



# BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

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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.

October, 1983

# 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.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's been a big summer around the Foundation, thanks to literally thousands of hours of dedicated volunteer efforts and to a continuous flow of letters and contributions from many of you. You will see what I mean as you read this Newsletter.

And the best is yet to come! The prospects for further research and media productions already in process are irresistible. We have some exciting projects scheduled during 1984 when the general Church curriculum focuses on the Book of Mormon.

But to do it all, we need your help! Books, video productions, research internships, the Book of Mormon Encyclopedia — they all take money to get off the ground.

We can't begin to tell you how much we have appreciated your interest and support. We are proud of where we are going and just how far we have come.

But . . .

To accomplish our goals we need additional working capital. In the past we have asked you to send us a small contribution to help finance F.A.R.M.S. projects. For those few who have generously responded, we are indeed grateful.

Now . . .

We need your contribution. Anyone who enjoys the benefits of this organization, who wants to further the cause of the Book of Mormon in the world, should make a minimum annual tax-deductible donation to the Foundation. We appreciate those who are regularly giving. You are supporting a significant work.

Please read the enclosed letter from Hugh Nibley, then make your donation with the card and return envelope provided. Your contribution will help. When the income tax filing deadline comes around next April 15, you will wish you had given more to F.A.R.M.S.

We want to do all we can to help further this important work.

## COMPLEMENTARY LISTING

A special catalogue of available reprints and preliminary reports has been prepared — to complement the 1984 Book of Mormon lessons for the Gospel Doctrine Sunday School class. Your copy is enclosed in this mailing.

There are certainly a number of your friends who will appreciate also having access to these valuable materials. We will be glad to furnish additional copies to anyone who sends in a written request with a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Please spread the word about this important help for serious students of the Book of Mormon. Many people are not aware of the useful materials available through F.A.R.M.S. As the Church focuses on Book of Mormon study in the coming year, this catalogue will guide the reader towards fascinating information which will help increase one's understanding and awareness.

## FIRST SLIDE SHOW COMPLETED

"I think we've got it," reported Kirk Magleby last week. After several hundred hours of work and three trips back to the sound stage to record the polished script, "Lands of the Book of Mormon" with 113 exquisite slides and a 22 minute cassette soundtrack is now ready for distribution. Nearly 50 sets have already been purchased and delivered.

Produced for the foundation by internationally-known photographer Floyd Holdman, the show brings together outstanding scholarship and superb artistry as it addresses the question: "Where did the events of the Book of Mormon take place?" In addition to Floyd Holdman slides were donated by 15 fine photographers including LaMar C. Berrett, Paul R. Cheesman and Lynn Hilton. Lavina Fielding Anderson, Kirk A. Magleby, V. Garth Norman, Stephen D. Ricks, John L. Sorenson, Bruce W. Warren and John W. Welch collaborated on the script. Dozens of reviewers, including those attending the F.A.R.M.S. open house at the Church Education System Symposium in August, viewed preliminary versions of the show. Their suggestions helped improve the final product. A hearty thanks to the entire production team!

How can you order a set? Just return the enclosed order form with **\$32.00** — which includes postage. Obviously, there's no profit built into this price.

What do you get? 113 slides, a 22 minute professionally narrated soundtrack, an attractive case, and a list precisely identifying each photograph. Statements made in the show are documented in a footnoted, annotated version of the script that is also available to you separately as a **F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report**.

This slide show focuses on the lands and places of the Book of Mormon as far as they can be presently identified. It guides you on a trip from Jerusalem through the Arabian Peninsula to Mesoamerica — with stunning precision and thought-provoking correlations with the scriptural text. Future slide shows already on the drawing boards will explore archaeological artifacts and cultural aspects of the ancient Near East and of the Pre-Columbian New World as they relate to the Book of Mormon.

