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This Newsletter is devoted exclusively to summarizing an important new publication in the field of archaeology, Radiocarbon Dating (Memoir, The Society for American Archaeology, No. 8, 1951; George F. Will, Treasurer, 322 Fourth St., Bismarck, N.D., \$1.50). (For an explanation of the method of radiocarbon dating see John L. Sorenson "Dating Archaeological Finds by Radioactive Carbon Content," Bulletin, Univ. Arch. Soc, No.2, Sept. 1951, pp 1-6.) This new publication consists of papers by specialists in various archaeological areas who discuss, criticize, or comment on Carbon 14 dates they know most intimately. Points of greatest interest to Society members are summarized below:

2.01 EARLY MAN IN AMERICA: In general the presence of early man in the New World is confirmed beyond doubt for a period beginning ca.11,000 years ago. The earliest dates are from the lava-covered Oregon caves and Danger Cave near Wendover, Utah. Some traits in now-proved early sites carried down to very late times indicating that under some circumstances (isolation, low developmental level, etc.) culture may be very stable over long periods. Hence comparisons of types of archaeological materials to link in time separate cultures may be risky, at least for this period and area.

2.02 MISSISSIPPI VALLEY: C-14 dates make the Hopewellian Mound-Builder culture of the eastern United States precede the Adena instead of following it as previously thought. Hopewell dates about 400 - 1 BC, Adena from about 300 - 800 AD, in the central Ohio valley, the area of maximum development. Previous estimates had Adena around 500 AD, Hopewell ca. 800 AD. Southern Hopewell (Marksville) of Louisiana and Mississippi now falls about 650 - 800 AD. To multiply the confusion, Early Point Peninsula and Middlesex cultures, thought to compare typologically with Adena, are carbon-dated to as early as 1000 BC. Other early levels in Massachusetts, New York and Kentucky go back to at least 3300 BC and some continue down two thousand years.

2.03 MEXICO: Unfortunately this crucial area is discussed rather uncritically by Helmut De Terra. His greatest concern is in bolstering his own belief in the antiquity (ca. 12,000 years ago) of the Tepexpan Man remains from the Valley of Mexico. He suggests that a previously suggested connection between the Cochise culture of Arizona and the "Chalco" stone artifacts of Mexico seems supported by a date of ca. 4300 BC for a stratum at Tlatilco containing Chalco materials. The "Early Archaic" levels (earliest high agricultural civilization) at Tlatilco and Zacatenco near Mexico City date to about 1500 BC and possibly earlier. The one date for the later Ticoman phase in the Valley of Mexico sequence is about 470 BC. This comes from beneath the lava at Cuicuilco. Therefore the eruption that produced that lava cannot have been earlier than this date. Two other dates in

the vicinity seem to support placing the first known pyramid builders in the Valley about 500 BC,

From Oaxaca in southern Mexico come dates that seem uniformly to support the interpretations of Dr. Alfonso Caso, though much earlier than most workers would place the cultures of that region:

Monte Alban I, ca. 600 BC (previously ca. 300 AD)

Monte Alban IIa, ca. 270 BC (previously ca. 400 AD)

Monte Alban IIIa, ca. 300 AD (previously ca. 500 AD)

Several other dates are given for Mexico, but all serve only to confuse an already chaotic picture. The above are at least consistent with each other, although the apparent interpretation may be in some conflict with known pottery sequences in the Maya area.

2.04 SOUTH AMERICA: Bird uses his knowledge of the stratigraphy of Peru to check the reliability of the C-14 dates (e.g., if culture "A" remains lie below Culture "B" the carbon date for "A" must be earlier than for "B"). Unexpected dates include 500-350 BC for Gallinazo and a beginning at ca. 350 BC for Mochica. Both are far earlier than previously thought possible, yet Bird deems the new data "acceptable." Agriculture at Huaca Prieta was underway by 2400 BC.!! The first pottery is placed at about 1200 BC and the previously enigmatic Paracas Meoropolis Culture on the south coast of Peru is put at least as early as 300 BC.

2.05 OLD WORLD: "The major pre" and proto-historic samples so far tested --- El-Omari (Egypt), Fayum Upper K Egypt), Alishar Chalcolithic (Anatolia), and Jarmo (Iran) ---all yielded dates significantly lower than current "guess dates" for sites in question. One might speculate that this indicates a trend, and that once food-production came into being, the rate of technological (and cultural) acceleration was much more rapid than had been anticipated." (From the summary.) The British Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) is reliably dated about 7500 BC, while the British Neolithic ("A") includes at date of 3000 BC. Some small samples from Belt Cave, Iran, give an uncertain 6000 BC for a Neolithic layer and around 8500 BC for the end of the Mesolithic.

2.06 GENERAL: More datable material, excavated carefully for the specific needs of the new method of dating, is badly needed. Meantime, however, the greatest weakness seems to be in determining and understanding the archaeological context of samples rather than in faulty laboratory techniques. Obviously, caution must be the rule for several years in using any C-14 dates.

2.07 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE SCRIPTURES??: In the nuclear or Near Eastern or Biblical area all the important cultural innovations comprising the urban revolution or "dawn of civilization" (e.g., metallurgy, writing, city life) now seem concentrated after 5000 BC. This may have great significance for Bible interpretation when both this information and the Bible are properly understood. The usual dating of the New Stone Age and Middle Stone Age is supported although these phases lasted later than previously thought.

In the American field we see a surprising diversity of simple cultures as early as 10,000 years ago. Some features of these seem to have continued right on down into later, well-known farming cultures.

Dates for most areas fit within limits previously established. The supposed time-gap between the early cultures of America and the later civilizations has been just about eliminated by pushing the higher cultures back in time, and by spacing out the early ones as far back as 10,000 BC. For Mesoamerica a new interpretation of the "Early Theocratic" or "Pre-Classic" civilizations in the light of the Book of Mormon may be required if the new dates are sustained. No such reinterpretation seems justified as yet, however, in view of the tentative nature of the few dates so far released (cf. M. Wells Jakeman, "Chronology" Bulletin, Univ. Arch. Soc., No. 2 pp 7-27). In any case these cultures do belong to the period of the Book of Mormon and may in fact be the actual civilizations described in that account. Another conclusion of importance is that the Book of Mormon peoples were relatively late in the archaeological history of the New World, appearing only after many early groups of less well-developed culture had occupied much of the Americas since Ice Age times.