

Division 2

Chronological Structure and Symbolism in the Small Plates of Nephi

Part 1: Chronological structure in the small plates of Nephi

1.1 Narratives in the small plates

This Division 2 and the following Divisions 3 and 4 analyze chronological structure and symbolism in the extant text of the *Book of Mormon*. This Division focuses on the relatively simple chronological structure in a group of narratives that the *Book of Mormon* describes as “small plates” and “plates of Nephi”.¹ This textual group was introduced in Part 1 of Division 1 of this source book² and usually is called the “small plates of Nephi” or the “small plates” in this source book. The chronological structure within this textual group appears to have been created by the writers’ use of carefully chosen diction in the year-, time- and number-terms that formed their year-related expressions and in the narrative-links that connected the year-related expressions to their associated narratives.

Because the phrases “small plates” and “plates of Nephi” occur in narratives of the *Book of Mormon*, the naming of this group of texts is consistent with the narrative policy of this source book; namely, *Book of Mormon* narrative details are presented in the way they are given in the text, as descriptions of ancient people, things and events. The policy is simple, clear and textually-verifiable. No attempt has been made to create either a modernized version or a purportedly objective version of each year-related narrative. The reader is not required to wrestle with what otherwise likely would be idiosyncratic or misleading stories.

Whether or not any particular *Book of Mormon* narrative describes perceptions of an ancient reality is irrelevant to the definitions of descriptive terms and to the data collection, sorting and analysis presented in this study. The definitions, data and statistics are based on the earliest extant physical manuscripts of the *Book of Mormon* and on English linguistics, not on whether one accepts or rejects a belief in the ancient reality of the narrated events. The temporal-expressions in the extant text of the *Book of Mormon* are ink designs on paper, tangible objects that may be studied in accordance with rational principles³ that diminish the distortions of emotional bias and competing belief.

In this Division 2, as in Division 1, quotations from the text of the *Book of Mormon* use the diction, punctuation and spelling set forth in Royal Skousen’s *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*,⁴ unless otherwise expressly noted. This text represents the most accurate reconstruction of the original text yet available. In this reconstruction (often referred to in this source book as the “Yale text”), Skousen usually modified the nonstandard spelling of the various scribes who participated in writing the *Book of Mormon* manuscripts, so that the spelling agrees with modern conventions; however, he kept the nonstandard diction and grammar that appear in the extant original and printer’s manuscripts.⁵

¹ 1 Nephi 9:1-5; Jacob 1:1-4.

² See Division 1, Part 1, Section 1.6.1 and Table 1.C.

³ See Division 10, Part 1, “Rational Interpretation of the *Book of Mormon*”.

⁴ Published by Yale University Press in 2009.

⁵ Skousen, “Editor’s Preface”, in Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, xxxv-xxxix, xli.

1.2 Describing chronological structure

The detailed analysis in this Division uses the descriptive terms introduced and examined in Division 1. These terms and their various analytical types are based on the earliest extant physical manuscripts of the *Book of Mormon* and on English linguistics, beginning with and centering on the noun *year* and its singular and plural meanings. Many of these terms and analytical types are applicable to the 29 temporal-expressions that appear in the small plates of Nephi. Those that are applicable to the small plates are listed in Table 1.A of this Division.

1.2.1 Year-term⁶

The ink designs or textual facts collectively called a “year-term” have been divided into three analytical types: an express singular noun (*year*); an express plural noun (*years*); and an implied singular noun (*year*). An implied *year* is indicated in eight instances by the ink designs that occur immediately before the point where the word *year* is expected to occur, but does not,⁷ and in one instance by the ink design interpreted as the pronoun *it*.⁸ The implied plural noun (*years*) does not appear to have been intended in any chronological expression within the *Book of Mormon*. While a total of 426 year-terms exist within the extant text of the *Book of Mormon*, the complete text of the small plates includes just 29 year-terms and uses only the express nouns *year* and *years*. To describe chronological structure and symbolism in simplest terms, the two express types of year-terms were symbolized in Division 1 by the use of regular capital letters, with A meaning *year* and B meaning *years*. The placement of the 29 year-terms in the small plates of Nephi also is depicted with the related capital letters A and B in Table 1.A.

1.2.2 Time-term⁹

Some ink designs in the *Book of Mormon* text appear to be adjectives that describe the time in which a year-term did exist, does exist or will exist. Each of these adjectives is called a “time-term”. A time-term may be a single word (e.g., “hence”¹⁰) or as many as 22 words (“from the time which the sign was given which was spoken of by the prophets that Christ should come into the world”¹¹). Time-terms may be divided into five express types: standard long names of Nephite eras; standard short names of Nephite eras; altered names of Nephite eras; the unique name of the third Nephite era; and familial, group or individualized time-terms collectively called personalized names. These personalized names may or may not describe Nephite eras. A sixth analytical type, called omitted names, was created for investigative purposes. A total of 272 time-terms are categorized as being omitted names; so, their existence as an analytical group cannot be ignored. One hundred fifty-three of the 154 express time-terms in the *Book of Mormon* follow their year-terms. The exception¹² has the time-term ahead of its year-term in the text.

⁶ See Division 1, Part 2.

⁷ 3 Nephi 5:7; 4 Nephi 1:1, 6.

⁸ Helaman 1:13.

⁹ See Division 1, Part 3.

¹⁰ Jacob 7:7.

¹¹ 3 Nephi 2:7.

¹² 3 Nephi 2:8.

In the small plates of Nephi, 13 of the 29 year-terms are qualified by express time-terms; the other 16 year-terms are categorized as having omitted names as their time-terms. The 13 express time-terms include a standard long name identifying the first Nephite era and 12 personalized names, five of which also describe the first Nephi era. Again, regular capital letters were used in Division 1 to symbolize these types of descriptive terms: D means the long name of a Nephite era; G means a personalized name; and H means an omitted name. The placement of time-terms in the small plates appears with the related capital letters D, G and H in Table 1.A.

1.2.3 Number-term¹³

An ink design or adjective called a “number-term” appears to consist of definite or general language that states or implies a year-term’s quantity or quantitative position. A number-term may be a single word (e.g., “thirty”,¹⁴ a stated cardinal name) or as many as seven words (e.g., “the two hundred and thirty and first”,¹⁵ a stated ordinal name). Except for two instances in the plates of Mormon where part of a number-term occurs after the year-term,¹⁶ the 418 express number-terms entirely precede their year-terms in the text. (The pronoun *it* is considered to represent an express number-term and to immediately precede its implied year-term.¹⁷) In Division 1, express number-terms were divided into five analytical types: stated ordinal names; stated cardinal names; referenced ordinal names; referenced cardinal names; and referenced general names. A sixth analytical type, called absent names, was created to account for the eight year-terms that are not qualified by any sort of number-term. These six analytical types also were labeled with regular capital letters: K (stated ordinal name); L (stated cardinal name); M (referenced ordinal name); N (referenced cardinal name); O (referenced general name); and P (absent name).

In the small plates of Nephi, all six types of number-terms occur. A single stated ordinal name or K number-term appears first in 1 Nephi 1:4. Fourteen stated cardinal names or L number-terms are distributed through the six books in these plates. Only the Words of Mormon has no L number-term. Three referenced ordinal names or M number-terms seem to occur in First and Second Nephi, but none of the other major divisions of these plates uses an M number-term. At least five referenced cardinal names or N number-terms occur in First Nephi, Jacob and the Words of Mormon, but in Division 1 this type was found to be difficult to separate from the five referenced general names or O number-terms that seemed to occur in First Nephi, Jacob and Enos. Lastly, a single absent name or P number-term was assigned for investigative reasons to a year-term in First Nephi. Table 1.A of this Division also shows the placement and associated capital letters of the various proposed analytical types of number-terms in the small plates.

In Part 4 of Division 1, the search for organized patterns in the use of number-terms in the small plates of Nephi and the plates of Mormon identified potential patterns when absent name or P number-terms were ignored and, in the plates of Mormon, when the three types of

¹³ See Division 1, Part 4.

¹⁴ 2 Nephi 5:28.

¹⁵ 4 Nephi 1:35.

¹⁶ Helaman 14:2; Mormon 3:1

¹⁷ Helaman 1:13.

referenced number-terms (M, N and O) also were combined in various ways.¹⁸ However, none of these combinations seemed to create letter patterns in the plates of Mormon that were entirely consistent. When temporal-expression types were analyzed in Part 6 of Division 1, all temporal-expressions in the plates of Mormon that included referenced number-terms appeared to be part of a single major category that was called “referred-quantity” expressions.¹⁹ In other words, at least at the temporal-expression level of analysis, the earlier perceived differences in referenced number-terms were disregarded by Mormon₂.

This group of referred-quantity texts also appeared to be divided into four analytical types based on the linguistic types of narrative-links and the singular or plural types of year-terms. In Division 1, the names given to these four analytical types and the italicized capital letters related to them were: referred-year-relation expressions (prepositional narrative-links with singular year-terms—labeled *M*); referred-year-event expressions (verbal narrative-links with singular year-terms—labeled *N*); referred-years-relation expressions (prepositional narrative-links with plural year-terms—labeled *O*); and referred-years-event expressions (verbal narrative-links with plural year-terms—labeled *P*). When these four analytical types proposed for the plates of Mormon were applied to the small plates of Nephi, three (*M*, *O* and *P*) appeared to be applicable to the small plates. They seemed to suggest an organized *MOPOM* letter pattern in Nephi₁’s writings;²⁰ however, the pattern seems to have merely replicated the underlying patterns in prepositional and verbal narrative-links and singular and plural year-terms. Thus, as the more detailed examination of the small plates begins in this Division, the categorization and use of referenced number-terms remains an issue requiring further analysis.

1.2.4 Year-related expression²¹

The textual fact called a “year-related” expression is a word or phrase that always consists of one textual component (a year-term) and usually includes at least one of two optional components that qualify year-terms (a time-term and/or a number-term). A year-related expression may be a single word (e.g., “years”²²) or as many as 26 words (“nine years had passed ... from the time which the sign was given which was spoken of by the prophets that Christ should come into the world”²³). By definition, a total of 426 year-related expressions exist within the extant text of the *Book of Mormon* and 29 of them occur in the small plates of Nephi.

1.2.5 Narrative-link²⁴

A “narrative-link” is another textual fact or ink design representing a word or phrase that is the primary or most basic narrative language used to connect a year-related expression to the other language of its associated narrative. This textual fact occurs in five linguistic types, which were symbolized by regular capital letters: preposition (labeled Q); verb (labeled R); conjunction

¹⁸ See Division 1, Part 4, Sections 4.8.3 and 4.8.4.

¹⁹ See Division 1, Part 6, Section 6.6.

²⁰ See Division 2, Part 1, Table 1.B.

²¹ See Division 1, Part 1, Section 1.5.

²² 1 Nephi 18:17.

²³ 3 Nephi 2:7.

²⁴ See Division 1, Part 5.

(labeled S); participle (labeled T); and adverb (labeled U). Again by definition, a total of 426 narrative-links appear within the extant text of the *Book of Mormon* and 29 appear in the text of the small plates of Nephi. Only three of the five linguistic types occur in the small plates. The prepositional or Q type and the adverbial or U type only appear in Nephi₁'s writings, but the verbal or R type of narrative-link occurs in every major division of the small plates. The placement and associated capital letters of the various proposed analytical types of narrative-links in the small plates of Nephi (Q, U and R) are depicted in Table 1.A.

