

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM



Edited by
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of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

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Desert and the World of the Jaredites (1952; rev. 1988) provides insightful historical material on the travels of Lehi's party from Jerusalem, which occurred about c. 600 B.C., through the Arabian Peninsula, to the Western Hemisphere, and also on the journey of the Jaredite colony at about c. 2200 B.C. from the Near East to the Western Hemisphere. Francis W. Kirkham wrote a two-volume work entitled *A New Witness for Christ in America* (rev. ed. 1959–1960) that discusses the coming forth and the translation and printing of the Book of Mormon and non-LDS explanations of the same topics. B. H. Roberts authored a three-volume work titled *New Witnesses for God* (1909). Volumes 2 and 3 addressed four topics: the Book of Mormon as a witness of the Bible; the discovery, translation, and people of the Book of Mormon; evidence of its truth; and Roberts's responses to various objections to the book. Sidney B. Sperry authored *Our Book of Mormon* (1947); *The Book of Mormon Testifies* (1952); and *Book of Mormon Compendium* (1968). Daniel H. Ludlow wrote a popular one-volume work, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon* (1976).

The Religious Studies Center at Brigham Young University sponsors an annual symposium on the Book of Mormon. Beginning in 1985, it has published a volume of selected lectures for each symposium. Both doctrinal and historical materials are included. Other volumes are planned as additional symposia are held. A volume entitled *A Book of Mormon Treasury* (1959), taken from the pages of the *Improvement Era*, contains thirty-six articles by General Authorities and other respected students of the Book of Mormon on historical, geographical, and doctrinal matters, as well as biblical relationships. Following a similar format, Kent P. Jackson compiled a two-volume work, *Studies in Scripture Volume Seven—1st Nephi—Alma 29* (1987) and *Studies in Scripture Volume Eight—Alma 30—Moroni* (1988). Jackson also edited a special Book of Mormon issue of *BYU Studies* 30 (Summer 1990):1–140. Other scholarly materials related to Book of Mormon topics are available through F.A.R.M.S. (Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies).

Others who have contributed to the literature about the Book of Mormon are Paul R. Cheesman, whose works include *The World of the Book of Mormon* (1984), and Monte S. Nyman, whose publications include *An Ensign to All People: The Sa-*

cred Message and Mission of the Book of Mormon (1987).

Church headquarters publishes materials for use in weekly priesthood quorum meetings, Relief Society meetings, Sunday School classes, and Institute and Seminary classes to assist members in better understanding the Book of Mormon.

Several authors have written on Book of Mormon archaeology and geology. Two popular books with an archaeological approach are Dewey and Edith Farnsworth, *The Americas Before Columbus* (1947), and Milton R. Hunter and Thomas Stuart Ferguson, *Ancient America and the Book of Mormon* (1950). More recent studies on Book of Mormon geography include John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (1985); F. Richard Hauck, *Deciphering the Geography of the Book of Mormon* (1988); and Joseph L. Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon* (1989). The Nephites, Lamanites, Mulekites, and Jaredites were historical cultures that occupied time and space; however, Church leaders have declared no official position as to where the Book of Mormon civilizations were situated other than that they were in the Western Hemisphere.

[See also other Book of Mormon entries.]

H. DONL PETERSON

BOOK OF MORMON ECONOMY AND TECHNOLOGY

The Book of Mormon reports information about three pre-Hispanic American peoples. Although its writers do not offer a detailed picture of the economic and material culture of their societies, numerous incidental details are preserved in the account. In many cases, though not in every instance, archaeology confirms the general details. The problems that remain in matching the Book of Mormon to its presumed ancient setting are no doubt due both to the scant information given in the book itself and to incompleteness in the archaeological record.

