

The Witness

The Foundation For Research On Ancient America



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Dinner Plates and The Book of Mormon

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The Foundation for Research on Ancient America is a nonprofit corporation comprised of individuals who desire to advance knowledge about The Book of Mormon and its witness of Jesus Christ. Through research, publications, seminars, and related projects, members of FRAA seek to assist in bringing forth the light contained in the ancient scriptures of The Book of Mormon. A contribution to the Foundation for Research on Ancient America results in membership and is tax-deductible.

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Cover . . .

The study of ceramics, or pottery, provides archaeologists with a great deal of information about former peoples. These brightly painted potsherds from the site of El Mirador date from the Preclassic era, 300 B.C. to A.D. 300. El Mirador shares many similarities in ceramic trends with its neighboring site of Nakbe. See the article beginning on page four which tells how the study of pots at Nakbe offers interesting correlations to the account found in The Book of Mormon. Photo from FRAA archives, a gift from Donald Forsyth.

Message from the President

An announcement about the Ella Coile Challenge Grant appeared in the last issue of *The Witness*. The Ella Coile Foundation requested that FRAA launch a matching fund drive from general and new contributors to match its \$50,000 grant for a total of \$100,000. Every dollar contributed will double in size and impact because of this special donation from the Ella Coile Foundation.

With the opening of the new bookstore (see p. 8) and the doubling of the summer intern program, we quickly realized we need more room! This gift will give FRAA an opportunity to expand into a larger facility housing a visitor's information center, which will introduce The Book of Mormon, and provide space for the growing programs of FRAA.

Since the announcement, a good beginning has been made, but we are still a long way from matching the \$50,000. You can help—just use the envelope inserted in this issue to join others in meeting this challenge! If you are a member of Helaman's Two Thousand, and want to make a special contribution to this challenge grant, please designate this on your blue return envelope.



Michael Gatrost

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Foundation News

FRAA 1992 Intern Goes to Belize

Brett Methner, one of the 1992 FRAA student interns, was selected to participate in an archaeological fieldwork class at Cerros, Belize. Deborah Walker, from the University of Minnesota, directed the dig for undergraduate and graduate students. Brett, a senior majoring in history and Spanish at Graceland, worked with the group from July 7 to August 7.

We were excited to learn of Brett's opportunity because the site of Cerros dates from 300 B.C. to A.D. 300, the heart of Nephite history. Cerros lies in what has been suggested as the Land of Jerushon.

For information on digs that accept volunteers, write Sherrie Smith, FRAA Research Library/Information Center, 210 W. White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050.

FRAA 1992 Intern Goes to Honduras



Shane Robinson, one of the 1992 FRAA summer Book of Mormon student interns, has been serving in Siguatepeque, Honduras. Shane works with H.O.P.E. (Honduran Outreach Program Endeavors), a privately supported organization working to spread the gospel in Honduras. Recently he wrote to us at FRAA. Here is an excerpt from his letter.

Thank you for your prayers and the financial support of FRAA. The videocassette recorder and television have been

a priceless asset for us. Every Saturday night we show two of The Book of Mormon and New Testament videos and talk about the lessons learned. The people really enjoy them. We have people even checking them out from us.

The people both in the church and out of the church here really don't know anything about The Book of Mormon. In fact, some of our people here who have been members for years didn't even know we believed in The Book of Mormon! But they know now.

Helaman's Two Thousand

In 1988, Helaman's Two Thousand began. This latter-day army's generous, faithful support has allowed FRAA to grow and expand its research, outreach, and witness of The Book of Mormon. To date approximately 870 households or individuals and 19 organizations (such as branches) have joined this mighty army for the Lord.

Members of Helaman's Two Thousand contribute to FRAA on a monthly or annual basis, or as circumstances permit during the year. Almost 95% of FRAA's income comes from this committed group.

Recently a survey was sent to members of Helaman's Two Thousand to get their input into the strategic planning process being conducted by the board of directors. They were asked several questions,

including "Why did you become a member of Helaman's Two Thousand?" Here are a few of those responses.

I believe in The Book of Mormon, and I remember what Helaman's Two Thousand did against their enemy in battle. I feel we can do the same thing if we put one mind and one heart to what we believe.

Since I am not qualified to do the research FRAA is doing, perhaps my small donation along with those of others will assist in finding truth.

We believe in The Book of Mormon in our family from way back and appreciate the format and invitation to contribute small amounts monthly. It is good to be a part of Book of Mormon witnessing.

Why don't you join and become a member of this dynamic and courageous army? In addition to receiving *The Witness*, you will receive the *MIGHTY SUMMONS*. This is a quarterly newsletter especially for members of Helaman's Two Thousand to keep them up-to-date on how their contributions are being utilized to spread the word about The Book of Mormon. In addition, we will send you a supply of envelopes to use in making your contribution.

Write to FRAA and tell us you want to be a part of promoting The Book of Mormon and its witness of Jesus Christ among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples!

Calendar

- | | |
|---|---|
| September 12 | Book of Mormon Day sponsored by Farview and New Jerusalem Branches |
| September 26 | Book of Mormon Day at Detroit, Michigan |
| October 11, 18, 25
November 1, 8, 5
7:00 P.M. | Monday Night Book of Mormon
Archaeology Lecture Series |
| December 23–
January 1, 1994 | Annual FRAA Mesoamerican Archaeology
Tour—Oaxaca and Mexico City |
| February 26–
March 13, 1994 | FRAA Tour to Israel |



Ren Lidberg



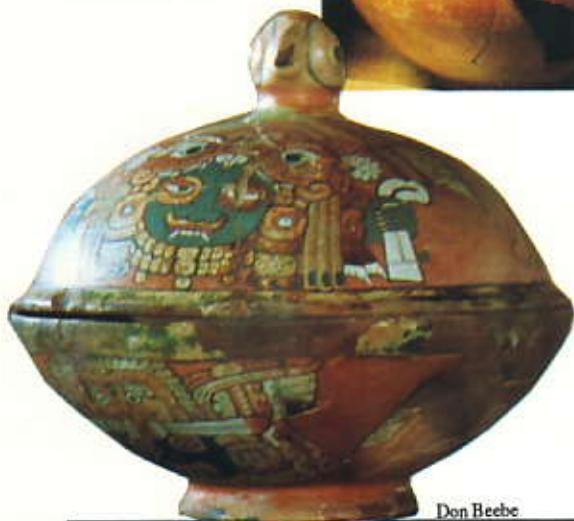
Don Beebe



Linda Trimble



Don Beebe



Don Beebe



Patricia Beebe

Dinner Plates and The Book of Mormon

Lyle L. Smith

During dinner recently, someone asked the following question: "Barring a catastrophic destruction like fire, what would be left two thousand years from now of our house and furnishings that would give archaeologists clues about how we lived?"

"Our dinner plates," I promptly replied. Pottery—like dinner china—and other ceramic items would still be here because pottery is baked earth. Wood products, cement, clothing, and most metal products would deteriorate. A few metals, like gold, and anything made of stone should also survive.

Because ceramics last indefinitely, archaeology digs are full of pottery, and archaeologists have spent an enormous amount of energy analyzing ceramics (Fagan 1985:324). Because pottery provides clues to archaeologists about the people who made and used it, the study of pottery has become a major vehicle used to identify groups of people, their migrations, and changes in their societies.

A good example of one of these studies appeared in the latest issue of *Ancient Mesoamerica*. Dr. Donald Forsyth* wrote an article reporting on his analysis of the ceramic sequence at Nakbe (Nahk-bay), Guatemala. To me, his finds fit Book of Mormon history. While Forsyth's article speaks for itself, the conclusions made here are mine.

His article and the ceramic chronological chart that accompanied it (figure 1) reveal definite parallels between the Maya and the people of The Book of Mor-

mon. The chart covers all of Nephite history. Dates found in The Book of Mormon compare closely with the ceramic histories for this geographical area.

