Four Oil Paintings Illustrating Book of Mormon Events

Ernel LeRoy Anderson

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FOUR OIL PAINTINGS ILLUSTRATING
BOOK OF MORMON EVENTS

A Thesis
presented to the
Department of Art
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

In partial fulfillment
of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

by

HERNIEL LEHOY ANDERSON

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem. The problem is to create four oil paintings illustrating Book of Mormon events.

How the Problem Arose. It would seem that the major portion of our heritage in world art has been inspired by religion. In Christianity alone a great store of art has grown up. The stories of the Bible have been represented in paintings down through the centuries. While studying art history and while visiting the art galleries of Europe, the writer was impressed with the great volume of paintings that have sacred scripture as their subject. Indeed, the Bible is a rich source of subject matter, but no less rich in subject matter for the serious painter is latter-day revealed scripture of which the Book of Mormon stands foremost.

As a missionary in the Southwest Indian Mission, the writer became intensely interested in the origin and history of the American Indian. As a missionary tool the Book of Mormon was very effective, but it was felt that with more illustrations its effectiveness might be increased.

Importance of the Problem. There is a dearth of Book of Mormon illustration when compared with that of the Bible. Yet there are themes in the Book of Mormon that would seem to equal or even surpass those of other scriptures.
Survey of Existing Book of Mormon Illustration. A survey was made of Book of Mormon illustrations insofar as they were accessible. Though narrow in scope, there have been some notable efforts made by a few individuals. George M. Ottinger was one of the first significant Book of Mormon illustrators. He did a series of paintings illustrating the Book of Mormon. ¹ Minerva Teichert is another artist of note in Book of Mormon illustration. ² Milton E. Swensen has done a series of eighteen ink drawings for Book of Mormon Stories for Young Latter-Day Saints by Emma Marr Peterson ³ that appear to be the best yet published in that medium. Goff Dowding has painted a fine mural of Samuel the Lamanite. ⁴ The most recent work of significance in Book of Mormon illustration is a series of twelve oil paintings by Arnold Friberg. ⁵

Review of Art of the Scriptures. A brief review of Bible and Christian painting was made to gain a perspective of religious and scriptural art. ⁶

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¹ Reproductions of his paintings may be seen in the book A Voice From the Dust, by Genet Bingham Dee (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1939).

² Two of these paintings are in the Brigham Young University collection. Others were exhibited in conjunction with the performance of LeRoy Robertson's Book of Mormon Oratorio at the George Albert Smith Fieldhouse.


⁴ The original painting may be seen in the Mexican Branch Chapel, 232 West Eighth South, Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁵ These paintings may be seen on exhibit in the Bureau of Information, Temple Square, Salt Lake City, Utah. Reproductions of these paintings have been published and are available at LDS Church bookstores.

⁶ Two books with extensive illustrations were used: Clifton Harby, The Bible in Art (Garden City, N.Y.: Garden City Pub. Co. Inc., 1936) and Baldwin H. Ward, Bible and Christianity in 1000 Pictures (Los Angeles: Year Pub., 1952).
Events to Be Illustrated. The four events to be illustrated have been chosen with two purposes in mind: (1) to cover a representative span of the Book of Mormon record; (2) to find events of spiritual significance. One event was chosen from the Jaredite period. The other three events are from the early, middle, and late Nephite periods. The events chosen for illustration are as follows:

(1) Coriantumr resting upon his sword before slaying Shiz (Ether 15:30)

(2) An Angel of the Lord appearing before Laman and Lemuel as they beat Nephi and Sam (1 Nephi 3:28).

(3) The vision of Alma the younger and the sons of Mosiah (Mosiah 27:11).

(4) Christ calling Nephi from among the multitude before the temple (III Nephi 11:18).

Illustration. Since the subject of this thesis is illustration, it is in order that we define illustration. The word illustration in itself connotes a representation of something.¹ Thus an illustration, we may assume, would be done in a representational style of painting. From the dictionary we learn that the illustration has two purposes: (A) to explain or make clear, and (B) to decorate or ornament.

A good illustration will attract the interest of a person with sufficient force that he will want to read the text.¹ An artist has the further purpose of organizing the various art elements—line, shape,

texture, tone, and color—to achieve the result of order and unity within the composition.\(^1\)

The illustrator strives to familiarize himself with facts, physical details, and background material so that his illustration may be convincing, and then he embellishes the facts with his own imagination.\(^2\) He should never become so involved with facts that he loses sight of organization. A good illustrator finds no trouble harmonizing facts and form in a composition. Where facts are lacking, the artist is free to supply details as it best suits the organization.

An effort has been made to base these paintings on fact insofar as the facts are available. But facts have not dictated the organization of the particular painting, nor have they been ignored in an effort to achieve organization in the individual illustration.

Delimitations. It shall not be the purpose of this written work to give an exhaustive account of the process of the painting. No attempt will be made to treat media other than a brief statement of the materials used. The painting was done on 1/8 inch untempered masonite. The smooth surface was prepared with gesso in the manner prescribed by Doerner.\(^3\) Oil tube colors were used and, for painting medium, an emulsion of terpentine and Dorland's wax. The wax was chosen in order that the artist might

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\(^2\)Loomis, p. 179.

\(^3\)Max Doerner, The Materials of the Artist and Their Use in Painting, Rev. Ed. (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1919).
achieve a mat or non-glossy surface finish.

Definition of Terms.

A bow-guard is any covering of the lower left arm to protect the arm from the strike of the bowstring when shooting.

Cotaras are a type of footwear worn by the Indians of Mexico and Central America.

A fez is a form of high-crowned brimless hat.

Foil refers to anything that serves by contrast of color or quality to adorn or set off another thing to advantage.

Form is the orderly arrangement or manner of co-ordinating the elements of an artistic production.

The format is the shape and size of the picture area.

Gesture is that which the figure is doing expressed in the motions of the limbs and body.

Greaves are armor for the leg below the knee.

A huipil is a short rectangle of cloth with a hole for the head worn by Indian girls of Mexico and Central America.

Jaredites refers to the earliest Book of Mormon people who migrated from the tower of Babel and became a numerous host on the American continent.

The Lamanites were a rebellious branch of the Nephites who remained in a somewhat primitive state through the Book of Mormon period, and whose descendants are the American Indians.

Maya designates the highest culture of pre-Columbian times in Central America of which some vestigial tribes survive.

A medium is the materials used by the artist for his artistic
expression, such as oil paints, water colors, charcoal, and so forth.

A motif is a salient feature, or theme, of a work of art.

The Mulekites were the third group of Book of Mormon people to arrive in Central America. They later met and joined the Nephites and afterwards were identified with them.

The Nephites were the second group of Book of Mormon people to arrive from the Old World and establish a civilization.

Olmec designates a style of art within the Maya culture which dates to the Book of Mormon period.

A poncho is a long cloak like a blanket with a slit in the middle for the head.

Tone is the general effect of light and shade, together with color, in a work of art.
CHAPTER II

COREANTUMR LEANING ON HIS SWORD
TO REST BEFORE SLAYING SHIZ

Event to Be Illustrated. The first event to be illustrated was chosen from the Jaredite period of the Book of Mormon. The event took place at the very end of the period when the Jaredites were on the battlefield in their final struggle from which only one man emerged.

...behold Shiz had fainted with the loss of blood. And it came to pass that when Coriantumr had leaned upon his sword, that he rested a little, he smote off the head of Shiz.1

The event was chosen as a representative event of the Jaredite era. It is the climax of a long and bloody history of that people.

Significant Points. After a study of the text and the events leading up to the particular event to be illustrated, certain points seemed significant:

(1) The outcome of the struggle was foreknown and foretold. The prophet Ether had prophesied that but for repentance, every soul of the Jaredites would be destroyed except Coriantumr (Ether 13:20-21).

(2) This final battle followed seven days of hard fighting and about thirteen years of wars and bloodshed (Ether 13, 14, and 15).

(3) Men, women, and children fought (Ether 15:15).

