



# Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship

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## Full Issue

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# Insights

A WINDOW ON THE ANCIENT WORLD VOLUME 26 | 2006

Number 6

<http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu>

## Maxwell Institute Supports BYU Symposium on Oliver Cowdery with Speakers, New Book

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of Oliver Cowdery's birth on 3 October 1806, more than a dozen scholars treated crowds in the BYU Conference Center to fresh perspectives on Cowdery as a central figure in the Restoration. Entitled "Oliver Cowdery: Restoration Witness, Second Elder," the symposium featured cultural historian Richard L. Bushman as keynote speaker and several other distinguished speakers spread throughout four sessions of three or four concurrent presentations each. Cosponsors of the five-hour event, held on 10 November, were the Mormon Historic Sites Foundation and BYU's Religious Studies Center.

The Maxwell Institute was pleased to offer its support by teaming up with BYU Studies to compile under one cover select scholarly research on Cowdery published by BYU Studies or FARMS over the past 30 years (see the accompanying sidebar article, "New Book Compiles Scholarship on Oliver Cowdery," for more on this new publication). The volume's editors, John W. Welch and Larry E. Morris, spoke at the symposium. This report spotlights their presentations and a few others.

### Oliver's Perception of Joseph

Following welcoming remarks by symposium organizer Alexander L. Baugh (Church History, BYU) and the unveiling of a new painting of Cowdery by artist Ken Corbett, Bushman addressed the topic "Oliver's Joseph." He noted that Oliver was the "chief beneficiary of Joseph [Smith]'s expansive prophethood" because Joseph shared with him so many visions and revelations—"the highest form of communion."

Bushman, who is the Gouverneur Morris Professor of History, Emeritus, at Columbia University

and author of the widely noted 2005 biography *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, asked why Cowdery, who was privileged to witness many foundational events of the Restoration, "wandered away from the Church in 1838 so callously." In partial answer, Bushman noted Cowdery's alignment with the disaffected Whitmer clan, his confrontation with Joseph Smith over alleged adultery, and his persistent financial worries. Cowdery wavered in his allegiance to the Prophet and did not have the rocklike character of Brigham Young. "Joseph had

[continued on page 5](#)

### New Book Compiles Scholarship on Oliver Cowdery

In conjunction with the recent BYU symposium "Oliver Cowdery: Restoration Witness, Second Elder," the Maxwell Institute has published *Oliver Cowdery: Scribe, Elder, Witness*, edited by John W. Welch and Larry E. Morris. This book includes 17 important articles previously published by BYU Studies or FARMS and covers virtually all periods of Oliver Cowdery's life.

"Oliver Cowdery was scribe, second elder, missionary, editor, publisher, justice of the peace, witness of the Book of Mormon, and defender of the Restoration," Welch says. "This bicentennial collection spotlights and clarifies Cowdery's many crucial contributions to the early years of the Church."

The two leading Cowdery scholars, Richard L. Anderson and Scott H. Faulring (who are editing a four-volume collection of Cowdery documents), are both well represented in this compilation. In "The Impact of the First Preaching in Ohio," Anderson discusses the first major mission in the Church, in which Oliver, Peter Whitmer Jr.,

[continued on page 7](#)

## Deer as “Goat” and Pre-Columbian Domesticated

Sometime after the death of his father Jacob, Enos wrote that the Nephites raised “flocks of herds, and flocks of all manner of cattle of every kind, and goats, and wild goats” (Enos 1:21). While contemporary archaeology thus far has not yielded evidence of pre-Columbian goats, anthropologist John L. Sorenson has suggested that Book of Mormon peoples, like the Spanish writers of a later time, may have considered some species of pre-Columbian deer to be a kind of goat.<sup>1</sup>

Although surprising to us today, evidence suggests that some species of Amerindian deer may have been raised and shepherded as “flocks” in pre-Columbian times.