1.2.6 Temporal-expression²⁵

At times, clarity of analysis requires a combined narrative-link and its year-related expression to be distinguished from other parts of the text. The hyphenated name “temporal-expression” describes these united elements. Of course, 426 temporal-expressions occur in the extant text, with 29 of them appearing in the small plates of Nephi. Based primarily on Mormon₂'s use and placement of temporal-expressions in the plates of Mormon, temporal-expressions were grouped in Division 1 into five major categories and their various analytical types were symbolized by italic capital letters to distinguish them from the regular capital letters used previously:

1. Within-year expressions subdivided into three types: whole-year or *A*, commencement or *B*, and latter-end or *C* expressions.
2. Year-end expressions subdivided into four types: pass-away or *D*, thus-ended or *E*, making-in-the-whole or *F*, and it-was or *G* expressions.
3. Mortal-time expressions subdivided into four types: non-numbered or *H*, of-age or *J*, added-end or *K*, and explicit-yea or *L* expressions.
4. Referred-quantity expressions subdivided into four types: referred-year-relation or *M*, referred-year-event or *N*, referred-years-relation or *O*, and referred-years-event or *P* expressions.
5. Stated-quantity expressions subdivided into four types: ordinal-time-relation or *Q*, ordinal-year-event or *R*, cardinal-time-relation or *S*, and cardinal-years-event or *T* expressions.²⁶

The 232 within-year and year-end expressions in the *Book of Mormon* also were characterized as “formal” expressions because they all exhibited four textual facts: standardized expression structure; stated number-terms; identification of a calendrical interval within an expressly stated Nephite era or an implied Nephite era context; and complete chronological meaning within the diction of each temporal-expression. The 194 mortal-time, referred-quantity and stated-quantity expressions were characterized as “informal” expressions because their textual facts differed from one or more of the four facts associated with formal expressions.²⁷

As to formal expressions in the small plates of Nephi, no within-year expressions occur and the only year-end expressions are nine pass-away or *D* expressions. The 20 informal expressions in the small plates include: three mortal-time expressions (one non-numbered or *H* expression

²⁵ See Division 1, Part 6.

²⁶ See Division 1, Part 6, Sections 6.2-6.3 and 6.5-6.7.

²⁷ See Division 1, Part 6, Section 6.4.

and two explicit-yea or *L* expressions); 13 referred-quantity expressions (three referred-year-relation or *M* expressions, four referred-years-relation or *O* expressions, and six referred-years-event or *P* expressions); and four stated-quantity expressions (one ordinal-time-relation or *Q* expression and three cardinal-time-relation or *S* expressions).

Table 1.B of this Division depicts the placement of Mormon₂'s apparent temporal-expression structural types, with their associated capital letters, in the small plates of Nephi.²⁸ This depiction assumes that Nephi₁ and the other Nephite writers in the small plates used structural categories and types identical to those of Mormon₂. None of these categories depicts a systematic arrangement other than the referred-quantity expressions in Nephi₁'s writings (mentioned in Section 1.2.3 above). This suggests that the writers in the small plates did not use a temporal-expression placement pattern similar to Mormon₂'s. Instead, their placement patterns appear to have been based on the various types of year-, time- and number-terms and narrative-links similar, at least, to the patterns depicted in Table 1.A of this Division.

1.2.7 Year-related narrative²⁹

A narrative that includes a temporal-expression is sometimes referred to as an “associated” narrative or, more specifically, as a “year-related” narrative. A year-related narrative always is composed of three basic elements: a year-related expression; a narrative-link, the *primary* narrative language used to connect a year-related expression to the year-related narrative; and all the *secondary* narrative language that makes up the remainder of the year-related narrative. In Division 1, a schematic table depicted the relationships of year-, time- and number-terms, narrative-links, temporal-expressions and secondary narrative language within a year-related narrative.³⁰ By definition, a total of 426 year-related narratives exist within the extant text of the *Book of Mormon* and 29 year-related narratives occur in the complete text of the small plates of Nephi. Of course, hundreds of other narratives that do not include year-related expressions exist within the *Book of Mormon* and enlarge on the chronological structure provided by year-related expressions, narrative-links and their associated narratives.

As the preceding paragraph suggests, the adjectives *primary* and *secondary* are used in specific ways in Divisions 1 through 4 of this study. They do not indicate that some narrative language is ancillary or of diminished value when compared with the language of year-related expressions. As defined, a narrative-link performs a vital function as the *primary* language connecting a year-related expression to its associated narrative; however, a *secondary* word, phrase or other textual segment in the associated narrative also may be crucial to the meaning of that narrative, its narrative-link and/or its year-related expression. In this study, the adjectives *primary* and *secondary* describe a linguistic and semantic order or position rather than rank or importance. Thus, each year-related expression (the center of this study) is connected to its associated narrative by a narrative-link, the *primary* language used to make that connection. The narrative-link also is connected to all the *secondary* language in the rest of the year-related narrative. With respect to the language in the rest of the *Book of Mormon*, the adjective *tertiary*

²⁸ See Division 1, Part 6, Tables 6.Q and 6.R.

²⁹ See Division 1, Part 1, Section 1.5.

³⁰ See Division 1, Part 1, Table 1.B.

is sometimes used in this order of expressions to describe the place or position of language (even including that of other year-related narratives) outside of a specific year-related narrative.³¹

1.2.8 Letter pattern, letter-set and letter-group

Table 1.A in this Division 2 shows that two consecutive A year-terms occur in 1 Nephi 1:4. They are followed by 11 consecutive B year-terms in 1 Nephi 10:4 through 2 Nephi 5:34 and then they are followed by a single A year-term in 2 Nephi 16:1, a single B year-term in 2 Nephi 17:8, another single A year-term in 2 Nephi 24:28 and another single B year-term in 2 Nephi 25:19. The following major divisions in the small plates of Nephi include 12 more B year-terms. This lengthy, intertwined and potentially confusing sequence of four A year-terms and 25 B year-terms may be depicted, in order, as ABBBBBBBBBBBBBABBBBBBBBBBBBBB. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, each of these separately labeled year-terms or groups of identically-labeled consecutive year-terms may be described by a single letter and viewed as being part of what this study often calls a “letter pattern”. Table 1.A shows that a very simple AB letter pattern may be said to describe the 11 year-terms in First Nephi. In Second Nephi, the 6 year-terms may be described by the letter pattern BABAB. Later writers in the small plates of Nephi (including Mormon₂) continued to use only B year-terms in their 12 additional year-related expressions. In this study, the analytical concept of a letter pattern is applied to the various types of year-, time- and number-terms, narrative-links and temporal-expressions.

To further simplify the letter patterns in the text of the small plates, one may assume for analytical purposes that the narratives in these plates are separated only by the different types of year-terms, rather than by the major divisions of the text. In other words, one may recognize that time runs forward moment by moment without any regard for human divisions that might occur within it (such as a birth, an enthronement, a vision, a battle, a death or the writing of a book). Thus, if the major divisions are disregarded, all the year-terms in the small plates may be said to have an ABABAB letter pattern. The B year-terms that conclude First Nephi merge with the consecutive B year-terms that commence Second Nephi and the B year-term that concludes Second Nephi merges with all the consecutive B year-terms in the following text of the small plates. (This same analytical simplification is equally applicable to the various types of time- and number-terms, narrative-links and temporal-expressions.)

Each separate letter of a letter pattern is sometimes referred to in this study as a “letter-set”. For clarity of presentation, a single letter-set is enclosed by parentheses or, depending on its position in certain types of letter patterns to be described below, sometimes a letter-set in a letter pattern is enclosed by brackets to emphasize its central position. For example, an (A) letter-set in the ABABAB letter pattern of the small plates may represent both the two identically-labeled consecutive A year-terms that begin First Nephi and each of the two separately-labeled A year-terms that appear in Second Nephi. Similarly, a (B) letter-set in the ABABAB letter pattern of the small plates may represent the 11 identically-labeled consecutive B year-terms that end First Nephi and begin Second Nephi, the single separately-labeled B year-term between the two A year-terms in Second Nephi, and the 13 identically-labeled consecutive B year-terms that end Second Nephi and continue throughout the remainder of the small plates of Nephi.

³¹ See *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, II: 2299 (primary), 2701 (secondary) and 3268-69 (tertiary).

Letter patterns such the AB pattern in First Nephi, the BABAB pattern in Second Nephi and the combined ABABAB pattern in the small plates of Nephi sometimes are referred to in this study as a “letter-group”. Each letter-group is composed of two or more letter-sets that appear in a distinct segment of the text. Again, for clarity of presentation, a letter-group is enclosed within parentheses. Hence, (AB) and (BABAB) may be called the year-term letter-groups of First and Second Nephi, respectively. Similarly, (ABABAB) may be called the year-term letter-group of the small plates of Nephi.

1.2.9 Letter pattern descriptive terms

The ABABAB letter pattern or (ABABAB) letter-group for year-terms in the small plates of Nephi is said to be composed of “alternating” letter-sets. Only two types of letter-sets are used and they only appear one after the other. Similarly, Table 1.A of this Part 1 shows a GHGHGHGHGHGHG letter pattern for the time-terms in First and Second Nephi and this pattern also is said to be composed of alternating letter-sets. However, because this letter pattern in Nephi₁’s two books begins and ends with (G) letter-sets, it also may be described as a (GHGHG[H]GHGHG) letter-group having a “central” [H] letter-set and as being “balanced” and “reversible”. A letter-group is described as “balanced” when the numbers of letter-sets are the same on either side of the central letter-set. In this instance, five letter-sets exist on either side of the central [H] letter-set. In addition, a letter-group may be described as “reversible” when the letter pattern, whether viewed forward or backward, is identical on either side of the central letter-set. In this instance, the same letter pattern GHGHG occurs on either side of the central [H] letter-set and the overall pattern of the letter-group is clearly reversible. By contrast, the (ABABAB) letter-group for the year-terms in the small plates of Nephi has no central letter-set. Because it consists of an even number of letter-sets, it cannot be balanced or reversible; so, it may be described as being “non-balanced” or “non-reversible”. Lastly, Table 1.A also shows a (KMLOLNPLO) letter-group for the number-terms in First Nephi. This letter-group initially may seem to be a jumble of different types of number-terms used by Nephi₁ to quantify or avoid quantifying his A and B year-terms in a variety of ways. While (L) and (O) letter-sets appear in that order in a couple of places in this letter-group and another (L) letter-set follows one of the (O) letter-sets, these letter-sets are not described as alternating, but as “variable sequence” letter-sets.

When all the time-term letter-sets for the small plates of Nephi are considered together (as shown in Table 1.A), without regard to the separations made by the major divisions, the letter pattern appears to consist of two balanced and reversible letter-groups with alternating (G) and (H) letter-sets separated by a single (D) letter-set: (GHGHG[H]GHGHG)(D)(GH[G]HG). The central letter-set of the first letter-group is an [H] letter-set, while the central letter-set of the second letter-group is a [G] letter-set. The entire letter pattern initially may seem to have been designed to draw attention to the unique (D) letter-set. However, when the various writers are considered, the first letter-group was engraved entirely by Nephi₁, the (D) letter-set and a simple (GHG) letter-group were engraved by his brother Jacob₂, and additional G time-terms were added to Jacob₂’s final (G) letter-set by his son Enos. The three descendants of Enos who engraved year-related expressions on the small plates (Jarom, Omni and Amaron) did not include time-terms in their temporal-expressions; so, their contributions to the pattern may be said to consist of a final omitted name or (H) letter-set. Then, for hundreds of years, the second time-term letter-group in these plates remained as a non-balanced and non-reversible (GHGH) letter-

group. This changed only when Mormon₂ added a final (G) letter-set³² to make the letter-group into a balanced and reversible (GH[G]HG) letter-group with a central [G] letter-set.

1.2.10 Intentional chronological patterns

Do letter patterns, letter-sets and letter-groups indicate intentional behavior on the part of *Book of Mormon* writers? Yes. Each writer who included a temporal-expression intended to communicate fundamental chronological information. At that basic level, there are few questions about any *Book of Mormon* writer's intent to use a certain year-, time- or number-term or a particular type of narrative-link at a specific location in the text. The related questions discussed in Division 1 dealt with issues such as possible spelling mistakes or scribal errors.

But does the patterned use of year-, time- and number-terms, of linguistic types of narrative-links, and/or of meaningful types of temporal-expressions indicate more complex intentional behavior, something beyond delivering basic year-related information? In Division 1, letter patterns and proposed letter-groups and letter-sets sometimes were suggested as representing a possible arrangement, organization, order, pattern, plan, structure, system or systemization that was variously described as being distinctive, meaningful, organized, overall, overriding, paramount, symbolic, systematic, systematized or unified.³³ These several nouns and adjectives were chosen to describe the visible textual facts that had been introduced, but that had not yet been subjected to detailed analysis. The nouns and adjectives suggested meanings associated with another proposed level of intentionality or purposive behavior that was symbolized by the apparent structure. At this proposed level of composition, the questions in Division 1 had to do with the accurate aggregation or sorting of individual year-, time- and number-terms and their associated narrative-links. Are all express singular year-terms in a text (whether a set of plates, major division or other textual segment) to be considered together? Are all referenced number-terms to be considered together or are they to be separated into various types? Do all time-terms that include the proper name "Lehi" have the same chronological meaning? These issues and many others at the complex level of analysis were suggested in Division 1.

