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Five Who Handled the Plates

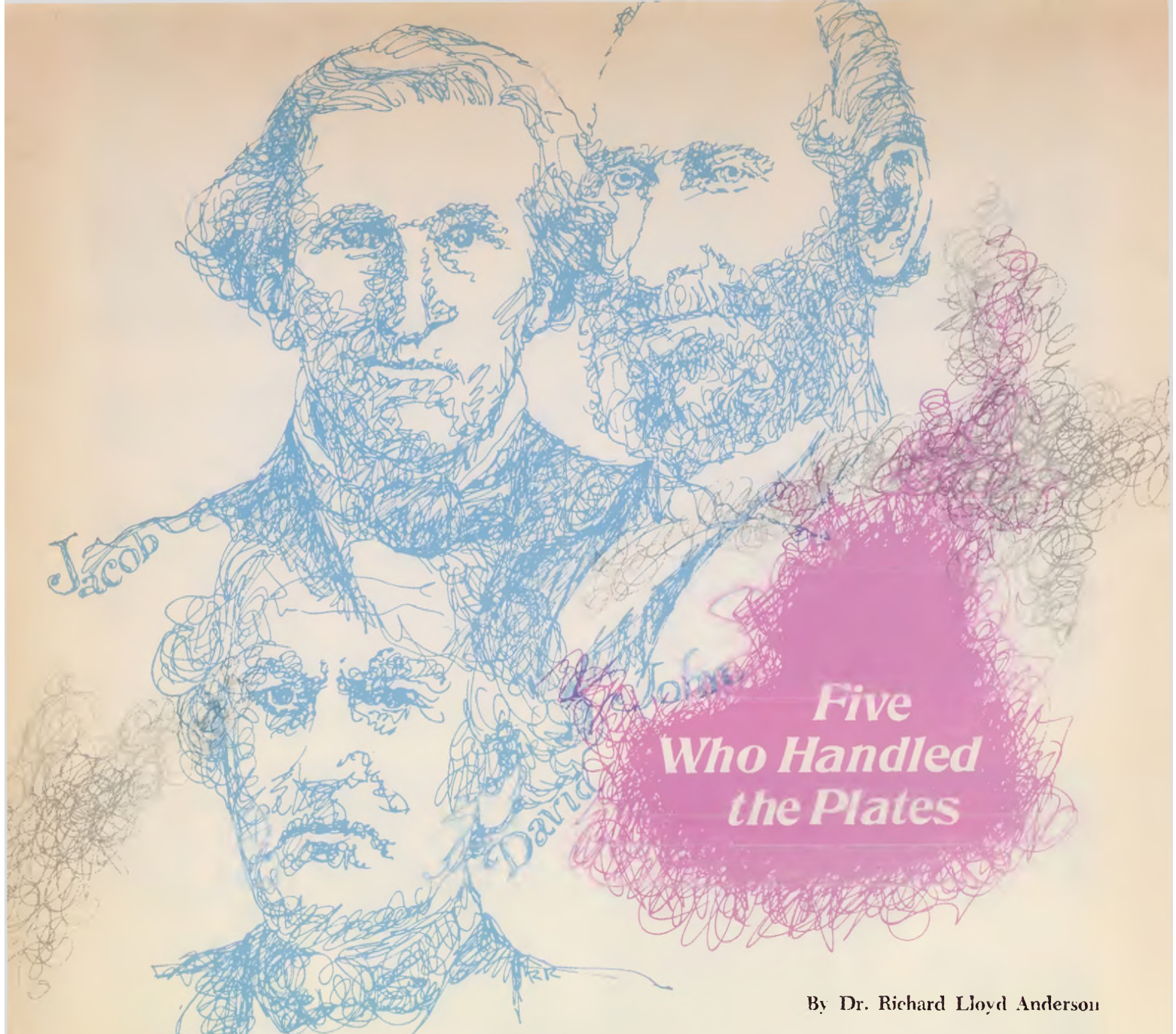
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Abstract: This article is a review of five of the Eight Witnesses who handled the golden plates—the four Whitmer brothers and Hiram Page. The testimony of the five witnesses never failed. “In fellowship or alienation, youth or age, persecution, poverty or affluence, four Whitmer brothers and Hiram Page never altered their plain testimony that they handled the original metal record of the Book of Mormon.”



