

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

NEWSLETTER No. 7

September 23, 1970

Dear Friends,

Again, it is the privilege of the Foundation for Research on Ancient America to greet you, and to share items which we trust will be of interest to all of you. It is because these things have been shared with us that we, in turn, can pass them on for possible use by you all. We not only thank those who have sent us bits of information from time to time, but we invite all who can do so to continue to send such information to us. Indeed, it is by this means that our newsletters are made possible.

If you have a friend who would enjoy a copy of this newsletter, we shall be glad to send it, and to place his name on our mailing list for future issues, if that is desired. This is a gratis service.

--T.D.S.

Research on Ancient Americans in the Tikal, Guatemala area was urged upon archaeologists by Herbert Joseph Mangham, writer for the Kansas City Times, November 23, 1962 (submitted by Keith J. McCormick of Independence, Missouri).

"Mystery surrounds the ruins of Tikal, largest of the Mayan cities located in the rugged, volcanic mountains in the Peten jungle. Under the debris are temples 230 feet high, palaces, great plazas, ball courts, reservoirs, artificial lakes, hundreds of buildings," Mangham stated at that time.

Excitement reigned when a crew of University of Pennsylvania archaeologists on November 9, 1962, opened a tomb in pyramid No. 1, which is 15 feet below the platform reached by a partly restored flight of steps 200 feet high, according to Mr. Mangham. He told of how, after only one week's work, this crew opened the tomb, finding a Mayan priest in good condition, approximately 1,200 years old. "He was about 5 feet 6 inches in height, a tall man for those days." The skeleton was "surrounded with jade, pearls, shells, tiger skins, bits of fabric, and ceramic vessels containing remains of food--lunch for the last journey." A note explains that the "tiger skins" must be "what they call 'tigerillo' here, of the cat family, but not a genuine tiger." *The jaguar is called "el tigre" in Spanish. There were no genuine tigers in America.*

The estimated age of the skeleton would indicate that this man lived in the Jaredite period, and the reference to his size corresponds to the Book of Mormon statements as to the size of those men. Ether (6:99) describes them. "And they were large and mighty men, as to the strength of men." *Since wither was 5'6" - "large" ???*

1970 AD.
- 1200 BC
770 AD.
WONS!
should be Lamanite period

***** See Newsletter No 11 p. 3 re: Ether's giant

Interest in Tikal by archaeologists, including the University of Pennsylvania, continues today.

Timothy J. Sullivan, a trustee of the Museum of Science, Miami, Florida, following his recent visit to this place, wrote of his findings in the museum's Muse News, August, 1970. Mr. Sullivan described Tikal's buildings of "greater architectural grandeur than any in Miami, distributed over a greater land area."

Of the Mayans, he wrote, "We believe their wanderings began in Asia Some historians assume they arrived in North America across the Bering Straits and gradually moved down the Pacific Coast. Others relate their building techniques and decorations to the middle east and speculate that the Mayans might have drifted to North America across the ocean from Africa. In any case, the rich soil of the

Yucatan Peninsula turned them from hunters to farmer-hunters about 600 B.C. . . . the Mayans created a superior intellectual environment, with elaborately designed and constructed buildings at about 30 locations from Yucatan southward to the Pacific. Of these sites, Tikal is the largest* and most spectacular; it is the ceremonial center. For about a thousand years the Mayans built Tikal continuously. Then, abruptly, construction stopped. Partially erected buildings were left incomplete." * *second largest, El Mirador (approx 80 mi north) is larger.*

Mr. Sullivan was obviously impressed by evidences in the ruins of "temples, plazas, palaces, steam baths, water reservoirs, ball courts, causeways and other things, whose use we can only guess." He described a "variety of elevations" as the builders had constructed "platforms built up from the jungle floor, sometimes covering a dozen acres," most of which is still "thick with vines and trees, waiting for future archaeologists," since "a mere sample" clearing has been accomplished by Guatemala and the University of Pennsylvania in the last 13 years.

Mr. Sullivan estimated Central Tikal as covering about six square miles with 3,000 structures entirely in stone (no metal having been used), and more than 200 inscribed monuments. Then Mr. Sullivan makes these observations: "Shortly after Tikal collapsed, the monuments were vandalized. Particular targets were the faces of men, perhaps rulers or leaders, once prominently carved in the stone. Other monuments had chunks of stone gouged from their bases or the feet of figures knocked off. . . . One theory is that the desecrators smashed the faces or feet of the sculptured figures as an act of defiance. Perhaps it was to break some imaginary religious or very real civil power," and then he questions, "If so, why?"