Comments from people who have seen "Lands of the Book of Mormon" are:

*"The Book of Mormon story took place somewhere in the Americas. This is an exciting, well photographed presentation of sites where this epic possibly took place."*

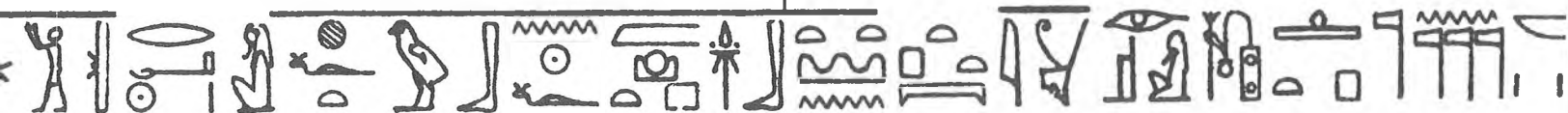
Dr. Paul R. Cheesman, Provo, UT

*"I can't tell you how much we appreciate your slides. Everyone found them very interesting. They are well done. We had occasion to show them again this weekend to a Church group."*

Mrs. Reuel Cameron, Chico, CA

*"This is certainly one of the finest media productions ever done on the Book of Mormon. It is refreshing to see good, objective scholarship presented in a professional way. I intend to use it in my classes."*

Michael D. Adair, SLC, UT



## REPRINTS AND PRELIMINARY REPORTS

### *Insights into the Language of the Book of Mormon*

Paul Hoskisson analyzes words, phrases and writing styles from the Book of Mormon text. His paper, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Language of the Book of Mormon," concludes that the scriptural record "is what it purports to be: a document with deep roots in the ancient Near Eastern milieu of Lehi's culture."

### *The Concept of the Messiah*

A leading Methodist scholar, Dr. James H. Charlesworth, surveys the appearance and meaning of terms like "the Messiah," "the Anointed One," and "the Christ" in the Pseudepigrapha. He then examines those same words in the Book of Mormon and finds several interesting parallels. The concept of the Messiah ministering to the lost tribes of Israel, for instance, is found in the Book of Mormon as well as in certain early Jewish and Christian texts. "Messianism in the Pseudepigrapha and the Book of Mormon" is an intriguing and significant work.

### *A Possible Jaredite City*

V. Garth Norman is one of the professional archaeologists who are currently researching the Mesoamerican context of the Book of Mormon. His paper, "San Lorenzo as the Jaredite City of Lib," examines a hypothesis that has gained credence among Book of Mormon scholars. This study shows why the large Olmec site of San Lorenzo on the Coatzacoalcos River in southern Veracruz is a good candidate for the "great city" that Lib and his people built "by the narrow neck of land, by the place where the sea divides the land." (Ether 10:30)

### *A Testimony by Joseph Smith's Mother*

A letter written by Lucy Mack Smith in early 1829 was discovered last year by Brent Ashworth, a Provo, Utah manuscript collector. Historian Dean C. Jessee discusses the background and content of that letter in his article, "Lucy Mack Smith's 1829 Letter to Mary Smith Pierce." Besides bearing powerful eyewitness testimony to the divinity of her son's work, Lucy's letter reflects information contained in the lost 116 pages. For instance, it refers to Ishmael as Lehi's "wife's brother."

### *Travelling Through Book of Mormon Country*

F.A.R.M.S.' outstanding media production, Lands of the Book of Mormon has been well received, and many people have requested a written version of the script. This is now available with footnotes and annotations documenting the statements made in the show. This concise, lucid piece is recommended to anyone seeking a clearer understanding of the possible physical and cultural setting of the Book of Mormon.

### *Prophetic Lawsuits*

In the last 20 years, Biblical scholars have identified three types of lawsuits which Old Testament prophets have in mind when they indict the Israelites for breaking the law of God. Prophetic speeches of this nature are classified as prophetic lawsuits. "Prophetic Lawsuits in the Hebrew Bible and Book of Mormon," by Richard R. McGuire, analyzes the words of Samuel the Lamanite, Abinadi, and King Benjamin to show that all three ancient Israelite contexts are reflected in Book of Mormon prophetic speech.

### *The Ten Tribes in America*

Mormons are not the only ones to have espoused the notion that members of the House of Israel settled anciently in the Americas. The idea that native Americans are descendants of the Lost Ten Tribes was quite popular in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries and a sizeable literature has grown up around this theory in relation to ideas about Indian origins. In his paper entitled "The House of Israel and Native Americans," D. Brent Smith surveys this literature and concludes that the Book of Mormon account of the Nephites is fundamentally dissimilar to the speculations about Israelites in America that were common in Joseph Smith's day.

