

(Lehi.Beginnings to 1830)

Alan C. Miner

Copyright 2005 by Alan C. Miner. All rights reserved

Last edit date: January 25, 2020

## A Detailed Chronology of LDS Thought on the Geography of Lehi's Journey from Jerusalem to the New World

Beginnings-----> 1830

[Year<sup>1</sup>](#) [Person](#)  
[Primary Souce<sup>2</sup>](#)

Quotes from Significant Books, "Articles," & Events

[Significant Theoretical or Illustrated Models, or Illustrations Related to Book of Mormon Geography]

Notes\*

*Note 1 (above): The mark ^ after the YEAR is purely a research tool indicating that a copy of the article or book is on file in the author's personal library.*

*Note 2 (above): The YEAR (listed on the left) for the event or quote is not always the same as the date of the PRIMARY SOURCE (listed on the right) from which the information was taken. If the source information (the later publication of the information) was significant, in and of itself, to the later time period in which it came forth, there will also be a separate listing for that later year. When appropriate, additional sources will be listed.*

*Note\* Pre Book of Mormon Literature: There were a number of books and articles that were written prior to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon concerning the geography and culture of Arabia. However, the reader must realize that not all of these works were printed in America and some were not published in the English language until many years after the publication of the Book of Mormon. Furthermore, when one considers that the Book of Mormon came forth on the western frontiers of New York where life was a struggle, one can easily see that there is a question of just how many of these works, if any, were available to the early authorities or members of the Church. To this one might add that hardly any of these works were mentioned in the early LDS diaries and histories as being specifically used by Church members in support of Lehi's travels. That is to say, whether any of these works were available or not, there is a lack of proof that anyone involved in the Restoration or the early Church read them. Thus when one considers the amount of influence that any of these works might have had on the early LDS views of Book of Mormon geography, one is dealing in speculation. While it is not the focus of this paper to solve this debate, neither is it my intent to avoid information that might have influenced views on Book of Mormon geography as many of these books have been cited by more recent LDS authors as well as some*

*non-LDS authors in their discussions concerning the content of the Book of Mormon. So with this warning, and for the benefit of the reader, I will list a few of these works before beginning a more strictly LDS perspective on the development of ideas concerning the geography of Lehi's journeys from Jerusalem to the New World. If the reader desires to focus only on LDS writings they can skip this section and move forward to the year 1830 when the Book of Mormon was published.*

[abt. 447 B.C.](#) [Herodotus](#)

### **The History of Herodotus**

From a translation by George Rawlinson, the editor Manuel Komroff writes the following note:

Herodotus, the "Father of History," lived during the eventful years of 484-425 B.C. He was born a Persian subject, the Greek provinces of Asia Minor having already become part of the vast dominant empire of Persia. . . .

The main object of this history was to record the great Persian war of invasion. But this war needed an extensive introduction which should explain and trace the growth of Persia from a small subject kingdom to a vast commanding empire. And more than this; Herodotus felt that he had to say something regarding the histories of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, media and other surrounding countries forming part of the empire. He also wanted the reader to understand what kind of people lived in these different countries, what climates and natural productions they possessed, and in what manner they worshipped their gods. . . .

. . . His efforts were received with little favor. It was owing to this that he left his home and went to live in Athens, the center of Greek intellectual life. This was in the year 447 B.C. Two years later his history won the popular approval of the citizens, who, by a decree, awarded him a prize of ten talents. . . .

A Latin version of Herodotus was made as early as 1450. This was revised by Heusback in 1537 and forms the text that accompanies the original Greek in many editions.

Sections of This Histories were done in English in 1584 by someone who signed himself B. R., but the first complete translation was made by Littlebury in 1709. Another version was done in 1791 by the Rev. William Beloe, "Keeper of the printed books at the British Museum."

Starting on page 185 (Book III) we find the following:

Arabia is the last of inhabited lands towards the south, and it is the only country which produces frankincense, myrrh, cassia, cinnamon, and ladanum. The Arabians do not get any of these, except the myrrh, without trouble. The frankincense they procure by means of the gum styrax, which the Greeks obtain from the Phoenicians, this they burn, and thereby obtain the spice. For the trees which bear the frankincense are guarded by winged serpents, small in size,

and of varied colours, whereof vast numbers hang about every tree. They are of the same kind as the serpents that invade Egypt; and their is nothing but the smoke of the styrax which will drive them from the trees.

Source: <sup>^</sup>The History of Herodotus, translated by George Rawlinson, edited by Manuel Komroff. New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1956.

The Hiltons write:

The Greek historian Herodotus, who lived from 485 to 430 B.C., wrote within 150 years of Lehi's time: "Arabia is the farthest of inhabited countries towards the south; and this is the only region in which grow frankincense [and] myrrh." He also reported on the distance between Arabia and Memphis Egypt: "I have heard that it is a two months' journey from east to west; and that westward its confines produce frankincense." He said that Arabians rode camels, which are "not inferior to horses in swiftness, and are much better able to carry burdens."

Source: Henry Cary, trans., Herodotus (London: George Bell and Sons, 1891, 215, 97, 214), as quoted in <sup>^</sup>Lynn M. Hilton and Hope A. Hilton, Discovering Lehi: New Evidence of Lehi and Nephi in Arabia, Springville, Ut: Cedar Fort Inc., 1996, p. 12

John Tvedtnes writes:

About 440 BC, the Greek historian Herodotus notes:

"There is a large river in Arabia called the Corys, which issues into the Erythraean [Red] Sea. . . . The Arabian king had the hides of cows and other animals sewn together into a pipe, which was long enough to reach the desert from the river. Then he drew the water from the river through the pipe into big storage tanks, which had been excavated in the desert to receive and hold the water. It is twelve days' journey from the river to this desert, and he is supposed to have brought the water to three separate parts of the deserts, through three pipes" (Herodotus, The Histories, 3.9 trans. Robin Waterfield (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, 172)

Although we cannot ascertain the location of this river (it may have been in the south, in Yemen),\* there are other ancient texts that mention rivers in the al-Maqnah region explored by Potter and Thorsted.

Source: John Tvedtnes, "More on the River Laman," in FARMS Update Research in Progress, No. 176, in Insights, Vol. 25, Num. 3, 2005, pp. 2-3.

[abt. 300 B.C.](#)   [Eratosthenes](#)

???

*Note\** In his writings about 6 B.C.(see notation), Strabo quoted Eratosthenes (ca. 275-194 B.C.)

[2nd Cent. BC](#)   [Agatharchides of Cnidus](#)

**On the Erythraean Sea. Agatharchides of Cnidus: On the Erythraean Sea, trans. and ed. Stanley Mayer Burstein, London: Hakluyt Society, 1989**

John Tvedtnes writes:

In the second century BC, Agatharchides of Cnidus, a Greek historian and geographer, wrote his treatise *On the Erythraean Sea*. The original text has been lost over time, but portions were quoted by subsequent writers who had access to it. [The early writers who cited Agatharchides were Diodorus of Sicily (*Library of History*), Strabo (*Geography*), and Photius (*Bibliotheca*).] In this way, portions of Book 1 of his work have been preserved, while Book 5 has survived almost intact and gives a description of the horn of Africa and the lands adjoining the Red Sea. Describing the northwest Arabian coast near the Sinai peninsula, Agatharchides wrote:

After these places there is a well-watered plain which, because of the streams that flow through it everywhere, grows dog's tooth grass, lucerne and also lotus the height of a man. Because of the abundance and excellence of the pasturage it not only supports flocks and herds of all sorts in unspeakably great numbers but also wild camels and, in addition, deer and gazelles. In response to the abundance of animals which breed there, crowds of lions, wolves and leopards gather from the desert. (pp. 151-152)

Source: John Tvedtnes, "More on the River Laman," in *FARMS Update Research in Progress*, No. 176, in *Insights*, Vol. 25, Num. 3, 2005, pp. 2-3.

*Note\** This would establish the presence of a stream (or "river") in northwest Arabian coast near the Sinai peninsula.

[abt. 63 BC](#)   [Artemidorus](#)

**Unknown. Cited in *The Geography of Strabo* 16.4.18, trans. Jones, 7:343**

John Tvedtnes writes:

Strabo, a Greek historian born in 63 BC, cited an earlier work by Artemidorus. After describing the region of northwestern Arabia near the island of Tiran and opposite the southern end of the Sinai peninsula, he wrote: "One comes next to a plain [about modern al-Maqnah] which is well

supplied with trees and water and is full of all kinds of domestic animals--mules among others; and it has a multitude of wild camels, deer, and gazelles, as also numerous lions, leopards, and wolves [jackals?]. Off this plain lies an island called Dia. Then one comes to a gulf about five hundred stadia in extent, which is enclosed all round by mountains and a mouth that is difficult to enter; and round it live men who hunt the land animals" (The Geography of Strabo 16.4.18, trans. Jones, 7:343)

Source: John Tvedtnes, "More on the River Laman," in FARMS Update Research in Progress, No. 176, in Insights, Vol. 25, Num. 3, 2005, pp. 2-3.

### [abt. 50 B.C.](#)    [Diodorus Siculus](#)

#### **Bibliotheke**

*Note\* S. Kent Brown notes that one of the earliest sources for information concerning the geography of Arabia was the classical writings of Diodorus Siculus (fl. ca. 60-30 B.C.). However, it would be centuries before this book would be translated into English. Siculus's Bibliotheke was published in 1814. However it contained "no firsthand information." "[It] featured descriptions of the land and peoples--some inaccurate--that were based chiefly on reports of others."*

Source: ^S. Kent Brown, "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon, edited by Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2002, pp. 69-70, 74-75.

### [6 B.C.^](#)    [Strabo](#)

#### **The Geography of Strabo**

*Note\* One of the earliest sources concerning Arabian geography was the writings of Strabo. However, it would be many centuries before these writings would be translated into English. In 1976, the Hiltons (In Search of Lehi's Trail) would include 6 pages of pertinent excerpts from these writings with the following note:*

*Strabo wrote of conditions in Arabia in the first century B.C., as well as the fascinating history of an ill-fated 10,000-man Roman infantry expedition to Arabia. This journey covered much of Lehi's trail [the Red Sea coastal corridor as proposed by the Hiltons] within six centuries of Lehi's time. Strabo of Amasia lived approximately 63 B.C. to A.D. 25. A Greek, he wrote seventeen books on geography, all published in 6 B.C.*

*Aelius Gallus was Strabo's "friend and companion" (2:5:12), the Roman Prefect of Egypt. Commanded by Emperor Caesar Augustus to reach and subjugate the incense country of Yemen and Dhofar (now in Oman), he took 10,000 infantry and landed, in 24 B.C., at Leuce Come' on the Red Sea coast in Arabia, a town on what is believed to be Lehi's trail. [see map below] He then traveled down the eastern coast of the Red Sea along the frankincense trail, took the city of Najran near Abha, and laid siege to Marib, the*

capital of one of the new frankincense kingdoms. The siege was abandoned because of lack of water, and the then returned to Egypt after great loss of life. The account shows the difficulty and barrenness of part of the Lehi trail 572 years after Lehi had probably traveled there.

The following, an account (based on first-hand sources) of travel in Saudi Arabia in 24 B.C., is excerpted from *The Geography of Strabo*, vol. 7 of seven volumes, translated from the Greek by Horace Leonard Jones (London: W. Heinemann Ltd., 1930), pp. 299-365.

[Six pages of text follow. To see the exact text the reader is referred to the endnotes]

Source: ^Lynn M. Hilton and Hope Hilton, *In Search of Lehi's Trail*, Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1976, Appendix 2, pp. 120-125.

Note\* This would establish travel along the coastal "frankincense trail" followed by the Hiltons in 1976. The trail would ascend up through the Asir mountains in a southeastern direction to Najran where one branch turned eastward towards Dhofar and one branch continued southward towards Marib.