Nakbe Challenges Current Views

Nakbe, although having earlier beginnings, emerged as a city in what is now northern Guatemala between 600 and 400 B.C. Excavations began in February 1989 under the direction of Richard D. Hansen with the University of California at Los Angeles. The findings created quite a stir, and newspapers around the United States carried stories about the work being done at Nakbe. The generally held belief that Maya advanced civilization began at A.D. 300 had to be revised.

The discovery, described by scholars as surprising and exciting, puts the emergence of an elaborate Mayan civilization with large cities back to at least 600 B.C. It was previously thought that the Mayans . . . did not rise above simple village life before 200 B.C.

—Wilford 1989:C15

The results of Dr. Forsyth's research on the ceramic evidence from Nakbe support this preliminary conclusion. The present prevailing view has been that people during the period called the Middle Preclassic (900-300 B.C.) lived small-scale village life, lacking substantial architecture and political organization. Forsyth says, "[This] seems questionable, at least at Nakbe. . . . The ceramics are very well made and show considerable sophistication in both manufacture and decoration" (1993:40). The earliest ceramic complex at Nakbe, called Ox, which belongs to the

Mamom horizon, also is "definitely associated, late in the period, with large-scale architecture" (1993:31).

These observations by Forsyth add credence to what David Freidel wrote about the emergence of Maya civilization.

Maya civilization banged into existence in its own way and time. . . . It is unsettling. For it violates the tacit rules of diffusion and, even worse, the tacit rules of gradual evolution espoused by modern archaeology.

—1986:x

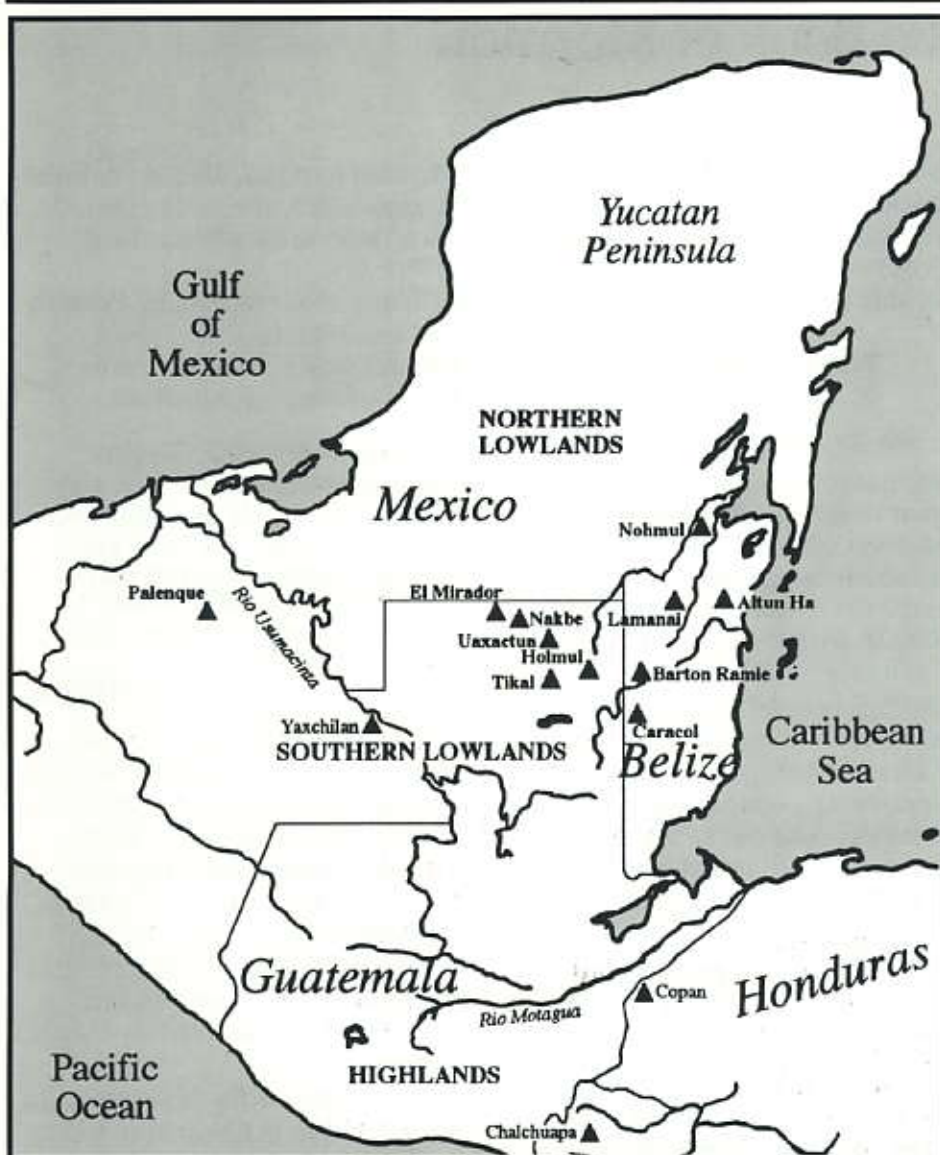
This certainly calls to mind correlations with Book of Mormon history, specifically the Mulekites who arrived in the New World. The Mulekites were emigrants from an advanced civilization in the Middle East. They did not evolve gradually, but rather "banged on the scene" in the Promised Land with a full-blown culture.

The high quality of ceramics in the Ox phase is perplexing to the evolutionary model which dictates that earlier pottery should be simpler in style and composition than later pottery. Yet, if these ceramics represent the first three to four hundred years of the Mulekite civilization, then more than simple ceramics should be expected.

Not a lot is known about the people of Mulek. The Book of Mormon says they did not bring records with them, but they were, in part, servants of a king. They most probably knew good quality ceramics and the process of manufacturing. In addition, the Mulekite perception of government would include court rule, a system far removed from simple village life. Court rule would include governmental organization.

◀ *The pieces of pottery pictured on the facing page from Mesoamerica range from approximately 1000 B.C. to A.D. 600. The practice of ceramics, so popular today, thrived in these early cultures, and like today, the people created more than just dinner plates.*

*Dr. Forsyth was a guest speaker at FRAA's Fourth Annual Spend a Day with The Book of Mormon. More recently, the cover photo of *The Witness* (Spring 1993:80) featured Dr. Forsyth who was working with an underwater archaeology team diving in Lake Peten, Guatemala.



Nakbe Ceramics and Architecture

Nakbe's ceramic sequence fits the same sequences found at other sites in the Peten area of Guatemala, such as El Mirador (Meer-a-dor), Tikal (Tee-kahl), and Uaxactun (Wah-shahk-toon), and those of Belize. Although sites in Belize like Barton Ramie, Cuello (Kway-yo), Cerros (Serrros), and Colha "share many types and modes with the central Peten, [they] also demonstrate important differences" (Forsyth 1993:42).

Around 300–250 B.C., the ceramics at Nakbe exhibit a major transition, moving from the Ox phase to the Kan phase. "[This move] corresponds closely to that of El Mirador and other

complexes of the Chicanel horizon especially Uaxactun and Tikal" (Forsyth 1993:31). Along with the change in pottery styles in the Chicanel or Kan phase came the disappearance of the small ceramic figurines so prevalent in Mamon or Ox phase (Weaver 1972:86). Although the Kan ceramic period carries through until A.D. 150, little pottery was found after A.D. 1, signifying a major reduction of population in Nakbe in the first century A.D.

From his studies at Barton Ramie in Belize (not far from Nakbe and Uaxactun), James Gifford postulated that the pottery changes around 300 B.C., from the Mamon (Ox) to the Chicanel (Kan) phase, indicate a move of the Maya from smaller inde-

pendent communities to a single society with more constant values (Sharer and Ashmore 1987:274).

What caused the major change in ceramic styles that occurred in Nakbe and her surrounding cities between 300–200 B.C. that included the standardization of design, the absence of figurines, and the establishment of a society with more constant values? The Book of Mormon sheds light on this question. Mormon, the abridger of the records, relates that Mosiah and a group of Nephites emigrated down from the southern highlands into the northern lowlands, bringing with them a system of writing and religion.