### *Water and Divine Judgement*

Many ancient documents, including the Old Testament, mention water ordeals that one could undergo as a means of verifying one's oath or seeking a divine dispensation of justice. Numbers 5:11-31 describes one such ordeal where a woman would drink "the bitter water that causes the curse" if she was accused of infidelity. Michelle Mitchell, in her paper "Ordeal by Water," shows how many Book of Mormon passages, including some pertaining to baptismal imagery or crossing the seas contain elements of traditional ancient water ordeals.

## TOUR TO BOOK OF MORMON LANDS:

with John L. Sorenson

sponsored by F.A.R.M.S.

We are excited to announce that John Sorenson, probably the most qualified expert on the New World culture and setting of the Book of Mormon, has agreed to accompany a F.A.R.M.S. sponsored tour to Mexico and Central America during 1984 — further details will be forthcoming.

This may be a one time opportunity to visit the Lands of the Book of Mormon with this eminent authority.



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

## ANCIENT CHRISTIAN WRITINGS AVAILABLE

The long-awaited first volume of Doubleday's landmark publication of the Pseudepigrapha is off the press — and the best deal anywhere for getting a copy is through F.A.R.M.S.

What is the Pseudepigrapha? This is a collection of books written by Jews and Christians between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D. that were never included in the Bible, and are not classified with the Apocrypha or the Dead Sea Scrolls. They were generally written in the name of some Old Testament hero (the Apocalypse of Abraham, the Testament of Job) and they often reflect traditions with early roots.

Seventy years ago only 13 such writings were known. The 1983 Doubleday publication includes more than 80.

This tremendous outpouring of information has enhanced our knowledge of early Christianity, of ancient Judaism, and consequently of Jesus. Many of these early Judaeo-Christian traditions are reflected in the Book of Mormon.

How can you order this important volume? It normally retails for \$35.00. By using the enclosed F.A.R.M.S. order form you can get this valuable work for only \$23.00. We are indebted to Doubleday, to Professor James H. Charlesworth, and to Dr. David Noel Freedman (Editor of the Doubleday Anchor Bible Series) for extending this extraordinary privilege.

## CONTEST WINNERS

The Comprehensive Bibliography of the Book of Mormon keeps growing. Thanks to many people who sent in additions and corrections to the bibliography prepared by Gary Gillum and Jack Welch last year, that listing has increased from 1700 to over 2000 entries.

The Bibliography contest winners were John A. Tvedtnes (81 additions), Salt Lake City, UT., Wade Lillywhite (53), Santa Ana, CA, and Ross Geddes (28), Mansfield, Australia. F.A.R.M.S. is pleased to award them autographed copies of recent publications about the Book of Mormon.

Ed Snow helped enter these changes and additions into the bibliography computer data base.

## HELP US BUILD A LIBRARY

"What would you think about building a first-rate research collection of scholarly materials about the Book of Mormon?" asks F.A.R.M.S. President John W. Welch, who adds, "We think it would be a big step forward in facilitating Book of Mormon research." And this dream may not be too far off.

F.A.R.M.S. has begun seriously collecting books and articles on the Book of Mormon. In addition to the rare first edition of the Book of Mormon which was recently donated to F.A.R.M.S., participants have donated original copies of Hugh Nibley's *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* (1957), Sidney B. Sperry's *Ancient Records Testify* (1938), John A. Widtsoe's *Seven Claims of the Book of Mormon* (1937), Franklin S. Harris' *Book of Mormon Message and Evidences* (1953), B.H. Roberts' *New Witnesses for God* (1926), and many other valuable papers and articles.

If you have any books which would help build this research base, ask yourself how useful they might be to the Foundation. Help us create a complete Book of Mormon collection. If we, together, don't do it — who will?

## RESEARCH CORNER

New ideas keep cropping up. Here are a few of the more striking points that researchers have recently noticed.

