

# RESTORATION HISTORY

DATE	EVENT	PLACE	REFERENCE
1950	First visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 1
1951	Second visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 2
1952	Third visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 3
1953	Fourth visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 4
1954	Fifth visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 5
1955	Sixth visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 6
1956	Seventh visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 7
1957	Eighth visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 8
1958	Ninth visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 9
1959	Tenth visit to the site for the purpose of the survey and the location of the site was determined.	East of the site	Page 10

## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CUMORAH-LAND

DATE	EVENT	PLACE	REFERENCE
Spring 1820	"First Vision"--the appearance of God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son, to Joseph in answer to prayer.	Sacred Grove, Manchester, New York	History of the Church, Vol.1, Chapter 1
21 September 1823 22 September 1823	Moroni visits Joseph Smith four times--told of Book written on Gold Plates, other things pertaining to Gospel. Visited again at Hill Cumorah and directed to return annually for four years.	Manchester, New York	History of the Church Vol.1, Chapter 2.  Pearl of Great Price--Joseph Smith 2.
22 September 1827	Moroni delivers plates to Joseph Smith.	Hill Cumorah	History of the Church Vol.1, Chapters 3-4
15 May 1829	Aaronic Priesthood conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery by John, the Baptist.	Susquehanna River Harmony, Pa.	History of the Church Vol.1, Chapter 5; D & C 13
June 1829	Vision to Three Witnesses	Fayette, Seneca County, N. Y.	History of the Church Vol.1 pp. 52-54; D&C 17
1829	Melchizedek Priesthood received under the hands of Peter, James and John.	Susquehanna River Harmony, Pa.	History of the Church Vol. 1 p. 40
6 April 1830	The Church Organized	Fayette, N. Y.	History of the Church Vol.1, Chapters 7-8; D&C 20 & 21



## A BOY'S PRAYER

I am a gnarled, old tree and even I am not sure of my exact age. I have stood for generations on a farm in Manchester, New York. My posterity stands tall and proud around me in a compact and beautiful grove. I have been a witness to many things in my life, but there is one experience I cannot forget.

It was spring or early summer in the year of eighteen hundred and eighteen that the Smith family moved onto my farm. There were nine children and I was instinctively drawn to them through my admiration for their love and kindness to each other. That is how I came to know the most unusual and extraordinary person I have ever seen. He was just a lad, but such a serious and intense youth for his tender years. He was tall for his age and gave the appearance of being a little awkward at times, but within his face were the contours and attributes of great character. His strong chin, sensitive mouth, and keen but gentle eyes, gave added depth to every reflection. The problems of the world fell heavily upon his shoulders, and he often would come to sit at my foot and lean against my trunk to rest or meditate. A mere boy--but one I will never forget--his name was Joseph Smith.

With each of Joseph's visits to my grove, my respect and admiration for him increased. A silent companionship grew between us and we soon became fast friends. As the spring days grew warmer his visits became more frequent. After helping his father and brothers in the fields and with the farm chores he would sometimes stop in the grove to rest and to think.

The foremost desire in Joseph's heart was to know truth. He had an unending thirst for spiritual and religious wisdom. Though his education was limited, he loved to read and found excitement with each new discovery he made in his quest for knowledge learned from his family's few, but carefully chosen books.

As his visits continued I came to understand the greatness of this young, but serious-minded boy.

One morning, after the family had lived in Manchester for about two years and this boy, Joseph, had passed his fourteenth birthday, I experienced the most unusual event of my long life: The sun arose that morning, warming the beautiful countryside, happily, for spring had come forth in her most becoming attire. The birds in my tree top were singing and chirping harmoniously. The squirrels and chipmunks, darting swiftly to and fro, seemed to sense something special about this morning and sometimes would stop short and listen, intently, as if waiting for something to happen. The beautiful wild flowers in full bloom marked the green countryside with vivid splashes of color, and cast their fragrance upon the gentle breeze which lazily stirred the air.

I looked often towards the farm house, not expecting, yet hoping, to see Joseph. Soon I saw him coming through the field in my direction. There was something different about him that morning. He was less carefree and more intent than I'd ever seen him before. He looked around cautiously before entering the grove. As he came near I was shaking with an inner excitement. A feeling that could not be explained, told me that something wonderful was about to happen.

I stood motionless as I watched, wishing to know the meaning of Joseph's excursion this morning. His eyes shone as if candles had been lighted from within.



As Joseph looked heavenward through my branches, I saw the perplexed look on his face. It was then I realized that he had come to the seclusion of my grove to pray. I trembled with the knowledge that I would be allowed to view such a sacred occasion. The troubled look on Joseph's face revealed his dilemma that he knew not how to pray aloud. After mustering all his courage, he knelt upon the grass and uttered his first prayer.

As he prayed, a dismal and depressing spirit enveloped the grove like a dark cloak. It centered upon Joseph and I watched, helplessly, as he was overpowered and thrown to the earth by the evil spirit. Compassion welled within me and I wished, desperately, for the power to save him from this destruction. I could do nothing. With his last strength he cried out for deliverance from that enemy.

At that moment I saw a pillar of light descending from the Heavens. The evil influence departed. A light so bright I could scarcely see, descended gradually, until it was nearly touching my branches. A warm feeling of peace surged through my being, and I drew my branches aside as the light entered the grove. The brightness penetrated, leaf by leaf, sending a tremor through each branch until every fiber tingled to the tips of my roots.

Within the light I saw two personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description--standing in the air above Joseph. As the light fell upon him, wonderment of what he saw drew him to his knees. The glory reflected in his face cannot be described. As they spoke I trembled and my pulse quickened at the sound of their voices--not harsh voices, neither loud voices, nevertheless calm voices that pierced me to the very center of my being.

