

Nophites in Europ

*Hagoth's northward exodus,
Book of Mormon prophecy,
and ancient Europe*

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About the Cover

The glyph used on the cover is from the Mayan script. According to modern linguists, this glyph means “to arrive”. (This is not to insist that Mayans were related to the Nephites.) This glyph was selected for use on the cover to illustrate the parallels between Alma’s account of Nephites boarding a ship and departing northward from Nephite shores around 60 BC, with numerous European accounts that told of a people that arrived along the coast of northern Europe shortly afterwards. This glyph likewise owes its use, in part, to 1 Nephi 18:23: “And it came to pass that after we had sailed for the space of many days we did arrive at the promised land; and we went forth upon the land, and did pitch our tents; and we did call it the promised land.”

About the Researchers

Don studied European culture at Brigham Young University before completing a degree in computer science, with a strong yearning for computational linguistics.

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Dedication

Don’s insight into the Book of Mormon, history, and our heritage, was his gift to me. As a teenager, he invited me to sit with him in early morning seminary when I was too young to be on the rolls. I trace my initial love for the Book of Mormon to the events following his earnest invitation to read it prayerfully. That soft-spoken man, who waged unspoken battles daily, is his brother’s hero. This work is not just an extension of him, but is a feeble attempt to thank him and my Father for his friendship.

Other projects from the Nelson family include:

1844 in Prophecy – Book 1

The Savior's ministry and latter-day martyrdom foretold in Daniel

1844 in Prophecy – Book 2

The Martyrdom and Patmos

Mathias and Bengta

A family history

Odin's Toga

The origin of Odin worship

Lombard Origins

A prequel to Nephites in Europe

Written, however, to a secular audience.

The Hagoth Chronicles, Volume 1

A fictional novel, written with Michelle Nelson
(based upon Nephites in Europe)

A screenplay about ancient Europe, written with Brian Nelson

Nephites in Europe

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The interpretations of historical and scriptural sources in this account reflect the views of individuals, and should not be mistaken for actual doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Those interested in official Church teachings such as a copy of the Book of Mormon are encouraged to contact the Church at a local congregation or via the Internet at <http://www.lds.org>.

Additional research and discussion related to Nephites in Europe may be found at:
<http://www.CandlestickStudios.com>

Specific queries relating to Nephites in Europe and other research can be sent to:
info@CandlestickStudios.com

Preface

Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;

Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms.¹

Many believe that studying and writing history is nothing more than rehashing established facts and dates. I had the privilege of learning otherwise from able teachers and writers. They taught that histories are written by mortals, each with their own prejudices, foibles, assumptions, and blind spots. Because of this, historical reconstruction demands careful thought, reexamination, and reflection.

History is actually much like a vast jigsaw puzzle. The items that make up the pieces depend on the period we're trying to reconstruct, and the questions we're trying to answer. The answers are rarely as simple as a single quote that provides an x-marks-the-spot solution, for the things that interest modern researchers are typically quite different from the things ancient writers were interested in writing about. So it often takes extensive searching and surveying to piece together the few comments that touch, even if ever so obliquely, on the topic one is exploring.

This study is much along those same lines. In the attempt to explore a specific question (the possibility of a Nephite colony in ancient Europe), over a hundred different historical sources were

¹ D&C 88:78-79

surveyed. These sources span centuries of early writings, written by scores of different chroniclers.

Most histories are written with a specific agenda or purpose, some noble, others less so. What makes a history good or bad is different for each reader. In the author's opinion, this history is beneficial if faith increases.² And that will be accomplished not so much by reflecting on this study, but rather by realigning oneself with the teachings of the record that forms the epicenter of this study. In other words, this book is little more than an invitation to open the covers of the Book of Mormon with greater appreciation, and with a deeper devotion to seek and follow God's will.

In 1827, Joseph Smith received the Nephite plates, which were engraved in a unique language that was generations removed from Hebrew and Egyptian. By the power of God, he was able to translate that record, which was published to the world in 1830. Some question the sincerity and/or the truth of his ministry. This study sustains him not just as a sincere man, but as a true prophet of God.

In 1827, the first historic dig in Europe to be led by a full-time professional archaeologist got under way. After a few years of additional digging and analysis, the leader of that effort died, still puzzling over the meaning of what he had uncovered. The parallels and contrasts between the 1827 European dig and Joseph's 1827 reception of the Nephite record are worth considering.

This historical research is more like the secular work of the archaeologist, an attempt to dig through the layers of the past. The Book of Mormon however, is in an entirely different category. As the prophet Joseph Smith taught, and as millions have found to be true, one can get nearer to God by aligning with

² D&C 88:118

the teachings and invitations in that sacred record than by any other pursuit or method.

*And, verily I say unto you, that it is my will that you should...
obtain knowledge of history, and of countries,
and of kingdoms, of laws of God and man,
and all this for the salvation of Zion³.*

³ D&C 93:53

Introduction

Decades before the birth of Christ, an obscure Nephite named Hagoth built several ships somewhere in the Americas. The largest of those ships was loaded with emigrants and sailed “northward”, out of Nephite history.

Shortly afterwards, Rome advanced into Northern Europe and discovered coastal peoples they had never even heard of before.

According to recent linguistic studies, the inhabitants of that region once spoke a tongue from the same family as Hebrew and Egyptian, but then adopted the Germanic tongue of their neighbors. The earliest records we have that speak of them were written by their contemporaries in the late Roman Republic and Early Roman Empire.

Later, these people themselves began to commit their histories to writing in a handful of manuscripts that have barely survived the passage of time. Although their history and traditions seem strange to some, they will resonate with those who have read the Book of Mormon.

These new Europeans claimed to have arrived from across the sea. Some of them called themselves the people of Nephi, Joseph and/or Hagoth. Judaic practices were honored among them on the European continent. And most importantly, in the first century AD, they claimed to have been visited by the earth-born son of God.

Centuries later, in alignment with Nephite prophecy, descendants of these people spread to every corner of the world, colonizing the South Pacific, New Zealand, South Africa, and both Americas. In their journeys, they shaped and forever changed world history.

This is their account.

Hagoth's Exodus

For generations, Christians in northern Europe preserved the tradition that their ancient forefathers were Israelites. Unfortunately, now in the 21st century, that tradition is rapidly being abandoned.⁴

Much of their early research was fascinating, and was closely tied to the Saxons. However, one of their frequent claims was that the Saxons arrived in northern Europe on foot. However, that claim of arriving on foot does not match the Saxons' own origin account. That account asserts that the forefathers of the English people arrived in Europe by boat.

On a similar note, the Book of Mormon tells us that approximately a generation before the birth of Christ, thousands of Nephites packed up their belongings and left the lands of their inheritance. The last chapter of Alma tells us that many of them departed on ships, built by a man called Hagoth.

Several things about this exodus are unique within the Nephite account. The most intriguing of these is perhaps this: with many key Nephite events, the prophets that recorded them provided commentary on their reason for including those historical events in their account. More specifically, a “thus we see” object lesson is frequently included. However the Hagoth account offers no such direct explanation. It simply hangs there, with the remaining Nephites (and most readers) wondering where the emigrants had gone.

What adds to the significance of this record of Hagoth's exodus is that Nephi of old had left strict instructions that only sacred things should occupy the precious space in their records.⁵ Yet the

⁴ For example, within my lifetime, the Church of God has abandoned the Anglo-Israelite doctrine.

⁵ 1 Nephi 19:5-6; Jacob 1:2-4;

account of Hagoth's exodus was considered sufficiently important to be preserved in the book of Alma. This suggests there was a sacred purpose for Nephite writers to preserve the account of Hagoth's exodus. To further illustrate the significance of preserving this unique mention, the Nephites admitted that they were unable to record "even a hundredth part"⁶ of their shipping and boat-building activities. Yet they chose to preserve the account of Hagoth.

The Book of Mormon suggests an explanation for events like Hagoth's migration:

And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard saw it, and he said unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree...

And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard, I take away many of these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will; and it mattereth not that if it so be that the root of this tree will perish, I may preserve the fruit thereof unto myself; wherefore, I will take these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will.⁷

Based on similar passages and promises elsewhere in the Nephite record, which tell of colonies and transplants, and based on what we know of the eventual destruction of Nephite society in the Americas, the curious fate of Hagoth's passengers is much like the fate of a small escape pod hurtling towards an uncharted planet. However, since they are a part of scripture, exploring what became of them is all the more gripping and meaningful.

To the South Pacific and Elsewhere

Many believe that Alma 63, the chapter which speaks of Hagoth, is a monologue about Nephites who eventually arrived in the South Pacific Islands. However, such a view is a limited glimpse of a more majestic picture.

⁶ Helaman 3:14

⁷ Jacob 5:7-8

For example, Elder Mathew Cowley, who served among the Pacific Islanders, taught that the Islanders were descendants of Lehi. He drew specifically from Alma 63 while teaching this. Because of this teaching and similar statements from others, many have jumped to the conclusion that all of the voyages described in Alma 63 refer to an exodus into the Pacific Ocean. However that additional supposition goes far beyond what Elder Cowley actually taught. Nor does that additional assumption mirror what the Book of Mormon actually says.

As we explore Alma 63 in greater detail, readers are encouraged to open their own scriptures while examining the accounts of Hagoth's ships. To provide a backdrop for the mood of the Nephite nation at the time of this exodus, a few brief comments might be of benefit.

It was six years after one the most lengthy and devastating wars the Nephite had yet endured. That war against an innumerable enemy had nearly swept their civilization into the sea. A brief lull in that recent storm now allowed many to reflect on their past and on their future. However, the three heroic men to whose faithfulness the Nephites owed their very survival were now gone. Their chief captain Moroni and his beloved commanders, Teancum and Helaman, were all dead. Their enemies had recently sworn to wipe out their entire civilization.⁸ During that solemn pause, thousands of Nephite families, perhaps after considerable prayer, determined it was time for them to pack up and leave.

Although such migrations were not an everyday occurrence, they were nothing new for Nephite culture. Centuries earlier, their forefathers had packed up from the Old World, marched through the wilderness, built boats, and sailed to an uncharted land across the sea. Similar but shorter migrations dotted their history in the generations since then. In addition, many knew that their own prophecies foretold the destruction of their nation. And the recent war gave them a glimpse of how real and looming those

⁸Alma 54:20

prophecies were. So at that juncture, thousands decided it was time to pack up and move on yet again.

First Voyage

At this juncture, in the 37th year of the reign of the judges, verses five and six tell us that Hagoth built an “exceedingly large” ship. With the mood of the nation, it didn’t take long to fill the ship with willing passengers. In short order, it was quickly loaded with provisions and “many” Nephite emigrants. And that same year, the new ship launched one of the Nephite seas. Alma specifically tells us that “they took their course northward.”

Second and Third Voyages

According to the next two verses, the following year, Hagoth finished building other ships, and the first ship returned. Apparently, a colony had been planted somewhere “northward”. That first ship was then reloaded with provisions and “many more” Nephite emigrants, and sailed off again northward, never again to be heard of among the American Nephites.

During that same year, “one other ship” sailed into an unspecified sea, in an unspecified direction. According to verse eight, the Nephites merely said “whither she did go we know not.”

The Nephites remaining in the land of Zarahemla did not know what became of the ship that vanished northward, or of the one that had sailed in an unspecified bearing in an unmentioned sea. The record also doesn’t tell us what became of any of the “other ships” that Hagoth was said to have built. Perhaps the remaining ships simply remained in local Nephite service, staying close to the coastline for trade and/or coastal defense.

But in the third year of Hagoth’s migrations, verse ten tells us that Corianton had still not returned from an earlier seafaring voyage northward. Based on the actions taken in his absence in verse eleven, it was apparently assumed that Corianton would not be returning. The record does not specify which northward voyage Corianton had joined. It could have been the second and final

northbound voyage of Hagoth's "exceedingly large" ship that never returned. Or, it could have been a northward voyage aboard one of Hagoth's "other" ships. Either way, this passage, and the absence of further mention of Corianton, suggests that he either perished at sea or lived out his days among an unknown Nephite colony "northward".

So the last chapter of Alma tells us of at least three distinct sailings a generation before Christ's birth:

- 1) The first voyage of the "exceedingly large" ship to a land northward.
- 2) The second and final voyage of the "exceedingly large" ship, again for a land northward, never to be heard from again.
- 3) The voyage of one of the "other ships" that Hagoth built, which sailed in an unspecified direction into an unspecified sea, also never to be heard from again.

Although Alma 63 does not tell us what specifically became of the shipbuilder Hagoth, it does tell us two key things, which combine to suggest what became of him.

First, in verse five, Alma recorded that Hagoth was not just curious, but was "exceedingly curious". As we will soon see, history suggests this means he was keenly inquisitive at heart – a kindred spirit to explorers like Leif Erikson and Christopher Columbus.

Second, and equally revealing, the same verse tells us specifically for whom Hagoth built his largest boat.

*And it came to pass that Hagoth....went forth and built
him an exceeding large ship...⁹*

As this passage suggests, and as subsequent translations into other languages reiterate, while Hagoth may have built "other" ships for

⁹ Alma 63:5

other people and other reasons, Hagoth built his largest ship for himself.¹⁰ Combined with his curiosity, this passage suggests that after his large ship's return from its first northward voyage and was loaded up with new passengers, Hagoth likely also stepped aboard and waved farewell to Nephite shores. Like Corianton, after this voyage, Hagoth is not mentioned again in the Nephite record.

This account is a treasure hunt, if you will, scanning scripture and history for clarification of what became of the passengers on board the second voyage of Hagoth's largest boat. There is precedent, and encouragement, for such a query.

Christ's Admonition

A generation after the exodus described in Alma 63, the resurrected Savior came and ministered among the Nephites in the vicinity of the land of Zarahemla, as the prophets had foretold. That ministry is the capstone and crown jewel of the Nephite record.

During his brief ministry there, the Savior told the Nephites that they were some of the "other sheep" which he had told the Jews in Palestine about.¹¹ However, the Jews had failed to understand his meaning. After explaining this, and even that their failure to understand was due to a failure to ask the Father in His name to receive a knowledge his other sheep, he then told the Nephites that there were yet other sheep that he must now go visit. But this time, it was the Nephites who failed to understand.¹²

Compassionately, the Savior encouraged them:

¹⁰ Danish: "...Hagoth... byggede sig..." (built for himself)

German: "...Hagot...hin baute sich"

¹¹ See John 10:16. 3 Nephi 15:17-20

¹² 3 Nephi 17:2

*Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand...*¹³

Afterwards, Christ asked them to bring their records, and after viewing them, asked if the prophecies in them had not all been fulfilled. When they said yes, he asked about a few prophecies which had no fulfillment recorded. The Nephites then acknowledged that they had been fulfilled. And the Savior had them amend their records to affirm that every jot and tittle of prophecy had taken place. This record is an attempt to serve a similar role in documenting the fulfillment of prophecies.

This account is not intended to take the place of pondering and prayer. Quite the contrary. Although this may help those with the initial “first study it out in your mind” side of the equation in D&C 9:8, it is only partial assistance with that first step. The rest is up to the reader. Readers will learn things here of various peoples, languages, nations, and histories. But these chapters are neither comprehensive nor definitive. They are instead a primer...for further consideration, study, and prayer. So as you begin, instead of mistaking this book for an answer, please recognize it instead as the beginning of a worthwhile question.

May readers find the journey as enjoyable as the destination.

¹³ 3 Nephi 17:1-3

Nephite Prophecy

Before leaving the Nephite shore, it would be helpful to review a handful of Nephite prophecies that clarify where we might search for one landing of Hagoth's people.

Nephite Prophecy

My brother and I have always felt drawn to study the ancient tribes of Europe. Until recently, we didn't know why. Since it is part of our heritage, we merely did our best to continue our journey along that path of study in spare evenings and weekends. Then, years later, my brother finally came across something that quickly brought everything into focus.

After studying the third chapter of 2 Nephi, where Lehi left a parting blessing to his youngest son Joseph, my brother was struck by the implications of what he read.

In this blessing, Lehi did a number of things. First, Lehi affirmed that his own son Joseph was a descendant of Joseph of Egypt, the great-grandson of Abraham. Second, in that blessing, Lehi foretold the mission of Joseph Smith. However, once my brother pointed out to me a third thing that Lehi said, it brought me to the edge of my seat.

Speaking directly to his own son Joseph, Lehi promised that his seed would “not be destroyed, for they shall hearken unto the words of the book.”¹⁴ And to reiterate the prophecy about Joseph Smith and the book that would come forth, Lehi added,

*And there shall rise up one mighty among them, who shall do much good, both in word and in deed, being an instrument in the hands of God...unto the bringing to pass much restoration unto the house of Israel, and unto the seed of thy brethren.*¹⁵

¹⁴ i.e. the Book of Mormon.

¹⁵ 2 Nephi 3:22-24

Now the context and theme throughout Lehi's entire blessing was of seed, and of the prophetic role one's seed would play because of one's righteousness. That this mighty one, Joseph Smith, would rise up "among" the seed of Lehi means one of two things. Either he would merely rise up among them in a geographic sense. Or he was one of them. The context of the rest of that chapter suggests the latter.

If the latter, Joseph Smith himself somehow descended through Lehi's son Joseph, in keeping with the main theme of Lehi's blessing. As my brother explained, if this was the meaning of Lehi's promise, Joseph Smith's ancestry somehow included Nephites (or more specifically Josephites), even though most people assume that all the Nephites were eventually destroyed in the struggle against the Lamanites.

So I began examining Joseph Smith's ancestry. His family traced to early American colonists who came from Europe, more specifically from England, with considerable concentration of ancestors in a few specific shires. So there were only two real possibilities for a Nephite heritage. Either during the early period of the British American colonies, Joseph's forefathers intermarried with a Native American who happened to descend through Lehi's son Joseph (a premise which, based on the documented genealogy of the Smith family is not likely), or at some point long before Columbus, Nephites landed on the European coast to become Joseph Smith's forefathers.

A closer study of the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants actually affirms that Lehi's seed would spread throughout the world.

For example, from 1828, in the third section of the Doctrine and Covenants, we are told that through the Book of Mormon the Restoration would bring a knowledge of the Savior not just to the Lamanites, but also "to the Nephites, and to the Jacobites, and the Josephites, and the Zoramites, *through the testimonies of their*

*fathers.*¹⁶ That passage suggests that at some point after 1828, Nephites and Josephites in unspecified location would somehow gain a knowledge of the Savior through the soon-to-be-published Book of Mormon.

Furthermore, only five chapters into the Nephite record, Lehi is filled with the spirit of prophecy, and “began to prophesy concerning his seed.” He foretold that the plates of brass would go forth “unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people who were of his seed.”¹⁷ So we know that Lehi’s children who would receive the Book of Mormon¹⁸ would be in many nations. The next few passages suggest where some of those nations were.

Lehi prophesied “many” other things concerning his seed.¹⁹ Then, Nephi requested and received a vision, in response to his fervent prayer to be shown the things “which my father saw”.²⁰ The reader should note that Nephi’s vision specifically included the course of Western European history and the subsequent European settlement of America – the land promised to Lehi’s seed. At the conclusion of this vision, Nephi reaffirmed that he had been shown what his father Lehi had seen when he prophesied *of his own seed*.

Nephi’s vision said that the European settlers were led by God to obtain America for their inheritance. Yet this same land had been specifically promised to Lehi’s seed. It is thus possible that these two promises were inclusive – that the one fulfilled the other.

Ancient American Testimony

Most people assume all of the Nephites were destroyed, and became extinct. Lehi’s promise to his son Joseph assures us that this assumption is not correct. And the writings of his other son

¹⁶ D&C 3:16-19

¹⁷ 1 Nephi 5:18

¹⁸ ...if the reception of the plates of brass is fulfilled by reception of the portions of the plates of brass cited or referred to in 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, Jacob, Alma, Helaman, and 3 Nephi.

¹⁹ 1 Nephi 5:19.

²⁰ 1 Nephi 10:17, 11:2-3

Jacob suggest that the Nephites (and other Israelites) would be spread throughout the world. In support of this, ancient Central American accounts and murals tell of two peoples that coexisted in ancient America: (i) the darker-skinned natives, and (ii) a fair-skinned people that vanished. To underline this parallel, Nephi told us three key things:

- 1) Nephi's vision of Europe was notably his own viewing of what Lehi had previously seen and spoken of *concerning the future of their seed*.²¹
- 2) The Europeans who would take possession of the New World were "like unto" Nephi's people.²²
- 3) Finally, many European settlers in America not only resembled Nephi's people, but some would specifically "be numbered among the seed" of Lehi, to become "a blessed people upon the promised land forever..."²³

In short, this account suggests that prophecy and history have come full circle. A people that appeared on the coast of Europe two thousand years ago may literally be an outgrowth of (and sequel to) the Book of Alma.

*...And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord, and then shall they know and come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him, wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved.*²⁴

There are other prophecies that relate to Nephites in various corners of the world. However for the purposes of this chapter, we have a sufficient starting point for exploring the possibility of

²¹ 1 Nephi 10:17

²² 1 Nephi 13:15

²³ 1 Nephi 14:1-2. In scriptural language, being numbered among the descendants of an individual may or may not mean literal descent.