### *Nephi's Bow*

Alan Goff has submitted a paper suggesting that the ancient Near Eastern practice of "breaking the bow" may shed light on the account of Nephi breaking his bow in 1 Ne 16. An article in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* 69 (1978) pp. 82-88, demonstrates that symbolic meaning was attached to the breaking of a bow. Kings would break the bows of disobedient vassals, and in Psalms God is asked to break the bows of the wicked. The bow was a symbol of power and leadership.

*Nephi's report of his broken bow need not be read symbolically*, but his brothers may have seen it that way in light of their ancient Near Eastern backgrounds. It was immediately after Nephi made his new bow and thus had the only bow in camp that his brothers complained that Nephi had "taken it upon him to be our ruler." 1 Ne 16:36.

### *Ammon and Cutting off the Arms of Enemies*

Another observation bears out an odd but ancient practice reflected in Alma 17:39 where Ammon returned to King Lamoni "bearing the arms which had been smitten off . . . of those who sought to slay him; and they were carried in unto the king for a testimony of the things which they had done."

The practice of cutting off the arms of enemies, specifically as a testimony of the conquest of victims, is attested in Yigael Yadin, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, Vol. 2 (New York: McGraw Hill, 1963), p. 399. The extreme left of band 4 of the Gates of Shalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.) shows the Assyrian troops cutting off the head, feet and hands of vanquished enemies. "In other reliefs, the artists of the Assyrian kings depict the military scribes recording the number of enemy dead in accordance with the number of severed heads, hands and feet which Assyrian soldiers hold up before them."

### *The Sword of Laban, Nephi's Steel Bow, and The Brass Plates*

Christopher Munson has conducted further research into the metal alloys known and used in the Near East at or before the time of Lehi. There are several interesting instances of steel.

A dagger with a gold hilt found in Tutankhamen's tomb is reminiscent of Nephi's description of the sword of Laban. "*The haft of the dagger is of granulated gold, embellished at intervals with collars of Cloisonne work of colored rock crystal, but the astonishing and unique feature of this beautiful weapon is that the blade is of iron still bright and resembling steel.*"

A brittle, carbonized iron called Martensite was also commonly produced. Nephi's steel bow that broke may have been made of this alloy.

Regarding brass (an alloy of copper and zinc), Munson points out that bronze (an alloy of copper and tin) frequently contained small amounts of zinc as well. Although high quality brass contains a high percentage of zinc, lesser amounts of zinc would produce brass-like alloys which would be soft enough to inscribe - but more tarnish-resistant than common bronze. Lehi was impressed that the Plates of Brass would not "be dimmed any more by time." 1 Ne 5:19.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: וְהָאָרֶץ אֲחֵת הָיְתָה תֵהוֹ וּבְרוּ חַל

## NEW FACES AT F.A.R.M.S.

In a non-profit research organization, people make the difference, and F.A.R.M.S. has some tremendous new people to introduce:

**John Tanner** of the BYU English Department received his Ph.D. from Berkeley. He has been a great help editing and abstracting papers. He is interested in research on stylistic aspects of the Book of Mormon texts.

**Bob Millett** of the BYU Religion faculty is the coordinator for a project that will identify books and articles by Biblical scholars which will be helpful in analyzing Book of Mormon texts.

**Michelle Steed** assisted the Foundation as a summer intern from the BYU Communications Department. She issued press releases, worked with our regional delegates and put together some exciting informational displays.

**Don Paver** is currently working as a communications intern. He is designing a more professional layout for the newsletter that will incorporate our new graphic image.

One of our most enthusiastic volunteers is **Ed Snow**. A 23 year old married student majoring in English and minoring in German, Ed is from Knoxville, TN and served an L.D.S. mission in Switzerland. He shares some of his feelings about the Foundation:

*"I'm interested in scriptural research and in promoting scholarship in Mormon Scriptures. As a student of literature, I have ideas for research that I may be able to contribute to F.A.R.M.S. I also enjoy volunteer work — someone has to do it. I hope that people from different disciplines will contribute time, research and money (I) to F.A.R.M.S. so that we will be able to understand our Scriptures in a more complete way. I think God expects us to try to understand everything we can about the Scriptures."*

## MEET OUR DIRECTOR OF PROMOTION

Thursday, September 8, 1983 was a red letter day for the Foundation. That was the day **Susan Roylance** came on board. Things may never be the same again. Mrs. Roylance became acquainted with the Foundation three years ago following a fateful meeting with Kirk Magleby in Guatemala.