When the early Spanish explorers first visited what is now the southeastern United States, they encountered native Americans who raised semi-domesticated deer. Men from De Soto’s expedition reported that in Ocale, an Indian town in northern Florida, “there is to be found . . . fowls, a multitude of turkeys, kept in pens, and *herds of tame deer that are tended*.”<sup>2</sup> According to the 16th-century Spanish historian Gómara, in Apalachicola (what is now the state of Florida), “there are very many deer that they raise in the house and they go with *shepherds* into the pasture, and they return to the corral at night.”<sup>3</sup> Another early

historian of Spain, Peter Martyr d’Anghiera, recorded:

In all these regions they visited, the Spaniards noticed herds of deer similar to our herds of cattle. These deer bring forth and nourish their young in the houses of the natives. During the daytime they wander freely through the woods in search of their food, and in the evening they come back to their little ones, who have been cared for, allowing themselves to be shut up in the courtyards and even to be milked, when they have suckled their fawns. The only milk the natives know is that of the does, from which they make cheese.<sup>4</sup>

Additional evidence suggests that deer may have been tamed or semi-domesticated in pre-Columbian Mesoamerica as well. According to Diego de Landa, Maya women “let the deer suck their breasts, by which means they raise them and make them so tame that they never will go into the woods, although they take them and carry them through the woods and raise them there.”<sup>5</sup> When the Spaniards passed through the region of Guatemala and Honduras, they likewise encountered and easily killed fallow deer that were not afraid of them.<sup>6</sup> Some Mesoamerican scholars “are convinced that small herds of tamed or semi-domesticated deer ranged through Maya sites, with a result


not dissimilar in some respects to the ‘deer parks’ of European royalty.”<sup>7</sup> When they entered the region of what is modern El Salvador, the Spaniards encountered a native people known as *mazahuas*, who took their name from the practice of possessing and shepherding herds of “white deer,” which disappeared shortly after the Conquest.<sup>8</sup>

Ethnohistorical sources also mention the Mesoamerican custom of caring for deer. Anthropologist Mary Pohl notes that the term *ah may* in the Motul dictionary refers to “venadillo pequeño criado en casa,” that is, “a little deer raised in a house.”<sup>9</sup> Also related is the Maya term *Mazatenango* (from *Mazatl-tenen-co*), which means “en la cerca o muralla del ciervo,” that is, “inside the fence or wall of the deer.” Another researcher suggests, “Perhaps the name originated in the custom of fencing or corraling deer to care for them.”<sup>10</sup> Deer were an important animal in many pre-Columbian rituals and were often sacrificed.<sup>11</sup> In the Guatemala highlands today, some Indians believe that deer are intermediaries between men and the gods and that they speak with the gods in order to cleanse the sins of men.<sup>12</sup>

In light of the evidence for deer shepherding in pre-Columbian times, it is interesting that early Spanish colonists in

Mesoamerica associated native Mesoamerican brocket deer with the goat. Friar Diego de Landa noted, “There are *wild goats* which the Indians call *yuc*. They have only two horns like goats and are not as large as deer.” He likewise described the small brocket deer as “a certain kind of little *wild goats* [sic], small and very active and of darkish color.”<sup>13</sup> In the late 16th century, another Spanish friar reported that in Yucatán “there are in that province . . . great numbers of deer, and small *goats*”—the latter again apparently referring to the red brocket deer native to southern Mesoamerica.<sup>14</sup>

In post-Columbian times the Maya, recognizing a similarity between the European goat and the New World brocket deer, gave the European animal the name *temazate* from the Nahuatl word for brocket deer (*tamazatl*).<sup>15</sup> Since some Mesoamerican deer could fulfill many of the same purposes as goats, Mesoamerican

deer may have acquired a similar designation among peoples in the Book of Mormon. 

