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Antonio Lebolo: Excavator of the Book of Abraham

H. Donl Peterson

When I began teaching classes in the Pearl of Great Price in 1965 at Brigham Young University, I spent little class time discussing the historical background of this book of scripture because only limited information was available, particularly about the Book of Abraham. It was commonly believed that the mummies and papyri that came from Egypt via Ireland were sold to the early Church leaders by a Michael H. Chandler, a nephew of the excavator. Joseph Smith had translated some of the papyrus manuscripts; then all were reportedly burned in the great Chicago fire of 1871. Little more was known. This much I had learned in a graduate class on the Pearl of Great Price taught by James R. Clark, author of *The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*. He had meticulously detailed all that was known in those days relative to the Abrahamic history. He was ploughing new ground and establishing a solid foundation upon which others could build.

The Latter-day Saint community was startled by an announcement in November 1967 that the Church had obtained from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City eleven fragments of Egyptian papyri that had once been in the hands of the prophet Joseph Smith. This announcement piqued the interest of students and soon the number of young people who registered for Pearl of Great Price classes skyrocketed. I, along with my colleagues, was unprepared to field the many questions that were forthcoming because of the find. We didn't know even the most basic things about the historical background of the Book of Abraham as indicated by these typical questions and answers:

1. Since all the papyri did not burn in the Chicago fire, is it possible that more papyri may be in existence?

Answer: I don't know.

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2. Who was Sebolo or Lebolo or whatever his name was? Where was he from? Why was he in Egypt?

Answer: I don't know.

3. Where were the mummies and papyri exhumed in Egypt?

Answer: I don't know.

4. How did the mummies get to the United States?

Answer: I don't know.

5. How accurate is the Michael H. Chandler account of the origin of the mummies and papyri as recorded in the *History of the Church*?

Answer: I don't know.

6. Where is Sebolo's or Lebolo's will? Does it detail his giving the antiquities to his Irish nephew Michael H. Chandler?

Answer: I don't know.

My lectures were filled with too many "I don't knows." The sudden fervor of student interest and questions stirred me to probe for answers to questions that previously had not even been asked. I was very uncomfortable with the void in our understanding, and because we were caught without facts, controversy flourished among various factions.

Jay M. Todd, then an editorial associate on the *Improvement Era* staff, wrote an excellent article which appeared in January 1968. It detailed Dr. Aziz Atiya's find of the eleven papyri fragments and the bill of sale between the buyer, A. Combs, and the owners—Emma Smith Bidamon, the prophet's widow; Lewis C. Bidamon; and Joseph Smith III.¹ Jay's article intrigued me as did other events that year. During that summer, I attended a BYU Land of the Scriptures Workshop led by Dr. Daniel H. Ludlow, during which we visited Pit Tomb 33 on the west bank of the Nile by Luxor, Egypt. This tomb, Dr. Ross Christensen of Brigham Young University had hypothesized, was where Lebolo had exhumed the eleven mummies.² The tour concluded in Florence, Italy, so I stopped at the Latter-day Saint mission home there and visited with Elder R. Brent Bentley, who had researched the Antonio Lebolo story. Jay Todd had written to the mission president, President Duns, to ascertain what information could be located about Antonio Lebolo. In response, President Duns, who was unable to go himself, sent Elder Bentley and two other elders to Lebolo's birthplace, Castellamonte. The elders had found Lebolo's birth recorded in the parish register of the local Catholic Church, and they had also located Lebolo's large home. Although I was unable to leave the tour to go to Castellamonte myself, my interest was further stirred to follow up on the elders' findings.

Jay Todd published Elder Bentley's findings and photographs in the July 1968 *Improvement Era*. In 1969 Jay performed another great service by publishing his fascinating and insightful book, *The Saga of the Book of Abraham*.

I was hooked by the intrigue of this story and began to plan how I might untangle the details of this saga. I began by corresponding with anyone who might know something about Lebolo. Occasionally, as I directed Travel Study tours to Israel, Europe, and the Middle East, I would bid the participants farewell in Rome or Athens and then hurry to Northern Italy, Paris, or Dublin to continue the research.

In 1982 I was appointed the Pearl of Great Price Director in the Religious Studies Center at Brigham Young University, which had funds for research. In the fall of 1984, I was granted a professional development leave. Having both time and funds, I traveled in company with a research assistant to Philadelphia, New York, Dublin, London, Paris, Turin, Castellamonte, Venice, Trieste, and, briefly, Egypt to continue research. In addition, Jay Todd, as a friend, generously shared his files on his Book of Abraham research. His book accompanied me on nearly every research journey, and it has greatly influenced my efforts.

Thanks to all the research carried out, the questions answered with an "I don't know" are less numerous today than they were twenty years ago. Allow me to introduce you to Antonio Lebolo as I now know him.

What is the excavator's name—Sebolo or Lebolo?

The excavator's full name in the Latin church records in Castellamonte is Joannes Petrus Antonius Lebolo.³ In Italian his name is Giovanni Pietro Antonio Lebolo, and in English it is John Peter Anthony Lebolo. When the mummies were first exhibited in Philadelphia in April 1833, at least two newspapers ran advertisements containing his name. One paper spelled his name correctly while the other spelled it Leballo.⁴ When the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia purchased a mummy from Michael H. Chandler in 1833, their accession book spelled Lebolo's name correctly.⁵ Lebolo's name is also printed correctly in an Academy publication in an 1849 book.⁶ The Church newspaper, *The Times and Seasons*, spelled it correctly in its 2 May 1842 reprint of Chandler's placards.⁷ Where then did the misspelling *Sebolo* come from? It was due to a typographical or writing error recorded in both the *Comprehensive History of the Church* and the *History of the Church* edited by B. H. Roberts.⁸ Because of the wide acceptance and circulation of these books, the spelling error has persisted. I have photographs and copies of many documents from Egypt and

Italy that bear Lebolo's name and signature. There is no question whatever that his name was Lebolo.⁹

What is known of Lebolo's early years?

Antonio Lebolo was born in 1781 to Pietro and Marianna Meuta Lebolo¹⁰ in Castellamonte, which is located approximately twenty-five miles north of Turin in what was known as Piedmont, then ruled by the king of Sardinia. His father was a community leader and a prominent grocer.¹¹

On 26 February 1797 Antonio, age sixteen, married Maria Pollino Marchetto, who was twenty-one.¹² She, like Antonio, came from a prominent family in Castellamonte. A baby boy, named Pietro Giovanni Enrici, was born to the couple in Castellamonte on 17 July 1800; the boy lived but thirteen days.¹³ Ten years later, on 20 May 1810, another son, Michael Pietro Antonio, was born.¹⁴

Antonio had married and started a family in the midst of political turmoil. Napoleon, in a conquest for world power, invaded the Piedmont in 1796. Most Piedmontese welcomed Napoleon's invasion since he drove the unwelcome Austrians out of their lands. However, the Piedmontese soon realized that Napoleon was not a liberator as he had promised, but only another conqueror with a different accent. In September of 1802, Piedmont was incorporated into the French Republic. Charles Emmanuel IV, under duress, abdicated and retired to Sardinia in 1798. Napoleon's invasion and eventual defeat influenced Lebolo's life for the next two decades.

