

**Missouri Persecutions:
Petitions for Redress**

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Paul C. Richards

When the Latter-day Saints first appealed to the U.S. Government in 1839–1840 for redress of wrongs committed against them in Missouri, Church President Joseph Smith said, “About 491 individuals gave in their claims against Missouri, which I submitted to Congress. . . .”¹ More than 200 of these same claims or affidavits plus other important original documents relating to Mormon history in Missouri have been uncovered by the Institute of Mormon Studies at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

These affidavits, sworn to by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints shortly after they were driven from Missouri in 1839, constitute a veritable gold mine of firsthand accounts covering the 1831–1839 period of LDS Church history on the western frontier. They document the persecutions, depredations and murders committed against the Saints, but at the same time, raise a few questions about traditional LDS views of that period of history. They point up the need for a new look at Mormon history in Missouri.

The new document find contains affidavits, letters, and petitions from 229 individuals, including affidavits from twenty-eight women and several children.² Only a few of these documents have been published in the *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*³ and in other works, leaving the rest as essentially untapped, primary-source documents covering this period. Even in the case of the printed materials, it is valuable to have the originals to make comparisons and to see what editorial changes have been made. Among the collection is an affidavit of Bishop Edward Partridge describing the time he was tarred and feathered at Independence (not the same document as in *HC* 1:390–91), more than ten affidavits from witnesses of the Haun’s Mill massacre, and numerous other personal accounts covering almost every phase of Church history in Missouri.

The collection also shows that the Latter-day Saints made two more redress appeals in Congress following the well-known, unsuccessful 1840 appeal. As already pointed out, Joseph Smith submitted affidavits from 491 individuals during that first attempt. These documents were retrieved by LDS delegate Elias Higbee at the conclusion of the four-month appeal before the Senate Judiciary Committee. On 24 March 1840, Higbee wrote to Smith, who had already returned from Washington to Nauvoo, Illinois:

Dear Brother: —Our business is at last ended here. Yesterday a resolution passed the Senate, that the committee should be discharged; and that we might withdraw the accompanying papers, which I have done. I have also taken a copy of the memorial, and want to be off for the west immediately.⁴

The original memorial or petition, from which Higbee took his copy, remained in Washington and today is filed in the National Archives under Senate Record Group Number 46. It is a twenty-eight page, handwritten document (two different hands), dated 27 January 1840, at Washington, and signed by Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Elias Higbee. This petition appears in *HC* 4:24–38, but with numerous editorial changes which will be discussed later.

The Latter-day Saints sent another delegation to Washington in 1842, this time to appeal before the House of Representatives in the newly seated 27th Congress. Major LDS historians are silent on this second appeal.⁵ Again the effort was unsuccessful, but this time the affidavits were not retrieved. Instead, they were kept by the House, and eventually filed in the National Archives with the 1842 House of Representatives Collection (HR 27A-G10.1), where they are now. Unfortunately, the collection contains less than half the affidavits that were submitted during the first appeal. It might be assumed that all were not used in the second appeal except for the fact that a note on one of the document folders indicates some papers may have been misplaced.⁶

Other documents pertaining to the 1842 appeal are also filed in this collection. They are as follows:

1. A twenty-four page, handwritten petition which is a copy of the 1840 memorial, except that it is dated 10 January 1842, and signed by Elias Higbee, John Taylor, and Elias Smith.

2. *History of the Late Persecution Inflicted by The State of Missouri upon the Mormons*, a sixty-four page book written by Parley P. Pratt during his eight-month imprisonment in Missouri. This work was published in Detroit by Dawson and Bates in 1839.

3. *Facts Relative to the Expulsion of the Mormons or Latter-Day Saints from the State of Missouri under the "Exterminating Order,"* a forty-three page booklet by John P. Greene published in Cincinnati by R. P. Brooks in 1839.

4. *Document Containing the Correspondence, Orders, &C. in Relation to the Disturbances with the Mormons: and the Evidence Given before the Hon. Austin A. King . . .* This 163-page document was published at Fayette, Missouri, by order of the Missouri General Assembly in 1841. Therefore, it could not have been part of the documentation for the Saints' 1840 appeal before Congress.

Copies of items 2, 3 and 4 have long been available in Mormon American so their recent discovery in the National Archives is not particularly

significant. However, it should be pointed out that items 2 and 4 were never trimmed during the book binding process. The pages are not separated at the top, thus indicating that the House Judiciary Committee, which handled the second appeal, never examined these documents.