²⁴ 1 Nephi 15:14

a Nephite colony in Europe. In the next chapter, we'll examine how a cross-Atlantic Nephite voyage is suggested not just by prophecy, but also by Nephite geography.

Nephite Geography

Many who have read the Book of Mormon account of Hagoth's ships departing near a narrow neck of land have assumed the voyages meant nothing more than a departure into the Pacific Ocean to transplant Nephites to the Polynesian islands. Surprisingly, there are three problems with that assumption.

First, such an understanding is too narrow. As addressed previously, Lehi's seed would be spread among many nations, which apparently includes Europe.

Second, associating all of Hagoth's ships with the Pacific creates a bearing discrepancy, for both voyages of Hagoth's "exceedingly large" ship were specifically described to have sailed northward – as was Corianton's voyage. However, the Polynesian islands are actually hundreds of miles *south* of any narrow neck of land.



The Pacific Islands in relation to Central America.

Even Hawaii is not north of the Mayan Yucatan peninsula. However, although the northward voyages of Hagoth's "exceedingly large" ship took a bearing that does not align well with Lehi's seed arriving in the Pacific Isles, Alma's account did mention one of Hagoth's "other" ships, which departed from an unspecified location, into an unspecified sea, on an unspecified heading, which could very well have embarked into the Pacific, taken a westward or a southwestward bearing, and arrived in Hawaii or the South Pacific, since this ship was *not* said to have sailed northward.

If accurate, this leaves both voyages of Hagoth's "exceedingly large" ship unaccounted for. This brings us to a closer consideration of Nephite geography, which illustrates the third problem with a Pacific orientation for all of Hagoth's ships.

The Nephite west sea

One reason people assume that Hagoth's entire expedition sailed into the Pacific Ocean is due to statements by earlier leaders like Mathew Cowley. As we will soon see, rather than contradict such statements, the following exploration will instead reconcile and add to them.

Another reason most people assume that Hagoth's entire expedition spilled into the Pacific Ocean is that Alma specifically said that Hagoth's exceedingly large ship launched "into the west sea." Most readers familiar with continental maps and satellite photos assume without further thought that the Pacific Ocean is the Nephite "west sea" mentioned in Alma, since the Pacific is, in general, west of the Americas. This paradigm is based largely on North American writers, who from their frame of reference, assumed the Pacific Ocean on their west must be what Alma was referring to. However, that alignment is based on a flawed frame of reference. Examining geography more closely, an unexpected body of water presents itself as a more likely candidate for the Nephite "west sea".

Many LDS scholars have placed “the narrow neck of land” and the Nephite lands of Bountiful, Zarahemla, and Desolation in the vicinity of the Yucatan peninsula.



Bodies of water in the Yucatan region.

Several of the researchers who propose that Nephite society was in this region during the 1st century BC based their conclusion on statements about that region published during and since Joseph Smith’s lifetime. Others refer to linguistic, historical, or other cultural parallels between the Book of Mormon and the cultures occupying or previously occupying the vicinity of the Yucatan.

If the region in or near the Yucatan peninsula was the center of Nephite culture, as those studies suggest, it suggests the end of a long-established paradigm – or more accurately the expansion of the previous paradigm. The map above demonstrates that a society centered in this region would not have considered the Pacific Ocean their west sea. Instead, they would have

considered the Gulf of Mexico as their west sea. The Pacific Ocean, on the other hand, would have been considered that region's "south sea."

To consider the Pacific as the region's south sea aligns better with Nephite descriptions as well. A south sea did exist, according to the Nephite record, and is otherwise difficult to account for. Furthermore, as we might expect, early maps and descriptions of the Yucatan region from European explorers specifically referred to the Pacific Ocean as the region's south sea. Thus, based on their orientation, locals living near the Yucatan peninsula do not consider the Pacific Ocean as their west sea. Instead, the Pacific is their south sea, and their west sea is the Gulf of Mexico – which is an extension of the Atlantic Ocean.

To corroborate this alignment, the Hagoth episode in Alma 63 said that his large ship which embarked into their western sea, sailed "northward." A northward bearing is difficult to account for if one forces the compass directions to make the Pacific Ocean that region's west sea. For if departing from the region south of the Yucatan, a ship simply cannot sail northward into the Pacific Ocean. They must instead sail southward.

As mentioned in a previous chapter, this does not dispel the notion of Nephite voyages into the Pacific. On the contrary, as mentioned earlier, a separate voyage, of a different ship into an unspecified sea was described in Alma 63. Also, hundreds of other shipping activities were alluded to in Helaman. Any of these could easily account for Pacific colonies.

But if the Nephite west sea and the embarkation point for the northward voyages were the Gulf of Mexico, this would resolve Alma's description for their body of being their west sea, as well Alma's his repeated mention of a northward bearing for Hagoth's largest ship. In addition, the Gulf Stream lent its powerful northward current to any vessel wishing to sail in that direction.

Other Geography Options

This is not to insist that the events described in Alma's account took place in the Yucatan region of Central America. Other plausible interpretations for Nephite geography exist. But as we will see, the Atlantic Ocean just happens to be the most likely body of water for a northward voyage.

For example, those who propose that the events described in Alma took place in the Great Lakes region of North America are presented with the issue of a northward voyage, which implies the St. Lawrence River, which empties into the North Atlantic.



A northward voyage from the Great Lakes Region.

Meanwhile, those who believe that Nephite society and the narrow neck of land²⁵ near Hagoth's point of departure are located in Nicaragua, Panama, or even South America are in a similar boat, no pun intended.

²⁵ See Alma 63:5



Nephite geographies proposed by various researchers during the last few generations

From each of the places proposed for 1st Century BC Nephites,²⁶ the Atlantic Ocean presents itself as the likeliest and most suitable body of water for a northward voyage. And from each location, the Gulf Stream lends itself as a ready accelerator.

Of course the Nephites of the 1st century BC lived somewhere in the Americas. And these various proposed locations for Nephite society during the 1st century BC are not to be confused with additional locations proposed by other researchers for where the Nephites landed in the Americas, centuries earlier. For the Nephite record is clear that the Nephites left their original

²⁶ The proposed locations for a narrow neck of land in the 1st century BC which the Nephites were known to be near are not to be confused with various other locations proposed for their landing in the Americas generations earlier. For the Nephite record is clear that the Nephites migrated from their landing point in the days of Nephi.

homeland almost immediately in the days of Nephi,²⁷ and migrated once again in the time of Mosiah, where they joined the Mulekites near a narrow neck of land. Again, our focus is on Nephite's society at the time of Hagoth. So wherever we the narrow neck of land was, the main Nephite body remained nearby until long after the days of Hagoth.²⁸

Currents and Tradewinds

In the context of a northward voyage into the Atlantic, we would be remiss to ignore the Gulf Stream. The Gulf Stream is perhaps the world's most powerful river. As one earlier writer described it:

*There is a river in the ocean. In the severest of droughts it never fails, and in the mightiest floods it never overflows.... Its current is more rapid than the Mississippi or the Amazon. Its waters...are of an indigo blue. They are so distinctly marked, that their line of junction with the common sea-water may be traced by the eye.*²⁹

This stream is both a different color and several degrees warmer than the surrounding Ocean.

To gain an inkling of its strength, although the Amazon is often considered the mightiest river in the world, the Gulf Stream's volume is 500 times greater. Even if we combine all the rivers in the world, they do not amount to 2% of the Gulf Stream.

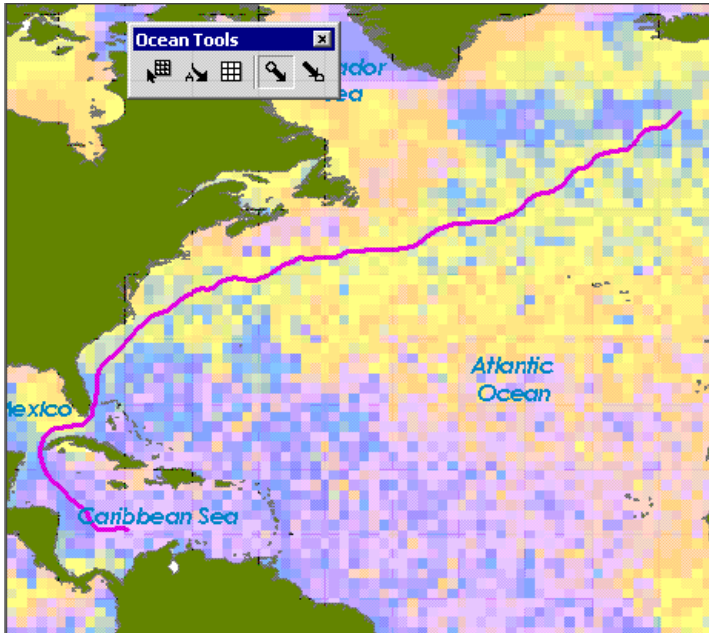
As mentioned above, in places, this current flows more swiftly than the largest North and South American rivers. Because of this, since its "banks" or edges are plainly visible from a ship, its current is used to this day as an accelerator for sailors traveling north.

²⁷ 2 Nephi 5:5-6

²⁸ Omni 1:12.

²⁹ Mathew Maury, *The Physical Geography of the Sea*, 1855.

The Gulf Stream, a powerful, solar-driven engine, has a considerable impact on the Northern Hemisphere. Without its warming influence, much of Northern Europe would be unsuitable for farming.



A computer model of currents and trade winds. The purple line indicates where a floating object placed in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico would travel in a few weeks, based on the Gulf Stream and prevailing winds.³⁰

If Hagoth's largest ship sailed into the Atlantic from any of the proposed Nephite locations, the powerful current of the Gulf Stream and the complementary trade winds suggest a likely destination for their northward bearing: northern Europe.

³⁰ From ESRI's ArcMap geographic analysis software.

Implications of an Atlantic Migration

In short, since 1830, there has been considerable conjecture over Book of Mormon geography. Regarding that ongoing attempt to understand Book of Mormon lands, Elder Widtsoe said, “All such studies are legitimate, but the conclusions drawn from them, *though they may be correct, must at best be held as intelligent conjectures.*”³¹ Let us then proceed in our attempt to understand Hagoth’s Exodus in a manner that is admittedly “at best an intelligent conjecture.”

The implications as to which known body of water formed the Nephite west sea, and what was meant by a northward bearing, are clearly pivotal and far-reaching. If Hagoth’s largest ship embarked into the Atlantic Ocean, as suggested here, then that suggests two viable destinations for a northward bearing: (i) further north into the Americas; or (ii) the greater trek across the Atlantic to Europe – comparable in distance to the initial voyages of the early Jaredites, Nephites, and Mulekites. Exploration of the first premise (Ancient America) requires expertise far beyond my areas of study and is therefore best left for others. So this study focuses on the latter option, Europe.

Manuscript Testimony

If a party of Nephites ventured as far north as Europe, we would expect some historical trace of their arrival, because some of the peoples of Europe were literate in the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. So during the next chapters, we will sample over a hundred sources, including ancient texts and artifacts, medieval manuscripts, and modern historical, linguistic, and archaeological commentary. While reviewing this testimony, the reader can then determine for themselves whether there is any basis to support the premise that Hagoth’s largest ship not only sailed northward into the Atlantic, but berthed in European waters.

³¹ Book of Mormon Reference Companion, Geography.

Hagoth and Nephi

As we have already seen, the premise of Nephites in Europe is at least a viable premise based on Nephi prophecy, geography, ocean currents, and trade winds. But as we will soon see in greater detail, European sources specifically and repeatedly suggest that at least one of Hagoth's ships reached the shores of northern Europe over two thousands years ago.

If so, Hagoth's exodus helped fulfill Nephite prophecy. Thus this interpretation not only attempts to follow the trail of a previously unknown Nephite transplant, but it also provides a meaningful backdrop for Nephi's keen interest in Europe.

However we choose to consider Hagoth and his ships, or the direction they traveled, Hagoth and Nephi were kindred spirits. For the ships they built likely played parallel roles in the preservation of Lehi's seed.

For they of whom I speak are they who have not as yet heard my voice...

But I have received a commandment of the Father that I shall go unto them...

And I command you that ye shall write these sayings after I am gone, that if it so be that my people at Jerusalem, they who have seen me, do not ask the Father in my name, that they may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy Ghost, and also of the other tribes whom they know not of, that these saying which ye shall write shall be kept and shall be manifested unto the Gentiles, that through the fullness of the Gentiles, the remnant of their seed, who shall be scattered forth upon the face of the earth because of their unbelief, may be brought in, or may be brought to a knowledge of me, their Redeemer.

And then will I gather them in from the four quarters of the earth; and then will I fulfill the covenant which the Father hath made unto all the people of the house of Israel.

*...go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things
which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye
may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow...³²*

³² 3 Nephi 16:2-17:3

Nephite Culture

So far, we have reviewed a few prophetic passages from the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants referring to Lehi's posterity, and a few verses from Alma 63 pertaining to Hagoth's exodus. After considering these factors which not only foretold Lehi's seed being spread throughout the nations of the earth, but suggested a vector for at least one of their voyages, we should now commit a few pages to Nephite culture. More specifically, before stepping on European soil, we need to be clear about the culture that existed among the Nephites at the time of Hagoth's exodus. Otherwise any attempt to find traces of their landfall beyond Nephite soil would have no baseline sample for meaningful comparison.

What we need for our pre-flight check is an accurate snapshot of Nephite society as it existed in Hagoth's day, which was approximately sixty years before Christ's birth. The need for this snapshot is that families and provisions were not the only things loaded onto Hagoth's ships. Those emigrants also dragged along their language, their memory of current events, their prophecies, their history, their customs, their traditions, their views on religion and government, and their concept of themselves as a people. Clarity on these aspects of Hagoth's culture will better equip us to pick up the trail of Hagoth's ship on distant shores.

Nephite Religion

The first and most central aspect of Nephite culture we should review is Nephite religion. Most readers are well aware that the earliest Nephites believed in a God of prophecy, in prophets who revealed His will, in sacrifice, in temple worship, and in the eventual birth and sacrifice of God's Son. In fact many of the younger souls departing Nephite shores around 60 BC expected the fulfillment of some of those Messianic promises during their own lifetimes or during the lives of their children.

In addition, we need to be clear that although prophets appeared throughout Nephite history, the role of a combined prophet-king like Nephi of old had been retired long before Hagoth. Instead, people in Hagoth's day expected a separation of powers and duties. For example, in Hagoth's day, order in the matter of faith was governed by priests, who were subordinate to a single "high priest" (for example, Alma). Meanwhile, the civil government was administered through other means.

Nephite Government

A generation before Hagoth, a major political revolution had occurred. The institution of the monarchy had been peacefully surrendered at the end of King Mosiah's reign, in part due to the dangers of that office recently made evident by the wickedness of King Noah. So although the concept of kingship was not far distant in Nephite history, monarchy was a form of government that was both feared and despised by most of Hagoth's contemporaries.³³

In Hagoth's day, rather than a king who ruled for a lifetime and passed his scepter down to his son, society was ruled by judges who were subordinate to the law and to a "chief judge" who was elected by the people (for example, Pahoran). In addition to the rule of the judges, in times of war, Hagoth's civil society was protected and defended under the leadership of military captains who commanded their citizen soldiers under the command of an appointed or elected chief captain (i.e. Moroni). This commander was not only authorized in times of war to appoint military command below him,³⁴ but in time of war was even considered authorized and justified to overthrow a corrupt chief judge, as Moroni's warning letter to Pahoran implies. That letter has a number of intriguing parallels with the Declaration of Independence – which may take on more meaning in a later chapter.

³³ The "kingmen" of Hagoth's day attempted to reinstate monarchy among the Nephites ca. 65 BC, but were routed and put down by Captain Moroni.

³⁴ Alma 56:9

Thus Nephite culture in Hagoth's day was much different than Nephite culture in 550 BC. Rather than a single leader, society was now governed by several leaders: a high priest over religious matters; a chief judge over legal matters; and a military commander over matters of war.

Nephite Warfare

Unlike many societies, some of the greatest acts of renown in Nephite battle were those which accomplished their military objective with as little bloodshed as possible. In this vein, Nephite commanders executed brilliant strategy that saved countless lives, including reinforced strongholds, decoys, pincer movements, and the frequent element of surprise.

One Nephite subgroup had a radical strategy for war that took respect for life to the far end of the spectrum. The people of Ammon, the former Lamanites otherwise known as Anti-Nephi-Lehies, buried their weapons, willing to accept whatever consequences came with that drastic action.³⁵

Nephite Law

As part of Nephite government, we should also touch briefly upon Nephite law. As Israelites, their law was based largely on the Law of Moses. However, although slavery was practiced among some Jews in Palestine and among the Lamanites, slavery was strictly forbidden among the Nephites.³⁶

Nephite Economy

In the context of Nephite culture, we should also touch upon Nephite commerce. The Nephites of Hagoth's day were skilled at shipbuilding, agriculture, fabrics, metalworking, armaments, and working timbers. We should also be aware that the hub of Nephite commerce rotated upon an interlocking system of weights and measures, which was clearly defined in Alma's record.

³⁵ Alma 24:17-19. (Centuries later, Mormon left a message for Lehi's latter-day descendants that they must do likewise. Mormon 7:4.)

³⁶ Alma 27:9

Nephite Identity

Nephite identity was more complex than a surface reading of the Book of Mormon might suggest. Committing a few paragraphs to recreate the multi-faceted Nephite sense of identity will assist us in understanding ancient European labels from a more Nephite perspective. In short, lateral thinking is needed here.

For example, although the peoples in the Book of Mormon were referred to generally as either Nephites and Lamanites, those two labels are too simplistic to convey the actual complexity of labels in the 1st century BC. By that time, the people described each other and themselves with a multitude of labels to clarify their political, religious, genealogical and geographic groupings.

1. Political labels were common in the Book of Mormon. At various points, some Nephites were referred to as king-men. And that label was merely a general umbrella for more specific labels, such as Amalickiahites for those who supported Amalickiah's bid for power, and Amlicites, for those who supported Amlici. However, most Nephites in Hagoth's day favored the preservation of their recent form of government, and thereby called themselves "freemen."³⁷ Such labels are roughly comparable to political labels today, such as Liberal, Conservative, Democrat, Socialist, and Republican.
2. For religious labels, there were several terms among the Nephites for those who followed specific teachers, practices, or beliefs, such as (i) Ammonites, who were Lamanites converted by the preaching of Ammon and his companions, and (ii) Amulonites, who were followers of the apostate priests of King Noah led by Amulon. Likewise, in our day we have Mennonites (for followers of Menno Simons), Lutherans for followers of Martin Luther, and Wesleyans and Methodists (for followers of the Wesley brothers' method of

³⁷ Alma 51:3-13; 60:25; 61:3-5; 62:1-9

discipleship), all of whom also bear the more encompassing labels of Protestants and Christians.

3. For genealogical labels, true to their Hebrew origins, the Nephites were generally very conscious of their ancestry. While considering themselves as being of the Nephite nation/people in general, they more specifically considered themselves to be Mulekite, Josephite, Jacobite, Zoramite or whatever origin they happened to be, meaning direct descendants of Mulek, Joseph, Jacob or Zoram.
4. For geographic labels, Nephites frequently referred to themselves or others by the place they happened to call home. Just like there are Bostonians in Boston, and Parisians in Paris, Nephites frequently adopted or were dubbed with similar titles, such as Ammonihahites for inhabitants of the city of Ammonihah.

Some Nephite labels conveyed different facets, whose meaning depended on the context. For example, being a Nephite could mean you were a literal descendant of Nephi of old, or that you were simply a citizen of the Nephite nation regardless of your heritage. Likewise, being a Zoramite could mean you descended from Zoram of old, or that you were a member of an apostate sect led by a different Zoram. Finally, the Amulonite label referred to previously, like many other labels, could be political, religious, ancestral and/or geographic in meaning depending on its context, for an Amulonite could have been one who supported the right of the priests of Noah to rule, or accepted their spiritual teachings, or descended directly from one of them, or simply lived in the land called Amulon.

To add to the mix, a Nephite could identify himself with multiple labels. A converted Lamanite serving in the Nephite army could consider himself of Lamanite descent, a Nephite warrior, someone from the land of Jershon, an Anti-Nephi-Lehi, an Ammonite, a stripling warrior, a son of Helaman, and one of the

freemen - without a single contradiction. The same is true today. Someone could conceivably be a liberal-leaning Republican, a Canadian, a Californian, a Rotarian, an Eskimo, a Methodist, a Protestant, and a Christian, all at the same time. Labels can lead us to assume divisiveness and exclusivity where they can just as easily depict something much more overlapping and inclusive.

