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Type: Newsletter

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## U.A.S. Newsletter, no. 46 (December 17, 1957)

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Published by: University Archaeological Society, Brigham Young University

# U. A. S. NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Ross T. Christensen

December 17, 1957

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Published approximately every six weeks by THE UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. The purpose of the Newsletter is to disseminate knowledge of recent archaeological discoveries bearing on the Latter-day Saint scriptures; also of the archaeological activities and viewpoints of the Society and its members. Subscription by membership in the Society: three dollars per year; or Life Membership, fifty dollars. (Membership also includes subscription to other publications of the Society and of the BYU Department of Archaeology.)

46.0 BYU ARCHAEOLOGISTS READY CENTRAL-AMERICAN EXPEDITION. BYU archaeologists are preparing to leave on the Fifth BYU Archaeological Expedition to Middle America late in December, according to Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, department chairman.

The expedition will conduct excavations at the ancient ruins of Aguacatal in the Xicalango jungle of western Campeche, southern Mexico, and will return from the field about March 15, 1958. It will be led by Dr. Ross T. Christensen, assistant professor of archaeology at BYU and UAS general secretary-treasurer. Two graduate archaeology majors will take part in the expedition: Welby W. Ricks, teaching assistant in the Department of Archaeology and UAS general officer, and Alfred L. Bush, research assistant in the Department and a Life Member of the UAS. Carl Hugh Jones, an advanced undergraduate major, is also expected to be on the staff.

Aguacatal has been identified by Dr. Jakeman, on the basis of evidence in the Chronicles as well as archaeological evidence, as almost certainly the city Bountiful of the Book of Mormon (Newsletter, 22.02). The BYU expedition which he led in 1948 excavated at this site (UAS Bulletin 3, August, 1952).

The present expedition was discussed June 27 at the Society's Tenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures. At that time, the four preceding expeditions from BYU to Book of Mormon lands, those of 1900, 1948, 1954, and 1956, were also reviewed. (See Newsletter, 44.03)

46.00 Progress-Reports in Newsletter. It is expected that general progress-reports by Mr. Bush will be issued from the field. These will constitute the feature articles in those issues of the Newsletter to be published during the absence of the expedition.

46.01 Special "Letters from Field" to Research Patrons. In addition to the Newsletter articles, according to present plans, a running series of informal "letters-from-the-field" will be air-mailed to the



Dr. Jakeman discusses the location of Aguacatal with expedition members. Seated, Dr. Jakeman; standing (l. to r.), Mr. Ricks, Mr. Jones, Mr. Bush, and Dr. Christensen.

archaeology office at BYU, where they will be reproduced by spirit duplicator and copies sent on to all Research Patrons and Life and Honorary Members of the UAS. (The category of Research Patron was created by vote of the Society, November 21, 1955. This distinction may be obtained by a payment of \$10 or more per year, in addition to the regular membership fee. The letters-from-the-field are planned as among the "special Society honors" which the membership voted to extend to Research Patrons; cf. Newsletter, 31.20, 43.4. For the importance of the contributions of Research Patrons to the success of the 1956 expedition, see Newsletter, 37.3.)

46.1 UAS MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN OAXACA ROUND TABLE. Two prominent members of the UAS attended and took part in the Seventh Round Table of the Mexican Society of Anthropology, convened at

Oaxaca, southern Mexico, during the first week in September. Gareth W. Lowe, UAS general officer and field director of the current New World Archaeological Foundation investigations in nearby Chiapas, and Major Joseph E. Vincent, USA-Ret., a faculty member of the Department of Anthropology of Mexico City College, participated in the symposium.

The week's activities included not only the usual business meeting and presentation of papers, but also the official inauguration of the new Center of Regional Studies, a field trip to excavations at Yagul, and a fiesta given by the governor of Oaxaca. Most of the papers were focused on archaeological and anthropological problems of Oaxaca. Reports were given on the Zapotecs and Mixtecs and their relationships to each other and to neighboring Indian peoples. The archaeological relationship of Oaxaca to the Maya and other tangential zones was considered.