Five Who Handled the Plates

By Dr. Richard Lloyd Anderson

“We have seen and hefted—”
“We did handle with our hands—”
“We also saw the engravings—”
“And we lie not. . . .”¹

With these simple claims, eight farmers and artisans publicly reported that Joseph Smith had shown them ancient plates of the Book of Mormon. A practical group who worked with their hands, they were better able to evaluate the “appearance of gold” and the “curious workmanship” than eight picked at random from a modern city.

The Prophet dated the vision of the three witnesses in June 1829, commenting that the “additional testimony” of the eight took place “soon after.” Lucy Mack Smith was nearby when both events took place, and she recalled that “in a few days” after the vision of the three, the believers from Seneca County, New York, visited the Smiths in Manchester, near Palmyra:

“Soon after they came, all the male part of the company, with my husband, Samuel, and Hyrum, retired to a place where the family were in the habit of offering up

their secret devotions to God. They went to this place, because it had been revealed to Joseph that the plates would be carried thither by one of the ancient Nephites. Here it was, that those eight witnesses, whose names are recorded in the Book of Mormon, looked upon them and handled them.”²

The eight men were Christian Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, Jr., John Whitmer, Hiram Page, Joseph Smith, Sr., Hyrum Smith, and Samuel H. Smith.

The Smiths are better known than the four Whitmer brothers and their brother-in-law, Hiram Page,

the house of Mr. Whitmer." Although this young minister seems to have been confused in some details by what many people told him, he remembered "two or three" of the Whitmer sons among "eight, who said they were witnesses. . . ." They had seen "certain plates of metal, having the appearance of gold. . . . These eight, we understood, were in company with Smith and three others."³

The Whitmer family had lived near Waterloo, New York, for just two decades when they extended their hospitality to Joseph Smith and believed in his divine call. In the early part of this period a standard guidebook characterized their township: "The inhabitants [are] principally of German extract, who came hither from Pennsylvania."⁴ The Whitmers were of this class. In several later interviews, David located the date of the New York move, which took place when he was four years old (1809), and the inclusion of Peter Whitmer on the 1810 census at Fayette confirms the family tradition.⁵ The proximity of the Whitmers to other pioneer settlers in the region (the Jolleys and the Schotts) through three censuses tends to show a single residence, confirmation of David's statement that the family remained in the same place until their move west with the Mormons in 1831. The deeds to Peter Whitmer came in four transactions between 1819 and 1827, but almost all settlers of this region contracted for their land and farmed it for several years before gaining formal ownership.⁶

Peter Whitmer and his sons were respected citizens of their township. The father was elected overseer of highways in his district in 1826 and 1827 and was also a local school trustee. Diedrich Willers, Jr., onetime Secretary of State of New York, prepared a careful history of Fayette late in the nine-

teenth century and then said of Peter Whitmer, Sr.: "He is spoken of by old Fayette residents as a worthy and industrious citizen."⁷ Diedrich Willers, Sr., the respected German Reformed pastor of the Whitmers, viewed Mormon converts as superstitious, which colored his comments on the elder Peter Whitmer, but he described him as "a quiet, unpretending, and apparently honest, candid, and simple-minded man."⁸ Local sources indicate that the Whitmers worshiped regularly at the early log structure of Zion's Church, a German-speaking congregation whose site is about a mile south of the Whitmer farm.⁹

Not only the father, but also the sons Christian, Jacob, and John Whitmer are found in Willers' church records as early as 1822. In 1825, Christian and Jacob, the two oldest sons, married sisters of the prominent Schott family. That year the 27-year-old Christian Whitmer was appointed ensign, one of three commissioned officers in the company of Seneca Grenadiers of the 102nd New York Regiment of militia.¹⁰ It is clear that this oldest Whitmer son was highly responsible and a recognized leader. He was also elected as one of six constables of Fayette township in 1828 and 1829, the year he became a witness of the Book of Mormon.¹¹

