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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.



FOUNDATION FOR
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MORMON STUDIES

INSIGHTS

AN ANCIENT WINDOW

"...by study and also by faith." D&C 88:118

ANNOUNCING THE COMPLETE COLLECTED WORKS OF HUGH NIBLEY

On March 31, 1985, Hugh Nibley will celebrate his 75th birthday. "The time has come," says Gary Gillum, "to compile and publish the Complete Collected Works of Hugh Nibley." F.A.R.M.S. is pleased to announce that arrangements for this significant publication have now been made. This monumental series will be jointly published by Dr. Nibley, F.A.R.M.S. and Deseret Book Company, with the cooperation of Bookcraft and others. This series culminates six F.A.R.M.S. projects involving the Nibley collection, including the Nibley bibliography, archive, reprint service, topical index, source index, and scriptural index.

Hugh Nibley, one of the most prolific LDS scholars on ancient history and the scriptures, has written extensively over the past 45 years. His Collected Works, which will comprise 13 to 16 volumes, will be topically arranged to permit easy reference. The topics include Ancient History, Old Testament and Apocrypha, New Testament and Early Christianity, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, Education, Politics and Society. It is hoped that the Old Testament volume will be published in time for use with the Sunday School Gospel Doctrine lessons on the Old Testament in 1986. The Entire set is expected to be completed in five years.

This publication is an ambitious project, yet one which will preserve the Nibley corpus and make it available to generations of readers for decades to come. Anyone interested is assisting with editing, footnote checking, or otherwise, please contact the F.A.R.M.S. office (378-3295). Making a donation in honor of Dr. Nibley's birthday is another way you might want to help.

The F.A.R.M.S. Archive will continue to make each Nibley paper available on an individual mail order basis. A new 1985 catalog of Nibley materials is now available. Use the enclosed order form if you are interested in getting one!

WHAT DOES THE F.A.R.M.S. LOGO STAND FOR?

Many people have asked what the F.A.R.M.S. logo means. Here is a brief explanation. The logo is composed of characters from Hebrew, Greek, Mayan and Egyptian, which are four of the main ancient languages and cultures relevant to Book of Mormon research. The characters are set in four stone blocks, symbolizing archaeology and ancient research. The blocks are fit together like a puzzle. The Hebrew "aleph" in the upper left hand corner and the Greek "omega" in the lower right hand corner are the first and last letters of the Hebrew and Greek alphabets, standing for the "first and the last" (Isaiah 48:12), or the "Alpha and the Omega" (Rev. 1:17), who is Jesus Christ. The Mayan glyph is stylized, representing Mesoamerican studies. The Egyptian "Wd3t-eye" is the "whole-eye of the Sun-god Re" which was an ancient symbol of resurrection, since a myth told how the eye was torn to pieces and put back together. We have chosen this Egyptian hieroglyph because of an astonishing connection with the Book of Mormon, namely that the "pieces" of this eye were used by the Egyptians as mathematical symbols for their grain-measures. In other words, the tear duct was worth 1/64; the eye lash was 1/32; the left white of the eye was 1/16; the eyebrow was 1/8; the pupil was 1/4; and the right white of the eye was 1/2. The whole eye was one full measure. This binary fractional system is extremely reminiscent of the weights and measures of the Nephites in Alma 11. There a leah is half of a shilum, which is half of a shiblon, which is half of a senum, which is half of an amnor, etc. Moreover this Egyptian measurement system was used to weigh and convert amounts of barley, wheat and other grains into silver and gold, just as the Nephite system was used. See Alma 11:7. This is described more technically in the F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report, "Nephite Weights and Measures in the Time of Mosiah II." In addition, the round pupil of this eye was also used by the Egyptians as the round outline of the hypocephali which they used in burials, of which Facsimile 2 in the Book of Abraham is an example.

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 F.A.R.M.S. to sponsor and coordinate a wide range of research projects that enhance our understanding of these sacred writings.

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FOR THE RECORD

"For me it became a stimulating task, not only an opportunity to read the Book of Mormon and other Mormon writings," has written Krister Stendahl, Harvard Divinity School, in his *Meanings: The Bible as Document and as Guide* (Fortress Press, 1984), commenting on his participation in the BYU Reflections on Mormonism symposium. "The laws of creative interpretation by which we analyze material from the first and second Christian centuries operate and are significantly elucidated by works like the Book of Mormon or by other writings of revelatory character: Swedenborgian, Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, or the Divine Principles of the Unification Church. All such authentic writings should not be confused with spurious gospel forgeries." *Meanings*, p. 99.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A "classic," by one definition, is a book that will wear you out long before you wear it out. By this standard, the Book of Mormon is one of the classics of all times.