The proceedings of this important exchange of current thought contain much of interest to UAS members. The following abstracts are compiled from a report submitted by Major Vincent, supplemented with letters from Mr. Lowe.

46. 10 Oaxaca's Changing Face. The early portions of the "Mesa Redonda" discussions were devoted to the physical geography and biology of Oaxaca and pointed up some of the problems inherent in reconstructing ancient geography. It was suggested that the valley of Oaxaca had formerly been a lake bed and that during the flourishing of the prehispanic cultures there existed a number of lakes in this region. (This problem should be given careful consideration in any proposed external correlation of Book of Mormon geography. --Ed.)

46. 11 Old-World Contacts? Although no reference was made to any specific contact between the ancient civilizations of the Old and New Worlds, at least three speakers of importance publically recognized that some contact between ancient America and other lands was not only possible but probable. One anthropologist even mentioned "occasional" and "accidental" landings. Ideas are slowly changing from the traditional, and until recently virtually unquestioned, concept that all Indians entered the Americas over the Bering Strait land bridge.

46. 12 A Pre-Classic Quetzalcoatl? Dr. Keith Dixon of the NWAFF caught the interest of the "Mesa Redonda" with his detailed description of the elaborately-carved bone artifacts which were discovered in Tomb I at Chiapa de Corzo. The likeness of a man with Caucasoid features and a flowing beard was clearly visible in photographs of rolled impressions made from these bones. Dr. Alfonso Caso described the discovery of this figure as "magnificent," and he and Dr. Ignacio

Bernal, both leading figures in Mexican archaeology, suggested that this was a conventional representation of Quetzalcoatl, the ancient Fair God.

Since the associated ceramic debris is late pre-Classic or proto-Classic in date, this would seem to mean that this god was worshipped at least as early as late Book of Mormon times. This discovery is one of the earliest evidences of such worship yet known.

It is expected that a more complete report on the carved bones will be published soon in American Antiquity.

46. 13 Opening of "Centro de Estudios Regionales." On the evening of September 4, an inauguration and open house was held at Mexico City College's new "Center of Regional Studies," Plazuela Antonio Labastida 7, Oaxaca, to give visiting archaeologists, anthropologists, and government officials an opportunity to view its facilities. Major Vincent, LDS faculty member of the college, had been commissioned to organize the Center and is its director (Newsletter, 43. 70).

After the official opening was pronounced by Sr. Lic. Norberto Aquirre, secretary-general of the State of Oaxaca, who represented the governor, a brief welcome speech was made to the 215 present by Dr. Paul V. Murray, president of Mexico City College. In deference to the religion of the director of the Center, the president extended his personal invitation to members of Brigham Young University and the NWAFF to use the facilities of the Center on equal status with Mexico City College students and faculty.

46. 14 Yagul-Mitla Field Trip. While a small executive group stayed in Oaxaca on the final day to plan for the eighth "Mesa Redonda," to be held in Chiapas, the main body of participants journeyed to the ruins of Yagul and Mitla (Newsletter, 28. 52, 38. 1).

Although all were familiar with Yagul through articles in Mesoamerican Notes, published by Mexico City College, very few had had the opportunity of actually visiting it. Mr. John Paddock explained the relationship of Yagul to Monte Albán and Mitla and pointed out that a study of the cultural materials yet to be found at this site should throw a great deal of light on the nature of the migration of the Zapotecs from Monte Albán towards Mitla and on the relationship of the Zapotec and Mixtec cultures. Small parties were then guided through the ruins by Major Vincent.

The group was afterwards taken to Mitla to attend a fiesta as guests of the governor of the State of Oaxaca.