Several years ago in a biographical history of the prominent people of the Canavese, I noticed that an Antonio Lebolo was mentioned as having received a military pension in 1805.¹⁵ I initially assumed that this entry either was a mistake or concerned another man since Antonio would have been only in his early twenties at the time. Later, however, I discovered that Lebolo, like many other young men in the occupied territories, had the option of either serving under Napoleon or being considered disloyal. Lebolo chose to enlist in Napoleon's army, where he was assigned to serve on the home front. Apparently capitalizing on the skills he had learned from his father, he became a quartermaster in Piedmont.¹⁶ In various documents he is also called a gendarme, a brigadier, and a caribineri (police officer). Lebolo was wounded on 22 March 1801; his father petitioned the town council to pay a pension of thirty-five lira "in behalf of the citizen Antonio Lebolo for provisions and convalescence pending his wound received in his assignment as Brigadiere Foriere [billeting officer] in the Gendarmerie on occasion of the revolt of S. Agostino against the rebels of Valle D'aosta."¹⁷ The nature and extent of his injury is

not mentioned. Even though Antonio was dismissed from the service on 6 January 1802 for infirmity, he continued to have ties with law enforcement. Giovanni Marro, an authority about one of Lebolo's associates, Drovetti, pointed out, "We came to know that he [Lebolo] was an officer of the French police after he was a Piedmont policeman."¹⁸

Lebolo was a respected man in his hometown, often being called upon to serve as a witness for legal documents.¹⁹ He lived in Castellamonte in 1800 and early 1801 and again from 1809 to 1811, but his whereabouts between 1801–1808 and between 1811–1813 are unknown.²⁰ One account refers to him as a gendarme in Milan.²¹ This possibility may have some merit in explaining his absence from Castellamonte, but military records listing Lebolo in Milan have not been located. According to the records we have, the only occupation that Lebolo had prior to moving to Egypt around 1817 seems to be connected with military and police work.²²

By 1810 Napoleon ruled as emperor at Rome, controlling all of continental Italy. But, protected by England's supremacy of the seas, the island of Sardinia was still ruled by the House of Savoy. After Napoleon abdicated in April 1814, the Piedmontese who had served under him were considered disloyal by the reemerging Sardinian monarchy. The king of Sardinia recovered his ancestral dominions of Savoy, Nice, and Piedmont and received, in addition, the territory of the Genoese Republic. To avoid prosecution, Lebolo and many other "Bonapartists" fled to safer climes. Lebolo, exiled from Maria, his young son Pietro, and his extended family, sailed to Egypt to begin a new career.

Why did Lebolo choose to go to Egypt?

After the war, when people were seeking new frontiers and fortunes, Egypt held a magnetic attraction. When Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798, he took 167 scientists, artists, and craftsmen along to explore, sketch, and document their findings. Their marvelous sketches and intriguing articles were published between 1809 and 1813 in the twenty-four-volume masterpiece *Description de l'Egypte*. This encyclopedic work introduced Europeans to the exotic land of the Nile, with its myriad pyramids, temples, tombs, obelisks, and mummies waiting to be explored, savored, and, sadly, plundered. Many hundreds of Europeans traveled to Egypt—tourists, promoters, and schemers alike. The pasha of Egypt, Mohamed Ali, was anxious to industrialize his country and upgrade his antiquated military machine, which lagged far behind that of his European neighbors. In exchange for modernization, he traded the multitudinous mummies, obelisks, and other antiquities that caught

the fancy of the Europeans. Ali considered the exchange acceptable; after all, mummies and monuments were commonplace and very expendable—ideal items to swap for modern weapons and such modern inventions as ice machines, cloth factories, a rum distillery, a sugar refinery, and cotton mills.

Lebolo had an important contact in Egypt—Bernardino Drovetti. Drovetti had held the rank of lieutenant colonel in the French army and had served with distinction in Napoleon's invasion of Egypt.²³ Drovetti had a mutilated hand as a memento of saving the life of Napoleon's brother-in-law, General Joachim Murat, during his military service under the French flag.²⁴ After the Egyptian campaign, Drovetti served in the first Piedmontese brigade, where he was in charge of the general staff of the reserve army. He was then assigned to organize a new Piedmontese army. In February 1801, at age twenty-five, he was "nominated head of the general staff in the Piedmontese division." From 9 October 1801 to 22 March 1803, he served as an appointed judge in the special military tribunal established in Turin.²⁵ Following his distinguished military career, Drovetti was selected by Napoleon Bonaparte to return to Egypt in 1803 to serve as vice consul general.²⁶ But when Napoleon fell, Drovetti was labeled a Bonapartist and was dismissed by Louis XVIII in 1814.

Like Lebolo, Drovetti was Piedmontese. He came from Barbania, a small town about seven miles from Castellamonte, Lebolo's hometown, and it is likely that the families knew each other. When Lebolo arrived in Egypt, probably in 1817, Drovetti was a trusted confidant and advisor to Mohamed Ali. Drovetti assisted Ali in establishing commercial enterprises and governmental policies and was also involved in the antiquities business, including the excavation of tombs. Drovetti employed Lebolo to excavate in the tombs in the Valley of the Kings on the west bank of the Nile near the ancient city of Thebes.²⁷

What was it like in Upper Egypt when Lebolo was there?

In the early nineteenth century Egypt had the spirit and the morals of a gold rush, for the sale of antiquities was a lucrative and competitive business. In addition, the antagonism between the pacesetter arch rivals—France and England—continued in the digs, and dividing lines were drawn through the ancient ruins and burial grounds. These demarcations helped the rival claimants to distinguish their own real estate and in addition prevented flagrant bloodletting.²⁸ Natives were hired for one piastre per diem to uncover the buried treasures.²⁹ Those men like Lebolo, who were in charge of the digs, often lived in the tombs of the ancient pharaohs or in adobe houses nearby. When exhumed, items of worth were

stored in these tombs or houses for safekeeping until the artifacts were shipped down the Nile to Cairo or Alexandria and beyond.³⁰ In the sale of antiquities, both the natives around Luxor and their European counterparts were unscrupulous in their dealings.³¹

The temperature was unbearable in the heat of the summer days, often reaching over 130 degrees. On the west bank the inhabitants lived underground, sharing their caves with cows, goats, dogs, and corpses. Poverty, insects, rats, and diseases were wide-spread. Human life was cheap. Caravan after caravan of blacks, shackled in chains, some carrying tiny babies, were marched through the cities of the Nile to the slave auction blocks. Many of these blacks had been forced to walk hundreds of miles from their homes in Sudan, Nubia, and other central African locations. Whites were also commonly auctioned in the markets. The sheikhs had extravagant harems; Ali's harem accommodated eight hundred women. Young men were emasculated to serve as eunuchs in the harems of the sheikhs, and many died as a result of the surgery. While residing in Egypt, many Europeans purchased black mistresses and, upon leaving, sold them or gave them to a friend.

In fear of Mohamed Ali's power and justifiable reputation for cruel, quick justice, the local sheikhs respected his orders. Punishments were numerous, brutal, varied, and rapid. Thieves' hands were severed, some violators were impaled, and others were bastinadoed (a process of beating the bottom of the feet with a rhino strap; the punishment often leaves permanent damage). The setting for this bedlam was in the shadows of some of the greatest monuments on the face of the earth.

Belzoni reported that Lebolo and some French ruffians attempted to kill him. Is this account factual?

Giovanni Battista Belzoni from Padua, Italy, was a large man, 6'8" tall, and very muscular. He performed as a circus strong man and had displayed great feats of strength on the entertainment circuits of England. He married an English wife and went to Egypt to promote a hydraulic water pumping machine. There he was unsuccessful and, in dire need of employment, hired out to Henry Salt, consul general of England, to work in Salt's excavations. According to his account, he was attacked by two of Drovetti's agents, Lebolo and Rosignani, over a dispute about excavation claims.³² His account, a very popular, two-volume work that he published in England, praised the author's courageous spirit and superior accomplishments but was uncomplimentary about Lebolo, portraying him as a troublemaker.