One of the reasons you will never wear the Book of Mormon out is the way it speaks to every person, whether old or young, glad or sad, the newest investigator or the seasoned church scholar. As we go through life, we can find this book relevant no matter what our station. Another reason is the way the book reflects human conditions so completely, and sets fundamental outlooks on life.

All this makes the challenge of studying such a book formidable, for the book displays so many dimensions and demands so many approaches. But the importance of this work is clear. As President Ezra Taft Benson stressed in his October 1984 Conference message, "My beloved brethren and sisters, for some years now I have been deeply concerned that we are not using the Book of Mormon as God intends. As I participated in the Mexico City Temple dedication, I received the distinct impression that God is not pleased with our neglect of the Book of Mormon." F.A.R.M.S. encourages everyone to give greater attention to the Book of Mormon.

Our thanks go to the hundreds of supporters who have helped in 1984. Together we can all make 1985 our finest year yet for Book of Mormon research.

John W. Welch



DOUBLEDAY: CHARLESWORTH AND JEREMIAH

F.A.R.M.S. makes many fine Doubleday books available to you at discount prices. The last Newsletter announced that Charlesworth's second volume of the *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* was available. Unfortunately, final publication has been delayed until later this year. Watch for another notice when it comes off the press.

In the meantime, another Doubleday volume may interest Book of Mormon students: John Bright's work on Jeremiah in the Anchor Bible Series. Jeremiah is of special interest to Book of Mormon studies. He was a prophet in Jerusalem at the time of Lehi. He is mentioned prominently in the Book of Mormon. Like Lehi, he testified of Jerusalem's wickedness and prophesied of its destruction (Hel. 8:20). He was cast into prison for his preaching (1 Ne. 7:14).

John Bright, a highly respected Hebrew historian at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, gives you here a modern translation of the Book of Jeremiah. His very valuable introduction includes a great deal of interesting information about Jerusalem at the time of Lehi.

The Book of Jeremiah and Professor Bright's commentary show that Lehi must have had enormous courage to preach repentance in Jerusalem. Only a few years before Lehi was called to preach, the local priests had insisted that Jeremiah be executed for preaching that Jerusalem would be destroyed. Jeremiah escaped death only through the intervention of a powerful political figure. Another prophet named Uriah, who made the same prophecies, was not as lucky: King Jehoiakim had him killed. Interestingly, Professor Bright reflects, "One wonders how many lesser men in Judah shared Jeremiah's feelings and spoke as he did. Not many, perhaps--but some!" (p. 170)

Jeremiah retails for \$18.00, but may be ordered through F.A.R.M.S. for only \$14.50. Use the attached order form.



NOTICE

Our new 1985 catalogue of F.A.R.M.S. materials should be ready in a few weeks.

John Sorenson's book on Mesoamerica and the Book of Mormon should be available in April, 1985.

Work on the Jewish Festivals Project, the Benjamin's Speech volume, our office and research computerization, and many other projects is moving ahead steadily. We hope to complete many of these in 1985.



A DAY AND A HALF'S JOURNEY FOR A NEPHITE

The narrow neck of land is an important geographical feature in the Book of Mormon. For many years people have debated whether the narrow neck was the Isthmus of Panama, the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Southern Mexico, or somewhere else. Some have argued that the neck must have been very narrow, because Alma 22:32 says that the distance across the "narrow neck" of the promised land from the east to the west sea was "a day and a half's journey for a Nephite." But how wide could this distance have been? Recently analyzed information suggests that it could have been quite wide indeed.

First, since the Limhi explorers (Mos. 8:7-8; 21:25-26) passed through this narrow neck without knowing that they had done so (they thought they were still in the Land of Zarahemla), this warns us that it must be of some substantial width.

Second, we also know that some people can go a long way in a day and a half. For example, a new BYU Media Productions film "Tarahumara: Footrunners Live On," describes a northwest Mexican Indian group who call themselves the Ramamuri (foot-runners). Some of them have been known to run 500 miles in six days, and to return that distance after a day's rest. Even more, the book *Ultra-Marathoning, the Next Challenge* (by Tom Osler and Ed Dodd, Mountain View, CA: World Publications, Inc., 1979) documents such accomplishments as Captain Barclay's covering 100 miles in 19 hours in 1806, and Edward Weston's walking 500 miles in six days. The record for the greatest distance traveled on foot in 24 hours was set in 1973 by Ron Bentley of Great Britain--161 miles. Since the Nephite record says that it was a day and a half's journey for a Nephite, we might infer that this was a significant feat and that it would have taken longer for someone else.

