

## CHAPTER I.<sup>1</sup>

### HISTORICAL.

*Birth and early life of the Mormon Prophet—The original Smith family—Opinion of Brigham Young—The “peep-stone”—“Calling” of Joe Smith—The Golden Plates—“Reformed Egyptian” translated—“Book of Mormon” published—Synopsis of its contents—Real author of the work—“The glorious six” first converts—Emma Smith, “Elect Lady and Daughter of God”—Sidney Rigdon takes the field—First Hegira—“Zion” in Missouri—Kirtland Bank—Swindling and “persecution”—War in Jackson County—Smith “marches on Missouri”—Failure of the “Lord’s Bank”—Flight of the Prophet—“Mormon War”—Capture of Smith—Flight into Illinois.*

JOSEPH SMITH, the founder of Mormonism, was born December 23d, 1805, at Sharon, Windsor county, Vermont. His parents, Joseph Smith, Sen., and Lucy Mack Smith, belonged to the lowest grade of society, and, by the testimony of all their neighbors, were illiterate and superstitious, as well as indolent and unreliable. They could believe in the supernatural as easily as the natural; for they were as ignorant of the one as the other.<sup>2</sup> These qualities seemed to descend upon the son by “ordinary generation;” but at an early age he showed that he far excelled all the rest of the family in a peculiar low cunning, and a certain faculty of invention, which enabled him to have a story ready for any emergency.

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<sup>1</sup> Original chapter page numbers: 21-57.

<sup>2</sup> Like many authors, J.H. Beadle’s opening remarks aim to evoke emotions. However, it’s unjust to assert that *all* their neighbors viewed the Smith, Sr. family as “illiterate and superstitious” and “indolent and unreliable.” While negative testimonials exist (some discussed in this book), the history of the Smith family includes basic schooling and, as seen with Hyrum, some higher education. The Smiths were not illiterate due to a lack of education; rather, they couldn’t afford better. In 1802-3, Joseph Smith, Sr. made a disastrous business deal involving crystallized ginseng root, leaving them destitute. There was excessive alcohol consumption. The family, as we’ll explore, held superstitious beliefs, often intertwining the divine with the occult. Hoping for a quick fortune, they avoided manual labor, embodying *indolence*. Such dreamers tend to be *unreliable*. The Smiths were not part of high society, but labeling them as “*the lowest grade of society*” feels more like name-calling. As we will see, there are plenty of reasons to question a divine connection involving the Smiths without adding drama for effect.

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In the year 1815,<sup>3</sup> the Smith family removed to New York, and settled near Palmyra, Wayne county, where they resided ten years.<sup>4</sup> Here young Joseph developed a remarkable talent for living without work, and at an early age adopted the profession of “Water Witch,” in which calling he wandered about the adjoining country with a forked stick, or hazel rod, by the deflections of which, when held in a peculiar manner, he claimed to determine the spot where a vein of water lay nearest the surface.<sup>5</sup> This had been a part of his father’s business; but Joe was possessed of real genius, though of a peculiar kind, and soon struck into higher paths. He began to “divine” the locality of things which had been stolen, by means of a “peep-stone” placed in his hat, and by the same means to point out where hidden treasures lay. Almost innumerable are the stories of his youth, giving bright promise of future rascality. But many of them depend on little more than popular report, and we can only receive as authentic those events which rest upon the sworn testimony of reliable men who were his neighbors. After ten years’ residence in Wayne, the family moved to the adjoining county of Ontario, and settled near, the town of Manchester. Here, from pointing out the place for wells, Joe went to work digging them. While in this work for Mr. Willard Chase, a peculiar, round, white<sup>6</sup> stone was found by him and the other workmen, which Joe took possession of and carried

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<sup>3</sup> 1816.

<sup>4</sup> The Smith family relocated to Palmyra, NY. in 1816, moved to Manchester in 1822, and eventually settled in Harmony (now Oakland), PA., in 1825-7. In adding Pennsylvania to the time-line, the chronological sequence aligns with the “ten years” mentioned twice in the paragraph by the author. But his math is certainly off in stating “After ten years’ residence in Wayne, the family moved to the adjoining county of Ontario, and settled near, the town of Manchester.”

<sup>5</sup> While “Water Witch” is associated with 19<sup>th</sup> century culture, it is more commonly recognized in our era as “Dowsing” or “Divining.”

<sup>6</sup> “Seer” or “Peep” stones were intriguing objects in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Given the unique shapes and colors found in natural stones, a variety of these curiosities existed in different shapes, colors, and sizes. The more unusual the stone, the more sought after it became. The stone Joseph claimed at the Chase well in 1822 was described as “chocolate-colored and about the size of an egg.”

Currently, the stone is owned by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and was photographed, advertised, and published in 2015.

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away, much to the regret of Mr. Chase's children, to whom it had been given as a curious plaything. This was afterwards the noted "peep-stone," in which Joe saw such wonders.<sup>7</sup> Many of these statements are not very strenuously denied by the best-informed Mormons. They acknowledge, generally, that Joe Smith was of humble parentage, very poor and illiterate, and that he was for many years a "wild boy." Brigham Young is especially frank upon the subject, adding, in conclusion: "That the Prophet was of mean birth, that he was wild, intemperate, even dishonest and tricky in his youth, is nothing against his mission. God can, and does, make use of the vilest instruments. Joseph has brought forth a religion which will save us if we abide by it. Bring anything against that if you can. I care not if he gamble, lie, swear, and run horses everyday, for I embrace no man in my faith. The religion is all in all."<sup>8</sup>

Brigham is correct; the early character of the Prophet has little to do with the religion, *except* as determining the character and credibility of his evidence. Let us then examine briefly the origin of this new theology, present the main testimony; and, as impartial judges, hear the Prophet's account first. Many years after,<sup>9</sup> when Mormonism was an established fact, Joseph gave the following account: At the early age of fifteen he became much concerned about the salvation of his soul, and at the same time a powerful revival of religion spread throughout Western New

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<sup>7</sup> The author is citing details from Willard Chase's 1833 Statement, as documented in *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville, OH: E.D. Howe, 1834), 240-248.

<sup>8</sup> The reference for this statement is unknown. A comparable sentiment expressed by Brigham Young is as follows: "I can sum up all the arguments used against Joseph Smith and 'Mormonism' in a very few words, the merits of which will be found in 'OLD JOE SMITH. IMPOSTOR, MONEY DIGGER. OLD JOE SMITH. SPIRITUAL WIFE DOCTRINE. IMPOSTURE. THE DOCTRINE IS FALSE, MONEY DIGGER. FALSE PROPHET. DELUSION. SPIRITUAL WIFE DOCTRINE. Oh, my dear brethren and sisters, keep away from them, for the sake of your never dying souls. FALSE PROPHETS THAT SHOULD COME IN THE LAST DAYS. OLD JOE SMITH. ANTI-CHRIST. MONEY DIGGER, MONEY DIGGER, MONEY DIGGER.['?]' And the whole is wound up with an appeal, not to the good sense of the people, but to their unnatural feelings, in a canting, hypocritical tone, and there it ends." Brigham Young—8 May 1853, *Journal of Discourses - Volume 1* (Liverpool, England: F.D. and S.W. Richards, 1854), 109-110.

<sup>9</sup> 1838.

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York.<sup>10</sup> Joseph professed to be converted and his mother, sister Sophronia and his brothers, Samuel and Hyrum (so spelled by his father) joined the church.<sup>11</sup> But when the revival ceased, a “great rush” took place among the ministers of various denominations as to who should secure most of the new converts;<sup>12</sup> Joseph’s soul was vexed, and he began to have serious doubts. In this frame of mind he opened the Bible, and his eye fell upon this text: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not”—JAMES, Chap. I. v. 5.<sup>13</sup> He, therefore, retired to a secluded thicket near his father’s house, and knelt in prayer, supplicating the Lord to know “which of all the sects was really right.”<sup>14</sup> While praying, the entire wood was illuminated with a great light, he was enveloped in the midst of it and caught away in a heavenly vision, he saw two<sup>15</sup> glorious personages and was told that his sins were forgiven.<sup>16</sup> He learned also that none of the sects was quite right, but that God had chosen him to restore the true priesthood upon earth.<sup>17</sup> Afterwards,

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<sup>10</sup> Documented evidence indicates that the *revivals* during that period occurred at a later time, commencing in 1824-5. In December of 1823 Joseph Smith, Jr. turned eighteen years old.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph aspired to associate with the *Methodist* religion, despite earlier instructions from Jesus Christ himself that he “*must join none of them.*” See Joseph Smith, Jr.—1838, *Pearl of Great Price—Joseph Smith—History 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2024 on-line edition), verses 7, 19.

<sup>12</sup> Despite the *revival* days leading to conversions, the outcomes were only slightly above the norm. There is no evidence in local news outlets of any extraordinary events, and there are also no locally documented instances of persecution.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr.—1838, *Pearl of Great Price—Joseph Smith—History 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2024 on-line edition), verse 11.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>15</sup> In the initial account of “*The First Vision*” in 1832, Joseph mentions only a *single* personage.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph’s absolution is not mentioned in his 1838 account. However, his 1832 rendition states: “*And he [the Lord] spake unto me, saying, ‘Joseph, my son, thy sins are forgiven thee. Go thy way, walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments.’”* *History, circa Summer 1832* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Joseph Smith Papers, 1832), 1.

<sup>17</sup> The accounts do not include any mention of the restoration of the “*true priesthood,*” although it is undeniable that this became a significant priority for young Joseph later on.

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he began again to doubt, and, being quite young, fell into sin, and it was not until September 23d, 1823,<sup>18</sup> that God again heard his prayers, and sent heavenly messengers<sup>19</sup> to tell him his sins were forgiven. An angel<sup>20</sup> visited him from time to time afterwards, instructing him in his duties, and finally informed him that in “the hill Cumorah,”<sup>21</sup> not far from Manchester, certain Golden Plates were buried, containing an account of the settlement of America, before Christ.<sup>22</sup> After several preliminary visits, on the 22d of September, 1826,<sup>23</sup> the Golden Plates were taken up from the hill Cumorah “with a mighty display of celestial machinery,”<sup>24</sup> and delivered by the angel to Joseph. His vision being cleared, at the same time, he saw a great concourse of devils struggling with angels to prevent the work.<sup>25</sup> The plates were “of the thickness of tin, bound together like a book, fastened at one side by three rings which run through the whole, forming a vol-

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<sup>18</sup> This was the evening of 21-22 September 1823.

<sup>19</sup> He was visited by only *one* angel.

<sup>20</sup> For the majority of Joseph’s life, the angel’s name was cited as “Nephi,” in contrast to the presently acknowledged name of “Moroni.” In her autobiography, composed just after Joseph’s passing, his mother, Lucy Mack Smith, designates the angel as “Nephi.” See *Lucy Mack Smith, History* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Joseph Smith Papers, 1845), 79.

