

1875, I personally heard him state, in Jan. 1876² in his own house in Richmond, Ray Co. Mo. in most positive language, that he did truly see in broad day light, a bright, and most beautiful being, an "Angel from Heaven," who did hold in his hands the golden plates, which he turned over leaf by leaf, explaining the contents, here and there. He also described the size and general appearance of the plates, and he further said, that he saw Joseph translate, by the aid of the Urim and Thummim, time and again, and he then produced a large pile of foolscap paper closely written in a very fair hand, which he declared was the manuscript written mainly by Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, as the translation was being read by the aid of the Urim and Thummim of the characters on the plates by Joseph Smith, which work of translation and transcription he frequently saw.

[8.]

Edward Stevenson Interview (1)
22-23 December 1877, Richmond, Missouri
Diary of Edward Stevenson, LDS Church Archives

Sat 22. after Breakfast wee took a walk up to David Whitmers the onley one of the 3 Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, that is now Living & Spent 4 [h]ours with him & again 4 [h]ours more in the Evening it being about 9 P. M. on Sunday Evening about 2 [h]ours again So that in all wee Spent 10 [h]ours haveing & being herd and as I was Successful in Emegrateing Martin Harris to Utah, I hope & Pray that I may be instrumental in the hands of the Lord in doing good & Bring Bro David to Zion. I will relate Some of the Items of Conversation as they Passed between us.

² See also J. L. Traughber interview, **Document [17]**, (which questions the accuracy of T. W. Smith's report) and T. W. Smith's response to Traughber, **Document [18]**, pp. 52-56 and 56-57.

Bro David Please relate your feelings in regard to the Testamoney of yours in the Book of Mormon, & the orrigen of the Gosple through Joseph Smith. Well as I know that the Sun Shines So do I know that I was Plowing one forenoon & I herd a voice & Saw a Personage Who Said Blessed is the Lord & he that keepeth his Comandments & the very next Round Bro. Joseph & Oliver Came along & Said come David & be one of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon Wee walked through A clearing & all Sat on a log it was about 11 A. M. When A Light appeared & it Grew Brighter until an Angle Stood before us and on the appearance of A table Was laid the Plates Urum & Thumin Ball or Director Sword of Laban &c & A voice Declared & Bore record of the truth of the Translation turning the Leaves over & thus the vision ended.

David Whitmer is 73 in Jan. 1878, & Stands 5, 10 in. & Weighs 150 lbs. fair & Prominent Features. he has only one son David & one Daughter Now A Widdow. Wee had Shown us the Transcript Cobby of the original of the Book of Mormon Written by Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdry, Ema Smith, the Prophets Wife, & Ch[r]istian Whitmer. It was foolscap & about 2 inches thick & clean & well preserved. he Gave us the Names of the 6—at the organisation of the Church

- 1 Joseph Smith Jr
- 2 Oliver Cowdry
- 3 David Whitmer
- 4 Hyrum Smith
- 5 John Whitmer
- 6 Christian Whitmer

As near as he could remember it was about Diner time at Peter Whitmers house, thare was presant about 40 or 50 Persons Mostley Members of the Church at F[ayet]t N York his testamoney is as Strong as Possible that Joseph Smith did receive Revelations & did organise the Church With apostles & Gifts on the Rock. But at the Reorganisation about the year 1836, varied Some as for Instance Nameing the Church

of Christ the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints, & young David spoke us Saying that that Was about the first Dispute or disagreement betwee[n] the Prophet and his father, he alsoe States that the Prophet Suffered the Publication of the Revelations (Doctrine & Covents) to be Printed, in Jackson Co Mo Premature & that he told them that it would result in Evil & that the Prophet had Gone astray & he did not believe in Revelations Received By the Prophet Since that time & that Evry one was for Something & his time would come by & by. that his testamoney was now going the World over in the Book of Mormon

[above the margin]

David Said that the Prophet translated first by the Urim & thumim & afterwards by A Seer Stone—E Stevenson

they No. about 15 & hold meeting in the Whitmer School house once in 2 or 3 weeks. Wee Bore A Faithful testamoney to him of the work being onward & Invited him to give heed & Search for the mind of the Lord & gather up to Zion in the tops of the mountains acording to Isaiah 2 Chap & that at anytime that wee would be on hand to Render him Evry necessary assistance & that I would [do] any thing for him he could write to me any time

Bro Clark alsoe Made the Same Proposition & Said take our Names & he observed I have his Name aludeing to me. I am Satisfied that he Pertook of our spirit Even the Spirit of Zion I also Bore Remembrance of Orson Pratt & W. Woodruff Inviteing him in his old age to visit Zion & be Blesed &c &c

Sunday 23d Wee visited Christian Church & alsoe Methodest meeting afternoon & Evening alsoe the Graves of the Father & Mother of David Whitmer & Oliver Cowdry the court House & Whare the old Jail was that contained our brethren in 1838 & Paid our Last visit to David W. & had the optertunity of Speaking to Several on our doctrines in our

Hotel one of the Conspikous ones Was Gen Donophin who was A Guest at our Hotel....³

[above the margin]

saw one of the Nephites

I wish to mention an Item of conversation with David Whitmer in regard to Seeing one of the Nephites. Zina Young, Desired me to ask about it. David Said. Oliver, & The Prophet, & I were riding in a wagon, & an aged man about 5 feet 10 heavey Set & on his back an old fashioned Armeey knapsack Straped over his Shoulders & Something Square in it, & he walked alongside of the Wagon & Wiped the Sweat off his face, Smileing very Pleasant David asked him to ride and he replied I am going across to the hill Comorah. Soon after they passed they felt strangely & Stopped, but could See nothing of him all arround was clear & they asked the Lord about it he Said that the Prophet Looked as White as a Sheet & Said that it was one of the Nephites & that he had the Plates. on arriveing at home they were impressed that the Same Person was under the bed & again they were informed that it was So. they Saw whare he had been & the next Morning Davids Mother Saw the Person at the Shed and he took the Plates from A Box & Showed them to her She Said that they Were fastened with Rings thus **D** he turned the leaves over this was a Sattisfaction to her. She Died in the room ware Wee visited Sitting up in her chair without a Struggle.

³ Omitted are a few lines regarding Alexander W. Doniphan.