Mr. Sullivan might be surprised at the accuracy of his guess as to the religious and civil war if he were to read the Book of Mormon account of the final battles between Nephites and Lamanites. We are confident that many of his questions would be logically answered.

Our thanks is extended to our good friends, Dr. and Mrs. R. W. Arnold of Miami, Florida, for the Muse News containing this item.

Also contributed by Dr. and Mrs. Arnold is an item from the Miami Herald, dated August 10, 1970, having to do with discoveries by Charles Lacombe concerning some of the carvings inside caves on the Dutch Antilles islands of Bonaire, Curacao, and Aruba, "based on Mayan hieroglyphics."

Mr. Lacombe, a former military cryptographer, one of Florida's most knowledgeable authorities on Mayan influence, and an "acknowledged expert on the still-undeciphered Mayan language," claims to have recognized "two or three Mayan hieroglyphics." Although these two or three symbols meant something to Mr. Lacombe, he was greatly puzzled. Up to this time there had been no linking of Mayan civilization south of Honduras, according to Richard Pothier, science writer for the Miami Herald, who theorized that small groups of Mayan traders may have gone farther south than Honduras, but he pointed out, "Mayan hieroglyphics were never carved by tradesmen—only by a 'priest class' of educated, mystic experts."

Dutch anthropologists, around the turn of the century catalogued the Indian writing in these vast caves which are still largely unexplored. Some of the inscriptions look like maps, possibly of the caves themselves. The Caves of Onima seemed to be ceremonial caves. In the exact center of a community of caves, one had a carved face on it. The red paint in the writing apparently comes from a tree that's still the and it is suggested that a carbon-14 dating test might produce surprising evidence as to the antiquity of these writings.

Although up to the present these island inscriptions have been a total mystery, Mr. Lacombe is convinced that his discovery offers conclusive proof that "These ancients really communicated with one another . . . it's the same thread of influence. It's simply another piece of the map. We can now take the Maya, whose influence supposedly stopped at Honduras, and move him over to the Dutch Antilles. It's a big step."

Mr. Lacombe continued, "Little by little, we're learning that Egypt and the Middle East, long considered to be the 'cradle of civilization,' may not be the only cradle . . . it's beginning to look like Central America may have been a cradle of civilization, too."

Dr. Alan Craig, of Florida Atlantic University's geography department, commented, "It wouldn't be too surprising to find Mayan influence that far from the Mayan mainland."

These statements by men of learning but add to a long list of substantiating evidences of Book of Mormon claims. *HOW?*

* * * * *

Inez Girton, of Moorhead, Iowa, who spent a number of years as a social welfare worker for the Arizona State Welfare Department working with the Indians, had an opportunity to observe many of their customs. She has written of some of her observations, including the following:

"Upon becoming acquainted with the functioning of the Tribal Government of the Indian reservations of Arizona, I realized that there was a familiar tone. It is a 'government of the people for the people.'

"In reading of the reign of the judges in the Book of Mormon, one finds a marked similarity to what I observed. The chief judge corresponds to the Indian chief. The councilmen, or lesser judges, are voted in or out as the case may be at proper intervals. No professional lawyer may participate in court proceedings on reservations, but every man is heard as he speaks in his own behalf. At present, the tribal chairman acts as chief. His duties parallel those named in the Book of Mormon as the chief judge. It is a change of name only.

"I have asked many of the older Lamanites of the origin of this form of government, but they only say that they have always had it. Some can remember their grandfathers as councilmen. One fact, too significant to be coincidental, is that this same form of government is in every tribe, although tribes vary so widely in culture, being almost strangers to one another. I read and inquired repeatedly about this during the years I associated with the Lamanites, and if there is any difference between their tribal government and the Book of Mormon government during the reign of the judges, it has totally escaped me."

* * * * *

A team of archaeologists uncovered artifacts and tools from an archaic North American civilization that pre-dated Columbus by 2,000 years, it is reported by The Blade, Toledo, Ohio, September 13, 1967.

This find was unearthed on a three-mile island in the Susquehanna River south of Harrisburg, Pa., by Ira F. Smith, who headed the excavation team. He tentatively classified the 200 pieces of pottery, knives, arrowheads, and tools found as belonging to the "so-called Middle Woodland culture which flourished between 500 B.C. and 500 A.D."