The visible textual facts also suggested related issues. What do alternating and variable sequence, balanced and non-balanced, and reversible and non-reversible letter patterns have to do with chronology itself, or with temporal-expressions, or with their elements, or with the components of year-related expressions that express chronological thought? These issues were not raised in the introductory discussions of Division 1. The focus there was to accurately describe the ink designs that appeared on paper and the placements of those designs, and then to initially suggest the possibility that such designs symbolized complex, meaningful organizations of chronological thought.

The issue of symbolic chronological meanings related to letter patterns must be addressed. It is vital to a comprehension of the meanings of the elements and components of temporal-expressions in the *Book of Mormon*. But the issue of symbolism is dependent on a thorough analysis of the three components of year-related expressions and of the five types of narrative-links that connect such expressions to the secondary narrative texts. As was suggested in the various parts of Division 1, a comprehension of the symbolism of such elements and components

³² Words of Mormon 1:2.

³³ See Sections 2.5.3, 3.8.3-4, 4.8.3-4, 5.3.3-4, 5.4.2-5, 6.2.4, 6.3.5, 6.5.5, 6.6.1-3, 6.7.1 and 6.8 in Parts 2-6 of Division 1.

and their placements must be founded on a thorough understanding of the visible textual facts themselves. Now that such basic facts have been introduced, their detailed analysis must be carried out before their suggested complex meanings, their deeper or overarching symbolism, may be understood. Thus, the issues related to the complex intentionality of the chronological structure must be deferred until the issues associated with the accurate description of the basic structure have been thoroughly examined. The discussions of complex purposive symbolism within the small plates of Nephi are reserved for Parts 2 and 3 of this Division. This Part 1 commences with a detailed analysis of the year-related diction that appears in Nephi₁'s writings; i.e., the major divisions of the text often called the books of First and Second Nephi.

1.3 Nephi₁'s temporal-expression diction

The earliest text of the small plates of Nephi appears to be known and complete. There is no indication in the 1830 printed edition of the *Book of Mormon* that any portion of the original text of the small plates is missing. The printer's manuscript, which is the copy of the original manuscript³⁴ from which the text of the small plates was typeset, is "fully extant except for about three lines of text missing from the bottom of the first leaf of the manuscript. The missing portions come from verses 7-8 and 20 of the first chapter of 1 Nephi".³⁵ The missing portions of those verses, as evidenced by the 1830 printed edition, contained no temporal-expressions. The diction of the 29 temporal-expressions in the small plates of Nephi is attested by the identical diction of the 1830 edition and printer's manuscript. In addition, the diction of 12 of the 29 temporal-expressions is attested by the surviving text of the original manuscript.³⁶ Hence, the diction of all the temporal-expressions in the small plates is complete and the placement of these expressions within the major divisions and narratives of these plates is certain.

Table 1.A includes the complete diction of each of the 29 temporal-expressions in the small plates of Nephi. The first column presents consecutive numbers based on the sequence of these expressions in the text. References within each of the major divisions are provided. The narrative-links in the temporal-expressions are italicized. The symbolic regular capital letters identified earlier also are set forth in this table. At least insofar as the introductions in Division 1 were correct, these letters represent decisions made by the writers regarding the types of diction to use when they linked year-related expressions to their narratives. The detailed analysis of the types of diction proposed in Division 1 appears in the following sections of this Part. Of course, each writer also made decisions regarding his diction that are not represented in the various types and letter labels. The decisions not described by letters are the writers' specific choices of diction for each temporal-expression. These specific choices and the apparent reasons behind them also are examined in the following sections. Each year-, time- and number-term and each narrative-link is examined in the context of the specific diction of its temporal-expression.

Table 1.A must be understood as an interim depiction based on Division 1, but subject to revision as the temporal-expressions in the small plates are thoroughly examined. This analysis

³⁴ The extant original manuscript includes only "about 25 percent of the current text" of the *Book of Mormon*. The remainder of the original manuscript was destroyed by water and mold between 1841 and 1882, while the manuscript sat in the cornerstone of the Nauvoo House, a hotel in Nauvoo, Illinois. Skousen, ed., *The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, 6-7, 37.

³⁵ Skousen, ed., *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon, Part One*, 4.

³⁶ See Division 1, Part 1, Table 1.A.

begins with First and Second Nephi because most of the variation in types of year-, time- and number-terms and narrative-links occurs in Nephi₁'s writings. Once these writings have been examined, the works of the writers who added to Nephi₁'s plates will be noted and compared.

1.4 Nephi₁'s year-terms

Table 1.A of this Division summarizes the ABABAB letter pattern that symbolizes Nephi₁'s use and placement of year-terms in his writings. This pattern, which was introduced earlier in this study, begins with two express singular or A year-terms in 1 Nephi 1:4. The first year-term appears in a year-related expression that includes a stated ordinal name as its number-term (“the first”) and a personalized time-term (“of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah”). The prepositional narrative-link (“of”) connects this year-related expression to the previous prepositional phrase “in the commencement”. As noted in Division 1, the temporal-expression “of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah” is not a formal within-year commencement expression because the time-term implies the chronological system of the kingdom of Judah.³⁷ This temporal-expression and the secondary language of the associated narrative record the time when Lehi₁ had “dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days”. This year-related narrative appears to have been recorded in Lehi₁'s personal record since the time was very important to him and to his city.³⁸ In addition, it seems likely that Nephi₁ and his brothers were young at the time Lehi₁ received his prophetic call and, thus, they may have had little familiarity at that time with the chronological system of Judah.³⁹

The following express singular or A year-term occurs in the same verse. The narrative associated with this second year-term also may have been included in Lehi₁'s record, but the odd construction of this verse places “my father Lehi” in Jerusalem “all his days” as a parenthetical statement between the two year-related expressions. Hence, Nephi₁'s writings in this verse seem to be intermixed with Lehi₁'s record. This second year-related narrative is clear: “there came many prophets prophesying unto the people”. The following narrative language describes the effect on Lehi₁ of the prophets' message about Jerusalem's pending destruction, Lehi₁'s response to that message, and his visionary calling to be a prophet.⁴⁰ The use of a referenced number-term, “that same”, makes it certain that this year also existed in the context of the chronological system of the kingdom of Judah. Thus, in a single verse near the beginning of Nephi₁'s writings, one express singular or A year-term immediately follows another. Because these year-terms are identically-labeled and consecutive, they may be symbolized by an (A) letter-set. And, although the intermixed construction of the verse adds some uncertainty about the second year-term, the first of the year-terms appears to have been predetermined by Lehi₁'s record.

The other two express singular or A year-terms in Nephi₁'s writings do not appear until the central part of his second book.⁴¹ They appear in Nephi₁'s quotation of 13 consecutive chapters

³⁷ See Division 1, Part 6, Section 6.2.2.

³⁸ See Division 5, Part 2, “When Was the First Year of the Reign of Zedekiah, King of Judah?”.

³⁹ See Division 5, Part 3, “Probable Ages of Nephi and Sariah at the Time of Lehi's Escape”.

⁴⁰ 1 Nephi 1:5-15.

⁴¹ 2 Nephi 16:1; 24:28.

of the Book of Isaiah.⁴² They are separated by an express plural or B year-term that is the only other year-term in these quoted chapters.⁴³ Thus, in this part of Nephi₁'s writings, separate A and B year-terms present a predetermined ABA letter pattern. The first of the A year-terms in Nephi₁'s second book appears in the temporal-expression “[i]n the year that king Uzziah died”, and the year-related narrative describes Isaiah₁'s visionary calling to be a prophet. This calling ends with a prophecy of devastating destruction in Judah that Nephi₁ could have seen reiterated in his father's prophetic mission.⁴⁴ The central B year-term of the ABA letter pattern is part of Isaiah₁'s prophecy of the complete destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel, which he referred to as “Ephraim”: “within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people”.⁴⁵ This is a temporal prophecy that specifies a definite number of years and it would seem to be closely related to the narrative that Lehi₁, although being a descendant of Manasseh,⁴⁶ had “dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days”. In other words, some of Lehi₁'s ancestors apparently had dwelt in the tribal land of Manasseh in the northern kingdom, but then had moved south to Jerusalem and had escaped the destruction of the northern kingdom that Isaiah₁ had prophesied. The last A year-term in Nephi₁'s writings and in the small plates of Nephi appears in the temporal-expression “[i]n the year that king Ahaz died”. The associated narrative describes Isaiah₁'s “burden [or prophecy] of Babylon”, a visionary prophecy identifying Babylon as the kingdom that in the Lord's due time would arise in power and bring about the destruction of Judah.⁴⁷ Thus, all three year-terms in Isaiah₁'s writings have to do with prophecy in the apparent context of a chronological system maintained in the kingdom of Judah.

Nephi₁ chose 11 consecutive B year-terms to separate the four (or perhaps five) apparently predetermined temporal-expressions into an ABABA letter pattern. The first year-term to follow the (A) letter-set that begins Nephi₁'s letter pattern is an express plural or B year-term. This B year-term is part of a temporal-expression that sets forth his father's most important temporal prophecy and specifies a definite number of years. In 1 Nephi 10:2-3, the prophesied time of the Messiah's coming is described in general chronological terms as occurring after the destruction of Jerusalem, after the exile to Babylon of many survivors of that destruction, and after their return “according to the own due time of the Lord ... to possess again their land of inheritance”. Then, for emphasis and specificity, Nephi₁ states that the time of the Messiah's birth will be “yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem”.⁴⁸ Just as Isaiah₁'s temporal prophecy that specified a definite number of years had been fulfilled in the lifetimes of Lehi₁'s ancestors, so Nephi₁ apparently expected his father's temporal prophecy to be fulfilled in the lifetimes of his descendants. Nephi₁ seems so convinced of the importance and truth of his father's prophecy that he reiterates it after six more year-terms have been recorded⁴⁹ and he repeats it again after another six year-terms have been recorded.⁵⁰ In other words, Nephi₁ uses

⁴² 2 Nephi 12-24.

⁴³ 2 Nephi 17:8.

⁴⁴ Compare 1 Nephi 1:8-13, 18-20 with 2 Nephi 16:9-12 (Isaiah 6:9-12).

⁴⁵ 2 Nephi 17:8 (Isaiah 7:8).

⁴⁶ 1 Nephi 5:14-16; Alma 10:3.

⁴⁷ 2 Nephi 23:1-24:28 (Isaiah 13:1-14:28).

⁴⁸ 1 Nephi 10:4.

⁴⁹ 1 Nephi 15:13; 17:4 (2), 20-21; 18:17.

⁵⁰ 1 Nephi 22:26; 2 Nephi 5:28, 34; 16:1; 17:8; 24:28.

numbers of year-terms (and the personalized time-terms referring to the Nephites' first era, together with the number-terms that mention "six hundred") to create a five-part, balanced and reversible (1/6/1/6/1) number pattern and to emphasize his father's temporal prophecy. This (1/6/1/6/1) year-term number pattern is completed after the ABA year-term letter pattern in Nephi₁'s quotations from the Book of Isaiah. In 2 Nephi 25:19, Nephi₁ finishes his use of temporal-expressions with a final B year-term: "the Messiah cometh in six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem". This prophecy completes Nephi₁'s (ABABAB) year-term letter-group and his (1/6/1/6/1) year-term number pattern.

Additional aspects of the (ABABAB) letter-group must be noted. When the emphasis is placed on the calling and mission of prophets in Judah, the predetermined letter pattern and Nephi₁'s first inserted (B) letter-set may be described as an (ABABA) letter-group. Prophecies concerning the destructions of Israel and Judah are set forth in the associated narratives and Lehi₁'s ministry late in this prophetic context is noted. However, when the Lord commands Lehi₁ to depart from Jerusalem, his 600-year Messianic prophecy is set in motion, the relevant year-term letter-group becomes (BABAB), and the quantified number pattern becomes (1/6/1/6/1). Similar alternating five-part patterns occur elsewhere in Nephi₁'s writings.