46. 15 The Pre-Classic in Oaxaca. While the first attention of the Oaxaca Round Table was given to later developments in the area, the pre-Classic (Book of Mormon) era was by no means ignored. Jorge

Acosta and Ignacio Bernal spent some time discussing the pre-Classic phases of Monte Albán. While the Monte Albán I and II periods are placed in this horizon, the architectonic traits of the first of these show considerable development. The date of Monte Albán I, according to a Carbon 14 report, was set at approximately 649 BC, while the appearance of the ball court seems to date back to 272 BC as an average. The influences of sites to the south, in Chiapas and Guatemala on the Monte Albán II period was also recognized.

During sessions devoted to the relationship of Oaxaca to other areas, Mr. Lowe submitted summary results of NWAf excavations at Chiapa de Corzo, a site which contains more than fifty mounds dating back to pre-Classic times. His report included an established ceramic sequence extending through six periods from early pre-Classic to early Classic, with a Carbon 14 date of 900 BC for the earliest period. This report was accompanied by an exhibit of sherds and photographs prepared under his direction.

Ignacio Bernal, commenting on this work, emphasized the importance of the Pacific coasts of Guerrero and Chiapas because of the abundance of La Venta (Olmec or late pre-Classic) culture materials to be found there. The finding of traces of this culture at Chiapa de Corzo widens the area of Olmec influence and helps explain the early appearance of similar traits at Monte Albán.

#### 46.2 UAS PUBLICATIONS.

46.20 UAS President Publishes on Metal Plates. Dr. Franklin S. Harris, Jr., president of the UAS and professor of physics at the University of Utah, has published a brief article on the ancient use of metal plates for the keeping of records. Entitled, "Others Kept Records on Metal Plates, Too," it appears in the October, 1957, issue of The Instructor (Vol. 92, No. 10, pp. 318-320 and inside back cover), official organ of the Deseret Sunday School Union of the LDS Church.

Through the courtesy of the author and by arrangement with the publishers, the Society is pleased to mail copies of Dr. Harris' paper to its entire membership list, accompanying the present Newsletter. Members will find useful a table listing 62 instances of ancient metal plates found in the Old World, together with their dates and the scripts used; also a map showing the distribution of the plate finds, approximately across the center of the Old World land-mass, from Portugal to Java.

46.21 Reviews UAS Publication on Blood Groups. Dr. G. Albin Matson, director of the Minn-

neapolis War Memorial Blood Bank (see below, 46.5), has consented to express an opinion with regard to a recent UAS publication, "The American Indian and the Blood Groups," by Virgil Haws (Miscellaneous Papers, No. 18, December, 1956):

"I come away from a critical reading of Dr. Haws' paper agreeing with his conclusions: That the composition of the American Indians as to blood groups and types differs significantly from that of the populations of northeastern Asia, the supposed source of the Indians according to the Bering Strait theory, thereby raising the presumption that their ancestors came 'by sea from some non-Mongoloid part of the Old World.' In fact, these are the conclusions that have been emphasized in some of my own earlier papers.

"If I were to offer any criticism of the paper, it would be that it is not sufficiently well annotated, and credit therefore has not been given the original work. To illustrate: For the tables on pp. 2, 3, and 4, only one reference is offered, namely William C. Boyd, Genetics and the Races of Man. Actually Dr. Boyd is responsible for hardly any of the data that is published here but merely compiled the tables from the work of others. In a paper such as Dr. Haws has prepared, the reader should be given the advantage of being able to trace directly to the original work. . . ."

(Dr. Matson was personally responsible for much of the original research upon which Dr. Boyd's compilations, as cited by Dr. Haws, were based; see below, 46.5. Copies of Dr. Haws' article are available from the UAS general secretary-treasurer: Society members, 10¢; non-members, 25¢--Ed.)

46.22 "Mormon Archaeology" Republished in Britain. A brief article by a member of the BYU archaeology faculty entitled "Mormon Archaeology," originally published in The Interamerican, has been reprinted in London by New World Antiquity (Vol. 4, No. 7, July, 1957, pp. 105-106).