The digging was largely confined to the northern tip of the island where the inhabitants apparently stayed, Mr. Smith said. It was theorized that the island may have been a stopping-off place for the people who traveled the river.

The excavation was conducted by a state historical and museum commission working under a \$2,500 grant from the Metropolitan Edison Co., which plans to construct an atomic power plant on the island.

* * * * *

The state of Mississippi recognizes that "traces of Indian civilizations" abound in that state, dating back many, many centuries. It is claimed by Dr. Richard A. Marshall, director of the Mississippi Archaeological Survey and assistant professor of anthropology at Mississippi State University, that "A human pelvis found near Natchez in 1846 is still considered one of the oldest human remains in North America and is probably the oldest from east of the Mississippi River."

Dr. Marshall, writing from Starkville, Mississippi, pointed to the destruction of prehistoric sites, Indian mounds and burial grounds by industrial and residential construction, flood control projects, dams, and reservoirs, pipelines and transportation facilities, with agricultural cultivation as one of the chief menaces. He explained that many farmers are subsoiling their fields to increase moisture absorption, thereby destroying archaeological evidences for a depth of two feet or more. Normal plowing disturbs only the top eight to ten inches, he said.

Dr. Marshall is pleading for the preservation of Indian "signs" and artifacts, and warned that untrained individuals may unwillingly contribute to the destruction by taking uncovered Indian relics from their sites. He said, "Indian relics uncovered by laymen are usually meaningless and contribute to the destruction rather than to the recording of the ancient history." He said for meaning to be found in the artifacts, they must be dug up and studied by archaeologists. He invited individuals who think they know of archaeological treasures to contact him at the Mississippi State University or the Department of Archives.

--The Commercial Appeal, Memphis
June 5, 1969.

Intensive research was begun early this year, according to Dispatch of the Times, London, January 18, 1970, in the Maya ceremonial center of Lubaantun in British Honduras. This is a British inspired Cambridge-Harvard project directed by Norman Hammond, a research fellow of the Latin-American Studies at Cambridge and archaeological correspondent of this newspaper. *Site of the unexplained "Crystal Skull"*

Two-fold interest by this group centers in this area. They hope to find the reason for the sudden collapse of the Maya civilization in this region. Also, the expedition hopes to find one of the long-lost sources of Mayan jade, revered by these ancients as other civilizations have prized gold. Reports have come of "green rocks" sighted by geologists on one of the slopes of the nearby Maya mountains. Lubaantun, which means, in Maya, "The Palace of Fallen Stones," according to this writer, consists of an amazing complex of 40-foot-high pyramids of stone built on an acropolis.

The group hopes to establish the "culture sequence" of the site and surrounding area by means of stratigraphic test excavations.

It was noted that Lubaantun is the only major Maya site to lack sculptured stelae--tall and beautiful monuments bearing inscriptions and illustrations--and it is suggested that the site's date is therefore prior to the birth of the stela cult.

The project was scheduled to work through the dry season to the middle of May, a period of about four months. The archaeological finds were to be sent back to Britain by ship, by permission of the British Honduras government, which allows half of all excavated material to be retained by the excavators, according to this article. It was planned that findings would be displayed in the British Museum's new Maya display which is to open this fall.

This information is by courtesy of Mrs. Vivian Cummins of Crescent City, California, who sent a clipping of the London story as it appeared in the Sunday Oregonian, January 18, 1970. If anyone should note a follow-up story of this undertaking last spring, we shall be glad to know about it.

Apparently a number of our members watched with interest reports of the trans-Atlantic crossing by Thor Heyerdahl (Norwegian) with his seven international crewmen in their papyrus boat Ra II. Their 4,500-mile crossing, begun May 17 at Safi, Morocco, ended when they reached Barbados in the Caribbean, July 12, 1970.

Their craft was described by the Wichita Falls Record-News (May 18, 1970), an "eight-ton bundle of straw modeled after the Nile River boats of ancient Egypt." The Ra II was built by Bolivian Indians from Lake Titicaca, whose method of building fishing boats out of tortora reeds, Heyerdahl believes, may have been handed down through a tradition acquired from the ancient Egyptians.