(4) The whole face of the land was covered with dead bodies (Ether 14:21).

1 Joseph Smith, Jr. (trans.), The Book of Mormon, Ether 15:29-30. Hereafter, all Book of Mormon references will be noted by book, chapter, and verse in parentheses following the citation.
(5) Two million people had been killed in battle (Ether 14:21).

(6) They used shields, breastplates, headplates, and were clothed after the manner of war (Ether 15:15).

(7) They were drunken with anger (Ether 15:22).

(8) They were large and mighty men as to the strength of men (Ether 15:26).

(9) Both men were exhausted and had lost much blood (Ether 15:27-32).

Identifying the Period. The Jaredites left Babylon about 3100-2800 B.C. The post-flood period is identified as the Early Dynastic Sumerian Culture in Old World Archeology. The final struggle of the Jaredites occurred about 300-200 B.C. which makes Jaredite occupation of this continent about 2500 years duration. Ancient Mexican writers termed those who lived on this continent during this era "The Ancient Ones" or "Giants".

In New World Archeology those whose remains date to this period are termed "lower archaic".

Principal Data Obtained in Research.

Book of Mormon. The Jaredites were "large and mighty men" (Ether 15:26); they had silks, linen, gold and silver (Ether 9:17), iron,

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1Hilton R. Hunter and Thomas Stuart Ferguson, Ancient America and the Book of Mormon (Oakland: Kolob Book Co., 1950), pp. 24, 35.
3Hunter and Ferguson, pp. 53, 54.
4Ibid., p. 21.
brass, and copper (Ether 11:23). Swords of steel are mentioned (Ether 7:9) as well as shields, breastplates and headplates (Ether 15:15). Large breastplates of brass and copper are specifically mentioned. The design of these implements is described as "of exceeding curious workmanship" (Ether 11:27).

Old World Archeology. The Sumerians wore kilts or a wrap-around sarong that went under the right arm and over the left shoulder. Some soldiers and others wore long capes or cloaks. In the case of soldiers, metal buttons or plates were attached to clothing as defensive armor. A simple leather or metal helmet, which covered the ears, was worn by the common soldier. Leaders wore a padded metal helmet which was tooled to represent a popular hair style. Rulers wore a tapered headdress or coro-
net. Bull's or ram's heads or horns were a popular motif for rulers.

Priests, rulers, and laymen of some dynasties had head and chin shaven. If not shaven, they grew heavy black hair and beards. The upper lip was usually shaved. Beards and hair were braided or separated into locks and curled.

Weapons in use were the sword, dagger, hand axe, bow and arrow, spear, shield, and four-wheeled chariot.

New World Archeology. Many figurines have been discovered that date within the Jaredite period. Types of dress represented include a great variety of turbans and a peculiar stylized ram's horn headdress. Large pins are affixed to some turbans. Large earrings, earplugs, and necklaces are worn by both men and women. The figurines are otherwise nude, but the hips are grooved and it seems logical that the figurines once had breechcloths of skins or fabric that have long since decayed.
Dynamic Patterns and Basic Rhythms. To arrive at a basic composition, a variety of dynamic patterns were drawn which seemed to suggest anger and violence. Diagonals seemed most forcefully to suggest the opposing forces of the combatants. The zig zag suggested uncontrolled anger and the clash of combat. Opposing diagonals seemed best also to suggest the weariness of a man leaning on his sword. After experimentation a modified "Z" pattern was selected.

Clay Modeling as an Aid in Planning. Clay modeling was employed to give a three dimensional quality in the lighting effects of the paintings. Though some help in this respect, it was felt that clay modeling was of more use in visualizing and realizing the positions of the figures in relation to one another. Clay modeling was employed to achieve this proximity of figures in the composition.

Though there was a desire to give a feeling of some depth in the paintings, a feeling of deep space (that clay models suggest) seemed relatively unimportant in these illustrations. Therefore, after using clay modeling as an aid in illustration, it was concluded that it is not necessarily helpful unless the artist has the particular aim of achieving a feeling of deep space and has some difficulty in realizing this aim or has difficulty in plotting the relative positions of figures in the composition.

Color Planning. In planning the colors the question arose as to the time of day the event occurred. The Book of Mormon gives no suggestion as to the time of day of the final struggle. The end of day was chosen
because it seemed symbolic to this, the final chapter in the history of a great nation. Therefore, reds and oranges were suggested and a double complimentary color scheme was selected employing reds and greens, blues, and oranges. Red and yellow were arbitrarily assigned to Coriantumr and blue to Shiz.

Arriving at the Final Pose. Numerous poses that met the requirements of the text were drawn. The model was drawn in various positions—leaning upon a sword, in standing position, crouched position, and even sitting position (see plate 1). The final pose was chosen because the gesture seemed best suited to the theme and composition. Shiz was drawn on a diagonal to Coriantumr in order to set up a basic tension in the composition.

Costume Studies. In designing the costumes, it was necessary to imagine the natural evolution of the Old World dress forward through two centuries of history. More concrete material is offered by the figurines of New World Archeology, and they suggested the breechcloths of the men and the modified turbans of the boy and woman warrior in the illustration. Coriantumr's ram's horn helmet is also derived from New World figurines.

The Book of Mormon mentions swords, breastplates, shields, and head plates. None of this armor is shown on the figurines of the period, so it was necessary to use the imagination to project the design of these articles. Coriantumr's sword is similar in design to a Sumerian dagger. The ram's horn helmet, as well as Shiz's helmet, while employing different motifs, are in shape much like a Sumerian helmet that has been found.
Shields have been given traditional shapes since the circular and rectangular shields seem to be basic to many widely separated cultures. Breastplates, however, were constructed differently than the European type we usually think of when the term is mentioned. An effort was made to harmonize the breastplate with early Mexican costume, and so a type of metal yoke is used. This is similar to cloth and skin yokes that were worn on ceremonial occasions by the Indians. Coriantumr is wearing greaves and bow-guards of leather with metal plates attached as a type of defensive armor. Leather girdles also have metal plates attached. This is following Sumerian armor which appears to have had metal buttons attached to leather garments.

A type of sandal seemed to be the logical footwear for the Jaredites although we find no reference to any type of footwear (see plates 1, 2, and 3 which contain some costume studies).

**Line Drawing.** A line drawing was made integrating the selected pose, the dynamic pattern, and selected costumes. A treeless plain, littered with dead bodies, was chosen as setting to heighten the feeling of aloneness that Coriantumr must soon have felt. One circular building, a religious mound, was used to break up the monotony of the plain. The building shadow and lines of bodies form the modified "Z" composition with the standing figure of Coriantumr bisecting and overlapping this geometric pattern. It was felt this organization would seem to give a cohesion to the entire composition.

**Tone Study.** A conte crayon tone study was then made to plan the basic
GESTURE AND COSTUME STUDIES FOR CORIANTUMR
ADDITIONAL GESTURE AND COSTUME STUDIES FOR CORIANTURR AND SHIZ
light and dark pattern of the painting. The tonal study was a help in achieving the feeling of solidarity in the finished painting.

Flat Color Painting. Using the median tone color for each object, all areas of the painting were filled in without any attempt at modeling. The purpose in this was to arrive at a harmony of colors by visualizing relationships of all parts in color before any modeling should obscure these parts.

Final Color Modeling. The shadows were painted and then the high lights. As the forms began to emerge, certain parts of the painting began to take on importance that was not their due. The design on Shiz's shield was too dominant. Rather than subdue the design, it was deemed wiser to eliminate the design entirely. The shield itself was of sufficient shape, color, and tone to carry the importance it deserves in the composition.

The shield of Coriantumr also presented a problem. Due to its shape and position, overlapping the central figure, it became a bullseye focusing attention on itself at the expense of the remainder of the picture. But rather than eliminate it or change the shape, it was made to hold its own place by subduing the color and tone and by breaking up this very formal shape with dents and stains (compare figures 3 and 4, plate 3).

