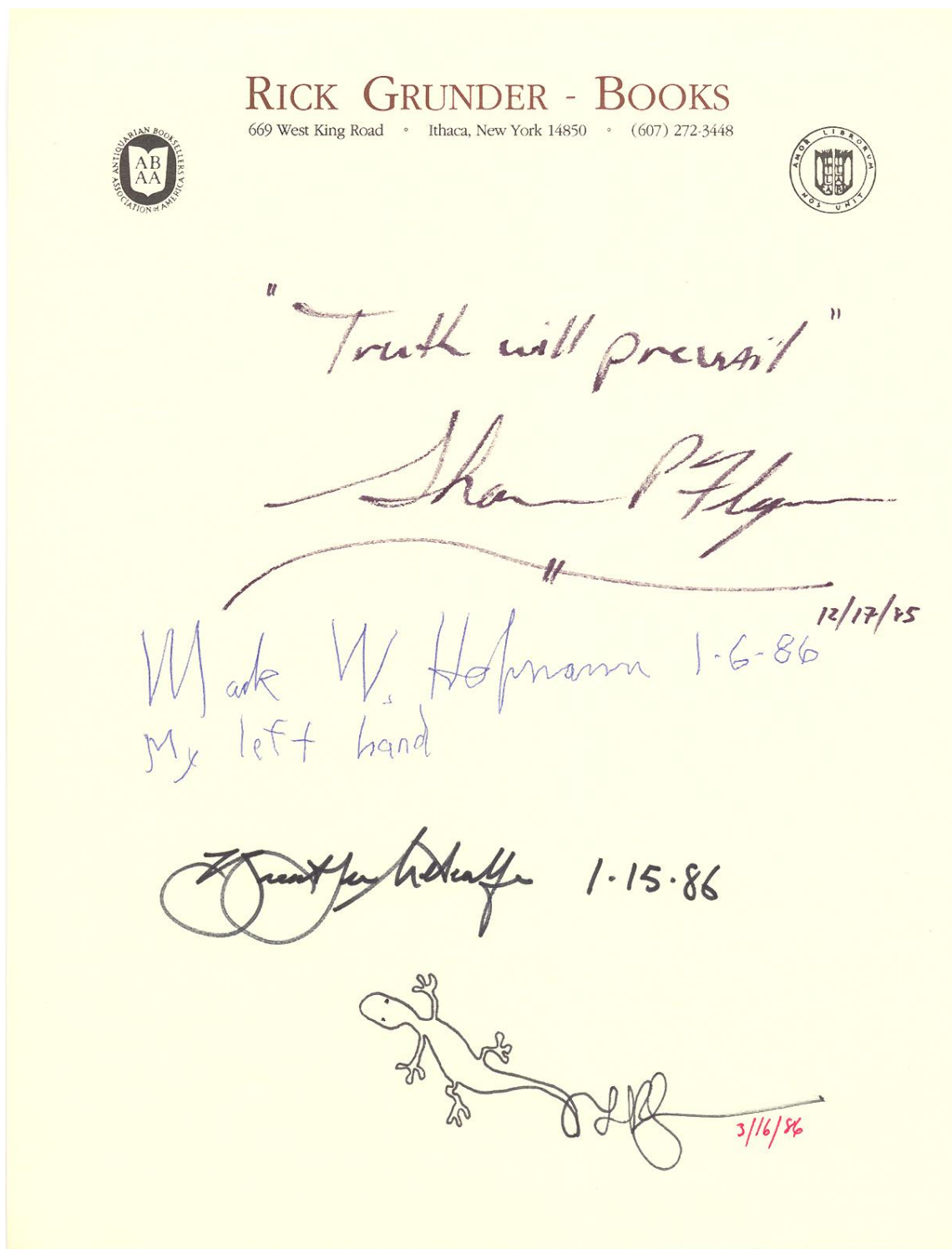
the black salamander

- 11 **HOFMANN, MARK W[illiam]**. AUTOGRAPH NOTE SIGNED, "Mark W. Hofmann 1-6-86 My left hand" on a sheet of my business stationery. [Salt Lake City], January 6, 1986.

One page, 8½ X 11 inches, verso blank. Condition as new. The purchaser of this piece may be amused when the item arrives with my 2025 invoice signed on identical custom stationery, still printed for me by the same company in Ithaca, New York after all these years. **\$1,750**

From the period at home, between the bombings and the preliminary hearing which ultimately sent Hofmann to prison for life.

RARE CURSIVE *FULL* SIGNATURE IN HOFMANN'S NATURALLY AWKWARD LEFT HAND,
WRITTEN WHILE HIS RIGHT HAND WAS MENDING FROM HIS OWN BOMB EXPLOSION.



:: ALSO SIGNED ::

by the late **Shannon P. FLYNN** ("Truth will prevail") December 17, 1985,

:: AND ::

by **Brent Lee METCALFE**, January 15, 1986,

:: AND :: with an outline drawing of a salamander in black ink by **Lyn Richard JACOBS** (1955-1995), the end of the tail forming his initials, "LRJ," March 16, 1986.

SIGNED at my request on the dates noted (the dates also written by the individual signers). The three friends of Hofmann (victims discussed in most of the books about the forgery/murders) signed this sheet when we still believed the man to be innocent of those crimes. Jacobs, who had been working on an original home-crafts style "stained glass" window portraying Joseph Smith, the white salamander and Angel Moroni, left off that project very shortly afterward, when evidence of Hofmann's guilt finally emerged which could not be doubted.

