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F.A.R.M.S. UPDATE

The Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies

Number 91

November 1993

B. H. Roberts Affirms Book of Mormon Antiquity in Newly Released Manuscript

LONG unseen by LDS scholars, an 847-page typescript entitled *The Truth, The Way, The Life* by B. H. Roberts will soon be published by *BYU Studies*. Roberts worked on this treatise mainly in 1927–1928, but he was still revising it in 1932, so it contains some of his last words written for publication; he died in 1933.

Because this manuscript has long been known only for its few controversial pages on the creation, it comes as an unexpected bonus to learn that it repeatedly asserts the antiquity of the Book of Mormon. While such affirmative statements may seem perfectly unremarkable, it is precisely their routine orthodoxy that makes them so notable. Coming from one of the great intellects of the Church, whose views about the Book of Mormon supposedly became more intellectually sophisticated in his last years, these unequivocal statements will disappoint anyone who has imagined Roberts as a closet doubter or late-in-life skeptic.

These statements should especially tell us how Roberts really felt about the Book of Mormon after he wrote his "Book of Mormon Study" in 1922. That work identified several Book of Mormon problems and called urgently for further study. Some have seen that work as evidence that Roberts had changed his views (see *Dialogue* [Fall 1993]: 77–86), but in light of the newly released manuscript, we now can determine that Roberts did not waver in his belief.

First, in the newly released treatise, Roberts describes the miraculous coming forth of the Book of Mormon in strong, straightforward, traditional terms. For example:

Three years after this first revela-

tion an angel of God named Moroni was sent to the prophet to reveal the existence of an ancient volume of scripture known as the Book of Mormon, a book which gives an account of the hand-dealings of God with the people whom he brought to the continents of America from what we now call the "Old World." (TWL 47-7)

He affirms that "Joseph Smith was commanded to translate, and was given the power and means by which he could translate the unknown language of these ancient American peoples" (47-7).

Second, the manuscript contains several statements that necessarily assume the antiquity and literal truthfulness of this ancient American scripture. For example, he speaks literally of the words that the resurrected Jesus "said to the assembled Nephites to whom he appeared on the Western Continent" (48-7, 8; 39-2, 4). Indeed, Roberts believed that "no incident in the gospel history is more emphatically proven than this great truth, the resurrection of the Son of God" (39-14), and he used as his key witness "the appearance of the resurrected Christ to the Nephites" (39-14).

Third, Roberts often identifies Book of Mormon prophets by the ancient centuries in which they lived. Lehi, he says, lived "before the birth of Christ, early in the fifth [sic] century, B.C." (40-10). He identifies a prophecy in the book of Alma as "one written near the close of the second century B.C." (40-10).

Fourth, Roberts goes out of his way to describe the book's authors as "ancient." He calls Lehi "an ancient

American Prophet" (7-10). He cites "revelations of God to the ancient inhabitants of America" (29-1). He calls the book "the American Volume of Scripture" written by "the old prophets of the ancient American race" (27-3).

Fifth, he treats many of its passages as the unique, authoritative source of revealed knowledge on important topics. He takes joy in drawing attention to doctrines "derived almost wholly from the teachings of the Book of Mormon" (44-15).

He extols it as a masterful work. Of a Book of Mormon reading he exclaims, "how beautifully clear this principle of purity in thought is set forth" (50-6). To Roberts, the four standard works were "all of equal authority, all of them dependable sources of knowledge" (29-2).

In a handwritten note on his third draft of this volume, Roberts penned the following note: "add 'other sheep I have' -Christ mission to Western continents. St John 10 ch" (18-13). This note was added as Roberts went through the manuscript for the last time.

Can there be any doubt that the man who wrote such words about the Book of Mormon believed it to be what it claims to be? If he had harbored any doubts, would he have repeatedly written such words in *The Truth, The Way, The Life*, which he hoped would be his magnum opus? Surely this final treatise from the prolific career of B. H. Roberts should also be the final word on his profound belief in the truth of this "ancient volume of scripture known as the Book of Mormon."

Based on research by John W. Welch

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make it possible for scholars to answer questions about these texts almost instantly, and for the entire set of texts. The kinds of searches and comparisons of words and phrases that can take weeks or months when done without a computer can be performed in fractions of a second with the electronic database.

The scholars who have so far published volumes on parts of the scrolls have had to work without access to other scrolls for comparative purposes. When this database becomes available, that isolation will cease to exist.