Moreover, the isthmus itself may have been wider than the "day and a half's" distance since we cannot be sure that the measuring point began on the east at the sea. Alma says that it was a day and a half's journey from "the east" to the west sea. The journey may have begun some distance inland.

Obviously, we don't yet know how wide the narrow neck was, but these figures show that it could have been a substantial distance. 120 miles is the width of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, which is now accepted by almost all Book of Mormon scholars as the Nephite narrow neck of land.



NEW REPRINTS AND PRELIMINARY REPORTS

With each Newsletter, several new papers become available to you. We think you will find several of these very interesting. Each can be ordered on the attached order form.

(1) The Updates of 1984

Each month a Monthly Update is sent out to all our major contributors and active volunteers. These are state-of-the-art short studies reporting our most recent discoveries and current work in process. The Updates for 1984 have addressed such topics as two Egyptian satuettes found in El Salvador, a likely identification of the name *MalkiYahu* in the book of Jeremiah as the name of Mulek son of Zedekiah, ancient magnetic compasses and the Liahona, survivors in Nazi death camps and the Book of Mormon, the Land of Jerusalem as the place of Jesus' birth, evidence of the horse in ancient America, why Nephi made arrows as well as a bow, Israelite Passover in the Book of Mormon, seven significant results of our Text Critical Project, possible metallurgical composition and weight of the golden plates, an ancient Jewish parallel to the execution of Zemariah in 3 Nephi, and the discovery of pre-Columbian domesticated barley in Arizona. All the Updates from 1984 are collected here in a single set. Each concise report makes fascinating easy reading.

(2) In Search of the Book of Lehi

We know from 1 Nephi 1:16 that Lehi wrote "many things." But what were they? In his article *Lehi's Personal Record: Quest for a Missing Source*, recently published in *BYU Studies*, Kent Brown traces the clues and concludes that the book of Lehi was "an important influence upon the writings of Lehi's two literary sons, Nephi and Jacob." He also finds that a "surprising amount of information exists which allows us to determine substantially the content and compass of Lehi's record." Off the record, Professor Brown has remarked: "This may be one of the best pieces I have ever written." Anyone interested in the composition of the Book of Mormon will find this study very worthwhile.

(3) Ancient Gold Plates and a Tree of Life

What should we make of the fact that Egyptian funerary literature talks about "trees" and "waters," not unlike Lehi's vision described in 1 Nephi 8? Or of the fact that ancient Greeks inscribed gold plates with similar images and ritual texts relating to the fate of the soul following death? Wilfred Griggs' paper, *The Book of Mormon as an*

Ancient Book (BYU Studies and Book of Mormon Authorship), asserts that these items unquestionably show that "the Book of Mormon has a demonstrable compatibility with the ancient Near Eastern origin which it claims." Dr. Griggs thus challenges simple-minded explanations of the Book of Mormon as a mere product of Joseph Smith and 19th Century New England.

(4) We Have Some Questions

Between 1972 and 1984, the *Ensign* printed 17 short features under the heading "I Have a Question" dealing with the Book of Mormon. For your convenience, these are all collected into a single reprint. Here you will find answers by LDS scholars to questions such as: Does the Book of Mormon bear any relationship to the Solomon Spaulding manuscript? Why is so much of the Book of Mormon given over to military accounts? What does the word *Lamanite* mean? In what way is the Book of Mormon the "most correct book"?

(5) Warfare in Ancient Mesoamerica

David A. Palmer's paper on Warfare in Nephite America documents three main causes of war in the Book of Mormon: economic advantage, political power struggles, and religious antipathy. He also discusses the role of war captains, sieges, battles by appointment, militias, and fortifications, with respect to both the scriptures and Mesoamerican archaeology. This is an important look at one of the major aspects of the Book of Mormon - one that heretofore has received little scholarly attention.

(6) The World Around the Time of Lehi

This technical report is a valuable but highly detailed reference tool. Robert F. Smith give brief descriptions, with source references, on all the Kings of Israel of Judah, from 793 B.C. to 445 B.C., prominent figures contemporary with them, the prophets of Israel for the same period, and a wealth of raw data in the form of facts and figures. In John Sorenson's estimation, this "gives us a thoroughly up-to-date structure of the historical framework to set the stage for the beginning of the Book of Mormon." The report also includes an appendix giving the latest information about what was going on in Arabia at the time Lehi travelled there.

