



FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

THELONA D. STEVENS, CHAIRMAN / 202 SOUTH PENDLETON AVE. / INDEPENDENCE, MO. 64050

NEWSLETTER NO. 20

January 30, 1975

Greetings:

All our members and friends are invited to attend the annual meeting of the Foundation for Research on Ancient America, which will be held February 9, at 3:00 P.M., in the lower auditorium (under the main sanctuary) of the Stone Church.

Dr. Richard A. DeLong will address the group. He has just returned from an extensive visit to Mexico, studying some of the archaeological ruins and seeking further information regarding the many mysteries which those archaeological sites hold. Dr. DeLong is bubbling over with enthusiasm over some of his "discoveries," and we are confident that you will not want to miss hearing what he has to say.

A short business session is also to be a feature of this meeting, including the election of officers for the ensuing year.

We are again urging upon youth and members of all ages to think seriously about the challenges for study offered by the Book of Mormon. There is still an unlimited field in which to engage in research, proving and reproving the great truths encouched in this marvelous book. Although a great deal of research has been done by individuals and groups since this record came into our hands one hundred and forty-five years ago, surely the surface has hardly been scratched. There is no need for youth to wait until maturity for entering into serious research on one or more chosen subjects. Older persons who have been procrastinating cannot begin earlier than now.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a list of topics suggested by Roy E. Weldon. Surely one hundred and sixty-two topics are sufficient to awaken some area of interest for study in each individual. Yet you need not be limited to this list. Some subject may occur to you which has not been suggested here, and you are free to choose any area at all. Just get started now on a definite project of study.

Some suggestions are offered here for getting started:

1. Make use of your school, church and public libraries. Also, book shops and even second-hand book stores. It is amazing what may be gleaned by searching through books others have disposed of, where sometimes one may run across invaluable 'finds.' Another source not to be overlooked is that of older relatives and friends' private libraries. If you live in the Greater Kansas City area, a marvelous library is at the disposal of all, our own World Church library at the Auditorium, which is open every day of the week but Sunday (Saturdays until 1:00 P.M.).
2. Talk with friends about your project, and listen when they have something to say on the subject, or when they tell you about someone who

may have some knowledge or experience along the very line of your study. Interviews often open channels of knowledge not thought of before.

3. Pray about your project. Take God into account as you go searching. He is interested in assisting you. He is pleased when we respond to his repeated commandments to study. Read again Doctrine and Covenants 85:21.
4. Take notes carefully, being sure to document everything you record-- giving the name of the book, author, publisher, date of publication and page numbers for every single statement which you make.
5. Set up some simple method of filing your notes right in the beginning. More extensive files will develop as your materials are collected.
6. Organizing your material will come later.

Do decide on some topic now and start your own individual research on it, collecting every bit of data which you can find on your chosen subject. You will find your fund of general information growing, your specific knowledge expanding, your comprehension of God's gift to us in the Book of Mormon deepening, and your zest for witnessing developing. Only good can come of conscientious searching for truth. Regardless of age and educational background, do start now.

--T.D.S.

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While researching with the Smithsonian Institution on finds reported in our last newsletter, Norma Anne Holik also checked with Dr. H. R. Van-Smythe, Smithsonian archivist, as to the latest data concerning the Bat Creek Stone. Accordingly, Norma Anne is incorporating this latest information in what she has submitted in the following:

"Back in 1885, a Smithsonian archaeologist named Cyrus Thomas was excavating an Indian burial mound in Loudon County, Tennessee. It was located at the junction of Little Tennessee River and Bat Creek, thus becoming known as the Bat Creek excavation. It was apparent that the mound had not been disturbed since roots of a tree, now dead, had grown extensively through the mound.

"Among the findings on this dig were several pieces of jewelry which have been established as having been 18th or 19th century trading goods. However, most interesting was a stone inscribed with characters. At the time it was found this stone attracted little attention, but recently Dr. Joseph Mahan, Jr., an ethnologist and American Indian archaeologist was searching for evidences of early contact between American Indians and the Mediterranean cultures. The stone was taken to Dr. Cyrus Gordon, at Brandeis University, who is an expert on ancient Mediterranean languages and history.

