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23.0 Newsletter in its Fourth Year: An Editorial. With the completion of the third year of publication and the appointment of a new editor, it seems worthwhile to pause and review our present position. The Newsletter, first issue of which was published August 15, 1951, and consisted of but a single sheet, run off on a ditto machine and distributed to about 75 members, has advanced to its present multilithed form with as many as seven pages, received by over 400 members throughout the world. We are grateful for the efforts of past editors and wish to thank the general officers of the UAS for their many contributions to the Newsletter's pages. In addition, we as a Society have much for which to be grateful—the science of archaeology has continued to make contributions to our knowledge and understanding in both the New and Old Worlds; and it is a source of satisfaction that these discoveries have generally been in harmony with our scriptural knowledge. In the New World, particularly, new discoveries have tended to confirm the Book of Mormon history of ancient America, often in most striking ways.

As the most frequent and informal publication of the Society, it is the responsibility of the Newsletter to keep Society members abreast of current progress in the science of archaeology, particularly as it sheds light on the scriptures, and to inform them of the activities of the Society and its members. Our purpose, as it is that of the other publications issued to the members, is primarily the "edification of the saints" in matters pertaining to archaeology—a science peculiarly called upon, since the inception of the Latter-day Saint church, to provide material witness to the scriptures (for instance, over fifty archaeological articles have appeared in the church magazine, The Improvement Era, alone). In order better to serve the Society and the Church in this important work, we therefore urge members to send us any suggestions they may have as to material for the Newsletter.

In contemplating the short history of this publication, it is noteworthy that its pages have chronicled, at least in brief, two expeditions of Society members into archaeologically little-known parts of Mexico and Central America: the New World Archaeological Foundation explorations of 1953 in Tabasco and Chiapas, Mexico, organized by Thomas Stuart Ferguson, a UAS general officer; and the BYU Department of Archaeology reconnaissance of parts of Chiapas and Honduras led by Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, Society president, in the early part of this year. Much of this work was done at personal sacrifice, and we owe these men special appreciation for their fortitude and devotion to what we feel is an important cause. That these recent expeditions

have neither made headlines nor settled all the problems, we find neither alarming nor disheartening. All worthwhile achievement is preceded by a period of preparation, and these efforts have laid needed groundwork. In archaeology, as in other fields of scientific research, each attempt to discover the unknown must be made from as many sides as possible, with the expectation that one hypothesis will eventually be sustained over the others. Consequently, we are not dismayed because Latter-day Saint investigators sometimes differ, for example, in their geographical interpretations of the Book of Mormon, for diligent investigation will in due time bring forth the correct locations. It is significant that several individually determined "probable locations" of the ancient Nephite center are within short distances of each other. We say, therefore, may these researches continue, that they may lead to even greater discoveries in the Book of Mormon field! Their success, however, will depend to a large extent on the enthusiasm and backing of the Society membership. So we urge again that the members write us their suggestions for the Newsletter--any which they may feel will help to further the purposes of the Society.

23.1 A New Type of Archaic Ruins in Chiapas, Mexico, is the title of a short article appearing under "Facts and Comments" in the July issue of American Antiquity (Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 62-64). The impressive ruins, solitarily investigated and described by S. Robert Russell (non-professional archaeologist of Key West, Florida), are among the most interesting to be reported from Mesoamerica in many years. UAS members of the 1953 NWAFF expedition had these ruins described to them by Phillip Drucker, Smithsonian archaeologist, who mentioned the presence in this region of what may be "the largest pyramid" in Middle America, or a natural hill carefully terraced to resemble such. These ruins had also been previously noted by Matthew Stirling as being near his still unreported excavations at Piedra Parada (be sure to read Sterling's "On the Trail of La Venta Man," in the Feb., 1947, National Geographic Magazine, for a map and an absorbing account of the people and archaeology of this "narrow neck" region, and a description of the general area of these ruins). The most impressive feature of these sites are immense platforms, or mounds, of field stone from 25 to 75 feet high and up to 600 feet wide and 300 feet long! Upon these foundations are ponderous walls and large structures of one and two tiers constructed with stones weighing several tons, some roughly squared. All the constructions had originally been faced with squared limestone slabs but have been much disturbed by heavy forest presently on the site. The author identified entrances in some structures which seem to have been deliberately closed up anciently. Among these was an underground vestibule, probably leading into a tomb, but now filled with dirt and sherds. No stelae or other monuments, petroglyphs, or any stone artifacts were recovered. The author concludes that the site must date earlier than 300 B.C., but indications from other sources point to a somewhat later date. The area, which is near Ocozocoautla in the southernmost Mexican state of Chiapas, is difficult to reach, according to the author, although only some forty miles from the excellent Pan-American highway. Many caves containing human debris were also found in the area.

