

Foundation for Research

on
Ancient
America



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NEWSLETTER NO. 35

September, 1980

Dear Members and Friends:

The next FRAA meeting will be held October 5 at 3:00 p.m. in Partridge Hall, Stone Church. The program will be in three parts: Raymond E. Treat will speak on "Geography of the Book of Mormon", George Knotts will give a visual lecture, "America: Land of Prophecy," and Susan Hairabedian will report on missionary developments of the Hawleys in Israel. The Hawleys are calling for as many copies of the Book of Mormon as possible. You may have a well-bound, clean copy (1908) edition, which you wish to contribute--or you may wish to contribute the price of one or more copies to help meet their urgent request. We shall be prepared to accept your gift books or cash contributions at this meeting--or by mail, or otherwise, of course.

This being our first newsletter since the World Conference last April, we report that our FRAA program at that time was apparently very well received. Every day, Monday through Friday, Luff Hall, Stone Church, was filled to capacity and there were many enthusiastic expressions of appreciation. A tape recording was made of the speakers: Raymond E. Treat, "Mesoamerican Archaeology and Book of Mormon Outlines Compared", Roy E. Weldon, "The Deeps of the Three Standard Books and Ebla", Charles R. Hield, "Jesus Christ in Ancient America", and Clair E. Weldon and Kenneth Raveill, a two-screen presentation. This recording (sound only), 60 minutes, is available for \$3.00. Please order from Fred O. Weddle, 410 N. Pleasant, Independence, MO 64050.

Thoric Nils Cederstrom and Myriam Claudia were married June 15 in the Stone Church after a previous ceremony for them in Mexico. The newlyweds are in Tucson, Arizona, where Thoric will begin work on his doctor's degree in anthropology and arid land water resources.

Please continue to support our efforts to promote the Book of Mormon. We appreciate your membership. Any contribution you wish to make in helping with this work will be gratefully received.

---T.D.S.

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Our thanks goes to Dr. James H. Robbins, Independence, MO., for sharing this experience with us:

There is a village in southern Mexico, which lies near to the base of Hill Cumorah, which has an intriguing legend. This legend tells of three men (the same three) who pass through their village in the first week of April every year and climb Hill Cumorah. They are never seen again until the next year early in April. It is believed by some that these men are the Three Nephites who were permitted to tarry. (I happen to be of those who believe this.)

Three other men and I, a few years ago, climbed Hill Cumorah. About a week later I was thinking about the trip, especially pondering as to why the Three Nephites make a pilgrimage to Cumorah each April. My concept of God is that there is always an important thing to be accomplished when He does something. While thus considering these things, the voice of inspiration spoke to my mind these words, "They (the Three Nephites) are beholding the doings of God among the children of men until the end come and are recording these things."

I quickly turned in my Book of Mormon to III Nephi 13:18 and read about the three who were

to tarry, but would "live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men," but there was nothing mentioned about them continuing to write upon the sacred records. However, because of the power of the Spirit which attended this experience, I am confident that indeed the Three continue to add to the sacred library which someday will be the inheritance of the sanctified. * * * * *

Gordon W. Harrison, Sharon, Pa., submitted this testimony and observation:

I am quite familiar with the Scriptures we have been using to support our claims regarding the truth of the Book of Mormon. Yet, I had been hoping for something that to me would be more substantial and concrete, harder for one to try to disprove. I have found what I have been looking for. I had read it many times, but for many years did not catch its significance.

One Sunday I was listening to a man read some verses of Scripture on TV. He read Luke 18: 31-33: "Then he took the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem and all things which are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on. And they shall scourge him and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again."

That last statement about his rising from the dead caught my attention especially. Also, the fact that the things which would soon happen to Christ had already been written by the prophets. "That's it; that's what I have been looking for all these years," I said. I was certain that the Old Testament said nothing about his rising the third day from the dead. If these things were not written in the Old Testament, there had to be another book somewhere written by some prophets concerning these things. Where were these writings?

Using my Cruden's Concordance, which I imagine is as complete as any, I could find no place in the Old Testament mentioning Christ's rising again the third day. Then I searched for the other things he said were written about him being "mocked, spitted on, scourged..." but I could find none of these things there either. This was proof to me that he was talking about some other book, but what one?