[6 B.C. Map: The Route Described by Strabo. Lynn M. Hilton and Hope A. Hilton, *Discovering Lehi: New Evidence of Lehi and Nephi in Arabia*, Springville: Cedar Fort Inc., 1996, p. 11]

Note\* I will remind the reader that all of the maps that have been included here are to help the reader visualize what these early authors were describing in their narratives. Most all of these maps have been published at a much later date. There is a big difference between trying to decipher a coherent picture through reading a translated foreign text loaded with foreign words and old Arabic place-names versus looking at a simplified map.

Note\* I do not know, at present, the year in which Strabo's writings were first published in English and distributed to America.

Note\* In his writings it is interesting that Strabo notes a "river" in southwestern Arabia somewhere between Najran (as noted on the map above) and Yenbo, which in relation to the map above would be situated south of Leuce' Come' on the Red Sea coast. He writes:

for on the ninth day he arrived at Negrani [Najran] where the battle had taken place, and thence on the eleventh day at Hepta Phreata, as the place is called, from the fact that it has seven wells; and thence, at last, marching through a peaceable country, he arrived at a village called Chaalla, and again at another village called Malotha, which is situated near a river; and then through a desert country, which had only a few watering-places, as far as a village called Egra [Yenbo]. The village is in the territory of Obodas; and it is situated on the sea. (*In Search of Lehi's Trail*, p. 124)

Strabo also notes the relative ease of caravan travel, that "camel-traders travel back and forth from Petra to this place [Leuce Come'] in safety and ease, and in such numbers of men and camels that they differ in no respect from an army. (Ibid., p. 123)

*Note\* This establishes a coastal caravan route from just above the gulf of Akaba to a third of the way down the Red Sea eastern coastline.*

Tvedtnes notes\*:

Describing the region called Yemen in our day, Strabo [see 6 B.C. notation] wrote: "The extreme parts towards the south, lying opposite to Aethiopia, are watered by summer rains and are sowed twice, like India; and the rivers there are used up in supplying plains and lakes. The country is in general fertile, and abounds in particular with places for making honey; and, with the exception of horses and mules and hogs, it has an abundance of domesticated animals; and, with the exception of geese and chickens, has all kinds of birds" (Geography 16.4.2, in the Geography of Strabo, trans. Horace Leonard Jones [London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, Loeb Classical Library, 1966], 7:309-11).

Source: John Tvedtnes, "More on the River Laman," in FARMS Update Research in Progress, No. 176, in Insights, Vol. 25, Num. 3, 2005, pp. 2-3.

#### A.D. 57<sup>A</sup> Unnamed author

##### The Periplus

An early source concerning Arabian geography was the account of an unnamed sailor. The work was called The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea. However, it would be many centuries before this book would be translated into English. In 1976, the Hiltons (In Search of Lehi's Trail) would include 12 pages of pertinent excerpts from these writings with the following note:

[p. 126] The unnamed author of the Periplus was probably a Greek merchant of Alexandria, Egypt, who made the journey from Egypt through the Red Sea past ports on the Arabian peninsula [see map below], which would be close to Lehi's route [the Red Sea coastal route proposed by the Hiltons]. His course followed on to India about A.D. 60. Some amazing details in the form of a nautical and commercial directory are contained in his record, which could qualify it as the original travel log. Though the author wrote about 660 years after Lehi's time, this account gives valuable insight into conditions as they probably existed in Lehi's day, since there was likely very little change until after Greek influence began to be felt there during the first century A.D. The western world learns here first of the regular monsoon winds that blow steadily from the southwest, beginning near the island of Madagascar, past Arabia, and across the Indian Ocean toward China, from June through November. Then, in amazing regularity even now, 2,000 years later, the following six months they blow in the opposite direction from the

northeast. It is these same southwest monsoons that regularly water the Qara Mountains at Salalah, Dhofar, and nowhere else on the south Arabian shore. This southwest monsoon could have been utilized by Nephi to sail eastward toward China to a point where he could have picked up ocean currents to carry his colony to America.

*Note\* Question: Is the Dhofar region described anywhere in The Periplus? The Hiltons write:*

[p. 126] The following, the eye-witness account of a visit to several seaports along Lehi's probable trail over nineteen hundred years ago, is excerpted from *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, Travel and Trade in the Indian Ocean by a Merchant of the First Century*, translated from the Greek by Wilfred H. Schoff (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1974), pp. 29-35, plus notes by Schoff.

Twelve pages of text and notes (pp. 126-137) follow from which the following is of interest:

[p. 129] In the tribal genealogy in Genesis X, we are shown their relation to the Semites of the North. Three of the children of Shem are given as Elam, Asshur, and Arphaxad. Arphaxad's son was Salah, and his grandson Eber. These names are associated with Babylonia and Chaldaea. Eber's second son was Joktan, of which the Arabic form is Kahtan, which appears farther south along the Persian Gulf, in the peninsula of El Katan. Of the sons of Joktan, most as identified with the southern coast; two of them being Hasarmaveth (Hadramaut), and Jerah (cf. the Jerakon Kome' of Ptolemy, north of Dhofar). The last-named [Jerah] the Arabs call Yarab: his son was Yashab (cf. the Asabi in Oman, para. 35), and his grandson "Saba the Great" (surnamed Abd-es-Shems) is said to have founded the city of Marib, and to have begun its great dam, on which the irrigation of the vicinity depended. The Sabaeans are thus connected with this Saba, a descendant of Jerah . . .

*[Note\* This "Jerah" will be compared with the "Jared" in the Book of Mormon by Potter & Wellington-- see the video notations for 2000-2003]*

[pp. 134-135] The inscriptions of the early Egyptian dynasties contain, as we might expect, few references to the trade in incense, which was brought overland to the upper Nile by the "people of Punt and God's Land" and not sought out by the Pharaohs. That incense was in use is sufficiently clear from the early ritual. . . . Then followed a period of disorder and Arabian domination in Egypt, during which Arab merchants controlled the trade. This was the condition described in Genesis XXXVII, 25, when "a traveling company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt." . . .



[p. 129] According to Arab accounts the dam at Marib was finished by a certain King Zul Karnain, suggesting the primacy of the Minaean dynasty [Location] at that time; but from about the 7th century B.C. the Sabaeans were supreme in all southern Arabia, controlling the caravan service. Colonies and resting-stations were established at intervals along the routes. We learn from the Koran (Chap. XXXIV) that the journey was easy between these cities, and travel secure by night or by day; the distances being so short that the heat of the day might be passed in one, and the night in the next, so that provisions need not be carried. The number of such settlements may be inferred from Strabo's statement that the caravans took seventy days between Minaea [Location] and Aelana [the Gulf of Acaba--see the 1814 notation]; and all the Greek and Roman writers, from Eratosthenes to Pliny, testify to the value of the trade, the wealth of those who controlled it, and their jealous hindrance of all competition.

[pp. 129-130] The entry of the fleets of the Ptolemies into the Red Sea [abt. A.D. 170] and their establishment of colonies along its shores, dealt a hard blow to the caravan-trade. If we sift fact from homily in the same chapter of the Koran, we find that the result was abandonment of many of the caravan-stations, and a consequent increase in the cost of camel-hire and of the provisions which now had to be carried; impoverishment, dispersion and rebellion of the dwellers in the stations, so that finally "most of the cities which were between Saba and Syria were ruined and abandoned," and a few years later than the Periplus, Marib itself, stripped of its revenues and unable to maintain its public works, was visited with an inundation which carried away its famous reservoir-dam, making the city uninhabitable and forcing the dispersion of its people. . . .

*Note\* This gives a description of travel along a caravan route with "resting-stations" is somewhat implied in the phrase, "we did rest for awhile" (1 Nephi ). However, the idea that the travel was "easy" from Jerusalem to "Saba" (the probable region of Nahom) is not necessarily implied by the text of the Book of Mormon. However see the comments of George Potter and Richard Wellington (2000) concerning "the most fertile parts and the more fertile parts."*

[p. 133] Of the age-long struggle for control of these sacred lands we know today little more than the Greek writers of two thousand years ago. . . . The archaeological expedition that shall finally succeed in penetrating these forbidden regions, recovering the records of their past, cannot fail to add greatly to our store of knowledge of the surrounding civilizations, by showing the complement to such records as those of Hatshepsut in Egypt and Tiglath-Pileser III in Assyria, and by giving the groundwork for the treasured scraps of information preserved by Herodotus, Theophrastus, Erasthenes, Agatharchides, Strabo, Pliny, and Ptolemy. At present we must be satisfied with such knowledge of the Incense-Land as may be had from these, and from inscriptions found by Halevy and Glaser in the homes of its neighbors, the Minaeans and Sabaeans.

Source: ^Lynn M. Hilton and Hope Hilton, In Search of Lehi's Trail, Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1976, Appendix 3, pp. 126-137.

*Note\* According to Kent Brown, the Periplus was not published in English until about 1807--see notation. As to when the information provided in the notes above was brought to light, I have not a clue right now. I am only quoting Schoff.*

[A.D. 57 Map: The Route Described in Periplus. Lynn M. Hilton and Hope A. Hilton, Discovering Lehi: New Evidence of Lehi and Nephi in Arabia, Springville: Cedar Fort Inc., 1996, p. 11]

#### abt. A.D. 70 Pliny the Elder

##### Natural History

An early source relative to Arabian geography was Pliny's Natural History, written in the first century A.D. Nevertheless, it would not be published in English until 1635 (see notation). In 1976, the Hiltons (In Search of Lehi's Trail) would include 7 pages of pertinent excerpts from these writings with the following note:

Pliny the Elder lived about 23 B.C. to A. D. 79 in the Roman province of Gaul (now France). He was on intimate terms with the Roman Emperor Vespasian. His celebrated literary work Natural History in thirty-seven books has been criticized as being unscientific and uncritical but it is nevertheless a valuable window for modern man to view many details of civilization two thousand years ago. In Book 12, Pliny tells how merchants could travel from Egypt to Arabia and India and return with a cargo in one year and gives much information about production and trade of frankincense. His comments on Arabs and Arabia are enlightening since they were written, though 600 years from Lehi's time, within the first century of Greek contact and influence with the area--the first major factor for change since Lehi. Pliny's account also provides important confirmation of the description of Arabia in The Periplus.

The following, an account of the possible route Lehi took two thousand years ago, is taken from Pliny, Natural History, translated from the Latin by H. Rackham (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1952), pp. 37-63. The map below shows some of the places visited by Pliny.

[Seven pages of text follow dealing with place-names that have not continued on with time. The reader is referred to the Hilton's book]

Source: ^Lynn M. Hilton and Hope Hilton, In Search of Lehi's Trail, Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1976, Appendix 4, pp. 138-144.

[A.D. 70 Map: Some of the Places Visited by Pliny. Adapted from Ptolemy's Map of Arabia Felix (according to Sprenger). David George Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia: A Record of the Development of Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula*, London: Lawrence and Bullen, Ltd., 1904, Face page 17]

abt. A.D. 170 Claudius Ptolemy  
**Ancient Geography of Arabia** (?)

David Hogarth writes:

Claudius Ptolemy's projection of the known world was to determine the geographical ideas of both Europeans and Asiatics for many centuries to come.

Ptolemy of Alexandria, mathematician and astronomer, flourishing about a century after Pliny, while the Roman Empire was stretched to its utmost terms under the Antonine dynasty, undertook to make an atlas of the habitable world. He was not a descriptive geographer, and his book was intended to be no more than a commentary on his maps. These [maps] we have neither from his hand, nor from any hand nearly contemporary; but his commentary has survived, and from it they [his maps] have been reconstructed.

