Cover: A small iron safe in the Western Reserve Historical Society Museum in Cleveland, Ohio, listed in the "Museum Accession Book: Vol. 1, 1894-1924," page 49 as "One iron safe once owned in Kirtland, by Joseph Smith, the Prophet, donated Dec. 8, 1900 by Mrs. Charles Morey, Cleveland." The safe measures 25 x 24 x 29 inches. The only marking on the safe is on the doorknob—it reads "DELANO PATENT, N. Y." The background shows Kirtland Safety Society Notes being donated to the Brigham Young University Library by C. DeLynn Heaps of Orem, Utah.

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BRUCE B. CLARK dean, college of humanities, Brigham Young University
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOLUME XI</th>
<th>SUMMER 1971</th>
<th>NUMBER 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guest Editor's Prologue</td>
<td>Truman G. Madsen 319</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Newell K. Whitney Collection</td>
<td>Chad J. Flake 322</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chronology of the Ohio Revelations</td>
<td>Earl E. Olson 329</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Meaning of The Kirtland Egyptian Papers</td>
<td>Hugh Nibley 350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The &quot;New Translation&quot; of the Bible, 1830-1833: Doctrinal Development During the Kirtland Era</td>
<td>Robert J. Matthews 400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirtland: A Perspective on Time and Place</td>
<td>Robert L. Layton 423</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Writing of Joseph Smith's History</td>
<td>Dean C. Jessee 439</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Impact of the First Preaching in Ohio</td>
<td>Richard Lloyd Anderson 474</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirtland as a Center of Missionary Activity, 1830-1838</td>
<td>Davis Bitton 497</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Impressive Letter from the Pen of Joseph Smith</td>
<td>LaMar C. Berrett 517</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources on the History of the Mormons in Ohio: 1830-38</td>
<td>Stanley B. Kimball 524</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index to Volume XI</td>
<td>541</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Editor: Charles D. Tate, Jr.
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Guest Editor's Prologue

TRUMAN G. MADSEN*

The response to the "Mormon Origins" and the "Coming of the Book of Mormon" projects which BYU Studies embodied in its Spring 1969 and 1970 issues has been more than generous. From one historian has come praise for the "candor, objectivity, and poise" that characterize "the new Mormon history" of which these studies are a part. From others there has been a stream of suggestions and leads on related topics. And from still others the response has been more in the vein of gratitude for the intensifying of a sense of heritage and religious consciousness. The demand for an annual issue to present further findings has been encouraging.

Moving in geographic and chronological sequence, the Institute of Mormon Studies is now involved in a two-year effort to deepen and broaden our sources on the Ohio period of Church history. Some twenty scholars are presently at work on the period, and this volume presents about half of the significant product.

Artifacts and photographs are again part of the format. Among these is the discovery by Dr. James R. Harris of a holograph letter from the Prophet Joseph Smith to his wife, Emma, written in mid-1832, haunting in its direct style and the inward stresses it reveals.

In a similar vein, three of the articles are essential to closer understanding of the intellect and spirit of Joseph Smith: Earl Olson's, Robert Matthews', and Hugh Nibley's.

Earl Olson has studied and carefully classified the order and locus of the revelations recorded during the Church's stay

*Dr. Madsen, Director of the Institute of Mormon Studies, is professor of philosophy at Brigham Young University. Former President of the New England Mission for the Church, he has lectured and published widely in the history and philosophy of religion.
in Ohio. Since nearly half of the published Doctrine and Covenants originated there, the tools Olson's article provides will facilitate more specialized work both on the text and the context of the Prophet's work.

Robert Matthews, who has been studying the Inspired Revision of the Scriptures for nearly twenty-five years, and has merited the trust of Utah historians no less than those of the Reorganization, presents what is sometimes ignored or forgotten, the evidence that the Prophet was himself learning and growing as he proceeded to translate and revise. A unifying insight results: that his revelations and his Biblical translations are interrelated and that he intended to do more. All of which one would expect of a Prophet committed to continual revelation.

Hugh Nibley shows us the Prophet and his companions freely speculating and disagreeing as they try one approach after another to the Egyptian papyri that nobody on earth could read. As the brethren broke with the Prophet the various projects were dropped, but they mark the first milestone in a path of serious study which LDS scholars will sooner or later be obliged to continue.

Other avenues are also explored. Robert Layton's approach to "environmental perception" shows in a geographer's terms the threads that connected the motives and patterns of situational meanings when New Yorkers became Ohioans and Ohioans moved west. His research has continued, and will culminate in a book-atlas tracing the impact of environmental conditions on the minds and hearts of the early saints.

Kirtland was both the target and the departure point for heightened missionary effort. Richard Lloyd Anderson deals predominantly with the one theme, Davis Bitton with the other. Dr. Anderson gives us a close-up of the first impact of the message of Mormonism in Kirtland, the building blocks that made possible the later expansion. Dr. Bitton singles out the most salient qualities of the effort and the most vital roles Kirtland played in nourishing it. Bitton generalizes the events, Anderson brings us in touch with the personalities, especially with the conversion-prototypes of Sidney Rigdon, Lyman Wight, Levi Hancock, and John Murdock.

Central to the whole historical enterprise—a theme that has "needed doing" for decades—is Dean Jessee's study. His mastery of styles of handwriting, constant exposure to early origin-
al documents, and familiarity with the Prophet's activities, especially in dictating his recollections and current detail, help to make his article indispensable. Here is what, to this date, is the most helpful disentangling of the threads that compose the manuscript history or documentary history of the Church.

Chad Flake, special collections sleuth at BYU, presents an important bibliographic footnote on the newly-acquired Newell K. Whitney collection.

Stanley B. Kimball, well-known to historographers for his index of bibliographical sources for the Nauvoo era, has now done the same for the Ohio period (focusing on sources east of the Mississippi). Among the "finds" that are far-reaching is the original ledger book of the Kirtland Safety Society. Its absence has led to conclusions which will now need revision. Papers on this are underway for the Summer 1972 issue of Studies.

We continue to welcome inquiries, suggestions, and research aid from laymen and specialists alike.
The Newell K. Whitney Collection

CHAD J. FLAKE*

The writing of history, always difficult, is made even more formidable in certain eras of Mormonism due to the lack of documentation. A review of the material published during the last two years on the New York period demonstrates some of the problems of solving various historic dilemma due to lack of adequate source material. This same lack of documentation is critical to the study of the Ohio period. Such problems as the mass-apostasy in Kirtland, and yet the seeming contradiction of the relatively little apostasy of Zion's Camp, which has been usually portrayed as rather a debacle; the position of the Kirtland Safety Society and affiliated banks in the total picture of Ohio settlement; the shift in consecration during the period; and the seemingly unnatural violence of the anti-Mormon activities on the Western Reserve, where innovative religion was not that uncommon, are a few of many events for which documentation is less than adequate. It is because of this lack of source material that the acquisition of the Newell K. Whitney collection by the BYU library is so very important. The Whitney collection is an aggregation of several hundred manuscripts and some rather important early imprints, kept together by the family of Newell K. Whitney, who as Presiding Bishop was given the responsibility of trying to settle some of the financial accounts, first in Kirtland, and later in Nauvoo. The collection is important both for its scope and for individual items.

Newel K. Whitney was born at Marlborough, Vermont, February 5, 1795. By 1814 he was a settler at Plattsburg, New York, and by 1817 had settled at Kirtland where he joined with Algernon Sidney Gilbert in a merchandising enterprise later called Gilbert and Whitney. Early in 1831 he joined the Mor-

*Professor Flake is Special Collections Librarian at Brigham Young University and editor of Mormon Americana.
Newel K. Whitney was born in Marlborough, Windham County, Vermont, February 6, 1798.

Brother Whitney, I lay my hands upon thy head in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I ask my heavenly Father to open the vision of my mind, to know what I shall say unto thee, for thou art a strange man, and thy ways have been unlike the ways of this man. Nevertheless I have sought to be a man of God, and to do in all things truth, obedience, and faith. The Lord has given thee strength, nomenclature, and thine nearest thy progenitors, and to thee shall concerning the lineage through which thou hast descended, I bless thee with a fatherly blessing for thee and thy children after thee, for their iniquities to the end. And on thee art a descendant of Methuselah the one of my posterity shall be given unto him before the Lord, for his heart shall be filled with the same spirit from his youth up, and he shall be a benefactor to the poorest. There shall be delivered from all iniquities and go forth and do the will of the Lord, for thou hast long brought him for the thing, and in the time there shall have it, and thy soul shall be filled with joy when the Lord maketh bare his arms for the good of the poor, and merrily they shall sing in joy, and thou shalt return to the Lord, whom thou shalt receive in the city, and rejoice in the Lord, and the Lord shall be exalted, and give his angels charge concerning thee, and they shall be kept from death and every destructor. thy father shall yet come into the church, and his heart shall rejoice in his old age. And great blessings upon thee, even more than thy heart can now comprehend or understand. Then shall see thy descendants and have the ministering of holy angels. Thy name is written in the books of life, and thou shalt have a place with the sanctified, where the Lord cometh to reign with his people. In the name of Jesus Christ I bless thee blessings upon thee, and then shalt yet realize them, and agree in them, even so. Amen.

Given in Kirtland, Ohio, September 14, 1833, by Patrick Henry Smith, Presiding Elder, Clerk.

A patriarchal blessing by Joseph Smith Sr. on the head of Newel K. Whitney
To the Saints scattered abroad, the Bishop and his Counselors of Kirtland send greeting.

The church in Kirtland has been visited in considerable numbers by the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Presiding Bishopric, the High Priests, and many of the other Elders. During these visits, the Prophet has given various instructions and counsel to the Saints, and has also addressed the general assembly of the church. The Bishop and his counselors have also met with many of the Saints in their homes and visited them in their places of meeting. They have also sent letters to the Saints, telling them of the progress of the church and expressing their love and encouragement. The Bishop and his counselors have also met with many of the Saints in their homes and visited them in their places of meeting. They have also sent letters to the Saints, telling them of the progress of the church and expressing their love and encouragement.

Very truly yours,

N. B. Whiting
R. Cahoon
V. Knight

A unique copy of a Kirtland broadside—a letter of instructions from the Presiding Bishopric to the saints abroad—1837
mon Church, and soon was appointed as a bishop in the Church. From then until 1848 he was vitally involved in the financial affairs of the Church.

The most important and exciting group of documents in the collection are early copies of eighteen revelations included in the *Book of Commandments* as well as two that were never published. These revelations are in the handwriting of such scribes as Oliver Cowdery, Frederick G. Williams, Newell K. Whitney, Sidney Rigdon, Orson Hyde, and John Whitmer.

The importance of these copies is attested to in the collection by a letter to Newell K. Whitney by Oliver Cowdery as follows:

Bishop Whitney:

Will you have the kindness to send us, by the bearer, the original copy of the Revelation given to 12 elders Feb. 1831 called "The Law of the Church"? We are preparing the old Star for re-printing, and have no copy from which to correct, and know of no other beside yours.

Your Ob't Serv't. Oliver Cowdery. Kirtland, Feb. 4, 1835.

The implication is that Cowdery had copies of the other revelations, but the whereabouts of these copies remains a mystery, so that the Newell K. Whitney copies, though possibly differing slightly from the official copies used to print the *Book of Commandments*, remain the earliest copies owned by the Church.

Historically as important are the records which give glimpses into the problems of the financial structure of Kirtland. Kirtland—that is, the Mormon Kirtland—was being built in much the same manner later used in Nauvoo, except that
Verily, I say unto you, concerning your brethren who have been afflicted, and persecuted, and cast out from the land of their inheritance. I the Lord have suffered the affliction to come upon them, wherewith they have been afflicted in consequence of their transgressions; yet, I will own them, and they shall be mine in that day when I shall come to make up their jewels. Therefore, they must needs be chastened, and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son; for all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified.

Behold, I say unto you, there were jarrings, and contentions, & environs, and strife, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances. They were also taught to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble.—In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but in the day of their necessity they feel after me.

Verily, I say unto you, notwithstanding their sins my bowels are filled with compassion toward them: I will not utterly cast them off; and in the day of wrath I will remember mercy. I have sworn, and the decree hath come forth by a former commandment which I have given unto you, that I would let fall the sword of mine indignation in the behalf of my people; and even as I have said, it shall come to pass. Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations, and this will I do when the cap of their iniquity is full.

And in that day, all who are found upon the watch tower, or in other words, all mine Israel shall be saved. And they that have been scattered shall be gathered; and all they who have mourned shall be comforted; and all they who have given their lives for my name shall be crowned.

Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still, and know that I am God. Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered, they that remain and are pure in heart shall return and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy; to build up the waste places of Zion. And all these things, that the prophets might be fulfilled.

And behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed: for the work of the gathering of my saints, until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains, or the strength of Zion.

Behold, it is my will, that all they who call on my name, & worship me according to mine everlasting gospel, should gather together and stand in holy places, and prepare for the revelation which is to come when the veil of the covering of my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off; and all flesh shall see me together. And every corruptible thing, both of man, or of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of heaven or of the fish of the sea, that dwell upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed; and also, that man shall melt with fervent heat; and all things shall become new. And my knowledge and glory, may dwell upon all the earth.

And in that day the enmity of man, and the enmity trodden under the feet of men. Behold, here is wisdom concerning the children of Zion: even many, but not all: they were found transgressors, therefore, they must needs be chastened. He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that abaseth himself shall be exalted.

And now, I will show unto you a parable that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion: A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; and he said unto his servants, go ye into my vineyard; even upon this very choice piece of land, and plant twelve olive trees; and set watchmen round about them and build a tower, that one may overlook the land round about, to be a watchman upon the tower; that mine olive trees may not be broken down, when the enemy shall come to spoil, and take unto themselves the fruit of my vineyard.

Now the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them; and planted the olive trees, and built a hedge round about, and set watchmen, and began to build the tower. And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves, and what need hath my lord of this tower? And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves, What need we this tower? Is this a time of peace? Might not this money be given to the exchangers? for there is no need of these things!

And while they were at variance one with another, they became very slothful, & hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord: and the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge, and the servants of the nobleman arose, and were affrighted, and fled: and the enemy destroyed their works, and breaks down the two trees.

Now behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them, Why! what is the cause of this great evil? Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you? And after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof, built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower? And I will answer you, the enemy of the vineyard, came and destroyed them, and his servants, and destroyed his vineyard, and the enemy destroyed his works, and broke down the two trees.

Now behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them, Why! what is the cause of this great evil? Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you? And after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof, built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower? And I will answer you, the enemy of the vineyard, came and destroyed them, and his servants, and destroyed his vineyard, and the enemy destroyed his works, and broke down the two trees.

And the lord of the vineyard, said unto one of his servants, Go and gather together the residue of my servants; and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also, among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry; and go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard, for it is mine, I have bought it with money. Therefore get ye straightway unto my land, and break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen: and meanwhile as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies; that by and by, I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

And the servant said unto his lord, when shall these things be? And he said unto his servant, when I will; go ye straightway, and do all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and this shall be my seal and blessing upon you: A faithful and wise steward in the midst of mine house: A ruler in my kingdom.

A prepublication copy of Doctrine and Covenants Section 97 (1835), now Section 105. And man. And shall be no sorrow because there is no wisdom in me concerning all the churches, insomuch
land transactions, the early base for both Kirtland and Nauvoo (so interesting that Robert Flanders in his *Kingdom by the Mississippi* became so involved in the transactions that he lost sight of the accomplishment and spirit of Nauvoo) was not the whole base in Kirtland. The Kirtland Safety Society formed in 1836 was also very important. The manipulation that the leaders had to perform in order to try to build a kingdom virtually out of nothing was here further complicated by duplicity and the national bank failures of 1837. Documents of this period, and also correspondence between Newell and his brother, Samuel F., who remained in Kirtland, help one understand the modus operandi of the financial structure of Kirtland, as well as the attempt of the Church leaders to extricate themselves from legal problems arising from its failure after leaving Kirtland.

Some of the individual documents are fascinating. One cemetery plot seems to show members of the Church speculating on funeral plots. Quite possibly one of the most important historical documents is one of the indictments brought by William Parrish and the Johnson brothers against the leaders of the Church in May of 1838. The one in question reads:

To the Bishop & his council in Kirtland, the Stake of Zion.

We prefer the following charges against Pres. Joseph Smith, Jr. viz. for lying and misrepresentation.- Also for extortion—And for speaking disrespectfully against his brethren behind their backs.


Later in the century after the death of Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde became president of the Quorum of the Twelve
Apostles, and the two people next in succession to Brigham Young were Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt, both of whom Brigham distrusted. Therefore at the General Conference of October 1875, the Quorum was reshuffled so that these men were dropped in seniority. The reason given for this was that these two men had lost seniority due to the fact that they had been dropped from the Quorum during the Missouri and Nauvoo period. While the Orson Hyde difficulty, i.e. his testimony against Joseph Smith in the Missouri trial, was certainly enough to arouse Brigham Young's distrust, the problem of Orson Pratt in Nauvoo in 1842 is more complex. Brigham Young held that his excommunication from the Church in August 20, 1842, was questionable under the circumstances. (History of the Church, Vol. 5, pp. 254-256.) It may well be that his memory went back farther, and that this incident was the real reason for Orson Pratt's loss of seniority along with Orson Hyde's.

The acquisition of this fine collection as late as 1969 raises hopes that there are other documents in undisclosed closets, bank vaults and attics, that will help us piece together the history of the Church during its early periods.

To the Bishop of the Church of Christ in Zion.

This meeting, Oct. 4th, 1838

He is a man of good standing, and highly recommended. In good standing, and highly recommended, this is written to preserve a

...
The Chronology of the Ohio Revelations

EARL E. OLSON*

Kirtland, Ohio, bears the unique distinction of being the locality where more revelations** were given to the Prophet Joseph Smith than any other place, with 46 sections of the present Doctrine and Covenants being received there. Fayette, New York, falls into second place with 20 revelations, while Hiram, Ohio, and Harmony, Pennsylvania, tie for third place with 15 revelations each. Close to one-half of the sections in the Doctrine and Covenants were given in Ohio. Many of these contained fundamental doctrines and principles which were of major importance in the development of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in its formative years.

Of the 136 sections in the Doctrine and Covenants, 64, or 47 percent were given in Ohio during 1831 to 1837, as follows:

Kirtland—46 sections: 41-50, 52-56, 63, 64, 70, 72, 84-99, 101-104, 106-110, 112, 134
Hiram—15 sections: 1, 65, 67-69, 71, 73, 74, 76-81, 133
Thompson—1 section: 51
Orange—1 section: 66
Amherst—1 section: 75

The remaining 72 sections, or 53 percent were given in other states, as follows:

New York 1823-1831—25 sections
Pennsylvania 1828-1830—15 sections

*Earl Olson is the Assistant Church Historian.

**The term "revelations" in this article is used in a broad sense to include the various sections of the Doctrine and Covenants, recognizing that some of them were minutes of a meeting, prophecy, explanation of scripture, etc.
Missouri 1831-1839—20 sections
Massachusetts 1836—1 section
Illinois 1841-1844—10 sections
Nebraska 1847—1 section

Of the 64 sections given in Ohio, 18 were published in the 1833 Book of Commandments; 38 sections were added in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants; 2 more sections were added in the 1844 edition; and 6 sections were added in the 1876 edition. Many of the revelations were printed in the early periodicals of the Church.

In order to better identify the Ohio revelations which will be treated in this article, a list is included to show which revelations were received there; when they were printed; the section numbers in the several editions of the Doctrine and Covenants; and the manuscripts which have been located of these sections which are currently on file in the Office of the Church Historian: the initials given in the manuscript columns identify the handwriting of the scribe or scribes who wrote these documents. (See Table 1.)
Resolved, that the President or Presiding at the seat of general church governor shall have power to determine whether any such case as may be appealed is justly entitled to a rehearing upon examining the appeal and the evidence, and statements accompanying it.

The twelve Counsellors then proceeded on Wednesday the 19th instant at 10 o'clock A.M. to cast lots or ballot to add 10 Believers. It was determined who should speak first and the following was the result. Members:

Olive Cowery drew No. 1
Joseph Coxe — 2
Samuel A. Smith — 3
Luke Johnson — 4
John A. Carter — 5
Sylvester Smith — 6

John Johnson — 7
Orson Hyde — 8
Sarah Carter — 9
Joseph Smith, Sen. — 10
John Smith — 11
Nathan Harris — 12.

The Council then adjourned to

Carefully examined 27 Augt 1843
and Recorded on the Book of 1843.

By O. Hyde

Pages from Book C, Book of Commandments Laws and Covenants (the end of Doctrine and Covenants Section 102)
## OHIO REVELATIONS DATA

<table>
<thead>
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JW John Whitmer
FGW Frederick G. Williams
NI Not identified
OC Oliver Cowdery
WAC Warren A. Cowdery
Orson Hyde
EP Edward Partridge
WWP William W. Phelps
JS Joseph Smith Jr.
IDENTIFICATION OF THE MANUSCRIPTS

For the past several years personnel in the Historian's Office have been searching for original handwritten copies of the revelations. A number of documents and early compilations have been located or procured and are now on file in the Church Archives.

Foremost among these is a bound volume which was many years ago given the title, "Kirtland Revelations." It contains 35 of the Ohio revelations. This volume is approximately 12 1/4 inches long, 7 3/4 inches wide, and 3/4 inch thick. The scribe who recorded most of the entries in the volume was Frederick G. Williams. Orson Hyde added a few pages, and Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery recorded the others. On page 20 appears the first signature of the scribe—Frederick G. Williams signed his name to an article dated August 29, 1832. His signature appears again on page 31 at the end of Section 84, and on several other pages. On page 32 is an interesting statement in connection with Section 86 "given by Joseph the Seer and written by Sidney the scribe and Councillor, and Transcribed by Frederick, Assistant Scribe and Councillor." The following page contains Section 87 and the words "Given by Joseph the Seer, written by F.G. Williams." Orson Hyde identified himself as scribe on page 107 at the end of Section

The manuscript volume "Kirtland Revelations"
104 when he wrote "Recorded by O. Hyde 18 Aug. 1834 upon this Book." Similar words were entered on page 111 at the end of Section 103.

Three small books, each approximately 6⅛ inches long, 3⅜ inches wide and ¼ inch thick or less, were presented to the Historian's Office in recent years. They had been well preserved in a family collection, for which historians are most grateful.

The first of these small books is labeled on the cover "Book of Commandments, Laws and Covenants." Because the three manuscripts are somewhat similar in format and are part of the same collection, and for purposes of easy reference, the same title has been used for all three, with the individual designations being Books A, B, and C.

Book A contains five of the Ohio revelations, recorded by Orson Hyde and Joseph Smith.

Book B contains twelve of the Ohio revelations. One entry in this book which helps in determining when the entries were made, appears at the end of Section 86, and states "copied at Zion 12 June 1833."

Book C contains three Ohio revelations. Section 103 is recorded first and is in the handwriting of Orson Pratt. At the end of the revelation, entered with a different ink, are the words "Copied by O. Hyde 18 Aught 1834." At the end of Section 104 are the words "Copied from the original by O. Pratt." The last revelation entered in this book is Section 102. At the end of these minutes of the council of twenty-four High Priests held 17 Feb. 1834, appear the original signatures of Orson Hyde and Oliver Cowdery, clerks, followed by the words "Carefully examined 27 Aught 183[4] and Recorded on the Book of Rev. by O. Hyde." The edge of the sheet containing the [4] in 1834 has broken away, but as this entry is studied in connection with the recording of the same section in the book "Kirtland Revelations," it appears that [4] would be the number originally entered. These two entries of the same section were probably entered within a short time of each other.

Various other handwritten manuscripts have been located. Some are individual sheets; some are entries in early journals; and some are recorded with other documents. Most of the revelations are also recorded in the manuscript of the "Documentary History of the Church," and would have received the at-
tention of Joseph Smith. These copies in the DHC manuscript will not be discussed further in this article.

The four manuscript volumes and the other manuscripts have been carefully examined by Dean C. Jessee of the Historian's Office staff, who has become familiar with the individual handwriting of the early scribes. Mainly due to his efforts, identification can now be made of the scribes responsible for most of the writing. Once it had been determined whose hand had recorded the document, research was then undertaken to identify the period of time each individual served as scribe. At the present time it cannot be accurately stated which if any of these manuscripts are the originals written at the time the revelations were received or which are subsequent copies of the originals.

THE PROBLEM OF ERRORS IN RECORDING

An interesting subject to be considered in connection with the revelations is a study of the differences that exist between these manuscripts and the printed revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants. Such a study is now being carried out by Robert J. Woodford for a doctoral dissertation at Brigham Young University. The results of his research should be helpful to the serious scholar.

It may be briefly mentioned here that a comparison of some of the manuscript copies of the revelations with the 1833 Book of Commandments, and the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants indicates in some instances very few changes in words, and those changes which do appear are negligible in meaning or interpretation, being mainly grammatical improvements. In other instances there are insertions of paragraphs, or sentences have been omitted. Some differences appear in the headings and dates of the manuscripts.

When documents are copied by hand errors have a tendency to occur. This is verified upon examination of the existing manuscripts. The manuscripts appear generally to predate the 1833 or 1835 printings, and the changes which were made in these printed editions did receive the personal attention of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the one person who would have the right to make corrections or additions. There are also some corrections made in the entries in "Kirtland Revelations," and these are in the handwriting of Joseph Smith. His corrections appear in the 1833 and 1835 printed texts.
Another aspect that deserves attention is the accounts regarding the way in which revelations were received and recorded. One statement comes from Parley P. Pratt, who was privileged to be in attendance when some revelations were received, and concerning which he wrote in May 1831:

Each sentence was uttered slowly and very distinctly, and with a pause between each, sufficiently long for it to be recorded by an ordinary writer in long hand. This was the manner in which all his written revelations were dictated and written. There was never any hesitation, reviewing, or reading back, in order to keep the run of the subject; neither did any of these communications undergo revisions, interlinings or corrections. As he dictated them so they stood, so far as I have witnessed; and I was present to witness the dictation of several communications of several pages each. (Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, p. 65-66.)

This statement, however, is modified by B. H. Roberts, who states that:

Some of the early revelations first published in the "Book of Commandments," in 1833, were revised by the Prophet himself in the way of correcting errors made by the scribes and publishers; and some additional clauses were inserted to throw increased light upon the subjects treated in the revelations, and paragraphs added, to make the principles or instructions apply to officers not in the Church at the time some of the earlier revelations were given. (DHC 1:173.)

An examination of the existing manuscripts verifies that there were differences or errors which occurred in copying, some examples of which are given in the following paragraphs.

With the manuscripts of Section 42 is a photocopy of a letter dated February 4, 1835, Kirtland. The letter is addressed to Bishop Whitney and signed by Oliver Cowdery. In it Oliver asks Bishop Whitney to send "by the bearer the original copy of the Revelation given to 12 elders Feb. 1831 called 'The Law of the Church.' We are preparing the old Star for re-printing, and have no copy from which to correct, and know of no other beside yours." (See p. 324.) The heading of the manuscript of Section 42 has the words "The Laws of the Church of Christ Kirtland Geauga Ohio May 23d 1831 A Commandment to the Elders." These lines do not appear in the present printed edition. In 1833 and 1835 publications give the date as February 1831, and the present D&C has Feb. 9, 1831. The copy of this revelation in Book B gives the date as February 9, 1831. An-
other difference in this manuscript is that a series of questions is included, starting with the question, "Shall the Church come together into one place or remain as they are in separate bodies?" This is followed by verses 1 to 10. Then appear the words "Question 2d. The Law regulating the Church in her present situation till the time of her gathering—Answer," followed by 11 through 69. Other questions follow.

The manuscript for Section 45 is headed "A prophecy to the Church of Christ given the 6th March 1831." The 1833 publication gives the date as March 1831; the 1835, the current D&C, and the Documentary History of the Church all give March 7, 1831.

The manuscript for Section 52 is dated June 6, 1831, whereas the 1833 and 1835 publications give June 1831, and the present D&C gives June 7, 1831.

The manuscript for Section 78 is dated March 1, 1832; Kirtland. The 1835 and the current D&C have only March 1832, at Hiram.

There are three manuscripts of Section 87. One is dated July 3, 1835, and two have December 25th, 1832, as does the present D&C. Section 87 was not published in the Doctrine and Covenants until 1876.

The manuscript for Section 88 has the words "the Olive Leaf 16 of April." The 1835 and the present D&C give December 27, 1832.

Both manuscript copies of Section 92 contain the name "Frederick" and do not include the name "Shederlaomach." The 1835 edition gives the name "Shederlaomach" but does not include "Frederick" or Frederick G. Williams." In the early publications the anonymity of the individuals concerned was retained through the use of these special names.

There is yet much research to be done on the manuscripts of the revelations, and it is hoped that additional manuscripts may be brought to light and made available to scholars. Continued research and study should contribute to a greater understanding of these important documents and support their claim to be divinely inspired.

THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE OHIO REVELATIONS

There is also a great area for further research on the historical setting of the Ohio revelations. What brought about the
revelation? How important were the contents? Where was the Prophet at the time? Who recorded the revelation originally? As many of these questions will be discussed as can be; the rest will be left to be answered through additional research and writing.

The young Prophet Joseph Smith arrived in front of the Gilbert and Whitney store in Kirtland, Ohio, on February 1, 1831. He had only a month earlier celebrated his twenty-fifth birthday. Persecution, intolerance, and misunderstanding had followed this young man in his earlier moves from Palmyra, New York, to Harmony, Pennsylvania, and thence to Fayette, New York, where he was living when a letter was received from John Whitmer desiring his immediate assistance at Kirtland to regulate the affairs of the Church there. As he had done many times before and as he would continue to do in the years to come, Joseph inquired of the Lord concerning His will, to which he received in answer a revelation (D&C 37), commanding him to go to Ohio "because of the enemy and for your sakes." (D&C 37:1)

He and his wife Emma, together with Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge, prepared for the move to the west, and in the cold winter in the last week of January 1831 left the Peter Whitmer home in a sleigh. The two-hundred snow-covered miles were traversed within a few days, and on February 1 the sleigh drew up in front of the store, where the travelers were welcomed by the Newel K. Whitney family. Joseph and Emma Smith were shortly located in two rooms of the Whitney home, which was located on the corner across from the store. They lived there for several weeks, during which time a number of revelations were received.

Four days after his arrival in Kirtland, Joseph received the first of the 64 Ohio revelations. The Saints in Kirtland had generally attempted to live the teachings of the new gospel, but some strange notions had crept in among them, and this revelation was received to answer the situation. They were commanded "to assemble yourselves together to agree upon my word." (41:2)

Five days later, February 9, Section 42 concerning Church government and how transgression should be dealt with was given in the presence of twelve elders.

During February a woman came to Joseph "with great pretentions to revealing commandments, laws and other curious
matters.” (Ms. of Ohio) In answer to her claim Joseph received a revelation (Section 43) stating that none but Joseph Smith was appointed to receive revelations and commandments as long as he lived and remained faithful. This woman had deceived some members who lacked the spirit of discernment. Also during February he received Section 44 which commanded the elders to meet and to assist the poor.

Five revelations were given in Kirtland during March 1831. In Section 45 the Lord declared "I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world, to be a light to the world, and to be a standard for my people, and for the Gentiles to seek to it." (45:9) Section 46 pertained to the Holy Ghost and gifts of the gospel, while Section 47 appointed John Whitmer as Church Historian with a commandment to keep a history. In Section 48 instructions were given to the saints in Kirtland to receive those saints who were emigrating from the east, and to divide their lands with the newcomers until the Lord commanded them to gather to the land of their inheritance. Lemon Copley, a convert to the Church from the Shaker faith, still retained some beliefs which conflicted with his new religion, and in Section 49 he and others were called to preach the gospel to the Shakers.

Of the two revelations given during May 1831 one, Section 50, was given at Kirtland to a group of elders who did not understand the different spirits manifesting themselves in the land, and upon inquiry of the Lord for further light this section was received.

Only one revelation was given at Thompson, Ohio—Section 51. A group of members known as the Colesville Branch had obeyed the commandment to gather to Ohio and had journeyed from Colesville, New York, and settled as advised in the small village of Thompson, about sixteen miles northeast of Kirtland. Due to difficulties which arose among them as they attempted to live the order of stewardship and consecration of properties, they requested that Joseph Smith assist them in their distress. His visit with them resulted in this revelation which instructed that Bishop Partridge was to "appoint unto this people their portions, every man equal according to his family, according to his circumstances and his wants and needs." (51:5) Not long afterward the Colesville Branch received further instructions to go to Missouri (54:8) to settle in the land of the New Jerusalem, which they did, arriving there in July 1831.
A prophecy to the Church of Christ given the 6th March 1834

Saying brethren & young people of my Church to whom the kingdom has been given hearken ye & give ear to him who laid the foundation of the earth who made the heaven & all the hosts thereof & by whom all things were made which move to have a being & to have a living & again I say hearken unto my voice lest death shall overtake you in an hour when you think not the summer shall be past & the harvest ended your souls are not saved listen to him who is your advocate with the Father who is pleading your cause before him saying Father behold the suffering of them who did me sin in whom these are called. Behold the blood of my son which was shed the blood of him the same gave that thy soul might be glorified. Whencefore hearken to my brethren that believe in my name that they may come to have everlasting life. Hearken O young people of my Church & listen to the voice of the beginning of the end the light & the life of the world a light that shineth in darkness & the Doctrine & Covenants. It not I come unto my own & my own receive me but unto as many as received me gave I power to do so many miracles & to become the sons of God & even unto them that believe on my name gave I power to obtain eternal life & even so I have sent more everlasting covenant into the world to be a light to the world & to be a standard for the people & for the Gentiles to seek to it also to be a messenger before my face to prepare the way before me & when mine eye seeth not with mine heart I will receive & accept them who are of the same eye seeth not with mine heart I will receive & accept them who are of the same eye say is the God of Jacob & his brethren whom he separated from the earth makes himself unto myself a city ordained until a day of nightmair shall come a day which was sought for by all holy men & found it not because of unbelief & abomination & confound that they were strong & judgements on the earth but obtain a promise that they should find it & set it in their flesh whereas hear them & shall learn with grace & I will speak unto you therefore as unto men in days of old & I will show it plainly & when I have my disciples as I Spoke before them in the flesh I Spoke unto them saying as ye have asked of me concerning the signs of my coming in the day when I shall come in my glory in the hand of heaven to fulfill the promises that I have made unto yours. To them for any one thereof up from the long absence of any fruits from your bodies to be a bondage will wither into you & the day of redemption shall come & also the restoration of the natural earth & man's eye behold the Temple which is in Jerusalem which ye call the house of God & your enemy say that this house shall not stand but even a day unto age that destruction shall come upon this generation as a thing in the night & this people shall be destroyed & scattered amongst nations or leaven the Temple which ye now see shall be thrown down that there shall not be left one stone upon another so it shall come to pass that ye shall see none of these shall not keep away until every destruction which I have
Five revelations were given in Kirtland in June 1831. Section 52 commanded some thirty elders to preach the Gospel; Section 53 concerned the work and appointment of Sidney Gilbert in the Church; Section 54 was to Newel Knight commanding the Colesville Branch to continue their journey to Missouri; Section 55 was given in response to an inquiry by William W. Phelps, who was told to assist Oliver Cowdery in the work of printing, selecting, and writing books, and Section 56 contained direction to several elders.

In accordance with instructions given to Joseph in Section 56 to journey to Missouri, he left Kirtland and arrived at Independence July 15, 1831. After arranging for the organization and welfare of the saints who were migrating to Independence, he returned to Kirtland, arriving there August 27. During the remaining days of August he received Section 63 which instructed some brethren to preach the gospel and others to move to the land of Zion in Missouri as part of the gathering.

Section 64 was given in Kirtland September 11, rebuking a number of leading men for not having kept the commandments. Through this revelation it was made known that Kirtland would be retained as a stronghold in the land for another five years. (64:21)

Preparations had been under way for several days by Joseph and Emma to move to Hiram, thirty miles southeast of Kirtland. This move was accomplished September 12, and the family then made their living quarters in the home of John Johnson. This was to be the home where a number of important revelations were to be received. Fifteen in all were given in Hiram. Also, while living in the Johnson home Joseph translated a portion of the Bible.

The first revelation given in Hiram occurred during October (Section 65), and has been designated by Joseph Smith as a prayer.

At a conference held in Hiram October 11, 1831, it was decided that the next conference should be held at Orange, Ohio, about twelve miles south of Kirtland, where a branch of the Church was organized. This conference convened at Orange on October 25, 1831. William E. M'Lellin, who had only recently arrived in Kirtland, was in attendance at the meetings in Orange and sought the will of the Lord concerning himself. Upon inquiry to the Lord, Joseph received an answer directing that M'Lellin should go on a mission to preach the gospel
(Section 66). The minutes of the conference as recorded by Oliver Cowdery in the Far West Record verify that the meetings were held in the home of Brother Sirenes Burnett, and apparently the revelation was given in that home. It was voted to hold another general conference January 25, 1832, at Amherst, Lorain County.

November 1, 1831, a special conference was held at Hiram to consider matters which should be attended to by Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer who had been appointed to go to Missouri. Attention was given to publishing the revelations which had thus far been received. Up to this time there had been no publication of the commandments. They had been copied by hand, sometimes inaccurately, or carried by word of mouth, with attending inaccuracies and difficulty of obtaining proper interpretation. As early as the summer of 1830 Joseph saw the need for publication of the revelation, and soon after the revelation known as Section 26 was received he began to arrange and copy the revelations received up to that time. During the conference a decision was made to publish 10,000 copies of the revelations. Section 1 was received in the Johnson home during the recess between the morning and afternoon sessions of the conference. It was to be a preface to the publication. The revelation was read to the conference the next day. In the revelation is declared: "Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my preface unto the book of my commandments, which I have given them to publish unto you, O inhabitants of the earth." (1:6) From this verse came the title to the publication Book of Commandments which was printed in Independence. At a later conference, May 1, 1832, it was decided to print only 3,000 copies of the book.

November 3, at a special conference in Hiram, another of the important revelations was received, which became known as the Appendix to the Book of Commandments (Section 133). It has been called the appendix because it was presumably intended to be printed as the last section in that publication.

Three additional revelations were given in Hiram during November: Section 67, containing a testimony of the truthfulness of the commandments; Section 68, calling several elders to preach, and Section 69, wherein Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer were commanded to take the commandments to Independence for printing.
At a conference held in Hiram, November 8, comments were made pertaining to some mistakes found in the revelations made either by the slow method of recording by the scribes at the time the revelation was originally dictated, or errors by the scribes themselves. In connection with this Joseph Smith wrote:

My time was occupied closely in reviewing the commandments and sitting in conference, for nearly two weeks; for from the first to the twelfth of November we held four special conferences. In the last which was held at Brother Johnson's in Hiram, after deliberate consideration, in consequence of the book of revelations, now to be printed, being the foundation of the Church in these last days, and a benefit to the world... the conference voted that they prize the revelations to be worth to the Church the riches of the whole earth, speaking temporally. (DHC 1:235)

In answer to an inquiry, Section 70 was received giving instructions on the management and printing of the Book of Commandments.

Although the revelations received up to this time were now to be published and the Prophet spent some time making corrections, there has not been found a written manuscript volume into which the commandments were copied in the order in which they appeared in the Book of Commandments. Nor has such a manuscript been found for the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants. It appears that the revelations were first recorded on individual documents. Some of the original documents could have been used by the Prophet in making his corrections, or such corrections could have been made on subsequent copies.

December 1 at Hiram Section 71 was given, instructing Joseph to travel and preach; in consequence of which he visited Kirtland, where Section 71 was received, December 4, on the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Church.

The first revelation in 1832 was received at Hiram (Section 73) commanding Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon to renew their work of translating or revising the scriptures and to continue preaching. While thus involved with translating, Section 74 was received, giving an explanation of 1 Corinthians 7:14.

The conference which had been appointed for Amherst, Lorain County, convened there on January 25, 1832. At this conference Joseph Smith, Jr., was sustained as president of the high priesthood. He wrote of this conference:
The Elders seemed anxious for me to inquire of the Lord that they might know His will, or learn what would be most pleasing to Him for them to do, in order to bring men to a sense of their condition; for as it was written, all men have gone out of the way, so that none doeth good, no, not one. (DHC 1:242)

Section 75 was received in answer to his inquiry.

One of the great revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 76, was given February 16, 1832, in the Johnson home at Hiram, while Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were engaged in revising the Gospel of St. John. Joseph Smith writes:

Upon my return from Amherst conference, I resumed the translation of the Scriptures. From sundry revelations which had been received, it was apparent that many important points touching the salvation of man had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled. It appeared self-evident from what truths were left, that if God rewarded every one according to the deeds done in the body the term "Heaven," as intended for the Saints' eternal home must include more kingdoms than one. (DHC 1:252)

In answer to their prayer, the heavens were opened and they beheld the Father and the Son, and were informed on the principles of the salvation of man, and the degrees of glory in the resurrection. One of the frequently quoted scriptures which has deep meaning for Latter-day Saints is found in this section:

And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father. That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God. (76:22-24)

Only five additional revelations were received in the Johnson home while Joseph was in Hiram, all of which were given during March 1832. Section 77 came while the translation of the scriptures was still in progress and explained part of the Revelation of St. John. Section 78 gave instructions on temporal affairs, together with instructions to the high priesthood; Sections 79 and 80 contained instructions to individuals; and in Section 81 Frederick G. Williams was called to be a counselor in the First Presidency.
Mob violence increased while Joseph lived in Hiram, to the extent that on March 24 a mob broke into the Johnson home, dragged Joseph from his bed, and, after beating him, covered him with tar and feathers. Sidney Rigdon was also mistreated at this time. Joseph was sufficiently recovered by the next day that he was able to preach and baptize. And the two men, Joseph and Sidney, having recovered from the mobbing, were able to start for Missouri on April 1. While in Missouri Sections 82 and 83 were given. The two men returned to Kirtland in June. During their absence, Emma Smith, following the advice of her husband, removed to the Whitney home in Kirtland where she and her husband would be more secure from the mob attitude which existed around Hiram. The remainder of the Ohio revelations (27) were all given while Joseph and Emma still lived in Kirtland.

Five of the revelations (Section 84-88) were given during the last four months of 1832. In response to inquiries of elders who had labored in the eastern states and were now returning to Kirtland, the Prophet inquired of the Lord and received
an important revelation on Priesthood (Section 84). Section 85 was written to encourage and instruct the saints in Missouri, and outlined some of the responsibilities of the Lord's clerk. Section 86 explained the parable of the wheat and the tares and its application to the latter days. The well-known revelation and prophecy on war (Section 87) was received at a time appropriate to the difficulties of the period. South Carolina had passed ordinances declaring their state a free and independent nation, and Pres. Jackson had issued a proclamation against this rebellion. The Prophet through this revelation was enabled to portray the forthcoming events. Section 88 is a lengthy, important revelation known as "The Olive Leaf."

Eleven revelations were given from February to August 1833 in Kirtland. The first of these (Section 89) is known as the Word of Wisdom, from which Latter-day Saints learn they are not to use hot drinks (tea and coffee), strong drinks (alcohol), or tobacco, and to use grains and the fruit of the vine. In Section 90 the position of Joseph Smith as President of the Church is reaffirmed. While revising the scriptures the Prophet came to that portion of the ancient writings called the Apocrypha and received the revelation (Section 91) wherein the Lord stated it was not necessary to translate that part of the Bible. Frederick G. Williams received instructions in Section 92 to join the United Order. In Section 93 the relation between the Father and the Son is defined and the well-known statement made—"The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth." (93:36) In Section 94 the saints are commanded to build a house for the Presidency and a printing house. Some of the members are chastised and rebuked in Section 95 for not observing instructions that had been previously given them concerning the building of the Lord's house at Kirtland. At a conference held June 4 at Kirtland, consideration was given to the disposal of the French Farm, to which an answer was received in the "Translating Room" that the area was to be divided into lots (Section 96). Section 97 concerned the affairs of the saints in Jackson County, Missouri, and in Section 98 the Lord indicated He was not well pleased with many of the saints in Kirtland. Section 99 contained instructions to John Murdock.

The Prophet started October 5 for New York and Canada and, while in New York, received Section 100. He returned to Kirtland November 4. The last revelation in 1833 (Sec-
tion 101) was given December 16 and pertains to the sufferings of the saints in Missouri.

Only four revelations are recorded for 1834 in Kirtland. The first of these (Section 102) was given in the Joseph Smith home and is the minutes of the first high council to be organized in the Church. The minutes were considered of sufficient importance to incorporate them as a section of the Doctrine and Covenants. In the minutes are outlined some of the basic responsibilities of the high council, and a pattern was established which is followed to this day.

Section 103 was given February 24, 1834, in the Joseph Smith home, as a result of the difficulties which existed in Missouri, commanding that the men in Kirtland be organized to travel to Missouri to assist the persecuted saints there. This group became known in history as Zion’s Camp. Before starting, Joseph received Section 104, on April 23, concerning the United Order. He left Kirtland with the camp May 5. The camp was disbanded June 25 and the members returned home, Joseph arriving in Kirtland about August 1. The last revelation of 1834, Section 106, was received as Joseph continued his preparations for the school to be held in Kirtland and contained instructions to Warren A. Cowdery.

Only three revelations are recorded in 1835 in Kirtland, Section 107 was given as the Twelve met in council, and, recognizing that they were about to be separated for missionary activities, they asked the Prophet to inquire the desires of the Lord concerning them. This important explanation of the duties of the priesthood was received in answer. The first 58 verses were given at this time, and the remainder added later.

While the Prophet was visiting in Michigan, on August 17, 1835, a special conference was held at Kirtland, at which Oliver Cowdery introduced the “Book of Doctrine and Covenants of the Church.” The title had evidently been accepted by a committee which had concluded that the former title of Book of Commandments was too limited in its scope. The printing of an edition of the revelations in 1835 was to contain more than just commandments. A series of “Lectures on Faith” had been developed and these were included in the 1835 edition, but not as revelations. Also printed in this edition was an “Article on Government and Laws in General” (Section 134) which was written by Oliver Cowdery and presented to the
conference by William W. Phelps as an expression of the beliefs of the saints at that time on this subject. In the absence of Joseph Smith, the assembly voted to accept this article for printing, as well as an article on marriage. The article on marriage had been prepared by Oliver Cowdery and was also presented to the conference by Phelps as an expression of the belief of the saints at that time. This article was replaced in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants with the present Section 132 on the eternity of the marriage covenant. Upon his return to Kirtland, the Prophet accepted the decision of the assembly and permitted the printing of the two articles in the 1835 edition.