There was a hushed stillness in the sacredness of the grove. The breeze was calmed and the birds, silent. It seemed as if the entire world was suspended in the presence of God.

One of them spoke, saying, "Joseph, this is my Beloved Son. Hear Him."

After Joseph had asked for spiritual knowledge, many great and glorious things were revealed to him. I heard Joseph converse with the Lord. As they were about to depart, with humility, the realization struck me; I, too, was standing before my Maker.

As the light faded, the impact of what I'd seen and heard left me shaken and weak. Slowly the world seemed to re-awake, but an air of sacredness and reverence remained within my grove. Pale, and with barely enough strength left to stand, Joseph arose to his feet. He leaned against my trunk for support, and I felt an inner strength within him he had not possessed before.

I had been a witness to a miraculous vision--the answer to a boy's prayer that would change the entire world. I know Joseph was chosen by the Lord, chosen to restore His Church and to place, again, upon this earth, God's greatest plan: To bring to pass the Immortality and Eternal Life of man.

---A Cumorah Legend  
Author Unknown

## THE HILL CUMORAH

---BY OLIVER COWDERY

By turning to . . . the Book of Mormon you will read Mormon's account of the last great struggle of his people as they were encamped round this Hill Cumorah . . . In this valley fell the remaining strength and pride of a once powerful people, the Nephites--once so highly favored of the Lord, but at that time in darkness, doomed to suffer extermination by the hand of their barbarous and uncivilized brethren. From the top of this hill, Mormon, with a few others, after the battle, gazed with horror upon the mangled remains of those who the day before, were filled with anxiety, hope, no doubt. A few fled to the south, who were hunted down by the victorious party, and all who would not deny the Savior and his religion, were put to death. Mormon himself, according to the record of his son Moroni, was also slain . . .

---BY ORSON PRATT

There is no spot on this wide world of ours, which is calculated to excite more vivid reflections, than the wonderful Hill Cumorah. There the history of one-half of our globe, reposed, for fourteen centuries, in profound unbroken silence: there, "the everlasting gospel," engraved, not on tablets of stone, but on plates of gold, awaited the voice of the heavenly angel to reveal the priceless treasure: there, buried in the holy archives of Cumorah's sacred hill, are plates of brass, plates of gold, undimmed by time; sacredly guarded as the temple of heaven: there shines the Urim and Thummim, the stones of light, the gems of immortality. There, repose in words of light, the hidden knowledge of ages past, the prophetic history of ages to come: there wisdom has selected her palace, and understanding her dwelling place, until "the spirit is poured out from on high," and "the skies pour down righteousness;" then, "the earth opens and brings forth salvation."

(Stories From Mormon History, Alma P. Burton, pp. 93-96.)



# CUMORAH

BY SISTER NELLIE ANN CLOVE

To my husband, Elder Grant Ivor Clove,  
for his unselfish love and the many years  
of happiness he has brought to my life.

Cumorah, hill of ancient time, if you could speak today--  
If you could tell your wondrous past--the world would homage pay.  
For years you slept in solitude unnoticed by the throng,  
But now your robes are velvet green; the Robin sings your song.

For centuries warmed by summer sun, caressed by winter's snow  
And gentle tread of many feet as people come and go.  
The scene of countless sorrows, fierce battles of the past;  
Such acts of vengeance once displayed forgotten now at last.

Those scars of battles, long gone by, caused you no lasting harm,  
The message that has been unearthed has added to your charm.  
For years you served as safety vault for truths engraved on gold;  
The value of their worth to man can never half be told.

Each evening as I walk the path that leads me to your crest  
My heart throbs with my love for you, Cumorah heaven blessed!  
I look at all your sister hills, they cannot share your fame  
For you were chosen anciently to proudly bear this name.

You knew the Prophet Mormon. How faithfully he served  
To abridge a sacred record that the truth might be preserved.  
Moroni left it in your care, obedient to the trust,  
And thus fulfilled the promise made to speak forth from the dust.

For now in glorious pageant we see the book unfold.  
The teachings of the Savior so beautifully are told.  
In days gone by these precious truths were seldom rightly priced,  
Now you proclaim to all the world that Jesus is the Christ.

# the Witnesses of the Book of Mormon Plates

## the Three Witnesses

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Age When Shown Plates	Occupation	Personal Data	Death
<b>OLIVER COWDERY</b>	3 Oct. 1806	Wells, Rutland County, Vermont	23 Years	School Teacher	Not too well to do—small stature, dignified but pleasant countenance. Baptized 15 May 1829. Excom- municated 12 April 1838. Baptized November 1848. Died in full fellow- ship. Never denied his testimony concerning the Book of Mormon.	3 March 1850 Richmond, Missouri
<b>DAVID WHITMER</b>	7 Jan. 1805	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	24 Years	Farmer	Strong build, of average height, dark eyes, quite handsome. Bap- tized June 1829. Excommunicated 13 April 1838. Never returned to the church. Never denied his testi- mony.	25 Jan. 1888 Richmond, Missouri
<b>MARTIN HARRIS</b>	18 May 1783	Easton, Albany County, New York	46 Years	Farmer	A prosperous farmer. Baptized 6 April 1830. Excommunicated last week in December 1837. Baptized in 7 November 1842. Baptized in Salt Lake City, Utah, 17 Septem- ber 1870. Never denied his testi- mony concerning the plates. Died in full fellowship.	10 July 1875 Clarkston, Utah



## MARTIN HARRIS' TESTIMONY

This interesting and faith-promoting account of a visit to Martin Harris, by William H. Homer, was published in the "Improvement Era" under date of March 1926. The author at the time was eighty-one years of age and residing in Utah County.