The database will be built around computerized transcriptions of the scrolls, which are about 80% available now, but will become available in their entirety during the course of the project. Transcribing the scrolls is the most demanding stage of scroll studies because of the deteriorated condition of most of the scrolls.

The three most important components of the database will be the transcriptions of the scrolls, translations, and photographs. The transcriptions will appear on screen line by line, in the same format as the original scrolls. Translations will be linked to the transcriptions, in a line-by-line format, and each column of transcribed text will be linked to the photograph of that section of the scroll, reproduced as a high-quality image on the screen. Thus transcription, translation, and photograph can be displayed simultaneously in separate windows on the same screen, linked together so that as the researcher moves from place to place in any one window, the display moves to the corresponding place in the other two.

In addition to these three pri-

mary components, the database may contain Old Testament texts in Greek and Hebrew, the Greek New Testament, the Pseudepigrapha, the Apocrypha, and other related documents from the biblical period (with links later to a similar Book of Mormon database).

It will contain reference works, including lexicons and concordances. It may also contain important commentaries on any of the primary documents. For any of the primary documents, it may also contain alternate versions of transcriptions, translations, or photographs, to the extent these might be helpful to students and scholars. Translation aids can also be made available on screen.

Users will be able to create files of their own notes and comments and link these to lines of text for linked display and revision. Users can also add any texts that they wish to the database and generate the same kinds of concordances and links that the basic database contains.

All the text materials will be fully indexed, allowing user-defined searches for any combination of words or letters in selected ranges of texts or in the entire database.

With the vigorous assistance of the Dead Sea Scrolls Foundation, F.A.R.M.S. is currently negotiating for rights to the various materials that will compose the database. Once it is determined what the precise source for each component will be, the full cast of collaborators can be made public.

The overall management and financial responsibility for this project will rest with F.A.R.M.S., which will distribute the product on a noncommercial basis. Noel B. Reynolds, F.A.R.M.S. president, serves as overall director of the project. Hebrew scholars and F.A.R.M.S.

board members Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks serve as technical director and consultant, respectively. Weston Fields, executive director of the Dead Sea Scrolls Foundation, coordinates contacts with Dead Sea Scrolls scholars and others who will contribute to the project in various ways.

Brigham Young University's participation consists primarily in providing software services and support and campus facilities and services to the database team. The database will use the new Windows version of WordCruncher, a BYU-developed program for the manipulation of texts on screen with capabilities in multiple language scripts. James Rosenvall and Monte Shelley are the principal developers of the software. Daniel Bartholomew and Jason Dzubak are the programmers assigned to this project.

It is projected that the first edition of the database will be available in approximately two years. Progress is contingent on funding, the cooperation of a multitude of key people, and success in resolving any technical problems that may arise. The software package already exists and will only require modifications to fit the particular product.

Weston Fields recently visited F.A.R.M.S. and BYU, where he reviewed the project and presented a public lecture on the scrolls. Stephen Pfann, DSS scholar and director of the Center for the Study of Early Christianity, located in Jerusalem, will make a similar visit in November in connection with his own collaboration with this project. In February, Emanuel Tov, professor of Bible Studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and Editor-in-chief of the DSS publication project with Oxford University Press, will also visit Provo to review the project and present a F.A.R.M.S.-sponsored lecture (February 21).

Paper Considers Book of Mormon Temples

Did the people of the Book of Mormon have temples as we know them? What did their temples mean to them, according to the Book of Mormon account? These and many other questions receive careful treatment in "The Temple in the Book of Mormon: The Temples at the Cities of Nephi, Zarahemla, and Bountiful" by John W. Welch, which is available as a preliminary report on the order form in this issue of *Insights*. In final form, it will be included in *Temples in the Ancient World*, which will be published by Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S. next spring.

Welch first turns attention to the religious setting out of which Lehi and Nephi came and which provides a necessary background to understanding temples in the Book of Mormon—"the law of Moses, sacrifice, and certain Israelite concepts that Lehi and Nephi would have understood and embraced in terms of their prophetic knowledge of the plan of redemption through the atonement of Christ."

With this background, Welch then discusses the three temples at Nephi, Zarahemla, and Bountiful, with emphasis on texts delivered at the temple or that contain the most sacred teachings of the plan of salvation, conveying "divine powers through ceremonial or symbolic means together with commandments received by sacred oaths that allow the recipient to stand ritually in the presence of God." These texts include 2 Nephi 6–10, Mosiah 1–6, Alma 12–13, and 3 Nephi 11–18.