The third revelation given in 1835 was directed to Lyman Sherman.

Two revelations were received in 1836, both of which were of special importance. The Kirtland Temple had been finished, and the dedicatory prayer was offered by Joseph Smith March 27 and is included in the Doctrine and Covenants as Section 109. A few days later, April 3, while convened in the Kirtland Temple in a conference, Joseph and Oliver retired to the pulpit, the veils were dropped, and after a solemn prayer, they received a glorious vision of the Savior, and visitations from Moses, Elias, and Elijah, the account of which is given in Section 110.

The final revelation given in Kirtland is dated July 23, 1837, and contains instructions to Thomas B. Marsh and the Twelve. Six months later, January 12, 1838, Joseph Smith moved his home from Kirtland to Missouri, never to return to Ohio.

The Ohio period was one of great development, expansion, and inquiry in the Church. As the understanding of the Prophet Joseph Smith expanded, he was ready to receive a deeper insight into the purposes of the Lord. The principle of inquiry which has been mentioned frequently in connection with the Ohio revelations, brought about many answers which were to set the pattern for Church procedure for the future. The examples given to individuals in answer to their inquiries might well be applied today to members of the Church who have similar queries in their minds.
The Meaning of
The Kirtland Egyptian Papers

HUGH NIBLEY*

INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE IS THE BEST KIND

Filed together in a gray cardboard box in the Church Historian’s Office is a strange batch of early Church papers, all in the handwriting of men associated with Joseph Smith in Kirtland in 1837, and all classified for one reason or another as “Egyptian.” We shall therefore call them “the Kirtland Egyptian Papers.”**Along with a number of odds and ends are two impressive documents, one a bound manuscript commonly and falsely designated as “Joseph Smith’s Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar,” and the other what appears to be a translation of the first chapter of the Book of Abraham from a number of accompanying hieratic symbols. A photographic record of some of these documents was made on a single film strip by the Historian’s Office some years ago, but nothing was put on the strip to indicate the nature, number, or relationship of the various items included. So when the film was purloined, reproduced without permission, and copies sold in Salt Lake City in 1966, the publishers had no means of knowing what they were dealing with, but joyfully accepted the signature of Joseph Smith on one piece of paper as proof that the whole batch was his own handiwork. The public was only too glad to go along with the ruse, which went unchallenged by the Mormons, who had unconsciously laid the foundation of a massive misunderstanding many years before.

When a bound manuscript captioned “Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language” was turned up in the Church Historian’s Office in February 1935, the finders were under-

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**Book of Abraham and Egyptian Manuscripts**  
in the Church Historian's Office,  
Salt Lake City, Utah

**Egyptian manuscripts:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #1, ca. 1837. 1 vol. 31 x 20 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Manuscript entitled &quot;Grammar &amp; alphabet [sic] of the Egyptian language,&quot; in the handwriting of W. W. Phelps and Warren Parrish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #2, ca. 1837. 2l. 33 x 20 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Manuscript entitled &quot;Egyptian counting,&quot; in the handwriting of W. W. Phelps. Characters with English explanations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #3, ca. 1837. 4l. 32 x 20 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Manuscript entitled &quot;Egyptian alphabet,&quot; in the handwriting of W. W. Phelps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #4, ca. 1837. 9l. 33 x 20 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Manuscript entitled &quot;Egyptian alphabet,&quot; in the handwriting of Joseph Smith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #5, ca. 1837. 4l. various sizes. Ms.</td>
<td>Manuscript in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery. Top has deteriorated, similarity to Mss. 4 and 5 indicates it was probably titled &quot;Egyptian alphabet.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #6, ca. 1837. 1 vol. 20 x 13 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Titled &quot;Valuable discovery of hiden [sic] records . . . in the handwriting of Joseph Smith. English contents are in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #7, ca. 1837. 1 vol. 20 x 16 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>English contents in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery. Back cover has &quot;F.G.W.&quot; and &quot;William&quot; on it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #8, ca. 1837. 1l. (1 fold.) 32 x 40 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Egyptian characters and hieroglyphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Mss. #9, ca. 1837. 1l. 39 x 19 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Characters by unknown person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Papyri #10, n.d. 1l. 33 x 20 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Egyptian Papyrus attached to a sheet of paper.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Book of Abraham manuscripts:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manuscript</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript #1, ca. 1837. 10p. 32 x 20 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Translation of the Book of Abraham, 1:1 to 2:18 in the handwriting of W. W. Phelps and Warren Parrish. Obtained from Wilford Wood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript #2, ca. 1837. 4p. 33 x 19 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Book of Abraham, 1:4 to 2:6 in the handwriting of W. W. Phelps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript #3, ca. 1837. 6p. 32 x 19 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Book of Abraham, 1:4 to 2:2 in the handwriting of Warren Parrish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript #4, 1841. 18l. 29 x 20 cm. Ms.</td>
<td>Book of Abraham, 1:1 to 3:26 in the handwriting of Willard Richards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facsimile no. 2, ca. 841. 4p. various sizes. Ms.</td>
<td>Includes explanations in the handwriting of Willard Richards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
standably eager to claim the discovery of a major writing of Joseph Smith himself, and not only accepted the thing without question or examination as his work, but even went so far as to label it "Joseph Smith's Translation of Abraham's Alphabet and Grammar." Small wonder that the parties who since 1966 have diligently exploited this document as a weapon against the Prophet have been only too happy to accept without further discussion and on the authority of the Mormons themselves the quite untested and untenable propositions (a) that Joseph Smith actually wrote the thing, and (b) that he also translated that other text (the first chapter and part of the second chapter of the Book of Abraham) from the Egyptian symbols that accompany it.

The three crucial documents upon which these false assumptions are based are (1) the one which has been misleadingly dubbed Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar (hereafter referred to as "A. & G.").\(^2\) (2) two manuscripts of Abr. 1:4-2:5 (designated as "Book of Abraham Mss. #2 and #3" by the Historian's Office), and (3) a piece of paper ("Egyptian Ms. #6") bearing the signature of Joseph Smith, thus incriminating him as the author of everything. When in 1967 the original Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri became available and it was found that they contained some of the same characters as those accompanying the English texts of the above-mentioned "B. of A. Mss. #2 and #3," the "Fall of the Book of Abraham" was proclaimed with the usual orgiastic ecstasies of the Salt Lake City Messenger. Mr. Richard P. Howard of the Reorganized LDS Church then took up the theme in an article which through the offices of Mr. Wallace Turner and the New York Times (May 2, 1970) received national attention: "... the discovery and publication in 1967, of fragments of the original papyri from which Joseph

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1James R. Clark, The Story of the Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955), p. 156. Clark's suggestion (pp. 109f) that this may be a translation of a grammar written by Abraham meets with many objections, not the least of which is that the Prophet records in the "Joseph Smith 'Diary'" kept by Willard Richards, 1842-4, and still unpublished, under the date of "Wednesday Nov 15 1843. P. M. at the office suggested the Idea of preparing a gram- mer of the Egyptian language." From which it is plain that it was his idea. For this and other references to follow to unpublished materials in the Church Historian's Office we are beholden to the researches of Brother Dean Jessee, whose investigations into the various handwritings involved in the Kirtland Egyptian Papers are indispensable to any progress of understanding.

2Obtainable under the title of Joseph Smith's [sic] Alphabet and Grammar, from the Modern Microfilm Company in Salt Lake City. Published in 1906.
Smith produced the Book of Abraham . . . has given us the key to an authentic appraisal of the process by which the Book of Abraham was formulated by Joseph Smith.”

It is assumed without question or examination that Joseph Smith “produced the Book of Abraham” from these very papyri—though Mr. Howard would be the first to insist that any such derivation is impossible. But what does that tell us of the “process by which the Book of Abraham was formulated”? For that we must go to “Joseph Smith’s Original Alphabet and Grammar” where, according to Howard, even “a quick glance . . . discloses the modus operandi of Joseph Smith in determining its contents.” He assures us that “all of the text from Abraham 1:4-2:18 has been verified as having originated in this way.”

In what way? What is the “process,” the modus operandi which Mr. Howard finds so obvious? If he knows so well how it was done, let him give us an independent translation of some of these texts using the same method: anyone undertaking such a salutary exercise will quickly change his mind and begin to ask himself, “Is this really the very text, is this the very Alphabet and Grammar, is this the very process?” And if he honestly wants an answer he will soon discover the fatal defect in these documents as evidence, namely that they are both random and fragmentary. There is a lot more to the story than they alone can tell us. Mr. Howard’s unawareness shows impressively when as a clincher he points to an entry in the Joseph Smith History: “The remainder of this month I was continually engaged in translating an alphabet to the Book of Mormon, and arranging a grammar,” which for Howard is “an indication of how and when he proceeded to do it.”

But no matter how carefully one reads the passage, it tells us neither when, how, nor by whom the Kirtland Egyptian Papers were produced: the period referred to was only ten days in July 1835, while our papers were turned out years later; the Egyptian materials found in the A. & G. are, as we shall see, not those used in the purported translations labeled “B. of A. Mss. #2 and #3”; and where does Joseph Smith come into the picture? By persistent repetition of his name in every other line and in every context, and by strict avoidance of the names of the men who actually

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4Howard, p. 41.

wrote the documents it is an easy matter to stick Joseph Smith with the whole thing.

The trouble is that the stolen film was both an incomplete and an indiscriminating document, though repeated reference to it as "the original film" seeks to cover up these fatal defects. There is nothing in the film to show what the various documents included in it have to do with each other; where each begins and ends; how many there are; what the purpose of each is. Above all, these few items do not represent the whole collection of Kirtland Egyptian Documents: B. of A. Mss. #2 and #3, for example, are far less important than B. of A. Mss. #1 and #4 which are not included in the film, but which alone can tell us what Nos. 2 and 3 are about. It is the missing documents that make all the difference, and had the critics been honest they would have asked themselves from the first whether the odd and contradictory stuff that their hands fell into really told the whole story.

A STRANGE PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

The Kirtland Egyptian Papers are written in the handwriting of six men: W. W. Phelps, Frederick G. Williams, Warren Parrish, Oliver Cowdery, Willard Richards, and Joseph Smith.

The Richards text ("Bk. of Abr. Ms. #4") is dated 1841—the date is written on the back of it in the hand of Thomas Bullock—and contains no Egyptian characters. F. G. Williams's contribution is little more than a signature on the cover of "Eg. Ms. #6." This leaves Phelps, Cowdery, and Parrish as the key operators. Oliver Cowdery and W. W. Phelps could have done their work between July 1835 (when the papyri reached Kirtland) and early 1838, when both men broke with the Prophet. It is Parrish, who worked closely with Phelps, who limits the time span: he became a scribe to the Prophet on January 21, 1836, and was dismissed in December 1837 when Joseph Smith discovered that he had been working against him; soon afterwards Parrish was excommunicated and never returned to the Church. This means that the Kirtland Egyptian Papers were produced no earlier than 1836 and no later than 1837. For all these matters the reader is referred to Dean Jessee's article in this issue of BYU Studies.

Joseph Smith first heard of the papyri on about July 1, 1835. After July 19, 1835, the Prophet, according to his journal,
spent "the remainder of the month . . . continually engaged in arranging a grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients." On October 1, 1835, he "stayed at home and labored on the Egyptian Alphabet in company with his brethren O. Cowdery & W.W. Phelps. The system of astronomy was unfolded." Then on Tuesday, November 17, 1835, he "exhibited the alphabet of the ancient Records to Mr. Holmes, and some others. Went with him to F. G. Williams to see the mummies." There is no mention of his working on grammar or alphabet on the last day named; indeed, in the whole daily record of his activities only twelve days are mentioned on which he worked in those fields, and the work could hardly have been more than a preliminary speculation and blocking out of approaches. After the initial excitement, other concerns had priority, and a bare six weeks after the work had begun W. W. Phelps wrote to his wife: "Nothing has been doing in translation of the Egyptian record for a long time, and probably will not for some time to come." In December of 1835 Oliver Cowdery wrote a long and enthusiastic article on the Egyptian papyri for the Messenger and Advocate, promising more to come. Yet the subject is never mentioned again in Church publications until 1842, even though articles continued to appear by the same brethren—Phelps, Cowdery, Parrish—on such subjects as "Ancient History—Egypt" (in two parts) and "An Account of Abraham."

Moreover, we nowhere find mention of Joseph Smith engaged in translating the Book of Abraham itself before October of 1840, when he reports that though the papyri had been "unrolled and preserved with great labor and care, my time has been hitherto too much taken up to translate the whole of them." After five years the work had hardly got beyond the physical manipulation of the documents. By the end of 1837

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4Joseph Smith History (classified as DHC Ms. B-1, p. 597, in the Church Historian's Office, 47 East South Temple St., Salt Lake City), in the hand of Willard Richards, written in 1843.

5Recorded in a number of sources: Joseph Smith's Diary (Sept. 22, 1835 to April 3, 1836, in the hand of Oliver Cowdery) under date of Oct. 1, 1835; Joseph Smith History (DHC Ms. B-1, p. 622); Joseph Smith History, 1835-6, p. 107 (numbering from the back of Vol. A-1, written at the time of entry, Oct. 1835, by Warren A. Cowdery, this being the source we have quoted.


the chapter-and-a-half that appear in the Kirtland Egyptian Papers had been translated, but in November of that year the Prophet was still after "procuring means to translate and print the records taken from the Catacombs of Egypt." Most of the work, that is, was still to be done long after the men who wrote the Kirtland Papers had left the Church, and none of it was published until 1842, five years later. Wilford Woodruff was thrilled when in February 1842 "Joseph the Seer . . . presented . . . some of the Book of Abraham" to a group of the saints. It was exciting news: "Joseph has had these records in his possession for several years but has never presented them before the world in the English language until now." Ten days later the Prophet corrected Reuben Hedlock's engraving for the issue of the Times and Seasons appearing on March 15, 1842, and on the following day read proof of "the commencement of the Book of Abraham." Two days later he was again studying the original papyri with Hedlock "so that he might take the size of the several plates or cuts." Then after three days he "recommenced translating from the Records of Abraham," and on the afternoon of the following day "continued the translation of the Book of Abraham," and after some Church business "continued translating and revising, and reading letters in the evening . . . ." Thus we see that even the rare occasions on which he found time to translate were interrupted by business of various sorts. James R. Clark posits that "the five chapters or 13 pages of the Book of Abraham" were all turned out in the thirty days between February 19 and March 18, 1842; compared with the size of the Book of Mormon and its rate of production, this is quite a minor performance. Clark suggests that "Joseph Smith had not until February of 1842 seriously undertaken the translation of the texts of the papyrus rolls, but had concentrated on Abraham's [sic] Alphabet and Grammar from 1835-1842." But to say that he worked only on the grammar is not to say that he worked

32Clark, pp. 168f, quoting Wilford Woodruff Diary (Ms.), Feb. 19, 1842.
33DHC 4:519.
34DHC 4:542.
35DHC 4:543.
36DHC 4:548.
37Clark, pp. 173f.
long and hard on it; we know from his journal histories that he hardly got started on the project, and could devote very little time to it. A note written by Willard Richards at the dictation of the Prophet states: "Wednesday Nov 15 1843...P.M. at the office suggested the Idea of preparing a grammer [sic]of the Egyptian language." It is quite clear that any Egyptian grammar by Joseph Smith never got beyond the planning stage. The translation was never completed either, and in February of 1843 the editors of the *Times and Seasons* could announce, "...we have the promise of Br. Joseph, to furnish us with further extracts from the Book of Abraham." Certainly translation had never had to wait on the completion or even the beginning of a grammar. In all, Brother Joseph spent barely ten days "arranging" a grammar, which along with his many other duties would allow him only time to line up a few ideas. Most significant, the only "Grammar" in the Kirtland Papers is only a page-and-a-half long, a work of no practical value whatever, and never employed in any translation.

**SCRIPTURE OR STEPCHILD?**

Mr. Howard and the *Times* have informed the nation that "it may be helpful to suggest that the Book of Abraham represents simply the product of Joseph Smith Jr.'s imagination wrought out in the midst of what to him must have been a very crucial and demanding complex set of circumstances." The Prophet is generously conceded the privilege of making a fool of himself in view of the severe pressure under which he was operating, the Book of Abraham being a sort of crash program undertaken in time of crisis. But this will never do. We have seen that the Prophet Joseph only worked on the Egyptian things when his time was not "too much taken up" with other things, i.e., when he was *not* working in a crisis; such happy times did not come often, but they were spread over a period of eight years, so that whether he worked intensively on the project or not, he had plenty of time to consider what he was doing. It was not a rushed and crowded project but one reserved for scattered periods of relative leisure: Joseph Smith never did anything more calmly and deliberately.

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1See note 6.
3Howard, p. 45.
Even if the whole thing was done at Nauvoo in the Spring of 1842, the plan was conceived at the very beginning, in 1835, giving the Prophet years to think it over.

Again, Mr. Howard looks no farther than his own rhetoric for proof when he solemnly informs us that the Book of Abraham was not "any kind of 'inspired' translation, as the church has traditionally considered the Book of Mormon to have been," and applauds his church for "trying to divorce Joseph Smith from the ideas expressed in the Book of Abraham."21 They will concede the Prophet's ability to deal with reformed Egyptian but place ordinary Egyptian hopelessly beyond his reach.

Yet from the very beginning the Book of Abraham was viewed and discussed by the Latter-day Saints as authentic scripture. As soon as the Prophet got possession of the papyri, W.W. Phelps wrote to his wife: "... the 'rolls of papyrus,' contained the sacred record kept of Joseph in Pharaoh's Court in Egypt, and the teachings of Father Abraham. God has so ordained it that these mummies and writings have been brought in the Church, and the sacred writing I had just locked up in Brother Joseph's house when your letter came." Moreover, these sacred records "will make a good witness for the Book of Mormon."22 In the envelope with this letter, the Prophet Joseph enclosed his own kind and comforting note to Sister Phelps back at the farm in Missouri, promising her that her husband would in time be able to teach her "hidethings of old times," even "treasures hid in the sand" (citing Deut. 33:19).23 On November 17, 1835, the Prophet reported that an inspection of the same documents left his visitor, Mr. Holmes, "strong in the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ."24 In his long article in the Messenger and Advocate a month later, Oliver Cowdery hailed the documents as "an inestimable acquisition to our present scriptures."25 The Prophet told another visitor, Josiah Quincy, according to the latter, that "these ancient records throw great light on the subject of Christianity," and though he never got around to demonstrating the point in detail, it is nonetheless

21Ibid., pp. 44-45.
23A photograph of this letter in the Prophet's hand accompanies the above article, n. 22.
true.\textsuperscript{26} Years later Orson Pratt recalled that "the Lord told him [Joseph Smith] they were sacred records, containing inspired writings of Abraham . . ."\textsuperscript{27} Indeed, how could writings of Abraham be considered anything but sacred? This "Book of Abraham," as it was always called, "that is to be presented to the inhabitants of the Earth in the Last Days," as Wilford Woodruff wrote just after a session with the Prophet Joseph,\textsuperscript{28} can no more be dismissed as a secular aberration than its sponsoring as scripture can be denied to Joseph Smith, its principal enthusiast.

**THE ALPHABET AND GRAMMAR (A. \& G.)**

We have seen that Joseph Smith as early as 1835 and as late as 1843 "suggested the idea of preparing a grammer of the Egyptian language," and made some preliminary exploratory motions. They could not have been more than that—there was too much else going on and, as the journal history shows, chances for serious work were few and far between. We also know that he worked "in company with his brethren" and sought their advice and help. Also we know from the letters and journals of all those men that they were strong-minded, independent, and (all but one) ambitious to shine as revealers and translators in their own right. So when a document like the so-called "Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" comes into our hands, the first question to ask, before leaping to conclusions and inventing a title that is calculated and bound to cripple serious research, is "Just who produced this?" And right away we begin to notice a number of interesting things.

1. None of this is written by the hand of Joseph Smith, but it is all in the handwriting of William Wines Phelps, with the exception of five short appendages to certain sections written by the hand of Warren Parrish.

2. The A. \& G. has no title page. It lies before us complete and undamaged in the original binding, but instead of a title page the writer did not even leave room for a title, so that the words "Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language"

\textsuperscript{26}Quincy Whig, Oct. 17, 1840, p. 1, cited in Clark, Story of the Pearl of Great Price, p. 112.

\textsuperscript{27}O. Pratt, in Journal of Discourses 20 (1878), p. 65.

\textsuperscript{28}See note 12.
have to be awkwardly and unevenly crammed in at the top of the first page, as an afterthought when the page was completed. What makes this interesting is that Joseph Smith was a stickler for titles, as his publications will show.\textsuperscript{296} Indeed, the one proper title page among the Kirtland Egyptian Papers was penned by Joseph Smith himself. Why, then, does this most ambitious work have no title page if Smith wrote or dictated it?

3. Stranger still, Joseph Smith is nowhere designated as the author. He always took full responsibility for what he wrote or dictated, as when in taking over the editorship of the \textit{Times and Seasons} he took pains to make clear just who was responsible for what.\textsuperscript{29} All the scriptures even, revealed through him, bear his name conspicuously at their head. However reticent his disciples may have been, the Prophet knew that it was important to establish the authorship of any inspired writing.

4. The grammar and spelling throughout the book are very nearly perfect, which means that they are not Joseph Smith's. This book is in the hands of a literate writer, W.W. Phelps, the best-educated man in Kirtland. How much of it is his and how much Smith's remains to be seen and calls for investigation.

5. It was not the habit of Joseph Smith to suppress his revelations. He made every effort to see to it that each excerpt from the book of Abraham was published to the world the moment it was presentable. "One cannot read the pages of the early periodicals of the Church," writes James R. Clark, "... without being impressed with the fact that to Joseph Smith, availability of the new revelations of God where people could read them and immediately profit by their instruction was more important than the technicality of having a complete text of these ancient records at the start ..." Hence, Clark notes, it was his custom to publish them in the form of extracts as he went along.\textsuperscript{30} But none of our Kirtland Egyptian Papers was ever published in any form; no one is challenged to put these writ-

\textsuperscript{296}Apart from examples in the standard works, the indefatigable Dean Jessee calls our attention to documents dictated or written by the Prophet, e.g.: JS 1832-34 Diary: "Joseph Smith Jr—Record Book Bought for to note all the minute circumstances that comes under my observation." JS 1833-36 Diary: "Sketch Book for the use of Joseph Smith, Jr." 1832 History: "A History of the life of Joseph Smith Jr. . . ." 1842-44 Diary: "President Joseph Smith's Journal".

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Times and Seasons} 3 (Mar. 1, 1842), p. 710.

\textsuperscript{30} Clark, pp. 173-4, 99.
The entire grammar section of the "Grammar and Alphabet" in the hand of W. W. Phelps, consists of this page and half of the following. The reader can decide for himself whether any of this material was used in the composition of the Book of Abraham, and if so how.
ings to the test, as all the world was invited to examine the Facsimiles and their explanations; no claims of revelation are made for them; no one claims authorship for them; no one is invited to inspect or comment or criticize. Those who have peddled the papers publicly have advertised them as "suppressed for 130 years." If they were suppressed they can hardly be given the status of official documents, let alone that of a standard work. If the brethren were invited to try a hand at inspired writing and translation, to "study it out in your mind; then . . . ask me if it be right," (D&C 9:8) we need not be surprised if all sorts of speculative papers, diagrams and word-juggling turn up as remnants of such preliminary study; it would be surprising, rather, if they did not. Even if the Kirtland Papers were the work of Joseph Smith, their existence would not refute his claims to revelation unless by his own declaration they represent his own inspired translation of specific Egyptian texts. As it is, the A. & G. in the hand of Phelps has by our indiscriminating editors been mingled with the pages of three other versions of an A. & G., which we must consider before we decide which if any is the responsibility of Joseph Smith.

EGYPTIAN MSS. #3, 4 AND 5

6. Beside the bound A. & G., the Historian's Office possesses three other documents which have been labeled "Egyptian Mss. #3, 4 and 5." All share common contents with each other and with the A. & G., but each has its own special interpretations. Ms. #3 consists of four pages, 7⅞ by 12⅞ inches, each written on one side of the paper only. It starts out bravely on page 1 with what it calls "Egyptian Alphabet first degree"; the page is carefully ruled into four columns which are headed, from left to right, "Character," "letter," "sound," and "Explanation." (See illustration.) Twenty-three hieratic signs are listed in the "Character" column, each one to be transliterated in the "letter" column into our alphabet, given its phonetic value in the next column, and finally receive a single "explanation" of one short line. The system is quite different from the one followed in the A. & G. The one-line explanations are carried on for the first page and for ten characters on the second page, but there they come to a stop: the next nineteen characters (the list of twenty-three
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>First Degree Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>ah</td>
<td>The first being who exercises supreme power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>The first man, one who has highly power or being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>A more minute sign, having greater dominion, or power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pharaoh**
- Royal family, royal blood, or Pharaoh, or a more frum or kind

**Herod**
- Crown of a prince, or equanimous Greek

**Tah-tumma**
- The name of the royal family, in the past the

**Pharaoh**
- An unmarried woman wishing to prince

**Pharaoh**
- A young unmarried male - a prince

**Pharaoh**
- Married or a married daughter

**Pharaoh**
- Crown of a prince, or king

The earth

Can take the attitude - be earth, be low, unsee, water

**Note**
- Can to see - sight, sometimes see, empty

**Note**
- See - Egypt. The land first seen by a woman, and water

**Note**
- In the earth which other person is that? Who?

**Note**
- The beginning, first, before anything to

**Zebulon**
- The beginning of the earth, or creation

**Zebulon**
- To be - as light in the earth

**Zebulon**
- The first creation of any thing from the first to every state before after

This "Egyptian Alphabet" by W.W. Phelps treats only 23 symbols, and the explanations cease after only a page and a half. It differs considerably from Phelps' treatment of his "Alphabet" in his "A. G." as well as from the Joseph Smith "Alphabet." Note that ambitious four-column beginning that is never followed through. Note especially that each character is interpreted in so few words that the basic idea can be expressed in two different ways in less than a line of text. This is in complete disagreement with the supposed translation of the characters in the Book of Abraham Mss., in which each symbol requires a paragraph of 50 or 100 or more words for its interpretation.
being repeated over and over again under different "parts" and "degrees") have their "sound" indicated, but no equivalent English "letter," and no "explanation" is offered for any of them. For the next seventeen characters, including the first seven on page 3, not even the sounds are given. Thus as in the A. & G. proper this great project begins to fizzle out on the second page, and grinds to a halt on the third. It is significant that this document, like the A. & G., is in the handwriting of W. W. Phelps. An "alphabet" designated by the Historian's Office as 'Egyptian Mss. #4, ca. 1837' may well be in Joseph Smith's own hand. It is on the same type and size of paper as Phelps' "Eg. Ms. #3" and like it, occupies four pages. But there is an important difference between the two texts. In the "Joseph Smith" version the columns for "letters" and "sounds" are entirely missing. The Phelps project is plainly the more ambitious of the two.

A third "Alphabet" text (Egyptian Ms. #5") is like the others of four pages only, on the same paper and obviously produced as part of the same campaign. The interesting thing is the way the three men disagree in their interpretations, each going his own way. Take for example the one sign that is constantly being rehearsed in all the "Grammar and Alphabet" writings, the well-known reed-sign, perhaps the most important and certainly the commonest of all hieroglyphic symbols. A special treatment of the reed-sign is tucked on at the end of each of the three copies. A comparison of the three texts is instructive.

Ms. #3: Za ki on-hish, Kulsidonhish, in the land of the Chaldees.

  Za ki an-hish Ahbrah aam, the father of the faithful thrones

the first right, unto whom is committed

Ms. #4: Ah-bra-oam. Signifies father of the faithful. The first right—the elder

Ah-braam:

  Ah-bra-oam. Signifies father of the faithful. The first right. The elder a

Ms. #5: Zakiian-hish, or Kulsidiash - The land of the Chaldeans.

Each of these is interpreting the same sign, with no sovereign master-mind to bring them to a unity of the faith. Cowdery
and Phelps hear different sounds and come up with different meanings. And Joseph freely lets them go their way while he goes his, each under obligation to "study it out in your mind" before asking for revelation. This is something that anti-Mormon writers have willfully misinterpreted from the first. Why, they have asked, would a prophet have to speculate and sweat like anybody else? Here is Brigham Young undertaking long and costly experiments to see whether corn or peaches or sugar beets or silkworms would thrive in the Great Basin. Some crops withered away, and others, contrary to the predictions of all the experts, flourished magnificently. If Brigham was a prophet, his enemies said, why didn't God spare him the trouble of all that trial and error by giving him all the answers right at first? To which he answered, Why should God do that? Brigham and the people were all the wiser for their experience and, as the Mormons have always taught, our express purpose in coming to this earth is to gain just such experience. All his life Joseph Smith dealt with ancient documents, constantly stretching his own mind to bridge the gap of the unknown, and then calling upon the Lord when a problem exceeded his powers. It is thus that we grow in knowledge and understanding.

NO KEY TO TRANSLATION

All the Grammar and Alphabet projects viewed so far aborted dismally; none of them could ever have been used even as an imaginary basis for constructing the story of Abraham. Consider a few points:

1. The A. & G. is a bound book, still complete with no pages missing. Yet only 34 pages have writing on them while 186 are left blank. The written pages do not, however, run consecutively, but are scattered at intervals throughout the book, an average of 3 written pages being followed by 18 to 20 blank ones. Thus only about one-sixth of the intended operation was completed. The pages carefully arranged and set apart for the other five-sixths were never used. The A. & G. is thus a work barely begun, but that is not all—even the written part is but a timid preliminary, for

2. the A. & G. contains only one page of grammar, and that is limited to a discussion of degrees of comparison. These
The first being who exercised supreme power in the first man or one who has singly, however, as a more universal right, having given dominion over all to the royal family royal blood a phantom of supreme power being called of a prince or queen a stands for queen being married or the principle of virtue.

Each man the name of a royal family in prime line, a cop with a unmarried woman and a virgin prince to an cop young unmarried man a prince.

Zip To woman married or unmarried among the lone cop had dream of a prince or king one who can the Earth.

The second part first degree.

1. Adam's God without beginning or end, he was.
2. Apos, the beginning with God the Son, the Holy Angels or disembodied spirits, heaven.
3. Almighty, God, in an inarticulate manner.
4. Almighty ministers of God high, first being.
5. Almighty ministers of God under the lips.
6. Almighty ministers not ordained of God self.
7. Almighty ministers who are lips, six in first place.
8. Boc the name of all mankind men or.
9. Boc his Adam of the first men or that king
10. Boc he the next from Adam on obtained.
11. Boc he the third person.
12. Boc he the fourth from Adam.
An "Egyptian Alphabet" in the handwriting of Joseph Smith (Eg. Ms. #4). Note (1) that the Egyptian signs are arranged according to form—vertical, horizontal, diagonal, etc.; that the explanations are systematic classifications (a) of the hierarchy of royal power and its establishment in the land (part one), and (b) of heavenly power and its transfer to mankind ("second part"); (2) that the text differs in many particulars from that of W. W. Phelps; (3) that only 23 symbols are considered in each part, while the "second part" does not go beyond Aleph and Beth, the first two letters of the alphabet. From this it would appear (1) that we have here a perfectly sane and rational approach to a problem, (2) that the approach is experimental and not authoritarian, and (3) that it was abandoned at an early stage.
degrees are referred to in dealing with the symbols that make up the Alphabet, and yet
3. the Alphabet that follows consists of only thirty symbols. With hundreds of hieroglyphic and thousands of hieratic symbols to choose from, the author throughout limits himself to only thirty of them. Why, since he is by no means bound by the conventional definition of an alphabet, does he stop with thirty?

4. And why, of the thirty symbols, is only one—the first one—completely explained? And why does he exhaust his ingenuity explaining that one (the reed-symbol, of course) no less than fifteen times, each time with a different shade of meaning? Some of the other symbols get short explanations, and these too are explained over and over again, each in its various "parts" and "degrees" while retaining its basic meaning. Even so, only half-a-dozen hieratic symbols are explained and all the rest of the magnificent accumulation of signs at the disposal of our scholars are ignored.

5. Stranger still, the signs that are explained are not found in the real Egyptian documents, where no system is in evidence of the placing of one, two, or three strokes above a sign, for example, and where there is nothing whatever to indicate the remarkably Ogam-like arrangement of symbols in the A. & G. And while the fascinating hieroglyphs that flank Facsimile No. 1 are duly noted and repeatedly listed, they receive no treatment at all, even though they are real pictures and far more suggestive of ideas than anything in the hieratic lists. What is more, the signs treated in the "grammatical" texts are not the signs that turn up in the margins of "B, of A. Mss. #2 and #3," from which signs the Book of Abraham is supposed to have been copied. The point we wish to make here is not that the stuff is confused and nonsensical, but that it never came anywhere near approaching the point at which its author could pretend that the one-page grammar and the six-letter alphabet were serviceable.

6. It is maintained by Howard, Turner, et al. that the A. & G. is "Joseph Smith's working papers," showing us the toilsome and tedious steps of a creative work in progress. "Working papers" in the form of a bound volume, neatly written out in final and unalterable form? Working papers in a fair hand, without smudging, erasing, rewriting, without additions or alterations? Working papers without a dot set
down by the intervening hand of Joseph Smith? In short, working papers that show no signs of any work but the scribal exercise of copying down an already completed text, free of any evidence of hesitation or deliberation? We have in the whole A. & G. fewer words than are contained in the average magazine feature-story—about thirteen typewritten pages. Can this represent long years of coming to grips with the Book of Abraham? At most this might be the final result of a lot of work—but the actual process of years of toil, the working papers of Joseph Smith? That is utter nonsense.

7. For what has the A. & G. to do with the Book of Abraham? In the "explanations," six incomplete and disconnected phrases from the text of the Book of Abraham are quoted, and that is all (Abr. 1:2, 3, 23, 26; 2:3, 5). These are not sentences but simply very brief expressions taken out of context. They appear with proper meaning and context in the Book of Abraham, but only in a fragmentary and disconnected state in the A. & G. Which makes it perfectly clear that the Abraham text was already completed at the time these expressions were borrowed from it to help make the grammar. All the words quoted from the Book of Abraham in the A. & G. put together make up less than the bulk of the single verse Abr. 1:2. The thought of the Book of Abraham being worked out from, or even with the aid of the A. & G. which came later and contains not an iota of the material in that book, is simply ridiculous.

8. Because of the peculiar system of classes and degrees, almost every passage in the A. & G. appears more than once, and most of the symbols are given more than one interpretation. Thus Parrish gives five different explanations of the "Kolob" sign. Whatever the nature of the game these gentlemen are playing, it is of no help to a translator when any symbol can, without the slightest alteration, take on half-a-dozen different meanings. Which are we to take as the official translation?

9. Where do we find any evidence that any of the absurdly elaborate apparatus of the A. & G. was ever put to use? What are we to make of the total neglect of the more than 120 exotic names found in the pages of the A. & G., none of which ever finds its way into the Book of Abraham?369 The Book of Abraham...
ham is much concerned with numbers: why does none of the 79 surviving symbols or the ingenious names which designate the Egyptian numerals in the Kirtland Papers ever show up in the Book of Abraham? Why if the "alphabet" was devised for the translating of the book, do none of the 30 symbols of that alphabet have anything to do with it, except for 5 astronomical symbols in Fac. 2? A Homeric grammar is based on Homer, a New Testament grammar on the New Testament; but the A. & G. and other papers supposedly based on the Egyptian texts of the Book of Abraham are almost entirely filled with stuff that has no relationship to the Book of Abraham as we have it.

TRANSLATIONS WITH EGYPTIAN SYMBOLS

Now we come to the critics' Exhibit A, those manuscripts taken from the stolen film and published to the world as absolute proof that Joseph Smith did not translate Egyptian but mistook the Book of Breathings for the story of Abraham. We refer to two manuscript copies of the first chapter and part of the second chapter of the Book of Abraham which contain in their left-hand margins a number of hieratic symbols. It is assumed that the English text is a translation of the Egyptian characters. This is taking a lot for granted, even on the evidence of the two texts, which go in the Historian's Office under the titles of "B. of A. Mss. #1 and #4." Let us consider them before turning to the more important "Mss. #2 and #3" which were not available to our pirates.

1. The first thing we notice about the Egyptian symbols in the margins is that they are not the symbols found in the A. & G. and related works. If the Book of Abraham is supposed to be based on the latter, then these hieratic characters cannot be considered as its source. And there is no reason why they should be, aside from the argument of mere juxtaposition.

2. But the position of the symbols raises more doubts than confidence: there are not nearly enough of them; they are much too far apart. Much capital has been made of the ridiculous disproportion between the eighteen brief hieratic symbols, which take up just two short lines of the Book of Breathings, and the long and involved history of Abraham which is supposedly derived from them. It is as if one were to detect evidence of fraud in the absurd disproportion between the page
Joseph Smith has put his signature on the front cover of an Egyptian text which he labels a "Valuable Discovery." The text itself, however, consists only of two pages of hieratic copied down in a modern hand, without any translation, and a note, in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery, about a princess "Katumin" who is supposed to have lived a thousand years after Abraham and so has nothing to do with his story.
number on this page and the mass of print that goes along with it—can a little number possibly contain all that information? Well, is it supposed to? The clever men who wrote these strange documents had studied ancient languages at school, and were quite as capable of noticing and pointing out such discrepancies as are the learned editors of the *Salt Lake Messenger*. For this we have good evidence in two Kirtland documents which deserve a brief side trip.

**THE "VALUABLE DISCOVERY" AND ITS TWIN**

The only document among the Kirtland Egyptian Papers that bears the signature of Joseph Smith is a booklet (Eg. Ms. #6) that has been made by doubling over six strips of tough, thin, unlined paper to form a brochure of 12 pages, 6 by 6 7/8 inches, sewn together along the fold. On the outside of the binding, which is made of a sheet of thinner and darker tissue paper and has slightly larger dimensions, is written in a bold scrawl: "Valuable Discovery of hiden records that have been obtained from the ancient buring place of the Egyptians. Joseph Smith Jr." On the first of the following pages are 17 lines of Egyptian text, rather poorly copied hieratic characters from a funeral document. Under this in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery is a brief note stating where the text was found. There is no attempt at translation or interpretation. The next page contains seven more lines of the same Egyptian text and nothing else—not a word of English. The third and last page contains two brief notes in Cowdery's hand on the chronology of a certain Princess Katumin, the first note preceded by three and the second by two unrecognizable characters. Since each note begins with the name of Katumin, one wonders how the name could be derived from totally different symbols. Was it supposed to be?

Along with the "Valuable Discovery" booklet goes another (Eg. Ms. #7) made exactly like it of the same kind of paper and with the same type of cover, this time bearing the scrawled name of "Williams" on the back, as well as the initials "F G W." So this would seem to be Frederick G. Williams' work—only it is not, for the book inside is written in the hand of W. W. Phelps. Oliver may have been acting as Joseph's scribe in this operation, but in that case was Phelps the scribe for Williams? We can't take the name on the cover of either of these books as proof of authorship. But here is
A Translation of the First Page

Nathumine, Princess, daughter of Onis-tas of Egypt, who began to reign in the year of the world, 2969.

Nathumine was born in the 30th year of the reign of her father, and died where she was 39 years old, which was 3020.

"Egyptian Ms. #7." Though the cover bears the name "Williams" and the initials "F.G.W." this document is in the handwriting of O. Cowdery. It is the only instance in the Kirtland Papers in which a specific English text is stated to be the translation of a specific Egyptian document. Note that the bulk of the two texts is pretty well balanced, with none of that grotesque disproportion which critics have read into the "Book of Abraham" Mss. and have diligently exploited as Joseph Smith's folly.
W. W. Phelps again; on page 1 of his booklet we find word for word the same two statements about the Princess Katumin as appear on the last page of the Cowdery version (Phelps calls her "Kah-tou-mun" in his "Alphabet or Eg. Ms. #3"); only this time the enigmatic characters supplied by Cowdery are missing—Phelps has none of them. Instead he adds an extremely important note by entitling his treatise on the princess "A Translation of the next page." Here at last is the only known case in which a specific English text is said to be a translation of a specific given Egyptian document. The "next page" in question is a numbered page in a bound book, so there can be no mistake about it. Phelps wants us to believe that the Egyptian text on that page is the original story of Katumin. And it gives us quite a surprise when we turn to it, for to match the four short lines of Phelps' English text he gives us a good three-plus lines of Egyptian text, thus preserving a very nice balance between the number of words in each. Phelps knew perfectly well that the Greek and Hebrew Testaments are no mere pamphlets compared with the King James Bible, and here he leaves no possible doubt that he considers a decent proportion advisable between his Egyptian and English texts.

This is important because the disproportion between the length of Egyptian signs and English sentences is labored as the principal argument against the Book of Abraham, and the most important evidence for this is B. of A. Ms. #4 in the handwriting of the astute and sensible Phelps. One needs no knowledge of Egyptian to point out that a dot and two strokes can hardly contain the full message of an English paragraph of a hundred words or more. In 1967 a Mr. Heward passed around handbills at a General Conference pathetically asking, "Why should anyone want to fight the truth?"—the "truth" being his own great discovery that if somebody translates a single dot as the story of Little Red Riding Hood something must be out of joint: "Could a single dot carry that much meaning?" Mr. Heward asked with eminent logic. We are asked to believe that this point escaped all the smart men of Kirtland, who persisted for no reason at all in deriving a whole book from less than two dozen signs, when they had thousands of such signs to draw from, and thereby achieved such monumental absurdity as no child could fail to notice. In 1970 Messrs. Howard and Turner bring forth as the crowning evi-
idence against Joseph Smith Mr. Dee J. Nelson’s sensational find that the hieratic word ms.t is translated by Joseph Smith with a paragraph of 132 words. It never occurred to anyone to ask, in the glad excitement, whether this was really Joseph Smith’s work and whether ms.t was ever believed by anyone to contain a story of 132 words. Actually, the text from which Mr. Nelson got his ms.t was written by Phelps (it is B. of A. Ms. # 2), and we have just seen that Phelps knew very well how the texts should balance up. Maybe there is something the critics don’t know about.

3. Looking at the first page of each of our two Abraham manuscripts (B. of A. Mss. # 2 and # 3), we note that both are numbered “page 1”—the story begins here. But what do we find? The first line is introduced by an Egyptian symbol, right enough, but opposite that symbol is not a line from the Book of Abraham but the words

second

sign of the fifth degree of the first part.

And then the next line is introduced by another Egyptian symbol and begins with the words

mine

I sought for the appointment where unto unto the priesthood

Page 1 of both texts begins not with the story of Abraham but with the fourth verse—a whole column left out; what comes before is not the Abraham story but something about grammar, leaving no room for the preceding verses even if this were not marked “page 1.” Is this the way one begins translating a book?

4. Next we note that Sign No. 3 (the third from the top) is placed over against the English text right in the middle of a sentence and squarely between two lines of “translation,” the “translator” thus leaving us in complete doubt as to just what lines are supposed to be translated from that sign. As it stands, the hieratic symbol cannot possibly be matched up with any particular sections, paragraph, sentence, or line of the Abraham story.

5. Compare this same symbol as it appears in B. of A. Mss. # 2 and # 3. In the latter we see within the bent arm of power a conspicuous circle with a dash inside it; circle and dash are completely absent, however, from Ms. # 2. Can such a prominent feature be blithely ignored where every little dot and line necessarily speaks volumes? It would seem that ac-
uracy of detail means little to our copyists, who are satisfied as long as the general configuration of a symbol is recogniz-
able—not for translation purposes, patently, but as some sort of marker. In both manuscripts the Egyptian characters are placed throughout in exactly the same position with relationship to the English text, while considerable license is taken with the manner in which they are drawn. Which indicates that they are meant as guides or markers of some sort rather than as containing every detail of the long and involved text within their tiny scope. This is born out if we consider the next symbol.

6. Symbol No. 4 in B. of A. Ms. ≠ 4 stands opposite what looks like a new paragraph or section. The preceding line ends abruptly in the middle of the page and even has a period to finish it. And sure enough there is a brand-new Egyptian symbol in the margin to start us off with a new idea or story. Only one thing is wrong: what should be the new section or paragraph begins right in the middle not just of a sentence but of a clause, its opening words being "utterly refused to hearken . . ." What our Egyptian character marks in this case is not an idea, a word, a phrase, sentence, or paragraph, but the point at which a scribe takes up his pen—right in the middle of a sentence. Again, the writers of Mss. ≠ 2 and ≠ 3 make no effort to have their hieroglyphic signs agree in anything but general appearance: a carefully partitioned circle in one is but a hasty loop in the other.

7. Seven lines down from this symbol in Ms. ≠ 3 our scribe (Warren Parrish) begins a new paragraph, and rightly so, since at this point a new theme is introduced, a discussion of human sacrifice (Abr. 1:7). Here if ever is the proper place for an Egyptian symbol to tell the new story—but there is none! The author of the English version is utterly indifferent to any possible Egyptian writing that might supply him with the needed information. First a character where none should be and then no character where such is indispensable—our scribes make not even the crudest, most elementary effort to match up their "translations" with their purported sources.

8. Look at the next sign, No. 5. It is placed in Ms. ≠ 3 exactly between the lines:

"... the hand of the priest of Elkener

Sign

The priest of Elkkenener was also the prie-
Plainly it does not mark the beginning of a new section or the introduction of a new idea, for the two lines practically repeat each other. But turning to Ms. 3 and the same sign we find that this scribe begins a new section at this point: he does not end the preceding section with a period, but simply breaks off in the middle of a line; and he does not begin the next line with a capital, but he does indent it. Why no punctuation? Because there is no break in the meaning. Why then the interrupted line and the new indentation, both completely ignored by the writer of Ms. 4? Because at this point the writer resumes operations. Again the two copyists make no effort to have their Egyptian symbols match in detail, indeed one must look twice to detect the resemblance between their marks—an unthinkable situation if they thought that every Egyptian squiggle and dot was loaded with detailed information. Halfway between Symbols No. 4 and 5 Parrish has marked what looks like a small equal sign in his margin, but there is no such mark in the other manuscript—another indication that the marginal signs do not supply the meaning of the text.