NOTE: I had about ten of these signed, nearly forty years ago. They were kept at my bank, and I let one out at a time, widely-spaced every few years (all offered copies having sold). Being manuscript, each example is naturally somewhat unique. In addition, *no two are alike* because Lyn drew the salamander on each example in a different color. I donated the beautiful white salamander version (gilt-outlined; illustrated in *Reminiscences*⁷) to the Jacobs papers at the University of Utah a few years ago, and now offer **MY OWN COPY** here - the "black salamander" version - for sale.

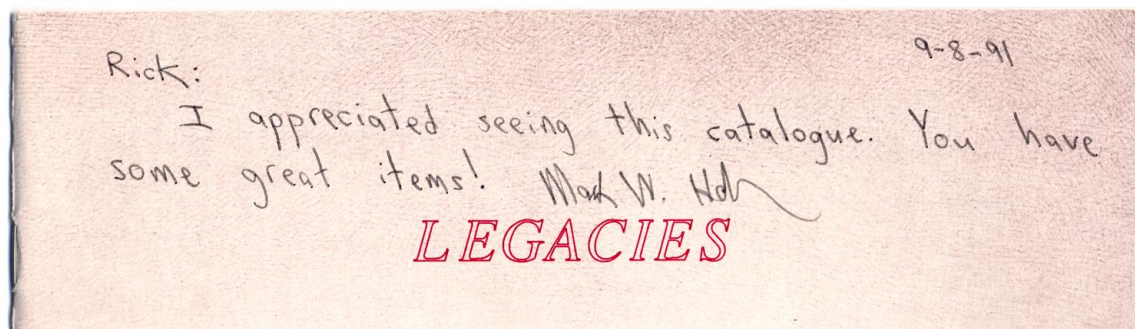
As an avid . . . *collector* of autographs, Mark must have sensed an ironic parallel situation when he signed this piece of paper . . .

All things considered, the autograph of Lord Nelson, another great adversary of Napoleon, is not so rare as the collector might expect. . . . Nelson lost his right arm at the Battle of Tenerife in July 1797. He learned to write quite well with his left hand, but the two hands are extremely distinctive: the normal hand slants strongly to the right; the left hand has a backward slant. [Jerry E. Patterson, *Autographs: A Collector's Guide* (NY, 1973), p. 157]

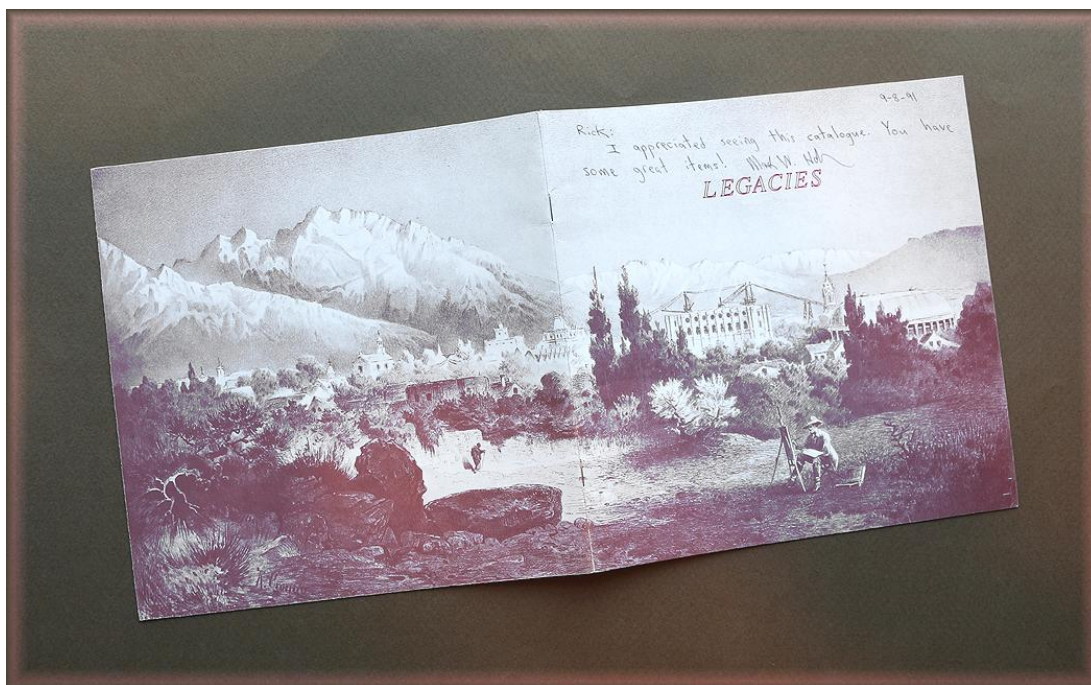
⁷ *Reminiscences*, 62.

- 12 **HOFMANN, MARK WILLIAM.** AUTOGRAPH NOTE SIGNED IN PRISON, on the front cover of my Catalogue Ten, *LEGACIES* (printed April 1991). Utah State Prison, Draper, Utah, September 8, 1991.

8½ X 8½ inches. 16 pp. Three black and white illustrations in the text. Original illustrated wrappers printed in reddish tones. In fine, clean condition. **\$1,000**



Our mutual friend, the late Shannon P. Flynn, visited the prison any number of times during those early years of Mark's incarceration. Shannon surprised me with this item which he sent to me by mail. I expect Hofmann thumbed through it carefully. It offered (and eventually sold) such items as the Kraus family's Nauvoo temple moonstone; a rare example of the illustrated Kinderhook plates broadside given by Emma Smith to someone in 1847; an enviable array of leading Mormons' signatures on a loan agreement in 1837; the Belcher-Dibble seerstone; and a lengthy letter from Brigham Young to Thomas L. Kane (December 15, 1859) calling the Mountain Meadows Massacre "horrifying . . . the recurring thought of it ever causes a shudder in my feelings. . . ."