Bat Creek Stone Revisited

For a number of years F.A.R.M.S. has devoted attention to an issue of considerable importance for the Book of Mormon: what were the number and nature of contacts between the Old World and the Americas before Columbus? John Sorenson in particular has contributed to the discussion of this issue, most significantly in his publication (with Martin Raish) of the two-volume, annotated bibliography, *Pre-Columbian Contacts with the Americas across the Oceans*.

Sorenson has brought to our attention a recent issue of the *Biblical Archaeological Review* that revisits one piece of evidence in this controversy, the Bat Creek stone. The review published an article by J. Huston McCulloch, "Did Judean Refugees Escape to Tennessee?" that argues that the stone contains a Hebrew inscription predating



Columbus, thus supporting the conclusion that significant contacts between the Old and New Worlds did take place before the seventeenth century. Another article by P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., "Let's Be Serious about the Bat Creek Stone," argues that the stone is a hoax and that there was not likely any pre-Columbian contact of any significance.

We are making available on the order form a reprint of both articles to bring you up to date on this issue. With the reprint we will send you a brief introduction to the controversy and what it means for an understanding of the Book of Mormon, written by Stephen D. Ricks, and a chapter written by Cyrus H. Gordon, reprinted from *By Study and Also by Faith*, that also discusses the stone.

Essay Illuminates Publishing Process

The Religious Studies Center at BYU sponsored a conference on Joseph Smith at the dedication of the new Joseph Smith Building on campus. Organized by Susan Easton Black, associate professor of Ancient Scripture at BYU, the conference was well attended and well received. Papers delivered at the conference have been published by the center and Bookcraft, and F.A.R.M.S. has arranged to reprint one of the chapters that particularly sheds light on the Book of Mormon.

Larry C. Porter, professor of Church History and Doctrine at BYU, discusses "The Book of Mormon: Historical Setting for Its Translation and Publication."

Porter has consulted numerous primary sources, some contemporaneous with the publishing of the first edition, and his analysis provides many interesting details, especially about events surrounding the publication. This reprint is available on the order form—and, like any scripture-related book from Bookcraft or Deseret Book, the book itself, *Joseph Smith: The Prophet, the Man*, can also be ordered at a discount from F.A.R.M.S.

If your study of the Doctrine and Covenants in Gospel Doctrine class this year has led to greater interest in the life and mission of the Prophet Joseph, you will find this essay very useful.

BYU Studies Features Griggs and Jett on Archaeology and Pre-Columbian Voyaging

By special arrangement, the most recent issue of *BYU Studies* is available through F.A.R.M.S. This outstanding publication contains several articles that will be of great interest to F.A.R.M.S. readers.

The lead article, by Dr. Wilfred Griggs and the members of the BYU-Egypt archaeology team, reports for the first time in print their latest findings. From an early Christian cemetery has emerged unique new evidence of violent persecutions of Christians during the late Roman Empire and also well-preserved examples of significant religious burial clothing. Moreover, state-of-the-art techniques for extracting and analyzing DNA from royal mummies have allowed the team to discover valuable information about the identity of these mummies, as well as their familial relationships and genetic characteristics. The article is heavily illustrated with color photographs of artifacts, mummies, and burials. Since reprints of this article will lack the

vivid and stunning value of the color prints, you will not want to miss this opportunity to obtain an original copy of the publication.

The second article in this issue of *BYU Studies* is by Dr. Stephen Jett, Professor of Geography at the University of California at Davis. Also extensively illustrated, this article discusses numerous evidences of transoceanic cultural exchanges between Asia and the Americas before Columbus. Jett also examines the presumptions for and against cultural diffusionism.

Other items in this issue of *BYU Studies* include articles, poems, book reviews, the 60-page-long 1992 Mormon Bibliography, as well as a neuropathological study of several events reported in scripture, such as the decapitation of Shiz in Ether 15:30-31.

The enclosed order form may be used either to order single copies of this issue or to subscribe for all four issues of 1993, which will include this issue.

Volunteers and Contributors Make Projects Succeed

Every subscription, every purchase, and every hour or dollar donated make a difference to the success of F.A.R.M.S. projects. The Foundation could not begin to accomplish its goals without the support of thousands of individuals who care deeply about the Book of Mormon and other witnesses of Jesus Christ.