I resorted to my Book of Mormon. I opened it to Mosiah 1:104,105 and read: "They shall... scourge him, and shall crucify him. And he shall rise the third day from the dead." Mosiah 8:32 foretold: "[He] suffereth himself to be mocked, and scourged...Nephi wrote (II Nephi 11:22): "They shall crucify him, and after he is laid in a sepulcher for the space of three days, he shall rise from the dead..."

I found yet many other references in the Book of Mormon on this subject, but these are enough to prove to me that Christ was talking about this book because all the things he mentions that would happen to him are found in this book. It qualifies better than any other book I know of. These things are not found in the Old Testament, but the writers of the "Gospels" recorded them after they had happened to him.

Proof that these things were not available to his apostles prior to their happening is found in Luke 18:33,34, which says, "And they shall scourge and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them; neither knew [remembered, Inspired Version] they the things that were spoken." This writing was unfamiliar to them. It was not in their Scriptures. It was hidden from them because it was in the writings of the Nephites.

Both John 7:20 and 10:20 record that the people charged that Jesus had a devil, but only the Book of Mormon (Mosiah 1:104) foretold this.

Those going to the sepulcher registered surprise at not finding him there, "For as yet they knew not the Scripture that he must arise from the dead" (John 20:9). Only the

Book of Mormon prophets had recorded early that this great event would take place.

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Book review by Audrey Stubbart

B E F O R E C O L U M B U S

by

Dr. Samuel D. Marble

Published by A. S. Barnes and Company, Inc. 1980
Cranbury, N. Y. Hardback, 250 pages. \$12.95

"Our history as Americans is far more complex, far more exciting and far more valuable than most of our teaching has led us to believe," Dr. Samuel D. Marble, author, educator and president of four colleges, says in this new book about the pre-Columbus discoverers of America.

Books on American history start with 1492, but Marble says our history goes much farther back than that and in support of his thesis he follows the growth of languages and other evidences of development. He mentions the totora reed which grows only in fresh water, along the banks of the Nile River and in Lake Titicaca of Peru. "Because the totora reed propagates itself below the water, botanists can think of no way this reed--which is genetically identical with its African counterpart--could have found its way to the Andes unless it was carried by hand. On the occasion when the totora reeds were woven into bundles to make a boat for the River Nile, men wore birdlike hats with beaks. . . And men wearing hats with beaks are shown on ancient tracings in Peru where boats are being woven from totora reeds in a pattern almost identical to that of ancient Egypt.

"In the entire course of Egyptian history, one memorable expedition was that of the Pharaoh Hutshepsut. The Emperor was a woman, but she was not a queen--she was a Pharaoh, and she wore an artificial beard on ceremonial occasions. . . sculpture shows the beard neatly hooked over her ears. . . Her great expedition is magnificently detailed on the Pharaoh's burial chamber. . . This expedition took place in approximately 1400 B.C. Thor Heyerdahl has conclusively demonstrated that it was possible for ships of earlier design, namely, those made of totora reeds, to cross the Atlantic, and that the early boats were more seaworthy than the colorful boats of Hutshepsut. If reed boats were used to cross the Atlantic--and Heyerdahl believes they were because of the evidence found at Lake Titicaca, in Peru, as well as on the west coast of Mexico and on Easter Island--no official records have come to light to indicate these voyages were sponsored by the government or recorded in any official document."

Ships of other nations did venture into the Atlantic well before the time of Christ. Paul the Apostle took passage on Phoenician vessels known as the Ships of Tarshish. It was very likely Phoenician ships that brought tin for the use of the early mound builders in this country, Marble surmises. "Bronze weapons have been found in mound builders sites dating back to 200 B.C. or earlier. . . Bronze, of course, is a mixture of copper and tin, and tin is not found in North America. Therefore these implements were either imported from Europe . . . or American craftsmen learned how to make them based on European models with the knowledge they would have a dependable supply of tin available. . . The Indians had a considerable knowledge of metallurgy and, interestingly enough, their symbols for gold and silver are almost identical to those used by Egyptians," the author states. He believes "it is entirely possible that Egyptians were present" by 400 B.C. In terms of impact on North America, the clearest and most extensive evidence is found in the Mayan civilization of Mexico.

