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Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah

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- 24.0 Annual Fall Round Table. The UAS Annual Fall Round Table was held November 19, 1954, at the LDS Institute of Religion, Salt Lake City, Utah. Dr. Franklin S. Harris, Jr., director of the Salt Lake Chapter, was chairman of the meeting, which had for its theme, "Methods of Research in the Archaeology of the Scriptures."
- 24.00 Mr. John L. Sorenson of the Dept. of Archaeology, BYU, discussed methods of dating early developments in the Mesoamerican or Book of Mormon area. Briefly explained were the native calendar systems, radio-carbon dating, and native historical or traditional accounts. The problem of establishing an accurate chronology of the various ancient civilizations of Mesoamerica is a critical one for determining possible archaeological correspondences with the Book of Mormon account.
- 24.01 Dr. M. Wells Jakeman, UAS president, then discussed the significance of Pre-Classic-period settlement patterns in Mesoamerica as an archaeological means of testing the chronology of the Book of Mormon. The increase and decrease of the number of settlements in successive phases of the Pre-Classic or Book of Mormon period in northern Central America (the "land southward" of the Book of Mormon) were shown to correspond in a striking degree to the developments in the settlement of that region according to the Book of Mormon. This appears to confirm the chronology of that record, but only on the basis of the GMT or 11.16.0.0.0 translation of the Maya dates, not the Spinden or 12.9.0.0.0.
- 24.02 Prize Papers. Following the above discussions, Dr. Jakeman announced the winners of the UAS prize paper contest (see May 31 Newsletter Paragraph 20.2). The first prize of \$30.00 was awarded to Gareth W. Lowe, graduate student in Archaeology at BYU, for a paper entitled, "The Need for Understanding the Book of Mormon Setting." The paper, read by Mr. Lowe, deplored the present lack of reliable background material for teaching the Mormon scripture, and suggested the possibility of presenting a generalized reconstruction of the geographic and cultural setting of the Book of Mormon record on the basis of present knowledge.
- Second prize of \$20.00 went to Read H. Putnam, Evanston, Wyoming, whose paper, "Some Metals and Alloys of Early America," considered the complexity of Pre-Columbian metallurgy in America. In addition, Mr. Putnam presented logical reasons for believing that the plates of the Book of Mormon record were of "tumbaga," a copper-gold alloy much used in pre-Conquest times in America, frequently treated so as to present a surface of pure gold. While tumbaga (as with all other metals) has so far

been found archaeologically only in post-Book of Mormon associations, it appears to meet the Book of Mormon requirements precisely. Mr. Putnam concludes: "When gilded, the tumbaga of early America answers in every respect the requirements needed for the plates. It is soft of surface, strong, tough, non-corrosive, easily obtained, easily worked, and not excessively heavy." And it answers the description of the plates as having the "appearance of gold."

"Honorable Mention" was awarded to Dr. Volney Wallace, Pullman, Washington, for a paper entitled "The Problem of Longevity of Early Man." Dr. Wallace briefly defined the problem respecting the great ages claimed for the biblical patriarchs.

