



Type: Magazine Article

Looking Back at Ancient America

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Source: *Improvement Era*, Vol. 44, No. 5 (May 1941), p. 279

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

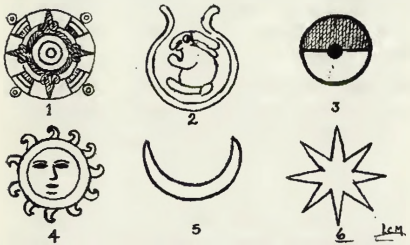
Abstract: No abstract available.

Current Facts on Ancient American Peoples

By Charles E. Dibble

A MODERN approach to the question of aboriginal origins and migrations is found in the study of human blood groups. The testing of blood for transfusions shows that a person's blood may be typed in the four forms familiar to the public: O, A, B, and AB. The percentage of persons belonging to each blood group varies in different races—thus its importance to anthropology. Blood typing is not limited to the living. Dried tissue from human burials can be tested and typed. The tissue from mummies thousands of years old has been tested and identified as belonging to one of the four groups.

The student of Aztec manuscripts can usually determine a writing to be pre-hispanic or post-hispanic. European art first influenced and altered the representation of trees, sun, moon, stars, and arrows. The appearance of these altered elements definitely identifies a Codex as post-Conquest.



FIGURES 1, 2, AND 3 ARE AZTEC REPRESENTATIONS OF SUN, MOON, AND STAR, RESPECTIVELY, BEFORE THE CONQUEST. FIGURES 4, 5, AND 6 SHOW EUROPEAN INFLUENCE.

The pre-white-man Indians in what is now the State of Utah conversed with varying degrees of ease. The Gosiute, on the eastern fringe of the Great American Desert, and the Shoshone, of northern Utah and southern Idaho, spoke a mutually intelligible language. The Southern Paiute, of southern Utah, and the Ute, of eastern Utah, also conversed with reasonable facility, the difference being that of dialect. However, the Gosiute and Shoshone found it somewhat more difficult to talk with the Southern Paiute and the Ute. Although belonging to the same large linguistic group, there was considerable difference in the words and grammar.

Dr. Luis E. Valcarcel, director of the National Museum of Peru, describes the recent discovery of two ancient cities located some 12,000 feet in altitude in the Peruvian Andes. The discoveries confirm past investigations and increase our knowledge of the early Incas. The sites reveal an intricate road system used by messengers, warriors, and merchants. Irrigation canals testify of irrigated farms capable of supporting a large population.

LOOKING BACK AT Ancient America

By WILLIAM and DEWEY FARNSWORTH

Publishers of "Buried Empires of South America," and "Grandeurs of Ancient America."



CABEZA DE SERPIENTE, CHICHEN-ITZA, YUCATAN

Serpent-head carvings upon ancient temples and monuments are acknowledged as peculiar to the art of Mexico and all parts of Central America, and, no doubt, were designed to depict the form of religious worship practiced by these forgotten races. As a symbol of religion, the serpent is thought to have originated in the Hebrew conception of the reign of the Messiah as expressed by the image of a "flying" or "winged" serpent. The serpent among both the ancient Hebrews and the Egyptians symbolized wisdom and the healing art.



ESTELA "A" AT COPAN, HONDURAS

At their zenith, the Mayas developed a hieroglyphic writing found today inscribed upon monuments and altars erected in the courts and plazas of their principal temples. This "Stela," found in the plaza of the temple at Copan in Honduras, is one of the finest examples of the intricate stone carvings—done without metal tools—of the ancients.

MONTE ALBAN, OAXACA

The archaeological zone of Monte Alban in Oaxaca covers an area of about twenty-four square miles, the ruins extending along the mountain range which overlooks the valley of Oaxaca thirteen hundred feet below. The main plaza of Monte Alban is a rectangle 1,000 feet long by 650 feet wide, surrounded by platforms from which pyramids rise. The structure that incloses the great plaza on the north side, which until 1931 was only a pile of formless ruins with grass and shrubs, is the superimposed work of three different periods. Excavation revealed a grand stairway believed to be the widest stairway yet disclosed in all American ruins.