At first Coriantumr was painted without the beard, the cape, and the tails of the breechcloth, but in order to more effectively stabilize the composition these verticals were introduced. They repeat and add emphasis to other verticals in the painting such as Coriantumr's arm
**PLATE III**

**Fig. 1** Line Drawing

**Fig. 2** Tone Study

**Fig. 3** First Painting

**Fig. 4** Painting with Changes

*The only photograph at this stage is defective in the upper right corner.*
holding the shield, Shiz's breechcloth, the boy's arm, and the wall of
the building.

Steps were added to the building to repeat with variation other
zig zag rhythms in the painting. The mountain in the distance assumed
too much importance and so was diminished in size in the later painting.

The ram's horn motif of Coriantumr's helmet presented a definite
design problem in that it, too, became a powerful bullseye drawing the
eye to itself and holding the eye as it monotonously traced and retraced
the curve of the horn (see plate 3 figure 3). After some work and study
on the problem, a workable ram's horn motif was developed that seemed to
keep its place well and was not monotonous (see figure 4 plate 3).

Shiz's head was facing the right in the early stages of the paint-
ing but was turned face down in later painting for the purpose of giving
the feeling that he had fainted rather than that he was sleeping. This
position tended to lead the eye more effectively into the picture and
give a certain urgency to the action.

Dented armor and blood were added in the final painting. It was
felt that this realistic touch better typified the Jaredites who had a
violent and bloody history.

The frieze on the building is a clue to the next action following
that which is portrayed in which Coriantumr cut off the head of Shiz.
Shiz raised upon his hands and then fell lifeless.

See a reproduction of the final painting in color, plate 4.
CORIANTUM RESTING UPON HIS SWORD
BEFORE SLAYING SHIZ

...behold Shiz had fainted with the loss of blood. And it came to pass that when Coriantumr had leaned upon his sword, that he rested a little, he smote off the head of Shiz (Ether 15:29-30).
CHAPTER III

AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARING
BEFORE LAMAN AND LEMUEL, AS THEY BEAT SAM AND NEPHI

Event to Be Illustrated. The second event to be illustrated was taken from the opening pages of the Book of Mormon and depicts an incident that happened just a short distance from Jerusalem among Nephi and his brothers.

...we hid ourselves in the cavity of a rock. And it came to pass that Laman was angry with me, and also with my father; and also was Lemuel, for he hearkened unto the words of Laman. Wherefore Laman and Lemuel did speak many hard words unto us, their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod. And it came to pass as they smote us with a rod, behold, an angel of the Lord came and stood before them, and he spake unto them, saying: Why do ye smite your younger brother with a rod? Know ye not that the Lord hath chosen him to be a ruler over you and this because of your iniquities? (I Nephi 3:27-29)

This event was chosen as a significant event in the early history of the Nephites. It is the first heavenly manifestation to the rebellious sons of Lehi who, in spite of the heavenly reproof, continued to rebel and became the leaders of the nation of Lamanites.

Significant Points. Certain points connected with this particular event stand out as significant:

(1) Nephi's brothers had given up hope of obtaining the brass plates and were intent upon returning to their father (I Nephi 3:14).

(2) Nephi was determined to keep the commandments of God, and so to try again after two failures (I Nephi 3:15).

(3) Their riches had been confiscated, and Laban had tried to murder them (I Nephi 3:25-26).

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(4) They hid in a cave for protection (I Nephi 3:27).

(5) Laman and Lemuel were older and felt that their leadership should be undisputed (I Nephi 3:28).

(6) Laman and Lemuel were quick-tempered and willing to resort to force to accomplish their desires (I Nephi 3:28).

(7) A heavenly visitation could hardly deter them from their wrong doing (I Nephi 4:14).

Identifying the Period. The Book of Mormon record gives the exact date of the departure of Lehi and his family from Jerusalem as "the first year of the reign of Zedekiah" (I Nephi 1:14) or 600 years before the birth of Christ.

Dynamic Patterns and Basic Rhythms. For this illustration a pattern was chosen which was based on an inverted "U". This inverted "U" is repeated in varying widths, heights, and sizes in the legs, arms, rods, and cave roof of the illustration. For basic rhythm plan, see figure 18 plate 5. The inverted "U" composition was selected because the abstract form suggests the sadness of a down-turned mouth, and yet in this pattern there was opportunity to suggest action and power. There was a desire to subtly suggest a note of sadness in the illustration because a display of disharmony within a family circle is an unhappy occurrence. Though the suggestion of sadness was the intended purpose in the choice of the inverted "U" composition, it was discovered by the artist that a note of sadness does not necessarily follow in the painting. While the composition seems a good one for this particular painting, the note of sadness is hardly in evidence.
COMPOSITION AND GESTURE STUDIES FOR LAMAN AND LEAVEL PAINTING

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Tone Planning. In planning the tonal composition of this painting, some preliminary pencil drawings were made (see plate 5 figure 19 and plate 7 figure 1). Due to the difficulty of depicting light effects in a darkened setting, special tone studies were necessary in planning this particular illustration. Before applying color in the final painting, a tone drawing was made using Indian red. This drawing served for tonal reference for painting in the color areas later.

Color Planning. It was decided to use crimson, blue and purple on the three main figures in the composition because they were preferred colors in ancient Israel. Since Lehi and his family were of the wealthy class (1 Nephi 3:25) of Jerusalem, it is reasonable to assume they would be dressed in the most popular colors and in the highest fashion of the times. A contrasting color, a golden yellow, was used for the angel to set him apart from the mortal beings. These basic colors are repeated in varied sizes, shapes, and strengths around the composition in an attempt to lead the eye around in the painting.

Arriving at Final Poses. A paramount problem existed in the subject of this particular painting. There were two smiters and two being smitten. The problem was to design two equal subjects in such a way that they would not have equal importance in the composition, and having unequal importance, still hold together in a harmonious grouping. Plate 5 shows how the artist sought to resolve this problem. It was finally resolved by placing Lemuel nearer and Laman farther away; Laman facing the

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viewer and Lemuel facing away; one in backlight and one in front light; Laman with rod pointing up and Lemuel with rod pointing down; Laman looking up and Lemuel looking down. This design gave contrast, and although the listing sounds repetitious and monotonous, in the actual painting these elements seem to harmonize.

Those being smitten are also contrasted in a similar manner—Sam kneeling and Nephi standing; Nephi looking up and Sam looking down; Sam facing the right and Nephi facing the left; Sam near and Nephi farther away; Nephi in back light and Sam in front light. To see the evolution of the poses, see the sequence of figures 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 14, 17, 18, and 19, plate 5.

A satisfactory attitude for the angel posed a difficult problem. There was a desire that the angel display a kindly, spiritual, benevolent and ethereal aspect but at the same time show the power, authority and finality of the priesthood of God. To help resolve this problem, a model was employed to make two studies in oils of (1) an angel showing the love, benevolence, and spirituality of God (see plate 6 figure 1); and (2) an angel in an attitude of power and authority (see plate 6 figure 2). The first angel was obviously too gentle and effeminate in aspect while the second seemed more dynamic and powerful than the description of the event seemed to dictate. In the final painting the artist attempted to combine these two aspects in the angel. At first painting, the angel was too feminine in countenance, and it was necessary to repaint the face to achieve a more virile, masculine appearance.

Principal Data Obtained in Research. Garments of the Hebrew period were
PLATE VI

Fig. 1 Gentle Angel

Fig. 2 Dynamic Angel

7-OIL STUDIES FOR AN ANGEL

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of three basic types:

(1) A short linen or leather kilt or skirt\(^1\) worn with a short sleeved shirt much like our modern day T-shirt.\(^2\) A belt or girdle\(^3\) was worn about the waist and secured with a toggle pin\(^4\) or tied with the ends hanging at the side.