One more document was uncovered which shows the Saints made still another appeal in 1844. Among the Senate records of the 28th Congress, first session (Sen. 28A-G7.2), is a fifty-foot petition containing 3,419 signatures from inhabitants of Nauvoo. The document includes about three pages of memorial giving an overview of the Saints' problems in Missouri and asking for redress. It was dated at Nauvoo 28 November 1843, and was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee on 5 April 1844.⁷

Copies of all these documents have been made and are filed in the Brigham Young University Archives as Manuscripts Collection 942. The collection totals more than 580 pages and is divided rather randomly into fourteen folders.⁸ It adds nothing earthshakingly new to the general, overall history of the Missouri persecutions, but contains many interesting histories. For instance, compare the following two accounts concerning the death of William Carey, who was taken prisoner along with other Mormons near Far West in 1838. The first account is from *HC* 3:182, 190:

Tuesday, October 30.—The advance guard of the mob were patrolling the country and taking many prisoners, among whom were Brother Stephen Winchester, and Brother Carey, whose skull they laid open by a blow from a rifle barrel. In this mangled condition, the mob laid him in their wagon and went on their way, denying him every comfort, and thus he remained that afternoon and night.

Wednesday, October 31.—. . . After we arrived in the camp, Brother Stephen Winchester and eleven other brethren who were prisoners, volunteered, with permission of the officers, to carry Brother Carey into the city to his family, he having lain exposed to the weather for a show to the inhuman wretches, without having his wound dressed or being nourished in any manner. He died soon after he reached home.

The second account is from the affidavit of John Smith:

. . . they placed several guns in our wagon we then Drove to their Camp about three miles after we came into their Camp they took up their guns and fired them of except one which missed fire—they layed it Down and left the gun locked; thirett Dunihue came along and got in to the Wagon to hand out the guns he picked up the gun that was locked and said, hear you Damd son of a bich; you have cocked your gun to shoot us; Carey replied I did not cock it; Said Dunihue, Don't you contradict me you damd Some of a bich; you; by the time the words came out of his mouth he struck Mr Carey a full blow with the brich of his gun upon his head, I was Sitting by the side of Mr Carey upon the same Seat when he received the fatal blow Mr Carey pitched forward and would have falen out of the wagon; but I caught hold of him and raised him in the wagon; his head was split open the Sergon washed his wound . . . he was

in great misery but could not speak a word; he lived about forty seven hours and expired. . . .⁹

The affidavit of John Loveless adds further information about the character of Carey's assailant:

. . . I was present at the That Wm Cary was stuck over the head with a gun by One of the Militia by the name of Dunnohoo. Wm Cary was A prisoner at the Time. And at the same time this Dunnohoo Jurked up a spear and made an attempt to take my Life. And likewise Saw this Dunnohoo brake open several houses while I was prisoner¹⁰

Most of the affidavits in MSS 942 were written in 1840 in response to an appeal from Washington by Joseph Smith and Elias Higbee. They wrote:

We want you to assist us now; and also to forward us your certificates, that you hold for your lands in Missouri: your claims to pre-emption rights, and affidavits to prove that soldiers were quartered on us and in our houses without our consent, or any special act of law for that purpose; contrary to the Constitution of the United States. . . .

These facts must be authenticated by affidavits. Let any particular transaction of the outrages in Missouri that can be sworn to by the sufferers, or those who were eye-witnesses to the facts, be sent, specifying the particulars. Have the evidence bona fide to the point.¹¹

The Saints in Illinois rallied together to write the affidavits. They appeared almost en masse before justices of the peace to have the facts "bona fide to the point." One such justice was William Laughlin, who verified thirty-five affidavits on 7 and 8 January 1840. To make sure there was no question, Nicholas Wren, clerk of the county commissioners' court in Adams County, Illinois, was called on to certify that Laughlin was an authorized justice of the peace.

Some of the affidavits almost parroted Smith's and Higbee's words to show that the depredations were executed "without our consent." The following two are typical:

. . . These troops came to Far West and lived upon us without our consent as far as my knowledge extends. . . .¹²

. . . General Clarks troops came to Mr Yale's house and stopt their for about two Days and destroyed considerable property, they tore up both the floors of the House destroyed their poultry, and hogs and set fire to a Hay stack I saw them set fire to the stack which was entirely destroyed, they took what Corn they wanted for their horses from Mr Yale and I believe he had about ten acres destroyed besides a Hay Stack, this they did without leave from Mr Yale or any one who had authority. . . .¹³

A note written by Bishop Edward Partridge at the bottom of Nathan Knight's affidavit indicates the urgency involved in getting the affidavits

together:

We will procure the proper certificate to show that Wells is a justice and forward it soon Be patient brn. will do as fast as we can We may send you some things which you do not want and omit some things which you do want but we will do the best we can¹⁴

The note was written 3 January 1840. On another sheet, Partridge submitted a list of twelve land patents for property he held in Jackson County, Missouri. It was thought best not to send the patents themselves for fear of losing them, a note said.