So as we venture into the various labels and histories of peoples in ancient Europe, we need to keep in mind that names provided for the various peoples of Europe, and even the occasional conflicts between them, might entice us to assume the seek for cleanly delineated labels, and exclusive divisions. However, based on Nephite and modern precedent, several of the ancient European labels that were gleaned, and perhaps in a few cases coined, by ancient observers may instead be as fluid, overlapping, and in some cases interchangeable as labels in Nephite and modern society. A specific illustration is provided by the Angles and Saxons. Some assert that these ethnic labels belonged to entirely different peoples. Others, including some of the earliest Saxon writers asserted that the Saxons derived from Angles – or in other words were Angles. Following that inclusive line of thought, in his introduction to the medieval writings of Gildas, John Morris says that the terms “Saxon” and “English” (or English) refer to “the same people in different languages.”³⁸ Or in other words, people that were considered Saxons by Roman outsiders referred to themselves instead as English or Angles, similar to how WASP, Haole, and Gringo can refer to the same people, depending entirely on one’s cultural perspective.

Nephite Language

Finally, we have the issue of the Nephite language. According to their own account, the Nephite language derived from the Hebrew and Egyptian languages.³⁹

³⁸ Editor John Woods, *Arthurian Period Sources*, Vol. 7, p. 2.

³⁹ 1 Nephi 1:2; Mosiah 1:4; Mormon 9:32-33

Of course, there are a few aspects of Hagoth's culture not touched upon here. But what we have reviewed will suffice for our journey into ancient Europe.

Hagoth and Rome

To approach the Hagoth account with a useful chronological frame of reference, the reader should be aware that Hagoth was a contemporary of Julius Caesar. This parallel takes on greater significance as we reconcile Nephite chronology with other ancient European events.

According to Nephite reckoning, the first wave of Hagoth's exodus took place fifty-five years before Christ's birth. The reader should be aware that Elder Bruce R. McConkie, Elder Hyrum M. Smith, and President J. Reuben Clark have suggested that our European Christian calendar (the system using BC and AD reckoning) was off a few years in its attempt to pinpoint the time of Christ's birth.⁴⁰

In other words, to align Hagoth's exodus with European chronology, we may need to take into account the New Testament assurance that Christ (i) was born in Judea during the reign of Herod the Great, and (ii) was in faraway Egypt before an angel told his family that Herod was dead. So if historians are correct in placing Herod's death in 4 B.C., and if enough time is allowed for (i) the wise men to visit the young Christ during Herod's reign and then (ii) for Joseph and Mary's flight into Egypt to escape Herod's murderous hand, Christ's birth was perhaps no later than 5 BC. Since Hagoth's first ship sailed from Nephite shores fifty five years before that time, the timing of Hagoth's exodus dates to approximately 60 BC.

On the other side of the Atlantic, in what was likely the year after the beginning of Hagoth's exodus, Julius Caesar was appointed Roman governor over what is now northern Italy and southern France. This would likely be the same year as the second and final northbound voyage of Hagoth's "exceedingly large" ship.⁴¹

⁴⁰ McConkie, *Mortal Messiah*, pgs. 349-350. See also Nelson, 1844 in *Prophecy – Book 1*, pgs 20-29, 90-99.

⁴¹ See Alma 63:7-8

The following year, in 58 BC, Caesar marched his troops further north into Europe in an eight-year campaign to conquer most of what we would call northern France.

The various peoples that Julius Caesar encountered during his eight-year campaign were not backwards barbarians. Instead, they had agriculture and trade networks, towns with timber and earthwork reinforcements, and sophisticated metalworking and coins.

The Usipites

In early 55 BC, Julius Caesar encountered a new people called the Usipites. According to Caesar's account, at this juncture, the Usipites had been journeying in search of a place to call home for "several years." The previous winter, they migrated westward across the Rhine in the dead of winter because of previous attacks by the Suebi that had repeatedly "prevented them from tilling their land."⁴² In other words, they were starving. The account specifically says that before crossing the Rhine, they spent three years in many parts of Germany.⁴³

The Usipites offered their friendship to Rome. But after a surprise cavalry attack on Rome's troops, despite being surrounded by numerous tribes, Julius concluded that the attack came from the Usipites, a convenient solution not only for his claim to have only attacked after being attacked, but also for justifying the expansion of his conquests all the way east to the Rhine river. He seized their leaders who came offering friendship, and marched on their camp, slaughtering any who resisted. For those who fled to the river, specifically the woman and children, the Roman cavalry was unleashed to hunt them down.

For this breach of international law,⁴⁴ beginning with the imprisonment of a peace delegation, in a speech before the

⁴² Julius Caesar, *The Conquest of Gaul*, Bk. IV, 1.

⁴³ Julius Caesar, *The Conquest of Gaul*, Bk. IV, 4.

⁴⁴ Christian Meier, *Caesar*, p. 237.

Senate, it was urged that Julius Caesar should be disowned by the people of Rome and handed over to those he had wronged. Instead, Julius Caesar violated Roman law further by crossing the Rubicon River with his troops, whereupon he overthrew the Roman Republic.

The Usipites were referred to in the 1st century AD as the Usipi. Both names are equally interesting. Their name and their chronology offer an interesting parallel for Hagoth's timeline. The second voyage of Hagoth's largest ship vanished during its northward journey in approximately 59 BC.⁴⁵ An arrival in Germania in late 59 BC, followed by three years of wandering would bring us to late 56 BC. And that very winter, the Usipi headed west and crossed the Rhine "not far from its mouth,"⁴⁶ in other words near the North Sea.

My brother had a close friend of Italian descent named Joseph. His parents and my brother often referred to him by the Italian equivalent of his name, "yoseppee". The name of this tribe could convey similar meaning, if they considered themselves descendants of another Joseph. For their earlier name, Usipites, aligns with the Josephites.

In later chapters, we will consider other possible candidates, including later neighbors of the Usipites, who called themselves Nefates.

⁴⁵ According to the Nephites, Christ was born in the 92nd year of the reign of the judges (3 Nephi 1:4,13) and the second voyage of Hagoth's ship disappeared 54 years earlier in the 38th year of the reign of the judges (Alma 63:7-8). If King Herod died in 4 BC as some historians suggest, Christ's birth would have been at some point prior. A nativity in 5 BC would place the second voyage of Hagoth's ship in 59 BC, as suggested here.

⁴⁶ Julius Caesar, *The Conquest of Gaul*, Book IV, 1.

Foothold

The implications of this historical situation spelled danger for any new people attempting to establish a foothold along the coasts of Northern Europe. Thus if one of Hagoth's ships landed on the Celtic coasts of ancient France at this juncture, they would have been in conflict with Celts and advancing Romans. On the other hand, any attempt to land and establish a colony along occupied lands further east along the Germanic coast would have been met with resistance from native Germanic tribes already experiencing a land crunch caused by those fleeing Roman expansion.

As if on cue, at this crucial juncture, the seas began to recede. Archaeologists affirm that "in the late first century BC", as Rome advanced [and as Hagoth's ships sailed from Nephite shores], the North Sea withdrew (or the seabed raised), exposing fresh, unoccupied land along the European coast.⁴⁷ Although this newly-exposed land bordered Germanic territory, it was not only protected and largely hidden by surrounding tideland marshes, but was out of reach of Julius Caesar's campaigns. Archaeologists affirm that this new land was immediately occupied by new settlers about halfway into the first century BC,⁴⁸ who quickly set about establishing homes and farms.

According to historians and linguists, northwest Europe was at one time occupied by three main peoples (in addition to the encroaching Romans):

- 1) Celtic speaking peoples (mostly in what we would call France and Britain),
- 2) Germanic-speaking peoples (in much of what we would call Germany, and Scandinavia).
- 3) A smaller foreign group, wedged between the Celtic and Germanic peoples.

⁴⁷ Todd, Northern Barbarians, pgs. 80, 84, 87.

⁴⁸ Christie, The Lombards, pgs. 6-7, citing Wegewitz's approximation of 30 BC.

The Third Group in Europe

According to those who have closely studied the ancient place names in that third region of Europe, the peoples who took possession of that land were originally neither Germanic nor Celtic in origin. Linguists are asserting that this group initially spoke a tongue from the Hamo-Semitic language family, and only adopted the Germanic tongue around the time of Christ.

For added clarity, the Hamo-Semitic language family includes Hebrew and Egyptian, the two languages spoken by the Nephites. We will explore the linguistic fingerprints of this group in greater detail in the Language chapter.

By Land or By Sea

Many have pondered the origins of the third group in Europe – the group said by modern linguists to have originally spoken a Hamo-Semitic tongue before adopting Germanic. Some modern commentators have asserted that this third group left the Mediterranean regions on foot, and marched their way across land to northern Europe. Although it's an interesting theory, it ignores the direct testimony of the people in question. According to their own ancient and medieval accounts, they did not reach northern Europe by land. Instead, they specifically claim to have arrived by sea.

- 1) The earliest written history by the Saxons of continental Europe said, “what is certain is that the Saxons arrived in these parts by sea.”⁴⁹
- 2) One of the oldest English accounts⁵⁰ affirms that the leading family of Denmark originally arrived by boat from an unknown land across the ocean.
- 3) Medieval accounts from Danes and Saxons alike affirm that the Saxon and Danish people were originally kindred peoples, at times even ruled by literal brothers.
- 4) Earlier records suggest that these oral accounts have ancient origins. An account written in Rome around 100 AD says that there was a religious tradition already circulating in northwestern Europe that involved a sacred procession on land of a miniature model seafaring ship – in memorial of some event that was unclear to Roman observers. Tacitus, the Roman who wrote of this practice suspected the ritual was Egyptian in origin, but admits “I do not know the origin or explanation of this foreign cult”⁵¹ It may have simply been

⁴⁹ Widukind of Corvey, *Sachserkroniken*, 1:3 (translation by John D. Nelson).

⁵⁰ The Anglo-Saxon account of *Beowulf*

⁵¹ Tacitus, *Germania*, Book 9

a Passover-like remembrance of God's guidance and deliverance to cross the ocean.⁵²

- 5) The earliest account describing Lombard origins describes their previous homeland across the ocean. That same account said the north portion of their homeland had a name that meant "destruction" or "ruin".⁵³
- 6) Finally, one account specifically said that when their boat reached the shores of Europe, their revered leader was a man named Hagoth.

Whatever became of the Nephite Hagoth, what is certain is that the ancient inhabitants of northwestern Europe arrived on the coast of Northern Europe by sea, under the leadership of a man with a strikingly similar name. Oral histories fondly preserved that name for generations, until it was finally committed to writing centuries later.

These European accounts therefore suggest a likely counterpart to Hagoth's exodus. And these parallels suggest a specific means for the fulfillment of prophecies in the Book of Mormon and Doctrine of Covenants.

This will suffice for an introduction. In the next chapter, we will explore the most important testimony from northern Europe.

⁵² On a parallel note, in northern Europe, hundreds of the oldest churches still display a miniature seafaring model ship from the church ceiling, a pervasive religious tradition which some date back to at least the Viking Age. That tradition may even trace back to the tradition mentioned by Tacitus in the first century AD. For a modern example, visit www.panoramas.dk/kalkmalerier/hyllested.html

⁵³ Compare the Land of Desolation, which in Hagoth's day was once the northern portion of Nephite lands (Alma 63:5).

Divine Visitation in Northern Europe

As stated in a previous chapter, the premise of a Nephite colony in ancient Europe raises a number of implications. Those implications increase with the timing of Hagoth's departure – which took place shortly before Christ's birth. If such a Nephite colony arrived in Europe before Christ's ministry, they would have been awaiting Christ's appearance, and would have been among the sheep of Israel Christ was sent to teach.

For example, Jesus of Nazareth promised the Jews in Jerusalem that there were other sheep that would yet hear his voice.⁵⁴ Shortly afterwards, the risen Christ also told the Nephites in the Americas that there were other sheep that he must yet visit.⁵⁵ Thus if some of Hagoth's people landed on the shores of Europe a generation before Christ's birth, the children and grandchildren of those European settlers could have been among those ministered to by the Son of God.

The Written Testimony

In Jerusalem, Christ's ministry left a wake that resulted in the New Testament.⁵⁶

Likewise, Christ's ministry in the New World resulted in the written account of 3rd Nephi,⁵⁷ and apparently left such a lasting imprint on the collective memories of New World cultures that the memory of the visitation of a bearded white god was passed down from generation to generation among the pre-Columbian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

⁵⁴ John 10:14-16

⁵⁵ 3 Nephi 15-16

⁵⁶ Plus a number of apocryphal accounts.

⁵⁷ Plus a number of tribal legends scattered through the Americas, and across the Pacific Islands – tribal accounts that were still in circulation centuries later when European explorers arrived on their shores.

Ancient writings likewise attest a divine visitation to northern Europe. By the time the account was committed to writing in 98 AD, word of this visitation had spread as far south as Rome, and was garbled somewhat in the process.

This Roman account says northern Europe was visited by the son of God, as attested by the people of that region. However, that account, which was written by a Roman who was staunchly anti-Christian, implied his own interpretation that the visitor was likely Hercules. Several chapters after making that assertion, however, the Roman chronicler openly admitted that the visitor may not have actually been Hercules. That chronicler admitted that the deeds of the northern visitor merely led Romans to *assume* that Hercules was being referred to - because of the deeds of the visitor to the north. As that writer admitted:

It may be that Hercules did go there⁵⁸; or perhaps it is only that we⁵⁹ by common consent ascribe any remarkable achievement in any place to his famous name⁶⁰.

By way of context, the “remarkable achievements” ascribed to Hercules according to Roman tradition, which a Roman audience could easily have confused with the northern visitor, included the following. According to Greek and Roman tradition:

- 1) Hercules was reportedly the son of a mortal woman. But his father was God.
- 2) As a child, an attempt made on his life.
- 3) As a young man, he had a vision that offered him a choice between an easy life of pleasure and vice, or a more difficult life filled with danger, hardship, and virtue. He chose the latter.
- 4) He restored a dead woman to life.
- 5) He took upon his shoulders the weight of the world.

⁵⁸ northern Europe

⁵⁹ i.e. Romans familiar with the story of Hercules

⁶⁰ Tacitus, *Germania*.

- 6) His last deeds involved overcoming and escaping the world of the dead, by which he achieved immortality.
- 7) Afterwards, he ascended to heaven, where he joined his father.

Note that the above list describes characteristics of the Roman-Greek god Hercules. We are told little of the northern visitor except that he was “earth-born” and was the prime focus of songs among some peoples in the north. However, the obvious parallels of the mythical Hercules with the known “achievements” of Christ would lead most pagan Romans assume that Christian stories and songs were instead referring to Hercules.

Elsewhere, Tacitus refers to an earth-born god worshipped in northern Europe, who the tribes sang of frequently. His name was supposedly “Tuisto” which is remarkably close to Kristu, the Latin equivalent of “Christ”, especially if the word was extracted by ear from the song of a foreign singer.

So we have the testimony from northern Europe in the 1st century AD that the son of God visited northern Europe. This same Roman chronicler suggested that distance made it difficult to continue “further research” into the actual identity of this visitor to the north. And he said that no Roman had attempted to research the topic further simply because it was judged “more pious and reverent to believe in the alleged exploits of gods than to establish the true facts.”⁶¹

Those who have studied the Book of Mormon, however, have a different approach, believing that through the Holy Ghost, the truth of all things can be known.

⁶¹ Tacitus, *Germania*, ch. 34. For additional information about ancient Germanic beliefs, see *Odin's Toga* (also by John Nelson).

Colonial Divisions

Before exploring the peoples of ancient Europe in greater depth, we'll take a moment to sample two parallel situations: American Nephites in the early 1st century AD, and colonial patterns from the time of the British American colonies in America. The American Nephites demonstrate how Nephites could quickly splinter into sub-tribes, with differing laws and forms of government. The British American colonies initially suggest a similar pattern, plus a few additional insights.

American Nephites

During Christ's lifetime, but before his resurrection, the Nephite government in the Americas collapsed due to pressure from without (including assassination of prophets and government officials), and internal corruption from within, including pride, wealth and growing class distinctions.⁶²

According to the Book of Mormon, at this juncture, the Nephites separated "into tribes, every man according to his family and his kindreds and his friends."⁶³ Each tribe then selected a different "chief or a leader" to govern their grouping. Those chieftains then each established different laws and forms of government unique to their individual preferences.⁶⁴

Despite the lack of a centralized government or other unifying laws, there was sufficient sense of a shared heritage that there were no wars among these early Nephite sub-tribes.⁶⁵ For they specifically determined "that they would not go to war one with another,"⁶⁶ even to the point that "they did establish very strict laws that one tribe should not trespass against another."⁶⁷

⁶² See 3 Nephi 6-7

⁶³ 3 Nephi 7:2

⁶⁴ 3 Nephi 7:3, 14

⁶⁵ 3 Nephi 7:5

⁶⁶ 3 Nephi 7:14

⁶⁷ 3 Nephi 7:14

In northwestern Europe in the early 1st century AD, we find a very similar situation, where instead of a unified group of people, we instead find smaller tribes, some of whom claimed a common heritage and overlapping origin accounts, but each operating under different leaders and laws. The decades between Hagoth and the first mention of these European tribes leaves plenty of time for their society splintering into tribes, for the American Nephites were said to have fragmented into tribes in less than a decade.

The impact of Roman incursions into northern Europe was apparently as disruptive to the region's sense of stability and identity as similar pressures had been on the American Nephites. The Roman wealth poured into the region to sustain puppet regimes and to purchase the allegiance of various chieftains also introduced novel class distinctions which fragmented the pre-existing culture, mindset, and government of northern Europe. And Roman culture even brought with it the tradition of poisoning and assassinating political and religious rivals, some of which was unleashed upon the region by Roman politicians.

There are those who suggest that the further the Romans penetrated into northern Europe, the more tribes they "discovered." A more accurate statement might be that the further Romans advanced, the more fractured northern European society became. For it was Rome's stated objective to splinter and divide the people of northern Europe, in the manner of divide and conquer. And it is this divisive role that the prophet Daniel said their empire would fulfill.⁶⁸ It is therefore quite likely that many of the tribal divisions in northern Europe were as much or more of Rome's creation than they were of Rome's discovery. A prime example are the Cannanefates, who were said to be an offshoot of the Batavi, and occupied land between the Batavi and the Frisians. Both the Batavi and the Frisians were encountered by the Romans in 12 BC, when legions marched through their territory, with no mention of the Cannanefates. But the

⁶⁸ See Daniel 2:40, Daniel 7:7, 8:21. Daniel doesn't mention the Roman empire by name, but instead refers to it as the kingdom that would arise after Greece.

Cannanefates were encountered in 5 AD, and were said to be a Batavian offshoot. This combines to suggest that the Cannanefates spun off from the Batavi between 12 BC and 5 AD. So the fracturing of the northern tribes may very well be associated with Rome's encroaching influence.

In addition, as we explored in an earlier chapter with the various labels and identities American Nephites were once known by, in ancient Europe, we lack the cultural context provided by explanatory passages in the Book of Mormon. Where one European grouping ends and another begins is often unclear, and even those blurry distinctions are overshadowed by still-undefined supra-tribal umbrella groupings like the Suevi or Suebi, the Ingaevones, Herminones, and Istaevones.

The Suevi or Suebi were an early alliance or federation of some kind in Germania, which at various points included Angles and Lombards, at times against their will. The Suebi were first mentioned by Julius Caesar, and their depredations were the reason the beleaguered Usipi left Germania after trying to plan cropse three years in a row. The Lombards were likewise subjected to the Suevi on and off throughout history. In the second century AD, Ptolemy described the Angles as "Suevi Angili" and the Lombards as the "Suevi Langobardi".⁶⁹

A possible correlation between the Lombards and the Usipi is suggested by the combination of Lombard account and our earliest Roman account, as we will see in a later chapter. This correlation is also suggested by the 2nd century AD geographer Ptolemy, who mentioned the Lombards first in relation with the Sugambri, and then later in relation to the Tencteri, making no mention of the Usipites, which previously and afterwards were known not only to be closely related to the Sugambri and the Tencteri. Also, both before and after Ptolemy's day, the Usipi were known to have occupied the local assigned by Ptolemy to the Lombards. And oddly, Ptolemy makes no mention of the

⁶⁹ Claudius Ptolemy, *The Geography*, Book II, Ch. X.

Usipites, even though previous and later historians do. Thus even if Usipi were only temporarily replaced by the Lombards both in their alliances and in the region they occupied such a parallel shift is not only unlikely, but would still not explain the temporary disappearance of the Usipi from Europe, suggested by Ptolemy's account. A simpler assertion is that the Usipi were considered Lombards.

Later, as the Roman Empire crumbled in the 5th century AD, a group bearing the same name crossed the Rhine and entered Spain.

This grouping was believed by some to have been “forged on the upper Rhine”, meaning inland Germany, around 60 BC, “the first manifestation of German self-awareness and co-operation”.⁷⁰ They first appear in history in 58 BC.

With the Celts on their west flank, the Romans advancing from their southwest, and with a possible third group attempting to colonize the coast, land in northern Europe was fiercely contested.

They were noted from their first appearance, “for their enormous statues, incredible courage, and splendid military training.”⁷¹ If the Suebi supra-grouping of Germanic tribes did emerge around 60 BC, and since Romans first encountered "Germans" in 58 BC, those events may trumpet the emergence of Nephite influence.

