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“For the Sum of Three Thousand Dollars”

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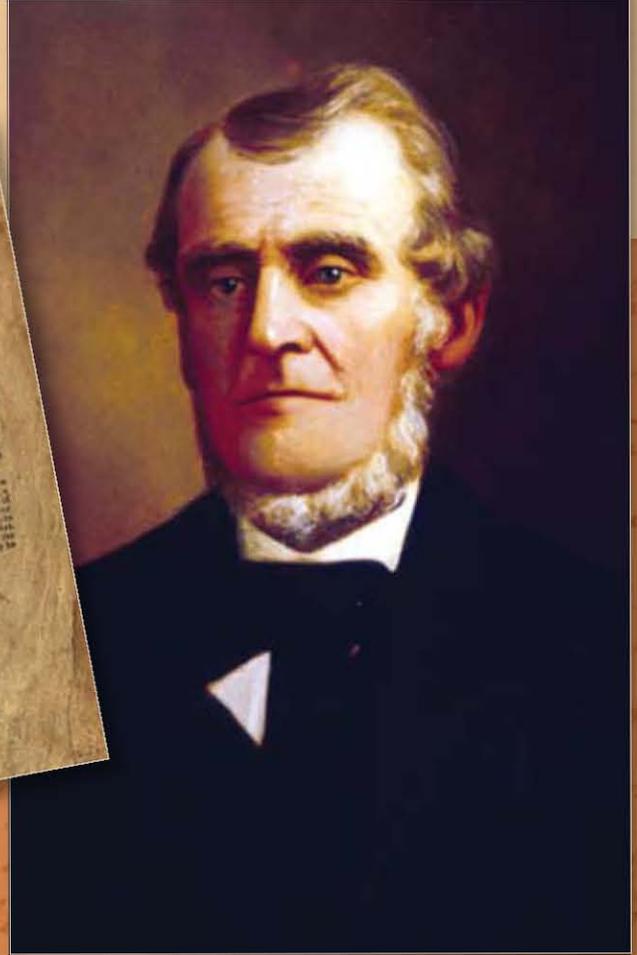
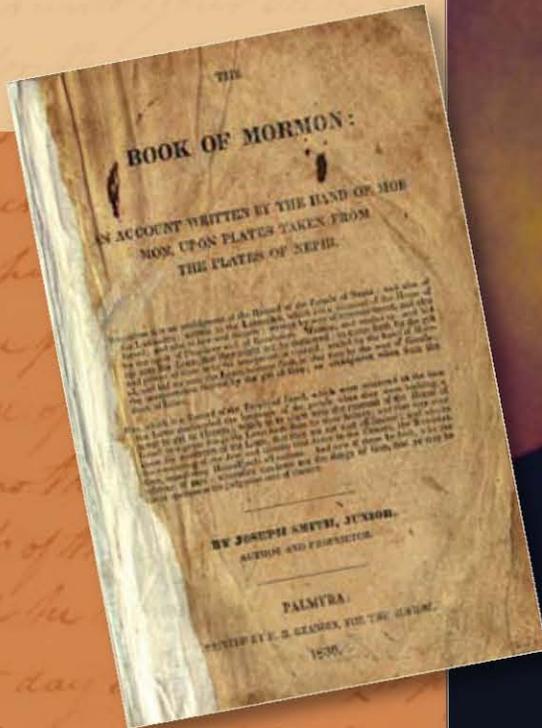
Title “For the Sum of Three Thousand Dollars”

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Abstract The familiar narrative of how Martin Harris mortgaged his farm to pay the printing cost of the first five thousand copies of the Book of Mormon overlooks details that make possible a fuller appreciation of his key role in the restoration of the gospel. Financially and otherwise, Harris was uniquely situated to secure the publisher’s note and relieve the financial tension that imperiled the book’s publication. Details of his family background, land ownership, business enterprises, and generosity are reviewed. Despite his pattern of vacillating in his religious commitments, his loss of 116 pages of translated manuscript, his exposure to public ridicule, and his fracturing marriage, Harris proved willing and able to honor the mortgage agreement and the Lord’s directives to him in Doctrine and Covenants, section 19. He did so at great personal cost when all attempts to recoup the publication costs failed and the shared financial responsibility unexpectedly fell solely on him. The view is expressed that Harris was raised up by the Lord to assist the Prophet Joseph Smith by securing and then personally financing the first publication of the Restoration.



"For the Sum of Three Thousand Dollars"



BY SUSAN EASTON BLACK

AND LARRY C. PORTER

Clockwise from bottom: Pressroom in the historic Egbert B. Grandin Building, in Palmyra, New York, where the first copies of the Book of Mormon were printed in 1830; title page from an 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, © Maxwell Institute; painting of Martin Harris, © Brigham Young University; Joseph translating the plates, a motion picture still from *Remembering Nauvoo*, © IRI. Background: Page from the printer's manuscript at 3 Nephi 21. Courtesy of Community of Christ Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri. Photo by Nevin Skousen.



“Our translation

drawing to a close, we went to Palmyra, Wayne county, New York, secured the copyright, and agreed with Mr. Egbert B. Grandin to print five thousand copies for the sum of three thousand dollars,” penned Joseph Smith.¹ Much has been written on the closing days of the translation and the process of securing the copyright, but acquiring the sum of \$3,000 has not received the same mention and, if mentioned, has lacked a proper description. Most accounts are like that found in *Joseph Smith and the Restoration*:

Martin Harris mortgaged his farm to Grandin; and on August 25, 1829, the contract was drawn up. Martin agreed to pay Grandin three thousand dollars within eighteen months after the printing began. Were he to default, Grandin was authorized to have the Harris farm sold at public auction and allow Martin the excess of the amount stipulated in the contract.²

Although such accounts state the basic facts, they lack the details that show what a unique and valuable contribution Martin Harris, one of Joseph’s first confidants outside his family, made to the Restoration.

