



## FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

THELONA D. STEVENS, CHAIRMAN / 202 SOUTH PENDLETON AVE. / INDEPENDENCE, MO, 64050

NEWSLETTER NO. 29

March 8, 1978

Greetings, Members and Friends,

More than two hundred and fifty attended the annual meeting of the Foundation which convened February 5, the main attraction being the illustrated lecture by Richard A. DeLong, Ph.D., teacher at Graceland. Dr. DeLong had recently returned from one of his numerous trips to Book of Mormon lands, and his pictures centered on Yucatan. His slides and lecture were excellent and well presented to an appreciative gathering.

Necessary business was expedited judiciously, which included the election of the same officers who served you last year: Thelona D. Stevens, president; Dr. Richard A. DeLong, vice-president; Shirley Eakin, secretary; Frederick O. Weddle, treasurer. Also are retained the same standing committee chairmen: manuscripts, Audrey Stubbart; library, Dr. James Van Biber, Jr.; publicity, Leta Moriarty.

At this meeting Roy E. Weldon, patriarch, made a short but rousing statement concerning the importance of the work of the FRAA, predicting future opportunities for expansion of our services.

There will be a meeting of the FRAA every day during the coming conference, Monday through Saturday, following the business session, 4:30 to 6:00 P.M., in the lower auditorium of the Stone Church. Each day there will be an illustrated lecture, as follows:

	Speaker	Subject
Monday	Charles R. Hield	Central Mexico
Tuesday	Frederick O. Weddle	Chichén Itzá, Uxmal, Palenque
Wednesday	Kenneth Raveill	Honduras, Copan; Church activities there
Thursday	Verda and Steele Bryant	Mountain Areas of Peru
Friday	Roy E. Weldon	Evidences Joseph Smith was a True Prophet
Saturday	Richard A. DeLong	Christ in Mesoamerica

Susan and Tom Hairabedian are taking a party on tour of the Holy Land May 27 to June 12, this year. They plan to visit Thoric Cederstrom in Jerusalem. There is yet time to join this tour if you are interested. Address: 1102 Anderson Street, Warrensburg, MO 64093; phone: (816) 747-9719.

Verda and Steele Bryant will also be visiting Thoric in Jerusalem soon. They left February 25 with a party which they are taking on tour of the Holy Land. Those desiring to tour some of the Latin American countries may be interested in the tours the Bryants have scheduled this year. One 10-day tour of Central Mexico will be leaving Independence for Puebla, Cuernavaca, Mexico City, and Tula July 31. There are only two seats open for this tour as of now. A duplicate tour will be made Sept. 11-20. There are currently 20 seats available. Then there will be a 10-day tour to Yucatan, Guatemala, and Honduras, including Tikal and Copan, beginning December 29. Address: 1510 S. Willow, Independence, MO 64055; phone: (816) 254-1041.

Two new books are being announced:

Peoples, Places and Prophecies, by Verneil W. Simmons, 1977. Published by the author, Rt. 2, Box 1619-T, McAllen, Texas 78501. \$12.95. Illustrated; 273 pages. May be ordered from Herald House, Drawer HH, Independence, MO 64055.

Book of Mormon Deeps, Volume II, by Roy E. Weldon and F. Edward Butterworth. Volumes I and II may be ordered from Herald House, \$5.00 each. These will be available also at all FRAA lectures during conference.

--T.D.S.

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From the pen of Charles R. Hield, high priest, Independence, Mo., comes this:

To those of us who accept the Book of Mormon as God's translation by Urim and Thummim from the writing of men in a Hebrew and ancient Egyptian language on gold plates, which tell the coming of some of these same people to America from the Near East, it is most interesting to find more and more scholars commenting that the early settlers in America accepted and worshiped a white and bearded leader who was "comparable to that of Christ." These modern scholars write that those ancient Americans believed that this divine person taught "Christian virtues," that he suddenly appeared "around the beginning of our Christian Era," that he was the "creator of the world," and they considered that he was a person who resided "in heaven." He was known among the early people of Mexico and Central America as "Quetzalcóatl" and in Peru as "Viracocha." Even José Lopez Portillo, the present president of Mexico in his book entitled Quetzalcóatl, says, "He was a white man with a black, round head, big eyes, a high forehead who arrived from the East, who also prophesied the arrival of white and bearded men from the East, who would come to reconquer." Note comments by three other scholars:

Hubert H. Bancroft, writing about the BEARDED WHITE GOD, in Native Races, Vol. 5, p. 23, said:

"Although bearing various names and appearing in different countries, the American culture-heroes all present the same general characteristics. They are all described as white, bearded men, generally clad in long robes; appearing suddenly, and mysteriously upon the scene of their labors; they at once set about improving the people by instructing them in useful and ornamental arts, giving them laws, exhorting them to practice brotherly love, and other Christian virtues."