(2) A close-fitting tunic or dress (worn by elders or wealthy class).\(^5\)

(3) An outer garment open at the front with sleeves or some type of arm covering.\(^6\)

Articles of clothing were plain or decorated along the edges.\(^7\)

Purple, crimson and blue were popular colors among the Hebrews.\(^8\)

Headgear. A common type of headgear in use was a simple strip of cloth wound around the head and secured with the ends hanging over the right ear. A variety of turbans, a skull cap, and a stocking cap were also used.\(^9\)

Footgear. Hebrews commonly went barefoot or wore leather sandals with thongs. High boots with turned-up toes were rare and probably worn only by the wealthy.\(^10\)

Hair Style. A short or long chin beard with the upper lip shaved was common fashion among the Hebrews. The hair was long, shoulder length or close-cropped.\(^11\)

Costume Studies. The costumes were based on the description of the

\(^1\)Wright, p. 64.
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 65.
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 64.
\(^4\)Ibid., p. 68.
\(^5\)Ibid., p. 65.
\(^6\)Ibid.
\(^7\)Ibid., pp. 66-67.
\(^8\)Ibid., p. 62.
\(^9\)Ibid., p. 65.
\(^10\)Ibid., p. 68.
\(^11\)Ibid., pp. 67-68.
Fig. 1 Tone Drawing

Fig. 2 Tone Painting

*Fig. 3 Flat Color Painting

ANGEL APPEARING BEFORE LACHAN AND LEMPFL AS THEY BEAT SAM AND NEPHI

* Photograph is defective but is necessary to show this state of development.

Fig. 4 Color Modeling

PLATE VII
clothes reported in the research findings. Lehi's family was wealthy, and so Nephi and his brothers undoubtedly wore clothes of the more wealthy class of Jerusalem. All are wearing the high boots with turned up toes, but Laman and Lemuel are dressed more vainly with the long tunic and robe and with decorative borders on some articles of clothing. This is in keeping with their desires for wealth and the high life of Jerusalem (I Nephi 2:11). Sam and Nephi are dressed more simply with Nephi wearing the stocking cap of the time. Lemuel is wearing a fez. Although not mentioned as an article of Israelite dress, headgear resembling a fez is found repeatedly in New World Archeology, and therefore, it was assumed that the Nephites brought this style of headgear from the Old World.

The dress of the angel is a simple long-flowing robe with a border design only around the neck of the garment. It was desired to keep the angel quite simple and plain to set him apart from the other figures in the picture.

**Line Drawing.** One major compositional change that was made in the line drawing was to shift the angel from the left side of the format to the right side (see plate 5). This seemed to give a much better relationship of figures and improve the eye path considerably. The result was that the angel now appeared in front of Laman rather than behind him. Lines and rhythms in the painting seemed to lead more naturally to the angel and back around in the picture.

Another change was to raise Nephi's arm as if he were trying to protect his face from the blow by Laman. This change did not hinder the
basic composition and seemed to improve the gesture.

Color Painting. A tone painting was first made using Indian red, and when it was dry, the median color was applied to each area. In this particular painting a somewhat different procedure was followed than in the first. Textured areas were alternated with smooth color areas. This procedure was followed in order to achieve more variety and interest in the work. While the technique seemed to achieve this goal, it created some difficulty in realizing an over-all unity. It was found necessary in the later color modeling to texture more areas in order to achieve the desired unity.

Final Color Modeling. From the start the cave walls and roof demanded too much attention. It was necessary to neutralize them to make them remain a foil to the action in the foreground. The cave entrance also appeared too important, but by darkening and neutralizing its color, it was made to harmonize with other elements in the picture.

In order to show the brilliance of the light emanating from the angel, Lemuel's tunic was painted to appear translucent—allowing the light to penetrate it. This, it seems, was compositionally wrong because it broke up the large dark shape of the foreground figure into smaller, lighter shapes that caught and held the eye rather than allowing the eye to proceed on into the composition. Also, the sheerness of the tunic gave the figure a feminine appearance (see figure 4, plate 7). In the later painting Lemuel's tunic was painted to appear opaque. A unity of shape was thus restored to the tunic assisting the eye to pass freely to the
center of interest.

The angel, being large in proportion and light in tone, tended to over-balance the painting to the right. To compensate for this, the two stones were painted in the lower left corner of the format. These stones repeat the inverted "U" rhythm and direct the eye to the center of interest. However, they were at first painted too dominant and had to be subdued by using a lighter tone to make the edges less distinct.

It was necessary to re-work the angel's face in order to give him a masculine virile countenance. This was accomplished by the use of more straight lines and angles and by changing the hair style.

See the final color rendering, plate 8.
...we hid ourselves in the cavity of a rock. And it came to pass that Laman was angry with me, and also with my father; and also was Lemuel, for he hearkened unto the words of Laman. Therefore Laman and Lemuel did speak many hard words unto us, their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod. And it came to pass as they smote us with a rod, behold, an angel of the Lord came and stood before them, and he spake unto them, saying: Why do ye smite your younger brother with a rod? Know ye not that the Lord hath chosen him to be a ruler over you and this because of your iniquities (I Nephi 3:27-29)?
CHAPTER IV

THE VISION OF ALMA THE YOUNGER
AND THE SONS OF MOSIAH

Event to Be Illustrated. The third event to be illustrated in order of occurrence was the appearance of an angel to five young men as they journeyed about to destroy the Church of Christ. These men were sons of the Nephite leaders (both national and ecclesiastical).

And as I said unto you as they were going about rebelling against God, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto them; and he descended as it were in a cloud; and he spake as it were a voice of thunder which caused the earth to shake upon which they stood. And so great was their astonishment that they fell to the earth and understood not the words which he spake unto them. (Mosiah 27:11-12)

Significant Points. The following points stand out as significant in a study of the complete text:

(1) Alma the younger was the wayward son of the High Priest of the church (Mosiah 26:17, 27:8).

(2) Mosiah was king, and his four sons, like Alma the younger, were rebellious (Mosiah 27:1 and 34).

(3) They were seeking to destroy the Church of God contrary to the laws of the land and of God (Mosiah 27:10).

(4) They were prosperous and wealthy and were very influential men among the people (Mosiah 27:7-8).

(5) They were the cause of much dissension among the people (Mosiah 27:9).

(6) The angel appeared as it were in a cloud (Mosiah 27:11).

(7) The angel spoke with a voice of thunder which caused the earth to shake (Mosiah 27:11).
(8) They fell to the earth in a state of shock (Mosiah 27:12).

(9) The angel came as a result of the faith and prayers of the people and of Alma, the High Priest (Mosiah 27:14).

(10) The angel's purpose was to convince Alma the younger and the sons of Mosiah of the power and authority of God (Mosiah 27:14).

(11) Alma the younger's astonishment was so great he became speechless and helpless for two days and nights (Mosiah 27:19 and 23).

(12) The result of the manifestation was complete conversion and a complete repentance of their actions (Mosiah 27:32, 35 and 36).

**Dynamic Patterns and Basic Rhythms.** In keeping with the text, there was a desire to design a composition that would suggest astonishment, shock, fear, and a manifest thundering, shaking power. To accomplish this feeling, a circular composition was selected in which the forms seem to explode toward the borders. In this type of composition it was possible to achieve a great deal of action which itself seems to suggest loudness, instability and power.

**Final Poses.** It was determined that the angel should be the central figure in the composition and that he should embody the power and authority of God as was his announced purpose (Mosiah 27:14). Therefore, the angel was drawn in an action pose with arms, legs, and clothes, themselves, in a somewhat exploding fashion. The angel was drawn oversize in proportion to other figures in the composition so that he might dominate the scene. His color is a fiery red-orange with white hair which is in keeping with the character of some descriptions of heavenly beings on record. The appearance of this angel is quite different in

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mode of manifestation as compared with the appearance of the angel to Laman and Lemuel (compare Mosiah 27:11 and I Nephi 3:29). So the character and aspect of the angel in this particular illustration is noticeably different from that of the first. The artist feels that in this angel the feeling of power and authority was realized that may be somewhat lacking in the Laman and Lemuel painting.