That such an influence came at the same time into this area (the Peten, which includes Nakbe) from the southern Guatemalan highlands has been documented in archaeology. David Freidel and Linda Schele theorize that cities in this area "borrowed certain Highland religious concepts, along with iconographic elements and the idea of hieroglyphic writing" (Willey and Mathews 1985: 4; Willey 1985:175, 182; Willey 1977:69).

Besides the dramatic change in pottery style, the figurines that are believed to have religious significance ended with the beginning of the Chicanel phase (Weaver 1972:86). Would not the arrival of the Law of Moses with King Mosiah end graven image production?

The largest and most sophisticated architecture of Nakbe occurs in the early Kan phase (250 to 1 B.C.). This architecture, like the buildings of the other cities in the same area, has a triadic theme, meaning groups of three temples built together. (See "The Road to Nakbe" by Richard Hansen in *Natural History*, May 1991.) This was a new development. Esther Pasztory believes the three-temple layouts of this period were widespread in Mesoamerica, suggesting religion was more communal in nature than

the later dynastic cults that came into focus about A.D. 250 and glorified individual kings (1988:75).

Some special reason motivated the people to build temples in sets of three, instead of four, two, or five. Could they represent the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

The Book of Mormon tells of a time within this era, 250 B.C. to A.D. 250, when "they had all things common among them, therefore they were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift" (4 Nephi 1:4). They did not glorify individual kings but rather lived more communally, as Pasztory points out.

Nakbe ceramics from A.D. 1-600 are exceedingly rare, reappearing only again in Late Classic times (A.D. 600-900). A drastic reduction in population seems to have taken place in the first century A.D. This is the same story found in The Book of Mormon when many cities were destroyed at A.D. 34. Linda Schele notes that "For reasons not yet understood, many of these cities [those in the lowlands or northern regions of Guatemala] failed during the second half of the first century A.D." (1991:6).

Conclusion

From Forsyth's article on the

ceramic sequence at Nakbe, much can be gleaned that lends support to The Book of Mormon record. The considerable sophistication of the ceramics during the Ox phase brings evidence that the people were more advanced than a simple village culture. The arrival of the Mulekites during this time frame with a full-blown culture could explain this sophistication. The highland to lowland spread of concepts, which saw the influx of a new religion and writing, support the wide change in ceramics between 300-200 B.C. The Book of Mormon provides the reason for this change—the emigration of Nephites under the leadership of Mosiah. The great decline that took place in Nakbe and numerous other cities in the first century A.D., documented by the lack of ceramics, is recorded and amplified by Book of Mormon history.

What does all this have to do with dinner plates? "By small and simple things are great things brought to pass" (Alma 17:35). And simple items, like our dinner plates, can provide important clues to the people who made and used them and bring into focus correlations with The Book of Mormon.

These finds do not prove the book true. Rather, they strengthen our faith and help convert our

minds that The Book of Mormon is an authentic record of Jesus Christ and his dealings with people identified in the Promised Land.

Lyle Smith serves as chairman of the archaeology committee for FRAA and on the editorial committee, organizes and leads the annual FRAA archaeology tour to Mesoamerica, and is a member of the FRAA advisory board.

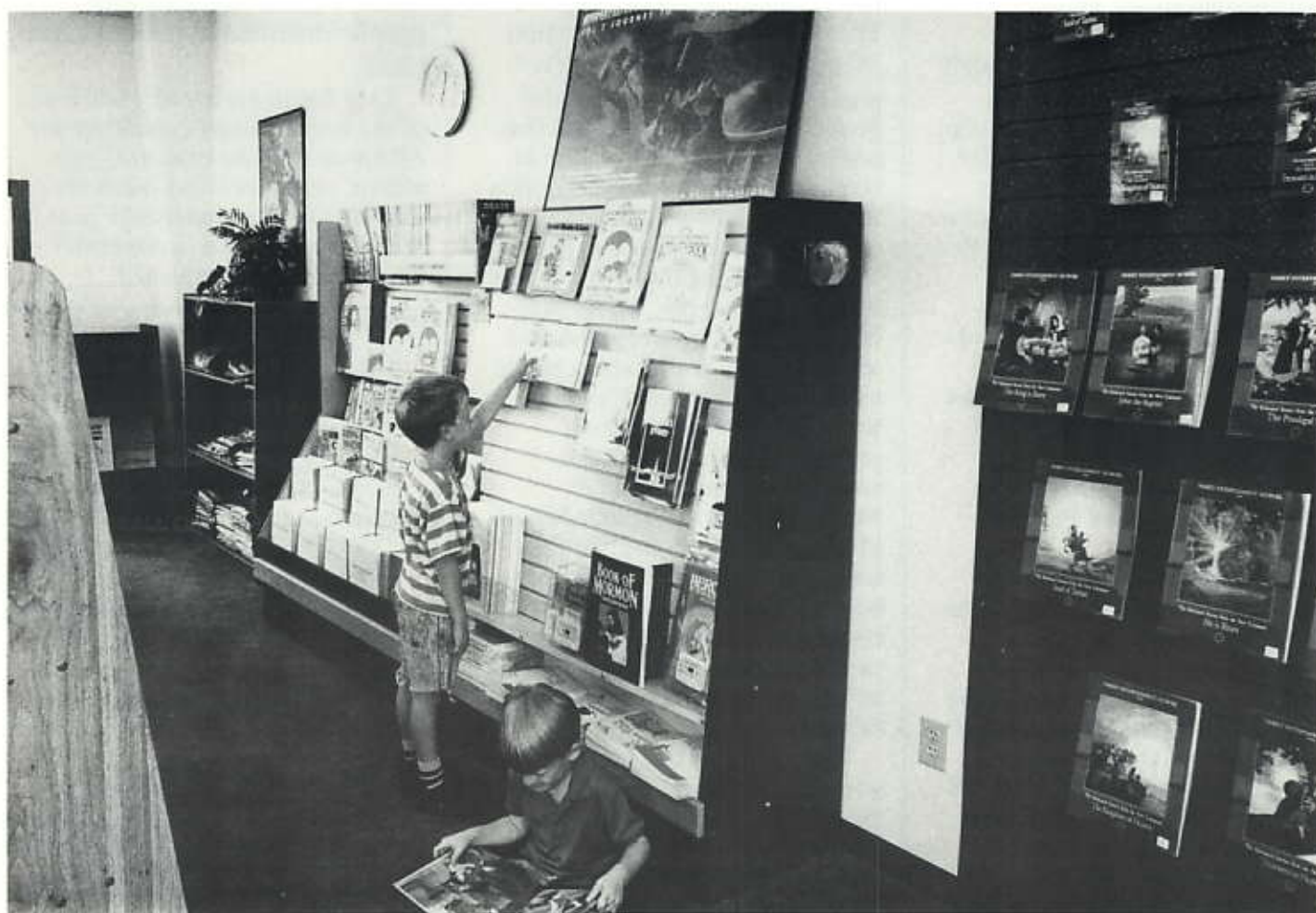
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DATE	PERIOD	UAXACTUN	EL MIRADOR	NAKBE	Book of Mormon
900	CLASSIC	TERMINAL	3	POST-LAC NA	Major Destruction A.D. 34
800			LATE	2	
700		1		UUC	
600		3			
500		EARLY	2	ACROPOLIS	
400	1				
300	PRECLASSIC	PROTO-CLASSIC		PAIXBANCITO	Major Destruction A.D. 34
200			CHICANEL		
100		CASCABEL			KAN
AD 1				LATE	
BC 1					
100	MIDDLE	MAMOM	MONOS		Mosiah to Zarahemla about 225 B.C.
200			?		
300					Large cities and architecture Mulekites arrive
400					
500				OX	
600					
700					
800					
900					

Figure 1. Ceramic complexes of sites in the Peten, Guatemala (adopted from Forsyth). Book of Mormon chart added by author.