This report is of particular interest to Society members, for it

is just southeast of this general area that Mr. Ferguson hopes to have the NWAFF working in the coming season, and the site is only about 160 air miles from the area Dr. Jakeman explored for BYU last year. In addition, Dr. Jakeman reports that in the latter area, at the large ruined city discovered by him, were mounds of similar size and shape. Unlike anything known from either the Yucatan Maya area or central Mexico, these sites may represent a singular culture as yet little known and about which another year of exploration may bring forth much information.

- 23.2 Important New Cave Sequence from Mesoamerica. In 1946, 1949, and again in 1954, Archaeologist Richard MacNeish excavated important caves in the northeastern Mexican state of Tamaulipas, which yielded evidence of a very long occupation. The following account is based on a popular summary of last season's work appearing in Science News Letter (28 Aug., 1954, pp. 138-139), as well as private communications of an expedition member to John L. Sorenson (Dept. of Arch., BYU), plus previous published reports.

Relatively crude remains of demonstrated Aztec date (ca. 1500 A.D.) in the upper levels indicate that the area concerned is on the frontier of Mesoamerica proper and therefore probably lagged somewhat, chronologically and culturally, behind the centers of civilization a few hundred miles to the south. This lag is again evident in the period between about 200 and 800 A.D., when constructions of these Tamaulipas people were relatively simple, with but a few small pyramids related to the cave cultures, as compared with the complex centers farther south. Certain cultural links tie them to the people of the south, but their development was certainly not so great as that of, say, the inhabitants of Teotihuacan in the Valley of Mexico. The lowest levels in the caves contain stone tools of "Early man" or hunting types, but those above, notably layers marking a period termed "La Perra," appear to date within the time of the Jaredite civilization of the Book of Mormon. Absence of pottery and other features here indicates that the region was backward and remote from main culture centers of this era also.

Of prime scientific importance is the fact that the good preservation within these caves provided a wealth of material for study of plant history. Corn was present already in the La Perra period; and even before La Perra, in what is called the Portales complex, squash and beans were apparently grown. The impression so far received as to dating is that these important domesticated plants are earlier than any so far known in Mesoamerica. A single radiocarbon measurement for the La Perra phase gave a date about 2400 B.C. The simple maize found early in this phase is similar to an extremely small-sized corn (cobs the size of coins) found at Bat Cave in New Mexico which radiocarbon measurements date even earlier. Later in the Tamaulipas sequence the wild grass teosinte is found, mixing with the early maize and causing many new variations to arise. Among these was the variety later dominant in the Maya area. It was at about the same time that the first gourds and cotton appeared. Tobacco and chili come in even later, along with pottery (about 200 A.D.?). Several thousand tobacco "butts" and corn cobs were recovered from these periods.

Although the exceptional circumstances of geographical position and environment make it impossible for us to compare directly characteristics

of the cave cultures with those of other Mesoamerican areas of the same time, the unusual degree of preservation of their remains adds important new facts to our knowledge of Mesoamerica in the period of the Book of Mormon. Significantly, the caves fail to show the long-sought-for link between hunters and civilized agriculturists in Mesoamerica. The origin of advanced civilization in this area is still as great a mystery to archaeology as ever. (J.L.S.)

23.3 Society Publication Attracts Jewish Attention. A recent letter received from Joshua Hochstein, faculty adviser, Hebrew Culture Club, Evander Childs High School, New York, and secretary, High School Pan-American Council, noted that The Jewish Chronicle of London, England, for July, 1954, contained an article which quotes from Thomas Stuart Ferguson's UAS Bulletin 4 article bearing on Semitic influences in the New World. Mr. Hochstein expressed a keen interest in this subject and voiced a desire to obtain a copy of the Bulletin which he wished to publicize widely in his area. A subsequent letter from him gratefully acknowledged receipt of the Bulletin, asking that his Pan-American Council be kept in mind for any such material in the future, and enclosed the clipping from The Jewish Chronicle. This article cited the Ferguson discussion extensively as "proof of the ubiquity of the Jewish tradesman and his civilizing contributions down through the ages." But this notice is also another evidence of the approaching renown of the Book of Mormon story. Do any of us fully visualize the role that archaeology, in support of the Book of Mormon, can play in convincing both "Jew and Gentile" that Jesus is the Christ?

23.4 Recent Films. Several recent films have archaeological themes. One of current interest to American archaeology enthusiasts is "Secret of the Incas." The greater part of this picture was actually filmed in highland Peru. Scenes of archaeological interest in Cuzco itself are those filmed in the Museum; but a substantial part of the story takes place among the stone ruins of Machu Picchu, one of a ring of fortresses which formerly protected the Inca capital in the 15th-16th centuries. This mountain-top citadel, perched at a breath-taking height above the sacred Urubamba River, offers some of the most magnificent views of ancient ruins which a student of archaeology will ever be privileged to see. Although the producers have included these marvelous archaeological views, the implication that archaeologists in Peru are seeking only for golden treasure is so patently false as to be ridiculous. The assertion that Machu Picchu is so remote as to be rarely visited by white man is without foundation. As a matter of fact, it is within easy reach from Cuzco, well known as the "archaeological capital of South America," and tourist parties are regularly guided through the site. Other features of the plot and the name of the archaeologist appear to be pure Hollywood fiction; nevertheless, the holiday costumes of the Quechua Indians are colorful and apparently authentic. The exception to this is the famed singer, Yma Sumac. Although a Quechua herself, her songs were written for her by her husband, a Peruvian but not an Indian. It appears that neither her costume nor her music originated in the native tradition. (R.T.C.)