### By Matthew Roper

Resident Scholar, Maxwell Institute

#### Notes

1. See John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (1985), 299.
2. Hernando De Soto, in *Narratives of the Career of Hernando de Soto* (1922), 162; emphasis added.
3. Francisco López de Gómara, *Historia General de las Indias* (1966), 70 (my translation).
4. Pietro Martire d’Anghiera, *De Orbe Novo: The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr d’Anghera* (1912), 2:259.
5. Diego de Landa, *Landa’s Relación de las Cosas de Yucatán* (1941), 127.
6. See Hernando Cortés, *Five Letters of Cortés to the Emperor* (1991), 314.
7. Brian D. Dillon, “Meatless Maya? Ethnoarchaeological Implications for Ancient Subsistence,” *Journal of New World Archaeology* 7/2–3 (June 1988): 60.
8. See Jorge Larde, “Los Mazahuas de El Salvador,” *Anales, Museo Nacional* 5/17–18 (1954): 86.
9. Mary D. Pohl and Lawrence H. Feldman, “The Traditional Role of Women and Animals in Lowland Maya Economy,” in *Maya Subsistence: Studies in Memory of Dennis E. Puleston* (1982), 305.
10. Jorge Luis Arriola, *El Libro de Las Geonimias de Guatemala: Diccionario Etimológico* (1973), 342 (my translation).
11. See Diego Garcia de Palacio, *Letter to the King of Spain* (1985), 41.
12. See María Montoliú, “Algunos Aspectos del Venado en La Religión de Los Mayas de Yucatán,” *Estudios de Cultura Maya* 10 (1976–1977): 165.
13. De Landa, *Landa’s Relación*, 204n1134 and 203–4; emphases added.
14. See Noyes, *Fray Alonso Ponce* (1932), 307 and n. 17.
15. See Rafael Martín del Campo, “Contribución a la Etnozoología Maya de Chiapas,” in *Los Mayas del Sur y Sus Relaciones con Sus Nahuas Meridionales* (1961), 33.


## New Web Site Debuts

The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship unveiled its new Web site on 1 November 2006. The new site, found at [maxwellinstitute.byu.edu](http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu), features all the material that resided on the FARMS Web site as well as additional content and links from all departments that make up the Institute.

Over the last several years, the FARMS Web site saw a large jump in Internet traffic as readers were drawn to the immense archive of previous issues of the *Insights* newsletter, the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, and the *FARMS Review*, as well as the more recently added library of book chapters culled from Institute publications. The new site is built on that strong foundation but now better represents the Middle Eastern Texts Initiative (METI) and the Center for the Preservation of Ancient

Religious Texts (CPART) with added material and information, and the site now links to BYU Studies, which recently came under the umbrella of the Institute. The new site also features a biography of Elder Neal A. Maxwell and a bibliography of his writings.

In addition to its expanded focus, the Institute’s Web site has been reorganized to make information more readily available. Users can now search by keyword or by author or simply browse through thousands of articles organized by topic or by publication. The menus on the front page of the site will also feature several randomly selected articles to draw users in to the present research and the Institute’s vast archives. In coming months, additional features will be added to the site, such as a calendar of events and video clips.


To access the Maxwell Institute Web site, visit [maxwellinstitute.byu.edu](http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu). 

## Institute Contributes to Exhibit

“Beholding Salvation: Images of Christ,” a new exhibit at the BYU Museum of Art, displays 170 works depicting the ministry of Jesus Christ. The paintings, sculptures, icons, and illuminated manuscripts represent half a millennium of religious art. Not part of the exhibit but prepared especially for it is a book authored by FARMS director S. Kent Brown in collaboration with Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Dawn C. Pheyse.

*Beholding Salvation: The Life of Christ in Word and Image* examines artistic depictions of Christ from different cultures, eras, and Christian traditions and comments on the incidents in Jesus’s ministry that inspired the art. The book features 80 full-color illustrations and art notes detailing how the imagery has evolved according to changing interpretations of Christ’s ministry. The handsome hard-bound book is available at the museum’s gift shop, at the BYU Bookstore, and at Deseret Book outlets.

“This book, *Beholding Salvation*, began in my head years ago when I was visiting an exhibition on the life of Christ that was showing in the National Gallery in London,” said Brown. “My two able coauthors have lifted that idea into a remarkable reality—an exhibition at the BYU Museum of Art.” The exhibition, which opened in November this year, will run through 16 June 2007.