All three express plural or B year-terms that help to record Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy—the 1s in the 1/6/1/6/1 year-term number pattern—probably should be interpreted in terms of a chronological system that Lehi₁ and his family chose for measuring the prophesied years after they left Jerusalem. Until they left the city, there was no need to measure the 600-year period. However, once they left Jerusalem, what means did they have for measuring and recording years in the wilderness by the Red Sea? What system did they use during their trek in "nearly a south-southeast direction" to Shazer and Nahom? What system did they use during their lengthy "sojourn" in the wilderness "nearly eastward" from Nahom before they reached the land they called Bountiful?⁵¹ Nephi₁'s writings say nothing explicit about this chronological system, except that they apparently began measuring and counting the years devoted to that 600-year measurement. Nephi₁ records that "even eight years" were spent in the wilderness and "thirty years had passed away from the time we left Jerusalem", and later, "forty years had passed".⁵² These express plural or B year-terms are part of the 11 consecutive B year-terms that make up the (B) letter-set between Nephi₁'s first (A) letter-set in First Nephi and the ABA letter pattern in Isaiah₁'s writings quoted in Second Nephi.

In addition to the two B year-terms that help to record Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy in First Nephi and the three B year-terms that help to record his followers' measurement of that prophetic period, three more of the 11 consecutive B year-terms that run from First Nephi into Second Nephi appear in identical temporal-expressions, "of many years". The first of these identical "of many years" temporal-expressions occurs when Nephi₁ teaches his brothers about Lehi₁'s prophecy that their descendants, after the coming of the Messiah, would dwindle "in unbelief, yea, for the space of many years and many generations" before they receive "the fulness of the gospel of the Messiah" from the Gentiles.⁵³ The chronological expression "for the space of many years" is indefinite. The second "of many years" temporal-expression occurs

⁵¹ 1 Nephi 2:1-6; 16:13, 33-34; 17:1, 4-6.

⁵² 1 Nephi 17:4; 2 Nephi 5:28, 34.

⁵³ 1 Nephi 15:13.

when Nephi₁ describes the devotion of Lehi₁ and his followers to measuring years by noting that “we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness”.⁵⁴ Here the chronological expression “for the space of many years” seems to be used as an indefinite predicate to the emphatic and definite phrase “yea, even eight years”. Nephi₁ used a similar literary pattern when he first described his father’s prophecy: an indefinite time for the return of the exiles from Babylon followed by the emphatic and definite phrase “yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem”.⁵⁵ These two indefinite periods “of many years” are clearly related to the emphatic statement of Lehi₁’s 600-year prophecy. The first relates to the dwindling in unbelief after the 600-year period is completed and the second relates to the measurement of time before the 600-year period is completed. The third instance of an “of many years” temporal-expression occurs in the last temporal-expression in First Nephi. The expression occurs in another Messianic prophetic context, but it appears to be far removed from the fulfillment of Lehi₁’s 600-year prophecy. “[B]ecause of the righteousness of [the Lord’s] people, Satan hath no power; wherefore he cannot be loosed for the space of many years, for he hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness and the Holy One of Israel reigneth”.⁵⁶ This chronological expression “for the space of many years” also is indefinite.

The remaining three B year-terms in the 11 consecutive B year-terms that run from First Nephi into Second Nephi occur consecutively in narrative contexts where Laman₁ and Lemuel reject Nephi₁’s and Lehi₁’s prophetic leadership. When the Lord reveals to Nephi₁ that a ship must be built for them to reach their land of promise, Laman₁ and Lemuel complain: “thou art like unto our father, led away by the foolish imaginations of his heart ... and we have wandered in the wilderness for these many years.... Behold, these many years we have suffered in the wilderness”.⁵⁷ When the family is at sea, Nephi₁’s elder brothers and the sons of Ishmael, and their wives, “began to make themselves merry ... [and] were lifted up unto exceeding rudeness”. Nephi₁ “began to speak to them with much soberness” and the clash between brothers escalated. “Laman and Lemuel did take me and bind me with cords, and they did treat me with much harshness”. While Nephi₁ was bound, “a great storm, yea, a great and terrible tempest” battered their ship for four days before they loosed Nephi₁ and the storm subsided. Nephi₁ reports, “Now my father Lehi had said many things unto them and also unto the sons of Ishmael, but behold, they did breathe out much threatenings against any one that should speak for me. And my parents being stricken in years ... were brought down, yea, even upon their sickbeds ... yea, even they were near to be cast with sorrow into a watery grave”.⁵⁸

Thus, whether the express plural or B year-terms in Nephi₁’s writings occur in reports about Isaiah₁’s, Lehi₁’s or Nephi₁’s prophecies, or about the faithful measurement of Lehi₁’s temporal prophecy, or about the faithless rejection of Nephi₁’s and Lehi₁’s prophetic leadership by Laman₁ and Lemuel, B year-terms appear in year-related narratives having to do with prophecy. More specifically, these narratives seem to focus on the power of a true prophet’s words extending beyond his mortal ministry. Isaiah₁’s prophecies of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah were fulfilled long after his death. Lehi₁’s prophecy of a land of promise for his followers

⁵⁴ 1 Nephi 17:4.

⁵⁵ 1 Nephi 10:4.

⁵⁶ 1 Nephi 22:26.

⁵⁷ 1 Nephi 17:20-21.

⁵⁸ 1 Nephi 18:9-18.

was fulfilled near the end of his life, but his 600-year prophecy extended far beyond the lives of any of his followers. In contrast, express singular or A year-terms in Nephi₁'s writings relate to the beginning or end of the reign of a king of Judah. Zedekiah obtained power when his reign commenced.⁵⁹ The reigns and powers of Uzziah and Ahaz both ended with their deaths.⁶⁰

1.5 Nephi₁'s narrative-links

Table 1.A in this Division also summarizes the letter pattern of narrative-links in Nephi₁'s writings. This pattern begins with two prepositional or Q narrative-links (“of” and “in”) in 1 Nephi 1:4. The preposition *of* is used three more times and the preposition *in* is used five more times in the small plates, all in Nephi₁'s writings. Two of the *in* prepositions and the preposition *within* appear in Nephi₁'s lengthy quotation from the Book of Isaiah. These three apparently predetermined narrative-links seem to be functionally equivalent; i.e., all three mean “inclosed, surrounded by limits” or “[w]ithin the limits of a period or space”.⁶¹ Beginning with the (Q) letter-set that starts First Nephi, an alternating QUQUQ letter pattern continues until the last (Q) letter-set in the narrative where the brothers argue over Nephi₁'s proposal to build a ship. In 1 Nephi 17:20, Laman₁ and Lemuel complain that “we have wandered in the wilderness for these many years”. This is the first and only use of the preposition *for* as a narrative-link in the small plates of Nephi and it completes the (QUQUQ) letter-group.

In the following verse, Laman₁ and Lemuel complain further, “Behold, these many years we have suffered in the wilderness”. Nephi₁ could have structured the temporal-expression in this complaint as he did in the first. The preposition *for* seems to have been ellipted from the second complaint: “Behold, [*for*] these many years we have suffered in the wilderness”. The brackets and italicized word are placed where an ellipted preposition *for* could have appeared. In 1 Nephi 17:21, Nephi₁ apparently chose to create a verbal narrative-link and to end the previous alternating QUQUQ letter pattern. This is the first and only use of the base verb *suffer* to create a narrative-link in the small plates of Nephi, but it is not the only use of verbal or R narrative-links. Indeed, beginning with the (R) letter-set in verse 21, an alternating RQRQ letter pattern continues until the end of Nephi₁'s writings. His other (R) letter-set is composed of the two consecutive R narrative-links in 2 Nephi 5:28 and 34, where Nephi₁ noted that 30 and then 40 years “had passed”.

In First Nephi, the complete narrative-link letter-group is (QUQUQRQ) and in Second Nephi the complete letter-group is (RQ). These letter-groups may be contrasted with the year-term letter-groups in the same books. First Nephi has a simple (AB) year-term letter-group and Second Nephi has a simple (RQ) narrative-link letter-group. Second Nephi has a balanced and reversible (BABAB) year-term letter-group and First Nephi theoretically has a balanced and reversible (QUQUQ) narrative-link letter-group, but with a seemingly unnecessary (R) letter-set in the middle of a hypothetical final (Q) letter-set. Did Nephi₁ mistakenly ellipt the preposition *for* in 1 Nephi 17:21? It seems unlikely.

⁵⁹ 1 Nephi 1:4.

⁶⁰ 2 Nephi 16:1; 24:28.

⁶¹ Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* I: [946] (in), spelling in the original; *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, I: 1394-96.

As noted above, within the writings of Nephi₁, the (ABABAB) year-term letter-group may be viewed as the interweaving of an (ABABA) letter-group emphasizing the reigns and powers of kings and a (BABAB) letter-group and (1/6/1/6/1) number pattern emphasizing the ministries and powers of prophets. In the balanced and reversible (BABAB) letter-group, the first (B) letter-set begins with Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy, the middle (B) letter-set quotes Isaiah₁'s 65-year prophecy, and the last (B) letter-set concludes Nephi₁'s writings with another repetition of Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy. In the (1/6/1/6/1) number pattern, Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy also is emphasized by its remarkable repetition. Thereafter, every writer in the small plates of Nephi used an express plural or B year-term that either identified an interval of years within the 600-year period or, in Mormon₂'s case, testified that Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy had been fulfilled.

In the same text and in a similar, but more complex manner, First Nephi appears to begin with a balanced and reversible (QUQUQ) narrative-link letter-group in which the first of the two adverbial or U letter-sets emphasizes the specificity of Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy, and the second U letter-set emphasizes the devotion of Lehi₁'s followers in measuring the years of his prophecy, even during their sojourn, wandering and afflictions in the wilderness. This (QUQUQ) letter-group is followed by another balanced and reversible (RQRQR) narrative-link letter-group that begins with Nephi₁'s older brothers' complaint about the misery of Lehi₁'s followers; the verbal or R narrative-link is "have suffered". Still, Lehi₁ and his followers had measured "these many years", as the year-related expression states. The middle (R) letter-set further describes the devotion of the Nephites to measuring the years of Lehi₁'s prophecy: 30 and then 40 years had passed "from the time we left Jerusalem". The concluding (R) narrative-link letter-set begins with Jacob₂'s first year-related expression, an expression that appears to have been commanded by Nephi₁ to complete his placement pattern of narrative-links. It had been 55 years since the family left Jerusalem and Nephi₁ was about to die; the small plates had been transferred into the care of Jacob₂ and his descendants; and they would thereafter only use verbal or R narrative-links to connect their year-related expressions to their associated narratives on these plates. Every writer who followed Nephi₁ and engraved a narrative-link on the small plates, including Mormon₂, used an R narrative-link. The five-part structure of these alternating, balanced and reversible (QUQUQ) and (RQRQR) narrative-link letter-groups and of the suggested (ABABA) and (BABAB) year-term letter-groups and the (1/6/1/6/1) number pattern mentioned above can hardly be attributed to carelessness or chance.

A much more complex structure also seems to occur with the diction and numbers of the 12 prepositional or Q narrative-links in Nephi₁'s writings. This structure is suggested in Table 1.A; however, it becomes clear in the following sequential list of the 12 prepositional narrative-links.

Preposition	Number	Reference	Comment
<i>of</i>	1	1 Nephi 1:4	predetermined first of 4 prepositions (<i>of</i>)
<i>in</i>	1	1 Nephi 1:4	intermixed first of 4 prepositions (<i>in</i>)
<i>of</i>	2	1 Nephi 15:13; 17:4	central 2 of 4 prepositions (<i>of</i>)
<i>for</i>	1	1 Nephi 17:20	unique preposition in small plates
<i>in</i>	2	1 Nephi 18:17; 19:8	central 2 of 4 prepositions (<i>in</i>)
<i>of</i>	1	1 Nephi 22:26	last of 4 prepositions (<i>of</i>)
<i>in</i>	1	2 Nephi 16:1	predetermined last of 4 prepositions (<i>in</i>)
<i>within</i>	1	2 Nephi 17:8	predetermined unique preposition in small plates
<i>in</i>	2	2 Nephi 24:28; 25:19	one predetermined preposition (<i>in</i>) followed by the last preposition (<i>in</i>) in the small plates

The structure appears to be divided into two groups: an initial nine narrative-links and a concluding three narrative-links. The initial group includes the prepositions *of*, *in* and *for*. The diction pattern and number pattern both are balanced around the central preposition *for*, which is a unique narrative-link in the small plates of Nephi. On one side of the central preposition *for*, the diction pattern is (*of/in/of*), but on the other side the diction pattern is (*in/of/in*). The diction pattern is not reversible. On one side of the single central preposition is the number pattern (1/1/2), while on the other side is the number pattern (2/1/1); hence, the entire (1/1/2/1/2/1/1) number pattern is reversible. This complex structure is composed of nine consecutive prepositional narrative-links, but their diction sorts them into just seven prepositional units: three *of* units; three *in* units; and one *for* unit.

