

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received **OCT 6 1980**
date entered **NOV 28**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Martin Harris Gravesite

and/or common

2. Location

street & number N of Main St not for publication

city, town Clarkston vicinity of congressional district 01

state Utah code 049 county Cache code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>grave</u>

4. Owner of Property

name Clarkston City

street & number

city, town Clarkston vicinity of state Utah

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorders Office, Cache County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Logan state Utah

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Martin Harris Grave site is located near the southeastern corner of the Clarkston cemetery. In 1925 the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints provided a polished granite monument which was dedicated at the grave site by Church president Heber J. Grant, on July 10, 1925, fifty years after the death of Martin Harris.

The monument stands approximatey 18 feet in height. The shaft is two feet two inches square at the base and tops to point twelve feet high. The bottom base is four feet six inches square by two feet high. The second base is three feet four inches square and one foot one inch high. The die is two feet 1 inch square at the base and three feet high. Engraved on the west side of the die is the following:

"Martin Harris one of the three witnesses to the Divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Born Easttown, Saratoga County, New York, May 18, 1783. Died Clarkston, Utah July 10, 1875."

Attached to the east side of the die is a grange plaque containing the testimony of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon.

In front of the monument to the west is a headstone lying flat on the ground and approximately two feet by five feet. West of the headstone approximately seven feet is a footstone approximately eighteen inches by eighteen inches.

Approximately three feet from the northeast corner of the monument a wooden and glass box which houses a visitor register has been constructed. Grass surrounds the site and two evergreen bushes grow adjacent to the monument on the north and south sides.

The cemetery is located northeast of Clarkston on a flat hill. From the cemetery and the Martin Harris monument is a panoramic view of Clarkston, Cache Valley and the mountains to the south, north and east.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1875 1924 **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Martin Harris grave is significant as the only property in Utah associated with one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon and one of the most important individuals in Mormon history.

Born May 18, 1783 in Easttown, Saratoga County, New York, Martin Harris became acquainted with Joseph Smith in 1827 the year Joseph Smith reportedly received the Golden Plates. Considered a prosperous New York frontier farmer, Martin Harris gave Joseph Smith \$50 to help him move from New York to Pennsylvania. Harris also served as Joseph Smith's first scribe during the translation of the Book of Mormon. Unfortunately the 116 pages which were translated with Harris acting as scribe were lost when Joseph Smith permitted Harris to take the pages in an effort to convince a doubting wife of the validity of his work with Joseph Smith. The pages were lost and Joseph Smith was instructed not to retranslate the pages out of fear that the original pages had fallen into the hands of his enemies who would change the pages and use them to show Joseph Smith a false prophet.

Despite a severe reprimand Martin Harris was permitted to see and handle the Golden Plates and was selected as one of the three witnesses, to give testimony of the truthfulness of the Golden Plates and Joseph Smith's translation of them as the Book of Mormon. In the written testimony signed by Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, they declared:

"We...have seen the plates...and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for His voice hath declared it unto us,...And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon;...

In support of this testimony and his commitment to the Book of Mormon, Martin Harris furnished \$3,000 toward the expenses of printing the first edition. The money was raised by mortgaging his farm, a portion of which was later sold to meet the mortgage payment.

After the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, Martin Harris moved with Joseph Smith to Kirtland, Ohio. However, when Joseph Smith and his followers moved on to Missouri and later Illinois, Martin Harris remained in Kirtland, and ceased activity with the church.

In 1856 Martin Harris' wife Carolyn Young left him and with their four children came to Utah. Although Martin Harris never recanted his testimony about the Book of Mormon, he apparently did not follow the Saints west from Kirtland because of resentment for not being given more important positions within the church and because of the economic turmoil which marred the Kirtland experience.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Andrew Jensen, Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia, Volume I, Andrew Jensen History Company, Salt Lake City, 1901.

Richard Lloyd Anderson, "Martin Harris: the Honorable New York Farmer," Improvement Era, February 1969, Volume 72 #2, p. 18.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property less than one

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Clarkston, Utah-Idaho

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	2	4	1	3	8	7	0	4	6	4	2	4	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary includes all the area within a 15 foot radius of the Martin Harris grave marker located near the southeast corner of the Clarkston Cemetery.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title A. Kent Powell

organization Utah State Historical Society

date March 1980

street & number 307 West 200 South

telephone (801) 533-6017

city or town Salt Lake City

state Utah 84101

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Melvin T. Smith

title Melvin T. Smith, State Historic Preservation Officer

date September 19, 1980

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Forrest W. Ray
Keeper of the National Register

date 11/28/80

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCARS use only	
received	OCT 8 1980
date entered	NOV 28

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

In 1870, at the age of 77, Martin Harris left Kirtland and came to Utah with funds provided from a subscription by Utah Mormons including a \$25 donation from Brigham Young.

Martin Harris was rebaptized and lived with his oldest son, Martin Harris Jr., until his death in Clarkston on July 10, 1875 at the age of 92. His last words were in testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

The original grave marker in the Clarkston cemetery, as described by his son was, a "headboard with name, date and place of his birth and death with the words, One of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon. Also their testimony."

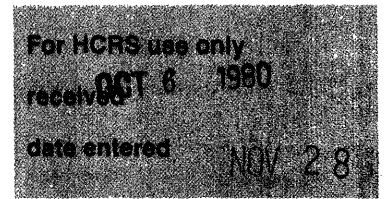
Some time before 1924 a second grave marker had been placed with a marble headstone with the inscription "Martin Harris one of the Witnesses of the Book of Mormon. Born May 18, 1783. Died July 10, 1875. Subscribed for by his numerous friends."

In 1924 Merlin R. Hovey, Secretary of the Cache Valley Chamber of Commerce, visited the Clarkston cemetery and noted: "The cemetery was surrounded by a broken-down wire fence with tumble weeds, cockleburs, and other weeds all over the cemetery. The graves not filled were being grazed by livestock."

Hovey, aware of the importance of Martin Harris in Mormon history, launched an effort to secure the removal of the Martin Harris remains to Logan. There was little support for the proposal, it did, however, spur the citizens of Clarkston to action. The cemetery was cleaned, fences repaired and livestock kept out. In cooperation with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the present 18 foot granite shaft was placed at the grave on July 10, 1925 - fifty years after the death of Martin Harris.

The importance of Martin Harris to Utah Mormons is that he is the only one of the original eleven witnesses to the Book of Mormon who came to Utah (three witnesses including Martin Harris saw the Golden Plates from which the Book of Mormon was reportedly translated in the presence of an angel. The other eight witnesses were shown the plates by Joseph Smith only.) The other witnesses either died before the exodus to Utah or for one reason or another chose not to follow Brigham Young west. Martin Harris was the last link to the early organization of the LDS Church. Participating in the translating of the Book of Mormon, giving financial support for its publication, falling away from the church, yet never denying his testimony of the Book of Mormon, and finally returning to the Church, Martin Harris has become a folk and religious hero for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Next to the grave of Brigham Young, no other grave in Utah has received greater public attention. The grave has been the site for numerous church outings, including one in 1934 in which more than 13,000 participated.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

9

Page

1

Wayne Cutler Gunnell, 'Martin Harris -- Witness and Benefactor to the Book of Mormon'
Masters Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1955.