(7) Subtle Pattern for Jacob to Amaleki

The authors of the last couple of books on the Small Plates of Nephi are often passed over: Jarom, Omni, Amaron,

Abinadom, Amaleki. At first glance, it seems that these writers were delinquent in their record keeping duty. But on close inspection, John Welch's report analyzing "The Father's Command to Keep Records in the Small Plates of Nephi" shows that these writers were all precise and careful about one thing: they all dutifully discharged the specific obligations given by Nephi's command as recorded in Jacob 1:1-4. "Modern readers should not underrate these little books." is one conclusion of this study.



F.A.R.M.S. TOURS

The F.A.R.M.S. June 1984 Tour to Guatemala and Southern Mexico was the finest Book of Mormon travel experience offered that year. The 1985 tour, departing June 17, for 16 days, will be even better. This unique tour focuses on those sites most likely occupied by Book of Mormon people. The itinerary is spectacular.

- 6/17 Oaxaca (Land of Moron)
- 6/18 Monte Alban, Mitla, Dainzu
- 6/19 Tapachula, Izapa, Antigua, Guatemala
- 6/20 Lake Amatitlan (Land of Shemlon)
- 6/21 Guatemala City, Kaminaljuyu (City of Nephi)
- 6/22 Lake Atitlan (Waters of Mormon)
- 6/23 Comitán (Manti, headwaters of River Sidon)
- 6/24 San Cristobal Las Casas
- 6/25 Tuxtla Gutierrez (Land of Zarahemla)
- 6/26 Chiapa de Corzo, Grijalva River (River Sidon)
- 6/27 Palenque, Villahermosa
- 6/28 La Venta (City of Mulek), Lake Catemaco
- 6/29 Cerro Vigía (Hill Ramah/Cumorah), Puebla
- 6/30 Mexico City
- 7/1 Mexico City, Teotihuacan

This will be the first tour to take John Sorenson's *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* along as a handbook. Many other supplementary maps, slide presentations, and transcribed lectures will add color and interest. The knowledgeable hosts will be F.A.R.M.S. Manager Kirk Magleby and archaeologist Bruce Warren. Dr. Warren lived for several years in Southern Mexico. Kirk has traveled through this area over a dozen times.

A \$200 deposit is now required to reserve your space on this exciting departure. Write F.A.R.M.S. or call Kirk or Shannon Magleby at (801) 756-4763 for further information. The deadline for reserving a place on this tour is May 15, 1985.

The Book of Mormon tour to Israel for 1985 has not carried. Watch for this one again in 1986.

Continued on page 6

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F.A.R.M.S. has recently forged an agreement with the World Group, an LDS owned travel organization headquartered in Simi Valley, California. F.A.R.M.S. will supply them with credible Book of Mormon research information which, combined with their travel expertise, will create outstanding travel opportunities for people of all budget and interest levels. This is an exciting new development in Book of Mormon travel and learning experiences.

World Group is looking for tour directors. Anyone interested should contact Dean Christensen in St. George, UT, at 801-673-5885. Or, you can contact the World Group office at 800-635-4200 outside CA or 800-358-4200 inside CA.



VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED

F.A.R.M.S. is always open to volunteers. There is an ongoing need for translators and for local volunteers to promote Book of Mormon projects in your community. Just drop us a note.



TELL YOUR STORY

It is apparent that the Book of Mormon means more to us than just paper and ink. This sacred volume has figured remarkably, and miraculously, in the profound spiritual experiences of thousands of people. "This aspect of the Book of Mormon's presence needs to be recorded," says Don Norton, Professor of English at BYU, who specializes in helping people write their personal histories. Don feels so strongly about this that he is now

collecting people's moving spiritual stories involving the Book of Mormon. Do you have such a story? Do you know someone else, or have an ancestor who does?

Don is gathering fifty or sixty of these stories. He would like to hear from as many people as possible. If you would like to help this project along, please drop Don a note by April 30, 1985. His address is 3161 JKHB, BYU, Provo, UT 84602. Or you can give him a call at (801) 378-7452.



F.A.R.M.S. IN THE NEWS

F.A.R.M.S. has two orientations: One is to do the academic scriptural research; another is to distribute those results as widely and inexpensively as possible. The recent addition of Sue Bergin to the F.A.R.M.S. staff as Coordinator of Public Relations has enhanced that second effort immensely. Like most people working with the Foundation, Sue puts in long hours as a volunteer because of her love for the scriptures.

Sue's recent media campaigns for F.A.R.M.S. have proven very successful. "There's a lot of interest out there for the kind of things F.A.R.M.S. is doing," she reports. A feature article sent to 56 Utah daily and weekly newspapers and 17 LDS-oriented publications in 7 states and Belgium has been printed by many of them. A full illustrated page in the Church News Section of the *Ogden Standard Examiner* ran in December.