Neither young Joseph nor his father—a wheat farmer, cooper, and day laborer struggling to pay a mortgage—was in a position to secure the agreement with Grandin. Oliver Cowdery, schoolteacher and scribe of the Book of Mormon translation, likewise lacked the necessary means or real wealth needed for collateral. The same could be said of 16-year-old Orrin Porter Rockwell, who likely made a considerable sacrifice when he proffered \$50 toward the publication of the Book of Mormon. But what of Joseph Knight Sr., who provided foolscap paper and commodities during the translation; Peter Whitmer Sr., who gave place and sustenance for Joseph in the final days of translation; and Josiah Stowell, a man of some substance who had earlier befriended and employed Joseph? They were all landowners like Martin, but it appears that none was in a domestic or financial position to provide the kind of security that Martin had offered to Grandin. Knight and Whitmer both owned considerably less land than Martin, while Stowell was hampered by obligations to a decidedly unsympathetic family. In addition, none of the three men lived in Palmyra, which, because it was only a few miles from the Smith farm, was clearly the best place to publish the Book of Mormon (both in terms of preserving the manuscript and saving time and expense). Though they were respected in their own communities, Whitmer, Knight, and Stowell naturally lacked associations and prominence in Palmyra—both of which could be important in funding a substantial publishing project.

Martin Harris, on the other hand, was a landowner and longtime Palmyra resident with a solid reputation among local businessmen—as well as a witness to the Book of Mormon—and he therefore seems to have been in a unique position to secure the publisher’s note and relieve the awkward financial tension of the situation.³ Would Martin be willing to step forward and provide the security when past associations with the translation had made him the target of public ridicule and marital strife? Then again, if he did offer to secure the financial obligation, could Joseph trust the man? Pomeroy Tucker, former editor of the *Wayne Sentinel*, gave his personal assessment of the financial crisis thus created: “Harris was the only man of property or credit known in all Mormondom; and, as will appear, he happened to be exactly the appropriate subject for the prophet’s designs; for without his timely aid and

pecuniary sacrifice the Golden Bible would probably have remained forever an unpublished romance.”⁴

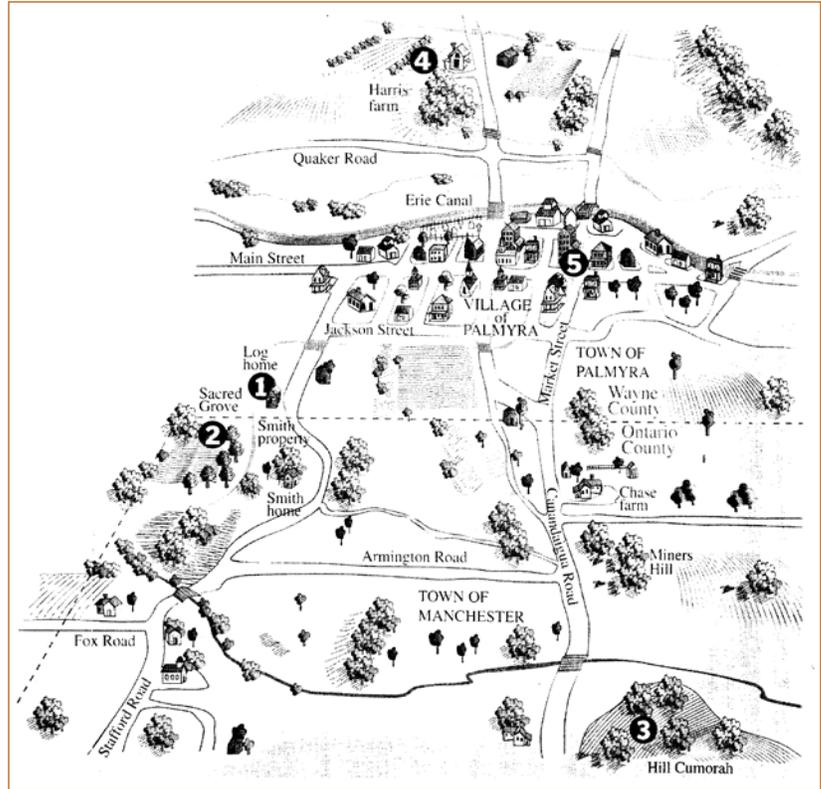
Martin Harris, like scores of early believers, felt inspired to assist the Prophet Joseph—to put his “all” on the line to help spread the word of the Restoration. But unlike those who would later be called to spread the good news, Martin was called to give freely of his considerable means, knowing full well that external consequences could further place his reputation, financial standing, and already-strained marriage in harm’s way. His acceptance of that call placed Martin Harris side by side with Joseph Smith in a negotiating role that proved vital to the Restoration. It also placed the Prophet in the uncomfortable position of having to revitalize his trust in a man the Lord had labeled “wicked” because of his compromise of sacred covenants in the loss of the 116-page manuscript (see Doctrine and Covenants 3:12–13; 10:1, 7).

We pause to remember that the Restoration was not a single event but a series of sacred moments that often placed the Prophet in need of the assistance of early believers. One such moment was securing the publication of the Book of Mormon.