A FEW ADDITIONAL COPIES of my above-described 1991 catalog (obviously NOT signed by Hofmann, but in as-new condition) remain available @ \$25⁰⁰ postpaid, or \$10⁰⁰ with the purchase of any other item in this catalog.

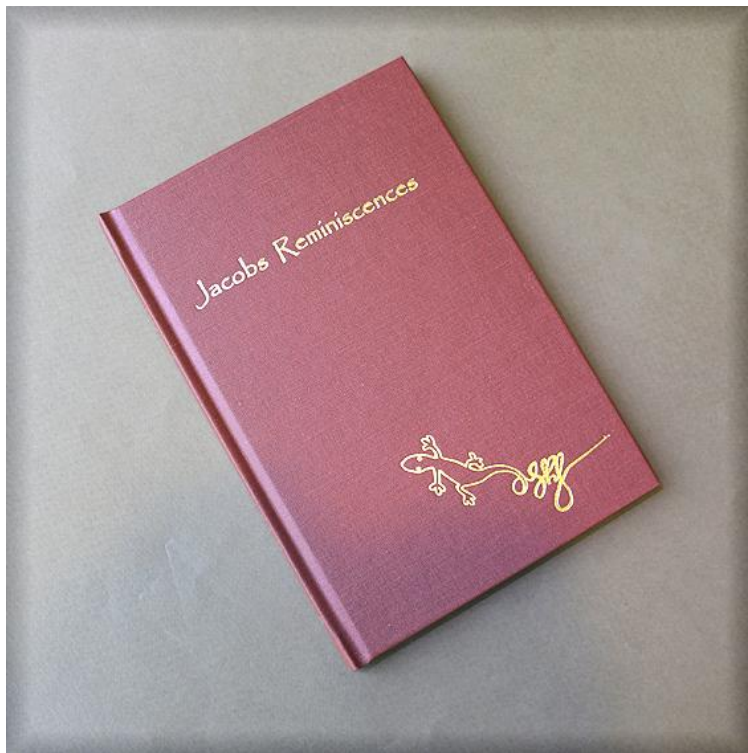
*[Mark] knew us all far better than he would ever let us know him.
... I think that I am more angry than embarrassed now - for ultimately,
from his own wife to President Hinckley, we were all betrayed. [48]*

- 13 **JACOBS, LYN RICHARD** (1955-1995). *REMINISCENCES of Lyn Richard Jacobs*[,] 1987 with notes and commentary by Rick Grunder. South Jordan, Utah: Bear Hollow Books, 2021.

22 cm. [x] pp.; [1]f.; 87 pp. Appendix, pp. 51-61; Notes, pp. [71]-87. Printed on semi-glossy paper with eight black and white illustrations from images never published before. Original gilt-lettered off-red cloth, the front board gilt-decorated with the outline of a salamander designed by Jacobs in early 1986, its tail forming his initials LRJ. Condition as new. **\$250**

Note on price: Copies are available from other booksellers at lower prices, but I have only a couple from the small initial batch (described below) that I can let go at this time.

FIRST and only edition, LIMITED to 100 copies. This became the final production of my friend Dr. Hugh McKell's BEAR HOLLOW BOOKS. He shipped a small



complimentary batch of these slim volumes to me on June 4, 2021 –and died five days later. He remains in the hearts of many bibliophiles and other historians, deeply missed.

THESE *REMINISCENCES*, as I explain in the introduction,

are the complete contents of Lyn's original, heavily-corrected typescript I found in a box in my basement in the summer of 2020. I must have seen it before, though perhaps during the distracting period in 1995 when Jacobs left all his books and papers to me. This account

springs from the darkest period of his life while he struggled to process and move beyond the disastrous parts of his affiliation with another friend who (as I try to explain blithely to folks I meet in the East) "was a quiet, unassuming guy who turned out to be a forger and pipe-bomb murderer." –or as Jana Riess has quipped recently, "the nice sociopath next door." Not everyone can say that.

Most people who knew Mark Hofmann still suffer from persistent puzzlement over the allure of it all. One small but consequential lie Lyn told while thus enthralled grew gradually out of hand until it devastated his life. [viii]

JACOBS writes, on introducing the Salamander letter in late 1983 . . .

I RETURNED to Salt Lake around the middle of December. I saw Mark almost immediately and he turned the letter over to me. We again discussed possible options for its sale and finally agreed that the best first step would be a visit to the Church. I told Mark that if [Don] Schmidt appeared interested, I would suggest a meeting with Pres. Hinckley.

I presented the document to Schmidt first, early one rainy morning during the last week of December. He read it and ushered me into G. Homer Durham's office, who suggested that a visit with Pres. Hinckley was in order. I immediately proceeded to the Church Administration building.

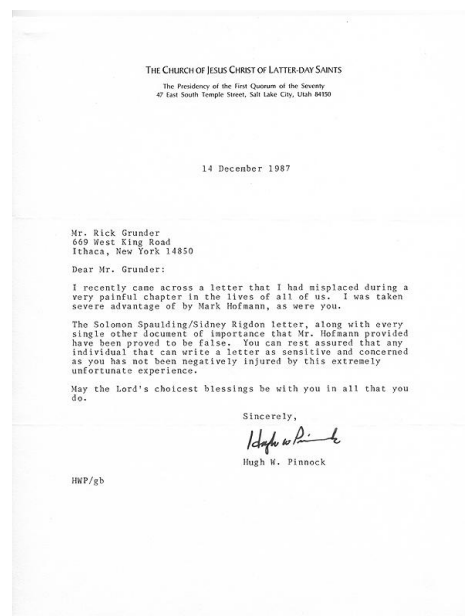
At first Pres. Hinckley appeared more interested in my background than in the letter, asking me where I was from, what I was doing, and, of all things, where I had gone on my mission and who my mission president was. After this, we discussed the letter and I told him it was mine. He asked where it had been found. I told him New York state, since that was where Mark had insisted he had gotten it, and I had no reason to doubt him then. I do not remember if Hinckley asked me if I was the one who actually located it or not. I do not recall having responded to such a question. He may have assumed that I was the finder as well as the owner. He appeared diplomatic about the whole affair and in fact seemed a little disinterested. He read the letter through carefully, and then point blank asked me what I wanted for it. I told him that I was not interested in a cash transaction, but wanted to trade something for it. I suggested an 1849 Mormon gold coin, which he clearly thought was ridiculous. Of course I was stabbing in the dark since Mark had only estimated the letter's value at around 30 to 40 thousand dollars. I then asked for one of the Church's duplicate *Book of Commandments*. Hinckley suggested that the price of documents was getting a bit out of hand and didn't really wish to consider such a high value for the letter. Perhaps he didn't want to set a precedent. I don't know. All I know is that he was not willing to pay the price, so I was unable to make a deal. [pp. 21-22]