"Dr. Gordon believes the stone is written in ancient Hebrew, suggesting that the stone is around 2,000 years old and is 'evidence of a migration of Jews from the Near East, probably to escape the long hand of Rome after the disastrous Jewish defeats in 70 A.D. and 135 A.D.' He states that the text includes five consecutive Hebrew letters which mean 'for Judah.' The fourth

letter was inscribed in a style which was found on Hebrew coins of the Greco-Roman period during which the Jews rebelled against Rome in 66-70 A.D. and 132-135 A.D. The last letter, on a line by itself on the stone, is the first letter of the alphabet which is normally used to designate the first year of an era.

"Dr. Van-Smythe says that their own research (that of the Smithsonian Institution), does not verify this statement, but on the other hand, they do not negate it. It is reported that Dr. Gus Van Beek, also of the Smithsonian Institution, believed that since there are additional scratches on the stone and the patina has not been disturbed, that it might either go back to the Roman period, or it might have been a stone on which somebody (Indian ?) copied some Jewish letters of the Roman period. However, he did say that the intact burial places it was prior to the 19th century and indicates that it can not 'be attributed to accident or forgery.'

"Question: If an Indian did copy something, where did he get the material from which to copy, for the inscription is in a script which before the 19th century had not yet been deciphered by Wilhelm Gensinuis.

"So the question remains as to whether this was a sacred stone handed down by the Indians or was just some doodling which accidentally hit on the Hebrew characters. All of this reminds us of the famous church history incident of Professor Anthon. ²

"A tenuous connection with the Book of Mormon comes through the fact that there are those scientists that definitely believe that certain migrations were made from the Near East to this land. So what happened to those people? Were they assimilated into the Indian nations already dispersed around the Americas or were they destroyed and their possessions taken over (including this stone) by warriors? Is there any evidence that the scientists might be wrong on the dating and that this stone is a remnant from an earlier migration? That does not seem likely since the writing is Hebrew, and the earlier writings were in a form of Egyptian and the lost records were in the Adamic language. But it is indeed an interesting point for speculation.

"There have been a number of scientists who have held beliefs concerning migrations. In 1799 Alexander von Humboldt left Europe to travel for five years in the Americas. He was a German baron, to be relied upon. The raw knowledge material which he took back was stupendous and over thirty volumes of photo-drawings and text were printed. Of special interest to me is his description of the pyramid at Cholula, Mexico, since I have personally spent many hours there, including 'digs' in a cornfield on the side of the pyramid. Humboldt took perfect measurements of this Toltec pyramid and collected stories of the Indians of the area, including one about the great Flood. He made a serious analogy of the biblical Flood and the Tower of Babel. ³

"Viscount Kingsborough, eldest son of King George III, in the 1820's wrote concerning his associations of America and the Old World. His publication cost so much that it brought about his death in a debtors' prison. His passion

was the belief that the civilized American Indians had been descendants of the 'ten lost tribes of Israel.' William Preston, great historian of the conquest of the Aztec empire, paid tribute to Kingsborough's research. ⁴

"Still another writer was Jean-Frederick-Maximilian Comte de Waldeck, who, in 1821, undertook a Guatemalan trip. His belief was that the Mexicans were descended from the Egyptians, because of writings he claimed to have seen. He thus disagreed with Kingsborough, but was partially financed by Kingsborough, so he named a Mexican pyramid for him. Waldeck was particularly interesting as a person because he lived to be 109 years old. He grew up in the Talleyrand pre-revolutionary France and witnessed the Franco-Prussian war.⁵

"The fact that these publications of the archaeologists named came out before 1830 prompts a question: Could a simple farm boy in New York have become so thoroughly familiar with these volumes (two of which were written in a 'foreign' language), as to use them in his 'manufactured' story?

"At this point a rereading of the Book of Mormon, Mormon 4:98-100 is suggested, in order to see why early researchers, who may have found 'writings' could have been confused."

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1. Bureau of American Ethnology Twelfth Annual Report, Washington, D.C., 1890-91, 1894, pp. 391-394.
Bible and Spade, Word of Truth Production, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Vol. 1, No. 1, Winter 1972, p. 34.
 2. Davis, Inez Smith, The Story of the Church, Herald Publishing House, 1964, pp. 59, 60, 571.
 3. Ceram, C.W., March of Archaeology, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1958, p. 268ff.
 4. Ibid., p. 272.
 5. Ibid., p. 274.
- An additional source: S.E.H.A. Newsletter, BYU, Provo, Utah, August, 1974, p. 5.

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Recommended New Books:

- Silverberg, Robert, Lost Cities and Vanished Civilizations, Bantam Books, New York, #N8269, 1973, 95¢.
- Bushnell, G. H. S. The First Americans: The Pre-Columbian Civilizations, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1974, \$2.95.