Testing what the Book of Mormon says about pre-Columbian material culture is more difficult than it might at first appear to be. For instance, it is a historically well-established fact that craft techniques can be lost; thus one cannot confidently assume that technologies mentioned for limited

Book of Mormon populations survived after the destruction of the Nephites. Nor can one assume what Old World technologies were successfully transferred to the New. Many crafts would not have been known to the small colonist parties, and even among the skills that were transported across the sea, many may not have proved useful or adaptable in the new environment. For that matter, items attested in early portions of the Book of Mormon may not safely be assumed to have survived into subsequent history within the record itself.

The economy of Book of Mormon peoples seems, on the whole, to have been relatively simple. Although many Nephites and Jaredites lived in cities of modest size (a point whose plausibility has been enhanced by recent research), their societies were agriculturally based. Trade was mentioned for some periods, but was constrained by frequent wars. In the infrequently mentioned times of free travel, trade barriers fell, and Lamanites and Nephites predictably prospered (e.g., Hel. 6:7–9).

Despite the economy's agrarian base, wealth was manifested in terms of movable flocks, herds, costly clothing, gold, silver, and "precious things" rather than land (Jacob 2:12–13; Enos 1:21; Jarom 1:8; Mosiah 9:12; Alma 1:6, 29; 17:25; 32:2; Ether 10:12). The ideology of the leading Book of Mormon peoples undoubtedly contributed to this phenomenon: They referred to themselves as a righteous remnant obliged to abandon their comfortable dwellings and depart into the wilderness because of their religious convictions. Since entire populations seem to have moved often, land may not have been a stable source of wealth (2 Ne. 5:5–11; Omni 12–13, 27–30; Mosiah 9; 18:34–35; 22; 24:16–25; Alma 27; 35:6–14; 63:4–10; Hel. 2:11; 3:3–12; 4:5–6, 19; 3 Ne. 3:21–4:1; 7:1–2). Ideally, wealth was to be shared with the poor and for the common good, but strong contrasts between rich and poor are evident more often than not.

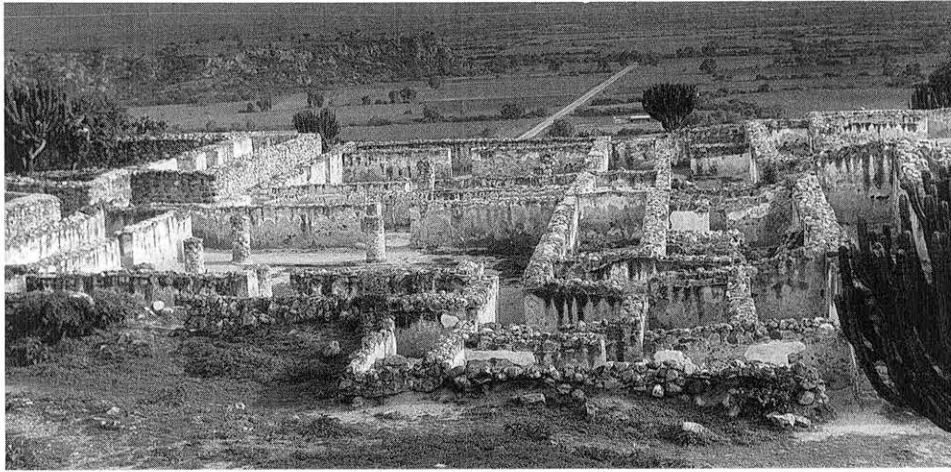
Agriculture in the Book of Mormon involved livestock and sown crops. For example, in the fifth century B.C., the Nephites "did till the land, and raise all manner of grain, and of fruit, and flocks of herds, and flocks of all manner of cattle of every kind, and goats, and wild goats, and also many horses" (Enos 1:21). In the second century B.C., the people of Zeniff cultivated corn, wheat, barley,

"neas," and "sheum" (Mosiah 9:9; cf. Alma 11:7). Early nineteenth-century American language usage suggests that Book of Mormon "corn" may denote maize or "Indian corn," which was and is a staple in diets in most parts of native America. Some of the other listed items remain less certain. Only in 1982 was evidence published demonstrating the presence of cultivated pre-Columbian barley in the New World (Sorenson, 1985, p. 184). "Neas" is not identifiable; but the word "sheum" appears to be cognate with early Akkadian *she-um*, a grain probably of the barley type (see F.A.R.M.S. Staff, "Weights and Measures").