Many Mormons have come to regard the Missouri persecutions as among the most atrocious crimes ever committed by man. It may be disappointing to some, then, to explore the MSS 942 affidavits and find that many of the Saints who lived through the persecutions really didn't say much about them. Take, for instance, the affidavit of William Allred:

September the 3rd AD. 1839
State of Illinois, Pike County—

Of Damage sustained By Mr. Wm. Allred by the Mob of the State of Missouri and the Exterminating Order of Governor Bogs it is 4 Fourthousand Dollars at a moderate rate

William Allred¹⁵

Not all are so short. A few go on for as many as twenty pages, but most involve one-third to one-half of an 8 1/2 by 11-inch sheet of paper. Many of the affidavits deal almost entirely with losses rather than with accounts of what happened. The following by Andrew Moore, written 25 September 1839, illustrates the point. This was written before the appeal came from Smith and Higbee in Washington to substantiate the outrages committed against the Saints.

A bill Stating the loss of property and damages that I sustained by the inhabitece of the State of Missouri unlawfully. I imagrated with my Famaly in the year 1834 from the State of Ohio to the State of Missouri with the expectation of resideing there, which cost me one hundred dollars there I bought Land and paid for it in Clay county being compelled to leve there with out any just caus or provocation I lost on my land there one hundred and ten dollars. I remooved from Clay to Caldwell Co damages for remooveing from Clay to Caldwell one hundred and ten dollars. there I bought Land and made me a farm there being compelled to leve the State in 1838 lost on Land Twelve hundred dollars, on Corn Cattle and other property two hundred dollars on Hoggs fifty dollars, two Rifle Guns thirty five dollars, one Swaard eaight dollars. on 2 Town lots in Farwest one hundred dollars I was Seraunded and taken and cept under gard unlawfully six days—damagees twenty dollars loss of time and damagees for remooveing out of the State one thousand dollars, all with out any Just caus or provocation, the amount of all losses and damagees as nigh as I can ascertain amounts to two thousand nine hundred and thirty three dollars¹⁶

Imagine what could be done claimwise with a case like that in a modern-day lawsuit. Lewis Abbot was getting close to the idea of collecting more than tangible losses when he wrote:

I think the State had ought to pay me for my loss \$1,500 at least and for my damage a great sum, as money would not hire me to pass through the same scenes again. . . .¹⁷

Loyal C. K. Griffen expressed similar sentiments:

. . . from the comensment of this fus to the end of it was as much as 1000 thousand Dollars Damage to me and my famerly this would not tempt me to go through the Same trubles and loses of time a gane So I close my trubles by being a friend to the laws of my country¹⁸

The Reverend Isaac McCoy, a Baptist missionary among the Indians, is named in LDS histories as being one of several religious leaders who led mobs in attacks on Mormons in Missouri. The MSS 942 affidavits also mention him as a persecutor of the Saints. Lewis Abbott's reference is typical.

This is to certify that I moved from Wayland Mass. 1832 to Jackson Co. Missouia. There I perched 80 acres of land I remained there untill the mob had driven the largest half of our sosity out of the Co. where then I was attack'd by a company of 40 mobers well armed and under the command of Rev. Isaac McCoy an Indian Missionary they threaten my life with much violence but left me on condition I would leave the County. Accordingly I move into Clay Co. 1833.¹⁹

Perhaps nothing more need be said except that research by RLDS historian Warren A. Jennings indicates that McCoy may have been acting at the head of the mobbers to keep them from murdering the Mormons.²⁰ McCoy's Journal for 6 November 1833, states:

I set for Independence, and met a small company who desired to make an excursion in the upper Mormon settlement in order to take the guns which might yet be found among them. Fearing that the Mormons would be rashly used by them I requested to forbear until I returned from town, & I would then accompany them. This they agreed to. A few miles farther I met a company of 30 or 40 persons coming up on the same errand. Believing that some of the Mormons, now conquered, would likely be killed by them, I proposed to turn back with them, to this some who were bent on avenging the deaths and wounds which had been occasioned by the Mormons, objected, though in respectful terms. Several advised me to proceed to town, a few expressed a wish that I should go with the company—the one party lest I should be present when some one would be killed—and the other that I might prevent the killing of any. I however turned and went with the company, many of whom I discovered were determined to kill. I embraced the earliest opportunities of conversing alone with the most murderously disposed. We immediately entered the Mormon settlement, and I as soon perceived that my anticipations had not been erroneous—there was need of some to regulate the conduct of the rash. Two guns were at one time cocked for the purpose of

shooting a Mormon, when I rushed forward and prevented. I had to use similar efforts afterwards to prevent one from being beaten with a stick, and another with a gun. I prevailed upon the company to stop a little from houses, and allow me with one or two only to approach and ask for their guns, &c. Had it not been for this measure the alarm and injury to the Mormons would have been much beaten and the injury considerable [sic]. In some instances I had to pacify some of our party by telling them that the Mormon had laid himself liable to prosecution, and it would be better to hand him by law, than kill him & thus expose themselves to prosecution. The Mormon men were generally hid, though we spoke to several. My business in approaching their houses alone was dangerous, for I knew not at what moment some one of them in their alarm might knock me in the head. We found two guns.

The company dispersed at night, and I returned to my house fatigued in the extreme yet satisfied that I had been the means of saving several mormons from being murdered on that day, and from suffering severely in other respects.²¹

Maybe McCoy was whitewashing the matter, but with all that the MSS 942 affidavits say about him, there is nothing to contradict his version of the story. In all cases, he is reported as coming at the head of a mob and demanding that the Mormons leave. Not once is he cited as physically attacking any of the Saints. This situation calls for more study and points up the need for a new look at Mormon history in Missouri.

A comparison of the original 1840 petition with the printed version in *HC* 4:24–38 shows many differences. For example, only two lines of the published version on page 25 are printed without changes. All the rest have been altered. Note the differences in the following passages. The first is from *HC* 4:25:

They then proceeded to the dwelling of Mr. Partridge, the beloved Bishop of the Church there, dragged him and his family to the public square, where, surrounded by hundreds, they partly stripped him of his clothing, and tarred and feathered him from head to foot. . . .

The following is from the original handwritten petition submitted to Congress in 1840:

They then proceeded to the dwelling of Mr. Partridge, the beloved Bishop of the Church; they dragged him from his family to the public square, and when surrounded by hundreds of spectators partially stripped him of clothes, and in the most unfeeling manner covered him with tar and feathers from head to foot.²²

The first account is shorter and less colorful. However, it does involve the family whereas the second one doesn't. Now compare these two accounts with Partridge's own affidavits as found in MSS 942:

On the 20th day of July A.D. 1833 George Simpson and two other mob-

bers entered my house (whilst I was sitting with my wife, who was then quite feeble my youngest child being then about three weeks old,) and compelled me to go with them, soon after leaving my house I was surrounded by about fifty mobbers who escorted me about half a mile to the public square, where I was surrounded by some two or three hundred more.

Rupell Hicks Esqr. appeared to be the head man of the mob, he told me that his word was the law of the county, and that I must agree to leave the county or suffer the consequences. I answered that if I must suffer for my religion, it was no more than others had done before me—That I was not conscious of having Injured any one in the county therefore I could not consent to leave it. Mr. Hicks then proceeded to strip off my clothes and was disposed to strip them all off—I strongly protested against being stripped naked in the street, when some more humane than the rest interfered and I was permitted to wear my shirt and pantaloons. Tar and feathers were then brought and a man by the name of —— Davies with the help of an other doubed me with tar from the crown of my head to my feet, after which feathers were thrown over me. For this abuse I have never received any satisfaction, although I commenced a suit against some of them for \$50,000. damage, and paid my lawyers six hundred dollars to get a change of venue,—My lawyers after getting their pay of me, made a compromise with the defendents without my consent, and threw my case out of court without giving me any damages by their agreeing to pay the costs, which they never have paid that I know of. And I never could prevail upon my lawyers to collect them for me though they agreed so to do.

Quincy Ill May 15, 1839

Edward Partridge²³

It is interesting to note that “some more humane than the rest” interceded to keep the rest from stripping their victim naked. Mormons today are not accustomed to thinking of other affidavits contain statements showing that some actually helped the Mormons.

Here is another comparison between the published and original versions of the petition. The first is from *HC* 4:26:

Shortly after the meeting above referred to, another persecution commenced; some of the “Mormons” were shot at, others were whipped, their houses were assailed with brickbats, broken open, and thrown down; their women and children were insulted; and thus for many weeks, without offense, without resistance, by night and by day, were they harassed, insulted, and oppressed.