*. . . a very painful chapter in the lives of all of us.
I was taken severe advantage of by Mark Hofmann, as were you.*

- 14 **PINNOCK, Hugh W[allace]**. (1934-2000, First Quorum of the Seventy, 1977-2000 [Presidency of the Seventy, 1986-89]; innocently entangled in \$195,000 funding liability for Hofmann to secure the mythical McLellin collection to donate to the LDS Church). Poignant TYPED LETTER SIGNED to Rick Grunder (in Ithaca, New York). Salt Lake City, 14 December 1987.

11 X 8½ inches. One page on the printed letter-head of "The Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, 47 East South Temple Street . . . , " Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Verso blank. In fine, clean condition; horizontal folds from mailing, not touching text or signature.

⌘ WITH ⌘ the original cover (envelope) printed with the return address of "The First Quorum of the Seventy" addressed to me in Ithaca and postmarked December 15, 1987 (in fine condition; neatly opened and with a USPS sticker forwarding this letter to my then-new address in Syracuse, New York). **\$1,000**



Elder Pinnock had traveled to Boise to speak at my father's funeral in early 1982, though he would not likely have recalled that gesture during what would follow. An adequate background to this letter is too complicated to recite in full, but here are some essential points:

In mid-1985, Hofmann duped Pinnock into personally securing a loan of nearly \$200K with which to buy the supposed McLellin Collection somewhere in Texas. Two weeks later on July 12, 1985, Hofmann showed Pinnock a photocopy of a (forged) document supposedly from that collection. It associated Sidney Rigdon with Solomon Spaulding in the 1820s. By sheerest bad coincidence, it happened that I had flown to Salt Lake City that very day. Months later, during another visit to Salt Lake, I was grilled in a bleak compartment that looked like an interrogation room from TV's "Law and Order." I thought I was visiting investigators Ken Farnsworth and Dick Forbes to be of some assistance voluntarily. Instead, they treated me badly, and wouldn't explain what it was all about.⁸

⁸ Forbes became much more amiable months later when visiting my home in Ithaca near the end of the investigation. I was surprised, however, when he thought my (Palmer Method) penmanship learned in grade school looked like nineteenth-century handwriting.

Once the circumstances finally became clear to me from other sources (see, for example, item 1 in this catalog), I procured documentation from Continental Airlines proving that my flight to Salt Lake was delayed until nearly 7:30 p.m. on that unfortunate July 12, apparently too late (per my much later, cordial phone conversation with investigator Mike George) to correspond with the time of day when Hofmann had shown the forged document copy to Pinnock.

A YEAR AFTER THE FACT, meanwhile, on July 1, 1986, I wrote earnestly to Pinnock, asking if he could recall what time of day Hofmann had shown him that spurious Rigdon-Spalding deed. The whole thing was preposterous anyway (in retrospect) since Solomon Spalding had died in 1816, years before the Hofmann-altered date on the document. As I would write later in *Mormon Parallels*, "It is bad enough for an antiquarian to be called a forger, but it is positively irritating to be considered an idiot."⁹

It took Elder Pinnock seventeen months to reply, and he never answered my question. Of course I felt peeved at the time. Yet in retrospect, the poor guy was hurt much worse than I was by the situation. He had to repay the loan to Hofmann out of his own pocket. And as one can read easily, between these lines, he truly had been put through the wringer through no fault of his own (except for a naiveté shared by many of us back then, plus his ardent concern to safeguard - at any cost - traditional narratives of earliest LDS history).

The letter is very measured and concise, though to be fair, certainly gracious. "The Solomon Spaulding/Sidney Rigdon letter," he writes,

along with every single other document of importance that Mr. Hofmann provided have been proved to be false. You can rest assured that any individual that can write a letter as sensitive and concerned as you has not been negatively injured by this extremely unfortunate experience.

May the Lord's choicest blessings be with you in all that you do.

I'll enclose a photocopy of the "sensitive" letter that I sent him at the time (*i.e.*, typically long and retentive, in Grunder style).

SOME READERS MAY ASK - perhaps fairly - if it is appropriate for an antiquarian bookseller to "exploit" Hofmann's crimes or to air personal material in this way. To reply bluntly, Mark's actions wounded many of us seriously, and impacted us financially for decades afterward.

In my case, I somehow escaped ever buying anything from Hofmann (let alone, any of his forgeries). I suffered no loss of murdered family members or close

⁹ Rick Grunder, *Mormon Parallels: A Bibliographic Source* (Lafayette, New York: Rick Grunder - Books, 2008; 2014; 2018), 1695.

