

B. H. Roberts:

Seeker after Truth

By John W. Welch

I first seriously encountered the writings of Elder B. H. Roberts of the First Council of the Seventy (1857–1933) when I was a college student. I was impressed by the stimulating analysis of LDS religious concepts in his *Seventy's Course in Theology* (1907–1919). I was caught up by the personally passionate historical prose in his *Missouri Persecutions* (1900), *The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo* (1900), and the *Comprehensive History of the Church* (1930). There was fire-power and electrifying conviction in his words. He called his faith “unshakeable.”

Recently, that faith has been drawn into question in the minds of some people. This is because of a set of papers about the Book of Mormon which B. H. Roberts wrote in 1922. In these papers, Elder Roberts bluntly lists many Book of Mormon “problems” and raises many arguments that he contemplated could be made against the Book of Mormon. As I read these papers, it became apparent that many people would misunderstand. For those who may be interested, here are the questions I think some people may ask about Elder Roberts’ Book of Mormon studies, and here are answers which recent research now provides.

What kind of a person was B. H. Roberts? He was fiercely loyal to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He had strong personal opinions, and on most occasions was outspoken and bluntly forthright.¹

All his life, B. H. Roberts sought after truth—spiritually and intellectually. For Brother Roberts—president of the Eastern States Mission from 1922 to 1927 and one of the seven Presidents of the Seventy from 1888 until his death in 1933—the search for truth was an all-consuming passion. He faced historical facts fearlessly; he confronted scientific theories confidently; and he squared off in debate spontaneously.

Did B. H. Roberts think scientific evidence could prove or disprove the Book of Mormon? No. He felt that scientific evidence was interesting and significant, but not infallible or controlling. Elder Roberts uncompromisingly recognized and openly acknowledged the Holy Ghost as the teacher of all truth. As he said in 1909:

“This [power of the Holy Ghost] must ever be the chief source of evidence for the truth of the Book of Mormon. All other evidence is secondary to this, the primary and infallible. No arrangement of evidence, however skilfully ordered; no argument, however adroitly made, can ever take its place; for this witness of the

Holy Spirit to the soul of man for the truth of the Nephite volume of scripture, is God's evidence to the truth; and will ever be the chief reliance of those who accept the Book of Mormon, and expect to see its acceptance extended throughout the world.”²

Thus, he was not afraid to ask questions about the Book of Mormon or anything else. “I am taking the position that our faith is not only unshaken but unshakeable in the Book of Mormon, and therefore we can look without fear upon all that can be said against it,” Elder Roberts wrote upon completion of his Book of Mormon studies.

Did B. H. Roberts think he had all the answers? Brother Roberts knew that he had certain answers to many historical, scientific, and gospel questions. He also knew that he did not have them all. A rational person will not seek more truth if he thinks he already has it all. Elder Roberts continued exploring, reading, thinking, and writing books, articles, tracts and pamphlets until he died in September 1933 at the age of seventy-six.

His knowledge about the Book of Mormon was no different. He was one of the first people ever to make a scholarly study of the Book of Mormon. His exploratory investigations found many things in the Book of Mormon which he considered “master strokes of philosophy” (as he writes in 1928)³ and sure signs of “divine origin” (as he speaks in 1932).⁴ Still, he knew that there were questions for which he had no answers. Yet he “most humbly prayed” and “most anxiously” awaited the “further development of knowledge that will make it possible for us to give a reasonable answer to those who question us concerning [these] matters” (as he wrote in 1921).⁵

How long have B. H. Roberts' papers on Book of Mormon “difficulties” been around? The papers, most of which were never given by Elder Roberts to anyone, have been in the hands of his family. They were donated to the University of Utah in 1979 and 1981, since which time copies have been made available.⁶

How have critics of the Church reacted to these papers? For critics of the Book of Mormon, Roberts' notes have appeared to be a bonanza. Here is one of the most intellectual General Authorities of his day seeming to expose all the evidentiary weaknesses of his own case. It is like a military officer writing an intelligence report telling the enemy where his own troops are most vulnerable. In the study, Brother Roberts is blunt. He states a case against the Book of Mormon in tough terms. It is clear that Elder Roberts recognizes there may be no answers to some of his hard questions, but that does not deter him from asking the questions.

