In my inaugural as editor of "The Corner," I want to acknowledge warmly a debt to Dr. James B. Allen, who for so many years edited this section so well. Moreover, I wish to renew the long-standing invitation for readers to submit documents, short articles, notices of events, and other historical potpourri for consideration for publication in "The Historians Corner."

MISSOURI PERSECUTIONS: THE PETITION OF ISAAC LEANY

Clark V. Johnson

As an outgrowth of the Mormon War in Missouri, Joseph Smith spent the winter of 1838–39 confined in the jail at Liberty, Missouri. While there he asked the Saints to prepare affidavits to secure redress from the federal government for their losses caused by their recent maltreatment at the hands of mobocrats.1 Beginning in December 1839 the Mormons commenced recording these Missouri experiences and swearing to their authenticity before civil authorities in two counties in Iowa and ten counties in Illinois.2 These officials were justices of the peace, clerks of the circuit court, and notary publics, who possessed the seals of their respective offices. The Mormons presented these legal documents to the federal government on at least three different occasions in a concerted attempt to obtain reparation for their sufferings in Missouri.

Presently researchers have discovered 823 petitions signed by 683 petitioners. There are 223 petitions located in the National Archives, 571 in the Library–Archives of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 in the Journal History of the Church, and 44 published in the History of the Church. Among the petitions in the National Archives and the LDS Church Archives are several documents that are not really petitions but are letters of explanation, inquiry, intent, and reference. Also, approximately 190 people wrote two or more petitions, and there are 48 duplicates. Most of these are found among the 44 printed in the History of the Church, the originals being housed in the LDS Church Archives.
Archives. The fact that some are duplicated and that some are not even petitions accounts for the discrepancy between the number of documents and the petitions.

The document presented here appears to have been signed by Isaac Leany on 20 April 1838 at Quincy, Illinois. Although it was not notarized, the document was sent to Washington, D.C. Describing the events in Missouri from the Gallatin Election fracas on 6 August 1838 to the LDS expulsion from Missouri, it focuses on the 30 October 1838 attack at Haun’s Mill, in which Leany was shot “four times through the body.” It also lists the names of 21 of the mobbers, 15 of the men and boys killed at Haun’s Mill, and 13 of those wounded during the massacre.

This document clearly exhibits the handwriting of more than one individual, suggesting that Laney dictated part, or perhaps all, of the statement. For one of the scribes, it is not clear whether the S’s are intended to be capitalized. For the sake of consistency, I have rendered all of these in the lower case, except at the beginning of clauses and proper nouns. In all other instances, I have attempted to preserve the original spelling and punctuation, including insertions and deletions.

Concerning his inadequacy in composing the petition, Laney said, “I shall endeavor according to the best of my understanding to give full satisfaction, but I am unlearned & you must excuse my awkerdness & watch for my meaning & not for my imperfections.”

It is well know[n] that there has bin a great difficulty existing between the Misouriens & the people called Mormons, and I am well aware that there is many false reports respecting the matter, now in circulation, I shall f now endeavor to become clear of all prejudice & give to the community a fare account of the barbarous slaughter that taken place on the 30th day of Oct 1838 at Hawns Mille on Shoal creek, I was an eye witness to the murder that was thare commited I was one that escaped being murdered or wounded but it was through difficultys, thare was but three or four besides myself that stood to see the result of the matter that escaped being killed or wounded, in order order to set forth the matter to the satisfaction of the inquiring what mind I must firs[t] show gave rise to so horrid a scene, firstly it was a jealous notion in the Misouriens, that the mormons had some eavl disine in gaethering themselves together Secondly they thought that the mormons would be apt to all vote the same