Another film well worth seeing is "The Golden Mask." Again the plot involves the search for a golden treasure, this time in a Roman tomb in North Africa. In compensation, however, we are treated to

several authentic views of some of the most impressive ruins which have survived from antiquity.

Still another noteworthy picture is "Valley of the Kings," actually filmed in Egypt with an archaeological theme. This is the first picture we have seen to emphasize the correct purpose of archaeological explorations, and is highly recommended. Although the plot has the usual Hollywood twists, it is in part based upon the discovery of King Tut's tomb (fictitious dates, names, and individuals are used in the film), and other actual incidents taken from the history of archaeological research in Egypt. Of major interest to students of the scriptures are the many authentic views of the impressive ruins within the locale of several centuries of Israelite history. These provide a visual experience which is probably next best to an actual visit to Egypt itself.

Other films current or anticipated with an archaeological theme or setting in Egypt are "The Land of the Pharoahs," describing the building of the Great Pyramid; "Joseph and His Brethren," filmed partly on the banks of the Nile; "The Ten Commandments"; and "The Egyptian."

23.5 Salt Lake Chapter Organized. On September 16th, a Chapter of the UAS was formally organized in Salt Lake City, with Dr. Franklin S. Harris, Jr., appointed as director, and Mrs. Katherine Wilcox and Maxine Leigh elected by acclamation to serve as assistant director and secretary, respectively. About thirty enthusiastic supporters were present at the organizational meeting. The group was addressed by Dr. Jakeman, who described some of the interesting incidents and results of his recent explorations in Central America. In attendance was Dr. Francis W. Kirkham, prominent church author and general officer and life member of the Society. Dr. Kirkham expressed his usual vigorous support of the Society and strongly urged continued research and early publication of everything of interest to Society members.

23.6 Columbus Chapter Reports. Robert K. Willardson, director of the Columbus (Ohio) Chapter of the UAS, writes that members of their group attended a lecture given by Dr. Carl E. Guthe of the American Association of Museums, entitled "Our Debt to the Indians." Mr. Willardson comments: "Most interesting to us was the fact that Dr. Guthe did not even consider the migration across oceans even plausible, much less mention the Book of Mormon." (This is in line with the common attitude of Americanists and indicates one of the problems facing LDS students of archaeology elsewhere than at BYU.) Mr. Willardson and Lorenzo H. Snow, both general officers of the UAS, are active in the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society and attended the Ohio Valley Archaeological Conference last July. Mr. Willardson concludes his letter as follows: "In the near future we hope to have a preliminary report on our work on 'An Investigation of the Relationships between the Hopewell Culture and the Cultures represented by Early Pike County, Illinois, Discoveries.' The most important excavations in Pike County are (1) the Kinderhook site opened in 1843 by Robert Wiley, and (2) the Illinois River site uncovered in 1834 by Joseph Smith. The scanty records left by these early workers makes the problem difficult, but in spite of this the analysis promises more than interesting speculations."

23.7 Archaeology Majors Increase. Dr. Jakeman reports that the Department of Archaeology at BYU is now teaching five sections of Introductory Archaeology to a total of over 160 students. An increased number of students have elected archaeology as their major subject this quarter, and it is expected that, if encouragement is forthcoming, they will provide much of the corps of trained personnel needed in the future for research and interpretation of archaeological findings of importance to Latter-day Saints.

23.8 Annual Round Table; Contest Deadline. The Annual Fall Round Table will be held in November in Salt Lake City. It is expected that winning entries in the second Prize Papers Contest will be read at this meeting and awards made. Contestants are reminded that the deadline for entry (see May 31 Newsletter, 20.2) is November 1. Members will receive announcement of the time and place of the Round Table.

23.9 Meets Panamanian Archaeologist. UAS member Alfred A. Bush, presently serving in the Army at Fort Kobbe, Canal Zone, and formerly an officer of the UAS Campus Chapter, writes of stimulating contacts with figures of archaeological prominence in Panamanian archaeology.

Karl P. Curtiss, an eminent amateur archaeologist of long standing, recently disposed of "one of the most complete" Panamanian collections in existence to the Peabody Museum. Pvt. Bush has viewed some of Curtiss' vast slide library and examples of local gold work, and has been invited to his home in Gamboa to see the rest of the collection.

Diana Chairi de Gruber, one of Panama's foremost native artists, has befriended Pvt. Bush. Her work is based upon pre-Columbian motifs found on the ancient pottery and gold work of Panama and South America.

Pt. Bush recently lectured to a fireside group in Panama on Book of Mormon archaeology.