Following the lead of Hipparchus and Eratosthenes, but improving on their methods, Ptolemy divided the world by parallels of latitude, reckoned from the Equator, and parallels of longitude, reckoned from a meridian which he drew through the extreme point of land known to him in the western ocean, namely the island of Ferrol. [pp. 15-16]

Very far from baseless was Ptolemy's enumeration of one hundred and fourteen cities or villages in Arabia Felix, as Sprenger was to demonstrate conclusively in 1875 by his masterly treatise on the "Ancient Geography of Arabia." To this scholar belongs the merit of restoring, in our century of wider knowledge, the credit that Ptolemy enjoyed in the Middle Ages. For not only did he show the Alexandrian to have been indeed aware of the peninsular character of Arabia, and the rough outline of its coasts, including those of the southeastern projection, of which Pliny had been ignorant; but that he had obtained from his predecessors or the caravaners authentic lists of stations, many of which he placed with such approximate accuracy on his chart that they can be identified with existing oasis settlements. . . . [pp. 17-18]

[A.D. 170 Illustration: Ptolemy's Map of Arabia Felix (according to Sprenger). David George Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia: A Record of the Development of Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula*, London: Lawrence and Bullen, Ltd., 1904, Face page 17]

Source: ^David George Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia: A Record of the Development of Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula*, London: Lawrence and Bullen, Ltd., 1904.

**12th Cent. Edrisi**  
**(Geography of Edrisi)**

Justin Winsor writes:

There seems to be a general agreement that a crew of Arbas, somewhere about the eleventh or twelfth century, explored the Atlantic westward, with the adventurous purpose of finding its further limits, and that they reached land, which may have been the Canaries, or possibly the Azores, though the theory that they succeeded in reaching America is not without advocates. The main source of the belief is the historical treatise of the Arab geographer Edrisi, whose work was composed about the middle of the twelfth century.\*

Winsor notes\*:

Cf. *Geographie de Edrisi, traduite de l'arabe en francais d'apres deux manuscrits de la bibliotheque du Roi, et accompagnee de notes, par G. Amedee Jaubert, Paris, 1836-40, vol. i. 200; ii. 26. Cf. Recueil des Voyages et Memoires de la Societe de Geographie de Paris, vols. v., vi. The world-map by Edrisi does not indicate any knowledge of this unknown world. Cf. copies of it in St. Martin's Atlas, pl. vi ; Lelewel, Atlas, pl. x-xii; Peshel's Gesh. der Erkunde, ed. by Ruge, 1877, p. 144; Amer. Geog. Soc. Journal, xii. 181; Allg. Geog. Ephemeriden, ix. 292; Gerard Stein's Die Entdeckungsreisen in alter und neuer Zeit (1883)*

Source: Justin Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History of America*, Vol. 1, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, New York, 1889, p. 72.

**1477 Ptolemy**

***Cosmographia of Claudius Ptolemaeus, edited by Angelus Vadius. Bologna, 1462 (sic), 1477.***  
**(Ptolemy's Geography)**

In 1995, G. R. Tibbetts published *Arabia in Early Maps* (New York: Falcon-Oleander Press). This book was "a bibliography of maps covering the Peninsula of Arabia printed in Western Europe from the invention of printing to the year 1751." He begins his bibliography with the first edition of Ptolemy's *Geography* to be printed with maps (1477), and continues to the year 1751 when D'Anville published his famous map of Asia. He writes:

Most of the extensive information given by the Arab geographers and travellers on the topography of the Arabian peninsula is meaningless when viewed in the light of modern maps. When attempting to elucidate these classical accounts, I turned for aid to the maps compiled and printed by Western cartographers, before the nineteenth century, i.e., before travellers

began to penetrate the peninsula and Europeans began to obtain their information from first hand accounts and surveys. . . . My aim has been to produce, within certain unavoidable limits, as complete a list as possible of maps containing an appreciable amount of topographical detail in the Peninsula. . . .

The area chosen is that covered by the three classical divisions of Arabia i.e. Arabia Petraea, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix. . . .

The early western cartographer's knowledge of Arabia . . . rested upon three slender sources. The first of these is the measurements and accounts of western navigators recording their voyages round the coast of the Peninsula. . . . The second source is that of the accounts of the natives themselves. . . . Even those who travelled in the Peninsula relied to a great extent on the tales of the Arab tribesmen for details of places which they could not visit. . . . The third factor is that of the accounts and measurements of explorers whether Christian or Muslim. During the period under consideration in this bibliography there were a few Europeans who travelled into Arabia, and left accounts of the travels they made, but none of them took measurements. . . .

The first map of the Arabian Peninsula to be printed was the one produced for the 1477 edition of Ptolemy's Geography. . . . [it] ran into many editions, becoming immensely popular during the sixteenth century, and was still used as an historic atlas after modern atlases had come into their own. . . .

The division of Arabia into Petraea, Deserta and Felix which occurs in Ptolemy was the general division in classical times. It is in a sense a natural division, and was more or less the political division in the days of Rome and the Nabataean kingdom. . . . D'Anville and later geographers used the three terms as regional names until quite recent times. . . . [pp. 9-19]

*Note\* I do not know at present just what year Ptolemy's Geography began to be published in English or distributed in America.*

*Note\* From this time forward, people would have become aware of "Arabia Felix" or Happy Arabia, where fruits, Honey, and fertility abounded in certain locations.*

### [1519](#) [Lodovico Varthema](#) **Itinerary, Milan, Italy, 1519**

Freeth and Winstone write:

It was no more than four years after the opening up of the sea route to India by Vasco de Gama that Lodovico Varthema left his native Italy for the East. His journey in the earliest years

of the sixteenth century took him to Egypt and the Levant, to Arabia and across the Red Sea to the land of Prester John, to Persia, Syria and the Indies.[p. 21]

Source: ^Zahra Freeth and H. V. F. Winstone, Explorers of Arabia: From the Renaissance to the End of the Victorian Era, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978, p.

[1519 Illustration: Varthema's routes in Arabia, Persia, Ethiopia and India, 1503-08. Zahra Freeth and H. V. F. Winstone, Explorers of Arabia: From the Renaissance to the End of the Victorian Era, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978, p. 20]

*Note\* Notice that the map illustrating the routes of Varthema lists the region of "Arabia Felix" and also the port of "Dhofar."*

### **1635 Pliny the Elder**

#### **Pliny's Natural History, 1635**

S. Kent Brown notes that some of the earliest sources for information concerning the geography of Arabia include "the classical writings of Strabo (ca. 64 B.C.-A.D. 19), Diodorus Siculus (fl. ca. 60-30 B.C.), and Pliny the Elder (ca. A.D. 23-79), as well as the anonymous sailor who authored the account in Greek titled *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (ca. A.D. 100)." However, it would be centuries before any of these books would be translated into English. Pliny's *Natural History* was the first to be published in English in 1635, but according to Brown it "contained no firsthand information . . . [it] featured descriptions of the land and peoples--some inaccurate--that were based chiefly on reports of others." Furthermore, Brown writes that he is doubtful that this source was available to the Smith family:

the libraries that Joseph Smith could have visited include that of Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire (which was close to where his family lived from 1811 to 1813, when he was between five and seven years old), and John H. Pratt's Manchester lending library (which was in the neighborhood of Palmyra, New York, where Joseph Smith spent his teenage years, from 1816 on). . . . Pliny's *Natural History* appeared in an English translation in 1635. But again, evidence does not confirm that his writings were available to readers in English either at Dartmouth before 1924 or in John Pratt's library at any time.

Source: ^S. Kent Brown, "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon, edited by Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2002, pp. 69-70, 74-75.

[1635 Map: Berthelot's Map of Arabia (1635). David George Hogarth, The Penetration of Arabia: A Record of the Development of Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula, London: Lawrence and Bullen, Ltd., 1904, Face page 33]

*Note\* This map has locations related to degrees latitude. The horizontal line on which "Arabia Felix" is written (possibly representing the northern boundary of the same) passes through the 21st degree parallel and eastward to near the southeastern tip of Arabia.*

[1680 Illustration: Muscat Harbour. This picture, published in 1680, does not exaggerate the amount of maritime activity in the thriving harbour of Muscat at the time. Robin Bidwell, Travellers in Arabia, London: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1976, pp. 194-195]

[1683 Map: Arabie Moderne. A map of Arabia printed in Paris in 1683. Many of the names-and all the rivers- are imaginary. Robin Bidwell, Travellers in Arabia, London: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1976, p. 7]

#### 1704 Joseph Pitts

**True and faithful Account of the religion and manners of the Muhammadans etc., Exeter, England, 1704**

Freeth and Winstone write:

Nowhere in the narrative did Pitts give the dates of his wanderings, except for the departure from England in 1678. But his story suggests that his stay in Algeria after the journey to the holy cities was shorter than the period of his captivity before the pilgrimage. If his service with the Algerian army and fleet, and his final escape, occupied six years, the pilgrimage would be placed at 1687. [p. 60]

Source: ^Zahra Freeth and H. V. F. Winstone, Explorers of Arabia: From the Renaissance to the End of the Victorian Era, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978, p.

[1704 Illustration: Pitts' route in Hijaz, c. 1687. Zahra Freeth and H. V. F. Winstone, Explorers of Arabia: From the Renaissance to the End of the Victorian Era, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978, p. 42]

#### 1726 La Roque

**A Voyage to Arabia the Happy, by the way of the Eastern Ocean, and the Straits of the Red Sea, performed by the French for the first time in A.D. 1708, 1709, and 1710; together with a Relation of a**

**Journey from the Port of Mokha to the Court of the King of Yemen, in A.D. 1711, 1712, and 1713; also an Account of the Coffee Tree--London, 1726.**

Source: ^Captain R. L. Playfair, A History of Arabia Felix or Yemen, from the commencement of the Christian Era to the Present Time; Including an Account of the British Settlement of Aden. Bombay: printed for Government at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, 1859. Reprinted by Documentary Publications, Salisbury, North Carolina, U.S.A., 1978. List of Authorities, p. x

**1745 Greene**

***New General Collection of Voyages and Travels, consisting of the most esteemed Relations which have been hitherto published in any language, Comprehending everything remarkable of its kind in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.*** [Anon., attributed to Greene.]--London, 1745.

Source: ^Captain R. L. Playfair, A History of Arabia Felix or Yemen, from the commencement of the Christian Era to the Present Time; Including an Account of the British Settlement of Aden. Bombay: printed for Government at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, 1859. Reprinted by Documentary Publications, Salisbury, North Carolina, U.S.A., 1978. List of Authorities, p. x

**1751 Jean Baptiste Bourguignon D'Anville**

**Premiere Partie de la Carte d'Asie contenant la Turquie, l'Arabie, la Perse, l'Inde en deca du Gange et de la Tartarie ce qui est limitrophe de la Perse et d' l'Inde. Paris, 1751.**

In 1995, G. R. Tibbetts published *Arabia in Early Maps* (New York: Falcon-Oleander Press). This book was "a bibliography of maps covering the Peninsula of Arabia printed in Western Europe from the invention of printing to the year 1751." He begins his bibliography with the first edition of Ptolemy's *Geography* to be printed with maps (1477), and continues to the year 1751 when D'Anville published his famous map of Asia. He writes:

The climax of what might be called "medieval" geography came with the great map of Asia published by D'Anville in 1751. . . . he was intensely interested in the classical geographers. It was his comparison of these with the work of the Arabs and with European travellers, which gave him a clearer view of the Peninsula as a whole than his predecessors had acquired. . . .

The Hijaz coastal region is fairly detailed, and this detail continues through the Yemen to the Hadramaut. Other detailed spots are Dhofar and Oman . . . The map is also more profusely scattered with tribal names than the earlier maps. . . .