The article was written by Ross T. Christensen in 1956 in response to a number of inquiries directed to Carl B. Compton, editor of The Interamerican, concerning the Mormons and why they are interested in archaeology (Newsletter, 38.7).

Of particular interest in the British publication is an editorial by "ES" entitled "Archaeology and Religious Faith," which serves to introduce the BYU professor's article. ES writes, "Here is not only a case of a religious organization putting up a reasoned explanation of unorthodox ideas in archaeology, but of this being published with scientific backing. . . . A principle has been established which might well be followed by many other religious bodies whose basic historical assumptions seem to be at variance with the

facts as we know them."

New World Antiquity is a monthly mimeographed journal published by Markham House Press Ltd., 31 Kings Road, London, SW 3, England. Annual subscription is \$3.00; single copies are available for 35¢. Payment should be made directly to the publishers.

46.23 Extra Newsletters Available. Extra copies of two past issues of the UAS Newsletter are now available from the general secretary-treasurer. These are: No. 40, March 30, 1957, containing a review by M. Wells Jakeman of An Approach to the Book of Mormon by Hugh Nibley; and No. 45, November 7, 1957, the Dead Sea Scrolls anniversary issue. Society members, 10¢; non-members, 25¢.

#### 46.3 NEW RESEARCH PATRONS AND LIFE MEMBER.

Since the last published report (Newsletter, 43.3), ten UAS members have become, or continue as, Research Patrons and one has become a Life Member.

Research Patrons for the year ending June 30, 1958, are: Einar C. Erickson, Orem, Utah, Otto A. Koepp, Madeira Beach, Florida, and Robert K. Willardson, Columbus, Ohio. Those for the year ending December 31, 1958, are: Ross T. Christensen, Orem, Utah, Conrad E. Green, Portland, Oregon, Dee F. Green, Provo, Utah, Lincoln A. Jagerson and Janice N. McAuliffe, Long Beach, California, Clark S. Knowlton, Collegeboro, Georgia, and David S. Welchman, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The new Life Member is James M. Hoyt, assistant professor of accounting at the University of Nevada, Reno. The Society now claims 13 Life Members.

It is intended that Research Patrons and Life and Honorary Members of the UAS shall receive a series of letters-from-the-field written by a member of the BYU archaeological expedition to southern Mexico and sent out as among their "special Society honors" (see above, 46.01).

#### 46.4 REPORTS FROM THE CHAPTERS.

46.40 Salt Lake Chapter. Dr. Milton R. Hunter of the LDS First Council of Seventy presented a lecture October 24 concerning his July trip to South America (Newsletter, 43.72), illustrated with colorful slides of ancient Peruvian goldwork and textiles. About 75 persons were in attendance, at the LDS Institute of Religion.

Two chapter officers were also elected at this time to assist the recently appointed chapter director, W. Ernest Young (Newsletter, 42.14): Lois Bigelow, assistant director, and Gevene Findlay, secretary.

On November 22, Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, chairman, BYU Department of Archaeology, addressed the

Chapter on the Lehi Tree-of-Life Stone (1 Nephi 8; see UAS Bulletin 4).

46.41 Campus Chapter. The BYU Campus Chapter heard a lecture December 9 by Dr. Jakeman concerning the projected BYU expedition to Central America (see above, 46.0). The official film record of the 1948 expedition was shown, and the objectives of the forthcoming expedition set forth.

Other fall quarter events have included illustrated lectures: on recent excavations of the New World Archaeological Foundation in southern Mexico, by Bruce W. Warren, October 28; on primitive art, by Professor Conan E. Mathews, chairman, BYU art department, November 11; and on the Dead Sea Scrolls, by Einar C. Erickson of Orem, Utah, November 25 (Newsletter, 45.02).

