



Father Milik examining the scroll fragments from Cave 4 in the Rockefeller Museum.

The Scrolls Found in Cave 4

When Caves 4a and 4b were discovered and it became known that the Bedouin were in possession of more than ten thousand scroll fragments found in them, the Jordanian Department of Antiquities realized that it faced two initial problems. In the first place, the Dominican scholars of the French École Biblique et Archéologique were not able to cope with such an abundance of material. The second problem was lack of a budget. Since no one knew how many fragments were held by the Bedouin, it was impossible to fix the budget for their acquisition. In addition, there was the possibility that material would be smuggled abroad and fragments belonging to a single scroll would be separated and circulate independently. Unauthorized archaeological

The Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem.



excavation is illegal, and therefore the Bedouin did not bring their finds directly to the Rockefeller Museum. Kando, the dealer who acquired the first scrolls found in Cave 1, was the agent who bought the fragments from the Bedouin and delivered them to the museum. The Jordanians and the curators of the Rockefeller Museum fixed the price for all the fragments—one Jordanian Dinar (then equivalent to



Carefully unrolling a scroll fragment from Cave 4 for examination.

one Pound Sterling) for each written square centimeter (the Bedouin did not receive any payment for the unwritten margins of the scrolls). In order to prevent the scrolls from being torn into small fragments and divided equally among the Bedouin who had discovered them, the Jordanians decided to pay one Dinar and 10 piasters for a fragment larger than 10 cubic cm, and an additional 10 piasters for a fragment larger than 20 cubic cm, and so forth. The larger the fragment, the greater would be their value.

By creating these financial conditions for parchment purchases, the Bedouin would not be encouraged to tear the scrolls into small fragments. The process of acquiring the scroll



Scroll fragments from Cave 4 as brought to the Rockefeller Museum.