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New Director Appointed for the Willes Center and the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies

Recently the Brigham Young University administration announced the appointment of Professor Paul Y. Hoskisson as the new director of the Laura F. Willes Center for Book of Mormon Studies and the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies at the Maxwell Institute, effective September 1. Professor S. Kent Brown, who previously headed up these operations, retired from the university at the end of August.

M. Gerald Bradford, Maxwell Institute executive director, noted that "Kent did an outstanding job charting the initial course for the Willes Center in regard to its fostering study of the Book of Mormon and he furthered the work of the Foundation in its support of work on other restoration scripture, especially the Book of Abraham. His vision and leadership will be sorely missed."

At the same time, Bradford pointed out that "Paul is more than well suited to assume his new responsibilities. All of us associated with the Maxwell Institute are excited about his appointment and look forward to working closely with him." Hoskisson is professor of ancient scripture at BYU, a scholar of the Book of Mormon and an authority on the Bible and the ancient world of the Bible. He

has served as associate dean of Religious Education and recently was the Richard L. Evans Professor of Religious Understanding.
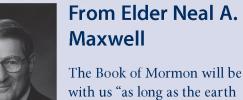
Since 1981 when he joined the BYU faculty, Hoskisson has taught courses on the Book of Mormon, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Pearl of Great Price, the history of civilization, as well as a number of language courses, including Ugaritic, Akkadian, and Hebrew. Before coming to BYU, he worked at the Universität Zürich, Switzerland, and the Universität Tübingen, Germany. He earned his PhD from Brandeis University in ancient Near Eastern Studies and his master's and bachelor's degrees from BYU. He is a member of a number of professional academic associations such as the Society of Biblical Literature, the American Oriental Society, the American Schools of Oriental Research, and the Mormon History Association.

Dr. Hoskisson has many publications to his credit, including "Aaron's Golden Calf," in *The FARMS Review*; "Looking Beyond the Mark," in *A Witness for the Restoration: Essays in Honor of Robert J. Matthews*; and "Neo-Assyrian Rhetoric: The Example of the Third Campaign of Sennacherib (704–681 B.C.)," with Grant Boswell in *Rhetoric Before and Beyond the Greeks*. He has edited a number of books, including *Historicity and the Latter-day Saint Scriptures*.

Professor Hoskisson is married to Joaquina V. Hoskisson and they are the parents of four children.

From Elder Neal A. Maxwell

The Book of Mormon will be with us "as long as the earth shall stand." We need all that time to explore it, for the book is like a vast mansion with gardens, towers, courtyards, and wings. There are rooms yet to be entered, with flaming fireplaces waiting to warm us. The rooms glimpsed so far contain further furnishings and rich detail yet to be savored, but decor dating from Eden is evident. There are panels inlaid with incredible insights, particularly insights about the great question. Yet we as Church members sometimes behave like hurried tourists, scarcely venturing beyond the entry hall. ("Not My Will, but Thine" [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], 33, as quoted in *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*, ed. Cory H. Maxwell [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997], 33.)

Book of Mormon Project Continues with New Volume

The Maxwell Institute and Brigham Young University are pleased to announce the release of part 5 of volume 4 of the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon*. Part 5 analyzes the text from Alma 56 through 3 Nephi 18.

Volume 4 represents the central task of the project, which is to recover the original English-language text of the Book of Mormon. Royal Skousen, an internationally known professor of linguistics and English language at Brigham Young University, has been the editor of the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project since 1988.

Part 5 of volume 4 examines 906 cases of variation (or potential variation) in the text. For 349 of these cases, the critical text proposes readings that differ from the standard text (the current edition). Of these proposed alternate readings, 100 have never appeared in any standard printed edition of the Book of Mormon while 27 readings make a difference in meaning that would show up in any translation of the English text of the Book of Mormon into another language. In addition, 17 readings make the text fully consistent in phraseology or usage, while 2 readings restore a unique phrase or word choice to the text.

About five-sixths of the analysis of the Book of Mormon text has now been completed. Skousen plans to publish the final part of volume 4 (part 6) in the late summer of 2009, which will cover from 3 Nephi 19 to the end of the book of Moroni. An addendum will also contain some additional items of analysis.

