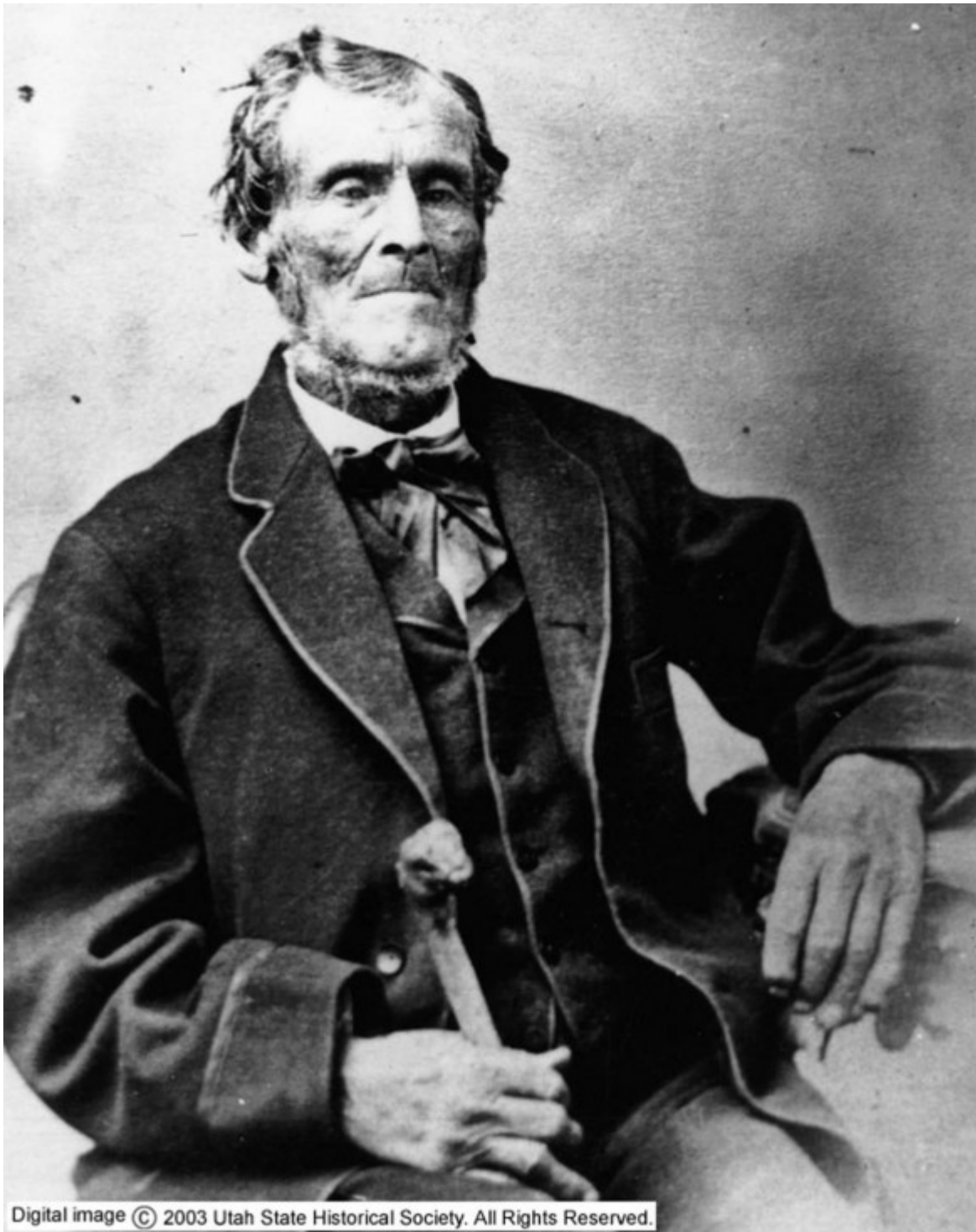


The colorization of old black and white photographs has become more popular in recent times. See [this collection](#) of historic photographs, now retouched in full color, including the raising of the American flag at the Battle of Iwo Jima, Audrey Hepburn, Albert Einstein, Mark Twain, Che Guevara, Charlie Chaplin, Salvador Dalí, Charles Darwin, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, George Orwell, Ernest Hemingway, and more. The color added to these iconic images helps bring them to life, as if they were taken by a modern camera today. The digital technique seems to be gaining in popularity.