Unfortunately, some Latter-day Saint writers quote Belzoni's report about Lebolo and assume that this muscle man, referred to in his earlier billings as the "Patagonion Samson" and the "French Hercules,"³³ was an unbiased reporter. In several books, those who knew Belzoni best are not as complimentary about Belzoni as Belzoni himself is. For example, Belzoni's co-worker in the excavations, Giovanni D'Athanasia, reports that Belzoni had "an impatient and intractable temperament."³⁴ He detailed the first meeting between Lebolo and Belzoni:

Having completed our arrangements we set out in the month of March, 1817, and arrived at Menia at the same time with two men from M. Drovetti, the Consul General of France, who were going to Thebes for the purpose of exploring. On seeing these two gentlemen Mr. Belzoni became furious, and would have given all he possessed of in the world to have been able to reach Thebes that very night, and mark out all the ground, in order that M. Drovetti's men, when they arrived, might not find a neutral spot to explore, nor even place sufficient to sit down on. Such was the length to which Mr. Belzoni's ambition had driven him.³⁵

D'Athanasia further wrote of Belzoni:

If he had been a conscientious and a sincere man, as he boasted himself to be, he ought to have put forth the naked truth, without garbling the facts. As it turns out, however, he has preferred to be viewed culpable of the blackest ingratitude. His memory cannot but suffer from it; for truth never long holds back from exposing and stigmatizing falsehood.³⁶

Yet another time D'Athanasia states:

I have already made allusion once or twice to Mr. Belzoni; it must not be supposed that in undertaking to publish this little work, my object was to set myself up as the refuter of Mr. Belzoni's statements; though I confess I do feel it to be impossible for me to preserve a religious silence on the subject, and abstain from refuting some passages in his works, in which he actually contradicts himself . . . and perverts the best established facts.³⁷

John J. Halls, the biographer of Henry Salt, Belzoni's former employer, wrote of Belzoni's two-volume work that "the insidious attacks directed against Mr. Salt in that [Belzoni's] publication, and through other channels, at length induced him [Henry Salt] to draw up, for the information of his friends in England, an account of the real circumstances in the case."³⁸ Salt set the record straight by publishing a twenty-eight-page document entitled "A Plain Statement of Facts."³⁹ This small work is decidedly uncomplimentary of Belzoni.

Belzoni published; Lebolo did not. The power of the pen ruled that day and still influences the present.

Where did Lebolo exhume the eleven mummies?

Drovetti spent little time in Luxor, remaining most of the time in Cairo close to the pasha. For some time his foreman on the west bank of the Nile, across the river from Luxor, was Lebolo, who was responsible for overseeing two to four hundred natives digging in various locations.⁴⁰ Lebolo probably discovered several hundred mummies in numerous sites while he administered Drovetti's affairs.

Only one site on the west bank of the Nile has been confirmed as a tomb where Lebolo is known to have dug; that is Pit Tomb 32. Lebolo's name, chiseled on the wall of that tomb, was located by Laszlo Kakosy, professor of Egyptology at Eotvos University in Budapest, Hungary. Kakosy confirmed his find in a lecture given at Brigham Young University on 6 November 1990.⁴¹

Ross Christensen, professor emeritus of anthropology at Brigham Young University, has proposed that Tomb 33 fits the description reported in the *History of the Church*.⁴² The tomb certainly is large enough and may be the very site. However, several brick-lined tombs were torn down by the excavators; one of these tombs may have been the tomb where Lebolo discovered the papyrus scrolls and the eleven mummies.⁴³

What evidence do we have that Lebolo was anything more than a grave robber?

In 1984 I was privileged to travel to Turin to study in the Accademia Delle Scienze Di Torino Library, which houses Professor Giovanni Marro's collection. This collection includes a file of hundreds of letters sent and received by Drovetti. Aided by Bruce Porter, my research assistant, and Patrizia Piania, a native of Turin and a convert to the Church, I spent nearly a week perusing these letters in the beautiful old historic library, seated at a table by a window, our only available source of light. The letters were stored in a wall cabinet in several large bundles wrapped in brown paper and tied with string. Marro had published on Drovetti and was planning a second volume when he passed away. We were very pleased that we were allowed to personally utilize his collection.⁴⁴

This paper does not allow many examples, but the following will suffice to point out that Lebolo was an amiable man who hosted Drovetti's guests with care and efficiency. Carlo Vidua, a prominent and affluent Piedmontese from Turin, wrote in a letter to his father:

But, among so many marvelous things, that are possible to be admired at Thebes, the most curious one of all is the valley where the kings' sepulchers lay. It is rather a lonely valley, arid, horrible, in which some holes like caverns are seen. Entering these caverns, long galleries, halls, chambers, and cabinets are found, in short, they are underground palaces, all covered with painted bas-relieves; and it is very marvelous. It is wonderful the preservation of the colors, the amount of the works, the scrupulous attention used to make them. Lately, a new one was discovered which surpasses all the others in beauty, in the perfection of the work, and in execution. I visited it two times. The second time I spent the whole day there, examining everything; it was already late evening, and I couldn't move myself away from there.

I dined inside there in a beautiful hall, much more elegant than our ballrooms. Also, I believe that, considering all, this sepulcher of the king of Thebes is a much more sumptuous dwelling than the dwellings of our living European kings. Who, do you think, gave me the honor of those sepulchers, and who reigns in Thebes in exchange of the dead king? A Piedmontese. Mr. Lebolo from Canavese, formerly a police officer in service of France, came to Egypt and was employed by Mr. Drovetti in the excavations, which he does continuously in Thebes. Our Piedmonteses really have a ready spirit, and are capable of succeeding in everything; from police work to antiquities is a big jump. . . . In those ten days that I lived in Thebes, Mr. Lebolo accompanied me, took me everywhere, had me come to dinner at his house, which is among monuments and half embedded in tombs, all filled with mummies, papyruses, and little statues. An Egyptian bas-relief was the top of the door; we made fire with pieces of mummies' coffins. Mr. Lebolo commands those Arabs; sometimes he has about 200 or 300 at his command; the Turkish commander respects him for fear of Mr. Drovetti. Oh, if Sesostri had lifted his head up, and had seen a Piedmontese commanding in the city with one hundred doors! When you see count Lodi, tell him that we drank to his health among the ruins of Thebes. Mr. Lebolo served for some time in Piedmont with the carabinieri and spoke very highly of his leader. He was also under count of Agliano in Savoy. To show my gratitude to such courtesy of this Canavese-Theban man, I took the task of sending a letter to his family; which I include here, praying you to make sure that it will reach its destination.⁴⁵

An Englishman, M. D. Brine, who was proprietor of a hotel at Radamon that catered to Europeans, wrote to Drovetti about Lebolo: "I am persuaded that Mr. Lebolo is not guilty of any crime; when the Casciff was going to beat the peasant, he [Lebolo] went to another room saying that he would rather lose all the antiquities of this world, provided that none would be beaten."⁴⁶ John Hyde, an English gentleman, sent Drovetti this comment: "When you next write to Mr. Lobilau [Lebolo] may I . . . obtrude upon your indulgence as to request you will remember me kindly to him, and reiterate my thanks for the kindly hospitalities I received from him

during my stay at Gournah.”⁴⁷ F. Brouzet, a retired elder *majeur* officer of the Royal Gendarmerie, wrote to Drovetti: “If the good Mr. Lebolo is still with you in Alexandria, please give him our regards. We wish him the best in his work.”⁴⁸

Finally, Frederic Cailliaud, a French traveler, author, and mineralogist, wrote to the consul general: “When we arrived in Gournah Mr. Lebolo brought me to his house where together we opened the tomb where he had collected the antiquities, I have personally broken off the seal of the trunk containing the papyri and one after the other one I inspected them . . . I found 3 of them with hieratic and Greek characters which nonetheless will be of great interest for the knowledge of hieroglyphics.”⁴⁹

A history of the prominent men of Canavese states that Lebolo squandered a fortune through his eccentric oriental lifestyle.⁵⁰ How did he amass any wealth if his only source of income was from working as Drovetti’s foreman?

Lebolo did become moderately wealthy. Count Carlo Vidua explained how: “Mr. Lebolo works successfully in his new career; he found beautiful pieces for the Drovetti museum; and since he was allowed by him to do some excavations of his own, he gathered for himself a small collection, which will bring him a moderate fortune.”⁵¹

While in Egypt, Antonio pursued interests other than excavation. He was involved with buying and selling ostriches, whose plumes were in great demand to enhance the apparel of the rich and famous of Europe.⁵² He also bought and sold exotic animals.⁵³

Lebolo seems to have stopped excavating in 1821. He moved to Alexandria, where he started selling artifacts. In answer to my inquiry about this activity, Helmut Satzinger from Vienna wrote:

I confirm receiving your letter dated 26 January [1977]. In response I share the following with you: The Egyptian collection of the Historical Art Museum is one of the best of its kind, the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York is the only collection in the United States that is better. A portion of the objects come from the collection of Antonio Lebolo of Alexandria.