If this nine-word or seven-unit structure seems needlessly complex, the complete structure of 12 prepositional narrative-links is even more enigmatic. The unique prepositions *for* and *within* each occurs once, the preposition *of* occurs four times, and the preposition *in* occurs six times. Do these numbers have meaning? If so, it is not immediately apparent in the text. If the initial nine prepositions are separated by their diction, then the prepositions *of* and *in* each occurs four times and the preposition *for* occurs once. Then, if the unique prepositions *for* and *within* are combined with the last unit of two *in* prepositions, the 12 prepositions may be viewed as three groups of four prepositions each: a consistent group of four prepositions (*of*), another consistent group of four prepositions (*in*), and a mixed group of two unique prepositions (*for* and *within*) and two final prepositions (*in*). Does this sorting based somewhat on diction have meaning? If so, it is again not immediately apparent in the text. Nevertheless, the diction and number patterns, at least for the initial nine prepositions, seem unlikely to have occurred by chance. This peculiar structure requires further examination in Part 2 of this Division.

1.6 Nephi₁'s time-terms

Table 1.A also presents an alternating GHGHHGHGHHGHG letter pattern for the time-terms in Nephi₁'s writings. Given the apparent five-part letter-groups and the five-part number pattern discussed above, the structure of the time-terms in Nephi₁'s writings may be viewed as a single balanced and reversible (GHGHH[H]GHGHHG) letter-group with a central [H] letter-set and five-part GHGHHG letter patterns on either side.

The first five-part GHGHHG letter pattern occurs entirely within First Nephi; so, it is possible to describe it as a (GHGHHG) letter-group. It uses G time-terms to identify two kinds of time periods. The first G time-term identifies time in the reign of a king of Judah and the other two G time-terms identify time from when Lehi left Jerusalem, with the second of these two personalized names appearing to be more informal because the determiner *that* seems to have been ellipted. The second five-part GHGHHG letter pattern occurs entirely within Second Nephi; so, this pattern also may be described as a (GHGHHG) letter-group. It also uses G time-terms to identify the same two kinds of time periods. A personalized or G time-term first informally describes years "from the time we left Jerusalem" and then the next two G time-terms describe years in the reigns of other kings of Judah. Thus, the pattern of time-term meanings associated with these two kinds of personalized or G names may be described concisely as: First Nephi (one king of Judah reign time-term and two Lehi departure time-terms) and Second Nephi (one Lehi departure time-term and two king of Judah reign time-terms). That contrasting numerical placement pattern of time-term meanings appears to be another unique form of balancing in the writings of Nephi₁. All of this suggests that the alternating letter pattern for the time-terms in

Nephi₁'s writings is to be understood as a unified composition of two five-part, alternating, balanced and reversible (GHGHG) letter-groups on either side of a central [H] letter-set.

In First Nephi, the narrative associated with the first G time-term identifies the beginning of the reign of a king of Judah. This is followed by two reports regarding the time when Lehi₁ left Jerusalem. In Second Nephi, the reverse pattern occurs as noted above, and there are two reports about the conclusions of the reigns of two other kings of Judah. Nevertheless, Nephi₁ does not end his use of personalized or G time-terms with the death of a king of Judah. The seventh and last G time-term in Nephi's writings is the phrase "from the time that my father left Jerusalem". This time-term in 2 Nephi 25:19 is part of the third (G) letter-set that concludes the placement of time-terms in Second Nephi. This time-term has diction identical to the one that appeared in 1 Nephi 10:4. Thus, the implication of the meanings and placements of these time-terms may be that the chronological system of the reigns of Jewish kings had been supplanted by a new chronological system, one dedicated to measuring Lehi₁'s prophetic time.

The omitted or H time-terms in Nephi₁'s writings cannot be ignored. Obviously, these letter-sets are integral to the alternating pattern, but they also seem to be used to make clear the writer's concern with Messianic prophecy. Nephi₁ uses the central [H] letter-set in his prophecy of a distant royal reign by the "Holy One of Israel". The "many years" associated with that reign differ from all the other years mentioned by Nephi₁. The entire composition of letter-groups and letter-set draws attention to Nephi₁'s prophecy regarding the Messiah's future reign.

Nephi's apparent planning of the placement of time-terms and the attention to be directed at their meanings and numbers also must be considered in connection with the long name or D time-term in Jacob 1:1. This time-term expresses the most formal or official of the names that describe the Lehi era. This long name also is used in the plates of Mormon to record the time when king Mosiah₂ was enthroned⁶² and to report the end of 600 Lehi calendar years, when the Messiah's birth was expected.⁶³ Jacob₂ used this long name after receiving the small plates from Nephi₁ and being instructed, by means of his brother's "commands",⁶⁴ in the types of things Nephi₁ wanted to have recorded in these plates. That instruction may have included the use of an express plural or B year-term, a verbal or R narrative-link and the long name of the Lehi era for the 12th time-term letter-set in the small plates of Nephi.

Jacob₂ used the long name only once. No other writer in the small plates used this same time-term, although Enos personalized the long name for his second time-term (the 12th express time-term in the small plates). Perhaps these other writers were also following Nephi₁'s commands that only the first of Jacob₂'s time-terms should use the most formal name of the Lehi era. The narratives recorded at the beginning of the Book of Jacob relate to the Nephites' observance of the end of Nephi₁'s political reign and prophetic ministry, to his anointing of a political successor and king, and to his delivery of the small plates into the hands of Jacob₂. Thus, the themes of textual formality, royal succession, and prophetic declaration that structured Nephi₁'s use of (G) and (H) time-term letter-sets in First and Second Nephi seem to culminate in the narrative themes associated with the use of a long name in Jacob 1:1. That culmination certainly may have been part of Nephi₁'s commands.

⁶² Mosiah 6:4.

⁶³ 3 Nephi 1:1.

⁶⁴ Jacob 7:27.

1.7 Nephi₁'s number-terms

Table 1.A shows that the writings of Nephi₁ may be represented by a KMLOLNPLO number-term letter pattern in First Nephi that initially seems to be just a variable sequence of letters and by an alternating, balanced and reversible, five-part (LMLML) letter-group in Second Nephi. When number-terms were introduced in Part 4 of Division 1, the suggestion was made that the separation of First and Second Nephi might be disregarded as merely a passing division in the constant movement of time through Nephi₁'s reign and ministry.⁶⁵ If the division between the two books is ignored, then the number-term letter pattern in Nephi₁'s writings becomes KMLOLNPLOLMLML. The suggestion also was made that the absent or P number-term might be disregarded because the lack of any quantitative measurement of time, the lack of even a general estimate, can hardly be considered a term of quantification. If the P number-term is ignored, then this number-term letter pattern in Nephi₁'s writings becomes KMLOLNLOLMLML and it may be divided into an initial (K) letter-set followed by two balanced and reversible letter-groups (MLOL[N]LOLM)(LML). The first of these letter-groups created by Nephi₁ appears to exhibit detailed planning, but his entire letter pattern must be carefully examined.

Nephi₁'s use of number-terms commences in First Nephi with a single, stand-alone, apparently predetermined, stated ordinal or (K) number-term letter-set. This first number-term in the small plates of Nephi is literally "the first" and it specifies the first year in the reign of Judah's king Zedekiah. The entire temporal-expression modifies the noun *commencement*. This is the only stated ordinal number-term in these plates. The (K) letter-set also represents the first and only number-term in these plates to be directly implied by a referenced number-term.

The second number-term in Nephi₁'s writings is the phrase "that same". It follows, appears in the same verse as, and refers directly to the stated ordinal number-term "the first". This (M) letter-set begins the longer and more complex of the two proposed number-term letter-groups composed by Nephi₁. The two referenced ordinal number or (M) letter-sets at the beginning and end of this (MLOL[N]LOLM) letter-group balance each other in position and in the content of their associated narratives. With respect to "that same year" mentioned in 1 Nephi 1:4, Nephi₁ goes on to report that Lehi₁ experienced a vision of God's throne and was called to be a prophet. At the end of this letter-group, the phrase "[i]n the year that king Uzziah died" is part of a Book of Isaiah quotation by Nephi₁ in 2 Nephi 16:1. The related narrative states that Isaiah₁ experienced a vision of God's throne and was called to be a prophet. These striking similarities in the content of the narratives associated with this letter-group's first and last (M) letter-sets further indicate that these narrative placements and the intervening ones were carefully planned to emphasize the importance of Lehi₁'s and Isaiah₁'s prophetic ministries in Nephi₁'s life.

The first LOL letter pattern in the variable sequence, balanced and reversible (MLOL[N]LOLM) number-term letter-group describes Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy in the first stated cardinal number or (L) letter-set, adds a referenced general number or (O) letter-set, and then ends with a second stated cardinal number or (L) letter-set in which Nephi₁ describes the passing of the initial eight years measured in Lehi₁'s 600-year prophetic period. The second LOL letter pattern balances the first LOL letter pattern in this letter-group and also describes

⁶⁵ See Division 1, Part 4, Section 4.8.3.

Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy in an (L) letter-set, adds an (O) letter-set, and then concludes with another (L) letter-set in which Nephi₁ again describes the years that had been measured in Lehi₁'s 600-year prophetic period.

These detailed parallels related to the first and last (M) letter-sets and LOL letter patterns balance and reverse around a central, referenced cardinal number or [N] letter-set composed of two identical number-terms that appear in Nephi₁'s report of his older brothers' protests in 1 Nephi 17:20-21. For "these many years", the brothers twice complain, we have "wandered in the wilderness" and "suffered in the wilderness". Thus, in the first, central and last referenced number-term letter-sets in this (MLOL[N]LOLM) letter-group, Nephi₁'s narratives contrast his faithless, frustrated older brothers with the visionary prophets Lehi₁ and Isaiah₁, both of whom were revered by Nephi₁. Indeed, at the time of this dispute with his brothers, Nephi₁ presented himself as another true prophet who needed their help to build a ship. Nephi₁ apparently used referenced number-terms to structure both the order of his year-related expressions and his contrasting narratives about belief and unbelief in the work of true prophets. Moreover, the balancing LOL letter patterns both suggest the vital importance of Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy to Nephi₁ and, subsequently, to the Nephites.

A simple (LML) letter-group composed of four number-terms concludes Second Nephi and begins the Book of Jacob. This letter-group seems to be a further indication that the first year-related expression in the Book of Jacob was planned or commanded by Nephi₁. In the narratives associated with this (LML) letter-group, Isaiah₁'s 65-year prophecy of the destruction of the kingdom of Israel (a prophecy that had been fulfilled before the time of Nephi₁) is contrasted with Isaiah₁'s yet to be fulfilled long-term prophecies regarding Babylon and the return of Jewish exiles from Babylon, and with Lehi₁'s related and yet to be fulfilled 600-year prophecy. The faith of the Nephites that Isaiah₁'s and Lehi₁'s long-term prophecies would be fulfilled also is expressed by the first temporal-expression in the Book of Jacob. The stated cardinal number-term in Jacob 1:1 is the last part of the (LML) letter-group that concludes Nephi₁'s writings. This expression marks the passing of 55 years, more than half a century, in the 600-year era measured by Nephi₁ and the faithful Nephites from the time Lehi₁ left Jerusalem.