On August 30, 1870, Martin Harris arrived in Salt Lake City, in company with Elder Stevenson.

When Martin reached Salt Lake City, he visited Brigham Young at his home. They became reconciled and Martin Harris was invited to speak in the Tabernacle and he bore a faithful testimony. He went to Smithfield and later to Clarkston and made his home with his son, Martin Harris, Jr. In course of time he returned to full fellowship and communion with the Saints.

Early in July 1875, five years after he had come to Utah, Martin Harris was stricken with a kind of paralysis. It was the venerable witness' last illness, but through it all he remained true to the faith. At that time I and my small family lived in Clarkston. With other members of the Clarkston Ward, I called at the Harris home to relieve them in the care of the old man. We began to think that he had borne his last testimony. The last audible words he had spoken were something about the Book of Mormon, but we could not understand what it was. But, these were not the aged witness' last words.

The next day, July 10, 1875, marked the end. It was in the evening--milking time--and Martin Harris, Jr., and his wife, Nancy Homer Harris, had gone out to milk and do the evening chores. In the house with the stricken man were left my mother, Eliza Williamson Homer, and myself, who had had so interesting a day with Martin Harris at Kirtland. I stood by the bedside holding the patient's right hand and my mother at the foot of the bed. Martin had been unconscious for a number of days. When we first entered the room the old gentleman appeared to be sleeping. He soon woke up and asked for a drink of water. I put my arm under the old gentleman, raised him, and my mother held the glass to his lips. He drank freely, and then he looked up at me and recognized me. He said, "I know you. You are my friend." He said, "Yes, I did see the plates on which the Book of Mormon was written; I did see the angel; I did hear the voice of God; and I do know that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of God, holding the keys of the Holy Priesthood."

This was the end. Martin Harris, divinely chosen witness of the work of God, relaxed, gave up my hand. He lay back on his pillow, and just as the sun went down behind the Clarkston mountains, the spirit of Martin Harris passed on. When Martin Harris, Jr., and his wife returned to the house, they found that their father had passed away, but in passing, Martin Harris, favored of God, repeated an unrefutable testimony of the divine inspiration and the prophetic genius of the great Prophet, Joseph Smith. (Signed, William Harrison Homer.)



## OLIVER COWDERY'S TESTIMONY

The following interesting event in the life of Oliver Cowdery was related by Judge C. M. Nielson of Salt Lake City, and was published in the "Liahona" on August 30, 1910. It gives conclusive proof that Oliver Cowdery was faithful to his testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon, and that he fearlessly proclaimed that testimony during the years that he was out of the Church, from 1838 to 1848.

In the year 1884 I was traveling as a missionary to Minnesota. I had no money, no friends and didn't know where to go. I passed a large store called the Emporium, something like our Z.C.M.I. I was attracted by it, but didn't know why. There were about 25 teams hitched near the place, owned by farmers in town on business. Something told me to "Go over and see a certain man." The street was full of people and I wondered which man. Then one man seemed to me as big as three ordinary men. The spirit whispered: "Go over and speak to him!" I hesitated to approach this entire stranger, but the same voice came to me a second and a third time. Then I went.

He was a prosperous-looking farmer with a fine two-seated buggy, which he was ready to enter, and was a prominent man, I afterwards learned. Not knowing what else to say, I said: "How far are you going?" "Home; where are you going?" "I have no certain place, I am from Utah." "You are not a Mormon, are you?" he asked, anxiously. "Yes." "Then God bless you!" he replied, reaching out his arms and dropping the lines. "Get into this buggy as fast as you can. When we get home my wife will rejoice as I rejoice now; I will then explain all. But you are not one of these make-believers, are you?" "No, I'm a real live Mormon from Utah."

Reaching the home, he called, "Mother, here's a real live Mormon Elder." I'm afraid I didn't look very fine, as I had slept in a haystack the previous night. They took me by the hand and led me into the house. I was very hungry and begged for something to eat. After my hunger was satisfied, they called in their sons and daughters and we sat around the table. My new-found friend then said:

"Now, young man, you thought it strange how I acted when you spoke to me. When I get through you will realize the importance of your coming to us. When I was 21 years of age, I was working my father's farm in Michigan. I had worked hard on the farm that summer and decided to take a day off, so went to the city. Near the courthouse I saw a great many people assembling and others walking that way, so I went over to see what was up. There was a jam in the courtroom, but being young and strong, I pushed my way close up to the center, where I found the prosecuting attorney addressing the court and jury in a murder trial. The prosecuting attorney was Oliver Cowdery, and he was giving his opening address in behalf of the state. (After he was excommunicated from the Church, Oliver Cowdery studied law, practicing in Ohio, Wisconsin and then Michigan, where he was elected prosecuting attorney.) After Cowdery sat down the attorney representing the prisoner arose and with taunting sarcasm said: 'May it please the court and gentlemen of the jury, I see one Oliver Cowdery is going to reply to my argument. I wish he would tell us something about that golden Bible that Joe Smith dug out of the hill; something about the great fraud he perpetrated upon the American people whereby he gained thousands of dollars. Now he seems to know so much about this poor prisoner, I wonder if he has forgotten all about Joe Smith and his connection with him.' The speaker all the while sneering and pointing his finger



in scorn at Cowdery in the hope of making him ridiculous before the court and jury.

"Everybody present began to wonder if they had been guilty of making such a mistake as choosing a Mormon for prosecuting attorney. Even the judge on the bench began looking with suspicion and distrust at the prosecuting attorney. The prisoner and his attorney became elated at the effect of the speech. People began asking, 'Is he a Mormon?' Everybody wondered what Cowdery would say against such foul charges.