Beginning on 10 January 2007, the museum will host a companion series of 14 lectures on the life, ministry, and teachings of Christ. Among the presenters are Brown, who will speak on “The Birth of the Savior” (17 January); Andrew C. Skinner, executive director of the Maxwell Institute, who will speak on “Crucifixion and Resurrection” (21 March); and John W. Welch, the Robert K. Thomas Professor of Law at BYU and editor of *BYU Studies*, who will speak on “The Sermon on the Mount” (31 January). All lectures will be on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM in the Museum of Art auditorium. 

## Scrolls Database Released

The Maxwell Institute is pleased to announce *The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library Revised Edition 2006*, published in cooperation with Brill Academic Publishers. Updated under the editorship of Emanuel Tov, who leads an international team of Dead Sea Scrolls editors, the searchable electronic database boasts exciting new features.


The CD-ROM program allows users to view high-quality images of the scroll texts along with their Hebrew or Aramaic transcriptions and their translations into English. Each of the more than 1,300 scroll images has been reprocessed for improved legibility and tagged with labels and numbers for easy reference. Based on Donald W. Parry and Emanuel Tov’s comprehensive *Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, the database contains new and updated translations as well as a morphological analysis of each Hebrew and Aramaic word, identifying its root and part of speech and also providing a concise English translation.

After its demonstration at last year’s meetings of the American Academy of Religion and the Soci-

ety of Biblical Literature, the database was further refined and then presented for sale at this year’s meetings in Washington DC in November. “Scholars have been enthusiastic about the revision of this database and have been anticipating its release for several years,” said CPART director Kristian Heal.

“The combination of a powerful text search engine and sophisticated image-manipulating software will enable scholars and students unparalleled research possibilities,” reports Brill’s catalog ([www.brill.nl](http://www.brill.nl)).

The database currently features all of the non-biblical material (some 500 Hebrew and Aramaic texts) found in 11 caves near the ancient site of Qumran in the Judean desert from 1947 to 1956. The next phase in this ongoing project will add the biblical material, for a total of some 900 texts with accompanying images, transcriptions, and English translations.

The newly revised *Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library* is being marketed primarily to libraries, research institutions, and academics and is available through the academic publisher E. J. Brill (search on the title in the catalog section at [www.brill.nl](http://www.brill.nl)). 

## Symposium cont. from page 1

to work with those who came along, and not all were giants,” Bushman said.

Bushman then focused on the perception of the Prophet Joseph discernible in Cowdery’s writings. In Cowdery’s letters dealing with Church history that appeared in the *Messenger and Advocate* in 1834–35, “Joseph remains a blurred figure while Oliver is at the forefront,” Bushman said. “We learn more about Oliver than about Joseph.” In all eight letters, Joseph is specifically named only twice. And whereas Joseph mentions in one sentence his temptation to obtain the plates for gain, Oliver devotes six pages to that struggle, saying Joseph sought “wealth and ease.” Yet Cowdery “lived the struggle between greed and God’s glory more than Joseph Smith did,” Bushman said. In fact, of nine charges cited by the Missouri high council that excommunicated him, six had to do with financial issues.

“There are as many Josephs as there are observers,” Bushman said, and we should rejoice in the multiplicity of impressions that add depth to our understanding of the Prophet. “Oliver’s is not our Joseph or *the* Joseph,” he concluded, “but will always remain significant.”

### Editor, Defender, Justice of the Peace

John W. Welch, the Robert K. Thomas Professor of Law at BYU and editor in chief of *BYU Studies*, spoke on Cowdery as an editor, as a defender of the Restoration, and as a justice of the peace in Kirtland. As an editor, Cowdery published the *Messenger and Advocate* during two terms (October 1834–May 1835 and April 1836–January 1837) at a time when the Industrial Revolution was spurring a veritable printing revolution. His writing style was typically lucid, personal, tolerant, and dynamic. He published important letters to the editor, notes from the field, eight of his own letters, and serial features on “The Gospel,” “The Faith of the Church,” and the “Millennium.”

“In Oliver’s writings are found the first attempts to publish a set of articles of faith and a history of the Church,” Welch said, noting that part of the first letter appears in the Pearl of Great Price at the end of Joseph Smith—History.