The newly organized Church assigned the youngest of the Whitmer brothers, Peter Whitmer, Jr., to travel west on a mission to the Missouri frontier. The sincere preaching of the young tradesman was remembered by several. Lyman Wight recalled his testimony "that he had seen the plates. . . ."¹² His own terse diary recalled on occasion: "[W]e declared the Book of Mormon. . . ."¹³ Following the pattern of the apostle Paul, these missionaries supported themselves



John Whitmer



Jacob Whitmer

and this article will survey the lives and testimonies of this latter group, with occasional reference to the remaining Whitmer brother, David, one of the three witnesses. This group resided in the same neighborhood in Fayette township, and the Church was organized at the home of the family head, Peter Whitmer, Sr. Just one week before this event (which took place less than a year after their experience with the plates), a young Baptist minister visited this household. David Marks recorded his impression of "attending a meeting in Fayette" on March 29, 1830, "at

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by.

Collector.—Halsey Winans.
Constables.—Halsey Winans, George
W. St. John, Edmund F. Hall, John L.
Rogers, James Stevenson, Jr. Willard
Metcalf.

The following gentlemen were yes-
terday elected town Officers for the
town of Fayette.

Supervisor.—Enoch Chamberlin.
Town Clerk.—Benjamin Woodruff.
Assessors.—Daniel Holman, John Ro-
rison, William A. Marshall.
Commissioners of High Ways.—Sam-
uel Cook, George Thomas, Tobias Pe-
rine.
Commissioners of Common Schools.—
Charles L. Hoskins, Sebastian Chatham,
Lewis Oakley.
Inspectors of Common Schools.—Isaac
Pinkney, Archibald Fowler, Samuel B.
Chidsey.
Overseers of the Poor.—Wm. Sweet,
John Yost.
Collector.—John Burtless.
Constables.—John Burtless, William
Sickels, Israel Rogers, Christian Whit-
mer, Jabez G. Cone, Jacob Hendricks.

State Road.—The bill providing for
the construction of a road, through the
southern tier of counties, leaving the
route to be designated by commission-
ers, was rejected in the senate, on the
15 inst. by a vote of 16 to 9. The pas-
sage of some bill on this subject is much
to be desired. The inhabitants of that
section have certainly strong claims for
it. We understand that it is the inten-
tion to present the bill in a different
shape, providing for the construction of
a road from Bath or Ithaca westward
to the Lake; aid for that part of the
route being at present most required.

Old newspaper report shows Christian Whitmer as a constable.

during their stay in frontier Mis-
souri. Peter Whitmer, Jr., was an
accomplished tailor and at this time
was engaged by General Alexander
Doniphan to make him a suit.¹⁴
But something higher than an occu-
pation was uppermost in the mind
of Peter Whitmer, Jr. The brief
notes of a conference speech cap-
ture his testimony and its basis
after returning from this early
mission:

"My beloved brethren, ever since
I have been acquainted with the
writing of God, I have viewed eter-
nity with perfect confidence."¹⁵

As the program developed for

settling Jackson County, the Whit-
mer family and others located in
a special settlement in the present
Kansas City area. Among them was
the Book of Mormon witness Hiram
Page, a native of Vermont, who had
earlier moved into western New
York, married Catherine Whitmer
in 1825, and then resided near
his wife's family in Fayette. Some
of the severest Missouri persecutions
came to witnesses of the Book of
Mormon. Late in 1833 John Corrill
reported of Christian Whitmer:
"They also took him and pointed
their guns at him, threatening to kill
him if he did not tell them where

W. W. THOMPSON, Sec'y

MARRI

In this town on Tues-
day, the 10th inst. PHILIP N
BURTON, Esq. PHILIP N
MISS ELSEY BRADT.

OBITUAR

In the death of Mrs.
FRIDGE, consort of Co
of Galen, Wayne count
the last Seneca Farmer
connexions sustain that
ment, which can only b
humble submission, and
hope, that their loss is
Mrs. Selfridge was an
pious professor of the
Saviour. She expired
hope of everlasting fel-
grave, cheerfully and c
the will of Providence
endearing connexions,
an affectionate husband
dren, the youngest five
deal, to mourn, the ben-
tender and paternal car
The deceased was in th
her age, when her spiri
transitory world, and i
welcomed into the hap
the spirits of the just—
ed cease from troubling
are at rest."