1Isaac Leany (also spelled Laney) was born in Simpson County, Kentucky, 19 December 1815 and died 31 October 1875 at Salt Lake City (Frank Eshom, Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah [Salt Lake City: Utah Pioneers Book Publishing Co., 1913], pp. 95, 995).
ticket and many other other notions that were false & groundless, and when the election came round some of the Misouriens publicly dec[lined] that the Mormons should not be entitled to a vote, for they were not entitled to a vote in Jackson county & they should not be thare, this in Daviess county, the Mormons contended that they were a free people that they supported the government & was in subjection to the laws of that country & that they had an equal right to vote, this soon bred a contention between the too partys, & soon come to blows, it is well known that the Misouriens was the agressers, that they first began to consult, and also first began to strike with unlawful weapons, the Misouriens soon got tyred of there fun for the Mormons proved too jolly for them as soon as the fray was over the Mormons left the ground without voting in order to keep down further disturbance, this was at Gallington the county seat of Davess county, the news soon came to Far West Caldwell county that there had bin a fray in Gallington with the Mormons & Misouriens & that too of the Mormons was killed & also that the Misouriens would not suffer the Mormons to bury there Dead this raised a considerable eximent with the Mormons & about one hundred men went from Far West to Gallington to see what was going on & to barry the dead and to see if they could not settle the feerse [?], they found that the report was false about there being any killed, the Mormons then endeavored to settle the matter without any further disturbance, they went to Adam Black a justice of the peace & ast him if he was willing to stop the fuss and a all live together in peace he said he was, they then ast him to sign his name to an article that they had drawn to that affect & he refused, they had heard that he had swore that he would raise a company against them & that they should not be allowed to live in peace amongst them, so the Mormons pressed on Black to sign his name to the article which was equally as binding on themselves as it was on Black or the Misouriens, he set [?] refused to sign there paper but said that he would right one him self & sign it he accordingly done so, and both par[ty]s signed the article.

It is commonly reported that Joseph Smyth lead this company to Davess county this report is false it is true he went along but not as a leader he went along in order to use his influence to ke[p] down further diffucultys, but the Misouriens determed to not be at peace with the Mormons they voiced it a broad that Smyth had brought a great company of men & had compelled Squier Black to sign his name to a certin paper, making out that there was something dreadful therein contained.

Now my friend the truth was but little regarded by the Misouriens but any thing was said & done to raise an eximent against the Mormons, ther were many things that transpired which I shal not mention, because I expect to be bref in my account & only mention the leadeing items & heads of things that transpired.

We will next notice the scrape that taken place at Dewit, the Mormons purchased a town plot in Carroll County at the mouth of grand River, 65 miles East of far West & had made a considerable progress in improving the place the citizens of caroll became displeuse to see the great emigration from the East to that place So they rose up in open rebellion against the laws of the land & under took a mob the Mormons from ther homes & from there land, the Mormons was desirous to have the matter farely envestaged & the difficulty settled without the shedin of blood they sent a request to Ketsville Chariton County desiring them to come and see when the rong Misouriens [indecipherable] gathered and made there threts until at lenth the militia was called out, but before this the too par[t]y had a little engagement or rather the scouters of these too partys
got engaged & some blood was shed & some lives was lost, so the militia came and placed them selves between the two parties; general Parks was commander the business of the militia was to enquire into the cause to remove the difficulty & put down unlawfull conduct, the fact was easy ascertained that the Misouriens was in fact, that they regardless of laws had embodiedd themselves to drive the innocent from there homes the militia new that the Misouriens had taken an unlawful step, but being filled with the same spirit even the spirit of mobocracy they was not as ready to go to work as perhaps they would have bin had they might of found the mormons the ones to go to work uppon, and insted of going to work & dispurseing the mob & putting down such condudck the jeneral came to the mormons see the [indecipherable] & told them that he could not do any thing for them, that it was out of his power to help them that he told [?] for said he if they should get in an engagement that the greater part of his men would fight against them & that he should be under the necessity of withdrawing his men aimately to keep them from joining the mob, this was quite encouraging to the mob to see the militia as they was callid so ready to join them, so the mob increased in number very fast, bidding defiance to the law regardless of republicanism trampling on the libertys our fathers so dearly bought. as soon as the mob thought there number sufficient for the mormons they sent the mormons word that if they was not gone by such a time which was very short that they would come upon them & masacree them, the time rolled round and the mormons was not gone, the mob them not an other time which was very short for them to be gone in, the mormons saw that perhaps there was ten to one & that they could not stay in peace & that if they undertook to sta[y] the result would be evil that there was over [indecipherable] a band of lawless mobs that the result