Although Cowdery typically ignored the critics, on one occasion he responded brilliantly to Alexander Campbell’s very influential 1831 newspaper article “Delusions.” In this response, Cowdery is firm and witty yet tolerant. He resists quarreling over minor arguments raised by Campbell and instead positively rests his case by defending three linchpins of the Restoration: priesthood, gathering, and temple. Welch argued that one must admire Cowdery’s ability to claim the higher ground by turning his attention to the distinctive strengths of his own position.

Cowdery’s brief term as justice of the peace was busy but efficient, as evidenced by his docket (preserved in the Huntington Library in San Marino, California). In electing Cowdery to this office, townsfolk expressed confidence in his honesty, wisdom, common sense, and human concern. Welch noted that Cowdery as judge notarized many deeds and mortgages, performed five marriages, and heard 240 cases from June to September 1837.

Most matters brought before Cowdery were debt-collection cases involving small amounts of money, but 10 were criminal cases, the most serious being a two-day trial with 70 witnesses in the August case of “assault and battery and riot” in the Kirtland Temple. Cowdery dismissed the charges. A few days later, he left Kirtland for Missouri, only three months into his three-year elected office. Welch suggested that Cowdery left not wanting to be caught in the middle of the turbulence brewing in Kirtland, as it was sure to surface again in his very courtroom.

### Oliver as Scribe

Royal Skousen, a linguistics professor at BYU who is editor of the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project, considered what the manuscript evidence reveals about Cowdery’s skill and even his temperament as principal scribe of the Book of Mormon.

Skousen noted that one-sixth of the Book of Mormon was set from the original manuscript (Helaman to the end of Mormon). Cowdery made an average of three errors per page when preparing the printer’s manuscript—an error rate that Skousen’s research has shown to be actually quite low in copy work of that nature. The 1830 typesetter made about the same error rate as he set type from

[continued on page 6](#)

## Symposium cont. from page 5

the manuscripts, so overall there are fewer errors for that part of the text that he set directly from the original manuscript. Cowdery was the best scribe of those who took down Joseph's dictation, Skousen said. "He had an exquisite hand and was very meticulous. Yet we must disabuse ourselves of the idea that as a teacher he was a great speller." Skousen listed examples of Cowdery's spellings in the original manuscript that deviated from standard spelling practice of the day (as established by Samuel Johnson's 1755 dictionary) and noted that scribe 2 of the printer's manuscript was a somewhat better speller (his error rate is slightly less than Oliver's).

Of added interest was evidence that Cowdery viewed the copy work of the other scribes somewhat condescendingly. To illustrate, Skousen discussed three instances of when Cowdery, upon reviewing the work of scribes 2 and 3 on the original manuscript, suspected inaccuracy in the scribes' work and independently made unnecessary changes in wording—that is, changes that likely do not reflect the original text as Joseph dictated it. For example, at 1 Nephi 11:36, Cowdery, presumably influenced by similar phrasing in Matthew 7:27, added "and it fell" after "the great and spacious building was the pride of the world" (the following clause, "and the fall thereof was exceedingly great," works fine without Cowdery's explanatory but unnecessary later addition to the text). Another indicator of Cowdery's temperament was his uncharacteristically sloppy ruling (foolscap paper came unlined) of the printer's manuscript gathering prepared by scribe 2 of P. Because scribe 2's gathering showed carelessness, Oliver, who typically prepared the gatherings himself and did so meticulously, seems to have expressed his irritation by not maintaining his usual neat ruling on that gathering.

Of 14 emendations that Cowdery made in the original manuscript, Skousen surmises that 3 are true to the original text, a determination made possible by computer-assisted research of the remarkably systematic text. Skousen went on to discuss spelling variation in the text (e.g., *Zenock* vs. the correct *Zenoch*), the oddity of double hyphens (at the end and beginning of lines) in the printer's manuscript, Cowdery's brief attempts at punctuat-

ing the text (which were ignored by the 1830 typesetter), and an instance (in Alma 45) where Joseph both translated and wrote down about two lines of text (it is doubtful that this represents any attempt on Oliver's part to translate the plates at this point).

