



# BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

<https://bookofmormoncentral.org/>

---

Type: Newsletter

---

## Insights, Vol. 2, No. 2 (July 1982)

Editor(s): FARMS Staff

Published by: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies

---



The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) existed from 1979 until 2006, when it was formally incorporated into the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship. Archived by permission.

# Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies

P.O. Box 7113 Univ. Station, Provo, UT 84602



# Newsletter

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies is a non-profit research and educational organization dedicated to the study of ancient Scripture. Your tax deductible contributions enable FARMS to sponsor and coordinate a wide range of research projects that enhance our understanding of these sacred writings.

JULY 1982

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is hard not to be enthusiastic about the progress FARMS has made in the last twelve months. Hopefully the next twelve will see even more. The strong response of volunteers, donors and scholars has really kept us scrambling to stay ahead. We have benefited from all your comments and suggestions! Keep them coming!

We are looking forward to great things in the near future. The Book of Mormon Bibliography will soon be out. Research areas are being defined and staffed. The Nibley Archive is launched. The Book of Mormon Encyclopedia Advisory Board is organized and several prototype encyclopedia articles are in process. In all this, Book of Mormon studies are receiving significant public exposure.

All these FARMS projects aim to bring deeper respect to the Book of Mormon. That amazing record continues to deserve and demand our very best.

## FARMS NEWS

### *Advisory Board Named*

A valuable "think-tank" for the Book of Mormon Encyclopedia has just been organized as a six-man advisory council. They include dean of Mormon scholars Hugh Nibley, now professor emeritus of Ancient Scriptures at BYU; Merrill J. Bateman, former dean of BYU's School of Management; Blaine T. Hudson, president of Blaine Hudson Printing in Salt Lake City; Charles D. Tate, editor of *BYU Studies*; Robert K. Thomas, former BYU academic vice-president; and Jay M. Todd, managing editor of the *Ensign*.

Together they represent perspectives of Church service, academic excellence, and business expertise that will "balance competing demands on what the encyclopedia should become, and keep the energies

flowing into this project properly focused," according to FARMS Director Jack Welch.

This board will meet periodically to review progress on the encyclopedia and give general direction to the project. Other members may be added as needs arise.

### *Works in Progress*

Brian Stubbs, a graduate student in linguistics at the University of Utah, is spending his summer working on a comparison between Uto-Aztec and Semitic, in particular the unusual semantic combinations associated with many Semitic roots. He is also contrasting them with distinctive and comparable combinations in New World language groups. Initial results should be available by the end of the summer.

Joe Stringham of Salt Lake City is identifying figures of speech used in the Book of Mormon. Those who know the difference between a metaphor and a simile will be surprised by the total number of classifications—everything from *accismus* ("an ironic refusal" as, for example, Laman refusing to share his wine with the Lamanite guards of Gid to make them desire it more), to *zeugma* (two words linked as though they are equal when they are not, as "it's too bad that mankind isn't," or, from Exodus 20:18, the people "saw thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpets . . .").

Paralleling Eric Hansen's paper on the Egyptian opening-of-the-mouth ceremony is a collaboration between Jack Welch and one of his former law students, Robert Crockett, on "silencing an opponent in debate." There is evidence from both the Old and New Testaments that an opponent in a debate who can no longer respond has been beaten, and that silence is proof of guilt. Examples are Christ's ability to silence the Pharisees and scribes, and the terrible silencing of Zeezrom in the Book of Mormon.



## *A Smorgasbord of Talent*

Since the announcement of the Book of Mormon Encyclopedia project, offers of assistance have poured in with a variety of needed skills and services.