Laurette Séjourné said of the BEARDED WHITE GOD, QUETZALCÓATL, in Un Palacio de la Ciudad de los Dioses:

"The foundation of the Nahuatl culture rests entirely upon the religious teachings of Quetzalcóatl, whose spiritual exaltation is comparable to that of Christ. And as our era begins with Christ, the era of the people who lived in Mexico at the time of the Spanish Conquest begin with Quetzalcóatl. After the establishment of that religion, the art of Mesoamerica did nothing more than express the essential formulas of His doctrine" (p.8).

"Now archaeology has proven that Teotihuacán, the first great city of Mesoamerica, is dedicated to Quetzalcóatl (Bird Serpent). The bird-serpent, because it expresses the basic concept of the Nahuatl religion, is the key-image of their symbolic language. This proof is important, because it located the Nahuatl Era approximately around the beginning of our Christian Era" (p.9).

Wendell C. Bennett and Junios B. Bird, in Andean Cultural History, published by Museum of Natural History, New York, 1960, writing about VIRACOCCHA (Mountain area of Peru), p. 234, said:

"The Gods in the official state religion were arranged in a hierarchy. Viracocha, the leader, was considered to be the creator of the world, and to reside in heaven."

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In the December 1976 issue of Biblical Archaeologist\* is a research article on "The Acoustics and Crowd Capacity of Natural Theaters in Palestine." By scientific methods, B. Cobbley Crisler and assistants conducted acoustical experiments at various places where the Bible states that crowds assembled. For instance: "And he [Jesus] began again to teach by the sea-side; and there was gathered unto him a great multitude; so that he entered into a ship and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land" (Mark 4:1).

The thesis of the article is that Christ and the prophets before him knew certain places where the acoustics were excellent and thus held their meetings in those places. In each spot they tested, the scientists found that it was indeed possible for a man speaking in ordinary voice to be heard over a large area and by huge groups . . . without the aid of megaphone or any mechanical or other aid.

It is recorded that King Benjamin "caused a tower to be erected" (Mosiah 1:36), from which he spoke to the many families assembled. The possibility comes to my mind that if we knew the spot for his farewell speech that it may well have been that the beloved king also knew a place which was acoustically favorable for his presentation.

This brings to attention the fact that there are so many things we do not know about the Book of Mormon peoples and places, but that without doubt the facts already known could be scientifically proved even as the acoustical properties of Bible stories have been proved.

--Norma Anne Holik

\*Biblical Archaeologist, published by American Schools of Oriental Research, Scholars Press, P. O. Box 5207, Missoula, Montana 59806. \$10.00 per year.

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Added to our files on SERPENTOLOGY is this by Robert F. Smith:

John L. Sorenson, "The Significance of an Apparent Relationship Between the Ancient Near East and Mesoamerica," in C. L. Riley, J. C. Kelley, C. W. Pennington, and R. L. Rands, eds., Man Across the Sea: Problems of Pre-Columbian Contacts (London/Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971, pp. 219-41), covers a wide range of topics on the Weldon list--especially the trait list of shared cultural features on pp. 227-41.

Serpentology is dealt with on pp. 234-35, under "Snake symbolism (wisdom, healing, fertility, water, rain, artistic motifs or dragons and undulation, etc.) with abundant documentation.

Two copies of this volume are available in the RLDS Research Library, the Auditorium, Independence, Missouri.

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The Aztecs, Maya, and Their Predecessors--Archaeology of Mesamericas, by Muriel Porter Weaver. 1972. Seminar Press, New York, subsidiary of Harcourt, Brace and Jovonovich. 347 pages, \$12.50.

Reviewed by James T. Van Biber, Jr., D.D.S., member of the Research on Ancient America Library Committee. This book is available for use by all in the General Church Research Library, the Auditorium, Independence, Missouri.