I refer you to the book by Egon Komorzynski: *Das Erbe Des Alten Agypten [The Inheritance of the Old Egyptians]*, H. Bauer, Vienna, 1965, he writes the following on page 65:

“In every instance, the further additions of that collection are considered old Egyptian memorials that the Austrian doctor, Ernst August Burghart, under the direction of the emperor, king, court and state council, collected in Egypt during 1821. The largest share was bought by Burghart from a collector by the name of Antonio Lebolo in Alexandria, and the remainder was probably purchased from art dealers. He did not undertake to do his own archaeological digging.”⁵⁴

What happened to Lebolo after he left Egypt?

Lebolo's wife Maria, whom he had not seen for several years, died in Castellamonte in 1821, while Lebolo was still in exile in Egypt. Lebolo left Egypt and moved to Venice, Italy, where he was involved in selling Egyptian antiquities and "exotic animals." By 1822, Lebolo had new family interests, a young black woman called Anna Mora (Italian for black), also known as Donna Africana (African woman). Sponsored by Lebolo, Anna and her two young daughters entered catechumenal training in Venice to prepare for their Christian baptism.⁵⁵ Anna stated that she did not know who her parents were, nor what her background was.⁵⁶ She is referred to as a black from Darfour, which is in western Sudan, but little else is known of her family. Her two young daughters were baptized with her, although one daughter, Maria, did not receive all of the Catholic rites in Venice since she had received some prior to her baptism in Trieste. Anna Mora was given the Christian name of Anna Marie, and the little girls were given the Christian names of Rosa Maria and Maria Catterina at their baptisms.⁵⁷ I have wondered if this incident is a significant source for the report that Chandler gave to Joseph Smith that Lebolo died in Trieste. Was little Maria ill and given the last rites while in Trieste, along with Antonio, who according to Chandler's account made out his will in Trieste during an illness?⁵⁸

Following the baptisms, Anna Marie and Antonio Lebolo were married in Venice on 12 June 1824.⁵⁹ Bertolotti stated that Lebolo "married a black woman, whom Drovetti gave him as a gift, after he provided her with civil and religious education."⁶⁰ On the marriage documents Lebolo's residence was listed as Alexandria, Egypt. A son was born to them, whom they named Guiseppe, while they were living in the Venice-Trieste area.⁶¹

In the latter part of 1824, Lebolo returned to Egypt and then, acting as the viceroy of Egypt's representative, went to Monaco to present to the sovereign there a gift of two ostriches: "The above-mentioned Mr. Lebolo coming from Cairo, was passing through Bassano towards the end of 1824, and then went to Monaco, commissioned by the viceroy of Egypt to present to that sovereign two ostriches of extraordinary beauty."⁶²

In 1826 Lebolo, along with his twenty-three-year-old black wife and their three young children, moved to Castellamonte. Pietro, Lebolo's son by his first wife, was sixteen years old. Unfortunately, records indicate that a black, illiterate wife who married into a prominent family in cloistered Castellamonte was not readily received;⁶³ black slavery was still practiced in many parts of the western world in the 1820s. Two more sons were added to Antonio

and Anna Marie's family while they lived in Castellamonte—Joannes Antonio in 1826 and Joannes Tomas in 1827.⁶⁴

In 1973, President Dan C. Jorgensen, former president of the Italian mission, reported that Lebolo died in Castellamonte in 1830 and not in Trieste in 1832. Which facts are correct?

An Italian Latter-day Saint, Adriano Comollo from Turin, whom I met following a Church meeting in Turin in 1984 and with whom I conversed relative to the Lebolo story, stated that he had located in the state archives in Turin a year or two before a legal document bearing Lebolo's signature. I asked him to return to the archives and photograph the document for me. I also explained that the notary who had prepared the document may have assisted Lebolo relative to other legal matters and it might prove valuable to peruse the notary's other papers while Adriano was there. I would have searched with him, but I was scheduled to fly to Egypt to continue my research on Lebolo's life story. I had been in Cairo about a week when I received a middle-of-the-night phone call from Adriano, who excitedly announced that he had located Lebolo's will and many other of Lebolo's legal papers in the state archives. My assistant Bruce and I changed our plans and returned to Turin posthaste to study and photograph Lebolo's long-sought-after will and other legal papers. I asked Adriano to record the details of his discovery. His account reads:

How I came in contact with Dr. Peterson was a kind of coincidence. In October '84 my wife, Jerrilynn, our little Sam and I were visiting the "Centro" branch. Sam escaped in a sudden race into a classroom where Dr. Peterson was talking about his Lebolo project. Jerri ran to catch Sam and on that occasion she heard the name of Lebolo. She remembered that I had once told her that I was involved in a research concerning Lebolo's parish records and she told that to Dr. Peterson. So, we met and since Dr. Peterson was leaving for Cairo he encouraged me to do research to find Lebolo's will. "We *have* to find that will!" he stressed.

At first Jerri and I chose to search, in a file of the notaries of the Ivrea area, the notaries of Castellamonte who worked around 1830 and there we started to look for Lebolo. Fortunately there were only 6 or 7 notaries there, but we didn't find any trace of Lebolo. We realized that Lebolo, even though he lived in Castellamonte, probably could go to a notary in some surrounding hamlet or town, or even to Ivrea. We counted the possible notaries to be about 90 and we felt we were seeking a needle in a haystack.

Providentially we found an indication that Lebolo was a friend of the notary of Collettero Parella (a hamlet near Castellamonte) whose name was Giacomo Buffa. So we looked in his books and there it was: not only the will but also the inventories and the news

that Lebolo delivered eleven mummies to a certain Albano Oblassa [*sic*] of Trieste to sell them.

Dr. Peterson soon returned from Cairo and said that they certainly were the mummies of Michael Chandler. Now we had to find a connection between Italy and America to prove that those mummies were the mummies of Michael Chandler.⁶⁵

I learned that Lebolo made out his will on 19 November 1829, while, he reported, he was “sound of mind, and in perfect control of my senses although ill in my body.” Two paragraphs in the will reflect the internal problems the family was facing because of his eccentric marriage to Anna Marie. Lebolo willed the following to Anna:

I give and I leave to my wife Anna, because of her chaste and honest condition of a widow, the usufruct of my goods and real estates, but in such usufruct living together with my universal heirs and with my parents Pietro and Marianna Lebolo.

And if my aforementioned wife would not or could not live with them, in such a circumstance, I give and leave to her for her alimony and clothing, the yearly amount of 240 lire, which will be paid by my heirs or for them by their guardian, otherwise in advance, and I want that my mentioned wife be satisfied and content for such yearly amount, without requiring anything else from my heirs, under the law of the “*quarta uxoria*,” that she might want to claim.⁶⁶

Of his eldest son, Lebolo wrote:

If my said firstborn son [Pietro] would not carry out such task and obligation, in such case, not to force him against his will to live with his other brothers, my universal coheirs, . . . I give to such son as a title of division the following . . . [several parcels of ground are mentioned.]⁶⁷

About two weeks later, Lebolo rescinded the previous stipulation regarding Pietro’s relationship with his half brothers with an addendum which reads:

Said Mr. Lebolo, who writes the addendum has revoked and revocates the prohibition and obligation to his first born son both for the division of his possessions and for the dowry of his late mother Maria Pollino Marchetto; he [Mr. Lebolo] wants that his mentioned son Pietro Lebolo can, as he pleases, determine the division of the inheritance, even without his brothers and coheirs having yet reached their legal age, provided that said first born son will take care of all expenses that will be necessary to such division, and if the division will be postponed until the legal age of the aforementioned heirs, the expenses will be equally divided among the coheirs. And as for the said dowry of his mother, said Mr. Lebolo, who is writing this addendum, wants that his aforementioned son Pietro can dispose of it as he pleases, and use as he will see fit.⁶⁸

On the night of 18–19 February 1830, Lebolo died in his home in Castellamonte at the age of 49.⁶⁹

Just a brief postscript about Anna Marie's life after Antonio died. Unable to live with her in-laws, she left her two daughters and three sons behind in Castellamonte and moved to Turin. A year and a half later, accompanied by an attorney, she returned to Castellamonte to petition the family to release to her some of her personal property. The document reads:

The Year of the Lord 1831 October the 10th . . . On 18th of February 1830, Antonio Lebolo died . . . He has given the usufruct of all his goods, real estate and personal property, to his wife Anna and to all sole heirs who are: Pietro, Giuseppe, Tommaso, and Giovanni, all his sons. If by chance, his wife Anna cannot or will not live with them he has provided for her for food and clothes 240 lire every year without claiming anything more. Since that Anna, Lebolo's widow, does not want to live with her sons and having already a new residence in Torino, after having made known her decision to Mr. Giovanni . . . Meuta attorney and guardian of Lebolo's heirs, she asks of the same guardian to give to her some personal property to be determined and systematically pay the sum due. The above-mentioned Mr. Meuta agrees to submit to Mrs. Anna all personal belongings, identified as personal property, and he will pay to her the sum of 240 lire with the implied condition that Mrs. Anna asks nothing more from the heirs and that the above mentioned sum will depend on her conduct as a widow and on her chastity and honesty as the will indicated . . . We came to the agreement to return to Mrs. Anna the following belongings: 'the gold ring with the inscription "amour" listed as number 211 valued at seven lire; the gold collier [necklace] valued at seventy lire listed as number 213 and also the cornel trimmed in gold listed as number 216.' . . . There is, in my presence, Mrs. Anna, Lebolo's widow, who came from an African nation, as she says from [Nubia] or Nigrigia is black and uninstructed by her parents about the place where she was born and emigrated at an infantile age.⁷⁰

Signing her name with a cross because of her illiteracy, Anna consented to the arrangements.

What does the will say about the mummies?

Following Lebolo's death, Francesco Bertola and other friends of the family were called upon to inventory Lebolo's holdings. This was no small task because Lebolo had been involved in several business ventures, including the grocery business, since his return to Castellamonte. The inventory took nine days to complete and is eighty-eight pages in length. Lebolo, contrary to some cursory and inaccurate statements, did not die a poor man. He had considerable land holdings, a large home, and many assets. Although he had loaned large sums of money and much was outstanding when he died, the family was not wanting.

I discovered many fascinating details concerning Lebolo's life-style and interests by studying his will but was very disappointed that no reference was made pertaining to the mummies to verify the report Chandler gave to Joseph Smith. In fact, had I not seen listed in the inventory a picture of Drovetti located in the room where Lebolo died, I would have almost believed I was tracking the wrong man.⁷¹

Possibly other documents that could have answered some questions were burned. President Dan C. Jorgensen, former Italian Mission President, interviewed Francesco Morozzo, who presently lives in Lebolo's house in Castellamonte. Morozzo remembers, "as a boy . . . playing in the attic which was filled with boxes of old letters, keepsakes, etc. He remembers much foreign correspondence with strange non-Italian stamps. Unfortunately, as time passed and he inherited the home, the attics were cleaned and all the 'junk' was burned."⁷² I have personally heard Mr. Morozzo confirm this account.

What documentation is available to connect Lebolo with the eleven mummies that Chandler displayed in the United States, the last four of which he sold to Joseph Smith?

The Comollos located Lebolo's will, the inventory, and other legal documents in the state archives in Turin. True, neither the will nor the inventory mentioned any mummies, but another notarial record they located did: a document that authorized Antonio's son Pietro, then twenty-one years old, to go to Trieste to represent his three little brothers, the family, and himself in transacting these matters of business:

1. Collect 2150 fiorini from Giovan Batista Gauttier and Rosa Gauttier for payments outstanding for a menagerie of foreign animals.
2. Collect from Gustavo Bourlet 1800 fiorini on a loan and 300 fiorini for a woman's scarf he was to have sold for Lebolo.⁷³
3. Contact Albano Oblassa, a shipping magnate, to see why he had not sent to the Lebolo family money for the sale of eleven mummies that Lebolo had entrusted to him to sell.⁷⁴

If these debtors did not make recompense, Pietro was authorized to start legal proceedings against them. (See figures 1a–1d.) It is my assumption that about seventeen months after Lebolo's death, his family discovered a ledger book of his business dealings in Trieste that prompted them to authorize Pietro to travel to Trieste to complete unfinished business there.

When I returned home from my professional development leave in November 1984, I had not found a single document to tie Antonio Lebolo's eleven mummies to the United States. I did know that shipping owner Albano Oblassa in Trieste had been authorized

by Antonio Lebolo to sell the mummies and send the payment to the Lebolos. But the search didn't end.

Adriano Comollo continues his story:

At the beginning of March '85 we received a letter from Professor Peterson: "... we need to find ...". It struck me as a divine order, so back to work!

At first Jerri and I conjectured that any other news concerning the destiny of those mummies could only be found in Trieste. However, just for thoroughness, we decided to cast one last glance in the Archives of Torino. I felt an inspiration, after I had expressly prayed for that problem, to seek among the notaries of Torino, not among those of Ivrea, and there we found the line connecting Italy with America.⁷⁵

The Comollos discovered that on 5 October 1833 a document was sent by the Lebolo heirs to a Francesco Bertola, a veterinarian formerly of Castellamonte, who had moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (Bertola's father, also named Francesco, was Antonio's long-time friend and one who helped inventory Lebolo's personal possessions.) The document in part states:

Special Power of Attorney from Pietro Lebolo in favor of Francesco Bertola, Professor of Veterinary Medicine.

... Pietro Lebolo has called and calls as his special procurator Francesco Bertola son of the living Francesco also born in Castellamonte-Piedmont and living in Philadelphia, Professor of Veterinary Medicine who accepts me here, myself Notary undersigned, acting as a public official accepting for him, therefore he receives the authority to claim the 11 mummies and other antique objects located in various boxes belonging to the deceased Antonio Lebolo who sent them to Albano Oblasser of Trieste. Albano Oblasser sent them to New York to the house of Mr. M'Led [M'Loed] and Quellerspie [Gillespie] of Meetland [Maitland] and Kennedy. Mr. Bertola has authority to sell them to whomever he thinks will fulfill the conditions, pay the amount that the procurator will decide and he will send the same through quittance, and in case of dispute he will protect the interests of the Mistere constituents and he will take care of all the problems that might come up in order to obtain a quick liquidation of such objects. In other words he will do whatever the constituent[s] would do if they were to conduct the transaction themselves.⁷⁶

Another rendition of the same document further explained that Antonio Lebolo had left the eleven mummies in the custody of Albano Oblasser of Trieste, "who sent them to New York to the house of Mr. M'led [M'Leod] and Guellerspie [Gillespie]."⁷⁷ There the mummies were supposed to be sold to anybody that would pay the sum M'Leod and Gillespie thought appropriate; the two were

then to send quittance in any possible way. Since the Lebolos did not pursue the matter, I assume they received quittance from the four New York maritime merchants or some other party.

The ancient papyri, including some writings of Abraham and Joseph, secure in Egyptian sarcophagi, arrived safely in the United States in the winter or early spring of 1833.⁷⁸ These writings, which speak of holy things relevant to man's salvation, were brought to Joseph Smith the last of June 1835, a time that their sacred message could be consequential to the restored Church: the Kirtland Temple was nearing completion, and some of these writings speak of temple-related matters.

Much has been discovered about Lebolo and the mummies, but much remains to be discovered.

NOTES

¹ Jay M. Todd, "Egyptian Papyri Rediscovered," *Improvement Era* (January 1968): 12–16.

² Jay M. Todd, *The Saga of the Book of Abraham* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969), 63–70. Dr. Christensen had made his tentative conclusion through studying Bertha Porter and Rosalind L. B. Moss's book, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960). As he stated, "I simply picked out the largest tombs to study. . . . Thus it was by a process of elimination that I concluded with my hypothesis that Tomb 33 could be the tomb in which Lebolo found his mummies" (Todd, *Saga of the Book of Abraham*, 63–64).

³ H. Donl Peterson, comp., Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, February 1982, 133. The background of this book is as follows: I had my friend, Francesco Morozzo, who lives in Lebolo's house in Castellamonte, Italy, photocopy the Lebolo family records in the Catholic parish in Castellamonte and also provide an English translation of the documents. I have presented copies of this work to the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University and to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Historian's Office and Genealogical Library in Salt Lake City.