FRAA'S NEW BOOKSTORE!



Tom Mitchell

FRAA has embarked upon a new venture which promises to be exciting for the saints of the church. A full-line bookstore carrying Book of Mormon, Bible, and church history books and materials opened in July 1993. The bookstore has the best and most extensive line of items on The Book of Mormon of any bookstore in the region. Resources from all organizations and churches who produce Book of Mormon literature are reviewed for selection.

The store now carries—or anticipates selling—the following:

BOOKS

- ★ about The Book of Mormon, Old and New Testaments, and church history;
- ★ teaching aids and resources;
- ★ on family values to nurture

spiritual growth;

- ★ for children of all ages with colorful stories from The Book of Mormon, Old and New Testaments, and church history;
- ★ selected history, art, and archaeology books relevant to The Book of Mormon;

VIDEOS

- ★ animated videos on the Bible and The Book of Mormon from Living Scriptures;
- ★ on character building and values such as honesty, sharing, and forgiving;
- ★ highlighting teachings and testimonies of such stalwarts as Thelona Stevens, Henry Schaefer, and Roy Weldon;
- ★ featuring archaeological

remains and countries of Mesoamerica;

MUSIC

- ★ sheet music of inspirational Christian songs and choral arrangements used to enhance special holidays and programs;
- ★ recorded sacred music;

SPECIALTY ITEMS

- ★ in the field of archaeology and language relating to The Book of Mormon, including kits, Hebrew learning aids, etc.;
- ★ T-shirts;
- ★ tote bags;
- ★ maps;
- ★ bookmarks;
- ★ original oil paintings by Thelona Stevens;



The Junior Witness

FALL 1993 Foundation for Research on Ancient America NUMBER 26

The Furnace of Affliction

by Viola Velt Presler

Illustrated by Betty Mosier Beller

This is a might-have-been story based on 1 Nephi 6:17 and Alma 17:71-80. There really is such a place of snakes in Saudi Arabia through which Lehi's people and the Children of Israel might have passed.

The caravan came to a rolling halt. Father Lehi had found a well.

Laman crouched down to drink and jumped back, spitting out the water. "It is brackish!" he complained.

"The salt has seeped in from the sea," Lehi explained. "But Laman, if you would survive in the desert, you must drink from the well which the Lord provides. Drink up, now. Fill your water bags. And praise God!"

"Yaaaaah!" Laman said, sticking out his tongue. "I don't like it! This water only makes me thirsty!"

There was water everywhere—water in the well, water in the sea, water pouring down their backs and streaming down their foreheads. It was all smarting with salt.

To their right, the Red Sea was a shimmering haze in the blazing heat. Before them spread

endless expanses of beach dotted with an occasional shrub or palm.

To their left, like bleached bones whitened by the merciless sun, there stretched endless rows of foothills and plateaus with mountain peaks piercing the sky behind.

"Father Lehi has led us down to hell," Ishmael's son Hiram said from behind the head cloth draped across his face.

"This surely is the back end of creation," his brother Dan agreed.

"Can we not just go back to the Valley of Lemuel and return to Jerusalem when the war with Nebuchadnezzar is over?" Lemuel asked.

"The Lord may not **'bring again the captivity'*** of Jerusalem in our lifetime," Lehi answered. "The Lord knows best. Perchance the Valley of Lemuel will no longer support us, or perhaps there is unknown danger there."

"Is there not 'unknown danger' everywhere?" Laman asked drily.

"I feel as if the heat is boiling up inside me, ready to explode," Mother Anna said. "There is no relief," she added, fighting for breath. Indeed, her face was aflame.

"Is there no other way to the Land of Promise, Lehi, than through this harsh desert?" Mother Sariah asked.

** Jeremiah 30:3 means bring the captives home again.*

"No," Lehi replied. "The only way to the Promised Land is through the wilderness. While the sun is so hot above, let us stretch our tarps from camel to camel and make a shade. We will rest awhile."

A phrase came to Nephi's mind—"the furnace of affliction." Where had he read that? Perhaps in Isaiah: "**For I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction**" (1 Nephi 6:17). They were in it now. Nephi remembered the heat that had shaped the metals that hot summer in Jerusalem when he had poured molten brass and silver and gold. The dross had floated to the top. The pure metal had been poured into new molds.

"Lord, give us the endurance to survive the loss of our dross," Nephi prayed.

There was no rest in this sweltering heat. Biting flies stung their hands and faces.

"We must find fresh water! We must find relief from this heat!" Laman exclaimed. "Let us go up to higher ground where the air is cooler."

Lehi studied the Liahona. "The Liahona does not tell us to change course," he answered. Yet he looked with concern upon the drooping women.

Laman caught the hesitation. "The Liahona only gives us a general direction. It does not tell us where to stop or rest."

Lehi looked doubtful. The

Liahona had not pointed toward the hills yet, nor had it told them to stop.

When the sun slid down a little toward the west, Lehi's people headed toward the hills to find a campsite. They had not eaten all day. They sipped sparingly of the water they would need tomorrow and munched on some dried quail and hard cakes left over from their wedding feasts. They made a circle with their camels and hobbled them. There, under the safety of moonlight, they tried to sleep while around them the night was alive, throbbing and buzzing with strange sounds.

Toward morning, Nephi awoke. A damp chill made sleep impossible. He started to sit up when something froze his senses. Something smooth and cold lay coiled against his arm. What could it be? What should he do? His body seemed paralyzed while his mind reeled. Moving only his eyes, he saw, drenched in the light of the moon, a puff adder.

Slowly, very slowly, he slid his dagger from beneath the mat with his other hand. Slowly, very slowly, his fingers closed upon it and poised. He stabbed the thing in the head. Though the body writhed, the head lay pinned to the ground.

Dorcas stirred. Nephi clutched her shoulder. "Snakes! Lie still, my wife. Do not move."

She stifled a scream. Only her eyes moved, rolling around, pleading with him. It seemed to Nephi that the horror of bedding down with snakes had nearly stopped her breathing.

Death lay all around them and all around their camels. The ground seethed with puff adders, black snakes, and cobras. But Nephi did not forget to pray. The Lord had delivered before. He would deliver again.

Slowly, stealthily he picked up the sword always by his side and began thwacking snakes, clearing a path toward Ishmael and Anna. Though he still felt frozen in horror, he and the men silently slew snakes in the moonlight. They threw the dead snakes in a heap, for each man had killed more than twenty snakes apiece.

"I cannot stand this place another minute!" Laman cried. He was shaking violently.

"Let us go!" Hiram said, shuddering.

"Can we get out? Is it safe?" Zoram asked.

"Haste would be foolish here," said Lehi firmly. "We have thought we could make decisions on our own. The truth is, there are no small decisions. Did the Liahona lead us here? No. Should we have looked to it for guidance in every way? Yes. Should we look to it for guidance now? Yes."

"Let us pray," Lehi said. Hud-

dled together in their cloaks, they asked the Lord for guidance. They thanked him that, miracle of miracles, no person, not even one camel, had been bitten by a snake. They gathered around to gaze intently at the Liahona. A new writing flowed right to left beneath the pointers.

"Remember Moses and the serpent of brass. Remember your Savior who guides you. Remember to look at the Liahona. Keep your eyes on the Liahona. Watch and follow. Kill all the snakes while there is yet early light. Kill them all, and eat your breakfast nearer the sea."

The men went through the camp again, checking under rocks and moving baggage, to be sure no snake was left alive.