Scholarly expertise comes from Gary Keeley of Sebastopol, California, soon to arrive at BYU with skills in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew; William Hamblin, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Michigan, who has experience contributing to an encyclopedia of military affairs and who will work with Matt Hilton on military matters in the Book of Mormon; Jay Huber of Ricks College's math department who is interested in researching calendar systems; Mike Adair of Salt Lake City who is researching angels in ancient Israel; Eric Hansen of Provo, Utah, who has analyzed the opening-of-the-mouth ceremony in Egyptian rites as it may be mirrored in the Book of Mormon episodes of those struck dumb or unconscious who, as seen in the rite, return to consciousness as changed individuals; and Ed Ashment, an Egyptologist who has shared with the Foundation over 1,600 notecards with word studies on possible Egyptian and Hebrew equivalents for Book of Mormon words and phrases.

Several people with access to fine libraries have volunteered research time: Carlan Youkstetter of San Marino, California, two blocks from the Huntington Library; Donald Cazier, director of the Stanford Institute; and Bruce Verhaaren of the University of Chicago.

Others have shared relevant papers from their files: Susan Easton of BYU's religion faculty who is doing research on the concept of God in the Book of Mormon, and Michael Bundy of Ogden, Utah.

Extremely welcome support services come from Crismon Lewis, editor of the *Latter-day Sentinel* in Phoenix who has offered to publicize newsworthy items. Steven Shallenberger, president of Community Press in Provo (which published the *Illustrated Book of Mormon* series), has offered marketing and distribution expertise. Michael Graves of BYU's Design Department will assign his senior design seminar the project of making a unified graphic image for FARMS, including brochures, posters, calling cards, and banners for exhibits. Noel Croft of Heyburn, Idaho, has given the Foundation a multilith offset printing press, which will help FARMS reach its goal of distributing research as inexpensively as possible. Wallace Saling of Orem, Utah, has been serving as printer to the Foundation. Shannon Magleby of American Fork, Utah, has assumed responsibilities as production editor of the newsletter; Richard Erickson of Springville, Utah, has taken over as a production manager, handling Newsletter distribution and production. While Janet Twigg is on vacation, Denise Davidson is serving as our clerk.

FARMS is most appreciative of the good will and the helpfulness of all of these individuals.

## *FARMS in the News*

Although FARMS has not sought publicity, it welcomes opportunities to explain its programs. Readers of the May 1982 *Sunstone Review* learned about the Book of Mormon Encyclopedia project almost as quickly as readers of the Newsletter.

*Seventh East Press*, an independent student newspaper published in Provo, ran a long story on FARMS in its 28 June 1982 issue. The article began on the front page and continued on two interior pages with a photograph of Hugh Nibley illustrating a description of the Nibley Archives, one of FARMS most recent projects. The article by staff writer Kent Appleberry describes the history of FARMS, interviews Jack Welch and John Sorenson, gives a thorough description of the Book of Mormon Encyclopedia project, and catalogues and describes such additional projects as the Robert F. Smith critical text of the Book of Mormon, the efforts to evaluate translations of the Anthon Transcript, and the attempts to identify possible Semitic roots for non-Biblical Book of Mormon names.

In Auckland, New Zealand, Latter-day Saint Ian Barber recently published a thoroughly researched monograph, "What Mormonism Isn't: A Response to the Research of Gerald and Sandra Tanner." In one paragraph he identifies FARMS as "the most exciting development in recent months" where work on the Book of Mormon is concerned. The monograph is available from Pioneer Books, P.O. Box 64-028, Birkenhead, Auckland, New Zealand.

## NOTICES AND REVIEWS

### *Visit the FARMS Exhibit on BYU Campus*

FARMS will be hosting an exhibit on Book of Mormon research in the Garden Court of the Wilkinson Center during BYU Campus Education Week, August 24-27. We will be passing out literature, selling reprints, gathering suggestions and answering questions about Book of Mormon studies and current FARMS projects. If you are attending Campus Education Week, come by and introduce yourself. Encourage your friends to visit the display and add their names to our mailing list.