### Conflict with the Church

Richard L. Anderson, professor emeritus of ancient scripture at BYU, spoke on financial aspects of Cowdery's conflict with the Church. He began by noting that though financial issues were not the direct cause of Cowdery's excommunication, they were an important underlying reason for his resentment of Church leaders. He went on to present a sympathetic account of Cowdery's personal liability for thousands of dollars of Church debt.

To help repay the debt incurred with the building of the Kirtland Temple, Cowdery and five others (including Joseph and Hyrum Smith and Sidney Rigdon) formed two partnerships to purchase dry goods and supplies for resale. Because the Church had not incorporated, the partners were personally responsible for the money. To understand Cowdery's financial predicaments, Anderson went through Cowdery's ledgers and receipts and concluded that by the time Cowdery left the Church in 1838, he was jointly liable for \$33,000 of its debt.

Cowdery's letters indicate that while he never lost faith in the doctrines of the Church, he became increasingly angry about its administration. He allied himself with the Whitmers, who were also becoming disaffected. He attempted to recoup financial loss by practicing law and working in debt collection, a move that made him highly unpopular with fellow church members. Eventually, after eight years as a church leader, he was excommunicated on 12 April 1838.

While out of the Church for 10 years, Cowdery never denied his testimony of the Book of Mormon or his part in the Restoration. When he desired to rejoin the Church, he wrote to his brother-in-law Phineas Young (Brigham's brother) expressing hope that the Church would clear his name of accusations of dishonesty. Such a statement never came, but he was rebaptized and fully reinstated in the Church on 12 November 1848. He died from a chronic lung condition before he could gather the money and supplies to join the Saints in Utah.

### Oliver's Conversion

Larry E. Morris, an editor for the Maxwell Institute, spoke on Oliver Cowdery's conversion. Oliver first met the Smith family in the autumn of 1828 when he began teaching in the Manchester, New York, school district. Joseph and Emma Smith, who had married in 1827, were then living in Harmony, Pennsylvania, where Emma's parents lived. Not long after meeting the Smiths, Oliver (age 22) met David Whitmer (age 23), who was in Palmyra on business. "A great many people in the neighborhood were talking about the finding of certain gold plates by one Joseph Smith, jr.," David recalled in an 1881 interview with the *Kansas City Journal*. He and Oliver decided to investigate the matter.

Probably because of neighborhood harassment a year earlier—after Joseph had obtained the plates—Joseph Sr. was reluctant to tell Oliver about Joseph Jr.'s sacred experiences, even after Oliver began boarding with the Smiths. Late in January 1829, however, Joseph Sr. and Samuel traveled to Harmony, where section 4 of the Doctrine and Covenants was received. In that revelation, Joseph Sr. was told, "The field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his

might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul" (v. 4). Morris speculated that this revelation may have motivated Joseph Sr. to tell Oliver about the plates.

Regardless of the exact sequence of events, Oliver followed the advice of Joseph Sr. and Lucy and prayed for a personal testimony. According to Joseph Jr., "[The] Lord appeared unto . . . Oliver Cowdery and shewed unto him the plates in a vision and also the truth of the work" (Joseph Smith Letterbook 1). As Oliver told Lucy, "I have made it a subject of prayer, and I firmly believe that it is the will of the Lord that I should go [and help Joseph with the translation]" (quoted in Lucy Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations*). Therefore, when Oliver and Samuel traveled to Harmony in early April 1829, Oliver had already received a personal witness of Joseph Smith's prophetic calling and was ready to assist with the translation, a task that Joseph and he accomplished in a truly amazing period of approximately 10 weeks.

The proceedings of this symposium will be published by the Religious Studies Center. 📖

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### New Book [cont. from page 1](#)

Parley P. Pratt, and Ziba Peterson traveled first to Buffalo, New York, and then 200 miles farther west into Ohio. They baptized 130 people, including Sidney Rigdon—a harvest that "doubled the membership of the Church and created a solid nucleus for rapid growth and a secure, if temporary, gathering location," Anderson writes.