The poses of other figures in the composition became that of animals and men when they are startled and afraid—the animals rearing and stampeding; the men being tossed about by the unexpected happenings. It seems natural that the horses and dog would be panicked and the men dumbfounded by the thunderous noise and the shaking of the earth beneath their feet. One man has been thrown from his horse and appears stunned. Another, whose horse is rearing, is trying to cover an ear from the thunderous noise and, in the same motion, shade his eyes to get a better understanding of the figure in the luminous cloud. A third man's mount has fallen and he is being pitched to the ground as he seeks to protect an ear from the thunderous clap. Two others are in the act of being thrown from their chariot as it nearly capsizes from the action of one horse rearing while the other tries to flee. Alma is the driver of the chariot.

Identifying the Period. The period was near 100 B.C.¹ Two groups (Nephites and Mulekites) originating at Jerusalem had met and united in

¹Book of Mormon, p. 187, assigned dates at the bottom of page.
the new land (Omni 14) about the year 200 B.C.\(^1\) Following this merger, they are referred to as Nephites. They had become a large and a wealthy nation (Mosiah 27:7). Most of the Nephites were Christians, but evidently the parents failed to properly train and teach their children, for many of the rising generation were scoffers and did not believe the traditions of their elders (Mosiah 26:1). Alma and the sons of Mosiah were leaders among this younger generation (Mosiah 27:8–10).

Principal Data Obtained in Research.

Book of Mormon. Concerning the Nephite dress at this particular time, the Book of Mormon states: "they became a large and wealthy people" (Mosiah 27:7), "some were proud and wore very costly apparel" (Alma 1:6), "they were neat and comely in appearance" (Alma 1:27), and they had an abundance of gold, silver, precious things, silk, fine-twined linen and all types of "good homely cloth" (Alma 1:29).

Dogs (Alma 16:10 and Mosiah 12:2) and horses (Alma 18:9–12 and 20:6), as well as other domestic animals, are mentioned.

The use of chariots (Alma 18:9–12 and 20:6) is also specifically mentioned during this period of time although they were in use by the Lamanites who generally were a less cultured and sophisticated group than the Nephites.

Old World Archeology. The reader is referred to the foregoing chapter which lists data on early Israelite peoples. In addition we learn that the Israelites also had horses and chariots.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Hunter and Ferguson, p. 129.

New World Archeology. In New World Archeology the Mulekite-Nephite nation is identified as the Maya culture. The Maya civilization, however, reached its greatest development after the Book of Mormon period, so it is necessary to limit the period of study of Maya artifacts. A style of Mayan art that dates well within the Mulekite-Nephite period is that designated Olmec art. Olmec artists have given us a good representation of the Book of Mormon peoples in their ceramic sculptures.

Much can be learned about their clothing and accessories from a study of Olmec baked clay figures. One thing becomes obvious in a study of Olmec figurines, and that is the great variety of designs of the various articles of clothing.

"In the warm climate of the Maya area, clothing as a protection from the elements has never been a necessity. Maya clothing was esteemed as a decoration..."2

Men wore a simple kilt with sometimes a wide girdle around the waist overlapping the top edge of the kilt. A twisted cloth or rope was sometimes worn around the middle of the girdle. Often the same type of material was worn for a necklace and as bracelets around the wrists. At other times a single or double wide-woven belt was worn with tassels decorating the ends. These were wrapped around the waist and secured with the belt ends hanging down at the left side. Huge necklaces (in appearance like Hawaiian leis) were worn as were a variety of bracelets for the upper arm.3

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Sandals were worn or they went barefooted. Earplugs and earrings were commonly used.

Headaddresses had a great variety of styles,\(^1\) but the motif of belt and bracelets was usually repeated in the headdress.

The upper part of the body was bare or covered with a cloak, "...which seems to have been a square or rectangle of cloth or an animal skin..."\(^2\) knotted over one shoulder.

Clay figures of a hairless edible breed of dog have been found by archeologists. These dogs were a large ancestor of the modern dwarf Chihuahua.\(^3\)

A prominent art motif of the time was the jaguar. The jaguar was an important religious symbol of the Rain God.

Early Chronicles of the New World. An early native Mexican writer, Ixtlilxochitl, grandson of the last king of Texcoco, wrote a history of the New World using as source material hieroglyphic writings he had inherited from his ancestors. His description of Ancient American dress is as follows:

"The Tultecas dressed the men and civilians in summertime with their cotton mantles and trunks; and in wintertime they put on some great wide sleeveless coats that came down to their knees, with their mantles and trunks. They wore shoes after their fashions, henequen...

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\(^1\)Ibid., (June 20, 1960) p. 62.

\(^2\)Brainerd, p. 68.

\(^3\)George C. Vaillant, The Aztecs of Mexico (Doubleday, Doran & Co. Inc.), plate 2.
cotargas or catles (leather sandals)...¹

The kings would always put on some plain white mantles, and other gray ones, with pearls and other carved precious stones... they would always put on their xicolxochitl gowns (long wide shirts) which came down to their knees in the same way as their mantles and trunks; They wore their cotton cotargas, with soles of gold; they would put on bracelets of gold and precious stones and necklaces of the same material...²

Costume Studies. Since the characters in this particular illustration were sons of the High Priest of the church and the king of the land, it was assumed that they would dress as did the wealthy people among the Nephites. It is to be remembered, however, that this is a period when the civilization is on the rise and should not reflect the glory of the civilization in full flower. Being wealthy then it seemed natural that these men would travel in the highest style of the times which appears to be by horse and chariot or horseback. The chariot, though big and awkward in design, has certain refinements that could be expected, such as quiver to hold bow and arrows, brass tires, brass tongue brace, gold hubs and gold front decoration.

Since the kilt appears to be the main item of clothing of the period, all men in the painting are wearing kilts except one who is wearing a breechcloth or "trunks" as it has been referred to above. Only one is wearing a cloak. All are wearing sandals of a type characteristic


²Ibid., pp. 324-25.
PLATE IX

GESTURE AND COMPOSITION STUDIES FOR CONVERSION OF ALMA THE YOUNGER AND THE SONS OF MOSIAH PAINTING

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of Ancient Central America.\(^1\) Headgear is varied—a skull cap on the man on the ground, none for the man on the rearing horse, a short fez on the closest man, a turbaned fez on the man in the center, and a gold helmet with encircling twisted cloth on Alma the younger. This seems in keeping with the archeological evidence regarding headgear of the period.

Alma is wearing a large necklace and woven belts typical of Olmec dress, also gold bow guards or bracelets on his lower arms. The others are wearing accessories in keeping with their dress or none at all.

Saddles and harnesses, while different in design from our own, are simple as the times might warrant but are ornate in the use of the stepped pyramid decor motif, padded seats, forehead ornament, and long quetzal bird plumes.

Hair is either shoulder length or short which is in keeping with the representations in Olmec art.

The clothing of the angel—long sleeved undergarment, short sleeved tunic, and long cape or cloak—was chosen principally for the overall abstract pattern they present. This strong abstract pattern was desired to give a feeling of force, power, and authority to the appearance of the angel. The diagonals and direct angular lines of the costume help to achieve this effect.

The difference in aspect of the angel in this illustration and the angel in the foregoing illustration can be explained in that each appeared in quite a different way according to the Book of Mormon description. Their purpose in appearing was different. The angel who

\(^1\)Hunter and Ferguson, p. 321.
appeared to Laman and Lemuel came to announce that they should return again to Jerusalem and that this time the Lord would bless them with success (I Nephi 3:29). He is not described as descending or appearing in a cloud or of raising his voice. It does not state that the earth shook.

The angel who appeared to Alma and the sons of Mosiah came for the expressed purpose "...to convince thee of the power and authority of God, that the prayers of his servants might be answered..." (Mosiah 27:11). He spoke with a voice of thunder which caused the earth to shake. So powerful was his voice that they fell to the earth and did not understand the angel's words at first (Mosiah 27:11-12).

Perhaps these were different angels or the same angel only manifesting himself in different ways according to the purpose of his mission. Whatever the explanation, the difference in the dress of the two angels was for the purpose of giving the desired emotional aspect to the particular event.

**Line Drawing.** A mountainous region was chosen as the setting for this event because most recorded manifestations seem to have occurred in quiet, solitary places. As stated in the text, they were journeying about at the time. The background was kept simple and unobtrusive in texture, shape and tone. In making the final drawing, consideration was given the repeated and opposing lines and planes of horses and men in the composition. A variety of sizes and shapes was another objective.

**Color Planning.** The planned basic color scheme was a complimentary one
Fig. 1 Flat Color Painting

Fig. 2 Color Modeling

CONVERSION OF ALMA THE YOUNGER AND THE SONS OF MOSIAH
of blue and orange. These two colors become the main colors of the angel and serve to heighten the sensation of power and virility in his being. Since no indication was found of the colors in vogue in Nephite times, colors of horses and costumes were assigned and used where they seemed best suited to balance the composition.

**Final Modeling.** In one respect this painting is the most successful of the group. The artist seemed to be more inspired with this subject (though it was the most complex and therefore presented the most problems of the four) than with the others. The drawing came easier and was less labored. Forms and mood were felt and experienced more than thought out. Though this painting probably took a longer time in the painting than the others, there was not the indecision or inner turmoil and struggle involved in the realization. Or if there were, it was sooner relieved and sooner forgotten. Being thus closer to the emotional heart strings of the artist, it perhaps has more felt experience to convey to the viewer.

Because it seemed to "flow" more or less painlessly from the pencil and brush of the artist, it required fewer preliminary drawings, and the organization came much freer. There were fewer changes to be made and those were only slight ones.

One important change was to raise the center of the composition on the format of the picture in order to allow a little more foreground at the bottom of the painting. This seemed to facilitate the entrance of the eye into the painting. It appears less abrupt and seems to improve the balance (compare plate 9 figure 12 and plate 10 figure 2).
To open up the design a little and make it seem less obstructed in the foreground, the dog was painted in front of, and not touching, the near horse (compare plate 9 figure 12 and plate 10 figure 2).

The man sitting on the ground in the painting was first drawn looking up at the bright cloud, but this position seemed somewhat strained and added nothing to the composition. Therefore, his head was painted in a bent position as if to suggest a state of shock.

In the early painting the tones of the angel and foreground seemed much too light in value. It was necessary to lower these tones a number of steps in order to get the feeling of brightness and the dynamics desired in the illustration. This was accomplished by repainting the angel, ground area, and all the objects in the foreground and by putting a blue glaze over the middle ground. This repainting seemed to achieve the desired mood. But it was felt that the foreground needed to go even much deeper in tone. Putting another blue glaze over the sky area and middle distance up to the edge of the illuminated area seemed to accomplish the feeling of deep tone in the foreground by association.

The light horse was first painted with the suggestion of reflected light on his underparts. The breaking up of light in this region of the painting attracted too much attention, and it was felt necessary to subdue the light areas.

Another problem was the jade ornament on the forehead of the near horse. As it was first painted, it was about the size and lustre of a third eye and, in fact, looked like one. It was necessary to lighten the tone because it was felt the device demanded too much attention.
The Near horse seemed too light in tone to bear its proper weight in this area of the composition (see plate 10 figure 2). By deepening the tone and connecting horse to shadow the balance of the picture seemed improved.

The final painting is reproduced in color on the following page (plate 11).
And as I said unto you as they were going about rebelling against God, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto them; and he descended as it were in a cloud; and he spake as it were a voice of thunder which caused the earth to shake upon which they stood. And so great was their astonishment that they fell to the earth and understood not the words which he spake unto them (Mosiah 27:11-12).
CHAPTER V

CHRIST CALLING NEPHI FROM AMONG
THE MULTITUDE BEFORE THE TEMPLE

Event to Be Illustrated. The fourth event to be illustrated occurred in 34 A.D., in the land called Bountiful. Here Christ appeared to a large group of people who were gathered at the temple marveling at the great change wrought in the landscape by the great cataclysm just passed.

After identifying himself and having the people feel the prints in his hands, feet and side, he called Nephi to come forth from among the people.

And it came to pass that he spake unto Nephi (for Nephi was among the multitude) and he commanded him that he should come forth. And Nephi arose and went forth, and bowed himself before the Lord and did kiss his feet. And the Lord commanded him that he should arise. And he arose and stood before him (III Nephi 11:18-20).

Significant Points. In reading the description of the events leading up to the appearance of Jesus and the event to be illustrated, certain points seemed significant:

(1) Just prior to the cataclysm, the people had turned to wickedness (III Nephi 7:15).

(2) Nephi boldly went forth among them and preached repentance with power and great authority (III Nephi 7:16-17).

(3) So great was Nephi's faith that he was able to cast out devils and unclean spirits and to raise his brother from the dead who had been stoned to death by the people (III Nephi 7:19).

(4) Angels ministered unto Nephi daily because of his great faith, and he was visited by the voice of the Lord (III Nephi 7:15-18).

(5) The people were angry with Nephi because of his great power (III Nephi 7:18-20).
(6) During the cataclysm that followed, the whole face of the land was changed; mountains were cast up, highways were broken up, there were seams and cracks upon all the face of the land (III Nephi 8:10, 12, 13, and 18).

(7) The voice of Christ was heard in the midst of the darkness (III Nephi 9:1 and 10:3).

(8) Only the more righteous of the people were spared alive (III Nephi 9:13 and 10:12).

(9) At the time of Christ's appearance, many people were gathered at the temple marveling upon the recent happenings (III Nephi 11:1).

(10) The voice of the Eternal Father proclaimed Christ (III Nephi 11:3-7).

(11) Christ descended clothed in a white robe (III Nephi 11:8).

(12) The people fell down and worshipped Jesus (III Nephi 11:17).

(13) Nephi was called forth to receive the keys of the priesthood—the power to baptize and confer the Holy Ghost (III Nephi 11:21 and 12:1).

**Dynamic Patterns and Basic Rhythms.** To obtain a suitable pattern for this illustration, the two main figures were drawn in positions in varying relationships to one another. "I," shaped patterns, triangular patterns, and circular patterns were tried, but the pattern that seemed most dynamic for the purpose was an inverted triangle superimposed on an "S" pattern. Rhythms were established by repeating this "S" with variations in the precipitous crack in the earth, the line forming the edge of the temple proper, the lines in the robes of the main figures, and so forth.

The inverted triangle is formed by the line from Jesus' head down beyond the tip of his near toe, up Nephi's arm to the point of his hat, and then left on a line along Jesus' outstretched arm to his head. This pattern is also repeated in the line of the clouds, down to Jesus' out-
stretched palm, up along a line through the edge of the distant temple. The distant temple itself forms a reversed triangle. With a little imagination many more repetitions of this pattern may be seen.

Final Poses. A difficult time was encountered in trying to resolve the poses of the figures of Christ and Nephi. For some of the drawings that resulted from this effort see plates 12 and 13. There was a desire to show Jesus in a gentle and compassionate pose and to depict Nephi as a humble but dignified servant. After many unsuccessful attempts, poses were achieved that seemed satisfactory. Models were then employed and the final poses drawn.

Identifying the Period. The period was 34 A.D.¹ in the land of Bountiful (III Nephi 11:1). A great many of the Lamanites had been converted and were living among the Nephites (III Nephi 6:14 and 10:18). The people had just experienced a great cataclysm which greatly changed the surface of the ground. Many people were killed and many cities were destroyed.

Principal Data Obtained in Research. The data set forth in the foregoing chapter has application here also. The period between is approximately 130 years, but the data given applies to the entire Mulekite-Nephite era.

Findings that have particular application to this illustration follow:

Book of Mormon. Jesus is described as a man clothed in a white robe whom they thought was an angel (III Nephi 11:8). The countenance

¹Book of Mormon, p. 421, see date at bottom of page.
STUDIES FOR THE POSE AND GESTURE OF CHRIST

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GESTURE AND COMPOSITION STUDIES FOR APPEARANCE OF CHRIST PAINTING

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and garments of Jesus were white to exceed all whiteness, "...there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof" (III Nephi 19:25).

New World Archeology. A stepped pyramid temple "E-VII-SUB" has been unearthed at Uaxactum, Guatemala, that dates to the Book of Mormon period.

An interesting convention of dress among the Olmecs was the use of ribbons or cords to make decorative wrappings especially of the arms and upper body. Wrappings were used also in connection with headdress or hair style.  

Early Chronicles of the New World. The native American historian, Ixtlilxochitl, describes the physical appearance of the white bearded God as seen on the American Continent:

Quetzalcoatl was a favorably disposed man, of grave aspect, white and bearded...His dress was a long tunic.

Mariano Veytia, a Mexican historian, summarized early descriptions of Mexico's Messiah as follows:

A full-grown man, tall of stature, white-skinned and full bearded, barefooted and bareheaded, clothed in a long white robe strewn with red crosses and carrying a staff in His hand.

Juan de Torquemada, a Spanish Catholic priest, lived in Mexico.

1JAKEMAN, p. 204.


3Don Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, Obras Históricas, (Mexico: 1891) quoted by Thomas Stewart Ferguson, One Fold and One Shepherd (San Francisco: Books of California, 1958) p. 145.

4Mariano Veytia quoted by Ferguson, p. 146. (For an Aztec representation of the Messiah's visit to America, see p. 147.)
in the sixteenth century. He compiled a history of that country. His
description of Quetzalcoatl follows:

They say of him that he was a white man, large of body, wide of
forehead, large eyes, long and black hair, large and round beard... They held him in great esteem... And in spiritual and ecclesiastical
matters this Quetzalcoatl was supreme, a great priest... They say
about this God, Quetzalcoatl, that while living in this mortal life,
he dressed in long clothes down to his feet, through modesty, with
cloak on top, scattered with red crosses.¹

An American scholar, Daniel Brinton, in his book *Myths of the
New World* summarizes the descriptions of the early authorities:

Whenever the personal appearance of the hero-God is described, it
is strangely enough, represented to be that of one of the white race,
a man of fair complexion, with long flowing beard, with abundant
hair, and clothed in ample and loose robes.²

The dress of the people is described by Ixtlilxochitl:

...women (wore) their huipiles and skirts and likewise their cotaras
of the same material; and when they went out they would put on some
white mantles worked in many colors, pointed in back, more or less
like a friar's hood, although they (the mantles) came down to the
bend of the knees... and the priests wore some (white) tunics and oth-
er black ones that came down to the ground, with their hoods with
which they covered their heads; their hair long, braided, which came
to their shoulders; and their eyes lowered and humble; bare-footed
at the time of their fasts and when they were in the temple very
seldom did they wear shoes, except when they went out, and on a long
journey.³

Torquemada, speaking of the third group of settlers from across
the sea (Mulekites), describes their dress in this way:

These people were men of good carriage, well-dressed in long robes
of black linen, like Turks, like the cassocks of the clergy, open

¹Jaun de Torquemada, *Monarquia Indiana*, in 3 vols., (reprint
Mexico:1924) quoted by Ferguson, p. 147.

²Daniel Brinton, *Myths of the New World*, (New York:1868) quoted
by Ferguson, p. 148.

³Ixtlilxochitl quoted by Hunter and Ferguson, p. 316.
in front, and without capes, cut low at the neck, and with short wide sleeves which did not reach the elbow.¹

Ixtlilxochitl, concerning the leaders of the ancient Mayas, states:

These kings were high of stature, and white, and bearded like the Spaniards...²

Costume Studies. In the Book of Mormon, Jesus is described as clothed in a white robe when he appeared. In other sources his dress is described as a long tunic, a long white robe strewn with red crosses, long clothes down to his feet, ample and loose robes. Jesus was drawn in a variety of robes and tunics. Most of these were "ample and loose" and came down to the ankles (see plates 12 and 13). The red crosses were deleted because there is no mention of them in the eye-witness account. From the drawings, a robe was chosen which was a simple poncho type. This seemed to meet the aforementioned requirements and also to facilitate the event of the people "thrusting" their hands into the wound in his side (III Nephi 11:15). This type of dress adapted well to the composition and gave a feeling of dignity and majesty to the person of the Savior. The broadness of the robe, together with the fore-shortened perspective, tend to give the figure a feeling of shortness. No other types of clothing are mentioned as being worn by Jesus in this instance and indeed, shoes or ornaments would detract from the simple beauty and dignity of His person.

Nephi, being High Priest of the church, probably dressed less

¹Juan de Torquemada, Monarquia Indiana, (Spain: 1613), quoted by Hunter and Ferguson, pp. 318-19.
²Ibid., p. 240.
elaborately than his fellows. The priests are described as wearing long robes. Nephi's dress is a long robe, with wide short sleeves, a wide cut neck, and wide gathered collar. While priests robes are described as being black or white by Ixtlilxochitl, it was felt his robe should contrast with that of Christ's, and because black is symbolic of death, evil, and foreboding, another color was chosen that might work into the composition. Nephi is wearing no jewelry since it is supposed that in preaching repentance and humility to the people, he himself refrained from any costly dress or show. His only jewelry is earplugs which seemed to be generally worn among all ancient Mayas. Nephi is painted with a mustache and beard because many figurines that date to this period represent men with beards. Hair style, too, is like that of certain figures of ancient Mexico.\(^1\) His hat is a variation of the stocking cap.

The woman in the lower left corner is dressed in a tunic with decorative ribbon arm-wrapping and headdress. She is wearing a large necklace and jade earplugs.

The man in the lower right corner is a Lamanite. He is wearing a twisted cloth headband to hold his long hair in place and a necklace of precious stones.

Others in the foreground are wearing a turbaned fes and a hood.

**Line Drawing.** The line drawing was planned so that all of the major lines in the painting would lead to the figure of Christ. All eyes are upon Christ. Even the line of clouds leads to the face of Jesus.

\(^1\)Hunter and Ferguson, p. 251. See also carved stone disc, p. 242.
Jesus' eyes were placed even with the horizon in order to suggest a calm, yet piercing gaze. His person is the largest light area in tone of any area in the painting, and yet by other devices, the picture appears balanced and the eye is led to other areas of the painting. The involved shapes in the figure of Nephi, the dark warm tone of his robe, the texture of the people beyond, the yawning crevice in the middle distance, and the distant temple and clouds seem sufficient to balance the picture—still they detract nothing from the figure of Christ who holds the center of interest.

There is some distortion in the perspective of the building, but it was intentional for the purpose of organization.

Color Planning. The color scheme is complimentary, that is to say, split compliment—red with yellow-green and blue-green. The white robe of Christ, along with the light blue shadows of the garment, seem to suggest a spiritual, ethereal aspect. Colors chosen for Nephi were red and blue which together seem to have a sense of the mortal or human aspect.

Color Modeling. After painting in the flat colors on all areas of the painting, to begin to establish color harmony, the shadow areas were begun. Colors at first seemed too intense, and it was necessary to neutralize them somewhat to achieve color harmony. This was achieved through darkening the color or mixing it with its compliment. Glasses were also used to neutralize some colors.

Difficulty was encountered in making the robe look extremely white. By using a light tone of alizarin crimson in places about the
Fig. 1 Flat Color Painting

Fig. 2 Color Modeling

CHRIST CALLING NEPHI FROM AMONG THE MULTITUDE
robe, especially where it turns from light to shadow, and then using a light tint of yellow where the light shines through the fabric, the robe seemed to take on the appearance of much more brilliance.

After the painting was well along, it was felt that Nephi's robe needed to be deeper in tone. In painting it darker, it was made too intense. It was necessary to use a green glaze over the area of the robe to make it hold its place in the composition.

A blue glaze was brushed over the entire painting except for the figure of Christ and the immediate area around him. This helped to unify the entire composition as well as to give the figure of Jesus the importance it should have in the composition. The difference in tone that resulted also seemed to add to the heavenly aspect of Christ.