D'Anville, after comparing other sources with Ptolemy, came to the conclusion that Ptolemy was right, and that the river of San'a did not reach the Indian Ocean, but his map of Asia shows



this river clearly emptying its waters into the sea east of Aden. Likewise, his river at Yamama, called Astan, reaches the sea near the Bahrain Is. . . .

It was the production of D'Anville's map which showed to the Western world its ignorance of inland Arabia. The desire to correct this ignorance led to the Danish expedition of Nieburh in 1761-4. thus one may class him both as the last and more important landmark in the old era of Arabian cartography as well as the fore-runner of the new era of scientific exploration. [pp. 29-31]

[1755 Map: D'Anville's Map of Arabia (1755). From First Part of Asia, revised and improved by Mr. Bolton, 1755. This map is illustrated on page 155 of G. R. Tibbetts, [Arabia in Early Maps](#) (New York: Falcon-Oleander Press), 1995.]

*Note\* On the above map a "highway" is shown leading from Syria down along the east of the Dead Sea and into Stoney Arabia and then continuing south-southeast along the coastal mountains paralleling the Red Sea. It also appears that there is trail leading eastward from Red Sea coast through the coastal mountains to about the 19th degree parallel, where it continues to the coast of the Arabian Sea, and ending near what is marked as the "Land of Ahad Arabs" (Dhofar region). There is another trail heading eastward from about the 23rd degree parallel and moving eastward across to the Bahrain Isles in the Persian Gulf.*

[1755 Map: D'Anville's Map of Arabia (1755). David George Hogarth, [The Penetration of Arabia: A Record of the Development of Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula](#), London: Lawrence and Bullen, Ltd., 1904, Face page 36]

**1780 Eyles Irwin**

**Series of Adventures in the course of a Voyage up the Red Sea, on the Coasts of Arabia and Egypt, in the year 1777; by Eyles Irwin, Esq., H.E.I.C.S.--London, 1780.**

Source: ^Captain R. L. Playfair, [A History of Arabia Felix or Yemen, from the commencement of the Christian Era to the Present Time; Including an Account of the British Settlement of Aden](#). Bombay: printed for Government at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, 1859. Reprinted by Documentary Publications, Salisbury, North Carolina, U.S.A., 1978. List of Authorities, p. x

**1788 Edward Gibbon**

**History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. 5, 1788**

In 1788, Edward Gibbon published his History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Kent Brown notes that in chapter 50 of volume 5, Gibbon gave a brief description of Arabia:

"Gibbon repeats straightforwardly what he has learned about Arabia from his sources, sometimes uncritically including the fantastic as if it were fact. As an example, he recalls the story of Agatharchides, alluded to by Diodorus Siculus, to the effect that "the soil was impregnated with gold and gems."

Source: ^S. Kent Brown, "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon, edited by Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2002, pp. 69-70, 74-75.

### **1792 Carsten Niebuhr (Robert Heron, trans.)**

#### **Niebuhr's Travels through Arabia and Other Countries in the East.**

Kent Brown writes that in 1774, Carsten Niebuhr began to publish a 3 volume German work titled Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und andern umliegenden Landern. The first volume dealt with his ill-fated expedition to Arabia in 1761. Niebuhr had been inspired to some extent to make this expedition because of some previous writings and maps by a man named Jean-Baptiste d'Anville (see the notation of 1814). In Niebuhr's book he discussed the incense trade and his observations of Arabia. One point of interest concerning Niebuhr's map of southern Arabia is that he shows the location of the "Nehhm" tribe.

In 1792, Robert Heron translated and published Niebuhr's volumes in English under the title Niebuhr's Travels through Arabia and Other Countries in the East. It was subsequently republished in 1799.

*Note\* Brown writes that of the two main sources available to the Joseph Smith family (Dartmouth library and John Pratt's Manchester lending library) Dartmouth did not acquire an English translation of Niebuhr's book until 1937, and the Manchester library did not own a copy.*

Source: ^S. Kent Brown, "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon, edited by Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2002, pp. 72-73.

In 1994 Warren and Michaela Aston would write concerning this area of the "Nehhm" tribe mentioned above:

The first point to be made is that the name NHM (in any of its variant spellings, Nehem/Nihm/Nahm, and so on) is not found anywhere else in Arabia as a place-name. It is unique. It is known to appear only once in southern Arabian writings (as a personal name) and a handful of times in northern Arabian Safaitic texts. There are also some interesting appearances of the name in the Old Testament; as Naham (1 Chronicles 4:19), as Nehum (Nehemiah 7:7), and, of course, as the name of the Prophet Nahum, whose brief book provides some of the Bible's most vivid poetic imagery. The Prophet Nahum was from Galilee, probably Capernaum ("the village of Nahum"), and delivered his prophecies between 660 and 606 B.C., making him a contemporary of Lehi. These biblical occurrences of the name, however, are far removed geographically from southern Arabia, and no historical connection with the tribal name in Yemen can be made. The fact that the name appears only once as an Arabian place-name argues strongly in itself for a possible link with Nephi's Nahom. . . .

*Note\* Despite the passive construction ("Ishmael died, and was buried in the place which was called Nahom"--1 Nephi 16:34) and despite the spelling ("Nahom") it is also possible that this place was named by Lehi after the prophet Nahum, or possibly after someone in Lehi's party (after the unnamed eldest son of Ishmael).*

Now that we can show the extreme rarity of the NHM name in Arabia and how aptly it fits all the elements of Nephi's account, we will examine the evidence allowing us to trace the history of the name in Yemen. We have already mentioned an obvious method--maps such as Niebuhr's 1763 map that show the name. The story of how Niebuhr came to publish his map is both a fascinating true-life adventure and a tribute to his tenacity and courage. It begins with an even earlier map. In 1751, a French cartographer, Jean Bourguignon D'Anville, published his great map of Asia showing Nehem in the same position relative to Sana'a as all the later maps do. To date, this is the earliest known map actually showing NHM. For our purposes it is also the most significant of all the maps because D'Anville used much earlier sources to prepare it, notably the Arab geographers Idrisi (1100-1165), Abu'l Fida (1273-1331), and Katib Chelebi (1609-1657). The publication of this map in the mid-eighteenth century demonstrated to the Western world how ignorant it was of inland Arabia. Aside from some of the coastal seaports, almost nothing was known of the entire southern half of the peninsula besides legends and myths. In what was a rather unusual move for his time, the Danish King Frederick V sponsored an expedition to these little known parts from 1761-1764. Niebuhr was to become the only survivor of the expedition, leaving us an accurate account of a pioneering journey. Thus it was that his map, made in 1763, showing Nehm, was based upon his own travels in the Yemeni highlands. The Danish expedition, working under primitive and dangerous conditions, had only the most basic equipment and methods available to them and succeeded in traveling only in the western half of the modern republic. Nevertheless, their maps and descriptions provided Europeans with the most accurate information about the area for more than a century to come.

Niebuhr describes Nehhm variously in his writings as a "Lordship," an independent "State of Yemen," and a "principality," whose warlike sheikh ruled over a few towns, together with many villages on a mountain.

Source: ^Warren P. Aston & Michaela Knoth Aston, In the Footsteps of Lehi: New Evidence for Lehi's Journey across Arabia to Bountiful, S.L.C.: Deseret Book, 1994, pp. 12, 14.

[1792 Map: Niebuhr's 1763 Map of Yemen showing the tribal district of NEHHM northeast of Sana'a. Carsten Niebuhr (Robert Heron, trans.), Niebuhr's Travels through Arabia and Other Countries in the East; see also Gerald R. Tibbets, Arabia in Early Maps (New York: Oleander Press, 1978), 30; see also Warren P. Aston & Michaela Knoth Aston, In the Footsteps of Lehi: New Evidence for Lehi's Journey across Arabia to Bountiful, S.L.C.: Deseret Book, 1994, pp. 14-15, figure 4]

In a 1982 article, Eugene England would write:

The standard geographies of the time, those that were possibly available to Joseph Smith in the public libraries at Canandaigua, Ithaca, and Rochester in western New York, were consistently spare in describing Arabia as "generally a barren uncultivated waste, with sometimes a little information on the "bizarre" customs surrounding the Islamic holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Some of them added (based on the surviving ancient references to "Arabia Felix" and on Karsten Niebuhr's account of his explorations of Yemen and the Hijaz, published in English in 1972) this kind of misleading generality: "The southern division is fertile in a high degree, and produces rice, maize, etc., and abounds in frankincense, gums, balsams, honey, wax, spices, and all the tropical fruits." [See the notation for the years 1802 & 1805]

. . . had [Joseph Smith] read Niebuhr in detail he would have known the littoral zone on the northeast shore of the Red Sea as a possible route, but he would have gotten the impression there was not any such system of wadis (valleys of the seasonal riverbeds) as became important in his story.

Source: ^Eugene England, "Through the Arabian Desert to a Bountiful Land: Could Joseph Smith Have Known the Way?" in Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins, edited by Noel B. Reynolds, Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1982, pp. 143-156.

Freeth and Winstone write:

Carsten Niebuhr has a specially honoured place among the earliest pioneers of Arabian exploration, even though the area he covered was not much more than a small triangle in the Yemen. His experiences produced the first European attempt at a complete account of Arabia, its people and their way of life, and such were the qualities of factual honesty in his Travels in Arabia that it became the natural source book for Edward Gibbon's chapters on the Arabs in the

Decline and Fall, as well as for other European scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. . . .

On 4 January 1761 the five men [Niebuhr's party] with their Swedish servant Berggren, embarked from Copenhagen to sail to Alexandria. . . . the expedition led to tragedy and death, and only Carsten Niebuhr, after more than six years of travel, was to see Copenhagen again.

Eighteen months after their departure the party had got no further than Suez. Tensions and jealousies continued to divide them, though by the time they left for Jidda in October 1762 they seem to have reached some measure of accord. . . . After a lengthy stay in Egypt, Forskal and Niebuhr, and perhaps also Von Haven, had acquired a good working knowledge of vernacular Arabic. All had adopted Egyptian clothes and were tanned and bearded.

Disembarking at Jidda, they set foot for the first time on Arabian soil, and were under strong apprehensions of ill-treatment from its inhabitants. To their pleasant surprise the citizens were not unfriendly. The Danish party was able to rent a house, and during their six-week stay Niebuhr investigated the town's imports and exports, customs tariffs, and water supplies, and recorded all available useful information. He drew a plan of the city and did some surveying outside from town walls.

From Jidda they sailed down the Red Sea in a tarrad, a native open boat. Their intended destination was Mocha, but when the vessel put in at Luhaiya, the most northerly port of Yemen, they decided to go ashore in the hope of proceeding from there by land. It was 29 December 1762.

Source: ^Zahra Freeth and H. V. F. Winstone, Explorers of Arabia: From the Renaissance to the End of the Victorian Era, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978, pp. 61-66

[1792 Illustration: Niebuhr's route in Yemen, 1762-3. Zahra Freeth and H. V. F. Winstone, Explorers of Arabia: From the Renaissance to the End of the Victorian Era, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978, p. 62]

[1792 Map: Niebuhr's Map of Yemen (1763). David George Hogarth, The Penetration of Arabia: A Record of the Development of Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula, London: Lawrence and Bullen, Ltd., 1904.]

(1763) Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula, London: Lawrence and Bullen, Ltd., 1904, Face page 60]

Source: ^David George Hogarth, The Penetration of Arabia: A Record of the Development of Western Knowledge Concerning the Arabian Peninsula, London: Lawrence and Bullen, Ltd., 1904.