The original reads thusly:

Shortly after the meeting above referred to, another persecution commenced with increased sufferings on the part of the devoted Mormons. Some of their people were shot at; others were whipped without mercy; their houses assailed with brickbats, the doors broken open; and thrown down; their women grossly insulted; and their weeping daughters brutally abused before their mother’s eyes. Thus were they for many days and weeks without offence and without resistance, by night and by day, harassed, insulted, and

oppressed. . . .²⁴

It seems that the editor wanted to tone down the severity of the account. At least he leaves out the part about the weeping daughters being abused before their mothers' eyes. Perhaps he was justified in this because the affidavits, including the twenty-eight written by women, give little or no evidence of attacks on women. It may be that victims of such assaults were, as today, reluctant to talk about them. Hearsay evidence in *HC* 3:428 and 464 indicates that several women were violated by mobs, but there is no direct evidence for such instances in MSS 942. In fact, a study of the affidavits leaves one with the feeling that even the worst of the Missourians had a certain respect for women—even Mormon women. Knowing what soldiers and street gangs have done in more recent times, perhaps we tend to pin these same types of atrocities on the early Missourians, but the affidavits do not back up this assumption. The following account by Catherine Fuller describes conditions which would afford every opportunity for mobbers to violate Mormon women, yet no mention is made of this type of atrocity:

I hereby certify that my husband and myself settled within about a mile of Haun's mill Caldwell Co. Missouri in the fall of AD. 1836 where we lived untill the massacre at the mills the 30th of Octr. 1838, at which time and place my husband was killed. About a week after the massacre I was at the mills and saw a large company of our enemies, as I understood, tented there I heard one of them by the name of Comstock say to Sister Merrill who lived in the house with me that if he could get his eye upon her husband he should be a dead man. Companies of from six to ten came to our house enquiring for men and guns a number of times.²⁵

This affidavit exhibits a strange, matter-of-fact association with the mobbers that gives cause for wonder. Ruth Naper's account also is intriguing because of her concern for seeming trivia after having lived through the Haun's Mill massacre. The affidavit also deals with the assault question.

. . . After a few days there came back a large company of armed men and took possession of Haun's mill and they also crowded into house and crowded me and my children away from the fire without my consent they lodged there and one night one of them came to my bed and laid his hand upon me which so frightened me that I made quite a noise and crept over the back side of my children, and he offered no further insult at this time. This company camped in the neighborhood between one and two weeks to our great inconvenience for they took from the brethren grain, cattle, hogs, bee stands, &c. as free to appearance as though they were their own.²⁶

Only one other affidavit says anything directly about assaults on women. It is interesting because it shows that Missouri mobbers could be dissuaded from their plans. The following account is from Elijah Reed:

... I was Closely Pursued I was at a Br. Jimmisons house in a by Place on the 28th of Oct & in the night of that Day a Company of men Came to the House & Demanded admittance & threatened to Brake Down the Door Mr. J got up and opened the Door meantime I hid under the Bed The men Came in and said they were soldiers & he must Go with them his wife asked where they said to the Malitia Camp above Richmond he Dressed himself & he & one of the men went for a horse at the Stable when they had got a little from the house the man Fired a gun & said the D.d rascal had run from him he then returned to the house & they began to abuse Mrs. Jimmison wanting to sleep with her But she begged & cried For them to Desist & they Did so I lay under the Bed During this time they soon left the house & we supposed they had killed him I lay in the Feild the remainder of the night. . . .²⁷

In examining documents like the affidavits in MSS 942, there is always the question of how much is fact and how much is exaggeration. As can be seen from the affidavits already quoted, there is an amazing matter-of-factness concerning some pretty terrible events. Many of the affidavits exhibit this same tone. But others, such as the one following, leave the reader wondering if the facts weren't a bit overplayed. The affidavit is from Truman Brace and concerns an event which took place in the fall of 1832 in Jackson County:

... One day as I was hauling a load of wood I saw a number of armed men on the prairie. Then they saw me two of them came up to me. They ordered me to Stop or they would shoot me. One of them named J. Young asked me if I believed the book of Mormon, I told them that "I did" They said that I must leave the County. I told them I had neither team or means to take me and my family away. The said Young then said he would shoot me and immediately made ready to carry his threat into execution, but the other man persuaded him not to do so,—the rest of the company then rode up I suppose there were about Fifty of the. The said John Young then took an axe gad which I held in my hand and commenced beating me with the same. I suppose I received about fifty strokes after breaking it he got a Raw Hide and Commenced whipping me with it he cut my Hat nearly all to pieces, while he was thus engaged a man of the head with a Rifle which nearly knock'd me down, John Young then took an axe from me and going a few steps back threw the axe at me with great force, but fortunately it did not hit me, at this time my wife and daughter seeing me there situated came and entreated the mob to share my life. I then went to the House and was followed by the mob. they came into the House. I sat me down on the chair when one of them thrust the mussle of the Gun against my neck and thrust me against the wall and then kicked me on the mouth with his foot and cut my lip. This was in my own House—. . . .²⁸