<sup>21</sup> Joseph called it “a hill of considerable size” (See Joseph Smith, Jr.—1838, *Pearl of Great Price—Joseph Smith—History 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2024 on-line edition), verse 51.

<sup>22</sup> Following the *translation* process, the “Golden Plates” provided Joseph Smith with *The Book of Mormon*, initially published in 1830. The broad timeline of the book (excluding *Ether*) spans from 600 BCE through 400 CE.

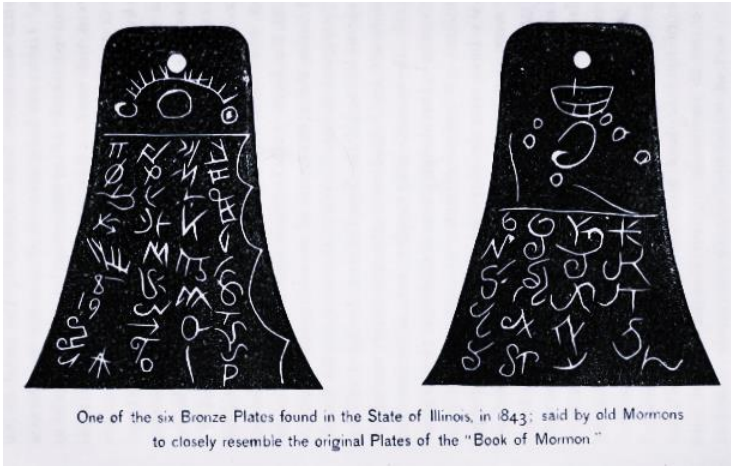
<sup>23</sup> The actual date was one year later: 22 September 1827.

<sup>24</sup> Sir Richard Francis Burton, *The City of the Saints: and Across the Rocky Mountains* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1862), 549/appendix v.

<sup>25</sup> Preceding the vision, Joseph describes an encounter with a dark entity: “[I]mmediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such an astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction.” See Joseph Smith, Jr.—1838, *Pearl of Great Price—Joseph Smith—History 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2024 on-line edition), verse 15.

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ume about six inches thick.”<sup>26</sup> The record was engraved on the plates in “reformed Egyptian”<sup>27</sup> characters, consisting of “the language of the Jews and the writing of the Egyptians.” In the same box with the plates, were found two stones, “transparent and clear as crystal, the Urim and Thummim used by seers in ancient times, the instruments of revelations of things distant, past and future.”<sup>28</sup> When the news of this discovery spread abroad, “the Prophet was the sport of lies, slanders and mobs, and vain attempts to rob him of his plates.”<sup>29</sup> He was ere long supplied with witnesses. Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris make the following solemn certificate:



One of the six Bronze Plates found in the State of Illinois, in 1843; said by old Mormons to closely resemble the original Plates of the “Book of Mormon.”

“We have seen the plates which contain the records; they were translated by the gift and power of God, for His voice hath declared it unto us, wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true; and we declare with words of soberness that an angel of God

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<sup>26</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr., *Times and Seasons Vol. III. No. 9*. “Church History,” 1 March 1842 (Nauvoo, IL: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1842), 707.

<sup>27</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1830, *The Book of Mormon Printer’s Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 427.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Ford, *A History of Illinois* (Chicago, IL: S.C. Griggs & Co., 1854), 255.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

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came down from heaven, and brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates and the engravings thereon.”<sup>30</sup>

The testimony of these three is prefixed to all printed copies of the “Book of Mormon,” for such is the name now given to the work. Oliver Cowdery was at that time a sort of wandering schoolmaster, rather noted as an elegant scribe. He assisted in translating the inscriptions on the plates, continued an active Saint for many years, and was finally expelled from the Church in Missouri, “for lying, counterfeiting and immorality.”<sup>31</sup> He led a rambling life for many years, and died a short time since a miserable drunkard.<sup>32</sup>

Martin Harris<sup>33</sup> was a credulous farmer who lived near the Smiths.<sup>34</sup> He had imbibed the notion, so common in the religious excitement of that period, that “the last days were at hand,”<sup>35</sup> and mortgaged his farm for three thousand dollars, to pay for printing the first edition of the book. He continued with the Mormons till his means were exhausted, and, having quarrelled [*sic*] with Joe Smith, in Missouri,<sup>36</sup> returned to his old residence in New York.

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<sup>30</sup> Paraphrased. See full version: Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1830, *The Book of Mormon Printer’s Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 463.

<sup>31</sup> Cowdery was excommunicated from the church on 12 April 1838, following his non-attendance at a membership hearing.

<sup>32</sup> Oliver Cowdery passed away on 3 March 1850, at the age of 43. While some historical records do mention struggles with alcohol, the circumstances and extent of any alcohol-related issues in his life are not fully detailed in the historical record.

<sup>33</sup> Martin Harris (18 May 1783 – 10 July 1875) provided financial backing for the initial printing of the Book of Mormon and additionally played a role as one of the *Three Witnesses*, affirming that he had seen the golden plates (“with a spiritual eye”) from which Joseph Smith claimed to have translated the Book of Mormon.

<sup>34</sup> Martin Harris lived on a 300-acre farm 1.5 miles outside of Palmyra, New York, at 2095 Maple Ave.

<sup>35</sup> Edward Winthrop, *Lectures on the Second Advent of Messiah* (Cincinnati, OH: 1843), 244.

<sup>36</sup> Martin Harris, along with several others, parted ways with Joseph Smith due to the collapse of the *Kirtland Safety Society* Bank. Subsequently, Harris, along with Warren Parish, initiated efforts to reorganize the church in Kirtland. Joseph Smith, Jr. and Sidney Rigdon relocated to Missouri.

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Of David Whitmer<sup>37</sup> little is known. He dropped out of the Mormon community, in one of the “drives” in Missouri, and settled in that State. But the Prophet had other witnesses. Soon after, four of the Smiths, three of the Whitmers, and another witness, eight in all, testify as follows: “Joseph Smith, the translator,<sup>38</sup> has shown us the plates of which hath been spoken, which had the appearance of gold; and as many of the plates<sup>39</sup> as the said Smith had translated, we did handle with our hands and also saw the engravings thereon, all of which had the appearance of ancient work and curious workmanship.”<sup>40</sup>

According to Smith’s account, he first met Oliver Cowdery, April 16th, 1829,<sup>41</sup> and after convincing him of his divine mission, on the 15th of May following, John the Baptist appeared, and ordained them both into the Aaronic Priesthood, after which they baptized each other.<sup>42</sup> In July<sup>43</sup> following, the Golden Plates were shown the “three witnesses,” and in that year the translation was completed. It was begun some time before, but suspended in July,<sup>44</sup> 1828, from the singular circumstance that the wife<sup>45</sup> of Mar-

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<sup>37</sup> David Whitmer (7 January 1805 – 25 January 1888) eventually became one of the most extensively interviewed witnesses. His excommunication from the church was grounded in accusations of violating the Word of Wisdom, neglecting leadership duties, affiliating with the other *Kirtland apostates*, and disseminating unfavorable information about Joseph Smith. In 1887, David expressed his perspectives in a pamphlet titled “*An Address to All Believers in Christ.*”

<sup>38</sup> Although Joseph Smith is mentioned having “translated” later in the statement, the original text read “*Joseph Smith jun. the author & proprietor of this work.*” See Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1830, *The Book of Mormon Printer’s Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 464.

<sup>39</sup> In the *Printer’s Manuscript* the word “leaves” is used rather than “plates.”

<sup>40</sup> Paraphrased. See the full version: Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1830, *The Book of Mormon Printer’s Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 464.

<sup>41</sup> The correct date is 5 April 1829. However, in its 1 July 1842 edition, page 832 of the *Times and Seasons* newspaper mistakenly published the date as 15 April 1829.

<sup>42</sup> See Joseph Smith, Jr.—1838, *Pearl of Great Price—Joseph Smith—History 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2024 on-line edition), verses 68-72.

<sup>43</sup> June 1829.

<sup>44</sup> ca. June 1828.

<sup>45</sup> Lucy Harris (1 May 1792 – 1836).



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tin Harris had stolen a hundred and eighteen pages of the manuscript. As afterwards appeared, the translators<sup>46</sup> thought she intended to wait until they had supplied the stolen part, then reproduce the original, and prove that they did not literally correspond. But it seems they had credited her with more cunning than she possessed. She had bitterly opposed her husband in his venture upon the new speculation, and had burned that part of the manuscript he brought home, hoping thereby to put a stop to the work. She afterwards attempted, by legal proceedings, to prevent the disposal of his farm; but, failing in that, finally separated from him. The translation was then completed, Oliver Cowdery making most of the final copy. The "Book of Mormon" was first given to the world early in 1830, when three thousand<sup>47</sup> volumes were published, under contract, by Mr. Pomeroy Tucker,<sup>48</sup> then proprietor of a paper<sup>49</sup> in the county. He has, within a few years, given to the world a valuable work on the "Origin and Progress of Mormonism,"<sup>50</sup> containing many interesting facts concerning the origin of the sect. The first proof-sheet of the work was given by Mr. Tucker, as a sort of curiosity, to his cousin Steve S. Harding, whom he styles "a fun-loving youth of that vicinity." Mr. Harding soon after removed to Indiana, and, just thirty-two years afterwards, was appointed by President Lincoln Governor of Utah,<sup>51</sup> whither he carried the proof sheet, and presented it to the Church Historian.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Should be singular. Joseph Smith claimed to be the only *translator*.

<sup>47</sup> The quantity was 5,000. Mr. Beadle may have conflated this with the monetary value for which Martin Harris mortgaged his farm to fund the project: \$3,000.

<sup>48</sup> The contract was awarded to *The Egbert B. Grandin Printing Press and Bookshop* located in Palmyra, New York. Pomeroy Tucker did, indeed, have access to a few of the early proof sheets of the inaugural 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon.

<sup>49</sup> *The Wayne Sentinel*.

<sup>50</sup> Pomeroy Tucker, *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism* (New York, NY: D. Appleton & Company, 1867).

<sup>51</sup> After receiving unanimous confirmation from the U.S. Senate on 31 March 1862, Harding began his overland journey west in May, reaching Salt Lake City and commencing his new duties on 7 July 1862.

<sup>52</sup> George A. Smith.

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The “Book of Mormon” was rapidly circulated, and attracted some comment. And at this point, a brief synopsis of this work is appropriate. It consists of a number of Books, named after their reputed authors—Book of Nephi,<sup>53</sup> Book of Alma, Esther,<sup>54</sup> Jared,<sup>55</sup> etc. They contain the following history:

In the reign of Zedekiah, six hundred years before Christ, a Jewish family, with a few friends and retainers, left Jerusalem, being warned of God that a great destruction and captivity were at hand, and journeyed eastward in search of a “land of promise.”<sup>56</sup> After many wanderings, and the death of the Patriarch,<sup>57</sup> they reached the sea, when Nephi, who had succeeded his father in the Patriarchate and Priesthood, was directed by the Lord to build a boat; and, furnished with a “double ball and spindle,”<sup>58</sup> which served the exact purpose of the modern mariner’s compass.<sup>59</sup> They embarked, and in due time reached the continent of America.<sup>60</sup> Subsequent revelations have decided that they landed in Central America.<sup>61</sup> There they increased rapidly; but a great schism arose, and one Laman, with his followers, refused to obey the true priesthood, for which they were cut off, cursed, and con-

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<sup>53</sup> Joseph named his primary character after a figure found in the biblical Apocrypha that he possessed at his home: “*And Neemias called this thing Naphthar, which is as much as to say, a cleansing: but many men call it Nephi*” (2 Maccabees 1:36). Note that the final three words of 2 Nephi 5:8 are also “*call it Nephi*” (*Emphasis added*).