The Financial Standing of Martin Harris

When the time came to publish the Book of Mormon, Martin was an astute 46-year-old businessman and prosperous farmer in Palmyra. He had been living in the community since age 10, when he and his parents moved to the area, then known as Swift’s Landing. In that year, 1793, his father, Nathan Harris, was induced by town founder John Swift to settle in “Township No. Twelve in the Second Range of Towns in Phelps and Gorham Purchase.” Within a year, Martin’s father had purchased 600 acres, nearly a square mile, for 50¢ an acre from Swift, no small sum at the time.⁵

On 27 March 1808, 24-year-old Martin married his 15-year-old first cousin, Lucy Harris, at Palmyra, Ontario County.⁶ A few years after their marriage, in 1813 and 1814, Martin was deeded



Sketch of the Palmyra area showing location of the Harris farm at the top. Courtesy of *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 21 March 1998 (www.democratandchronicle.com).

146 acres by his father and an additional 4 acres by his brother Emer.⁷ Over a period of years, Martin acquired a total of 320 acres, which were primarily north of Palmyra but did include a 4-acre lot in the village. By 1825, the year the Erie Canal was completed, the enterprising Martin was in a position to transport produce and livestock raised on his lands to eastern markets along the new waterway. In addition, Martin enjoyed much personal satisfaction from producing woven materials for use largely within his own household. His expertise in this venture was recognized by the Ontario Agricultural Society. In 1822 the *Ontario Repository* reported that “Martin Harris, Palmyra,” was awarded five dollars from the society for producing “the best cotton and woollen coverlet” in the area. For 20 yards of bleached linen, he received a four-dollar prize. By 1823 he had won eight additional monetary prizes from the society, and he won three more in 1824.⁸

One resident later described Martin as “an industrious, hard-working farmer, shrewd in his business calculations, frugal in his habits, and what was termed a prosperous man in the world.”⁹ He had definite ideas about finance, and because of his abundance, townsfolk expressed willingness to listen. Martin spoke of the importance of making business transactions in gold and silver. He “distrusted banks, Federalists, and authoritarians.”¹⁰ Regardless of whether all listeners concurred with his financial leanings, it appears, as one historian put it, that “none in all that neighborhood were more promising in their future prospects than [Martin].”¹¹

However, that respectability was questioned again and again as he gave of his means to young Joseph Smith. “In the midst of our afflictions we found a friend in a gentleman by the name of Martin Harris, who came to us and gave me fifty dollars to assist us on our journey [of 125 miles to Harmony, Pennsylvania],” wrote Joseph.¹² Lucy Smith recalled that this much-needed assistance was given inside a public house in Palmyra, when Martin approached Joseph and said (as recorded by Lucy), “How do you do mr smith?” He then took “a bag of silver from his pocket” and thrusting it in Joseph’s direction said, “Here Mr smith is \$50 I give it to you to do the Lords work with.”¹³ When Joseph sug-

for her to finish before “she commenced urging me to receive a considerable amount of money which she had at her own command” to help with the translation. Polly also desired to “help me to 75 dollars in money” to get the record translated, reported Mother Smith. Although Mother Smith refused the money on that occasion, Lucy Harris spoke with Joseph Smith about the matter. His comment, “I always prefer dealing with men rather than their wives,” displeased her.¹⁶ However, following a dream in which she claimed to see the gold plates, she offered Joseph a gift of \$28, an inheritance acquired at the passing of her mother, which gift was accepted. Thus, Martin’s wife became the first recorded donor to the Book of Mormon translation.¹⁷

The Inescapable Issue of Trust

In days past, Martin had shown fervor for more religious causes than what young Smith espoused. Antagonist E. D. Howe stated, “[Martin] was first an orthodox Quaker, then a Universalist, next a Restorationer, then a Baptist, next a Presbyterian, and then a Mormon.”¹⁸ Although Howe’s claims are exaggerated to a degree, Palmyra Episcopal minister Rev. John A. Clark did say, “If I mistake not, at one period [Martin was] a member of the

Where did Martin stand on his testimony of Joseph Smith’s translating gold plates? Did he have the faith necessary to secure the obligation with Grandin, or would he vacillate as he had in days gone by?

gested that he would sign a note for the silver, Martin motioned to all present to witness that he freely gave him the money and would not accept a note or compensation of any kind. On another occasion, viewing Joseph’s wardrobe as inappropriate for a man called of God, Martin reportedly insisted that the best pattern in a local store be used to make him a black suit that Martin promptly paid for.¹⁴

It was not just Martin’s generosity to Joseph that was questioned but also the financial offerings of his wife, Lucy, and her sister, Mrs. Polly Harris Cobb, who lived in the Harris household.¹⁵ Mother Smith recalled that while sharing with Lucy Harris and Polly the story of the gold plates, Lucy could not wait

Methodist Church, and subsequently had identified himself with the Universalists.¹⁹ If the minister’s remembrances are closer to the truth, it appears Martin was not above leaving one religious persuasion for another. To friend Pomeroy Tucker, he was a searcher and scripturalist of sorts. He read “the Scriptures intently, and could probably repeat from memory nearly every text of the Bible from beginning to end, giving chapter and verse in each case,” reported Tucker.²⁰ Where did Martin stand on his testimony of Joseph Smith’s translating gold plates? Did he have the faith necessary to secure the obligation with Grandin, or would he vacillate as he had in days gone by?

Then, of course, there was the issue of the lost 116 pages of the book of Lehi translation. Sometime during an eventful three-week period in June and July 1828 in which Martin had possession of the manuscript, he took his wife to visit her relatives, attended to business, and served on jury duty. But of greater consequence was his showing the manuscript pages to others. “By stratagem,” reported Joseph, “they got them away from [Martin.]”²¹ Lucy Mack Smith recorded that Joseph cried out, “Oh! Martin have you lost the manuscript? have you broken your oath and brought down condemnation upon my head as well as your own[?]”