DIED.—In this village
PHILIP CHASE, aged —

P O E M

THE death of LAL
with other POEM.
and for sale by
Waterloo, April 2, 18

S. B. GAY,

HAS Just established
Village of Seneca

the brethren were."¹⁶ Another corre-
spondent wrote in the midst of this
terror: "[T]he enemy . . . had
thrown down 10 or 12 houses, and
nearly whipped some to death,
among whom was H. Page."¹⁷
Earlier that year, John Whitmer
had joined other Mormon leaders
in offering themselves as hostages
to stop the abuse of their people.

In poverty but great faith the
Latter-day Saints regrouped in Clay
County after their Jackson County
expulsion. All of the Whitmer wit-
nesses were prominent enough in
this early Missouri period to sit on
the high council. But death re-
moved the oldest brother, Christian,
in 1835 and the youngest, Peter, in
1836, both weakened by chronic
infections. Stalwart in their de-
fense of the faith, both were paid
a touching tribute from the per-
sonal knowledge of their brother-
in-law Oliver Cowdery:

"By many in this church, our
brothers were personally known:
they were the first to embrace the
new covenant, on hearing it, and
during a constant scene of persecu-
tion and perplexity, to their last
moments, maintained its truth—
they were both included in the list
of the eight witnesses in the Book
of Mormon, and though they have
departed, it is with great satisfac-
tion that we reflect, that they pro-
claimed to their last moments, the
certainty of their former testi-
mony. . . . May all who read
remember the fact, that the Lord
has given men a witness of himself
in the last days, and that they have
faithfully declared it till called
away."¹⁸

The next casualties among the
Whitmer group were spiritual. John
had been a trusted missionary, and
in 1838 he was Church Historian
and counselor to his brother David
in the Missouri presidency. Because
he and W. W. Phelps, the other
counselor, had taken personal title

Neither Hiram Page nor the Whitmer brothers ever altered their testimonies

to the gathering site of Far West, the resentment of the Missouri members resulted in criticism and then formal suspension of that presidency from office. Declining to be called to account economically or to personally appear at high council trials, John Whitmer was excommunicated March 10, 1838, followed by his brother David one month later. Hiram Page and Jacob Whitmer were not formally dealt with, but they took sides with their relatives and from that time were alienated from the Church. Because the Whitmer faction had sacrificed so much, it is understandable in retrospect that each of these men was angered and permanently hurt at often inconsiderate treatment from former friends. This is not to justify their very real rebellion against priesthood authority, but to admit the need to exercise such power carefully and to observe that their steadfastness in testimony is remarkable in the face of their resentment against former associates.

Hiram Page and the Whitmers remained in upper central Missouri after the Mormon expulsion. Two main changes took place in their lives. First, these men were religiously unsettled. John Whitmer recorded his deepest feelings in his manuscript history during the month of his excommunication. Referring to difficulties in "some temporal movements," he alluded to his own "expulsion," closing with his prayer for forgiveness "of my faults" and a hope of salvation "in the Kingdom of God, notwithstand-

ing my present situation, which I hope will soon be bettered and I find favor in the eyes of God and all men his saints."¹⁹ Such a private comment shows that the testimony of the witnesses was no facade but the expression of a profound personal experience. Subsequently, when William E. McLellin sought to enlist them in his reorganized church in 1847, they agreed to become leaders in emotion-charged circumstances. But not long after McLellin left, Hiram Page began a series of letters to Kirtland confessing that the Missouri witnesses failed to discern the true power of God in these actions. Speaking specifically for the surviving Whitmers and himself, Page admitted, "we have been lying dormant," and yet he envisioned no practical involvement, since "the way is not opened for us to organize as we would. . . ."²⁰ Although inactive, a decade after their apostasy the remaining eight witnesses still devoutly believed that God had established a latter-day work.