9. Information-wise, Sign No. 4 showers us with a generous catalogue of exotic proper names—Elkkenir, Libnah, Mahmakhrab, and the god of Pharaoh King of Egypt, tells us how the people hardened their hearts to the preaching of Abraham, how the heathen offered their children to idols, how the priest of Elkkena (mentioned for the second time, with an alteration of spelling—how is that indicated in the symbol?) tried to put Abraham to death, etc. It is quite a story for one little picture to convey, especially when the copyists don’t particularly care about details in drawing it. The next sign, No. 5, is a very simple affair—two straight dashes, a circle, and a tiny T-shaped figure, but it manages to convey the name of Pharaoh no less than four times, once specifically as "Pharaoh King of Egypt," without giving any credit to Sign No. 4; then it goes on to tell about an altar built in the land of Chaldea, about human sacrifice to "the god of Pharaoh" (another steal from Sign No. 4), about Shagreel (his name repeated twice) who was identified with the sun, about the rites at Potiphar’s Hill in the Plain of Olishem—all that jammed into four strokes and a circle—a circle which the two manuscripts draw quite differently. Well, the same phrases and images go on being presented by a series
of quite different signs, and then we get to Sign No. 8, and though it is quite different from the other characters it brings us right back to our old friends Elkkinir, Libnah, Mahmachrah, and the god of Pharaoh King of Egypt, with the Chaldeans thrown in for good measure. What goes on here? Couldn't the translator remember what he had just translated? He didn't need to, for it was right on the page before his eyes in his own handwriting. Yet he keeps on reading the same list of names and epithets by way of rendering totally different Egyptian characters, and having achieved a miracle of economy by squeezing gallons of juice out of one tiny lemon he does not make use of his precious symbol when he needs to express the same things again, but simply picks up any symbol that happens to be at hand and makes use of that. The basic rule of this grammar is that any Egyptian character will express any name or situation or combination of names or situations imaginable. If Sign No. 5 tells us about the sacrifice of three virgins, Sign No. 6 can tell us the same story all over again while assuming quite another shape. On the other hand, don't ever worry about needing another symbol after one symbol has been milked for a minor epic—though there are thousands of characters available, you can forget about them and go on adding episode after episode to your one-symbol story: there is no limit to what you can read into it—one small symbol is "translated" by over 180 words. With such principles in operation, who cares about grammar? Why all this head-splitting about symbols when any symbol will do?

10. The fact is that there is no head-splitting. Nobody pays any attention to the Egyptian symbols; no Egyptian character is ever redrawn or corrected, or discussed or ever referred to in whole or in part. True, some symbols are discussed in the A. & G., but these are not the symbols, and if one can imagine any principles of translation deducible from the Grammar, it is impossible to discover any sign of their being applied in PGP Copies 3 and 4.

11. Prolonging our second glance at B. of A. Mss. #2 and #3, we are surprised and puzzled to note that the text of the Book of Abraham before our eyes is written down in a neat, flawless hand, without any signs of hesitation or exasperation. Only a few minor touches distinguish it from our printed text of Abraham. As in the A. & G., everything is tidy and correct, with no signs of creativity or normal pangs of composition, to
Translation of the Book of Abraham written by his own hand whose hieroglyphs and found in the catacombs of Egypt.

In the land of the black crows, at the residence of my father, J. Abraham, I now, that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence, considering there was greater happiness and peace, and rest for me, I sought for a habitation of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer.

The name: Being here a follower of righteousness, desiring to be one who helped great

In radicil: A greater holiness of righteousness

Help a notion of greater knowledge; a prince of peace; one who keeps the commandments of God; a rightful heir; a high priest, helping the right belonging to the fathers, from the beginning of time; even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time; even the right of the first born, or the first heir, who is Abraham, or first father, through father, unto the.

"Book of Abraham Ms. #1." An attempt by W. W. Phelps to match Egyptian characters with specific English words is evident from the numbers placed beside the first two hieroglyphs (j and w), the same numbers appearing before the English words "land," "Abraham," and "saw," the basic meaning of the j and w signs according to the "Alphabet" studies. It is quite evident that the plan was quickly given up, none of the following signs being treated in such a manner; which means that they are not being "translated" at all. W. Parrish takes over the writing in the middle of the page, and marks his beginning with an Egyptian symbol, though he begins in the middle of a sentence. There is no discernable relationship between the symbols and the contents of the various sections of text.
say nothing of laborious translation. No "working papers" of a
difficult translation ever looked like this. The copyists were
writing down the finished or nearly-finished text of the Book
of Abraham in a fair, flowing and uninhibited hand, not de-
erving that text from, of all things, eighteen hieratic marginal
symbols.

12. The margins themselves show this: the margins of the
English text are remarkably straight and neat, and it is at once
apparent that the hieratic symbols must adapt themselves to
those margins, and not the other way around. Thus on the
last page of B. of A. Ms. #2 W. W. Phelps has kept a neat
margin but one more than twice as wide as necessary to ac-
commodate the Egyptian characters; this waste of space and
paper would have been avoided had he been adapting his mar-
gin to the hieratic signs. On the other hand, on the last three
pages of Ms. #1 some Egyptian characters are squeezed right
off the page by a margin that is not wide enough for them,
and one jumps over the margin and intrudes a whole inch on
the space of the English text. Thus the margins always ac-
commodate the English text, but not the Egyptian symbols. Which can
only mean that the English of the Book of Abraham was here
copied down before the Egyptian signs were added. This was
borne out further by the fact that all the marginal Egyptian
writing is supplied by a single hand, an expert at copying
them, and not by the writers of the English text.32 We can
hardly call evidence that Joseph Smith derived the Book of
Abraham from Egyptian symbols documents not written by
him in which the Abraham text is not derived from those sym-
bols.

13. In B. of A. Ms. #2 the writer after reaching Abr. 2:5
decides to dispense with Egyptian writing altogether. He gives
up the margin in the middle of the page and even goes back
and recopies verses 4 and 5 without margins, after which he
goes on with the Abraham story without the benefit of mar-
gins or hieroglyphs. How could he thus depart from his source?
What source? Ms. #2 drops the Egyptian at Abr. 2:5, and
Ms. #3 ends abruptly in the middle of the page with the end of
verse 2. In no known document is the exercise with Egypt-
ian characters carried beyond the middle of chapter 2. What,

32There are two styles of writing, a thin line-drawing and a heavy brush-
like stroke, a good imitation of the original. At least all the drawings of each
type are by the same person, who may have tried his hand at both styles.
"Book of Abraham Ms. #2." In the handwriting of W. W. Phelps. The finished state of the English text, showing no sign of correction or hesitation, shows that it was simply copied down, and in no wise indicates a process of translation, while the conspicuous failure of the margin to adapt to the Egyptian characters indicates that they were added later. At the bottom of the page the whole last section (Abr. II, 3-5) is repeated without the benefit of the Egyptian symbols, implying that the impatient copyist has decided that he can do as well without them.
then, is the source of the other two-thirds of the Book of Abraham? From what Egyptian text was the rest derived? Certainly not from the Book of Breathings, whose limits are clearly marked. If B. of A. Mss. # 2 and # 3 are to be accepted as evidence of Joseph Smith’s folly, we still have to explain the bulk of the Book of Abraham, which cannot be burdened with such indiscretions.

A strange line of reasoning sees in the sequence of the signs in the margins “the key to an authentic appraisal of the process by which the Book of Abraham text was formulated by Joseph Smith.” The discovery that those signs not only come from the Book of Breathings but actually occur with the English text in the same order as in the Egyptian was hailed as a triumph of perspicacity. But if the Mormons decided to use Egyptian symbols for any purpose, what could be more natural than to take them from the Egyptian documents in their possession—where else would they get them? And in making use of such symbols what easier and more natural way than just to copy them down in order? The most interesting characters of all, not meaningless hieratic hentacks, but real pictures, are repeatedly listed in the Kirtland Papers, in the order in which they occur on the papyrus along with Facsimile No. 1 (the “lion couch”); yet no attempt is made to translate any but two of the signs—the two (reed and “w,” of course) that happen to be not recognizable pictures of anything. Why doesn’t Joseph Smith or anybody else ever attempt the easy fun-task of reading meaning into those eloquent little pictures? There seems to be a positive aversion to the idea of “translating” Egyptian symbols.

B OF A. MSS. #1 AND #4

The text designated by the Historian’s Office as B. of A. Ms. #1 gives every indication of being the parent and original of the series to which Mss. #2 and #3, just discussed, belong. Obtained by the Church from the late Will C. Wood, it is ten pages long, on paper 7 3/4 by 12 inches. It has never been published. At the top of the first page it bears the title: “Translation of the Book of Abraham written by his own hand upon papyrus and found in the Catacombs of Egypt.” And to give it further precedence over Mss. # 2 and # 3, this manuscript begins properly at the beginning, with verse 1. It is, in fact, a
"Book of Abraham Ms. #3." Though this is numbered page 1, it begins with a note on grammar, immediately followed not by the beginning of the Book of Abraham but by a passage well along in the story (Abr. 1, 4). Note that this is a "fair copy" of an already finished text. Note also how the character in the middle of the page marks a new phase of the writing but has no reference whatever to meaning or content. Note that none of the other signs can be matched up with specific ideas or episodes or proper names, the latter occurring and reoccurring without the slightest regard for the Egyptian symbols.
most ambitious and impressive beginning. A three-quarter-inch margin is ruled off on the left and headed "character," and the first two characters to appear in it are the ubiquitous reed and "w"-loop, which happen to be the signs with which the intact De Horrack papyrus of the Book of Breathings (Louvre No. 3284) begins, and the signs with which in all probability the damaged Joseph Smith Papyrus No. XI also began. To these two characters the writer of B. of A. Ms. #1 gives numbers 1 and 2, using the same numbers to designate particular words in the English text appearing directly opposite these signs, so that we get this:

Reed: ¹ In the land of the Chaldees, at the residence of my
"w":² fathers, I, ²Abraham, ¹Saw, that it was needful for
me to obtain . . .

Now throughout all the "Grammar and Alphabet" papers the reed sign is given two meanings, namely, (1) "land of the Chaldeans" and (2) the act of seeing, while the loop or "w"-symbol is always said in some way or other to refer to Abraham. Hence there cannot be the slightest doubt that the writer here intends to relate specific Egyptian characters to specific English words and ideas. Now this is something like it; this is the sort of demonstration for which we have been looking, in which things are properly pinned down. But alas, if this is the beginning of a rigorous demonstration it is also the ending; for with the second line of the text the project is lamely given up—at that early stage of the game any further attempt to number Egyptian symbols by way of matching them with definite English equivalents is abandoned. The next four lines of text have no matching Egyptian symbols at all, and from then on such signs are scattered at the usual meaningless intervals (that is, with no visible relationship to the meaning of the text) as in the other B. of A. Ms. Need we say that this auspicious but brief beginning to B. of A. Ms. #1 is in the hand of W. W. Phelps? And is it surprising that he peters out at line 18 of the first page, after which Warren Parrish takes over and completes the remaining fourteen lines on the page as well as the remaining nineteen pages of the manuscript? Phelps's last symbol is three little strokes which go with twelve lines of text, and Parrish's next symbol (a dot and three lines) when he takes over is set over against fourteen lines of English. That is not how the thing started out, with the first two sym-
bols opposite consecutive lines with numbers to indicate just what in those lines the symbols were supposed to stand for. No, the serious business of "translation" has been given up and what we have thereafter is either mere eyewash or the use of mysterious symbols to help the copyists in coordinating their work, or both. The brethren at that time were not averse to the use of code names and cabbalistic symbols in carrying on their business.

It is quite clear what happened on page 1 of B. of A. Ms. # 1. The enterprising Phelps set out to apply the principles set forth in his copy of the A. & G. to his copy of the Book of Abraham, and didn't get to first base. In the same way he starts out grandly and folds up miserably with his impressive four-column "Egyptian Alphabet" (Eg. Ms. # 3.) In view of his performance (and he is certainly our number one performer) it is impossible to maintain that he seriously attempted to carry on either his grammar or his translation beyond two symbols alone; only the first two, the reed and the "w" were ever fully explained either in the Grammars and Alphabets or the PGP copies, and even Joseph Smith could not derive the whole Book of Abraham from those two symbols. When Parrish in B. of A. Ms. # 1 places the "Chonsu" sign beside 19 lines—182 words—of English text, it is up to the critic to show that he or anybody else really thought of that as an exercise in translation. This last performance, incidentally, is followed by a new story, a new section, and a new paragraph, all properly indented and capitalized—but no Egyptian symbol in sight to provide the information. Opposite a heavy dot in the margin of page 2 is a long sentence containing a parenthetical remark ("Now the god of Shagreel was the Sun"), and we yean to ask Mr. Heward to explain how the parenthesis and its contents are expressed in the dot.

With pages 7 and 8 of B. of A. Ms. # 1, things begin to get interesting. On page 7, Abr. 2:6 is rendered:

... bear my name unto a people which I will give in a strange land which I will give unto thy seed after thee for an eternal when

       memorial everlasting possession ∧ if they hearken to my voice.

And on the next page, "I know the beginning from the end" is changed to read "I know the end from the beginning." (Abr. 2:8.) Then a series of parenthetical remarks is inserted by the translator:


... and in thee and in (that is in thy priesthood.) and in thy seed, (that is thy priesthood) after thee (that is to say thy literal seed, or the seed of thy body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed ... (Abr. 2:11.)

In all of these passages not a word has been changed, words have been shifted around and parenthetical remarks have been inserted not to change but to clarify meanings. The end result is exactly as we find it in the printed edition of the PGP. Was the final text, then, taken from this copy? The next two pages show us that it was not, for there the following passages occur:

... and I took Sarai, whom I took to wife in Ur of Chaldea wife when I was Joes Jurshon, to come to the land of Canaan.

(Page 9.)

This is quite different from the final text of Abr. 2:15:

And I took Sarai, whom I took to wife when I was in Ur, in Chaldea ... and came forth in the way to the land of Canaan.

Only at the end of the next verse do we get the rest of the sentence:

... by the way of Jershon, to come to the land of Canaan.

And on the last page we read:

borders land of the
... into the land of the Canaanites, and the land of the idolatrous nation.

Compare this with Abr. 2:18:

... into the borders of the land of the Canaanites, and I offered sacrifice there in the plains of Moreh, and called on the Lord devoutly, because we had already come into the land of the idolatrous nation.

Here the end result in Copy 1 is definitely not the official text.

Thus B. of A. Ms. ±1 has the marks of a work in progress, and we can be sure that the final confused and jumbled verse is as far as it got. It begins with W.W. Phelps's setting out to give us a genuine analytical translation, but fizzes out on the first page; what follows is a simple straightforward copying of Abraham chapter 1 by Warren Parrish; with chapter 2 the writer begins casting about for better wording, rearranging
but never changing words; on the last two pages his text differs from the present official version, and ends up in a state of confusion marking the end of the project at Abraham 2:18. It was copying, but copying with discussion. When a reading is changed in one of the three copies of B. of A. Mss. #1, 2 and 3, it is usually altered in the other two as well, showing that men were working together; but the end results are not always the same, as in Abraham 2:15, where the writer has written and then struck out the words that stand in B. of A. Ms. #4 and in the present official version. It is as if the scribes were being encouraged to think for themselves.

B. OF A. MS. #4

The Church Historian's "Book of Abraham Ms. # 4" bears on the back of it the date 1841 in the hand of Thomas Bullock, though the document itself is in the handwriting of Willard Richards. This writing, coming years after the others, is, as might be expected, closer to our present-day version than the others. It bears the title later appearing in the Times and Seasons version of March 1, 1842, and the 1851 version published by Richard's nephew Franklin D. Richards, in 1851:

A Translation of Some ancient Records that have fallen into our hands, from the Catacombs of Egypt, purporting to be the writings of Abraham, while he was in Egypt, called the Book of Abraham, written by his own hand upon papyrus. THE BOOK. of A.B.R.A.H.A.M.

On the back of the second page of B. of A. Ms. # 4 is written: "A Fac-Similee from the Book of Abraham—Explanations of the above cut." The twelve explanations to Facsimiles No. 1 then follow as they stand in the present Book of Abraham, except that the much-discussed philological explanation of item 12 is missing. Filed with Ms. # 4 are also four pages, 8 by 10 inches, in the hand of Willard Richards, containing the explanations of Facsimile No. 2, exactly as found in our PGP. There is also a copy of the damaged Fac. 2 on a slightly larger sheet of paper.

Book of Abraham Ms. # 4 differs both from the other B. of A. Mss. and from the final printed text. Thus we find Abraham 1:4 first disagreeing with the other versions and then corrected to agree with them:
I sought for mine apointment according to the
unto the Priesthood, according unto the
the appointment of God unto the

It is nothing more than the usual adjusting of the text, without the removal or changing of a single word, to get the clearest expression. Throughout this text are inserted pencil notations of page numbers from another manuscript, which included most of the third chapter of Abraham, parts of which are quoted with page numbers on an extra sheet (page 14) which has been added to our Ms. # 4. Though Richards's translation comes to a halt where the others do, the quoting of verses 18 and 22 of Chapter 3 shows that he is not here engaged in translation, but like the others, is copying from another manuscript, in which, however, all the copyists are allowed to introduce improvements.

The most significant thing about the Willard Richards manuscript is that while it is most explicitly designated as a translation of certain specific Egyptian records, and is accompanied by reproductions of Egyptian writings (the Facsimiles) along with explanations of the same, showing the writer's concern to give the fullest possible documentation, it contains not a single one of the hieratic symbols found in the margins of the 1837 manuscripts. This confirms the many indications noted above, that those marginal characters were not regarded as the Egyptian source of the text; if such an idea was ever entertained, by the time Richards produced Ms. # 4, the latest and most authoritative of the Kirtland Papers, it had been completely abandoned.

All in all, Ms. # 4 is the most "official" of the four copies and to show clearly the independence of these "translations" from the few Egyptian symbols that accompany the other versions. The rewording in all these manuscripts, far from showing the work of translation in progress, never changes a meaning or touches upon any basic issue of translation. No indication is ever given, no slightest hint is dropped at any time, that the Egyptian characters in the margins were appealed to in case of disagreement or during any discussion; no reference is found anywhere to the way in which those symbols might have been put to use in arriving at meaning; there is no evidence that anything in the A. & G. was put to use in these translations—indeed, the Egyptian symbols ap-
A Translation of Some Ancient Records. All these fall to our hands from the Catacombs of Egypt, prefixed to the translations of the Book of Abraham, while he was in Egypt, called the Book of Mosheim, written in the same hand upon papyrus.

THE BOOK OF MOSHEIM.

In the Land of the Shortening of the Presence of my Father, A. Mosheim, I saw that it was needful for one to obtain another place of Presence, and living there was greater happiness and peace. And for one, I taught for the Blessing of the Father, to the Right of documets. I should be desired to administer the same; having been myself a follower of Righteousness for training.

"Book of Abraham Ms. #4, 1841," in the handwriting of Willard Richards. Not properly one of the "Kirtland Egyptian Papers," this manuscript shows that the text is still fluid in the Nauvoo period, though alterations are very minor. Here Richards changes the "seeing" of the earlier versions to "finding." With the same freedom, the phrase "purporting to be" has been dropped from the official title in our present-day edition.
pearing in the A. & G. are not those found in the margins of the PGP copies. The claim that these documents show us exactly how the Book of Abraham was translated is the purest nonsense. Incidentally, the retouches in the text continued long after Kirtland. In our own time the important title of the 1851 edition was changed: "Translated from the Papyrus, by Joseph Smith" has been added, and the significant qualification "Records . . . purporting to be the writings of Abraham, while he was in Egypt," has been dropped.

**Mysterious Markings**

A variety of markings—letters, numbers, dashes, and dots—serve in the Kirtland Papers to coordinate the work and avoid confusion where a number of people are dealing with the same stuff. As we have seen, the pages of the various series are numbered, and the pages of B. of A. Ms. #4 are coordinated by number with those of a missing manuscript. A series of capital letters, each with two strokes under it, runs through all the papers, placed there by a single hand to avoid confusion by identifying each separate sheet. Not all the pages are so marked, and no effort is made to follow a rigorous order; thus six pages of B. of A. Ms. #3 bear the letters O through S, in proper order, but in reverse, while elsewhere the letters appear in the same order as the pages. The letters do not have any necessary relation to page numbers, the pages lettered A,B,C, D,E,F,G,H,I, being matched by the numbers 6,?,1,2,3,4,1,2, and blank, respectively in the A. & G. Two loose two-page spreads, though marked with the usual underlined capital letters (this time T, U, and V), bear on each of their two pages capital O's and W's respectively—not underlined. Sometimes the capitals with strokes under them appear in the left-hand margins of B. of A. Ms. #2 and #3 right along with the Egyptian symbols, which the unwary might easily confuse with them. This should admonish us that the position of a symbol next to a text does not necessarily prove that the text is a translation of the sign. It was entirely in keeping with the learned obscurity and exotic nature of their work for the brethren to employ not only letters and numerals to mark off various phases of their undertaking, but to draw also on the wonderful Egyptian symbols that had so astonishly come into their hands. To this day but few middle-westerners have ever seen
a real Egyptian papyrus, and for the genuine article to turn up in Kirtland, Ohio, of all places in 1835, is against all the rules of probability. Our copyists can take the hieratic symbols or leave them alone, and the same applies to the other symbols. Each type was added by a single person, concerned not with interpretation but with bringing the work of a number of hands together in some sort of correlation.

WHAT IS BEHIND ALL THIS?

It would seem that Joseph Smith is working with the brethren, but they are doing a lot of things on their own. What strikes one first of all is the overpowering predominance of one hand and mind in the work—those of W. W. Phelps. In his handwriting is the bound A. & G., the "Grammar and Alphabet Copy 1," the important B. of A. Ms. # 1, and the "Katumin" document which claims to be the actual translation of an accompanying text. Each of these writings is the most ambitious and revealing of its type. And was Phelps simply the faithful scribe? Far from it! Almost as soon as he met Joseph Smith he was made "printer to the Church," a title which, as J. R. Clark points out, meant far more than "that simply of a pressman." Before joining the Church Phelps had already been the editor of three newspapers (founder of two), employing his craft to broadcast the power of a universal mind. His biographer gives him the epithet of "the versatile"—"printer, hymn writer, poet-journalist, newspaper editor, judge, orator, scribe, lawyer, educator, . . . pioneer, explorer, writer of books and pamphlets, topographical engineer, superintendent of schools, surveyor general, weather man, chaplain of the lower house of representatives, and speaker of the house in the legislature . . . " Though only thirty years old when he first met the Prophet, he had already been candidate for the lieutenant-governorship of New York. Upon embracing the gospel he determined, as he puts it, "to quit the folly of my ways, and the fancy and fame of this world."

But to renounce the vanity of the world is more easily said than done, and before half a year had passed Phelps had to be roundly rebuked by the Lord: "And also let my servant

23Clark, p. 24.
William W. Phelps stand in the office to which I have ap-
pointed him ... And also he hath need to repent, for I, the
Lord, am not well pleased with him, for he seeketh to excel,
and he is not sufficiently meek before me." (D&C 58:40f.)
Phelps was not a man to subordinate himself, and in 1832 the
Prophet warns him in a letter to take care lest "they that
think they stand should fall."36 On January 14, 1833, Joseph
declared that Phelps represented "the very spirit which is
wasting the strength of Zion like a pestilence."37 W. W. Phelps
was a wonderful man, but his weakness was vanity. At
the time the Kirtland Egyptian Papers were being produced,
the Prophet had to rebuke him again; but things had gone so
far that Phelps soon turned against Joseph Smith and went
about publicly stirring up trouble, and finally, in November
1838, signed a terrible and damning affidavit against the
Prophet.38 Within two years, however, he confessed that his
charges had been lies, and begged to be taken back into the
Church again. That took strength of character, and Joseph for-
gave him freely, as he always forgave his enemies; he knew
only too well Phelps's one great fault—"he taketh honor unto
himself."39

Joseph Smith had a high regard for Phelps's ability. In an
encouraging and kindly note to the latter's wife he had written,
"His merits, experience, and accomplishments, but few can
compete with in this generation."40 In his literary activities as
editor of the *Evening and Morning Star* he was given a free
hand: "... if the world receive his writings—behold here is
wisdom—let him obtain whatsoever he can obtain in right-
eousness, for the good of the saints." (D&C 57:12.) They were
his writings, not Joseph's; even when the journal displeased
the Prophet, who wrote to Phelps, "If you do not render it
more interesting than at present, it will fall ..." he was left
to his own resources.41 Claiming "a good education which in-
cluded the Greek and Latin classics," Phelps was quite aware

36*DHC* 1:229, Letter of Joseph Smith to W. W. Phelps, Nov. 27, 1832.
37*DHC* 1:316-7.
38The document is given at length in Bowen, pp. 91-93.
39B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints* (6 vols.; Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints, 1930), Vol. 1, pp. 506f, n. 21 [hereafter referred to as *CHC*].
He gives the exchange of letters between Phelps and Joseph Smith on the
occasion. The quotation is from a blessing given to Phelps by the Prophet on
Sept. 22, 1835, see Bowen, p. 98.
40See note 20.
41Bowen, p. 317.
that he was the best educated of the brethren.\textsuperscript{42} But his right to be heard extended to matters of revelation as well as scholarship. It was he who gave their grandiloquent titles to the Church leaders—Lion of the Lord, Wild Ram of the Mountains, Archer of Paradise, etc.\textsuperscript{42} It was he who on August 9, 1831, saw "the destroyer riding upon the face of the waters." And he also aspired to making inspired translations of the scriptures. Among the Kirtland Egyptian Papers is a small cloth-bound book inscribed "W. W. Phelps, Diary Vc. 1835," containing original renderings of the Bible, of which the Church Historian writes: "These passages of Scriptures from the Bible do not appear to have any connection with the Inspired Revision by the Prophet Joseph Smith. This is no doubt the result of research and study done by Wm. W. Phelps." And why not? Joseph Smith encouraged others to obtain all the gifts that God has bestowed on man. Thus in 1835 the promise was given to Warren Parrish through the mouth of Joseph Smith: "... he shall see much of my ancient records, and shall know of hidden things, and shall be endowed with a knowledge of hidden languages; and if he desires and shall seek it at my hands, he shall be privileged with writing much of my word. ..."\textsuperscript{43} Plainly the right to undertake inspired translation was not limited to Joseph Smith, but was extended to others, in particular the very scribes who produced the Kirtland Egyptian papers.

There was jealousy, too. The situation is illucidated in a revelation of November 1831 (D&C 67): "O ye elders of my church ... Your eyes have been upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and his language you have known, and his imperfections you have known; you have sought in your hearts knowledge that you might express beyond his language." The smart men around the Prophet were convinced that they could do a better job than he could in turning out inspired writings. And there were no restraints placed upon them as long as they went about it honestly: "It is your privilege," nay they receive the promise to share the same gifts as Joseph, but only to that degree to which "you strip yourselves from jealousies and fears, and humble yourselves ... for ye are not sufficiently humble." (D&C 67:10.) There it is, plain as a pike-staff: the Brethren

\textsuperscript{42}Ibid., p. 1.
\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., p. 33.
\textsuperscript{43a}DHC 2:311f, cited by Jessee in this journal.
were impatient with Joseph Smith's lack of education and desired to improve on his performance; they had every right to do so, and were invited to try, but warned that they would not succeed as long as they were motivated by jealousy. So there is no reason why Cowdery, Phelps, and the others should not have tried their own hands at deciphering Egyptian. Upon receiving the above revelation, "William E. M'Lellin, as the wisest man, in his own estimation, having more learning than sense, endeavored to write a commandment like unto one of the least of the Lord's, but failed." Are not the Kirtland Papers written by men who shared M'Lellin's ambitions? Upon first viewing the papyri, Phelps had written to his wife: "These records of old times, when we translate them and print them in a book, will make a good witness for the Book of Mormon." The editorial "we" here definitely includes himself—the Kirtland Egyptian Papers bear witness that no one tried harder to translate than he did, and there is a note of impatience if not petulance in the letter he wrote the lady six weeks later: "Nothing has been doing in translating of the Egyptian record for a long time, and probably will not for some time to come."

In coming into the Church, Phelps had moved into what had previously been Oliver Cowdery's intellectual domain of editing and writing, and a distinct rivalry between the two can be detected in the Kirtland Papers. Even before the Church was organized Cowdery had sought and been promised the gift of knowing things "concerning the engravings of old records . . . that you may translate and receive knowledge from all those ancient records which have been hid up, that are sacred." As always, certain conditions went with the promise, however: "... according to your faith shall it be unto you," and "you shall ask with an honest heart." (D&C 8.) That is why "in attempting to exercise this gift of translation . . . Oliver Cowdery failed; and . . . the Lord explained the cause of his failure to translate"—"Behold, you have not understood . . . you took no thought save it was to ask me . . ." Lack of perfect faith and honesty in Cowdery showed itself in the following year, when he had the presumption to write Joseph Smith a letter "'Commanding' him to alter one of the revelations which had

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44DHC 1:225-6.
45See note 22.
46Bowen, p. 68, Letter of Sept. 11, 1835.
47CHC 1:132f.
been received."^{48} Soon after that he was told that he had a right to speak by revelation whenever the Comforter led him, but that he was not to compete with the head of the Church in speaking with authority and that his writing was to be "not . . . by way of commandment, but by wisdom." (D&C 28.) He had as good a right to use his wits as other men, but, like Phelps in his writing and translating, was prone to be carried away by vanity and fall on his face. Each man became increasingly jealous of the Prophet through the year 1837, and both finally had to be cut off from the Church, Cowdery at the autumn conference of 1837,^{49} and Phelps in the following summer.^{50}

Though he experienced a marvellous manifestation at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in March 1833, Frederick G. Williams "soon after . . . yielded to improper influences" and accordingly on November 7, 1837, was "rejected as a counselor in the First Presidency." He was not excommunicated until March 17, 1839, however, and was taken back into the Church a year after.^{51} During the period of writing the Kirtland Papers, therefore, he was definitely turned against Joseph Smith. As early as 1836 Warren Parrish was found embezzling $25,000 of the Safety Society Funds, and began operations against President Smith, going about organizing the "Reformers" who went so far as to seize the Temple and declare Joseph Smith a fallen prophet. Parrish had been found "guilty of sexual sin in Kirtland," but "made confession to the church, and on promising reformation retained his standing." He was not cut off from the Church until early 1838, when he became one of Joseph Smith's bitterest enemies; he never returned to the Church.^{52} Thus the man who worked most closely with Phelps in turning out the Kirtland Egyptian Papers was one of those most strongly animated at the time by feelings of ambition, jealousy, and guilt.

Willard Richards, who did not even join the Church before 1837, was the one and only writer of Kirtland Egyptian Papers to remain true; and when the others left he took charge of what papers were available. It is significant that though as "keeper of the records" he was in charge of all official documents,

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48 CHC 1:217.
49 CHC 1:431-4.
50 DHC 3:46.
51 A. Jensen, LDS Biographical Encyclopedia (1901), 1:51.
52 CHC 1:404-406; DHC 2: 528.
the papers designated as "Egyptian Grammar" were kept not with the others in the iron-bound box which Elder Richards risked his life to save during a flash flood while crossing the plains, but were stored away by themselves in the trunk of his wife Jennetta.\(^2\) This alone puts them in a special category apart from the official documents of the Church, laid aside and never in any sense proclaimed official. He didn't have all the papers, however; all along the Prophet had been more interested in dictating his own History to these same men than having them work on the Book of Abraham, and when they left him they took their work with them: "Twice Joseph had attempted to have his history recorded and published," yet "in each case an apostate scribe had refused to surrender a partly prepared manuscript."\(^3\) The important B. of A. Ms. \# 1, by Phelps was never among the papers that passed from Willard Richards to his nephew Franklin D. Richards, but was acquired by the Church in 1947 through the late Wilford Wood. The scribe apparently considered that he had a right to the thing as his own work.

**ANOTHER TENTATIVE SUMMARY**

The men who cooperated, more or less, to produce the Kirtland Papers were impatient of Joseph Smith's scholarly limitations and were at the same time invited by him to surpass them. In dealing with these men, the Prophet showed superhuman forbearance, freely forgiving them all their terrible offenses against him and inviting them back into the Church even when they did not ask it. In their literary work he gave them a free hand, sharing his idea with them, and letting them make what use they pleased of his words. They were the "aspiring spirits," the "great big Elders... who cause him much trouble"; after he taught them in private councils, they would then go forth into the world and proclaim the things he had taught them, as their own revelations.\(^4\) But still he put up with them, encouraging them to work along with him and improve his English.


\(^3\) Noall, p. 306.

Now when these men turned against Joseph Smith at the very time that they were working on the Egyptian Papers, they all started making public statements and signing affidavits in which they did their best to invent the most damning and withering charges they could to make the Prophet an object of ridicule and contempt as well as loathing in men's eyes. Phelps, Cowdery, and Williams all admitted later that the charges were fabrications; but why at that time did not one of them, including the bitter Parrish, so much as even hint at the fiasco of the Egyptian translations? Because there was no fiasco: the Kirtland Egyptian Papers were as much their baby as Smith's, but no matter who was responsible for them they contained nothing reprehensible, since no claims either of divine inspiration or of scholarly accuracy were made for them. The freedom of expression displayed by the various copyists shows plainly enough that the work was considered experimental.

Here we see the brethren, with the encouragement of the Prophet, casting about for suggestions and ideas, a course that was often recommended to them by the voice of revelation. Before God gives us the answer he expects us to be diligent seekers, even as Abraham was (Abr. 2:12): "... we never enquire at the hand of God for special revelation," said Joseph Smith, "only in case of there being no previous revelation to suit the case ... it is a great thing to enquire at the hands of God ... and we feel fearful to approach Him ... especially about things the knowledge of which men ought to obtain, in all sincerity, before God, for themselves, in humility and by the prayer of faith ..."54 The brother of Jared, at the Lord's suggestion, attempted to produce a flameless light for his ships. He worked like a demon, exercising all his faith, ingenuity, and strength, and the result was a fiasco! In words of total self-abasement he announced his humiliating failure and confessed his helplessness, begging the Lord to take over where he had failed. And at that point—but not a moment before—God did take over (Ether 2:22-3:6). Even the mighty Brother of Jared had to learn by that mortifying but highly effective process of trial and error which is the essence of our time of probation here on earth.

We should not let the element of the fantastic in the Kirtland Papers prejudice us too much against them. The history of Egyptology is largely a story of the fantastic. Aside from

54Ibid., p. 22.
the nature of the material, every Egyptologist must indulge in
some pretty wild guessing from time to time if he hopes for
any fruitful breakthroughs—usually, the greater the scholar
the more bold and original the guessing. The bad guesses, of
course, don't get published; usually they are quietly and merci-
fully forgotten and never held against their perpetrators. We
are not much interested in the thousands of times that Edison
was wrong, but in the hundreds of times he was right. In the
case of Joseph Smith the attitude of the critics has always
been the reverse of this. But no man knew better than he that
it is by our mistakes that we are admonished, humbled, and
enlightened.

The Kirtland Egyptian Papers, we submit, represent that
mandatory preliminary period of investigation and exploration
during which men are required to "study it out in your mind"
(D&C 9:8), making every effort to "obtain for themselves"
whatever can be so obtained, thereby discovering and acknowl-
ledging their own limitations, before asking for direct reve-
lation from on high. There were at least three separate experi-
ments or approaches, none of which as far as we can see at
present, contributed anything to the Book of Abraham. Specifi-
cally, (1) the Book of Abraham was not derived from the
"Alphabet" writings, which only got as far as Beta—the
second letter; (2) it was not derived from or by means of the
"Grammar," which never got beyond the first page and a half;
(3) it was not translated from the first two lines of the Joseph
Smith Papyrus No. XI—the Book of Breathings," for reasons
indicated above. These three projects were separate undertak-
ings, each dealing with different materials from the others
and in a different way. The three exercises can be regarded
as experiments which were dropped before any of them got
very far—laid aside and wisely kept out of circulation, for
such things could easily be misinterpreted by malicious minds.

To those who ask, as many do, from what particular
Egyptian manuscript the Book of Abraham was translated? the
answer is, that we do not know. The eleven fragments of the
Joseph Smith Papyri in our possession are only a portion of the
original collection. But when in 1842 the Prophet at Nauvoo
describes himself as "translating from the Records of Abra-
ham," we can be sure that it was not the Book of Breathings
to which he was referring, that having been dropped for good
as the Kirtland Papers show, way back in 1837.
All proper investigation moves from the known to the unknown, and whatever was definitely known the brethren of Kirtland were willing to embrace—they made valiant efforts to come to grips with Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and German; but in their day nothing was known about Egyptian. What were they to do? They had nothing to go on but intuition, and they gave it a try. They had an excellent excuse for not getting involved in the mysteries of an unknown language, but still they tried their hand at a number of approaches, because you never know, and because they had been invited by revelation to do so—God knew perfectly well that the Brother of Jared would fall on his face, that was part of the plan. But we today are a different situation; we have enormous advantages which the men of Kirtland did not have, and the firm and relentless thrusting in our faces of the newly rediscovered Joseph Smith Papyri is a reminder that we now are under the same obligation they were under to exhaust all the available resources. Those resources are indeed formidable and should test the skill and dedication of LDS scholars to the limit. So far, though they have hardly been touched, they promise wonderful things.

The Kirtland Egyptian Papers were a milestone, now left far behind. The follies of 1912 were another, in which Joseph Smith's critics showed their limitations to the world. There will be other milestones, but the lesson of each will be the same, namely, that the more diligently we seek, the better right we have to ask.

What emerges most clearly from a closer look at the Kirtland Egyptian Papers is the fact that there is nothing official or final about them—they are fluid, exploratory, confidential, and hence free of any possibility or intention of fraud or deception. Strangely enough, though they seem to express a free play of fancy they are not all pure nonsense. For example, Joseph Smith's discussion of the "Alphabet," strangely reminiscent of the Rabbi Akiba's alphabet, reads like a very up-to-date analysis of the basic ideas of Egyptian religion and kingship; and there are so many happy guesses about the meanings of symbols that one begins to wonder whether they can all be purely accidental or fanciful; after all, the Book of Abraham itself is far from nonsense. All these things, however, must be the subject of other and more careful studies.
The "New Translation" of the Bible, 1830-1833: Doctrinal Development During the Kirtland Era

ROBERT J. MATTHEWS*

Before one can recognize the role of the "new translation" of the Bible in the development of doctrine during the Kirtland era of Church history, it is necessary that he first have a historical perspective of the beliefs and practices of the Church at various times since its organization in 1830. In addition, it is necessary that one know what the new translation of the Bible is; why the Prophet Joseph Smith made the translation; when it was made; and how it was made. In pursuit of these items this article will attempt to look at the Church in the early 1830s and, so far as it is possible, will trace the introduction of several important doctrinal concepts into the Church during that time. In this context we will discuss the role of new translation of the Bible in the restoration of the gospel in this dispensation.

When speaking of the "development" of the Church doctrine, we do not mean particularly to dwell on an evolutionary phenomena but rather simply to emphasize that all of the doctrines were not revealed at once and that there has been a

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Although not a translation in the usual sense, the Prophet Joseph Smith consistently referred to his work with the Bible as the new translation or simply as the translation. When later published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints it was titled: Holy Scriptures, Inspired Version, and it is commonly spoken of today as the "Inspired Revision." Since the focus of this article is on the process and purpose of Joseph Smith’s work with the Bible in his own day and time and has no reference to the printed editions, the writer has elected to use the terminology used by the Prophet in the 1830s and 1840s.
"NEW TRANSLATION" OF THE BIBLE

developmental increase of doctrine from continuing revelation. Such is the message of the ninth Article of Faith which reads:

We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

It is in the spirit of this principle that we trace the historical relationship that exists between Joseph Smith’s new translation of the Bible and the increase of doctrine during the Kirtland period.

THE GOSPEL WAS REVEALED LINE UPON LINE

What did the faithful convert of the Church in 1830-1831 accept as essential "Mormonism"? Was he instructed concerning marriage for time and eternity? Of the three degrees of glory in the resurrection? Was he taught concerning the temple endowment, of baptism for the dead, of patriarchal blessings, or of the word of wisdom? Was he instructed in detail concerning the various offices and quorums in the priesthood from the deacons up through the teachers, priests, elders, seventies, and high priests? Was he taught concerning the quorums of the Presiding Bishopric, the First Council of Seventy, the Patriarch to the Church, the Council of the Twelve, and the First Presidency? To each of these questions the answer must be "no" for the simple reason that these matters had not yet been revealed in this dispensation and were known, if at all, only by the scant mention of some of them in the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

Again, what did the faithful Latter-day Saint of the early 1830s hold to as the "standard works" of the new dispensation? He had a Bible and a Book of Mormon, but he did not have a book of Doctrine and Covenants or a Pearl of Great Price simply because the contents of these two standard works had for the most part not yet been revealed.

As additional revelations came to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the doctrinal concepts of the gospel as it was to be taught in this dispensation began to be known, and as these revelations were recorded, they became the documentary materials for new

There is some information in Doctrine and Covenants 20 (April 6, 1830) about the duties of deacons, teachers, priests, and elders, but this revelation does not contain quorum organization.
volumes of scripture. It is on the background from which many of these revelations came that we can now focus our attention to discover what it was that prompted or called forth revelations from heaven on particular subjects. In other words, what was the Prophet doing when he received this or that revelation, and what was it that prompted him to inquire of the Lord about this or that doctrine?

PURPOSE OF THE NEW TRANSLATION

Obtaining the word of the Lord on a subject appears to be partly a matter of asking, of careful study and self-exertion, as well as listening. The Lord explained that divine communication is not to be had merely for the asking without effort, but that one must "study it out in the mind" and then inquire of the Lord. (D&C 9:7-8.) Consistent with this principle we turn to three passages in the Doctrine and Covenants that have a bearing upon the "translation" of the Bible. First, from a revelation to Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and John Whitmer, dated July 1830 and now identified as Doctrine and Covenants 26:1:

Behold, I say unto you that you shall let your time be devoted to the studying of the scriptures...

Although this passage does not specifically mention the translation of the Bible, it is noteworthy that the manuscripts of the translation dated at this same time (from June to November 1830) are in the handwriting of John Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery, as dictated by the Prophet Joseph, which shows that these three brethren were simultaneously engaged in a study of the scriptures and in making the translation of the Bible.3

A second passage, from Doctrine and Covenants 42:56, is dated February 9, 1831, and reads:

Thou shalt ask, and my scriptures shall be given as I have appointed, and they shall be preserved in safety. (Italics added.)

That this passage has reference to the translation of the Bible seems obvious, since the Book of Mormon was already trans-

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3The original manuscripts of the new translation of the Bible are in the custody of The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Independence, Missouri. By the courtesy of that organization the writer has had the opportunity of studying these manuscripts.
lated and published, and the work with the Bible was already underway at the time. The Lord was simply telling the Prophet that he had to ask to start the process of receiving revelation.

A third, and perhaps the most impressive passage is found in Doctrine and Covenants 45:60-61, under the date of March 7, 1831, just twenty-eight days after the previous reference. Until this time the translation had been focused only on the book of Genesis, but now the Prophet was instructed to turn to the New Testament:

And now, behold, I say unto you, it shall not be given unto you to know any further concerning this chapter, until the New Testament be translated, and in it all these things shall be made known.
Wherefore I give unto you that ye may now translate it, that ye may be prepared for the things to come.

Of particular importance in the above passage is the explanation as to why the translation was to be done. It was that the Prophet himself would learn by the process. The implication is that Joseph had been asking questions about the gospel, and the Lord’s answer was that he would have to translate the New Testament to “know any further” about those things. The promise was that “in it [i.e. in the translation] all these things shall be made known.” In the subsequent translation of the Old and New Testaments many revelations were received which contained much information and gave expanded views on the gospel. Some of these revelations are now published as sections in the Doctrine and Covenants and as portions of the Pearl of Great Price.

There are many examples that corroborate the proposal that through the study and translation of the Bible the Prophet would be prompted to ask questions and in turn receive divine inspiration. It was reading James 1:5-6 in 1820 that first prompted Joseph to inquire of the Lord, which resulted in the First Vision. Reading the Book of Mormon led to an inquiry concerning baptism, which brought John the Baptist to confer the Aaronic Priesthood. Thus, searching the scriptures and receiving revelation thereunto was a familiar pattern to the Prophet, and it illustrates the wisdom of the Lord in directing him to make a translation of the Bible so that he would fre-

\[^4\]Joseph Smith 2:11-20, Pearl of Great Price.
\[^5\]Ibid. 2:67-72.
quently ask and be the recipient of many new revelatory experiences concerning the doctrines of the gospel.

A CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE TRANSLATION

In order to discuss the very fundamental matter of why and how the translation of the Bible was made, we have jumped ahead of the natural sequence of events and passed over many important dates and circumstances relating to the Prophet's work with the Bible. It will be profitable for us to return to the date of June 1830 and follow the progress chronologically through July 2, 1833, which are the first and last dates recorded upon the manuscripts of the new translation. In so doing we will have the opportunity to observe the introduction of several major doctrinal concepts of the restored gospel and to see many direct and indirect relationships between the new translation of the Bible and the development of doctrine during the Kirtland period.

Perhaps the earliest date we can attach to the new translation is June 1830, at which time the revelation called the "visions of Moses" was received. Concerning this revelation the Prophet Joseph wrote:

I will say . . . that amid all the trials and tribulations we had to wade through, the Lord who well knew our infantile and delicate situation, vouchsafed for us a supply of strength and granted us line upon line of knowledge—here a little and there a little, of which the following was a precious morsel.⁶

He then recorded the "visions of Moses," now published as chapter one of the Book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. The Prophet does not say what connection this revelation has with the actual translation of the Bible, or whether or not it was received while he was engaged in the translation. It may have immediately preceded the translation. However, it is included as part of the original manuscripts of the translation which suggests that the Prophet recognized a connection between it and them. The earliest manuscript copy available is in the handwriting of John Whitmer, who, as we have already observed, was studying the scriptures at this time with Joseph and

Oliver. Of special note in this revelation is the declaration that many things had been taken out of the book which Moses had written, but that the Lord would raise up another like unto Moses, and those things which had been removed would be had again among those who believe. (See Moses 1:40-41.) It may well have been at this time (June 1830) that the Lord instructed the Prophet to begin a translation of the Old Testament.