would be in the shedding of blood, accordingly the time rolled & and the mob came against them & the mormons under took to compermise the matter with the the conditions of the compermise was to that the mormons should all be gone / in the space of twelve hours with there familys & by complying with these conditions they would not come against them nor molest them any more the mob agree to pay them for there land which they never done, the mormons bundled up & left there in the twelve hours being compelled to leave a great deal of there property not being able in so short a time to get teams & to guether there stock, there was one poore woman that was some what afflicted being exposed in moving died by the way, the mob being over joyed in the success that they had in driveing the mormons the great victory they had gained in driveing these deluded imposters & false teachers as they called them, that they guethered themselves toguether to speak of the noble deed that they had done it was a joyful time with them in deed not realizing the scandle & disgrace that they had brought upon themselves & there country & not realizin that these people had as good a right to by land & settle on it an [?] & worship god as they pleased so far as they did not enfringe on others rights, so some of them not recolecting ther name at presant made an a speech on the subject & said we have gained the victory we have succeeded in driveing the mormons from this place, now the land is just coming in market in Daviess County & they will go & settle thare & a hoalt

t it enter the land & get such thare that it will be impossible to get them out from there & now is our time to stop them so let us take the cannon and follow them before they get too strong a hoalt thare we have helped you drive them from here now come on boys & help us to drive them from Daviess or they will take the county in a short time, so they guethered up the cannon & all the force that they could & went

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on to Daviess & located themselves at mill port they took too of the mormons prisners company
as they went, this [indecipherable] was headed by Lawyers & priests there was Sashel Woods a notible prysbyterian priecest that was a head leader amongst them this man who professes to be a follower of Christ & one that calls on sinners to repent just see what a sample he has given to the world & his followers, I shall more fully treat on the conduct of this man hereafter now my friend you know that it is commonly reported that the mormons is altogeth in fault I would have you to clear your self of prejudice & notice how the mormons hav bin treated for these thing is true and this is the way [indecipherable] was treated you that they [indecipherable] need not suppose that because I am a mormon that I have not told the truth about the matter, & now my reader this is not all the ill treatment that we the mormons have resaved, I did not expect when I commenced wrighting to have wrote so much on the subject but seeing that I could not gave full satisfaction
first without x showing the leading cause, I only expected to wright a few things, but seeing that a few things will not tell the story I shall endeavor according to the best of my to give full satisfaction my understanding, x but I am unlearned & you must excuse x awkerdness & watch for my meaning & not for my imperfections for I wright this in order that the world may know the truth of what has taken place in these our days-days [indecipherable] there is one thing that I forgot to mention which transpired before the mob made there / attempt to drive the mormons from Dewit, that is concern-
ing the threats & attempt the mob ma[d]e on Daviess coun there was about three or four hundred mob came to Davis count[y] & went to driving off the mormons cattle & hogs & took beegums [wagons?] & many other articles & threatened to massacre them if they did not leave the county the militia was called out & the mob was dispersed, they then went immediately to Dewit and as I stated before that the mormons sent to Kietsville chariton county to get them to come and investagate the matter, they also sent to the governor & the govenors orders was to them you have got your selves in to difficultys & I cannot help you, you will have to fight your own battle & help your selves, so we see that the governor was not ready to hear the cries of the innocent but was ready to see the mob plunder & steal & enfringe on the rights of the a people whoos charrectors have bin empeached & misrepresented to the world, it is well known that this same governor was a mob carrector / in the jackson county
tys, there was men here from plattsburg & from Daviess & from the different coun round about & they were all engaged in the driving the mormons from Dewit carroll county, & this is why they could say to the carroll boys we have helped you now come & help us. Now my fellow travlers to eternity, I have no douts but you have heared the matter in quite a different light, but I expect to stand before the bare of an im-
god partial y eve[n] the bar of the god of Abraham Isaac & Jacob thare to give an account for the deeds done in the body. And realizing this I can clearly & boldly say that this is the way the mormons has bin treated yea & if this was the worst I should have but little group[n]ds for complaining to what I have & it is becuse of the religion which they hold too that they are so persecuted the laws of the land guarentees to everyman to worship god according to the dictates of there own conscience so far as they do not in fringe on other mens rights, & if the mormons has in from on any ones rights, why
not take them to the law & punish them according to the crime committed, & if they have stold or rob'd or murdered punish them & let the innocent go clear, but insted of this the laws of the land was laid down & mob laws ruled & this kind of law wants neither judge nor jury, but all that the mob laws of Misourie required was to suspision a man to be a mormon & then a pile of black hickrys & this law was put in force against a great many of the mormons & some that was not mormons, on suspition fared the same fate, many of the mormons was cruely whipped there houses burned & there property stold, & had to put up with many vexations, which I shall more fully treat on hereafter.