"Finally Oliver Cowdery arose, calm as a summer morning, I was within three feet of him. There was no hesitation, no fear, no anger in his voice, as he said: 'May it please the court, and gentlemen of the jury, my brother attorney on the other side has charged me with connection with Joseph Smith and the golden Bible. The responsibility has been placed upon me, and I cannot escape reply. Before God and man I dare not deny what I have said, and what my testimony contains as written and printed on the front page of the Book of Mormon. May it please your honor and gentlemen of the jury, this I say, I saw the angel and heard his voice--how can I deny it? It happened in the daytime when the sun was shining bright in the firmament; not in the night when I was asleep. That glorious messenger from heaven, dressed in white, standing above the ground, in a glory I have never seen anything to compare with--the sun insignificant in comparison--and this personage told us if we denied that testimony there is no forgiveness in this life nor in the world to come. Now how can I deny it--I dare not; I will not!'"

The man who related this to me was a prominent man in that state; he was a rich man, a man who has held offices of trust from the people--a man of respect, one when you look into his face you will not doubt. To strengthen his statement this man, who knew nothing of "Mormon" history, said Oliver Cowdery mentioned something he wanted me to explain--that the angel took back a part that was not translated. We know this and that part of the golden plates then withheld will be revealed at some future time.

"Since I heard Oliver Cowdery speak," continued my host, "I have not had peace for these many years. I want to know more about your people. I felt when I listened to Oliver Cowdery talking in the courtroom he was more than an ordinary man. If you can show us that you have what Oliver Cowdery testified to, we shall all be glad to receive it." (Liahona, August 30, 1910)

The return of Oliver Cowdery to the Church took place during the early part of October 1848, when he arrived at the small settlement of Kanesville, Iowa, accompanied by his wife and daughter. He was received in a friendly manner by the brethren who resided there and at a conference of the Church held at Kanesville on October 21st, he was invited to speak. His remarks were preserved for us by Bishop Reuben Miller, who was present at the meeting, and were later published in the "Millennial Star," vol 21, 544-546.

Following is a verbatim report: "Friends and Brethren--My name is Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery. In the early history of this Church I stood identified with her, and was one in her councils. True it is that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Not because I was better than the rest of mankind was I called; but, to fulfill the purposes of God, He called me to a high and holy calling.

"I wrote, with my own pen, the entire Book of Mormon ( save a few pages)



as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated it by the gift and power of God, by the means of the Urim and Thummim, or, as it is called by that book, 'holy interpreters.' I beheld with my eyes and handled with my hands the gold plates from which it was transcribed. I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the 'holy interpreters.' That book is true. Sidney Rigdon did not write it; Mr. Spaulding did not write it; I wrote it myself as it fell from the lips of the Prophet. It contains the Everlasting Gospel, and came forth to the children of men in fulfillment of the revelations of John where he says he saw an angel come with the Everlasting Gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. It contains the principles of salvation; and if you, my hearers, will walk by its light and obey its precepts, you will be saved with an everlasting salvation in the kingdoms of God on high. Brother Hyde has just said that it is very important that we keep and walk in the true channel, in order to avoid the sand-bars. This is true. The channel is here. The holy Priesthood is here.

"I was present with Joseph when an holy angel from God came down from heaven and conferred on us, or restored, the lesser or Aaronic Priesthood, and said to us, at the same time, that it should remain upon the earth while the earth stands.

"I was also present with Joseph when the higher or Melchizedek Priesthood was conferred by holy angels from on high. This Priesthood we then conferred on each other, by the will and commandment of God. This Priesthood, as was then declared, is also to remain upon the earth until the last remnant of time. This holy Priesthood, or authority, we then conferred upon many and is just as good and valid as though God had done it in person.

"I laid my hands upon that man--yes, I laid my right hand upon his head (pointing to Brother Hyde), and I conferred upon him this Priesthood now. He was also called through me, by the prayer of faith, an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ."

In the early part of November following, Elder Hyde called a High Council meeting in the log Tabernacle to consider the case of Oliver Cowdery; having been cut off by the voice of a High Council, it was thought that, if he was restored, he should be restored by the voice of a similar body. Before this body Brother Cowdery said:

"Brethren, for a number of years I have been separated from you. I now desire to come back. I wish to come humbly and to be one in your midst. I seek no station; I only wish to be identified with you. I am out of the Church. I am not a member of the Church, but I wish to become a member of it. I wish to come in at the door. I know the door. I have not come here to seek precedence. I come humbly and throw myself upon the decisions of this body, knowing as I do that its decisions are right and should be obeyed."

Brother George W. Harris, President of the Council, moved that Brother Cowdery be received. Considerable discussion took place in relation to a certain letter which, it was alleged, Brother Cowdery had written to David Whitmer. Brother Cowdery again rose and said:

"If there be any person that has aught against me, let him declare it. My coming back and humbly asking to become a member, through the door, covers the whole ground. I acknowledge this authority."

Brother Hyde moved that Brother Oliver Cowdery be received into the Church by baptism and that all old things be dropped and forgotten, which was seconded and carried unanimously. Soon afterwards he was re-baptized.



## DAVID WHITMER'S TESTIMONY

The following interviews, between David Whitmer, Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith, took place at Richmond, Missouri, on the 7th and 8th of September, 1878. Elders Pratt and Smith had gone east from Salt Lake City to visit the historical sites of the Church. On their way they stopped off at Richmond, Missouri, to interview David Whitmer, the last surviving witness of the Book of Mormon. Joseph F. Smith committed to writing the interview which is printed below, and which is to be found in the "Millennial Star," vol. 40, pp. 771-774.