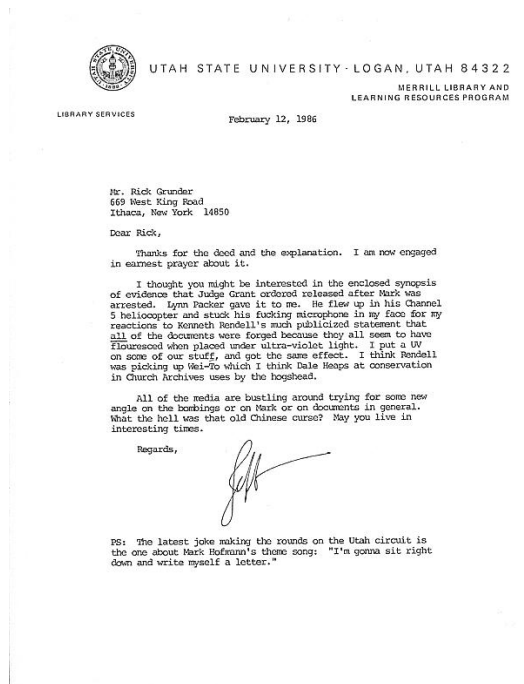
friends. Yet at a more elemental level, some of the most stupendous genuine manuscripts I was able to handle in subsequent years sold at lower prices (and with infinitely more difficulty and garnering much less respect) than should have been the case. For the longest time following the bombings, people felt understandably leery of anything handwritten, no matter the source. Insults to the trade flew hard and wide, often at random and without much sophisticated analysis. The events of the 1980s continue even now to complicate our lives.

There is also another factor, which age (77) brings to the forefront. In recent years, I have watched several collector and dealer friends pass away while still owning things of importance that did not always find their best destinations afterward. Some items even get tossed out and lost by heirs. To me, it seems more judicious to place material responsibly, during the living time –while body and mind still function well enough.

"All of the media are bustling around trying for some new angle on the bombings or on Mark or on documents in general. What the hell was that old Chinese curse? May you live in interesting times."

15 **SIMMONDS, ANDREW JEFFREY ("A. J."; "Jeff")**. TYPED LETTER SIGNED "Jeff" to Rick Grunder (in Ithaca, New York). Logan, Utah, February 12, 1986.

11 X 8½ inches. One page on Utah State University library letterhead stationery, verso blank. In fine, clean condition; never folded. Nicely typed, and signed boldly in a large blank area reserved for his signature. **\$450**



Relaying a "synopsis of evidence that Judge Grant ordered released after Mark was arrested." (No longer present with this letter; perhaps lost somewhere in my house.) Simmonds had his share of demons and a vibrant, expressive personality. He here thanks me for "the deed and the explanation. I am now engaged in earnest prayer about it." I retain no memory now of what that may have been. Regarding the once-enclosed synopsis, he writes:

Lynn Packer gave it to me. He flew up in his Channel 5 helicopter and stuck his f***ing microphone in my face for my reactions to Kenneth Rendell's much publicized statement that all of the documents

were forged because they all seem to have fluoresced when placed under ultra-violet light. I put a UV on some of our stuff, and got the same effect. I think Rendell was picking up Wei-To [*i.e.*, detecting that legitimate deacidification chemical] which I think Dale Heaps at conservation in Church Archives uses by the hogshead.

.....

PS: The latest joke making the rounds on the Utah circuit is the one about Mark Hofmann's theme song: "I'm gonna sit right down and write myself a letter."

SIMMONDS, of course, is remembered in Hofmann context initially for being used innocently to "discover" or bring to light Hofmann's first major forgery, the Anthon transcript. I never met Jeff in person, but I remember him telling me on the phone about him or someone carrying a shotgun in the car for security while transporting Mark and the transcript from Logan to Salt Lake City.

As news reports of the Hofmann preliminary hearing aired on television and radio, USU special collections director Jeff Simmonds maintained an unstable ambivalence between suspecting Hofmann and discounting the investigation. When the news of Throckmorton's testimony about the Deseret currency went over the wires, Simmonds, at work in Logan, suddenly remembered Hofmann photocopying the Deseret currency ledgerbooks.

"Get [Alvin] Rust's book," he told his assistant, and they thumbed for the appropriate reference. They found an editor's note, saying that heretofore undiscovered sets of Deseret currency had been found just as Rust's book (which Hofmann had helped prepare) went to press. Simmonds sagged against the wall. "Oh, shit," he said.¹⁰

¹⁰ *Salamander*, 444-45.

[**SPANISH FORK COOPERATIVE INSTITUTION NOTES** (forged by Hofmann)] "Xerox given to me the day after Mark said he had discovered them. Must be the first and perhaps only copy made of these. Made on a xerox machine in the LDS Church Genealogical Dept. — June 6, 1989[,] L. R. Jacobs —"

PHOTOCOPY, MADE BY **HOFMANN** of these forgeries, ca. early 1982. **\$850**

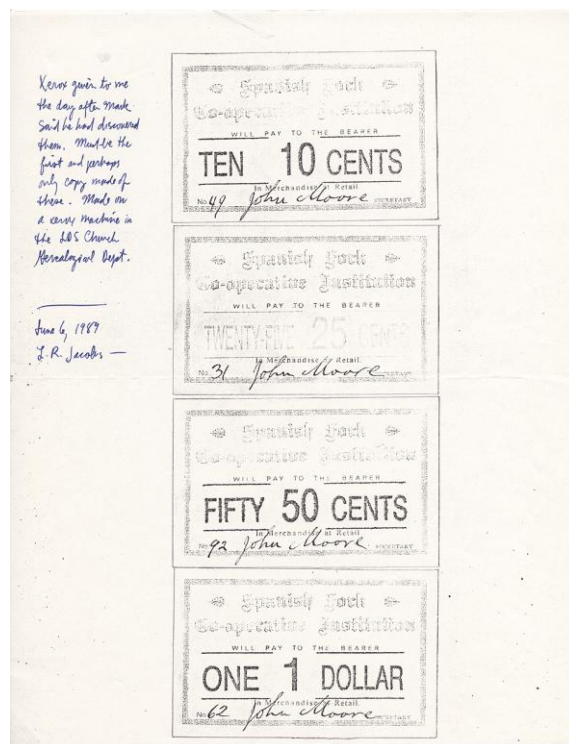
11 X 8½ inches. One page, verso blank. Black and white PHOTOCOPY on ordinary copy paper, with Lyn **JACOBS'** ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPH NOTE SIGNED (above) written here in blue ink to the left of a column of images of four printed notes signed "John Moore" in denominations of 10 cents, 25 cents, 50 cents, and one dollar - hand-numbered, respectively, 49, 31, 92 and 62.