She has written a major article on F.A.R.M.S. for the February issue of *BYU Today*, which has a circulation of 180,000 and is sent to BYU alumni throughout the world. She now hopes to interest some national publications in doing an article about F.A.R.M.S. and current Book of Mormon research. She recently got a story on the national AP wire.

Sue has a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University and is a writer

for BYU's Public Communications office and *BYU Today*, specializing in science writing. A native of Provo, she returned to her hometown last year after five years of school and work in Salt Lake City, Ogden, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.



PROJECT NEWS

Over the past months, F.A.R.M.S. has made good progress on a number of projects. Here is an interim report.

F.A.R.M.S. continues to make Reprints and Preliminary Reports available on a non-profit basis to hundreds and hundreds of people. Our accounting as of December 31, 1984, shows that 463,496 pages of material have been distributed and 194 titles are being offered.

Our study of the various editions of the Book of Mormon is making steady progress. The second volume of the "Critical Text: A Tool for Scholarly Reference" should be ready for delivery soon. Here are some of the kinds of things we learn by studying the first handwritten version and the printer's manuscript of the Book of Mormon: The earliest versions of 2 Ne. 6:8 and 33:4 speak of "things," while the later editions read "word." Actually, the Hebrew *debarim* can be translated either way. Similarly, the earlier editions of 1 Ne. 7:11 read "how," where the later ones have "what." The Hebrew relative particle *asher* can indeed go either way (see 1 Sam. 12:24). Jacob 35 originally read "father," not "fathers." This makes a big difference.

John Tvedtnes has submitted a long draft of his recent research on the etymologies of Book of Mormon names. His work has pulled together all of the ideas ever advanced on this topic.

Ben Urrutia is nearly finished with his transcription of the tapes of Rabbi Schultz's seminar on the Book of Mormon.



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We call our affiliates **participants** because the substantial research job that needs to be done will require the dedicated participation of large numbers of individuals from all walks of life.

We earnestly encourage voluntary contributions of time and money and urge all to share their research, questions and ideas. Whether you are a scholar, philanthropist, Sunday School teacher or whatever, we simply ask that you participate in an appropriate manner to help promote scripture-related research.

Let us hear from you!

F.A.R.M.S.

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.) is a non-profit charitable corporation organized to promote, coordinate, and finance research on Mormon scriptures, particularly the Book of Mormon. Your contributions are tax-deductible. F.A.R.M.S.' purposes are (1) to identify, sponsor, and coordinate **research** on Mormon scriptures by qualified scholars both in and out of the Church; (2) to make valuable materials available to researchers and the general Church membership that might not otherwise find **publication** in existing outlets or that may be in periodicals not readily available; (3) to eliminate duplication by **communicating** as widely as possible reports on research in progress and by encouraging interdisciplinary efforts; (4) to **raise money** to promote and finance these purposes; and (5) ultimately to use tapes, films, magazines, documentaries, and other presentations to communicate the results of careful scholarship in a way that a **mass audience** can understand. F.A.R.M.S. does not intend to minimize the need for **faith** in the Book of Mormon but wishes to increase the **understanding** of the Book of Mormon to help it come truly to life.

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GRI-82 C. Wilfred Griggs, "The Book of Mormon as an Ancient Book: Gold Plates and the Tree of Life from the Ancient Mediterranean" (BYU Studies) **\$1.00**

ENS-84 Ensign, "I Have a Question" -- 17 Questions relating to the Book of Mormon, 1972-1984 **\$1.25**

STF-84 F.A.R.M.S. Staff, "The Monthly Updates of 1984" **\$1.00**

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PAL-84 David A. Palmer, "Warfare and the Development of Nephite Culture in America" **\$.75**

WEL-84a John W. Welch, "The Father's Command to Keep Records in the Small Plates of Nephi" **\$.75**

BOOKS:

John Bright, *Jeremiah* (Doubleday Anchor Bible Series) **\$14.50**

MEDIA:

Lands of the Book of Mormon (113 slides, 22 minute cassette sound track) **\$35.00**

Two in One: "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Lectures" and "Lands of the Book of Mormon" now both on one VHS video tape. **\$35.00**

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SCHOLARLY REFERENCE:

Critical Text of the Book of Mormon: A Tool for Scholarly Reference (3 volumes, 1100 pages: Volume 1 now available, Volume 2 and 3 forthcoming in 1985. Available only as a set. Write for further information.)

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Janet Twigg F.A.R.M.S. Office (801) 378-3295

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Lavina Fielding Anderson Salt Lake City, UT, (801) 467-1617

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