The next date is July 1830 in which a commandment was given to Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and John Whitmer to let their time be devoted to the studying of the scriptures. This is Doctrine and Covenants 26:1, as referred to earlier.

The next dates of importance are October 21, 1830, November 30, 1830, and December 1, 1830. These three dates appear on the manuscript for the early parts of Genesis up through about Genesis chapter five.

Also, under the general heading of December 1830 the Prophet recorded in his journal:

It may be well to observe here, that the Lord greatly encouraged and strengthened the faith of His little flock, which had embraced the fulness of the everlasting Gospel, as revealed to them in the Book of Mormon, by giving some more extended information upon the Scriptures, a translation of which had already commenced.

... To the joy of the little flock ... did the Lord reveal the following doings of olden times, from the Prophecy of Enoch. (Italics added.)

The Prophet then added the prophecy of Enoch which corresponds to the seventh chapter of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. The exact date is not certain, but the manuscripts of the new translation suggest a date early in December for this entry, since material translated just previous to this is dated December 1 as noted above.

In the meantime, Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, and others had been called on a mission to the wilderness “among the Lamanites.” (D&C 32.) While traveling in Ohio in November on the first segment of the journey, the missionaries converted Sidney Rigdon, a former acquaintance of Brother Pratt. Rigdon thereupon left Ohio and traveled back to Fayette, New York, to see the Prophet, arriving on December 11, 1830. He asked the Prophet to inquire of the Lord as to what he

¹DHC 1:131-133.
(Sidney Rigdon) should do as a member of the Church. The reply as recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 35 states that the Lord had had his eye on Sidney for some time and that he had been prepared for "great things." Verses 18 and 20 are of particular interest to us.

And I have given unto him [Joseph Smith] the keys of the mystery of those things which have been sealed, even things which are from the foundation of the world, and the things which shall come from this time until the time of my coming... 

And a commandment I give unto thee [Sidney]—that thou shalt write for him; and the scriptures shall be given, even as they are in mine own bosom, ...

The declaration that the Prophet held keys to the knowledge of things from the foundation of the world, and also of things that were yet to come, enhances his position as one who could by revelation understand and translate the Bible. Sidney is specifically told that he is to serve as scribe to write the new scriptures that would be given.

Until Sidney Rigdon was appointed as scribe, John Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, and Emma Smith had served as scribes to Joseph. But Oliver was now away on a mission, and John Whitmer was about to be called on one. The earlier manuscripts of the translation show the handwriting of Whitmer, Cowdery, and Emma. However, with the appointment of Rigdon to write for the Prophet, the material of the early manuscripts (which extended at least through the first seven chapters of Genesis) were further revised by the Prophet and rewritten in the handwriting of Sidney Rigdon. Thus, the final rendition of these materials of Genesis date from late December 1830.

The next significant date is still later in December 1830 at which time Joseph is instructed to cease his labors of translating and move to Ohio. (D&C 37:1.) The move was not to be made in haste, but Joseph was first to take care of the business of the Church in the Colesville, New York area.

Early in January 1831 John Whitmer was sent on a mission to Ohio, and he took with him a copy of the revelations which Joseph had lately received. That these materials included parts

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8Since Sidney arrived in Fayette on December 11, 1830, the final revision and rewriting of the early chapters of Genesis would have to be sometime in the month after that date.
from the new translation is seen from the following quotation from the *Painesville Telegraph* of January 18, 1831:

A young gentleman by the name of Whitmer arrived here last week from Manchester, New York, the seat of wonders, with a new batch of revelations from God, as he pretended, which have just been communicated to Joseph Smith. As far as we have been able to learn their contents, they are a more particular description of the creation of the world, and a history of Adam and his family, and other sketches of the anti-diluvian word, which Moses neglected to record . . . 9

By February 4, 1831, Joseph had moved to Ohio, and the following instruction was received at Kirtland for the benefit of the Church located there:

And again, it is meet that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., should have a house built, in which to live and translate. (D&C 41:7.)

Since the Book of Mormon had already been published a year earlier, and the Book of Abraham would not be known for four years, this passage can have reference only to the translation of the Bible. Although the Prophet had been instructed late in December to put aside the work of translating the Bible while he moved to Ohio (D&C 37:1), this revelation dated early in February indicated that the translation was to be taken up again.

Five days later, on February 9, 1831, the following instruction was received as recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 42:56-58:

*Thou shalt ask, and my scriptures shall be given as I have appointed,* and they shall be preserved in safety. (Italics added.)

More revelation concerning the scriptures was to be received, but the procedure was to *ask.* This key to procedure is no doubt a major reason why the Prophet was required to make the translation of the Bible. In the process of reading the scriptures and inquiring, a favorable mental and spiritual climate would be created, doctrinal and historical questions would arise, the Prophet would ask, and revelation would be received. The labor would produce its own reward. This con-

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9The excerpt was copied from the original paper by Francis W. Kirkham and published in his *A New Witness for Christ in America* (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing Company, 1960), p. 436.
cept is supported by further instructions about four weeks later when on March 7, 1831, additional instructions were given about the purpose of the translation and the procedure to be followed.

This brings us back again to the important passage of Doctrine and Covenants 45:60-61 which we quoted earlier, but repeat here for emphasis:

And now, behold, I say unto you, it shall not be given unto you to know any further concerning this chapter, until the New Testament be translated, and in it all these things shall be made known. Wherefore, I give unto you that ye may now translate it, that ye may be prepared for the things to come.

Just what "chapter" is referred to is not known, but the Prophet was to proceed with the translation so that many things of great import could be made known; first to him, and through him to the Church.

The above communication illustrates an important fact referred to previously; that at least one purpose of the translation was for the education of the Prophet himself. Notwithstanding that he held the keys to the mysteries, that he was tutored by angels, and that he had the guidance of the Holy Ghost, it was necessary for him to make an effort in the work in order to gain the knowledge. By the process of translation many things were to be known to the Prophet. It was apparently through this means that the gifts and keys that he held would operate in bringing him to the greater knowledge. In light of this view of the translation, it is a mistake to assume that he translated the Bible solely by information he had previously obtained.

The original manuscript shows that the brethren began work on the New Testament on March 8, 1831, the very day after receiving the foregoing instruction. The title of that page of the manuscript is indicative of the attitude that Joseph and Sidney had about the work they were doing: "A Translation of the New Testament translated by the power of God."

Although the translation of the New Testament was begun on March 8, 1831, the dating on the original manuscripts suggests that they had also continued to work with the Old Testament until April 5, 1831, at which time the translation of the Old Testament had reached Genesis 24:42. A note placed at
the end of Genesis 24:42 in the manuscript reads: "April 5, 1831—transcribed thus far." Thus it appears that for about three weeks (March 8 until April 5) both Genesis and Matthew were being translated. Since the primary emphasis was on the New Testament during this period of time, it is likely that what the notation really means is that the translation of Genesis was being discontinued at this point in favor of devoting more time to the New Testament.

From the foregoing we may conclude that Genesis 1:1 through 24:42 had been translated and recorded between June 1830 and April 5, 1831. Therefore all of the doctrinal information that is found in those chapters was made known to the Prophet at least by the latter date. It is not possible to include a complete list of the doctrinal concepts and contributions that are found in the translation of these chapters of Genesis in the limits of this short article; but such a survey would include revelations and statements about the creation of the world, about pre-mortal existence, about Adam and the early patriarchs, the revelation of the plan of salvation to Adam, the account of Cain as Master Mahan, the preaching of Enoch, the preaching of Noah, the preaching of Melchizedek, and much information about Abraham, all of which is not found in the King James Version or in any other scripture.

AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY REVEALED

Of particular importance is a comment in the translation of Genesis 17:11 (printed edition, Inspired Version) in which it is stated that children become accountable to the Lord when they are eight years of age. The age of accountability is a basic principle of the gospel and one of the distinctive features of Mormonism and is about as familiar to members as any principle or practice in the Church. Perhaps no principle or practice is more faithfully observed in the Church than that of parents having their children baptized at the age of eight years, because they believe that is when children begin to be accountable. But we would ask when was it revealed to the Prophet Joseph that little children begin to be accountable at the age of eight? The Book of Mormon emphatically declares that children are innocent and do not need baptism, but it does not tell at what age baptism should be administered. The matter is clearly stated in the Doctrine and Covenants 68:25-27, and it is to this source
that we generally turn for instruction on the matter. However, Section 68 is dated November 1831, while the dates on the manuscript of Genesis show that the Prophet was aware of the doctrine sometime before April 5, 1831, which was more than eight months earlier than Section 68. It appears from these facts that the eight-year-old age of accountability was revealed to the Prophet Joseph while he was translating Genesis 17 sometime between December 1, 1830 (when he was working with chapter 5), and April 5, 1831 (when he had reached Genesis 24). This is important historically, and adds dignity and worth to the role of the translation of the Bible in the restoration of the gospel in this dispensation. It is therefore a major point in the purpose of this article, which is to discuss the place of the translation of the Bible in the development of Church doctrine during the Kirtland era.

OTHER DOCTRINAL REVELATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TRANSLATION

On December 1, 1831, the Prophet recorded the following in his journal:

I resumed the translation of the Scriptures, and continued to labor in this branch of my calling with Elder Sidney Rigdon as my scribe. (Italics added.)

This important passage reiterates the Prophet’s conviction that his work of translating the Bible was not a self-appointed venture, but was part of his divine calling. Soon thereafter Joseph and Sidney were instructed by the Lord to go forth and preach “expounding the mysteries thereof out of the scriptures” for a season until instructed otherwise. (D&C 71:1.) Obedient to this command, they continued to travel and to preach in the area until January 10, 1832, when the following, now designated as Doctrine and Covenants 73:3-4, was received:

Now, verily I say unto you my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, saith the Lord, it is expedient to translate again;

And, inasmuch as it is practicable, to preach in the regions round about until conference; and after that it is expedient to continue the work of translation until it be finished.

10DHC 1:238-9.
The next entry in the Prophet's journal states:

Upon the reception of the foregoing word of the Lord [on January 10], I recommenced the translation of the Scriptures, and labored diligently until just before the [Amherst, Ohio] conference, which was to convene on the 25th of January.¹¹

The Prophet generally did not indicate the exact passages of the Bible on which he was working, but on this occasion he wrote:

During the period [between January 10-25, 1832], I also received the following, as an explanation of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, 7th chapter, 14th verse:¹²

He then recorded the revelation now identified as Doctrine and Covenants 74, which is the first complete section in the Doctrine and Covenants that was obtained as a result of his work in translating the Bible.

The work of translation was again laid aside in order to hold the conference at Amherst, Ohio, late in January. After the conference, Joseph returned to Hiram, near Kirtland, to the home of John Johnson, where he had been living for some time, and shortly thereafter, made the following entry in his journal:

Upon my return from Amherst conference, I resumed the translation of the Scriptures. From sundry revelations which had been received, it was apparent that many important points touching the salvation of man, had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled. It appeared self-evident from what truths were left, that if God rewarded every one according to the deeds done in the body the term "Heaven," as intended for the Saints' eternal home must include more kingdoms than one. Accordingly, on the 16th of February, 1832, while translating St. John's Gospel, myself and Elder Rigdon saw the following vision: (Italics added.)¹³

The Prophet then recorded the revelation now identified as Doctrine and Covenants 76, which is the second complete section of the Doctrine and Covenants received as a result of translating the Bible. Thus as a result of translating the Bible on the above date, he received not only one of the greatest revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants but one of the greatest revelations ever received by mortal man.

¹¹DHC 1:242.
¹²DHC 1:242.
¹³DHC 1:245.
The above journal entry is extremely informative because it is another instance wherein the precise date is known on which the Prophet was laboring on a particular passage, and a particular doctrinal subject is revealed.

The revelation itself contains an informative comment about the work of translation and leaves no doubt as to how the two brethren felt about their calling. In verses 15 to 18, it is affirmed that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were appointed by the Lord to make the translation and that the work was done by the Spirit:

For while we were doing the work of translation, which the Lord had appointed unto us, we came to the twenty-ninth verse of the fifth chapter of John, which was given unto us as follows:

Speaking of the resurrection of the dead, concerning those who shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth—

They who have done good in the resurrection of the just, and they who have done evil in the resurrection of the unjust—

Now this caused us to marvel, for it was given unto us of the Spirit. (Italics added.)

Two weeks later, the Prophet entered the following note in his journal:

About the first of March [1832], in connection with the translation of the Scriptures, I received the following explanation of the Revelation of Saint John: (D&C 77.)

The "explanation" referred to is now published as Doctrine and Covenants Section 77, and is the third complete section of that volume that was given to the Prophet as a direct result of the translation of the Bible. This revelation contains some extremely interesting information about spirits, angels, the earth, and the creation of man.

Later in March 1832, the Prophet wrote:

Besides the work of translating, previous to the 20th of March I received the following four revelations:  

He then recorded sections 78 through 81 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Whether or not these revelations are associated

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11DHC 1:255.
12DHC 1:255.
with the translation of the Bible we do not know. Their content is not particularly doctrinal, and there may not be a direct relationship, since they deal more particularly with regulatory affairs of the Church.

On April 1, 1832, the Prophet began a journey from Kirtland, Ohio, to Independence, Missouri, during which time he did not continue with the translation. On May 6, 1832, he left Independence in company with Newel K. Whitney and Sidney Rigdon, intending to return immediately to Kirtland. However, due to an accident in which Brother Whitney sustained a broken leg and foot, the Prophet did not arrive at Kirtland until some time in June. Shortly after his return to Kirtland, he wrote:

As soon as I could arrange my affairs, I recommenced the translation of the Scriptures and thus I spent most of the summer.17

During the summer and fall of 1832 in Kirtland several revelations on doctrine were received. We do not have categorical evidence that these came as a direct result of the translation of the Bible, but it seems likely that there is some relationship. On the basis of the revelations for which there are direct ties, which are all doctrinal, it follows that other doctrinal revelations might have the same background if received at a time when the translation was in progress. On this basis Section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants might be related to the translation, since it contains information about the ancient patriarchs, priesthood, baptism and related doctrinal items. This revelation was received on September 22 and 23, 1832.

Following the reception of the revelation now known as Doctrine and Covenants 84, the Prophet's next journal entry states:

I continued the translation of the Bible and ministering to the Church, through the Fall.18

As the Prophet continued translating into the winter of 1832, he wrote:

On the 6th of December, 1832, I received the following revelation explaining the parable of the wheat and tares:19

\(^{19}DHC\) 1:271-272.
\(^{17}DHC\) 1:273.
\(^{18}DHC\) 1:295.
\(^{19}DHC\) 1:300.
Then follows the revelation now known as Doctrine and Covenants 86. Though there is not a direct statement to the effect, the same reasoning that links Section 84 to the translation of the Bible could be applied to Section 86. We know that the translation was being made at this time, and it is possible that sections 84, 86, and also 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants came as a direct result of the translation, since the time element and the subject matter are harmonious to this conclusion.

The relationship between these sections and the translation of the Bible may be direct or it may be indirect, but there is strong probability that a relationship does exist. Sometime after December 6, 1832, and before February 2, 1833, the Prophet recorded in his journal:

This winter was spent in translating the Scriptures; in the School of the Prophets; and sitting in conferences. I had many glorious seasons of refreshing.\(^{20}\)

Then on February 2, 1833, at Kirtland, Ohio, the Prophet wrote the following in his journal:

I completed the translation and review of the New Testament, on the 2nd of February, 1833, and sealed it up, no more to be opened till it arrived in Zion.\(^{21}\)

Having thus "completed" the New Testament, the Prophet then returned to the translation of the Old Testament, as indicated in the following excerpt from Doctrine and Covenants 90:13, dated March 8, 1833:

And when you have finished the translation of the prophets, you shall thenceforth preside over the affairs of the school.

The language suggests that the work with the books of the Old Testament, called the "prophets" was already in progress, and perhaps nearly finished, for on the next day, March 9, 1833, the Prophet wrote:

Having come to that portion of the ancient writings called the Apocrypha, I received the following.\(^{22}\)

He then recorded Doctrine and Covenants 91 which is the

\(^{20}\)DH\(C\) 1:322.
\(^{21}\)DH\(C\) 1:324.
\(^{22}\)DH\(C\) 1:331.
fourth complete section of the Doctrine and Covenants that is definitely known to have been received in direct consequence of the Prophet’s work of translating the Bible.

A few weeks later, on May 6, 1833, the following instruction, now identified as Doctrine and Covenants 93:53 was received:

And verily I say unto you, that it is my will that you should hasten to translate my scriptures.

On the same day the Prophet also received a revelation concerning printing the translation of the Bible. This information is now published as Doctrine and Covenants 94:10. The subject of printing the translation was later mentioned in Doctrine and Covenants 104:58 and also in 124:89-90.

In an “Epistle of the First Presidency to the Saints Scattered Abroad” on or near the date of August 31, 1840, an appeal was made to the membership of the Church to contribute funds to be used in building up the kingdom. Of special interest is the following paragraph near the close of the Epistle:

Connected with the building up of the Kingdom, is the printing and circulation of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, hymnbook, and the new translation of the scriptures. It is unnecessary to say anything respecting these works; those who have read them, and who have drunk of the stream of knowledge which they convey, know how to appreciate them; and although fools may have them in derision, yet they are calculated to make men wise unto salvation, and sweep away the cobwebs of superstition of ages, throw a light on the proceedings of Jehovah which have already been accomplished, and mark out the future in all its dreadful and glorious realities. Those who have tasted the benefit derived from a study of those works, will undoubtedly vie with each other in their zeal for sending them abroad throughout the world, that every son of Adam may enjoy the same privileges, and rejoice in the same truths. (Italics added.)

During the years between 1833 and 1844 several letters of the Prophet and other official Church documents mentioned the need for money to publish the translation of the Bible. Notable among these are a Memorial of Joseph Smith, Jr., to the High Council, on June 18, 1840; a notice in the Times and Seasons

\[DHC\ 4:187.\]
\[DHC\ 4:156-137.\]
for Wednesday, January 12, 1842; and an epistle of the Twelve, March 1, 1843.

Some portions of what is now the Book of Moses, taken from the early chapters of Genesis, were published in Church periodicals in the lifetime of the Prophet. At least two undated printed "broad sides" of Matthew chapter 24 were issued "for the benefit of the saints." It is believed that these were printed in Ohio in the middle 1830s. Whether or not the broadsides were official Church publications is not known. Neither is it known who authorized their printings.

**REVELATION ON MARRIAGE**

The revelation on celestial marriage and plurality of wives was recorded on July 12, 1843, and is known today as Doctrine and Covenants Section 132. However, there is a strong probability that this document is related to the translation of the Bible—an assertion supported by historical evidence and also by doctrinal affinity. Although the document is dated July 12, 1843, in Nauvoo, Illinois, it is believed that the information contained therein was made known to the Prophet as early as 1831 and that the 1843 date signifies only the day on which it was committed to writing in its present form. For example, the record begins with the statement:

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob . . . as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines . . .

(D&C 132:1.)

It is likely that the question regarding the plurality of wives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could have arisen during the translation of the book of Genesis, which took place in 1830 and

25DHC 4:493.
26DHC 4:293.
27*Evening and Morning Star* 1, No. 3 (August 1832), "Extract from the Prophecy of Enoch"; 1, No. 10 (March 1833), "A Revelation of the Gospel to Adam"; 1, No. 11 (April 1833), "History of Noah," and "Revelation to Moses of the Heaven and the Earth." *Times and Seasons* 4 (January 1844), 71-73, "A Revelation to Joseph Smith, Jr. given June 1830."
28Original copies are located in the Special Collections room of the Clark Library at Brigham Young University.
1831. The following excerpt from the writings of Brigham H. Roberts supports this view:

There is indisputable evidence that the revelation making known this marriage law was given to the Prophet as early as 1831. In that year, and then intermittently up to 1833, the Prophet was engaged in a revision of the English Bible text under the inspiration of God, Sidney Rigdon in the main acting as his scribe. As he began his revision with the Old Testament, he would be dealing with the age of the Patriarchs in 1831. He was doubtless struck with the favor in which the Lord held the several Bible Patriarchs of that period, notwithstanding they had a plurality of wives. What more natural than that he should inquire of the Lord at that time, when his mind must have been impressed with the fact—Why, O Lord, didst Thou justify Thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; as also Moses, David, and Solomon, in the matter of their having many wives and concubines (see opening paragraph of the revelation)? In answer to that inquiry came the revelation, though not then committed to writing.  

Direct testimony of the early dating of the revelation on marriage comes from Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith. These two brethren attended a meeting of the Reorganized Church in Plano, Illinois, in 1878, while on a visit to the East, and Elder Pratt was invited to speak. An extract from the report of his remarks is as follows:

Elder Pratt . . . explained the circumstances connected with the coming forth of the revelation on plural marriage. Refuted the statement and belief of those present that Brigham Young was the author of the revelation; [and] showed that Joseph Smith the Prophet had not only commenced the practice of that principle himself, and taught it to others, before President Young and The Twelve had returned from their mission in Europe, in 1841, but that Joseph actually received revelations upon that principle as early as 1831. Said "Lyman Johnson, who was very familiar with Joseph at this early date, . . . told me himself that Joseph had made known to him as early as 1831, that plural marriage was a correct principle. Joseph declared to Lyman that God had revealed it to him, but that the time had not come to teach or practice it in the Church, but that the time would come."

If the document on marriage is associated with the translation of the Bible, then it constitutes still another revelation to

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30 DHC 5: 29-30.
add to the list of sections in the Doctrine and Covenants that have a common background in the translation of the Bible.

OTHER POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIPS TO THE TRANSLATION

At some time, the exact date or dates being unspecified, the Prophet received intelligence relative to the correct order of organizing and conducting councils in the Church, including the manner in which councils were conducted anciently. In referring to this subject at a conference in Hiram, Ohio, on October 11, 1831, Joseph said:

. . . . the Elders were instructed in the ancient manner of conducting meetings, of which knowledge most of them were ignorant.32

To a council of high priests and elders in Kirtland on February 12, 1834, the Prophet gave further instructions concerning ancient councils, saying that he had never before set forth "all the order in which it [a council] ought to be conducted." He then proceeded to explain the order of ancient councils, and the manner in which they were conducted.33

The Prophet does not specify the circumstances or the dates when these things were communicated to him, but it is possible that they came as part of the accumulation of knowledge and spiritual experience that came to him in connection with the work of translating the Bible.

That his work with the Bible sometimes brought the Prophet into visionary experiences is evident from the fact already noted that the vision of the degrees of glory was received in connection with the translation of the fifth chapter of John. Hence, it is possible that other visions were also given to the Prophet while he was engaged in the translation. He reported that he "saw Adam in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman," and that Adam called his children together to bless them.34 He likewise spoke of Adam presiding at a council of high priests.35 Whether

32DHC 1:219.
34DHC 3:388.
35D&C 107:53-57. This same information is contained in a blessing given by the Prophet to his father on December 18, 1833, more than a year before it appears in Section 107, thereby showing that the Prophet had the information earlier than the date of writing Section 107, which was February 1835. See Joseph Fielding Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1958), pp. 38-39.
the Prophet first learned of these things in connection with the translation of the Bible is not known, but it seems possible.

It is well to note again that the purpose of the translation of the Bible was the spiritual education of the Prophet himself, and that in the process many things were revealed to him which before were not known.

Although a categorical statement by the Prophet connecting the revelation about ancient councils to the translation of the Bible is not available, the possibility of such a relationship is strengthened by virtue of the fact that many doctrines and principles were received in that connection, and it is reasonable to expect that this should be the case with this subject also. Such an assumption, if correct, further suggests a relationship between the translation of the Bible and the revelation on priesthood known as Doctrine and Covenants Section 107. The subject matter of Section 107, concerning Adam, the ancient patriarchs, a council at Adam-ondi-Ahman, latter-day councils, and priesthood quorums seems entirely consistent with the above hypothesis. That the pattern of councils and Church organizations was shown to the Prophet by vision is claimed in Doctrine and Covenants 107:93, wherein it is said that the order of the Seventy (and presumably the other quorums also) was "according to the vision." Likewise Parley P. Pratt quoted the Prophet as saying to the Twelve:

... I have now finished the work which was laid upon me, by committing to you all things for the building up of the kingdom according to the heavenly vision, and the pattern shown me from heaven. (Italics added.)

Although Section 107 was not recorded until March 28, 1835, it is certain from the translation of the early chapters of Genesis in 1830 and also from the Prophet's instructions to the elders in 1831 about ancient councils that he knew much about these things as early as 1831. It is probable that much of the information about priesthood had been revealed to the Prophet earlier than the formal writing of Section 107 in 1835, and if so, the logical connection would be with the translation of the Bible. The same relationship respecting councils might also pertain to the organization of the "high council" described in Doctrine and Covenants 102.

36Statement by Parley P. Pratt in New York, January 1, 1845, and printed in the Millennial Star, 5, No. 10 (March, 1845), 151.
Thus the knowledge of the gospel possessed by the Prophet and extended to the Saints in 1833 was considerably increased over that which they had in 1830. Line upon line, here and there a little, and particularly as a result of the Prophet’s labors in "translating" the Bible, the doctrines of the gospel were steadily revealed. The real purpose of the Bible translation was not so much to have a new corrected edition of the Bible, but rather, to bring the Prophet to a greater understanding of the gospel. Consequently, the real product is not so much a new Bible itself, but the doctrines that were revealed in the process. Consequently, the Prophet’s work with the Bible is an indispensible element in the unfolding of the gospel and the building of the dispensation of the fulness of times—much of which occurred while the Prophet lived in the vicinity of Kirtland, Ohio.

The Prophet worked on the Bible translation primarily between June 1830 and July 1833. This is also the same period of time during which most of the doctrinal revelations now published in the Doctrine and Covenants were received. This is not coincidence, but rather it is consequence. This was a time of learning and of revelation in which the fundamental doctrines of the restored gospel were being revealed to the Prophet, and the translation of the Bible was the principle vehicle, the mode, the method, etc., by which the gospel was restored during these years.

There had been a previous period of great doctrinal revelation when the Prophet had translated the Book of Mormon, and subsequently there would be another period of great doctrinal advancement when he later would work with the Book of Abraham. The Book of Mormon was in the New York period, the translation of the Bible in the early Kirtland period, and the Book of Abraham came in the later Kirtland and early Nauvoo periods. In each case there was a major surge of doctrinal revelation associated with the translation of tangible documents.

SUMMARY

In summary of the principal items discussed in this article we recall the following:

1. The Prophet attached great importance to his divine commission to make a translation of the Bible.
Among other things, he stated that the work of Bible translation "was a branch of his calling" and that he and Sidney "were doing the work of translation, which the Lord had appointed" unto them. Frequently the Lord instructed the Prophet to set the work aside temporarily because of the press of other business, and later to take it up again. Each directive to the Prophet to resume the work was in effect a renewal of the divine commission.

2. The Prophet's background was rich in spiritual experiences preparatory to the work of the translation of the Bible.

3. A major purpose of the translation was the spiritual education of the Prophet, and through him, the education of the Church.

4. There is a close historical relationship between the translation of the Bible and much of the material contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, and it is obvious that the history of the Doctrine and Covenants and the history of the translation of the Bible are closely intertwined. In the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants frequent mention is made of the translation of the Bible, and several entire sections of the Doctrine and Covenants were received as a direct consequence of the translation.

Individual passages in the Doctrine and Covenants that have reference to the translation of the Bible must include at least the following:

| 35:18-20 | 90:13 |
| 37:1     | 93:53 |
| 41:7     | 94:10 |
| 42:56-61 | 104:58 |
| 45:60-61 | 124:89 |
| 73:3-4   |       |

Entire sections in the Doctrine and Covenants for which there is direct relationship to the translation of the Bible are as follows:

| 74        | 77 |
| 76        | 91 |

In addition, the following sections of the Doctrine and
Covenants are probably directly related to the Bible translation:

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5. The translation of the Bible contributed the Book of Moses and the 24th chapter of Matthew to the Pearl of Great Price.

6. The translation of the Bible had a significant role in the history of the Church.

   The fact that the Prophet made a translation of the Bible is a matter of record. That it was a substantial work is certified to by its sizable contributions to the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price, two of the standard works of the Church. It is also a topic of frequent mention in the Prophet’s journal and in the official History of the Church. It occupied much of the Prophet’s time for a period of three years (1830-1833) and was included in the subjects of several epistles of the leading councils of the Church.

7. The translation of the Bible contributed to the doctrine of the Church developed during the Kirtland era.

   As previously noted, the translation of the Bible contributed much to the content of the Doctrine and Covenants and to the Pearl of Great Price, two of the standard works giving the doctrine, faith, and practice of the Church. Much concerning pre-earth life, the degrees of glory in the resurrection, much information concerning Adam, Enoch, and the ancient patriarchs, of Cain, of the work of Satan, views of the Church respecting the Apocrypha, an explanation of the Revelation of John, the age of accountability, and probably also the doctrine of the eternal marriage covenant are associated directly with the translation of the Bible.

   The major part of the translation was done intermittently during a period of approximately three years from June 1830 to July 2, 1833, during which time most of the major doctrinal revelations now published in the Doctrine and Covenants were received as a consequence.
Kirtland: A Perspective on Time and Place

ROBERT L. LAYTON*

In a sense Kirtland, Ohio, 1831 to 1838 is a single tree in a forest of places and events. It is well to study the tree, or even to spend time in analysis of one leaf on one branch of the tree, but neither the tree nor a single leaf thereon can really be understood without reference to the entire forest. Each event in time is unique in its relationship to other events. Each place is unique in its relationship to other places. Each group of people we might study lives at a time and in a place and has a unique perception of its environment, framed in time and place, strongly affected by times past and by its location. The citizens of the Kirtland, Ohio, area in the 1830s, both Mormon and non-Mormon, had to gain a living from day to day. They farmed, manufactured, traveled, bought and sold land, talked of the past, tried to anticipate the future, were rained upon and snowed upon. If we are to judge their way of life, their decisions, it seems valid to suggest a look at their tree in the context of the forest. There is no pretention that this can be accomplished in one short article, but even a brief series of comments may broaden our perspective of place and time in Kirtland.

KIRTLAND: SITE AND SITUATION

A modern physiography describes the situation of Kirtland as lying on the northern margin of the Allegheny Plateau, overlooking a narrow lake plain. The people in the 1830s used the

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term plain, but referred to the plateau as hills, for while the rock structure is essentially horizontal, the surface is almost completely in slope, and hilly would still remain the most accurate description. The plain between the shore of Lake Erie and the hills to the south is some five miles wide near Kirtland, but widens out to the west. Both plain and hills show the evidences of glaciation. A few observant people even as early as 1835 began to guess concerning the fact that the long low ridges of sand and gravel inland from the present shore were ancient beaches from higher levels of the lake. Even those who cared nothing about how or why these ridges occurred, however, were quick to use them as routes of travel as the forest was cleared away. They were level, well drained, and relatively straight. The glacially disrupted drainage patterns, giving rise to many areas of marsh and swamp, were also an obvious fact of life even to those who knew nothing of later theories on glaciation. Much of the lake plain west of Cleveland was swamp, and travel to Detroit was often difficult or even impossible.2

The continental ice sheets altered much of the drainage pattern of Ohio, leaving the divide between the drainage into Lake Erie and drainage into the Ohio River, just a few miles south of the lake. The divide was relatively low and often almost imperceptible. Almost as early as the first settlers there was agitation for construction of canals connecting the lake and river system, often with only the most hazy notion of the actual elevations involved.

Among the short streams flowing off the northern slope of the plateau, two are of major significance in dealing with Kirtland. The East Branch of the Chagrin River makes a sharp bend as it leaves the plateau area and the first settlers of Kirtland saw in this site the opportunity to divert the stream across the bend and set up a mill.3 The other stream is the Cuyahoga, lying some twenty miles to the west, which became the location of the Ohio Canal, fixed the location of Cleveland,4 and influenced the entire economy of the region.

In broad perspective the landforms in Western New York were also critical in the development of Northern Ohio. The relationship of the Mohawk Valley and the old glacial channels to the west which allowed for construction of the Erie Canal can hardly be overemphasized.

CLIMATE

In 1835 climate was still equated with latitude to a large degree, but data was accumulating rapidly and theories being proposed to explain anomalies known to exist. A journalist and promoter named Scott pointed out in about 1841 that the 50° isotherm is exactly the best climate and is that isotherm near which mankind have chosen to congregate in great numbers and build great modern cities.\(^5\) Flint has in his book, *A Condensed Geography and History of the Western States*, tables giving the monthly temperatures and yearly averages for places ranging from Council Bluffs to Pittsburgh.\(^6\) He also gives data on maximum and minimum temperatures, winds, clear, cloudy, rainy, and snowy days. Flint divides the Mississippi Valley region into four major climates; north of 41° latitude, 37° to 41° latitude, 31° to 37° latitude, and south of 31° latitude to the mouth of the river. For each area he discusses the characteristic wild and cultivated vegetation. It is a useful and not inaccurate statement and may be assumed to have been available in most libraries throughout the then western states.

On a day-to-day basis, most contemporary accounts, however, are not so interested in the long-term climate, but rather use the word climate to refer to what we would now call the weather. To the farmer the week-to-week, month-to-month, and year-to-year variations were, as they are today, critical. The length of the period between frosts was critical and those who had moved from Vermont and New Hampshire to western New York or northern Ohio had no questions as to their blessing in regard to growing season and the competitive advantage afforded by the extra days, 180 to 200 days in the lake plain of northern Ohio as compared to 120 to 140 days in Windsor County, Vermont.\(^5\) As the areas of superior climate

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and soils opened in New York, Ohio, and to the west, many rural parts of Vermont and New Hampshire lost as much as fifty percent of their population. Climate was a major factor in the move of the Smiths from Vermont to New York, and they had a great deal of company as any examination of population data for that part of Vermont will demonstrate.

A major topic of discussion was the influence of forests on climate. Many were firmly convinced that clearing the woods brought a decrease in precipitation, while others were certain that the opposite was true. Winters or summers which seemed hotter or colder than normal were attributed to the effects of clearing the forest. Then, as now, the weather in the Kirtland region fluctuated from year to year. The summer of 1838 was seriously lacking in rain and caused many problems in agriculture, the summer of 1845 even drier. Long-time residents were always certain that the climate had changed since they were young, but memories concerning weather were no more accurate then than now.

THE FOREST

It seems doubtful that any of us today can really appreciate the overwhelming impact of the forest in the settlement of America. Forests were both a blessing and a curse. The forest provided lumber, medicines, nuts, dyes, fuel, fencing, wagons, ships, tools, sugar, tannin, and even roads. When the first settlement of Americans reached the grasslands of the west, they were lost without wood. On the other hand the forest was a barrier to road building, a problem to clear for farm land, and often thought to harbor disease, or to change the climate for good or bad if cut away.

Ohio was an area of superb forest. Except for areas of swamp and very limited prairies, or open grass areas, the entire state was covered with oak, maple, black walnut, black locust, walnut, wild cherry, and many other trees and shrubs.\(^8\) The sycamore is noted as the king of the forest, and one contemporary account relates a measurement of fifteen and one-half feet in diameter for one of these trees.\(^9\) Most trees were smaller, but many reached two or three feet in diameter and were difficult to remove. When Governor St. Clair was ordered

to cut a thirty-foot road through part of Ohio in 1791, he found it far easier to cut three ten-foot roads and thus avoid the larger trees.\footnote{William W. Shideler, "A Geographic Analysis of the Ohio Road System," Unpublished Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1959, p. 253.}

To clear land for agriculture took a man three to four weeks of dawn-till-dark labor for one acre. Once fifteen to twenty acres had been cleared and agriculture begun, many settlers hired a professional slasher to clear additional land.\footnote{Henry Howe, \textit{Historical Collections of Ohio}, 3 Vols. (Columbus, Ohio: Henry Howe and Son, 1891), Vol. 2, p. 53.} The slasher would study carefully the prevailing winds and the slope of the land, then carefully notch the larger trees over a long strip about thirty feet in width, cutting so the trees would incline toward the center of the strip, and deepening the notches as he moved windward. Upon finishing the strip he waited for a favorable wind, then felled the "starter" tree against the next in line and so felled a number of acres at one time. The trees were then allowed to dry for two or three years, following which they were fired to burn the branches and brush. The large trunks were cut into logs, either with an ax, or by building a fire on and around the fallen trunk and burning through the log. The latter was known as "niggering" and an experienced man by attending a number of fires and by "sawing" the burning poles against the log to remove the charcoal, could obtain logging lengths more rapidly than was possible with an ax. At this point the neighbors would often hold a logging bee, and men and oxen would assemble to remove the logs for later use as lumber or fence rails. Finally there remained the problem of removing the stumps, which were burned as much as possible, and then left to rot. Clearing was a long process requiring years of labor before the land could be plowed without difficulty, but clearing increased the value of the land sufficiently enough that some settlers supported themselves by taking up new land, clearing it, selling to later arrivals, then moving on to repeat the process in newer lands to the west.

**DISEASES**

Disease in the 1830s was attributed to location, changes in the weather, noxious vapors and other such causes. A good picture of the state of affairs may be obtained by reading some
comments from Flint. In his introduction concerning the entire Mississippi Valley he noted: 12

In such a variety of climates and exposures—in a country alternately covered in one point with thick forests, and in another spreading out into grassy plains—and having every shade of temperature, from that of the Arctic regions, to that of the West Indies, there must necessarily be generated all the forms and varieties of disease, that spring simply from climate. Emigrants from the Atlantic country will always find it unsafe, to select their residence near stagnant waters and creeping bayous, on the rich and heavy timbered alluvions . . .

Emigrants have scarcely ever paused long enough, or taken sufficient elements into the calculation, in selecting their residence with a view of its salubrity. When the choice is made they are often encumbered with families, and generally feel stinted both for time and money, and are in a hurry to commence operations for the provision of their families. They are apt to give too little weight to the most important motive of all which ought to determine their selection. A deep bottom, a fertile soil, a position on the margin of a navigable stream; these are apt to be the determining elements of their choice. The heavy forest is leveled. A thousand trees moulder, and putrify about the cabin. The stagnant waters, that, while shielded from the action of the sun by the forest, had remained comparatively innoxious, exposed now to the burning rays of the sun, and rendered more deleterious by being filled with trunks and branches of decaying trees, and all kinds of putrid vegetation, become laboratories of miasma, and emit on every side the seeds of disease . . .

The most dangerous period is after the trees have been leveled a year or two, and while they are still decaying about the dwelling. This well known fact would seem to give plausibility to the doctrine, that these deep and grand forests feed their foliage with an atmosphere, that is adverse to the life of man; and that when the forests are cleared away, the miasma, the noxious air, that used to be absorbed and devoured by the redundant vegetation and foliage of the forests, and incorporated with its growth, thus detached and disengaged, inhaled by the new residents, becomes a source of disease.

Flint recommended further that new residents stay out of the night air, avoid heavy rains, long exposure to sunlight, and abrupt changes of climate. He felt that these preventative measures would avoid the need for taking medicines, of which he

had a very low opinion, feeling that the medicine often damaged the patient more than the disease.

Whatever the supposed causes, the inhabitants of early Ohio and other areas suffered considerably from severe colds, diarrhea, "remitting fever" (malaria), rheumatism, "pneumonic affections," and "bilious fevers." They did take some comfort in the low incidence of lung consumption as compared to those living in the Atlantic area.

DIVIDING UP THE LAND

Fundamental to understanding any area is a knowledge of the system used to divide the land and obtain title and tenure. Settlement of the New England region proceeded for the most part in an orderly manner with strips or tiers of "towns" being extended at the frontier as those behind were occupied. A "town" was usually about 36 square miles, but it was not necessarily square in shape. Within the "town" a number of villages might exist, some with a rectangular street pattern, but most comprised of a series of houses strung out along a main road. Property boundaries were irregular and surveyed according to the metes and bounds system using landmarks such as a large rock or tree, a pile of stones or a wooden stake at corners. Survey and property division in the western lands by federal authority following the ordinance of 1785 was radically different. The land was surveyed into strips 6 miles in width running north and south known as ranges, crossed at right angles by strips six miles in width known as townships. In Ohio, which was settled during the period of transition, parts of the state are presently surveyed in metes and bounds, parts in 6-mile strips according to the now familiar pattern over most of the United States, and parts in a variety of other systems. The area of Ohio in which Kirtland is located is unique in being surveyed into strips 5 miles in width.14

In 1795 the State of Connecticut sold without survey what was guessed to be 3 million acres of land on the southern shore of Lake Erie to a group of investors for the sum of $1 million.

Representing this group which operated under the name of the Connecticut Land Company, General Moses Cleaveland led a group of surveyors into the area in 1796 and began a systematic survey of the purchase. It is of some interest to note that he paused in his 68-day trip from the East to counsel with the Indians at Buffalo, New York, and arrange purchase of the land which in actuality belonged to the tribes although sold by Connecticut. Purchase and treaty were arranged for a present of $500, two beef cattle, 100 gallons of whiskey, and a promise from Cleaveland to use his influence to obtain an annuity of $500 per year from the federal government. With this settled, the survey began from the Pennsylvania line to the Cuyahoga River.\(^{14}\)

In the initial survey the land was divided into strips of 5 miles across, those running north and south called ranges, those running east and west called townships. Within each 5-mile square or 160,000 acres, there were 42 lots of 380 acres. The lots were numbered from the southwest corner to the north and returning to the south so that lot #12 adjoined #1 and lot #42 was in the northeast corner.\(^{15}\)

Property within the tract was given out by drawing lots designating which of the investors received a given area because of the erratic value of the plains, hills, and swamps which the surveyors had mapped. A Mr. Andrew Hall received in 1799 as a part of his share, Lot 17 of Tract 1 of the township named after Mr. Turband Kirtland, one of his colleagues. Hall sold the land to a Mr. French for $300 in 1817 and French proceeded to establish a farm, a brick kiln, and a grist mill. In 1818 French sold some of his land to a William Card for $1,000, and other land in the area owned by Turband Kirtland was sold at that time for about $2 or $3 an acre,\(^{16}\) a large profit on land that a few years earlier had been purchased for about $.30 per acre.

The rectangular surveys and sale or distribution of land within these surveys over broad areas had an immediate impact on the pattern of settlement. No longer did the frontier move out in well-defined increments as with another tier of towns in New England; instead individual families scattered over large areas, often many miles from their neighbors. Villages and

\(^{14}\)Hatcher, *Western Reserve*, p. 18.

\(^{15}\)Drawing received from clerk of Thompson Township, Geauga County, Ohio.

\(^{16}\)Fielding, “Mormon Church in Kirtland,” p. 208.
towns became central places offering services to the surrounding agricultural population rather than residential sites for farmers who worked the fields surrounding the village.

**SPECULATION IN LAND**

The concept that land could be sold by a government to gain income, which began on a large scale around 1760 in New England, was in full bloom in 1835. There was, however, a great deal of disagreement as to how land should be sold and at what price. Some felt that it was the right of every free citizen to be given free land. Some felt that land sales should be restricted to very large units, thus allowing only the wealthy to obtain lands in the west. The mood of Congress changed from time to time. In 1796 the minimum purchase of government lands was 640 acres at $2.00 per acre with half the purchase price deferrable for one year. In 1800 the minimum changed to 320 acres and the buyer was permitted to pay $1/2 on purchase, $1/4 two years later, and the final $1/4 four years later. In 1804 the minimum was lowered to 160 acres. In 1820 the minimum was made 80 acres and the price lowered to $1.25 per acre but no credit was allowed. In 1832 a farmer could purchase 40 acres and thus begin with an investment of only $50.00. During all of this period, the values and regulations on purchase of land from private land companies fluctuated also, and in some areas land was being given free to veterans of various wars as a compensation for services.

The allowable minimum, and credit provisions, had a great deal to do with how much land was sold. Few people on the frontier had cash on hand in any quantity. With a provision for deferring payment they could clear some of their land, burn the logs for potash, harvest some corn, hire out to an established neighbor perhaps for a few days, and meet their next payment.

If the price of land was seemingly not high, neither were the wages. Common labor in the early 1800s in the Ohio area paid about $0.75 to $1.00 for a dawn until dark day. In 1828 a laborer on the canal at Dayton recalls being hired at $12.00 per month and having his pay cut to $9.00, at which point he quit the job. A bank cashier in Dayton in 1814 was paid $400.00 per

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annum.¹⁸ In the early 1800s a lucky farmer might pick up extra money from trapping. In 1832 bear skins traded at about $4.00, muskrat $.40, mink $.30, deer from $.75-$1.00, wolf $.25, but silver fox went as high as $75.00. Beaver were gone by 1837.¹⁹ Income from furs for purchase of land was minor after the 1830s in Ohio. Without credit it was difficult to obtain funds from any source to buy land outright.

Scarcity of cash money was also a major problem, and notes which were issued by all sorts of banks were hazardous. Notes existed from so many sources that banks and larger stores kept a catalog against which to check incoming paper notes for their current status. An interesting aspect here is that some notes which were known to be bogus circulated freely in a given area by local agreement because they were printed nicely and on high quality paper. Among legitimate bank notes, those coming up river from the Bank of New Orleans were highly regarded. Those notes, with Dix printed on the ten denomination were known as "Dixies" and it is thought by some that this is where the term generally applied to the South originated.

AGRICULTURE

It is difficult to imagine that there was anyone in the Western States in 1835 who did not believe that a great deal of money could be earned by purchasing and holding land even for a short time. At the end of The Revolutionary War the frontier was located at what is now Rome, New York, or just across the mountains into Kentucky. By 1835, Independence, Missouri, was on the frontier and the line enclosing the region of two to six people per square mile included Illinois, much of Arkansas, and Louisiana. A few in the East thought that expansion would be the downfall of the country, but others were forecasting a population of 800 million by 1946,²⁰ or 264 million in the Mississippi Valley alone.²¹ Agricultural land would do nothing but increase in value and urban land even more so. Rich and poor alike bought and sold land, often on credit, hoping for a rise in value to cover their payment and return a quick profit. Some became wealthy and others bankrupt.

¹⁹Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio, Vol. 1, p. 534.
²⁰Brown, Historical Geography, p. 92.
In 1835 agriculture represented practically all of the economy in the Kirtland area. Merchants and manufacturers were few and nearly everyone engaged in serving some aspect of agriculture. Farming, except for plowing and harrowing and drawing loads, was a hand operation dependent on human muscle. Production of one acre of wheat took forty to fifty man hours. The cast iron plow, patented in 1814 by Jethro Wood, was known and in general use in the East but was difficult to use in the West where the soil tended to stick to its pitted surface. The steel plow was not invented by John Deere until 1838. Drill seeding did not come until after 1840, and while the reaper was patented by McCormick in 1834, the machine did not come into general use until about 1845. The horse-drawn hayrack, invented about 1820, was slow in being adopted and the threshing machine first became practical about 1836. Chemical fertilizers were unknown, but the use of manure was well understood and those who did not apply this valuable resource to their fields were looked upon as poor farmers.