Heyerdahl's objective in this sailing was to prove that a boat similar to those used by the ancient Egyptians is capable of crossing the Atlantic. The successful crossing adds support to the belief by some anthropologists and archaeologists in the cultural contacts between ancient Egypt and the pre-Columbian civilizations of Central and South America. Thus, Thor Heyerdahl was given additional credence to the Book of Mormon claims, just as his 1947 crossing of the Pacific in his raft of balsa logs, the Kon Tiki, served the same purpose by proving the possibility of pre-historic ocean migration.

Our thanks go to the several who sent clippings concerning this recent voyage, but our special recognition goes to Major Gary R. Lair of Sheppard, Texas, for his consistent reports as set forth in the Wichita Falls Record-News.

* * * * *

The following items were submitted by Pearl Kinnaman of St. Joseph, Missouri.

In St. Joseph's News Press, July 5, 1970, a Robert Ripley "Believe It or Not" story sketches an inscribed stone and says, "Stones found on the Susquehanna River, in Pennsylvania, bear markings resembling the Phoenician alphabet, deciphered by some scientists as indicating the Phoenicians wrote of 'a fair land beyond the West,' long before Columbus discovered America."

James Ford, in "The Puzzle of Poverty Point," Louisiana. American Museum of Natural History Magazine,# November 1955, page 468, describes a unique metal hunting device which supports Book of Mormon references as to the use of iron and other metals by those ancient people.

In a mound "35 times the cubage of the pyramid of Cheops at Gizeh in Egypt," was found a common weapon, a bola, consisting of 5 or 6 weights made of a heavy iron ore, or magnetite.

Each weight was attached to a cord about 18 inches long, all fastened together at the ends, so that when swung around the head like a sling and let go, the weights would spread apart. When one cord contacted the animal or bird, the other weights would wrap their cords around the creature. *See Newsletter No. 5 p. 4-5*

Miss Kinnaman then found that the Smithsonian Institute Handbook of South American Indians. Vol. 5, B.A.E. Bulletin 143, p. 246, carries a statement on "Inca Culture" (by Rowe) that "The Quechua word for iron is Quellay."

Further research by Miss Kinnaman gives this information:

Lengenscheidt's Pocket Hebrew Dictionary (Hebrew-English) by Dr. Karl Feyerabend (Barnes and Noble, Inc., New York, 1961), page 300:
Kala (Kay-lah'-e): to swing, to hurl with a sling, to expel
Kela (Ke'lah-e): a sling

* The address of American Museum of Natural History Magazine is: Central Park West, at 79th Street, New York, N. Y.

In Arizona Highways Magazine, July 1970, p. 18, 19, Miss Kinnaman found pictures of Navajo National Monuments, "Batatakin Cliff Dwelling" and "Inside Keet Seel Ruins." In the same number of this magazine (p. 12), is a statement of interest regarding the people. "Archaeologists found evidence to support the theory that these people were the ancestors of the Hopi Indians." Miss Kinnaman was intrigued by the Indian names and Hebrew meanings.

Navajo Indian: Batatakin

Hebrew: Batta (Baht-tay⁶): something cut off, cliff, ruin, end, precipice
taka (tay-khay⁷): encamped

Indian meaning: House on the side of cliff

Navajo Indian: Keet Seel

Hebrew: Kets (Keets): a cutting, destruction, end, extremity, death
tsel (tseel): shadow, protection, shelter

Indian meaning: Empty houses

--Feyerabend's Hebrew Dictionary, pages 50, 370. .

* * * * *

An article submitted by W. H. Cloven, Ft. Riley, Kansas, describing "stone box graves" recently discovered near Fort Campbell, Kentucky holds special interest for Book of Mormon students due to the construction of the boxes, because of the stone box in which the Book of Mormon records were found by Joseph Smith.

According to Glenn L. Koons, curator of the museum at Fort Campbell, as set forth in The Army Digest, July 1969, p. 61, evidence has been unearthed which "indicates the presence of prehistoric peoples," who lived in the area of the post "possibly as far back as 10,000 years ago." Several sites have been unearthed, revealing about a dozen burial places. "Archaeological methods have identified the skeletons of a 40-year-old woman, buried with a 15-month-old child; a 12 year-old boy; two infants buried together; and a 5-month-old boy." The bodies had been buried in what is called "stone box graves," in which "limestone slabs form the sides and lid. A unique feature is the 'shard lining' made up of broken pieces of pottery. For some reason, well fitting pieces of pottery covered the floor of the grave but not the walls."

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