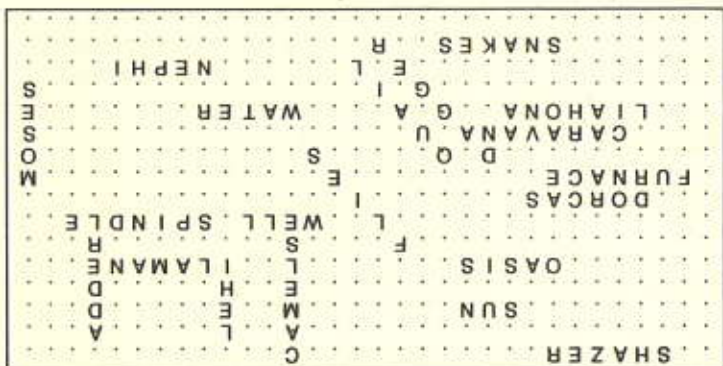
The morning dampness was turning rapidly into a heavy mist—of course, mist rolling in from the sea. Yet as the mists rolled in, the Liahona began to glow. Lehi continued to study its writing. How great was Father's joy, Nephi noted, as the lower spindle began to quiver. It was time to move on.

The fog and their own fears might have walled them in as prisoners in the place of the snakes, but the Lord had prepared a way of escape. Holding high the Liahona, Lehi led them through the mists, back toward the sea.

It would be another day of oppressive heat. The blinding light seared the eyeballs and made their heads throb, but the Lord was leading.

Nephi started them off by chanting the psalm he loved so well: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me" (Psalm 23). The Lord had delivered them. Why should they fear?

Nevertheless, Nephi still shuddered at the memory of the snakes. "Remember Moses,"



Key to the Furnace of Affliction Puzzle

SHAZER
SUN
OASIS
DORCAS
FURNACE
LAMANA
GAV
WATER
NEPHI
SNAKES
R
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N
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The Furnace of Affliction Puzzle

L	E	S	H	A	Z	E	R	L	I	J	B	I	F	M	H	J	K	D	C	H	I	C	P	F	H	D	C	I	A	C	G
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C	B	N	B	F	M	J	C	B	S	U	N	D	P	F	O	Q	L	E	M	E	J	E	N	I	D	O	F	D	G	E	E
F	L	L	E	K	P	L	H	E	G	I	B	J	E	K	A	C	B	L	E	H	M	H	G	O	G	I	P	D	G	H	L
M	M	M	O	C	K	N	O	A	S	I	S	Q	E	H	N	E	F	M	L	J	C	I	L	A	M	A	N	E	G	G	N
B	E	J	A	O	H	O	K	M	G	B	J	C	J	F	F	B	B	B	S	P	A	P	P	K	H	F	C	R	H	H	L
I	D	C	H	Q	L	D	G	Q	E	H	P	N	G	J	L	G	I	W	E	L	L	B	S	P	I	N	D	L	E	I	K
I	D	M	D	O	R	C	A	S	M	N	Q	H	H	C	K	I	D	O	G	M	C	I	K	B	N	L	B	H	D	N	D
C	F	U	R	N	A	C	E	B	H	F	E	D	J	M	B	F	E	M	J	A	F	J	H	A	D	O	C	I	C	A	M
F	G	E	N	I	J	P	G	C	I	D	F	Q	F	J	H	M	E	S	O	P	A	I	D	A	N	M	L	E	C	Q	O
L	D	N	A	C	A	R	A	V	A	N	A	D	U	J	F	M	P	B	B	L	I	P	N	J	G	J	M	M	C	L	S
H	F	C	L	I	A	H	O	N	A	M	D	G	D	A	F	P	C	D	W	A	T	E	R	A	B	J	A	H	M	E	E
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G	G	F	F	A	O	F	O	N	E	B	L	C	K	D	J	D	M	A	K	G	M	B	P	H	D	O	O	H	O	N	A

WELL DAGGER SUN SPINDLE SNAKES CAMELS LEHI NEPHI
 WATER CARAVAN FURNACE FLIES ADDER QUAIL DORCAS
 OASIS LIAHONA MOSES LAMAN SHAZER

they had read on the Liahona. Nephi remembered that the Children of Israel had been bitten by snakes. Moses had raised a brass serpent on a pole. The people had only to look to be healed (Helaman 3:47-48; Numbers 21:8-9). Such a simple thing—to look. Nephi remembered his vision. A picture of the Lamb of God lifted up upon the cross flashed into his mind (1 Nephi 3:87). The same Lord who had healed the Children of Israel who were bitten by snakes in this same wilderness—that same Lord would come to die. That same Lord would come to save.

Their only task was to keep their eyes on the Liahona, God's gift to them. They were not to focus upon the snakes or the darkness. They were to fasten their eyes on their Savior.

“Lord, heal my mind,”

Nephi prayed. “Take away the memory of fears and horrors. Let me recall instead the soft glow of the Liahona as it led us to safety through the mists.”

By the fourth day, the supply of brackish water gave out. The camels plodded more slowly now. They too could not last another day.

“We are being baked alive,” Laman murmured through blistered lips and swollen tongue. “Father, we cannot go on; we are about to die.”

Though his own eyes burned from the dazzling sand which mirrored the sun, Lehi said, “He will not perish who trusts in the Lord God of Israel.”

He had wrapped the Liahona in soft wool and made a place for it on the saddle before him. From time to time Lehi checked its directions. This time they

would march until the Lord told them to stop. This time they would follow the pointer exactly.

Weak from hunger and thirst, saddle sore and weary from the heat, they marched on. Then the air began to grow lighter and cooler about them, and the ground began to rise beneath their feet.

Just around the next bend they saw an oasis. It was not the pleasant Valley of Lemuel, but among the date palms and tamarisk trees, there stood a well. All about was lush green grass. Eagerly the camels dropped their heads and began to munch.

The Liahona's spindle stopped quivering. “We will pitch our tents here,” Lehi cried, striking his spear into the soft earth. “We name this place Shazer.”



POSTERS

- ★ scenes from The Book of Mormon, church history, Old and New Testaments for use in church school classes; and
- ★ scenes of ruins from Mesoamerica.

We are excited about the new bookstore. It will provide materials to help us teach little ones, guide and nurture them as they grow older, and enlarge and expand our own understanding of the Scriptures as we become more Christlike in our daily walk of life.

Come by and see the store!

Bookstore hours:

Monday – Friday
10:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M.

See the insert in this issue for lists and prices.

BECOME A FRAA BOOK REPRESENTATIVE

For those who live outside of the Independence area, why not become an FRAA book representative, enabling your congregation to share with us in promoting these worthwhile materials and books about The Book of Mormon, Bible, and church history. Call or write FRAA, c/o Paula Rowland, 210 W. White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050, (816) 461-FRAA (3722).

Featured Book

This volume by Joseph L. Allen comes highly recommended by the staff of FRAA. While we may not agree with all his conclusions, the material deserves our careful attention and study.

For many years, Allen has operated a travel business called Middle America Tours. He always augments his tours with information about The Book of Mormon. This book comprises much of that information and provides a good companion for those traveling in Mesoamerica.