<sup>54</sup> “*Esther*” is incorrect. The book he is referring to is *THE BOOK OF ETHER*.

<sup>55</sup> There is no book of *Jared*. The accounts of *Jared* and the *Brother of Jared* are contained in *The Book of Ether*.

<sup>56</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1829, *The Book of Mormon Original Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 3.

<sup>57</sup> Ishmael. “*Nephi, who had succeeded his father in the Patriarchate*” seems to indicate Mr. Beadle was mistaken about this part of the journey.

<sup>58</sup> This object, later known as the *Liahona*, first appears in 1 Nephi 16:10. See Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1829, *The Book of Mormon Original Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830).

<sup>59</sup> The term “*of the modern mariner’s compass*” seems to first appear in *The Medical Times – Volume 5, No. 108* (London, England: M’Ritchie, 16 October 1841), 25.

<sup>60</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1829, *The Book of Mormon Original Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830); see also 1 Nephi 18:23/2024 on-line edition.

<sup>61</sup> The church has not made an official statement specifying the exact location where Lehi’s band landed.

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demned “to be a brutish and a savage people, having dark skins, compelled to dig in the ground for roots, and hunt their meat in the forests like beasts of prey.”<sup>62</sup> But it was foretold that a remnant of them should, in time, “have the curse removed, and become a fair and delightsome people,”<sup>63</sup> who should “blossom as the rose, under the teachings of the Latter-day Saints.” These were the Lamanites, the present Indians, while the Christian party<sup>64</sup> were known as Nephites. The latter spread over all of North and South America, became rich and powerful, and built the cities of Zarahemla, Jacobbugath [*sic*], Manti, Gidgiddoni, and scores of others, thus accounting for the numerous ruins found on this continent. They were ruled over successively by Nephi the First, Second, and Third, by Noah, Alma, Kish, Coriantumr,<sup>65</sup> and numerous other kings, and were successively instructed by a number of prophets. But the Lamanites increased likewise, and carried on almost perpetual war with the Nephites, till a great part of the land was desolate. According to this history, there have been no people of the Old World so warlike and bloodthirsty as these; and battles in which from twenty to fifty thousand were slain were of common occurrence. The Nephites were troubled, too, by “false doctrine, heresy, and schism;”<sup>66</sup> the true priesthood was reviled; one man arose and preached Universal

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<sup>62</sup> Paraphrased from Enos 1:20; see Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1829, *The Book of Mormon Printer’s Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), III.

<sup>63</sup> The Book of Mormon originally used the term “a white & delightsome people,” see Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1830, *The Book of Mormon Printer’s Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 91. *Emphasis* added. In 1981, the words were modified to “a pure and a delightsome people,” see *The Book of Mormon - 2 Nephi 30:6* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2024 on-line edition). *Emphasis* added.

<sup>64</sup> At this point in the Book of Mormon narrative, it was several hundred years before the advent of Jesus Christ. It was premature to categorize the Nephites as *Christians*.

<sup>65</sup> These latter two were *Lamanite*, not *Nephite* Kings.

<sup>66</sup> Rev. E. Strickland, M.A., *Heresy and Schism* (London, England: R. Groombridge, 1844), 41.

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ism, “that God would save all mankind at the last day,”<sup>67</sup> and others followed strange gods. An immense mass of the nation turned back and joined the Lamanites, and a band of robbers, under one Gadianton, desolated a large part of the land. At length prophets appeared and announced the coming of Christ, who, after he was crucified at Jerusalem, preached the Gospel in America. At the time of his death, this country, also, was shrouded in darkness; a mighty earthquake threw down the wicked city of Jacobbugath, [*sic*]<sup>68</sup> opened great chasms and basins throughout the land, and the whole face of the country was changed. The Nephites accepted Christ at once; but in a few generations, fell again into apostasy, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of their enemies. The mighty Chieftain Omandagus, whose rule was from the Rocky Mountains to the Mississippi, fought against the Nephites, and after him many others.<sup>69</sup> Little by little, the Nephites were driven eastward, but made a stand near the shores of Lake Erie, and fought “till the whole land was covered with dead bodies.”<sup>70</sup> They made their final stand about 430, A.D.,<sup>71</sup> at the hill Cumorah, in Ontario County, New York, where the

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<sup>67</sup> This character’s name was Nehor, and his story ignites the beginning of the *Book of Alma* in the Book of Mormon.

<sup>68</sup> According to 3 Nephi 9:9, Jacobugath was destroyed by fire. In the previous verse, we learn of the cities destroyed by earthquake: “*∅ behold the city of Gadiandi ∅ the city of Gadiomnah ∅ the city of Jacob ∅ the city of Gimg Gimginno all these have I caused to be sunk ∅ made hills ∅ vallies in the places thereof*” Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1829, *The Book of Mormon Printer’s Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 378.

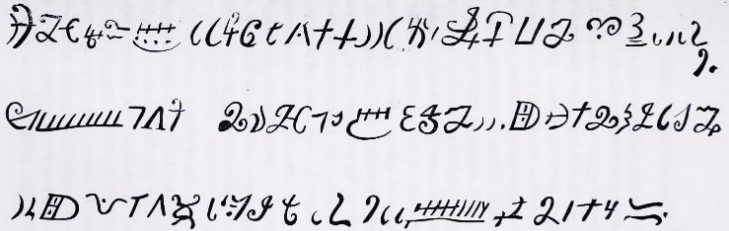
<sup>69</sup> Omandagus was a prophet. It was Zeph who was known as “*a warrior and chieftain under the great prophet Omandagus, who was known from the hill Cumorah, or Eastern sea, to the Rocky Mountains*.” See John Taylor, *Times and Seasons* – Vol. VI, No. 20, “History of Joseph Smith” (Nauvoo, IL: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), 1076.

<sup>70</sup> This scene was described many hundreds of years earlier. From Ether 14:20: “*∅ so great ∅ lasting had been the war ∅ so long had been the scene of bloodshed ∅ carnage that the whole face of the land was covered with the bodies of the dead*.” Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1829, *The Book of Mormon Printer’s Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 451.

<sup>71</sup> This is now thought to be 421 CE. See *Book of Mormon* – Moroni 10 chapter heading (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2024 on-line edition).

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Lamanites came against them, and the battle raged till two hundred and thirty thousand Nephites were slain; the little remnant was captured, and only Mormon and his son Moroni escaped.



Fac-simile, according to Joe Smith, of the writing on the Original Plates of the "Book of Mormon."

The various kings and priests had kept a record of their history, which Mormon now collected in one volume, added a book of his own, and gave them to his son. The latter finished the record, and buried the whole in the hill Cumorah, being assured of God that in fourteen centuries, a great Prophet should restore them to man. Such is the book, and Joseph's account of it.<sup>72</sup> On such testimony alone there is sufficient cause to reject it, the book itself containing abundant internal evidence of a fraud.<sup>73</sup>

Let us now glance at the opposing account. In the year 1812, a written work, called the "Manuscript Found," was presented to Mr. Patterson, a bookseller of Pittsburg, Penna., by the author, Rev. Solomon Spaulding. This gentleman was born in Pennsylvania,<sup>74</sup> was a graduate of Dartmouth College, and for many

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<sup>72</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr. not only predicted his destiny, but mentions the commonality between the biblical Joseph of Egypt, Joseph Smith's father, and himself. 2 Nephi 3:14-15 reads: "∅ thus prophesied Josep saying behold that Seer will the Lord bless ∅ they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded for this promise of which I have obtained of the Lord of the fruit of thy loins shall be fulfilled behold I am sure of the fulfil[ ]ing of this promise ∅ his name shall be called after me [Joseph, Jr.] ∅ it shall be after the name of his father [Joseph, Sr.] ∅ he shall be like unto me for the thing which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand by the power of the Lord shall bring my People unto Salvation" Joseph Smith, Jr.—circa 1829, *The Book of Mormon Printer's Manuscript* (Palmyra, NY: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830), 53. *Emphasis* added.

<sup>73</sup> The Book of Mormon contains several instances of anachronisms, and this book discusses some of them.

<sup>74</sup> Solomon Spaulding was born 20 February 1761.

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years a Presbyterian minister; he fell into bad health, left the ministry, and finally died of consumption.<sup>75</sup> The “Manuscript Found” was written by Spaulding as a historical romance, to account for the settlement of America, and he proposed to Mr. Patterson to publish it with a preface, giving an imaginary account of its having been taken from plates dug up in Ohio; but the latter did not think the enterprise would pay. Sidney Rigdon was then at work in the office of Mr. Patterson;<sup>76</sup> the latter died in 1826, and what became of that copy of the manuscript is not known. Mrs. Spaulding had another complete copy; but in the year 1825, while residing in Ontario Co., N.Y., next door to a man named Stroude, for whom Joe Smith was then digging a well, that copy also was lost. She thinks it was stolen from her trunk. Thus far all is clear, and there is no particular discrepancy between the two accounts; but when the “Book of Mormon” was published, the widow and brother of Solomon Spaulding, and several other persons who had heard him read his work, forthwith claimed that the new publication was nearly identical with the “Manuscript Found,” varying only in certain interpolated texts on doctrinal points. This claim was circulated abroad, and caused Sidney Rigdon to write a highly slanderous and abusive letter to the press in regard to Mrs. Spaulding. Mormon historians say that Spaulding’s book was a mere idolatrous romance, and that the whole story is the invention of Dr. Philastus Hurlbut, who seceded from the saints in Ohio, and “persecuted” Joe Smith in various ways. The widow’s and brother’s statement is supported by the evidence of Mr. Joseph Miller, Sr., now of Washington Co., Penna., who had often heard Spaulding read his work; by that of Mr. Redick McKee,<sup>77</sup> who formerly boarded with the Spaulding’s, and by others who knew of the work. Space fails to set forth all the evidence presented in support of this view. Suffice it to say, that

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<sup>75</sup> Solomon Spaulding died 20 October 1816.

<sup>76</sup> As evidence that Rigdon/Spaulding lived in Pittsburgh, PA at the same time: In the 9 July 1816 edition, both Sidney Rigdon and Solomon Spaulding were listed in *The Commonwealth* newspaper for unclaimed mail at the post office, as of 30 June 1816. Spaulding died that same October.

<sup>77</sup> Redick McKee (7 December 1800 – 13 September 1886) was an American government official. His association with Spaulding, and his writing, is compelling.