1.8 Nephi₁'s chronological plan

Not long after the death of Lehi₁, the Lord warned Nephi₁ that Laman₁, Lemuel and those who supported their leadership were preparing to murder him and that he should leave with those who would go with him. Nephi₁ and his followers "did journey in the wilderness for the space of many days". When they found a place to settle, they called it "Nephi" and named themselves "the people of Nephi". His people "did observe to keep the judgments and the statutes and the commandments of the Lord, in all things according to the law of Moses" and they "believed in the warnings and the revelations of God".⁶⁶ After a number of years of hard work and prosperity in their new land, Nephi₁ reported that "thirty years had passed away from the time we left Jerusalem". His people were living "after the manner of happiness"; he had consecrated his younger brothers to be "priests and teachers over the land of my people"; and he was keeping "records upon my plates which I had made". At that time, he also reported that the Lord

⁶⁶ 2 Nephi 5:1-10.

commanded him to “[m]ake other plates” and to engrave “many things upon them which are good in my sight for the profit of thy people”. Nephi₁ “went and made these plates” and then “engravened that which is pleasing unto God”. Nephi₁ closed this brief narrative about the origin of the small plates by writing, “it sufficeth me to say that forty years had passed away, and we had already had wars and contentions with our brethren”.⁶⁷

1.8.1 Vital ministries

The planning of Nephi₁'s engravings on the small plates seems to have begun with three fundamental decisions that affected not only the narrative content of these plates, but his chronological plan as well. To fulfill the Lord's command to write “that which is pleasing unto God”, Nephi₁'s first vital decision seems to have been to emphasize his “ministry” rather than his “reign”; i.e., to focus on his religious experiences and teachings.⁶⁸ In that regard, as Nephi₁ began to contemplate ways to compose his writings on the new set of plates, he seems to have understood the close connection of the ministry of Isaiah₁ with the ministry of his father Lehi₁ and, subsequently, with his own ministry and those of his younger brothers, Jacob₂ and Joseph₂. To his thinking, these ministries apparently all were “good” in the sight of God and profited his people, so that they could continue to live “after the manner of happiness”. His engravings on the new set of plates were to be “kept” and apparently used “for the instruction of my people”.⁶⁹ Thus, he chose to note that long before his ministry and those of his younger brothers to the Nephite people, he had taught his older brothers in the wilderness regarding the words of Isaiah₁.⁷⁰ In the land of promise, he continued to teach his brothers and, after he escaped from them, he taught the words of Isaiah₁ to his people and specifically requested Jacob₂ to do the same.⁷¹ In planning his writings on the new set of plates, he chose to include 18 complete chapters from the version of the Book of Isaiah engraved on the brass plates, which Nephi₁ and his older brothers had obtained at Jerusalem.⁷²

In choosing the Isaiah quotations, Nephi₁ apparently understood that three of the chapters included temporal-expressions, one of which identified the year of Isaiah₁'s prophetic calling.⁷³ Furthermore, since the year of Lehi₁'s prophetic calling apparently was known from his record⁷⁴ and since Lehi₁'s calling began the events that eventually lead to the ministries of Nephi₁ and two of his brothers among the Nephites, the four temporal-expressions in the writings of Isaiah₁ and Lehi₁ seem to have predetermined the diction of four of the 29 temporal-expressions that in due course were worked into Nephi₁'s writings.⁷⁵ These four temporal-expressions included express singular and plural year-terms, prepositional narrative-links, personalized and omitted time-terms, and stated ordinal, stated cardinal and referenced ordinal number-terms.

⁶⁷ 2 Nephi 5: 26-34.

⁶⁸ E.g., 1 Nephi title appositive; 9:3-4; 10:1; 19:3.

⁶⁹ 1 Nephi 19:3.

⁷⁰ 1 Nephi 15:19-20.

⁷¹ 1 Nephi 19:22-24; 2 Nephi 6:1-5; 11:1-8; 25:1-6.

⁷² 1 Nephi 20-21 (Isaiah 48-49); 2 Nephi 7-8 (Isaiah 50:1-52:2); 2 Nephi 12-24 (Isaiah 2-14); 2 Nephi 27 (Isaiah 29).

⁷³ 2 Nephi 16:1: 17:8; 24:28 (Isaiah 6:1; 7:8; 14:28).

⁷⁴ 1 Nephi 1:17; 6:1-3; 19:1-2.

⁷⁵ 1 Nephi 1:4; 2 Nephi 16:1: 17:8; 24:28.

1.8.2 Integrated temporal-expression diction

Nephi₁'s second basic decision appears to have been that the diction of the temporal-expressions in his writings, whether predetermined by Isaiah₁'s and Lehi₁'s earlier writings, adapted from other passages in the brass plates,⁷⁶ or created by himself,⁷⁷ would be fully integrated throughout his writings. The received and created diction, like the passing of time through Nephi₁'s life itself, would simply flow forward through the record of his ministry. Thus, Nephi₁ seamlessly incorporated the diction of the four apparently predetermined temporal-expressions and adopted or created additional temporal-expression diction. Then, this diction was inserted in the text in a complex design based on year-, time- and number-terms and narrative-links. The design, as determined thus far in the analysis of Nephi₁'s writings, is only partially symbolized in Table 1.A by the letter patterns that appear with the three components of year-related expressions and with the five linguistic types of narrative-links. Diction and number patterns, as discussed above, also seem to have been part of his integrated design.

1.8.3 Divided books

The third fundamental decision made by Nephi₁ at an early point in the planning process appears to have been that his writings were to be separated into two major divisions, each of which would begin with a title, "The Book of Nephi", followed by an introductory declaration that included a content synopsis, a contextual statement of chronology, a societal description and a verification.⁷⁸ Despite this decision, Nephi₁'s intent seems to have continued to be that his writings, at least for most purposes, were to be read as a unified record of his "reign and ministry", as the title appositive of his first book states and as the introductory declaration of his second book indicates. The simple contextual statement of chronology that begins his second book ("after I Nephi had made an end of teaching my brethren") refers directly to the narrative about him teaching his brothers in the final chapter of his first book.⁷⁹ Thus, except for the insertion of a title and content synopsis to clearly signal the creation of another book, Nephi₁'s narration of events in his "reign and ministry" does not skip a beat.

By dividing his writings into two books, Nephi₁ seems to have been able to accomplish two crucial purposes suggested by his writings. The first purpose was the legitimation of his reign and ministry, both by his father and by God. Near the beginning of his first book, Nephi₁ reported the escape of his family into a wilderness area near the Red Sea and he noted the "stiffneckedness" of Laman₁ and Lemuel. They rejected "the words of the prophets" who declared that Jerusalem would be destroyed and "they did murmur in many things against their father because he was a visionary man". Indeed, "they were like unto the Jews which were at Jerusalem, which sought to take away the life of my father".⁸⁰ Nephi₁ described himself at that time as "being exceeding young, nevertheless being large in stature, and also having great desires to know of the mysteries of God". Thus, he sought the Lord to resolve the family conflict and, thereafter, he and his brother Sam refused to participate in what apparently had been an incipient

⁷⁶ E.g., Genesis 29:14; Leviticus 25:8, 30 ("the space of").

⁷⁷ E.g., 1 Nephi 17:21 ("these many years ... have suffered"); 2 Nephi 5:34 ("forty years had passed").

⁷⁸ See Division 10, Part 3, "Identifying major divisions in the plates".

⁷⁹ 1 Nephi 22; 2 Nephi 1:1.

⁸⁰ 1 Nephi 2:1-13.

conspiracy to force a return to Jerusalem. Indeed, the Lord promised Nephi₁ that if he would keep his commandments, and if the enmity of Laman₁ and Lemuel also became directed at him, he would “be made a ruler and a teacher over” them.⁸¹ Nephi₁’s first book notes instances where his rebellious brothers’ occasional religious obstinacy and homicidal desires arose but were held in check.⁸²

At the beginning of his second book, Nephi₁ noted the approaching death of Lehi₁ and emphasized the political and religious reality that Laman₁, Lemuel and those who followed them entirely rejected Lehi₁’s prophetic leadership. At that time, Lehi₁ issued dying decrees that the elder brothers and their followers should “[r]ebel no more against your brother”, but “hearken unto the voice of Nephi”.⁸³ Thus, Lehi₁ designated Nephi₁ to be their “ruler” and “teacher”, their political and religious leader, and in so doing, Lehi₁ reiterated that his Messianic revelations and those of Nephi₁ were to be integral parts of the religion of their people.

Nephi₁’s second crucial purpose in dividing his writings appears to relate to the opportunity the creation of two books gave him to symbolize the faith and devotion that he and his followers maintained with respect to Lehi₁’s 600-year prophecy. The division of Nephi₁’s writings into two books necessarily divided his number-terms into two groups. The symbolic consequences of that quantitative separation are analyzed in Part 3 of this Division. Thus, three vital decisions by Nephi₁ appear to undergird all of his writings. He would emphasize the origin and content of his ministry rather than the history of his reign. He would integrate the year-related diction he used throughout his writings by creating patterns in his use of year-, time- and number-terms and narrative-links. But, for two significant reasons, he would divide his writings into separate books. These decisions need not have occurred in that order, but they are clearly indicated in the text of Nephi₁’s writings in the small plates.

1.9 Temporal-expression structure after Nephi₁

As noted above and depicted in Table 1.A, temporal-expressions in the small plates of Nephi maintain complete uniformity in their use of express plural or B year-terms and verbal or R narrative-links in the major divisions that follow Second Nephi. They also maintain uniformity in their use of alternating, personalized or G and omitted or H time-terms after the use of the long name or D time-term in the first verse of the Book of Jacob. Even Mormon₂, writing hundreds of years after the last of Jacob₂’s descendants had engraved his report on the small plates, seems to have recognized the balanced and reversible placements of the various types of year-, time- and number-terms and narrative-links, and to have composed his temporal-expression in conformity with the letter patterns of Jacob₂ and his descendants. The final temporal-expression recorded in the small plates is Mormon₂’s composition using an express plural or B year-term, a verbal or R narrative-link and a personalized or G time-term that turns the alternating GHGH time-term letter pattern of Jacob₂ and his descendants into another five-part, balanced and reversible (GHGHG) time-term letter-group similar to the five-part letter-groups created by Nephi₁.

⁸¹ 1 Nephi 2:16-24.

⁸² 1 Nephi 2:8-14; 16:18-32, 34-39; 17:17-22, 48-52; 18:9-22.

⁸³ 2 Nephi 1:24, 28.

With number-terms, however, the structure that follows Nephi₁'s writings initially may seem to be quite jumbled. Nephi₁'s final stated cardinal or (L) number-term letter-set in his concluding (LML) letter-group extends into the Book of Jacob and incorporates Jacob₂'s first stated cardinal or L number-term. Thereafter, Jacob₂ seems to have created an (NON) letter-group with his "many hundred", "some" and "many hundred" number-terms. His son Enos appears to have created an OL letter pattern with his "many" and "an hundred and seventy and nine" number-terms. The descendants of Enos only used stated cardinal or L number-terms. Did Jacob₂'s descendants not understand the balanced and reversible patterns of the preceding writers? When Mormon₂ added another "many hundred" or (N) number-term letter-set at the end of the small plates of Nephi, did he simply give up attempting to match the (OL) letter-group apparently provided by Jacob₂'s descendants? If not, why did Mormon₂ choose to create a final (OLN) number-term letter-group on these plates? Is the first number-term of Enos a referenced general or O number-term? Is Jacob₂'s third number-term an O number-term? In dealing with such issues, the use of regular capital letters and terms such as "letter pattern", "letter-group" and "letter-set" symbolize writers' apparently considered decisions about how to express chronological concepts. Again, the questions of whether and how referenced number-terms were divided into various types by the writers must be considered.

What is the effect on the number-term letter patterns if referenced ordinal or M and referenced cardinal or N number-terms are considered a single type (new M = prior M + prior N) and referenced general or O number-terms are considered a second type of referenced number-terms? What is the effect on the number-term letter patterns if referenced number-terms are combined in other possible ways, so as to have two types (new M = prior M + prior O with a separate prior N; or new N = prior N + prior O with a separate prior M)? These alternatives also are suggested by the number-term letter patterns identified in Part 4 of Division 1.⁸⁴ What is the effect on the number-term letter patterns if all referenced number-terms are considered to be a single type (new M = prior M + prior N + prior O)? This alternative is suggested by the number-term letter patterns proposed in Part 4 of Division 1 and by the referred-quantity category of temporal-expressions proposed in Part 6 of Division 1.⁸⁵

1.9.1 Alternative 1: number-term letter patterns

Table 1.C of this Division presents the letter patterns in each of the major divisions of the small plates when referenced ordinal and referenced cardinal number-terms are considered to be a single type (labeled M in this table). This alternative requires the combination of two types (new M = prior M + prior N) that reference definite number-terms. All five previously identified referenced cardinal number-terms are assigned to the same category as the three referenced ordinal number-terms. Referenced general or O number-terms constitute a second type of referenced number-terms. If the major divisions and the absent number-term identified in Table 1.A again are disregarded, then the KMLOLMLOLMLMLMOMOLM number-term letter pattern for these plates may be divided into a single (K) letter-set followed by three balanced and reversible letter-groups (MLOL[M]LOLM)(LML)(MOM) and by a fourth variable sequence (OLM) letter-group.