[1793 Illustration: Portuguese Forts at Muscat, Oman. The two great Portuguese forts dominating Muscat, pictured in pencil and watercolour by William Daniell in 1793. R. G. Searight, Esq, London. Robin Bidwell, Travellers in Arabia, London: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1976, pp. 196-197]

**1794 R. Brooke**

**General Gazetteer, London, 1794. Republished in a number of editions, finally with revisions by John Marshall in the U.S. in 1844.**

**1797-1800 Dean Vincent**

**The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, containing an Account of the Navigation of the Ancients; by Dean Vincent.--London, 1797-1800.**

Source: ^Captain R. L. Playfair, A History of Arabia Felix or Yemen, from the commencement of the Christian Era to the Present Time; Including an Account of the British Settlement of Aden. Bombay: printed for Government at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, 1859. Reprinted by Documentary Publications, Salisbury, North Carolina, U.S.A., 1978. List of Authorities, p. xii

**1802 Jedidiah Morse**

**Geography Made Easy: Being an Abridgment of the American Universal Geography. Boston, 1802, p. 388.**

Dan Vogel notes that "In describing the Arabian desert, Jedidiah Morse's 1802 *Geography Made Easy* said 'the caravans, having no tracks, are guided, as at sea, by a compass.' "

Source: ^Dan Vogel, Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2004, p. 136., p. 609n. 13

*Note\* This is the first time that a compass is associated with caravan travel in Arabia. Additionally, the details of the fertility in southern Happy Arabia (Arabia Felix) stresses abundant fruit and also honey. Although Eugene England (see the commentary for 1982) regards this as "misleading generality," it nonetheless must have been true in some (or even many) locations.*

Vogel also notes:

Claims to the contrary, Smith's contemporaries knew that southern Arabia was fertile. Jedidiah Morse's 1802 Geography described it thus: "But the southern part of Arabia, deservedly called the Happy, is blessed with an excellent soil, and, in general, is very fertile. There the cultivated lands, which are chiefly about the towns near the seacoast, produce . . . oranges, lemons, pomegranates, figs, and other fruits; honey and wax in plenty, with a small quantity of corn and wine."

Source: ^Dan Vogel, Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2004, pp. 138-139, p. 610n. 23

*Note\* The LDS view that Smith's contemporaries all believed that Arabia was a total wasteland is perpetuated by Noel Reynolds in the 2005 FARMS video, "Lehi's Journey" --see notation.*

## 1805

**A System of Geography: or, a Descriptive, Historical and Philosophical View of the Several Quarters of the World, 4 vols. Glasgow: Niven, Napier, and Khull, 1805, vol. II, p. 273.**

*Note\* Eugene England writes:*

I have examined the great variety of the geographies or "gazetteers" that could possibly have been available to Joseph Smith. They range from R. Brooke's General Gazetteer, published in London in 1794 and very popular, republished in a number of editions (finally, with revisions by John Marshall in the U.S. in 1844), to Nathaniel Dwight's Short but Comprehensive System of the Geography of the World . . . Designed for Children (Northampton, Conn.: Simeon Butler, 1811), which was also republished many times. All of these are sketchy, very general and vague, and though generally consistent with each other, even obviously all dependent on Brooke's early work, they are contradictory about a central matter, the nature and location of any fertile areas in Arabia. All of those before 1835, when more careful explorations began to have their effect, subscribe to the ancient Romantic idea of an "Arabia Felix" in the south, but some identify the whole southern third as that poetic area (Butler, op. cit.); some speak of "some few fertile spots [in the interior], which appear like islands in a desolate ocean"--Jedediah Morse, A New System of Geography, Ancient and Modern, for the Use of Schools, 24th Edition (Boston: Richardson and Lord 1824), p. 228; some identify such fertile oasis as in "the south-western [italics added] extremity toward the shores of the Red Sea"--A System of Geography; or, a Descriptive, Historical and Philosophical View of the Several Quarters of the World, 4 vols. (Glasgow: Niven, Napier, and Khull, 1805) Vol. II, p. 273; and some claim that "in the south-southeastern part, called Arabia Felix, there is, in some spots, a fine soil, and luxuriant vegetation" (Dwight, op. cit.,

p. 109; italics added). None implies there is any timber such as would be needed for shipbuilding. Dwight stating specifically, "there is very little timber in Arabia of any kind." None suggests any fertile areas along the coast, some specifically denying it, such as Conder's Arabia (The Modern Traveller Series, London, 1825), p. 9. ["Through the Arabian Desert to a Bountiful Land: Could Joseph Smith Have Known the Way?" in Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins, Noel Reynolds ed., Provo: BYU: Religious Studies Center, 1982, p. 154, note 2.]

*A southwestern area that would qualify would be the city of Marib but is that "toward the shores of the Red Sea"?*

*[See the 1982 England notation, note 2]*

**1807**      **??**

**The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, 1807**

S. Kent Brown notes that one of the earliest sources for information concerning the geography of Arabia was an anonymous sailor who authored an account in Greek titled The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (ca. A.D. 100)." [see the A.D. 57 notation] However, it would not be until 1807 that this book would be translated into English. According to Brown, this book "featured information almost exclusively about the coastal areas." Furthermore, Brown writes that he is doubtful that this source was available to the Smith family as "the Dartmouth library did not acquire its copy until 1908, and John Pratt's library in [Manchester] New York never owned a copy."

Source: ^S. Kent Brown, "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon, edited by Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2002, pp. 69-70, 74-75.

**1808**      **Abraham Parsons**

**Travels in Asia and Africa, including a Voyage \* \* \* from Bombay to Mokha and Suez, in the Red Sea; by Abraham Parsons, Esq.--London, 1808.**

Source: ^Captain R. L. Playfair, A History of Arabia Felix or Yemen, from the commencement of the Christian Era to the Present Time; Including an Account of the British Settlement of Aden. Bombay: printed for Government at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, 1859. Reprinted by Documentary Publications, Salisbury, North Carolina, U.S.A., 1978. List of Authorities, p. xi



On pages 296-302, Elijah Parish writes the following:

ARABIA

Situation and extent.

Miles

Length      1300    between    Lat. 12o 30' & 30o N.

Breadth     1200    Long. 110° & 135° E. fr. Phil.

**Boundaries.**-- This extensive country is a peninsula, bounded on the northeast by the Euphrates and the gulf of Persia, south by the Indian and Ethiopic ocean, west by the Red sea and the isthmus of Suez, and part of Syria, and northwest by Syria and Mesopotamia.

**Divisions.**-- There are three divisions of this country; Arabia the happy, Arabia the desert, and Arabia petraea. . . .

**Climate**-- The air of this country is hot, and in many places unhealthy. A hot wind sometimes blows in this country, called Samiel. A thick haze gives notice of its approach, at which the people throw themselves with their faces on the ground, and so continue till the gale is over, which is often only momentary in its duration. Those who do not use this precaution find the wind instant death.

A stranger on the shore of that part called the happy should doubt the propriety of the name; but as he passed to the central parts, the woods dropping balm, the verdant hills, the luxuriant vales, the fruits of every clime inviting his taste, soft breezes of cassia, and other fragrant perfumes, soon convince him, that he is in Arabia the happy.

**Produce**-- . . . The dates of Arabia are excellent. The country produces balm, frankincense, myrrh, manna, cassia, assafoetida, and incense. The Arabs have camels and the finest horses; in some parts are lions, tigers, wolves, bears, and jackals.

Arabia Deserta is a dreary waste, a boundless level of barren sand, intersected by naked mountains, affording neither shade nor shelter from the intense rays of a tropical sun (Gibbon). . . .

Arabia Petraea is that region, where the children of Israel wandered for 40 years. Here are no verdant pastures, no cheerful flocks nor herds, no valleys of corn, no olive yards, nor vines

blushing with grapes. All is a lonesome desert, a picture of desolation, diversified only by sandy plains, naked rocks, and barren mountains. In this country no spacious inn, no hospitable cottage receives the weary traveller; at night the sand is his couch, the heavens his covering, the provisions and water he carries his only support, his camels his only protectors.

When the Arabian traveller has prepared his frugal meal, using the dung of camels, which he finds in the sand, instead of wood, he ascends the highest hill near him, and invites all his brethren, the sons of the faithful, to come and partake with him, through probably not a soul is within a hundred miles.

*Note\* There are many details mentioned here. If someone had made a contemporary study of travels in Arabia in order to write the Book of Mormon, it is strange that he would not have included any of these details.*

**1811<sup>^</sup> Nathaniel Dwight**

**Short but Comprehensive System of the Geography of the World: By Way of Question and Answer. Principally Designed For Children and Common Schools, Northampton, Conn.: Simeon Butler, 1811.**

On page 108 we find the following:

Of Arabia

. . . Q. How is Arabia bounded?

A. It is bounded on the north by Turkey; on the east by the Gulphs of Persia and Ormus; on the south by the Indian Ocean; and on the west by the Red Sea, which separates it from Africa.

Q. How is Arabia divided?

A. It is divided into Arabia Petraea on the northwest & Arabia Deserta in the middle; and Arabia Felix on the South-east.

Q. What mountains are there in Arabia?

A. Sinai, Horeb and Gabel-el-Ared.

Q. What rivers are there in Arabia?

A. There are very few streams of water in Arabia, of any size. The river Euphrates runs on the north-east part of the country.

What is the air and climate of Arabia?

A. It is very hot, and generally unwholesome.

Q. What is the face of the country?

A. In some places it is a barren and lonely desert, where there is nothing but scattered rocks and immense fields of sand. In the south-eastern part, called Arabia Felix, there is, in some spots, a fine soil, and luxuriant vegetation.

...

Q. What are the animal productions?

A. The camel and the dromedary are common in Arabia; and the Arabian horses are excellent. Few other animals are found in Arabia.

...

Q. What cities are there in Arabia?

A. The commercial cities are Mocho, Aden, Muskat, Suez, Jidola. A very great trade is also carried on at Mecca.

*Note\* Eugene England writes:*

I have examined the great variety of the geographies or "gazetteers" that could possibly have been available to Joseph Smith. They range from R. Brooke's *General Gazetteer*, published in London in 1794 and very popular, republished in a number of editions (finally, with revisions by John Marshall in the U.S. in 1844), to Nathaniel Dwight's *Short but Comprehensive System of the Geography of the World . . . Designed for Children* (Northampton, Conn.: Simeon Butler, 1811), which was also republished many times. All of these are sketchy, very general and vague, and though generally consistent with each other, even obviously all dependent on Brooke's early work, they are contradictory about a central matter, the nature and location of any fertile areas in Arabia. All of those before 1835, when more careful explorations began to have their effect, subscribe to the ancient Romantic idea of an "Arabia Felix" in the south, but some identify the whole southern third as that poetic area (Butler, *op. cit.*); some speak of "some few fertile spots [in the interior], which appear like islands in a desolate ocean"--Jedediah Morse, *A New System of Geography, Ancient and Modern, for the Use of Schools*, 24th Edition (Boston: Richardson and Lord 1824), p. 228; some identify such fertile oasis as in "the south-western [italics added] extremity toward the shores of the Red Sea"--*A System of Geography; or, a Descriptive, Historical and Philosophical View of the Several Quarters of the World*, 4 vols. (Glasgow: Niven, Napier, and Khull, 1805) Vol. II, p. 273; and some claim that "in the south-southeastern part, called Arabia Felix, there is, in some spots, a fine soil, and luxuriant vegetation" (Dwight, *op. cit.*, p. 109; italics added). None implies there is any timber such as would be needed for

shipbuilding. Dwight stating specifically, "there is very little timber in Arabia of any kind."  
["Through the Arabian Desert to a Bountiful Land: Could Joseph Smith Have Known the Way?" in  
Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins, Noel Reynolds ed., Provo: BYU:  
Religious Studies Center, 1982, p. 154, note 2.]

*However, from what is stated above, it only states that Arabia was divided into three regions, NOT THIRDS.*

*[See the 1982 England notation, note 2]*

### [1812](#) [Jedidiah Morse](#)

**American Universal Geography. Boston, 1812, volume 2, p. 640**

Dan Vogel notes that "[Joseph] Smith's contemporaries recognized the Arabian desert as the land of Ishmael (see Jedidiah Morse, American Universal Geography [Boston, 1812], 2:640."