As a subject for research, the possibility of African discovery of America has never been a tempting one for American historians, Marble points out. "Yet, it is a fact that Columbus took back to Spain samples of metal of Indian spearheads he had acquired from the

Haitians and "when the metal was assayed by Ferdinand's own mineralogists, their conclusion was that it was the very alloy of African origin." He said there was trade between Africa and Haiti antedating Columbus so many years that the natives could only inform him that "six European expeditions had arrived before him." He says that "In comparison to the Scandinavian studies, the knowledge of African expeditions to the Americas has not moved a great deal beyond where it was when Columbus left it."

The Celts may have arrived here as early as 800 B.C. At one time the Celts--or Gauls--dominated Europe. Marble says. "Berry Fell of Harvard, who is both an oceanographer and epigrapher, has discovered a substantial number of Celtic inscriptions in the New England area. Among the more important are the antiquities of 'Mystery Hill', a site which Fell is confident was occupied from 800 to 600 B.C. Mixed in with the Celtic writings are stone engraved tablets of Phoenician origin, possibly from Cadiz, which became one of the major shipping centers of pre-Christian Spain.

Also found in the New England area are caves which are constructed from stone obviously gathered from considerable distance to form a structure not otherwise found in colonial New England. These structures have corbeled walls that slope to a narrow roof which allows one stone at a time to be removed from the ceiling to permit a view of the sky, a construction used in Celtic Europe primarily for purposes of astronomical observation. Marble says that while pre-Columbian artifacts have been found to exist, "It is worth noting that an American Stonehenge was constructed near 'Mystery Hill', and the stones placed with such precision as to make accurately the equinoxes, and the winter and summer solstices. This arrangement could not have happened by accident, and carbon-14 analyses of charcoal found near the sites at different layers indicate that occupation prior to 1000 B.C. is evident. Reports on carbon-14 dating are now on deposit at Harvard University."

By combining Phoenician sea power with Egyptian science and mathematics, one of the greatest voyages of discovery in human history was carried out by Phoenician ships. "The Pharaoh on the throne of Egypt from 609 to 595 B.C. hired Phoenician ships to circumnavigate Africa from east to west. . . Obviously, if the Phoenician sailors under Egyptian tutelage were able to make a voyage in excess of 9,000 miles and return safely, these same seamen were capable of crossing the Atlantic."

ASTRONOMY

"The Pharaoh Necho understood very well that the earth was round and that the sun was the center of the solar system almost 2,200 years before the idea was rediscovered by Copernicus", Marble says.

Dealing with the Mayans' calendars for the calculation of the solstices, the eclipses, metronic cycles, Marble tells that "They calculated eclipses into the third millennium of our era. . . which will not occur for another thousand years. . . computed to the second, and these calculations have been confirmed by modern astronomers as accurate."

Speaking of one of the best known sculptures of the Yucatan, the Choc-Mool, he says that visitors to Yucatan have been told until recently that the receptacle was a bowl in which the priest placed the still throbbing heart of the human sacrifice. "The Choc-Mool, it now seems clear, was an astronomical instrument, and the bowl. . . holding water or possibly liquid mercury, with which the Mayans were at this time acquainted," was designed "to observe the split-second observation of the transit of stars", is still used by the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C.

PYRAMIDS

"The period of pyramid building in Egypt was remarkably brief," says Marble. "The first efforts at the construction of a pyramid occurred about 2900 B.C. and during a span of

"two hundred years, the astronomers, architects, stone cutters and masons were experimenting. . . When the architects and designers understood fully the failure, and even the hair-breadth inaccuracies, of all of the previous experiments, the Pyramid of Cheops was constructed. . . After its completion, the age of pyramid building in Egypt came to a close."

Marble refers to Peter Tompkins as a specialist in Egyptian pyramids. He says, "He has made comparable studies of the pyramids of Mexico, particularly the Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacan," and quotes Tompkins: "There appears to have been a great deal of intercourse between the Middle East and Mesoamerica, with its flow of technicians, as well as religious and philosophical notions, it seemed reasonable to assume that any earth-consumerate unit be related to the unit used in the building of the Great Pyramid of Cheops, or at least to have been devised from some common source."