Colonial Numbers

Another colonial consideration is the number of settlers, and their rate of growth. Although several European tribes are viable candidates for Nephites, determining which (if any) of these people came from the Americas is a different matter. Nephite colonists might only align with one of the early tribal groupings, like the Lombards, who were said to be few in number. However, the considerable linguistic impact on the entire region, as attested

⁷⁰ The Oxford Classical Dictionary, p. 451

⁷¹ Julius Caesar, The Conquest of Gaul, Book 1, 39.

in several studies, suggests that the weight of the foreign influence may have involved more than just the Lombards.⁷²

A potential growth projection of a potential Nephite colony might be helpful.

For a starting point, if Nephites did arrive, we don't know how large Hagoth's "exceedingly large" ship was, or more specifically, how many passengers it carried, other than the vague mention of "many". Nor do we know how many emigration trips may have been part of a Nephite European diaspora. That destination may have included both of the known northward voyages of Hagoth's largest ship, plus the potential third northward voyage of Corianton.

The most widespread understanding of Alma 63 is that there were two contemporary Nephite migrations. One of them is interpreted to have been on foot, which consisted of 5,400 men plus their families, which likely amounted to more than 15,000 Nephites. And this migration just happened to be contemporary with another migration by sea with Hagoth's ships.

Another possible reading is that the northward journey of the "large company", the 5,400 men and their families are first presented in verse 4, and the next four verses describing Hagoth's ships are provided as the means for the exodus of that large company into the land northward. If so, Alma's statement that this ship was "exceedingly large" and could accommodate "many" passengers was modest. However, we will proceed with the initial, more conservative interpretation, that the large company was on foot, and that the "many" that "took their course northward" in Hagoth's largest ship were additional emigrants.

⁷² However, some linguists claim that the Lombard impact on the region was significant, asserting that the second Germanic sound shift was caused by the Lombard migrations through Europe on their way to Italy.

Roman ships at that time could carry 1,000 passengers plus 1,000 tons of cargo.⁷³ This would align generally with the “many” and “many more” people and the “much provisions” mentioned for the voyages of Hagoth’s largest ship.

With Alma’s description of an exceedingly large boat, and with the potential of more than one northward voyage, I’ll venture to propose 1,600 as the initial size of a Nephite colony in Europe. Whether we say that such an estimate derived from one voyage, or more, is mostly irrelevant. This size of a colony would allow an approximate fighting force of 200-300 soldiers, many of whom would likely have been veterans from the Lamanite wars. Again, this number is merely set forward as a ballpark, finger-to-the-wind estimate.

For the early years of such a colony, an approximate 3% annual growth rate is proposed, based on the following.

In 1920, the U.S. birth rate was just under 3%, minus a mortality rate that left a net annual growth of 1.6%.⁷⁴

1920 was selected for a baseline growth comparison because:

- 1) This was one of the earliest years the metrics are available.
- 2) This was before the 1928 discovery of antibiotics.
- 3) This was before Margaret Sanger’s birth control movement picked up speed.⁷⁵

Thus the numbers in this sample are not as dramatically skewed by modern medical interventions and trends as later decades would be. So 1920 provides a fair reflection of the growth rate expected in a pre-antibiotic, pre-birth-control society. However the 1.6% net U.S. growth rate is based on monogamy. Ancient

⁷³ World Book Encyclopedia, 1988 Edition, Vol. 17, Ships, p. 406.

⁷⁴ Based on 27.7 births per 1,000 population, and 1,157.4 deaths per 100,000 population, per The 1994 Information Please Almanac, pgs. 843, 847.

⁷⁵ Her first attempt to establish a clinic in 1916 led to a prompt jail sentence. The outgrowth of her movement became the Planned Parenthood Foundation.

historians assert that polygamy was practiced among some of the candidate peoples of ancient Europe.

To provide a comparable sample from another culture, Pakistan has a sustained net growth rate exceeding 3%.⁷⁶

So whether we take the U.S. 1.6% growth rate and add a higher birth rate due to environmental factors and the temporary practice of polygamy, or whether we take Pakistan's growth rate, factor out initial medical advances there, and then factor in polygamy, 3% is a viable growth rate for the region in question.

This rate might even be modest. It should be noted that centuries ago, historians specifically commented on the healthy conditions of northern Europe, which reportedly harbored fewer diseases than the warm Mediterranean latitudes.⁷⁷ Early Roman historians additionally commented on the rapid population growth in northern Europe.⁷⁸ Furthermore, it was foretold that the descendants of Joseph (the Joseph from Egypt), would be "fruitful."⁷⁹ And the Nephites were descendants of Joseph.⁸⁰ Based on all these factors, if Nephites did colonize northern Europe, 3% is a reasonable growth rate for generalized projections.

With these estimates, an initial colony of the size of the previously estimated landing group could have grown to over 10,000 souls by the time of Velleius' expedition under Tiberius in 5 AD, and to well over 150,000 souls by the time of Tacitus' account in 98 AD, unless they were beset by serious wars or disease. But in 98 AD, Tacitus said that the Lombards were few

⁷⁶ The 1994 Information Please Almanac, p. 241

⁷⁷ For example, the first two sentences of Paul the Deacon's "History of the Lombards" opens with this assertion: the colder north regions are healthier, so people get sick less frequently, so the populations grow more rapidly.

⁷⁸ Jordanes referred to the region as "a hive of nations, or a womb of nations" from which numerous nations emerged to conquer the rest of Europe. Jordanes, History of the Goths, IV.

⁷⁹ Genesis 49:22

⁸⁰ 1 Nephi 5:14.

in number. If Nephites did colonize Europe, and if Lombards were among their descendants, they either suffered serious setbacks, or the Lombard tribe only accounted for some of the Nephite descendants.

LDS Colonies

If we further consider LDS settlement patterns in North America as a potential example of colonial patterns in Europe, LDS leaders in the 19th century did not gather all their people in a single location. Instead, these leaders intentionally asked their people to pick up stakes and plant new colonies throughout the west, from north to south, in Canada all the way south into Mexico. A similar phenomenon, for similar reasons, may have taken place two thousand years ago in northern Europe, which would align well with the general projections provided here.

Conversions

In addition to natural growth rates, annexation and conversion of other peoples are also possible avenues for rapid growth of Nephite colonies in ancient Europe. For example, Nephites in the Americas not only found like-minded allies among the Mulekites who incorporated themselves into Nephite culture, but thousands of others converted to their faith and joined them as a people, such as the Anti-Nephi-Lehies.

To paint a better picture, if a Nephite colony was planted in Europe, between a 60 BC arrival and Roman advancements into their region in 12 BC or 5 AD, there was sufficient time for two entire generations to learn the Celtic and/or Germanic tongues, and to minister among the neighboring peoples, akin to what Ammon and the sons of Mosiah had done with such success among the Lamanites.⁸¹ Such missionary efforts could even explain the name for the Angles. For in Latin, the word means messenger. And in Germanic, among other things, the word refers to fishing, as in anglers. So whether it carried a Latin, Germanic

⁸¹ By way of comparison, it takes modern LDS missionaries less than a year to become sufficiently fluent in a foreign language to teach the gospel.

or even a double meaning, it could possibly mean both messengers and “fishers of men.”⁸²

Alliances

Later chapters will touch briefly upon some of the alliances among the various tribes of Europe that may relate to their origins. However, this section will touch only upon alliances with Rome. For it is of distinct and initially surprising interest that several candidates for Nephite colonists in Europe allied themselves with the Roman Empire.

For example, the Frisians and Batavians, first mentioned in 12 BC during Drusus’ campaign, immediately joined the Romans, and sent contingents of their own troops with Roman legions to fight against Germanic peoples. The Lombards, likewise, said to be fiercer than the Germans, although beyond the reach of several Roman campaigns, nonetheless threw their muscle behind one of Rome’s puppet chieftains in the first century AD to help restore his right to rule a neighboring tribe. And the nearby Usipi and Cannanefates are found allied with Rome in their first encounters, with their men serving in Rome’s auxiliary units.

In this context, an account from the Roman expedition in 5 AD merits mention here. After describing the Lombards, Velleius Paterculus said:

Even in the midst of these great events, I cannot refrain from inserting this little incident. We were encamped on the nearer [west] bank of the aforesaid river [the Elbe], while on the farther [east] bank glittered the arms of the enemies’ troops, who showed an inclination to flee at every movement and maneuver of our vessels, when one of the barbarians, advanced in years, tall of stature, of high rank, to judge by his dress, embarked in a canoe, made as is usual with them of a hollowed log,⁸³ and guiding this

⁸² Matthew 4:19

⁸³ A practice once common among Native Americans, known as a dugout canoe.

strange craft he advanced alone to the middle of the stream and asked permission to land without harm to himself on the bank occupied by our troops, and to see Caesar [Tiberius]. Permission was granted. Then he beached his canoe, and after gazing upon Caesar for a long time in silence,” he spoke.

Up to this point, the account is plausible, and the graphic descriptions make the account likely. But Velleius then claims to somehow cite the foreigner’s words verbatim, which he claimed amounted to the main saying his people worshipped Tiberius as a god. The claim that this people east of the Elbe, who had never heard of Tiberius before, somehow believed he was a god, smacks of Roman propaganda, and does not explain why they remained armed, on the opposite bank.

More specifically, these words were likely either put into the visitor’s mouth by Tiberius’ camp translators in order to flatter the general, or were placed there as gloss by Velleius after the fact, during the writing of his account, when Tiberius was emperor, to serve as political propaganda for his patron’s assertion to be a god.

After this apparent gloss in the manuscript account, the visitor then reportedly said that he “never hoped for or experienced a happier day.” He then asked for and received permission to touch [shake?] Caesar’s hand, “again entered his canoe, and continued to gaze back upon him until he landed upon his own bank.”

The closing words of that visitor, whether translated correctly or otherwise, do seem a fitting sentiment for a besieged people in need of a strong ally. For the Elbe River, and specific portion of it approached by Tiberius on this campaign, was known to be Lombard territory in the 1st century AD.⁸⁴

Bodyguards

⁸⁴ The Lombard account Codex Gothanum mentions the Elbe as their early home, as does

In Rome, recruits from these peoples were considered more trustworthy than native Romans themselves. Batavians and their neighbors were frequently sought out in the first century AD as the handpicked personal bodyguards of emperors and governors.

Allying with the Roman Empire against Germanic tribes could be conceived as bizarre behavior if the Frisians, Cannanefates, Batavi, and others were of Germanic ethnic origin. If, instead, as linguists, ancient documents, and modern historians suggest, some of the groupings in this region were instead of foreign origin, it offers a political and historical explanation for their actions. If new colonists, struggling for survival, truly were besieged by aggressive Germanic and Celtic neighbors, as Roman and Germanic sources, and even modern historians like Malcolm Todd imply, Rome would have been seen not as a god, but as a godsend. And it would have been prudent for such newcomers to ally themselves with Rome. That is, as long as Rome remained a fitting ally.



A map of some European tribal groupings in the 1st century AD showing potential candidates for Nephite colonists.

It may be no small coincidence that such people, some of whom were said to sing of the son of God before entering battle, banded together in rebellion against Rome in 69 AD. This rebellion, at the juncture of a Civil War within the Empire, was notably in the very wake of the Emperor Nero's execution of scores of Christians in Rome, including the apostle Paul. Thus the timing for their rebellion may not have been coincidental.

The American Colonies

As Nephi predicted, centuries after Nephite civilization in the Americas died out, Europeans began boarding ships and sailing west to colonize the Americas. Their colonies offer a pattern for considering the sorts of pressures that a Nephite colony might have experienced in ancient Europe.

The Massachusetts colony, for example, was beset by religious leaders determined to quash independent thinking. Free thinkers like Roger Williams left that colony, and led others away to establish a new nearby colony in Rhode Island, based on broader tolerance for differing beliefs. William Penn had similar intentions with the Pennsylvania colony.

A Nephite colony in Europe would have been subject to the same egos, quirks, personality conflicts, and institutional inertia that led Roger Williams to lead English colonists to branch off on their own, some under official patents, others setting off in the wild to homestead freelance. Similar factors lead employees in our day to peacefully walk out the door and form their own companies.

However in a Nephite colony in Europe, such centripetal tendencies would have been counterbalanced for the first few decades by the need to survive in a new land wedged between hostile Celtic and Germanic tribes. So splinter groups from a main Nephite body would likely have been few and far between, perhaps limited to well-hidden and protected coastal marshes or scattered coastal islands. However, as the Romans expanded into the region by 12 BC, Rome's presence would have provided a

growing sense of security against the Germanic and Celtic threat that not only minimized many of the previous survival concerns, but even presented occasional opportunities for ambitious groups to spin off on their own into a new colony, sometimes even with imperial funding, in what the empire referred to as landed allies, or feoderati.

Long Hair

The first portion of the Nephite record clearly depicts a migratory society. The middle portion tells us of additional migratory offshoots. Speaking of the Lord's dealings with his people, Nephi himself declared, shortly after his vision of Europe and the Americas:

And he leadeth away the righteous into precious lands....⁸⁵

Nephi's brother Jacob, the same Jacob who recorded Zenos's Olive Tree allegory, explained:

For behold, the Lord God has led away from time to time from the house of Israel, according to his will and pleasure. And now behold, the Lord remembereth all them who have been broken off, wherefore he remembereth us also.⁸⁶

With these realities in mind, let's consider a map of Europe. In review, we have a culture in northwest Europe that claimed to arrive by sea. According to their own testimony, they made their landfall on the shore of the North Sea approximately where the Danish peninsula of Jutland meets the mainland of Europe.

This is the very same region from which the English people later left the European continent to take possession of the island of Britain, and gave it a new name, England.

This coastline along the northern coast of Europe was occupied by Frisians, Canne-nefates, and Lombards, who were discovered by expeditionary Roman forces between 12 BC and 5 AD during the reign of Caesar Augustus, heir of Julius Caesar.⁸⁷ Two

⁸⁵ 1 Nephi 17:38

⁸⁶ 2 Nephi 10:22

⁸⁷ The coastal Frisians were first encountered by Roman troops in 12 BC. Roman legions on wider patrols encountered the other two neighboring coastal groups in 5

centuries later, Saxons inhabited some of this region, and were believed by some to be a confederation of other peoples, including some of these previously mentioned peoples.

Lombards

As mentioned above, one of the names the Romans knew this people by was Langobardi, Langobards, or, as they would be known in later centuries, Lombards. In each case, their name simply means “those with long hair”.

There are several facets of Lombard culture that may interest the reader. Their name, in the context of their culture, has considerable implications. To understand the significance of their name in the context of Hagoth’s exodus, however, we should keep in mind that Nephite culture derived from Jewish culture, or as Nephi called it, “the learning of the Jews”.⁸⁸

Jewish Grooming

To understand Nephite customs, it is helpful to trace the customs related to grooming. First, as affirmed by Egyptian art and even Egyptian mummies, it was an Egyptian custom to shave regularly (a custom which was later adopted by the Romans). As an extension, this Egyptian custom was apparently even expected of Egyptian servants. For example, when the Pharaoh released Joseph of old from prison, Joseph immediately cleaned himself, dressed, and shaved.⁸⁹

However, a few centuries after Joseph, when Moses delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, it was then declared wrong for an Israelite to “round” their hair or trim the edge of their beard.⁹⁰ Jews then came to consider it an indignity to be shaved.⁹¹ In effect, long hair among the Jewish people became an outward expression of their faith. Central to this tradition was the mighty,

AD.

⁸⁸ 1 Nephi 1:2

⁸⁹ Genesis 41:40

⁹⁰ Leviticus 19:26-28; 21:5

⁹¹ 2 Samuel 10:4

long-haired Samson, who fought to defend the freedom of his people. This Jewish practice continued during Christ's first ministry, when it was practiced among the Nazarites in Palestine, and is perpetuated to this day in various forms among some Orthodox Jews.

Grooming Among the Early Nephites

When considering Nephite culture, we should remember that at the time of Hagoth's exodus, those sailing from the land of Desolation still operated under the Law of Moses. In other words, in strict accordance with the Law of Moses, faithful Nephites in Hagoth's day would likely have honored the prescriptions in the law of Moses regarding hair and beards.⁹²

Furthermore, during Hagoth's day, two additional covenants entered the scene. Under Moroni's title of liberty, the Nephites covenanted⁹³ to unite in defense of their faith, their liberties, and their families. Likewise, the sons of Ammon entered into a similar covenant.

And they entered into a covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites, yea, to protect the land unto the laying down of their lives; yea even they covenanted that they never would give up their liberty, but they would fight in all cases to protect the Nephites and themselves from bondage.⁹⁴

Long Hair in Europe

A century after Hagoth, we find a striking nexus between Jewish and Nephite customs in Northern Europe. Roman chroniclers described a tradition that was rapidly spreading and becoming fashionable among other tribes in northern Europe. This custom directly connected long hair with a promise to defend one's people.

⁹² Compare 2 Nephi 25:24

⁹³ Alma 46:12, 19-21

⁹⁴ Alma 53:17

*There is one custom...that has become a general rule.... As soon as they reach manhood they let their hair and beard grow.... This fashion of covering the face is assumed in accordance with a vow pledging them to the service of valour...*⁹⁵

Additionally, it was said that fulfilling this vow would prove themselves “worthy of their native land and parents.”⁹⁶

This tradition continued among the Saxons as late as 570 AD, and among the Franks even later. In fact the Merovingian dynasty of France came to an end during the Dark Ages when their deposed king’s long hair was cut off with symbolic finality. Even modern commentators unfamiliar with the Book of Mormon assert that this tradition of long hair among early Europeans was reminiscent of the “ancient Israelite Nazirites...”⁹⁷

Centuries after the Romans first encountered the Lombards, it was still widely known that they received their name “from their flowing and never-shaven beards,”⁹⁸ or as their own chronicler said, “on account of the length of their beards untouched by the knife.”⁹⁹

Based on these correlations, it would appear that the long-hair tradition was introduced into ancient Europe by the Lombards themselves, as their name suggests. For the Romans made no mention of any such tradition spreading among other tribes until after they discovered the Lombards. Thus it would appear that as Lombard prestige in battle grew, their ancient custom of long hair, and the duty to defend their people associated with it, became fashionable among neighboring peoples.

Lombard Origins

⁹⁵ Tacitus, *Germania*, 31

⁹⁶ Tacitus, *ibid.*

⁹⁷ Rives, *Germania*, p. 250.

⁹⁸ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, IX, 2, 94

⁹⁹ Paul the Deacon, *History of the Lombards*, IX:1

According to the Lombards themselves, they claimed to have come from “an island” across the sea. Although some readers might consider it a stretch to consider the Americas an island, the Vikings who later set foot in North America referred to the land as an island, as did many other early European explorers. Even the Nephites in America considered their land to be “an isle of the sea”.¹⁰⁰

In addition, the Lombards said their homeland across the sea was “where many people dwell”. Other than the Americas, there are very few lands bordering the Atlantic which fit that description.

Also, the Lombards said that before departing their homeland across the sea for Europe, their enemy came with an army demanding tribute (bondage) under threat of war. This is precisely what happened among the Nephites just before Hagoth’s exodus. Hagoth departed shortly after the fiercest Nephite-Lamanite war in their history, where the Lamanites insisted that the Nephites submit to their demands.

Additionally, although the Lombards are often *assumed* to be of the same ethnic stock as their ancient Germanic neighbors, one of the first Romans to encounter them suggested otherwise. Speaking of the Lombards’ ferocity in battle, he said that they were actually “*more* fierce than the Germans.”¹⁰¹ This phrasing suggests that, like the Frisians, Lombard roots were something other than Germanic. They in fact occupied part of the same region that linguists say was inhabited by a people that initially spoke a language from the Hamo-Semitic (Egyptian-Hebrew) family.

Finally, some may find it of interest that the Lombards maintained a tradition about their ancient homeland across the Atlantic, which described the earlier homeland before they landed on the European coast. They said the name of the north part of that

¹⁰⁰ 2 Nephi 10:20.

¹⁰¹ Velleius Paterculus, Roman History, II:106. Compare Mosiah 20:11 and Alma 56:56.

ancient homeland meant “destruction” or “ruin”. The Book of Mormon offers a fitting match:

And it came to pass that Hagoth...built him an exceedingly large ship...by the land of Desolation,...by the narrow neck which led into the land northward.¹⁰²

¹⁰² Alma 63:5

Freemen, Nephites, and Saxons

As mentioned previously, for self preservation and other reasons, the early colonists of northwest Europe may have splintered into more than one sub tribe by the first century AD. Such candidates include, among others, the Batavians, Frisians, and Cannanefates. And a later confederation of some of those peoples was known as the Saxons.

The Freemen

A neighboring people known as the Frisii or “Frisians” may be a kindred tribe of the Lombards. The Romans encountered the Frisians in 12 BC, a few years before they penetrated Europe far enough to encounter the Lombards. According to some accounts, the Frisian name itself may simply mean “the free”. Those familiar with the last chapters of Alma may recall how the free men were those who rallied around Moroni’s title of liberty to put down the king-men who were trying to alter the law and restore a monarchy among the Nephites.