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while it is of moral force sufficient to convince most minds, it is yet not such proof as would establish the fact beyond all doubt, or convict Smith and Rigdon of theft and forgery in a court of justice. If the proof were any less strong than it is, I would decide against the Spaulding claim, solely from the internal evidence of the book; for the style and matter are such as to raise a very strong presumption that it could not be the work of any man with intelligence enough for a minister, or of a graduate from Dartmouth College. But the true theory no doubt is, that the writing of Spaulding was taken by Smith, Rigdon, Cowdery and others, as the suggestion and idea of their work; but was greatly modified and interpolated by them, leaving sufficient characteristics to be recognized by the Spaulding witnesses, who were left solely to their memory for a comparison with the “Book of Mormon,” recognizing what was in it, and forgetting much that was not included.<sup>78</sup>

Of the “three witnesses” it is unnecessary to treat; their subsequent course shows what weight is to be attached to their testimony. The best evidence furthermore shows, that Sidney Rigdon was the prime mover in the fraud,<sup>79</sup> and that Joe Smith was conveniently put forward as the Prophet.<sup>80</sup>

The year 1830 ranks as number one of the Mormon era. Early in the spring, the “Book of Mormon” appeared, and on the memorable 6th of April following, the Mormon Church was organized

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<sup>78</sup> This is an overview of what is commonly referred to as *The Spaulding/Rigdon Theory*. While widely accepted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it has lost historical favor over time due to the perceived conspiratorial nature that would involve too many individuals to conceal the truth. It is important to note that confidentiality blood oaths were frequently made between parties, which could explain the silence on the subject. The research conducted on this topic is intriguing, and I would suggest exploring the latest data available at [mormonleaks.org](http://mormonleaks.org).

<sup>79</sup> This presumption relies on accepting the *Spaulding/Rigdon Theory*.

<sup>80</sup> It is difficult to dismiss the notion that Joseph Smith, Jr. served as the charismatic front-man, still in the process of learning various aspects of life and responsibility, while Rigdon, being older, more experienced, and religious, was the *silent partner* compiling the data in the background. This presents a compelling argument.

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near Manchester.<sup>81</sup> Six members were baptized and ordained elders, viz.: Joseph Smith, Sr., Joseph Smith, Jr., Hyrum Smith, Samuel Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and Joseph Knight, all but the last two of the “original Smith family.” The sacrament was forthwith administered, and hands laid on “for the gift of the Holy Ghost.” On the 11th of April, Oliver Cowdery preached the first public discourse on the new faith, and the same month the “first miracle” was performed in Colesville, Broome Co., N.Y. On the first of June,<sup>82</sup> the Church, which had meanwhile gained a few more Whitmers and some others, held its “First Conference” at Fayette, in Seneca Co.; and the same month Joe Smith was twice arrested, “on false charges,” tried and acquitted.<sup>83</sup> Meanwhile, on the 18th of January, 1827, he had married Emma Hale, daughter of Isaac Hale, of South Bainbridge, Chenango Co., N.Y.;<sup>84</sup> and, in 1830, she was, by special revelation, pronounced “Elect Lady and Daughter of God,”<sup>85</sup> afterwards more learnedly styled *Electa Cyria*. She became thoroughly disgusted at her husband’s religion while in Nauvoo, and expressed no particular regret at his death; she refused to emigrate to Utah, but apostatized and married a Gentile, and is rather popular as land-lady of the old Mansion House, at Nauvoo. In August of 1830, Parley P. Pratt, a young Campbellite preacher, came on a visit especially to

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<sup>81</sup> The church advocates for the inception of the religion at the David Whitmer farm in Fayette, New York. Nevertheless, early records suggest that the church was organized 27 miles away in Manchester, as highlighted by the author.

<sup>82</sup> 9 June 1830.

<sup>83</sup> The first arrest occurred in March 1826, with the second arrest on the final day of June. Although acquitted in the latter case, Fraser’s Magazine, in its February 1873 issue, published the following statement regarding the court proceedings in March “... *And therefore the Court find the Defendant guilty.*” *Fraser’s Magazine - Volume VII*, “The Original Prophet” (London, England: Longmans, Green, and Co., February 1873), 230.

<sup>84</sup> The Isaac Hale farm is located in Harmony Township, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania.

<sup>85</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr., acting as “*the voice of the Lord your God*” addresses Emma as “*my daughter,*” and “*thou are an elect lady*” (verse 1). See Joseph Smith, Jr., *History, circa June 1839-circa 1841 [Draft 2]* (Harmony, PA: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, July 1830), 49.



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hear of the new faith, and was at once converted,<sup>86</sup> and soon after, Sidney Rigdon appeared as a leading Mormon.<sup>87</sup> Their own history states that he had never heard of Smith until this time.<sup>88</sup> Soon after, Orson Pratt was baptized,<sup>89</sup> and the new Church now had valuable material in its composition. The wild, poetical zeal of Parley, and the cool determination of Orson Pratt, the immense biblical knowledge and controversial skill of Sidney Rigdon, and the shrewd cunning of Joe Smith, were united in the work of propagandism, and converts multiplied. In October,<sup>90</sup> missionaries were sent to the "Lamanites," and in December, Sidney Rigdon visited Joe Smith, and preached several times in the vicinity.<sup>91</sup> In January,<sup>92</sup> Smith and Rigdon proceeded to the latter's residence, near Kirtland, Ohio, preaching by the way. Rigdon had previously collected a band of nearly one hundred persons, who called themselves Disciples; mostly seceders from other denominations, holding to a literal and rapid fulfilment of the prophecies, very fanatical and looking daily for "some great event to occur." Many of these adopted the new faith at once, and a

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<sup>86</sup> Parley P. Pratt was baptized 1 September 1830.

<sup>87</sup> Sidney Rigdon was baptized 14 November 1830.

<sup>88</sup> Lorenzo Saunders, a friend of the Smiths, along with several other witnesses, affirmed that they were aware of Sidney Rigdon visiting Joseph Smith, Jr. before 1830. In Saunders' instance, he was "duly sworn" on 21 July 1887, before Linus S. Parmelee (Justice of the Peace) and declared "... in March of 1827, on or about the 15th of said month I went to the home of Joseph Smith for the purpose of getting some maple sugar to eat, that when I arrived at the house of said Joseph Smith, I was met at the door by Harrison Smith, Jo's brother. That at a distance of ten or twelve rods from the house there were five men that were engaged in talking, four of whom I knew, the fifth one was better dressed than the rest of those whom I was acquainted with. I inquired of Harrison Smith who the stranger was? He informed me his name was Sidney Rigdon." Based on the timeline, there is some debate as to whether Rigdon could have been in Palmyra, New York on, or about, 15 March 1827.

<sup>89</sup> Orson Pratt was baptized 19 September 1830.

<sup>90</sup> In September 1830, Oliver Cowdery departed to preach to the Native Americans situated beyond the western border of Missouri.

<sup>91</sup> Lorenzo Saunders was "duly sworn" on 21 July 1887, before Linus S. Parmelee (Justice of the Peace) and declared: "... in the summer of 1830, I heard Sidney Rigdon preach a sermon on Mormonism."

<sup>92</sup> In December 1830, Joseph Smith received a revelation counseling members of the church in New York to gather to Kirtland, Ohio.

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church of thirty was organized. "By revelation" of February 9th, the elders were commanded "to go forth in pairs and preach,"<sup>93</sup> and it was ordered they should dwell particularly upon the fact that "the last days were at hand."<sup>94</sup> This idea is one that has a great hold upon many minds. Nor is it confined to the ignorant; many intelligent men in every generation become impressed with the idea that "in *our* day the world has become so corrupt, that God Almighty is going to make a great change," and in spite of the plain declarations of Scripture, fanatics will wrest the mild precepts of the Gospel, and force them to indicate that hell-fire and destruction are impending over everybody but their own particular sect. The Mormons began as Millenarians, and that of the maddest sort; but they did not preach that the world itself was to be destroyed, only that destruction was soon to fall upon all who did not embrace the new gospel. No particular time was set for this consummation, but it was understood to be imminent. Early in 1831, John Whitmer was appointed Church recorder and historian,<sup>95</sup> and about the same time, the remaining New York Saints came to Kirtland, which is set down in Mormon annals as the First Hegira.

On the 6th of June, the Melchisedek, or Superior Priesthood, was first conferred upon the elders,<sup>96</sup> and soon after Joe Smith had a revelation that the final gathering place of the Saints was to

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<sup>93</sup> Paraphrased. Joseph Smith, Jr.—9 February 1831, *Book of Commandments* – Chapter XLIV. (Zion, MO: W.W. Phelps, 1833), page 90/verse 7.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>95</sup> John Whitmer officially assumed the role of church historian on 8 March 1831, succeeding Oliver Cowdery, who had been serving in that capacity.

<sup>96</sup> While the official date remains unrecorded, historians posit that the restoration of the *superior priesthood* occurred between 16-28 May 1829. David Whitmer underwent baptism, confirmation, and ordination as an *Elder* on 6 June 1829.

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be in Missouri.<sup>97</sup> He set out the same month with a few elders, and in the middle of July, reached Jackson County, Missouri,<sup>98</sup> where another revelation was granted that this was “Zion which should never be moved,”<sup>99</sup> and the whole land was “solemnly dedicated to the Lord and His Saints.”<sup>100</sup> They began at once to build, and laid the first log in Kaw Township, twelve miles west of Independence. Another revelation, of August 2d,<sup>101</sup> fixed the site of the Great Temple “three hundred yards west of the Court House in Independence,”<sup>102</sup> which spot was accordingly dedicated by religious exercises, which were followed by a great accession of “gifts.” On the 4th of August, another large party arrived from Kirtland, a “General Conference” was held in the “land of Zi-

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<sup>97</sup> The author seems to be conflating two events. Initially, an 1832 revelation mentioned Missouri (which aligns with the described timeframe as *soon after*). See Joseph Smith, Jr.—22/23 September 1832, *Doctrine and Covenants – Section IV* (Kirtland, OH: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1835 edition), 89. Secondly, on 12 January 1838, another revelation instructed the abandonment of Ohio and exodus to Missouri: “*Verily I say unto you the time [has] ... come that your labours [sic] are finished in this place, for a season, Therefore arise and get yourselves on to a land which I shall show unto you even a land flowing with milk and honey you are clean from the blood of this people and wo unto those who have become your enemies [sic] who <have> professed my name saith the Lord, for their judgement [sic] lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not, let all your faithfull [sic] friends arise with their families also and get out of this place and gather themselves together unto Zion ...*” Joseph Smith, Jr. – 12 January 1838, *Revelation* (Kirtland, OH: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1838). Both Joseph and Sidney left for Missouri that same evening.

<sup>98</sup> Joseph Smith arrived in Far West, Missouri on 14 March 1838. Jackson County is about 50 miles south of it.

<sup>99</sup> The wording is “*Zion shall not be moved ...*” See Joseph Smith, Jr.—16/17 December 1833, *Doctrine and Covenants – Section XCVII* (Kirtland, OH: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1835 edition), 235.