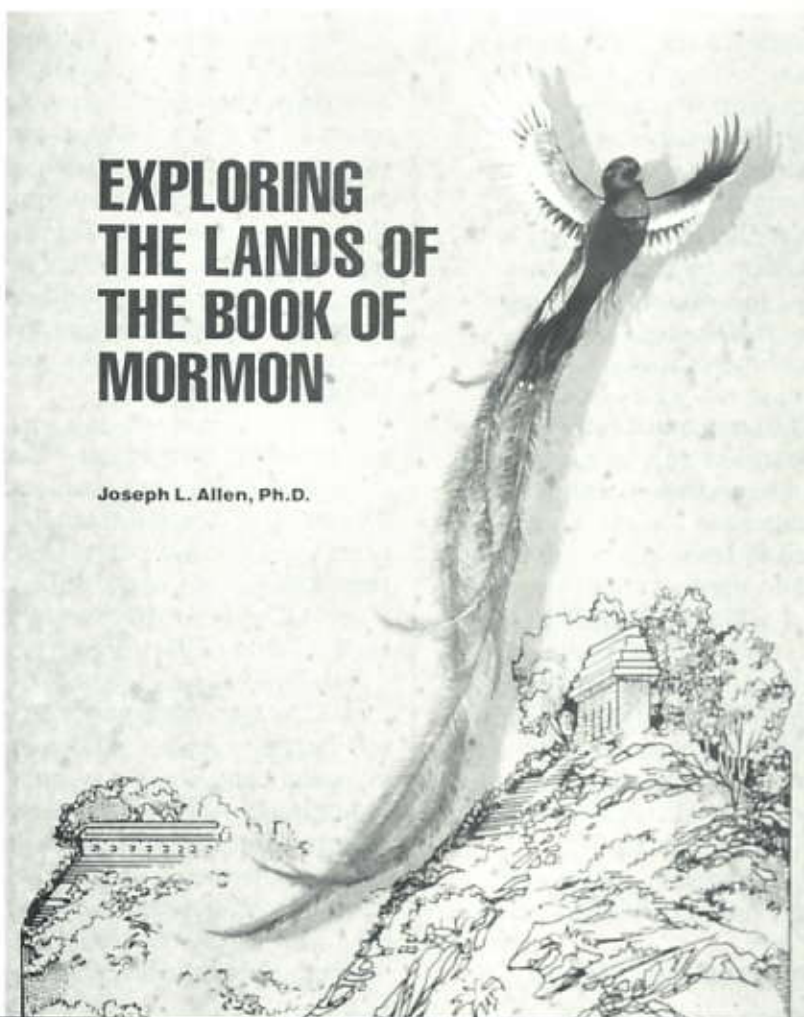
The editor of the book, Ted D. Stoddard, Professor of Business Communication, Marriott School of Management, Brigham Young University, wrote: "I began encouraging Dr. Allen to write a book about the traditions, customs, languages, and geography of the Book of Mormon. For tour purposes, he did write a few things. As I absorbed those items,

I became even more convinced that he must write a comprehensive book." Thus this volume was written.

Stoddard concludes his introductory remarks with these words.

This is good stuff. It'll bring the Book of Mormon to life for you. It'll strengthen your testimony that Jesus is the Christ. I've experienced a marvelous change in my life as a result of this material, and I can hardly wait to see what happens to you as you expose yourself to Dr. Allen's insights.

The many maps, illustrations, comprehensive bibliography, and index contribute to the book's effectiveness. It sells for \$24.95. Purchase by December 1, 1993, and pay only \$20.95, plus shipping and handling.



Whatsoever Passeth Through the Paths of the Sea

Don Montel

This testimony helped convince me that The Book of Mormon was of divine origin and contained many truths.

In February 1945, during World War II, I was in the Navy on the island of Tinian, one of the Mariana Islands in the Pacific. (The plane carrying the atomic bomb took off from this island on August 6, 1945.) We were engaged in the second Battle of the Philippine Sea. On February 17, we had word that a battleship had sailed from Japan carrying the largest guns of any ship in the world at that time. It was called *Ise*. Our assignment was to stop that ship from engaging any of our people. The events of that day are still very clear in my mind.

In the briefing to prepare us for the search and destroy mission, we learned all the particulars of the attack. Although we had no knowledge of the amount of anti-aircraft their ship carried, our own battleships carried 156 barrels of anti-aircraft guns. So we knew our chances of getting in and out with an attack on this ship was just about nil to none.

In the intelligence briefing, we were told the procedures to follow in case we were shot down. The intelligence officer went into great detail on how to escape capture and keep from being picked up by Japanese forces. As we prepared to leave the ready room, he tried to give us hope. He said, "A short while ago Eddie Rickenbacker survived 33 days in an open life raft. Maybe you can go one better. From where you will be, if you keep your head down and don't get captured, in about a year the ocean currents will take you to North America."

We proceeded to go on our flight but failed to find the battleship *Ise*.

Some years later, through

several experiences, I came to realize that this Jesus Christ, of whom I had heard so much as a child, was a true and living being. These experiences prompted me to try to get to know him better.

While this was happening, my wife Marcella attended a church I had not heard of as a child. It was called the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. One of the books she studied and kept laying out in front of me at all times was The Book of Mormon. I picked it up a few times but concluded it wasn't for me. I became convinced this Joseph Smith could really spin a good story.

I am firmly convinced that The Book of Mormon is a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Further experiences caused me, however, to do some serious studying. Therefore, I tried again to read The Book of Mormon. I would start with First Nephi and sometimes get halfway through the chapter, but eventually would give up. I just couldn't see anything in it. I struggled with the language—I could not understand it—and the words did not make an impression on me.

One evening my wife's sister called. Marcella told her, "Don's struggling. He's trying to read The Book of Mormon, but he just can't get anything out of it. He can't stay with it." Her sister said, "Oh—tell him to start with the book of Ether. Have him try that."

What did I have to lose? I looked to find the book of Ether and began to read. As I did, into my mind came these thoughts, "Man, this is a fantastic story! If only it were true!" I read the marvelous experience where the Brother of Jared saw the hand of the Lord, where the stones were blessed, the barges were built,

and so many things.

I tried to reason it out in my mind. "Now, they would have to free float, and they left some place from Asia. The description of the storms sounds like the water close to the Aleutian Islands." I'd been in the Aleutian waters and knew what they were like. I wondered, "How did Joseph know of these things? No . . . No . . . It can't be. It can't be."

But yet, as I continued to read, I became fascinated with it. I still wasn't convinced, though, that it was a true and proper book until I came to the third chapter of Ether and the 13th verse.

And thus they were driven forth, three hundred and forty and four days upon the water; and they did land upon the shore of the promised land.

Three hundred and forty-four days! Immediately I was carried back to that day on Tinian and the briefing we were given on how to survive if shot down by the Japanese. We were told it would take about a year for the currents to get us back home. A year would be about 365 days, but with a trip that long, and with wind variations, how much difference is 20 days? All at once this thing came together for me! It was like somebody turned on a light bulb flooding my mind with the words, "This is true!"

My first thought after that was to rationalize. If Joseph wanted to write this book, he could have gotten the information by studying the naval charts. But then I recalled that we had been told that the charts of ocean currents in the northern Pacific were not published until the 1850s. They had been charted by a young naval lieutenant who accompanied Admiral Matthew Perry when he opened Japan to trade in the 1850s. This lieutenant was with the Coast Survey (later

called the Coast and Geodetic Survey and now the National Ocean Survey).

I turned to the front of The Book of Mormon and found its publication date of 1830. Twenty-five years before the knowledge about ocean currents and other relevant information had been published as fact, Joseph Smith hit it right square on the money!

Excited now, I was unable to put the book down that night. I read the rest of Ether. Then I went back and started with first Nephi. And it all came alive—all the way through.

With this simple testimony, I am firmly convinced that The Book of Mormon is a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I am firmly convinced that it is a true and proper book. Joseph Smith had no way of knowing of the currents or how long it would have taken to float with the currents from Asia to America. The knowledge was not readily available until the 1850s. I thank God that this testimony was given to me.



Don Montel resides in Oak Grove, Missouri, and serves as pastor for the Bates City Restoration Branch.

Editor's Note:

In September 1990, when FRAA went to Michigan for a regional Book of Mormon day conference, I gave a presentation called "China and the Jaredites." I shared the above testimony in the course of the presentation saying that Don knew that a U.S. naval officer was the first to study and publish the results of oceanic explorations. Don was unaware of the lieutenant's name, however, but I had done some research and found it was Matthew Fontaine Maury.

From the study of old logbooks, Maury began in 1846 "preparing 'wind and current' charts of the three grand oceans, viz: the Atlantic, the Pacific and Indian" (Williams:1963:178—see reference in text below). The first of the *Wind and Current Charts* were published in 1847. In 1855, Maury's *The Physical Geography of the Sea* became the first standard oceanography text.

During one of the breaks at the conference, a lady came to me and said her husband was a science teacher and taught about Maury. She asked if I knew that Psalm 8 led Maury to look for the currents? I said no.

Since then, through research I found the following from the book *Matthew Fontaine Maury, Scientist of the Sea* by Frances Leigh Williams (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1963: p. 151).