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FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

RESEARCH TOPICS

You are invited to participate in church-wide research on Book of Mormon claims which is being promoted by the Foundation for Research on Ancient America. The following topics have been suggested by Roy E. Weldon. Please choose the subject, or subjects, which most interest you. Correspondence should be directed to Mrs. F. L. Stevens, 202 S. Pendleton, Independence, Mo., 64050.

1. Age, golden
2. Agriculture
3. Anatomy
4. Animals
5. Anthropology
6. Apostasy
7. Archaeology
8. Astronomy
9. Baptism, adults and infants
10. Bees, honey
11. Books, lost
12. Book of Malachi
13. Botany
14. Brothers, four
15. Buildings
16. Calendar
17. Cannibalism
18. Carbon 14 dating
19. Cement
20. Ceramics
21. Chariots
22. Cherubim
23. Christ
24. Christianity
25. Chronology
26. Churchianity
27. Cities
28. Circumcision
29. Combinations, secret
30. Creation, story of
31. Cross
32. Cultures
33. Cureloms, cumoms
34. Decree, everlasting
35. Diseases
36. Doctrine
37. Dragons
38. Dramatics
39. Earth as scroll
40. Economics
41. Egyptian
42. Elephants
43. Entomology
44. Errors
45. Ethics
46. Etymology
47. Evolution
48. Evidence, internal
49. Fasting
50. Flood, world-wide
51. Fortifications
52. Gathering
53. Genealogy
54. Gentiles
55. Geography
56. Geology
57. Giants
58. Gifts, spiritual
59. Godhead
60. Gospel
61. Government
62. Grammar
63. Hebrews
64. Hieroglyphics
65. Highways
66. History covered by Book of Mormon period
67. Horses
68. Ichthyology
69. Interpreters
70. Isaiah (when written)
71. Jaredites
72. Jerusalem
73. Kings
74. Land, cursed
75. Land of promise
76. Lamanites
77. Laying on of hands
78. Liahona
79. Literature, place of Book of Mormon in
80. Lost tribes of Israel
81. Metallurgy
82. Migrations
83. Miracles
84. Money (coins)
85. Moses, law of
86. Names
87. Nephi
88. Nephites, three
89. Paleontology
90. Pearls

- 91. Philosophy
- 92. Philology
- 93. Plagiarism
- 94. Plates of brass
- 95. Plates of Lehi
- 96. Plates of Nephi
- 97. Plates, purpose of
- 98. Polygamy
- 99. Pores
- 100. Population
- 101. Pre-existence (of spirit)
- 102. Prayer, Lord's
- 103. Priesthood
- 104. Priesthood, high
- 105. Promise, great
- 106. Prophecy with the Book of Mormon
- 107. Prophecy (Bible) fulfilled in B/M
- 108. Prophets of Old Testament
- 109. Psychology
- 110. Pyramids
- 111. Radiochemistry
- 112. Rebellion
- 113. Records, buried
- 114. Redeemer
- 115. Restoration according to works
- 116. Restoration of the gospel
- 117. Restoration of house of Israel
- 118. Religions
- 119. Robe, white
- 120. Sacrifice, human
- 121. Saints, blood of
- 122. Seeds, grains
- 123. Serpentology
- 124. Seismology
- 125. Sheep
- 126. Shepherd
- 127. Shipbuilding
- 128. Signs of Christ's birth
- 129. Sin, original
- 130. Slavery
- 131. Spirit, Great
- 132. Sociology
- 133. Statistics
- 134. Stewardship
- 135. Supper, Lord's
- 136. Symbolism
- 137. Temples
- 138. Textiles
- 139. Therapeutics
- 140. Topography
- 141. Tower of Babel
- 142. Towers
- 143. Treaty, ten year
- 144. Tree, olive
- 145. Upheaval, great
- 146. Virgin birth
- 147. Visions
- 148. Voice, upheaval power
- 149. War, last
- 150. Wheat
- 151. Wheel (chariots)
- 152. Wine
- 153. Witchcraft
- 154. Witness, second
- 155. Witnesses, three
- 156. Workmanship, fine
- 157. Writings
- 158. Writing styles
- 159. Zarahemla, city of
- 160. Zedekiah
- 161. Zoology
- 162. Lord's Zupper

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 202 S. Pendleton
 Independence, Missouri 64050
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