



7-31-1999

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Journal of Book of Mormon Studies

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BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Studies, Journal of Book of Mormon (1999) "Out of the Dust," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*: Vol. 8 : No. 2 , Article 13.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jbms/vol8/iss2/13>

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NEAL A. MAXWELL INSTITUTE
FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

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Title Out of the Dust

Author(s)

Reference *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 8/2 (1999): 82-83, 88.

ISSN 1065-9366 (print), 2168-3158 (online)

Abstract This article examines several interesting discoveries pertaining to the Book of Mormon. Anthony W. Ivins suggests that the Jaredites may not have been completely extinct, that Coriantumr, the alleged last Jaredite, may have had children with Mulekite women after he discovered the people of Zarahemla.

A wooden vessel that was found in Lake Michigan turns out to be a prototype of a proposed “sea-going tow barge” developed in World War II for the Navy.

Arrowheads discovered in Israel show that steel was in use by about 1000 BC; the name Aha was engraved with steel on one arrowhead, thus giving a Hebrew-language source for this name found in the Book of Mormon.

Researchers have found similarities between the Anthon Transcript and Old South Arabian (Arabic).



OUT OF THE DUST

Did the “Last Jaredite,” Coriantumr, Leave Descendants?

Those who have not carefully read the writings by Latter-day Saints of generations past who carefully examined the Book of Mormon to extract new knowledge from it will have missed some interesting ideas. Some may imagine that thinking about the Book of Mormon in the days of our grandfathers or farther back was characterized by drab uniformity. But some surprisingly innovative notions can be seen at times.

Anthony W. Ivins, who would later become an apostle and counselor to President Heber J. Grant, in 1902 came up with an idea that may have been unique.¹

He asked the question, “Are the Jaredites an extinct people?” to which most readers of the Book of Mormon would quickly respond, of course, long since extinct. But on the basis of his research, Ivins, who was a native of the Mexican LDS colonies, felt that the answer might not be so definite. He reported that in the national archives in Mexico City he had recently found an account by Francisco Muñoz de la Vega, a former Catholic bishop in the state of Chiapas in southern Mexico, in which the cleric reported on an ancient manuscript that was in his possession. It stated that “the father

and founder of their nation was named Te-po-na-hu-ale, which signified, ‘Lord of the Hollow Piece of Wood.’” The document further reported that this ancestor was “present at the building of the great tower, and beheld with his own eyes the confusion of languages.” After that event, God commanded him to come “to these extensive regions [of Mesoamerica] and divide them among mankind.”

Ivins posed the question, “Was the writer of this manuscript a Jaredite?” Jared was present at the building of the Tower of Babel and witnessed the confusion of languages. Then the Lord had him build barges (“hollow pieces of wood”?) to cross the ocean to the New World. But how might a record of these matters have been preserved, since the book of Ether seems to say that all Jaredites were destroyed? Ivins’s suggested solution to the puzzle was that Coriantumr could have had descendants. Before his death, that final Jaredite king lived for the space of nine moons among the people of Zarahemla before the latter people came to a knowledge of the Nephites (see Omni 1:21–22). “During this period he may have begotten children.” This seems even more likely, Ivins thought, given “the high estimate placed upon posterity by the ancients.” It is logical that he would desire that his name be preserved, so

he “would take [Mulekite] wives and beget children.” Those descendants “would undoubtedly teach their children the story of the origin of their fathers” and of the great tower, hence the tradition recorded in the document held by de la Vega.

Obviously Anthony W. Ivins was not a conventional thinker when it came to the Book of Mormon. A more detailed examination of the writings of this student of the Book of Mormon might be rewarding to those who suppose that 80 years ago an independent-thinking Mormon was a contradiction in terms.