Why did Elder Roberts write such things? First, the project grew out of committee assignments Elder Roberts was given in 1921 by Elder James E. Talmage and President Heber J. Grant. The committee was asked to respond to several questions about Book of Mormon archaeology. B. H. Roberts pursued the assignment vigorously.

Second, Elder Roberts loved to debate. He knew how to argue a case toe-to-toe and believed that much good could emerge. Even as a mission president, B. H. Roberts, who was an outspoken character all his life, would dress up in street clothes and go out to debate on the street corners of New York. When he saw unresolved problems, he would try to state those problems as clearly and as strongly as possible, then pursue the controversy.

Third, he was loyal. He wanted to help the Church wherever he could. He knew that future generations would probably face these issues and he wanted them to be prepared. In 1927 he said of his study, “Such a question as that may possibly arise some day, and if it does, it would be greatly to the advantage of our future Defenders of the Faith, if they had in hand a thorough digest of the subject matter.”⁷ To have presented these issues any less forcefully or dramatically would have been uncharacteristic of Brother Roberts.

What is Elder Roberts’ “Study of the Book of Mormon”? The Study is twenty typewritten chapters (each about fifteen pages long). The first fourteen chapters discuss similarities between the Book of Mormon and a book by Ethan Smith published in Vermont in 1823 (second edition in 1825) entitled *View of the Hebrews or the Tribes of Israel in America*. The last six chapters consider the proposition that the Book of Mormon is of human rather than divine origin.

The Study is sometimes confused with a shorter, 145-page paper entitled “Book of Mormon Difficulties” which is what B. H. Roberts initially wrote by way of committee assignment from Elder James E. Talmage in 1921. In that paper, B. H. Roberts pointed out the difficulties he ran into as he was responding to five questions asked about the Book of Mormon by a Mr. Couch from Washington, D.C. Brother Roberts found in his research that the prevailing scientific theories about Indian origins and pre-Columbian fauna, flora, and technology differed from what he believed about such things.

Do we know exactly when B. H. Roberts wrote the second work, “Study of the Book of Mormon”? Yes. The first page of the original typescript says that the Study was written thirteen years “to be exact” after the publication of *New Witnesses for God* (which appeared in 1909). Due to this and several other telltale changes Roberts made on the typescript,⁸ we can date the typing of the Study to before he left to serve as mission president in New York on 29 May 1922. Most of his proofreading changes were made before that time as well. This means—contrary to assertions some people have made—that Elder Roberts did not write the Study during his mission presidency.

Did Brother Roberts consider the Study a finished piece? No. He never submitted it to Church authorities⁹ and, uncharacteristically, only proofread it lightly.

What did B. H. Roberts think of the Study? In 1932 he called it an “awful” book. He said that he had not written it for publication.¹⁰

Did Elder Roberts draw any conclusions from the Study? No. He said in an unsent cover letter accompanying the Study, “I do not say my conclusions, for they are undrawn. ... What is herein set forth does not represent any conclusions of mine.” Throughout the study Elder Roberts asks questions. They are tough rhetorical questions, but still they are just questions, not assertions nor conclusions. They are questions he expects opponents to be asking. To these he puzzles: “What shall our answer be?” “What is to be our general standing before the enlightened opinion of mankind?” These problems he calls “legitimate queries.” He says they would be powerful weapons “in the hands of a skillful opponent,” and aimed to blunt them by paying attention to them.

Did Elder Roberts worry that people would misunderstand his Study? Yes. He wrote, “Let me say once for all, so as to avoid what might otherwise call for repeated explanation, that what is herein set forth does not represent any conclusions of mine.”

