

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

NEWSLETTER No. 5

December 10, 1969

Dear Friends,

In spite of holiday pressures of heavy mail and busy members, this Newsletter is being sent.

Our thanks go to a number of you who have sent contributions, comments, and items for use in our work; also for the names of friends to whom Newsletters may be sent.

Happy holidays, and unlimited blessings in the coming year is our wish for you all.

-- T.D.S.

* * * * *

From Alex Iaw of Sydney, Australia comes a clipping from a Sydney newspaper, The Sun, dated August 2, 1969, having to do with explorations by the Andes Explorers' Club. Gene Savoy, president, writes of legends among the Peruvian jungles people regarding the "White Messiah."

Mr. Savoy describes these people as tall, blonde descendants of a white civilization. . . . I saw white people there with blue eyes and blonde and red hair. . I saw dark-skinned people with blonde, fair-skinned children. It was incredible." He describes the people as "well over six feet tall."

Concerning the "legendary White God," he said, "he definitely emerged from the Peruvian jungles to spread his message. . . . To the Indians, he was like a Messiah; he taught a new religion of peace, the immortality of the soul and preached against materialism. . . . His symbol, found throughout Central America, was the plumed serpent and a cross. He taught that one must sacrifice the inner heart to obtain immortality, but some of the Indian races, like the Aztecs, interpreted this later that the heart had to be torn out alive in human sacrifices." Savoy thought the religion of the "White God" bore a strange parallel to Buddhism and Christianity.

* * * * *

A related article comes from The Sun-Telegram of San Bernardino, April 13, 1969, a story of what is termed "the purest primitives left on the face of the earth," by Dietmar Carsten. Carsten is one of the few explorers to have "challenged these wilds (of Peru) and almost certainly the first to find and photograph the Kashomashiris." He heard about them from the Campa Indians. A Campa on close terms with them, strangely enough, acted as interpreter.

"The Kashomashiris are apparently very different from the rest of the tribes that surround them. (The name 'Kashomashiri' means naked, literally without 'cushma' or sack-dress; this was the term the Campas used to describe them--they had no name for themselves.) They are a slight, graceful people, light of skin, the women of great beauty. Their way of life is one of the utmost simplicity. They live on wild fruits and plants, and small animals which they hunt with bow and arrow. They wear only a modest girdle of leaves; they have no ornaments and possess only a few basic utensils." Some Campa accounts suggest that there may be 2,000 of these people, but Carsten estimates that the total may be a mere 500 scattered through the area."

Gene Carsten is a German, a resident of New York, whose primary interest is ethnology. He plans further expeditions to this area.

* * * * *

Inez Gorton of Moorhead, Iowa, long a social welfare worker among the Arizona Indians, also worked with the San Carlos and White Mountain Apaches for a number of years. She wrote:

"I have heard the Lamanites howl for the loss of a loved one. This sound is different from any other audible expression of grief. It rends the air, figuratively speaking. I have heard that they regard this as a sacred duty, and the tradition must be carried on. In no way does this resemble one of their chants. The term 'howl' adequately describes their vocalization. I know of no other race of people who practice this rite.

"We find repeated references in the Book of Mormon to howling, one of which is quoted from Isaiah, 'Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand . . . ' - II Nephi 10:6.

"Following the great storm at the time of Jesus' crucifixion, 'there was great mourning, and howling and weeping among all the people continually' - III Nephi 4:21. (Also see verses 25, 54, 60, etc.)

"Numerous other Book of Mormon references carry similar expressions, such as Mosiah 7:51; Helaman 3:92; 5:43; Ether 6:88, 90."

* * * * *

One of the members of the Foundation, William Murray of Yucaipa, California has been doing research on the American horse for some time. He has submitted some material which we believe will stimulate further study by those interested in this subject, together with "The Horse in Ancient America," by Charles R. Hield in the Saints' Herald, October, 1969. Elder Murray writes:

THE AMERICAN HORSE

One of the criticisms by enemies of the Book of Mormon when it was first published was that the Nephites found horses in America and had actually domesticated and used them. (See I Nephi 5:216; Alma 12:76-82; III Nephi 2:20, 44; 3:1; Ether 4:21.) The horse, it was believed, was brought to America by Spanish explorers, so Joseph Smith had made a great mistake.

In November, 1968 my wife and I made a trip to the South Pacific. While in Sydney, Australia we visited the Australian Museum. There we found an exhibit called the "Evolution of Horses," a pictorial exhibit exceptionally interesting to one familiar with the Book of Mormon. Concerning the exhibit was this statement:

"True horses of the Genus Equus evolved in North America from a Plihippus stock at the end of the Pliocene and were well established in early Pleistocene times. . . . they spread to all parts of North America and also migrated across the still existing land bridges into Europe, Asia, Africa and South America. Toward the end of Pleistocene times, horses became extinct in North and South America, but persisted in Eurasia and Africa. . . ."

The Los Angeles County Museum exhibits specimens of various epochs, and describes the evolution of the horse, and states that its disappearance was 10,000 to 11,000 years ago, according to Carbon-14 dating of associated wood fragments, which was before the Spanish Conquistadores. The cause for their disappearance is still a mystery. Many individual finds are recorded in the collection in this museum, but all are of a single specie, the extinct western horse.