As stated earlier, MSS 942 contains about ten affidavits dealing directly with the Haun's Mill massacre which took place 30 October 1838. The collection includes the affidavit of Amanda Smith, thus affording another opportunity for comparisons, since the affidavit was published in *HC* 3:323–325. As with the petition to Congress, the Smith document appears

in a heavily edited form in the published version. The most significant difference is the names of the mobbers. *HC 3:325* reads:

I will mention some of the names of the heads of the mob: two brothers by the name of Comstock, William Mann, Benjamin Ashley, Robert White, one by the name of Rogers. . . .

Compare this with the original:

. . . I will mention some of the names of the heads of the mob: two brothers by the name of Crumstock, William and Benjamin Ashby, Robert White, and one by the name of Rogers. . . .²⁹

Amanda Smith's young son who was in the middle of the massacre also swore out an affidavit. It is a priceless, firsthand account:

I hereby certify that father stoped at Haun's mill and was living in a tent at the time massacre took place there. I was in the tent when the company rode up. Some of our people hallowd to the women and children to leave the tents I run into a blacksmith shop where my father was. I crept under the bellows as also did my brother and another boy by the name of Charles Merrick I was wounded on the hip, my brother had his brains blown out, and the other boy received three wounds and has since died of them. My mother tells me that I was eight years old last month. I saw some of our enemies pull off my father's boots before he was dead

his
Alma X Smith³⁰
mark

The above was written 3 January 1840. Note that the document was signed with an X. Nineteen of the affidavits were thus signed. Six of the nineteen signers were women.

Some of the affidavits are interesting because of the frontier language they portray. They wrote the way they talked. Consider the following which deals also with the Haun's Mill massacre:

all of A Suding the war whoop was heard and an armed force ameadiately hove in Sight and Commenced firing upon men women and Children our Society Called for quarters, but none Granted the women and Children then fled in every direction nearly frightened out of there sensis in this awful Seene of destruction I made out to escape and after a short and Bloody Conflict the mob dispersed not leaving so much as the clothes of the Dying and wounded but litraly took their Clothes from their backs & boots & shoes from thire feet also most of thire furnitur and to prove their Savage feracity more Clearly they Also litarly took a Corn Cutter and mangled an ole Revolutionary Soldier by the name of McBeide in Cool Blood. 16 were killed and among the Number killed was my father and two sons dyed of their wounds

his
Mosiah X Benner³¹
mark

Tarlton Lewis, who was wounded in the Hauns Mill tragedy, wrote an affidavit which shows that all Missourians were not set on murder all of the time. Speaking of the time after the massacre, he said:

. . . While I was confined with my wound, companies of six or eight came to my house three or four times enquiring for arms and threatening to take me a prisoner and carry me off. Twice they examined my wounds to see if I were able to be moved but concluded that I was not.³²

Similar things happened to other Saints at other times in Missouri. For instance, David Pettigrew wrote concerning the Jackson County era:

. . . they still continued their depradations till in Oct when a mob came to my house in the night of Between 50 and a hundred men headed by brazill Moses Wilson Luis Franklyn and burst Open my door and cried how many mormans have you got here I told them we ware sick to come in and light a candle and see which was done by brazill he then came to the bed and felt the faotts of my self and wife and pronounced us sick the cry was made to tare down the house which was forbidden to be done that night by brazill but threttoned us with ammediate destruction if we did not leave the county forthwith. . . .³³

Other affidavits show that some of the Missourians actually helped the Mormons. Elisha Whiting wrote:

. . . and soon taken sick and in a few days a mob threatened to come upon and drive me from my home not withstanding my sickness. but through the kindness of a neighbor who informed me of the plot, and offered me an asylum under his roof which I accepted and escaped from their snare³⁴

The whole Missouri affair is not a simple story of the good versus the bad. Both sides drank in rumors and spread propaganda that could cause almost any culture to go to extremes to defend itself. An example of how the Missourians felt is depicted in David Pettigrew's conversation with Judge Elisha Cameron of Clay County:

. . . and now will retale a conversation that took place between Judge Elisha Camron and myself as I met him in the road he said its terrible times oald man the Maill Carrier Eat breakfast at my house this morning and said he came by an army of mormons this side of richmond and they are twelve hundred strong in Jackson and they have four cannon and recruits are coming in from other counties continually for God's sake don't take your family over thare to be cut all to peices. . . .³⁵

Then with Missouri Lieutenant Governor Lilburn W. Boggs stirring up both sides, it is no wonder that the conflict worsened. Isaac Morley said he had a talk with the Lieutenant Governor in Jackson County in 1833.

