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Title: **Meeting One of the Three Witnesses**

Provenance:

Category: **Document**

Person: **Hyrum Don Carlos Clark**

Date:

David Whitmer Interviewed by Edward Stevenson, December 1877 Source: Edward Stevenson to Orson Pratt, 23 Dec 1877 in JH, 23 Dec 1877, pp. 3-4. [page 3] Hudgins House, Richmond, Ray County, Missouri

David Whitmer Interviewed

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[page 3]

Hudgins House, Richmond, Ray County, Missouri

December 23, 1877.

Orson Pratt,

Salt Lake City,

3 Dear Brother: I have just returned from the third interview with David Whitmer, since our arrival at this place, night before last. David looks pretty well preserved, and weighs heavier than ever before 152 lbs; and stands 5 feet 10, fair, and prominent features. Brother Hyrum Clark and myself met him at his own fireside and were made welcome, and he was very free to converse, each interview lasting several hours. I asked him in regards to the names of the six members at the organization of the Church on the 6th day of April, 1830, and he gave them as follows: 1st Joseph Smith, 2, Oliver

Cowdery, 3rd, David Whitmer, 4th, Hyrum Smith, 5, John Whitmer, 6, Christian Whitmer and as near as he could remember, about 12 N. [sic] dinnertime. He also said there were 40 or 50 persons present many of whom were in the Church.

He showed us the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon written by four different persons, Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, Emma Smith, and Christian Whitmer. It was clean and well-cared for, written on foolscap, and about two inches thick. It came into his hands from Oliver Cowdery at his death, who lived at this place at the time of his death, and now he is by the side of both the father and the mother of David Whitmer, and some others of the Whitmer family, about half a mile north of Richmond. We visited the spot today. The city now contains about 2,000 inhabitants. A large courthouse stands in the same square on the spot where the old stood about 40 years ago. Some of our brethren will remember the old one. The old log jail is substituted by a blacksmith and wagon shop. A shock of earthquake rent the new courthouse in 1862, but it still stands. We asked David Whitmer in regards to his faith in the Book of Mormon. He smiled and his countenance lit up, saying, "As I know the sun shines so I know an angel appeared while Joseph, Oliver and myself sat upon a log in a clearing about 11 o'clock in the morning," a light first appearing which grew brighter until the angel stood before them and placed upon a table before them and placed upon a table before them the plates of gold, also the brass plates, [page 4] the Urim and Thummim (or interpreters) the ball or compass and the sword of Laban. He said there could be nothing to induce him to deny

these things. He further stated that he knew that Joseph was a prophet, and did receive revelations and that he organized the Church on the rock of the Twelve Apostles.

4 David has just two children, a son 44 years of age, [and] a daughter, both living here, the latter a widow. David will be 73 years of age in January, and his brother John, 2 years and 6 months older and lives at Far West.

4 I had a very pleasant interview today with General Doniphan and attended the Christian Church of which he is a member. General Atchison is still alive and two other members of the bar, all of which lived at Liberty, Clay County, Missouri, at the time of the expulsion of our people from Jackson County when Clay County received them. We had the opportunity today of explaining some of our views at our hotel in the presence of General Doniphan and others, and also several times while on the cars.

With kind regards,

E. Stevenson.

4 P.S. Martin Harris was not with Oliver and David, but subsequently witnessed the plates, etc., probably the next day.

E. S.