Just when and why did the horse disappear from America? Students of the Book of Mormon believe it was much later than 10,000 years ago. Paul M. Hanson in Jesus Christ Among the Ancient Americans, Herald House, 1945, pp. 167, 168, gives several quotations from a number of authors questioning dates given by paleontologists. As time goes on and new discoveries are made, perhaps many dates will have to be changed. There is much to be uncovered yet.

The disappearance of the horse in America remains a mystery. Perhaps some day the riddle may be solved.

Newsletter No. 5, p. 3.

References: Rancho La Brea, publ. by Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, 900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90007. A record of Pleistocene Life in California (Sixth Edition) by Chester Stock, 1968. \$1.25 (cloth \$2.95).

The Ascent of Equus, Chester Stock and Hildgarde Howard, Los Angeles County Museum, 1963, 50¢.

* * * * *

An added thought is gleaned from Since Cumorah, by Hugh W. Nibley, Desert Book Company, 1967, Salt Lake City, Utah, \$.95, p. 257:

"Extensive studies on the domestication of the horse (and the presence of a pre-Columbian horse in America is still being argued pro and con) have established that the horse was not domesticated at just one time and place but independently in various times and places. It would appear that horses were used to pull wagons in some places long before anybody thought of riding upon their backs (R. S. MacNeish, in Antiquity, 39 (1965), pp 87-94, on the origins of American agriculture.)"

* * * * *

We draw on Since Cumorah also for another quotation, p. 251:

"A sacred record on gold plates was once considered just too funny for words.

Today at least a hundred examples of ancient writing on metal plates are available, the latest discoveries being three gold plaques found in 1964 near an ancient shrine on the coast of Italy; they are covered with Punic and Etruscan writing and date from about 500 B.C. Punic, it will be recalled, is Phoenician, a language and script that flourished in Lehi's day a few miles from Jerusalem."

Mr. Nibley gives credit to G. Colonna for this statement in Archaeology (1966), p.21.

* * * * *

Various news sources comment about the subway excavations taking place in Mexico City which are unearthing relics of the Aztec past. One such news item is taken from the News Section of Grit, a Crescent City, California newspaper, sent by Mrs. Vivian Cummins of that city. This article speaks of the unearthing of a monolith of an Aztec goddess weighing half a ton, which will be placed in a national museum in Mexico City. A temple which has been uncovered will be left as part of the decor of a subway station, "probably the most unusual station in the world." The article goes on to say, "Tenochtitlan was built on islands in the middle of Lake Texcoco. When the Spanish conquistador, Hernando Cortez, arrived there in 1519, the Aztec capital had a population of 100,000. London at that time had 40,000 inhabitants; Paris had 65,000, and no city in Spain even came close to this. The city was said to be a vision of architectural elegance--aqueducts and ceramic water pipes; trees and flowers and garden zoos, highly polished walls and magnificent temples." One of Cortez' soldiers wrote, 'Today all that I saw is overthrown; nothing is left standing.' A second subway line is planned. "It will run to the middle of the present-day Zocalo, which covers the Aztecs' great central square."

This news story is dated September 2, 1969.

Book of Mormon lovers will doubtless be interested in watching for announcements of further findings as additional excavations are made.

* * * * *

Another item of interest submitted by Mrs. Cummins is also from Grit, Family Section, May 11, 1969, a book review by Gardner Soule of his own book, Undersea Frontiers, Rand McNally & Company, 1968.

Mr. Soule describes photography by deep-sea cameras "four miles above the floor of the Milne-Edwards Deep of the Pacific's Peru-Chile Trench." This was done by

Dr. Bob Menzies, now at Florida State University, at Tallahassee.

Aboard the "Anton Bruun," a specially built apparatus, one day about 20 miles from the island of Hormigas de Afuera, Dr. Menzies and his scientists lowered their cameras to a point about 6,000 feet beneath the sea in a job which took hours, taking pictures, which showed carved rock columns.

"Dr. Menzies took a total of about 1,000 photographs. Most clearly showed mud strewn with animal tracks and remains. But some clearly showed what seems to be jointed rock. One picture showed pillars standing upright, extending four feet out of the mud. Other pictures showed rocks that look like pillars that have fallen over."

When Dr. Menzies tried again to locate this area, he was unable to do so, but a change in bottom currents, it is explained, could have swept his camera from the spot. Instead of finding the same spot, he found others, showing more fallen pillars. "Some of the pillars appear to have some kind of writing on them. The numbers three and nine seem to show up on some of the lying-down pillars, but these could be tracings made by marine animals It is almost beyond belief to consider that the inscriptions represent man-made inscriptions. We do not find these structures elsewhere. Elsewhere, the bottom is mud, as would be expected." And Dr. Menzies' final comment was, "It seems incredulous, the idea of a sunken city . . . Maybe the idea of a sunken civilization is not so incredible after all. Some day I will go back there."

* * * * *

Recommended as a book of general information on what has been accomplished by civilizations: History of Mankind, Cultural and Scientific Development, Volume One, Part II: The Beginnings of Civilization, by Sir Leonard Woolley. Published by The New American Library, New York and Toronto, and The New English Library Limited, London. A Mentor Book, The New American Library, 1301 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N. Y. 10019. \$1.25.

* * * * *

Foundation for Research
on Ancient America
202 S. Pendleton
Independence, Missouri 64050
Address correction Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit No. 138
Independence, Mo. 64050
Return Postage Guaranteed