This book was designed by the author to cover the archaeology of central Mexico and the Maya area. It gives an overview of archaeology from the earliest traces of archaeological evidence to the conquest of the Aztecs by the Spanish. These events are dealt with in chronological order to enhance comprehension and minimize confusion.

Along with descriptions of changes in cultures, descriptions of the rise and fall of the civilizations, development in agriculture, and theories of history, there are many maps and timetables showing where and when these events are thought to have taken place. There are also excellent photographs and drawings that show the remains of the structures and artifacts. Chapter 5 is devoted to current developments in deciphering the writings, explanations of the calendars, and numbering systems of the various cultures.

The book seems to be a synthesis of scholarly archaeology in light of present findings and thinking. For someone beginning to study Mesoamerican-Mexican archaeology this book would be excellent for a basis from which to branch into more detailed research or visits to these areas to experience the thrill of personal discovery, to see the greatness of the works of the Book of Mormon peoples and their descendants

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Dessa Shreve, Independence, noted this from the Wyoming State Journal, Lander, dated July 2, 1963:

The "Sacred Flat Pipe" is a highly prized religious symbol of the Arapahoe Indians, who believe its possession is vital to their existence. Their account of it is:

Many thousands of years ago the Sacred Flat Pipe was carried across the ice when our people fled to escape the cruelty of the Neauthau (Gentiles or Aliens). As the Pipe was given to us, He-nau-nau-a-in-nau, (the Chosen People) by God, it is the most holy thing on this earth. The carrier of the Pipe must always travel by foot. When this Pipe wastes away, the world will end.

It is said that God gave your people a Sacred Stone with rules written on it. You do not have that Stone. We have our Sacred Flat Pipe which He gave to the first Arapahoe.

But our God is the same. We are your friends.

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Foundation for Research  
On Ancient America

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## FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

THELONA D. STEVENS, CHAIRMAN / 202 SOUTH PENDLETON AVE. / INDEPENDENCE, MO. 64050

1978

Greetings, One and All:

The sole purpose of the Foundation for Research on Ancient America is to uphold and advance the use of the Book of Mormon. This is in accord with the purpose stated on the title page of the Book of Mormon itself--that it is "written to the Lamanites...and also to Jew and Gentile...to shew unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers...and also to the convincing of Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations."

Recognizing that it is important to conduct research in the Mediterranean area where the Book of Mormon peoples originated (as well as research in Mesoamerica), the Foundation has granted to Thoric Cederstrom a \$2,500 scholarship, making it possible for him to be currently studying at the University of Jerusalem. Thoric is engaged in research in connection with his 16-hour course load, in addition to which he is doing some work for the Department of Antiquities in the Archaeological Laboratory in Jerusalem (for the Government), and expects to go on a dig soon. The Foundation is hoping for some additional developments involving others in connection with this project before Thoric returns home.

In our undergirding desire to promote the Book of Mormon, we extend a special invitation to the youth throughout the church to enter into a special study of the Book of Mormon. We encourage the kind of research which grows into a consuming project of glorious, joyous unfolding of knowledge. Diligent study of this sort, guided by the Spirit of God, can become a lifetime project of learning and sharing this knowledge with others. Of course such sharing can take on numerous forms of service. One which we advocate is the writing of scholarly books on subjects pertaining to the Book of Mormon. This is not only possible but it is necessary for this church to come forth with many appropriate texts in order to adequately present the fullness of the gospel, which must include the Book of Mormon.

In an effort to help our youth and indeed those of all ages, for all are invited to participate, we are offering a list of suggested topics. Choose one or more of these topics as a beginning point, or choose any topic(s) which may occur to you. There is no limit except the limitations which you yourself present. There are almost countless areas for studying and supporting Book of Mormon claims. These include archaeological and other external proofs and supporting testimony, plus the internal evidences (those which are supported by other scriptural statements). Hence, this association is not limited to archaeological study, though archaeology obviously does contribute much by way of proof of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

You are invited to accept a list of topics, to begin your research.

You are invited to become a member of this association, so that your membership dues can be used to assist us in our work. Your membership automatically makes you eligible to receive copies of our newsletters.

You are invited to contribute otherwise financially to the work of the Foundation as may be possible. All contributions are tax deductible, as we are duly organized and registered as a nonprofit organization.