Maury was fully aware that his proposed type of chart and sailing directions represented a radical departure from the type then in use by mariners. In his years at sea he had found true the verses of the 107th Psalm: 'They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.' As he weighed the proposal he would make,

Maury later told his family, that verse came often to his mind but even more frequently the words of the 8th Psalm: 'Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands . . . and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.' Those words convinced Maury that he was right in his belief that there were natural paths through the sea, even as there were natural paths through mountain passes, if man would but persist until he discovered them. The need was great. The lack of adequate charts was causing unnecessary loss of life at sea (emphasis added).

Not only did his work of charting the winds and currents of the ocean save lives, it provided the witness to Don Montel that The Book of Mormon was true!

Turn the page for more about transoceanic contact.

The topic of transoceanic contact continues to cause heated and strong debate. In the March/April 1993 issue of Archaeology, the article "Voyages of the Imagination" written by Frank J. Frost, an authority on early seafaring, "debunks tall tales about Precolumbian visitors to the New World."

On the other hand, authority Paul Tolstoy, who has conducted scientific research on the technologies for making bark cloth and paper, presents a convincing case for contact between Asia and Mesoamerica. (See "The Maya Rediscovered: Paper Route" in Natural History, June 1991 and MIGHTY SUMMONS April 1992, p. 3)

Even authorities like Michael D. Coe have begun to acknowledge that

the possibility of some trans-Pacific influence on Mesoamerican cultures, cannot, however, be so easily dismissed. . . . It is possible that Asian intellectuals may have established some sort of contact with their Mesoamerican counterparts by the end of the Preclassic.

—The Maya, 4th ed., Thames and Hudson, 1987

Proponents of the transoceanic contact theory usually cite cultural similarities between Old and New World civilizations to support their position. For example, one of the most provocative shared cultural traits lies in the use of jade. Miguel Covarrubias wrote in his book Mexico South, Alfred A. Knopf, 1967, that "jade was to the Mexicans, as well as to the Chinese, more than just a precious stone: it was worshiped as a symbol of everything that was divine and valuable" (p. 109). He goes on to say,

Both carved it exquisitely, wore it as an amulet, made offerings of it, and buried it with their dead. While the Mexicans often placed jade beads in the mouths of their corpses, the Chinese of 2,400 years ago also placed a cicada of jade in the mouths of theirs. Although these parallels are most likely coincidental, it is hard to explain why both Chinese and Mexicans painted their funeral jades with a coat of bright red cinnabar. Furthermore, the style of ornamentation of some of these jades is often strikingly similar, variations of the squared spiral motif (p. 108).

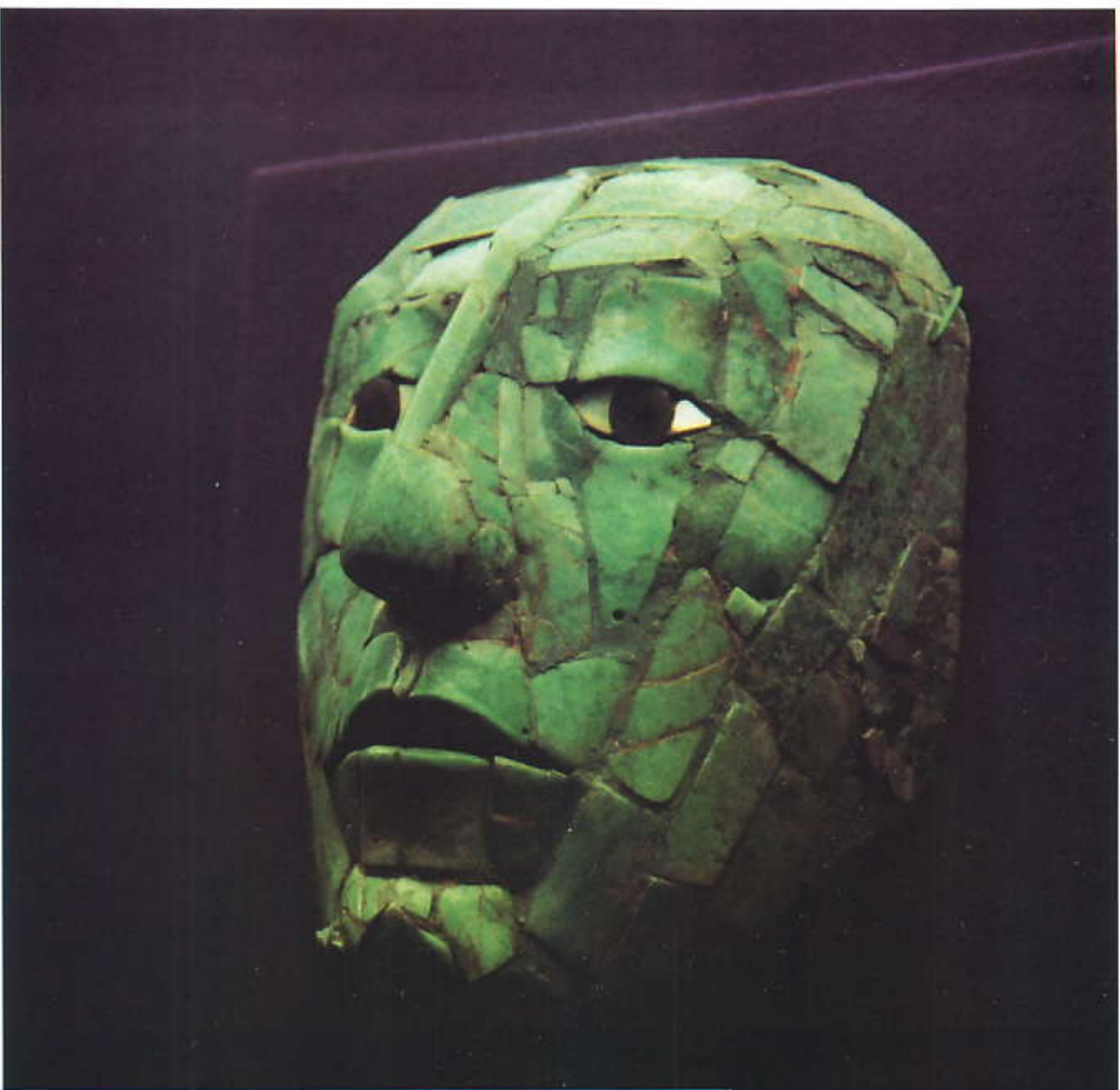
The mosaic jade mask pictured on the opposite page was found in the tomb of Lord Shield Pacal under the Temple of Inscriptions at Palenque (Pah-LEN-kay). Muriel Weaver Porter describes the find this way in her latest edition of The Aztecs, Maya, and Their Predecessors, Academic Press, 1993, p. 323.

He [Pacal] was carefully laid out in the crypt in a great stone sarcophagus with a jade piece in his mouth, and one in each hand; he wore a jade ring on every finger, bracelets, a diadem of jade disks, jade and mother-of-pearl earspools, and his favorite tubular jade bead necklace . . . and finally his face was covered with a mosaic mask with eyes of shell and obsidian. Beside him lay 2 jade figures. Everything including the corpse had been coated with red cinnabar to emphasize his eternal life after death.

The other photo, taken in the small museum at Palenque, shows a jade necklace which might possibly have come from Pacal's tomb.

One of the most recent discoveries in China has been the combined tombs of Han nobleman Liu Sheng and his wife Princess Tou Wan. Both bodies were encased in jade suits made with thousands of small jade plaques. The suit was in eight parts: helmet, mask, back and front upper garments, trousers, armllets, gloves, and boots. See New Treasures of the Past by Brian Fagan, Barron's, 1987, pp. 179-186.

The two-volume work by John L. Sorenson and Martin H. Raish, Pre-Columbian Contact with the Americas across the Oceans: An Annotated Bibliography, published in 1990, provides the student with hundreds of citations concerning transoceanic contact.