As I before stated the mob guethered there force & there canon and went to mill port & there began to prepare to make an attact on the mormons in Daviess they increased in number verry fast, they had jenerally called the mormons cowards because they would suffer themselves imposed upon & abused without resenting, now the mo was collecting dayly at millport & makeing preparaition to burn rob murder & driv the mormons from Davie whilst the mob was preparing themselves with guns there was a circumstance took place which puts me in mind of an old story which I have often heard told upon the mormons, when the mormons of mormons was in jackson county, it was reported that they had a large stone Fort & that the mormons was taking to it a wagon load of coffins which they said was to bury there dead in, & the wagon broke down & the coffins bursted open & they were filled with guns which they was taking & burying in there forts & in this way there guns was discovered, This report was false, but this circumstance which was similar was true one of the mob by the name of john comer was taking a his [?] wagon load of guns to millport and his wagon broke down & he took out his guns which was in boxes insted of coffins & drug them into a thicket & hid them & went to get assistance about fixing his waggon & / whilst he was gone some of the mormons discovered his loading, & it being in there settlement got a company of mormons to watch the wagon & guns until their owner should come & see what was there calculation at length there came two men john comer and a nether man with him, the mormons informed them that they had found a wagon & some boxes of guns out in the thicket close by & that they wanted to get them to hall them to Farewest for them, these men discovered that the mormons was in earnest they accordingly obeyed there request the mormons kept these men & guns a few days untin the jinera came with the militia & they gave up the guns & prisoners to them, there was 44., united states yawgs [?] there was many that taken place from time to time which I shll [?] shall not mention but leave it for them to set forth who are more capable & who are eye witnesses to the outrages that has bin comitted

I shall now precede to give an account of the bloody butchery that taken place at the blacksmys shop at Haws mille on Shoal creek on the 30th day of Oct., 1838, the mob party increased from time to time & committed outrages after outrages until at length the mormons not willing to bare it no longer they said to the jeneral what must they do was they not to have no protection must they stand and see there property stolen there families abused there houses burned there cattle drove off & nothing to be done for them, then jeneral Donathan said to them go & defend your selves & drive the mob from Daves county drive them to hell, breathing out an oath against
them, the mormons then went out supposing that they was legally ortherized, & finding that the mob had burned six or seven of there houses & was carying on at a great hand stealing & driveing off there stock. So the mormons went to work determined to rout them or dy in the attempt, they soon got the mob in the notion of leaving Daviess county so a great portion of them fled in to Livingston a joining county & told that the mormons was burning there houses stealing & plundering & it was soon that

blown to the four winds that the mormons was doing every thing x was bad now the citzens of livingston & the mob that had left Daviess began to steal cattle from the mormons that lived in the neighbourhood of Hawns mille & also to go throw the neighborhood & take there guns from them, they came twice & drove off cattle & an other time they came & took several guns they also as we heard said that they would burn our mill down, & we new that they was not too good to do it, & nowing that it was our only chance to get on going, for we dare not to go to there milles so about thirty of us went to guard them from burning it down & while we was guarding the mill we held a council to now what plan we should fall upon to accomplish a treaty or to come on some conditions of peace it was voted that a letter should be written & sent to them immediately desiring th to k[n]ow what there determinations was, for

they had imbooddyed themselves several days before we had & we heard thay was coming on us, we had appointed to take them the letter & just before he started they came a mesage from them desiring too or three of our leading men to go & meet the too or three of there leading men & see if they commerpise the matter, this was the very thing that we wanted. So in the presance of there mesinger we elected three men to go commerpise with them, we also in the presance of there mesinger unanimously g agreed to abide the treaty that our men should make with them our three men then started fourth with to the place that they desired them to come to & there they met with twelve or fourteen armed men, so the too partys began to coun[set] the matter & soon found that the difficulty that was between them was easy removed, that it was in consequence of false reports that had occasioned them to guether themselves to guether, they had heared that the mormons intended to come & burn dow there houses, they settled the difficulty without much trouble, the Misouriens was not willing to countenance such conduct as this stealing party was gilty of, nor be called of that party so they would not asosciat with them, but agreed to use there enfluence to get them to come & commerpise with us also & we was using every effort that lay in our power to get on peable terms with them when we thought that we had got the difficultys settled with the greater part of them & was likely to succeed in getting it