I've tried my hand at colorizing old photographs of [Oliver Cowdery](#) (presumably) and [David Whitmer](#) in the past, with some success. I thought I'd round out the collection by doing the same work to an old photograph of Martin Harris, the last of the Three Witnesses. The trouble is, there are very few known photographs of Martin Harris—only *two* to be exact.¹ There are many other drawings, paintings, or engravings of one sort or another, many made after one of the photographs,² and others from the artists' imaginations or recorded descriptions. But only two actual photographs are known to be extant of this early Church figure.

One of the photos is a very rare photograph of Martin Harris late in life. He lived until he was 92 years old, so this may have been within a few years of his passing.³ This is found in the Church History Library archives, and you can see a copy of this photograph on the Church History Library website [at this link](#).⁴ Unfortunately, the photo is in very poor condition, with little discernible detail in Martin's face.

The other photo is perhaps the most well-known image of Harris, and is a photograph of unknown date⁵, taken by [Savage & Ottinger](#). I have been unable to determine if the original is extant. All of the digital renditions of this photograph I've been able to discover seem to be taken from *copies* of the original, not from the original itself. Below is one of the best copies I've been able to find, used by permission from the Utah State Historical Society's Classified Photo Collection.⁶ This image has much more detail, and less damage:



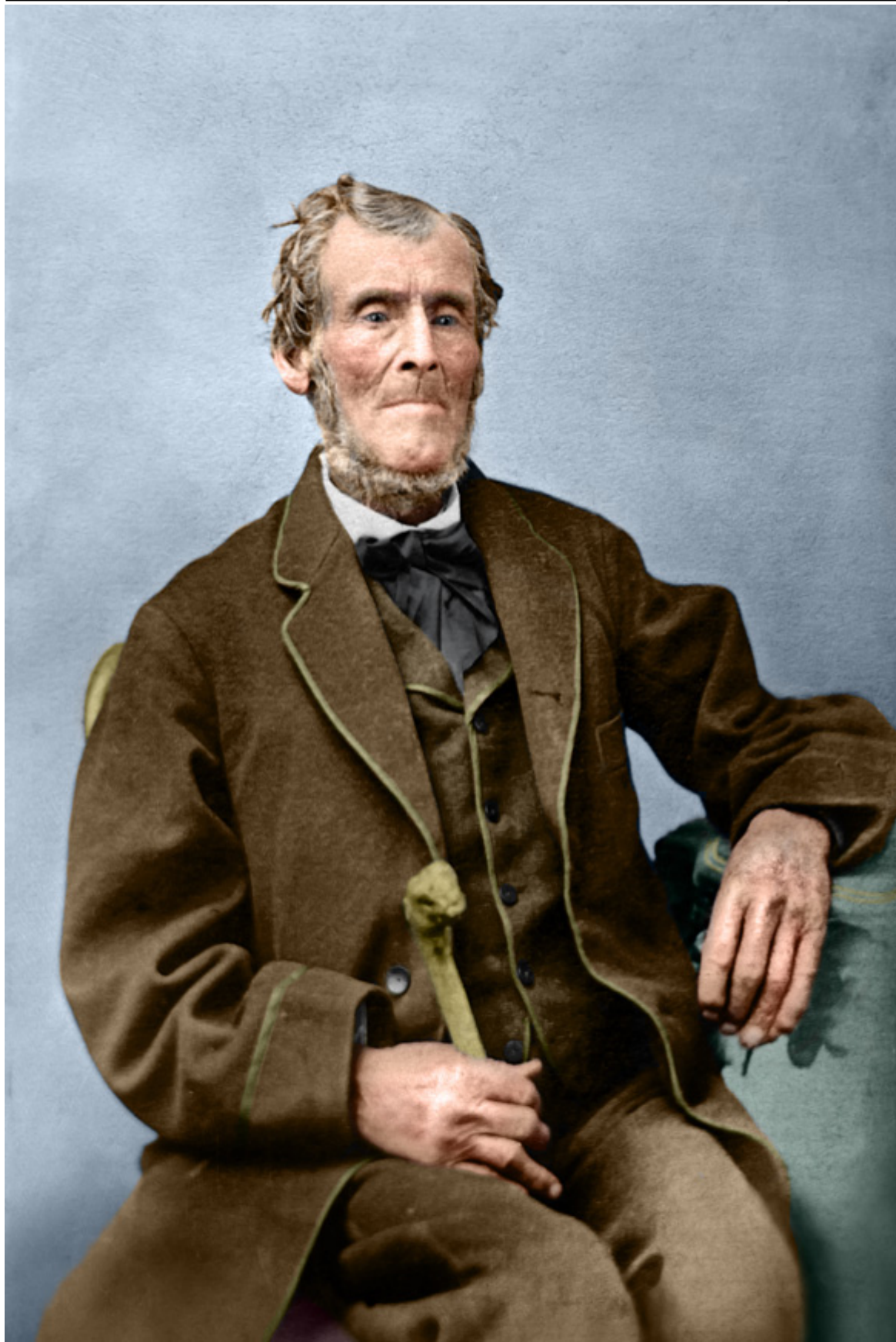
Martin Harris. Utah State Historical Society Classified Photo Collection. Identifier: 39222001351001, photo number: 12477, relation: Classified Photo Collection, 921 Biography. Used by permission, Utah State Historical Society, all rights reserved.