Why in his study does Elder Roberts not suggest any answers to the problems he is raising? The Study is not an answer book. It is a question book. Many of the questions he had answered before and others he would answer in the future. For example, he raises the objection that the small party of Nephites could not possibly have constructed a temple like the large and opulent temple of Solomon. Brother Roberts had already answered that question in 1909.¹¹

As another example, he poses the question of whether Joseph Smith’s powers of imagination were sufficient to have written the Book of Mormon. Elder Roberts regularly preached in the 1930s that the “perfect” sacrament prayers in Moroni 4–5 are evidence that the Book of Mormon was not written by Joseph Smith.

Some of the questions require no answer, such as the bogus suggestion that Joseph Smith got the name “Ether” from the name “Ethan Smith.” Elder Roberts himself says in the Study, “Do not take the idea too seriously.”

How careful was B. H. Roberts in this research? Not very. This particular research shows signs of haste and remained unfinished. In fact, the Study was written inside of a few months. Much of it consists of long quotes from other sources, given with little analysis. Even Elder Roberts’ reading of the Book of Mormon was not always as careful as it could have been. Several of his problems arise because of assumptions he has made about the Book of Mormon. For example, Brother Roberts assumed that the lands of the Book of Mormon were all relatively flat. He apparently overlooked many contrary statements, such as Alma 47:9, which speaks of a large mountain and valley.

Would B. H. Roberts feel embarrassed to know that some of his research was incomplete or flawed? Absolutely not. He wrote that “the generations who succeed us in unfolding in a larger way some of the yet unlearned truths of the Gospel, will find that we have had some misconceptions and made some wrong deductions in our day and time. The book of knowledge is never a sealed book. It is never

‘completed and forever closed;’ rather it is an eternally open book, in which one may go on constantly discovering new truths and modifying our knowledge of old ones.”¹² This observation pertains equally today to our continuing efforts to know the Book of Mormon better, both through study and also by faith.

Did the Study change Elder Roberts’ use of the Book of Mormon? No. Before and after the Study he used the Book of Mormon as the focus of his missionary programs. He voluntarily chose to speak on Book of Mormon subjects again and again in conferences and in the media.¹³ Over fifty-six major talks or statements were made by B. H. Roberts after the Study in which he affirms his faith in the Book of Mormon.¹⁴ After the Study, Elder Roberts may have taken less interest in archaeology and placed more emphasis on the doctrinal and philosophical strengths of the Book of Mormon, but in no way did he ever doubt or reject the historicity of this “ancient American volume of scripture,” as he called it on many occasions.

Did Elder Roberts, perhaps knowing that his Study would be troublesome to people, affirm his testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon after he wrote the Study? He wrote in May 1922 of “the tremendous truth” of the Book of Mormon. He said in 1924 that the Saints should build upon the Book of Mormon “wherein is no darkness or doubt.” He spoke at general conference in April 1928 of the “hundred more such glorious things that have come to the world in that book to enlighten the children of men.” He speaks repeatedly of the historicity of the Book.¹⁵

Nevertheless, Brother Roberts knew that he had been abrasive and challenging at times during his many years of service to the Church. At October general conference, 1929, Elder Roberts may have had the Book of Mormon Study in mind when he remarked: “I happened to be reminded today that next April it will be fifty years since I commenced my public ministry in the Church. ... I am mentioning some of these things in order that my profession of faith that I have made here today may be supported by the evidence of steady, persistent effort on my part to develop and to advocate and to establish this great work of God.

“But this is my object, and my object alone; that after bearing testimony to the fundamental things of this work, and my confidence in it, I hope that if anywhere along the line I have caused any of you to doubt my faith in this work, then let this testimony and my indicated life’s work be a correction of it. I make reference to these personal things in fifty years of service so that you may know that my testimony has some sanctions for it in the life of service I have given to the cause.”¹⁶

Is it possible that B. H. Roberts had a faithful facade which he wore in public but in private was a skeptical doubter? If Elder Roberts was anything, he was outspoken and honest. It is extremely difficult to believe that he was two-faced. In his April 1928 general conference talk, Elder Roberts emotionally spoke of the Book of Mormon and of the appearance of the resurrected Jesus Christ among the

Nephites gathered at the temple in Bountiful. He said: “And now, O Lord Jesus, if thou couldst but come into the consciousness of our souls this day, as thou didst come into the vision of the ancient Nephites in the Land of Bountiful, we would join their great song of praise and worship, saying—‘Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God!’ And we, like them, would fall down at the feet of Jesus and worship him this Easter day! Amen.” In powerful statements like this one, Elder Roberts revealed his deep-felt faith in the Book of Mormon.

