

# The Soap Opera

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This all happened in the four years prior to when Joseph received the Brass plates. The people heading west were always looking for "the easy way"- lottery, easy money, whatever. There were a lot of rumors at the time about Harmony, Pennsylvania as having treasure. Isaac Hale lived in Harmony. He was one of the original settlers of Harmony, a hunter by trade. He owns his land, and paid for the Methodist church singlehandedly. Nice guy, leaves dead deer on widows doorsteps etc. Serves as an Alderman- a city councilman. Has a brother that doesn't do well. He's the one going for the lottery. Not a hard worker, moved to Harmony but doesn't do much of anything. There was a rumor that Cortez had made it all the way to Pennsylvania (reality... not a chance) and buried a lot of Spanish gold. Natives in the area wore gold jewelry. There were people coming called 'peepers' who were supposed to be able to look at a stone and can see where all the treasure is. One woman came and said it was in the 600 acres that Isaac Hale owns. His brother wants to be able to dig for it. Isaac says fine. Lots of get-rich-quick type people are all on the farm. His brother's partner was murdered and Isaac says, no way, no more. The woman says the woman has moved under the ground and so they're digging up the whole place. Also, his game has fled the land. William's partner has heard of a "looker in stone" who had seen "gold treasure" in upstate New York. Josiah Stowell goes up to Palmyra to buy wheat from Father Smith and has heard Joseph's stories and says he will bring back Joseph to look in a stone to find the treasure for once and for all. Agrees to give both Father Smith & Joseph a part of the treasure. It's the winter months so, why not. Joseph still doesn't have the Urim & Thumim but he says he has a seer stone. Joseph has started digging wells in Alvin's place. He claims that while digging a well. About 14 feet down he found the seer stone. It's not the same as a Urim & Thumim. The last time it was seen was in the Manti Temple dedication. It's chocolate color with a white band around it. Very smooth like it's spent a long time in water. He agrees to go dig this last big hole. He is invited to stay with Isaac Hale. This is where he saw Emma for the first time. She was 5'9" and large boned. At that time it was considered that she would survive if she was large boned... so that was a good thing. She could survive the rigors of where they were living. Joseph lived with Isaac Hale for 1 month. They dug 2 HUGE holes and through all of it Joseph refuses to use his stone, instead uses his muscles to dig. Finally Isaac tells his brother and all the other money diggers to get out of there. Everyone leaves, but before they leave Joseph asks for Emma's hand in marriage. Isaac says no, I would rather see her go to the grave then to marry a money-digger. Emma was 2 years older than Joseph, a singer in the Methodist choir etc. Joseph moves in with Josiah Stowell and goes and courts Emma whenever Isaac is gone. He asks for her hand twice more and gets the same response. Her brothers will not intercede for him either. Finally in 1827, they elope in Western New York. When Isaac Hale hears it, he says "My daughter has been abducted". Things are so difficult between Emma & Joseph and her father that they have to send in a neighbor to get her dowry (stuff in a hope chest or money etc.) She owned 1 cow in addition to all of the things that she owned anyways. The neighbor was able to get it all, they needed a place to live so they went back to live with Father Smith & family. Emma and Lucy became best friends. Lucy wrote much about Emma, "I have never met a more charitable woman in her life." She would be the first to give up her bed. Lucy went and lived with Emma & her new husband in Nauvoo rather than her 3 other daughters in the Nauvoo area. September 1827, time for Joseph to return to the Hill Cumorah. Joseph took a companion with him every time he went to the hill- this time he took Emma. This time he receives the plates. In Emma's patriarchal blessing she is told that she was blessed to be one of the first to know that Joseph had the plates and that she was like Mary at the tomb to be the first to know that Christ had been resurrected. Joseph was gone for over a day, and the family and Josiah Stowell s there as well. Josiah has a contract with Joseph saying that any treasure found is 1/11th his. Joseph takes Josiah out of the room and talks to him and tells him how fabulous the Urim & Thumim is. Josiah does not push the envelope and returns to Harmony and tells people that treasure has been unearthed in Palmyra, and all of those money diggers come to town. They come and try to break in and steal the plates. Joseph has to hide the plates. He hides them in a "glass box". A box shaped kind of like mom's solar oven, always made of wood. Called a glass box because you would put your window panes inside of the box when you were moving. Or you might put your dishes or nice things in it. Alvin made this glass box, and it housed both the plates and the Urim & Thumim. He hid them in a hearth, and in the woods inside a decaying log. Joseph could not possibly do any translation while in Palmyra. He was very desperate at this time, and asks Emma to write her father to see if they could stay with him. Isaac feels bad about having disowned his daughter. He says he would be delighted to allow them back in. He is so anxious to see Emma that he sends his son to pick them up. Joseph is understandably concerned. He knows he needs to have some money just in case. He turns to Martin Harris for money. Martin had heard all of the stories as they came, and gives Joseph \$50 while in the tavern. When he tells his wife Lucy she gets so angry that she takes him to court for stealing the money. Finally Martin Harris testifies that he gave Joseph the \$50, and says "If he wants everything I have, he can have it." Joseph heads out of town and the peepers and some of the ministers surround the wagon. As they go for the barrel of beans he tells them not to go for it because it will make a mess. When they get to the Hale home, Father Hale asks to look in the glass box, and Joseph says he can only look inside if he is inside of the glass box. He asks if Joseph is still a "looker in stone". Which he says he is. Isaac says they are not allowed in his house unless he is allowed to see inside the glass box. Joseph & Emma move into her brother's tool shop. To make amends with Lucy, Martin Harris says he's going to go to NYC to get her a colored dress. Women in

those days wore brown dresses mostly, and a colored dress was a sign of status. Instead, he goes to Harmony, Pennsylvania. Finds Joseph living in this tool shed. Joseph asks Martin to scribe for him. In the meantime Lucy is getting worried, and goes to ask the stage coach man to find out that Martin went to Harmony instead of NYC. She is livid. Leaves the 4 kids with family members, and asks the stage coach man to take her to Harmony. She is left at the tool shop, bursts open the door and comes in. She turns to Joseph and says "only you can save my marriage. Show me those plates." Joseph says "I can only show you these plates if you are as innocent as a child." She searches the house and goes outside. She finally goes and asks for refuge at the home of Isaac Hale. She is invited in. All of the rumors are now in Harmony. She goes home and makes a separate room in their home for Martin. He says he's going to go to NYC and get affidavits that the characters are correct. After all that he goes through in NYC he returns to Joseph and asks for the manuscript. Joseph was going to go with Martin and told that they were allowed to show the manuscript to 5 people.