<sup>100</sup> The wording is “*... the land which I [the Lord] have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints: wherefore this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion.*” See Joseph Smith, Jr.—20 July 1831, *Doctrine and Covenants – Section XXVII* (Kirtland, OH: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1835 edition), 154.

<sup>101</sup> 20 July 1831.

<sup>102</sup> The wording is “*... the spot for the temple is lying westward upon a lot which is not far from the court house ...*” See Joseph Smith, Jr.—20 July 1831, *Doctrine and Covenants – Section XXVII* (Kirtland, OH: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1835 edition), 154.

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on,"<sup>103</sup> and another revelation vouchsafed to Joseph, that the whole land should be theirs, and should not be obtained "but by purchase or by blood."<sup>104</sup>

Just what was to be understood by that strange wording, it is now impossible to tell. The Mormons explain it very innocently, and the Missourians construed it to mean that the Saints would unite with the Indians and drive out the old settlers. Joe Smith returned to Kirtland the latter part of August,<sup>105</sup> and soon after established a mill, store, and bank. The last was what was then denominated a "wild cat" bank, that is, it had no charter, and deposited no State bonds for security; but rested solely on the individual credit of the proprietors.<sup>106</sup> As several wealthy men had come into the new organization, the notes of the bank circulated at par. Joseph Smith was made President, and Sidney Rigdon, Cashier. For the next five months, Joseph travelled and preached in the Northern and Eastern States, making many converts, who "gathered" either at Kirtland, or in Missouri. The elders sent out in February previous had met with tolerable success, and Samuel H. Smith, brother of the Prophet, had added greatly to the Church by converting Brigham Young. This noted personage was born at Whittingham, Windham Co., Vermont, June 1st, 1801. He had four brothers and six sisters, all of whom became Mormons.<sup>107</sup> He was baptized in April, 1832,<sup>108</sup> by Eleazer Millard, and soon after "gathered" at Kirtland. He was brought up on a farm, and learned the trade of painter and glazier, which he followed till

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<sup>103</sup> "On the 4<sup>th</sup> [August 1831] I attended the first conference in the land of Zion." Joseph Smith, Jr., *Times and Seasons - Volume V, No. 5* (Nauvoo, IL: John Taylor, 1 March 1844), 450.

<sup>104</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr.—August 1831, *Book of Commandments - Chapter LXIV* (Kirtland, OH: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1833), page 153/verse 30.

<sup>105</sup> See *Saints—1815-1846—The Standard of Truth* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2018 edition), 136.

<sup>106</sup> The author has advanced the narrative by a few years. The *Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking Company* was established and dissolved in 1837, spanning from January to November.

<sup>107</sup> All of Brigham Young's siblings became members of the church in either 1832 or 1833.

<sup>108</sup> Brigham Young joined the *Church of Christ* on 9 April 1832.

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after his conversion to Mormonism. In him Joe Smith recognized one “born to rule,” and his deep cunning and wonderful knowledge of the weak points in human nature, soon gave him a leading position in the Church. In March, 1832, Joe Smith and Sidney Rigdon, while absent from home,<sup>109</sup> were tarred and feathered by a mob, “for attempting to establish Communism, for forgery and dishonorable dealing,” according to their adversaries;<sup>110</sup> by their own account, “for the truth’s sake,” and this is set down as “the beginning of persecutions.” Early in April,<sup>111</sup> Joe Smith found it necessary to go again to Independence, Mo., where a sort of “Ecumenical Council” was held,<sup>112</sup> and a printing office set up. In June, was issued the “Morning and Evening Star,”<sup>113</sup> the first Mormon periodical, edited by W.W. Phelps. Joe Smith soon returned to Kirtland,<sup>114</sup> and the latter part of the same year Heber Chase Kimball was baptized<sup>115</sup> into the Church. In February, 1833, Joe Smith finished his “inspired retranslation” of the New Testament,<sup>116</sup> and soon after received a “revelation to square things in Zion,”<sup>117</sup> A quorum of three High Priests, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams, was organized as “Presidency of the Church,” and they were at once favored with “visions of the Saviour and concourse of angels.”<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> On 24 March 1832, they were pulled from their homes and into a meadow.

<sup>110</sup> “The historian Fawn Brodie references an account that one of John Johnson’s sons, Eli, meant to punish Smith by having him castrated for an intimacy with his teenage sister, Nancy Marinda Johnson.” One of the mob, Symonds Ryder “felt Smith was plotting to take property from members of the community and a company of citizens violently warned Smith that they would not accept those actions.” (Wikipedia 2024 “Life of Joseph Smith from 1831 to 1837.”). Apparently, there was no singular reason.

<sup>111</sup> Joseph Smith, Newel Whitney, and Sidney Rigdon left Ohio on 1 April 1832.

<sup>112</sup> 26 April 1832.

<sup>113</sup> The monthly newspaper was named *The Evening and the Morning Star*.

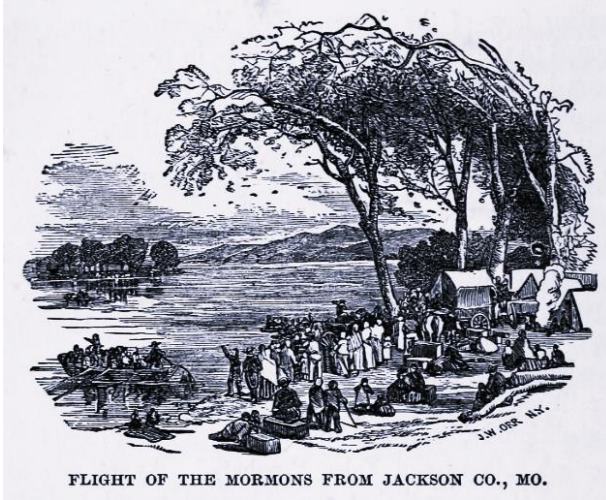
<sup>114</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr. left Missouri on 6 May 1832 and arrived back in Ohio “some time in June.”

<sup>115</sup> Heber C. Kimball was baptized into the *Church of Christ* by Alpheus Gifford, on 16 April 1832.

<sup>116</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr. completed the *Book of Revelation* in late July 1832.

<sup>117</sup> 25 June 1833. See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – Volume 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 357.

<sup>118</sup> The *Kirtland Stake High Council* was organized on 17 February 1834.



By the spring of 1833, the Mormons numbered some fifteen hundred in Jackson County, Missouri. They had taken virtual possession of Independence, where their paper was published, and were fast extending their settlements westward. The intense religious excitement which raged throughout the United States during the decade of 1820-30, which led to the wild phenomena of “jerks,” and so-called religious exercises of howling, jumping, barking and muttering, seems to have left a precipitate of its worst materials in Mormonism. They daily proclaimed to the older settlers that the Lord had given them the whole land of Missouri; that bloody wars would extirpate all other sects from the country; that “it would be one gore of blood from the Mississippi to the border,”<sup>119</sup> and that the few who survived would be

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<sup>119</sup> “On Oct. 24, 1838, Thomas B. March [sic], the president of the 12 apostles, and Orson Hyde, also one of the apostles, made before a justice of the peace in Ray co., Mo., an affidavit in which March said, corroborated by Hyde: ‘They have among them a company, consisting of all that are considered true Mormons, called the Danites, who have taken an oath to support the heads of the church in all things that they say or do, whether right or wrong ... The plan of said Smith, the prophet, is to take this state; and he professes to his people to intend taking the United States, and ultimately the whole world. This is the belief of the church, and my own opinion of the prophet’s plan and intentions. The prophet inculcates the notion, and it is believed by every true Mormon, that Smith’s prophecies are superior to the law of the land. I have heard the prophet say that he would yet tread down

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servants to the Saints, who would own all the property in the country. As their numbers increased, arrogance and spiritual pride took possession of them; they proclaimed themselves “Kings and priests of the Most High God,”<sup>120</sup> and regarded all others as reprobates, destined to a speedy destruction. In conversation with the Missourians, they never wearied of declaring that all the Churches established by the latter were “alike the creation of the devil,” that they were under the curse of God and all their members doomed, castaway Gentiles, worse than heathen, and unworthy of longer life. At the same time it does not appear that there were any more violations of law among them, than would be among the same number of very poor and ignorant people anywhere; but their general conduct was insufferable. In the first flush of their religious enthusiasm, they seem to have been governed by no ideas of moderation; they proclaimed through the country that it was useless folly for Gentiles to open farms, the Lord would never allow them to enjoy the fruits of their labor; they notified the workmen upon new buildings that they could never hope to be paid therefor, and generally proclaimed that in a very few months the Gentiles would have neither name nor place in Missouri.

The simple-minded Missourians listened with a vague wonder to their first predictions, then smiled at their confident boastings of superior purity and holiness; but soon their increasing numbers and arrogance awakened serious fears of the future. The Missourians, unaccustomed to the language of hyperbole in prophecy, interpreted their predictions to mean that the Saints themselves would be the ministers of God’s vengeance, and smite the unbelievers; many were incensed against them for their language, and the public mind was greatly inflamed. In April, 1833, a number of Missourians came together in Independence, and decided that “means of defence ought to be taken,” but determined upon noth-

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*his enemies and walk over their dead bodies; that if he was not let alone he would be a second Mahomet to this generation, and that he would make it one gore of blood from the Rocky mountains to the Atlantic ocean.” See *New American Cyclopædia – Volume XI* (New York, NY: D. Appleton and Company, 1861), 737. *Emphasis* added.*

<sup>120</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr. – 27 August 1843, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1938), 322.

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ing. The first June number of the *Morning and Evening Star* contained an intemperate article, headed, "Free People of Color," which excited the wrath of the old citizens against the Mormons, as "abolitionists,"<sup>121</sup> and was answered by a small pamphlet, headed, "Beware of False Prophets." As summer advanced, it appeared that the Mormons would be sufficiently numerous to carry the county at the August election, and this roused all the fears of the old settlers afresh. Without apparent concert, an armed mob of three hundred assembled at Independence, tore down the newspaper office, tarred and feathered several of the Saints, whipped two of them a little and ordered all to leave the county.<sup>122</sup> Oliver Cowdery was started to Kirtland to consult with Joe Smith; but, during his absence, the Saints agreed with the citizens to leave Jackson County. On the 8th of October, W.W. Phelps and Orson Hyde presented a memorial to Governor Dunklin, of Missouri, praying for redress, to which that officer made answer, that they "had a right to the protection of the law, if they chose to stay in Jackson."<sup>123</sup> Emboldened by this, they refused to leave according to agreement, and the last of the month the mob again rose, burnt ten Mormons' houses and committed a few other outrages. The Mormons armed in turn, and fired into a portion of the mob, killing two; the whole body of citizens then arose against them, calling in aid from other counties, when the Mormons became panic-stricken and suddenly evacuated Jackson, crossing the Missouri River during the nights of November 4th and 5th, into Clay County.<sup>124</sup>

This first expulsion of the Mormons is a point upon which there has been much discussion. That the people of Jackson

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<sup>121</sup> *The Evening and the Morning Star* – Volume II. No. 14., "Free People of Color." (Independence, MO: W.W. Phelps, July 1833), 109.