Whatever their origins, Frisians still live along the coast of the North Sea. Their homeland stretches from the coast of the Netherlands in the province called Friesland, eastward through Germany’s northwest coast, and upwards along Denmark’s southwest coast. According to linguists, the Frisian language is the closest living language to Old English. However, as suggested earlier, that language was not the original tongue spoken among the Frisians in ancient times. As we will see in the language chapter, linguists assert that the ancient Frisians only adopted the Germanic language after their arrival in northwestern Europe.

When the Frisians were first mentioned by the Romans in 12 BC, the Roman general Drusus was advancing into northern Europe and immediately formed an alliance with them. As the legions continued their advance further into northern Europe, a contingent of Frisians marched with them. At one juncture in that campaign, when the legions were cut off and the enemy was

approaching, it was the Frisians who stepped in and saved the day.

Nefates

In 5 AD, when Roman legions crossed the Rhine to conquer new peoples, among the peoples these legions encountered, the Cannanefates¹⁰³ were mentioned first and foremost.¹⁰⁴ Shortly afterwards, however, Cannanefates, Lombards, Frisians, and neighboring people rose up and revolted against Roman rule.

Of all the ancient European tribal names, the Cannanefates are among the most intriguing tribal groupings in northwestern Europe. They were known to be a seafaring people on the North Sea coast who were confederate with Saxon and Lombard peoples. Their name, however, is of greatest interest. In the ancient Germanic languages, “Canna” means tribe or descent.¹⁰⁵ (For example, the modern English word “kin” and the German word for children “kinder” both derive from that ancient root.) In other words, Canna-nefates very possibly means “the people, tribe, or descendants of the Nefates”. Their very name may thus attest to their origin as a people of Nephite descent.

Around 100 AD, the Roman historian Tacitus said the Cannanefates were “of the same race and language” as the Batavians, another tribe inhabiting the coast of what we would call the Netherlands.¹⁰⁶ And the Batavians in turn, according to Tacitus, “were once a tribe of the Chatti”.¹⁰⁷ Neither the Batavians nor the Chatti were known to Julius Caesar in his previous expeditions into northern Europe. This may seem like a lot of splitting off. However, we should recall that by Tacitus’ day, the living descendants of the early colonists could have numbered more than 150,000.

¹⁰³ Various spellings for this people include Canninefates and Cannenefates

¹⁰⁴ Velleius Paterculus, II:105.

¹⁰⁵ Koerbler’s *Gotische Woerterbuch*, Kanna.

¹⁰⁶ Tacitus, *Histories*, 4:15.

¹⁰⁷ Tacitus, *Histories*, 4:12.

The Canna-Neftates were later assumed to be absorbed into the Dutch people along with the Batavians. However, if time allows, we will explore their resurfacing centuries later.

Whether these ancient medieval texts are referring to actual Nephites or to peoples who bear Nephi's name by mere coincidence is up to the reader. We nonetheless have concrete testimony of Nephites in Europe from multiple sources, whatever we deem that significance to be.

Saxons

Although each of the previous tribal names was known to Roman historians by the early 1st century AD, the name "Saxon" did not appear until a century or two later. The Saxon name itself reportedly refers to the short sword or "sax"¹⁰⁸ common among them. When the Saxons first appear in history, the land they were said to occupy was actually Lombard territory, with whom they were allied. For a number of reasons, many historians believe the Saxons were not a new ethnic group, but were instead simply a new confederation of the same tribes that had previously occupied the region. Thus it is asserted by many historians that the Saxon confederation included Lombards and Frisians, who were known to have accompanied the Saxon confederation in their later occupation of Britain.¹⁰⁹

A few centuries later, around the time Nephite society in the Americas was destroyed, many Saxons were invited by the British to cross the Channel and restore order in Britain in the wake of the fall of the Western Roman Empire. These Saxons were reportedly also invited by the war-weary Britons to impose whatever terms they saw fit as their reward for restoring stable government. Because of this, Britain became a new land of inheritance for a portion of the Saxon confederation. Those Saxons thereby became the forefathers of men like Joseph Smith,

¹⁰⁸ Our modern words "scissors" and "incision" come from the same root word.

¹⁰⁹ Christie, *The Lombards*, p. 11. Foulke, *History of the Lombards*, Ch. 13, note 6.

since his ancestry traces back to the regions of England which they settled.

And those Saxons, by their own account, descended from a seafaring people that landed on Europe's coast centuries earlier, led by an aging veteran named Hadgoth.

Angles, Jutes and other Scandinavians

In this chapter, we'll briefly explore a few other people from northern Europe, the Angles, Jutes and other Scandinavians.

First, a brief word or two about geography. The land of the Jutes was Denmark's Jutland peninsula. The Angles' homeland was the southeastern base of that same peninsula, bordering Saxon, Lombard, Jutish, and Frisian territories. So the Jutes, the Angles, Lombards, Saxons, and some of the Frisians occupied southwestern Scandinavia. In 1864, Prussia wrested the southern peninsula from Denmark. So whether we refer to the Angles, Saxons, Lombards, Jutes, and some Frisians as Scandinavians or Germans, in either case, we would be correct.

The Angles

Of all the peoples in northern Europe mentioned in the first century AD, few have retained their name to this day. Most were absorbed into other peoples. The Lombards retained their name for a millennium, and were absorbed into the Italian people, but left their name on the region of Lombardy, Italy. However, the Angles (English), like the Frisians, managed to preserve their name from their first appearance in European history.

Since the Angles occupied a region beyond the reaches of most Roman legions, very little is known of them prior to their migration to Britain in the fifth century AD. In the first century AD, they are mentioned briefly by Tacitus in the same paragraph as the Lombards and the Eudoses, who may be the Jutes. But of both the Angles and Eudoses, Tacitus said "there is nothing noteworthy about those tribes individually". Collectively, however, he refers to a shared practice among them, the ark-of-the-covenant passage mentioned in an earlier chapter. That is certainly something noteworthy.

What the term "Angles" refers to is unknown. The answer hinges somewhat on who gave them their name. It could have been a name they gave to themselves, or it could be a name their Roman

or Germanic neighbors used to describe them. Among several of these options: in Semitic, one meaning for Angel could be “bull”;¹¹⁰ in Latin, their name could mean angel or messenger; and in Germanic, their name could allude to fishing (as in modern anglers). For a Christian people of Semitic origin in a Latin-Germanic world, it could even have carried more than one of these connotations.

It is of some interest that some of the Saxon origin accounts claim the Saxons actually descend from the Angles. Whatever we make of them, the Angles were allied with the Saxons, and took possession of Britain in cooperation with Saxons, Jutes, Frisians, and Lombards. The Angles thereby gave their name to the English people, to the English language, and to England itself.

In England around 730 AD, just as literacy was being established among the English, the historian Bede told of an episode that occurred there about sixty years earlier. A soldier named Imma from northern England had been captured after a battle, and was chained to prevent his escape. However, the chains were useless, “for no sooner had those who chained left than the fetters fell off.” His captors asked whether Imma had “written charms”, which some historians assumed to mean runic writing and/or an amulet to make him impervious to being bound. Imma emphatically denied knowing about anything like that. Imma was then handed over as a prisoner to a Frisian in London who encountered the same problem. “One kind of a fetter after another had been put on him, and none could hold him.”¹¹¹ Based on the account, however, the prayers of Imma’s devout Christian brother were said to be the source of his repeated release. This account seems peculiar by modern reckoning. However, it has Nephite precedent with Alma and Amulek,¹¹² and

¹¹⁰ See the table in the Hadgoth chapter. Some assert that the banner under which the Israelite tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) marched was the bull, based on Moses’ departing blessing, where the blessing on the tribe of Joseph included: “His glory is like the firstling of his bullock...” Deut. 33:17.

¹¹¹ Bede, *A History of the English Church and People*, Book IV, Chapter 22. See also Richard Fletcher, *The Barbarian Conversion*, pgs. 249-250.

¹¹² Alma 14:26

additional precedent with Paul.¹¹³ Thus although it was deemed miraculous by Imma's contemporaries to the point of folk magic, it was instead well grounded in both Nephite and New Testament precedent.

There is an ancient Old English or English poem, or more accurately a portion of a poem, which has survived the passage of time. It is called the Fight at Finnsburgh, and only a few paragraphs remain.

In it, a leader and sixty of his warriors are besieged and attacked. The leader encourages them to awake, "have your shields ready, be of good courage and turn to the front with steady resolve."

"Light flashed from swords as if all Finnsburh were afire. Never have I heard of sixty staunch warriors who bore themselves in battle more honorably...."

"For five days the band of companions fought and held the door: and none of them was killed."

The imagery and verbiage here is strikingly similar to Alma's account of the stripling warriors, who fought so gallantly in defense of the Nephites shortly before the northward departure of Hagoth's ships.

Sixty
Never...fought....
None of them was killed.
Finally, their commander's name is of interest.
It was Hnaef.

Jutes

As mentioned above, Jutes may have been known by Tacitus around 100 AD by the name "Eudoses". A few centuries later,

¹¹³ Acts 12:5-7

the early English historian Bede likewise referred to the Jutes as the “Iutae”. As mentioned above, if the 1st century Eudoses truly are the Jutes, according to Tacitus, they shared religious beliefs with Angles and perhaps with Lombards.

In the 400’s AD, many Jutes are said to have migrated to Britain with Angles, Saxons, Frisians and Lombards, where the Jutes specifically occupied southern England, specifically Kent and the Isle of Wight.

Several years ago, I was in a conversation with an elderly woman in southeastern Jutland, where I lived for a few months. The woman spoke “sonderjydisk”, or Jutish, a Danish dialect, instead of traditional Danish. A young man from Copenhagen was there as well. During the hour-long conversation with that woman, the Danish man remained silent. Afterwards, I asked him privately if everything was OK. He said he was fine, but simply couldn’t understand a word the woman had said. (I would imagine my American accent didn’t help matters either.) So although spoken Danish and Jutish have considerable overlap, to some ears, they are as different as night from day.

Of further interest is the Danish name for Jutes. In Denmark, those who live on the Jutland peninsula are referred to as “Jyder”, (approximately “Yoo-thur”), and the dialect they speak is referred to as “Jydisk” (approximately “Yoosk”). By way of comparison, the Danish word for Jews is “Jøder” (approximately “Yoo-thur”), who are Jewish or “Jødisk” (approximately “Yoosk”). Thus the Danish words for Jews and for inhabitants of Jutland are strikingly similar.

It may be that the 1st-century existence of Judaic-like practices among the Jutes, including an ark-of-the-covenant tradition, helps explain the Jewish/Jutish name similarities in modern Germanic languages. It is also worth considering that the Nephites considered themselves to be Jews,¹¹⁴ not ethnically, since they

¹¹⁴ 2 Nephi 30:4

didn't descend from the tribe of Judah,¹¹⁵ but rather nationally, because their forefathers were once subjects or citizens of the kingdom of Judah.¹¹⁶

Scandinavians

Scandinavia was home to most of the peoples discussed in this study. Where Scandinavia begins and ends depends to some degree on which era we are referring to. The Jutland peninsula, most of which is Danish today, was ruled by the Danish crown until Germany seized the southern portion of the peninsula in the last half of the nineteenth century. In other words, although the region of the Jutes and some Frisians is ruled by Denmark today, the homeland of Lombards, Angles, and Saxons were likewise considered part of the same realm as recently as one hundred and fifty years ago.

Therefore, it is not surprising that some of the Saxon origin accounts claimed that the Saxon people derived from neighboring Danes and Northmen. This premise aligns with other medieval accounts which identified Scandinavia as a “womb of nations”.¹¹⁷

To help suggest of that shared heritage between Scandinavians and others, Widukind of Corvey described the banner under which Hadgoth and his people once fought centuries earlier. Like heraldry, the description is interesting. He said their banner contained a serpent, a lion, and an eagle.

By way of comparison, in the 10th century AD, there was a Danish king named Gorm. He and his son Harald raised runic

¹¹⁵ They were instead said to be of Manassah (through Lehi, per Alma 10:3) and of Ephraim (through his wife Sariah and her brother Ishmael, per early references to content in the lost 116-page manuscript translation of the Book of Lehi).

¹¹⁶ When Lehi's family left Jerusalem, the Northern Kingdom (Israel) had long since been taken captive and dispersed among the nations. Lehi's forefathers had apparently heeded prophetic warnings, and migrated south to avoid the Assyrian captivity. Paul in the New Testament was likewise not of the tribe of Judah, (he descended through Benjamin), yet he also considered himself a Jew by national origin.

¹¹⁷ Jordanes, History of the Goths.

stones in southern Jutland. According to the inscriptions on these runic stones, Harald is said to have converted his people to Christianity. (Based on research discussed previously,¹¹⁸ however, it might be more accurate to say that he converted his people back to Christianity.¹¹⁹) The decoration on the largest of those Danish runic stones is of distinct interest in the context of Widukind's account, for that stone conveys a serpent, a lion, and an eagle. The stone itself was created in the same century that Widukind's source, Rudolf, wrote his account of Saxon origins, and was a motif once used throughout much of Scandinavia.

There were longstanding alliances between Saxons and Danes. The Anglo-Saxon account *Beowulf* explained such alliances, as did Germany's *Nibelunglied*. Whether their shared heraldry signified a common origin is implied, but is difficult to confirm. It is notable, however, that this imagery was later adopted in Anglo-Saxon heraldry under the griffin, which was part lion, part eagle, and part serpent.

In the Middle Ages, when emperors and kings were amassing power in Europe from the first century AD to the ninth, those unwilling to bow to a king retreated northward to Scandinavia. Then in the ninth century, when kings were amassing power in Scandinavia, those there who were unwilling to concede their voice to a king migrated to settle Iceland. After Saxony was conquered by Charlemagne and monarchies spread to much of Scandinavia, Iceland became the final outpost for European democracy. Appropriately, the descendants of those freedom-seeking Icelanders were the ones who rediscovered America around 1000 AD. And the stories of their explorations would later reach Christopher Columbus.

Another facet of Scandinavian society was the legend of berserker warriors. Supposedly, these berserkers, as part of their devotion to their faith, could wade into battle and emerge unharmed.

¹¹⁸ See the previous chapter, *Divine Visitation*.

¹¹⁹ To explore how Christianity was temporarily displaced in many regions of ancient northern Europe, refer to *Odin's Toga*.

Arrows, fire, and swords could not harm them. Such a tradition is comfortably at home with the account of Samuel the Lamanite standing on the wall to deliver his message, when arrows could not touch him, Ammon and his brethren receiving a promise that they would not be harmed serving among the Lamanites, and the 2,000+ stripling warriors emerging from heated battles to discover that not one of their troops had been killed. It is therefore interesting that historian J. B. Rives comments on other historians finding a parallel between Tacitus' 1st-century account of Samson-like covenant warriors¹²⁰ in Germania, with the later Viking berserker warriors. He cautions, however, that centuries passed between Tacitus' account and the Old Norse accounts, and thus "any connection between the two is necessarily tenuous."¹²¹ Tenuous, however, does not mean the proposed connection is incorrect. In addition, the assertion of a tenuous or weak connection on this single parallel is counterbalanced by the numerous other parallels and connections documented in this study. But for now, that other historians suggest the 1st century warriors were the precedent for a later berserker tradition is interesting enough.

One other relevant aspect of Scandinavian history is emigration and heritage. Many individuals from Western Europe can trace their heritage to Scandinavia. In separate waves in the 400's, 700's, 800's, 900's and 1000's AD, Scandinavians conquered portions of Ireland and England. In the 900's England was in essence divided in half, the southern half ruled by the Saxons (themselves of earlier Germanic or southern Scandinavian origin), and the northern half, called the Danelaw, ruled by Danish or Scandinavian law. In the 1000's AD, Scandinavian kings ruled all of England for several decades. And shortly afterwards, in 1066, England was conquered in the Norman Conquest by William the Conqueror, a descendant of Scandinavian Vikings. During the 900's AD, Vikings had conquered and settled Normandy, France, giving the region their own name, Normandy

¹²⁰ See the Lombard chapter for a more in-depth explanation of these 1st-century warriors, and the Hadgoth chapter for the 1st century texts describing them.

¹²¹ Rives, Germania, 251-252.

or land of the Northmen. Prior to this, Saxons had conquered the same region. Thus the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 was actually an additional wave of Scandinavian immigration to England. So between the 400's AD and 1000's AD, numerous waves of Scandinavians had settled in Great Britain and France. Thus those who have English, Irish, Scottish, and French heritage likely also have Scandinavian heritage in those same lines.

A similar situation took place in Italy, but on a smaller scale. In the 1000's AD, some of the remaining regions of Italy still under Lombard control called upon Norman warriors as mercenaries to help strengthen their position in Italy. Not long afterwards, Normans turned against their Lombard employers and carved out dukedoms and kingdoms for themselves in southern Italy. And the Lombards were preceded by the Gothic Kingdom in Italy.

Thus portions of Great Britain, France, and Italy were settled by waves of neighboring peoples from northern Europe, sharing a common heritage with regions of the Netherlands, northern Germany, and Scandinavia.

Analysis of the early settlement of North America paints a similar picture. The largest share of the early English settlers to America came from the regions of the Danelaw mentioned above.¹²² In addition, by far the largest share of early French settlers to North America came from Normandy.¹²³ Thus although Quebec claims to have a separate culture, its more ancient heritage holds much in common with surrounding Anglo-Saxon regions. This is not to suggest that one culture is better than another, but rather that the recent divisiveness¹²⁴ among Canadians is based on a limited understanding of their common origins.

¹²² Mapping America's past, pgs. 40-41.

¹²³ R. Cole Harris & Geoffrey J. Matthews, Historical Atlas of Canada Vol. 1, plate 45.

¹²⁴ Recently, Quebec, or French Canada, has come close to seceding from the rest of Canada, which some believe would lead to Civil War in the Canadian provinces.

Language

Words can be powerful things. Rarely, however, do we consider the individual words we use every day. Those who do, however, have input to offer in the matter of Nephites in Europe that merits serious consideration. As we begin an exploration of European language, we should be reminded that the language of the Nephites, according to their own testimony, consisted of Egyptian and Hebrew. Thus we enter a comparison between that Nephite assertion and European linguistic evidence.

In “The World’s Major Languages”, linguist John Hawkins asserts that “fully one third of the vocabulary of the Germanic languages is not of Indo-European origin.”¹²⁵ Let’s clarify what Hawkins means here.

First, by Germanic languages, Hawkins is referring to the language grouping that derives from Northern Europe that includes Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Faroese, English, German (including Yiddish), Dutch (including Afrikaans) and Frisian.¹²⁶ These Germanic languages are spoken today in much of northern Europe, North America, the South Pacific, and South Afrika. As Hawkins points out, in our day, “the geographical distribution of the Germanic languages is more extensive than that of any other group of languages.”¹²⁷

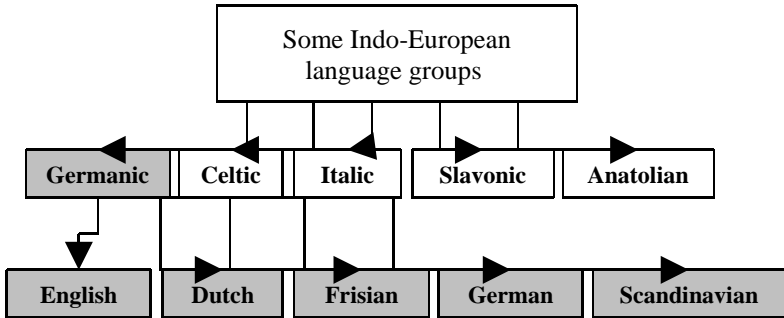
Second, Hawkins said that a good portion of this Germanic lexicon traces to some language family *other* than Indo-European. To be more specific, Germanic belongs to the Indo-European language group, along with Indo-Iranian, Hellenic (Greek), Italic (Latin, French, Italian, Spanish), Anatolian (Hittite, Lydian, Lycian), Celtic (Irish, Scots Gaelic, Manx, Welsh, Breton, Cornish), Slavonic, Baltic (Lithuanian, Latvian), Armenian, and Albanian. So even though the Germanic languages themselves are classified as Indo-European, a good

¹²⁵ John A. Hawkins in Comrie, p. 71.

¹²⁶ John A. Hawkins in Comrie, p. 68.

¹²⁷ John A. Hawkins in Comrie, p. 68.

portion of their vocabulary unexplainably derives from some source(s) other than Indo-European. Interestingly, many of these orphan words in the Germanic languages are concentrated in a few specific topics.