Here Harris appears to be in his 50s or 60s. It still has quite a bit of deterioration, including dust and scratches, but not as bad as the other. One interesting condition found on this photograph is that the eyes have been scratched out, likely on the original.⁷

I did similar work on this photograph to what I did with [Cowdery](#) and [Whitmer](#). I started by cropping the photo where I thought I could get the most detail out. Then I desaturated it, and adjusted the levels to maximize the tones. Then I cleaned up all the dirt, scratches and scrapes. I adjusted some contrast around the faded edges. I then used color layers to add color back in to the photo, at my best guess.⁸

One of the most difficult challenges was restoring the eyes. Because nearly all of the eyes had been scratched out of the original, they had to be drawn back in mostly from scratch. As they say, “the eyes are the window of the soul,” so I had to be very careful to get this right, or the whole image would fall flat. I did everything I could to meticulously restore the eyes as I imagine they would have appeared in the original photograph, trying not to alter any more than necessary. I created the pupils and irises, and added the all-important highlights and reflections which give life to the eyes. I have been unable to find if Martin’s eye color is recorded in history, but from a close analysis of the photograph, and the parts of the eyes that showed through around the scratches, it appears to me that his eyes could have been a shade of blue.⁹

Here is the result:



Martin Harris. Photo by Savage & Ottinger. Retouching and colorization by Bryce M. Haymond. Here is an uncompressed [TIFF version](#). (Click to see full high resolution)

Perhaps this can give us a better glimpse of the man who sacrificed his farm, among other things, to guarantee the publication of the first edition of the Book of Mormon, and who also was one of the Three Witnesses of the

authenticity and reality of that book. Harris also served as a scribe during a portion of the translation, which is now the lost 116 pages.

Although he was excommunicated early in the history of the Church, he remained true to his testimony of the Book of Mormon throughout his life. When asked if he had ever denied his testimony of the book, he replied:

I answer emphatically, No, I did not;—no man ever heard me in any way deny the truth of the Book of Mormon, the administration of the angel that showed me the plates; nor the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, under the administration of Joseph Smith Jun., the prophet whom the Lord raised up for that purpose, in these the latter days, that he may show forth his power and glory. The Lord has shown me these things by his Spirit—by the administration of holy angels—and confirmed the same with signs following, step by step, as the work has progressed, for the space of fifty-three years.¹⁰

Later he said, holding out his hand:

Gentlemen, do you see that hand? Are you sure you see it? Or are your eyes playing you a trick or something? No. Well, as sure as you see my hand so sure did I see the Angel and the plates.¹¹

And again, near the end of his life, when asked if he still believed, he replied:

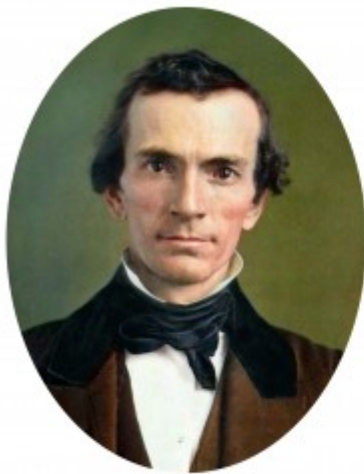
Do I believe it! Do you see the sun shining! Just as surely as the sun is shining on us and gives us light, and the [moon] and stars give us light by night, just as surely as the breath of life sustains us, so surely do I know that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God, chosen of God to open the last dispensation of the fulness of times; so surely do I know that the Book of Mormon was divinely translated. I saw the plates; I saw the Angel; I heard the voice of God. I know that the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God. I might as well doubt my own existence as to doubt the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon or the divine calling of Joseph Smith.¹²