Teotihuacan, near Mexico City, was the largest and most impressive of the Mayan cities, with a population "not less than 200,000, and covered eight square miles, which meant that it was larger than Imperial Rome, and at its zenith, larger than any city in Europe." Teotihuacan was laid out shortly before the birth of Christ. The ceremonial center of the city has been excavated and restored, but large portions of the city still remain slumbering under more than a thousand years of accumulated debris."

Marble observes that "Historians and archaeologists believe that artistic and social forms grow out of the ecology of the regions in which people live," and sites a number of examples where sculptures and pyramids in Mexico and northern South America and elsewhere seem to be ecologically misplaced. This leads him to discuss the "portrayal of lions on the sculptured reliefs of the pyramids of Chichen Itza in Yucatan. Why lions, you ask, when there are no lions in North or South America? For the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Persians and Israelites, the lion had been a symbol of power, force and fear. . . To have a lion on the pyramid at Chichen Itza is a borrowed idea just as much as a statue of an anteater would be on the entrance of the Supreme Court. The introduction of such forms, shapes, and symbols into the life of the Olmecs was certainly a product of trans-Atlantic migration. Marble's chapters on Egyptian and Mesoamerican pyramids are "musts" for reading.

LANGUAGE

The author finds most expansive and interesting the growth of the language of the pre-Columbian peoples. Beginning with the Celts, he traces the script in this manner: "Ogam script was used by the Celts until about A.D. 800 when it fell into disuse." He says Jerry Fell stirred a tempest by collecting a set of matching inscriptions from parts of the world bordering on the Atlantic ocean. He reasoned that the ocean currents might be the "conduit for the transportation of man and his culture."

He reports that Ogam script was found in 1712 on a stone in County Kerry, Ireland, and on a rock at Dighton, England. In 1784 an English colonel, Charles Vallancy, discovered an ancient tombstone in County Clare, Ireland, and was able to decipher it. Then a stone with Punic writing was found at Moundsville, W. Va. in 1838, and it is believed to have been correctly translated. "Another stone bearing the Aton sun symbol of the Pharaoh Ikhnaton, engraved in approximately 800 B.C. in Punic writing has been found in Oklahoma with words that appear to be excerpts from Ikhnaton's hymn to the sun. In 1975, stones were found on the Atlantic coast inscribed in a southern Iberian alphabet and attributed to Hanno, dated from 480 to 475 B.C. A large number of Phoenician inscriptions have also been found in Brazil."

Alex Reinert, a linguist on the faculty of Harvard and a specialist in South American languages, found a rock inscription he could not read on a cave wall in Paraguay. After careful research, he discovered that the record was in Ogamic writing, and reported a visit by mariners from Cadiz about 300 to 500 B.C. The discovery of two Ogamic inscriptions on this side of the Atlantic brought a lively revival of interest in this form of writing.

Newsletter No. 35, p. 6.

The ability to read the Mayan language has been lost, and no more than a third of the hieroglyphs are comprehensible to us today. Marble suggests that evidences abound of the language elements that appear to unite the Mayan with languages used by other peoples at times. The Ogamic writing of the Irish and the comparable script of the Iberians in Spain are explored in this fascinating book by Marble.

As to himself, he said, "As I began to broaden my base understanding, I had the thrilling experience of becoming literate", and was reminded again how little we know of another people unless we understand their language. In the absence of all the symbols of the Egyptian culture, I was an outsider until I took time to study the hieroglyphics. A knowledge of the language of the ancient Egyptian began to awaken an awareness of how much the culture of these people had permeated the present day and how far the echo of those voices had been heard. It was a surprise, for example, to discover how many words presently in the English language were in the standard Egyptian vocabulary of 3,500 B.C., and are virtually unchanged in meaning. I had read the wrong books, for no one had told me that the English language owed an indebtedness to the Egyptians.

Dr. Marble's book is full of facts, figures and also conjectures though he documents his statements and gives sources. Book of Mormon students will find many new, challenging, provocative thoughts for study and research in this remarkable book.

The astounding facts regarding Mayan mathematics as uncovered by Marble had to be omitted from this review due to lack of space. Audrey Stubbart has agreed to present this and some other facts as stated by Dr. Marble in a subsequent newsletter.

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