Hawkins clarified the nature of hundreds of foreign words embedded in the Germanic languages:

These items, far from being peripheral, belong to the very core of the basic vocabulary of Common Germanic. They constitute a particularly high proportion of the following semantic fields: seafaring terms; terms for warfare and weaponry; animal names (particularly fish) and terms for hunting and farming; communal activities and social institutions and titles. Examples (taken from English alone) are: sea, ship, strand, keel, boat, rudder, mast, ebb, steer, sail, north, south, east, west; sword, shield, helmet, bow; carp, eel, calf, lamb, bear, stork; thing (originally a communal meeting), king, knight. Other fundamental terms that belong here are: drink, leap, bone, wife, and many others.¹²⁸

So at some point in northern Europe, there were influences from other language tradition(s) which left lasting imprints on the most central aspects of society in Germanic or northern Europe, including seafaring, agriculture, warfare, and social affairs. The questions that remain are: which language influences are we

¹²⁸ John A. Hawkins in Comrie, pgs. 74-75. Emphasis added.

referring to here; when was this influence in Europe; and where did this people live? The answers to those questions will help us pinpoint a likely source for many of the non-Indo-European words in the Germanic languages.

Foreign Language Influences In Europe

After studying the first issue, linguist Theo Vennemann concluded years ago (i) that Semitic was anciently spoken in Germanic regions of northern Europe, (ii) that Semitic had considerable influence on the ancient Germanic languages, and (iii) that many of the words in the Germanic languages that are not of Indo-European origin were loanwords from that Semitic people. Furthermore, Vennemann even asserted an Egyptian influence on European languages, asserting for example, that the English¹²⁹ term “bee”, as in honeybee, owes its origin to the Egyptian “bj-t”.¹³⁰

So two of the influences on early Germanic from which words were adopted into the Germanic languages include Egyptian and Semitic. But where in Europe did this people live?

Where They Lived

Historian Malcolm Todd wrote of Hans Kuhn’s place name study which suggested that the northwest¹³¹ region of continental Europe, which Kuhn referred to as the Nordwestblock, anciently spoke a language that was “neither Germanic nor Celtic, or even Indo-European at all, but which had links with certain early names found in the Mediterranean lands.”¹³² Let’s be specific about two things: the Mediterranean parallel Todd is alluding to, and the languages spoken there.

¹²⁹ Keep in mind that English is a Germanic language.

¹³⁰ Note the linguistic assertion from the Hagoth chapter of the terminal –t becoming silent over time in many European languages.

¹³¹ Theo Vennemann concurs that a non-traditional European language influence, which Vennemann specifically defines as Semitic and Egyptian, was once spoken in the “Continental Northwest” of Europe. Vennemann, *Languages in Prehistoric Europe*, p. 323.

¹³² Todd, *The Northern Barbarians*, pg. 33.

In the context of Mediterranean influences, there are three main Mediterranean regions: the north (Europe); the east (the Middle East), and the south (Africa/Egypt). However, the northern Mediterranean region is not a likely candidate for the source of non-Indo-European influence, since that region includes Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Albania, and Turkey, which spoke Indo-European languages.¹³³ Since Kuhn and Todd are asserting that the northwest region of Europe once spoke a non-Indo-European language that traces to Mediterranean lands, this then suggests the eastern and southern Mediterranean lands. This just happens to be the region which speaks the Hamito-Semitic (otherwise known as Hamito-Semitic or AfroAsiatic) language family, which is separate from the Indo-European family. Interestingly enough, the Hamito-Semitic language family includes Hebrew,¹³⁴ Aramaic, Akkadian, Lydian, and Egyptian. Thus Kuhn's assertions for the language(s) spoken anciently in northwestern Europe align well with Vennemann's assertion of Semitic and Egyptian influence within the Germanic languages. Or, as Vennemann specifically put it, "certain West Indo-European words without accepted etymologies – especially in Germanic – can be reconstructed as Semitic loan-words."¹³⁵ And to be more comprehensive, when Vennemann says Semitic, he includes Egyptian.¹³⁶

So Kuhn said a people in Europe spoke a non-Indo-European language from Mediterranean lands. Vennemann specifically asserted the Mediterranean languages of Semitic and Egyptian as key influences there. And for locale, Kuhn specified Northwestern Europe as the epicenter of this linguistic influence on the ancient Germanic languages.¹³⁷

¹³³ See prior definition of Indo-European.

¹³⁴ It also includes Arabic, but that language did not emerge until after

¹³⁵ Theo Vennemann, *Languages in Prehistoric Europe*, p. 325.

¹³⁶ Theo Vennemann, *Languages in Prehistoric Europe*, p. 320

¹³⁷ For a more recent analysis of the Nordwestblock language, see W. Meid ('Hans Kuhns "Nordwestblock" - Hypothese', *Anzeiger d. österreichischen Akademie d. Wissenschaften* 121 (1984): 2-21)

Long before Kuhn, Todd, Vennemann, and Meid, a number of books were published that asserted ancient Hebrew influence in northern Europe.¹³⁸ Many of these studies drew from a pervasive tradition throughout much of northwestern Europe, which asserted that peoples of northwestern Europe were of Israelite origin. For example, E. Odlum published what he considered Hebrew loan words in the English language, including:

English	Hebrew	Varied Meanings
Rabble	Rab	Rabble, rout, multitude
Cipher	Saphar	To count or cipher, as in arithmetic
Sake	Sakan	Profit, for the sake of
Sore	Tsur	Distress, soreness
Sorrow	Tsarar	Sorrow, inflicted with trouble
Shiver	Sheber	Shiver, break, shiver my timbers
Puke	Pook	To puke, put out
Chill	Chil	Pained, chilled, made uncomfortable
Rash	Raash	To be angry, to rage
Ahah	Ahah	An exclamation of surprise
Mellow	Melo	Mellow, ripe, fullness, maturity
Hollow	Holhul	Empty, hollow
Cane	Cana	Cane, reed, coarse grass
Direct	Derek	Right, straight, direct
Call	Kol	Voice, shout, call
Room	Rum	Make tall, a space, enlargement
Shame	Shamen	Amazed, astounded, shamed
Mar	Mar	Bitter, spoiled, marred
Char	Charah	To burn char, as in charcoal
Suck	Suk	To draw out, as to suck
Keel	Keli	A vessel, a ship, as twenty keel ¹³⁹
Ruts	Rutz	Rut, runner, run

¹³⁸ Such as Odlum's "God's Covenant Man: British Israel", from whose work part of the following table was made. Much of the same approach appears in E. Raymond Capt's "Missing Links Discovered" which, like Odlum's work, suggests that tribes of Israel entered Europe long before Christ.

¹³⁹ Written a century ago, this term is no longer commonly used to describe a full ship. This also happens to be one of several Germanic words specifically identified by Hawkins as having an origin other than Indo-European.

Cover	Kaphar, kafar	To cover
Sum	Sum	Total, count, as to sum
Calamity	Kalam	Agitation, calamity, excite
Dumb	Dahm, dohm	Dumb, silent
Bar	Barzel	Iron, iron bar, or bar-iron, barrel of gun
Raven, ravage	Ravah	To satiate, to raven or ravage
In	In	In, within, inside
Carats	Charuts	Best gold, carats, a standard for diamond
Shoo	Shua	To shout, to say shoo, to chase
Ceres	Keres	Cereals, beaten-out grain
Sure	Shur	To see, examine, make sure, be sure
Nod	Nud	To nod, approve
Holiday	Hulledeth	A holiday, or birthday
Amass	Amas	To amass, increase
Berry	Peri	Fruit, berry, pear
Harass	Haras	Destroy, worry, harass
No	No	Disallow, annul, to say no
Horrid	Orits, or arats	Terrify, make terrible, or horrid
Ore	Or	Horizon, light, shining metal as zinc ore, orange
Angle	Angl	Bull, as Taurus a bull, John Bull
Mote	Motz	Chaff, dust, as cast out the mote
Earth	Eretz	Land, earth
Ad	Ad	Till, until, up to, as in adjoin, attain, adept
Nag	Naga	To smite, plague, worry, nag
Yes	Esh or yesh	Yes, to say yes
Hurrah	Ruah	To shout, to call out, sign of triumph
Soothe	Suth	To persuade, soothe
Sack	Saq	A bag, or sack
Satin	Sadin	Cloth, garments, linen cloth
Push	Poosh	Scatter, push, rout
Guernsey	Gur	To sojourn + ey, an island

Studies by linguist Dennis H. Green also assert that innovations that are imported into foreign cultures are adopted with their

original loanwords intact, retaining most of their original foreign pronunciation. Thus the assertions of Todd, Kuhn, Vennemann, Odlum and Green, with Hawkins' explanation serving as a backdrop, combine to assert that a portion of the Germanic languages spoken in much of the world today trace to a Hamo-Semitic people that lived in northwestern Europe, the very region that was occupied by ancient Frisians, Lombards, and Cannanefates. The question that then remains is when did the Hamo-Semitic or Egyptian-Hebrew people live there?

Chronology

To help answer this question, according to Todd's description of Kuhn's thesis, the people of the Nordwestblock were in place in that portion of Europe "at the opening of the historical period."¹⁴⁰ This means when the region first entered the radar of written history. Thus the subsequent Roman inroads into northern Europe under Julius Caesar, and under his heir Caesar Augustus, frame the opening of the historical period for this region. For this is when history first discovered and wrote about this region and its peoples. Based on the known chronology and activities of those rulers, Egyptian and Semitic were therefore spoken among a people of northwestern Europe somewhere between 58 BC and 12 BC.¹⁴¹ This window aligns extremely well with the era of the shipbuilding Nephite Hagoth, whose emigration transport service began fifty-five years before the birth of Christ. And according to ancient and medieval testimony, the region specified by Kuhn as speaking a non-Indo-European Mediterranean tongue was occupied by Frisians, Lombards and Cannanefates precisely when, according to Todd, that language was supposedly spoken there.

Todd provided further commentary on Kuhn's work. Speaking of a subsequent influx of Germanic peoples into the regions held by the Northwestblock language group, Todd suggests that the Romans may well have been aware of this Germanic

¹⁴⁰ Malcolm Todd, *The Northern Barbarians*, p. 33.

¹⁴¹ For the first recorded encounter with Frisians. This outward window can be expanded to 5 AD, to include Tiberius' expedition further into northern Europe.

encroachment on the Nordwestblock culture just beyond Roman borders, “and their concern probably helped promote the offensives of the Augustan generals.”¹⁴² Todd’s alignment of the Nordwestblock people with the campaigns of Augustan generals is of crucial interest on two counts.

First, marching under the orders of his stepfather Caesar Augustus¹⁴³, the Roman general Drusus¹⁴⁴ penetrated that region of Northwestern Europe in 12 BC, and encountered Frisians for the first time. So Frisians were in the right place at the right time. As evidence of a potential linguistic cross match, modern historian J.B. Rives says that based on place name and personal name evidence in Frisia, the language spoken by the Frisian people was originally “neither Germanic nor Celtic” and thus “there is some reason to think that the Frisii were in origin a non-Germanic people, who only during the Roman period¹⁴⁵ came to adopt Germanic culture.”¹⁴⁶ Thus the Frisians are viable linguistic candidates for Nephite colonists.

A bizarre aspect of Drusus’ penetration into this region is that he supposedly died three years later, while attempting to expand his original conquests. More specifically, in 9 BC, he was reportedly

¹⁴² Malcolm Todd, *The Northern Barbarians*, p. 34. Julius Caesar used a similar justification for his military expansion into Gaul/France, which in our day parallels U.S. and allied justification for involvement in Korea, Vietnam, and even Iraq.

¹⁴³ The same Caesar Augustus mentioned in Luke 2:1, who decreed that all the world should be taxed.

¹⁴⁴ Otherwise known as Nero Drusus or Drusus the Elder. This Drusus was father of both the Emperor Claudius and the General Germanicus, grandfather of the Emperor Caligula through Germanicus, and great-grandfather of the Emperor Nero.

¹⁴⁵ The “Roman period” refers to the period when the peoples were under Roman influence, a period which, for the Frisians, began in 12 BC. This thus suggests that their adoption of a Germanic language occurred at some point after 12 BC, which aligns well with nineteenth-century immigration patterns, where it was the children and grandchildren of immigrants, rather than the immigrants themselves, who, while able to retain the languages of their fathers for a generation or two, were nonetheless quick to absorb and adopt the surrounding language. The more close-knit the immigrant community, however, the longer subsequent generations were typically able to retain bilingual abilities.

¹⁴⁶ J.B. Rives, *Germania*, p. 261, citing the work of B. Sjoln.

stopped by a large woman, told it was not his destiny to go further and that his life and mission were at an end. Whether that 1st-century account contains elements of truth, or whether he merely fell from his horse as other contemporaries assert, Drusus died suddenly that year, and his brother the general Tiberius accompanied his body back to Rome.

Secondly, this same Tiberius, who would later become the Tiberius Caesar mentioned in the New Testament, also marched under the orders of his stepfather Caesar Augustus into Germania in 5 AD. That year, Tiberius penetrated the Nordwestblock region further than his brother had, and encountered Cannanefates and Lombards for the first time. Speaking of the Lombards encountered during that campaign, a cavalry officer in that campaign asserted that rather than being the fiercest of all the Germans (which would suggest the Lombards were Germanic), the Lombards were instead said to be “more” fierce than the Germans (which suggests that the Lombards, like the Frisians, were of some other origin). So we have linguistic testimony that the Frisians were of some origin other than Germanic or Celtic, and an eyewitness Roman assertion that their neighbors, the Lombards, were ethnically in a similar boat.¹⁴⁷ And this all comes in the context of linguistic testimony that claims the region which includes the early Lombard/Frisian territory spoke a Semitic language when those peoples were discovered by the Romans.

Thus we have a number of peoples to consider. Lombards, Frisians, and Cannanefates are promising initial candidates for Nephite colonists in Europe in the 1st century BC. They were in the region that spoke the right language, at the right time.

¹⁴⁷ No pun intended. That the Lombard and Saxon origin accounts assert Hadgoth’s people had to defend themselves against Vandals or Thuringians upon their arrival in Europe aligns well with Todd’s assertion that Romans penetrated the region for the purpose of intervening against such aggression. For in the Middle Ages, the term Thuringian was once a term that meant *all* peoples of Germanic stock. In other words, upon arriving in Europe, Hadgoth’s people had to defend themselves from Germanic aggressions in general. This parallels what Tacitus said of the Lombards in the 1st century AD (see the chapter on Hadgoth).

Furthermore, many Frisians¹⁴⁸ and Lombards are said to have migrated centuries later to Britain alongside the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, thus bringing things full circle to Joseph Smith's English forefathers. These peoples demonstrated the cultural and linguistic traits we might expect of Hagoth-era Nephite colonists. And their linguistic influence upon Germanic culture left considerable imprints on modern vocabulary in the areas of agriculture, warfare, seafaring,¹⁴⁹ and social affairs, the very aspects of life where Nephite society excelled.

For example, Nephites were so effective at agriculture that Lamanites repeatedly desired to subjugate them, in order to live off their proceeds. And, the Nephites were so effective at warfare that they kept the numerically superior Lamanites at bay for over eight centuries. As to seafaring, Nephite factions are believed to have braved both the Pacific (under Nephi) and the Atlantic (under Mulek) in order to reach the Americas, and to have later sailed northward to undisclosed lands to the north (under Hagoth) in an “exceedingly” large boat. In addition, parallels of Nephite language, social institutions, religious observances, government, tactics, and even commerce¹⁵⁰ somehow surfaced in early Europe. Thus on every count, we have an extremely likely match between Nephite culture in Hagoth’s day and a people discovered in northwestern Europe shortly afterwards. Finally, from that same region of Europe and from among the same people, there emerged their own claim that they had arrived in Europe by boat, led by a man named Hadgoth, a man who just happened to fight under a banner with Nephite-like tactics.

Like the 1st-century AD spread of Lombard tradition for long hair and beards among surrounding Germanic neighbors, it is thus likely and apparent that the improvements and innovations

¹⁴⁸ According to Procopius and Bede.

¹⁴⁹ The Nephite legacy in shipbuilding from Nephi to Mulek to Hagoth was distinct. That historians assert the Germanic people first learned shipbuilding at this same juncture in time suggests that the Germanic people learned this trade from the Hamo-Semitic people in the region who provided them both the knowledge and the terminology.

¹⁵⁰ See the Appendix section on Measures.

imported to Europe by the Hamo-Semitic people were not only adopted as useful and fashionable by their neighbors and Germanic-speaking descendants, but that in this transfer, many of those innovations retained their original Hamo-Semitic names.¹⁵¹

Thus the testimony of historians and linguists such as Todd, Kuhn, Rives, Sjoln, Vennemann, Green, and others, combine to paint a linguistic picture of ancient northwestern Europe that aligns strikingly well with every other aspect of Nephite culture we have sampled from that region. The Historian E.A. Thompson documented a number of profound cultural changes that took place in Germania between the conquests of Julius Caesar in the 50's BC and the writings of Tacitus around 100 AD. These changes range from shifts in forms of government, religion, and warfare. Thompson asserted that Roman aggressions and Roman influence played a considerable factor in those cultural changes. Such is certainly the case. However, the influence of a new people in that region speaking a Semitic language with a new culture likewise played a considerable role in the sweeping cultural changes during those same decades. There is therefore considerable cause to suggest that a Nephite colony not only landed in Europe before Christ, but altered the very fabric of Western History and Civilization. In fact like tempered steel, their influence in matters of warfare likely played a role in Germania's eventual ability to turn the tables on Rome. For the people that annihilated three Roman legions in 9 AD and evicted imperial officers from Germania for good were later known to be allied with and to a considerable degree influenced by the Lombard people.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Just as "computer" and other modern innovations introduced into other countries typically retain the near-original pronunciation of the culture that introduced the innovation. For ancient equivalents, see the writings of Dennis H. Green and Theo Vennemann.

¹⁵² For example, less than a decade after the inland Cherusci defeated three Roman legions in 9 AD, the Lombards were known to be allied with the Cherusci. In addition, a few decades later, a leader of the Cherusci, ousted by a faction within the Cherusci, was restored to power among his people through Lombard influence.

Such cultural influence likely also steeled insistence among the English that their king sign the Magna Carta, and may have been a factor in the decision among English, Dutch, German and Scandinavian peoples to support the Reformation, and among Scandinavian nations to hold the Counter Reformation in check. Such influence likely also steeled the Netherlands against Austrian and Spanish control in their struggle for independence, and in the English stand against the Spanish Armada. The potential influence of such a culture upon southern Europe could be just as interesting, but is a topic better suited for other researchers.

According to the Nephite record, Nephi created a record in the language of his father. According to the historians and linguists cited in this chapter, it is quite possible that every English and Germanic writer has also spoken in the language of Nephi's father. For it is quite likely that Nephi's culture left a distinct imprint on the very words we, his possible descendants, now speak.

*Yea, I make a record in the language of my father,
which consists of the learning of the Jews and the
language of the Egyptians.*

1 Nephi 1:2

Government

American Government

Latter-day scripture openly declares that the Founding Fathers of the United States were “raised up” by God for the very purpose of establishing the Constitution.¹⁵³ Furthermore, these Founding Fathers acknowledged that they intentionally drew from European forms of government for their drafting of the Constitution. More specifically, Thomas Jefferson proposed that the official seal of the United States include “Hengist and Horsa,¹⁵⁴ the Saxon chiefs, from whom we claim the honour of being descended and whose political principles and form of government we have assumed.”¹⁵⁵

But if a Nephite colony in Europe founded the very societies from which the Founding Fathers later drew their principles, the American Constitution may then owe its very origins to Nephite principles of government.

As a biographer of one of the Founding Fathers stated:

Jefferson’s great ambition at that time was to promote a renaissance of Anglo-Saxon primitive institutions on the new continent. Thus presented, the American Revolution was nothing but the reclamation of the Anglo-Saxon birthright of which the colonists had been deprived by ‘a long train of abuses.’ Nor does it appear that there was anything in this theory which surprised or shocked his contemporaries.¹⁵⁶

According to LDS scholar Cleon Skousen, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin agreed that in their struggle to wrest free from tyrannical government, their best models to draw upon to form a new representative government were found (i) among ancient Israel and (ii) among the later Anglo-Saxons.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ D&C 101:80

¹⁵⁴ Two Saxon brothers who according to early English history led the Saxon migration from the European continent to Britain.

¹⁵⁵ Skousen, *The Making of America*, pg. 32.

¹⁵⁶ Skousen, *The Making of America*, pgs. 32-33

¹⁵⁷ *ibid*, pg 47

As mentioned, Jefferson claimed “the honor” of being descended from the Anglo-Saxons. In addition, as part of that heritage, Jefferson explained that our “political principles and form of government” also trace back to Anglo-Saxon principles. According to Jefferson, his adoption of Anglo-Saxon and Israelite principles of government was because, according to him, the Anglo-Saxon and ancient Israelite systems of government were “the wisest and most perfect ever yet devised by the wit of man”.¹⁵⁸

Early European Government

The form of government found among the early Europeans was a system based on a strong sense of individual freedom, justice and a division of powers.

Around 100 AD, Roman observers noted that the tribes in northern Europe typically refused to accept the rule of a king – seeing that office as an unnatural elevation of a fellow mortal, and an imposition on individual freedom. Instead, most Germanic peoples were ruled by a balance of powers divided among:

- 1) a chief priest and his priests who were responsible for matters of faith,
- 2) a chief judge who was responsible for the laws, and
- 3) in times of war, a dux, or general, or as the Nephites referred to him, a chief captain.

