

The Historians Corner

Edited by James B. Allen

Historical research sometimes takes on a very personal flavor, as it did recently when Donald Q. Cannon discovered that one of his ancestors was the last Mormon to hear the final testimony of the last of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. In this issue of "The Historians Corner" Professor Cannon uses this incident to demonstrate the value of comparing primary and secondary sources in attempting to validate historical claims.

The second item in this issue comes from Ronald K. Esplin, whose continuing study of Brigham Young has given him some important insight into various personal characteristics of this pioneer leader. He has used the publication of a tender, heartwarming letter written by Brigham Young in 1840 as an opportunity to illustrate some of these characteristics.

ANGUS M. CANNON AND DAVID WHITMER: A COMMENT ON HISTORY AND HISTORICAL METHOD

Donald Q. Cannon

Angus M. Cannon was apparently the last Latter-day Saint to hear David Whitmer's testimony concerning the origin of the Book of Mormon. David Whitmer was the last to die of the Three Witnesses who testified that a heavenly angel had shown them the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated.

The first inkling I had of Angus Cannon's association with David Whitmer came through reading a newsletter of the George Cannon Family Association. As a great-grandson of Angus Cannon, I read the November 1973 issue of *The Cannon Chronicle* with great interest because it contained the following lead article:

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