Did B. H. Roberts ever say anything after 1922 that could lead someone to think that he had lost faith in the Book of Mormon? Yes, on one known occasion. Elder Roberts had a conversation with Wesley Lloyd, one of his former missionaries, in Salt Lake on 7 August 1933, six weeks before his death. He began this conversation, if reported correctly by Brother Lloyd, complaining that his unpublished book *The Way, The Truth, The Life* had been subjected to “severe criticism” and rejected by the Brethren. He thought he had been personally attacked. He then took issue with a new Church policy of not sending missionaries into the field without financial backing.¹⁷ He next complained about Brigham Young. Finally, he turned to the Book of Mormon, complaining that back in 1922 a “crisis had arisen where revelation was necessary” but that no answer had been forthcoming.

No doubt, Brother Roberts voiced some complaints that day. The important thing is that he did not resign his Church position as he said he might do. He did not cease working on his missionary correspondence course. He did not give up on the Church. And he did not give up on the Book of Mormon. These supposed complaints are not representative of his more fundamental attitudes and beliefs.

In actual fact, the Wesley Lloyd journal is inaccurate and not reliable in many factual respects.¹⁸ Brother Lloyd says that Roberts “shifted his base on the Book of Mormon.” Shifting bases, however, does not mean abandoning. In reality, we know how Elder Roberts shifted: in his later years, B. H. Roberts found his doctrinal approach of the Book of Mormon’s divinity more satisfying.¹⁹ Brother Lloyd says that Elder Roberts thought that the Book of Mormon was in need of “the more bolstering.” Needing “more” bolstering was always B. H. Roberts’ position.

It may also be relevant that Elder Roberts, at seventy-six, was in ill health. He had lost a foot, spent several months near death’s door in hospitals, and suffered from the advanced stages of the diabetes that would kill him a few weeks later.²⁰

Undoubtedly, Elder Roberts also felt a great loss due to the death of Elder James Talmage on 27 July 1933, about a week before this conversation with Lloyd.

These facts help place in context what the old fighter was feeling that day as he conversed with his young friend. After that conversation, Elder Roberts went to Chicago to represent the Church at a world conference of religious leaders. He also told Jack Christensen (another of his missionaries), sometime around 1 September 1933, “Ethan Smith played no part in the formation of the Book of Mormon. You accept Joseph Smith and all the scriptures!”²¹

Is it necessary for members of the Church today to read B. H. Roberts' Study to be up to date on Book of Mormon studies? No. In fact, the Study is now to a considerable extent out of date. Most of his questions have since found answers.

The Study marks a beginning stage in the history of Book of Mormon studies. With Roberts, students of the Book of Mormon began to think more deeply about shallow and inadequate archaeological explanations or “proofs” of the Book of Mormon. With Roberts, scholars like Elder John A. Widtsoe, and a few years later Hugh Nibley²² and Sidney Sperry, began to expand our approaches to the study of the Book of Mormon.

What were Elder Roberts' main questions? Elder Roberts raised questions in five areas.

1. He found that the prevailing theory in the 1920s about the origin of the American Indian was that they all came long ago over the Bering Strait, not across the sea.
2. He pointed out the apparent absence of a credible relationship of the Book of Mormon account to the archaeology of the 1920s.