⁸⁴ See Division 1, Part 4, Section 4.8.4.

⁸⁵ See Division 1, Part 4, Section 4.8.4; and Part 6, Section 6.6.

This proposal has several drawbacks. First, the definitional issue in Part 4 of Division 1 was the lack of a clear distinction between referenced cardinal or N and referenced general or O number-terms. That original difficulty remains an issue. When is a number-term an N or an O? One cannot dispose of this definitional problem merely by combining referenced cardinal number-terms with referenced ordinal number-terms. Second, this alternative fails to recognize the difference that seems to appear in Nephi₁'s writings between a referenced ordinal number-term (e.g., the second number-term in 1 Nephi 1:4) and a referenced cardinal number-term (e.g., 1 Nephi 17:20). Since stated ordinal and stated cardinal number-terms appear to be separated into different types, one may well expect that the same would be true for referenced ordinal and referenced cardinal number-terms. Third, this way of categorizing referenced number-terms does not solve the question of Mormon₂'s assumed choice to add a referenced number-term (an M in Table 1.C) to the previous (OL) letter-group. Could he not have expressed his witness of the coming of Christ with a referenced general number-term? Perhaps he could have. For example, "And it is *more than three hundred* years since the coming of Christ and I deliver these records into the hands of my son". How many years more than 300? At least arguably, "more than three hundred" could be considered a referenced general or O number-term rather than the combined or M form of referenced number-term. These three drawbacks cannot be ignored; so, they suggest that this categorization of referenced number-terms is unlikely.

1.9.2 Alternative 2: number-term letter patterns

Table 1.D shows the letter patterns in each of the major divisions of the small plates of Nephi when referenced ordinal and referenced general number-terms are considered to be a single type (labeled M in this table). This alternative requires the combination of two very different types of number-terms (new M = prior M + prior O). All five previously identified referenced general number-terms are assigned to the same category as the three referenced ordinal number-terms. Referenced cardinal or N number-terms constitute the second type of referenced number-terms. If the major divisions and the absent or P number-term identified in Table 1.A again are disregarded, then the KMLMLNLMLMLMLNMNMLN number-term letter pattern for these plates may be divided into a single (K) letter-set followed by three balanced and reversible letter-groups (MLML[N]LMLM)(LML)(NMN) and a fourth variable sequence (MLN) letter-group. The problems with this proposal are similar to those for alternative 1. The definitional issue involving referenced general or O number-terms and referenced cardinal or N number-terms is not solved. The two combined types are significantly different. And this categorization of referenced number-terms does not solve the question of Mormon₂'s assumed choice to create a variable sequence (MLN) letter-group. These problems also cannot be ignored in a thorough analysis of this issue; so, this appears to be another unlikely categorization.

1.9.3 Alternative 3: number-term letter patterns

Table 1.E depicts the letter patterns in each of the major divisions of the small plates of Nephi when referenced cardinal and referenced general number-terms are considered to be a single type (labeled N in this table). This alternative requires the combination of the two types of referenced number-terms that were difficult to separate with clear definitions in Part 4 of Division 1 (new N = prior N + prior O). All five previously identified referenced general number-terms are assigned to the same category as the five referenced cardinal number-terms. Referenced ordinal or M number-terms constitute the second type of referenced number-terms. If

the major divisions and the absent or P number-term identified in Table 1.A once more are ignored, then the KMLNLNLNMLMLNLN number-term letter pattern for these plates may be divided into a single (K) letter-set followed by three balanced and reversible letter-groups (MLNL[N]LNLM)(LML)(NLN). With this alternative, there is no fourth variable sequence letter-group.

Initially, this seems to be an attractive alternative. First, the prior lack of a clear distinction between referenced cardinal or N and referenced general or O number-terms is no longer an issue because they are all considered to be part of the same category. Second, this proposal recognizes referenced ordinal or M number-terms as a distinct type. Third, this method of sorting referenced number-terms solves the issue of Mormon₂'s assumed choice of a number-term. If he added an N number-term to a previous (NL) letter-group, he not only would have created a third balanced and reversible number-term letter-group in these plates, but he would have concluded the Lehi era temporal-expressions on these plates with an NC era temporal-expression that witnessed the fulfillment of Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy.

Nevertheless, this third alternative has a significant drawback. Because stated ordinal and stated cardinal number-terms appear to be separated into different types, one again may expect that the same would be true for referenced ordinal and referenced cardinal number-terms. They are indeed separated in this proposal, but the resulting combined types (prior N and prior O) seem to be materially different. A referenced number-term that is general because its definite quantification was unknown to Nephi₁ at the time it was written (1 Nephi 15:13) is now placed in the same category as referenced cardinal number-terms (1 Nephi 17:20-21) that are clearly susceptible to quantification because the preceding texts include chronological data. Hence, this alternative appears to be based on an unlikely categorization of Nephi₁'s number-terms that cannot be overlooked.

1.9.4 Alternative 4: number-term letter patterns

As noted above, a fourth alternative that avoids the definitional problems is one apparently chosen by Mormon₂ for his plates. All referenced number-terms are combined into a single category that may be divided into various types by their narrative-links and year-terms. Table 1.F depicts the letter patterns in each of the major divisions of the small plates of Nephi when all referenced number-terms are considered to be a single category (labeled M in this table). If the major divisions and the absent or P number-term identified in Table 1.A are disregarded as suggested above, then the KMLMLMLMLMLMLM number-term letter pattern for these plates may be divided into a single (K) letter-set followed by an alternating, balanced and reversible letter-group: (MLMLMLM[L]MLMLMLM). The central [L] letter-set is composed of the two stated cardinal number-terms in 2 Nephi 5:28 and 34. In the ten-year period indicated by these verses, Nephi₁ received the revelation to create a new set of plates, prepared a small set, apparently organized the plan for his writings and quotations, and engraved much if not all of his intended content (First Nephi and Second Nephi at least through 2 Nephi 5:34), all in accordance with the Lord's commandments. Since Mormon₂'s categorization of temporal-expressions appears to have placed all his referred-quantity expressions into a single category that was not divided by the types of number-terms, he may have viewed Nephi₁'s number-term letter pattern as being organized and divisible in this particular way.

This proposal also has shortcomings. First, it suggests that referenced number-terms were simply categorized and used by Nephi₁, Jacob₂ and Jacob₂'s descendants in a lengthy,

alternating MLMLMLMLMLMLML letter pattern until Mormon₂ added the final (M) letter-set and made the pattern balanced and reversible. All the other balanced and reversible letter patterns in the small plates suggest that this assumption is unlikely. Second, this proposal suggests that Nephi₁'s categorization of referenced number-terms was identical to Mormon₂'s categorization more than eight centuries later. That also seems like an unlikely assumption because, as the application of Mormon₂'s categorization to the small plates in Part 6 of Division 1 indicated, the resulting temporal-expression letter-set for the writers after Nephi₁ (a single referred-years-event or *P* letter-set) seemed to be inconsistent with what appeared to be their various alternating forms and numbers of referred-quantity expressions.⁸⁶ Third, this proposal fails to recognize the apparent difference between a referenced number-term that clearly implies a previous, definitely-quantified number-term presented in the text (the second number-term in 1 Nephi 1:4) and a referenced number-term that is general because its definite quantification apparently was unknown to Nephi₁ at the time it was written (1 Nephi 15:13). That is a distinct difference in these number-terms that would seem to be of consequence. Differences in the meanings of narrative-links and year- and time-terms appear to be crucial to understanding Nephi₁'s chronological structure. Why should referenced number-terms be different in this regard? Finally, this proposal requires that the analysis of referenced number-terms in Part 4 of Division 1 must be abandoned.⁸⁷ All five previously identified referenced cardinal number-terms and all five previously identified referenced general number-terms must be assigned to the same category with the three referenced ordinal number-terms. None of these drawbacks can be overlooked. Indeed, they suggest that Nephi₁ probably did not consider all referenced number-terms to be identical.

1.9.5 Alternative 5: number-term letter patterns

Despite all the unsolved issues related to the foregoing alternatives, a fifth alternative has been suggested by their examination. The concluding (NLN) letter-group in alternative 3 and the conclusion of the (MLMLMLM[L]MLMLMLM) letter-group in alternative 4 suggest that all the referenced number-terms in the writings of Jacob₂ and his descendants may be the same type. This fifth alternative is shown in Table 1.G, where all five types of express number-terms identified in Part 4 of Division 1 are used for sorting these adjectives. The absent or *P* number-term identified in Table 1.A again is disregarded. It is not considered to be part of the number-term letter pattern because it provides no quantification. However, the previously identified, referenced general or *O* number-terms in Jacob 7:1 (“some”) and Enos 1:8 (“many”) are categorized as referenced cardinal or *N* number-terms. When the major divisions also are disregarded, the KMLOLNLOLMLMLNLN number-term letter pattern may be divided into a single (*K*) letter-set followed by three balanced and reversible letter-groups (MLOL[N]LOLM) (LML)(NLN). Unlike the four previous alternatives, this alternative suggests a simple, consistent letter pattern that recognizes referenced ordinal, cardinal and general number-terms as three distinct types that may be clearly defined in the small plates of Nephi. The proposed new definitions are as follows:

⁸⁶ See Division 1, Part 6, Section 6.6.1.

⁸⁷ See Division 1, Part 4, Sections 4.6 and 4.8.3.

1. Referenced ordinal or M number-term: This number-term consists of a determiner (*that same* or *the*) that qualifies an express singular year-term in the writings of Nephi₁.
2. Referenced general or O number-term: This number-term consists of a single adjective (*many*) that qualifies an express plural year-term in the writings of Nephi₁.
3. Referenced cardinal or N number-term: This number-term consists of a determiner (*these many*, *many*, *many hundred* or *some*) that qualifies an express plural year-term anywhere in the small plates of Nephi.

In other words, only Nephi₁ used referenced ordinal or M number-terms (two of which appear to have been predetermined ones) and referenced general or O number-terms (apparently based on a “space of” phraseology in the brass plates). All subsequent writers in the small plates seem to have been required to use either stated cardinal or L number-terms or referenced cardinal or N number-terms if they composed year-related expressions.

This proposal is consistent with Mormon₂ sorting all his referred-quantity expressions into a single category that was not divided by the types of number-terms. He could have viewed the number-term letter pattern that he found in the small plates as being divisible into a single (K) letter-set followed by an alternating (MLMLMLMLMLML) letter-group. In the Words of Mormon, he would have been able to duplicate Jacob₂’s referenced cardinal number-term (“many hundred”) and to create a balanced and reversible (MLMLMLM[L]MLMLMLM) letter-group, with a central [L] letter-set affirming the Nephite devotion to measuring and recording the passing of years in the Lehi era. Alternatively, this fifth proposal is consistent with Mormon₂ recognizing that Nephi₁, Jacob₂ and Enos all used referenced cardinal or N number-terms and with Mormon₂ adding another N number-term to create the final balanced and reversible (NLN) letter-group depicted in Tables 1.F and 1.G. In either case, Mormon₂ could have added a final temporal-expression to the small plates of Nephi that not only created a balanced and reversible number-term letter-group, but concluded the Lehi era temporal-expressions on these plates with an NC era temporal-expression that testified to the truth of Lehi₁’s 600-year prophecy.

This fifth alternative also is consistent with the careful composition and placement of Jacob₂’s first temporal-expression in the small plates of Nephi. As to the use of year-terms, his first temporal-expression continued Nephi₁’s final use of express plural or B year-terms related to Lehi₁’s 600-year prophecy. Thereafter, every temporal-expression created by writers in the small plates used an express plural or B year-term. Nephi₁’s apparent plan for year-terms in the small plates was never modified.

As to the use of narrative-links, Jacob₂’s first temporal-expression completed Nephi₁’s second five-part balanced and reversible organization of narrative-links. In terms of the letter patterns in Table 1.A, Nephi₁’s narrative-link pattern was completed in Jacob 1:1 as (QUQUQ) (RQRQR) and, thereafter, every temporal-expression in the writings on the small plates used a verbal or R narrative-link. Nephi₁’s apparent command that only verbal or R narrative-links be used by subsequent writers in the small plates was obeyed completely.