Law and justice were considered paramount among these people. The handshake to conclude an agreement, and our modern jury system of twelve jurors, the right to be judged by one’s peers, derives from the Anglo-Saxons’ system of justice. In addition, these same principles echo throughout Anglo-Saxon, Frisian, Lombard, and Scandinavian society.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 60

Nephite Government

As introduced previously, ancient Nephite government incorporated the same offices, elements and principles found later among the Anglo-Saxon, Frisian, Lombard, and Scandinavian peoples.

In Hagoth's day, the voice of the people chose their leaders, and the balance of powers divided among Nephite leaders included:

- 1) a chief priest and his priests who were responsible for matters of faith,
- 2) a chief judge who was responsible for the laws, and
- 3) in times of war, captains commanded by a chief captain

It is certain that the American Constitution derives from ancient traditions from northwestern Europe. It is therefore quite possible that the very premise of a constitutional, government, representing the voice of the people, with a division and balance of authority, traces back to the ancient Nephites. Thus both the form of government and the standard of freedom raised to the world in 1776 among the thirteen British Colonies in America may descend directly from Nephite government and Captain Moroni's standard of liberty, a standard that Hagoth's emigrants would have known well.

And it came to pass that Moroni died also. And thus ended the thirty and sixth year of the reign of the judges.

And it came to pass that in the thirty and seventh year of the reign of the judges, there was a large company of men, even to the amount of five thousand and four hundred men, with their wives and their children, departed out of the land of Zarahemla into the land which was northward.

And it came to pass that Hagoth, he being an exceedingly curious man, therefore he went forth and built him an exceedingly large ship, on the borders of the land Bountiful by the land Desolation, and launched it forth into the west sea, by the narrow neck which led into the land northward.

Alma 63:3-5

Hadgoth in Europe

In this section, we will explore the once-famous European hero known as Hadgoth. Before exploring this chapter, it would do well to note that the premise of Nephites in Europe is independent of the Nephite Hagoth, for we do not know whether Hagoth ever left Nephite shores. However, in the European accounts, Hadgoth is said to have brought his people to Europe by boat. And his ancient leadership was claimed by several European peoples. Thus parallels between the Nephite Hagoth and the European Hadgoth merit initial consideration.

The Manuscript Evidence

The manuscripts which speak of the early European hero Hadgoth were first committed to writing between 400 and 1200 AD.

Although the author of each manuscript is not known¹⁵⁹ some of the authors include Prosper of Aquitaine¹⁶⁰, Paul the Deacon¹⁶¹, Rudolf of Fulda¹⁶², Widukind of Corvey¹⁶³, Adam of Bremen¹⁶⁴, and Saxo Grammaticus¹⁶⁵. These manuscripts were originally created in what we would call Italy, France, Germany, and Denmark – in other words, representative of much of Western Civilization. So although few have heard of Hadgoth in our day, his name was once as well-known in Western Civilization as George Washington's is today.

The Name

Hadgoth's name¹⁶⁶ was spelled and pronounced differently in

¹⁵⁹ We don't know who wrote the *Origo Gentis Langobardorum*, but it is in the prologue of King Rothari's law code of 645 AD.

¹⁶⁰ Died ca. 465 AD

¹⁶¹ Died ca. 799 AD

¹⁶² Died ca. 865 AD

¹⁶³ Died ca. 973 AD

¹⁶⁴ Died ca. 1085 AD

¹⁶⁵ Died ca. 1220 AD

¹⁶⁶ While most modern names have a specific meaning, it is unknown what the Nephite Hagoth's name originally meant. Nephi, for example, may be a derivative of Semitic Nabi or Nafi, which means "prophet". If so, since Nephi actually became a prophet, Nephite names may have been a prophetic pronouncement by

different regions. In northern Europe, he was referred to as Hathagat¹⁶⁷, Hadegot, or Hadugatu¹⁶⁸. Elsewhere, mostly in southern Europe, parallel accounts refer instead to Aggo¹⁶⁹, Agio¹⁷⁰, or Aio¹⁷¹. Many historians assume that the northern and southern spellings refer to two different European heroes. However, careful consideration of the parallels between the various historical accounts and linguistic realities in each region suggest that the various European origin accounts were describing the same man.

For example, pronunciation differences between the northern Hathagat, Hadegot, or Hadugatu and the southern Aggo, Agio, and Aio, align well with known linguistic differences for each European region, akin to how George, Jorge, and Jorgen (pronounced: d'jordge, hor-hay, and yurh-ihn) are parallel European names pronounced quite differently in each region. As such, there appears to be two branching traditions for a single hero, a northern or Germanic tradition and a southern or Latinized counterpart.

Hagoth in Southern Tongues

It is suggested that in southern Europe, Hagoth was transformed to Aggo, Agio, or even Aio sometime between the first century BC and its first written appearance in the fifth century AD. As an explanation for these pronunciation differences:

the child's parents – akin to a modern child's blessing. Or it reflects a later name given to them based on key aspects of their early life – something apparent in Germanic tradition as well. Either way, one possible Egyptian derivation of the cognates Ha-goth means “to go into the boat”. Thus Hadu-goth, the fighting Goth, may reflect a late Germanic attempt to make sense of the foreign name Ha-goth, which in its original form, made no linguistic sense to them.

¹⁶⁷ From a Danish translation of the Saxon Chronicles.

¹⁶⁸ From an English translation of Adam of Bremen's 11th-century account.

¹⁶⁹ Twelfth-century Danish version of a ninth-century Lombard account.

¹⁷⁰ According to a fifth-century Aquitainian document and a seventh-century Lombard document.

¹⁷¹ Ninth-century Lombard Italy pronunciation, written in Latin, after most Lombards had adopted an Italian dialect.

- 1) In the English Cockney dialect from the familiar “My Fair Lady”, the initial “H” of “Henry Higgins” is dropped, and the professor’s name is instead pronounced: ‘Enry ‘Iggins. Although drawing from a fictional account, it demonstrates a valid principle. The same holds true with French pronunciation of Henry, as in “On-ree”.¹⁷² Thus Hagoth and ‘Agoth are linguistic parallels.
- 2) In addition, in Latinized southern Europe, the terminal “t” of Hagot/Hagoth would likewise also have been dropped or at least become silent.¹⁷³ Consider French merlot, maginot, etc. Thus ‘Aggo is a viable equivalent for Hagot or Hagoth.
- 3) Furthermore, among a Germanic people in southern Europe, specifically in Aquitaine and Lombard Italy, the “g” consonant in the middle of the name would have become softened into the “zh” sound of Agio.
- 4) As a final mutation, in a Lombard community that had discarded their Germanic language in exchange for an Italian dialect, the “g” sound would eventually be dropped completely in place of the “y” sound of Aio. A similar principle applies in the differences between High and Low German. For example, the German word “tag” (pronounced “tog”), loses its hard “g” in both Low German examples of English “day” and Danish “dag” (both pronounced “day”). We can actually confirm this final transition in the manuscript evidence, for the hero’s name was spelled “Agio” in both the earlier Aquitanian and Lombard accounts, but later morphed into “Aio” among the Latinized Lombards by the time of the medieval Lombard historian Paul the Deacon.

¹⁷² Dennis H. Green, a linguist, actually asserts the loss of the initial “H” in spoken Lombard. Ausenda, *After Empire – Towards an Ethnology of Europe’s Barbarians*, p. 46.

¹⁷³ In Comrie’s “The World’s Major Languages”, he explains that in Indo-European languages, the “final –t was regularly dropped” p. 73.

Hagoth in Northern Tongues

For a northern or Germanic transition from Hagoth to Hathagat, Hadegot, Hadugatu:

- 1) In the Middle Ages when the Germanic origin accounts were being recorded, names were occasionally given extra syllables, as a nickname, or even a completely new name,¹⁷⁴ based on the asserted characteristics of the individual. For examples Charles, King of the Franks, conqueror of Saxons, Lombards and Frisians, was renamed centuries after his death to Charle-magne (“Charles the great”). Likewise, Lief, mentioned elsewhere in this account, was later known as Fredleif due to the remarkable peace (“fred”) during his reign.
- 2) In that vein, Hadu/Hathu means “battle” in Germanic.¹⁷⁵ Since the early immigrant hero encouraged his people to fight instead of flee, and then led them to a stunning victory, Ha-goth may well have been nicknamed Hadu-goth, the fighter.¹⁷⁶
- 3) Minor differences between the soft “th” in Hagoth and the harder “t” ending Hathagat are accounted for in the differences between High Germanic (hard d’s and t’s), compared to Low Germanic (softer d’s and th’s). Consider German “tag” softened in English “day”, German “vater” softened in English father, German “danke” softened in English “thank”, and High German Hadugot being the equivalent of the Low German Hadugoth.

Thus if Hagoth arrived in Europe shortly before Christ, language and naming differences in southern and northern Europe would have caused the pronunciation and spelling of his name to shift from region to region, and from century to century. For example, if the shift from Ha-goth to Ha-du-got and Ha-du-goth in the

¹⁷⁴ See the Skjold and Scéf chapter.

¹⁷⁵ Dennis H. Green, *Ausenda, After Empire – Towards an Ethnology of Europe’s Barbarians*, p. 46.

¹⁷⁶ Akin to how Abram was renamed Abraham.

northern tradition occurred as suggested here, that shift would likely have taken place at some point in the window between 160 AD and 360 AD. The beginning of this time window is suggested by a large Lombard body, which retained no evidence of the extra syllable, migrating south into the interior of Europe by ca. 160 AD. The end of this time window is framed by a seafaring people that were at times associated with the Saxons, known as the Attacotti, A(t)tecotti, Aticotti, or Ategutti, emerging in history in the 360's AD.¹⁷⁷ This seafaring 'Attacotti could simply be the people of 'Attecott or Hadugot.¹⁷⁸

Common Origins

As mentioned above, the Saxons had a seafaring ally whose name, the 'Attacotti, is the linguistic equivalent of the people of 'Attacott, the Saxon founder Hadegoth/Hadegot. Thus a common origin is suggested for the allied Saxons and Attacotti.

The Lombards were another key Saxon ally. Although the exact relationship between Saxons and Lombards is unclear, those two people had a long history together. When the Saxons were first mentioned in Europe, they occupied territory previously held by Lombards, and are later said to have incorporated Lombards who had not marched south into their domain.¹⁷⁹ To amplify the

¹⁷⁷ Some Attacotti served in Roman legions. Roman officials claimed the Attacotti had peculiar marriage customs (polygamy) and were even cannibals. There may be no correlation between such a people and Nephites. However, as to marriage issues, consider a new people attempting to establish themselves in a hostile region, with the temporary possibility of Jacob 2:30. As to the claim of cannibalism, any Roman observing or overhearing a blessing on the sacrament might conclude that such a participant was partaking of another's flesh and blood – literally, instead of symbolically (compare Moroni 4:3; 5:2). Note that the Attacotti were described as cannibals by Roman officers during the same decade that the Roman Emperor Julian the Apostate was recovering northern Europe for the Empire. This Julian actively worked to subvert Christianity in favor of ancient Roman paganism, especially among Roman officials.

¹⁷⁸ Others suggest an independent Celtic/Irish origin for the Attacotti name. That said, the known alliance between the Saxons and the Attacotti, compounded by the similarities between the Saxon hero Hadegot and the Attacotti tribal name, suggest that the Saxons and the seafaring Attacotti shared common origins.

¹⁷⁹ Neil Christie, *The Lombards*, p. 12. By this time, the main body of Lombards had left the coast of the North Sea to occupy central Europe.

centuries-old “close relations”¹⁸⁰ between these two allies, due to the absorption of some Lombards into Saxon society, Saxons were therefore at least part Lombard. In addition, in the fifth century AD, when Anglo-Saxons crossed the Channel to occupy Britain, Lombards accompanied them.¹⁸¹ A century later, when the main body of Lombards marched to occupy Italy, twenty thousand Saxons allies, along with their women and children, marched with them. Due to centuries of such Saxon-Lombard alliances and intermarriage, the Saxon origin accounts may very well derive from what would otherwise be called Lombard oral history, since some Lombards were absorbed by the Saxons. In other words, multiple peoples may have been drawing their origin accounts from the same tradition.

So when considering Lombard and Saxon origins, the reader has a number of possible conclusions.

- a) Either the neighboring allied peoples with centuries-old “close relations” just happened to have parallel origin accounts with similarly-named heroes, and that when the Saxons arrived in Europe, they somehow unwittingly reenacted the Lombard origin account centuries after the first known Lombards,
- b) Or, the Saxon origin tradition simply derives from the Lombard tradition.¹⁸²

It is suggested that the later is the case, and that the Saxon accounts of Hadgoth parallel and illuminate the Lombard accounts of Aggo/Agio. For further suggestions of common Anglo-Saxon and Lombard origins, review the chapter on Scef and Scyld.

¹⁸⁰ Neil Christie, *The Lombards*, p. 11.

¹⁸¹ Neil Christie, *The Lombards*, p. 11.

¹⁸² Widukind’s account specifically says that Hadgoth was revered as a father among his people, even though not all Saxons descended from him. Which demonstrates a shared tradition despite diverse ancestry, the very perspective we might expect for an origin account that derives from the Lombards.

Hadgoth's Era

We do not know specifically when the European Hadgoth lived or died. Some place him in the sixth century AD,¹⁸³ which doesn't fit well for an origin account, since Saxons and Attacotti are known to have been in Europe centuries earlier.

However, since that hero landed on the European continent at some juncture in time, and since the Lombards¹⁸⁴ were known to be in Europe by at least 5 AD, the hero at the time of their initial landing would then likely have been at least *born* before Christ. Although we can't narrow his era down any further in this context, such a European chronology for the European Hadgoth aligns well with the Nephite Hagoth, who was alive and well, according to Nephite history, approximately 55 years before Christ. For a more precise glimpse of his proposed era, refer to the chapter on Scyld and Sceaf.

His Origin

¹⁸³ Medieval accounts derived from oral tradition are notoriously inaccurate in placing historical events in their correct chronological era. (The same holds true with any oral family history, especially for events which predate the life of the speaker.) And, the three European manuscripts which suggest a sixth-century dating for Hadgoth admit to being pulled directly from oral tradition. Thus although many of the details of the man's deeds may be accurate, its chronological placement may be skewed. Furthermore, the most descriptive of those three manuscripts is assessed elsewhere by another historian as containing considerable political propaganda slanted to benefit the benefactors of the written version(s). In other words, written in a time when Franks were solidifying their sovereignty over the Saxons, the Frankified version of the Saxon origin account conveniently places Saxon origins in what was for them recent history, asserting a historical precedent of Frankish overlordship of the Saxon people.

¹⁸⁴ Most historians associate the 6th-century Lombards in Italy with the 1st-century Langobardii of Northern Europe, in part because of their name (both of which refers to "long beards"), and in part because the Italian Lombards outright claimed to have landed in northern Europe long ago where the 1st-century Langobardii were known to have dwelt. Still, some historians assert that one cannot prove a historical continuity between the two known peoples. While it is true that such a link has not been proven beyond a doubt, the preponderance of evidence supports the connection, leaving the burden of proof with those who would assert they are different people.

Whatever the origin and identity of this early hero, he was fondly remembered for centuries. Despite the passage of time and the dimming of memories, Hadgoth played a crucial role in the history of his people. Some of these manuscripts identified him as a leader chosen by his people to lead the crossing of the sea to settle a colony in continental Europe. Others described him in considerable detail as the man who, shortly after landing on the northern coast of Europe, led his little colony in a battle that saved them from extinction. Many modern historians assert that before arriving on the coast of northern Europe, this man and his seafaring people lived in Scandinavia or England. However, historians openly acknowledge that although this is one possible interpretation of the manuscripts, it is not what the texts actually say. Instead, what they do say is that they came from a land whose northern region meant “ruin” or “destruction”. Furthermore, some of these texts specifically claim that the hero and his people actually set out on their voyage *from* the west,¹⁸⁵ from a land where many people lived, before landing on the European continent. After weighing the various accounts, it is suggested that this man and his people actually did set out from a land west of mainland Europe, a land whose northern region had a name meaning “ruin” or “destruction”, and, based on the assertion of more than one linguist, this was from a place where the native people spoke a Hamo-Semitic language.

It is thus suggested that European origin accounts of Aggo, Agio, Aio, Ajjo, Hathagat, Hadegot, Hadugatu (and even the existence of the seafaring Attacotti) combine to suggest that at some point before Christ, the Nephite Hagoth set foot in northern Europe.

Sources

Translations of some of the historical sources follow. Keep in mind that all but the first two of these accounts were committed to writing centuries after the events they describe, after being passed

¹⁸⁵ The assertion in some of these medieval texts is that the land sailed from was merely England. Consider, however, that Friesland (home of the Frisians?), Vinland (home of the Vinnili?) and other lands were depicted in medieval European rhymes and manuscripts as being somewhere west of Great Britain.

down orally for generations.

Velleius Paterculus (1st Century)

It was at this time that I became a soldier in the camp of Tiberius Caesar,¹⁸⁶ after having previously filled the duties of the tribunate. For, immediately after the adoption of Tiberius, I was sent with him to Germany as prefect of the cavalry....

He at once entered Germany. The Canninefates, the Attuarii, and the Bructeri were subdued....

*Ye Heavens, how large a volume could be filled with the tale of our achievements in the following summer. Under the generalship of Tiberius Caesar! All Germany were traversed by our armies, races were conquered hitherto almost unknown, even by name; and the tribes of the Cauchi were again subjugated. All the flower of their youth, infinite in number though they were, huge of stature and protected by the ground they held, surrendered their arms, and, flanked by a gleaming line of our soldiers, fell with their generals upon their knees before the tribunal of the commander. The power of the Langobardi was broken, a race surpassing even the Germans¹⁸⁷ in savagery.
(Book II chapters 104-106)*

Cornelius Tacitus (1st Century)

The Langobardi, by contrast, are famous because they are so few. Hemmed in as they are by many mighty peoples, they find safety, not in submission, but in facing the risks of battle.

¹⁸⁶ The same Tiberius Caesar mentioned in Luke 3:1. For clarification, at the time of the campaign mentioned above (5 AD), Tiberius was not yet Caesar but was instead serving under Caesar Augustus. However, by the time the account was written and published, Augustus had died (14 AD) and Tiberius had become Caesar, emperor of Rome.

¹⁸⁷ Here in the earliest European mention of the Lombards from one who served in the Roman campaign that discovered them in 5 AD, the wording (if translated correctly) suggests that the Lombards are not of Germanic origin. Some assert that the term “German” was used by some writers to describe those of Germanic ethnic stock, while others suggest it used to describe inhabitants of Germania whether they were Celtic, Germanic, or any other origin. However, after describing the Lombards as being within Germania proper, he nonetheless described them as being more fierce than the Germans – an odd yet interesting distinction, which suggests he may not have been distinguishing just their battle tactics, he may also have been speaking of a non-Germanic ethnic origin.

(Chapter 40)

There is one custom – sometimes practiced by other German tribes, though rarely, and only as an exhibition of individual daring – that has become a general rule among the Chatti. As soon as they reach manhood they let their hair and beard grow as they will. This fashion¹⁸⁸ of covering the face is assumed in accordance with a vow pledging them to the service of valor; and only when they have slain an enemy do they lay it aside. Standing over the bloody corpse they have despoiled, they reveal their faces to the world once more, and proclaim that they have at last repaid the debt they owe for being brought into the world and have proved themselves worthy of their native land and parents.

(Chapter 31)

Origo Gentis Langobardorum (7th Century)

There is an island that is called Scadan¹⁸⁹, which is interpreted “destruction”¹⁹⁰ in the regions of the north¹⁹¹, where many people dwell. Among these there was a small people that was called the Winniles. They were ruled by two chieftains, called Ybor and Agio, and their mother, Gambara.

Paul the Deacon (8th century)

Because of overpopulation, the Winnili, originally inhabitants of an island called Scandinavia, were forced to draw lots and a third of the tribal group sailed away. The emigrant Winnili under their appointed leaders, Ibor and Aio, and their powerful mother, Gambara¹⁹², settled in Scoringa for some years. The Vandals under Ambri and Assi, coercing

¹⁸⁸ Note that this “fashion” was becoming popular among the tribes of Germania in 98 AD when Tacitus was writing this account – decades after the Lombards were named for their fierceness and for their long beards. Thus the Lombards are likely the origin of this spreading hygiene fashion in Germania.

¹⁸⁹ Variant versions of this manuscript instead read “Scadan” and “Scandanan”. A different chronicle reads “Scatenaug”. Note that Paul’s account, which borrowed from Origo, swapped out these earlier term(s) for his preferred “Scandinavia” (but not Scandinavia). Some suggest that for Paul’s term, he borrowed his spelling from Pliny (a first century historian who was referring to a completely different context). By doing so, Paul potentially altered the substance of the Lombard Origin account.