<sup>122</sup> This event occurred on 20 July 1833.

<sup>123</sup> The governor's letter is dated 19 October 1833. While the author's quote is paraphrased, the sentiment is clear. The governor wrote, "I would advise you to make a trial of the efficacy of the laws; the judge of your circuit is a conservator of the peace."

<sup>124</sup> 5 November 1833 "On application to Colonel Pitcher, it was found that there was no alternative, but for the Church to leave the county forthwith ..." See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – Volume 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 432.



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County were not justified in law is plain; but that they did exactly as the people of nine counties out of ten would have done, is equally plain. They seem to have been actuated much more by a fear of what the Mormons would do when they had the power, than by what they had done; and that those fears were well founded, is abundantly shown by subsequent events. The near vicinity of the Mormons was intolerable, and the settlers were determined they should leave. The mob allowed the Saints to carry their printing material to Liberty, Clay Co., where they soon after began to publish the *Missouri Enquirer*.<sup>125</sup> They spread themselves over Clay and into Van Buren County; but were “persecuted” and annoyed in the latter so they made no great settlement.

Meanwhile, Joe Smith and a much more intelligent class of Mormons were building up Kirtland. July 2d, 1833, Smith completed his “inspired translation” of the Old Testament,<sup>126</sup> and soon after a printing press was set up in Kirtland, and the *Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate* established.<sup>127</sup> “Old man Smith,” the Prophet’s father, was made Patriarch,<sup>128</sup> and Bishop Partridge head of that branch of the Church.<sup>129</sup> When the news of affairs in Jackson County reached him, Joseph “determined on war, and began at once to collect a small force.” He soon had two hundred men, with whom he started westward; “marched on Missouri,” according to Gentile history; “hoped to redeem Zion,”

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<sup>125</sup> “Dec. 27. [1834] The Mob permitted Messrs. Davis and Kelly to carry the establishment of the ‘Evening and Morning Star’ to Liberty, Clay Co., Mo., where they began to publish the ‘Missouri Enquirer.’” See Sir Richard Francis Burton, *The City of the Saints: and Across the Rocky Mountains* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1862), 551/appendix v.

<sup>126</sup> *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – Volume 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 368.

<sup>127</sup> “The former part of October [1834] was spent in arranging matters respecting the Lord’s house and the printing office, for it had previously been published that the Evening and Morning Star would be discontinued, and a new paper issued in its place, entitled The Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate.” See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – Volume 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 164.

<sup>128</sup> 18 December 1833.

<sup>129</sup> 4 February 1831.

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according to Mormon annals.<sup>130</sup> About this time, Joseph had another revelation “as to business,” which will be found in the *Doctrine and Covenants* with the rest, which contained, among other directions, this remarkable passage:—“Behold, it is said or written in my laws: Thou shalt not get in debt to thine enemies. But, behold, it is not said at any time the Lord should not *take when He pleases*, and pay as seemeth to Him good. Wherefore, as ye are on the Lord’s business, whatsoever ye do,” etc.<sup>131</sup> We need not be surprised, therefore, to learn, as we do from Joseph’s Autobiography, that the people along the road were very hostile. Two days before starting, on May 3d, the Conference of Elders, in Kirtland, repudiated the name of Mormons and adopted, for the first time, that of Latter-Day Saints;<sup>132</sup> and we notice in Joseph’s account that along the road they constantly denied the name of Mormons. These being the “last days,” they were Latter-day Saints, as well as to distinguish them from the Saints of former days; the term Mormon, on the contrary, is supposed to be derived from the Greek *Μορμουν* [*Mormou*], signifying a “horrible fright” or “bugbear.”

Joe and his “army” reached Missouri in the latter part of June, but while near the Mississippi, the cholera, then but just known in America, broke out in his camp, and in a few days twenty of the company died. Joe preached, prayed and prophesied in vain; his followers were panic-stricken at the horrible and unknown disease. He first attempted to cure it “by laying on of hands,” but desisted with the remark, that “when the Lord would destroy, it

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<sup>130</sup> “Wilford and a handful of Saints left for Zion on May 1 [1834]. Joseph, Brigham, Heber, and the Holbrooks—along with about a hundred other volunteers—left Kirtland several days later and joined up with Wilford along the road.” See *Saints—1815-1846—The Standard of Truth* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2018 edition), 198-199.

<sup>131</sup> Paraphrased. Joseph Smith, Jr.—11 September 1831, *Book of Commandments - Chapter LXV* (Kirtland, OH: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1833), page 160/verses 37-39.

<sup>132</sup> This transition was from “*The Church of Christ*” to “*The Church of the Latter-day Saints*.” The church will not adopt the full name, “*The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*” until 1838. See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 2* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 62-63.

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was vain for man to attempt to stay His hand.”<sup>133</sup> An armed force which had meanwhile gathered in Jackson County, in anticipation of his coming, was scattered by a violent storm, and in a few days, the cholera having spent its force, the company reached Liberty.<sup>134</sup> There was nothing to be done, and in a few days Smith returned to Kirtland.<sup>135</sup> A quorum of twelve apostles was then organized,<sup>136</sup> among them, Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball. The former received the “gift of tongues,” and was sent on a mission to the Eastern States,<sup>137</sup> and in May, 1835, all the twelve left Kirtland on general missions.<sup>138</sup> The ensuing August, there was a General Assembly at Kirtland, in which the “Book of Doctrine and Covenants,” and the “Lectures on Faith,” by Sidney Rigdon, were adopted as the rule of faith.<sup>139</sup> About this time, a learned Jew, formerly Professor of Oriental tongues in New York,<sup>140</sup> was connected with the Mormons, and on the 4th of January, 1836, a Hebrew professorship was established at Kirtland, Joseph Smith and several other leading Mormons entering upon the study. A Temple had been projected early in the settlement, which was completed and dedicated as the “House of the Lord,” March 27th, 1836. This was their first temple, and its estimated cost, \$40,000. Meanwhile, Governor Dunklin had attempted to have the Mor-

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<sup>133</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr., wrote: “I authorized General Lyman Wight to give a discharge to every man of the Camp who had proved himself faithful, certifying that fact and giving him leave to return home.” See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 2* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 123.

<sup>134</sup> 4 June 1834. See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 2* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 83.

<sup>135</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr.: “About this time [31 July 1834] I arrived in Kirtland.” See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 2* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 139.

<sup>136</sup> 14 February 1835.

<sup>137</sup> He left in the fall of 1832.

<sup>138</sup> 4 May 1835. See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 2* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 139.

<sup>139</sup> 17 August 1835. See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 2* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 243. It should be noted that *The Lectures on Faith* were eventually removed from the Doctrine and Covenants in 1921, as they were not viewed as direct revelations to Joseph Smith, Jr.

<sup>140</sup> Dr. Daniel Levy Maduro Peixotto (18 July 1800 - 13 May 1843).

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mons again put in possession of their lands, in Jackson County, whereupon a committee of citizens from the latter met a committee of the Mormons, and offered the following:

*“Proposition of the people of Jackson County to the Mormons:*

“The undersigned committee, being fully authorized by the people of Jackson County, hereby propose to the Mormons, that they will buy all the land that the said Mormons own in the County of Jackson, and also all the improvements which the said Mormons had on any of the public lands in said County of Jackson, as they existed before the first disturbance between the people of Jackson and the Mormons, and for such as they have made since. They further propose, that the valuation of said land and improvements shall be ascertained by three disinterested arbitrators, to be chosen and agreed to by both parties. They further propose, that should the parties disagree in the choice of arbitrators, then—is to choose them. They further propose, that twelve of the Mormons shall be permitted to go along with the arbitrators, to show them their land and improvements while valuing the same, and such other of the Mormons as the arbitrators shall wish to do so, to give them information; and the people of Jackson County hereby guarantee their entire safety while doing so. They further propose, that when the arbitrators report the value of the land and improvements, as aforesaid, the people of Jackson will pay the valuation, *with one hundred per cent., added thereon*, to the Mormons within thirty days thereafter.

“They further propose, that the Mormons are not to make any effort, ever after, to settle either collectively or individually within the limits of Jackson County. The Mormons are to enter into bonds to insure the conveyance of their land in Jackson County, according to the above terms, when payment shall be made; and the committee will enter into a like bond, with such security as may be deemed sufficient for the payment of the money, according to the above proposition, etc., etc.”<sup>141</sup>

The Mormons have always maintained that their later troubles were “solely on account of their religion,” but that they were driven from Jackson County because “the mob desired to get pos-

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<sup>141</sup> *The Evening and the Morning Star* (Kirtland, OH: W.W. Phelps, July 1834), 175.

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session of their lands.” The above document certainly tends to disprove that charge. The foremost men in the county offered their personal security for the payment, but the Mormons rejected the proposition, on the ground that the Lord had said, “Zion should never be moved.”<sup>142</sup> The citizens of Jackson then became apprehensive that they would be attacked from Clay County, and stirred up those in the latter county who considered they already had cause to complain of the Mormons; so they “requested” the latter, in May, 1836, to remove, which they did, this time settling in Carroll, Davis<sup>143</sup> and Caldwell Counties. In the last named they founded the town of Far-West, and these counties being new and unoccupied, they prospered greatly for a while.

In June, 1837, the first organized foreign mission was sent to England,<sup>144</sup> consisting of H.C. Kimball, Orson Hyde and W. Richards. On the 30th of July following, they baptized the first converts there, in the river Kibble, and the first confirmation of members was at Walkerford, August 4th.<sup>145</sup> The first Conference of English Mormons was held in the cock-pit at Preston, the 25th of the following December.<sup>146</sup>

In the autumn of the same year, the “Kirtland Safety Society Bank,” engineered by Smith and Rigdon, failed,<sup>147</sup> under circumstances which created great scandal, and the Prophet had a revelation to “depart for the land of Zion,” in Missouri. Smith and Rigdon left Kirtland “between two days,” and their creditors pursued them for a hundred miles; but in the language of Joseph’s Autobiography, “the Lord delivered them out of the hands of

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<sup>142</sup> The wording is “Zion shall not be moved ...” See Joseph Smith, Jr.—16/17 December 1833, *Doctrine and Covenants - Section XCVII* (Kirtland, OH: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1835 edition), 235.

<sup>143</sup> The county name is spelled *Daviess*.

<sup>144</sup> 1 June 1837. See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 2* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 489.