In his award-winning article, "The Return of Oliver Cowdery," Faulring reviews in detail the efforts of Oliver's friend and brother-in-law, Phineas H. Young, to help bring Oliver back into the fold after his 1838 excommunication. As early as 1842, Phineas wrote to his brother Brigham that Oliver's heart "is still with his old friends." The next year, Joseph Smith instructed the Twelve to invite Oliver back into Church fellowship and service. This letter was inexplicably delayed for several months, but Oliver responded favorably. In fact, Faulring points out that on the last day of

Joseph Smith's life, Almon W. Babbit visited the Prophet and read a recent communication from Oliver. "Although the letter has been lost and its specific contents remain unknown, it can be presumed from Oliver's optimistic overtures that his was a congenial letter," Faulring surmises. Oliver maintained a positive but long-distance relationship with Church leaders until he was rebaptized in 1848.

Other articles discuss such topics as the translation and printing of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood, Oliver's response to Alexander Campbell's criticisms of the Book of Mormon, and Oliver's accounts of the Pentecost-like outpourings associated with the dedication of the Kirtland Temple.

Of particular interest to many is the recent discovery of an original daguerreotype believed to be that of Oliver Cowdery (reported at length in the 18 November issue of *Church News*, a section


[continued on page 8](#)

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## New Book cont. from page 7

of the *Deseret Morning News*). In his article on this topic, Patrick A. Bishop, a Church Educational System coordinator who discovered the image while doing research in the Library of Congress's archives, compares the newly identified image with known likenesses of Oliver. "While [my] observations . . . are not absolute," he writes, "they do provide convincing evidence that this is indeed a heretofore-unknown image of Oliver Cowdery."

This book is available at the BYU Bookstore. To order a copy online, go to [byubookstore.com](http://byubookstore.com), or go to [maxwellinstitute.byu.edu](http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu) and, at the bottom of the notice for this book, click on the "more" link to the BYU Bookstore. 

### PUBLICATIONS

***Beholding Salvation: The Life of Christ in Word and Image***, by S. Kent Brown, Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, and Dawn C. Pheseey (*Deseret Book*, 2006), presents 80 full-color illustrations of Christ as depicted by the old masters and modern artists. It narrates his life, comments on events in his ministry that inspired the art, and details how the imagery has evolved apace with changing interpretations of his life and mission.

***Oliver Cowdery: Scribe, Elder, Witness***, edited by John W. Welch and Larry E. Morris (*Maxwell Institute*, 2006), compiles 30 years' worth of scholarly writings about the Second Elder of the Church in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of his birth on 3 October 1806.

***The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library Revised Edition 2006***, edited by Emanuel Tov (*Brill Academic Publishers*, 2006), is a newly updated and fully searchable CD-ROM program that allows users to view high-quality images of all the nonbiblical scroll texts along with their Hebrew or Aramaic transcriptions and their English translations.

***St. Ephrem the Syrian: Select Poems***, edited, introduced, annotated, and rendered into English by Sebastian Brock and George Kiraz (*BYU Press*, 2006), features original texts and lucid translations of 20 substantial poems from the fourth century. Written by the most important theologian of the Syriac Christian tradition, they reflect upon the history of salvation, commencing with paradise and continuing through the earthly life of Christ and the rise of the Christian church.

***Verse by Verse: The Four Gospels***, by D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner (*Deseret Book*, 2006), is an in-depth scripture commentary on Christ's ministry and teachings. It includes illustrations, charts, maps, and other study aids.

***Verse by Verse: Acts through Revelation*** (previously published under the title *New Testament Apostles Testify of Christ*), by D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner (*Deseret Book*, 2006), examines the doctrines taught by the early apostles and shows how those teachings harmonize with principles and doctrines of the restored gospel.

# Insights

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The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship encourages and supports research on the Book of Mormon, the Book of Abraham, the Bible, other ancient scripture, and related subjects. The Maxwell Institute publishes and distributes titles in these areas for the benefit of scholars and interested Latter-day Saint readers.

Primary research interests at the Maxwell Institute include the history, language, literature, culture, geography, politics, and law relevant to ancient scripture. Although such subjects are of secondary importance when compared with the spiritual and eternal messages of scripture, solid research and academic perspectives can supply certain kinds of useful information, even if only tentatively, concerning many significant and interesting questions about scripture.

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