Lake Michigan Barge

The mysterious wooden vessel reported earlier² in this department has since been identified as a demonstration model of a proposed “sea-going tow barge” developed during World War II for the U. S. Navy. Mike Tym, a Ukrainian immigrant and inveterate inventor, built the 34-foot long prototype “floating fuel tank” in his shop. It was made semi-submersible so as to be difficult to detect, and it proved effective in tests. But the Navy decided against building more, and the test version was abandoned and sank near the Chicago River locks. Mr. Tym died in 1981.³

Bronze Arrowheads and the Name Aha

In the May/June 1999 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, P. Kyle McCarter Jr. of Johns Hopkins University reports significant new analyses of three artifacts from ancient Israel. On two points the findings intersect with the Book of Mormon.

The objects are bronze arrowheads on which Hebrew inscriptions have been engraved. They come from the eleventh century B.C., a time for which hardly any other instances of Hebrew writing are known. The total number of such arrow points is now near 50, so considerable new light on the history of the Hebrew script is being revealed by examining them.

The information of special interest to students of the Book of Mormon concerns metallurgy and a name inscribed on one of the points. Using a high-magnification microscope, Dr. R. Thomas Chase of the Freer Gallery of Art, a division of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington and an authority on ancient bronzes, examined the newest set of points to be located and discovered that on one “the inscription had been incised with a *steel* [emphasized in the original] engraving tool.”⁴ This demonstrates that steel was in use by about 1000 B.C. The Book of Mormon of course refers to the sword of Laban, who lived four centuries later; that sword was of “the most precious steel” (1 Nephi 4:9). Some have questioned whether steel was known as early as 600 B.C. but clearly the new data show that that metal was in use centuries earlier.

One of the points examined by Thomas and McCarter bears an inscription that translates as “The arrowhead of ‘Aha’ son of ‘Ashtart.’”

The name Aha is apparently the same as that borne by a man mentioned in the Book of Mormon. Alma 16:5 says that Zoram, the chief captain over the armies of the Nephites at that time, “had two sons, Lehi and Aha.” Formerly the personal name Aha had not been known from the Bible or other Hebrew-language sources, but this new information documents that the name was in use long before Lehi’s day.⁵

Similarities between the Anthon Transcript and Old South Arabian (Arabic)

The Anthon Transcript consists of characters copied from the gold plates in Joseph Smith’s possession. According to David Whitmer, Joseph personally spent “a whole week” to make a copy of the hieroglyphics made from the first of the gold plates. He was especially “particular” so “that the characters should be perfectly reproduced and that the ‘reformed Egyptian’ language should be shown up in all its native simplicity.”⁶ Martin Harris presented Joseph Smith’s handwritten copies to Professor Charles Anthon of Columbia University with the request that he translate them.

Researchers have presumed that a fragment of paper in the possession of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, on which seven lines of characters appear, was the piece shown to Anthon. Consequently it is commonly called the “Anthon Transcript” in discussions of the subject by LDS scholars. However, there appears to have been more than one sheet on which characters were copied. Hence, we cannot be absolutely certain that the commonly reproduced one is the original, but it is the best version available for study.⁷

Various attempts have been made to connect these characters with historically known writing systems. Edward Ashment suggested Micmac Indian script, Ariel Crowley sought to show connections to Demotic Egyptian and to Mayan, and Carl Hugh Jones drew attention to a unique script found on a Mexican artifact.⁸ However, none of the proposals has settled all questions about the Anthon Transcript.

Taylor Mammen, a BYU student working under the direction of Professor S. Kent Brown, recently compared the Anthon Transcript characters to those used to write Old South Arabian and Old North Arabian. Those scripts, preserved first in personal names and spells, date from the seventh century B.C.⁹ Old South Arabian is particularly interesting because it was spoken and written not many hundred miles from the area where Lehi and his party reached the Indian Ocean and built their vessel to sail off to America. Moreover, there is good reason to believe that “the place which was called Nahom” (1 Nephi 16:34) lay within the population which wrote and spoke a *dialect* of Old South Arabian. Mammen’s unpublished manuscript demonstrates plausible relationships between Old South Arabian and 12 characters found on the piece of paper shown to Anthon as well as between Old North Arabian and 25 Anthon Transcript characters. Naturally, we do not know whether the sounds represented by the Old South Arabian letters are similar in any way to the sounds that the characters on the Anthon Transcript may have represented. □

- mighty factors in the achievement of God's purposes" (Roberts, *New Witnesses*, 2:vi–viii).
47. "A Plea in Bar of Final Conclusions," *Improvement Era* 16, February 1913, 313.
 48. *Ibid.*, 309.
 49. See "Originality in the Book of Mormon," *Improvement Era* 8, September 1905, 801–15; October 1905, 881–902.
 50. *New Witnesses*, 3:503–4.