FARMS has also been invited to display its exhibit at the Church Educational System Symposium on the Book of Mormon, held at BYU on August 19-21. Church educators are encouraged to visit the FARMS display and share their ideas about current Book of Mormon research.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: וְהָאָרֶץ אֲדָמָה הָיְתָה תְהוֹ וּבְהוֹ וְחָח

### *Authorship Book Published*

After several years of preparation, Noel B. Reynolds' compilation of nine significant articles on Book of Mormon authorship has gone to press. The volume, entitled *Book of Mormon Authorship*, will be published by the BYU Religious Studies Center through Bookcraft.

Dr. Reynolds, associate academic vice-president of BYU, edited the collection and wrote one of the essays, a piece entitled "Nephi's Outline." Other contributors include Truman G. Madsen, C. Wilfred Griggs, Hugh Nibley, Wayne A. Larsen and Alvin C. Rencher, Eugene England, and Richard L. Anderson. Several of their papers appear here for the first time; others have been updated and improved. Two of the articles, "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon" by John W. Welch and "The Book of Mormon and the American Revolution" by Richard L. Bushman, have been available as FARMS Reprints.

The book will soon appear in LDS bookstores or it can be ordered directly from the Religious Studies Center, 156 JSB, Provo, UT 84602, for \$9.95.

### *SBL Meeting Attended*

In April, Kent Jackson, Paul Hoskisson and Jack Welch attended the regional meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Association of Religions in Denver. Jackson read a paper on the Book of Mormon as a sacred text to a plenary session of the conference. His work introduced many scholars to the Book of Mormon and its use in the Church. Hoskisson's paper dealt with oaths made by the gods at Mari. Welch's paper was entitled "Ancient Near Eastern Law and the Book of Mormon" and is available with this newsletter as a Preliminary Report. The papers were all well received. Many of the scholars attending expressed regret that they did not know more about the Book of Mormon.

The organizer of the Regional Meeting was Dr. Frederick Greenspahn who teaches at the Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Denver. He is presently analyzing accounts in the Old Testament where younger sons become preeminent over their elder brothers. He was eager to know the relevance of his work for Book of Mormon studies. Paul Hoskisson is coordinating with Dr. Greenspahn so that the Book of Mormon conflict between Nephi and his elder brothers can be included and compared in this study. Dr. Greenspahn's analysis should produce a very interesting basis for understanding the tension between Nephi and Laman and Lemuel that so influenced the course of Nephite history.

### *Nibley Archive Announced*

Through the efforts of Alex Nibley, one of Dr. Nibley's sons, the Foundation has become the official Hugh Nibley archive. Copies of all of Dr. Nibley's published and unpublished papers will become available through FARMS as soon as they can be collected, edited, copied and prepared for distribution. The first 24 papers are already available. A Nibley Archives catalogue can be ordered on the current FARMS order form. Eventually there will be over 165 articles in this series. All of them are indexed in Gary Gillum's "All Scripture Index to Hugh Nibley's Works," a FARMS Preliminary Report for the last several months.

### *Rare LDS Works Become Available*

Copies of rare books on Mormon history and theology are available in photo reduced editions from a Utah company called Catalog A. You can request their order form by writing to P.O. Box 612, West Jordan, UT 84084. Several titles in their collection relate to the Book of Mormon, such as George Reynolds' 1891 *Dictionary of The Book of Mormon*, and George Q. Cannon's 1883 work, *The Life of Nephi*.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

### *Bibliography Project Arrives*

The Book of Mormon Bibliography, an index of all serious studies about the Book of Mormon, should be ready for distribution this fall. It already contains over 1,850 entries. This monumental bibliography will be the first relatively comprehensive listing of articles, papers, book and theses dealing with the Book of Mormon. It will provide a solid base for the Book of Mormon Encyclopedia and facilitate other organized research on Book of Mormon topics as well as guide development of the FARMS Reprint series. It should also help prevent unnecessary duplication of research. When it is available, we hope many will review this bibliography and notify FARMS of any titles that may have been overlooked.