Quality of soil was equated with growth of particular trees. Tall trees, nut bearing trees such as oak and beech, were considered indicators of good soil, and the phrase to head for the tall timber meant just that when choosing new land.

Maize, or Indian Corn, was the backbone of agriculture. Corn was an ideal frontier crop. A peck of corn would plant an acre and yield from 50 to 110 bushels an acre. Two bushels of wheat, weighing 120 pounds, were required to plant an acre and the yield was 15 to 20 bushels. Corn could be planted with a hoe or even a sharp stick among the burned stumps and branches. It did not have to be harvested immediately when ripened as did wheat. It stored well and it was nourishing. Made into whiskey, it could be transported long distances at a profit. Converted into pork, it could be driven to market in herds and frequently was. In 1840 corn exceeded all other grains in Ohio, with over 33 million bushels.

There were, however, many other agricultural products. All of the major grains were produced, as well as large quantities of potatoes. Crops such as hops, hemp and flax, tobacco, and even mulberry leaves for production of silk were also important.


Horses, cattle, sheep, swine, and poultry were well distributed and improving in quality. Fruits such as apples grew well and orchards were widespread.

MANUFACTURING

While centers such as Pittsburgh and Cincinnati were boasting of dozens of mills and factories by 1835, even Cleveland remained unimportant in this respect in northern Ohio, and Kirtland had no more than a few home industries. The United States census of 1840 lists the value of production from home industries in Lake County, Ohio, as $18,731.00. Tanneries employed ten men, silk manufacture eight males and four females, brick and lime manufacture nine men, etc. The two major activities were production of potash from wood ashes, 153 tons for Lake County in 1840, and maple sugar, 64,931 pounds. Ohio in that year produced over 6 million pounds of sugar, mostly for home consumption.

TRANSPORTATION

The key to prosperity for northern Ohio or any other western region in 1835 lay in cheap transportation. It was estimated in that year that the surplus products of the Mississippi Valley were worth $20 million. Without a cheap way to ship products to the market, wide variations in price existed within a few miles. In 1817, for example, flour was worth $15 a barrel in Sandusky on Lake Erie, but only worth $6 a barrel in Columbus near the center of the state where it could not be shipped except by wagon during a few months of good weather.

Prior to completion of the Erie Canal, Ohio was oriented toward New Orleans. The Kirtland area was isolated, and southern Ohio was far advanced in settlement over the north. Some authors were predicting that New Orleans would become the largest city in the world with its control over the trade of the vast valley to the north. Except for the canals and later the railroads, that prediction might well have been correct.

By 1835 trade over the Erie Canal was in full swing and the Ohio Canal connecting Cleveland with the Ohio River to the south was also functioning. The two canals were effectively

connected by steamboats operating on Lake Erie. The impact of the canals was phenomenal. From July to December of 1827 when the Ohio Canal opened water travel from Cleveland to Akron, 6,059 barrels of flour, 619 barrels of whiskey, 102 tons of tobacco, 50 tons of butter, 28 tons of cheese, and 992 tons of other products moved north, while 3,536 tons of salt, 393 barrels of fish, and 233 tons of other goods moved south. In a two week period during the same year, over 600 settlers arrived in Cleveland to remain or to move to adjacent counties. Exports from Cleveland which totaled just over $50,000 in 1825 were near $5 million by 1833.

Highways were still crude or nonexistent in the Kirtland area in 1835. The first settlers came into the area via the lake, some traveling over the ice by sleigh from Buffalo during winter. Trails gradually developed along the township and range lines. Where the surveyors had blazed the trees, the people followed the blazes to the point becoming lost in the heavy forest. These trails which formed the major survey divisions were modified somewhat to avoid steeper slopes as they were widened and used for wagons, but became essentially the skeleton of the transportation net by 1835, along with the routes along the fossil beaches mentioned earlier.

Pioneers entering Ohio more to the south first used buffalo trails. These trails were in some cases wide enough for small wagons. The buffalo were unexcelled in their choice of routes offering the least possible slope. Even today many rail and highway routes in Ohio lie directly on the paths laid out by these animals, no better route having been found.

Moving goods by road in Ohio in 1835 was both difficult and expensive. By canal one mule could tow a barge with as much as twenty tons of cargo. To move twenty tons over land took perhaps twenty wagons and teams under the best conditions and these conditions seldom existed for more than a few weeks each year. Corderoy roads were used in 1835 for crossing local swamp regions, but the first plank road was not made until 1837 near Syracuse, New York. Roads of crushed stone were well known but very expensive, costing around $10,000 to $13,000 per mile. Where such roads were built as turnpikes

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26Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio, Vol. 3, p. 284.
and a toll charged, they were little used for freight because of the expense which was often as high as or even higher per mile than our modern toll highways. A toll road in Connecticut in about 1800, for example, charged $12\frac{1}{2}$c per mile for a loaded wagon and 4c a mile for a man and a horse. Even sheep and hogs were charged $\frac{1}{2}$c per mile per animal.\(^2\)

**LET'S BUILD A CITY**

One of the most remarkable aspects of the rapid occupation of the area from the Alleghenies to Missouri within a few brief years was the proliferation of villages, towns, and cities. Jesup W. Scott, an early promoter of Ohio, wrote of "A West of Cities," and proclaimed as early as 1841 that there would be 352 cities of a half million people in the Mississippi Valley alone within a hundred years.\(^3\) He, of course, hoped to own real estate in several of them. But he was hardly alone in his estimates.

Beginning with the surveys of western New York, the surveyors were always on the watch for potential city locations. They and others were well aware of the potential value of urban real estate, and were quite aware of what made for urban growth. A waterfall, a location to bridge an important river, a salt spring, a potential highway route, or later canal or rail route, deep water near the shoreline of one of the great lakes matched perhaps by a natural route inland, and visions of a major urban center with its increasing land values would break forth. Some of these dreams were realized, and some died quietly, taking with them investments of a great deal of money. Scott, who on one occasion envisioned Cincinnati as becoming the largest city in the country, and was certain that Toledo would outdistance Cleveland, nevertheless points out in 1867 that land which he purchased for $12 an acre in Toledo was then worth $12,000 an acre, and that lots which sold for $25 in about 1840 were then selling for $25,000.\(^4\) In 1840 many were willing to take the risk.

Planning a completely new city seems a relatively rare thing today, particularly for the average individual. In 1835, however, it was not particularly rare, and many settlers entering Ohio

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\(^2\)Brown, *Historical Geography*, p. 103.
\(^3\)Glaab, "Scott and West of Cities," p. 6.
\(^4\)Glaab, "Scott and West of Cities," p. 11.
and other parts of the West had participated in planning and opening up several potential cities. By the 1830s most of the city plans of plats were based on a simple grid-iron arrangement. This offered an easily laid out plan with minimum expense in surveying, and was well suited to the laying and selling of town lots for quick return by investors. A common practice was to survey the townsites and the immediate surrounding area into what was called “in lots” and “outlots.” Settlers would purchase, or receive through drawing lots, an in lot in the city of about a half acre, and also an outlot of perhaps five acres. This was done, for example, in Dayton, Ohio, and also as early as the settlement at Savanna, Georgia.

When General Moses Cleaveland arrived at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River, he pictured the location as ideal for the capital of the lands being surveyed. Pacing off a 10-acre block for a central square, which seems to have been a very common size for such public squares, he instructed his surveyor to lay out a town plat. The initial plat as mapped in 1796 shows the 10-acre square with major streets of 132 feet in width extending from the four sides of the square. Outlots of 10 acres and up to 100 acres were also surveyed.

The platting of a city at Kirtland was discussed as early as 1833, but an official drawing was not filed until April of 1837. The plat, as filed with the Geauga County courthouse, Chardon, Ohio, was signed by some 68 property owners, including the Prophet Joseph Smith. The city was a grid pattern to consist of some 225 blocks, each 10 acres in size and divided into 20 half-acre lots. The streets are shown as 4 rods (68 feet) in width, oriented to magnetic north. This plat was to be laid out over existing property lines and terrain, with little regard for either, a fact which antagonized many local non-Mormon residents. Some surveying was done and some of the 4,500 platted lots were sold before the saints left Kirtland, but after their departure little or no attention was paid to the plat and today there is little evidence that such a plan ever existed.

It could be said that there is an important difference in stating that the Mormons were there, and stating that the

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Mormons were there also. In Kirtland they were there also. They came into an area already settled, already altered in physical character to some extent by clearing of forests, opening of roads, and opening of the canals which afforded an access to market for agricultural and manufactured products. It was a familiar environment to most of the saints arriving there, with no major differences in climate or land form such as they encountered to the west in Missouri and more so in the Great Basin. There was no experimentation with new crops or methods of agriculture as was needed later. But there was also no unoccupied land upon which to plat new cities, or which to farm. Land had to be purchased from others with payment for the cost of improvements and be subject to the vagaries of current speculation. The land was all owned. Even to pull off the road with the wagons and camp for the night as the saints left for Missouri required payment of a fee for occupying private land.\footnote{Joseph Smith, Jr., \textit{History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints}, 7 Vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1948), Vol. 3, p. 109.}

In being there also, the Mormons were an integral part of the tree in a forest of places and events. To extract the tree from the forest is to study it out of context. An understanding of the tree within the forest has only just begun.
The Writing of Joseph Smith’s History

DEAN C. JESSEE*

On April 6, 1830, the day the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, Joseph Smith conveyed a revelation to the Church which began, "Behold there shall be a record kept among you. . . ." From that time Joseph Smith and his associates regarded record keeping as a "duty imperative." ¹

That this 1830 revelation motivated Joseph Smith’s history-writing and record-keeping efforts is evident from the amount and nature of the records he created after that date. The writing of his history was a subject of intense concern during the remaining years of his life. In June 1840 he memorialized the High Council in Nauvoo to "relieve him from the anxiety and trouble necessarily attendant on business transactions," and urged them to appropriate sufficient means "for a clerk or clerks . . . to aid him in his important work." In 1843 when his scribes Willard Richards and William W. Phelps reported that noise from a nearby school class distracted them "in the progress of writing the history," Joseph immediately ordered Mr. Cole, the caretaker of the school, to "look out for another place as the history must continue and not be disturbed." The Prophet added: "There are but few subjects that I have felt

¹The revelation is published in the Doctrine and Covenants 21:1. Franklin D. Richards, in answer to a question of Hubert H. Bancroft, how the Mormons came to have an Historian’s and Recorder’s Office when other people generally neglected such things, replied that the precedent was set in the 1830 revelation and from that time record-keeping became a "duty imperative." Franklin D. Richards, "Bibliography of Utah," (Church Historian’s Office), July 1880, pp. 3-4.

²Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B.H. Roberts (Salt Lake City, 1948), Vol. 4, pp. 136-137. (Cited hereafter as DHC.)

*Dean C. Jessee is a member of the staff at the LDS Church Historian’s Office in Salt Lake City.
a greater anxiety about than my history which has been a very
difficult task." On another occasion he told William Phelps
that "the history must go ahead before anything else." The
records created as a result of this concern for history constitute
the prime sources for the life of Joseph Smith and for early
Mormon history.

Since figures of the past are observed mainly through docu-
ments, the accuracy of the view is highly dependent upon the
integrity of the sources. In determining the authenticity of
early Mormon sources pertaining to Joseph Smith, the student
is faced with two problems: (1) the identity of the scribes
who wrote the source material, and (2) the method of com-
piling the history. The second of these is dependent for its
solution upon the first.

Joseph Smith did little of the actual writing of his history.
According to his journal, he seldom used the pen himself,
dictating all of his communications to a scribe. Shortly before
his death he wrote: "For the last three years I have a record of
all my acts and proceedings, for I have kept several good,
faithful, and efficient clerks in constant employ: they have
accompanied me everywhere, and carefully kept my history,
and they have written down what I have done, where I have
been, and what I have said."

The number of scribes engaged in writing for Joseph Smith
during the final fourteen years of his life reflect his continued
concern for his history. A list of these men, the identification
of their handwriting, and a brief summary of their clerical
service establishes their writing tenure and lays the groundwork
for understanding the nature of early Mormon source material.
Furthermore, it permits a reconstruction of the method of com-

OLIVER COWDERY (1806-1850)
Scribe: 1829-1838

Oliver Cowdery began writing for Joseph Smith on April 5,
1829, and was the chief scribe of the Book of Mormon manu-

3Ibid., 6, p. 66.
4Ibid., 5, p. 394.
5Ibid., 4, p. 1. "Wednesday July 3rd [1839] ... Afternoon dictating
History—Thursday & Friday (assisted by Br Newel Knight) dictating History
... ." The Joseph Smith Diary that records this entry was written by James
Mulholland.
6Ibid., 6, p. 409.
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script. He served as Church Recorder from April 1830 to March 1831 and again from September 1835 to 1837. He wrote a history of the Church covering the period from "the time of the finding of the plates up to June 12th, 1831."

In June 1831 he was appointed to "select and write" books for the Church schools; and on May 1, 1832, he, along with W. W. Phelps and John Whitmer, was called to "review and prepare" revelations to be printed in the *Book of Commandments*. When John Whitmer was appointed to write the Church history in November 1831, Oliver was assigned to give him "counsel and assistance." Following the purchase of Egyptian mummies by the Church at Kirtland in July 1835, Oliver assisted Joseph Smith in the "translation of some of the hieroglyphics" and later, the Egyptian alphabet. At Far West, Missouri, on December 6, 1837, he was appointed recording clerk, standing clerk of the Council, and recorder of patriarchal blessings. Cowdery's service as a scribe had ended by April 12, 1838, when he was "considered no longer a member of the Church," at a trial in Missouri. His handwriting appears extensively in the Book of Mormon manuscript, Joseph Smith diaries, the 1832-1835 Letter book, and patriarchal records.

**JOHN WHITMER (1802-1878)**

* Scribe: 1829-1838

John Whitmer was baptized in June 1829. He assisted Joseph Smith with the translation of the Book of Mormon, and in arranging and copying Church revelations in July 1830. In June 1831, he replaced Oliver Cowdery as Church Recorder, a job that he accepted with reluctance:

> I was appointed by the voice of the Elders to keep the Church record. Joseph Smith Jr. said unto me You must also keep the Church history. I would rather not do it but observed that the will of the Lord be done, and if he desires it, I desire that he would manifest it through Joseph the Seer. And thus came the word of the Lord: 'Behold it is expedient in me that my servant John Whitmer should write and keep a regular

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2. Doctrine and Covenants 69:2-4. (Cited hereafter as D&C.)
4. Ibid., 2, p. 527.
5. Ibid., 3, p. 17.
6. Ibid., 1, p. 104.
history, and assist you my servant Joseph, in transcribing all things which shall be given you, . . . And again, . . . it shall be appointed unto him to keep the church record and history continually, for Oliver Cowdery I have appointed unto another office."13

In July 1832, Joseph Smith exhorted Whitmer "to remember the commandment to keep a history of the church & the gathering and be sure to shew himself approved whereunto he hath been called."14 His efforts were officially discontinued at a Church trial in Far West, Missouri on March 10, 1838, when he was excommunicated from the Church. One of the charges made against him was "withholding the records of the Church . . . when called for by the clerk."15 His history has since been recovered and published.16 Although not extensive, Whitmer's other writing is found in copies of revelations and Joseph Smith's correspondence.

SIDNEY RIGDON (1793-1876)
Scribe: 1830-1838

Sidney Rigdon joined the Church on November 14, 1830. He met Joseph Smith in Fayette, New York in December 1830, and later that month was called to "write for him; and the scriptures shall be given, even as they are in mine own bosom, to the salvation of mine own elect."17 In October 1831, when Joseph Smith renewed work on his revision of the scriptures, he was assisted by Sidney, who had moved to Hiram, "to act in his office as scribe to me."18 On September 24, 1834, Rigdon was appointed one of a committee "to arrange the items of the doctrine of Jesus Christ."19 At Kirtland he served as trustee and conductor of the "Kirtland School," where penmanship, arithmetic, and English grammar were taught. In 1838 he taught grammar to the Church Presidency and assisted Joseph

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12John Whitmer, "Book of John Whitmer," p. 25. See also D&C 47:1, 3.
13Letter of Joseph Smith to Hyrum Smith, July 31, 1832 (Church Historian's Office. Cited hereafter as CHO).
16D&C 35:20.
18Ibid., 2, p. 165.
Smith in compiling the history that was begun on April 27 of that year. After the Church left Missouri there is no evidence that Sidney Rigdon continued as a scribe to the Prophet.

FREDERICK GRANGER WILLIAMS (1787-1842)
Scribe: 1832-1839

Frederick G. Williams was converted to Mormonism in October 1830. He first met Joseph Smith in Missouri in August 1831. His tenure as scribe began on July 20, 1832, "from which time up to the commencement of the Hebrew school in Kirtland I was constantly in said Smith's employ." In addition to writing he served as counselor in the Presidency of the Church beginning in 1833. That same year he established a printing firm in Kirtland. He assisted in gathering and arranging the revelations of the Church in 1834; and a year later he became the editor of the Northern Times. Williams was excommunicated from the Church in March 1839; he returned in April 1840, and died at Quincy, Illinois on October 10, 1842. His clerical service apparently ended at the time of his excommunication. Williams' handwriting appears in Joseph Smith's 1832 history, diary, 1832-1835 Letterbook, and numerous revelations.

ORSON HYDE (1805-1878)
Scribe: 1833-1836

Orson Hyde joined the Church in October 1831. His clerical activity dates between June 6, 1833, when he was appointed clerk to the Presidency, and January 21, 1836, when he was replaced by Warren Parrish. His handwriting in manuscript copies of revelations, and the Kirtland High Council record attest to his clerical efforts.

21Frederick G. Williams, undated manuscript, F.G. Williams Papers (CHO).
22A revelation of March 8, 1933, refers to Williams as "counselor and scribe" to Joseph Smith. D&C 90:19.
23Joseph Smith referred to Williams as a man "in whom I place the greatest confidence and trust." Joseph Smith, "Diary," 1832-1834, Nov. 19, 1833. This esteem was shown in the naming of Joseph's second son—Frederick G.
Two pages of Willard Richards’ Diary showing his method of recording his writing progress in the manuscript of Joseph Smith’s History. These pages indicate that between July 29 and August 13, 1843, Richards wrote pp. 489 to 526 of the manuscript. His reference on August 7 to a “new plan on the history,” refers to the commencement on that date of a slight change in the format of the History, which continues from p. 509 of the manuscript, wherein dates and brief summary notations from the text were written in the margin of each page as a finding aid.
WILLIAM WINES PHELPS (1792-1872)
Scribe: 1831?-1844

William W. Phelps arrived in Kirtland, Ohio in June 1831 where he was employed in the "work of printing, and of selecting and writing books for schools" in the Church with Oliver Cowdery.24 A month later he was called "as a printer unto the Church," to establish a printing press in Jackson County, Missouri, where he became editor of the Evening and Morning Star in June 1832.25 A specific date for the beginning of his clerical activity is not known, but he assisted in writing early revelations. He also wrote for Joseph during the study of the Egyptian records.26 In May 1832 he was appointed with Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer to prepare revelations for publication, and in 1835, assisted the committee in compiling the Doctrine and Covenants.27 Phelps was excommunicated from the Church in March 1839, but returned again in 1841, having "trembled at the gulf I have passed."28 In 1843 he was assisting Willard Richards on Joseph Smith's History.29 His clerical efforts are evident in early manuscript revelations, the Egyptian alphabet, a manuscript of the Book of Abraham, patriarchal records, and the 1839 Joseph Smith History.30

WARREN PARRISH
Scribe: 1835-1837

Warren Parrish was appointed scribe to Joseph Smith on October 29, 1835, "at $15.00 per month," and began writing in the Prophet's 1835-36 History.31 Parrish's calling was announced in a revelation on November 14, 1835:

... he shall see much of my ancient records, and shall know of hidden things, and shall be endowed with a knowledge of

26Ibid., 2, pp. 236, 286.
27Ibid., 1, p. 270; 2, p. 227.
28Ibid., 4, p. 142.
30See chart on p. 463.
31Joseph Smith recorded on October 29, 1835: "... went to Dr. Williams' after my large journal ... returned home, and my scribe commenced writing in my journal a history of my life; concluded President Cowdery's second letter to W.W. Phelps, which President Williams had begun." DHC, Vol. 2, p. 293. The "large" diary referred to here is the book that was later re-labeled as "A-1" which became the first Volume of Joseph's History of the Church.
...missionaries came upon him, his words were abundantly supplied, and even anticipated. He was respected by the entire community, and his name was a tower of strength; his counsel was sought for, respected, and listened to. But it should unite with the Brethren of Christ his poverty of means and influence would vanish, his family dependent upon him for support must necessarily share his humiliation and poverty. He was aware that his character put his reputation must suffer the extremities of the community.

Among all these things, there must have been feelings of no ordinary kind, a temptation to seek a sheltered place from the path of duty. He had formerly made a sacrifice for truth and conscience, and had been sanctioned, consequently he felt great confidence in the Lord, believing that if he pursued the path of duty, He, God, would be with him.

Although he felt great confidence in the Lord, he felt it a time of some magnitude when he devoted his determination to his future companion, who never before shared in his poverty and who had long struggled through it without means or依靠. For informed her what the consequences would undoubtedly he respecting their mild and serene spirit, if they obeyed the impulse and the voice "My child, you have ever followed me into poverty, and are you again willing to do the same?" she answered, "I have made the matter, I have contemplated the consequences in which we may be placed, I have counted the cost, and I am perfectly satisfied to follow you; yes, it is my desire to do the will of God, come what or come death. Accordingly they were both baptized into the church of Jesus Christ and together with those who had been previously admitted to baptism, made a little branch on the tree.
hidden languages; and if he desire and shall seek it at my hands, he shall be privileged with writing much of my word, as a scribe unto me for the benefit of my people; therefore this shall be his calling . . . and it shall be said of him in time to come, Behold Warren, the Lord's scribe for the Lord's Seer, whom He hath appointed in Israel . . . .

When illness deprived Joseph Smith of Warren's services in December 1835, the Prophet wrote: "O may God heal him, and for his kindness to me, O my soul, be thou grateful to him, and bless him. And he shall be blessed of God forever, for I believe him to be a faithful friend to me, therefore my soul delighteth in him." On December 30 Joseph "... spent the day reading Hebrew . . . in company with my scribe, who is recovering his health, which gives me much satisfaction, for I delight in his company." However, when the illness continued into January, Warren wrote to Joseph: "I have a violent cough . . . and writing has a particular tendency to injure my lungs, . . . I therefore, with reluctance, send your journal to you, until my health improves." On February 8, 1836, Joseph reported that "Elder Parrish, my scribe, received my journal again. His health is so much improved, that he thinks he will be able, with the blessing of God, to perform his duty."

Parrish's clerical "performance" can be followed during this illness in the handwriting of the 1835-36 History, and the Prophet's smaller journal covering the same period. Parrish wrote pages 57-104 and 134-189 of the History—"apparently coinciding with the illness—and 160 pages of Joseph's 1835-36 diary. On January 21, 1836, Warren Parrish succeeded Orson Hyde as "scribe for the Presidency."

By December 1837 Warren Parrish's tenure as scribe had ended. Returning to Kirtland on about the tenth of the month, Joseph Smith reported:

During my absence in Missouri Warren Parrish . . . and some others united together for the overthrow of the Church. Soon after my return this dissenting band openly and publicly renounced the Church of Christ of Latter-day Saints and claimed themselves to be the old standard, calling themselves the Church...

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28DHC, Vol. 2, pp. 311-312.
30Ibid., 2, p. 345.
31Ibid., 2, p. 385.
32Ibid., 2, p. 393.
34Edward Partridge, "Diary," January 21, 1836.
of Christ, excluding the word 'Saints,' and set me at naught, and the whole Church, denouncing us as heretics.39

SYLVESTER SMITH
Scribe: 1834-1836

Sylvester Smith was baptized shortly after the organization of the Church. He was appointed a member of the first High Council organized at Kirtland, and is listed as a clerk of the Council in meetings of August and September 1835. He was one of three clerks of the general assembly of the Church held at Kirtland in August 1835. He was appointed by Joseph Smith on January 25, 1836, as "acting scribe for the time being, or, till Elder Parrish shall recover his health."40

WARREN A. COWDERY (1788-1851)
Scribe: 1836-1838

Warren A. Cowdery was appointed presiding high priest over the branch of the Church at Freedom, New York in November 1834, and did not arrive in Kirtland until February 25, 1836. When the firm, Oliver Cowdery and Company, was dissolved in 1837 and the management transferred to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, Warren A. Cowdery became their agent in the printing office and book bindery. He also served as editor of the Messenger and Advocate.

Church records indicate that he wrote more extensively than reference to his name, which appears over the title, "Assistant Recorder," would indicate.41 He kept Kirtland Council minutes, wrote in Joseph Smith's diary, and 1835-36 History, and patriarchal records. Warren did not continue with the Church after the Kirtland difficulties in 1838.

GEORGE W. ROBINSON (1814-   )
Scribe: 1836-1840

George W. Robinson's name appears as "Clerk and Recorder" on minutes of the Kirtland High Council between January 1836 and November 27, 1837.42 He was elected Gen-

42See "Kirtland Council Minutes," 1832-1837 (CHO).
eral Church Recorder on September 17, 1837, in place of Oliver Cowdery who had gone to Missouri; and at the general conference in Far West, Missouri on April 6, 1838, he was sustained as "general Church recorder and clerk to the First Presidency." In April 1838 he assisted with the writing of the History that was begun that year.

Intending to move to Iowa, George Robinson was released from his clerical calling on October 3, 1840. He later left the the Church.

JAMES MULHOLLAND (1804-1839)
Scribe: 1838-1839

James Mulholland commenced writing for Joseph Smith on Monday, September 3, 1838. His writing was interrupted by the Missouri imprisonment of the Prophet, but resumed again on April 22, 1839. Mulholland wrote, at Joseph Smith's dictation, the beginning pages of the 1839 History incorporating the history written in 1838.

While the Prophet was enroute to Washington, D.C. in November 1839, James Mulholland died. He was regarded by his employer as "a man of fine education, a faithful scribe. . .".

ROBERT BLASHEL THOMPSON (1811-1841)
Scribe: 1839-1841

Robert B. Thompson joined the Church in May 1836. After the expulsion of the saints from Missouri in 1839, he began writing for the Quincy Argus and was also engaged as a clerk in the courthouse there. In May 1839 he was selected as one

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44Ibid., 3, pp. 13-14.
45"This day was chiefly spent in writing a history of this Church from the earliest period of its existence up to this date, By Presidents, Joseph Smith Jr & Sidney Riglon, myself also engaged in keeping this record." George W. Robinson, "Scriptory Book of Joseph Smith . . .," pp. 34, 37, 38. Robinson makes further reference to the History on succeeding days: "Monday, the 50th This day was spent by the first Presidency, in writing the history of the Church; . . . Tuesday 1st May 1838. This day was also spent in writing Church History, by the first Presidency Wednesday 2nd This day was also spent in writing history . . . Friday 4th. This day also was spent in studying & writing history, by the presidency. . ." Ibid. See also DHC, Vol. 3, pp. 25-26.
46James Mulholland, "Diary" (CHO).
47Ibid.
48See footnote 83.
49DHC, Vol. 4, p. 89.
of a committee to gather historical data for the Church. He succeeded George W. Robinson as general Church clerk on October 3, 1840. In the following month he assisted Elias Higbee in writing a petition to Congress for redress of Mormon grievances in Missouri. On February 3, 1841, he was elected Nauvoo City recorder, and also served as associate editor of the Times and Seasons.

Thompson died on August 27, 1841. At the time of his death Joseph Smith noted that he had done "much writing for myself and the Church." His clerical contribution is seen in pages of the 1839 History, Joseph's 1838-43 Letter book, patriarchal records, and private correspondence.

HOWARD CORAY (1817-1908)
Scribe: 1840-1841

Howard Coray's clerical association with Joseph Smith is explained in Coray's autobiography:

... On the 3d or 4th day of April, 1840 I set out with a few others for Nauvoo, for the purpose of attending conference, and to gratify a curiosity that I had to see the Prophet. Some time during the Conference I took occasion to visit him, in company with Joseph Wood. He introduced me to brother Joseph with something of a flourish, telling him that I was a collegiate from Jacksonville college. This was not true and was not authorized by me. The Prophet, after looking at me a little and asking me some questions, wished to know whether it would be convenient for me to come to Nauvoo, and assist, or rather clerk for him. As this was what I desired, I engaged at once to do so; and, in about 2 weeks thereafter, I was busily employed in his office, copying a huge pile of letters into a book—correspondence with the Elders as well as other persons, that had been accumulating for some time. ... I finished the job of copying letters. I was then requested by bro. Joseph to undertake, in connection with E.D. Woolley, the compilation of the Church History. This I felt to decline, as writing books was something, in which I

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50Ibid., 4, p. 204.
51Ibid., p. 237.
52Ibid., p. 411. A letter of Joseph and Hyrum Smith to Oliver Granger on August 30, 1841, reports Thompson's death: "All things prosper in this place except the loss we have sustained in the death of two of our most valuable men Brother D.C. Smith & Robert B. Thompson. Both have recently died of what I call a q[u]icken Deased upon their lungs they wasted a way in one week & spit up their very vitals—they are gone. Their loss is irraparable, but we must be submissive to the will of God." Original in Huntington Library.
53Joseph ... ordered Bro. Thompson to write a few lines to Bishop Ripley in his name. ... William Clayton, "Diary," March 26, 1841.
had had no experience. But bro. Joseph insisted on my undertaking it, saying, if I would do so, it would prove a blessing to me as long as I should live. His persuasive arguments prevailed; and accordingly in a short time, bro. Woolley and myself, were busily engaged in compiling the Church history. The Prophet was to furnish all the materials; and our business, was not only to combine, and arrange in chronological order, but to spread out or amplify not a little, in as good historical style as may be. Bro. Woolley’s education not being equal to mine, he was to get the matter furnished him in as good shape as he could; and my part was to go after him, and fix his up as well as I could, making such improvement and such corrections in his grammar and style as I might deem necessary. On seeing his work, I at once discovered, that I had no small job on my hands, as he knew nothing whatever of grammar; however, I concluded to make the best I could of a bad job, and thus went to work upsetting and recasting; as well as casting out not a little. Seeing how his work was handled, he became considerably discouraged; and rather took offence at the way and manner in which I was doing things, and consequently soon withdrew from the business. Immediately after bro. Woolley left, I succeeded in obtaining the services of Dr. Miller; who had written for the press, and he was considerably accustomed to this kind of business. Now I got on much better, I continued until we used up all the historical matter furnished us by the Prophet. And as peculiar circumstances prevented his giving attention to his part of the business we of necessity discontinued our labors, and never resumed this kind of business again.54

Coray’s reference to copying letters in a book is confirmed by his handwriting in Joseph Smith’s 1838-43 Letter Book.55 He also copied extensively in the patriarchal records. However, existing manuscripts do not indicate that either Coray or Woolley worked on the History, a fact that may be explained by the loss of Church records.

JAMES SLOAN (1792-)
Scribe: 1840-1843

James Sloan’s clerical talents were divided between Church and municipal assignments. On February 3, 1841, he was elected Nauvoo City Recorder, and at a Church conference on October 2 was appointed general Church clerk to replace Robert

54Howard Coray, "Autobiography" (CHO), pp. 17, 19-20.
55Coray’s last Letter Book entry is one of October 19, 1840, which may suggest a terminal date for his letter-copying.
B. Thompson. In July 1841, he was appointed secretary to the Nauvoo House Association, in which appointment he was in charge of recording stock certificates, and account books. A year later he was serving as secretary of the Nauvoo Legion.

As a Church clerk Sloan recorded patriarchal blessings and ordinances for the dead. In 1843 he was called on a mission to Ireland, which terminated his clerical career. Prior to his departure he brought "the desk containing city and Church books and papers to the mayor's office."  

Nauvoo municipal court and city council records, Church patriarchal records, and Joseph Smith's correspondence provide evidence of his ability.

**WILLARD RICHARDS (1804-1854)**  
Scribe: 1841-1854

Willard Richards joined the Church on December 31, 1836 in Kirtland, Ohio. He was in England from June 1837 to August 16, 1841, during part of which time he edited the *Millennial Star*. Upon his return to Illinois he began a significant career as clerk and compiler of history when on December 13, 1841 he commenced writing as a Church recorder, and a year later, on December 21, 1842, he was appointed Joseph Smith's "private secretary & historian." Later, on July 30, 1843, Richards was appointed General Church Recorder to replace James Sloan. He was present in the Carthage Jail at the time Joseph and Hyrum Smith were killed in 1844. Under his direction two years later Church records were packed and transported across the plains from Nauvoo to Salt Lake Valley.

He contributed significantly to Nauvoo municipal affairs: On October 30, 1841, he was elected to the city council, and a month later he became editor of the *Times and Seasons*. He was appointed city recorder in August 1843, and also served as clerk of the municipal court.

Joseph Smith's daily journal for the years 1842-1844, portions of the 1838-43 Letter Book, and Nauvoo municipal records—all prime sources behind the Prophet's History—were written by Willard Richards. He wrote extensively in the fin-

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ished manuscript of the History and took a leading role in its compilation both before and after the death of the Prophet. Joseph regarded him as "a man in whom I have the most implicit confidence and trust... He has done me great good and taken a great burthen off my shoulders since his arrival in Nauvoo..."  

WILLIAM CLAYTON (1814-1879)

Scribe: 1842-1844

William Clayton arrived in Nauvoo from England in December, 1840. He began writing for Joseph Smith on February 10, 1842: "Bro. Kimball came in the morning to say that I must go to Joseph Smith's office and assist Bro. Richards," Clayton wrote in his diary. "I accordingly got ready and went to the office and commenced entering tithing for the temple." When Willard Richards temporarily left Nauvoo in June 1842, the entire clerical responsibility of Joseph Smith's office was given to Clayton. Upon Richards's return in October, Clayton continued as a clerk until Joseph Smith's death in 1844.

Clayton wrote extensively in the record book of the Nauvoo Masonic Lodge, recorded Joseph Smith sermons, and assisted with his correspondence.  

THOMAS BULLOCK (1816-1885)

Scribe: 1843?-1856

Thomas Bullock immigrated to Nauvoo from England in 1843. He is first mentioned as a scribe to Joseph Smith in November 1843. On May 13, 1844 he was appointed clerk of the ship, "Maid of Iowa," and on June 16 was transferred to Joseph Smith's office. Bullock became the chief scribe under Willard Richards when work resumed on the Joseph Smith History in 1845. He was also chief clerk of the Pioneer Company in 1847, and was employed in the same capacity in the

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60 Letter of Joseph Smith to Jennetta Richards, June 25, 1842 (CHO).
62 DHC, Vol. 5, p. 49. On July 2, 1842, the day Richards left Nauvoo, Joseph "rode out in the city with my clerk, Mr. Clayton." Ibid., p. 52.
63 A letter of Joseph Smith to "Judge Thomas," dated June 26, 1844, is signed by "Wm. Clayton Clerk for Joseph Smith."
64 Although Bullock continued writing until his death, the terminal date of 1856 given here indicates the completion of work on Joseph's History.
Joseph Smith's History of the Church, Vol. B.1, p. 812. The single line at the bottom of the page written by Willard Richards at the time of Joseph Smith's death. The remainder of the page is in the handwriting of Thomas Bullock.
Historian’s Office in Salt Lake City under Willard Richards and George A. Smith.

Bullock’s main contribution consisted of writing nearly 700 pages of the manuscript of Joseph Smith’s History; and he wrote extensively in Nauvoo municipal council and court records, and in the papers of Joseph Smith.

GEORGE A. SMITH (1817-1875)

Although George A. Smith did not personally write for Joseph Smith, he was closely associated with the Prophet and assisted Willard Richards on the History in Nauvoo. Under his direction, the compilation of the History was completed in Salt Lake City in 1856. Franklin D. Richards said of George A. Smith that he possessed “a very tenacious and powerfully retentive memory—any person, or thing, he ever saw, or heard, once committed to memory, or even carefully read, he seemed never to forget. He was a man of great versatility of thought, and idea, and seemed peculiarly adapted to that labor and responsibility.”

WILFORD WOODRUFF (1807-1898)

Wilford Woodruff was not a personal scribe to Joseph Smith. His literary contribution consists of his diary record of events in the Prophet’s life and the assistance he gave George A. Smith during the final stages of the History compilation. On February 12, 1855, he spent part of the day at the Historian’s Office “examining my Journals containing Joseph’s sermons preparatory for publication in the Church History.”

Two years later he wrote:

I have never spent any of my time more profitably for the benefit of mankind than in my Journal writing for a great portion of the Church History has been compiled from my Journals and some of the most glorious gospel sermons, truths, and revelations that were given from God to this people through the mouth of the Prophets Joseph and Brigham, Heber and the Twelve could not be found upon the Earth on record only in my Journals, and they are compiled in the Church history and transmitted to the Saints of God in all future generations.

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65Franklin D. Richards, “Bibliography of Utah,” p. 3.
67Ibid., March 17, 1857.
March 1

This morning I read and worked in German; went to my office and reviewed my calculus letter in French and German, No. 4, Vol. 8, after which I went with Marshall T. C. Thompson to procure some provisions for Thomas Morgan and Robert Taylor, who are partners of the inhabitants of the City, I had directed should work out their punishment in the highways of Boston.

Elder O. Hyde called on me this afternoon to borrow a horse; I instructed my elder to put the Second General saddle on my horse, "St. Duncan," and let Elder Hyde ride the Governor, in the Second General saddle.

Signed a power of attorney dated Feb. 28 to Amasa Lyman, to sell all the lands in Providence County, to me by Mr. H. Dunn.

The Mississippi river: up on the 19th of Nov. last, and still continues to, wagons and teams constantly pass over the ice to Memphis.

I am constantly receiving applications from abroad for Elders which have responded to, in the times and seasons of this day, that the Conference in St. Louis, will attend to as many of them as possible.

The Council of the Twelve Apostles wrote to Thomas, Lucy, Augusta, and other branches, as follows:—The Twelve to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in and about Rome.

Beloved brethren, As we believe.
ROBERT LANG CAMPBELL (1825-1874)
Scribe: 1845-1850, 1854-1856

Robert L. Campbell arrived in Nauvoo from Scotland in April 1845 and on May 3 commenced writing in the Historian's Office. He was a scribe for the Patriarch John Smith. After his arrival in Salt Lake Valley in 1848 he went to England as a missionary, and did not return to his employment in the Historian's Office until November 20, 1854. He copied an extensive portion of Joseph Smith's History into volumes D-1 and E-1.

LEO HAWKINS (1834-1859)
Scribe: 1853-1856

Leo Hawkins, an English convert to the Church, arrived in Salt Lake City in 1850 and was engaged as a clerk in the Historian's Office on Sept. 20, 1853. His writing on the History is seen on more than 200 pages in volumes D-1 and F-1, and in the compilation of Joseph Smith's sermons. In 1859, at the age of 25, he died of tuberculosis.

JONATHAN GRIMSHAW
Scribe: 1853-1856

Little is known of Jonathan Grimshaw except that he was employed in the Historian's Office as a clerk between June 7, 1853 and September 1856, when he left Utah Territory for the East. He was the penman for the first 150 pages of Volume F-1 of the Joseph Smith History, and he assisted in compiling the Prophet's sermons from existing manuscripts.

EARLY ATTEMPTS TO WRITE A HISTORY

While this is not a definitive list, the foregoing men wrote or assisted in compiling the bulk of early Mormon Church

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6These dates indicate Campbell's years of employment in the Historian's Office prior to completion of the Joseph Smith History.
6These dates indicate the years of Hawkins' clerical work during the compilation of Joseph Smith's History.
6"Historian's Office Journal," date indicated.
6"On June 7, 1853, Grimshaw wrote: "This morning Dr. Richards sent for me, and introduced me into his new office as a clerk." "President's Office Journal."
6A complete listing of those who wrote for Joseph Smith or were engaged in clerical work for the Church prior to 1846 would include the following: John Corrill, Elias Higbee, Almon Babbitt, Erastus Snow, Ebenezer Robinson,
history sources between 1829 and 1856. Identification of their handwriting establishes with relative accuracy the nearness of these sources to Joseph Smith, and lays the groundwork for reconstructing the Prophet's effort to write a history.\textsuperscript{73}

Evidence substantiates Joseph's repeated concern to write a history that would do "justice to the cause."\textsuperscript{74} The picture that emerges is one of repeated beginnings due to frustrating circumstances that he explained after early efforts to write had ended in failure.\textsuperscript{75} Available sources show that seven attempts were made to write the History prior to 1839:

1. The history written by Oliver Cowdery covering the period "from the time of the finding of the plates up to June 1831."\textsuperscript{76}
2. The John Whitmer history covering the post-1831 years after Oliver Cowdery's history left off. This record was retained by Whitmer after he left the Church.\textsuperscript{77}


\textsuperscript{73}See charts on pp. 441, 463.
\textsuperscript{74}DHC, Vol. 4, p. 470.
\textsuperscript{75}Several factors hindered the writing of the History: "...long imprisonment, vexatious and long-continued law-suits, the treachery of some ... clerks, the death of others, and ... poverty ... from continued plunder and driving ... . " DHC, Vol. 4, p. 470. So far as the clerical difficulties were concerned, of the men listed above, who wrote during Joseph Smith's lifetime, nine apostatized from the Church, two died at critical points in writing the History, and one retained Church records entrusted to him.
\textsuperscript{76}This history has not been found. It may have been the manuscript referred to in a letter of Andrew Jenson to Franklin D. Richards, during Jenson's search for historical records in Missouri in 1893: "You speak of the Oliver Cowdery manuscript, which is supposed to have contained the record of the restoration of the Melchisedek Priesthood. You may be sure that that was the first I looked for and inquired after; but there is nothing in Whitmers book about it; and Mr. Schweich said he did not think there was anything in the papers left after the late David Whitmer bearing on this point, although he admitted that there was a whole box full of old documents which had not been examined since David Whitmer died. Mr. Schweich rather conveyed the idea that the Oliver Cowdery heirs, in Southwest City, Mo., had Oliver Cowdery's old papers; but he did not know. ... If Mr. Schweich admits to you that they are in possession of the Oliver Cowdery record he denies it to me. ... ." Jenson to Richards, September 14, 1893.
\textsuperscript{77}It was not until Andrew Jenson visited George Schweich, brother-in-law to the deceased David Whitmer, in Missouri in September 1893 that the Church obtained a copy of the Whitmer history: "I boarded another train which brought me 5 miles to Richmond, where I went to work immediately copying John Whitmer's old record, in the store of Geo. Schweich, who assisted me some in reading proof. Mr. Schweich did not think that the little old book with faded writing was the very book that I had been hunting for, but as I perused it, I came to the conclusion, without telling him so, that it contained all that John
3. An unfinished 1832 history in the handwriting of Frederick G. Williams and Joseph Smith.

4. An 1834 fragment of history in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery.

5. The 1834-35 history published in the *Messenger and Advocate*.


7. The 1838 history that was started by Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and George A. Robinson on April 27 of that year.

The difficulties surrounding these early efforts to write an official history did not diminish after it was resumed in 1839. The writing of this final version—usually known as Joseph Smith's documentary History—constitutes an exercise in perseverance that was begun in Nauvoo in 1839 and completed in Salt Lake City in 1856. Detail provides answers to some of the questions of authorship and methodology that have shrouded the study of the History.

Whitmer ever wrote on Church history; hence I was anxious to copy every word contained in it. Mr. Schweich reluctantly allowed me to take it to my hotel where I spent all night copying, and in the morning returned the original to him. I was very pleased indeed to obtain a copy of this old Whitmer record; it is well known that John Whitmer was appointed the first historian of the Church, and it was also known that he, when he apostatized, refused to give up this record to the Church authorities. And now when found, we discovered that it contained only a little of historical value. Yet John Whitmer recorded events which are not recorded elsewhere." Andrew Jenson, *Autobiography*, p. 209.

John Whitmer's history has since been published twice. See footnote 16.

This six-page account is the only history containing the actual handwriting of Joseph Smith, a fact that was not detected when this account was previously analyzed. The pages containing this record were originally part of Joseph Smith's 1832-35 Letter Book, and contain his account of the First Vision and the visits of Moroni. See Dean C. Jessee, "Early Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision," *BYU Studies*, Vol. 9 (Spring, 1969), pp. 277-278.

Located in Volume A-1 of the 1839 history, this fragment consists of pages labeled for a "Genealogy" of the Presidents of the Church, and daily entries for December 5, 6, 1834, under the heading of "Chapter 1." It is recorded on the first twenty pages of the volume, following which, the page numbering continues on blank pages.

This "history" was written in the form of a series of letters between Oliver Cowdery and W.W. Phelps that were published during the year beginning October 1835. It contains random Church history events beginning with the priesthood restoration and terminating with the visit of Moroni.

This record is located on pages 46-134 of Volume A-1 following the 1834 history. This account consists of a recopying of the *Messenger and Advocate*—Cowdery, Phelps letters, followed by daily third-person diary entries of events in Joseph Smith's life covering the dates between September 22, 1835, and January 18, 1836.

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<td>Robert B. Thompson</td>
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**"Book of Mormon,"**

Ms. 144 pp.

- [Kirtland Revelations] 1831-1834. 120 pp.
- [Articles and Covenants] 50 pp.
- [Plat of Kirtland, Ohio, n.d.] 1 sheet.

**Joseph Smith, "Diary,"**

1832-1834. 93 pp.


1839. 15 pp.

1842-1844. 4 v.

- [Book of Abraham] Mss. 4 items.

