



BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

<http://bookofmormoncentral.org/>

Type: Newsletter

U.A.S. Newsletter, no. 65 (March 9, 1960)

Editors(s): Ross T. Christensen and Ray T. Matheny

Published by: University Archaeological Society, Brigham Young University

U. A. S. NEWSLETTER

Editor: Ross T. Christensen

Number 65

Contributing Editor: Ray T. Matheny

March 9, 1960

Published approximately every six weeks by THE UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. The purpose of the Newsletter is to disseminate knowledge of recent archaeological discoveries bearing on the Latter-day Saint scriptures; also of the archaeological activities and viewpoints of the Society and its members. Subscription by membership in the Society: three dollars per year; or Life Membership, fifty dollars. (Membership also includes subscription to other publications of the Society and of the BYU Department of Archaeology.)

65.0 SYMPOSIUM DATE DRAWS NEAR. Next April 2 is the scheduled date for the Society's "Twelfth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures." A complete program is enclosed with the present newsletter.

Cosponsored by the University Archaeological Society and the BYU Department of Archaeology, the annual event will occupy the entire Saturday preceding the general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The John A. Widtsoe Lecture Hall (room 230) in the Eyring Science Center on the BYU upper campus, Provo, Utah, has been scheduled for the day. All members are urged to attend. The public is also cordially invited. There will be no charge for UAS members; a registration fee of \$1 will be required of non-members.

Dr. Welby W. Ricks, UAS vice-president, will serve as Symposium chairman. It is expected that Otto Done, Society president, will be present to give the welcoming address.

A meeting of the Society's Executive Committee will probably be called preceding the Symposium. Since this body is the policy-forming organ of the Society, it is suggested that members discuss their ideas for the improvement of the organization with general officers before this occasion.

A luncheon has been arranged in connection with the Symposium. A charge of \$1 will be asked of those who wish the noon meal.

65.1 LOYAL MEMBER GIVES \$5,000. Brigham Young University has received a bequest of \$5,000, to be spent for archaeological purposes, from the estate of a Salt Lake City woman who was a member of the UAS for several years before her death. The gift was listed in the will of Mrs. Zella Lichfield Roberts, who passed away on July 31, 1958.

Mrs. Roberts first joined the Society in June, 1952, at the time of the 29th annual BYU Leadership Week, at which several UAS leaders spoke and when the

Society membership increased by about 40% (Newsletter, 7.30). The following month, she wrote of her intention to include the UAS in her will. Mrs. Roberts renewed her membership without interruption from that time until her death. In September, 1955, she contributed to the Society's "Fund for the Removal of the Lehi Stone" from the ruins of Izapa to the National Museum in Mexico City (Newsletter, 29.0).

Mrs. Roberts was born February 6, 1885, in Goshen, Utah County, a daughter of Joseph T. and Anna Till Lichfield. She married Frank Edward Roberts in the Salt Lake Temple in 1909. She is survived by her husband, four children, seven brothers and sisters, and 14 grandchildren.

Mrs. Roberts was active in the LDS church and in real estate affairs in Salt Lake City and Utah County. For many years she operated the Picadilly and Roberts Apartments and also owned tourist courts in Mesa, Arizona, with her husband.

She was keenly interested in ancient American civilizations. Among her world travels was an extensive tour through Mexico and Central and South America to study the archaeological ruins.

University officials have indicated that the fund will be made available for spending under the direction of the Department of Archaeology.

65.2 THE POPULAR AZTECS. A review of The Aztec: Man and Tribe, by Victor W. von Hagen (New York: Mentor Books, 1958. 222 pages. 50¢). Reviewed by Dee F. Green.

This book is a series of free-flowing quotes from almost everyone who has said anything about the Aztecs, mixed with an abundance of the author's own pithy opinions and served up in the racy von Hagen style.

The line drawings accompanying most chapters scarcely allow the reader time to catch his breath before being rushed on. A few of the same old photographs accompany the narrative, without any particular relationship, however.

Perhaps of greatest interest to Society readers are the author's references to Mormonism and to an article written by a former editor of the Newsletter, John L. Sorenson (see Newsletter, 42. 61). The text reference is on page 29, to which a note is added on page 208.

Von Hagen stumbles over his own ignorance with statements such as, "The Church of the Latter Day Saints, whose sacred Book of Mormon traces this genealogy, even today finances with 'Golden Tablets of Moroni' highly equivocal research to support the theory that the American Indian is a descendant of one of the tribes of Israel." He further presses the point by dividing the LDS people into two categories: "God-fearing, God - in - my - heart people" and "history-twisters." A ridiculous and completely uninformed division! True, there have been in the Church certain untrained individuals whose writings have been neither scholarly nor representative of scholarly opinion among the LDS. But these should not be confused with LDS scholarship, and to imply that such scholarship does not exist, or is distinct from the "God-in-my-heart" Mormons, is to reveal a bias which simply cannot lead to correct conclusions.

Furthermore -- and this is abundantly evident throughout the book -- von Hagen seems to be unaware of, or perhaps prefers to ignore, a recent trend among Americanist scholars away from the traditional independent-inventionist theory of the origin of the ancient American civilizations, towards diffusionism or the origin of these civilizations in transoceanic influences from the Old World (Newsletter, 21. 01, 59. 21).

For the beginner: there is some good introductory material. For the scholar: a waste of time.

65. 3 BYU STUDENT GROUP REPORTS WINTER ACTIVITIES. . On January 14 the quarterly business meeting of the Campus Chapter was held. The following were elected to serve during the winter quarter: Kristine Hansen of Corvallis, Oregon, honorary president; Ray T. Matheny of Provo, president; Jay L. Woodard of Goshen, Utah, vice-president; and Dorothy Louise DeWitt of Jacksonville, Illinois, secretary. After the elections, Carl Hugh Jones, a graduate student in the BYU Department of Archaeology, gave a report on his summer's work opening up a group of ruins in the Mesa Verde National Park.

On February 10 Dr. Mark K. Allen, chairman of the BYU Department of Psychology, spoke to the Campus Chapter on "Biblical and Other Archaeological Ruins in the Near East," illustrating his lecture with slides taken the previous year while he was a member of the Faculty of Letters at the University of Ankara, Turkey.

Chapter officers entertained faculty members and

majors and minors of the Department of Archaeology on February 11 at the home of Mr. Matheny, chapter president. Future development of the department was discussed over a Mexican enchilada supper.

65. 4 PARTICIPATE IN NEW TESTAMENT, BOOK-OF-MORMON, CONFERENCES. Drs. Sidney B. Sperry and Ross T. Christensen, UAS general officers, delivered lectures before a "New Testament Conference," held on the BYU campus, February 27 (Newsletter, 64. 5). About 150 persons were in attendance.

The UAS officials are also scheduled to take part in a "Book of Mormon Institute" to be held at Cedar City, Utah, on April 9. Dr. Sperry will speak on "A Textual Analysis of the Book of Mormon." Dr. Christensen will discuss "Book-of-Mormon Archaeology Today."

The Book of Mormon Institute is being sponsored by the LDS Institute of Religion at the College of Southern Utah. Inquiries should be addressed to Paul E. Dahl, director of the Cedar City institute, or to Hartley Fredrickson, Adult Education and Extension Services, BYU.

65. 5 MEETS PARAGUAYAN ARCHAEOLOGISTS. Richard L. Money of Payson, Utah, who earned the BA degree in archaeology at BYU in 1957 (Newsletter, 42. 2), is returning this month from an LDS mission in Uruguay and Paraguay. A recent letter tells of his archaeological adventures and travel plans.

Elder Money met General Marcial Samaniego, defense minister of Paraguay, who has excavated pre-Inca ruins at Cerro Corá, north of Concepción. Richard spent several hours talking with the high government official about archaeology and Guaraní mythology.

Elder Money also spent part of a day with Carlos Pusineri, a trained archaeologist of Asunción, who has a "very impressive" personal museum of Guaraní artifacts and other South American materials.

Richard plans to visit important archaeological ruins in western South America during his return trip to Utah.