The second force upon the estranged witnesses was a secularization of their lives. Their essential problem was to make a living, and artificial religious convictions would certainly tend to fade to irrelevance. For instance, Jacob Whitmer settled in Richmond, Missouri, and he faced life in 1838 with few assets and a family of seven. His struggle in this period was later outlined on the basis of information from his remarkably successful lawyer-son. From 1840 to 1843 Jacob was virtually an invalid and unable to work, at the end of which period "his limited means were well nigh exhausted."²¹ A shoemaker by trade, he worked from 1843 to 1845 to buy a small acreage and erect a shoe shop on it. In the next decade he evidently followed the pattern of many early tradesmen by farming during the summer and working

his shop during the winter. At his death in 1856, his industry had resulted in ownership of 113 acres.²² But alienated from his Mormon associates for 18 years and preoccupied with material survival, Jacob Whitmer had never waned in his conviction regarding the plates. In 1888 his second son told Andrew Jenson, "My father, Jacob Whitmer, was always faithful and true to his testimony to the Book of Mormon, and confirmed it on his death bed."²³

Hiram Page's experience paralleled that of Jacob Whitmer. Starting life again with a family of eight in 1838, he disclosed no real estate assets on the 1850 census, two years prior to his death. Although family and neighborhood tradition indicate that Page had been a doctor when young, he was evidently untrained in that field and was generally a farmer, so listing himself on the census just mentioned. Conflict with religious associates and the fight for economic survival breaks the idealism of many a man, but Hiram Page's enthusiasm for the Book of Mormon was strong in adverse circumstances. Replying directly to an inquiry about his testimony, he mentioned early spiritual experiences and reaffirmed his practical knowledge of the plates: "As to the Book of Mormon, it would be doing injustice to myself, and to the work of God of the last days, to say that I could know a thing to be true in 1830, and know the same thing to be false in 1847."²⁴ Hiram Page's letters are warm toward his former associates, sending special greetings to Martin Harris, a fellow witness. His second son was 20 at his father's death in 1852 and later told Andrew Jenson: "I knew my father to be true and faithful to his testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon until the very last. Whenever he had an opportunity to bear his

Murder—The following statement of a diabolical deed, is furnished us by a respectable gentleman, residing at the spot where the act was committed.

On the night of the 7th inst. a Mrs. [name] of Sumpter District, was in-ly murdered by the servant maid.

She had for several days and nights attending her grand mother who extremely ill; on the evening of the 6th she returned to her residence to resume her domestic affairs and enjoy some repose. At the proper hour she retired leaving two children, who were in the kitchen with the servant. The servant a short time left the kitchen, entered the mansion of her mistress, and perpetrated the deed by striking her two or three blows on the head and it is said cut her throat, which caused her immediate death. Mr. S. the husband, was at the grand-mother's of the deceased.

When the servant returned to the kitchen the children saw her throw an apron at the door, to which they paid no attention, suspecting nothing. When she entered the house they heard one of the infants strangling, they rushed into the room, called their mother, and hearing no reply, put their hands upon her to assist her to relieve the child; but lamentably to tell, they found the bed clothes were on fire and immediately kindled, and beheld their beloved mother and one of the infants bathed in the blood of the dead object of their affection and regard. She immediately alarmed the nearest neighbors who repaired to the dreaded scene and to their regret and astonishment ascertained the reality of the dreadful tale. An investigation of the matter, the next day related the circumstance of the murder, which was immediately examined and covered with blood. The servant was apprehended, tried and convicted and was to be executed yesterday.

See Alexandria (D. C.) paper March 10. **Murder and Robbery.**

On Saturday night, William Simpson a Southern trader, was murdered near Centreville, Fairfax county,

Newspaper clipping shows David and Christian Whitmer active in

Seneca Grenadiers.

Commissions for a company of Grenadiers in the 102d regiment, have lately been received at the clerk's office in Waterloo, for the following named persons, viz:

DANIEL SCHOTT, *Captain*,
MICHAEL HENDRICKS, *Lieut.*
CHRISTIAN WITMER, *Ensign.*

At a meeting of said company held at the house of the widow Hendricks, on the 12th instant, pursuant to notice given for the purpose of adopting a uniform, and electing non-commissioned officers, the following persons were elected, viz: *Sebastian Chatham*, 1st. *John Bachman*, 2d. *David Witmer*, 3d. and *Samuel Hendricks*, 4th Sergeants.