**Joseph Smith, "History of the Church,"** 6 v.


**[Church History, 1835-1836]** 143 pp.

- [Patriarchal Blessings, 1834-1846] 9 v.
THE HISTORY COMPILATION IN NAUVOO

Joseph Smith began dictating the History, in its present form, to his clerk, James Mulholland on June 11, 1839, apparently using the 1838 History as a basis. According to George A. Smith the format and style of the History was determined by Joseph:

The plan of compiling the history of Joseph Smith from the Journals kept by his clerks, Willard Richards, William Clayton, Wilford Woodruff, and Thomas Bullock, was commenced by himself, extracting items of necessary information in regard to general and particular movements from the Times and Seasons, Millennial Star, Wasp, Neighbor, and other publications, extracts from City Councils, Municipal Courts, and Mayors Dockets, and Legion Records, which were all kept under his direction; also the movements of the Church as found in Conference minutes, High Council records, and the records of the several quorums, together with letters and copies preserved on file; also noted remarkable occurrences throughout the world, and compiled them under date of transaction, according to the above plan. . .

James Mulholland wrote the initial fifty-nine pages of the History, at least part of which was copied from the history begun the previous year. These pages cover events from Joseph Smith’s birth to September 30, 1830. However, Mulholland’s untimely death on November 3, 1839, temporarily terminated work on the History. Robert B. Thompson, who was appointed Church clerk in October 1840, replaced Mulholland, but wrote even less than his predecessor before he, too, died on August

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74Joseph Smith’s 1839 diary kept by James Mulholland records the beginning of the History: "Monday 10th [June] began to study & prepare to dictate history—Tuesday commenced to dictate and I to write history. Wednesday Thursday & Friday generally so employed. . . ." Mulholland also recorded his writing activity in his own diary: "Commenced again to write for the Church on Monday the 22nd April, 1839. May 9. All this time busy for Church. Monday 27 Writing all day for Church. Thursday - writing and examining papers &c. Friday & Saturday writing—Monday 3rd June & Tuesday writing for Church. Monday 10. Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday 13th & writing &c. for Church history. Monday 17th and Tuesday writing history. Wednesday forenoon unwell, afternoon writing history. Thursday forenoon studying for history. Saturday copying in Letter book. Monday 24th All this week copying letters. Wednesday— afternoon writing history. [absent in Quincy, Illinois] Monday 22 [July] commenced again to write Friday writing & recording history." The "letters" he mentions copying were very probably those he wrote in Joseph Smith’s 1838-43 Letter Book, seventy-three pages of which are in his hand.

75Evidence that the History was rewritten in 1839, incorporating the 1838 effort is elaborated in Jessee, "Early Accounts," pp. 286-287.

76Letter of George A. Smith to Wilford Woodruff, April 21, 1856 (CHO).
In the evening, had an interview with a deacon on Saturday and
Sunday, objecting to his performing as the city. Also an interview with a minister
Sunday, and conversation about the race without body or parts.

At 6 p.m. I announced with my staff, and with the band and about a
large body, that the general audience present before the speeches,
and of my speech to the Indians. The Indians seemed not to notice that I was
speaking, and they performed their observations in entertainable style.

The speech I knew well to the Indians, many of them were ignorant, and more
slow-witted. The men were in great spirits, and said great improvements, both in uniform
and discipline, and we felt proud to be associated with a body of men which is some part of
discipline, majesty, in a knowledge of military tactics, the parts of lines, one of the thoughts, and a great deal of the western charity.

In the course of my remarks by the bridge, I told the Indians when we have
promised them in order to obedience, they have always held in any form we please to
help us, upon such places, where they give me power to protect the moment. I will now
say I can do nothing for this moment, I will increase that power. To the
end of the address the Indians seemed to the city and in the north, that
seemed 7 P.M., mildly windy and very cold. Then was the United States officers
2 General Council of Ten, present, who rejected each opinion at one appearance
and obedience.

In the evening attended the public performance of the Council. Department
State, St. Louis.

A conference was held at Temple, York county, Maine, 3 hundred, if then,
3 Prints of Auditors, 2 Councils, and 20 members were presented. A council had
been secretly organized at Temple, York county, New York consisting of 2 priests, and
1 Leader and 20 members.

Sunday. In the forenoon I was asked by several gentlemen concerning
the place, which was dug out near Windham.

The Council of the First Presidency met
 Elder 18 young preached at La Grange.

I talked at office at 7 a.m. with a representative to Joseph L. Smith.

John Scott was unwilling to give John Bankroll one fourth of the
lot as directed by me.

In company with my wife, mother, and my adult family, Sidney Rigdon
John Scott, John Young, W. Woodruff, and about one hundred gentlemen and ladies,
arrived 10 min. After 8 a.m. from the Mover and the state of Indiana, having
been a fine bountiful of music. We had an excellent audience from our central point
John Scott. The band performed in part with much good order and delight, sincerely.
The captain and officers on board had all they could to make us comfortable, and we had a
very agreeable and pleasant trip. We started with the intention of visiting Augusta, but in
consequence of the losses of the ship, it was impracticable, as therefore allowed our
next day to pass.

27, 1841. Following Robert Thompson, W.W. Phelps wrote
the manuscript to November 1, 1831.

Not until Willard Richards was appointed secretary to
Joseph Smith in December 1842 was any significant progress
made on the History. At the time he began writing, not more
than 157 pages had been completed, covering events up to
November 1, 1831. By May 8, 1843, he had written 114 pages
beyond W.W. Phelps’ last entry. At the time of Joseph Smith’s
death, the narrative was written to August 5, 1838. Richards
described his efforts in a March 1844 letter:

It is now seven years since I have laid my head one night
in my own house during that time I have been in England, near
four years and the remainder of the time have spent in writing
the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,
which, of course will afford no income until it is completed and
printed which cannot possibly be done for one or two years. It
is a great work and all important to the Church and world.

Besides writing the main History, Willard Richards by 1844
had created or collected for the Prophet much of the source
material upon which the remainder of the compilation of the
History depended.

Writing of the History resumed in February 1845 under
the direction of the Council of the Twelve. It was to be com-
piled “according to the . . . plan which [Joseph Smith] while
in prison just previous to his murder requested Elder Willard
Richards to continue. . .” With the entry of August 6, 1838,
begins Thomas Bullock’s handwriting in the text. In his diary
Bullock chronicled the progress of the work:

Dec. 9, 1844. at daylight went to Phelps for books &c then to
Dr. Richards. I was sworn in Deputy Recorder. . .
10 . . . at the Drs. all day writing in Record Books &c.
18 examining Church papers—endorsing same—according to
date. . .

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86See chart on p. 441.
87Progress in the writing of the History between May 8, 1843, and March
2, 1844, can be followed in Willard Richards’ diary where he lists the pages
written for each day. August 24, 1843, “554.5. commenced on the 2d vol of
the history [B-1],” is an example. A page from the diary is reproduced on
p. 445.
88Letter of Willard Richards to “Mr. Moffatt.” Augusta, Illinois, March
27, 1844 (CHO).
89Smith to Woodruff, April 21, 1856. That the History following Joseph
Smith’s death was based upon sources created during his life— as stated in this
letter—is verified by comparing the sources with the History.
For a partial listing of these see the chart on p. 463.
19 Going through Church Records—making a list of places not copied—also of papers . . .
24 went to Dr R then to the old office searching out the old Church papers afterwards endorsing same.
Christmas 25 very dirty—went to Dr R's indorsing papers and filing in proper bundles—gathering the leaves of Record Books in proper place—saw a bee in the window . . . dined with Dr. R. & supped.
Jan. 14, 1845 . . . recording Church History
16 . . . Dr & I preparing for history all day.
17 . . . Dr. & I preparing Church History
18 . . . G.A. Smith called in the afternoon about the history of the Church. staid some time . . . Dr. & I on the Church History . . .

17 [Feb., 1845] Writing in Church History Book all day . . .
18 Geese flying north—Writing in Church History . . .
19 Geese flying north, birds singing—beautiful Spring day a spider and flies—all day writing Church History . . .
20 . . . I & Dr. writing history.
22 Office all day writing Church history . . .

March 15 . . . finished the year 1839—wrote 56 pages last week.

Saturday 22 Writing history all day . . . finished the year 1840.
April 4 Copying history till noon—finished 1841 . . .
Monday 14 Office writing history—commenced at February 1.
1842 went home at 7 tired.

Friday 18 Writing history finished June 1842 . . .

May 3 Saturday Office—writing history finished July 1842 being the end of Vol. 3.90
Monday 5. got up mp 4 [morning prayer]—started for office 20 min to 6 called up bro Wandell & went to office writing in Book 3 and commenced in new Book at 11 a.m.—and wrote till ep [evening prayer] 5.91

Thursday 3 [July] Writing history finished Vol 3 containing about 343,000 words . . .

90 Vol. 3 corresponds to Volume C-1 as later labeled. See chart on p. 441.
91 The "new book" would be Volume D-1.
Friday 4 Writing history in 4th vol.... [D-1]

Friday 25... writing history till 7. at ep 3 had a hunt in office, caught 11 mice....

Although Bullock's personal diary ends on August 5, 1845, an office journal kept concurrently by him indicates the continued progress on the History:

Monday 4 [August 1845] TB [Thomas Bullock]... commenced history 1422 3/4 page and writing till 3...

Wednesday 20 TB writing history in 4 vol in P. M. commenced the year 1843...

Tuesday 6 [Jan. 1846] Dr. [Willard Richards] dictating history while TB wrote it...

Saturday 10 TB writing history in Book D till 12 when Dr returned from Temple - after dinner he dictated & I wrote history until Sunset wrote up to Feby. 21/43...

Thursday 15 TB writing book D (finished Feb 28)....

In the months immediately preceding the departure of the Saints from Nauvoo, every effort was made to collect historical data. On November 16, 1845, Willard Richards wrote an epistle to the saints:

All those who have letters, or documents of any kind in their possession, which in any way relate to the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, are requested to leave them with the Historian before tomorrow evening.

Every individual who may be in possession of any fact, circumstance incident, event, or transaction which they wish recorded in the General History of the Church will report it in writing before tomorrow evening.

The Historian wants all books, maps, charts, papers, documents, of every kind name and nature, and all information that may relate to, or have a bearing in any wise upon the History of the Church, before him, in his office, within twenty four hours.

Important items of History have frequently been presented at too late an hour to gain an insertion. Therefore I would say,

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that the documents now wanting, are for the years 43-4 and 5, but if any of the brethren have any items of valuable history of any date, they may hand them in, and they will be filed away for future use.\footnote{Brigham Young, "Manuscript History," November 16, 1845.}

THE HISTORY COMPILATION AFTER NAUVOO

By February 4, 1846, the day the books were packed for the journey west, the History had been completed to March 1, 1843. Thomas Bullock had written 674 pages of the History. A notation following the entry of February 28 establishes the terminal point of the History compilation in Nauvoo: "end of W. Richards compiling the books packed Feb. 4, 1846 in Nauvoo. Miles Romney present. T Bullock—clerk."\footnote{Joseph Smith, "History of the Church," Volume D-1, p. 1485.}

A one-page inventory written by Thomas Bullock shows that the Church records including the History were packed into two boxes for the trip west: a "small box," which contained the duplicate handwritten copy of the History,\footnote{The "duplicate" mentioned here was apparently written as an insurance measure against loss of the original. It was begun in April 1845 and discontinued on August 6, 1856, upon the request of Brigham Young. At this time the History had been duplicated to July 18, 1843. The scribes who wrote this copy were: Charles Wesley Wandell, Wilmer Benjamin Benson, Franklin Dewey Richards, Leo Hawkins, Robert Lang Campbell, Jonathan Grimshaw, and Thomas Bullock.} listed on the inventory as "new books A-2, B-2, C-2, D-2" and a "large box," which contained the original manuscript, entered as "old book A-1, C-1, D-1, B-1."\footnote{[Thomas Bullock,] "Schedule of Church Records. Nauvoo, 1846." (CHO).}

A reference to the transportation of the Church records across the plains was made by Willard Richards at Mt. Pisgah, Iowa on May 29, 1846: "Bro. Joseph Horns team—Henry Fairbanks driver, received of Willard Richards to carry on the journey over the mountains 1 Box records 381 [lbs.] 1 Box records 205 [lbs.]."\footnote{Willard Richards, "Diary." The weight of the boxes of records noted here corresponds to the "large" and "small" boxes mentioned in the Bullock inventory.} Fairbanks took the records to Winter Quarters from which place Thomas Bullock transported them to the Great Salt Lake Valley.\footnote{See appended notation in Joseph Smith, "History of the Church," Vol. D-1, p. 1485.}

The rigors of establishing a new commonwealth in the mountains precluded even the unboxing of the historical records of the Church until June 7, 1853. Immediately following Thomas Bullock's note in the History, giving the date the books were
packed at Nauvoo, the same writer made the following notation: "The books were unpacked in GSL City by Willard Richards and Thomas Bullock, June 7, 1853 . . ." Another note at the same place in the manuscript indicates that resumption of work on the History occurred on "Dec. 1, 1853 [when] Dr. Willard Richards wrote one line of History being sick at the time—and was never able to do any more." The "single line" dictated by Richards is the last sentence written by Thomas Bullock in the History, and marks the end of Willard Richards's contribution to the History. He died on March 11, 1854.

At the general conference of the Church in April 1854, George A. Smith was appointed Church Historian to succeed Willard Richards. George A. brought impressive qualifications to the task of continuing the History. He had been closely associated with Joseph Smith and in Nauvoo had assisted Richards "during about 70 days in revising and collecting matter for the History . . . which made me acquainted with the plan of compilation . . ."102

The remainder of Joseph Smith's History of the Church from March 1, 1843 to August 8, 1844, was completed under the direction of George A. Smith. This consisted of 844 pages in Volumes D-1, E-1 and F-1, written by Leo Hawkins, Robert L. Campbell, and Jonathan Grimshaw, Historian's Office clerks.

George A. Smith summarized his contribution to the History:

On the 10th April 1854, I commenced to perform the duties of Historian by taking up the History of Joseph Smith where Dr. Willard Richards had left it when driven from Nauvoo on the 4th day of February 1846. I had to revise and compare two years of back history which he had compiled, filling up numerous spaces which had been marked as omissions on memoranda by Dr. Richards.

I commenced compiling the History of Joseph Smith from April 1st 1840103 to his death on June 27th 1844. I have filled


102 Ibid.

103 Smith to Woodruff, April 21, 1856.

104 The reference to April 1, 1840, appears to contradict the beginning date of March 1, 1843, given above. However, the early date represents the point from which George A. "revised and compared." His actual compilation of the text started with the latter entry.
February 28—No article in the Chicago Inquirer, but one. Aaron Ockerman has seen the sign of the sun of man, as, and Jordan in the Boston of the Times and Journal as follows. 

"During the many signs of the times, and other strange things, which are continually angering the minds of men. I notice a small presentation in the Chicago Inquirer, upon the subject of one, Aaron Ockerman, of Cape St. Croix, stating that he has seen the sign of the sun of man in heaven, as predicted in the 14th of Math. The Lieutenant jurisdiction of a 'serpent,' like the green snake, which the brave apostle to me, he may note to himself, for 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.' Every honest man who has visited the City of Heaven, and is wise, can bear some of greater things, and place one in the front ranks of those who are known to be good for the good of goodness and other times, hypocrites, and abominable creatures, that white men make them. Some to darkness and our, virtues exalts me and the Lord is light and immortality.

The writer as well as some others, think that Joseph has his work at last; because the Ockerman certifies that he has seen the sign of the sun of man. But I shall use my right, and declare, that notwithstanding the Ockerman may have seen a wonderful appearance in the shadow, one meaning about sunshine (which is nothing very uncommon in the winter season) he has not seen the sign of the sun of man, as predicted by Jesus; neither has any man, nor will any man, as after the sun will have been darkened and the moon bathed in blood, for the Lord had not shown me any such sign, and as the prophet saith, so it must be; surely the Lord will do nothing, but he reveals his power unto his servants the prophets. (See Amos iii.)

Therefore, hear this, Death, the Lord will not come to reign over the righteous, in this world, in 1845, nor until every thing for the wicked is ready. Yours respectfully, Joseph Smith.

End of 28th day, compounding the books packet 18th of Feb. in Nauvoo. MILD MARY FAITH.

Patriot, Cape.

Joseph Smith's History of the Church, Vol. D-1, p. 1485 showing the point to which the History had been written prior to the exodus from Nauvoo. Note Thomas Bullock's concluding reference to the books being packed on Feb. 4, 1846.
up all the reports of sermons by Prest. Joseph Smith and others from minutes or sketches taken at the time in long hand by Dr. Willard Richards, Wilford Woodruff, Thomas Bullock, William Clayton, Miss Eliza R. Snow &c., which was an immense labor, requiring the deepest thought and the closest application, as there were mostly only two or three words (about half written) to a sentence. The greatest care has been taken to convey the ideas in the prophet's style as near as possible; and in no case has the sentiment been varied that I know of; as I heard the most of his discourses myself, was on the most intimate terms with him, have retained a most vivid recollection of his teachings, and was well acquainted with his principles and motives. 

. . . . The severe application of thought to the principles of the History, the exercise of memory &c., have caused me to suffer much from a nervous headache or inflammation of the brain; and my application of mind being in exercise both day and night, deprived me of a great portion of necessary sleep.¹⁰⁴

The Joseph Smith History was finished in August 1856, seventeen years after it was begun. Wilford Woodruff recorded on the 13th that it was "finished up to the death of Joseph in Carthage jail,"¹⁰⁵ and five days later, on the 18th, the First Presidency met in the Historian's Office where they "... finished up the History of Joseph Smith."¹⁰⁶ Copying the History from the preliminary draft continued until November 6, 1856.¹⁰⁷ Upon publication of the History, George A. Smith and Wilford Woodruff appended the following statement:

The History of Joseph Smith is now before the world, and we are satisfied that a history more correct in its details than this was never published. To have it strictly correct, the greatest possible pains have been taken by the historians and clerks en-

¹⁰⁴Smith to Woodruff, April 21, 1856.
¹⁰⁵Wilford Woodruff, "Diary," August 13, 1856.
¹⁰⁶Ibid., August 18, 1856. The six-volume manuscript of Joseph Smith's History (labeled A-1 to F-1) covers events recorded in the first six volumes of the printed DHC to the entry of June 28, 1844, which concludes page 189 of Vol. F-1 of the manuscript and page 629 of the DHC, Vol. 6. Following this, seventeen pages of the manuscript contain an excerpt from Thomas Ford's History of Illinois, which is recorded on the first 31 pages of DHC, Vol. 7. Pages 228 to 304 of the manuscript contain the "compilation of History, from June 22 to August 8, 1844 . . . . compiled from the Journals of . . . . Willard Richards, Wilford Woodruff and others; and from the documents on file," which was written by George A. Smith and Wilford Woodruff, and which is recorded on pages 129-242 of the DHC, Vol. 7. The remaining contents of DHC, Vol. 7 were not recorded as part of the initial compilation of the History as found in Vols. A-1 to F-1 of the manuscript.

A comparison of the manuscript of the History with the printed versions in the Times and Seasons, Deseret News, Millennial Star, and the DHC as edited by B. H. Roberts, is the subject of another study.

¹⁰⁷Entries in the "Historian's Office Journal" indicate the progress of the writing by Campbell, Hawkins and Grimshaw. See chart on p. 441.
gaged in the work. They were eye and ear witnesses of nearly all the transactions recorded in this history, most of which were reported as they transpired, and, where they were not personally present, they have had access to those who were.

Moreover, since the death of the Prophet Joseph, the history has been carefully revised under the strict inspection of President Brigham Young, and approved of by him.

We, therefore, hereby bear our testimony to all the world, unto whom these words shall come, that the History of Joseph Smith is true, and it is one of the most authentic histories ever written.

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108 The work of "revision" mentioned here began on April 1, 1845, as described by Brigham Young: "I commenced revising the History of Joseph Smith at bro. Richards' office; Elder Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith were with me, Pres. Joseph Smith had corrected forty two pages before his massacre. It afforded us great satisfaction to hear Brother Richards read the History of the infancy of the church. Adjourned at eleven p.m., having read one hundred and forty pages in book A [-1]." (Brigham Young, "Manuscript History.") Heber C. Kimball reported progress on the "revision" on May 16: "Thomas Bullock and G.A. Smith came in, Bullock read history for us commenced with the first Book A, page 304, 16 line. . . . We read till sunset page 378." On May 17 they "began to read at 10 o clock. Present T. Bullock, B. Young W. Richards, G.A. Smith. . . . We read history till five in the afternoon to page 5 hundred and 11. We were weary. We read 132 pages. . . ." (Heber C. Kimball, "Journal.") By May 10, 1845, more than 800 pages of the History had been "read and revised." George A. Smith in his summary of the work noted that "it has been revised by the Council of the First Presidency almost without any alteration." (Smith to Woodruff, April 21, 1856.)

The Impact of the First Preaching in Ohio

RICHARD LLOYD ANDERSON*

Specific plans to preach the restored gospel in the west matured during the second conference after Church organization, held late September, 1830. Members gathered near Waterloo, New York, to transact business for an essentially New York Church of fewer than a hundred members. Even before the conference assembled at the Whitmer home in Fayette township, a revelation was given to the "second elder" regarding a proposed mission to Indian territory just west of Missouri:

[T]hou shalt take thy journey among the Lamanites. And it shall be given thee from the time that thou shalt go, until the time that thou shalt return, what thou shalt do. And thou must open thy mouth at all times, declaring my gospel with the sound of rejoicing.1

During the conference a revelation formally designated Peter Whitmer, Jr. as junior companion to Oliver Cowdery in this mission.2 Oliver Cowdery was then Mormonism's most eloquent spokesman, standing next to Joseph Smith in Church government and in prominence as a witness of the early visions. The importance of the western mission is evident from the fact that he headed it.

This conference set significant precedents for Church administration. However, the missionary theme was prominent during its three days duration. The official minutes not only give the date of convening as Sept. 26, 1830, but also sum-

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1Book of Commandments 30, also D&C 28. The mission was inspired by Book of Mormon promises to the Indian descendants of its Lamanite race.

2Book of Commandments 32, also D&C 30.
marize what was probably the first missionary farewell in LDS history: "Singing and prayer in behalf of Brother Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Jr., who were previously appointed to go to the Lamanites."3

Two companions were soon added, Ziba Peterson and the dynamic Parley P. Pratt, neither of whom are mentioned in the September conference minutes. Pratt had been converted by reading the Book of Mormon and talking at length with Hyrum Smith and other Book of Mormon witnesses. After Oliver Cowdery baptized him "about the first of September, A.D. 1830," Parley P. Pratt then travelled some 200 miles east to Columbia County, New York, where he baptized his brother Orson on September 19 and soon left to return to Church headquarters.4 Pratt later recalled details:

Returning to western New York the same autumn, I saw for the first time Joseph Smith, the Prophet, at his father's house in Manchester, heard him preach, and preached in his house, at the close of which meeting we baptized seven persons. After this he inquired of the Lord, and received a revelation appointing me a mission to the west, in company with Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and Ziba Peterson. We started this mission in October, 1830.5

The first printing of the revelation calling Pratt and Peterson confirms the October 1830 date and promises, "I myself will go with them and be in their midst—and I am their advocate with the Father, and nothing shall prevail."6 Such words do not overstate the power of their preaching in Ohio. The October departure appears in another source, Peter Whitmer's unsophisticated but tersely eloquent survey of their mission: "The word of the Lord came unto me by the Prophet Joseph Smith on the tenth month, saying, "Peter, thou shalt go with thy brother Oliver to the Lamanites. We started on the same month to the west . . ."7

In outfitting these men for their long journey, the women of the Church played an unpublicized role. Joseph Smith men-

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3Far West Record, typescript, p. 2.
4"History of Parley P. Pratt," Deseret News, May 19, 1858. For Orson Pratt's recollection of his brother's visit and his baptismal date (Orson's birthday), see "History of Orson Pratt," Deseret News, June 2, 1858.
6D&C 54 (1835 ed.), also D&C 32:3 (present ed.).
7Journal of Peter Whitmer, Jr. The quoted revelation paraphrases both the September and October revelations referring to him.
tioned that "preparations were made for the journey of the brethren"; his mother was more specific:

As soon as this revelation was received, Emma Smith and several other sisters began to make arrangements to furnish those who were set apart for this mission with the necessary clothing, which was no easy task, as the most of it had to be manufactured out of the raw material. Emma's health at this time was quite delicate; yet she did not favor herself on this account. But whatever her hands found to do, she did with her might, until she went so far beyond her strength that she brought upon herself a heavy fit of sickness, which lasted four weeks.6

Loved ones were left behind. Thankful Halsey Pratt lived in the Peter Whitmer, Sr., household while her husband filled his missionary call.

Pratt's autobiography sets departure as "late in October."9 This harmonizes with a remarkable document from an unusual source. The Methodist preacher Ezra Booth was converted after the first missionaries left Ohio; in his short career as a skeptical Mormon he gathered information to expose the Church. His "inside story" was printed in the Ohio Star during the last three months of 1831, and principally contained his many complaints and doubts concerning his mission to Missouri earlier that year. The source is filled with hearsay and sarcastic narrative (a technique certain to distort history); however, the Booth letters are the first printed source for the revelations of Joseph Smith, mostly reproduced in short extracts. Booth obviously could quote documents without eroding them with his acrid bias. His quotations are generally accurate, particularly the fairly long revelation calling Oliver Cowdery on the Lamanite mission.10 (Revelations were circulated in private copies before the first printed edition in 1833; Joseph Smith recalled one presented to the western missionaries: "a copy of the revelation was given them.")11 Since Booth responsibly copied the Oliver Cowdery revelation, an associated document very probably originated

6Lucy Smith, Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith (Liverpool, 1853), p. 169. Minor editorial modifications are made in this quotation and others in the article, restricted to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
8Book of Commandments 50, D&C 28.
9"History of Joseph Smith," Times and Seasons, Vol. 4 (1843), p. 172, also Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (2d ed.; Salt Lake City, 1964), p. 120.
from a manuscript source. It is a covenant of cooperation among the four missionaries, filled with faith and humility in the face of their challenging task:

Manchester, Oct. 17, 1830

I, Oliver, being commanded of the Lord God to go forth unto the Lamanites to proclaim glad tidings of great joy unto them by presenting unto them the fulness of the gospel of the only begotten son of God, and also to rear up a pillar as a witness where the temple of God shall be built in the glorious New Jerusalem; and having certain brothers with me who are called of God to assist me, whose names are Parley, Peter, and Ziba, do therefore most solemnly covenant before God that I will walk humbly before him and do this business and this glorious work according as he shall direct me by the Holy Ghost, ever praying for mine and their prosperity and deliverance from bonds and from imprisonments and whatsoever may befall us, with all patience and faith. Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY

We, the undersigned, being called and commanded of the Lord God, to accompany our brother Oliver Cowdery to go to the Lamanites and to assist in the above mentioned glorious work and business; we do therefore most solemnly covenant before God that we will assist him faithfully in this thing by giving heed unto all his words and advice which [are] or shall be given him by the spirit of truth, ever praying with all prayer and supplication for our and his prosperity and our deliverance from bonds and imprisonments and whatsoever may come upon us, with all patience and faith. Amen.

Signed in presence of

JOSEPH SMITH, Jr.          P. P. PRATT
DAVID WHITMER              ZIBA PETERSON
                                PETER WHITMER

Paul-like, the four missionaries walked eighty miles west to Buffalo, where they spoke to an Indian group about The Book of Mormon as a record of their ancestors, and left copies with those who could read. But the most dramatic scene of the mission opened 200 miles further west near Cleveland, Ohio. Parley P. Pratt earlier had been converted to the Disciples' movement when the noted Sidney Rigdon had come into Pratt's

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47Letter of Ezra Booth to Rev. Ira Eddy, Nov. 24, 1831, Nelson, Ohio, cit. Ohio Star [Ravenna], Dec. 8, 1831. The bracketed "are" is an editorial replacement of "is," and the names of witnesses have been put in a separate column.
neighborhood west of Cleveland (Lorain Co.) in 1829. Now the tables were turned as Pratt sought out Sidney Rigdon with a more thorough-going restorationism than Rigdon had once presented Pratt. The Mormon Elders arrived in Rigdon’s locality to declare new revelations, and the recreation of the spiritual power enshrined as a dead letter in the Bible. Rigdon and scores of careful Bible readers were affected. 15

In a few short weeks the restored Church of Christ had as many members in Ohio as in New York. The earliest sources agree on the number of conversions. The short “journal” of eyewitness Peter Whitmer, Jr., was written in 1831 and summarizes the Ohio phase of the mission: “there we declared the fulness of the gospel and had much success. We baptized 130 members.” Written the same year, the opening lines of John Whitmer’s history are similar:

They journeyed as far west as the state of Ohio, and through the divine influences of the Holy Spirit, by the assistance of the Lord they built a branch of the church in Geauga County, state of Ohio, which consisted of about 130 members. 16

The most spectacular conversion was Sidney Rigdon, and no source captures his recollections more authentically than the “History of Joseph Smith,” written and published while Rigdon was available for consultation and criticism. 15 There were searching expectations in the circles about Sidney Rigdon, but his was “the first house at which they called.” The noted preacher was polite but “very much prejudiced” to hear that the Book of Mormon was an additional revelation to the Bible. Pressed in discussion, the seasoned minister declined to argue but promised: “I will read your book . . . and will endeavor to ascertain whether it be a revelation from God or not.”

16 The Book of John Whitmer, ms. p. 1. The same figure was given in the Evening and the Morning Star, April, 1833, a newspaper of which Oliver Cowdery was co-editor; see n. 71 infra. Lyman Wight’s Journal, discussed later in the article, also gives “130 members”; see n. 37 infra. Pratt’s Autobiography, p. 50, gives the number of baptisms as “127 souls.” John Whitmer’s location of Kirtland in Geauga County was correct at the time he wrote, though it is now in Lake County.
17 Cf. the prefacing remark to the very detailed biography and conversion account: because of irresponsible beliefs about Rigdon, a “correct account” of his life will be given “from authentic sources.” The most accessible authentic source was Rigdon himself. Times and Seasons, Vol. 4 (1843), p. 172.
During the next "fortnight" the missionaries returned "occasionally" to find an earnest searcher reading the Book of Mormon, "meditating on the things he heard and read," and also "praying to the Lord for direction." Finally convinced, he counted the cost (which was considerable) and fearlessly submitted to baptism.16

Of Parley P. Pratt's statements recounting this notable conversion, the most specific supplements the Rigdon history just summarized:

About the 15th of Oct., 1830, I took my journey, in company with Elder O. Cowdery and Peter Whitmer to Ohio. We called on Elder S. Rigdon, and then for the first time, his eyes beheld the Book of Mormon; I myself had the happiness to present it to him in person. He was much surprised, and it was with much persuasion and argument that he was prevailed on to read it. And after he had read it, he had a great struggle of mind before he fully believed and embraced it.17

In later life the conversion force was still powerful in the mind of a man who had known more than his share of disillusionment. President A. W. Cowles of Elmira College visited Sidney Rigdon in 1868 and soon after reported the interview, though with the condescending style of the religious journalist. The former Mormon leader remembered receiving the Book of Mormon and his impressions on investigating it:

Rigdon solemnly affirms that this was his first personal knowledge of Joe Smith and the Mormons. After a few days Cowdery returned and held a long interview with Rigdon. Rigdon had read a considerable portion of the book. He questioned Cowdery about Smith and found that he was entirely illiterate. Rigdon expressed the utmost amazement that such a man should write a book which seemed to shed a flood of light on all the old scriptures, open all their profoundest mysteries, and give them perfect consistency and complete system. In his fresh enthusiasm he exclaimed that if God ever gave a revelation, surely this must be divine.18

Rigdon's respect for the Book of Mormon message is confirmed by family traditions from his son, John W. Rigdon. When informed that Joseph Smith was a young man with

16Ibid., pp. 289-90, also Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 122-125.
18A. W. Cowles, "The Mormons," Moore's Rural New Yorker, Jan. 23, 1869, p. 61. 'Entirely illiterate' is likely Cowles' phraseology, not Rigdon's.
"hardly a common school education," the well-read minister replied: "if that is all the education he has got, he never wrote this book." Other issues besides the message of the Book of Mormon are prominent in Sidney Rigdon’s conversion, apparent from a detailed contemporary account published in early 1831 over the initials M.S.C. The author was probably Matthew S. Clapp, a young and capable convert of Sidney Rigdon to the Disciples’ movement in Mentor—the article reveals the Mentor congregation’s experience in the conversion of their pastor. Here the testimony of the Book of Mormon witnesses is stressed, for the missionaries “related the manner in which they obtained faith”;—through prayer, “and an angel was shown unto them,” an apparent reference to Oliver Cowdery’s vision. Beyond the Book of Mormon, another great issue was the source of authority to teach and baptize. “M.S.C.” relates that the missionaries insisted upon rebaptizing their converts—and after “seventeen persons were immersed by them in one night,” the missionaries “came next day to his house” to find a “much displeased” Sidney Rigdon, negative because he had already immersed his followers in a covenant of remission of sins. Pratt recalled the resolution of the problem:

At length Mr. Rigdon and many others became convinced that they had no authority to minister in the ordinances of God, and that they had not been legally baptized and ordained. They therefore came forward and were baptized by us, and received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands and prayer in the name of Jesus Christ.

The conversion of Sidney Rigdon rested upon the double

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40Orson Hyde mistakes the middle initial but identifies locality in writing of the year 1829, when he "returned to Mentor and spent one season with a young man by the name of Matthew J. Clapp, at his father’s house, where the public library was kept." ("History of Orson Hyde," Deseret News, May 5, 1858.) Sidney Rigdon and Orris Clapp, Matthew’s father, were neighbors, according to the 1830 census. For the education and religious zeal of young Clapp, see Hayden, Early History of the Disciples, pp. 193, 195, 197 ff.

41"Mormonism," Painesville Telegraph, Feb. 15, 1831. This article is the source behind E. D. Howe’s account in Mormonism Unveiled and also the main source for Hayden’s account in Early History of the Disciples. A convenient copy of the “M.S.C.” source is in Francis W. Kirkham’s valuable New Witness for Christ in America, Vol. 2 (rev. ed.; Salt Lake City, 1959), p. 80 ff. Other articles cited are at p. 41 ff.

42Painesville Telegraph, Feb. 15, 1831.

43Pratt, Autobiography, p. 50.
thrust of new revelation and restored authority, a combination quite evident in the contemporary newspaper reports. For instance, the first *Painesville Telegraph* story of the mission specifically named "Cowdray" and his teaching:

About two weeks since some persons came along here with the book [of Mormon], one of whom pretends to have seen angels and assisted in translating the plates. He proclaims destruction upon the world within a few years, holds forth that the ordinances of the gospel have not been regularly administered since the days of the apostles till the said Smith and himself commenced the work . . . In the neighboring township of Kirtland, we understand that twenty or thirty have been immersed into the new order of things, many of whom had been previously baptized.²⁴

At their first interview the missionaries had requested Rigdon's permission to speak to the Mentor church. The open-minded leader agreed, with the following result:

The appointment was accordingly published, and a large and respectable congregation assembled. Oliver Cowdery and Parley P. Pratt severally addressed the meeting. At the conclusion Elder Rigdon arose and stated to the congregation that the information they had that evening received was of an extraordinary character and certainly demanded their most serious consideration . . . [H]e would exhort his brethren to . . . give the matter a careful investigation and not turn against it without being fully convinced of its being an imposition, lest they should possibly resist the truth.²⁵

The Mentor congregation had been created under the leadership of Rigdon, whose vigorous views of the restoration of the primitive gifts went beyond Campbellite concepts. John Murdock, brother-in-law of the Clapps in the Mentor congregation, shared these views. A Campbellite minister living near Warrensville (southwest of Kirtland), he heard of Rigdon's investigation and other Mormon conversions as he was on his way to fill a Sunday preaching appointment. An initial angry reaction turned to curiosity, and by the following Thursday he traveled 20 miles to Kirtland to hear the new message for himself. Pratt's *Autobiography* mentions the general excitement "in Kirtland, and in all the region round about" at the news of the

²⁴Painesville Telegraph, Nov. 16, 1830.
Book of Mormon and revelations surrounding its origin: "The people thronged us night and day, insomuch that we had no time for rest or retirement." Some came "for curiosity, some to obey the gospel, and some to dispute or resist it." Murdock's more detailed autobiography portrays these situations: constant news about "the new preachers," his own journey to Kirtland, with opponents of the Mormons determined to keep him from reaching Kirtland or dissuading his interest when there, and the intense day and night conversations with the missionaries. John Murdock already believed in the literal restoration of primitive Christianity, so the essential question was whether the Mormon missionaries were imposters or authentic servants of God:

I said, if it be so, their walk will agree with their profession, and the Holy Ghost will attend their ministration of the ordinances, and the Book of Mormon will contain the same plan of salvation as the Bible. . . . I did not ask a sign of them by working a miracle . . . For I did not believe that the spirit would attend their ministration if the Book of Mormon was not true, neither if they were not sent forth of God."

Murdock remembered that night as "the first confirmation meeting that was held in Ohio." Although he did not attend, he carefully questioned a half-dozen who had been confirmed: "I found their testimony agreed on the subject that there was a manifestation of the spirit attended the ministration of the ordinance of laying on hands . . ." In the meantime he formed a first impression of the motives of Oliver Cowdery and a Campbellite opposer:

And I watched the spirit of each one of them in their conversation, and I found that Goodwell bore down with warmth, whereas Cowdery wished not for contention and endeavored to evade controversy.

While the confirmation meeting was held, Murdock read the Book of Mormon; when the group returned, "the spirit of the Lord rested on me, witnessing to me of the truth of the work."

26Pratt, Autobiography, p. 50.
29Ibid, p. 16.
31Ibid., p. 15.
The next morning he requested baptism, which was performed by Parley P. Pratt in the Chagrin River:

And the spirit of the Lord sensibly attended the ministration, and I came out of the water rejoicing and singing praises to God and the Lamb. An impression sensibly rested on my mind that cannot by me be forgotten. . . . This was the third time that I had been immersed, but I never before felt the authority of the ordinance. But I felt it this time and felt as though my sins were forgiven. I continued with the brethren till Sunday, at which time they preached in Mayfield and baptized a number. And on Sunday evening they confirmed about thirty. I was one of the number.32

Murdock gave the date of his baptism as Nov. 5, so the Mayfield meeting just mentioned was Sunday, Nov. 7, and Levi Hancock was probably there. Single and twenty-seven years of age, he heard the news of the four men with the revealed book from his brother, who mentioned a Sunday meeting and reported their practise of baptizing and bestowing the Holy Ghost:

At these last words I gathered faith, and there seemed to fall on me something pleasant and delightful. It seemed like a wash of something warm took me in the face and ran over my body, which gave me that feeling I cannot describe. The first word I said was, "It is the truth—I feel it. I will go and hear for myself tomorrow."33

The next morning Hancock accompanied his family to Mayfield, taking his mother on the horse behind him. A crowd assembled there at the Jackson home:

I got in the chamber where there had been a few boards pulled up (which had been laid down loose before) to give the spectators a fair chance to hearing. In the chamber I took a seat beside a lawyer by the name of Card. He sat with his pencil and paper and commenced to scribble as the speaker arose and began to talk.

This first speaker was Parley P. Pratt, who told of Christ's ministry in the Book of Mormon, and afterwards stressed "that there must be something sent from God in order to prepare the people for the glorious reign of Christ."34 Sidney Rigdon

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32Ibid., p. 16.
34Ibid.
spoke next, apparently prior to his baptism, for he expressed doubt that he should preach again "and advised the people not to contend against what they had heard." The final speaker was undoubtedly Oliver Cowdery:

"[T]here arose another young man whose countenance bespoke a spirit of peace and love. He said he had been an eye witness to the things declared, and the book reported to be a revelation was truth, however strange it may appear to the people." 30

Levi Hancock's father and sister were baptized that day, and the first of the week Levi followed the missionaries to Kirtland and requested baptism of Parley P. Pratt. Pratt's Autobiography recalls that "meetings were convened in different neighborhoods," and the Hancock record illustrates this. He returned to Mayfield with Oliver Cowdery's promise to follow. Hancock and Lyman Wight spoke there on one evening, followed the next day by Cowdery, Peterson, and Whitmer. "They held meetings and baptized some, and in the evening they confirmed many members in the church." 31

At this time Lyman Wight was in the midst of his own investigation of the Mormon claims, and his story illustrates how fully prepared for conversion a number in his circle were. Filled with a desire to comply strictly with the early Christian order, Wight, Isaac Morley, and others had entered into a covenant to hold "all things common."

In conformity to this covenant I moved the next February [1830] to Kirtland, into the house with Bro. Morley. We commenced our labors together with great peace and union. We were soon joined by eight other families. Our labors were united both in farming and mechanism, all of which was prosecuted with great vigor. We truly began to feel as if the millenium was close at hand. 32

About the beginning of November, Wight had been appointed to move seven miles from Kirtland to Mayfield and take charge of five families who would become a branch of this society:

31Ibid.
When I had my goods about half loaded, there came along four men (namely P. Pratt, O. Cowdery, P. Whitmer, and Ziba Peterson) and brought with them the Book of Mormon, which they wished to introduce to us. I desired they would hold on till I got away, as my business was of vital importance, and I did not wish to be troubled with romances nor idle speculations. But nothing daunted, they were not to be put off, but were as good-natured as you please. Curiosity got uppermost, and I concluded to stop for a short time. We called meeting, and one testified that he had seen angels, and another that he had seen the plates, and that the gifts were back in the church again, etc. The meeting became so interesting withthal that I did not get away till the sun was about an hour high at night, and it was dark before I arrived at my new home.38

With pressing duties, Wight dismissed the episode by assuming that the missionaries would immediately travel on to Missouri. As discussed, however, they followed him to his new home of Mayfield. Wight despaired of giving full details of the elders' stay on the Western Reserve, but summarized: "I shall therefore content myself by saying that they brought the Book of Mormon to bear upon us, and the whole of the common stock family was baptized."39

The four missionaries were not the only ones "who brought the Book of Mormon to bear." After his conversion trip to Kirtland and Mayfield, John Murdock returned to his home (Orange Township) to ignite interest in a new area:

I endeavored to bear testimony to my neighbors whom I met by the way, but they would not believe. At length I arrived home. My family gladly received me and my words, thank the Lord. And my wife and Brother Covey both believed the Book of Mormon, for I brought it home with me and read it to them, and I was filled with the spirit as I read. At length the first day of the next week arrived, and the New York brethren held meeting in Warrensville, four miles west of my house, and I bore testimony to the truth. My wife, Brother Covey, and three others were baptized. Brother Ziba Peterson held meeting in my house the evening before, and I bore testimony to my neighbors.40

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38Ibid. "Speculators" of the second sentence has been replaced with the "speculations" of the printing of this extract in the Saints' Herald, Vol. 29 (1882), p. 192. The History printing has been followed in retaining "withal" in the last sentence.
39Ibid. "Of the" was probably accurately transcribed in the History and accidentally deleted in the Saints' Herald version.
Kirtland was base of operations for the New York missionaries after their initial contact with Rigdon at Mentor. As Wight indicated, Kirtland was headquarters for Isaac Morley's "family," which attempted to live the early Christian economic order. Those who already believed in the experiences and programs of the Book of Acts were obviously ripe for a restored gospel. Through the New Testament they knew vividly of eyewitnesses of revelation, of religious leaders called by God and authorized by the laying on of hands, of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost (neglected by even Christian restorationists). The Rigdon-oriented official history gives an overview of the success with the Kirtland "family":

About two miles from Elder Rigdon's, at the town of Kirtland, were a number of the members of his church, who lived together and had all things common... to which place they immediately repaired, and proclaimed the gospel to them, with some considerable success. For their testimony was received by many of the people, and seventeen came forward in obedience to the gospel." This number corresponds to the seventeen baptisms that "M.S.C." claimed had at first offended Rigdon. In fact, by Nov. 16, the Painesville Telegraph editor had heard of "twenty or thirty" baptisms at Kirtland.12

Rigdon's influence and presence was significant at Kirtland in the "fortnight" of his investigation. As a matter of fact, he was baptized there about Nov. 15, and his public profession at Kirtland touched many. "M.S.C." set his baptism on a Monday and reported the surrounding events with a tone of irony:

The Monday following he was baptized. On the morning of the preceding day he had an appointment to preach in the Methodist chapel at Kirtland. He arose to address the congregation apparently much affected and deeply impressed. He seemed exceedingly humble, confessed the sins of his former life, his great pride, ambition, vainglory, etc., etc. After he was baptized, he professed to be exceedingly joyful, and said he would not be where he was three days ago for the universe.43

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12 "The Golden Bible," Painesville Telegraph, Nov. 16, 1830.
43 "M.S.C." seems to eclipse Rigdon's investigation into a week, but may be quite correct in setting a Monday baptism, which fits into Pratt's recollection of
Parley P. Pratt evidently describes the same sermon in giving other details of Sidney Rigdon’s baptism:

And when finally convinced of its truth, he called together a large congregation of his friends, neighbors, and brethren, and then addressed them very affectionately for near two hours, during most of which time both himself and nearly all the congregation were melted into tears. He asked forgiveness of everybody who might have had occasion to be offended with any part of his former life. He forgave all who had persecuted or injured him in any manner. And the next morning, himself and wife were baptized by Elder O. Cowdery. I was present—it was a solemn scene. Most of the people were greatly affected. They came out of the water overwhelmed in tears."

The firstfruits in Ohio were by no means confined to the Rigdon circle of disciples. An example of an outsider to these connections is Philo Dibble, newly married and 24, who had recently settled on land five miles east of Kirtland. By way of ridicule he was told "that four men had come to Kirtland with a golden Bible, and one of them had seen an angel." Dibble "did not feel inclined to make light of such a subject," however, but "thought that if angels had administered to the children of men again, I was glad of it; I was afraid, however, it was not true." The next morning he and his wife drove the carriage to "hunt up those strange men in Kirtland." Since the missionaries were in Mayfield that day, Dibble and his wife returned

a two-day sequence. The official narrative of Rigdon’s conversion specifies conviction a “fortnight” after receiving the Book of Mormon, and baptism shortly afterward. (Times and Seasons, Vol. 4 [1843], p. 290; also Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 125.) In 1882 Heman C. Smith reported that his grandmother (widow of Lyman Wight) "told me a few days ago that she remembers distinctly that Sidney Rigdon was baptized the same day herself and husband were; but perhaps not by the same person, as there were several baptizing at the same time.” (Saints’ Herald, Vol. 29 [1882], p. 192.) The Wight journal sets the date of baptism of the Wights: "Myself and family were baptized by P. Pratt on the 14th of November, 1830, in Chagrin River, at Kirtland, Ohio.” (History of the Reorganized Church, Vol. 1, p. 154.) A Monday baptism would make the actual date Nov. 15 and Mrs. Wight’s recollection very significant but off by one day. Some personal histories imply a Rigdon baptism very early in the short stay of the missionaries, but none of these are firsthand and are only reporting the rumors that attended his first Mormon investigations. Cf. n. 21 and B. H. Roberts, Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City, 1930), Vol. 1, pp. 231-235.