. . . about this time lieutenant Governor Boggs Came to my house and advised me if any of the Citizens came and Destroyed any of my property by

night if he was in my place he would return the Same injuries to them in the Dark. . . .³⁶

One samplings of a few of the documents in MSS 942 have been touched on here. The entire collection deserves detailed study. Perhaps the most interesting thing about the documents is that they give the reader a more humanistic view of frontier Missourians than is generally available in LDS histories.

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1. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City, 1966), 4:74. Hereafter cited as *HC*.

2. These names are listed alphabetically in the accompanying Appendix.

3. *HC* contains affidavits from more than forty persons, written in 1839 and 1840 about the Missouri persecutions (See *HC* 3:183, 323–325; 4:49–71). The two which are duplications of documents in the new find are from Joseph Young (*HC* 3:183) and Amanda Smith (*HC* 3:323–325). *HC* also contains the petition which the Saints sent to Congress (*HC* 4:24–38). The original of this is in the new document find.

4. *HC* 4:98–99.

5. The *Congressional Globe* also is silent on this second appeal, but a handwritten note on one of the containers holding the documents of this appeal reads:

“Document presented by Mormons May 10, 1842 and on May 21, 1842 to the House Judiciary Committee; and the petition of Elias Higbee, John Taylor, & Elias Smith delegates of the LDS (referred on Feb. 14, 1842, to that committee), setting forth certain grievances, and asking for the redress of them.”

A check of the *Congressional Globe* on the dates above indicted shows no action of the matter by the main body of the House (see Blair and Rives, eds., *The Congressional Globe*, vol. 11, no. 15 [Washington, 1842]).

6. The note reads: “Document Number 3 has not been located. It is possible that the Original papers comprising this file are scatter [*sic*] throughout the other documents in this group.”

7. The *Congressional Globe* substantiates this appeal. (See entry for Friday, 5 April 1844, vol. 13, no. 32, p. 497).

8. Hereafter, references are from MSS 942 and are cited according to folder number, e.g., MSS 942:7. The pages are not numbered within the folders.

9. MSS 942:11. As with other documents cited herein, original punctuation and spelling are preserved.

10. MSS 942:11.

11. *HC* 4:44, 7 December 1839.

12. MSS 942:10, affidavit of J. S. Miles.

13. MSS 942:10, affidavit of Mary K. Miles.

14. MSS 942:7.

15. MSS 942:7.

16. MSS 942:7.

17. MSS 942:9.

18. MSS 942:13.

19. MSS 942:9.

20. Warren A. Jennings, professor of history at Southwest Missouri State College, in Springfield, has studied the 38 volumes of McCoy's letters and McCoy's Journal housed in the Manuscript Division of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas.

21. Reprinted in Warren A. Jennings, "Isaac McCoy and the Mormons," *Missouri Historical Review*, vol. 61, no. 1 (October 1966), pp. 70–71.

22. MSS 942:5.

23. MSS 942:9.

24. MSS 942:5.

25. MSS 942:8.

26. MSS 942:8.

27. MSS 942:10.

28. MSS 942:9.

29. MSS 942:8.

30. MSS 942:8.

31. MSS 942:11.

32. MSS 942:8.

33. MSS 942:10.

34. MSS 942:11.

35. MSS 942:10.

36. MSS 942:11.

List of Names of the Signers of the Memorials, Affidavits, and Letters in the 1840 and 1842 Appeals to Congress by the LDS Church.

Note: This list does not contain the 3,419 names signed by Nauvoo residents on the fifty-foot petition submitted to the U.S. Senate in 1844.

