

**ON THE TESTIMONY OF
BOOK OF MORMON WITNESSES,
1871**

W. E. McLellan's
Book
Jan. 4th 1871.

them in his hand, and showed as many of the leaves or plates as Joseph had translated to them. So that they saw, and looked upon them until they were entirely satisfied. And he the angel spoke to David Whitmer¹ and said, "David, blessed is the Lord, and he that keepeth his commandments." These men saw his form, saw his glorified appearance, heard his words, saw all that he showed them, and then saw him ascend to heaven again. This was no collusion. These men could not be mistaken They eith[er] told the truth [or] th[ey] wilfully lied. How [illegible] we know?²

This vision was in 1829. More than forty years ago, and what has been the conduct of those men since that day? Two of them are dead—and probably³ two living. Those who are dead testified to the last hour of their lives of to the truth of their vision. Those who are still living are firm in their testimony. I visited David Whitmer after he was more than 65 years of age,⁴ and he solemnly declared to me "I saw the Angel of God, I heard his voice, hence I know of a truth! Martin Harris⁵ is some over 89 years of age,⁶ and still he carries the book of Mormon under his arm, and testifies to all great and small, "I am Martin Harris in all

The title at the top of this page is ours, rather than McLellan's, and is meant as a general description of the notebook's contents. "W. E. McLellan's Book Jan. 4th 1871" is what McLellan himself wrote on the cover of Notebook 2.

1. For a summary of David D. Whitmer's life, see the Biographical Notes.
2. This paragraph is crossed out with a large X.
3. McLellan added the words "and probably" between the lines.
4. Whitmer's sixty-fifth birthday was 7 January 1870. The notebook date of January 1871 fits nicely with McLellan saying that Whitmer was "more than 65 years of age."
5. For a summary of Martin Harris's life, see the Biographical Notes.
6. Since Martin Harris was born on 18 May 1783, he would only be eighty-seven years old.

the world, and I know the book of Mormon to be verily true. And although all men should deny the truth of that book, I dare not do it. My heart is fixed. O god, my heart is fixed! I could not know more truly or certainly than I do.”

12 In⁷ 1833, when mobbing reigned triumphant in Jackson Co. Mo. I and O. Cowdery⁸ [fled]⁹ from our homes, for fear of personal violence on Saturday the 20th day of July. The mob dispersed, agreeing to meet again on the next Tuesday. They offered eighty dollars reward for any one who would deliver Cowdery or McLellan in Independence on Tuesday. On Mond[ay] I slipped down into the Whitmer’s settlement, and there in the lonely woods I met with David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery. I said to them, “brethren I never have seen an open vision in my life, ...¹⁰ [page 2:] Is that book of Mormon true?” Cowdery looked at me with solemnity depicted in his face, and said, “Brother William, God sent his holy Angel to declare the truth of the translation of it to us, and therefore we know. And though the mob kill us, yet we must die declaring its truth.” David said, “Oliver has told you the solemn truth, for we could not be deceived. I most truly declare¹¹ ~~declare~~ to you its truth!!” Said I, boys I believe you. I can see no object for you to tell me falsehood¹² now, when our lives are endangered.¹³ Eight men testify also to handling that sacred pile of plates, from which Joseph Smith, ~~translation~~ translated that heavenly work.

13. One circumstance I’ll relate of one of these eight witnesses. While the mob was raging in Jackson Co. Mo. in 1833 some young men ran down Hiram Page¹⁴ in the woods¹⁵ one of the eight witnesses,¹⁶ and

7. This is where Paul M. Hanson, “Unwavering Testimony,” *Saints’ Herald*, 9 Jan. 1929, 35, begins quoting the notebook.

8. For a summary of Oliver Cowdery’s life, see the Biographical Notes.

9. Though the text is hard to read, the word “fled” is given in Hanson’s transcript.

10. The extant photograph omits the rest of this page, but Hanson, “Unwavering Testimony,” 35, provides the missing text:

... but you men say you have, and therefore you positively know. Now you know that our lives are in danger every hour, if the mob can only catch us. Tell me in the fear of God.

The text then continues with “Is that book of Mormon true?”

11. McLellan’s “I most truly declare” has been shortened (probably accidentally) by Hanson to “I must declare.”

12. McLellan adds “hood” above the line.

13. Hanson, “Unwavering Testimony,” 35, ends his quotation here.

14. For a summary of Hiram Page’s life, see the Biographical Notes.

15. McLellan adds the words “in the woods” between the lines.

16. McLellan adds the word “witnesses” between the lines.

commenced beating and pounding him with whips and clubs. He begged, but there was no mercy. They said he was a damned Mormon, and they meant to beat him to death! But finally one [of] them said to him, if you will deny that damned book, we will let you go. Said he, how can I deny what I know to be true? Then they pounded him again. When they thought he was about to breathe his last they said to him Now what do you think of your God, when he dont save you: Will¹⁷

17. The extant fragment ends here.