On his death bed, he is reported to have once again repeated his enduring testimony of the Book of Mormon:

The Book of Mormon is no fake. I know what I know. I have seen what I have seen and I have heard what I have heard. I have seen the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon is written. An angel appeared to me and others and testified to the truthfulness of the record, and had I been willing to have perjured myself and sworn falsely to the testimony I now bear I could have been a rich man, but I could not have testified other than I have done and am now doing for these things are true.¹³

In 1870, about five years before his death, he joined again with the Saints in Utah and was rebaptized a member of the LDS Church. We owe much to this early Mormon leader and friend of the Prophet Joseph, who was instrumental in the restoration of the Gospel and the publication of the Book of Mormon.

To conclude, here are the Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, as perhaps we've never seen them before in full color, from presumed photographs of all three, and as they might have appeared in life:



OLIVER COWDERY



DAVID WHITMER



MARTIN HARRIS

The Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon. Compilation, retouching, and colorization by Bryce M. Haymond. (Click for full high resolution)

1. Confirmed by email with Church History Library, 17 September 2013. [?](#)
2. Most of these depictions are made from the more well-known photo of Martin Harris, sitting in a chair with a cane in his right hand. [?](#)
3. Born May 18, 1783; Died July 10, 1875. [?](#)
4. Call number: PH 8421/f0001.
http://churchhistorycatalog.lds.org/primo_library/libweb/static_https/custom/CHL/pages/viewer.jsp?pid=IE1233459&mvg=0&mvi=0 ?
5. Wikipedia opines that it was taken near 1837, when Martin Harris was about 54 years old.
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Harris_\(Latter_Day_Saints\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Harris_(Latter_Day_Saints)) ?
6. Identifier: 39222001351001, photo number: 12477, title: Martin Harris, relation: Classified Photo Collection, 921 Biography, http://content.lib.utah.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/USHS_Class/id/1746/rec/5. There is a better copy of this photograph in the Church History Library archives, but I was unable to obtain permissions to that copy. Call number: PH 1300. Charles W. Carter glass negative collection, circa 1860-1900: Item 89; Martin Harris, copy of a Savage and Ottinger photo. Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.
<http://eadview.lds.org/findingaid/PH%201300/> ?
7. Some believe that this enucleation was a photographic technique done by the photographer: "People could not keep their eyes open for the long exposure required by a Daguerreotype, so photographers scratched out the pupils of eyes on the plate or emulsion to make the subject's eyes appear to be open." Scot Macdonald, *Propaganda and Information Warfare in the Twenty-first Century* (Routledge: 2013), chapter 1, page 1.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=JjxC1c247pYC&lpg=PT14&ots=tlzrfjV41w&dq=scratching%20out%20eyes%20daguerreotype&pg=PT14#v=onepage&q=scratching%20out%20eyes%20daguerreotype&f=false>. Others think that the eye gouging of old photographs was done to symbolically "destroy" the person photographed, or to remove the cursing "evil eye" of the person gazing out of the photo:
<http://uk.answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20130210065037AAmZoPo>. It is unknown when or who made the marks on the photo. The scratches appear in all copies of this Harris photo I've seen, unless edited out, which is why I believe they were on the original. [?](#)
8. Requests for expert opinion on era clothing colors have unfortunately not been returned. [?](#)
9. I believe blue eye color can often be deduced in black and white photos, because of the often light tone of that particular eye color. Others seem to agree, for example:
<http://www.personal.psu.edu/drs18/blogs/memories/2012/08/photo-galatea.html> ?
10. Martin Harris, Letter of Martin Harris, Sr., to Hanna B. Emerson, Smithfield, Utah Territory, January 1871, in Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents*, 2:338. [?](#)

11. Martin Harris interview with Robert Barter, c. 1870, in Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents*, 2:390. [?](#)
12. William Harrison Homer, "The Passing of Martin Harris," *Improvement Era*, vol. 29, no. 5 (March 1926):472. [?](#)
13. Martin Harris on his death bed. Cited by George Godfrey, "Testimony of Martin Harris," from an unpublished manuscript copy in the possession of his descendants, quoted in Eldin Ricks, *The Case of the Book of Mormon Witnesses* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1971), 65–66. [?](#)