<sup>145</sup> Sir Richard Francis Burton, *The City of the Saints: and Across the Rocky Mountains* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1862), 552/appendix v.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>147</sup> *Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking Company* (2 January 1837 - November 1837).

their persecutors.”<sup>148</sup> They reached Far-West in March,<sup>149</sup> and found a fearful schism raging in the Church. The authority of Joseph was unequal to the task of restoring order, and Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery and one L.E. Johnson were “cut off from the Church,”<sup>150</sup> while Orson Hyde, Thomas B. Marsh, W.W. Phelps and many others apostatized and brought many serious charges against Joe Smith and other leaders.<sup>151</sup> It was said they were plotting treason against the State, that, they were conspiring with the Indians, that they were engaged in counterfeiting and cattle-stealing, and were attempting to establish a community of goods as well as wives. The dissenters stirred up the neighboring people against the Saints, and for purposes of defence and retaliation the “Danite Band” was organized.<sup>152</sup> They were first commanded by D.W. Patton,<sup>153</sup> who took the name of “Captain Fearnot,” and styled themselves “Daughters of Gideon.” Afterwards they adopted their present name from the suggestion in GENESIS xlix. 17: “Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.”

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<sup>148</sup> The pressure was so great that on 12 January 1838 Smith and Rigdon fled Kirtland, Ohio at 10:00 pm. Both Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were eventually prosecuted. “They were found guilty of violating state banking laws and fined \$1,000 each, plus small costs. As Mormon historian B.H. Roberts concisely stated in his history of the church, ‘The Kirtland Safety Society enterprise ended disastrously.’” See Richard Abanes, *One Nation Under Gods* (New York, NY: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2002), 139.

<sup>149</sup> 14 March 1838. See Sir Richard Francis Burton, *The City of the Saints: and Across the Rocky Mountains* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1862), 552/appendix v.

<sup>150</sup> “1838 ... April 12 and 13. Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, the three witnesses to the ‘Book of Mormon’ (others say O. Cowdery, D. Whitmer, and L.E. Johnson), charged with lying, theft, counterfeiting, and defaming the Prophet’s character, were cut off from the Church (J.H.)” See Sir Richard Francis Burton, *The City of the Saints: and Across the Rocky Mountains* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1862), 552/appendix v.

<sup>151</sup> “1838 ... April 12 and 13 ... Orson Hyde, Thos. B. Marsh, W.W. Phelps, and others apostatized, accused the Prophet of being accessory to several thefts and murders, and of meditating a tyranny over that part of Missouri, and eventually over the whole republic. (J.H.)” See Sir Richard Francis Burton, *The City of the Saints: and Across the Rocky Mountains* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1862), 552/appendix v.

<sup>152</sup> June 1838.

<sup>153</sup> David Wyman Patten (14 November 1799 – 25 October 1838).

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On the 4th of July, Sidney Rigdon preached what he called, "Sidney's last sermon;"<sup>154</sup> in which he threatened Gentiles and apostates with violence, and declared that the "Saints were above all law."<sup>155</sup> Troubles soon after arose in Davis County, at elections; the Mormons all voting one way secured control of the County; a general fight occurred at the August election in the town of Gallatin, in which a number were seriously wounded on both sides.<sup>156</sup> For two months there were occasional fights all over Davis County, and the Mormons at length declared their "independence of all earthly rulers and magistrates."<sup>157</sup> The Clerk of the county, a Mormon, was commanded by Joe Smith to issue no more writs against the Saints; and the Justice of the Peace in Gallatin was mobbed for entertaining suits against them.<sup>158</sup> Scattering parties of militia began to assemble under arms in the neighboring counties, one of which, commanded by Captain Bogart,<sup>159</sup> came to battle with a party of seventy Mormons and defeated them. Another party of Mormons attacked the militia near Rich-

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<sup>154</sup> 4 July 1838. More commonly known as: Sidney Rigdon, *Rigdon's July 4<sup>th</sup> oration* (Far West, MO: Self Published, 4 July 1838).

<sup>155</sup> Joseph Smith, Jr.: "The address was delivered on the public square under the hoisted flag [raised by Joseph Smith, Jr.] representing the Liberty and Independence of these United States of America." See Dan Vogel's *History of Joseph Smith and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 3* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2015), 41.

<sup>156</sup> "Aug. 6 [1838]. Troubles in Gallatin Co. occasioned by elections. The Mormons say that persecutions of the Saints commenced in Davies Co., Mo." See Sir Richard Francis Burton, *The City of the Saints: and Across the Rocky Mountains* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1862), 552/appendix v.

<sup>157</sup> This directly contradicts Joseph Smith Jr.: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law." See Joseph Smith, Jr., *Pearl of Great Price*, Articles of Faith #12 (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2024/on-line edition).

B.H. Roberts later characterized Rigdon's speech as a "'Declaration of Independence' from all mobs and persecutions." See B.H. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 1* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News Press, 1965), 438.

<sup>158</sup> Judge Adam Black (1801 - 1890).

<sup>159</sup> Samuel Bogart (2 April 1797 - 11 March 1861) was an itinerant Methodist minister and militia captain from Ray County, Missouri. (See *Wikipedia* entry "Samuel Bogart" (2024).

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mond, in Clay County, and killed two of them; the latter returned the fire, killing "Captain Fearnot."<sup>160</sup> The Mormons then rose *en masse* and drove out all the officers of Davis County not of their faith, and burned and plundered the town of Gallatin, another small village, and much of the surrounding country, driving out the inhabitants.<sup>161</sup>

About this time, Brigham Young fled for his life to Quincy, Illinois.<sup>162</sup> The troubles grew so extensive and complicated, that after many attempts to learn something definite from "the seat of war," Governor Lilburn W. Boggs called out fifteen thousand militia to restore order. The first detachment had a sort of battle with the Mormons in Carroll County, after which, Governor Boggs issued an order that the Mormons "should be expelled from the State," adding, "even if it was necessary to exterminate them."<sup>163</sup> This is the celebrated "exterminating order," and Governor Boggs the "Nero" of Mormon historians. Another body of militia were fired upon by the Mormons at Haun's Mill, and in revenge exterminated the whole Mormon party, variously estimated at from sixteen to thirty. Only two escaped alive.<sup>164</sup> The

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<sup>160</sup> "Led by Mormon apostle David W. Patten, a unit of Mormon militia from Caldwell County crossed into Ray County early in the morning of 25 October, and attacked Bogart's sleeping men at approximately 3 am in their camp alongside the river. A savage fight ensued, resulting in the deaths of three Mormons (including Apostle Patten) and seven wounded, to one dead and six wounded for Bogart's company. The Mormons rescued their hostages and drove Bogart from the field ..." See Wikipedia entry "Samuel Bogart" (2024).

<sup>161</sup> "This brawl spawned raids initiated by both belligerent sides throughout this region. In retaliation, the Mormons organized to pillage and burn Millport on Oct. 18 [1838]. Some accounts claim Gallatin was burned also, though others argue that the Mormons did not cross south of the Grand River." See *Mormon War: Dark Chapter in Missouri History 1838* (<https://daviesscountyhistoricalsociety.com/1838/04/21/whats-the-mormon-war/>).

<sup>162</sup> February through March of 1839.

<sup>163</sup> "... the Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the State if necessary for the public peace—their outrages are beyond all description." Governor Lilburn Williams Boggs (14 December 1796 – 14 March 1860), *Missouri Executive Order 44*, dated 27 October 1838.

<sup>164</sup> The tragic event known as the "Haun's Mill Massacre" transpired at 4:00 p.m. on 30 October 1838, resulting in the loss of 17 lives. Among the 240 militia men present, four sustained injuries, none of which were fatal.



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Mormon forces then began to retreat on every hand, and finally united in the town of Far-West, where they were surrounded by a large militia force under Generals Doniphan, Lucas and Clarke, and compelled to surrender at discretion. Most of their plunder was recaptured and delivered to the owners, and the great body of the Mormons were released under a promise to leave the State.<sup>165</sup>

Joe Smith, Hyrum Smith, and forty others were held for trial, and the militia officers forthwith organized a Court Martial and condemned several of them to be shot! But General Doniphan, a sound lawyer and brave man, by a firm use of his authority and influence, prevented this foolishly illegal action.<sup>166</sup> The prisoners were taken before the nearest Circuit Judge and put upon trial “for treason, murder, robbery, arson, larceny, and breach of the peace.”<sup>167</sup> They could not well have been tried for more; but it seems by the evidence that many of them were guilty on most of the charges. They were committed to jail to await their final trial. The evidence in the case was printed by order of the Missouri Legislature, and presents a singular instance of how a few knaves may lead to their destruction a whole people, if sufficiently ignorant and fanatical.<sup>168</sup> Comparative peace was restored, but the history of civil commotions shows that private revenge will seek such a period for its gratification, and in many neighborhoods fearful outrages were perpetrated upon individual Mormons by those who held a personal animosity against them. Their leaders

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<sup>165</sup> 10 November 1838. “General Wilson then ordered every family to be out of Diahman in ten days, with permission to go to Caldwell, and there tarry until spring, and then leave the state under pain of extermination.” See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 3* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 207.

<sup>166</sup> 1 November 1838. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 3* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 191.

<sup>167</sup> 11 November 1838. “... charged with the several crimes of high treason against the state, murder, burglary, arson, robbery, and larceny.” See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 3* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 209.

<sup>168</sup> The author’s assertion that “... a few knaves may lead to their destruction a whole people, if sufficiently ignorant and fanatical” is a profound observation. This sentiment echoes the outcomes witnessed in numerous tragic tales involving religious leaders who guide their followers into lives marked by unfulfilled prophecies and shattered promises.

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had provoked a conflict for which the innocent suffered; and the most quiet and unoffending portion of the Mormons were hunted out and rudely hurried from their homes at the most inclement season of the year, often without a chance to supply themselves or dispose of their property, and much suffering was the result. They now numbered over twelve thousand, and in the month of December this large body began the journey into Illinois, which the most of them reached in January, 1839. They spread over the western counties wherever they could find food or employment, particularly about the town of Quincy, in Adams county; while many went as far east as Springfield, and others to St. Louis. They were everywhere received as sufferers for their religion, and to some extent for their "free-state" sentiments; for Illinois was just then beginning to be agitated by the anti-slavery excitement, and the Mormons had been driven from a slave State. The Missouri border had never been well spoken of, nor was it till long afterwards; and the Illinoisans rather seemed pleased with the opportunity of showing how superior they were to the "border ruffians." They regarded but little the Mormon statement that their religion was the only cause of trouble; in fact the more intelligent knew that such could not be the case; but they made haste to assume that the Mormons were "New York and New England Yankees, driven out as abolitionists," because the Missourians would not tolerate such sentiments. The people of Illinois, particularly of the western counties, knew little and cared less about differences of speculative theology. That portion known as the "Military Tract" had but lately come into market, and was settled very rapidly; the religious training of the people had not kept pace with the advance of their material interests, and a sermon to them was a sermon, whether preached by Arminian or Calvinist, orthodox Trinitarian or heterodox Unitarian. Perhaps they were not impious or skeptical; religion was "at loose ends," but there was always a sentiment in its favor, only sectarianism was little understood, talked of, or cared for. In short the charity of these people was broad enough to cover all sects, and no man was persecuted or called in question for his religious belief. Under these circumstances they gave the Mormon people protection, and welcomed them to their homes and tables; they listened to the story

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of their wrongs with tears in their eyes; they grasped the outcasts by the hand, and swore to stand by them to the bitter end. Subscriptions were opened for them in many places; even the Indians, yet upon a near reservation, contributed liberally, and several sections made kindly overtures, and pressingly invited the fugitives to settle among them. They had not yet caught sight of the cloven foot of the monster, or seen its miscreated front. The Missourians found, in the meantime, that they had “caught an elephant;” they had Joe Smith, his brother Hyrum, and forty others in jail on a multitude of charges; but many of the witnesses were gone, the trial would have been long and expensive, and it was probably the best policy to get them all out of the State in such a way that none would re-enter it, rather than condemn a few to the penitentiary. Accordingly, they were removed from place to place, loosely guarded, and on the 15th of April, Joseph and a few others escaped from their guards, who were either drunk or pretended to be.<sup>169</sup> They hastily made their way to Quincy,<sup>170</sup> followed by the small remnant of Mormons which had been left at Far-West. The remaining prisoners escaped and followed soon after, and in the language of Governor Boggs’ next message, “the young and growing State was happily rid of the fanatical sect;” but in the language of Mormon poetry,

“ — Missouri,  
Like a whirlwind in her fury,  
Drove the Saints and spilled their blood.”