Source: ^Dan Vogel, Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2004, p. 608n. 10

### [1814](#) [Diodorus Siculus](#)

**Bibliothèque, 1814**

The classical writings of Diodorus Siculus (fl. ca. 60-30 B.C.) were finally translated into English and published in 1814. (See the notation for 50 B.C.)

### [1814^](#) [Jean-Baptiste d'Anville](#)

**Compendium of Ancient Geography, by Monsieur d'Anville, John Horsley trans., 2 vols. (New York: R. M'Dermutand D. D. Arden, 1814)**

In 1751, Jean Baptiste d'Anville would print a map of Arabia titled Premier Partie de la Carte d'Asie in which he noted the general location in southern Arabia of the Nehem tribe. In 1768 d'Anville published a 3-volume description of Arabia titled Geographie ancienne abregee. John Horsley translated d'Anville's volumes and in 1814 published them as the Compendium of Ancient Geography, by Monsieur d'Anville. The maps included with this work were taken from d'Anville's map and were quite complete.

Source: ^S. Kent Brown, "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon, edited by Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2002, pp. 73-74.

The following is from the 1814 translation by Horsley:

By ancient Geography we understand whatever the Greek and Roman writers have left us upon that subject. . . . (vol. 1, p. 1)

Another great division of the ocean, which from the eastern coast of Africa stretches to the south of the continent of Asia, and which we call the Indian Sea, was denominated Mare Erythraeum, or the Red Sea. . . . (vol. 1, p. 3)

IV.

ARABIA

We proceed to survey a vast country, which extends from the Euphrates on the north, to the Erythrean Sea on the south; having for its western limits the Arabic Gulf, commonly called the Red Sea; and on the other side the Persian Gulf, which, as well as the preceding, is an inlet of the sea known in antiquity by the name of Erythrean. From its situation, bordered by water on three sides, it is called in the language of the people who inhabit it, Gezirat-el-Arab, the Island or Peninsula of Arabia. There are distinguished two races in Arabia, as well by lineage as by modes of life. The first and more ancient are reputed to owe their origin to Jectan, or Kahtan, son of Eber, are called pure Arabs, inhabit cities, and have been governed by kings. A posterior generation of Mostarabes, or mixed Arabs, who are not stationary, or occupied by agriculture, but erratic and pastoral, recognise for their author Ismael, the son of Abraham. . . . It is sufficiently known that this continent is divided into three regions distinguished from each other by the several epithets of Petraea, the Happy, and the Desert Arabia. What appertains to each, it is our present purpose to show. (vol. 2, pp. 3-4)

ARABIA PETRAEA

From the confines of Judaea, it extends towards the south to the Arabic Gulf . . . The part confining on Judaea is particularly distinguished under the name of Idumaea, formed from that of Edom, which was given to Esau, the son of Jacob. And the posterity of this patriarch possessed a part of Arabia Petraea, when the people of Israel, respecting the limits of a nation sprung from a common ancestor, made a great circuit through the desert, turned south to the

Elanite Gulf, and then remounting northward, entered by the country of Moab. But the posterity of Ismael, who derived their name from Nabaioth, his eldest son, becoming very numerous, the name of Nabathaei prevailed in Arabia Petraea; which in the time of Augustus was governed by a king seated at Petra, whence the country drew its name. Having been conquered by Trajan, it was joined to Palestine . . . Baldwin I. king of Jerusalem, becoming master of this place gave it the name of Mount Royal. This prince suffered much in traversing the mountains south of Judaea, which have caused this part of Idumaea to be called Gebalene, from the term Gebel, or Gebal, which in Arabic denotes a mountain. On this route, and beyond the mountains, he found a city, whose name of Sezuma has been re-established Sodom under this form in the opinion of some. The permutation practised in the East, of the daled and zain (d and z), may have given room to this opinion, which it would appear even to favour. But as, on the destruction of the cities seated in the valley which the lake Asphaltites covers, we find Lot retreat to Segor in the interval between the dawn and the rising of the sun, this position must necessarily be very near those cities; and we find Segor, or Zoara, subsisting in the name of Zoar, at the hither extremity of the lake, at the mouth of a river which passes by Petra, named Saphia.

The cities known to antiquity in Arabia Petraea, are those of which we have no modern information. We must, however, except Aelana, or Ailath, as it appears in the Bible, and which gave to one of the arms which the Arabic Gulf forms at its extremity, the name of Sinus Aelanites. This place, which is now ruined, has no cultivated land in its environs, though it preserves the name of Ailah. Astrongaber, whence the fleets of Solomon took their departure for Ophir, was an open port, at the head of the most eastern creek of the Elanite Gulf; and this position is called Berenice by Ptolemy. . . . This place is now called Calaat-el-Acaba, which signifies the Castle of the Descent; while the Elanite Gulf is named Bahr-el-Acaba. . . .

The Nabatheans prevailing in Arabia Petraea, extended themselves far towards the Desert, and thus confounded the limits of their primitive seats and the Happy Arabia; so that these limits cannot, with accuracy, be decided. It may be said, however, that the first claims not only the country between the gulfs, as has been reported, but also that adjacent to the eastern shore of the Elanite gulf. Madian, called by Ptolemy Modiana, and whose name relates to one of the children that Abraham had of Keturah, caused the Madianites to be so called; and we find the dwellings of a part of these contiguous to the Moabites. The position of Madian, not far from the sea, is called by the Arabs, Megar-el-Shuaib, or the Grotto of Shuaib; and this name of Shuaib is given to Jethro, who was pontiff of Madian, and faith-in-law to Moses. . . . (pp. 4-9)

#### ARABIA FELIX

It must be remarked that what appertains to the Arabia Deserta of Ptolemy, appears restrained to the country contiguous to Syria and to Babylon, and has relation to that which is now called Dahna, or the Desert Plain. . . . coasting along the gulf, we find a place named Albus pagus, or, according to the Greek, Leuce come, which must be the same with Hawr, before

mentioned; as the Arabic name has relation to whiteness, which that anciently appropriated to it . . . Receding still farther from the sea, the name of Iatreb, appropriated to Medina before it was called Medinet-al-Nabi, or the City of the Prophet, is the same with Iatrippa.

The name of Mecca appears evidently in that of Maco-raba, the second member whereof is used to designate a great or principal city; and the house revered at Mecca is among the Arabs of an antiquity anterior to the origin of the Mohammedan worship; for they attribute the foundation of it to Abraham. We cannot forbear remarking that a river whose course appears considerable in Ptolemy, under the name of Betius, is in reality only composed of two little streams, now called Bardilloi. Arabia has scarcely a river that does not perish in the sandy plains, or expand in moors and fens. . . . Musa, which was heretofore what Mokha is at present, a staple for the landing and re-shipping of merchandise. At length arriving at the strait by which the Arabic Gulf communicates with the Erythrean Sea, we discover in a port named Ghela, that which is mentioned in antiquity under the name of Ocelis. . . .

This southern part of Arabia, bounded on the east by the Arabic gulf, and on the south by the Erythrean Sea, is that which particularly merits the epithet of Happy. The name of Iemen, whereby it is actually known, is a term in the Arabic, as in many other oriental languages, to express the Right: and turning towards the rising Sun, according to the aspect affected by the Asiatics, such will be the relative position of a southern country. It may be added that in this term of Iemen is also comprised an idea of felicity. . . . Sabatha, as the principal city of the Sabeans, can be no other than Sanaa, which is known in Iemen as holding an anciently the 'first rank. . . .

The royal city of the Homerites was called Mariaba, or, as we read in Arabic, Mareb; which name expresses in this language the pre-eminence of the city. The Arabs make it the residence of Beltris queen of Saba, who visited Solomon. There subsist vestiges of this city, which was destroyed by a sudden inundation caused by the bursting of a dyke whereby the collected waters in its environs were restrained. . . . When we read, in the account of the expedition of the Romans in Arabia, that from the territory of Mariaba to the country of incense was only a journey of three days, Hadramaut must be understood; which, nearer than Seger, had also its particular odour. On the route that the Romans held in their retreat, as well as in advancing into the country, there is mention of Angrana, as a considerable city, which afterwards became the centre of Christianity in Arabia, and the royal residence of Arethas, whom Dunaan king of the Homerites, and a Jew by religion, caused to be put to death. It well preserves its name in Nageran, or Nagran. . . . This . . . terminates what we more distinctly recognise of positions in the interior of Fertile Arabia.

We proceed now to the notice of what the coast of the Erythrean Sea offers to observation. The first remarkable place after the Arabic Gulf is Arabia Felicis Emporium, to which corresponds the modern name of Aden, a word denoting pleasure and delight. . . . A bay of the sea, comprising isles which are mentioned as odoriferous, is named Sacalites Sinus. In the Arabian geographers its name appears Giun-al-Hascic, or the Gulf of Herbs. At its head is a city named

Hasec, near which there is a tomb named Cabal Houd, and said to be that of Eber, father of Jectan. . . . As we read in a particular description of the shores of the Erythrean Sea, that the Syagros promontorium is the most eastern point of this continent, it can be no other than Ras-al-Hhad, although the information of Ptolemy appears not to authorise this opinion. We shall stop here, as the retrogression of the coast towards the entrance of the Persian gulf will enter more properly into a detail of what concerns the Desert Arabia. (pp. 9-17)

#### ARABIA DESERTA

To the Region of Incense succeeds a country named Mahrah, whose aspect is sufficiently deformed by nature to merit the distinction of the Sterile Arabia. For between the country of Oman, whereof we shall presently speak, and the environs of Mecca, a continued desert extending across the continent, furnishes no particular objects in geography; the ancients appearing even to be unacquainted with the country in this part. But, adhering to the coast, we find Moscha portus represented by Mascat, which was for some time in the power of the Portuguese. And this position follows the Syagrosic promontory, instead of preceding it, as in Ptolemy. And the Omanum Emporium, or Omana, which this geographer places in the interior of the continent, is actually a maritime position, which has given the name of Oman to the country in its environs. . . . Knowing only as Arabia Deserta what extends on the south side of the Euphrates between Syria and Babylon, the writers of antiquity have comprised this shore of the Persian gulf in Arabia Felix; and truly some places are recognised on it that do not disgrace this distinction. . . .

We shall conclude this section with some objects more general. The Arabs who live under tents are called Scenitae, after a Greek term, which signifies precisely this species of habitation. In calling them Bedouins, we use an Arabic word, denoting a people habituated to live in plains without a fixed habitation . . . Procopius, under Justinian, speaks of the Roman Saracens and the Persian Saracens, and we see this name diffused over the space extending between the Arabic and Persian gulfs. In the opinion of some of the learned, this denomination is derived from an Arabic term, designating men addicted to rapine; and as we see them without scruple adopting this mode of life, we may believe that they would not blush to be distinguished by the name. . . . (pp. 17-20)

[1814 Maps Taken from Premier Partie de la Carte d'Asie by John Horsley. In 1751, Jean Baptiste d'Anville would print a map of Arabia titled Premier Partie de la Carte d'Asie in which he noted the general location in southern Arabia of the Nehem tribe. In 1768 d'Anville published a 3-volume description of Arabia titled Geographie ancienne abregee. John Horsley translated d'Anville's volumes and in 1814 published them as the Compendium of Ancient Geography, by Monsieur d'Anville. The maps included with this work were taken from d'Anville's map and were quite complete.]