¹⁹⁰ In the Latin text, it reads: excidia

¹⁹¹ Latin: “in partibus aquilonis” or “in the north part”. If this term “excidia/destruction” is meant as the north part or portion of a land it aligns well with the Land of Desolation, which formed the northern part of Nephite lands, and was specifically mentioned in the account of the departure of Hagoth’s ships.

their neighbouring provinces, sent messengers to the Winnili to either pay tribute or engage in battle. The Winnili decided rather to fight for their liberty than be enslaved by the Vandals. When the Vandals besought Godan for victory, he promised it to those whom he first saw at sunrise. However, Gambara went to Frea for advice, and she suggested that the Winnili should line up early with their wives with their hair let down and arranged around their faces like beards. When Godan saw the long line of warriors at dawn, he exclaimed “who are these long-bearded ones?” Frea persuaded him to give victory to those to whom he had given a new name. Hence the Winnili were victorious.

Widukind of Corvey (10th Century)

Widukind’s account is the lengthiest account of the European Hadgoth, too lengthy to include here. To summarize, when threatened with extinction shortly after arriving on the coast of Europe, Hadgoth, said in that account to be a revered veteran,¹⁹³ encouraged his people to stand and fight, reminded them of their noble heritage, led them to the enemy’s stronghold, where they let themselves down over the wall by night, and fell upon the enemy. In that conflict, not one of his own people was killed. Thus there are multiple parallel threads between the European Hadgoth and Nephite battle history.

Adam of Bremen (11th Century)

It may be asked what mortals first inhabited Saxony and from what region this folk first came forth. We have learned from reading of the ancients that this people, like nearly all the peoples in the world, had by a hidden judgment of God been passed more than once from one

¹⁹² Gambara, according to the Chronicon Gothanum, was a prophetess, who “declared to them their migration...moved therefore not by necessity, nor hardness of heart, nor oppression of the poor, but that they should attain salvation from on high, she says that they are to go forth.” (Monument, Germ. Hist. Leges, IV, 641.) For interesting context, note that Hagoth’s migration occurred in the shadows of the dreadful Lamanite war and of Alma’s private prophecy that the local Nephites would become extinct (Alma 45:11). Thus those leaving at the time of Hagoth may well have been leaving under inspiration similar to that ascribed to Gambara.

¹⁹³ Based on the Nephites needing to send most of their men to battle in their desperate struggle for survival just prior to the departure of Hagoth’s ships, the Nephite Hagoth may very well have been a veteran in the Nephite wars with the Lamanites. And the Nephite tactics used just prior to the departure of Hagoth’s ships align strikingly with the tactics of the European Hadgoth.

kingdom to another people, and that their territories had also been named from the names of their conquerors. If then, the Roman writers are to be believed, the Suevi were the first to live along the Elbe and in the rest of Germany, and their neighbors were those called Druids, Bardi, Sicambri, Huns, Vandals, Sarmatians, Heruli, Dacians, Marcomanni, Goths, Northmen, and Slavs.¹⁹⁴ On account of the barrenness of their native soil and of domestic strife, or as it is said, because of the need of reducing their numbers, these peoples left their homes and together overran all Europe as well as Africa. Gregory of Tours and Orosius give this account of the Saxons of antiquity: "The Saxons," the latter says "are a very warlike people, terrible in their valor and agility. They live on the seacoast, inaccessible because of impassable swamps. When at one time they meditated a hazardous incursion into the Roman territories, they were subdued by the Emperor Valentinian." Later, when the Saxons took possession of the Gallic country, they were vanquished by the Roman commander, Syagrius, and their islands were seized. According to the Saxons were first settled along the Rhine and were called Angles; part of them went to Britain and expelled the Romans from that island. Another part conquered Thuringia and occupied that region. After briefly relating these events, Einhard¹⁹⁵ enters upon the history as follows:

"According to an ancient tradition," he says, "the Saxon people sprang from the Angles, the inhabitants of Britain, and sailed over the ocean to the coast of Germany, intending, as was necessary, to seek a place in which to settle. They landed in a region called Hadeln at the very time when Theodoric the king of the Franks was at war with his brother-in-law, Irminfrid, the duke of the Thuringians, and was cruelly devastating their land with fire and sword. But when after two engagements, in which he suffered grievous losses, the fighting was still indecisive and victory hung in the balance, Theodoric, his hope of conquering frustrated sent messengers to the Saxons whose leader was Hadugato. On learning the reason for their coming, Theodoric induced them to aid him by promising them a place in which to settle in the event of victory. And since they fought valiantly with him as if their own liberty and country were at stake, he overcame his adversaries and, after having plundered and almost exterminated the natives, assigned their territory

¹⁹⁴ Adam garbles history here somewhat, as some of these peoples did not emerge in Europe until long after the Saxons, and the Druids were not so much a separate people as priests among a people.

¹⁹⁵ Referring to the 9th-century Saxon account by Rudolf and Meginhart/Eginhard

to the victors as he had promised. When on dividing the land by lot they could not occupy it all themselves, because many of them have been killed in battle and because their numbers were small, they turned over part of it, in particular that which lay to the east to individual settlers who were to work it under tribute, each one according to his lot. The other parts, however, the Saxons themselves possessed.

Overview

Basically, in the context of the discoveries of the Lombard and Frisian peoples in Europe, these accounts in essence say that Hadgoth's people came to Europe by boat at some point before 5 AD (if we pinpoint the Lombards and Cannanefates) and before 14 BC (if we include the Frisians).

Hagoth, Vinland, and Columbus

The initial founding of the Nephite nation on American soil traces to Nephi building a ship, and crossing the ocean with his family. Two thousand years after Nephi, Christopher Columbus was led by God to sail west from Europe and discover the Americas. While it is believed that Nephi saw Columbus¹⁹⁶ in vision, Alma's mention of Hagoth may provide a missing link between Nephi and Columbus. For as we will soon see, the premise of a Nephite colony in Europe suggests that Christopher Columbus may have been more than a fulfillment of Nephite prophecy. He may have also been a descendant of Nephi of old, returning to the land of his inheritance.

Approximately six hundred years after the voyage of Hagoth's ships, the Western Roman Empire was in ruins. In 568 AD, tens of thousands of Lombards migrated south to Italy and established kingdoms and duchies that governed for over two centuries in northern Italy, and for considerably longer in southern Italy. One of the regions of Italy that they conquered and governed was Genoa, the claimed birthplace of Christopher Columbus.

According to archaeologists, the Lombards stood a head taller than their Roman neighbors. They also had fair hair.

Seven centuries after the collapse of Lombard rule in northern Italy, Christopher Columbus was born. According to his contemporaries, Columbus grew to become a "tall, well-built" man, with a fair complexion, "light" or "blue" eyes, and "blond hair which had turned gray by his thirtieth year."¹⁹⁷ This description is in striking contrast to the dark-haired, dark-eyed Italian stereotype. (If Christopher was instead born in Spain, as some suggest, it presents the same situation – he did not resemble the characteristics of a typical Spaniard.) Either way, the

¹⁹⁶ Some assert that Nephi was referring to earlier explorer(s).

¹⁹⁷ Brigham, Christopher Columbus p.19

descriptions of his appearance suggest some other ancestral origin for Christopher's family.¹⁹⁸

While considering Christopher's ancestral origins, the family name of Columbus (or Colombo, as they were known in the city of Genoa), is worth closer consideration. In Italian, the prefix "co-" means "associated with" or "related to," just as the first word in Anti-Nephi-Lehi, apparently derived from Egyptian "Nty", meaning with. Dozens of modern English words begin with the "co" prefix.

It is therefore quite possible that Christopher Co-lombo's forbears considered themselves descendants of the Lombards.

Christopher's height and fair complexion, eyes, and hair, plus the fact that Lombards were known to have settled in that region, suggest this is a distinct possibility. In fact the language spoken in Genoa during Christopher's day was still a blend of Italian and Lombard which few outsiders could understand, and which made it difficult for native Genoans to understand regular Italian. So although supposedly born in Italy, Christopher had to study and learn Italian to communicate with other Italians. Furthermore, Christopher's first America-bound armada was armed, according to Christopher's own writings, with "lombard" cannon.

So it is likely that Christopher descended at least in part from the northern peoples who claimed centuries earlier to have arrived in Europe by boat, and who marched south to the Mediterranean long before Christopher was born. It would appear that in Christopher Columbus, Nephi's vision began to come full circle.

Bridging the Atlantic

Earlier, we explored Lombard descriptions of their homeland across the ocean. At this juncture, it should be added that their own written history claims that although they were known as Lombards in Europe, they were called Winnili in their previous

¹⁹⁸ Goths and other Germanic peoples took possession of Italy before the Lombards, and of Spain long before. And the Goths claimed a common heritage with the Winnili/Lombards.

homeland. According to some modern linguists, the term Winnili stems from a word meaning “pasture”. If accurate, this would imply that they were originally a pastoral or farming people. This aligns quite well with what we know of Nephite society.

Additionally, we should note that Lombard history was not written until approximately 800 AD, at the beginning of the Viking Age. Thus for eight centuries, the Lombards had preserved and passed down the memory of their origins by word of mouth, including their original Winnili name.

As mentioned previously, Christian¹⁹⁹ Vikings then ventured as far west as North America, where they landed approximately 1000 AD, a mere two hundred years after the Lombards first committed their history to writing.

Vinnili and Viniland

Upon arriving in America, the Vikings gave the land a very interesting name. They called the land Viniland. Some interpret the name to mean land of grapes. Others interpret it to mean land of meadows or pastures. However, just as Frisland means land of the Frisians, Viniland may also mean the land of the Winnili.

Unlike modern English, which has different pronunciations for “V” and “W”, in ancient Rome, “W” did not exist, and during the early Middle Ages “V” and “W” were interchangeable and indistinguishable in most Germanic languages. More specifically, in German, “w” is a consonant which some German immigrants never learn to pronounce a “w” differently than “v.” By way of illustration, any number of World War II movies and spoofs depict the villain warning his captives: “vee have vays to make you talk.” So in much of northern Europe, Winnili would be pronounced Vinnili. In other words, by naming the Americas Viniland or Vinland, those Vikings may have been hinting that

¹⁹⁹ Leif Eirikson was known to be baptized as a Christian and appointed to as a missionary before his first journey to Vinland or America.

the Vinnili had returned west to their ancient homeland. For those who feel this is an unwarranted stretch, feel free to jump immediately to the next chapter.

In seeming confirmation of this, the Viking sagas themselves described their explorers reconnoitering the new land as returning from spying out the land, loaded down with grapes and grain. To an agricultural people, and especially to a Judeo-Christian audience, the implication of this imagery was both clear and intentional. The discovered land was a promised land.

And Moses sent [twelve men] to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them... 'bring of the fruit of the land'So they went up, and searched the land...and...cut down from thence... grapes... pomegranates, and...figs.

*And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel...and brought back word unto them....and said, 'We came into the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it.'*²⁰⁰

Likewise, the Lombards were previously enticed to come take control of Italy when a similar package was sent to them by Narses, Byzantine representative of the Eastern Empire in Italy, demonstrating the rich produce from Italy, with the invitation to come.²⁰¹ Accepting the invitation, they entered Italy and “found it flowing with milk and honey.”²⁰²

In keeping with the promised land theme, the Icelandic sagas specifically described Leif Erikson setting out on foot to explore the new “choice” land with a party of twelve men, who discover abundant pasture, timber, fish, and grapes. As proof of what they discovered, they then returned to Greenland loaded with Vinland’s produce. Thus it may be that the memory of a cultural

²⁰⁰ Numbers 13:17-27

²⁰¹ Origo Gentis Langobardum, Ch. 5. Paul the Deacon, History of the Lombards, Book 2, Chapters 1 and 5.

²⁰² The Codex Gothanum.

promised homeland across the Atlantic was preserved from the time before Roman legions discovered them on the European coast.

As indications of this memory, approximately a century before Christopher Columbus rediscovered America, a common English rhyme placed both “Veneland” and “Frisland” in the West Atlantic. In addition, numerous maps from the early age of exploration show both Viniland and Frisland in the Atlantic – far west of Ireland. Some suggest that this western Frisland (which can also be interpreted as “Freezing Land”) was simply confused by cartographers for Iceland. Since the maps that depict Frisland also depict Iceland, it may be suggesting that the Frisian homeland was a different place altogether.

An elaborate account of a visit to Frisland by a European named Zeno was published in 1558. He described the land, their towns, and the people in considerable detail. Some modern historians, eager to dismiss a Frisland in the western Atlantic, point to Zeno’s elaborations to suggest that the entire idea of a Frisland in the West Atlantic was a hoax derived entirely from Zeno’s vivid imagination. However, the 14th century English poem mentioned above apparently existed generations before Zeno. And Frisland is known to be on numerous Atlantic maps *prior to* Zeno’s works. Thus the tradition of a Frisian land or homeland west of Ireland predates Zeno’s imagination. So although Zeno’s account may be an elaboration, it was built upon a pre-existing tradition, circulating among Europeans, that a land, perhaps even a homeland, lay somewhere to the west.

Over a decade before Christopher Columbus’ famous voyage to America, he first visited the British Isles and Iceland. In the British Isles he likely learned of traditions about land to the west. In Iceland, he likely also learned of visits there by Leif Eirikson and others. These accounts likely strengthened his resolve to attempt the voyage west, which eventually resulted in Queen Isabella’s sponsorship of his voyage. Then in 1492, Christopher Co-lombus sailed west to fulfill Nephi’s vision.

The Winnili

Finally, a comment or two about the Lombard's pre-European name, the Winnili. Although various peoples from northern Europe claimed to descend from Nefi (Nephi?), Scef (Joseph?) and Hadgoth (Hagoth?), the Lombards only claimed to have arrived with Aggo – not to descend from him. In parallel, the Saxons specifically stated that not all of their people descended from Hadgoth, though they revered him as a father of their people. So with ancestral names a frequent theme in these origin tradition, the pre-European “Winnili” identity sticks out like a wallflower, with no apparent correlation with Nephite conventions. At least at first glance.

As we explored in a previous chapter, the Lombard tradition of growing their hair long as part of a vow to defend their people is strikingly reminiscent of the Samson account and the Jewish Nazarite pledge, and more specifically and more recently of the sons of Helaman, who only years earlier made a similar pledge to defend the Nephites.

We should note that Helaman, the leader of these young warriors, died two years before the first northbound voyage of Hadgoth's large ship.²⁰³ These young men considered him not just a spiritual and military leader but as a second father. Thus in the vacuum of his death on the eve of Hagoth's migration, Helaman's former followers had a number of decisions to make.

It is thus quite likely that some of those stripling warriors chose to accompany and guard Hadgoth's northbound colony, to fulfill their pledge to defend the Nephites. Such young men, committed to showing their continued gratitude to the Nephites, would likely not allow them to venture far without some protection. In fact Helaman states that many Ammonites departed for the land northward,²⁰⁴ wherever one deems those lands to be. Most of the

²⁰³ Alma 62:52; 63:4-5

²⁰⁴ Helaman 3:12

Ammonite warriors, however, likely remained near the land of Jershon, serving as auxiliaries in the Nephite army, as needed, under the bidding of Moroni's son, the new chief captain, Moronihah.

But back to labels. As noted elsewhere, the Ammonites were known by several names. Among these is one of the Book of Mormon's largest mouthfuls, Anti-Nephi-Lehies.²⁰⁵ The Book of Mormon Reference Companion suggests that the "Anti" portion of this label may derive from the Egyptian "Nty", which means "he of, the one of". If that derivation from "Nty" is accurate, Anti-Nephi-Lehi meant "one of" or with "Nephi and Lehi."²⁰⁶ A name associating themselves as being united with the people of Nephi aligns well with the vow among the sons of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies to defend the Nephite people, and with the Nephite account that says the Ammonites then called themselves Nephites. The sons of Ammon in essence became an honor guard, a sworn bodyguard.

Again, Anti-Nephi-Lehi is an unwieldy label for any people. We don't know what the Lamanite reconstruction of that term might have been, or what a Germanized transliteration might have sounded like. But after centuries of transliteration and at least two language shifts,²⁰⁷ the medieval Lombard term Wi-ni-li may well be all that was left of the original label when it was finally committed to writing centuries later. This is offered for consideration, with no claims of being definitive. There are two related points worth additional consideration.

It is of interest, that the Codex Gothanum specifically says that the Winnili name was a reference not to any observable characteristic like long hair, but was instead a reference to their "parentage." It is of note that when the converted Lamanites adopted the name of Anti-Nephi-Lehies, "they were called by this

²⁰⁵ Alma 23:16-17

²⁰⁶ Book of Mormon Reference Companion, page 67.

²⁰⁷ First from Semitic to Germanic in the 1st century BC or AD. And then from Germanic to Italic a few centuries later after their arrival in Italy.

name and were no more called Lamanites.” In other words they surrendered the previous heritage and instead called themselves “of Nephi and Lehi”, adopting Nephi and Lehi, instead of Laman and Lehi, as their heritage.

Lamicho and Skjold

While their earlier Lamanite heritage was set aside, their language and history were not. One of the first Lombard kings was said to be Lamisso, Lamicho, or Laiamicho. As a child, Lamicho was said to have been abandoned with his siblings in a fish pond, rescued from the water, and marked for greatness.²⁰⁸ Foulke, who translated the account into English, cited Ludwig Schmidt, a Lombard historian, as suggesting that the Lamicho origin story derives from and elaborates upon the early English Scef origin account, who also came from the water and landed on the European coast as an orphan to be chosen as a leader. The suggested connection to Scef also brings to mind Scef’s descendant Skjold, who was likewise drawn from the water to become a leader of his people.

The connection to Skjold is of further interest because the Origo says that the Lombard leaders Aggo and Lamicho were both “of the race of Gugingus”.²⁰⁹ In Scandinavian accounts, the Gju-kung-ar, the same plural term, were said to descend from Nefi. The Gu-gingus/Gju-kungar reference may simply mean “Jew-kings”.²¹⁰ (Ging/king in English carries has the same royal meaning as kung/kunung in Icelandic.) And the “ar” ending in the Icelandic “Gjukung-ar, like the “er” ending in many plural Danish words, suggests a plural noun, as apparently does the “s” ending of the Lombard term Gu-ging-us. Thus the Lombard and Icelandic terms appear to be linguistically parallel. For the Gju-

²⁰⁸ See Paul the Deacon, Book 1, Chapter XV for Lamisso’s story, and the older Origo Gentis Langobardorum for Lamicho/Laiamicho.

²⁰⁹ One version of the manuscript, Modena MSS, omits the phrase “of the race of the Gugingus”, so its validity in Lombard history hinges on the accuracy of the manuscript version cited here.

²¹⁰ Perhaps a descendant of Mulek, son of Zedekiah, king of Jerusalem, but based on the European context, more likely a descendant of Nephi, who considered himself a Jew.

kungar were said by the Icelanders to descend from Nefi and the seafaring Skjold.²¹¹

Citing a specific ancestry for rulers in medieval records was typically done because it was a distinguished line that added to their dignity and right to rule. Based on this, Schmidt might be correct in aligning the early Lombard Gju-king Lamicho with the Anglo-Scandinavian Skjold.

Lama, Valley, and Water

Lamicho is said to have been named for the water from which he was drawn. More specifically, according to Paul the Deacon, “lama” was a Lombard term for water. The connection of this word to water in an ancient Lombard account is of distinct interest in the context of Nephite heritage.

Immediately after leaving Jerusalem, Lehi and his family paused to take their breath in the wilderness near the Red Sea, “in a valley by the side of a river of water.”²¹² As Nephi described:

*And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman saying: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness!*²¹³

Foulke questioned Paul’s assertion that the word was of Lombard origin, by explaining that in northern or Lombard Italy, the word lama initially meant a collection of water. Foulke cited Mommsen however, in saying that the word’s initial meaning later shifted in Lombard Italy to mean “a low plain.”²¹⁴

Immediately after naming the river for his son Laman, Lehi then named the valley after another son, Lemuel, and said:

²¹¹Lehi and his descendants were Josephites by heritage, but Jewish by nationality, as they had lived under the nation and kings of Judah.

²¹² 1 Nephi 2:6

²¹³ 1 Nephi 2:9

²¹⁴ Paul the Deacon, Book I, Chapter XV, note 1.

*O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and steadfast,
and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord!*²¹⁵

It is then interesting that although Foulke doubted Paul's assertion that the word lama was of Lombard origin, he did comment that in the Lombard region of Italy, the word then meant "a low plain." Perhaps it simply meant both. Either way, Lehi's plea for steady humility in his sons is worth considering.

Whatever we make of Viking explorations, Vinland/Winiland, Lombard/Winnili connections and parallels, and Christopher Columbus, Icelandic writers clearly drew from and played upon Biblical imagery of a promised land when referring to their entrance into the New World and their arrival in Italy. So whatever Christopher's heritage may actually be, Christopher's journey to a new land and the conviction that he was led there by God were consistent themes in European migration history, including that of the Viking Age. Each of these likely Nephites descendants, Viking and Explorer alike, depicted the Americas as a promised land.

²¹⁵ 1 Nephi 2:9, 14.

This concludes the first portion the Nephites in Europe research. Over a hundred additional pages exist, which are currently being prepared for publication. To receive our weekly newsletter of website content updates, email your request to info@CandlestickStudios.com