The members of the board of directors of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies consider it a privilege to associate with you and wish to express sincere thanks for your support of the research and publishing programs of the Foundation. May God bless you for your generosity and your loyalty to the scriptures that he has given us to testify of his Son.

The Purpose of F.A.R.M.S.

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.) encourages and supports research about the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ, and other ancient scriptures.

F.A.R.M.S. is a nonprofit educational foundation, independent of all other organizations. Its main research interests include ancient history, language, literature, culture, geography, politics, and law relevant to the scriptures. Although such subjects are of secondary importance when compared with the spiritual and eternal messages of the scriptures, solid research and academic perspectives alone can supply certain kinds of useful information, even if only

tentatively, concerning many significant and interesting questions about the ancient backgrounds, origins, composition, and meanings of scripture.

The Foundation works to make interim and final reports about this research available widely, promptly, and economically. As a service to teachers and students of the scriptures, research results are distributed both in scholarly and popular formats.

It is hoped that this information will help all interested people to "come unto Christ" (Jacob 1:7) and to understand and take more seriously these ancient witnesses of the atonement of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Fall Issue of Journal Continues Tradition

Students and teachers, academics and nonacademics, professional people and retirees—the contributors to the Fall issue of the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* reflect a variety of backgrounds and interests, bound together by their shared commitment to the value of the Book of Mormon and their desire to plumb its depths.

Copies may be obtained using the order form. The table of contents printed below indicates the range of topics considered, including historicity; the theological, ritual, cultural, linguistic, literary, economic, and historical trajectories of the Book of Mormon; the Book of Mormon in the modern Church; and perspectives on the on-going polemic against the book.

The Book of Mormon, Historicity, and Faith

Robert L. Millet

Lehi's Dream of the Tree of Life: Springboard to Prophecy

Corbin T. Volluz

The Lord Will Redeem His People: Adoptive Covenant and Redemption in the Old Testament and Book of Mormon

Jennifer Clark Lane

The Type at the Border: An Inquiry into Book of Mormon Typology

Robert E. Clark

The Economics of the Book of Mormon: Joseph Smith as Translator or Commentator

Garth L. Mangum

Mormon as Editor: A Study in Colophons, Headers, and Source Indicators

Thomas W. Mackay

Joseph Smith's Receipt of the Plates and the Israelite Feast of Trumpets

Lenet Hadley Read

Moses' Brazen Serpent as It Relates to Serpent Worship in Mesoamerica

Wallace E. Hunt, Jr.

The Radical Reformation of the Reorganization of the Restoration: Recent Changes in the RLDS Understanding of the Book of Mormon

Louis Midgley

Comments on the Book of Mormon Witnesses: A Response to Jerald and Sandra Tanner

Matthew Roper

Nephi's Jerusalem and Laban's Sword

William J. Adams, Jr.

Sariah in the Elephantine Papyri

Jeffrey R. Chadwick

Translation of the Book of Mormon: Interpreting the Evidence

Stephen D. Ricks

Comments on Nephite Chronology

John L. Sorenson

Firesides Planned

In addition to speaking at firesides periodically in the Salt Lake and Provo areas (call for details), scholars associated with F.A.R.M.S. are sometimes invited to travel to more distant locations to conduct firesides for interested friends of the Foundation. In October, Truman Madsen spoke at a successful F.A.R.M.S.-sponsored fireside in San Diego, on which we will report in the future. In the coming weeks, F.A.R.M.S. will sponsor the following firesides:

•McLean (VA) Stake Center, Nov. 20

•San Antonio, Texas, Hiatt Regency Hill Country Hotel, young single adult conference, Nov. 20

Follow Indian Example, Nibley Urges

"It would be hard to imagine two cultures more opposed than our own and that of the Indians." These words summarize a central argument of a new paper by Hugh Nibley. In October 1992 Nibley gave a challenging and insightful address at the Bill of Rights Symposium sponsored by the J. Reuben Clark Law School at BYU. It has been published as "Promised Lands" in the *Clark Memorandum* by the Law School and is available as a reprint from F.A.R.M.S.

Focusing on the Hopi Indians as an example, Nibley discusses the "colossal culture gap" that exists between Indian culture and mainstream American culture and illustrates the problems that Indians have experienced—misunderstandings, manipulations, and broken promises. Mormon culture is not exempt from his criticism of the treatment of Indians. He believes that many Indians "no longer consider the Mormons their friends."