About the time that the Church commenced moving from the state there was a Committe appointed to receive donations in cash & property and put into waggons teems & for the purpose of Removeing the poor they had bin very busily employed for about two months & had got the poor all away except between thirty & forty families & arrangements going on as fast as they could be entered into when out came from Davie County a company of men armed with Wm Bouman at their head came into Far west and there told their buisness & there was told by Wm Slade & a man by the name of Glues neither of them belonging to the Church that the Committe were doing all they could the mormons were doing all of them getting away fast as they could but all would not do they came over to the Committe house & there gave us our orders & that was that we must all be out of the County by the next Fridy night which was giving us six dayes for to do that—that requird a month & then what was to done the Comitete amediately commenced hiring teems & sending the families to
Ginnevis grove with as little of their affects as they could get along with & live & amediately there came in a heyey rain & fifteen families then with out any manner of a shelter & sutch a storm it was the creeks raised so high that they became imposable & the roads intolerable & in the attemp to obey the Commands of a mob there was one yoke of oxen drownd & then we had to give up and Run the Risk of their threats but the Lord blocked up their way of coming to us as well as ours of getting out then the time passed on for about 8 or 10 dayes long & the Committe had got the principle part of the poor out & this said Bogart raised a Company of men & came to the comittee house a place this comittee had to do their Buisness & there they commenced operations Breaking in the windows of the hous—tables shacks & evry thing they could lay their hands on & then there was only two of the Committe left Vis Daniel Shearer & Elias Smith & drove them from their Buisness & they were obliged to leave the town & take with them what they could & leave the Rest of the property to the mob for in the lane of a couple of men that had just moved inte the place & what the names of this last mob was Whitiker, Odle, Raglin, Bogart & / in the intermediate time between these two mobs there were a number of teems came up from Illinois for purpose of taking away families & while stayong over night there was one for of their horses stole belonging to a man by the name of Burton & a week after two of our people went back for the purpose of transacting some buiness & found one of those horses in the possession of a man by the name of Kearns the very man that we suspected had stole the span & we found afterwards to our satisfaction that he then [?] Kerns had traded the other one away for an indin poney & then sold the poney to one of our people Sam Parker while I was liveing near Hawn's mills on sho- Shoal Creek Mo & about the 25 or 26 of October 1838 I was informed that a company mob of twenty in number under Nehemiah Cumstock had been to the mill and leveled pieces at those present demand ing all their guns one man gave up his rifle another who had his gun in hand refused and started off two of the mob followed and snaped their guns at him twice or three times each one of these men I was told was Hiram Cumstock the other name I never learned though the man whom they were trying to shoot made his way off and gave word to the neighbor who met the next day at the mill to hear the story from the different families who informed us that the mob had sworn the burning of the neighburhood and mill with the other hard threats such as killing Hiram Abbot who would not give up his gun & we also learned that there was another company of men lying below us at house of Mr Mc Crosky & knowing that either of those compani was far superior to ours in numbers some of the neighbours wanted to leave their homes and run off but haveing only about seven waggons to twenty three or four families we had to stay and defend our selves and as I recollect it was on the thirtweth of the month we concluded to offer them terms of peace but before our messengers state had started there came one from the company below us with a request that we would send three men to the house of Oliver Walker to make a treaty with three men which they would to the same house David Evans Jacob Myers seignior and Anthony Blackburn was chosen to meet them and on going to Walkers they met ten men with each a rifle instead of three without arms however peace
prevailed and a treaty was soon made and agreed a pon I suppose to the satisfaction
next day
of both sides and on A two of our men went back again those two were Evans and
ames Ames they was told that the other company had sent a messenger to Cumstock
and his company with word of the treaty between us and them and also told them
that we wanted to treat with them they said that Cumstocks company was not only
mad with us but mad them with them for making any kind of a treaty with us Evans
sent them word that he wanted nothing but peace and would not fight them without
offering them terms of peace I cannot tell whether or not they got the word or not but
well I remember that on the thirtieth of October about three o clock in the afternoon
Cumstocks whole army of two hundred and fifty men came upon us our company was
about thirtyseven in number being joined by a company of families traveling to the
other side of that County and the adjoining Counties stopped there to get grinding at
the mill Cumstocks company formed a kind of broken line at the distance of about
seventyfive yards situating their horses in front for a kind of breastwork commenced a
out
fire with A passing a word meantime Capt Evans advanced toward them and called
aloud for quarters until they fired I suppose between fifty and a hundred rounds with
out any answer then we could do nomore than fire afew shots while the women and
children made their escape to fire [?] the mob still advancing came within about four
or five rods when I made my escape by flight being shot four times through the body
and once across each arm being about the last man off the ground now I am well
aware that this is an incredible story to tell that a man being shot four times through
body made his escape by flight but I have the scars to show ten in number one ball
entering my body through the inside corner of my left shoulder blade came out just
a
below about two and A half or three inches below my collar bone and as far as three
inches on the right of the middle of my breast another entered through the muscle
under the hind part of my left arm and passed through my body and came out under
the middle of my right arm another passed through the my left hip on the inside or
through the upper end of my hip bone another through my right hip hit the bone just
about the joint glanced out through the skin and rolled down my drawers leg in to
my boot these four balls made eight visible wounds with two others one across each
arm are all the wounds in my flesh I cannot tell how many bullet holes was in my
clothing thare was twentyseven in my shirt but to my story haveing made my own
escape and hid my self I listened at them shooting the wound which could not
escape I was informed that one of these murderers followed old father McBride in his
retreat and and cut him down with an old sythe while he was pleading for mercy this
was seen by Mrs ames and two other ladies who were secreted under the creek bank
Waren Smith and his Son was also shot a second time being unable to retreat after
their first wounds Jacob Fouts and Wm Champlin feined their selves dead and lay
still untill their pockets were robed and after they supposed the wounded all were all
dead they robed the houses took the horses from the mill and out of the stables and
two wagons from the mill and off they went for the night but on the first or second
of Nov they returned and camped at the mill robed that plundered the neighbourhood taking off such things as they pleased mob law being established