**1814 James Playfair**

**A System of Geography, Ancient and Modern; by James Playfair, D.D., F.R.S., and F.A.S., Edin., Principal of the United College of St. Andrews, and Historiographer to H.R.H. the Prince Regent.-- Edinburgh, 1814.**

Source: ^Captain R. L. Playfair, A History of Arabia Felix or Yemen, from the commencement of the Christian Era to the Present Time; Including an Account of the British Settlement of Aden. Bombay: printed for Government at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, 1859. Reprinted by Documentary Publications, Salisbury, North Carolina, U.S.A., 1978. List of Authorities, p. xi

**1816 Elias Boudinot**

**A Star in the West; or, a Humble Attempt to Discover the Long Lost Tribes of Israel, Trenton, 1816.**

Elias Boudinot was the first president of the American Bible Society. He also served in the U.S. Congress from 1777 to 1884. In 1816 he wrote *A Star in the West; or, a Humble Attempt to Discover the Long Lost Tribes of Israel*. According to Dan Vogel, "this book drew heavily on the evidence of Adair [1775] and introduced a wide American audience to the theory of Israelite origins. However, the Lost Ten Tribes would not be pictured as traveling through Arabia in order to reach the New World. In his book *A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources* (Detroit, Mich.: Harlo Press, 1964), non-Mormon Wesley M. Jones writes some notes on *A Star in the West* in which he states:

Speculating on the possible route taken by the tribes from the Old World to the New, Boudinot says, "from the great tower of Babel each race took to their own direction . . ." Again, a body of the tribe of Ephraim going northward ". . . into that quarter where there never had man been." (p. 25)

**1816 Ali Bey**

**Travels in Morocco, Tripoli, Cyprus, Egypt, Arabia, and Syria, between 1803 and 1809. London, 1816.**

Source: ^Captain R. L. Playfair, A History of Arabia Felix or Yemen, from the commencement of the Christian Era to the Present Time; Including an Account of the British Settlement of Aden. Bombay: printed for Government at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, 1859. Reprinted by Documentary Publications, Salisbury, North Carolina, U.S.A., 1978. List of Authorities, p. ix

**1818** [Jean-Baptiste d'Anville](#)

**An Epitome of Ancient Geography, Sacred and Profane, Being an Abridgement of D'Anville and Wells. Robert Mayo trans., Philadelphia: A. Finley, 1818.**

Robert Mayo made another translation of Jean-Baptiste d'Anville's 3-volume description of Arabia titled *Geographie ancienne abregee*. In 1818 he would publish his translation as *An Epitome of Ancient Geography, Sacred and Profane, Being an Abridgement of D'Anville and Wells*. His map of Arabia is not as detailed as d'Anville's original.

S. Kent Brown writes:

Another translation of d'Anville's French work was Robert Mayo's *An Epitome of Ancient Geography*, which first appeared in 1818. The map of Arabia is much simpler than that which accompanied Horsley's translation. But neither of these English translations reached the Dartmouth library before Joseph Smith's family moved from the area. Likewise, d'Anville's map that notes the tribal area of Nehem was never part of the collections of either the Dartmouth library or John Pratt's library while Joseph Smith lived in these areas.

*Note\* Kent Brown comments:*

*A review of the holdings of John Pratt's Manchester lending library and those of Dartmouth College has yielded no evidence that any of the aforementioned works dealing with Arabia-- classical or contemporary--existed in these two collections in Joseph Smith's day. They are simply absent from the accession lists of John Pratt's library. In the case of Dartmouth College, the library did not acquire any of these works until after 1830, except volume 2 of Horsley's English translation of d'Anville's work, which came to the library in 1823. Apparently only one of d'Anville's maps came with the translation, but which one is unknown; copies of forty maps came to the library in 1936. Dartmouth College acquired Edward Gibbon's famous historical work only in 1944 and the English translation of Niebuhr's volumes in 1937, much too late for Joseph Smith to have consulted them. Furthermore, the books in John Pratt's library that claimed to treat the ancient world deal with Arabia only in a general way, focusing almost exclusively on the northern area near the Persian Gulf. In this light it is safe to conclude that Joseph Smith did not enjoy access to works on Arabia in either of the libraries that lay near his home at one point or another in his youth. In a similar vein, any hypothesis that Joseph Smith had access to a private library that contained works on ancient Arabia is impossible to sustain.*

Source: ^S. Kent Brown, "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon, edited by Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2002, pp. 74-75.

[1818 Map simplified from Premier Partie de la Carte d'Asie by Robert Mayo. Printed in 1751, this map appeared in Jean-Baptiste d'Anville's three-volume Geographie ancienne abregee, which appeared in 1768. These volumes were translated by Robert Mayo and published as An Epitome of Ancient Geography, Sacred and Profane, Being an Abridgement of D'Anville and Wells (Philadelphia: A. Finley, 1818). The pages that deal with Arabia are 203-14. The map of Arabia, which the author has simplified from d'Anville's original, shows few of Arabia's geographical features. Map Source: ???]

### 1821 G. Forster Sadleir

#### Diary of a Journey across Arabia, 1819, in the Trans. Lit. Soc. of Bombay, 1821

"In the annals of Arabian travel, the name of George Forster Sadleir [1789-1859] holds an honoured place, but it is known to few outside the narrow circle of historico-geographers . . ."  
[p. 3]

"He was born in Cork on January 19, 1789, of Anglo-Irish extraction. . . . On April 4, 1805, at the age of sixteen, Sadleir became an Ensign "without purchase" in the 47th Regiment of Foot, in which he was to serve abroad continuously for over twenty-two years. . . . In 1819 Sadleir made his memorable journey across Arabia from east to west, which is his greatest claim to distinction. It was the first recorded crossing of the Peninsula by a European and a feat of Arabian travel unequalled for nearly a hundred years or, to be exact, until Captain Shakespear's great journey in 1914. (D. Carruthers, "Captain Shakespear's Last Journey," Geog. Journal, May-June, 1922.) [pp. 3-5]

He left Qatif on June 28 and began his journey of over a thousand miles, which in eighty-four days took him across Arabia to Yanbu on the Red Sea. [p. 9]

A short account of the journey appeared in the Trans. Lit. Soc. of Bombay in 1821. It may be doubted whether the Diary would ever have been published but for the interest shown in the travels of the mysterious political crypto-Jesuit, W. G. Palgrave, who in 1862, explored Nejd, through which Sadleir had passed. . . . [Sadleir's Diary] is a very rare book. It is entitled "Diary of a journey from el Khatif in the Persian Gulf to Yanbo on the Red Sea during the year 1819, by Captain G. Forster Sadlier [sic] of H.M.'s 47th Regiment, Compiled from the Records of the Bombay Government. Printed at the Education Society's Press, Byculla, Bombay, 1866." [pp. 3-6]

In 1821 the Literary Society of Bombay, in publishing an account of this extraordinary journey, observed:

Travelling, however, expeditiously and alone, through a country in which the exact position of a single town has never been ascertained, and unprovided with the necessary instruments, it has not been in Captain Sadlier's power to give that geographical precision to his route which he would have wished; but he was particularly attentive in frequently marking the direction of his march by a very good compass, and in noting exactly the time of each day's journey; and by such means, as it is well known, a near approximation to the truth may be obtained.

The principal part of Captain Sadlier's journey lay through the provinces of Hajar, or Bahrein, and Najd, which have been always the residence of the Bedouin tribes. Their peculiar mode of life, and the deserts which they inhabit, must ever prevent any material change taking place in their manners, customs, and government. Hence the accurate description of them given by Niebuhr fifty-eight years ago will be found equally correct at this day. . . . [pp. 24-25]

Source: <sup>^</sup>[Diary of A Journey Across Arabia \(1819\)](#), George Forster Sadleir. With a new introduction by F. M. Edwards. Cambridge, England: The Oleander Press, 1977. (Note\* While the 1866 edition included a map (see below), the reprint of 1977 included an introductory essay by F. M. Edwards.)

[1819 1866 Map: Route across Arabia, from El Katif in the Persian Gulf, to Yambo in the Red Sea. Compiled from the Journal of Captain Sadlier, by M. Houghton, H. C. M. George Forster Sadleir, [Diary of A Journey Across Arabia \(1819\), 1866](#)]

*Note\* The above map provides evidence for the route proposed for Lehi by the RLDS Committee on Archaeology in 1898 and 1910 (see notations)*

*Note\* George Potter and Richard Wellington write the following:*

In 1819, Captain G. Forster Sadleir of the British Army was the first European to cross Arabia. He made his journey from El Kateef (Qatif) on the Arabian Gulf coast west to Yambo (Yanbu) on the Red Sea coast. Captain Sadleir recorded on September 5, 1819, while a short distance north of Medina, "We entered a Derah (wadi) between the hills, and descended into a deep rocky ravine in which is a plentiful supply of water." His map of the journey marking this wadi records "Ravine and River of water" (Sadleir, *Diary of a Journey across Arabia*, 22, 94; italics added). It is interesting that an early nineteenth-century Englishman and an early nineteenth-century American used exactly the same terminology to describe a small river in a ravine or gorge. The only difference was that the American had never been to Arabia or seen such a river! Under such circumstances Joseph Smith's use of this phrase seems totally appropriate.

Source: <sup>^</sup>George Potter and Richard Wellington, [Lehi in the Wilderness](#), Springville, UT: Cedar Fort Inc, 2003, pp. 49 n. 1, 183.

[1823^](#) [Ethan Smith](#)

***View of the Hebrews; or the Tribes of Israel in America, 1823***

Dan Vogel writes:

Ethan Smith, a Congregational clergyman who served as pastor to churches in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York, quoted both Adair [1775] and Boudinot [1816] as well as a variety of American and European sources in his 1823 book *View of the Hebrews; or the Tribes of Israel in America*. . . . The first edition of Ethan Smith's book appeared in 1823, but its popularity required a second, expanded edition two years later.

In his book *A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources* (Detroit, Mich.: Harlo Press, 1964), Wesley M. Jones writes some notes on "View of the Hebrews" in which he states:

[Ethan] gives no detailed explanation as to how the Tribes of Israel reached America--only the fact that they are here. He quotes Esdras as saying that the Ten Tribes lived for a time in Media. Then, dissatisfied, they took a northeast journey of about a year and a half to a "sequestered land never inhabited by man since the great flood." (p. 37)

[1824^](#) [Jedediah Morse](#)

***A New System of Geography, Ancient and Modern, for the Use of Schools, 24th edition, Boston: Richardson and Lord, 1824, p. 228***

Preface

Geography, as a science, is yet in its infancy. . . . In the following pages the world is presented under three distinct views, 1. An Introductory view of each quarter or grand division of the globe. 2. A view of each country in detail. 3. A General View, or Recapitulation. . . . The publishers have prepared an Atlas to accompany this work . . . The principal improvement [over previous editions] is the addition of a System of Ancient Geography, accompanied with an Ancient Atlas of five maps. [iii-v]

Globes

. . . The latitude of a place is its distance from the equator measured in degrees on the meridian. If the place lies north of the equator, it is in north latitude; if south of the equator, in south latitude. . . . [p. 23]

Arabia

Situation: Arabia is in the southwest of Asia; bounded N. by Turkey; E. by the Persian gulf and the Indian ocean; S. by the Indian ocean; and W. by the Red sea, which separates it from Africa.

Face of the Country: The whole interior of Arabia is an immense desert of burning sands, interspersed with some few fertile spots, which appear like islands in a desolate ocean. A hot and pestiferous wind called the Simoom, frequently blows over the desert, and instantly

suffocates the unwary traveller; and whole caravans are sometimes buried by moving clouds of sand raised by the wind. The edges of the country on the seacoast, contain some flourishing provinces and settlements; but in all parts they suffer for want of water, there being no river of any consequence in all Arabia, and no rain for months, and sometimes a year together.