“Yes,” replied Martin, “it is gone and I know not where[.]”

“Oh! my God my God[,]” said Joseph as he clenched his hands together, “all is lost is lost what shall I do[?] I have sinned[;] it is me that tempted the wrath of God.”²²

Mother Smith added: “I well remember that day of darkness, both within and without: to us at least the heavens seemed clothed with blackness, and the earth shrouded with gloom.”²³

Martin had confronted his wife about the missing manuscript. Lucy adamantly denied any responsibility for the loss, although many believed her responsible for the theft, including Lucy Mack Smith.²⁴ As for Joseph, he believed that the loss was a direct “consequence of my having wearied the Lord in asking for the privilege of letting Martin Harris take the writings.”²⁵ The Lord confirmed

his lamentations: “And when thou deliverdst up that which God had given thee sight and power to translate, thou deliverdst up that which was sacred into the hands of a wicked man” (D&C 3:12; 10:1, 7). Martin had “set at naught the counsels of God, and [had] broken the most sacred promises which were made before God, and [had] depended upon his own judgment and boasted in his own wisdom” (D&C 3:13).

Perhaps it was not a coincidence that (according to Lucy Mack Smith) soon after the loss “a dense fog spread itself over [Martin’s] fields, and blighted his wheat while in the blow, so that he lost about two thirds of his crop; whilst those fields, which lay only on the opposite side of the road, received no injury whatever.”²⁶ Not surprisingly, marital discord reached new heights for Lucy and Martin during the nine months that followed.

Of their growing differences, none was more directly aimed at stopping the coming forth of the Book of Mormon than the complaint Lucy lodged against Joseph Smith in March 1829 before a magistrate in Lyons, New York. The charge against young Joseph was attempting to defraud her husband out of money and property.²⁷ Lucy reported that when the court met, one witness testified that Joseph had nothing more than a box filled with sand, another stated it was filled with lead, and yet another solemnly testified that Joseph had confided in him that “there was nothing at all in the box . . . all he wanted was to get Martin Harris’s money away from him.” Lucy Harris spoke of Joseph’s attempt to defraud her husband out of all his property. Then stood Martin Harris, who testified, “I can swear that Joseph Smith has never got one dollar from me by persuasion. . . . I have never seen in Joseph Smith, a disposition to take any man’s money without giving him a reasonable compensation in return.”²⁸ The judge, apparently swayed by Martin’s testimony, told those in the courtroom to trouble him no more with such ridiculous folly. The case against Joseph Smith was closed.

Was Joseph willing to open the issue again and subject himself to perhaps another court case or worse by having Martin secure the note with Grandin? Was it worth the risk, especially when



Waiting for Martin, by Glen S. Hopkinson

prejudice against the publication went unchecked in Palmyra? Would it open anew wounds in the relationship of Martin and Lucy that were slow to heal? How pivotal was the publication of the Book of Mormon to the Restoration? These questions and others needed to be resolved.

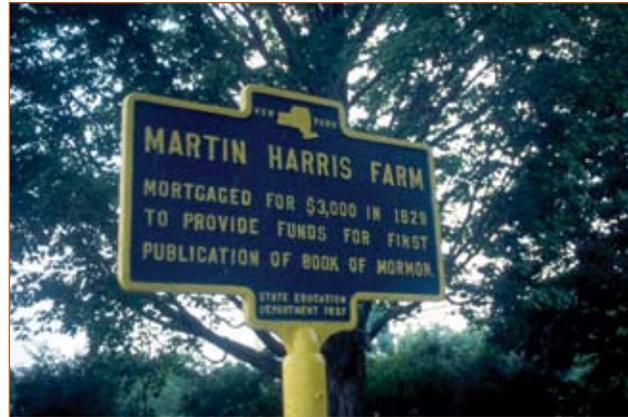
The Lord's Directive to Martin Harris

An early account of Martin Harris's willingness to secure the Book of Mormon publication comes from John H. Gilbert, who became the compositor for the project:

In the forepart of June 1829, Mr. E. B. Grandin, the printer of the "Wayne Sentinel," came to me and said he wanted I should assist him in estimating the cost of printing 5000 copies of a book that Martin Harris wanted to get printed, which was called the "Mormon Bible." It was the second application of Harris to Grandin to do the job.—Harris assuring Grandin that the book would be printed in Rochester if he declined the job again.²⁹

Thurlow Weed, former publisher of the *Rochester Daily Telegraph* and then editor of the *Rochester Anti-Masonic Enquirer*, also verified Martin's early declaration to stand as security for the printing from the very outset. Weed wrote that Joseph Smith first came alone to his office wanting to get a book published. Weed declined, and Joseph came a second time with Martin Harris, "a substantial farmer residing near Palmyra." Weed claimed that Martin "offered to become security for the expense of printing." Weed again declined.³⁰ His competitor, Elihu F. Marshall of Rochester, agreed to publish the book but at an exorbitant price. Hoping that Grandin might relent on his previous refusal and that a better price might yet be obtained, Joseph and Martin again met with E. B. Grandin, publisher in Palmyra.