Skousen's work has garnered praise from scholars familiar with Book of Mormon studies. Terryl L. Givens, professor of literature and religion at the University of Richmond and author of *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture that Launched a New World Religion*, says of one analysis in Skousen's work: "This strikes me as more than just careful editorial work. This is a brilliantly fashioned argument that is carefully reasoned, meticulously argued, and reliant upon the best kind of intellectual effort: because he gives both readings the full benefit of the doubt, conceives hypotheses that substantiate both readings, and scours the text for corroborating evidence. And he repeats this procedure hundreds of times."[1]

Grant Hardy, professor and chairman of the Department of History at the University of North Carolina at Asheville and editor of *The Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition,* describes Skousen and his project: "Skousen is a scholar's scholar. He examines everything, his arguments are meticulously reasoned, he uses all the available resources of modern academia, he is generous (often giving credit to students who came up with possible readings), he always gives full consideration to alternative explanations and inconvenient evidence, and he seems willing to go wherever the evidence leads. . . . As a historian who has spent his professional life working with critical editions of ancient texts, my response to Skousen's book is awe and humility."[2]

Part 5 of *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon* is available from the BYU Bookstore.

Notes

1. Terryl L. Givens, "The Book of Mormon Critical Text Project," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 15/1 (2006): 35.

2. Grant Hardy, "Scholarship for the Ages," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 15/1 (2006): 48.

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Editor's Note: The Maxwell Institute invited Professor Royal Skousen to describe part 5 of volume 4.

In many cases the original reading is more consistent than the current reading, as in Helaman 4:12. There the printer's manuscript reads "raiseing up in great contentions & **desenting** away into the land of Nephi among the Lamanites". Oliver Cowdery often spelled the verb *dissent* as <desent>. But the 1830 typesetter, when he read the printer's manuscript here in Helaman 4:12, interpreted the *n* as an *r*, leading to the current reading "and **deserting** away into the land of Nephi among the Lamanites". Yet in the Book of Mormon, people do not desert, they dissent; only lands are deserted.

Another example of an original reading that is more consistent is in Helaman 16:11. Here the printer's manuscript reads "& **thus** were the conditions also in the eighty & eighth year of the reign of the Judges". The 1830 typesetter misread *thus* as *these*, giving "And **these** were the conditions also, in the eighty and eighth year of the reign of the Judges." This change appears to be innocuous, but interestingly the Book of Mormon consistently distinguishes between the use of *thus* and *these* in

phrases like this one: the word *these* is used only when a specific list is provided, either preceding or following. But there is no list of conditions in Helaman 16, only a general description of the conditions during those times; thus the use of the *thus,* the reading in P, is correct.

In part 5 there's a large number of cases where the critical text restores the Hebraistic *if-and* construction (where in English we expect *if-then*), as in this pair of examples:

> Helaman 10:8–9 (original text)
>   and thus **if** ye shall say unto this temple :
>   it shall be rent in twain
>   **and** it shall be done
>
>   and **if** ye shall say unto this mountain :
>   be thou cast down and become smooth
>   **and** it shall be done

There are also seven instances of this construction in Helaman 12:13–21. In his editing for the 1837 edition, Joseph Smith eliminated the unexpected use of *and* in all these instances. Nevertheless, it is clear that this construction occurred quite often in the original text and with full intent; these unexpected *and*'s were not accidentally inserted into the text. The critical text will restore each one of them, despite their difficulty for English readers.

Part 5 also examines more instances of archaic word meanings in the original Book of Mormon text, ones that date from the 1500s and 1600s. For instance, in the printer's manuscript for Helaman 8:11, the text reads "God gave power unto one man even Moses to smite upon the waters of the Red Sea & they **departed** hither & thither". The 1830 typesetter thought *departed* must be an error, so he replaced it with the expected *parted*. Yet the Oxford English Dictionary explains that the verb *depart* once had the now obsolete meaning of 'to put asunder, sunder, separate, part' (see definitions 3a–3d), with citations from 1297 through 1677. Many of the citations in the OED for this meaning are religious ones. For instance, John Wycliffe's 1388 translation of Isaiah 59:2 reads: "ʒoure wickednesses han **departid** bitwixe ʒou and ʒoure God" (which the King James Bible translated as "but your iniquities have **sepa-rated** between you and your God"). There is John Maundeville's reference (about 1400) to Moses's rod: "þe ʒerde of Moyses, with þe whilk he **departid** þe Reed See", meaning 'the rod [yard] of Moses with

which he parted the Red Sea'. When the King James Bible refers to Moses using his rod to part the Red Sea, the verb is *divide:* "but lift thou up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea and **divide** it" (Exodus 14:16). William Tyndale, in his 1526 transla-tion of Romans 8:39 uses *depart:* "to **departe** us from Goddes love". The King James Bible, on the other hand, uses the verb *separate:* "to **separate** us from the love of God". The 1557 Geneva Bible translates John 19:24 as "they **departed** my rayment among them." But the King James Bible once more circumvents this use of *depart*, in this instance by selecting the verb *part:* "they **parted** my raiment among them". Finally, there is this example from the 1548–49 Book of Common Prayer: "Till death vs **departe**". In 1662, this reading was changed to "Till death us **do part**" because by then the meaning of 'to part' for *depart* was obsolete. Note, however, that the change in the very familiar phraseology was minimal: the *de-* was replaced with the helping verb *do*, thus maintaining the cadence and sound of the original language.