Elder O.P. Do you remember what time you saw the plates?

D.W. It was in June, 1829--the latter part of the month, and the eight witnesses saw them, I think, the next day or the day after (i.e. one or two days after). Joseph showed them the plates himself, but the angel showed us (the three witnesses) the plates, as I suppose to fulfill the words of the book itself. Martin Harris was not with us at this time; he obtained a view of them afterwards (the same day). Joseph, Oliver and myself were together when I saw them. We not only saw the plates of the Book of Mormon but also the brass plates, the plates of the Book of Ether, the plates containing the records of the wickedness and secret combinations of the people of the world down to the time of their being engraved, and many other plates. The fact is, it was just as overshadowed by a light. It was not like the light of the sun nor like that of a fire, but more glorious and beautiful. It extended away round us, I cannot tell how far, but in the midst of this light about as far off as he sits (pointing to John C. Whitmer, sitting a few feet from him), there appeared as it were, a table with many records or plates upon it, besides the plates of the Book of Mormon, also the Sword of Laban, the Directors--i.e., the ball which Lehi had--and the Interpreters. I saw them just as plain as I see this bed (striking the bed beside him with his hand), and I heard the voice of the Lord, as distinctly as I ever heard anything in my life, declaring that the records of the plates of the Book of Mormon were translated by the gift and power of God.

Elder O.P. Did you see the angel at this time?

D.W. Yes; he stood before us. Our testimony as recorded in the Book of Mormon is strictly and absolutely true, just as it is there written. Before I had heard about him and the plates from persons who declared they knew he had them, and swore they would get them from him. When Oliver Cowdery went to Pennsylvania, he promised to write me what he should learn about these matters, which he did. He wrote me that Joseph had told him his (Oliver's) secret thoughts, and all he had meditated about going to see him, which no man on earth knew, as he supposed, but himself, and so he stopped to write for Joseph.

Soon after this, Joseph sent for me (D.W.) to come to Harmony to get him and Oliver and bring them to my father's house. I did not know what to do, I was pressed with my work. I had some 20 acres to plow, so I concluded I would finish plowing and then go. I got up one morning to go to work as usual and, on going to the field, found between five and seven acres of my ground had been plowed during the night.

I don't know who did it; but it was done just as I would have done it myself, and the plow was left standing in the furrow.

This enabled me to start sooner. When I arrived at Harmony, Joseph



and Oliver were coming toward me, and met me some distance from the house. Oliver told me that Joseph had informed him when I started from home, where I had stopped the first night, how I read the sign at the tavern, where I stopped the next night, etc., and that I would be there that day before dinner, and this was why they had come out to meet me; all of which was exactly as Joseph had told Oliver, at which I was greatly astonished.

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Nature gave man two ends--one to sit on and one to think with. A man's success or failure depends on the one he uses most.

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Bruce Barton:

For good or ill, your conversation is your advertisement. Every time you open your mouth you let men look into your mind.

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Goethe:

If you treat a man as he is, he will stay as he is, but if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be, and could be, he will become that bigger and better man.

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Most of us live our lives the way we watch television. Even though the program isn't as good as we would like it to be, we are too lazy to get up and change it.

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The most important of all the commandments of God is that one that you are having the most difficulty keeping today.

----Harold B. Lee

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# The Witnesses of the Book of Mormon Plates

## The Eight Witnesses

Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Age When Shown Plates	Occupation	Personal Data	Death
CHRISTIAN WHITMER	18 Jan. 1798	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	31 Years	Shoemaker	Baptized, 11 April 1830. He was <u>always</u> faithful to the Church.	27 Nov. 1835 Clay County, Mo.
JACOB WHITMER	27 Jan. 1800	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	29 Years	Shoemaker	Baptized, 11 April 1830. He apostatized in 1838, never returning to the Church. He never denied his testimony of the plates.	21 April 1856 Richmond, Missouri
PETER WHITMER, JR.	27 Sept. 1809	Fayette, New York	19 Years	Tailor Farmer	Baptized, June, 1829. He remained active in the Church and was a very zealous friend of the Prophet.	22 Sept. 1836 Liberty Clay County, Mo.
JOHN WHITMER	27 Aug. 1802	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	26 Years	Farmer	Baptized, June, 1829. John was excommunicated 10 March 1838. He never returned to the Church, but never denied his testimony.	11 July 1878 Far West, Missouri
HYRUM PAGE	1800	Vermont	29 Years	Physician Farmer	Baptized, 11 April 1830. He studied medicine when he was young, married one of the Whitmer daughters. Left the Church in 1838, but never denied his testimony.	12 Aug. 1852 Excelsior Springs, Mo.
JOSEPH SMITH, SR.	12 July 1771	Topsfield, Essex County, Massachusetts	57 Years	Farmer	Baptized, 6 April 1830. He was the father of eleven children, had to struggle to make ends meet and provide for his family. He remained faithful all of his life.	14 Sept. 1840 Nauvoo, Illinois
HYRUM SMITH	9 Feb. 1800	Tunbridge, Vermont	29 Years	Farmer	Baptized, June, 1829. Hyrum was very similar in build to the Prophet. He was a man even the most slanderous of men could not find fault with, and he always remained faithful to the Church.	27 June 1844 Carthage, Illinois
SAMUEL H. SMITH	13 Mar. 1808	Tunbridge, Vermont	21 Years	Farmer	Baptized, 15 May, 1829. He was always faithful to the Prophet, and he became the Church's first missionary.	30 July 1844 Nauvoo, Illinois



## HISTORICAL AND SCRIPTURAL EVENTS SURROUNDING THE RESTORATION OF THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

The Melchizedek Priesthood with its keys and powers was restored by Peter, James and John to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery approximately June of 1829. The following are scriptural and historical references about this event.

1. When John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph and Oliver he promised that the Priesthood of Melchizedek would be conferred upon them.

He said this Aaronic Priesthood had not the power of laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but that this should be conferred on us hereafter; . . . The messenger who visited us on this occasion, . . . said that. . . he acted under the direction of Peter, James and John who held the keys of the Priesthood of Melchizedek which Priesthood he said would in due time be conferred on us, . . .<sup>1</sup>

2. A footnote reference in the History of the Church summarizes some of these points surrounding the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood:

Restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood. -- The promise to confer upon Joseph and Oliver the Melchizedek Priesthood was fulfilled; but as there is no definite account of the event in the history of the Prophet Joseph, or, for matter of that, in any of our annals, the evidences of the fact of their ordination to the higher or Melchizedek Priesthood promised them by John the Baptist are presented now, together with a consideration of the place where, and the time when the great event occurred.

The Prophet Joseph, in a communication to the Church, under date of September 6, 1842, makes undoubted allusion to the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood in the course of an ecstatic review of the great things God had revealed to him. He said: "And again, what do we hear? Glad tidings from Cumorah. Moroni, an angel from heaven, declaring the fulfilment of the prophets--the book to be revealed. A voice of the Lord in the wilderness of Fayette, Seneca county, declaring the fulfilment of the prophets--the book to be revealed. A voice of the Lord in the wilderness of Fayette, Seneca county, declaring the three witnesses to bear record of the book. The voice of Michael on the banks of Susquehanna, detecting the devil when he appeared as an angel of light. The voice of Peter, James and John in the wilderness between Harmony, Susquehanna county, and Colesville, Broome County, on the Susquehanna river, declaring themselves as possessing the keys of the kingdom, and of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times." (Doctrine and Covenants, sec. cxxviii: 20.)

In one of the early revelations given to the Prophet Joseph, the Lord makes most direct reference to the restoration of the higher Priesthood through the ministration of Peter, James and John. The

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1. History of the Church, vol. 1, pp. 39-40.



subject matter of the revelation is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and in the course of it the Lord promises to "drink of the fruit of the vine" with his servants on earth to whom the revelation is addressed; "and with Moroni, \* \* \* and also Michael, or Adam, the father of all, \* \* \* and also with Peter, and James and John, whom I have sent unto you, by whom I have ordained you and confirmed you to be Apostles, and special witnesses of my name, and bear the keys of your ministry, and of the same things which I revealed unto them; unto whom I have committed the keys of my kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel for the last times; and for the fulness of times." (Doctrine and Covenants, sec. xxvii). This revelation was given some time early in August, 1830, but only the first four verses were written at that time. The rest of it was written in September of that year. (See chapter xi of this volume). These two allusions -- the one by the Prophet and the other by the Lord -- to the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored in accordance with the promise of John the Baptist when conferring the Aaronic Priesthood, but they make it possible to fix upon the place where, and approximately the time when, the event occurred. Undoubtedly the place where the ordination was performed was on the banks of the Susquehanna River, in the wilderness between Colesville, in Broome county, New York, and Harmony, in Susquehanna county, Pennsylvania; for it is there the Prophet says the voice of Peter, James and John was heard declaring themselves as "possessing the keys of the kingdom, and of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times;" for which appearing and declaration there would be no other occasion than the ordination of Oliver and Joseph to the Melchizedek Priesthood in fulfilment of the promises made by John the Baptist. The time at which the ordination took place was evidently between the 15th of May, 1829, and August, 1830. The last named date is the one under which the Lord so definitely referred to the circumstance of having sent Peter, James and John to ordain Joseph and others to be Apostles, even special witnesses of His name, and unto whom He had committed the keys of the kingdom. Hence the time of the ordination must have been between those two dates.

From information contained in other revelations, however, this period within which the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored may be considerably reduced. In April, 1830, a revelation was given concerning the organization and government of the Church and in that revelation the Lord said: "Which commandments (i.e. to organize the Church) were given to Joseph Smith, Jr., who was called of God and ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ to be the first elder of this Church; and to Oliver Cowdery, who was also called of God, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the second elder of this Church, and ordained under his hand;" (Doctrine and Covenants, sec. xx: 2,3). This allusion to the ordination of these men to the apostleship reduces the time of their ordination to the period between the 15th of May, 1829, and April 6, 1830.

But the time within which the ordination took place may be still further reduced. In a revelation bearing the date of June, 1829, making known the calling of the Twelve Apostles in these last days, and addressed to Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, the Lord said: "I speak unto you, even as unto Paul mine Apostle, for you are called even with that same calling with which he was called." As this could scarcely be said of men who had not been ordained to the same holy apostleship as that held by Paul, and consequently to the Melchizedek Priesthood, the conclusion is reasonable that the ordination promised by John the Baptist, doubtless occurred some time between May 15, 1829 and the expiration of the month of June of that same year.