"Pratt, Mormonism Unveiled, p. 41. The quote is a direct continuation of that cited in n. 17, supra.

"Philo Dibble’s Narrative,” Early Scenes in Church History (Salt Lake City, 1882), p. 75.
the next day, accompanied by a neighboring family. They met the four New York missionaries:

I remained with them all day, and became convinced that they were sincere in their professions. I asked Oliver what repentance consisted of, and he replied, "Forsaking sin and yielding obedience to the gospel." That evening he preached at Brother Isaac Morley's and bore his testimony to the administration of an angel at noonday. He then dwelt upon the subjects of repentance and baptism and the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, and promised that all who embraced these principles with honesty of heart should receive a testimony."

The meeting closed with Dibble, William Cahoon, and three other persons standing in response to Cowdery's invitation to indicate willingness for baptism. Against his wife's cautions, Philo Dibble was baptized and describes his elation afterward:

When I came out of the water I knew that I had been born of water and of the spirit, for my mind was illuminated with the Holy Ghost. I spent that evening at Dr. F. G. Williams. While in bed that night I felt what appeared to be a hand upon my left shoulder, and a sensation like fibers of fire immediately enveloped my body. . . . I was enveloped in a heavenly influence and could not sleep for joy. The next morning I started home a happy man."

Dibble's conversion is typical in beginning with Oliver Cowdery's testimony and ending with a personal witness. The man whose name headed the Testimony of Three Witnesses in the Book of Mormon insisted on the reality of seeing angels in his Ohio preaching in 1830, evidenced by Mormon and non-Mormon alike, including several newspaper articles reporting the same thing. If a supernatural experience is easy to allege, it is more difficult to give the personal impression of sincerity. The sources on Cowdery's Ohio preaching in 1830 furnish the means of measuring the man who claimed to have stood in the presence of angels. This Book of Mormon witness was no fanatic, but a man of firm and quiet assurance. Edward Partridge was a mature businessman who was skeptical of the claims of Christian ministers when the four New York mission-

*Ibid., 75-6.

aries called at his hatter's shop in Painesville and presented the Book of Mormon. Lydia Partridge remembered the confrontation:

He told them he did not believe what they said, but believed them to be imposters. Oliver Cowdery said he was thankful there was a God in heaven who knew the hearts of all men. After the men were gone my husband sent a man to follow them and get one of their books.  

Similarly, the reception at the Shaker community at North Union was cool, but their iron-willed leader nevertheless considered Cowdery's deportment consistent with his claim. Ashbel Kitchell's journal noted that the missionaries caused "a good deal of excitement" in the Kirtland area, followed by their visit of "two nights and one day" at the Shaker community of North Union:

Late in the fall a member of that society came to our house to visit the Believers. His name was Oliver Cowdrey. He stated that he had been one who assisted in the translation of the golden Bible, and had seen the angel, and also had been commissioned by him to go out and bear testimony that God would destroy this generation. By his request we gave liberty for him to bear his testimony in our meeting. But finding he had nothing for us, we treated him kindly and labored to find out their manner of spirit. He appeared meek and mild . . . .

This impression of Cowdery is generally found in the records of the Kirtland preaching. John Corrill, shocked at the effrontery of Mormon claims and worried about the conversion of his Campbellite friends, traveled thirty miles to challenge the missionaries personally at Mentor: "I felt indignant and

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"Extracts from Lydia Partridge’s Writings, Family History of Edward Partridge, Jr., p. 5. This episode did not occur at Kirtland, since Lydia Partridge says that the elders next "went to Kirtland to Isaac Morley’s . . . ." Partridge’s residence at Painesville is shown by: his enumeration there on the 1830 census; advertisements in the Painesville Telegraph during 1830 for his business accounts and "hat factory" at Painesville; his Aug. 31, 1833 letter from Independence, Mo.: “When I left Painesville two years ago last June, I expected to have returned again to that place the same season . . . .” (Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate, Vol. 1 [Jan., 1835], p. 56.) Cf. Cowdery’s comment in the same issue that Partridge “formerly resided” at Painesville (p. 65).

"Journal of Ashbel Kitchell, copied by Henry C. Blinn, held by the Shaker Museum, Old Chatham, New York. A second copy exists, made by Elisha D. Blakeman, but in this Cowdery incident the Blinn copy seems superior. I am very grateful for the assistance of Director Robert F. W. Meader, who agrees with the above judgment. I have spelled Cowdery’s name as it apparently read in the original, assuming that the final “y” was not correctly copied by Blinn."
sought an argument with Oliver Cowdery, who refused."50 The appraisals of several converts have already been mentioned. The blunt Lyman Wight sought to avoid hearing the new message, but the missionaries "were not to be put off, but were as good-natured as you please." John Murdock observed an antagonist bear down "with warmth" upon Cowdery, who "wished not for contention and endeavored to evade controversy." Levi Hancock reported that the speaker who "had been an eye witness to the things declared" was a "young man whose countenance bespoke a spirit of peace and love."

Such experiences show clearly why Philo Dibble could travel to Kirtland to find out whether an angel had really appeared, and conclude that the four missionaries "were sincere in their professions." Their conviction overshadowed a clear lack of polish. Orson Hyde was a young Campbellite preacher of some education and promise. The elders traveled west from the Cleveland area to his station near Elyria, and he could not easily dismiss their declarations:

I encountered them, but perceiving that they were mostly illiterate men, and at the same time observing some examples of superior wisdom and truth in their teaching, I resolved to read the famed "golden Bible," as it was called.51

The religious integrity of the first Ohio Mormons is clear. Irresponsible emotionalism does not characterize their beginnings on the Western Reserve. Excesses came later, but these were criticized by Mormon leaders and also by the first converts studied here. On the whole these pioneer Mormons had an impressive background of Bible study. Lydia Partridge probably speaks for the majority of the 1830 converts: "I was induced to believe for the reason that I saw the gospel in its plainness as it was taught in the New Testament, and I also knew that none of the sects of the day taught those things."52 In her own terms, she had joined "the Campbellite Church," but she was in reality a "Rigdonite," baptized by him and having faith in some form of modern revelation and spiritual gifts. The missionaries brought not only the Book of Mormon, but full faith in the Book of Acts, with the laying on of hands for the gift of

50 John Corrill, Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints (St. Louis, 1839), p. 8.
52 Extracts, History of Edward Partridge, Jr., p. 5.
the Holy Ghost and its accompanying spirituality. Spiritual out-
pourings which followed duplicated early Christian experiences.

These "gifts" were not automatic, but came from intense in-
quiry, in which reading the Book of Mormon was stressed. Ashbel Kitchell explained why Oliver Cowdery left seven copies at the Shaker community:

This Mormon appeared to have full faith in their books, that
whosoever would read them, would feel so thoroughly con-
vinced of the truth of what they contained, that they would be
unable to resist and would finally be obliged to unite with
them. He then thought it prudent to wait for us a while for
the leaven to work . . . 53

In this case the challenge was rather weakly accepted. The
seven copies of the Book of Mormon were distributed, but
"they were soon returned as not interesting enough to keep one
awake while reading." 54 Conversions through the Book of Mor-
mon were of varied duration. Some knew immediately, some in
weeks, and some only after long months of considering. Orson
Hyde obtained a Book of Mormon "and read a portion of it,
but came to the conclusion that it was all fiction." After preach-
ing against it, he honestly assessed his lack of knowledge of the
book, and moved to Kirtland for serious investigation: "after
about three months of careful and prayerful investigation . . .
I came to the conclusion that the Mormons had more light
and a better spirit than their opponents." 55

Early Ohio conversions that did not last are consistent with
those that have been examined. A noted instance of semi-con-
version is illuminating. In his first Mormon meeting (at May-
field) Levi Hancock sat by the young lawyer Card, who was
taking notes. Apparently at a later Sunday, after Rigdon's bap-
tism and ordination, Varnum J. Card came to Mayfield ac-
 companied by his friend John Barr. Cowdery and Rigdon spoke
at a morning meeting, and Rigdon baptized in mid-afternoon.
In the midst of a moving service, "Mr. Card suddenly seized
my arm and said, 'Take me away.'" Card's face was "pale," and
"his frame trembled as we walked away and mounted our
horses." Regaining his composure, Varnum Card evaluated his
experience: "'Mr. Barr, if you had not been there, I certainly

53 Journal of Kitchell, copied by Blinn.
54 Ibid.
should have gone into the water.' He said the impulse was irresistible."56

John Corrill investigated Mormonism while Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Jr. were first in Kirtland—and was baptized some six weeks later. Disillusioned at the Mormon persecutions in Missouri, he left the Church and wrote a careful appraisal of his LDS career. His conversion contained both rational and spiritual elements; on renouncing Mormonism, Corrill explained away neither approach. He had "made very diligent inquiry" concerning the origin of the Book of Mormon and was certain that Smith was the author:

As to its being a revelation from God, eleven persons besides Smith bore positive testimony of its truth. After getting acquainted with them, I was unable to impeach their testimony... 57

Corrill attended a Kirtland confirmation meeting in which he sought "to detect their hypocrisy" with "a jealous eye." The ordinances of the sacrament of the Lord's supper and the laying on of hands were followed by a testimony meeting in which prophecy and speaking in tongues were prominent:

I watched closely and examined carefully every movement of the meeting, and after exhausting all my powers to find the deception, I was obliged to acknowledge in my own mind that the meeting had been inspired by some supernatural agency. 58

During the ensuing winter Ezra Booth and Symonds Ryder were converted, only to be deconverted within a short time. Ryder's attitude on leaving is known, and Booth's long exposé (as earlier discussed) was printed. They both lapsed because of human qualities in a divine organization. Yet neither convincingly dismisses the spirituality of their conversions. Booth wrote:

When I embraced Mormonism, I conscientiously believed it to be of God. The impressions of my mind were deep and powerful, and my feelings were exerted to a degree to which

56Statement of John Barr, cit. Frederic G. Mather, Lippincott's Magazine, Vol. 36 (1880), pp. 206-7. Card's first name follows the spelling of the Cleveland publications and the Directory, Cleveland and Ohio City, for the Years 1837-8 (Cleveland, 1837), in which both Card and Barr are listed as practicing attorneys.
57Corrill, Brief History, p. 11.
58Ibid., p. 9.
I had been a stranger. Like a ghost, it haunted me by night and day, until I was mysteriously hurried, as it were, by a kind of necessity, into the vortex of delusion.  

Booth's friend Ryder assessed the apparent integrity of those who founded the new religion, an issue that began for the Ohio converts with Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Jr., but immediately included Joseph Smith himself. Almost three decades later Ryder recalled his first impressions:

In the winter of 1831 Joseph Smith with others had an appointment in the south school house in Hiram. Such was the apparent piety, sincerity and humility of the speakers, that many of the hearers were greatly affected and thought it impossible that such preachers should lie in wait to deceive.

The possibility of deception dictated the counter-mission of Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge to the New York neighborhood of Joseph Smith. "M.S.C." wrote contemporaneously that Rigdon left for New York "about three weeks after" his baptism. By then the four New York missionaries had resumed their journey to Missouri, taking the Kirtland convert Frederick G. Williams as an ordained companion, and leaving the Ohio saints under the new elders Sidney Rigdon, John Murdock, and Lyman Wight. In the words of Lydia Partridge, at this time "my husband partly believed, but he had to take a journey to New York State and see the Prophet . . ." Several sources establish the trip as a fact-finding mission. John Corrill perhaps confuses personalities but gives his understanding of the visit's purpose: "after Rigdon had joined the Church in Kirtland, he was afraid that he had been deceived, so he and Edward Partridge went to the state of New York to inquire further into it." According to Philo Dibble, Partridge also went on behalf of several others. A skeptical neighbor identified Partridge and his business: "We have sent a man down to York State to find out the truth of this work, and he is a man who will not lie." John Whitmer's contemporary history indicates the openness of Partridge's inquiries: "he being desirous to know the

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51 Extracts, History of Edward Partridge, Jr., p. 5.
52 Corrill, Brief History, p. 17.
53 Dibble, Narrative, Early Scenes, p. 77.
truth of these things, but not having confidence enough to inquire at the hand of God; therefore, he sought testimony of man, and he obtained it..."64 Lucy Mack Smith recalled the arrival of Rigdon and Partridge while a meeting was in progress at Waterloo, New York. When Joseph Smith finished speaking, he extended an opportunity for spontaneous remarks:

Upon this Mr. Partridge arose and stated that he had been to Manchester, with the view of obtaining further information respecting the doctrine which we preached. But not finding us, he had made some inquiry of our neighbors concerning our characters, which they stated had been unimpeachable until Joseph deceived us relative to the Book of Mormon... [H]aving heard that our veracity was not questioned upon any other point than that of our religion, he believed our testimony and was ready to be baptized...65

Partridge wrote a letter from New York disclosing his belief and baptism to his non-member friends—perhaps with dubious results, for it only caused Philo Dibble’s neighbor to avoid him.66 Rigdon and Partridge were back in Ohio by Feb. 1, and Rigdon confirmed their findings:

[He] commenced a long detail of his researches after the character of Joseph Smith. He declared that even his enemies had nothing to say against his character. He had brought a transcript from the docket of two magistrates, where Smith had been tried as a disturber of the peace, which testified that he was honorably acquitted.67

The above episode illustrates the continuing effect of the preaching of the Cowdery-Pratt mission in Ohio, for growth was just beginning as they left. The hundred converts on the Western Reserve in November, 1830 were a thousand by the next summer. The missionaries, according to the contemporary "M.S.C.," had arrived "about the last of October."68 On November 16 the Painesville Telegraph indicated that they had come "about two weeks since"—and John Murdock’s autobiography pinpoints a report of the Mentor preaching by Oct. 31.69 Lyman Wight remembered the missionaries coming to

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64The Book of John Whitmer, ms. p. 2.
65Lucy Mack Smith, Biographical Sketches, p. 170.
68Ibid.
69Murdock’s journal gives his baptism as Nov. 5 and reports his hearing of the Mormon elders on the previous Sunday. This was Oct. 31.
him at Kirtland, "about the first of November," an episode following the first Mentor preaching. Wight also thought that they stayed "seven weeks," but this is inaccurate. The "two or three weeks" of Pratt's *Autobiography* is a corrective, but "less than four weeks" from Cowdery corresponds better with precise facts. The latest dates at which the New York Elders were in the Kirtland vicinity are November 18 (Wight's confirmation date), and November 20 (Wight's ordination as elder). The missionaries immediately left, for by November 26 a news story had been written regarding these "deluded mortals" and the arrest of Pratt near Amherst, some 50 miles west of Kirtland.

In four action-packed weeks, missionaries of the restored gospel had preached intensively in Mentor, Kirtland, and Mayfield, and they had held important meetings in North Union (in Cleveland's Shaker Heights), Warrensville, and Painesville. They had saturated the Kirtland area with their message and testimony. Their newspaper valedictory reported that "the four persons . . . have proceeded on their mission to the Indians"—and accorded them a grudging tribute:

There are rising of 100 in this and an adjoining county who

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51 Cowdery was co-editor and presumably the source of information for this historical summary in the *Evening and the Morning Star*, Vol. 1 (April, 1833), which summarized the Ohio preaching: "These first four, having added one to their number, proceeded to the west, after having baptized one hundred and thirty disciples in less than four weeks and ordained four of them elders . . ."
52 *Wight's Journal*, cit. *History of the Reorganized Church*, p. 154. After a Sunday meeting, apparently held Nov. 14 at Warrensville, John Murdock relates: "On Monday morning the York brethren, accompanied by F. G. Williams, a late convert, took leave of us and started for upper Missouri." But the missionaries appear to be in the midst of their ministry at Kirtland on Nov. 14 and 15, judged by the data of Wight and Rigdon. It is possible that Nov. 15 was simply a farewell to the Warrensville area, but it is more likely that Murdock gives a wrong impression of meetings in his area on Sunday, Nov. 14—that in reality these were on Sunday, Nov. 21, and that he is correct on the day of departure as Monday, Nov. 22.
53 On Dec. 14, 1830 the *Painesville Telegraph* copied this story "from the Milan (Huron County [Ohio]) Free Press," in the form of a letter to the editor dated "Amherst, Lorain County, Ohio, Nov. 26, 1830." Cf. n. 75 infra.
54 The missionaries personally contacted Edward Partridge at Painesville (see n. 48, supra). Evidence of their public preaching there comes from a source to be used with great care, A. B. Deming's melodramatic newspaper, *Naked Truths About Mormonism*. In Jan., 1888 an affidavit of May 6, 1885 from K.A.E. Bell was printed. Filled with hearsay, the statement contains some personal experience: "I attended the first Mormon meeting Pratt and Cowdery held in Painesville . . . . They told about Prophet Jo Smith finding the gold plates, and said they saw them." Bell might have confused Kirtland with Painesville, but Ketchel E. Bell is enumerated in Painesville on the 1830 census.
have embraced the ideas and assertions of Joseph Smith, Jr., many of them respectable for intelligence and piety.\textsuperscript{15}

Although the Missouri phase deserves to be fully narrated, the Lamanite Mission achieved its main success among those prepared for the message on the Western Reserve, not among Indian peoples, where political and cultural conditions were not yet ripe. The Ohio labors of Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, and their companions doubled the membership of the Church and created a solid nucleus for rapid growth and a secure, if temporary, gathering location. One assesses the impact of four men in four weeks with a certain awe. The fields were ripe, and the hands of the harvesters sure. The documents of the rise of the Church in New York do not furnish personal records that so visibly recreate the events and emotions of the first yield in Ohio. More than any other segment of LDS history, early Kirtland reveals why the restored gospel reached independent minds and induced powerful action. In fact, a study of the conversions on the Western Reserve in 1830 has more than a little relevance for the spread of Mormonism today.

\textsuperscript{15}"The Book of Mormon," \textit{Painesville Telegraph}, Nov. 30, 1830.
Kirtland
as a Center of
Missionary Activity, 1830-1838

DAVIS BITTON*

From the fall of 1830, when Parley P. Pratt and three other missionaries passed through Ohio on their way west, Kirtland was a center of Mormon missionary proselyting. Almost overnight a congregation sprang up in Kirtland and its vicinity, and immediately the message of the restored gospel began to be carried out from Kirtland. One of the new Ohio Saints, Frederick G. Williams, joined the Pratt party as it continued westward to Missouri. Others excitedly carried the news to friends and relatives in the vicinity of Kirtland and to other towns in the surrounding region. Undoubtedly some of the new Ohio members wrote letters to loved ones in New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Vermont. Besides natural enthusiasm accompanying their conversion, the new Ohio members were doubtless inspired to preach the gospel by the strong mission-

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ary obligation repeatedly proclaimed in the early revelations. "O, ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day," said a revelation received by Joseph Smith for his father but applicable to all members. "For behold the field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul."  

Beginning to hum with the good news of the restoration of the gospel at the end of 1830, Kirtland soon became the unquestioned center of the new Church's proselyting. By January there was a congregation of about one hundred there—apparently more than the total membership in the New York branches—and in May the New York saints began to move into the Kirtland area. By June, according to rough estimates, there were several hundred members of the Church, the majority of whom lived in Kirtland and its vicinity.  

In February 1831 Joseph Smith received a revelation instructing the elders to gather in a conference at Kirtland. "And it shall come to pass that they shall go forth into the regions round about, and preach repentance unto the people. And many shall be converted, insomuch that ye shall obtain power to organize yourselves according to the laws of man." At the conference in June, 28 elders were called to travel to Missouri two by two, taking different routes, "preaching the word by the way." Those going to Missouri preached in different Ohio

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2This revelation for the benefit of Joseph Smith, Sr. had wider applicability, as indicated by the plural "ye." Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City, 1876), Section 4. Like other early revelations this one circulated in manuscript before its publication. For a particularly good description of missionary activity in the vicinity of Kirtland at the end of 1830 see the journal of Levi Ward Hancock (mimeographed copy at Princeton University Library). "All this part of the country," he said, "seemed to be awake and would listen to the new doctrine."  

3One should be cautious about membership figures. See Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (rev. ed., Salt Lake City, 1956), 1:146, 175-79, 250. (Hereafter this work will be cited as DHC, standing for the common designation "Documentary History of the Church.") A contemporary newspaper account confirms the general picture: "Strange as it may appear, it is an unquestionable fact, that this singular sect have, within three or four weeks, made many proselytes in this county. The number of believers in the faith, in three or four of the Northern Townships, is said to exceed one hundred—among whom are many intelligent and respectable individuals. The prospects of obtaining still greater numbers in this county, is daily increasing." Western Courier (Ravenna, Ohio), May 26, 1831, reprinted in St. Louis Times, July 9, 1831. Ellsworth estimates that there were 600 to 800 Mormons by the summer of 1831. (Ellsworth, 69 ff.)
towns as they moved outward from Kirtland and returned a few months later, having made a long, sometimes circuitous missionary circuit. Some missionaries were sent east to "labor with their families." And others, "the residue of the elders," were instructed to remain in Ohio, where they watched over the churches, worked, and declared "the word in the regions about them." Already we see the broad outlines of the pattern that was followed for the next several years.

**OHIO "SATURATED" WITH MISSIONARIES**

From 1831 to 1837 no state received the "saturation" treatment that Ohio did. Over and over again it was criss-crossed by Mormon elders on their way or returning from other states. In addition, those unable to go on longer missions would often manage to find a few days for preaching in such towns as Amherst, Portage, or Newton. And elders living at home during the "off" season or winter months would often be available for short preaching tours. To cite one example among many of the relatively brief Ohio circuit, we find Hyrum Smith and Reynolds Cahoon leaving in December 1831 on a missionary tour that took them to Poncort, Leroy, Thompson, Rome, Bloomfield, Furnessytown, Hiram, and Wethersfield before their return to Kirtland. Their reception was uneven, at best, but they were not discouraged. Back in Kirtland, they rested "for a little season." On January 14, 1832, Hyrum left again, this time in a different direction, and preached in Cleveland, Florence, and Amherst before returning to Kirtland. Such "swings" out of Kirtland and back were a constant recurrence between 1831 and 1838.

Missionaries could travel greater distances. The new convert Jared Carter was living in Amherst, Ohio in the fall of 1831, when he started his mission to Vermont. He was back home by the end of February 1832. For approximately two months he lived at home. But there was no rest for a Mormon elder; he preached in the neighboring towns of Brownham, Newloman,

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1. Doctrine and Covenants 52 (hereafter referred to as D&C).
2. Hyrum Smith, Diary (1831-35), photocopy of holograph, Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah. The Church Historian's Office, the single most important center for the study of Mormon history, will henceforth be abbreviated as CHO. In all quotations from the early journals, I have taken the liberty of correcting a few spelling errors and occasionally adding punctuation for ease of reading; there have been no corrections of grammar or additions of words.
3. Jared Carter, Journal (1831-33), holograph, CHO.
Florence, and Hiram as well as in Amherst. Then he went into Kirtland to find out his "ministry" for the "ensuing season." Another mission to Vermont and New York started in April and ended in October with his return to the Kirtland area. This time he allowed himself a five-week respite, working "that my family might be made more comfortable," before starting on a mission to Michigan Territory.

Another great Kirtland missionary was Lorenzo Barnes.\(^7\) Barnes had lived in Norton, Medina County, Ohio since 1816. He was 21 years old when he was baptized on June 16, 1833. Less than a month later he was ordained an elder and was sent on a mission by "a council of High priests." He and Elial Strong held meetings at Larad, Westfield, Harmony, Jamestown, Pomfert, and Perrysburg "and in the regions round about." This tour was during August and September. In October Barnes was back in Kirtland, where he worked on the temple for three or four weeks and then returned to Norton to teach school during the winter. Note the rhythmic pattern—missionary journey, "rest and recovery," and then another foray.

In the spring of 1834 Barnes went with Joseph Smith on the unsuccessful military operation known as Zion's Camp. He remained in Missouri until October, when he received a license from the High Council and started on a missionary journey that lasted for over six months before he arrived back at his home in Ohio.

Barnes was home less than a month before he started on another mission in the spring of 1835. Without tracing his journey, we can notice that in general he went eastward to Pennsylvania, spent considerable time in Ohio along the way, and made an effort to visit relatives. After spending five-and-a-half months on this mission Barnes might have expected to work and help support his family. But he was called to Kirtland to study English grammar and Hebrew at the special school for elders. At the beginning of April he returned to Newton. There he held long conversations with his parents, who had not accepted the Mormon message, and continued to preach and baptize in the locality.

For such missionaries as Lorenzo Barnes and Jared Carter, Kirtland was a home base. Like medieval knights they left the

\(^{7}\text{The name is spelled both }\text{Barns and Barnes. The latter spelling is found in his handwriting on his journals. Lorenzo Barnes, Reminiscence and Journals (1812-39), holograph, CHO.}\)
castle for repeated adventures in the dark world. In the sense that every Latter-day Saint was expected to be a missionary, of course, any home branch could function much as Kirtland did.

The pre-eminence of Kirtland was due in the first instance to the simple fact that it was a center of gathering and consequently there were more saints there than anywhere else. The other place of gathering, Jackson County, Missouri, bade fair to surpass the Ohio center and did function as a secondary center of proselyting activity. But Missouri’s role as a missionary center was weakened as early as 1833 by the outbreak of the “Missouri persecutions,” which forced the Missouri saints to move, to rebuild, and finally to flee from the state. Kirtland remained relatively free from such large-scale violence. Moreover, the organization of the Twelve and the Seventy at Kirtland in 1835 meant that the agencies most responsible for organizing and implementing the missionary effort were located in Kirtland. The situation did not change until 1838, when most of the Saints left Kirtland, just before Nauvoo, Illinois was established as a new place of refuge.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KIRTLAND MISSIONARIES

What were the general characteristics of missionary activity during the years of Kirtland’s hegemony? Helpful in answering this question are the Church periodicals of the 1830s, and the journals of the missionaries. Through such primary sources we can gain a good insight into what it meant to be a Mormon missionary during the first decade of the Church’s history. Here are some of the most striking characteristics of the Kirtland missionaries.

They preached in courthouses, schools, churches, barns, private dwellings and on streetcorners. In early 1833 David W.

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8 The Evening and Morning Star was published at Independence, Missouri, from June 1832 to July 1833, and resumed publication at Kirtland, Ohio from December 1833 to September 1834. Especially important for the present subject are the Latter Day Saint Messenger and Advocate, published monthly at Kirtland from October 1834 to September 1836, and the Elders’ Journal (1837-38), the first two issues of which were published at Kirtland.

9 The following journals, all located in the CHO, are especially valuable for the Kirtland period: Lorenzo Barnes, Reynolds Cahooy, Gideon Carter, Jared Carter, John S. Carter, Zebedee Coltrin, Jonathan Dunham, Jonathan H. Hale, Elias Hutchinson, Orson Hyde, Levi Jackson, Amasa Lyman, David W. Patten, Charles C. Rich, Samuel H. Smith, Wilford Woodruff, and John Murdock. There are others as well. Hopefully the guide to Mormon diaries that I am preparing will enable researchers to locate most of the diaries that are relevant for this and other topics in Mormon history.
Patten and his companion attended a Methodist meeting "and preached to them the gospel in its plainness and simplicity." The preference seems to have been for a public meeting in an available meeting hall, such as a church or courthouse.\(^{10}\) Often such places were available and appointments were given out—publicity was distributed—for one or more such meetings. One of the interesting terms common to the vocabulary of the age was "liberty." After the elders had presented their message they would "give liberty," i.e., open up the meeting to anyone who wanted to say anything. It was a procedure that put any attending clergy on the spot; silence might be interpreted as assent, but taking issue with the Mormons would simply lead to further discussion. One also encounters a slightly different usage of the term "liberty," as, for example, claiming to have had "good liberty" or merely "liberty" when speaking. This, I gather, referred to fluency that resulted when one spoke under the influence of the Spirit.\(^{11}\)

Although public meetings were the means by which the elders could reach the largest audience, they did not fail to meet with smaller groups, especially the families of friends and relatives or the families of those who put them up for the night. "Cottage meetings," of course, could easily grow if a few neighbors were invited in or if a private home had to be used as the only location for a "public" meeting. And going door to door was by no means uncommon. It does not seem to have been the systematic "tracting" of later years, blocking out areas of cities. More typically the missionaries knocked on the doors of farm houses as they made their way along a road. Or in the villages and small towns they would take a day or two to go from house to house.\(^{12}\) And quite early we find examples of street meetings, although they seem to have been held only when a meeting hall was unavailable.\(^{13}\)

\(^{10}\)Parkin, 138. For description of the varied audiences see Higdon, 116-17.

\(^{11}\)When the first Mormon missionaries came to Ohio, Parley P. Pratt gave a sermon. Then he "gave liberty for anyone to reply," whereupon Sidney Rigdon arose and "advised the people not to contend against what they had heard." (Levi Ward Hancock Journal, p. 24.) Orson Hyde described an agonizing experience when he attempted to preach without enjoying "liberty" by saying "I was shut up." (Higdon, 94.)

\(^{12}\)Examples of going from house to house are found in the journals of Orson Hyde, Wilford Woodruff, and others.

\(^{13}\)Street meetings were held in Cincinnati by Lorenzo Barnes on the corner of Sixth and Vine, where a "large congregation . . . listened with great attention."
They presented a simple, direct message. Often they delivered standard sermons on such subjects as the prophecies of the Bible and their fulfillment, the Book of Mormon, the signs of the times, or the contrasts between New Testament Christianity and the religion people were familiar with. Here is how Lorenzo Barnes summarized his "manner of preaching":

Our manner of teaching the people generally was—in the first place to lay before them the first principles of the gospel: faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, & the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. These we proved from the New Testament to the people were preached and practiced by the apostles and obeyed by the people in ancient days and Paul says if we or an angel from heaven preach any other let him be accursed & then by comparing the ancient order of things with the teachings of the present generation and [we] left the people to judge who were preaching the gospel that Paul did and who were preaching a different one.

Secondly showed what the power of Godliness was and who were denying it. Proved the necessity of more revelations wherever the Church of Christ is on the earth and then that according to the prophecies there will be more revelations given in the last days to bring about the great work that is to be accomplished. And then the prophecies concerning the restoration of the House of Israel and the means that God will make use of to bring about the great work. The covenants made to the Fathers, the coming of Christ, his kingdom and reign on earth &c. &c.

Much of the preaching was based on Biblical texts. What the missionaries were expected to avoid was abstruse theology or elaborate scriptural exegesis. The "mysteries" were considered not good matter for attracting converts. When Joseph Wakefield and Solomon Humphrey were sent east in 1831, a revelation instructed them to declare "none other things than the prophets and apostles, that which they have seen and heard and most assuredly believe, . . ."

They made special efforts to convert family and friends. Understandably, the elders wished to carry the "pearl of great price" to their loved ones. In practical terms, too, it was in their home area among people who knew them that they stood the

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1 Higdon, 72-79; Ellsworth, 50.
2 There is no good study of the use of scriptures in Mormon theology. Barbara M. Higdon has rightfully pointed out that a few standard passages were used over and over again. (Higdon, 159-67.)
3 D&C 52:36.
best chance of gaining a hearing. This double motivation helps to explain the frequency of trips by missionaries from Kirtland to New York State or Vermont or Massachusetts. 17 (As time went on the pattern continued; even late in the century it was not unusual for a person to be called on a special mission, exempted from the usual mission jurisdictions and the obligation of having a companion, in order to preach the gospel to relatives.)

These family confrontations could be laden with emotion. In the fall of 1832 Orson Hyde spent two days at Oxford, New Hampshire, with his brother Asahel, who failed to believe. Orson Hyde described his departure: "Left brother Asahel with hearts full of grief; united with him in prayer before we left. We shed many tears over each other, and I bade my brother, my own mother's child adieu, his wife and little ones farewell, to see my face no more." A few days later he called on his sister and brother-in-law in Great Falls, New Hampshire. At first the brother-in-law, a Mr. North, was quite friendly, helping to find a place for the missionaries to hold their meeting, putting up notices, and coming to listen. But when they heard the message, both Laura North and her husband were "quite unbelieving." Hyde's entry for the next day is pregnant with emotion:

Continued at Mr. North's; stayed at home in the forenoon with my sister, and tried to reason with her about the work, but all to no purpose. Mr. North came home from meeting and we tried further to reason with him but in vain. We saw that they objected to our testimony, and, must I tell?—we took our things and left them, and tears from all eyes freely ran, and we shook the dust of our feet against them, but it was like piercing my heart; and all I can say is "The Will of the Lord Be Done."

Other missionary diaries, such as those of Lorenzo Barnes, contain terse entries that merely hint at the crushing disappointment when loved ones rejected the gospel message.

OPPOSITIONS AND SUCCESSES

_Thy encountered much indifference and opposition._ On the discouraging side of the ledger the Mormon elders often found

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17 Preaching to family and friends in New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts were the Carter brothers, Orson Hyde, Samuel H. Smith, Ebenezer Robinson, and many others.
a lack of interest. Or such interest as existed was often hostile, expressing itself in jeers, catcalls, and occasional violence. In 1832, Amasa Lyman scheduled a public meeting in Talmage, Ohio, but "there was [sic] no people that did attend." A few months later in Madison, Ohio he and his companion "cleansed our feet against thousands who rejected us." About the same time Jared Carter was preaching in his home state of Vermont. At Chesterfield he warned the people in a meeting. At the end of the meeting many gathered around him to criticize. When he finally departed, a group of people "followed me about half of a mile making ridicule [sic] of me." Later, at Plattsburg, he held a meeting but "without access to the hearts of the people."

Many good examples of the kind of discouragement faced by the Mormon missionaries are found in the 1832 missionary journal of Orson Hyde. The following excerpts reflect experiences in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts:

. . . preached in the village in the evening; prospects unfavorable. . .

Went on from Fairview 6 or 7 miles. I took off the dust of my feet against almost all—.

Went on to Mill Creek and found where Clavin sold a Book for $1.87½—found the people very hard; seemingly no salvation for them . . .

Preached in Mill Creek; prospects poor.

. . . labored in Erie with a number of families; prospects poor. . .

. . . preached in the village without much spirit and without much effect.

. . . found the people hard and unbelieving, and it really seems as though Satan had grasped them with his own foul chains.

Went on to Buffalo; found the people hard . . .

Prospects very poor in Candor where we are now—Prejudice rages and Satan roars.

From indifference the negative response ranged up to irate denunciations, threats, heckling and physical abuse. On July 17, 1832, Orson Hyde and his companion were holding a meeting in a private house. A mob of some hundred men gathered around the house and swore that they would tar and feather the elders. Fortunately "a little boy came into the house to see
if we were there and he did not see us, and went out and told them that we were not there, and they then disappeared swearing and scolding, and thus the Lord delivered us." Hyde tells of another occasion when "a numerous crowd came out and fired crackers during the meeting and made disturbance, and after the meeting the rabble set up a hugh and cry through the town and round the house like a pack of grizzly wolves determined to devour us, but the Lord sent them home and we retired to rest."

In 1835 Lyman Smith and Lewis Robbins attempted to preach in Havanna, New York, but were harrassed by men "throwing hard apples at them." When they continued preaching, "the rowdies blew out their candles and kicked up a general row," forcing them to leave, and then pelted them "with a shower of mud." The same year George A. Smith and his companion were holding a meeting on Sullivan's Island when a Baptist deacon furnished a popgun and ammunition, which he passed in through the windows to a man who fired pop-gun wads of tow at me all the time I was preaching. He was an excellent shot with the pop-gun, the most of the wads hit me in the face. I caught several of them in my hands. Many of them were tickled, but some of them paid good attention. I finished my discourse without noticing the insult.19

They encountered especially strong opposition from the clergy. The journals of the Kirtland missionaries are full of references to the clergy. In 1832, Amasa Lyman recorded that in Keene, Ohio he and his companion were "attacked by one of the teachers of Babylon who sought by sarcasm and blackguard to bring the work of the Lord into disrepute." The following year he tells of being "opposed by one of the teachers of Babylon" in Virginia. When Orson Hyde was able to arouse the interest of a congregation on his 1832 mission, a Methodist minister was "very much opposed but could not bring one thing to bear against the truth." In 1835 Lorenzo Barnes reported that in Clearmont County the "priests" did everything in their power to oppose Mormonism. "But all they could do," he continued, "was to read newspaper stories, call for signs and cry

16George A. Smith, "My Journal," The Instructor (September, 1946), 416.
17The Instructor (October, 1946), 462. Other examples of "overt resistance" are itemized by Parkin, 150 ff.
false prophet, false teacher, delusion, imposition, &c." Almost every issue of the Church periodicals contained further examples of opposition from the clergy.20

It should perhaps be noticed that the clergy viewed the Mormon missionaries as rival preachers who could "upset" families and draw away members from congregations. Such concern was contemptuously seen by the Mormon elders as selfish protection of the clerical "craft." Nor were feelings made more pleasant by Mormon references to "priests of Babylon," "priests of Baal," or "hireling priests." Such scathing contempt was made possible by the natural fervor of new converts, some of whom brought a previous anti-clericalism with them, by passages in the Mormon scriptures that condemned "priestcraft," and by the interesting fact that several of the most vocal elders had been preachers before their conversion. Perhaps the surprising thing is that occasionally they found a friendly, "candid" minister, and that conversions from the Protestant clergy continued to occur.21

_They sometimes participated in debates_. Responding to the attacks of the clergy the Mormon missionaries often challenged them to debate. The stories of these debates as recounted in the diaries and Church periodicals invariably present a picture of Mormon truth triumphing over sectarian error. One suspects that the encounters may have appeared different from the other side or from the point of view of many in the congregations. But probably the elders did fare remarkably well in verbal combat. Their message was one they were much better prepared to discuss than the person encountering it for the first time. They had personal experience and testimony to bring to bear against the rumor and unreliable newspaper stories of the opposition. And they had incredible self-confidence. In 1832 David Patten accepted a challenge to debate. He summarized

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20A few among many examples of efforts by the clergy to oppose the proselyting of the Mormon elders. See the _Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate_, 1 (1834-35), 7, 24, 44, 62, 75, 77; 2 (1835-36), 223-24, 237, 258. Organization of a mob by the local clergy in Tennessee is described in Vol. 2 (1836), pp. 365-67. (Hereafter this periodical will be cited as simply _Messenger and Advocate._) Another example is found in _The Elders' Journal_, 1 (1837), 2-3. From the first appearance of the Mormons in Missouri, according to Oliver Cowdery, the clergy took the lead in opposing them. (DHC 1:182.)

21There is not, to my knowledge, a good study of conversions of ministers to Mormonism, which started in 1830 and continues to the present day. For some intelligent comments on the social, geographical, and religious origins of early Mormon converts, see Ellsworth, ch. 15 and appendix.
the result as follows: "We went accordingly and we gave him the length of his own rope and he hung himself on lust." In 1836 Elias Hutchinson met a Presbyterian minister in debate and "confounded him so that he could not open his mouth." When someone complained that the Mormons were "not within reach of argument," the Messenger and Advocate responded:

This the writer knew, (if he knew anything about the church,) was not true—so far from it, that wherever our Elders have travelled abroad they have at all times, been ready, God giving them his Spirit, to stand up boldly, in defence of the religion they profess; and even 'beardless boys,' among them, have been able to confound the Priests of this generation . . . 22

Missionaries may have been encouraged to participate in such controversy by the early revelation instructing Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon to preach the gospel: "Wherefore, confound your enemies; call upon them to meet you both in public and in private; and inasmuch as you are faithful their shame shall be made manifest."

Church leaders were sometimes not entirely happy with the argumentative proclivities of the missionaries. The Messenger and Advocate wrote: "We sincerely hope our elders will not go round the country, challenging others to debate the subject of religion with them." If drawn into a debate the elders were instructed to make sure that the opponent was of "respectable standing," for a victory over "a man of no character" was a loss of time and reputation. This warning strongly suggests that some of the elders had won "cheap" victories. Although it had reservations, the periodical did not go so far as to forbid debating: "If they [the elders] are attacked, as they invariably will be, we commend them for defending themselves with the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." 23

A FIELD WHITE TO HARVEST

They sometimes found interested listeners and had remarkable success. It would be a mistake to notice the opposition—the slanderous rumor-mongering, the heckling, the doors slam-

22 Messenger and Advocate, 2 (April, 1836), 294.
23 Ibid., 2 (July, 1836), 351. For some of Joseph Smith's reservations on debating, growing out of experiences at Kirtland, see DHC 2:317-18, 330, 334-35, 340-41. In 1836 the elders were instructed "not to contend with others." DHC 2:431.
med in their faces, the occasional violence—at the expense of missionary successes. After all, the field was "white to the harvest." The same journals that tell of indifference and opposition also tell of interest and acceptance. In early 1833, after being rejected in several places, Amasa Lyman came to a town where he had a "very attentive congregation." Two years later Lorenzo Barnes preached in Salem, Ohio, where the people "listened with great attention & much of their prejudices [sic] apparently removed." Of another locality he reported that "many appear believing." Often he spoke to crowded congregations. In Clearmont County he found calls to preach "on the right hand and on the left."

A good indication of widespread receptivity is found in the Church periodicals. A spirit of jaunty optimism permeates such reports as the following 1835 statement summarizing the first "season's" activity of the Seventy:

They have traveled, through the assisting grace of God, and preached the fulness of the everlasting gospel in various States and generally with good success; many have been convinced, and 175 baptized into the Kingdom of Jesus. . . . the mighty wheel rolls on like a bright cloud in the heavens unchecked by the efforts of men.24

Elders reporting their activities frequently told of the need for more laborers, for the doors were open and the field ready to harvest. Places where results were encouraging and additional elders needed included Huntington, Connecticut; Troy, Pennsylvania; Freedom, New York; Providence, Rhode Island; Liberty, Iowa; Jay, Vermont; Brookville, Indiana; and Clinton, Illinois.25 "We often ask," said the Messenger and Advocate in 1835, "when will the time arrive, or will it ever, that the number of laborers shall be equal to the harvest?"26

All in all, it was a breathtaking experience. "Who would have supposed," wrote Orson Pratt in 1835, "that the spread of truth would be so rapid?"27 The gospel was spreading, ac-

24Messenger and Advocate, 2 (January, 1836), 253. For interesting summaries of their successes—miles traveled, books sold, sermons, and baptisms—by individual missionaries, see pp. 255, 258, 255, 256.
25The need for additional missionaries in different localities is exemplified by the Messenger and Advocate, 1 (1834-35), 8, 9, 43-46, 62, 64, 90, 93, 104, 142; 2 (1835-36), 224, 296.
26Ibid., 1 (March, 1835), 93.
27Ibid., p. 89.
KIRTLAND MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

acording to another observer, "like wildfire." 28 From the central cordon of New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio the work had expanded westward to Missouri. Then from these older areas it moved outward to New England, to Illinois and Indiana. In addition to these main lines of expansion there were free-lance missionaries who traveled far and wide. As early as 1833 the word crossed into Canada. During 1835-36 New York, Pennsylvania, New England, and Canada received especially concentrated proselyting. A circle of 150 miles in radius from Palmyra would include at least three score branches, according to S. George Ellsworth, and another such circle drawn near the center of the Connecticut River Valley would include more than two score of New England and Canadian branches. 29 The renewed persecutions in Missouri and the financial turmoil at Kirtland had some dampening effects on the missionary effort, but the general pattern of preaching continued, and important

28 Ibid., 1 (June, 1835), 141.
29 Ellsworth, ch. 8. For permission to use the accompanying map, showing sites of Mormon branches between 1830 and 1840, I am indebted to Professor Ellsworth, Department of History, Utah State University. The version of the same map in his dissertation superimposes the location of the sites on a map showing population density.
new areas were opened up: Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina. Wilford Woodruff in the Fox Islands continued to enjoy success. And in 1837, in a bold, inspired move, the missionary program had been flung across the sea to England, where Heber C. Kimball and his colleagues achieved amazing results.

**KIRTLAND’S ROLE IN THE MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES**

What was the role of Kirtland during this important period stretching from about 1831 to 1837? We have already noticed that for several reasons Kirtland was the main center of missionary activity and have considered some of the chief features of the proselyting enterprise during these years. It is now time to examine more carefully the functions performed by Kirtland in this far-flung, complicated movement. Four points are deserving of particular attention:

1. *Kirtland provided organization and direction.* In some ways, of course, the missionary obligation was on every member. They were expected to teach others when they could and not wait to be “commanded in all things.” Furthermore, even as things became more fully planned and organized, missionary calls were often quite indefinite both as to place and as to duration. It was common, for example, to be called to preach the gospel in the East or the South. The day when Elders would be called on two-year missions, sent to carefully defined missionary fields, and there assigned to a specific companion and locality—all of this was far in the future.

But very early the Mormon leaders saw the advantages of some kind of planning and organization, and Kirtland was the place where it was done. The conference in June 1831 saw the naming of twenty-eight elders by name; they were told who was to travel with whom as companion, where to go, and general directions about route. This kind of supervision continued to be exercised by the Kirtland leaders, usually through the High Council. In early 1832, for example, Jared Carter went from

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8D&C 52. For a good analysis of the “free-lance” missionary during the early stages of proselyting see Ellsworth, 94.
9See Minutes of the Kirtland High Council, CHO, which council concerned itself with ordinations, giving and revoking licenses, assigning missionaries, and many specific questions from the scattered branches. The fluidity of Church organization before 1835 is indicated by such phrases as “a conference of Elders,” “a council of High Priests,” “a council of High Priests and Elders,” and “the high council of the church of the Latter-Day Saints.”
Amherst into Kirtland to find out his assignment, viz. where he should go to preach and who would be his companion. During 1833-34 licenses were issued to these traveling elders by either the Missouri or the Kirtland High Council.