Divisions: Arabia is commonly divided into three parts; Arabia Felix or Happy Arabia, bordering on the Persian gulf, the Indian ocean and the southern part of the Red sea; Arabia Petoea, or Stony Arabia, lying on the Red sea north of Arabia Felix; and Arabia Deserta, or the Desert, including all the interior and northern parts of the country.

Chief Towns: All the towns in Arabia are near the coast. . . .

Animals: Camels abound in this country. This animal is wonderfully fitted by Providence for traversing the hot and parched desert. The camel can travel 6 or 8 days without water, and usually carries 800 pounds upon his back, which is not taken off during the journey. When weary he kneels down to rest, and sleeps with his load upon his back. His feet are made of a hard fleshy substance, well fitted to resist the heat of the sands--The Arabian horses are the best in the world. They are swift, yet docile, and will live whole days without food, and bear incredible fatigue. . . .

Caravans The inland trade of Arabia, Persia, Turkey, Tartary, and Africa is carried on principally by caravans, consisting of large companies of merchants, travellers and pilgrims, who march with their camels over the sandy deserts. They carry their provisions and drink with them. Their water is carried in skins by the camels. They go armed, and travel in company to defend themselves from the wandering Arabs. This mode of travelling and trading has subsisted from the earliest antiquity, for it was to a caravan that Joseph was sold by his brethren.

Antiquities: Near the north end of the Red sea is Mount Sinai, where God delivered to Moses the ten commandments, and near it is Mount Horeb, where the angel appeared in the burning bush. These mountains are now inhabited by monks, who pretend to show the very spot where the miracles happened. [pp. 228-230]

*Note\* Here Mount Sinai and Horeb are included in Arabia, but from the description St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai Peninsula is implied.*

#### General Views

. . .

Winds. . . . In all parts of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans which lie in the torrid zone, except near shore, the winds blow constantly at all seasons of the year from the east. Under the equator they are due east; as you approach towards the northern tropic they incline to northeast, and towards the southern tropic to southeast. These winds are called Trade winds, because they much facilitate trading voyages. The Spanish flotillas, which sail annually from Acapulco, on the western coast of Mexico, to the Philippine islands, are borne along by the

trade winds with uninterrupted prosperity; no attention, no skill, is required to steer them; no accident ever befalls them; and this voyage of nearly half the circumference of the globe, is often performed in sixty days, without a change of sails. It is impossible ever to return by the same track.

In the Indian Ocean the regular trade wind prevails between the southern tropic and the 10th degree of south latitude; but to the north of this last boundary, begins the empire of the monsoons. For six months, from April to October, a strong wind blows constantly from the southwest, bringing with it rain and tempest; during the rest of the year, a dry and agreeable wind blows from the northeast. The change from one monsoon to the other is accompanied with violent storms and hurricanes. . . .

Currents. The great currents of the ocean generally run from east to west, following the course of the trade winds. . . . In the Pacific, Indian, and Southern Atlantic Oceans the currents, with few exceptions, run from east to west. [pp. 304-305]

*Note\* This seems to be the first information on conditions that might have affected the route of an ocean crossing from Arabia to the New World. However, the above facts would run counter to a Pacific crossing.*

*Note\* See the 1982 England notation in which he comments on the content of these early geographical primers.*

[1825](#)

**Conder's Arabia (The Modern Traveller Series), London, 1825.**

In 1952 Hugh Nibley would write:

The best guide to Arabia at the time of the writing of the Book of Mormon imagined forests and lakes in the center of the peninsula, while insisting that the whole coastline was "a rocky wall . . . as dismal and barren as can be: not a blade of grass or a green thin," to be found. (Conder's Arabia, pp. 14f, 9, 348f.)

Source: ^Hugh Nibley, Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishing Co., 1952, p. 127. See also ^England, "Through the Arabian Desert to a Bountiful Land: Could Joseph Smith Have Known the Way?" in Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins, edited by Noel B. Reynolds, Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center 1982, p. 146.

*Note\* Eugene England writes:*

I have examined the great variety of the geographies or "gazetteers" that could possibly have been available to Joseph Smith. They range from R. Brooke's *General Gazetteer*, published in

London in 1794 and very popular, republished in a number of editions (finally, with revisions by John Marshall in the U.S. in 1844), to Nathaniel Dwight's *Short but Comprehensive System of the Geography of the World . . . Designed for Children* (Northampton, Conn.: Simeon Butler, 1811), which was also republished many times. All of these are sketchy, very general and vague, and though generally consistent with each other, even obviously all dependent on Brooke's early work, they are contradictory about a central matter, the nature and location of any fertile areas in Arabia. All of those before 1835, when more careful explorations began to have their effect, subscribe to the ancient Romantic idea of an "Arabia Felix" in the south, but some identify the whole southern third as that poetic area (Butler, op. cit); some speak of "some few fertile spots [in the interior], which appear like islands in a desolate ocean"--Jedediah Morse, *A New System of Geography, Ancient and Modern, for the Use of Schools, 24th Edition* (Boston: Richardson and Lord 1824), p. 228; some identify such fertile oasis as in "the south-western [italics added] extremity toward the shores of the Red Sea"--*A System of Geography; or, a Descriptive, Historical and Philosophical View of the Several Quarters of the World*, 4 vols. (Glasgow: Niven, Napier, and Khull, 1805) Vol. II, p. 273; and some claim that "in the south-southeastern part, called Arabia Felix, there is, in some spots, a fine soil, and luxuriant vegetation" (Dwight, op. cit., p. 109; italics added). None implies there is any timber such as would be needed for shipbuilding. Dwight stating specifically, "there is very little timber in Arabia of any kind." None suggests any fertile areas along the coast, some specifically denying it, such as Conder's Arabia (*The Modern Traveller Series*, London, 1825), p. 9.

("Thorough the Arabian Desert to a Bountiful Land: Could Joseph Smith Have Known the Way?" in Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins, Noel Reynolds ed., Provo: BYU: Religious Studies Center, 1982, p. 154, note 2.)

#### **1828^ [Jacob Willetts](#)**

**Willetts' New and Improved School Geography; Accompanied by a New and Correct Atlas, Fifth edition, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., Potter and Wilson, 1828.**

On page 115 under the heading of "Arabia," we find the following:

Arabia is divided into three parts: Arabia Stony, Arabia Desert, and Arabia Happy. The face of the country, along the sea coast, is mountainous; in the interior it is mostly an immense desert, interspersed with fertile spots, like islands. The climate is various. In some parts it is hot and unhealthy; in others, highly salubrious.

#### **1828^ [Frederick Butler](#)**

**Elements of Geography and History Combined, 4th ed., Wethersfield, Conn.: Deming and Francis, 1828.**

In the preface, Frederick Butler writes the following:



In compiling this work, the Author had before him the Geographies of Morse, (both Universal and Abridgement) Cummings, Adams, Dwight, Willett, and Dana's Sketches of the Western States; from which he made the most valuable selections. The historical sketches are derived from Rollin's Ancient History, Russell's Modern Europe, Robertson's South America; and various other writers, particularly upon the United States. . . .

This work is accompanied with an improved Atlas, containing nine Maps, in which all the modern Geographical changes are carefully and particularly laid down . . . [p. iv]

On pages 344-345 we find the following:

ARABIA

. . .

Q. What are the natural or physical divisions of Arabia?

A. Arabia is divided into three parts, viz. Arabia Petroea, or Stony Arabia, on the north; Arabia Deserta, or the Deserts of Arabia, in the middle; and Arabia Felix, or Arabia the Happy, on the south.

Q. What are the face of the country, soil, productions, and climate?

A. The face of the country, in the two first divisions, is generally a barren, uncultivated waste; but the third, or southern division, is fertile in a high degree, and produces rice, maize, &c.: and abounds in frankincense, gums, balsams, honey, wax, spices, and all the tropical fruits. . . .

Q. Which are the principal rivers?

A. Arabia is almost wholly destitute of rivers; there is not one stream in the whole country, that deserves the name of river; they are very small.

Q. Which are the animals of Arabia?

A. The horse has been noted for his speed and beauty from the earliest ages. The camel is common to Arabia, and peculiarly useful to carry burdens over the desert, because he can travel six or eight days without water, and can carry 800 lbs. upon his back. . . .

*Note\* See the 1982 England notation in which he comments on the content of these early geographical primers.*

**1829** [Johann Burkhart](#)

**Travels in Arabia, London, 1829.**

The Hiltons write:

The geography of Saudi Arabia was mostly still shrouded in mystery in 1830. The first serious visitor in modern times [to Saudi Arabia] was Johann Burkhart who managed to write and

publish in England his 1812-1813 adventures of discovery in Africa and southern and northern Arabia. However he never reached southeastern Arabia, nor did he describe any place he visited where there existed flowers, fruits, honeybees, streams or a forest large enough to provide timber for building a ship. In fact, his descriptions of the places he saw in the peninsula would lend one to believe that only sand and desolate wasteland, controlled by warring Bedouin tribes, existed. Burkhart embraced Islam just to survive. Distrust and hatred of Christians since the time of the abortive crusades in the 11th and 13th centuries had made the area off-limits except to the braves of travelers.

Source: ^Lynn and Hope Hilton, Discovering Lehi, 1996, p. 4.

*Note\* The title of Burkhart's published writings is not listed either in footnote or in the bibliography at the back of Hilton's book.*

*Note\* If one consults the map of Burckhardt's travels, they will find that he never progressed south of Mecca. Thus he can't be blamed for not writing about the fertility of "Happy Arabia" because he never reached it.*

Freeth and Winstone write:

In 1809, at the age of twenty-five, he [Johann Burkhart] left England for the Orient. He was heading for Aleppo, where he intended to perfect his Arabic by "losing himself in the crowds." He so effectively learned to speak and live like an Arab that he was soon able to make long journeys to the Syrian interior, passing everywhere as a native Levantine. It was during this period that he re-discovered Petra for the modern world. He adopted the name of Shaikh Ibrahim ibn Abdullah, and though if questioned he would admit that he was a Frank, he claimed to be a convert to Islam, and allayed all suspicion by his scrupulous observance of Muslim religious duties. Since he had read much classical Arabic literature and learned most of the Koran by heart he could hold his own with any learned men he might meet. . . .

It was July 1814 when he arrived in the damp, enervating heat of Jidda, dressed in rags after his travels from the Nile. . . . Burckhardt was practically penniless. . . . When Burckhardt was in Jidda the hinterland was still dangerous for travellers because of bands of Wahhabi raiders. . . .

Before his death [on October 15, 1817, at the age of only thirty-two], Burckhardt had managed to send to London his manuscripts on his African and Arabian travels, as well as his Notes on the Bedouins and the Wahabis, and his collection of Arabic Proverbs. He apologised for their unpolished state, explaining that his eyesight was troubling him again and he had found it hard to put the finishing touches to his writings. By the time his papers reached the African Association Burckhardt was dead. His Travels in Arabia was prepared for publication by Sir William Ouseley and appeared in 1829. For more than half a century it was the standard authority on the holy cities of the Hijaz, valued for its encyclopaedic detail and factual reporting. D. G. Hogarth, the twentieth-century scholar, places Burckhardt among the foremost of those who have written about Arabia . . .

Source: ^Zahra Freeth and H. V. F. Winstone, Explorers of Arabia: From the Renaissance to the End of the Victorian Era, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978, pp. 92-120.

[1829 Illustration: Burckhardt's route in Hijaz, 1811. Zahra Freeth and H. V. F. Winstone, Explorers of Arabia: From the Renaissance to the End of the Victorian Era, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978, p. 92]

1830

**The Book of Mormon is published**

*Note\* The reader is referred to Volume 1 of my 9-volume A Covenant Record of Christ's People wherein the text of the Book of Mormon is highlighted in different manners to indicate most if not all of the geographical and cultural phrases within the text relative to Lehi and Nephi's journey through Arabia.*