Gary Gillum is directing this project, with assistance from Denise Davidson, Jack Welch, David Whittaker, Scott Norwood and many others. Don Green of Salt Lake City has very generously provided five large volumes of articles about the Book of Mormon which he has collected from Church magazines from 1948 to the present. FARMS has also had access to several private collections, including the Sidney B. Sperry papers.



## REPRINTS

### *Pre-Columbian Old World Coins? Think Twice*

One of the papers offered in this issues' Reprint Series is "Pre-Columbian Old World Coins in America: An Examination of the Evidence," by Jeremiah F. Epstein (*Current Anthropology* 21 [Feb. 1980]:1-20). Epstein surveys the field of Old World coins dating to pre-Columbian times that have been found in the United States, particularly within the last three decades, to determine how seriously such items should be taken. If valid, the existence of such coins would obviously be a powerful argument for diffusionists.

In his survey of some forty coin discoveries, he includes a reported find dating back to the sixteenth century, even though more than twenty-five of the forty coins have been discovered since World War II, just when American tourists and servicemen were buying antique coins abroad and bringing them back as souvenirs. Several genuine coins seem to have been discovered so close to the surface that they differ by centuries from the strata where they were found. Furthermore, some of the coins have been identified as pious forgeries of religiously significant Hebrew coins that were very popular with gullible tourists in the late nineteenth century.

The coins are fairly evenly distributed between coastal states and interior states, which would seem unlikely if they were arriving in the pockets of sailors, and are also fairly evenly distributed over the range of centuries. It is even more unlikely that the most common of these would *not* represent the periods of intense maritime activity of Greece, Rome, and Phoenicia.

Only one of the coins was found in a controlled pre-Columbian site. In many cases it is difficult to determine where a given coin actually was discovered because they are typically unearthed by amateurs and receive newspaper publicity rather than examination on site by geological and archeological experts.

In short, although Epstein does not attack the diffusionists on the basis of this analysis, it is clear that the strength of their position must lie in other evidence.

## PRELIMINARY REPORTS

### *Paper on International Relations Offered*

One of the Preliminary Reports offered with this issue is an examination of "International Relations and Treaties in the Book of Mormon" by Mark Davis and Brent Israelsen. Their purpose is to identify "principles of the law of nations" in the Book of Mormon.

They cover five topics: (1) The Nephites and Lamanites formed almost immediately into national states, a form characteristic of ancient Israel, that represents cultural or ethnic nations in political form. Such states differ from tribes, which exist largely as kin subgroups, and the larger empire which unites heterogenous cultural groups.

(2) Citizenship was usually determined by culture and race. Aliens had few rights and could be killed or enslaved at will (as Ammon nearly was). Citizens did not seem to be free to leave their country without the express permission of the king. Occasionally, however, whole groups could be assimilated, as were the Anti-Nephi-Lehis or the people of Zarahemla, at which time they seemed to lose any separate identity.

(3) Diplomatic relations seem to have been primarily "*ad hoc* and informal" when the two nations were not at war. If peacetime trade also produced political understandings, they are not reflected in the Book of Mormon.

(4) War was, as the authors point out, "the central relationship between the Nephites and the Lamanites." In the absence of international law, any dispute could escalate to a defense by arms.

(5) The only guarantee of a treaty seemed to be the military ability to enforce it, and indeed, an agreement did not seem binding unless it were reached after some kind of contest. Interesting parallels can be found between ancient Near Eastern treaties and those in the Book of Mormon.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, federal tax identification number 95-3442860, was incorporated in 1979. In July 1981 its newsletter circulation was 850; currently over 3,000 newsletters are mailed to 43 states and 17 foreign countries. To date over 4,000 Reprints and Preliminary Reports have been distributed. Recent asset acquisitions include a multilith offset press. Last fiscal year 46 people made financial contributions to FARMS; this year 204 people have contributed. FARMS has four part-time employees.

*EN ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς*