



BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

<http://bookofmormoncentral.org/>

Type: Newsletter

U.A.S. Newsletter, no. 87 (January 28, 1964)

Editors(s): Ross T. Christensen and Forest R. Hauck

Published by: University Archaeological Society, Brigham Young University

U. A. S. NEWSLETTER

Number 87

Editor: Ross T. Christensen
Assistant Editor: Forest R. Hauck

January 28, 1964

Published six times a year by THE UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. The purpose of the Newsletter is to provide members of the Society with up-to-date information regarding archaeological discoveries and research bearing upon the Hebrew-Christian and Latter-day Saint scriptures, through news reports, reviews, and short articles; also with news concerning the Society and its members, and the BYU Department of Archaeology, of which the Society is an affiliate organization. All views expressed in the Newsletter are those of the author of the particular contribution in which they appear and not necessarily those of Brigham Young University or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Subscription by membership in the Society (three dollars per year; Life Membership, fifty dollars), which also includes subscription to other publications of or issued through the Society.

87.0 IN QUEST OF LEBOLO'S "CATACOMB": A NOTE ON THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM. Two BYU faculty members traveling in Egypt have brought to light new archaeological evidence on the Book of Abraham, a Latter-day Saint scripture resulting from tomb explorations of the early nineteenth century.

87.00 Itinerary. Dr. Lynn M. Hilton, director of the BYU-Salt Lake Adult Education Center, and Ellis T. Rasmussen, assistant professor of Hebrew and Old Testament, both representing BYU Travel Studies, led a tour of 32 persons to archaeological ruins and other points of interest in Mexico, Egypt, the Levant,

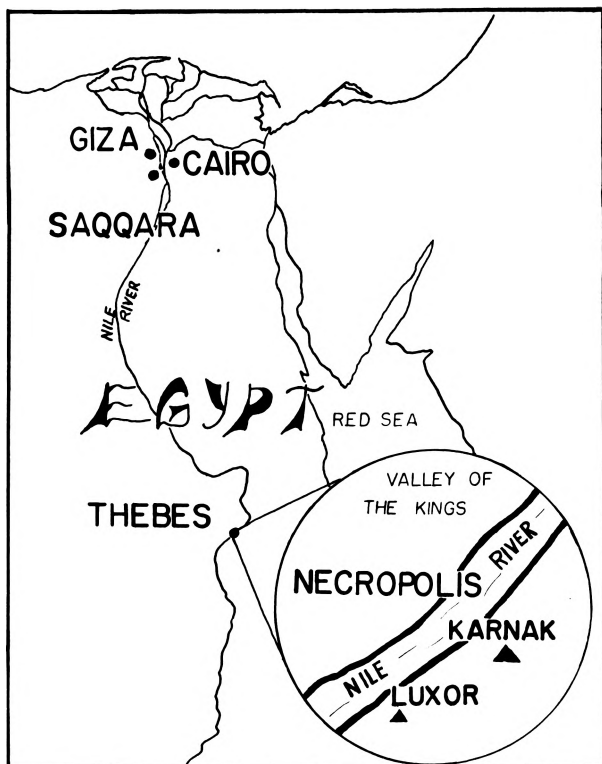
and the Holy Land, between September 29 and November 13.

In Egypt the group visited Giza and Saqqara, near modern Cairo, as well as Luxor, Karnak, the Valley of the Kings, and the Necropolis, in the area of Thebes (see map). It was at a tomb in the Necropolis, or City of the Dead, that the new evidence appeared.

87.01 Mummies at Kirtland. According to the Prophet Joseph Smith, Michael Chandler arrived at Kirtland, Ohio, on July 3, 1835, with four mummies, two scrolls (including that which was later translated into the Book of Abraham), and other antiquities. These had been found a few years earlier by "the celebrated French traveler," Antonio Lebolo, in ". . . one of the catacombs in Egypt, near the place where once stood the renowned city of Thebes" (History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Vol. 2, pp. 235, 348; 1948 ed.). This "catacomb," or pit-tomb as it would be termed in modern usage, was evidently located at Gurneh (Qurnah), a place-name associated with the Necropolis, which is on the west side of the Nile opposite Karnak and Luxor (Newsletter, 71.11).

87.02 Pit-tombs. These pit-tombs, which are underground burial chambers carved from the solid rock, are found in large numbers in the Necropolis. Some are called "private tombs," or "tombs of the nobles," to distinguish them from the royal tombs in the nearby Valley of the Kings, and each has been labeled by the Egyptian government with a number placed at the entrance. In a few instances these subterranean chambers have been discovered in modern times to contain hundreds of ancient mummies, all despoiled of their gold and other treasure by ancient tomb robbers and later gathered up by pious priests and reburied, stacked like kindling wood, never more to be disturbed until the explorations of the nineteenth century.

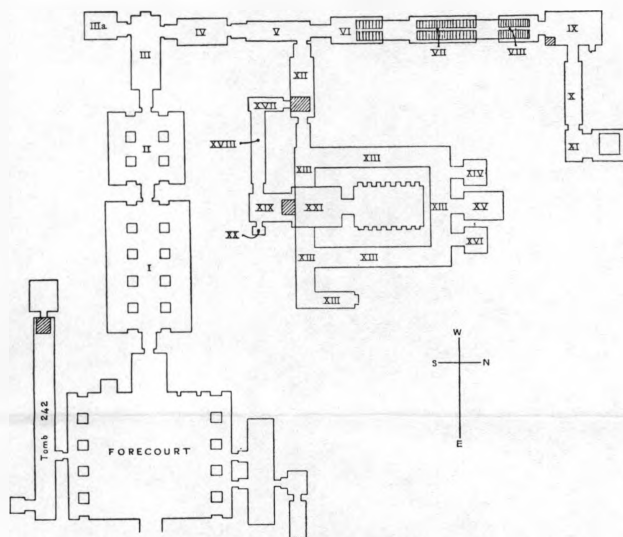
An examination of published sources made it appear nearly three years ago that No. 33 among the private tombs could be that discovered by Antonio Lebolo. It was located at Gurneh, i. e. "near Thebes."



Ancient Egypt. Inset: Area of Thebes. Map by Forrest R. Hauck.

It was large enough to have held 300 or 400 mummies, as indicated by Joseph Smith. And it contained a number of small chambers, probably sufficient to have held the 100 mummies that the Prophet said were "embalmed after the first order, and placed in niches" (*ibid.*, p. 349).

87.03 At Tomb 33. Profs. Hilton and Rasmussen and their party, following their tour of the Valley of the Kings, located and examined Tomb 33. Their guide was surprised at their request to see this tomb and stated that it was never visited by tourists. It is used at present, in fact, as a government kerosene depository, but he was able to get permission to lead the group there.

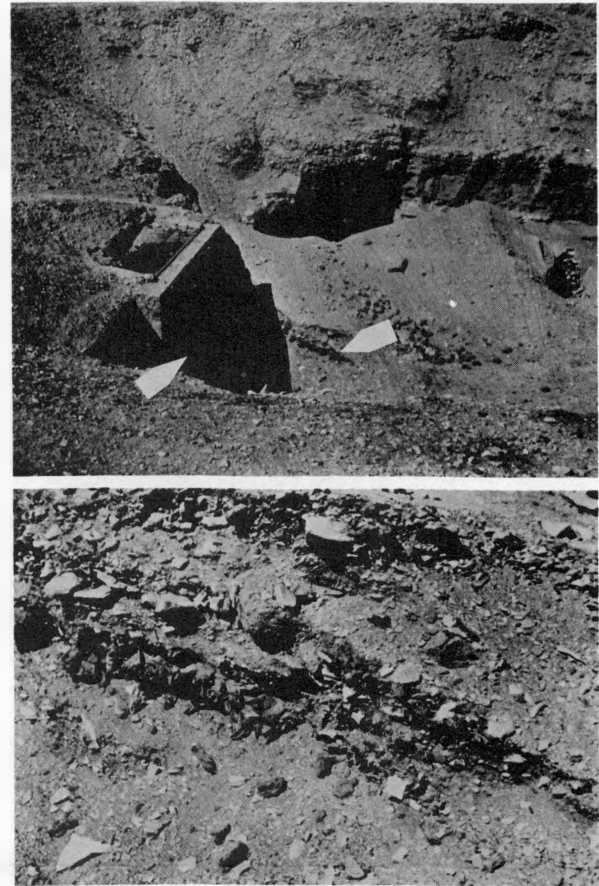


Plan of the tomb of Petamenopet (Tomb 33). After Duemichen (reproduced from Bertha Porter and Rosalind L. B. Moss, Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings, Vol. 1, The Theban Necropolis, p. 64).

The stone ceilings above the Forecourt and Chamber I, and probably Chamber II (see plan), have collapsed, thus filling them with heaps of rubble. Portions of the walls are still visible, however, revealing wall paintings and small recesses which could have been the "niches" referred to by Joseph Smith.

The remainder of Tomb 33, including Chambers III to XX, are apparently still intact, however. At the entrance of what seems to be Chamber III government authorities have placed an iron gateway (see photograph), behind which the kerosene is deposited. The party did not proceed past this point.

On the gate is a sign which reads, "33: Petamenopet: XXVI Dyn." The original owner of the tomb, Petamenopet, was a noble of the Twenty-sixth or Saite Dynasty. Pharaoh Necho II, whose mummy according



Tomb 33, at the masonry gateway built in modern times at the entrance of Chamber III. In the upper view arrows indicate the iron door on which the name Petamenopet is posted (left) and the layer of mummy shrouds (center). Debris from the collapsed roof fills Chamber II, center and right. The lower view is a close-up of the shroud layer. Photographs by Lynn M. Hilton.

to Joseph Smith was one of the four brought to Kirtland by Chandler, was of the same dynasty (Newsletter, 71.11).

In excavating down through the rubble in order to place the iron and masonry gate at the entrance of the sealed portion of Tomb 33, government workmen cut through a layer of what appeared to be ancient shrouds mingled with fragments of human mummies. Dr. Hilton estimates that the exposed layer was about 18 inches thick and eight feet in length (see photograph).

87.04 Possible Significance. Profs. Hilton and Rasmussen are convinced, after their examination of Tomb 33, that there is a good possibility it was the one where Lebolo made his momentous discovery. Dr. Hilton speculates on the significance of the thick layer of mummy shrouds: several hundred mummies

could have been unwrapped at this spot, perhaps a century ago, in search of treasure. This may be the reason why the 1835 account states that, of the 300 or 400 mummies found, only 11 were sufficiently preserved to be removed (op. cit.). This assertion may have been merely an excuse to cover up Lebolo's tomb-robbing.

Dr. Hilton had previously visited Tomb 33 in 1961. Aside from that visit and the present one, no Latter-day Saint has ever searched for the locale of Lebolo's discovery, so far as the professors are aware.

87.1 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SETS SYMPOSIUM DATE. The date of the Fifteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures and other important matters were decided at a meeting of the UAS Executive Committee, held at BYU on January 10.

Dr. Welby W. Ricks, UAS president, was chairman of the meeting, which was attended by seven General Officers. Four others, excused because of distance, had previously submitted their views by mail. Two more were excused because of illness.

The Executive Committee is the central policy-forming organ of the Society and at the present time consists of 19 General Officers living as far distant as Hamburg, Germany. Dr. Ricks of Provo is president of the Society and chairman of the Executive Committee. Virgil V. Peterson of Salt Lake City is vice-president.

87.10 Report of the General Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Ross T. Christensen, UAS general secretary-treasurer, reported that the present Society membership stands at 746 persons. Six hundred ninety-five of these are Contributing Members (this category includes 21 complimentary memberships issued to full-time missionaries and seven Departmental Affiliates), Institutional Members, i. e., organizations such as libraries, seminaries, etc., number 13. Also included are 35 Life Members and three Honorary Members. This total membership figure represents an 11.8% increase over that of the last official Membership Report, dated June 12, 1961 (Newsletter, 76.10). In addition to the actual members, 70 scholarly institutions and other organizations and persons are on the Society's complimentary mailing (exchange) list.

87.11 Reports on the Chapters. Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, faculty advisor of the UAS Campus Chapter, and Darrell Tondro, director of the Salt Lake Chapter, reported on the activities of their respective groups. (Further details are given below, 87.6.)

87.12 Fifteenth Annual Symposium. The Fifteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures will be held in Salt Lake City this year, the

Committee decided, with the Salt Lake Chapter of the UAS serving as the host organization. The date was set for Saturday, May 16. Dr. Christensen will serve as chairman and will appoint a Symposium Committee to help organize the affair (see further announcement of the Symposium, below, 87.2).

87.2 SYMPOSIUM CHAIRMAN CALLS FOR PAPERS. All UAS members are cordially invited to submit papers for reading at the Fifteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures, to be held next May 16 (see above), according to Dr. Ross T. Christensen, symposium chairman.

Those who desire to present such papers should submit to the chairman an abstract of not more than one page by April 2. A Symposium Committee will then select the papers which are to be read and arrange the program.

The purpose of the Symposia, which have been held nearly every year since 1947, is to facilitate the exchange of ideas on the part of students of archaeology as it pertains to the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Pearl of Great Price. In the past nearly all the papers that have been presented have treated some phase of this general subject.

According to Dr. Christensen, the Symposia have been an important factor in developing scriptural archaeology as a scholarly discipline among Latter-day Saints. Over the years a great deal of important information of this subject has been presented at these gatherings for the first time. This annual event has traditionally been co-sponsored by the Society and the BYU Department of Archaeology.

The papers of the last two symposia have been published in full by BYU Extension Publications, with copies distributed free to all UAS members. It is anticipated that similar arrangements will be made for the 1964 symposium.

87.3 ENROLLMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY MAJORS. Twenty six students have been enrolled during the fall semester as majors in the BYU Department of Archaeology, according to the department chairman.

This constitutes a substantial increase over the preceding academic year (Newsletter, 85.1), in the number who have chosen archaeology as their principal or major subject. It is also the highest enrollment in the history of the Department.

According to department records, 22 bachelor's degrees and six master's degrees have been awarded since it was founded in 1946.

87.4 RESEARCH PATRONS AND LIFE MEMBERS. Since the last listing in the Newsletter (85.3) a considerable

number of new and continuing Research Patrons, together with two new Life Members, have been entered on Society records.

The following were recorded as Research Patrons for the year 1962: Francis W. Kirkham, Salt Lake City; Sidney B. Sperry, Provo; and Bruce W. Warren, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Mexico.

The following were entered as Research Patrons for the year 1963: Esther Phelps Aston, Kaysville; Mrs. Plet J. Avery, Greybull, Wyoming; Mr. & Mrs. Howard Barker, Salt Lake City; Otto Done, Tucson, Arizona; Harold W. Johnson, Sullivan, Indiana; Carl Hugh Jones, Logan; Francis W. Kirkham, Salt Lake City; Fred Olsen, Guilford, Connecticut; Welby W. Ricks, Provo; Curt H. Seemann, Hamburg, Germany; Lorenzo H. Snow, Tucson, Arizona; Sidney B. Sperry, Provo; Darrell R. Tondro, Salt Lake City; Joseph Eugene Vincent, Garden Grove, California; Bruce W. Warren, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Mexico; L. A. West, Portland, Oregon; and Mary B. Wikoff, Cream Ridge, New Jersey.

The following have already become Research Patrons for the year 1964: C. E. Angel, Gretna, Virginia; Charles Stuart Bagley, Alamogordo, New Mexico; Robert George Baker, Tucson, Arizona; R. Dean Benedict, Pocatello, Idaho; James Floyd Calkin, Salt Lake City; C. I. Canfield, Boise, Idaho; R. F. Christensen, Riverside, California; Ross T. Christensen, Orem; Horal G. Clark, Morgan; James R. Clark, Provo; Hester Devenport, Ucon, Idaho; LaRue Ford, Cedar City; Dale B. Garner, Rupert, Idaho; Dee F. Green, Orem; Robert L. Hamson, Chatsworth, California; M. Wells Jakeman, Provo; Carl Hugh Jones, Logan; Francis W. Kirkham, Salt Lake City; Clark S. Knowlton, El Paso, Texas; Lonnie D. Martin, Phoenix, Arizona; Mrs. Lawrence J. McMurtrey, Redmond, Washington; Wanda I. Olson, Seattle, Washington; Marion Poulter, Chelsea, Massachusetts; M. L. Randall, Houston, Texas; Lorenzo H. Snow, Tucson, Arizona; Magdalene Steinmann, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Murray C. Udy, Niagra Falls, New York.

The distinction of becoming a Research Patron may be obtained by contributing \$10 or more per year--in addition to regular membership dues--to the Society's Research Fund. This money is used, under the direction of the Executive Committee, for research and publication in the field of scriptural archaeology. In the past, important assistance to BYU archaeological expeditions has come from this fund (Newsletter, 37.3).

Dr. Robert L. Hamson, Chatsworth, California, and Stanley R. Larson, Boise, Idaho, have recently become Life Members of the UAS.

Life Membership is available for a fee of \$50. The Society now claims 35 of this category (see above, 87.10).

87.5 PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM UAS OFFICE.

87.50 "Antonio Chi" Reprinted. Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, director of publications for the BYU Department of Archaeology, has announced the re-printing of a 45-page booklet edited and translated by himself, entitled The "Historical Recollections" of Gaspar Antonio Chi; An Early Source-Account of Ancient Yucatan.

"Antonio Chi" is No. 3 of the "Brigham Young University Publications in Archaeology and Early History," which is the official series of the Department. It was first published in 1952 and has now been out of print for a number of years.

"Antonio Chi" is a compilation of the writings of a sixteenth-century Maya prince bearing on customs in Yucatán preceding and following the Spanish conquest.

UAS members may request this paper as one of their "free past publications."

87.51 Article on Aerial Photography. By arrangement with the author, copies of an article by Ray T. Matheny are now available at the UAS office.

"Value of Aerial Photography in Surveying Archaeological Sites in Coastal Jungle Regions," is the name of Mr. Matheny's five-page article, which appeared in the "Facts and Comments" section of American Antiquity, October, 1962 (Vol. 28, No. 2). Forty reprints of this article, bound in paper covers, are now available. The cost is 30 cents per copy.

Mr. Matheny was a member of the 1961 expedition of the Department of Archaeology to the ruins of Aguacatal in western Campeche (Newsletter, 75.0). He is an expert on the applications of aerial photography to problems of archaeological reconnaissance. The present paper discusses his aerial survey of the Aguacatal area.

87.6 NEWS OF THE CHAPTERS.

87.60 Salt Lake Chapter Expands. The following report on this season's activities of the Salt Lake Chapter of the UAS was received from the director, Darrell R. Tondro, 3480 South 3610 East, Salt Lake City:

Because of the continued growth of the Chapter, we have found it necessary to seek larger quarters for our meetings, as we now enjoy an average attendance of over a hundred persons. In the past many have been denied admittance for lack of room.

We have now secured facilities at the Senior Citizens Recreation Center, 237 South 10th East, Salt Lake City. We meet at 8:00 p.m. on the first Friday of each month, except July and August. An invitation is extended to all UAS members and the public, to attend.

We have had some outstanding Friday evening meetings during the past few months, with such

speakers as explosives engineer Dr. Melvin A. Cook explaining the Continental Drift (September), artist Prof. Mabel Frazer showing slides and charts of Palenque and other Mesoamerican ruins (October), geologist Dr. William L. Stokes tracing out the migrations of prehistoric animals over the various continents (November), Mexican government guide José O. Dávila bringing to us by picture and word some of the new developments in the archaeology of Mesoamerica (December), and Dr. Lynn M. Hilton of the BYU-Salt Lake Adult Education Center leading us through ancient and modern Palestine and the tombs of ancient Egypt (January; see above, 87.0).

Also, on Saturday, January 11, Mr. Dávila, until recently of Puebla, Mexico, lectured at an all-day seminar on Book of Mormon archaeology sponsored by the Chapter. The event drew an overflow crowd at \$5 per ticket.

Meetings for the rest of the season will be equally interesting. Arrangements have been made with Prof. Verla Birrell, who will give us more pertaining to her experiences in Middle America, and with others who will also be able to impart important messages concerning archaeology and related subjects in connection with the Scriptures.

My fellow officers in the Salt Lake Chapter have been really marvelous, with their assistance and dependability, in making it what it is today. Included are Irene Thorell, secretary-treasurer; and Howard Harris, W. Ernest Young, Arthur Richardson, Jack Jarrard, and Sheldon Brewster, board members.

87.61 Campus Chapter Reports. The following résumé of the activities of the UAS Campus Chapter between October and January, 1963-64, has been submitted by Tim M. Tucker, program chairman, 46 East 5th North, Provo:

October 23. Dr. M. Wells Jakeman of the BYU Department of Archaeology addressed a large audience on Izapa Stela 5, or the "Lehi Tree-of-Life Stone" (Newsletter, 86.4). He emphasized the nature of art symbols and their relationship to ancient religions, pointed out various general parallels between ancient cultures of the Near East and those of Mesoamerica, and demonstrated specific correspondences as to the Tree of Life symbol among Mesopotamia, Mesoamerica, and the Book of Mormon. Interesting interpretations were given to certain elements of Stela 5. The meeting was concluded with color slides of highland Guatemala, Tikal, the Usumacinta River, and Stela 5, itself.

November 6. James C. Dean and Larry D. Davis, archaeology majors at BYU, discussed the ill-fated expedition of last September and October into the Barranca de Cobre, Chihuahua, Mexico, under the

leadership of John L. Cross of Cross Tours and Explorations, Inc. (Newsletter, 86.59). Mr. Dean stated that the canyon at the bottom of which the river was located is nearly twice as deep in some places as the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. The great difficulty that plagued this river run was the tremendous boulders lying in the river bed, which would not permit the expedition boats to pass downstream. The adventurers had to portage around and over these boulders, as also waterfalls and other obstacles. Because of the delay the two speakers were sent down the river to a mine where it was hoped food could be purchased. Four days later these young men found the mine and sent help back to the expedition. The lecture was illustrated with color transparencies.

December 4. Chester Yazzie, Navaho convert to the LDS Church, former missionary to the Southwest Indian Mission, and president of the BYU campus club called "The Tribe of Many Feathers," discussed correspondences between the Book of Mormon and certain Navaho and Hopi legends. He spoke of the migrations of the Navaho people, their 12 ancient leaders, and the role of the medicine man. He also commented on the religious practices of the Hopi and pointed out that the marriage ceremony, in which the couple are dressed in white clothes, is claimed to be effective for time and eternity. Mr. Yazzie stated that the Hopi believe in baptism for the dead and have offices in their religious structure which are similar to those of the LDS church. The meeting was concluded with a demonstration of Indian clothing, pottery, and implements.

January 8. David Galbraith addressed the Chapter on the subject, "Israel, Past and Present." The speaker spent a year in Palestine in an Israeli kibutz (labor colony), traveled extensively, and learned to speak modern Hebrew fluently. He also learned a good deal as to their customs and traditions. He stated that it is of great importance to study Hebrew and related languages, such as Aramaic. Color transparencies were shown, which illustrated archaeological ruins and the geography of Israel, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

Present plans call for a lecture every third week on a subject relating to archaeology. Notices of these meetings will be given in the Daily Universe (campus newspaper), in handbills, and in letters sent individually to chapter members. All UAS members are invited to attend.

The following speakers have been tentatively scheduled: Ross T. Christensen, February 5, review of a new UAS publication; Fletcher B. Hammond, geography of the Book of Mormon; and Louis J. Nackos, ruins of the Maya civilization of Yucatan.

87.7 CULTIVATED GRAINS OF THE BOOK OF MOR-MON. By Carl Hugh Jones, director of the Man and His Bread Museum, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, and UAS general officer.

There are several references to grain in the Book of Mormon. Some of these have to do with the Old World, some with the New World. We can safely assume that the Jaredites, Lehiters, and Mulekites all brought seed grains with them from their homeland (cf. I Nephi 8:1; Mosiah 9:9; Ether 10:12).

Even in those early days there were several varieties of wheat and barley that these travelers could have brought with them. Only a search of the archaeological and biological records of the areas from which they came can reveal the types of grain grown there when they left. The New World record must also be searched for any evidences it might yield, before this chapter in Book of Mormon studies can be written.

There are several places in which a researcher might look for evidence. For the Old World there is a considerable literature which must be examined, plus much other searching. Evidence on the types of grain grown or used by a people is to be found in imprints of the kernels on their pottery, charred remains in their pots and kitchen refuse, actual seeds in dry storage pits, and pollen from datable proveniences.

Because of the great variety of evidence needed to make such a study, there is room for several researchers to work simultaneously on this problem. To assist anyone who may be interested in delving deeper into the subject, a brief bibliography is listed below. The writer would appreciate hearing from anyone who would like to work with him on this problem or might have additional leads.

Curwen, E. Cecil, and Gudmund Hatt

1961 Plough and Pasture: the Early History of Farming. Collier Books.

Jasny, N.

1942 "Competition Among Grains in Classical Antiquity," American Historical Review, Vol. 47, p. 747.

Jessen, Knud, and Haus Helbaek

1944 Cereals in Great Britain and Ireland in Pre-historic and Early Historic Times.

Vavilov, N. I.

1926 "Studies on the Origin of Cultivated Plants," Bulletin of Applied Botany, Vol. 16.

Watkins, A. E.

1933 "The Origin of Cultivated Plants," Antiquity, Vol. 7, p. 73.

87.8 LECTURES SCHEDULED. Drs. M. Wells Jakeman and Ross T. Christensen of the BYU archaeology faculty have been scheduled by Adult Education and Extension Services of BYU to deliver lectures at several locations on scriptural archaeology.

The place and date of Dr. Jakeman's lectures will be announced in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Dr. Christensen will lecture in the Los Angeles area, Friday and Saturday, February 14 and 15. His topics will include "Theories of American Indian Origin," "Native Scriptures of the New World," "Time and Space Dimensions of the Book of Mormon," and "Deciphering the Lehi Tree-of-Life Stone." He will share the podium with M. R. Gottfredson.

At Delta, Utah, on February 22, Dr. Christensen will join four other BYU professors in presenting an all-day seminar or "Education Day." His topics will include shorter versions of his Los Angeles subjects, together with "Scrolls, Stones, and the Old World Scriptures." The meeting place is the Deseret Stake Center.

He will participate with the same lecture titles in a similar program to be held at Vernal, Utah, on March 14.

These events are part of the extension program of BYU and are not directly sponsored by the Department of Archaeology of the UAS. An admission fee is charged in each case. All UAS members are welcome to attend. Inquiries should be directed to: Department of Community Education, West Lewis House, BYU, Provo, Utah; or (for the California lectures) to: BYU-Los Angeles Adult Education Center, 3141 West Century Boulevard, Suite 9, Inglewood, California, 90305.

87.9 MOVIE ON MAYA CIVILIZATION. "Kings of the Sun" is the name of a recent full-length color motion picture with a pre-Columbian New World setting.

Produced by the Mirisch Company, a British corporation, and distributed by United Artists, it stars George Chakiris as King Balam (bah-LAM), Yul Brynner as Chief Black Eagle, and Shirley Anne Field as Princess Ixel (ee-SHELL). The setting is in Chichén Itzá, well-known religious center of ancient Yucatán, and in an imaginary colony planted by political emigrées from that city who sailed across the Gulf of Mexico to settle on the southern shore of what is now the United States. The time, while unspecified, would seem to have been around 1200 AD. A tender love-theme among the leads is woven into the tale of struggle of the new colony with remarkable restraint and good taste.

It was not, of course, the intention of the producers to present a historically flawless portrayal of pre-hispanic America, and certainly this picture has its anachronisms. Some of the armaments, for example, were inappropriate. The metal swords used by the attackers from the west under King Hunac Ceel (hoo-noc-KAY-el) of Mayapán were entirely out of place. No such thing is known in the archaeological record of Mesoamerica until the coming of the Spaniards. The bow and arrow could conceivably have been a Maya weapon, but the atlatl or spear-thrower was much more commonly employed in ancient Yucatán. Perhaps most amusing of all was the catapult on siege gun which was trained on Black Eagle's warriors. The tunic of King Balam, upon close examination, appeared to have been made of leopard skin, an animal unknown in the New World. A jaguar skin would have been correct.

It was astonishing to note that Black Eagle's followers, the "Wanderers of the Earth," although a nomadic people who knew nothing of weaving until the Maya immigrants taught it to them, nevertheless camped outside the colonial city in tipis which appeared to be made of canvas. Perhaps even more startling were the strikingly European facial types of some of the leads. Ixel with her pretty turned-up nose was far from a Maya type, which is characterized by a long, convex nose with depressed tip; while the evil King Hunac Ceel, who led the army from the west, would have made a better Irishman than Maya or Toltec.

But if one can relax and ignore these anachronisms, he can still enjoy a very entertaining cinematographic experience. There are, as a matter of fact, some commendable features in the portrayal. The architecture and the costuming seem generally authentic, although certain of the headdresses appear to be somewhat imaginative. No horses or other European animals are shown (cf. Newsletter, 47.5).

Moreover, the story is based upon actual historical events. There actually did occur a conquest of Chichén Itzá from the western-Yucatán city of Mayapán about 1200 AD, and it actually was led by a king named Hunac Ceel. Furthermore, the colonization of southeastern United States from Mesoamerica undoubtedly did take place at least in part, in the manner portrayed. Although the Gilmore Corridor across Texas was a more likely route for most of the migration, quite probably some of it was accomplished by boat directly across the Gulf of Mexico.

The contrast between the nomadic way of life of Black Eagle's buffalo-hunters from the Plains and the sedentary way of life of Balam's agriculturalists from Yucatán, was portrayed in a vivid fashion.

The obsidian- or flint-edged wooden club-swords (macanas) of Balam's defenders seemed to be entirely authentic and, as many a Spaniard could testify, were very effective striking weapons.

The names of the lead characters were carefully chosen. Balam, for example, was the name of a fifteenth-century Maya prophet (cf. Newsletter, 59.7). Ixel is closely similar to the name of the Maya goddess Ixchel. The very name of the invading king from the west as recorded in the Chronicles, viz. Hunac Ceel, was used.

For the first time within the writer's memory the motion picture industry has attempted a film on life in the New World before the arrival of Columbus. The scenes of warfare and migration are reminiscent of the much earlier Book of Mormon accounts and will be of interest to those familiar with that record. But regardless of whether such scenes could be considered illustrative of Nephite history, the picture presents in a striking manner what the Spaniards were up against in conquering Middle America, specifically Yucatán, in the sixteenth century.

(For an account of the first Spaniards in Yucatán see Frans Blom, The Conquest of Yucatan, Houghton Mifflin: New York, 1936. For bibliography on pre-Columbian culture contacts between Mesoamerica and southeastern United States, see Ross T. Christensen, "Ancient Diffusion from Mesoamerica to the 'Mound Area' of Eastern United States; an Annotated Bibliography," Bulletin of the University Archaeological Society, No.1, pp. 13-19, May, 1950. For a collection of articles illustrating the strong cultural contrasts among the various native peoples of the New World, including those of the Plains and Yucatán, see Matthew W. Stirling et al., National Geographic on Indians of the Americas, National Geographic Society: Washington, DC, 1955.)