The following is a description of the uniform as agreed upon, viz:—Caps to be of leather, nine or ten inches in height, considerably bell-crowned; the American standard painted in front, with the motto of "Seneca Grenadiers" in curve form round the standard; a white plume with a red top to be worn in front. Stocks to be black leather or silk. Coats, indigo blue, single breasted, standing collar, bullet buttons, four on each side of the collar, worked on silver lace from button to button, three rows of buttons in front, with nine in each, worked with silver lace from one button to the other, in diagonal form; three rows of buttons with three in each, on each sleeve, to represent herring bone, worked with silver lace; three rows with three in each in like form on each skirt, worked with lace likewise; four buttons at each flap, worked with lace lengthwise; four buttons on the skirts of each of the back piece, with lace. Length of coats, to be about half way between the long and short coat. White vests. Citizen pantaloons, indigo blue, and short hose to be

Seneca Farmer the communications Woolley, are requested to publish

Melancholy Accident.—Ting, (March 10) about 10 o'clock Mr. Thomas Arnold, shipmaster, in ascending a ladder (at the frigate now building at the Yard, for the purpose of inspecting his daily vocation; he fell and he fell to the ground, of nearly forty feet. He was picked up and carried home, where he lingered a few hours and expired. He has left a widow and several children to mourn his sudden exit. *Delphia paper.*

Among the executive business of the Senate of the United States on the 20th inst. was the confirmation of the promotion of lieutenants to be masters commandant. We understand the promotion follows: Captains Henley, Cass Brown, Thompson, Wadsworth, I and Ballard, to be post captains. Kearney, Parker, M'Call, Torner, Lagher and Stevens, to be masters. —*21b. Gas.*

The first Congress of the Mexico the new Constitution was assembled of January. The two branches—House of Representatives, were elected with regularity and harmony. On the 27th of February, 1824, was proclaimed the victory of Ayacucho, in Peru, the Mexican Sea, 2d February, of

"This most glorious victory produced effect for our independence as the flag produced for that of the United States. The nations of Europe will now see that Spain has no longer any real object of subduing us. Through the tent of America, the flag of Spain will soon disappear entirely."

The Mexican "Eagle," contains history of the late war between the United States and Great Britain, offered as "a present" to the Mexicans.

A subscription has been opened for the relief of the Spanish captives in Cuba. —*1b.*

A verdict of \$5,500 has been given in Maine, for a breach of marriage. The parties were Miss Mary T. Stebbins. —*1b.*

Nine negro convicts have entered the Penitentiary at Trenton, N. J. —*1b.*

Seneca Grenadiers.

these plates, and know of a surety that Joseph Smith, Jr., has translated the Book of Mormon by the gift and power of God. . . ."²⁶

From this peak of conviction, the same man descended to the depths of doubt within three years. Skeptical of Joseph Smith personally because of the failure of the Kirtland Bank, and rejected by his companions in gospel service, John Whitmer made common cause with other non-Mormons in ridiculing the faith of Theodore Turley, the business agent of the Church who remained to wind up financial affairs at Far West after the Mormons were driven out. But Turley openly accused Whitmer of inconsistency; answering in the presence of his anti-Mormon friends, the Book of Mormon witness made two revealing statements. First, he admitted, "I now say, I handled those plates; there were fine engravings on both sides. I handled them." When Turley next asked bluntly why Whitmer now doubted the work, the witness indicated his inability to translate the characters on the plates: "I cannot read it, and I do not know whether it is true or not." From the strict point of view of evidence, this report is most impressive. With social pressure to deny and personal motivation to explain away his experience, John Whitmer insisted that he had in fact handled the plates.

John Whitmer stayed in Missouri and farmed land on the site of the former city of Far West and its temple lot. His material success is measured by his estate inventory at death, listing ownership of 625 acres, much livestock and farm equipment, to which must be added the fine two-story house that still stands. The evaluation of his community on his 40 years of residence in Caldwell County is shown by the local obituary that alluded to the Mormon expulsion: "Mr. Whitmer

testimony to this effect, he would always do so, and seemed to rejoice exceedingly in having been privileged to see the plates. . . ."²⁵

After 1856 John Whitmer was the sole survivor of the eight witnesses. Outliving all the rest from two to four decades, he was contacted by more people than the others and thus left more specific statements about his experience. John Whitmer's life was tragic in the sense that he was materially successful but essentially a lonely man with deep desires to share his faith in the Book of Mormon and modern revelation.