In very good, clean condition. (A small copier streak in the blank upper margin has been covered lightly with white-out —something Jacobs did regularly.) The photocopy of the four notes is fairly light. Old (but neat and strong) horizontal fold through the middle of the page, not affecting the writing or anything important. Jacobs' written 1989 date would reflect when he came upon this page among his papers one day and wrote the caption more than seven years after the event itself:

On January 15, 1982, Hofmann ordered stamps used in manufacturing the notes. *Mark Hofmann Interviews*, 119. Richard Marks testified that Hofmann sold him a set of Spanish Fork Co-op notes in February 1983. "I was of the impression in talking to Mark at the time that there was only one other complete set known, those that belonged in the Church archives." . . . [*Victims*, 492, n.57]

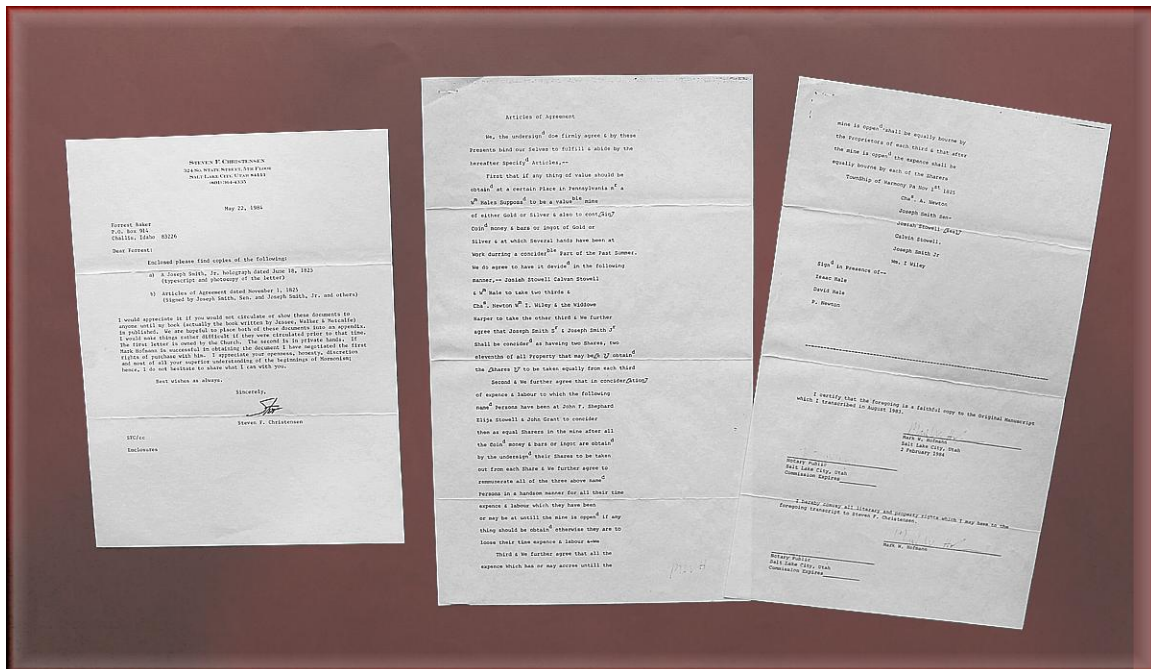
Some of the Spanish Fork Co-op notes, he [forensic examiner George J. Throckmorton] testified, included impressions made from the same stamps that created the proofs found at a local engraving company. The inks used in making the impressions proved to be indistinguishable from modern stamp-pad inks. The notes also fluoresced under ultraviolet light, proving that modern pigments or whiteners had been added to the paper used to print them. [*Victims*, 300]

PROVENANCE: From the papers of Lyn Richard Jacobs which I inherited in 1995.



We further agree that Joseph Smith Sr & Joseph Smith Jr Shall be consider^d
as having two Shares, two elevenths of all Property that may be[e?] obtaine^d . . .

- 17 [STOWELL, Josiah - contractual agreement text, 1825 (forged by Hofmann)]
Steven F. CHRISTENSEN. TYPED LETTER SIGNED ("Steve") on his printed
letterhead stationery, conveying his two-page legal-size PHOTOCOPY of MARK
HOFMANN'S NOTARIZED TYPESCRIPT OF A MUTUAL MONEY DIGGING CONTRACT
[intended eventually to be forged in manuscript by Hofmann?] purportedly
signed by Charles A. Newton, Joseph Smith Sr., Josiah Stowell, Calvin Stowell,
Joseph Smith Jr. and William I. Wiley for gold and silver that may "be obtain^d at a
certain Place in Pennsylvania n^r a W^m Hales['] . . ."



Sent by Christensen to a collector in Idaho. Salt Lake City, May 22, 1984.