Because of their lack of sympathetic treatment of Indians, "the Mormons are regularly given a black eye . . . a black eye they would not deserve if they would only pay a little more attention to their scriptures." This introduces Nibley's second major argument: "There is one common ground, one common need, between us and them, and it is the Book of Mormon." He discusses Indian beliefs and practices that are closer to the teachings of the Book of Mormon than is American culture, and he argues that we must learn from the Indians ways of thinking and acting more in harmony with those teachings. As he concludes, "If we are to be saved we must move in their direction."

BOOK OF THE MONTH SPECIAL FEATURES

Old Testament and Pearl of Great Price Reading List

Each year F.A.R.M.S. compiles a list of books that may aid readers in their study of the scriptures in the Gospel Doctrine class of the Sunday School. The Old Testament and Pearl of Great Price are the assigned scriptures for 1994. We have made arrangements to provide to F.A.R.M.S. readers at a 20% discount the following books, from which you can select items to support (not replace) your study of these scriptures.

We wish you well in your study of the scriptures in 1994.

Hugh W. Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies*
\$19.95 retail • sale price: \$15.95

Hugh W. Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*
\$15.95 retail • sale price: \$12.75

Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet, *Studies in Scripture: Genesis to 2 Samuel*
\$15.95 retail • sale price: \$12.75

Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet, *Studies in Scripture: 1 Kings to Malachi*
\$18.95 retail • sale price: \$15.00

Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Old Testament*

\$15.95 retail • sale price: \$12.75

Tyndale, *New Bible Dictionary*

\$27.99 retail • sale price: \$22.50

Anchor Bible Dictionary, 6 volumes (special order; expect 3–4 weeks for delivery)

\$360.00 retail • sale price: \$288.00

William Wilson, *Old Testament Word Studies*

\$19.95 retail • sale price: \$15.95

William Whiston, trans., *The Works of Josephus*

\$19.95 retail • sale price: \$15.95

John Bright, *A History of Israel*

\$27.00 retail • sale price: \$21.50

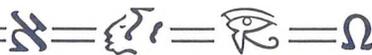
Abraham Joseph Heschel, *The Prophets*, 2 volumes

\$26.00 retail • sale price: \$21.00

Victor P. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Poet, and Seer*

\$18.95 retail • sale price: \$15.00

Special prices good until December 31



Benefits

Regular Subscription: still only \$12 per year
(\$30 for 3 years)

- The *Insights* newsletter, 6 times per year
- 15% discount on books from Deseret Book, Bookcraft, and Doubleday, ordered through F.A.R.M.S.
- Three requests per year to the F.A.R.M.S. Reference Service

Gold Subscription: \$60 to \$499 per year
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- Selected books published by F.A.R.M.S. during that year

ORDER FORM

Catalog Number	Titles	Qty.	Unit Price	Total Price
J-93b	Stephen D. Ricks, ed., <i>Journal of Book of Mormon Studies</i> , 2/2, Fall 1993, 220 pp.		\$7.95	
N-PRO	Hugh W. Nibley, "Promised Lands," paper, 12 pp.		\$1.50	
WEL-93	John W. Welch, "The Temple in the Book of Mormon," 80 pp.		\$5.00	
MCU-93	J. Huston McCulloch and P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., "The Bat Creek Stone Revisited," reprinted from <i>Biblical Archaeological Review</i> , 24 pp.		\$2.25	
POR-93	Larry C. Porter, "The Book of Mormon: Historical Setting for Its Translation and Publication," reprint, 10 pp.		\$.75	
BYUS-1	<i>BYU Studies</i> , 33/2, \$7.00 retail		\$6.00	
BYUS-2	<i>BYU Studies</i> , subscription for 1993 (4 issues, including 33/2)		\$15.00	
N-V4dT	Hugh W. Nibley, <i>Teachings of the Book of Mormon</i> , transcript of semester 4, softbound regularly \$18.50, sale extended		\$12.95	
N-V4T	Hugh W. Nibley, <i>Teachings of the Book of Mormon</i> , complete set of transcripts, all 4 semesters, softbound, regularly \$74.00, sale extended		\$44.95	
F-C1	<i>Book of Mormon Computer Study Aid</i> , regularly \$24.95 (see catalog for requirements)		\$18.75	

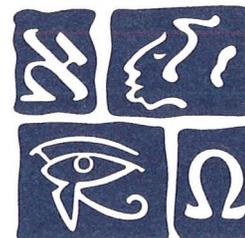
BOOK OF THE MONTH SPECIAL FEATURES (enter items from the other side of this order form—prices good until December 31).

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