*"I was deeply impressed with Kirk's enthusiasm towards this project, and am grateful to now have the time to be of some help to forward the worthy goals of F.A.R.M.S."*

Mrs. Roylance brings to F.A.R.M.S. a wealth of experience in public relations, direct mail and organizational fundraising. Having helped found three other organizations, she has gained valuable insights into effective methods of organizational promotion. Her husband, Robert C. Roylance, is in charge of crop production for all LDS Welfare farms. They are the parents of seven children and have been foster parents for four Indian children.

Susan is in charge of public relations, promotion, and fund raising for the Foundation. You will see F.A.R.M.S. reach more people and do more good around the world as a result of her professional and enthusiastic efforts.

## EXHIBITS AND OPEN HOUSE

During August, the Foundation again sponsored informational exhibits at the CES Symposium and Education Week on BYU campus. We appreciate Reed Hyde, Shannon Magleby, Garth Norman, Stephen Ricks, Larry Smith and Janet Twigg who donated many hours of their time staffing the displays. Over 250 people added their names to the newsletter mailing list as a result of the exhibits.

We also hosted an open house for Church educators and their partners one evening during the CES Symposium. Nearly 100 people visited with Foundation staff members and previewed the newly-released slide show *Lands of the Book of Mormon*.

## ADVISORY BOARD EXPANDED

The July 1982 Newsletter announced the creation of an Advisory Board to help F.A.R.M.S. achieve its ambitious goal of publishing a comprehensive Book of Mormon Encyclopedia. Three devoted individuals have recently added their services to that board. **Paul R. Cheesman** will be the Advisory Coordinator. **Truman G. Madsen** will be responsible for External Relations, and **Noel B. Reynolds** will serve as Academic Relations advisor.

The enclosed letter from Hugh Nibley shows the names of the entire board as they now appear on our letterhead.

## PRESS RELEASES SPREAD THE WORD

In an effort to make interesting scriptural research available to a larger audience, the Foundation has issued press releases to LDS periodicals. Jeanette Smith, Michele Steed, John Tanner and Jack Welch prepared short abstracts of several papers that were sent to 25 newspapers in August.

The encouraging response has convinced us that this is an effective way to disseminate news about scholarly research. Look for F.A.R.M.S. materials to appear in your regional LDS newspaper during the coming months.

## REGIONAL DELEGATES RESPOND

Over 100 people throughout the world have agreed to serve as regional delegates for the Foundation.

Last summer, under the direction of Michelle Steed, these volunteers helped update, verify and correct the more than 6500 names and addresses of the F.A.R.M.S. newsletter mailing list. This major effort will help us reach you better.

**Please help us keep our list current by notifying us of any change in your name or address.**

## WEIGHTS AND MEASURES PAPER READY

We have experienced some delay in getting the Preliminary Report entitled "Weights and Measures in the Time of Mosiah II" completed. Recent publications on ancient Near Eastern measurement systems sent our staff back to do further research to be sure the paper was up to date and comprehensive. The paper is now available. Participants who had previously ordered it will be receiving their copy in the mail soon.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

9/30/83

Foundation For Ancient Research and Mormon Studies  
Incorporated 1979, Federal Tax ID #95-3442860

Newsletter Circulation - 6,500

Frequency - Quarterly

Distribution - 50 states, 24 foreign countries

Reprints and Preliminary Reports - Titles Available . . . . . 211  
- Distributed to date . . . . . 10,200

Media Productions - Titles Available . . . . . 1  
- Distributed to date . . . . . 47

Volunteer Hours Contributed to date . . . . . 12,000

Financial Contributors to date . . . . . 62

Paid Staff - one Clerk/Bookkeeper (part-time)

- one Director of Promotion (full-time)