One page, 11 X 8½ inches, verso blank. In fine condition; two neat and strong
horizontal folds. Cover (mailing envelope) NOT present. The ORIGINAL signed
Christensen letter :: AND :: his conveyed PHOTOCOPIES (see below) of the notarized
Hofmann-forged "Articles of Agreement" transcript: **\$2,500**

:: TOGETHER WITH ::

"Articles of Agreement." TYPESCRIPT TEXT in 40 short lines plus individual lines
naming the six purported signers, followed by the names of three witnesses
(Isaac Hale, David Hale, and P. Newton).

Below these appears the NOTARY PORTION in two sections, each section signed by
Hofmann and a notary public (Christensen's photocopy only here, not originals).

Hofmann's signatures appear very light in this copy, and those of the notary are too light to read at all. Hofmann also initialed the bottom of the first page, "MWH" (again, photocopy only here). The text of this portion reads in its two parts as follows:

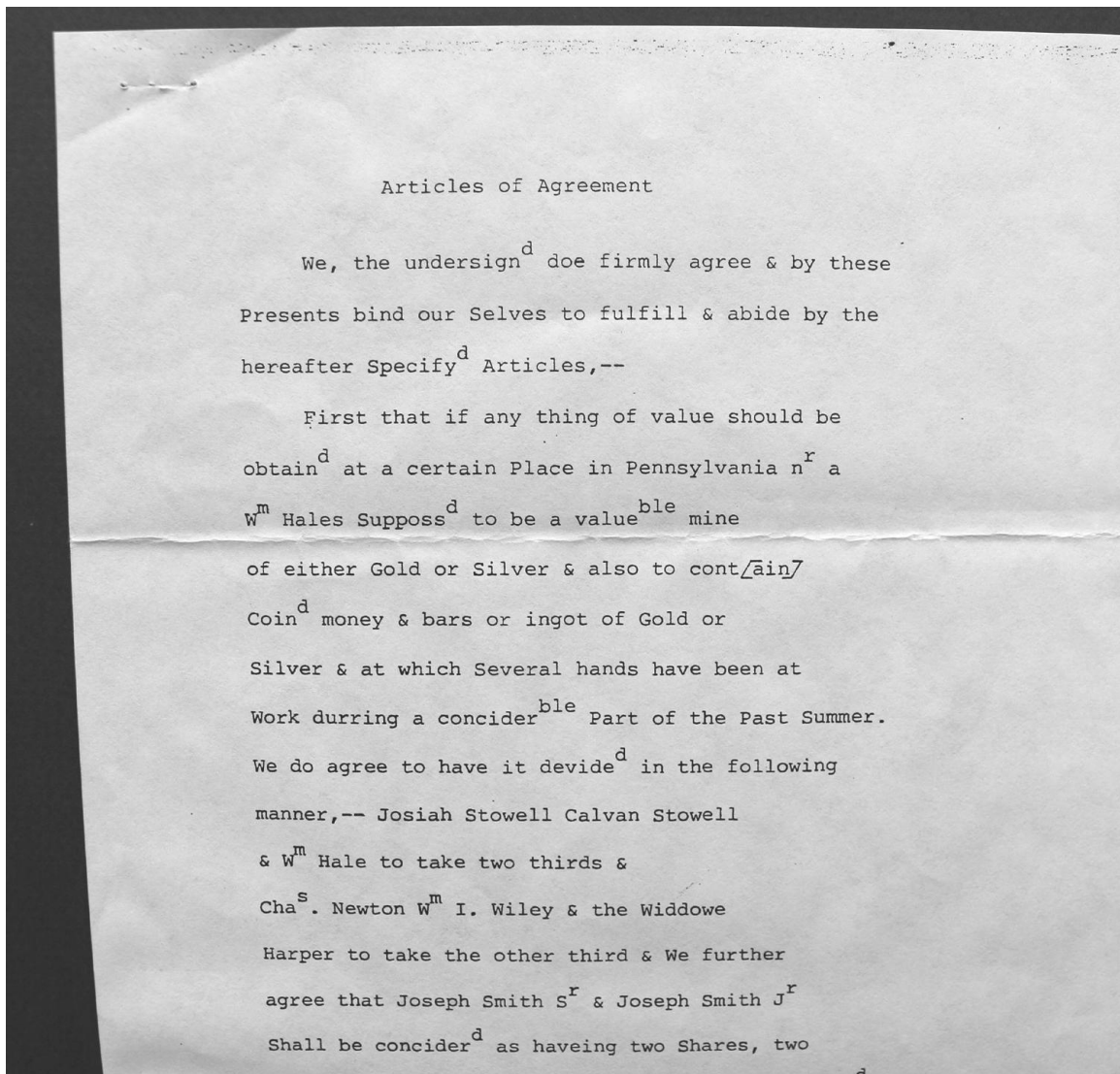
I certify that the foregoing is a faithful copy to [sic] the Original Manuscript which I transcribed in August 1983.

.....

I hereby convey all literary and property rights which I may have to the foregoing transcript to Steven F. Christensen.

Salt Lake City, 2 February 1984.

Two pages on the front sides of two legal-size leaves (14 X 8½ inches); versos blank. In very good condition. Once neatly stapled together. Three neat, strong horizontal folds to each leaf.



the murderer's typed forgery text – this photocopy made by the future murder victim

In his original signed letter (further above), Christensen also says to find a typescript and photocopy of a Joseph Smith letter dated June 18, 1825 (recipient not mentioned, but surely the forged JS to Josiah Stowell letter of that date; see *Victims*, 74-76, with illustration.). However, *those copies are no longer present here*. "I would appreciate it," Christensen adds,

if you would not circulate or show these documents to anyone until my book (actually the book written by Jessee, Walker & Metcalfe) is published. . . . I[t] would make things rather difficult if they were circulated prior to that time. The first letter is owned by the Church. The second is in private hands. If Mark Hofmann is successful in obtaining the document I have negotiated the first rights of purchase with him. . . .

