

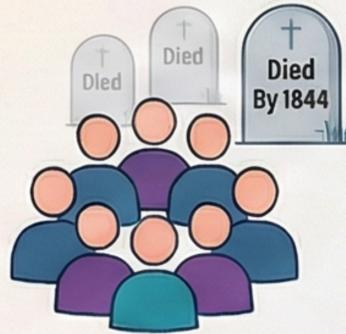
What Happened to the Book of Mormon Witnesses?

The LDS Church presents the testimonies of the witnesses to the golden plates as foundational proof. However, historical records reveal unstable relationships, rival affiliations, and conflicting accounts.

UNSTABLE LOYALTY: THE WITNESSES AFTER THE FACT

Most of the 8 Witnesses Quickly Died or Left the Church

By 1844, five had died and three had been excommunicated or had left.



Eight Witnesses

X Excommunicated (1836) - John Whthner

X Excommunicated (1838) - Jacob Whinner

X Lett the Church (1839) - Hiram Page



JAMES STRANG

Key Witnesses Followed Rival Prophet James Strang

After Joseph Smith's death, nearly all living witnesses and Smith's own family followed Strang.

Martin Harris Followed Multiple Prophets

Harris, one of the Three Witnesses, also followed claimant Gladden Bishop and his "sacred plates."



Martin Harris

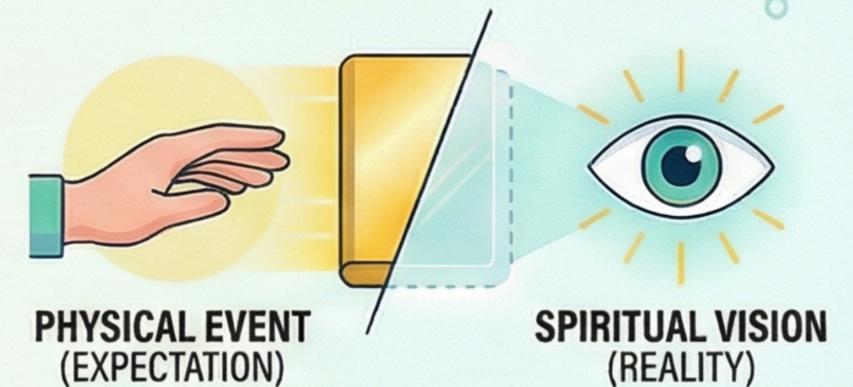


Gladden Bishop

INCONSISTENT STORIES: CONTRADICTIONARY TESTIMONIES

A "Spiritual Vision," Not a Physical Event?

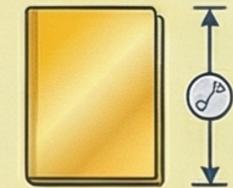
There are at least 13 accounts where witnesses described seeing the plates in a "vision" or with "spiritual eyes."



Conflicting Descriptions of the Plates



Witness A:
Greenish, thick paper size



Witness B:
Gold, thin like tin

Witnesses disagreed on the plates' size, color (greenish vs. gold), and thickness (like "thick paper" vs. "tin").



The Idea of Buried Metal Plates Was Common

Stories of ancient records on buried metal plates were widespread in Joseph Smith's 19th-century environment.