According to Pomeroy Tucker, he and Grandin sought "to divert Harris from his persistent fanaticism in that losing speculation."³¹ Failing to do so, Grandin agreed to publish the book if Martin would secure the note with his valuable property as collateral. Grandin and Martin reached an agreement on 17 August 1829. Eight days later, on 25 August, Martin Harris put his guarantee upon an official mortgage note for the land.³² Mother Smith said that Martin was to initially pay half of



Sign in Palmyra, New York. Photo courtesy of D. Kelly Ogden.

the printing cost of the Book of Mormon and that Joseph and Hyrum would pay the residue. This financial arrangement, however, did not materialize as planned. Before January 1830, Martin became aware that the Smith brothers were unable to meet their share of the obligation. Joseph had applied for a loan with George Crane, a Quaker living in Macedon. His application was denied. Joseph then contacted friends, asking them to pre-purchase copies of the publication to finance the undertaking. Martin encouraged these contacts, hoping that a community effort of believers would provide the needed finances. One such believer was Josiah Stowell. Joseph Smith reported to Oliver Cowdery in October 1829 that Stowell had a "prospect of getting five or six hundred dollars" for copies of the book. Stowell was unable to help, however.³³ As one prospective financial outlet after another dried up, Martin realized more and more that the full weight of the obligation fell upon his shoulders and his alone.

Before the first copies of the Book of Mormon rolled off the press, rumors flew as if on eagles' wings that Martin would be unable to sell a portion of his farm and pay the cost of printing. Grandin was concerned. Adding to Martin's growing fears, citizens of Palmyra passed a resolution calling upon all residents to refuse purchase of the Book of Mormon and to use their influence to stop others from making such a purchase. The rumors, coupled with the resolution, caused E. B. Grandin to suspend printing in January 1830. It was not until 26 January, when Martin secured from Joseph Smith an agreement that he would have an equal opportunity

with the Prophet and others to sell the Book of Mormon until sufficient copies had been sold to pay the printing costs, that Grandin's fears were calmed and the printing commenced anew.³⁴

Knowing it would be a few months before the Book of Mormon was ready for sale, Martin applied for a short-term loan of \$1,300 to tide him over. He approached Charles Butler, a lawyer and regional loan officer for the New York Insurance and Trust Company in Geneva, New York, for the loan. According to Butler, Martin presented him with a letter of introduction from Henry Jessup, an elder in the Presbyterian Church in Palmyra. As Butler expressed it, Jessup was a man "on whose judgment I depended in respect to the character of the borrower and the value of the property."³⁵ Jessup's letter told of Martin's business savvy and well-kept farm, but, believing the loan was for the purpose of publishing the Book of Mormon, Butler refused.

With the refusal and with mounting pressure from his wife to default on his obligation with Grandin, Martin began to vacillate. Knowing something of Martin's hesitation to pay the debt and questioning his determination to sell the required acreage should the necessary sales of the book not materialize, Hyrum Smith urged his brother Joseph to raise the money by preselling the Book of Mormon in Canada. Joseph agreed. In the winter of 1829–1830, the Prophet directed Oliver Cowdery, Joseph Knight Sr., Hiram Page, and Josiah Stowell to go to Canada and there find someone who would purchase the copyright to the Book of Mormon for the stipulated price of \$8,000. They journeyed to Kingston, Upper Canada, and were slated to go to York (Toronto), but the circumstances of their arrival at the latter place remains uncertain. In Canada, the men were unable to find anyone to facilitate the purchase.³⁶ Their efforts provided no additional funding. The burden of payment remained with Martin. He was capable of meeting the obligation, but would he?

In the village of Palmyra, Martin was known as a man of considerable wealth and property. Some suggest that he could have paid the expected sum without embarrassment had he chosen. Instead, Martin dickered, bargained, and handled the transaction in his own way, seemingly unmindful of the Lord's directive to "not covet thine own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon, which contains the truth and the word of



Lucy Harris home in Palmyra, New York. Before selling his farm, Martin Harris gave his wife 80 acres, and she built this home on that property. Photo courtesy of Kenneth R. Mays.

God" (D&C 19:26). In the same revelation, he was forewarned that "misery thou shalt receive if thou wilt slight these counsels, yea, even the destruction of thyself and property" (D&C 19:33). Then in no uncertain terms, the Lord said, "Pay the debt thou hast contracted with the printer. Release thyself from bondage" (D&C 19:35).

Martin renewed his determination to meet the divine directive, and a relieved Grandin announced that the Book of Mormon would be available for public sale at his bookstore on 26 March 1830.³⁷ The release of the volume, mounting financial pressures, and other interpersonal concerns between Martin and Lucy created an irreconcilable schism in the Harris household. Lucy left Martin, taking their children and locating on the 80-acre farm acquired from Martin through a previous land transaction with Peter Harris, who had then deeded the same to his sister in a November 1825 settlement.³⁸

Martin made every attempt to presell copies of the Book of Mormon in advance of its availability to the public. However, he dejectedly reported to Joseph Smith and Joseph Knight upon their March arrival from Harmony, "The Books will not sell for no Body wants them." The Prophet tried to console him with the response, "I think they will sell."³⁹ Because of the boycott of the volume by certain of the citizens, "the book . . . fell dead before the public. . . . It found no buyers, or but very few," Pomeroy Tucker recalled.⁴⁰ Albert Chandler, an apprentice in Luther Howard's book bindery, recorded: "Martin Harris . . . gave up his entire time to advertising the Bible to his neighbors and the public

generally in the vicinity of Palmyra. He would call public meetings and address them himself.”⁴¹ Rev. Ancil Beach received correspondence from Canandaigua, New York, bearing the signatures of six prominent individuals who attested, among other things, that “Harris became very boisterous on the subject of the book and preached about the country in endeavoring to make sale of it—Harris is by some considered a deluded man partially insane, and by others as a cunning speculator in publishing this book for the sake of gain.”⁴²