⁴ In the *U.S. Gazette* (Philadelphia) 3 April 1833, page 3, Lebolo is spelled correctly. It is misspelled Lebalo in the 3 April 1833 *Daily Chronicle* (Philadelphia). The following week, on 9 April 1833, the *Daily Intelligencer* (Philadelphia) spells his name correctly.

⁵ The Ethnological Collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, entry No. 60, pages 4–5. A photocopy is in the author's possession.

⁶ Samuel George Morton, M.D., *Catalogue of Skulls of Man and the Inferior Animals*, 3d ed. (Philadelphia, 1849), unpaginated, entry No. 60.

⁷ *Times and Seasons* 3 (2 May 1842): 774.

⁸ See Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978), 2:348 (hereafter cited as *History of the Church*); and B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century 1*, 6 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), 2:126–27.

⁹ In 1950 a young returning missionary from Czechoslovakia, Melvin Mabey, armed with information supplied by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, was the first person in recent years to confirm that Lebolo was the correct name and spelling (James R. Clark, *The Story of the Pearl of Great Price* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955], 76–77).

¹⁰ See Peterson, Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, 133.

¹¹ The author has several photocopies of documents from Castellamonte where Pietro Lebolo is listed with other merchants in Castellamonte dealing in staples, produce, and dairy products.

¹² Peterson, Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, 134.

¹³ Peterson, Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, 135–36.

¹⁴ Peterson, Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, 137.

¹⁵ A. Bertolotti, *Passeggiate nel Canavese* O.C. (1871), 5:456, cited in Michelangelo Giorda, *La storia civile religiosa ed economica di Castellamonte Canavese* (Ivrea, Italy, 1953), 337: "Among the documents of 1805, we notice two certificates issued to a fellow citizen Antonio Lebolo to give him a

yearly pension of 450 franks. This person was the faithful companion of . . . Drovetti of Barbania, during those Egyptian excavations.”

¹⁶Lebolo was quartermaster in the Piedmontese gendarmerie. A quartermaster is “an army officer who provides clothing and subsistence for a body of troops” (*Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*). Apparently Lebolo’s military assignment was related to his father’s mercantile business. Some documents relating to Lebolo’s military career are housed in the State Archives in Turin along with other military documents of the Napoleonic period. Photocopies are in the author’s possession.

¹⁷Record of Service certificates called “Bassa Forza,” issued by French authorities, certificates from 1801 to 1813, document page 207, Rec. 1, State Archives of Turin. A photocopy is in the author’s possession. A photocopy of the petition by his father to the Castellamonte Town Council, 22 March 1801, is also in the author’s possession.

¹⁸Translation of Giovanni Marro’s summary of C. Balbo, *Lettere del Conte Carlo Vidua*, vol. 3 (Turin: n.p., 1824), in Giovanni Marro Papers Collection, Accademia Delle Scienze, Turin, Italy (hereafter cited as the Marro Papers Collection). A photocopy is in the author’s possession.

¹⁹In the notary records of Giacomo Buffa, now in the State Archives in Turin, Lebolo’s signature as a witness is often seen on various transactions. Author possesses photocopies of these documents.

²⁰Dating has been determined by Lebolo’s signatures on various legal documents from Castellamonte that are in the author’s possession.

²¹Stanley Mayes, *The Great Belzoni* (London: Putnam, 1959), 173.

²²Count Carlo Vidua was hosted by Antonio Lebolo in the Theban digs for ten days in 1820. In a letter Vidua said, “Mr. Lebolo was a French police officer. . . . From a soldier, which he had been all his life, he became an antiquarian” (Carlo Vidua to the Marchese Doria Di Cirie, 28 June 1820, published in Giuseppe Pomba, ed., *Letters of Count Carlo Vidua*, trans. Cinzia Noble and Murray R. Low [Turin: Cesare Balbo, 1834], 193, letter no. 35).

²³*Nouvelle Biographie Generale depuis les temps les plus recules jusqu’a nos jours, avec les renseignements bibliographiques et l’indication des sources a consulter*, 46 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot Freves, 1852–78), 13:807.

²⁴“He mutilated a hand in a skirmish where it is said, he saved the life of Murat” (*Nouvelle Biographie Generale* 13:807). Chateaubriand wrote of Drovetti’s crippled hand: “I haven’t forgotten at all the tenderness that he showed me when he bade me goodbye on the shore; very noble tenderness, when one like him wiped away his tears with a hand mutilated in the service of his country.” The letter is in the Marro Papers Collection and was published in Francois-Rene Chateaubriand, *Œuvres romanesques et voyages*, 2 vols. ([Paris]: Galimard), 1:1135–36.

²⁵See Giovanni Marro, *Il corpo epistolare di Bernardino Drovetti*, 2 vols. (Rome: Nell’Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato per la Reale Società de Geografia D’Eggitto, 1940); volume 1 is on Drovetti’s military career.

²⁶“In 1802, probably at Murat’s request, he was named vice consul in Egypt under mattieu de Lesseps . . . In 1807 he replaced Lesseps” (*Dictionnaire de Biographie Francaise* 2:836).

²⁷Count Carlo Vidua wrote of Antonio Lebolo while he visited Thebes in 1820: “Who do you think gave me the honor of those sepulchers, and who reigns in Thebes in exchange of the dead King? A Piedmontese. Mr. Lebolo from Canavese, formerly a police officer in the service of France, came to Egypt, and was employed by Mr. Drovetti in the excavations, which he does continuously in Thebes (Count Carlo Vidua to Count Pio Vidua, 20 June 1820, in Pomba, *Letters of Count Carlo Vidua*, 176, letter no. 34).

²⁸“But the rivalry of the French consul, Drovetti, in the same pursuit and speculation, had become very inconvenient, and soon led to violent and continued altercations between the adherents of the two factions; so that all the site of ancient Thebes was subsequently, either by the direction or the tacit consent of the government, (administered at that time in Upper Egypt by the Defterdar Bey,) portioned out and allotted into two great divisions, as French and English ground, each party being only entitled to dig within his own limits, and only authorized to appropriate what should be found there, an expedient which, however, very imperfectly allayed their jealousies and contentions” (William John Bankes, ed., *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Giovanni Finati*, 2 vols. [London: John Murray, 1830], 2: 212–13).

²⁹John Maddox hired some natives to dig for him at Abu Simbel, paying two piastres per day, although “the usual price per day was only one piastre for each man” (John Maddox, *Excursions in the Holy Land, Egypt, Nubia, Syria, etc.*, 2 vols. [London: Richard Bentley, 1834], 1:316). Chandler reported that Lebolo paid the excavators at Thebes 4–6 cents per day (*History of the Church* 2:348).

³⁰“Mr. Lebolo brought me to his house where together we opened the tomb where he had collected the antiquities” (F. Cailliaud to B. Drovetti, 23 August 1820, letter in the Marro Papers Collection).

³¹Carlo Vidua reported “Not only these Muslim countries, after the curiosity is satisfied, are displeasing because of the barbarity of their inhabitants; but are more displeasing, generally speaking, because of the Europeans who live here. Excepting a few individuals, this country is the receptacle of bandits and desperados of all of Europe” (Count Carlo Vidua to Countess Incisa of S. Stefano, 4 August 1820, in Pomba, *Letters of Count Carlo Vidua*, 233, letter no. 40).

³²G. Belzoni, *Narrative of the Operations and Recent Discoveries within the Pyramids, Temples, Tombs and Excavations in Egypt and Nubia; and of a journey to the coast of the Red Sea, in search of the ancient Berenice; and another to the oasis of Jupiter Ammon*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1822), 1:129–35.

³³ Colin Clair, *Strong Man Egyptologist, being the dramatized story of Giovanni Belzoni* (Old Boorne, 1957), 8–12.

³⁴ Giovanni D' Athanasi, *A Brief Account of the Researches and Discoveries in Upper Egypt Made under the Direction of Henry Salt, Esq.* (London: John Hearne, 1836), 8.

³⁵ D' Athanasi, *Brief Account of the Researches and Discoveries in Upper Egypt*, 8–9.