That there was a distinct administration of angels in the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood is sustained by the testimony of Oliver Cowdery. On the occasion of his returning to the Church at Kanesville, Iowa, in the fall of 1848, after an absence of eleven years from the body of the Saints, in the course of the public address which he then delivered, he said: "I was present with Joseph when an holy angel from God came down from heaven and conferred on us, or restored, the lesser or Aaronic Priesthood, and said to us, at the same time, that it should remain upon the earth while the earth stands. I was also present with Joseph when the higher or Melchizedek Priesthood was conferred by the holy angel from on high. This Priesthood, we then conferred on each other by the will and commandment of God." The authority for the foregoing statement is the report of Bishop Rueben Miller, who was present on the occasion of Oliver Cowdery's delivering the address from which the above is quoted. Bishop Miller's notes of Cowdery's remarks were published in the Deseret News on the 13th of April, 1859. It is to be observed that Oliver Cowdery, in this quotation, is represented as saying with reference to the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, that it was by the "holy angel," whereas, according to the statement of the Prophet, that Priesthood was restored by three angels -- Peter, James and John. The discrepancy may arise from imperfect recording of Oliver's language. In a signed statement which Oliver Cowdery gave to Samuel W. Richards, under date of January 13, 1849 -- the statement has been published a number of times in our Church periodicals -- being about two months and a half after delivering the address reported by Bishop Miller, he said: "John the Baptist, holding the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood; Peter, James and John, holding the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood, have also ministered for those who shall be heirs of salvation, and with these administrations ordained men to the same Priesthood. These Priesthoods, with their authority, are now, and must continue to be in the body of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. \* \* \* Accept assurance, dear brother, of the unfeigned prayer of him who, in connection with Joseph, the Seer, was blessed with the above administrations."

(Signed) Oliver Cowdery.<sup>2</sup>

A blessing given to Oliver Cowdery by Joseph the Prophet also confirms this event.

On the 18th day of December, 1833, when the Prophet blessed his father and ordained him to the Patriarchal Priesthood, he also blessed a number of others, among whom was Oliver Cowdery. After pronouncing Oliver's blessing, the Prophet said:

"These blessings shall come upon him (Oliver) according to the blessings of the Prophecy of Joseph in ancient days, which he said should come upon the seer of the last days and the scribe that should sit with him, and that should be ordained with him, by the hands of the angel, unto the lesser priesthood, and after receiving the holy priesthood under the hands of those who had been held in reserve for a long season, even those who received it under the hands of the Messiah, while he should dwell in the flesh upon the earth, and should receive the blessings with him, even the seer of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saith he, even Joseph of old."<sup>3</sup>

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2. History of the Church, vol. 1, pp. 40-42, footnote.

3. Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 3, p. 101.

. . . We have not, unfortunately, any account so definite, of the reception by Joseph and Oliver, of the Melchizedek Priesthood as we have the confirmation of the Aaronic Priesthood. But we have positive information and knowledge that they did receive this Priesthood at the hands of Peter, James and John, to whom the keys and power thereof were committed by the Lord Jesus Christ, and who were commissioned to restore it to the earth in the dispensation of the fulness of times. We cannot fix the exact date when this Priesthood was restored, but it occurred some time between the 15th of May, 1829, and the 6th of April, 1830. We can approximate to within a few months of the exact time, but no further, from any of the records of the Church. . . which great event occurred, without doubt, between May and July, 1829.<sup>4</sup>

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4. Joseh F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine, pp. 193-194, 196.

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#### ESTIMATE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Of all the American religious books of the nineteenth century it seems probable that the Book of Mormon was the most powerful. It reached perhaps only one percent of the people of the United States, but it affected this one percent so powerfully and lastingly that all the people of the United States have been affected, especially by its contribution to the opening up of one of our great frontiers. (New York Times, Late City Edition, 5 November 1937, p. 3.)

---Henry A. Wallace, former secretary of Agriculture for the United States

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The probability of life originating from accident is comparable to the probability of the unabridged dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing shop.

---Professor Edwin Conklin, Princeton University

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There are those among us who are trying to serve the Lord without offending the devil.

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Happiness is like Jam -- You can't spread even a little without getting some on yourself.



APRIL 6, 1830:  
THE DAY THE CHURCH  
WAS ORGANIZED

BY DOYLE L. GREEN  
(ENSIGN, JANUARY, 1971)

It was the sixth day of April in the year of our Lord 1830.

The place was a log farm home belonging to Peter Whitmer, Sr., in Fayette, Seneca County, New York.

The event: the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation.

The organizing of just any church may or may not be an important event, for many dozens of churches have made their appearance in the United States over the last century and a half, but the reestablishment and formal organization of God's true church upon the earth is a happening of such vital significance and vast meaning that it should excite the interest of every human being in this day and time.

Almost anyone who has a desire can organize a church, and if he fills the requirements, he could have the church legally recognized. But it is one thing to have a church recognized by the laws of the land and something else to have it recognized by God as well. And if it is to be sanctioned and sanctified by God, it must be His church, organized under his direction.

Amos, the prophet of old, said: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7.) And the apostle Paul, writing to the the Hebrews, declared: "... no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." (Heb. 5:4.)

The Lord had revealed His will to a young prophet, and he had called him as he did Aaron and other prophets down through the history of the world. This young prophet, under the direction of the Lord, presided over and conducted the events of that day in April 1830. His name was Joseph Smith, Jr. He was but twenty-four years of age. For ten years previous the Lord had been preparing him for the role he was now fulfilling.

As a boy of fourteen, Joseph, confused as to which church he should join, earnestly sought guidance through prayer, and God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ appeared to him in a vision, telling him to join none of the churches, "for they were all wrong; . . . that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; . . . that: 'they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.'" (Joseph Smith 2:19.)

Word that the Lord had spoken to a fourteen-year-old boy was received with much excitement, but little tolerance, by the people of western New York. Small wonder. Such a thing was unprecedented. God had not revealed

himself to the world for many generations; yea, centuries. It was popularly believed that the heavens were closed.

Yet those who knew the young man well were impressed. Joseph was honest and sincere, devout and intelligent. He had been honestly seeking the true church of God. The large number of so-called Christian sects and the extreme diversity of their teachings demonstrated the confusion that existed in the religious world. Where was the truth? Was it illogical to think that a loving Father who had guided his children through the dispensations would again speak to man?