As Martin struggled to ease his financial obligation, a Palmyra businessman, Thomas Lakey, offered to buy some of Martin’s property.⁴³ Martin Harris made the transaction for the requisite 151 acres in a private sale to Lakey on 7 April 1831. Lakey was to reimburse Martin in a series of payments extending to October 1832.⁴⁴ However, what was to have been a more protracted payment period was conveniently adjusted after several months’ time. John Graves came to the Wayne County area from England in 1831, locating at Walworth, just north of Palmyra. He and his wife, Jane, had with them a widowed daughter, Christina Graves Grainger, and her four children. Christina had with her some \$3,000 in gold coins, which she secured in a money belt around her waist. She provided the capital to her father, John, who then made the purchase of the specified 150¼-acre tract from Thomas Lakey on 28 January 1832. Lakey’s price for the sale was \$3,300, a markup of \$300.⁴⁵ Lakey then paid Martin the outstanding amount required for their \$3,000 agreement, and Harris compensated Grandin that same amount. Thomas Rogers, second assignee on the original mortgage agreement between Martin Harris and Grandin, certified before the commissioner of deeds for Wayne County, Truman Hemingway, on 28 January 1832 that “said mortgage is redeemed paid off, satisfied and discharged.”⁴⁶ The long-standing debt was duly retired.



This home is situated on the site of the Martin Harris Farm, in Palmyra, New York; the original home no longer stands. Photo courtesy of Kenneth R. Mays.

“Who Would Have Thought?”

Martin Harris, once a respected businessman and entrepreneur of sorts, walked the streets of Palmyra with arms full of expensive leather-bound copies of the Book of Mormon. Decades later, the *Palmyra Courier* recalled that he had been seen daily “inviting his friends and neighbors to buy. His form was conspicuous, with a grey suit of homespun, his head surmounted by a large stiff hat, while under his arm he carried several copies of the book.”⁴⁷ Instead of envying his circumstances as they once had, neighbors said that he was “crazy.” Grandin reported that Martin had “a large circle of acquaintances and friends to pity his delusion” as he followed the pursuits of the Prophet and the Church to Kirtland, Ohio, in 1831.⁴⁸

None of the early residents of Palmyra, with the exception of the Smith family, “received so many rebuffs” and endured “so many unfeeling comments” from near neighbors as Martin did.⁴⁹ Let it be remembered that no other early believer in the Restoration contributed more financial support to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon than Martin. Without his willingness to meet the publisher’s financial requirements, the printing of the Book of Mormon would have been delayed if not postponed for an indeterminate season. Without Joseph Smith’s willingness to accept and trust Martin when wisdom might suggest another course of action, the great written proof of the Restoration may have awaited another day. The financial support of Martin Harris, too often forgotten in the abyss of history and the personal struggles of the man, was very significant. Martin was raised up to help a prophet of God secure the first publication of the Restoration, and he fulfilled that important role at great personal cost.

Martin Harris, one of Joseph’s first confidants outside of his family circle, stepped forward and met the financial obligation incurred by the publication of the Book of Mormon. It was not until years later that he caught a glimpse of what his financial sacrifice had meant to the restoration of the gospel. Upon gazing at the temple and tabernacle in beautiful Salt Lake City, he exclaimed, “Who would have thought that the Book of Mormon would have done all this?”⁵⁰ 

ENDNOTES

“For the Sum of Three Thousand Dollars”

