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## In Memoriam, Franklin S. Harris Jr.

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**Abstract** In memory of Franklin S. Harris Jr. and his contribution to Book of Mormon research.



## IN MEMORIAM FRANKLIN S. HARRIS JR.

Well-known Book of Mormon researcher Franklin S. Harris Jr. died 13 August 1999 in St. George, Utah. He had lived in Rockville, Utah, for twenty-one years since retiring from the physics faculty of the University of Utah.

Harris was one of the sons of Franklin S. Harris, president of Brigham Young University, and traveled widely with his father before earning a bachelor's degree from BYU and then a doctorate from the California Institute of Technology. While a missionary in the European Mission office in London under President John A. Widtsoe, he was assigned to gather information on archaeological and historical materials at the British Museum that constituted evidence in favor of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

The results were published in the 1930s as a small book under the pair's joint authorship titled *Seven Claims of the Book of Mormon: A Collection of Evidences*. It constituted the first substantial body of Book of Mormon studies published by LDS scientists. In 1953 Harris published *The Book of Mormon: Message and Evidences*, a volume along the same lines as *Seven Claims*. He was a contributing editor to the *Improvement Era* for thirty-one years. A majority of the material in his regular column in that church periodical concerned Book of Mormon evidences. He maintained an active interest in research on the Nephite scripture almost to the time of his death at age eighty-seven.