Book of Mormon mention of horses in pre-Columbian America has drawn much criticism, and no definitive answer to this question is at present available. Linguistic data suggest that Book of Mormon "horse" need not refer to *equus*, but could indicate some other quadruped suitable for human riding, as Mesoamerican art suggests (Sorenson, 1985, p. 295). Moreover, some little-noticed archaeological evidence indicates that in certain areas the American Pleistocene horse could have survived into Book of Mormon times (*Update*, June 1984).

Most transportation was evidently on human backs; in the two contexts that the Book of Mormon mentions "chariots," it appears that their use was quite limited (Alma 18:9–12; 20:6; 3 Ne. 3:22). Chariots are never mentioned in military settings. Wheels are nowhere mentioned in the Book of Mormon (except in a quote from Isaiah). Thus, it is unknown what Nephite "chariots" may have been. "Highways" and "roads" are mentioned as used by the Nephites (3 Ne. 6:8). Some Latter-day Saints consider these to be reflected in the extensively documented road systems of ancient Mexico. "Ships" of unknown form were used during the middle of the first century B.C. for travel on the "west sea" coast (Alma 63:6) and for shipping timber to the north (Hel. 3:10), and at times maritime travel was evidently extensive (Hel. 3:14). Fine pearls are also mentioned as costly items (4 Ne. 1:24).

"Silk and fine-twined linen" are mentioned (e.g., Alma 1:29; Ether 10:24) along with common (cotton?) cloth. The "silk" is unlikely to have been produced from silkworms as in China, but similar fabrics were known, at least in Mesoamerica. For example, in Guatemala fiber from the wild pineapple plant, and among the Aztecs rabbit hair, served



The use of cement appears extensively in Mesoamerican archaeology around the first century A.D., as, for example, in these cement buildings at Teotihuacan in the Valley of Mexico. The Book of Mormon states that some Nephite dissenters who moved into a land northward “became exceeding expert in the working of cement” and built “cities both of wood and of cement” beginning in 46 B.C. (Hel. 3:7, 11). Courtesy John W. Welch.

to make silklike fabrics. Although flax apparently was not known in America prior to the arrival of the Spaniards (linen was made from flax in the Old World), several vegetable-based fabrics with similar characteristics are well attested in ancient America (*Update*, Nov. 1988).

Care must be exercised when reading the Book of Mormon, or any other text originating in a foreign or ancient culture, to avoid misunderstanding unfamiliar things in light of what is familiar. For instance, the Nephites are said to have used “money,” but since the Israelites in Lehi’s day lacked minted coinage, Nephite “money” was probably noncoined.

A well-integrated system of dry measures and metal-weight units is outlined in Alma 11; some analysts have pointed out that the system sketched is strikingly simple, efficient, and rational (Smith). In its binary mathematical configuration and its use of barley and silver as basic media of exchange, the Nephite system recalls similar systems known in Egypt and in the Babylonian laws of Eshnunna (F.A.R.M.S. Staff, “Weights and Measures”; *Update*, March 1987).

Making weapons of “steel” and “iron” is mentioned by the Nephites only during their first few generations (2 Ne. 5:15; Jarom 1:8; iron is mentioned only as a “precious” ornamental metal during the time of Mosiah 11:8). Just what these terms originally meant may not be clear. Jaredite “steel” and “iron” and other metals are mentioned twice

but are not described (Ether 7:9; 10:23). The weapons of the common soldier were distinctly simpler: stones, clubs, spears, and the bow and arrow (e.g., Alma 49:18–22).