Early in May, Joe Smith went to Commerce, in Hancock County, Illinois, by invitation of Dr. Isaac Galland, from whom he obtained a large tract of land near the head of the Des Moines Rapids, and shortly had another revelation for his people to settle there. To a proper understanding of their future history a brief sketch of the locality is necessary, which has been kindly furnished me by R.W. McKinney, Esq., present Postmaster at Nauvoo, who has resided in that vicinity since 1837:

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<sup>169</sup> 15 April 1839. Joseph Smith, Jr., “*This evening our guard got intoxicated. We thought it a favorable opportunity to make our escape ...*” See *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Volume 3* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret News, 1902 edition), 321.

<sup>170</sup> Joseph Smith Jr. arrived in Quincy, Illinois on 22 April 1839.

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“Hancock is a river county, washed on the west by the Mississippi for forty miles, taking into account the windings of the river. It was originally nearly all prairie, extending eastward in a direct line from Commerce twenty-five miles; high and rolling, with a soil of inexhaustible fertility, and with most of the timber fringing the streams along the eastern border. The western part of the county, bordering on the Des Moines Rapids; was always a favorite spot of beauty to the voyager on the Mississippi; the eye was here relieved by a most inviting prospect, the river was fringed by low wooded hills, from which gushed clear and sparkling brooks, passing with low musical murmurs over their rocky beds until they were finally lost in the ‘Father of Waters.’

“But the early progress of Hancock County was anything but encouraging. While other sections of the State, with fewer advantages and a less healthy climate, rapidly augmented in wealth and population, this remained almost a wilderness, and this by reason of uncertain titles.

“Hancock County, fair, healthful, and fertile, ‘even as the Garden of the Lord,’ was one of those unfortunate counties comprised in that afflicted section lying between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, known as the ‘Military Tract.’ It had been set apart by Act of Congress as bounty land for the soldiers of the War of 1812; but few of them emigrated there, and nearly all of the patents, or ‘soldiers’ rights,’ as they were called, were thrown upon the market for sale. This furnished, for a score of years, a rich harvest for speculators and land jobbers, and the ‘Military Tract’ became the ‘happy hunting ground’ of sharks and sharpers of every description. A race of ‘bloated patent holders’ was thus created, whose broad tracts of wilderness land rivalled in extent the proudest dukedoms and baronies of the old world. It was against sound public policy to create such a land monopoly on the public domain; but much greater evils grew out of this thing in the establishment of a conflict of titles, creating doubt and uncertainty, casting a shadow on every man’s homestead who dared to erect it on the Tract, and driving away honest and enterprising settlers. A system arose in the East of forging patents by having absent or deceased soldiers represented by others, and even by making du-

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plicate copies entire without affidavit, or aid from the Land Office.

“In hundreds of instances there were three patents upon the same section, with facilities to make a thousand, in fact, the entire Tract was eventually strewn with patents as thick as autumn leaves in an unbroken forest. So great grew the evils of this system, and from the non-payment of taxes by non-residents, that the Legislature of Illinois went to work to devise a remedy. But the Legislators of new States are not generally very learned or capable statesmen, and the sharpers laughed at the idea of illiterate men thwarting the plans of men whose business it was to ‘pierce the centre’ of the most explicit statute. The Legislature having tried sharp and pointed statutes on the fraternity before, but without success, instead of tinkering and amending laws which ‘John Doe, *et al.*,’ had laughed at, tried the virtue of a more sweeping enactment. They enacted, in substance, that if any one held possession of land for seven years under color of title, such possession should be proof of title conclusive against all the world, and that ‘John Doe *et al.*,’ with their pockets full of patents, should be forever barred and excluded. When John Doe and his compeers took in the force of this statute, not a smile lit up their solemn countenances. They were caught at last. But everybody was disappointed by the final operation of the statute. It only created or attracted another ‘swarm of flies, more hungry, voracious, and pestilent than any that had preceded them; the heavens and the earth were darkened by their myriads, and no friendly swallow appeared to drive them away.’

“No sooner was the ‘Delinquent List’ exposed for sale for non-payment of taxes, than a crowd appeared in and around the Court House, hungry and haggard, the like of which had surely not been seen since Pharaoh’s lean kine emerged from the river Nile.<sup>171</sup> Here were congregated broken down tradesmen, tinkers and vagabonds; rough, roaring, swearing fellows, and smooth-faced, hypocritical, canting knaves, jostled each other, and mingled and commingled in the halls of justice, each one striving with the few dollars he had contrived to save out of the general wreck by

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<sup>171</sup> See *Authorized King James Version of the Holy Bible*, Genesis, chapter 41.

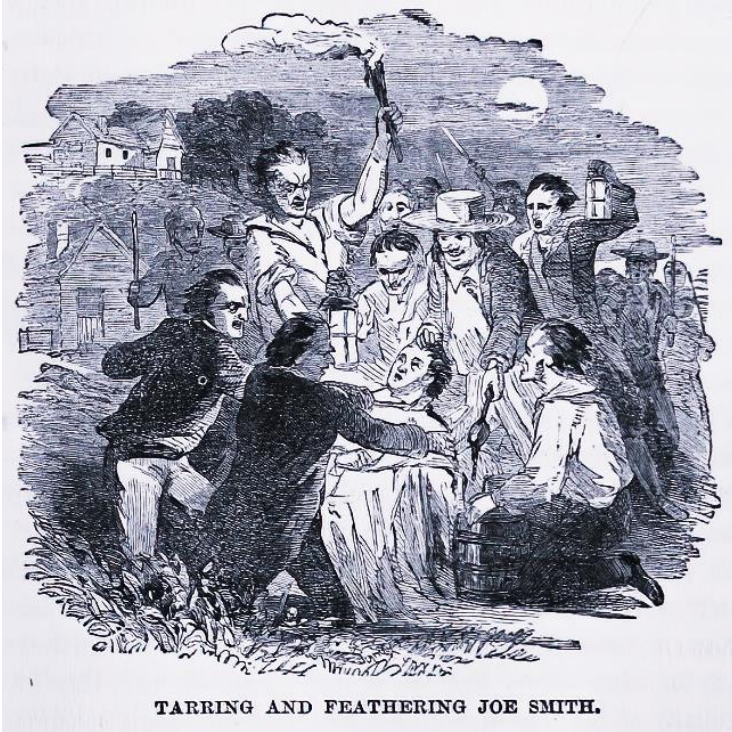
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cheating his creditors, to retrieve his fortunes, and the result was a land-monopoly more corrupt than any that had preceded it. The law had been aimed at the non-resident jobber, to compel the payment of taxes; but this unscrupulous crowd hurled it without mercy or discrimination at the heads of everybody; if it carried away the inheritance of the widow and orphan, it was all the same to them. The wise Legislators stood aghast at the havoc they had innocently caused. They had 'called spirits from the vasty deep,' and contrary to all past experience they had come. These sharpers inspired general terror, and no wonder; for had the incongruous and villa[i]nous crowd made a descent into hell, the devil would have fled howling to the most retired and gloomy corner of his domain, leaving them to contend and squabble among themselves for a 'tax title' on his burning throne! It was now an indiscriminate fight on the 'Military Tract,' in which all sorts of persons, with all sorts of papers, documents, and titles, rushed to the conflict and couched their lances for the fray. In this hot contest the unsophisticated settler, not conversant with these matters, had but little show. He could much more readily, with the slightest possible assistance, 'read his title clear to mansions in the skies' than so establish his claim to a single foot of land covered by 'soldiers' rights,' forged patents, and tax titles on the whole Military Tract.

"Fortunately, Hancock County was not altogether covered by these titles. The Act granted the soldier 'one hundred and sixty acres of land,' no less, no more. Hence, those quarters called 'fractional,' with less or more than one hundred and sixty acres, were subject to entry at the Land Office. These skirted the banks of the river and along the township lines of the whole county, and were rapidly taken up and settled before the arrival of the Mormons, at which time Hancock County contained a sparse population of several thousand. Owing to greater security of title, most of them were settled along the Mississippi. The Des Moines Rapids excited much attention as a favorable site. Among the conspicuous men who visited this section was General Robert E. Lee, then a Lieutenant of Topographical Engineers, in the employ of the War Department, for the purpose of making a survey of the rapids. His visit was in 1832, and he remained in the county the whole

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season, and was favorably known to all the old settlers, and much respected for his urbanity and gentlemanly bearing. It was then a favorite idea with some, that the Mississippi would in time be bridged at these Rapids, and that at no other place could a permanent structure be erected. Hancock was organized as a county in 1829, and the Capital permanently established a few years after at Carthage.



TARRING AND FEATHERING JOE SMITH.

“Meanwhile the courts traveled around the country after the manner of a public exhibition, holding terms at such points as met the views of the lawyers, or perhaps where it was considered that law and justice were most needed. Among the lawyers who then practised in Hancock, were Malcolm McGregor, Archibald Williams and O.H. Browning; the former, a brilliant genius, died young, and the latter two have since become ‘known to fame.’

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“First in history was a Post Office at the Rapids, called Venice, but there was no town of that name. In the year 1834, Commerce was laid out by Messrs. Alex. White and James B. Teas; and shortly after a Mr. Hotchkiss, of New Haven, Conn., laid out Commerce City, just above the other town. All proved failures, but many still had confidence that this was *the* place for a great city in the future. Among the owners of the ‘bottom land’ was Dr. Isaac Galland, a man of *some* enterprise, who, immediately after the failure of Hotchkiss, opened a correspondence with Joe Smith, which resulted in an agreement that the latter should settle all his people near Commerce.”

To the foregoing graphic sketch it is only necessary to add, that the Prophet purchased a small tract and received gratis a larger one; a convenient revelation was vouchsafed for the Saints to gather to this stake of Zion; they complied with rapidity, the plat of a great city was laid out and the Mormon star was once more in the ascendant.