What Is The Significance Of Zelp In The Study Of Book of Mormon Geography?
Kenneth W. Godfrey

1. *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, comp. and ed., Dean C. Jessee (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 324.
2. Reuben McBride, Diary, 3 June 1834, LDS Church Archives. For a detailed account regarding McBride's diary and the fact that it duplicates itself, see Kenneth W. Godfrey, "Zelp," *BYU Studies* 29/2 (1989): 34.
3. Moses Martin, Diary, LDS Church Archives.
4. Wilford Woodruff, Diary, LDS Church Archives. This entry is on a page headed "May 8th, 1834." See also Scott Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff's Journal* (Midvale, Utah: Signature, 1983), 1:10. John L. Sorenson, in a letter to the author, observes that the only period when an Indian might be known even approximately from the Rocky Mountains to the eastern part of the continent is likely limited to the Middle Woodland Period or Hopewell culture dating within the limits A.D. 1–500. It is possible, though less likely, that something of the same situation of widespread, interregional communication could date to the Mississippian Period, A.D. 1300–1600. It is of course also possible that the Zelp burial, which was near the surface at the mound's top, dated considerably later than the period of mound construction. For information regarding connections between Mesoamerica and the Hopewell Indians, see James B. Griffin, "Mesoamerica and the Eastern United States in Prehistoric Times," in *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966), 4:111–31; David S. Brose and N'omi Greber, *Hopewell Archaeology* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1979). Onandaga is the name of a tribe of Indians that belonged to the five-nation confederacy of the Iroquois who occupied upper New York State. See John Mohawk, "Origins of Iroquois Political Thought," *Northeast Indian Quarterly* 3 (summer 1986): 16–20.
5. Heber C. Kimball, Autobiography, LDS Church Archives. This was probably written after the Saints had arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. There is evidence that the autobiography was taken from *Times and Seasons* 6, 1 February 1845, 788.
6. George A. Smith, Journal, 2 June 1834, LDS Church Archives. The following note was appended: "a narrative of which is published in the Church History."
7. Joseph Smith, *Manuscript History of the Church*, Book A-1, 3 June 1834, LDS Church Archives, see n.1, addenda, p. 5. A second copy of the same material known as "Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-2," was apparently written entirely in the hand of Wilmer Benson. It differs from the Richards version in a dozen details of spelling, punctuation, and phrasing, but only two dif-