Elections of officers for the fall quarter were held October 10 at which Eric Brodin of Gothenburg, Sweden, was elected president. Alfred L. Bush of Denver, Colorado, was named honorary president; Carol Luana Collett of Kaysville, Utah, was elected vice-president; and Florence R. Faherty of Orem, Utah was named secretary.

46.5 BLOOD-TYPING AMONG THE MAYAS. Dr. G. Albin Matson, director of the Minneapolis War Memorial Blood Bank and a new member of the UAS, is planning an expedition, this winter, to Mexico and Central America, where he will study the distribution of Hereditary blood factors among the Maya Indians.

Dr. Matson expects to leave sometime in January and spend about six weeks in the field. He conferred October 2 with Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, BYU Mesoamerican expert, concerning the distribution of significant racial types.

A part-time lecturer in the Department of Bacteriology, University of Minnesota School of Medicine, Dr. Matson is an authority on blood-typing among the Blackfoot and Blood Indians of Montana. He was the first to demonstrate an exception to the old generalization that all American Indians are of the type-O blood group, viz.: There is a high percentage of type A among the Blackfoot and Blood (cf. above, 46.21).

Dr. Matson is first counselor in the presidency of the LDS North Central States Mission

46.6 A QUESTION FOR THE EDITOR. "A Question for the Editor" was instituted in the preceding issue (45.3) as a permanent feature of the Newsletter. A selected question and an answer written either by the editor or by a guest contributor will appear in each issue. Questions should be addressed to the Editor, UAS Newsletter, Department of Archaeology, BYU.

46.60 Lehi's Landing Place. Sir: Until the

mid-1940's some of the Elders told us that Lehi of the Book of Mormon landed on the west coast of South America, somewhere around 30-32 degrees south latitude, and gradually worked his way northward, but gave no source of authority. Now and for some years, however, Lehi's supposed landing place is in Central America. Why has this shift been made?--Mrs. A. Hyatt Verrill.

The official view of the LDS Church with regard to the landing place of Lehi has not changed; in fact there has never been any official LDS view. The landing place is not a matter of doctrine. All interpretations of Book of Mormon geography have been private interpretations, since the Book itself does not specify the modern equivalents of its ancient geographical locations, nor have they been divinely revealed to the Church membership. That is something which we of the present generation are privileged to investigate.

Beginning in 1882 with the publication of the first American edition of The Compendium, by Franklin D. Richards and James A. Little, the Panama identification--that is, that "the narrow neck of land" of the Book of Mormon is the Isthmus of Panama--was very popular among Latter-day Saints. Beginning at least as early as the 1920's, however, certain investigators began to consider the possibility that this narrow neck was the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, located in southern Mexico. Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, who established the Department of Archaeology at BYU in 1946, has held to this latter opinion. The two contrasting views require different landing places for Lehi. It now appears that the Tehuantepec view, which requires a landing place perhaps in southern Central America, is rapidly gaining favor among serious students of the Book of Mormon. --RTC.

(See also the following statements on the subject: B. H. Roberts, New Witness for God, Vol. 3, pp. 499-504; Frederick J. Pack, "Route Travelled by Lehi and his Company," The Instructor, Vol. 73, No. 4 (April, 1938), p. 160; Nancy Clement Williams, After 100 Years (Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., Independence, Mo., 1951), pp. 101-102; and UAS Newsletter, 22. 0. --Ed.)

46. 7 CORRECTIONS. Two lines of Dr. Sidney B. Sperry's essay in the last issue of the Newsletter, "The Special Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls to Latter-day Saints," were unfortunately omitted in the final typing of the multilith master-sheets. In paragraph 45. 03, page 5, column 2, line 20, following "Book of Mormon," add: "This tedious task has revealed that the scroll

seldom agrees with the departures of the Book of Mormon. . ."

Also, on page 1, column 2, in the caption accompanying the photograph, change "Wasy" to "Wady."