- 24.1 Christmas Gift Memberships. An invitation to give memberships in the UAS for Christmas this year accompanied the last mailing of The Biblical Archaeologist to Society members. Those who receive the gift memberships will be welcomed into the Society by a personal letter from Pres. M. Wells Jakeman. The accompanying enclosure of current membership publications will bear the label "Do Not Open Till Christmas," and will be sent in ample time and by first class mail. Here is a gift that will be a constant reminder throughout the year of the giver's thoughtfulness. Members should submit their requests without delay, so as to allow sufficient time for Christmas mailing.
- 24.2 Price of Bulletin Reduced. With the circulation of the UAS Bulletin No. 5, which accompanies the present Newsletter, the sale price for extra copies of Bulletin No. 4 will be reduced to 50¢ apiece for Society members. The regular price of \$1.00 per copy will continue for non-members. Orders must be prepaid.
Published in March, 1953, Bulletin No. 4, with its remarkable new light on the Tree-of-Life theme, was sent to all Society members at that time and since then has been sent to all new members, free of charge. As well as helping greatly in effecting the some 200% increase in membership since that date, about 1200 copies have been sold separately at \$1.00 per copy.
- 24.3 Memberships for Missionaries. Missionaries are reminded of the complimentary membership in the UAS that is available to them (see May 31 Newsletter, Paragraph 20.1). One must be a full-time missionary, or have received his call, and must already be a member of the Society at the time of application, or else the first year's membership dues (\$3.00) must accompany the application. This complimentary membership is valid for the duration of the mission, but is granted only in response to an actual request from the missionary. Be sure to state the expected date of release when making application.
- 24.4 Salt Lake Chapter Meets. Dr. Charles E. Dibble of the Department of Anthropology, University of Utah, addressed the Salt Lake Chapter November 1, presenting a summary of a recent conference on the early history of the Valley of Mexico attended by him last August in Mexico City. Dr. Dibble described the confused chronological problem existing as a result of 13 variations of the calendar system having been used by different groups in Mexico at or prior to the time of the Spanish Conquest. As a result of new absolute dates from the radiocarbon method which in some cases conflict with currently accepted dates, the entire problem of dating archaeological cultures is being re-assessed. Following a

discussion period, refreshments were served to the 43 persons present.

- 24.5 Campus Chapter News. Meetings of unusual interest have been held by the Campus Chapter during the present quarter. On November 10, Prof. James R. Clark of the BYU Division of Religion discussed some of the archaeological problems connected with the Pearl of Great Price. Prof. Clark has pursued this subject for many years, and has combined the results of his research into the circumstances of the coming forth of the Pearl of Great Price, with a considerable knowledge of Egyptology to form an impressive corpus of material. Presented for examination were photostats and slides of pages from an original copy of the Pearl of Great Price in the handwriting of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. The group also examined photostats from Joseph Smith's uncompleted Egyptian Grammar, now preserved in the LDS Church Historian's Office.

The campus unit was addressed by Prof. Charles Edward Jacobs of the BYU geology faculty on December 1. Professor Jacobs is a specialist in ground water studies and served as a special consultant to the Israeli government for eight months during the past year. He is locally known for his interpretation of the biblical deluge as a planetary flood, as opposed to the usual view of the geological and archaeological professions. Having investigated the problem intensively on both a geological and scriptural basis, Prof. Jacobs believes that much geological reasoning is fallacious, that no compelling facts in geology oppose a planetary-flood interpretation, that distinctions of animal species are both ill-defined and little-understood, and that the multitudinous animal species of the present-day world could conceivably have developed from Noah's arkfull. He admits, however, that many real problems in the understanding of the biblical account still remain.

- 24.6 Republish Society Article. Asael T. Sorenson, president of the Brazilian LDS Mission, sends word that the November issue of their mission magazine A Liahona, carries a résumé in Portuguese of Thomas Stuart Ferguson's UAS Bulletin 4 article, "Joseph Smith and American Archaeology."

- 24.7 Antonio Chi Publication. Favorable reviews of the BYU archaeology department publication, THE "HISTORICAL RECOLLECTIONS" OF GASPAR ANTONIO CHI; AN EARLY SOURCE-ACCOUNT OF ANCIENT YUCATAN (BYU, Publications in Archaeology and Early History, No. 3, ed. and trans. by M. Wells Jakeman, Provo, Utah, 1952), have recently appeared in the professional journals Archaeology (Autumn, 1954, pp. 186-187; by J. Alden Mason, University of Pennsylvania) and American Antiquity (October, 1954, p. 189; by J. Eric S. Thompson, Carnegie Institution of Washington). A number of orders for the publication have since been received by the department. from universities, museums and private students. (Members of the Society who have not previously received this work are reminded that it may be obtained on special request, as one of three extra publications of the Society or Department which may be received free of charge in one year of membership.)