Lewis Abbott	Mary Benson	Levi Bracken
Rufus Abbot	Lettice Bent	Lindsey A. Brady
David W. Adams	Samuel Bent	John Brassfield
William Aldrich	Henry Best	Alanson Brown
H. M. Alexander	Betsy Bidwell	Mary Brown
Albern Allen	Robert W. Bidwel	Horace Burges
James D. Allen	Adam Black	Daniel B. Bush
Martin C. Allred	George Boosinger	Reynolds Cahoon
William Allred	William Bowman	Daniel Cathcart
Philip Ballard	Peter Boyce	Lorenzo D. Chamberlin
Lucinda Barlow	Spuire Bozarth	Solomon Chamberlin
Moriah Benner	Truman Brace	Amelial Chapman
Jerome M. Benson	James Bracken	Nathan Cheney
James Clark	Mary Ann Hoyt	Elijah Reed
Moses Clawson	Smith Humphry	John Reed
Barnet Cole	Jacob Huntsman	Elisha Richards
Anthony Coombs	James Huston	Sidney Rigdon
Lucy Corkins	Charles Jameson	Oren P. Rockwell
John Corrill	Mahlon Johnson	Sarah Rockwell
David Crenshaw	Moses Kelly	Noah Rogers
Charles Crismon	H. N. Kent	James H. Rollins
Lyman Curtis	Perry Keyes	Stephen M. St. John
Nahum Curtis	Joseph C. Kingsbury	William Seely
Percy Curtis	Nathan K. Knight	Elihah Shaw
Alpheus Cutler	John Lawson	Joel Shearer
Thaddeus Cutler	Isaac Leany	Benjamin Slade
John Daley	Alfred Lee	Clark Slade
Daniel C. Davis	Eli Lee	Alma Smith
Isaac Decker	Wm. Leffingwell	Amanda Smith
David C. Deming	Tarlton Lewis	Elias Smith
Moses Dudley	John Loveless	John Smith
Edmund Durfee Jr.	Rober Lucas	Joseph Smith
Jabis Durfee	Arza Ludd, Jnr.	Willard Snow
James Durfee	John M. McCall	Chester Southworth
Perry Durfee	Jesse McCard	Charles Sqires
David Dutton	Enos McHall	Daniel Stanton
Hannah Dutton	William Marks	Henry Stephens

Elisha Edwards
 Rufus Edwards
 Isaac Ellison
 Lydia B. English
 (Widow of William
 Whiting)
 Henry Ettleman
 Philip Ettleman
 Ladawick H. Ferre
 Reuben Foot
 Jonathan Ford
 Clarissa Fosdick
 Catherine Fuller
 David Fullmer
 D. H. Gilmer
 Charles Glulet
 Charles Granger
 Loyal C. K. Griffen
 Selah J. Griffen
 Thomas Grover
 Solomon Hancock
 James M. Henderson
 Rueben Hendrix
 Jordan P. Hendrixson
 Amos F. Herrick
 Lemuel Herrick
 Phebe Herrick
 Elias Higbee
 John S. Higbee
 Elisha Hill
 Curtis Hodges, Sen.
 Elizabeth Holsclaw
 Jonathan Hoopes
 Warner Hoopes
 Joseph Hormuth
 Eli Houghton
 James Houghton
 Ornan Houghton

Eliphaz Marsh
 Moses Martin
 J. S. Miles
 Mary K. Miles
 Samuel Miles
 Samuel C. Miles
 Alexander Mills
 Albert Miner
 Andrew Moore
 Isaac Morely
 Arthur Morrison
 Elizabeth C. Munj
 William Munjar
 John Murdock
 Philindia Myrick
 Reuben Naper
 Ruth Naper
 Elijah Newman
 William Niswanger
 Daniel Norton
 Harvey Omstead
 John Outhouse
 Mahalaanon Overtor
 John Pack
 James B. F. Page
 Abraham Palmer
 Edward Partridge
 Charles W. Patten
 John Patten
 P. Paullin
 David Pettigrew
 Jeremiah Plumb
 Merlin Plumb
 Uriah B. Powell
 Terah Pulsipher
 Tunis Rappleye
 Delia Reed

Henry Stevenson
 Dexter Stillman
 Coonsod Strokes
 Nathan Stuart
 Gabriel N. Taylor
 John Taylor
 George B. Teeples
 Darrill S. Thomas
 Lewis Thompson
 John Thorp
 James B. Turner
 Lewis Turner
 Nelson Turner
 William Turner
 Elizabeth Tyler
 John P. Walker
 Wm. C. Walker
 John Welch
 Elisha Whiting
 Andrew Whitlock
 Bradley B. Wilson
 Eleanor Wilson
 George C. Wilson
 Lewis D. Wilson
 Polly Wilson
 William Wilson
 David Winter
 Giddion D. Wood
 Hannah Wood
 William Woodland
 James Worthington
 Hannah Yale
 Hannah York
 Jane A. Young
 Joseph Young
 Phineus H. Young