Susan Easton Black
and Larry C. Porter

- History of the Church*, 1:71.
- Ivan J. Barrett, *Joseph Smith and the Restoration: A History of the Church to 1846* (Provo, UT: BYU Press, 1973), 114. For a more complete account of this sequence, see Larry C. Porter, “Book of Mormon, Printing and Publication of,” in *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, ed. Dennis L. Largey (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 134–39.
- Martin Harris, son of Nathan Harris and Rhoda Lapham, was born on 18 May 1783 in Easttown, Saratoga County, New York.
- Pomeroy Tucker, *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1867), 49–50.
- Ontario County New York Deeds, book 6, 45.
- Lucy, daughter of Rufus and Lucy Harris, was born on 1 May 1792 in Palmyra (Deposition of Martin Harris, Service Pension, War of 1812, 24 April 1871, National Archives, Washington DC).
- Ontario County New York Deeds, 5 October 1813, book 19, 506–8; 4 January 1814, book 20, 327; 9 December 1814, book 10, 514–15; see “Old Newspapers—No. 24,” *Palmyra Courier*, 24 May 1872. This particular 150 acres became significant in Martin’s later settlement of the debt owed Grandin for publishing the *Book of Mormon*. Pomeroy Tucker stated: “The main farm and homestead, about one hundred and fifty acres of land, was retained by himself, the mortgage covering only this portion. . . . The farm mortgaged was sold by Harris in 1831 at private sale, not by foreclosure, and a sufficiency of the avails went to pay Grandin—though it is presumed Harris might have paid the \$3,000 without the sale of the farm” (Tucker, *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism*, 54–55).
- Ontario Repository*, 29 October 1822; see *Ontario Repository*, 11 November 1823 and *Wayne Sentinel*, 10 November 1824.
- Palmyra Courier*, 24 May 1872.
- Rhett S. James, “Harris, Martin,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 2:574.
- Thomas Gregg, *The Prophet of Palmyra* (New York: J. B. Alden, 1890), 37.
- History of the Church*, 1:19.
- Lucy Mack Smith, History rough manuscript, 1844–1845, book 6, 6, MS, Family and Church History Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter Church Archives); Lucy Mack Smith, “The History of Lucy Smith Mother of the Prophet, 1844–1845,” 121, MS, Church Archives.
- See Madge Harris Tuckett and Belle Harris Wilson, *The Martin Harris Story* (Provo, UT: Press Publishing, 1983), 20. David Aldrich was reported to have sold Joseph Smith “his first decent suit of clothes” while employed as a clerk in a Palmyra dry goods store (Thomas L. Cook, *Palmyra and Vicinity* [Palmyra, NY: Press of the Palmyra Courier-Journal, 1930], 125).
- Polly was the widow of Freeman Cobb, who drowned on 19 December 1821 in Lake Ontario. She and her children lived in the home with Martin and Lucy Harris until she remarried in July 1828. See *Geneva Gazette*, 3 June 1812.
- Smith, History rough manuscript, book 6, 4, MS; see Smith, “History of Lucy Smith Mother of the Prophet,” 118–19, MS. Lucy Mack Smith wrote of Lucy Harris: “Her husband permitted her to keep [a private purse] to satisfy her peculiar disposition.”
- William H. Homer, “The Passing of Martin Harris,” *Improvement Era*, March 1955, 146.
- E. D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville, OH: E. D. Howe, 1834), 261.
- John A. Clark, *Episcopal Recorder* 18 (1840): 94, as cited in Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 169.
- Tucker, *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism*, 40.
- History of the Church*, 1:21.
- Smith, History rough manuscript, book 7, 6, MS.
- Smith, “History of Lucy Smith Mother of the Prophet,” 134, MS.
- Lucy Smith spoke of the missing manuscript with some certainty. She declared, “The manuscript has never been found; and there is no doubt but Mrs. Harris took it from the drawer, with the view of retaining it, until another translation should be given, then, to alter the original translation, for the purpose of showing a discrepancy between them” (Lucy Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations* [Liverpool: Published by O. Pratt, by S. W. Richards, 1853], 123). There were also rumors that Lucy Harris burned the manuscript. “[Lucy Harris] says she burned them up,” reported Lorenzo Saunders, a neighbor of the Smith family. “And there was no mistake, but she did. They never was found; never came to light. . . . & she never denied of burning the papers” (E. L. Kelley Papers, Community
- of Christ Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri). This rumor has persisted. Hugh W. Nibley, for example, related that Rebecca Neibaur Nibley, daughter of Alexander Neibaur, was very close to Martin Harris’s second wife, Caroline Young Harris. Caroline told Rebecca that “Lucy Harris was so mad that she took the 116 pages and threw them in the fire.” Rebecca related this event to Hugh Nibley’s mother, Agnes Sloan Nibley, who then repeated it to Hugh (statement by Hugh Nibley in a personal interview with Larry C. Porter, Provo, Utah, 11 December 1997).
- History of the Church*, 1:21.
- Smith, “History of Lucy Smith Mother of the Prophet,” 134, MS.
- Lucy Mack Smith wrote, “This was the first time that a suit was ever brought before any court which affected any of my Children.” Smith, History rough manuscript, book 8, 6, MS; Smith, “History of Lucy Smith Mother of the Prophet,” 146, MS. Apparently, at this writing she failed to recall an Ontario County Court of Common Pleas case, May Term 1819, in which Jeremiah Hurlburt, plaintiff, brought suit against Joseph Smith Sr. and Alvin Smith, defendants, recorded 26 June 1819, photocopy in Church Archives. There was also an 1826 hearing in South Bainbridge, Chenango County, New York, involving Joseph Jr. See bill of Justice Albert Neely to Chenango County for conducting the 20 March 1826 hearing, “same [i.e., The People] vs Joseph Smith,” located in the office of the county supervisor, Chenango County Office Building, Norwich, New York. See also Gordon Madsen, “Joseph Smith’s