In 1835 a momentous reorganization took place at Kirtland when the Twelve Apostles and the Seventy were established. In some ways the respective assignment and authority of the different councils remained confused for a few years, but both the Apostles and the Seventy had a primary obligation to carry the gospel to the world, and improvements in the organization of the missionary effort were quickly apparent. The Twelve visited several conferences in 1835 and carefully defined district boundaries. At these conferences reports from each branch were heard. Those who had taught false doctrine or otherwise disrupted orderly operations were corrected or cut off. Improved licensing procedures with central control were established; it would be much easier than before to identify those elders who were officially authorized to preach, to visit the scattered branches, and officiate in ordinances. Both the Twelve and the presidency of the Seventy, both of which had their "headquarters" at Kirtland, took the responsibility of assigning elders to specific fields of labor.  

It would be an exaggeration to say that Kirtland housed a complex operations center—a huge room, with files on different areas and a giant map carefully marked with colored pins. But it would be equally absurd to assume that there was no planning at all. Some discussion of areas that were promising or in need of visitations, along with some consideration of which missionaries were available, undoubtedly took place. To the extent that such centralized planning and commissioning existed it was at Kirtland.

2. Kirtland provided training. For the missionaries to be effective and to avoid confusing new members of the Church with conflicting interpretations, they needed some kind of systematic gospel study. Sunday meetings at Kirtland accomp-

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52DHc, 2, 181, 200, 209, 220ff. An interesting discussion of the Seventy as "a veritable flying column" for missionary work by B. H. Roberts is found in DHc, 2, 203n. One modern historian sees the Seventy, in their original intent at least, as "a permanent calling for well trained and highly competent Mormon 'Jesuits' who must, in time, have become highly effective." (Fielding, 117.) Instructions to missionaries on the care they should exercise in preaching to children or slaves are found in DHc, 2, 262-63. Improvements of procedures for licensing are described on pp. 400, 403-05, 446, 475, 490.
lished this to some extent. There were also quorum meetings during the week and special courses of study. The “Lectures on Faith,” delivered in 1835, are a good example of an effort to provide systematic instruction in basic gospel principles. Secular learning was provided in a school that focused mainly on grammar and geography. It was set up not as an elementary school for children but as a kind of “remedial” school for the elders. Ambitions were high, as indicated by the introduction of a course in Hebrew in 1836.

During the “off” season elders living in Kirtland were expected to take advantage of these special “seminars” and “workshops.” Some living in other communities were called to participate. It is impossible to estimate how successful these training sessions were, but it seems likely that they did much to enhance the self-confidence and esprit de corps of the missionaries. Through these schools and through conferences and quorum meetings Kirtland was the educational headquarters of the church between 1831 and 1837.

3. Kirtland provided inspiration. In a way the “inspiration” was the most important thing of all, for without it few missionaries would be able to maintain their fervor in the hostile world. It was to Kirtland that new members came from hundreds of miles away in order to meet and shake hands with the Prophet Joseph Smith. Often they received a patriarchal blessing. Nor does it seem possible to overestimate the inspirational octane provided by the new quorum activities, the sacred ordinances, and the divine power manifested at the Kirtland Temple. In small groups anywhere in the world the saints could and did experience moving testimonies, healings, speaking in tongues, and other gifts of the spirit. But nothing could quite take the

33“During the winter of 1836, I attended a high school together with Brothers Joseph and Hyrum and most of the leading men of the Church; it was a fine opportunity for obtaining knowledge. The evenings were mostly spent in meetings for instructions on the principles of our faith and religion. It was then and there that the lectures in the first part of the book of Doctrine and Covenants were given.” Harrison Burgess, “Sketch of a Well-Spent Life,” in Labors in the Vineyard (Salt Lake City, n.d.). Cf. sketch by John A. Widtsoe in N. B. Lundwall comp., A Compilation Containing the Lectures on Faith (Salt Lake City, n.d.).

34In 1835 an announcement of the opening of school was specifically addressed to the elders. Subjects to be taught in the school were listed as penmanship, arithmetic, grammar, and geography. Messenger and Advocate, 1 (February, 1835), 80. Cf. DHC, 2:200, 299. Joseph Smith, according to one modern historian, saw Kirtland as having the potential to become “a great educational headquarters and a spiritual mecca.” Fielding, 70-71. Cf. Ellsworth, 176ff.
place of Kirtland. Missionaries would return to Kirtland tired in body, the spirit flickering, and then in a few weeks would be ready to go again, a blazing torch. It was at Kirtland more than anywhere else, it seemed, that the spirit of God like a fire was burning. 35

4. Kirtland provided information. If there is an inherent threat to a new movement like Mormonism, it is that of schism, fragmentation. Anyone who has read more than a few missionary diaries is acutely aware of the frequency of troubles among the members of the Church. Missionaries spent much of their time in trying to smooth over differences or to remove offending members. But it is surprising that any common faith could be maintained when new members with little or no background could announce their own opinions. Hence the incalculable importance of missionary visits, regular conferences, and above all the Church periodicals. The Evening and Morning Star, the Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate, and the Elder's Journal were the periodicals during the 1830s that did much to give out instruction, pass on decisions, keep the scattered saints informed of developments elsewhere, and give them the assurance of belonging to a living, dynamic Church. Although the Evening and Morning Star was started at Independence, Missouri, even from the beginning it contained important messages from Kirtland, including revelations that had been received there. Then, as a result of the mob fury in Missouri, publication was transferred to Kirtland in 1833. Just as modern news commentators tell us the views of Washington or London, or as a modern Mormon sometimes refers to the policy of Salt Lake, so the saints of the beginning years of the Church must have received expectantly from missionaries, from letters, and from periodicals the latest pronouncements and recommendations of Kirtland. 36

35Wilford Woodruff's journal is a good example of the effect of the spiritual experiences at Kirtland. A short statement by another elder summarizes the effects of the manifestations during the dedication of the Kirtland Temple: "All felt they had a foretaste of heaven...; and we wondered whether the millennium had commenced." Daniel Tyler, Scraps of Biography (Salt Lake City, n.d.), p. 32.

36The Church periodicals contained occasional private communications to elders, withdrawals of licenses, instructions on specific procedures, and announcements of conferences. Virtually every issue printed letters from missionaries describing their experiences, as the following in 1836: W. Parrish (the South), Brigham Young (New York, New England), Daniel Stephens (Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut), Hazen Aldrich (New York, Vermont), Ebenezer
KIRTLAND'S DECLINE AS CHURCH CENTER

Kirtland's position as triumphant center was not destined to last for long. It enjoyed remarkable growth up to 1835 and, as we have seen, provided important direction to the intense proselyting carried on by fervent converts. From 1835 to 1837 it was in its heyday. While the poor Missouri saints struggled for survival, Kirtland saw the completion and dedication of its temple, the organization of the Twelve and Seventy, and continuing economic prosperity. Like the sun in the firmament, Kirtland was the center around which other Church activities revolved and from which they derived both light and warmth. Starting in 1837, however, disaster struck Kirtland—economic depression, the failure of the wildcat bank, factional quarrels and apostasy. With the departure of Joseph Smith and the Twelve in 1837 Kirtland's glow as the center of an expansive, irresistible movement came to an end, and with the departure of Kirtland Camp the following year the city was left a sorrowful shell. For a brief, exciting period it had been the nerve center of Mormonism's proselyting activity, the center where more than anywhere else the Lord was extending the saints' understanding. Those who had been part of it—Jared Carter, Lorenzo Barnes, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, Amasa Lyman, David Patten, and many others—would never forget.

Robinson (Ohio), Wilford Woodruff (the South), Heber C. Kimball (New York, New England), and Erastus Snow (Pennsylvania). (Messenger and Advocate, 3 [1836], 408, 413-15, 431, 439-40, 464-65.)
An Impressive Letter from the Pen of Joseph Smith

LA MAR C. BERRETT*

Because of rivalry and jealousy among the Missouri Saints, the Prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Newel K. Whitney were appointed to sit in council with them in April 1832. (D & C 78: 9-10.) This was the second visit by Joseph Smith to the Missouri area.

After grievances were amicably settled, the three brethren returned to Kirtland by stage via St. Louis and Vincennes, Indiana. At a point between Vincennes, Indiana, and New Albany (near Greenville) they had a run-away when the horses became frightened. Joseph and Sidney jumped out of the coach unhurt; but when Bishop Whitney attempted to jump, his coat caught and threw him into the wheel. His leg and foot were broken in several places. Joseph and Newel stayed at Mr. Porter’s Public House at Greenville for four weeks, and Elder Rigdon returned to Kirtland. While attending Brother Whitney as he recuperated from his injuries, Joseph Smith was poisoned. He vomited so profusely that he dislocated his jaw. He replaced it himself and then made his way to the bedside of Newel K. Whitney where Newel administered to him and he was healed instantly. The Prophet Joseph Smith indicated that the effect of the poison was so powerful it caused much of the hair of his head to be loosened. He was grateful to be alive, however, and said, “thanks be to my Heavenly Father for his interference.”

Sometime in the four weeks while Newel K. Whitney was bedfast, Joseph Smith wrote an intimate letter to his wife, Emma.¹ His impressive account of his struggle for repentance and his assurance of his own forgiveness is touching; it is one of the most authentic glimpses of the Prophet’s repentance and effort for worthiness.

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¹This letter was discovered by James R. Harris in 1960 in the possession of the Chicago Historical Society, who graciously supplied us with a copy of the letter. See DHC 1:271-2 for the instance of writing.
Dear Wife

I would inform you that Brother Martin has arrived here and brught the pleasing news that our Familys were well when he left them which Greately Cheared our hearts and [re]vived our Spirits we thank our hevenly Father for his goodness [ ] unto all of you us and [yes]. Martin arrived on Satterday the Same week he left Chagrin haveing a properous time we are all in good heath Brother Whitneys leg is gaining and he thinks he Shall be able to to perform his about Journy so as to get home \ as soon as the 20th. my Situation is a very unpleasent one although I will endeaver to be Contented the Lord asisting me I have visited a grove which is Just back of the town almost every day where I can be Secluded from the eyes of any mortal and there give vent to all the feeling[s] of my heart in meditations and prarry I have Called to mind all the past and moments of my life and am left to morn [ ] Shed tears of sorrow for my folly in Sufering the adversary of my Soul to have so much had in times past ul power over me as he has \ but God is mercif
June 6th, Greenfield, Ohio, 1832

Dear Mrs. Smith,

I would inform you that Brother Martin has arrived here and brought the pleasing
news that our families were well when he left them which greatly pleased our hearts
and restored our spirits. We thank and
Lagrange. Everything for the goodnews that
us and you. Martin arrived on Saturday.
This same week the Black Chagrin Militia
a profane time we are all in good health.
Brother Martin, by an error, and in that
he shall be able to get home tomorrow.

My situation is a very unpleasant one
although I will endeavor to be contented. I
have rented a farm
since writing me. I have rented a farm
which is last third of the farm and
every day which can be secluded from
the feeling of my heart in meditation.
the feelings of my heart in meditation. I
have called to mind all the past
memories of my life and the love of
God in the kindness for me fully in elucidating
the wisdom of my soul to guide me in much.
Your son sent me to the best that God in mercy

and has forgiven my sins and I rejoice that he
Sendeth forth the Comforter unto as many as
believe and humbleth themselves before him
lost
I was grieved to hear that Hiram had his
little Child I think we can in some degree
Simpathise with him but we all must be
of the Lord
reconciled to our lots and say the will be done
her husband
[ ] Sister Whitney wrote a letter to [ ] which
which was very cheering [ ] and being unwell
at that time and filled with much anxiety
it would have been very Consoling to me to
have received a few lines from you but as you
did not take the trouble I will try to be conte
nented with my lot knowing that God is my
friend in him I shall find comfort I have
given my [ ] life into his hands I am prepared
to go at his Call I desire to be with Christ
I Count not my life dear to me only to do his
will I am not pleased to hear that William
Mclelin has come back and disobayed the voice
of him who is altogether Lovely for a woman
I am astonished at Sister Emaline yet I cannot
belive she is not a worthy sister I hope She
find
[ ] will him true and kind to her but have
no reason to [ ] expect it his Conduct merits the
disapprobation of every true follower of Christ
LETTER FROM JOSEPH SMITH

...her favor and I agree that he
indeed for the Comforter came as many as
believe and humbleth themselves before him.
I was pleased to hear that Harriet had
little child. I think I was in some degree
compassionate with them. But we all might be
acquainted to our lives and say this guilty to
her. Whatever wrote a letter to her which
which was very cheering to me and gave much
at that time and filled with much anxiety
I would have been very amusing to me to
have received a few lines from you but as you
did not take the trouble I well knew to be done
with this letter I have given up. With my lot knowing that God is in
friend in Him I shall find comfort. I have
given my life into his hands and I am prepared
to go at his will. I desire to be with Christ
of whom not my life dear to me only to do his
will I am not pleased to hear that William
had come back and disbursed the writer.
Of him who is altogether lovely for a woman
I am astonished at sister Thomas yet I cannot
believe she is not a worthy sister. I hope she
will become true and kind to her and have
no reason to expect it. This Conduct marred the
heart of every true follower of Christ.
but this is a painful subject I hope you will excuse my warmth of feeling in mentioning this [ ] Subject and also my inability in conveying my ideas in writing. I am happy to find that you are Still in the faith of Christ and at Father Smiths I hope you will Comfort Father and Mother in their trials and Hiram and Jerusha and the rest of the Family tell Sophronia I remember her and Kalvin in my prayers my respects to the rest I should like see little Julia and once more take her on my knee and converse with you on all the Subjects which concerns us things I cannot is not prudent for me to write I omit all the important things which could I see you I could make you acquainted with tell Brother Will that I and Brother Whitney will arrange the business of that farm when we come give my respects to all the Brothers Br— Whitny Family [ ] tell them he is Cheerful and patient and a true Brother to me I subscribe myself your Husband the Lord bless you peace be with so Farewell until I return

Joseph Smith Jr.
LETTER FROM JOSEPH SMITH

But this is a painful subject I hope you will excuse my want of feeling in mentioning the subject and also my inability in conveying my ideas in writing. I am happy to find that you are still hid in the faith of Christ and at Father Smith I hope you will comfort Strawberry and Nother in their trials. And please and Geo. and the rest of the family let it be known I remember her and the boys in my prayers. My respects to the rest. I should like to see Little and Jucle and once more take her on my Knee andCompose with you on all the subjects which concern us. Things I cannot is not hard for me to write. I omit all the important things which could I see you I could make you acquainted with till Brother Willas that I and Brother Wathov will arrange the hearings of that form when we come here. My respects to all the Brethren here. Wathov and family let them be cheerful and fair. Brother to me of Sabros, patient and a true Brother to me. Be myself your husband the Lord gives you place he will be. Farewell until I return.

Joseph Smith Jr.
Sources on the History of the Mormons in Ohio: 1830-38

(Located East of the Mississippi)

STANLEY B. KIMBALL*

This study of the source materials on the Mormon Ohio period restricts itself almost exclusively to sources located east of the Mississippi. For a fairly comprehensive listing of source materials found west of the Mississippi, especially in Utah and California, the reader should consult Max E. Parkin’s 1966 study, Conflict at Kirtland. For an extensive list of all kinds of printed primary and secondary sources he should also see Eva L. Pancoast’s 1929 thesis, “Mormons at Kirtland,” and Robert Kent Fielding’s 1957 dissertation, “The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Ohio,” as well as Parkin.1

The following analysis is based largely on materials discovered by sending out more than 350 letters to individuals and institutions—especially to institutions listed in A Directory of

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Information Resources in the United States, Historical Societies and Agencies in the U.S. and Canada, National Union Catalogue of Manuscript Collections, A Guide to Archives and Manuscripts in the United States, and Subject Collections plus many personal friends and contacts.

One hundred and forty-three responses were received containing information about a great variety of items held in seventeen collections, mainly in Ohio. Though few in number the documents discovered are important, for most have not been utilized heretofore, and many may have been unknown. I would like to think that this listing will encourage further and deeper study of this germinal period of Mormon history.

My material on contemporary newspapers is based on information found in the Union List of Newspapers, Edwin Alden & Bro.'s American Newspaper Catalogue, and Newspapers on Microfilm.

This study does not concern itself with one very important body of primary sources—Mormon imprints of the Kirtland era. These materials, including such books as The Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and the newspapers—the Elders' Journal, the Evening and Morning Star, Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate, and Northern Times—deserve a separate study, which will be taken up in the next Institute of Mormon Studies issue on the Ohio period (BYU Studies 11:4, Summer 1972).

One or two comments on the geography of the area may be helpful. Kirtland is in the old Western Reserve, an eight-county area of northeastern Ohio. Up to 1840 most of the places connected with the Mormons were in Geauga and Portage counties. In 1840 Lake County was cut off Geauga County and, as will be evident from the following information, many important documents are today in Lake County. One other oddity, while

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2In addition to the studies cited elsewhere in this article, the following are recommended: Livingston Wright, "The First Shrine of Mormonism," Ohio Magazine, 1 (1906), 164-166; William J. McNiff, "The Kirtland Phase of Mormonism," Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, 50 (1941), 261-268; Willis Thornton, "Gentile and Saint at Kirtland," Ohio Historical Quarterly, 63 (1954), 8-33; R. Kent Fielding, "The Mormon Economy in Kirtland, Ohio," Utah Historical Quarterly, 27 (October 1959), 331-356; and Max H. Parkin, "Mormon Political Involvement in Ohio," BYU Studies, 9:4 (Summer 1969), 484-502. Although little effort has been made to list printed primary source materials, special mention should be made to Eber D. Howe, Autobiography and Recollections of a Pioneer Printer, (Painesville, Ohio: Telegraph Steam Printing House, 1878) and C. G. Crary, Pioneer and Personal Reminiscences (Marshalltown, Iowa: Marshall Printing Co., 1893), both of which are larded with references to the Mormons in Kirtland.
Kirtland is today in Geauga County, Kirtland Township is in Lake County.

I. LETTERS

In the Lake County Historical Society (Mentor, Ohio) there are three letters: (1) Priscilla Martin, St. Albans, Ohio, August 15, 1836, to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Whitney, Kirtland Mills, Ohio. The letter is mainly personal, but there is one reference to a

Mr. Kimball the man you requested to call on us was hear the 11th of July and I think he is a godly man he appeared as such hear he went up to see Phebe and preached in fayettville and was much liked by them all Ben says it is the most reasonable preaching he ever heard on his return from there he came hear again and I think he was pennless by his talk I washed a little for him and lent a little chang for he told me that god wod pay me four fold and left his blessing with me and prayed[?] with us and finely I felt myself more than payed when he left the house.

The addressee may be the same Samuel Whitney who was baptized a Mormon in October, 1835, in Kirtland and the "Mr. Kimball" may very well be Heber C. Kimball, who was on a mission from June to October of 1836.

(2) Stillman Perkins, Casenovia, [N.Y.], March 3, 1837, to Samuel Smith, Ashtabula, Ohio, regarding general business matters and containing the following information about Joseph Smith: "The receipt for the hundred dollars and the account of Joseph Smith for rent I have in my possession, You may inform me what you wish to do with them. . . . As near as I can find out about that account of Joseph Smith for rent there has nothing been done about it." The addressee probably is the brother of Joseph Smith.

(3) P.M. Hitchcock, n.p. [Painesville, Ohio?] February 14, 1884, to Mr. Hayden regarding the sender's father who tried to collect a debt from Joseph Smith by threatening "to levy on the temple." The writer records that Sidney Rigdon responded, "Allright let him sell the Temple. I don't think any but Mormons would buy it, and its true no one will take it away." The addressee is most likely Amos Sutton Hayden, author of Early History of the Disciples of the Western Reserve, Cincinnati, 1875.
Two Sidney Rigdon letters are at the Western Reserve Historical Society (Cleveland). (1) To any gentleman of business in Cleveland, Kirtland, Ohio, March 15, 1837, recommending "our much respected Citizen, Mr. Reuben Haddock who is desirous of obtaining articles to some account in the mercantile line as also provisions . . . ." (2) To John Crowel of Warren, Ohio, dated Nauvoo, Illinois, May 15, 1843, concerning the family troubles of a Mrs. Brooks who was apparently originally from Ohio and boarded with Rigdon's family in Nauvoo.

Among the A. C. Williams papers, c. 1888-1903, at the Western Reserve Historical Society are several letters from Arthur B. Deming, an ardent anti-Mormon of Painesville, Ohio. Deming was the son of Miner R. Deming, one-time sheriff of Hancock County, during the Mormon era in Illinois. According to correspondence with the Western Reserve Historical Society, "Apparently Deming was collecting statements from persons about Mormons. Included is one he had prepared for a Mrs. Hanson, once of Willoughby, Ohio, to sign, care of A. C. Williams. Mrs. Hanson was Williams's mother-in-law; also letters from the Rev. W. M. Paden, Salt Lake City, 1900, against the seating of Apostle Smoot in the U.S. Senate. Paden was of the Ministers' Association of Utah."

The Historical Society also has a letter from Willard Emery, Madison, Geauga County, Ohio, July 20, 1838, to his parents at Andover, New Hampshire. Emery had recently arrived in Ohio and was informing his parents of the journey. He reports that "We visited the great Mormon Temple that was built by Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon two Mormon leaders. They profess to have revelations from the Lord and declared to the people all around that the Lord had given them the land all around in the vicinity of the Temple and that the fullness of the Gentiles should be brought in for their use and benefit."

Apparently he witnessed the July 6 exodus of the Kirtland Camp of Zion, the last group of Mormons to leave Kirtland for Missouri; for he records that, "A few days since between six and seven hundred more of them left with seventy loaded wagons and seventy cows, all started in one day together for the promised land."

The Library of Congress has a small group of Albert Brown Papers, consisting of ten items (1831-53) which are chiefly letters to his relative Amos L. Underwood concerning the diffi-
culties of the Mormons in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa. Brown, a high priest and a member of Zion’s Camp, followed Brigham Young west to Utah.

II. DIARIES, JOURNALS, AND REMINISCENCES

The Library of Congress has thirteen boxes of 468 manuscripts made by the Works Project Administration’s Historical Records Survey during 1935-37. A twenty-five page inventory by an unknown compiler of these manuscripts gives the titles, date, and place of transcription and initials of the transcriber, but the brief titles make it difficult to determine which would contain information on Ohio.

The Library of Hiram College (Hiram, Ohio) has several manuscripts: (1) A five-page typescript, "Short History of the Foundation of the Mormon church based on personal memories and facts collected by Hartwell Ryder, Hiram, Ohio, at the Age of 80 years," copied by Minnie M. Ryder in 1903-04, from the manuscript written by her uncle, Hartwell Ryder. Hartwell was the son of Symonds Ryder, an apostate enemy of Joseph Smith and the alleged leader of an anti-Mormon mob at Hiram. The manuscript refers in general to the origin of the Church and to some early events in Hiram. Perhaps the most important part is the author’s refutation that his father was the leader of the mob which tarred and feathered Joseph Smith at Hiram during March 1832; “for I can well remember that my father was sick in bed until late the next morning.”

(2) A thirty-eight page typescript manuscript, "An Episode in the Thirties," by Abraham Garfield (son of James A. Garfield) in 1934. This manuscript was written "specifically for Uncle Joe." Presumably, therefore, it is based on the memories of his uncle, Joseph Rudolph, son of Zeb and Arabella Rudolph of Hiram. It is a well-written account of some alleged experiences of Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon when they first came to Hiram.


The Western Reserve Historical Society has a two-page statement by Lucia A. Goldsmith, of Painesville, Ohio, n.d. titled "Sidney Rigdon, the first Mormon Elder" but which concerns
mainly a critical account of the author's hearing Joseph Smith preach in the Kirtland Temple.

The same society also has a three-page statement (n.p., n.d.), "About the Mormons," written by a Mr. Fowles (father of B.C. Fowles of Russellville, Arkansas) who had been a shoemaker in Chardon (nine miles from Kirtland) during the Mormon era. Part of the document is thoroughly anti-Mormon, but Fowles does write the following favorable description of Joseph Smith:

Smith was a very fine looking man viewing him with full face—but not as good looking from a profile view. He was a hard worker, wrote considerable, enjoyed the fullest confidence of the sect. He was a very entertaining man—would interest an audience in a remarkable degree—and was quite popular with those who had dealing with him. He was close in money matters—would drive a sharp bargain—always having the advantage on his side. He was nevertheless a friend to the poor & needy & many a weary foot sore traveller has been the recipient of his bounty—He was temperate in his habits—rarely indisposed—and usually in an excellent humor.

About Brigham Young Fowles wrote:

Brigham Young was a young man when the Mormons were at Kirtland but remarkably intelligent. He was quite handsome. Wore whiskers, while Smith was always closely shaved. He was considered one of the very ablest in the sect, in fact I heard it stated at the time that he was the best preacher.

The Lake County Historical Society has a two-page statement by A. G. Riddle, n.d. n.p., regarding Judge Ruben Hitchcock and "the famous trial of the State vs. Joe Smith, for conspiring to murder [Grandison] Newell" in 1837.

III. COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP RECORDS

The most important primary sources east of the Mississippi are the Record Books and the Execution Docket Books of the Court of Common Pleas (1806-79), Land Records, Deed Books (1799-1839), and Tax Duplicates (1830-39) in the Geauga County Court House (Chardon, Ohio). They are invaluable for any understanding of the many and speculative land and business transactions which many Church leaders and members engaged in, the building of that "Zion," the United Order, diffi-
culties arising out of the question of whether Mormon leaders had the right to perform marriages, the Kirtland Safety Society, suits to collect debts, and various other civil disputes between Mormons and non-Mormons. The County Marriage Records (1805-51) are also important. (Brigham Young's marriage to his second wife, Mary Ann Angell, on Feb. 18, 1834 is recorded there for example.)

In the Lake County Court House (Painesville, Ohio), records of the Court of Common Pleas (Journal of entry, Document no. 60) tell the story of the February 1880 case between the LDS and RLDS churches for ownership of the Kirtland Temple. (The RLDS won.)

Of particular importance is the two-volume Kirtland Town-ship Minutes and Poll Book for the period 1817-1838 and 1838-1846 which is located in the Lake County Historical Society. "The Mormons never were mentioned as a group. The only citations were the attempts to get rid of the community before it got started through Poor Laws and about 1837 when there was an obvious attempt with some success to enter local politics." Among the references to the Mormons in these volumes are the following:

On October 29, 1831, the families of Joseph, Hyrum, and William Smith were considered likely to become public wards and were to be asked to leave town by the Overseers of Poor. On January 13, 1831, the families of Sidney Rigdon and Doct. [?] Williams were put on the list of the Overseers of Poor.

On April 4, 1836, four tied local elections were recorded: Oliver Cowdery and Thomas W. Donavan for Clerk of Elections; Turner Shephard, Samuel Booth, and Frederick G. Williams for Overseers of Poor; Jerome Bump and Isaac Slamen for Constable; and, finally, Edward Gillett, Lory Holmes, Oliver Harman, Jr. for Fence Viewers. These four ties were decided by the casting of lots. The winners were Donovan, Shephard, Bump, Holmes, and Harman.

It is more than likely that the court houses of the several counties in the Kirtland area contain information about the Mormons, but one would almost have to search personally in their holdings to find it. Fortunately there is a typescript, "In-

†Perhaps the best analysis of these particular public records is contained in Fielding's dissertation.

†I am indebted to Mrs. M. A. Prusha of Chesterland, Ohio for this information regarding these minute books.
ventory of the county archives of Ohio," for each of four counties in the Kirtland area—Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, and Trumbull.

IV. KIRTLAND SAFETY SOCIETY AND OTHER FINANCIAL RECORDS

The Chicago Historical Society owns the original Stock Ledger (and Index to the ledger) of the Kirtland Safety Society, on the fly leaf of which is written the following:

"Cleveland, Ohio, April 10, 1885

This Stock ledger has been secreted since the Bank failed in 1837 and was found by Arthur B. Deming (son of Gen. M. R. Deming under whose charge Joseph and Hiram Smith were killed by a mob in the Carthage Jail in Illinois June 27th, 1844) while securing evidence as to the true origin and early history of Mormonism." (Cf. Deming letters mentioned above.)

The ledger is 287 pages long and shows the entries for 200 persons including Joseph Smith, Emma Smith, Joseph Smith, Sr., Lucy Smith, Hyrum Smith, Jerusha Smith, Samuel H. Smith, George A. Smith, Brigham Young, Lorenzo Young, Erastus Snow, Lorenzo Snow, Heber C. Kimball, David Whitmer, Sidney Rigdon, Wilford Woodruff, Parley P. Pratt, Truman O. Angel, Reynolds Cahoon, Vinson Knight, Oliver Cowdery, Luke Johnson, and Elija Able, a negro convert.

This source has been little used, if at all, and throws much light on this complicated phase of Mormon history. Fielding, in his study, wrote "Details concerning the operation of the Bank are unknown. No records have been preserved, and all of the principal parties to it either say nothing, or, are very general in their accounts." And Parkin stated that "The amount of specie paid in was never disclosed, but most of the stock was paid in the form of land owned by stockholders which consisted of 180 charter members." One reason for the fact that this source is relatively unknown is that few would suppose such an item to be in Chicago.

This unique document deserves a study in itself. The following cursory analysis of this ledger reveals that the 200 individuals subscribed for various numbers of shares (from 3,000 to 5) with the face value of from $150,000 to $50 and paid for

\footnote{Fielding, "Growth of the Church," p. 191.}

\footnote{Parkin, \textit{Conflict at Kirtland}, p. 215. The ledger does not bear out the statement that the stock was paid for by land.}
them in cash amounts varying from $4,887.00 paid in by Joseph Smith to $.52 by Alex Valier.

The grand totals eloquently reveal the inherent weakness of the project—200 persons subscribed to 79,420 shares worth at face value approximately $3,854,000 at $50 par value per share which was paid for with only $20,725 in specie. Heber C. Kimball, for example, subscribed to $50,000 worth of shares for only $15 in cash. Other important Mormons paid in correspondingly small sums: Brigham Young, $7.00; Lorenzo Snow, $7.97; Wilford Woodruff, $5.25; Erastus Snow, $5.25. A few others, however, were able to come up with larger amounts: Parley P. Pratt, $102.00; Hyrum Smith, $169.00; Vinson Knight, $262.00; Emma Smith, $315.00; Joseph Smith, Sr., $323.00; and W. J. Peterson, $785.00.

The Journal of the Senate of the State of Ohio contains some new and valuable information regarding the Mormon efforts to secure a charter for the Kirtland Safety Society Bank. Until now about all we knew about such an attempt was through Joseph Smith who recorded early in November 1836, that Elder Orson Hyde was sent "to Columbus with a petition to the legislature of Ohio, for an act of incorporation," which "because we were 'Mormons' the legislature raised some frivolous excuse on which they refused to grant us those banking privileges they so freely granted to others." Fielding, who used both The Journal of the Senate of the State of Ohio and The Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio for that period could find no further information about this application.5

Apparently the Mormons tried again to secure a charter, for on February 10, 1837, the following amendment to a bill pertaining to the regulation of banks in Ohio was presented to the Ohio Senate:

Mr. Medary moved to amend the bill by adding the following as an additional section.

Joseph Smith, Jr., Sidney Rigdon, Benjamin Adams, Nehemiah Allen, Benjamin Bissel, Horace Kingsbury, Newel K. Whitney, Warren A. Cowdery, Hiram Smith, Oliver Cowdery, H. A. Sharp, and their associates, are hereby made a body corporate, under the name of the Kirtland Safety Society

5Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 vols.: Introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City, 1902-12), 2:468.

5Fielding, Growth of the Church, pp. 162-206.
Bank, to be established in the town of Kirtland, in the county of Geauga, the capital stock of which, shall be three hundred thousand dollars; upon which question,

Mr. Medary called for the Yeas and Nays and they were ordered; when the same was taken and lost. Yeas 11, Nays 24. . . .

The Ohio Historical Society has two exceedingly rare promissory notes. The first, dated September 1, 1837, for $269.81 borrowed from the Bank of Geauga, Painesville, is signed by thirty-two men. Few extant documents bear so many signatures of so many important Mormons. Among the signers are Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, Brigham Young, Noah Packard, Josiah Butterfield, and Reynolds Cahoon. The failure of the Kirtland Bank undoubtedly occasioned the signing of this note.

The second promissory note signed by Hyrum Smith, dated Kirtland, January 30, 1838, is for $20.16 "due Lewis Robbins . . . to be paid in Land . . . in the State of Missouri in Caldwell Co.," is good evidence that Missouri lands served as surety for notes contracted in Ohio.

Of the many Kirtland Bank notes scattered throughout the country, some are located in the following repositories: The Dawes Memorial Library of Marietta College, (Marietta, Ohio) has a $10.00 bank note dated March 1, 1837, signed by J. Smith, Jr., cashier and S. Rigdon, President. Yale University Library’s Western Americana Collection has a $1.00 banknote made out to Orson Pratt or bearer and signed by Joseph Smith, Jr., cashier and Sidney Rigdon, President. The Boston Public Library has a $10.00 note, dated March 8, 1837, signed by Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and others. The Western Reserve Historical Society has one of the few complete sets of Kirtland Bank notes in denominations of one, two, three, five, ten, twenty, fifty, and one hundred dollars, all signed by various members of the Church, the majority bearing the names of Joseph Smith as cashier and Sidney Rigdon as president. Some, especially the three dollar ones, are overprinted so that Kirtland Safety Society Bank becomes the Kirtland Safe-

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9Journal of the Senate of the State of Ohio, (Columbus, 1837), pp. 365-366. See also the Painesville Telegraph, February 24, 1837, which reports on the Senate sessions.

10These notes are described in detail by Kenneth W. Duckett, Echoes (the Association of the Ohio Historical Society), 2 (January 1963), 1.
ty Society anti-Banking Co. The New York Public Library has a $1.00 note in its William Berrian Collection.

V. MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS

In the Chicago Historical Society is a certificate of ordination certifying that, "Sylvester B. Stoddard has been received in to this church . . . and has been ordained an elder . . . ," signed Joseph Smith, chairman, and F. G. Williams, clerk, Kirtland, Ohio, October 13, 1836. On the reverse side it is countersigned by Thomas Burdick, recording clerk. Stoddard later served in a bishopric in Nauvoo and as a missionary to Maine in 1844. He became embittered afterward, however, left the Church, and returned to Kirtland.

The Lake County Historical Society has various other important collections: census records, indexed cemetery records, genealogies and scrapbooks of Lake County families, and a large map collection. This society also has a deed regarding land which Joseph Smith sold to Samuel Whitney, Sr., dated April 10, 1837, Geauga County and signed by J. Smith, Jr., Emma Smith, Hyrum Smith, and V[inson] Knight.

Mr. D. W. Garber of Stockton, California, has a valuable collection of Jacob Myers papers. Myers was a millwright who erected mills for the Mormons in various places, including Ohio. Included in these papers (which cover the period 1816-1856) is a "Patriarchal Blessing of Jacob Myers by Joseph Smith, Sr., dated at Kirtland, September 13, 1835. Mr. Garber also has a Kirtland Safety Society Bank note, dated February 10, 1837, and signed by J. Smith, Jr., and S. Rigdon.

The Ohio State Library has a huge collection of miscellaneous cemetery, census, family, bible, church, and marriage records for three counties in the Kirtland area—Cuyahoga, Lake, and Portage—which was brought together by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress has a collection of fifteen maps of Ohio for the period


12Since this collection is west of the Mississippi, it is somewhat out of place here. I first learned of it, however, when Mr. Garber still lived in Perryville, Ohio, so I am including it.
1830-38 the study of which would be requisite to Mormon movements at that time.\textsuperscript{13}

There is one letter at the Ohio Historical Society which gives some indication as to how suspect the Mormons were at times as they traveled between their two centers in Ohio and Missouri. (Joseph Smith, for example, crossed Illinois enroute to Missouri in 1831, 1832, and 1834.) Our attempts to preach to the Indians was particularly suspect during the 1832 troubles in Illinois with the Sac and Fox Indians and their chief, Black Hawk.

In June 1832, Joseph Antrim of Vermillion County, Illinois, wrote to his uncle and aunt in Prible County, Ohio, about Black Hawk and the Mormons. In reference to the latter he wrote:

I will inform you that we have a new sort of people in our Country who call themselves mormonites the preach up that they righteous and they wicked should be separated & the were agoing to build a new Jerusalem away out in they plains meaning they grand frontier. \ldots It is suspected that there new Jerusalem is a fort & and the themselves are brittish spies the have large ironbound boxes that is supposed to be loaded with guns and ammunition and also coffins that is loaded with the same. \ldots The also tell the indians that the are the dissendant of the children of israel and that the shall be restored again that the lord will fight there battles for them. \ldots

The reference to “brittish spies” is, of course, occasioned by the fact that during the War of 1812 Black Hawk fought for the British.

VI. THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

There appears to be little about the Mormons in Ohio in the National Archives. One possible source would be in the land entry records of the General Land Office or of the Post Office Department. A letter from Richard S. Maxwell, assistant director of the Social and Economic Records Division stated, “In order to make an effective search of the records it would be necessary to have more information, such as the names of Federal agencies that may have been involved with the Mormons, names of persons who contacted the Government or

\textsuperscript{13}All students of this period of Mormon history should consult Edwin Scott Gaustad, \textit{Historical Atlas of Religion in America} (New York, 1962).
dates and subjects of events. Only a person thoroughly familiar with early Mormon history would be able to determine if our holding were pertinent to such a search."

There may also be some reference to the Mormons in the United States District or Circuit Court of Ohio records contained in the Federal Records Center in Chicago. (Correspondence to date, however, has failed to locate anything.)

VII. NEWSPAPERS

During the time the Mormons were in Ohio there were at least 188 newspapers published by Mormons and non-Mormons in more than 70 communities. Of these 57 were published in 27 communities within a 75-mile radius of Kirtland—mainly in the old Western Reserve. (These figures do not include whatever newspapers were published in adjacent Pennsylvania—only 40 miles east of Kirtland.) A rough breakdown by distance is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-10 miles</td>
<td>Kirtland, Chardon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 miles</td>
<td>Painesville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 miles</td>
<td>Jefferson, Mantua, Ravenna, Hudson, Cleveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50 miles</td>
<td>Lorain, Elyria, Medina, Cuyahoga Falls, Warren, Ashtabula, Conneaut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-70 miles</td>
<td>Sandusky, Huron, Milan, Norwalk, Wooster, Canton, Lisbon, Carrollton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-75 miles</td>
<td>Millersburg, New Philadelphia, Wellsville</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collectively this body of newspapers is a huge cache of primary sources. Since it is beyond the scope of this article to do much with these newspapers, I can only indicate to what extent they have been mined and suggest that there is yet much work to be done in Ohio newspapers. As the following table shows, Pancoast, Kent, and Parkin together cited only twenty of the more than fifty contemporary Ohio newspapers published within a seventy-five mile radius of Kirtland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEWSPAPER</th>
<th>NO. OF CITATIONS</th>
<th>YEARS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashtabula Journal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chardon Spectator</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1832-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati Advertiser</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland Daily Gazette</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland Herald</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland Liberalist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland Observer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1837</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VIII. ARTIFACTS

In the Western Reserve Historical Society Museum there is a small iron safe which is supposed to be the safe which was used by the Kirtland Safety Society while it was in existence in 1836 and 1837. This safe is made of iron, decorated with large black knobs, stands on four wheels and measures 25x24x29 inches. The only marking on the safe is on the door-knob—it reads DELANO PATENT, N.Y.

A Jesse Delano (1780-1867) began a hardware store in 1815 and went into the manufacturing of iron-chests about 1825. The Kirtland Safety Society could have ordered this safe directly from New York, but it is much more likely that they secured it in nearby Cleveland. The only proof that this safe is indeed that of the Kirtland Safety Society is on p. 49 of the museum’s “Museum Accession Book: Vol. 1, 1894-1924,” where it is recorded, “One iron safe once owned in Kirtland, by Joseph Smith, the Prophet, donated Dec. 8, 1900 by Mrs. Charles Morely, Cleveland.”

The same museum also has an oval shaped drop-leaf table of the Country Sheraton style (very fashionable at that time) which may have belonged to Joseph Smith in Kirtland. This was acquired by gift from Laurence H. Norton, 1941.

IX. VARIA, ESOTERICA, ETCETERA

This section is a potpourri of odds and ends which ought to be noted somewhere. The American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, Ohio, for example, has the following material regarding Professor Joshua Seixas who taught Hebrew in the Mormon “School of the Prophets” during 1836 in Kirtland. A three-page
typescript manuscript, "Joshua Seixas, Hebraist," by Rabbi D. de Sola Pool; an excerpt from a letter from N. Taylor Phillips to Mr. Robert S. Fletcher, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, dated September 20, 1933, regarding the former's published article on Seixas; and two pieces of correspondence between Lauritz G. Peterson of the LDS Church Historian's Office and Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern of Norfolk, Virginia, during May 1954.\(^\text{14}\)

As is generally well known, the famous Rev. Solomon Spaulding "Manuscript Found," or "Manuscript Story," which for a season was considered to have been the source of the Book of Mormon, (a theory now discredited by all serious-minded students) is located in the library of Oberlin College. (This pertains to Ohio only because the president of Oberlin College discovered the manuscript while on vacation in Hawaii in 1844 and brought it back to his college, and because Spaulding wrote it while living at Conneaut, Ohio, during the years 1810-12.)

Lorenzo Snow, fifth president of the Mormon Church, was a student in the 1830s at Oberlin College, and the office of the College Archivist has an alumni file on him, but it contains no primary source materials, only correspondence from the 1930s on.\(^\text{15}\)

The Library of Congress has a two-volume corrected typescript manuscript, William H. Whitsitt's "Sidney Rigdon, Real Founder of Mormonism, 1793-1876," which contains some pages pertinent to Ohio.

The drawings and photographs of the Kirtland Temple made in 1934 by the Department of Interior's Historic American Buildings Survey are also housed now in the Library of Congress. It is listed as HABS, measured drawings—17x28 inches, 22-25 Kirtland (Mormon) Temple, six sheets.\(^\text{16}\) The Library of the Department of the Interior itself has no documents on the Mormons in Ohio.

The original weathervane of the Nauvoo temple shaped in the form of a prone Angel Moroni, may have been in Cincin-


\(^{15}\)There is some information about both Lorenzo Snow and Joshua Seixas in Robert Samuel Fletcher's *A History of Oberlin College . . .*, (Oberlin, Ohio, 1943), pp. 222, 368-370.

\(^{16}\)Most of these drawings were published in *The Architectural Forum*, (March, 1936).
nati, Ohio, for over one hundred years. This vase cannot be completely authenticated, but there is considerable evidence that the original was somehow acquired by the Salem Evangelical and Reformed Church of Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1867. This badly damaged figure has been replaced and the older one was acquired by Nauvoo Restoration, Inc. in 1968 and is now at Nauvoo, Illinois.

The Popular Cultural Center of Bowling Green, Ohio, has materials relating to the Utah Gospel Mission in an anti-Mormon movement in the 1900s. The Ohio Historical Society has a Thomas L. Strong letter, May 1853, Pleasant View, Utah, to James S. Elliott in Ohio, relating mostly to girls, but also giving prices of agriculture products.

Though hardly falling within the geographical limits of this study, it should be noted that the Genealogical Society of Salt Lake City, Utah, has an enormous collection of materials on Ohio (it takes thirty-one inches of thinner than normal catalogue cards to list them), many of which are primary. There is little evidence that anyone studying the Mormons in Ohio has really utilized this trove. (Unaccountably, this society, which has teams of full-time microfilers roaming the world, has copied most of the county records of Ohio except those counties near Kirtland—Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Portage, and Trumbull. This anomaly is soon to be corrected.)

For a little comic relief, I would like to pass on the following. One of my correspondents advised me regarding the "Wyrick Holy Stones" discovered near Jackstown, Ohio, and currently at the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum, Coshocton, Ohio, and stating that "These fraudulent artifacts are believed to be authentic by the Mormons." These interesting stones are indeed on view in this museum. It seems, however, that they are fakes planted around 1860 in a desperate effort by someone to prove that the mound-building Indians of Ohio were in some way connected with the lost ten tribes of Israel. The allegation that Mormons believe them to be authentic is gratuitous.37

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37For a detailed account of the finding of these stones see E. O. Randall, "The Mound Builders and the Lost Tribes," Ohio Historical Quarterly 17 (April 1908), 208-218. Since the publication of the Book of Mormon, Mormons are usually credited with accepting any fact or fancy relating American Indians to the Old World. For a recent serious and related article see John H. Wittorf, "Joseph Smith and the Prehistoric Mound-Builders of Eastern North America," Newsletters and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology, (October 1970), 1-9.
X. NEGATIVE DOCUMENTATION

Among the many institutions which reported having nothing regarding the Mormons in Ohio were, rather surprisingly, the following sixteen. Except as mentioned above, there is apparently little or nothing in the National Archives. Furthermore, negative replies were received from the following institutions: Ohio Genealogical Society, Mansfield; Cleveland Public Library; The Shaker Historical Society, Shaker Heights, Ohio; Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland; Morely Library, Painesville, Ohio; Early Settlers Association, Cleveland; Ohio State University Libraries, Columbus; Ohio University, Athens; The State Library of Ohio, Columbus; Kent State University, Chardon; The Geauga County Historical Society, Burton (Kirtland is in this county); the Portage County Historical Society, Ravenna (Hiram is in this county); William L. Clements Library of Early Americana, University of Michigan; The American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.; The Archaeological Society of Ohio, Plain City; and the Smithsonian Institution.

*While this society has no primary sources, it has published a Pioneer and General History of Geauga County (Columbus, 1953) which does give some information about the Mormons in that area.*
Index
Volume XI, Nos. 1-4
Autumn 1970, Winter, Spring, and Summer 1971

AUTHORS

Bitton, Davis, "Kirtland as a Center of Missionary Activity, 1830-1838," 497, Summer 1971.
Breinholt, Floyd E., "A Note on 'Utah Ranch,'" 34, Autumn 1970.
ARTICLES

"Kirtland as a Center of Missionary Activity, 1830-1838," by Davis Bitton, 497, Summer 1971.
"A Note on 'Utah Ranch,'" by Floyd E. Breinholt, 34, Autumn 1970.

POETRY, FICTION, DRAMA, ART

"Utah Ranch," an oil painting by Floyd E. Breinholt, 33, Autumn 1970.

BOOK REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTES

Iconographs, by May Swenson, reviewed by Veneta Nielsen, 107, Autumn 1970.
It's You and Me, Lord! by Alan Gerald Cherry, reviewed by Reed N. Wilcox, 210, Winter 1971.
Succession in the Church, by Reed C. Durham, Jr., and Steven H. Heath, reviewed by Duane E. Jeffery, 207, Winter 1971.
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