Patricia Beebe



The Book of Mormon Marathon

Gaylord and Faye Shaw

In 1991 Gaylord taught the class "Science and The Book of Mormon" during the winter term at Graceland College. The response was so positive that the following winter term Ron Smith offered "The Book of Mormon in Context"—in Mexico! We could share many wonderful experiences from both of these classes, but we want to focus on the latest campus Book of Mormon activity—The Book of Mormon marathon.

Brett Methner, an FRAA intern in our Book of Mormon Sunday School class, suggested the idea. The Book of Mormon would be read aloud continually from start to finish. He had heard where another group had completed the task in about 24 hours. We realized the worth of having the words read on the Hill. Besides spotlighting the book, the marathon would provide a quick remedy for students who 'never have time' to read The Book of Mormon. We also hoped the activity would spark an interest in others. But, more than that, the golden words being read aloud would establish a perpetual blessing on campus to those receptive to it.

We chose the last Saturday in March for it was then, 163 years ago, that The Book of Mormon first came off the press. It would be an anniversary day of appreciation and thanksgiving. We would remember all who had gone before who had given us a rich spiritual heritage and had willingly sacrificed so we could receive their message. We also had a sense of expectation for the records yet to come forth.

The students handled the arrangements—finding a location and designing and displaying promotional signs. A few evenings before the last Saturday in March, they held a service of prepara-

tion. They decided to fast from food during the reading. Juices were available, however, to help to keep everyone awake. We were impressed with the dedication of those present.

It took the group 25 hours and 5 minutes to read the entire book, and during that time, no one spoke aloud to disrupt the reading. Students intently took notes and marked their books. A total of 43 stopped by to listen and read, with several returning two or three times. A few who arrived during the day (we began at 8:00 A.M.) remained until the end. The times we struggled most to keep awake only reinforced our awareness of the inner commitment of each one.

In the core group of sixteen to eighteen were a descendant of J.J. Cornish, a descendant of a man who set out to tar and feather J.J. Cornish but was converted instead, a descendant of the first Tahitian to be baptized into the church by Oliver Cowdery, and a great-niece of Oscar Case. One student stated we had become

like family, and we all agreed.

An unexpected enrichment that will remain with us was the beauty of hearing the various voices read. With an atmosphere of acceptance, no one hesitated with strange words. Some interpretations were fascinating, and who is to say which are correct?

From this experience we became changed people—having a longing to seek additional enlightenment through study. Students read the book more frequently now and want to share what they continue to discover. We all gained a deeper understanding and are grateful for the lives of those in The Book of Mormon who provided such rich testimonies. We have a desire to draw closer to the ever-present Christ, of whom The Book of Mormon witnesses.

Gaylord Shaw is a professor of biology at Graceland College. Faye Shaw teaches home economics and art in high school and enjoys Book of Mormon research. Both serve on the FRAA advisory board.



Brett Methner, 1992 FRAA intern and a junior from Overland Park, Kansas, and Sarah Rastle, a freshman student from Escondido, California, stayed through the complete reading of The Book of Mormon—all 25 hours!



Notes and News from the FRAA Research Library

Sherrie Kline Smith

Attention Home Schoolers and Private School Students!

The research library at FRAA has many resources to aid the study of hundreds of different topics—historical, geographical, scientific, and theological. In fact, the library has materials not found in any other library system in the Kansas City area.

While a goal of FRAA is to have an extensive children's section, at present these resources are limited. The library will better serve junior and senior high students. Materials may not be checked out, but photocopying services are available.

The next time you need to do a special project or research on a particular topic, don't forget the library at FRAA. Call or stop by to see how we can help.

New Serials

Several new subscriptions have been added to the serials already received by the library. These include the following:

Native Peoples—This new magazine is published quarterly by

the emerging National Museum of the American Indian in Washington D.C., a part of the Smithsonian Institution. It is dedicated to the art and lifeways of American Indians.

Missouri Archaeological Society Quarterly—This newsletter of the Missouri Archaeological Society, tells about the digs and finds in Missouri and the Kansas City area.

In Other Words—A Wycliffe Bible Translators' publication, printed six times a year. It keeps people informed about what is happening with translating the Bible into all the world's languages.

The Jerusalem Post—This international edition comes bi-weekly and is not available at other area libraries except UMKC (not up-to-date) and the Johnson County, Antioch Branch.

Anthro Notes—The National Museum of Natural History Bulletin for Teachers is published free-of-charge three times a year by the Smithsonian Institution.

Articles Worth Reading

"The Bat Creek Inscription—Did Judean Refugees Escape to Tennessee?" in *Biblical Archaeological Review*, July/August 1993 has two parts: "Yes—J. Huston McCulloch gives evidence from paleography and artifact dating." "No—P. Kyle McCarter charges fraud, probably perpetrated by disgruntled 19th-century discover [sic] of stone."

This is the latest on this so-little-published topic. Discovered in the late 1800s by a Smithsonian Institution excavation, the Bat Creek stone has received scant attention. Cyrus Gordon, a professor of Semitic languages renowned for his work in Ugaritic, a Canaanite language written in cuneiform, declared in 1970 that the signs on the stone were paleo-Hebrew letters of the first or second century A.D. Other scholars, however, do not agree.

In the July/August 1993 issue of *Archaeology*, see three articles on the Maya and astronomy on pages 26-35. The titles are: "Written in the Stars: Celestial Origin of Maya Creation Myth" by Richard A. Wertme

Wish List

- * A recently published encyclopedia set, preferably *Americana*, or the money to purchase \$ 750
- * Shelving \$1,400
- * Printer for library computer \$ 500
- * Out-of-Print: Titles

The Pathfinder of the Seas: The Life of Matthew Fontaine Maury, by John W. Wayland, 1930.

The View of the Hebrews: or the Ten Tribes of Israel in America.

Call Sherrie Smith if you can help with any of these projects. Thanks! 816 461-FRAA (3722)

and Angela M.H. Schuster; "Mediators in a Universal Discourse" by Anthony F. Aveni; and "A Mayan Reading of the Story of the Stars" by Dennis and Barbara Tedlock.

"Secrets of the Maya" in *TIME*, August 9, 1993, pp. 44-49.

Recent Acquisitions

This last quarter the library has received numerous materials from the following individuals: Dorothy Cargyle, Michael and Julie Gatrost, Klaas and Bona Lee Kaat, Pat Lowman, James Mitchell, Sr., Todd and Suzanne Smith, Linda Trimble, Scottie Wilcox, and Walter Weldon. Included were over 60 books. Listed are a few of these titles.

The Archaeology of Palestine by William Foxwell Albright; *The Mysterious Maya* by George Stuart; *Treasurers of China* by Reader's Digest; *Antique Jade* by Oscar Luzzatto-Bilitz; *Jade: A Study in Chinese Archaeology and Religion* by Berthold Laufer; and *Cortes: The Life of the Conqueror by His Secretary Francisco Lopez de Gomara*.



Join Lyle and Sherrie Smith, FRAA tour leaders, on the annual archaeology tour! There is still room for a few more adventurous souls.

This year the tour will visit the magnificent Oaxaca valley and Mexico city areas. See such sites as Monte Alban, Mitla, Teotihuacan, San Jose Mogote, and others. Experience the weaving and crafts of the people in Oaxaca and enjoy Christmas Eve with the traditional "Night of the Radishes" on the Oaxaca zocalo.

Touring these places makes The Book of Mormon come alive as Lyle and Sherrie share the parallels found in the cultures of Mesoamerica and the events and people found in The Book of Mormon. See a writing system from Jaredite times. View cement laid the first century B.C. Learn of the Feathered Serpent who dominates Mexican mythology and the opposite force, the jaguar. Spend Christmas with a Nephite and his family.

Contact NOW: Lyle Smith, FRAA Tour, 210 W. White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050, (816)461-FRAA (3722) or at (816) 229-5192. The tour costs \$1400.



Mel Robinett

TheWitness

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