- 1826 Trial: The Legal Setting,” *BYU Studies* 30 (Spring 1990): 91–108.
28. Smith, “History of Lucy Smith Mother of the Prophet,” 147–48, MS; see Smith, History rough manuscript, book 8, 6–7, MS.
 29. John H. Gilbert, “Memorandum, made by John H. Gilbert Esq, Sept 8th, 1892,” King’s Daughters’ Free Library, Palmyra, New York.
 30. Harriet A. Weed, *Autobiography of Thurlow Weed* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1884), 1:359; see Paul Benton, “Rochester Journalism,” in *Centennial History of Rochester, New York: Volume 2, Home Builders*, ed. Edward R. Foreman (Rochester, NY: Board of Trustees of the Rochester Public Library, 1932), 108.
 31. Tucker, *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism*, 4.
 32. Wayne County Mortgages Book, 3:325–26. Stephen S. Harding, later territorial governor of Utah, recalled that it was “truly phenomenal” that Martin “should abandon the cultivation of one of the best farms in the neighborhood, and change all his habits of life from industry to indolence” (S. S. Harding to Thomas Gregg, February 1882, as cited in Gregg, *Prophet of Palmyra*, 37).
 33. Joseph Smith to Oliver Cowdery, 22 October 1829, Joseph Smith Papers, Church Archives.
 34. Agreement between Joseph Smith Jr. and Martin Harris, 16 January 1830, Simon Gratz Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Some have supposed that this 1830 agreement was between Harris and Joseph Smith Sr. rather than Joseph Jr.; however, Richard Lloyd Anderson and Scott H. Faulring have conclusively demonstrated that the agreement was indeed with Joseph Smith Jr. (see volume 1 of Anderson and Faulring’s forthcoming publication *The Documentary History of Oliver Cowdery: Witness of the Second Elder*).
 35. Manuscripts of Charles Butler, Library of Congress, as cited in Anderson, *Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses*, 101.
 36. Hiram Page to “Wm” (apparently William E. McLellin), 2 February 1848, Community of Christ Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri; see David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ, By A Witness to the Divine Authenticity of The Book of Mormon* (Richmond, MO, 1887), 30–31. Several details related to the trip to Canada are unclear, such as the exact date and who actually made the journey. David Whitmer indicated decades later that Oliver Cowdery and Hiram Page went by themselves. Hiram Page did not mention Martin’s debt as a factor in the attempt to sell the copyright in Canada.
 37. *Wayne Sentinel*, 19 March 1831.
 38. Wayne County New York Deeds, 29 November 1825, book 5, 530–32. No records of any divorce proceedings have been found. According to her grave marker in Palmyra, Lucy Harris died at age 44 (sometime between 1 May 1836 and 30 April 1837). Martin married Caroline Young on 1 November 1836 (presumably after Lucy’s death). Caroline, the daughter of John and Theodocia Young, was born on 17 May 1816 at Hector, Schuyler County, New York.
 39. Dean C. Jessee, “Joseph Knight’s Recollection of Early Mormon History,” *BYU Studies* 17/1 (1976): 36–37.
 40. Tucker, *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism*, 60–61.
 41. William Alexander Linn, *The Story of the Mormons* (New York: Macmillan, 1902), 48.
 42. N. W. Howell and others to Rev. Ancil Beach, January 1832, Walter Hubbell Collection, Princeton University Library, Princeton, NJ; copy in Church Archives.
 43. Thomas Lakey owned a blacksmith shop and a wagon shop and often bought and sold real estate. A cursory survey of the Index to Grantees, Wayne County, New York, 1823–1869, indicates that Lakey was involved in some 68 land purchases and 45 sales, with additional sales being handled by his heirs after his death.
 44. Wayne County New York Deeds, 7 April 1831, book 10, 515–16.
 45. Wayne County New York Deeds, 28 January 1832, book 11, 128–29.
 46. Certification of Thomas Rogers, 28 January 1832, recorded 8 February 1832 by Cullen Foster, Wayne County deputy clerk. See Minor T. Patton, “How it was that my great-grandmother’s gold paid for the printing of the first edition of the Book of Mormon,” typescript, Church Archives, 1–6; Wayne Cutler Gunnell, “Martin Harris—Witness and Benefactor to the Book of Mormon” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955), 37–39; Tuckett and Wilson, *Martin Harris Story*, 49–50; and Wayne County New York Deeds, book 11, 128–89. A copy of this agreement was obtained from Carl Lakey, son of Thomas Lakey, by Willard Bean. Bean sent the agreement to William Pilkington Jr. sometime after 24 July 1935.
 47. *Palmyra Courier*, 31 May 1872.
 48. *Wayne Sentinel*, 27 May 1831.
 49. *Palmyra Courier*, 24 May 1872.
 50. Edward Stevenson, “The Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon,” *The Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star*, 21 June 1886, 390.
- “Upon All the Ships of the Sea, and Upon All the Ships of Tarshish”: Revisiting 2 Nephi 12:16 and Isaiah 2:16**
Dana M. Pike and David Rolph Seely
1. We began discussing the topic of this article many years ago. Our determination to finish and publish this article was motivated, in part, by two relatively recent publications that employ Isaiah 2:16 // 2 Nephi 12:16 as part of their authors’ efforts to raise questions about the means by which the Prophet Joseph Smith brought forth the Book of Mormon. These are David P. Wright, “Isaiah in the Book of Mormon: Or Joseph Smith in Isaiah,” in *American Apocrypha: Essays on the Book of Mormon*, ed. Dan Vogel and Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), 157–234; and Ronald V. Huggins, “‘Without a Cause’ and ‘Ships of Tarshish’: A Possible Contemporary Source for Two Unexplained Readings from Joseph Smith,” *Dialogue* 36/1 (2003): 157–79. Compare David P. Wright, “Joseph Smith’s Interpretation of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon,” *Dialogue* 31/4 (1998): 181–206.
 2. For a convenient review of this data, see Victor L. Ludlow, “Isaiah in the Book of Mormon,” in *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, ed. Dennis L. Largey (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 344–45.
 3. Recently published study aids for those who want to broaden and deepen their understanding of the content and function of the Isaiah quotations in the Book of Mormon include the entries on Isaiah in Dennis L. Largey, ed., *Book of Mormon Reference Companion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 340–400; and Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch, eds., *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998).
 4. See for example, George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1955 [reprinted 1961]), 325–26; Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 141–42; Keith A. Meservy, “God Is with Us,” in *1 Kings to Malachi*, ed. Kent P. Jackson (Studies in Scripture, vol. 4; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993), 92; and Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina M. Peterson, *Understanding Isaiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1998), 32.
 5. Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993), 505.
 6. Victor L. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 91. Compare 91n3: “The Book of Mormon proves to be a valuable resource in restoring a more correct version of the original material.” See similarly, W. Cleon Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks to Modern Times* (Salt Lake City: Ensign, 1984), 159, who states that 2 Nephi 12:16 “contains a remarkable demonstration of the integrity of the brass plates.” See note 9 below for additional representative citations.
 7. Sidney B. Sperry, *Our Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Steven & Wallace, 1947), 172–73. Compare *The Voice of Israel’s Prophets* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1952), 90–91 (later reprinted with “1965” on the title page); *The Problems*