The completely candid temperament of John Whitmer furnishes one of the best tests of the truth of his claim to have seen and handled the plates. As a trusted leader on the inner circle of decisions, he was editor of the *Messenger and Advocate* almost a year. In his closing editorial in 1836, John Whitmer shared his experiences as a member of the Church "from its beginning":

"Therefore I desire to testify to all that will come to the knowledge of this address, that I have most assuredly seen the plates from whence the Book of Mormon is translated, and that I have handled

remained at Far West and has since been a highly respected and law abiding citizen."²⁸

Although rural Caldwell County was relatively inaccessible, John Whitmer told his story of seeing the plates to a wide variety of visitors. In 1861, Jacob Gates talked with him over four hours and wrote in his journal, "[H]e still testified that the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the Lord. He also said that he believed that . . . Brigham Young was carrying out the doctrine and system which Joseph Smith taught but he (Whitmer) did not believe in a man's having more than one wife. . . ."²⁹

Like other Book of Mormon witnesses whose lives are well-known, John Whitmer's reiteration of his testimony was a moving experience to him. Pained that he was out of the Church, this witness wept openly when William Lewis pressed the inconsistency of his inactivity: "At last he did say, wiping the tears off, that the day would come when we would all see eye to eye."³⁰ The bitterness of the days after his excommunication were gone, and what remained in John Whitmer's mature years was the vivid memory of participation in the translation of a record of scripture:

"[O]ld Father John Whitmer told me last winter, with tears in his eyes, that he knew as well as he knew he had an existence that Joseph translated the ancient writing which was upon the plates, which he 'saw and handled,' and which, as one of the scribes, he helped to copy, as the words fell from Joseph's lips, by supernatural or almighty power."³¹

What motivated John Whitmer to reaffirm his testimony constantly to the end of his life? Financially successful and respected by his neighbors, this quiet personality shunned notoriety. Yet the affirmative men-

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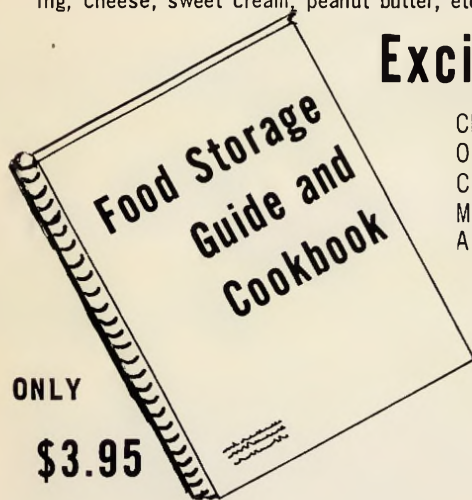
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tion of Mormonism in the location of the worst Mormon persecutions was certain to cause prejudice against him. His actual handling of the plates is the only plausible explanation for the seriousness with which this conservative farmer shared his testimony with Mormon visitors and non-Mormon associates. One may surely rely on his ability to report whether or not he lifted and handled a metal object of substantial weight. Six months before his death, he delivered his convictions publicly at a rural Sunday morning service, reported in the local newspaper as follows:

"Mr. Whitmer is considered a truthful, honest and law abiding citizen by this community, and consequently, his appointment drew out a large audience. Mr. Whitmer stated that he had often handled the identical *golden plates* which Mr. Smith received from the hand of the angel. He said it was of pure gold; part of the book was sealed up solid, the other part was open, and it was this part which was translated. . . . Before closing he asked the audience if they would take the Book of Mormon and the Bible and compare them, and to take Paul's rule, 'To prove all things and hold fast to that which is good. . . .'³²

In fellowship or alienation, youth or age, persecution, poverty or affluence, four Whitmer brothers and Hiram Page never altered their plain testimony that they handled the original metal record of the Book of Mormon. ○

FOOTNOTES

¹These phrases from "The Testimony of Eight Witnesses" are identical in the 1830 or present edition of the Book of Mormon. Capitals are added to the first three clauses.

²Lucy Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith* (Liverpool, 1853), p. 140.

³David Marks, *The Life of David Marks* (Limerick, Maine, 1831), p. 340. His language is undoubtedly inexact in implying the appearance of the angel to all witnesses.