On these first two matters, we, along with science, still await definitive answers. As President Anthony W. Ivins, a counselor to President Heber J. Grant, said in general conference, April, 1929, “Where was the City of Zarahemla? ... It does not make any difference to us. There has never been anything yet set forth that definitely settles that question. So the Church says we are just waiting until we discover the truth. All kinds of theories have been advanced.”²³ Plausible answers, however, have recently been developed. One such scientific and scholarly theory recently advanced is John L. Sorenson's *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*.²⁴ For example, in B. H. Roberts' day there was no evidence of pre-Columbian domesticated barley in the Americas; today there is.

3. Elder Roberts pointed out certain seemingly absurd or erroneous passages in the Book of Mormon.
4. He suggested similarities between Book of Mormon conversion stories and early nineteenth-century spiritual experiences.

Today, many of these alleged absurdities, on closer examination, turn out to be strengths rather than weaknesses. For example, Alma 46 says that Captain Moroni waved the “rent” of his coat in the air. This seems impossible in English, since one cannot wave the “tear.” But in Hebrew the expression is a natural one.²⁵ The similarity between the Nephites falling down during King Benjamin's speech and Methodists falling down at revival meetings in Joseph Smith's day is superficial. More extensive are the similarities between King Benjamin's speech and ancient Israelite festival and coronation celebrations.²⁶

5. B. H. Roberts displayed a list of twenty-six purported “parallels” between the

Book of Mormon and a book written in 1823 (second edition 1825). That book, *View of the Hebrews* (*VH*), argues that the American Indians were descendants of the lost ten tribes of Israel (a theory which Elder Roberts rightly wrote in 1932 is not the theory of the Book of Mormon). Since the alleged points of contact between *VH* and the Book of Mormon are scattered throughout *VH* and in some cases are supposedly quite specific, the hypothesis that Joseph Smith directly relied on *VH* becomes plausible only if one assumes that Joseph Smith knew *VH* quite well and accepted it as correct. If this were so, then he should have followed it—or at least not contradicted it—on its major points. But this does not turn out to be the case. Consider the following “*unparallels*”:

- a. *VH* begins with a chapter on the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. It has nothing to say, however, about the much earlier destruction of Jerusalem in Lehi’s day by the Babylonians.
- b. Chapter 3 comprises most of *VH*. It produces numerous “distinguished Hebraisms” as “proof” that the American Indians are Israelites. But few of these points are found in the Book of Mormon, as one would expect if Joseph Smith were using *VH* or trying to make his book persuasive. For example: *VH* asserts repeatedly that the Ten Tribes came to America via the Bering Strait, which they crossed on “dry land.” According to *VH*, this opinion is unquestionable, supported by all the authorities. From there *VH* documents that the Israelites spread from north to east and then to the south at a very late date. These are critical points for *VH*, in whose view Amos 8:11–12 prophesies that the tribes would go from the north to the east. Significant population migrations in the Book of Mormon, however, follow a crossing of the ocean and then always move from south to north.
- c. *VH* reports that the Indians are Israelites because they use the word *Hallelujah*. Here is one of *VH*’s favorite proofs, a dead give-away that the Indians are Israelites. Yet this word is not used in the Book of Mormon. Furthermore, a table showing thirty-four Indian words or sentence fragments with claimed Hebrew equivalents appears in *VH* (2d ed., pp. 90–91). No reader of the book could have easily missed this chart. If Joseph Smith had wanted to make up names to use in the Book of Mormon which would substantiate his claim that he had found some authentic Western Hemisphere Hebrew words, he would have looked hard at such a ready-made list. Yet none of these thirty-four Hebrew/Indian words (Keah, Lani, Uwoh, Phale, Kurbet, etc.) resemble any of the 175 words which appear for the first time in the Book of Mormon.
- d. *VH* says that the Indians are Israelites because they carry small boxes with them into battle. These are to protect them against injury. In *VH*, they are considered sure signs that the Indians’ ancestors knew of the Ark of the Covenant. If Joseph Smith were depending on *VH*, he would not likely have passed up such a distinguished and oft-attested “Hebraism” as this. Yet in all Book of Mormon battle scenes, there is no such ark, box, or bag serving as a military fetish.
- e. The Indians are Israelites because the Mohawk tribe, a tribe held in great

reverence by all the others, was paid tribute. To *VH*, the conclusion was that the Mohawks are the vestiges of the tribe of Levi, Israel's tribe of priests. If Joseph Smith were relying on such a belief, one might think that he would have provided something about Levites in the Book of Mormon, but he did not.