³⁶ D' Athanasi, *Brief Account of the Researches and Discoveries in Upper Egypt*, 24.

³⁷ D' Athanasi, *Brief Account of the Researches and Discoveries in Upper Egypt*, 97–98.

³⁸ J. J. Halls, *The Life and Correspondence of Henry Salt, Esq. F.R.S. etc. His Britannic Majesty's Late Consul General in Egypt*, 2d ed., 2 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, 1834), 2:1–2.

³⁹ Halls, *Life and Correspondence of Henry Salt* 2:3–30.

⁴⁰ *History of the Church* 2:348 states, "He [Lebolo] . . . employed four hundred and thirty-three men, four months and two days (if I understand correctly)—Egyptian or Turkish soldie[r] 's." Count Carlo Vidua wrote, "Mr. Lebolo commands those Arabs; sometimes he had about 200 or 300 at his command; the Turkish commander respects him for fear of Mr. Drovetti" (Count Carlo Vidua to Count Pio Vidua, 20 June 1820, in Pomba, *Letters of Count Carlo Vidua*, 176, letter no. 34).

⁴¹ Laszlo Kakosy reported, "There is no doubt that LEBOLO had visited tomb 32 since he wrote his name on the ceiling of the tunnel-passage" ("Hungarian Excavations in Thebes," *Africana Budapest*, 2 [1986]: 102). Dr. Kakosy spoke at BYU on 6–7 November 1990 on Lebolo's work in Egypt and the importance of tomb 32 to the academic world. Tomb 32 is large enough to match the size of the tomb—which contained several hundred mummies—mentioned in the *History of the Church*. Tomb 32 may or may not be the tomb the eleven mummies came from, if the Porter-Moss research is accurate, but it is interesting to pinpoint a tomb where Lebolo once worked.

⁴² Todd, *Saga of the Book of Abraham*, 63–70.

⁴³ Sadly, some of the so-called excavators were primarily plunderers whose strongest motivation was greed. They left a wide path of destruction behind them. Mummies were shuffled from tomb to tomb as well as other artifacts. Lebolo was collecting artifacts for Drovetti's collection which was to be preserved in a European museum.

⁴⁴ Much more valuable information awaits discovery in Professor Marro's collection. Many letters were written in Italian, some in French, both of which Patrizia could read, but some were in Arabic which none of us could read. Guido Donini, the librarian, who received both his M.S. and Ph.D. from Harvard University and who speaks fluent English, assisted us in every way possible.

⁴⁵ Count Carlo Vidua to Count Pio Vidua, 20 June 1820, in Pomba, *Letters of Count Carlo Vidua*, 175–77, letter no. 34.

⁴⁶ Marro, *Il corpo epistolare di Bernardino Drovetti*, 300–301.

⁴⁷ John Hyde to Bernardino Drovetti, 27 August 1819, in the Marro Papers Collection. A photocopy is in the author's possession.

⁴⁸ F. Brouzet to Bernardino Drovetti 18 August 1820, in the Marro Papers Collection. A photocopy is in the author's possession. Brouzet was senior superior officer of the Royal Gendarmerie, retired, at the time of his writing.

⁴⁹ Frederic Caulliaud to Bernardino Drovetti, 23 August 1820, in the Marro Papers Collection. A photocopy is in the author's possession.

⁵⁰ An attorney in Lebolo's hometown, Giuseppe Perotti, wrote a history of Castellamonte entitled *Castellamonte e la sua storia* (Ivrea, Italy, 1980). In it he wrote: "Always to be remembered at the beginning of the century is the figure of Anthony Lebolo of Castellamonte, friend of Bernardino Drovetti . . . and companion of his during the excavations in Egypt . . . Such activity provided him with a fabulous capital valued at 300,000 francs, that, he, however succeeds in dissipating with a life sumptuous, eccentric, and in time extravagant" (199). A. Bertolotti wrote: "Antonio Lebolo, whose family was one of the most ancient of the town, was employed in Egypt by Cav. Drovetti to supervise and then direct his famous excavations. He went back to his fatherland with about 100,000 francs, which he wasn't able to keep because of the oriental pomp that he wanted to follow" (Bertolotti, *Passeggiate nel Canavese* 5:456).

⁵¹ Count Carlo Vidua to Count Pio Vidua, 20 June 1820, in Pomba, *Letters of Count Carlo Vidua*, 177, letter no. 34.

⁵² "We had dinner at Libollo's house; we went to his house to see two very pretty young ostriches" (Linant De Bellefonds, *Journal of a Trip in the Lower Nubia* [n.p., n.d.], 45.) A photocopy is in the author's possession.

⁵³ Lebolo had sold a menagerie of animals to Giovanni and Rosa Gauttier who lived in Trieste (see n. 73 below).

⁵⁴ Helmut Satzinger to author, 31 January 1977.

⁵⁵ The church record at the Catecumena at Venice dated 12 June 1824 reads: "Anne Maria Darfour, previously Anna Mora, Donna Affricana [African lady], was accepted in this pious Institute of the Catecumena with her two young daughters, on October 10, 1822, and became Christian at about 21 years of age and unmarried by her own declaration. She was baptized today by me, the Prior Father Agostino Kvijungich" (Peterson, *Antonio Lebolo, His Roots and Branches*, 141).

⁵⁶ On 10 October 1831 relative to a change in her husband's will, the following is recorded of Anna: "There is in my presence, Mrs. Anna, Lebolo's widow, who came from an African nation, as she

says from Nubia or Nigrigia, is black and uninstructed by her parents about the place where she was born and emigrated at an infantile age” (notary records of Giacoma Buffa, unpublished, 227–29, 10 October 1831, State Archives, Turin, Italy).

⁵⁷The Venetian church record states: “Anna Marie Darfour . . . was baptized today by me the Prior Father Agustino Kvijungich. . . . At the same time . . . the child name Rosina . . . was baptized . . . and was given the name of Rosa Maria. . . . On the same day June 12, 1824, the full church services were performed for Maria Catterina, daughter of the above Donna Africana, since this child only was given the holy water of baptism in Trieste by a Priest as was becoming the faith of her standing” (Peterson, Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, 141).

⁵⁸In his report to Joseph Smith, Chandler states: “On his way from Alexandria to Paris, he put in at Trieste, and, after ten days’ illness, expired. . . . Previous to his decease he made a will of the whole to Mr. Michael H. Chandler . . . his nephew” (See *History of the Church* 2:349). After researching for several hours on two different occasions in Trieste, I have found no will drawn up by Lebolo there.

⁵⁹Peterson, Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, 139–40.

⁶⁰Bertolotti, *Passeggiate nel Canavese* 5:456.

⁶¹Peterson, Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, 153.

⁶²G. B. Brocchi, *Giornale delle osservazioni fatte ne viaggi in Egitto, nella Siria e nella Nubia* (Bassano, 1843). This is a footnote by the editor of a letter that Brocchi sent to his brother dated Cairo, 25 February 1825.

⁶³Giuseppe Perotti wrote in a history of Castellamonte, “The country never forgave him for having brought to Castellamonte a negro wife, who showed off publicly to the measures of the treasures by him discovered” (Perotti, *Castellamonte e la sua storia*, 199).

⁶⁴Peterson, Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches*, 148–49.

⁶⁵Adriano Comollo to author (received by author on 4 April 1985), “The History of Our Involvement in the Lebolo Research,” in author’s possession (H. Donl Peterson, comp., *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, 65).

⁶⁶Notary records of Giacomo Buffa, unpublished, 193, 17 November 1829, State Archives, Turin, Italy, photograph in author’s possession (Peterson, *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, trans. Patrizia Piania, Cinzia Noble, Adriano Comollo, and others, 3).

⁶⁷Notary records of Giacomo Buffa, 195, 17 November 1829, photograph in author’s possession (Peterson, *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, 5).

⁶⁸Notary records of Giacomo Buffa, 209, 4 December 1829, photograph in author’s possession (Peterson, *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, 7).

⁶⁹Notary records of Giacomo Buffa, 47, 19 February 1830, photograph in author’s possession (Peterson, *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, 8a). The account clarifies that he died the night of 18–19 February 1830; this dating explains the discrepancy of his death date in some documents. Antonio Lebolo, *His Roots and Branches* contains a photocopy of his death entry on page 150.