Exactly one year (to the day) after sending the above material (present here) to the collector in Idaho, Christensen sent a copy of the same transcript of the money digging agreement to Gordon B. Hinckley:

On Wednesday, May 22 [1985], Steve Christensen wrote to Gordon Hinckley. Christensen noted with interest the church's publication of the Stowell letter, adding, "Perhaps you are already aware of the existence of an 'Articles of Agreement', which evidently, was the legal document which followed the correspondence of Joseph Smith, Jr. to Stowel." Christensen had not seen the original of the document, dated November 1, 1825, but he enclosed a transcript of it, that he had received from Mark Hofmann, who had certified it to be accurate.

.....

Christensen volunteered to assist "on this issue" should Hinckley want him to. He said he did not intend to publicize the document but that Walker, Jessee, and Metcalfe had all had access to the transcript over a year earlier when they began their research on the salamander letter.

On Tuesday, May 28, Hinckley responded to Christensen's letter of May 22 containing the transcript of the 1825 Articles of Agreement. "This is an interesting document," he wrote. "I do not recall ever hearing of it before." Hinckley then expressed his long-range view of the recent publicity surrounding document discoveries: "The enemies of the Church seem to be having a great time. Their efforts will fade while the work moves forward." [*Victims*, 104-105]

"The 1825 Money-Digging 'Articles of Agreement,'" wrote Allen D. Roberts in 1987,

relates essentially the same treasure-seeking arrangement as the Stowell letter. The LDS Church obtained it from Steven F. Christensen through Gordon B. Hinckley in 1983, but it was not yet known in the historical community and remains unpublished. An early version of the contract had been published on 23 April 1880 in the *Salt Lake Tribune*. Hofmann, evidently, had rediscovered the

original document, which differed slightly from the earlier published version. Only a type script of the document was sold to murder victim Christensen for \$5,000 including "all literary and property rights" soon after he paid \$40,000 for the salamander letter and began a research project to describe early Mormon origins.

The contract lent credibility to the salamander letter and later to the Stowell letter, both of unusual but parallel content. As we will see, this formula of using a forgery to substantiate or even authenticate another forgery was a hallmark ploy of Hofmann.

["'The Truth Is the Most Important Thing': The New Mormon History According to Mark Hofmann," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20:4 (Winter 1987), 88-89. Available online at: <https://www.dialoguejournal.com/articles/the-truth-is-the-most-important-thing-the-new-mormon-history-according-to-mark-hofmann/>]

For broader background and the 1880 *Salt Lake Tribune* version, see: <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/appendix-1-agreement-of-josiah-stowell-and-others-1-november-1825/1>

*I know for myself that Angels minister to men in these last days.
I have also seen the golden plates and the interpreters . . .*

- 18 [WHITMER, David, letter to Joseph Conrad, 1873 (forged by Hofmann)]
"One day Hofmann walked up to me and said 'Here's a copy of a typescript I gave Durham a few hours ago, what do you think?' L R. Jacobs ——— " No date, but describing an event that occurred ca. October 11, 1982.

One legal-size page (14 X 8½ inches), verso blank. Hofmann's TYPESCRIPT TEXT OF THE PURPORTED LETTER (HOFMANN'S PHOTOCOPY here, given to Jacobs; no image) fills much of the left-hand half of the page. JACOBS has written his ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPH NOTE SIGNED (above) in black ink at lower right. (The ink, while black like the photocopy, has a different hue than the Xerox toner, and comes closer to bleeding through to the back of the leaf than the photocopied text.) In fine, clean condition. Folded in half horizontally, but the fold is strong and does not touch any of the text. **\$1,000**

Rick Turley discusses the 1873 Whitmer-to-Conrad forgery at some length in *Victims*, Chapter 4.

. . . Hofmann brought another letter to the church's attention through Don Schmidt. This letter, a companion to the one Ashworth had acquired, was

AT the beginning of October 1985, I pulled up roots and moved to an isolated house set deep in the woods of New York State, a few miles beyond Ithaca's Cornell University. No friend or acquaintance lived within an hour's drive. The weather was cold, and I went outside on the second morning to search through a pile of damp logs and branches, wondering if they would burn in the woodstove which dominated the high-ceilinged great room that served as parlor and rustic, rented kitchen.

My quest was probably for fortune, but survival was a more immediate need. I am not a superstitious man, yet that peculiar situation's natural, dark feelings may excuse some interesting sentiments which took hold suddenly when I spied a small salamander resting upon a log. Placid and pure (though certainly not white), it seemed to look at me as if to ask,

"What are you doing here?"

What did I know, indeed, of what would follow? It was a time of the unexpected. Astounding new primary Mormon sources were emerging from this region, so here I was, ready to take part.¹¹

NOT LONG AFTER THE BOMBINGS, a news crew from Salt Lake City's KUTV traveled east and stopped at my newly-rented home. After the filmed interview, I offered to drive them to a local diner for a late lunch. Before we went, one of them dropped to the ground to check under my car for bombs. Inside the front and back windows of both house and automobile, I had posted notes warning possible religious extremists that I had advised the local FBI office of what was going on in Salt Lake City.

As we began to descend South Hill to downtown Ithaca, the crew asked to stop at a beautiful vantage point to film an outdoor portion of their story. The background featured the south end of Cayuga Lake, from which point the Colesville Saints once embarked to travel continuously by water from Central New York State to their new destination near Kirtland, Ohio.

¹¹ *Mormon Parallels*, 35.

History can be an exhilaration, but it comes with a warning. For a long time after the events of October 1985, we simply didn't know what was happening. And to this day, forty years afterward, I still feel wary of any unexpected package that arrives at my door.