- ferences are substantive. Where Richards describes Zelp as "a man of God," Benson puts "a son of God," and Richards's "a great struggle with the Lamanites" reads in Benson, "the last great struggle with the Lamanites."
8. *Times and Seasons* 6, 1 January 1846, 1076.
 9. Joseph Smith, *He Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1902), 2:79–80. Compare 1948 edition, pp. 79–80. Fletcher B. Hammond states that Preston Nibley, Assistant Church Historian, had authorized him to say that "the 1904 edition of the Documentary History of the Church, Vol. II, at pages 79 and 80, correctly reports the 'Zelp' incident, and that that part of the 1934 [1948] edition of the same history which differs from it is erroneous. That is to say that the Prophet Joseph did not say: 'Onandagus who was known from the hill Cumorah, or, eastern sea to the Rocky Mountains'; but he did say: 'Onandagus, who was known from the eastern sea to the Rocky Mountains'; he did not say Zelp was killed 'during the last great struggle of the Lamanites and Nephites,' but he did say Zelp was killed in a battle . . . during a great struggle with the Lamanites." However, as we have shown previously, it is impossible to know exactly what Joseph said on these matters. Therefore, even Preston Nibley's educated statement may attribute more to Joseph Smith than the facts warrant. Fletcher B. Hammond, *Geography of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing, 1959), 103, see pp. 100–103.
 10. See John L. Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*, 2 vols., ed. Richard L. Predmore (New York: Dover, 1969).
 11. Letter of Joseph Smith to John M. Bernhisel, 16 November 1841, in Jessee, *Personal Writings*, 502. For a discussion of other journal and diary entries concerning the possible location of Book of Mormon lands, see Ross T. Christensen, "The River of Nephi: An Archeological Commentary on an Old Diary Entry," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology* 158 (December 1984): 1–9. Christensen discusses some diary entries of Charles L. Walker, Reuben McBride, and Levi Hancock, and then treats the topic "How Much Did the Prophet Know?" (about Book of Mormon geography and archaeological claims).
 12. See Donald Q. Cannon, "Zelp Revisited," in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint History: Illinois*, ed. H. Dean Garrett (Provo, Utah: BYU Department of Church History and Doctrine, 1995), 107.
 13. See, for example, John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1985), 8–23; John E. Clark, "A Key for Evaluating Nephite Geographies," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 1 (1989): 20–70. Even though most events of Nephite history may have taken place within a relatively small area, it is evident that cultural transmissions radiated out from Central America, both to the north and to the south; see "Mesoamericans in Pre-Spanish South America," in John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1992), 215–17, and "Mesoamericans in Pre-Columbian North America," in Welch, ed., *Reexploring*, 218–20.
 14. George Q. Cannon, "Editorial," *Juvenile*

- Instructor* 22/4 (1887): 221.
15. B. H. Roberts, *New Witnesses for God II* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1951), 3:501–2.
 16. This information was shared with me by John L. Sorenson, in a letter dated 1 June 1999.
 17. "Book of Mormon Students Meet," *Deseret Evening News*, 25 May 1903, 7.
 18. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation: Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1956), see 3:232–36.
 19. Cannon, "Zelp Revisited," 109.

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1. "Are the Jaredites an Extinct People?" *Improvement Era* 6, 1902–1903, 43–44.
2. See *JBMS* 8/1 (1999): 73.
3. Based on Peter Kendall, "Answers Surface for Lake Enigma," *Chicago Tribune*, 8 February 1999.
4. P. Kyle McCarter Jr., "Over the Transom: Three more Arrowheads," *Biblical Archaeology Review* (May/June 1999): 42–43.
5. Matthew Roper first noted the name Aha. John A. Tvedtnes drew the article to our attention.
6. Lyndon W. Cook, ed., *David Whitmer Interviews: A Restoration Witness* (Orem, Utah: Grandin Book, 1991), 198.
7. See John L. Sorenson, "The Book of Mormon as a Mesoamerican Record," in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997), 414–17.
8. Edward H. Ashment, "The Book of Mormon and the Anthon Transcript: An Interim Report," *Sunstone* 5, 1980, 29–30; Ariel L. Crowley, "The Anthon Transcript," *Improvement Era* 47 (1944): 542, 576–83; Crowley, "The Anthon Transcript and the Maya Glyphs," *Improvement Era* 55, 1952, 644–45; and Carl Hugh Jones, "The 'Anthon Transcript' and Two Mesoamerican Cylinder Seals," *Society for Early Historic Archaeology Newsletter* 122 (September 1970): 1–8.
9. For the alphabetic signs, see G. Lankester Harding, *An Index and Concordance of Pre-Islamic Arabian Names and Inscriptions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 6. On the history of the language, see John L. Hayes, "Arabic," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*, ed. Eric M. Meyers et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1:166–69.

Credits: In the previous issue (8/1), the painting of a New Zealand Maori settlement used on pages 4–5 was *The Time of Kai* by Gottfried Lindauer 1907, oil on canvas. Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, gift of Mr. H. E. Partridge, 1915. We appreciate Louis Midgley's facilitating our use of this illustration. In the same issue, the pictures on pages 44–45 and 47 were taken from a mural by Diego Rivera in the National Palace in Mexico. Used with the permission of Dolores Olmedo.