The relative simplicity of Book of Mormon society does not imply lack of sophistication by ancient standards. For example, it would seem that literacy was not uncommon among either Nephites or Jaredites. The founding leaders of the migrations were definitely literate, and the Nephites in their middle era are said to have produced “many books and many records of every kind” (Hel. 3:15). The Lamanites and Mulekites, on the other hand, were less consistent record keepers (Omni 1:17–18; Mosiah 24:4–6; Hel. 3:15). The Jaredites and Nephites kept their most sacred records on almost imperishable metal PLATES, although some of their books were on flammable material (Alma 14:8). The plates that Joseph Smith had in his possession, and that he and other contemporary eyewitnesses described, seem well within the skill of pre-Hispanic metallurgists (Putnam; Sorenson, 1985, pp. 278–88), and the manner of their burial has rich precedent in the Eastern Hemisphere (Wright).

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DANIEL C. PETERSON

BOOK OF MORMON EDITIONS (1830–1981)

Two major goals of each published edition of the Book of Mormon have been (1) to faithfully reproduce the text; and (2) to make the text accessible to the reader. The goal of textual accuracy has led later editors to earlier editions and, when available, to the original and printer's manuscripts (*see* BOOK OF MORMON MANUSCRIPTS). The goal of accessibility has led to some modernization and standardization of the text itself and the addition of reader's helps (introductory material, versification, footnotes, chapter summaries, dates, pronunciation guides, and indexes).

Four editions were published during Joseph SMITH'S lifetime:

1. 1830: 5,000 copies; published by E. B. Grandin in Palmyra, New York. In general, the first edition is a faithful copy of the printer's manuscript (although on one occasion the original manuscript rather than the printer's was used for typesetting). For the most part, this edition reproduces what the compositor, John H. Gilbert, considered grammatical "errors." Gilbert added punctuation and determined the paragraphing for the first edition. In the Preface, Joseph Smith explains the loss of the Book of Lehi—116 pages of manuscript (*see*

MANUSCRIPT, LOST 116 PAGES). The testimonies of the Three and the Eight Witnesses were placed at the end of the book. In this and all other early editions, there is no versification.

2. 1837: Either 3,000 or 5,000 copies; published by Parley P. PRATT and John Goodson, Kirtland, Ohio. For this edition, hundreds of grammatical changes and a few emendations were made in the text. The 1830 edition and the printer's manuscript were used as the basis for this edition.

3. 1840: 2,000 copies; published for Ebenezer Robinson and Don Carlos Smith (by Shepard and Stearns, Cincinnati, Ohio), Nauvoo, Illinois. Joseph Smith compared the printed text with the original manuscript and discovered a number of errors made in copying the printer's manuscript from the original. Thus the 1840 edition restores some of the readings of the original manuscript.

4. 1841: 4,050 copies (5,000 contracted); published for Brigham YOUNG, Heber C. KIMBALL, and Parley P. Pratt (by J. Tompkins, Liverpool, England). This first European edition was printed with the permission of Joseph Smith; it is essentially a reprinting of the 1837 edition with British spellings.

Two additional British editions, one in 1849 (edited by Orson PRATT) and the other in 1852 (edited by Franklin D. Richards), show minor editing of the text. In the 1852 edition, Richards added numbers to the paragraphs to aid in finding passages, thereby creating the first—although primitive—versification for the Book of Mormon.

Three other important LDS editions have involved major changes in format as well as minor editing:

1. 1879: Edited by Orson Pratt. Major changes in the format of the text included division of the long chapters in the original text, a true versification system (which has been followed in all subsequent LDS editions), and footnotes (mostly scriptural references).

2. 1920: Edited by James E. Talmage. Further changes in format included introductory material, double columns, chapter summaries, and new footnotes. Some of the minor editing found in this edition appeared earlier in the 1905 and 1911 editions, also under the editorship of Talmage.

3. 1981: Edited by a committee headed by members of the Quorum of the Twelve. This edition is a