⁷⁰Notary records of Giacoma Buffa, 227–29, 10 October 1831.

⁷¹The inventory of Lebolo’s personal effects reads: “We entered the room where Master Antonio Lebolo died and after we took out the seal we found . . . No. 35. Another small picture with a yellow frame of the French Consul Avv. Drovetti in Egypt, valued at one lire” (Notary records of Giacomo Buffa, 64, 66, 23 February 1830, photograph in author’s possession [Peterson, *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, 10, 12]).

⁷²Dan C. Jorgensen, “New Facts on the Life and History of Giovanni Pietro Antonio Lebolo,” October 1976, 4. Jorgensen deposited a copy of his research in the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University and at the LDS Church Historian’s Office in Salt Lake City.

⁷³The Fiorini was minted in Florence. It weighed 3.54 grams in 24 carat gold.

⁷⁴Notary records of Giacomo Buffa, 163, 30 July 1831, photograph in author’s possession (Peterson, *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, 55–56).

⁷⁵Comollo, “History of Our Involvement.”

⁷⁶Notary records of F. Clemente Calonzo, unpublished, 132, 5 October 1833, State Archives, Turin, Italy, photograph in author’s possession (Peterson, *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, 59–60).

⁷⁷A second rendition of F. Clemente Calonzo’s 5 October 1833 notary entry by Adriano Comollo. Comollo to author, March 1985 (Peterson, *Lebolo’s Will and Inventory Book*, 64).

⁷⁸Michael H. Chandler displayed the eleven mummies in Philadelphia on 3 April 1833 (see *History of the Church* 2:349).

FIGURE 1a. A notarial record authorizing Antonio's son Pietro to represent the family and himself in transacting some business regarding, among other things, eleven mummies (manuscript page 163). The translation follows:

Special power of attorney from Mr. Giovanni Meuta, guardian of the children Giuseppe, Giovanni and Tomaso Lebolo to the head of Mr. Pietro Lebolo from Castellamonte.

In the year of our Lord 1831, on July 30, after 12 o'clock A.M., in Castellamonte and in the house of said Mr. Meuta, there, I, the undersigned notary, being present and the doctor Tomaso Pollino son of the late architect Giacinto, and Tomaso Norma son of Pietro, both born and residing in Castellamonte, they are suitable witnesses in this matter, undersigning with me and the said Mr. Meuta and they are fully known by me, the notary.

Having personally decided, Mr. Giovanni Meuta, son of the late Bernardino born and residing in Castellamonte as the guardian of the brothers Giuseppe, Giovanni and Tomaso Lebolo sons of the late Antonio, chosen as such with a document dated February 19, 1830, written by me, the undersigned notary, signed in Castellamonte on the 23 of said month, file #330 in the volume 1, sheet 535, with the payment of 6 Lire and 30 cents, and

FIGURE 1b, Manuscript Page 163a

in good faith on said day the undersigned Parish Officer, the guardian and coparent, desiring to award, as it depends on him, all the interests of his said administered children Lebolo, and procured for them the liquidation of the following belongings left them by the said late Antonio Lebolo, their common father, that is 1) Eleven mummies given by him to Mr. Albano Oblassa,[†] so that he [Mr. Oblassa] would arrange to sell them. 2) As of Mr. Gustavo Bourlet,[#] debtor of 1800 fiorini, to be exchanged with said Mr. Lebolo, with also a woman's large scarf, referred to as the Turkish scarf, worth 300 fiorini also given to said Mr. Bourlet, so that he [Mr. Bourlet] would arrange to sell it. 3) And finally as of Mr. Giovan Batista Gauttier and Rosa Gauttier, without a fixed residence, owners of a menagerie of foreign animals, both debtors to said Mr. Lebolo for 2,150 fiorini [recorded] in six promissory notes written in favor of [Mr. Lebolo] himself, in order to take care

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 alla sistemazione dei conti per la loro
 natura epistolare e crediti e conseguente
 l'imponibilità dei medesimi. La medesima
 disposizione speciale dei debiti ingiusti -
 debito contrattato e nominato come quirit
 in virtù del precedente contributo e nomina
 il signor Pietro Labato figlio primo genito
 di detto Antonio natore di Castellamonte
 e Salinoya, ed attualmente di Sogginno
 nella detta città di Trapani, qui accetta
 tanto per altro ma obbligo sottoscritto -
 come officio pubblico fungente, al epistole
 del che il detto detto Labato, coll'entra
 nella memoria di lui qualità di compratore
 e conferisce al detto Labato ogni
 sua propria facoltà di potestà avvocato
 ingiudicio avanti quel signor Tribunale
 o delegato di detto Salinoya, Sogginno
 e Sautio, proporre contro i medesimi -
 tanto quelle ragioni che credesse esser
 sorte per lui, e conseguenti al detto -
 crediti, e ad ogni altro modo di debito
 e leggere qualunque somma che potesse

le debite istruttorie debite per il precedente -
 monte a beneficio di amministrazione per
 istruttorie contrarie; di questo a favore
 dei debiti per qualunque ragione di somma
 amministrabile, e che non sia contraria -
 alla autorità anche al detto Labato
 di contribuire a nome del medesimo, e per
 l'istruttoria di detto ingiusto debito, nel loro
 precipuo crediti uno o più procuratori
 e di conferire anche in modo di detto
 l'autorità necessaria e di approvare, colla
 facoltà in somma al detto Labato di
 il fare per li esecutori nominati tutti -
 e quanto far potrebbe lo stesso
 la parte presente colla clausola cum libere
 et ut alter ego.

Del che tutti i detti sottoscritti col presente
 ho ricevuto, e pubblico a tutto Stato di Sicilia
 e pubblicare a tutto Stato di Sicilia, in nome di
 detto signor Labato, in nome di detto signor Labato
 e sottoscritti di detto Salinoya, Sogginno, Sautio
 vita per l'istruttoria istruttoria - B. B.
 e salute a Trapani - e sottoscritti a Trapani
 e approvare la cosa ingiustamente per lo -
 detto signor Labato.

Il tutto per detto signor Labato -
 La presente istruttoria non è di natura obbligatoria
 per il signor Labato, e contro il contego facciano quante
 di volta.

Giacomo di Salinoya

FIGURE 1c, Manuscript Page 164

of the accounts concerning the above mentioned matters and credits and to obtain the cash from them, [Mr. Meuta] has decided and has been nominated as guardian of said Lebolo children, as he determines and nominates in this present document, Mr. Pietro Lebolo, first born son of said Antonio, born and residing in Castellamonte, and presently living in the aforementioned city of Trieste, here I, the undersigned notary, am accepting for him, as functioning “ex officio publico,” so that said Mr. Meuta, according to his position, has given and gives to Mr. Pietro Lebolo all and complete power to summon to any court or Magistrate said Oblassa, Bourlet and Gauttier, and propose against them all the reasons he might believe as necessary, in order to receive said credits, to deal with them and receive any amount of which they

FIGURE 1d, Manuscript Page 164a

might be in debt, either [if they pay] spontaneously or by verdict, in favor of the [people] mentioned for any amount until final and general satisfaction is reached. Also with authority given to said Mr. Lebolo to delegate, in the name of the principal and for the interest of said Lebolo children in relation the the above specified credits, one or more proxies to whom he would also give all necessary and opportune authority, with maximum power to said Mr. Pietro Lebolo to do, for the above specified credits, all that the principal could do, with the clause *cum libera et ut alter ego*.

I, the undersigned notary having been required to to all this, have received the present document, which was read and made public by me, with a clear knowledge of said Mr. Meuta, being present the above mentioned witnesses, and with them under-signing, the rights of signature, according to the regular price [is] three lire and eighty five cents, that is 3.85.

†residing in Trieste

#already residing in Trieste

The two recorded footnotes are approved

Signatures Meuta, Giovanni; Cav. Pollino; Norma, Tomaso

The present note, written by the hand of myself the undersigned notary on official paper, containing four written pages.

Giacomo Buffa