and

the [?] in this band of robbers murderers A thieves was Wm Man & [?] Esq N.
Cumstock Esq Howard Maupin Jesse Maupin James and Stephan Reynolds called

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Runnels Hiram Cumstock a young man named Glase Erasmus Severe Jacob Rodgers Robert White George Miller Sardis Smith Elijah Trosper [Prospher] these men came on painted black trimmed of with red rags and ribbands screaming like so many demons enough to disgrace a heathen forest much more a land of liberty after some spent in this manner captain went to Richmond to draw pay for his service I was told that instead of pay they gave him a cursing and threatened him with justice throwing the murder and robbery in his teeth and orders to return the stolen property this made Cumstock mad and on his way home he passed the mill and stuck up an advertisement stating that the stolen property should be brought to his house and could be had by paying him for taking care of hit some of the property was got and I have seen some of the horses that was worked near to death and rode nearly down but some of the best of them could not be found for asmall reward and one of the mob was going round trying to buy the chance of such they being about the best that was taken

the names of the murdered
Benjamin Lewis
John York
John Lee
John Byers
Wm Napier
Warren Smith
Austin Hammer
Simon Cox
Levi Merick
Elis Benner
George Richards
—-Campbell
Josiah Fuller
Thomas McBride
Sardis Smith a little boy

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<th>wounded</th>
<th>Tarlton Lewis</th>
<th>this I will support in any court of justice</th>
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<td>Jacob Fouts</td>
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<td>Isaac Leany</td>
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<td>Charles Jimison</td>
<td>Alma Smith a little</td>
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<td>Mary Steadwell</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hiram Abbot</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Charles Merick a boy</td>
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SUBSTITUTED NAMES IN THE PUBLISHED REVELATIONS OF JOSEPH SMITH

David J. Whittaker

INTRODUCTION

Until 1981, editions of the Doctrine and Covenants contained seven revelations with pseudonyms of individuals and places, thus cloaking original identities. These substituted names occur in all

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