As to the use of time-terms, Nephi₁’s GHGHGHGHGHG letter pattern was a balanced and reversible one that alternated single or consecutive groups of personalized or G time-terms and omitted or H time-terms. The pattern has been depicted above as two balanced and reversible, five-part (GHGHG) letter-groups positioned on either side of the central [H] letter-set that concluded First Nephi. Jacob₂’s first temporal-expression used an official, long name or D time-

term that is unique in the small plates of Nephi. Thereafter, every temporal-expression in the writings on the small plates helped to create or maintain another alternating pattern that used only personalized or G time-terms and omitted or H time-terms. Presumably, when Lehi₁'s 600-year period finally ended, the small plates were to be completed by a final personalized time-term that created a balanced and reversible GHGHG letter pattern. However, the descendants of Jacob₂ never got to that point because Amaleki had no brother or child who could receive the plates and they were already "full".⁸⁸ Thus, the use of the long name or D time-term to mark the year that had been completed before Nephi₁ officially ended his reign and ministry and the duplication of Nephi₁'s use of alternating G and H time-terms by Jacob₂ and later writers all suggest that the time-term letter pattern was prescribed by Nephi₁ as well.

Finally, as to the use of number-terms, the proposed letter pattern in Table 1.G may suggest some confusion created by Jacob₂'s son Enos. Nephi₁'s design begins with a standalone stated ordinal or (K) number-term letter-set that appears to have been predetermined by Lehi₁'s record. Thereafter, Nephi₁'s balanced and reversible design seems to have intermingled referenced ordinal or M number-terms, referenced cardinal or N number-terms and referenced general or O number-terms with stated cardinal or L number-terms. Assuming that an absent number-term is not to be included in the pattern as a quantitative measurement, then Table 1.G depicts Nephi₁'s design with two balanced and reversible letter-groups, (MLOL[N]LOLM) followed by (LML), both of which were completed in Second Nephi. Jacob₂'s first temporal-expression may be viewed as a continuation of, or complement to, Nephi₁'s final use of a stated cardinal or L number-term related to Lehi₁'s 600-year prophecy. The number-term letter pattern after Jacob 1:1 seems to have been the one set forth in Table 1.G. Both Jacob₂ and Enos are assumed to have used referenced cardinal or N number-terms like the central [N] number-term letter-set in Nephi₁'s (MLOL[N]LOLM) letter-group. Then, Enos completed his book with a temporal-expression that used another stated cardinal or L number-term. Thereby, he apparently initiated a final (NLN) letter-group that seems to have been assumed would be completed when the 600-year prophecy was fulfilled. After Enos, every temporal-expression created by writers in the small plates used a stated cardinal or L number-term, until Mormon₂ added the final referenced cardinal or N number-term to the small plates of Nephi.

Another, perhaps less likely, view of the number-term letter pattern after Second Nephi is one where Jacob₂'s use of a stated cardinal or L number-term in Jacob 1:1 is assumed to be a letter-set distinct from Nephi₁'s final (L) letter-set. In this view, the change in writers began a new pattern. Then, when Enos completed his book with another stated cardinal or L number-term, a balanced and reversible (LNL) letter-group had been created by Jacob₂ and Enos, and every temporal-expression placed thereafter in the small plates by the descendants of Enos required the use of a stated cardinal or L number-term to maintain the pattern. Finally, when Mormon₂ added the last referenced cardinal or N number-term to the small plates, he seems to have assumed that Jacob₂'s use of a stated cardinal or L number-term in Jacob 1:1 was part of Nephi₁'s final (L) letter-set and the remaining NL letter pattern created by Enos and his descendants was modified to be the (NLN) letter-group created by Mormon₂. The reason that this view seems less plausible than the first is based on Jacob₂'s use of a verbal or R narrative-link in Jacob 1:1. His first temporal-expression appears to have completed Nephi₁'s (RQRQR)

⁸⁸ Omni 1:12-30.

narrative-link letter-group. Hence, his stated cardinal or L number-term seems likely to have completed Nephi₁'s (LML) letter-group, as well. Nephi₁'s last number-term and Jacob₂'s first number-term were consecutive and categorized in exactly the same way.

Despite all the design consistency suggested by this fifth alternative, there are two unresolved problems. They arise out of the reclassification of the number-term “some” in Jacob 7:1 and the number-term “many” in Enos 1:8. The problem with “many” in Enos 1:8 is relatively easy to address because there are three other temporal-expressions that use the number-term “many”. In Nephi₁'s writings, the three number-terms that use the adjective *many* have been categorized as referenced general or O number-terms, but in the writings of Enos, this same adjective has had its categorization changed. Now it is to be understood as a referenced cardinal or N number-term. In other words, the sorting has not been based solely on the diction of these four number-terms because that diction is identical in each instance. How are these “identical” number-terms different?

In First Nephi, each of the three “of many years” temporal-expressions qualifies the noun *space*. In 1 Nephi 15:13, a “space of many years and many generations” is prophesied by Nephi₁ between the time when the Messiah “hath manifested himself in body unto the children of men” and the distant time when “the fullness of the gospel of the Messiah” shall “come unto the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles unto the remnant of our seed”. This number-term “many” has been categorized as a referenced general or O number-term because no definite number of years may be determined from the text or apparently had been revealed to Nephi₁. Likewise, in 1 Nephi 22:26, another “space of many years” is prophesied by Nephi₁ for the time when “the Holy One of Israel reigneth” and “Satan hath no power ... over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness”. Again, this number-term “many” has been labeled a referenced general or O number-term because no definite number of years may be determined from the text or evidently had been made known to Nephi₁.

Between these two clear instances of referenced general number-terms is the one set forth in 1 Nephi 17:4. Here, the conclusion of a “space of many years” is reported, rather than prophesied. Indeed, Nephi₁ states that “we did sojourn in the wilderness for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness”. A definite number of years may be ascertained from the text because Nephi₁ immediately reports it. Nevertheless, this adjective *many* is not considered to be a referenced cardinal or L number-term because of the literary context in which it appears. In the circumstance of Nephi₁'s report, the number-term “many” is categorized as a referenced general or O number-term because it is positioned in the text as a literary predicate and contrast to the emphatic, definite number-term “even eight” that immediately follows.⁸⁹

These three “of many years” temporal-expressions are distinguishable from the proposed determiner *many* in Enos 1:8. In this fourth instance, Enos is reporting the words God spoke to him in answer to his “mighty prayer and supplication ... all the day long” and into “the night”. God assures him, “Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed”. When Enos questions, “Lord, how is it done?”, God says, “Because of thy faith in Christ, whom thou hast not heard nor seen—and many years passeth away before that he shall manifest himself in the

⁸⁹ This pattern, a general quantitative description followed by the adverb *even* and a specific quantitative description, also occurs in narrative contexts unrelated to year-related expressions; see, e.g., Mosiah 7:2-5; 18:18; Alma 58:39; Helaman 4:9-10.

flesh—wherefore go to it; thy faith hath made thee whole”.⁹⁰ There is much more to this dialogue, but the temporal-expression is “many years passeth ... before he shall manifest himself in the flesh”. This expression is a prophecy stated by God, who presumably knew exactly how many years were meant. This expression is neither a literary predicate nor a contrast to the following year-related expression, which does not appear until the nearly end of the Book of Enos. Still, both temporal-expressions in the Book of Enos may have been intended to provide definite numbers for the purpose of chronological symbolism.⁹¹ A definite number of years for the number-term “many” is suggested by the preceding narratives in the Book of Jacob if “some” in Jacob 1:1 also is deemed to be a referenced cardinal number-term. This suggestion appears to be consistent with the chronological symbolism examined in Parts 2 and 3 of this Division.

The problem with the reclassification of the number-term “some” in Jacob 7:1 is the lack of comparable number-terms. Jacob₂’s seemingly vague statement is that “some years had passed”. To this point in the study, the number-term “some” in this temporal-expression has been classified as a referenced general or O number-term. Now it is suggested that it is to be grouped with the other referenced cardinal or N number-terms. The literary analysis, however, has not yet identified the adjective *some* with a definite number of years indicated in the text or in another set of plates. Based on the meanings of number-terms and their associated letter patterns, a definite number might be implied by the word *some* in the context of the political and religious challenge made by Sherem to Jacob₂’s authority and teachings.⁹² This suggestion also appears to be consistent with the chronological symbolism of the Book of Jacob, which is presented in Parts 2 and 3 of this Division. In those Parts, the groupings of number-terms and their letter patterns set forth in Table 1.G are deemed to be the ones intended by Nephi₁ and the other writers who engraved temporal-expressions on his small set of plates.

1.10 Conclusion

Rather than viewing Nephi₁’s writing process as merely extracting bits and pieces from his comprehensive history or from the brass plates, and then putting the extracts into a simple chronological order, it appears logical to view Nephi₁’s writings as having been carefully chosen and composed, and then placed within an intentional design. The choice of diction for each temporal-expression, the complexity of the placement of temporal-expressions, and the purposes behind all these decisions seem most likely to have been planned precisely.

This Part 1 has analyzed the proposed decisions regarding the design or structure of temporal-expressions that were created by the men who wrote in the small plates of Nephi. The chronological structure indicated by this analysis suggests that Nephi₁ began with at least four, and possibly five, temporal-expressions that were predetermined by the writings of Lehi₁ and Isaiah₁. The four certain temporal-expressions provided Nephi₁ with eight types of year-related diction: a prepositional narrative-link, a stated ordinal number-term, a stated cardinal number-term, a referenced ordinal number-term, an express singular year-term, an express plural year-term, a personalized time-term, and an omitted time-term. To these, Nephi₁ added five more types of year-related diction: an adverbial narrative-link, a verbal narrative-link, a referenced

⁹⁰ Enos 1:1-8.

⁹¹ Division 1, Part 4, Sections 4.6.3, 4.9-4.10 introduced this kind of chronological symbolism.

⁹² Jacob 7:1-23.

cardinal time-term, a referenced general time-term, and an absent number-term. A long name time-term was added to the text by Jacob₂, but because of the way that narrative-links and year-, time- and number-terms were placed within the text of these plates, it seems likely that Nephi₁ planned at least the first of Jacob₂'s temporal-expressions. All 13 of the express analytical types are shown in Table 1.H, together with the diction of the temporal-expressions, their placement in the text of the small plates, and their symbolic letter labels. The references within each major division are depicted within separate boxes, so as to provide a visual contrast with the organization of descriptive terms and their analytical types.

A significant part of the chronological structure in the small plates appears to have been created by the use of balanced and reversible placement patterns for the various types of narrative-links and year-, time- and number-terms. In particular, when regular capital letters were assigned to symbolize each of such types, five-part letter patterns and even a five-part number pattern were found in the plates. Three-, seven-, nine- and 11-part balanced and reversible placement patterns also were found in these plates. Table 1.H also identifies the letter patterns of the temporal-expression groups by enclosing them within separate boxes. For year-terms and time-terms, the boxes containing the proposed letter-groups end at the conclusion of Second Nephi; however, for narrative-links and number-terms, the boxes containing the proposed letter-groups extend into Jacob 1:1. These extensions, the continuation of express plural year-terms, and the long name or D time-term that is unique in this set of plates all suggest that Nephi₁ planned the chronological structure symbolized by the letter patterns shown in Table 1.H. In other words, when Nephi₁ transferred his small set of plates to Jacob₂, "the things which [his] brother Nephi had commanded"⁹³ apparently included strict adherence to a design or plan for describing the passage of time in the Lehi era.

1. Narrative-links: the exclusive use of verbal or R narrative-links in all subsequent temporal-expressions. (The base verbs used by later writers included *be, come, have* and *pass*.)
2. Year-terms: the exclusive use of express plural or B year-terms in all subsequent temporal-expressions.
3. Number-terms: the use of stated cardinal or L number-terms and referenced cardinal or N number-terms in some sort of alternating way in all subsequent temporal-expressions.
4. Initial time-term: the exclusive use of a long name or D time-term for Jacob₂'s initial report about the 55th Lehi calendar year ending prior to Nephi₁ concluding his official reign and ministry.
5. Subsequent time-terms: the alternating use of personalized or G time-terms and omitted or H time-terms in all temporal-expressions after Jacob₂'s initial temporal-expression.

Table 1.H is considered to be an accurate representation of the decisions made by the men who placed temporal-expressions into the small plates of Nephi. The chronological structure described in this table is used as the basis for the examination of chronological symbolism in Parts 2 and 3 of this Division.

⁹³ Jacob 7:27.