f. *VH* claims that the righteous Indians quickly lost knowledge that they were all from the same family, were active "for a long time" well into recent times, and that their destruction occurred about A.D. 1400, as evidenced by tree ring counts near some of the fortifications of these people. The Book of Mormon rejects these notions, reporting that tribal affiliations were maintained for almost a thousand years and that the destruction of the Nephites occurred in the fourth century A.D.

g. *VH* argues that the Indians are Israelites because they knew the legends of Quetzalcoatl. But the surprise here is that *VH* argues that Quetzalcoatl was none other than—not Jesus—but Moses! "Who could this be but *Moses*, the ancient legislator in Israel?" (*VH*, 2d. ed., p. 206; emphasis in original.) He was white, gave laws, required penance (strict obedience), had a serpent with green plumage (brazen, fiery-flying serpent in the wilderness), appeased God's wrath (by sacrifices), was associated with a great famine (in Egypt), spoke from a volcano (Sinai), walked barefoot (removed his shoes), and opened a golden age (seven years of plenty in Egypt—which has nothing to do with Moses, by the way). If *VH* provided inspiration for the Book of Mormon, it did not provide much. Besides the fact that *VH* sees Quetzalcoatl as *Moses*, none of these hallmark details associated with Quetzalcoatl are incorporated into the account of Christ's visit to Bountiful in 3 Nephi.

The foregoing seven points can be multiplied literally twelve times over.²⁷ In the face of such differences, the few similarities pale. Both works speak of long migrations for religious reasons; both report wars; both say the people knew how to write and work with metals; and both praise generosity and denounce pride; *VH* speaks of Indian lore that they left a "lost book" back in Palestine and buried other records with their chiefs. B. H. Roberts asks the question: "Can such numerous and startling points of resemblance and suggestive contact be merely coincidence?" One can answer "yes," for the differences outweigh the similarities and most of the similarities lose force upon examination. If Joseph Smith had given *VH* basic credence, he would not have contradicted and ignored it in so many ways.²⁸

Do we have all the answers to Book of Mormon questions? No. We may never have all the answers to questions about the Book of Mormon. But in the last sixty years since B. H. Roberts made his study, many things which he thought someone might say were weak or odd about the Book of Mormon have turned out to strengthen its credibility.

The Lord apparently does not intend the Book of Mormon to be an open-and-shut case intellectually, either pro or con. If he had intended this, he would have left more concrete evidences. Instead, the Lord has given us the opportunity to address the Book of Mormon as a matter of faith, as a modern-day miracle, a product of

divine revelation. As such, it serves, through revelation, as a keystone of the Restoration and as a sacred testimony of Jesus Christ. Like B. H. Roberts, all readers of the Book of Mormon should take the Holy Ghost—not a list of preconceived, self-limiting issues—as their guide.

Few have sensed the will of the Lord in this regard more keenly than B. H. Roberts, who for many years was the “lightning rod” among the General Authorities to absorb the strikes against the Book of Mormon and supply answers whenever he could. Often he had good replies, but sometimes he had none. He never expected or claimed to have all the answers.

Today, while we have better answers, we still do not have all the answers; we should not expect or need to have. But this does not mean that we lose faith in the Book of Mormon.

Elder Roberts, in fact, is an inspiring example of one who kept the faith in the face of serious questions for which he did not have the answers. If in his works we find some things that on the surface seem confusing, we should remember his words in October 1929: “If anywhere along the line I have caused any of you to doubt my faith in this work, then let this testimony and my indicated life’s work be a correction of it.” So let it be.