You are invited, most of all, to enter into a systematic period of earnest, prayerful study with a long-time view to making a real contribution to the work of the Kingdom through your own individual promotion of the Book of Mormon, as brought forth by the gift and power of God for our day.

Your chairman,

Theiona D. Stevens

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

R E S E A R C H    T O P I C S

You are invited to participate in church-wide research on Book of Mormon claims which is being promoted by the Foundation for Research on Ancient America. The following topics have been suggested by Roy E. Weldon. You may choose one or more of these topics, or you may choose your own. Please direct your correspondence to Mrs. F. L. Stevens (Thelona D. Stevens), 202 S. Pendleton, Independence, Missouri 64050.

1. Age, golden
2. Agriculture
3. Anatomy
4. Animals
5. Anthropology
6. Apostasy
7. Archaeology
8. Astronomy
9. Baptism, adults and infants
10. Bees, honey
11. Books, lost
12. Book of Malachi
13. Botany
14. Brothers, four
15. Buildings
16. Calendar
17. Cannibalism
18. Carbon-14 dating
19. Cement
20. Ceramics
21. Chariots
22. Cherubim
23. Christ
24. Christinity
25. Chronology
26. Churchianity
27. Cities
28. Circumcision
29. Combinations, secret
30. Creation, story of
31. Cross
32. Cultures
33. Cureloms, cumoms
34. Decree, everlasting
35. Diseases
36. Doctrine
37. Dragons
38. Dramatics
39. Earth as scroll
40. Economics
41. Egyptian language
42. Elephants
43. Entomology
44. Errors
45. Ethics
46. Etymology
47. Evolution
48. Evidence, internal
49. Fasting
50. Flood, world-wide
51. Fortifications
52. Gathering
53. Genealogy
54. Gentiles
55. Geography
56. Geology
57. Giants
58. Gifts, spiritual
59. Godhead
60. Gospel
61. Government
62. Grammar
63. Hebrews
64. Hieroglyphics
65. Highways
66. History covered by Book of Mormon period
67. Horses
68. Ichthyology
69. Interpreters
70. Isaiah (when written)
71. Jaredites
72. Jerusalem
73. Kings
74. Land, cursed
75. Land of promise
76. Lamanites
77. Laying on of hands
78. Liahona
79. Literature, place of Book of Mormon  
in lost tribes of Israel
80. Lost tribes of Israel
81. Metallurgy
82. Migrations
83. Miracles
84. Money (coins)
85. Moses, law of

86. Names
87. Nephi
88. Nephites, three
89. Palaeontology
90. Pearls
91. Philosophy
92. Philology
93. Plagiarism
94. Plates of brass
95. Plates of Lehi
96. Plates of Nephi
97. Plates, purpose of
98. Polygamy
99. Pores
100. Population
101. Pre-existence (of spirit)
102. Prayer, Lord's
103. Priesthood
104. Priesthood, high
105. Promise, great
106. Prophecy with the Book of Mormon
107. Prophecy (Eible) fulfilled in  
the Book of Mormon
108. Prophets of Old Testament
109. Psychology
110. Pyramids
111. Radiochemistry
112. Rebellion
113. Records, buried
114. Redeemer
115. Restoration according to works
116. Restoration of the gospel
117. Restoration of house of Israel
118. Religions
119. Robe, white
120. Sacrifice, human
121. Saints, blood of
122. Seeds, grains
123. Serpentology
124. Seismology
125. Sheep
126. Shepherd
127. Shipbuilding
128. Signs of Christ's birth
129. Sin, original
130. Slavery
131. Spirit, Great
132. Sociology
133. Statistics
134. Stewardship
135. Supper, Lord's
136. Symbolism
137. Temples
138. Textiles
139. Therapeutics
140. Topography
141. Tower of Babel
142. Towers
143. Tower, great
144. Treaty, ten-year
145. Tree, olive
146. Upheaval, great
147. Virgin birth
148. Visions
149. Voice, upheaval power
150. War, last
151. Wheat
152. Wheel (chariots)
153. Wine
154. Witchcraft
155. Witness, second
156. Witnesses, three
157. Workmanship, fine
158. Writings
159. Writing styles
160. Zarahemla, city of
161. Zedekiah
162. Zoology