There are a number of conjectural emendations in part 5, including this interesting one suggested by Paul Huntzinger: in Alma 59:8 all of the textual sources, including the original manuscript, read "the remainder of the people of Nephihah were obliged to flee before them and they came **even** and joined the army of Moroni". Huntzinger proposes that the word *even* is an error for *over* — that is, the original text read "they came **over** and joined the army of Moroni". Usage elsewhere in the Book of Mormon consistently supports the phraseology "to come **over** and join a people", but never "to come **even** and join a people". In support of this emendation, there is an instance in the manuscripts of a mix-up between *over* and *ever* as well as several mix-ups between *ever* and *even*, suggesting that a mix-up of *over* and *even* is possible.

Another conjectural emendation involves the occurrence of *yea* in Helaman 3:3. Here all the textual sources, including the original manuscript, read "and it came to pass in the forty and sixth **yea** there were much contentions and many dissensions". Usage elsewhere in the text shows that *yea* is improperly used here (we expect *yea* either to amplify or to modify what has just been stated). Of course, what we actually expect in Helaman 3:3 is the word *year*. And significantly, there are five other cases in the manuscripts where Oliver Cowdery mistakenly wrote the word *year* as *yea*. In four of

those cases, Oliver caught his error and added the *r*, but in one case he did not (namely, in Alma 48:21, where the original manuscript has *year* but Oliver miswrote it as *yea* in the printer's manuscript).
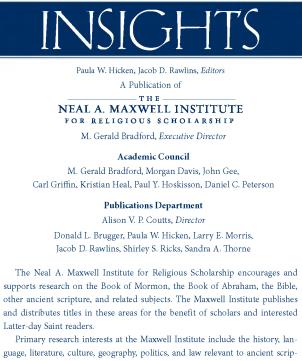
Sometimes Book of Mormon names have been changed during the transmission of the text. For part 5, the following names were changed early on in the transmission of the text: *Kishcumen* to *Kishkumen*, *Gaddianton* to *Gadianton*, and *Ezaias* to *Ezias* (in Helaman 8:20).

Sometimes editors have made changes that appear to be correct but turn out to be textually wrong. For instance, near the end of 3 Nephi 16, Jesus says, in verse 17, "and **when** the words of the prophet Isaiah shall be fulfilled" and then he proceeds to quote Isaiah 52:8–10. This *when*-clause is never completed by a main clause. In order to deal with the resulting sentence fragment, the editors for the 1920 LDS edition changed the *when* to *then*, which seems to be a perfectly reasonable emendation—in fact, one could argue that Joseph Smith dictated *then* but Oliver Cowdery misheard it as *when*. Yet as David Calabro points out, Jesus comes back to this quotation later in 3 Nephi 20:10–13 and there he explicitly uses the word *when*: "ye remember that I spake unto you and said that **when** the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled". Even though the use of *when* seems difficult in 3 Nephi 16:17, it turns out that it is the correct reading, and the critical text restores it.

Finally, part 5 covers a large portion of the text where the 1830 edition was set from the original manuscript, not from the printer's manuscript. For one sixth of the Book of Mormon text, from Helaman 13:17 through Mormon, the original manuscript rather than the printer's manuscript was taken into the print shop and used as the copytext by the 1830 typesetter. This means that for this part of the text we have two firsthand copies of the original manuscript, namely, the 1830 edition and the printer's manuscript. The original manuscript is extant for only a small portion of this part of the text. As one might expect, both the firsthand copies agree in the vast majority of cases. But when they differ, we have an interesting problem: which of the two readings is the correct one? (There always is a third possibility: both readings are wrong; but this issue rarely comes up.) One interesting example where both readings are theoretically possible occurs in 3 Nephi 17:5. Here the printer's manuscript, in Oliver Cowdery's

hand, reads as follows: "And it came to pass that when Jesus had thus spoken he cast his eyes round about again on the multitude & **behold** they were in teers & did look steadfastly upon him". On the other hand, the 1830 edition has the word *beheld* instead of *behold*: "he cast his eyes round about again on the multitude, and **beheld** they were in tears, and did look steadfastly upon him". In theory, either reading will work here. There is not enough evidence from transmission errors to determine who would have been more inclined to make the change here, but usage elsewhere in the text argues that *behold*, the reading of the printer's manuscript, was probably the reading of the original manuscript (and the original text).

There are quite a few cases of this kind of variation in part 5, where the original manuscript is not extant but differing readings in the two firsthand copies (the printer's manuscript and the 1830 edition) seem to be acceptable. Each of these cases leads us to consider both transmission errors and usage elsewhere in the text in order to determine which reading is the more probable reading of the original text. 🔡