The figure of Christ was first painted with a cast shadow, but it was later felt that perhaps resurrected beings, having a shining countenance, probably do not cast a shadow. So the cast shadow of Christ was removed without ill effect to the composition (compare plate 14 figure 2 and plate 15).

For a full-color reproduction of the final realization of the painting, see plate 15.
And it came to pass that he spake unto Nephi (for Nephi was among the multitude) and he commanded him that he should come forth. And Nephi arose and went forth, and bowed himself before the Lord and did kiss his feet. And the Lord commanded him that he should arise. And he arose and stood before him (III Nephi 11:18-20).
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Purpose. It has been the purpose of this work to create four oil paintings to illustrate Book of Mormon events, and in so doing, to add to the limited heritage of paintings that take as their subject Book of Mormon literature. It would seem that a wealth of painting has grown up having Bible literature as its theme, but in the realm of latter-day revealed scripture relatively little art has resulted though these scriptures have been extant for more than a century. It was in the desire to help fill this illustrational gap and perhaps to make a contribution to Book of Mormon art that this work was undertaken.

Choice of Events. Events to be illustrated were chosen to cover a representative part of the book with an eye to the spiritual significance of the event. The four events illustrated were:

1. Coriantumr resting upon his sword before slaying Shiz (Ether 15:30).
2. The Angel of the Lord appearing before Laman and Lemuel as they beat Sam and Nephi (I Nephi 3:28).
3. The vision of Alma the younger and the sons of Mosiah (Mosiah 27:11).
4. Christ calling Nephi from the multitude before the temple (III Nephi 11:18).

Survey of Existing Works. Before any work was commenced on the painting
proper, a survey was made of existing serious Book of Mormon illustration. Though the field was quite narrow some significant things have been done. Artists of significance in this area are George M. Ottinger, Minerva Tischert, Milton E. Swensen, and Arnold Friberg. Others have contributed but these seem to be the significant painters of Book of Mormon themes.

**Preliminary Research.** Considerable research was done in the text of the Book of Mormon itself, in Old World Archeological writings, New World Archeological writings and in early chronicled histories of Pre-Columbian times in order to learn as much as possible about physical details of Book of Mormon peoples such as physical traits, dress, armor, buildings and so forth. This research was of considerable help, especially as relates to costume design for the figures in each illustration.

**Significant Points.** Before beginning each painting the event was studied in context and significant points having a bearing on that particular event were listed.

**Developmental Painting.** The following were important steps in the development of the painting:

- **Dynamic Patterns and Basic Rhythms.** A structural study was then made employing dynamic patterns related to the particular subject. A pattern was chosen and certain basic rhythms planned.

- **Final Poses.** Drawings were made of various poses, and when a suitable pose was found, a model was employed for the final drawing.

- **Costume Studies.** Using the research data, costumes were designed
for the characters in each illustration.

Line Drawing and Color Planning. A final line drawing was made in each instance integrating the various elements into one united composition. A color scheme was chosen and colors assigned important characters in each painting.

Tone Study. For certain of the illustrations, tone studies were made as an aid in achieving a balanced, dramatic organization.

Flat Color Painting. Each area of the painting was then filled in with a flat middle tone of its planned color in an effort to achieve a good balanced color relationship.

Final Color Modeling. Final modeling was undertaken, painting the shadow tones in first and then the light tones. Necessary changes were made at this point. The paintings were adjusted in tone, texture or intensity to arrive at an overall unity and harmony.

Photographic Record. A photographic record was kept as each individual illustration evolved. This record was made to show some important steps in the progress of the painting. A colored photographic print of the final painting was made in each instance.

Conclusions

After experiencing the painting of these Book of Mormon events, it is the considered opinion of the artist that:

(1) the Book of Mormon offers themes to the artist that are equal to any in sacred or profane literature. Even the most demanding painter should find a challenge in the themes of this book;

(2) an ever increasing amount of archeological material is being uncovered which may substantially aid the future Book of Mormon painter;
(3) early historical writings, chronicles of Pre-Columbian times, have recently come to light that offer opportunities for study to the interested painter;

(4) the format of each painting should be selected on the basis of the chosen event. The format of the present paintings was chosen arbitrarily with the desire to hold to a uniform size for the series but it was felt that certain of the events would have been better portrayed on a different size or shape of format;

(5) there has been a sense of purpose and direction in this work that the artist has not experienced in other types of painting. The LDS painter, especially, should find a feeling of purpose and satisfaction in portraying Book of Mormon themes because there is a real need in the church to bring the Book of Mormon events to life through painting.

Recommendations

As a result of this experience in Book of Mormon illustration, it is recommended that the Book of Mormon painter;

(1) make himself familiar with the entire context of the Book of Mormon and seek to obtain the spirit of the people and times it records;

(2) gain a firm background of information on the customs and dress of Book of Mormon peoples through a study of archeological and other sources;

(3) choose for illustration spiritually significant events that will enhance and promote the purpose of the Book of Mormon;

(4) seek to project the spirit of the particular event and not just the physical situation.

(5) strive to portray Book of Mormon subjects with the skill and craftsmanship deserving of sacred scripture.
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Illustration


Methods and Materials


Composition


Anatomy


Costume


Color


Bible Illustrations


Book of Mormon Illustrations


Old World Archeology


New World Archeology


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FOUR OIL PAINTINGS ILLUSTRATING
BOOK OF MORMON EVENTS

A Thesis Abstract
presented to the
Department of Art
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

In partial fulfillment
of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

by
ERNEL LEROY ANDERSON

1962
This thesis abstract by Ernel LeRoy Anderson is accepted in its present form by the Department of Art of the Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis abstract requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

THESIS COMMITTEE

[Signatures]
FOUR OIL PAINTINGS ILLUSTRATING BOOK OF MORMON EVENTS

Statement of the Problem. The problem was to create four oil paintings which illustrate Book of Mormon events.

Importance of the Problem. The Book of Mormon seems to hold forth great promise to the painter of religious subjects, but to the present only a limited number of artists have made use of this rich source. There is a need for good illustrations to help these scriptures come to life for the Book of Mormon reader.

Illustrated Events. The four events illustrated were:

1. Coriantumr resting upon his sword before slaying Shis (Ether 15:30).

2. An Angel of the Lord appearing before Laman and Lemuel as they beat Sam and Nephi (I Nephi 3:28).

3. The vision of Alma the younger and the sons of Mosiah (Mosiah 27:11).


These events were chosen for their spiritual significance and to represent various periods of Book of Mormon history.

Survey of Book of Mormon Illustration. A survey was made of Book of Mormon illustration to the present time. It was found that while few artists have attempted Book of Mormon subjects, some significant contributions have been made.
Preliminary Research. Before the painting was begun, a review of the Book of Mormon was made for facts of the story and to understand in context the events that were illustrated.

Old World and New World archeological sources were investigated and a knowledge obtained of some of the material remains of Book of Mormon peoples and those of the eastern lands from which they came.

Certain early chronicled histories of the New World were studied, and it was learned that they contain some descriptions of customs and dress of these early peoples.

Methods of painting, materials of the artist, composition, anatomy and color were reviewed in preparation for the painting.

Developmental Painting. Each event was analyzed and significant points were listed. A dynamic pattern was developed which seemed to give the desired mood to the illustration and the basic rhythms were planned. A variety of poses were drawn, a suitable one chosen and final poses were made using a model.

Data obtained in research having application to each event was listed and costume studies were made using this data as a basis.

A line drawing was then made incorporating and integrating dynamic pattern, basic rhythms, selected poses and costumes. Tones and colors were planned for the individual illustration and each area of the composition was painted in its median tone. Dark and then light areas were painted in and the modeling refined.

Changes in drawing, composition, texture, color, and tone were made freely as the painting progressed and as they seemed necessary to
improve the organization.

Photographic Record. Through the photographs that were taken as the work progressed, it is possible to see the major changes that were made. These changes and the reasons for them were noted in the text. A color photograph of the final painting was taken and a color print of each illustration was included.