⁴Horatio Gates Spafford, *Gazeteer of the State of New York* (Albany, 1813), p. 187.

⁵*Kansas City Daily Journal*, June 5, 1881. Family tradition and the birthplaces listed on the 1850 census indicate the birth of Catherine Whitmer April 22, 1807, in Pennsylvania and the birth of Peter Whitmer, Jr., September 27, 1809, in New York.

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⁴Seneca County Clerk's Office: Book M, p. 430; Book Q, p. 134; Book R, p. 124; Book S, p. 567.

⁵Diedrich Willers, *Centennial Historical Sketch of the Town of Fayette* (Geneva, New York, 1900), p. 49.

⁶Letter of Diedrich Willers to Ellen E. Dickinson, cit. Ellen E. Dickinson, *New Light on Mormonism* (New York, 1885), p. 249.

⁷*Ibid.* See also Courier Printing Company (ed.), *Manual of the Churches of Seneca County* (Seneca Falls, New York, 1896), p. 102.

⁸*Seneca Farmer* (Waterloo, New York), March 23, 1825.

⁹Fayette Township Record, at Waterloo Library and Historical Society, Waterloo, New York. John Genung, president of the society, materially assisted in locating these references.

¹⁰Journal of Lyman Wight, cit. *Saints Herald*, Vol. 29 (1882), p. 192.

¹¹Name file, Church Historian's Office.

¹²Interview with Alexander W. Doniphan, *Kansas City Daily Journal*, June 12, 1881.

¹³Far West Record, Typescript, Church Historian's Office, October 25, 1831.

¹⁴Letter of John Correll to Oliver Cowdery, Liberty, Missouri, December 1833, cit. *The Evening and the Morning Star*, Vol. 2 (January 1834), p. 125.

¹⁵Letter of Nov. 6, 1833, cit. *ibid.* (December 1833), p. 119.

¹⁶*Latter Day Saint Messenger and Advocate*, Vol. 3 (December 1836), p. 426.

¹⁷The Book of John Whitmer, cit. *Journal of History*, Vol. 1 (January 1908), p. 305. The manuscript shows that these first comments, intended to close his records, were crossed off as subsequent conflict occasioned further explanation.

¹⁸Letter of Hiram Page to Alfred Bonny, et al., Richmond, Missouri, June 24, 1849, cit. *The Olive Branch*, Vol. 2 (August 1849), pp. 27-29.

¹⁹*History of Ray County, Missouri* (St. Louis, 1881), p. 530. This sketch is the basis of other information in this paragraph, confirmed by other sources.

²⁰Probate papers, Ray County, Missouri.

²¹Letter of Andrew Jenson to *Deseret News*, September 13, 1888, Richmond, Missouri, cit. *Deseret News*, September 17, 1888.

²²Letter of Hiram Page to William E. McLellan, May 30, 1847, Ray County, Missouri, cit. *Ensign of Liberty*, Vol. 1 (January 1848), p. 63.

²³*The Historical Record*, Vol. 7 (October 1888), p. 614.

²⁴*Latter Day Saint Messenger and Advocate*, Vol. 2 (March 1836), pp. 236-37.

²⁵Memoranda of Theodore Turley, April 4, 1839, Church Historian's Office. As in all quotations of this article, editorial changes have been limited to punctuation, spelling, verb forms, and capitalization.

²⁶*Kingston Sentinel*, cit. *Richmond Conservator*, July 26, 1878.

²⁷Journal of Jacob Gates, March 18, 1861.

²⁸Letter of William Lewis to *Saints' Herald*, November 29, 1877, Stewartville, Missouri, cit. *Saints' Herald*, Vol. 24 (1877), p. 381.

²⁹Letter of Myron Bond to *Saints' Herald*, August 2, 1878, Cadillac, Michigan, cit. *Saints' Herald*, Vol. 25 (1878), p. 253.

³⁰Article of early 1878 from the *Kingston Sentinel*, cit. *Saints' Herald*, Vol. 25 (February 15, 1878), p. 57. The date and delivery of the speech on January 13, 1878, was verified in an independent letter, cit. *ibid.*, p. 58.

Completion

By Dorothy Cameron Smith

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