Notes

1. See Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980).
2. B. H. Roberts, *New Witnesses for God*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1909), 2:vi–vii.
3. Deseret News, June 16, 1928.
4. Stake Conference Minutes, San Francisco Stake, April 23–24, 1932.
5. Elder Roberts wrote this in 1921 in a paper entitled “Book of Mormon Difficulties,” which he submitted to the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve.
6. Most recently these papers have appeared in *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, ed. Brigham D. Madsen, Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985.
7. B. H. Roberts’ letter to Elder Richard R. Lyman, 24 October 1927.
8. Documentation dating the Study is presented in a report by John W. Welch and Truman G. Madsen, “Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?” (FARMS Preliminary Report 1985, P. O. Box 7113 University Station, Provo, UT 84602.)

9. This corrects, with Madsen's concurrence, the statement in the *Ensign*, December 1983, p. 15. See B. H. Roberts' letter to Elder Richard R. Lyman, 24 October 1927, stating that he had not yet decided to submit the Study to the First Presidency.
10. Truman G. Madsen, *Ensign*, Dec. 1983, p. 15.
11. *New Witnesses for God*, 3:523.
12. *New Witnesses for God*, 3:503–4.
13. See Truman G. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts and the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies* 19 (Summer 1979), pp. 427–45.
14. These are all collected in "B. H. Roberts: His Final Decade—Statements about the Book of Mormon (1922–1933)," available as a FARMS Reprint ROB-33.
15. For a lengthy listing of these statements see Welch and Madsen, "Did B. H. Roberts Lose Faith in the Book of Mormon?"
16. In Conference Report, pp. 89–91.
17. This was in the middle of the Great Depression.
18. The Study was done during 1922, not later, as Lloyd states. Elder Lyman asked if the research would "increase our difficulties," not "help our prestige." The Study was 450 pages, not 400, and was never sent to President Grant, as Lloyd claims. Lloyd says that Roberts, in the Study, "swings to a psychological explanation of the Book of Mormon and shows that the plates were not objective but subjective with Joseph Smith." But there is no such "swinging" or "showing" in the Study.
19. See letter of Mark Allen, one of Elder Roberts' missionaries, written 20 July 1983, in possession of Truman G. Madsen.
20. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith*, p. 376.
21. Jack Christensen was interviewed by Truman Madsen, 25 April 1979.
22. For a discussion of Hugh Nibley's contributions to Book of Mormon studies, see *Ensign*, April 1985, p. 50.
23. In Conference Report, pp. 15–16.
24. Deseret Book Co., 1985. See also *Ensign*, Sept. 1984, pp. 26–37, and Oct., 1984, pp. 12–23.

25. See John A. Tvedtnes, “Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon: A Preliminary Survey,” *BYU Studies* 11 (Autumn 1970), p. 51. Readers interested in an expanded treatment of Elder Roberts’ questions are referred to “Finding Answers to B. H. Roberts’ Questions, and ‘An Unparallel,’” (FARMS Preliminary Report 1985).
26. This is demonstrated in a recently compiled report entitled “King Benjamin’s Speech in the Context of Ancient Israelite Festivals,” (FARMS Preliminary Report 1985).
27. John Welch discusses eighty-four such distinctions in “Finding Answers to B. H. Roberts’ Questions, and ‘An Unparallel.’”
28. Further discussions of dissimilarities are available in Spencer J. Palmer and William L. Knecht, “View of the Hebrews: Substitute for Inspiration?” *BYU Studies*, 5, (Winter 1964), pp. 105–113; Hugh Nibley, “The Comparative Method,” *Improvement Era*, Oct. 1959, pp. 744–759 and Nov. 1959, pp. 848, 854, 856; Hugh Nibley, *No Ma’am That’s Not History* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946); and Bruce Blumell, *Ensign*, Sept. 1976, pp. 84–87, each available as reprints from FARMS See also Ariel L. Crowley, “Analysis of Ethan Smith’s ‘View of the Hebrews’: A Comparison with the Book of Mormon,” in *About the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), pp. 117–121.