Four years passed, and then young Joseph was visited by another heavenly messenger, who called himself Moroni and who told him that God had an important work for him to do. Deposited in a nearby hill were some gold plates that contained the fullness of the everlasting gospel. His was to be the glorious privilege of translating the characters from the plates and being the instrument in God's hands in restoring the gospel and reorganizing the true church.

Going to the nearby hill, as instructed by Moroni, Joseph found the plates in a stone box, protected from the elements of centuries by a rounded stone lid that covered them.

While attempting to remove the treasure, Joseph was informed that the time had not yet come for him to take the plates but that he must return each year for four years to receive instructions, and thereby he was taught "how and in what manner his (God's) kingdom was to be conducted in the last days." (Joseph Smith 2:53-54.)

At length Joseph received the plates, and on April 7, 1829, work was started in earnest on the translation of the writing on the plates, with a young schoolteacher named Oliver Cowdery acting as scribe. Less than three months later the monumental task of translation was complete, and the first edition of the publication called the Book of Mormon came from the press in the early spring of 1830.

During the course of translation, whenever a question arose, the two young men would inquire of the Lord and thereby receive much guidance and information. Many passages, for example, declared that baptism was essential to salvation. This they also knew from reading the Bible; yet, neither had been baptized. When they asked of the Lord, a messenger from heaven, who said his name was John -- called John the Baptist -- laid his hands on their heads and conferred the Aaronic Priesthood upon them and commanded them to baptize each other.

Additional enlightenment and authority, including the Melchizedek Priesthood, were received as needed for the progress of the work.

Early in April 1830 the young prophet received the revelation that has become section 20 of the book called the Doctrine and Covenants. It is often referred to as a "revelation on Church organization and government." Of this, the Prophet Joseph wrote: "We obtained of him (Jesus Christ) the following, by the spirit of prophecy and revelation; which not only gave us much information, but also pointed out to us the precise day upon which, according to his will and commandment, we should proceed to organize his Church once more here upon the earth."



The first verse of the revelation reads: "The rise of the Church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh, it being regularly organized and established agreeable to the laws of the country, by the will and commandments of God, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April."

One cannot study this revelation without being tremendously impressed with the knowledge and understanding the Lord of heaven poured out upon his servant concerning the matters vital to the salvation of man and the reestablishing of the kingdom of God upon the earth. In part, at least it seemed to be a reaffirmation and reemphasis of knowledge and guidance that the Lord had previously given young Joseph.

Among the precious truths and instructions received in this revelation were the following:

1. God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ do exist. God is infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, the framer of heaven and earth and all things that are in them.
2. Man is made in the image and likeness of God.
3. The living and true God is the only being man should worship.
4. The Holy Ghost bears record of the Father and the Son.
5. Man became sensuous and devilish by transgressing the laws of God.
6. God truly loves his children.
7. God gave his Only Begotten Son so "as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved." (D&C 20:25.)
8. God established for His children the principle of repentance for the remission of their sins.
9. After they have truly repented of their sins, all men should be baptized. (The prayer to be used in baptizing is given.)
10. A child must reach "the years of accountability before God" and be capable of repentance before he is baptized.
11. Those who have been baptized should be confirmed members of the Church by the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost by those who have authority.
12. A person must be properly called and ordained by one having authority to officiate in the ordinances of the Church.
13. God truly does communicate with his prophets and sends messengers to administer to them.
14. The Book of Mormon was revealed and translated by divine power.
15. The Book of Mormon contains a record of the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

16. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon proved to the world "that the holy scriptures are true, and that God does inspire men and call them to his holy work in this age and generation, as well as in the generations of old; thereby showing that he is the same God yesterday, today, and forever." (D&C 20:11-12.)

17. All those who believe and have faith and work righteousness will gain eternal life.

18. The practice of common consent is to be followed in the Church.

19. Duties of elders, priests, teachers, deacons, and members of the Church are outlined.

20. The importance of the sacrament in remembrance of the Lord Jesus is stressed.

21. The manner in which the sacrament should be administered and the prayers to be used are given.

Almost a year before, in June 1829, the Lord had outlined to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the procedures to be followed in organizing the Church, but He instructed them to wait for the proper time. Joseph Smith's "History of the Church" reads "... for we had not long been engaged in solemn and fervent prayer, when the word of the Lord came unto us in the chamber, commanding us that I should ordain Oliver Cowdery to be an elder in The Church of Jesus Christ; and that he should also ordain me to the same office; and then to ordain others, as it should be made known unto us from time to time. We were, however, commanded to defer our ordination until such time as it should be practicable to have our brethren, who had been and who should be baptized assembled together, when we must have their sanction to ... ordain each other, and have them decide by vote whether they were willing to accept us as spiritual teachers or not; when also we were commanded to bless bread and break it with them, and to take wine, bless it, and drink it with them; afterward proceed to ordain each other according to commandment; then call out such men as the Spirit should dictate, and ordain them; and then attend to the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, upon all those whom we had previously baptized, doing all things in the name of the Lord." (D&C 1:60-61.)

The appointed hour finally arrived. At the meeting were four other men, in addition to Joseph and Oliver, who had been selected to become incorporators of the Church, "agreeable to the laws of our country." (D&C 21:1.) They are listed in the "History of the Church" as Hyrum and Samuel H. Smith, brothers of Joseph, and David and Peter Whitmer, Jr., sons of the man who had opened his home for the organization meeting. All had previously been baptized.

In addition, there were a "few" friends who had been invited to attend, perhaps not more than thirty altogether. Among these were the Prophet's father, Joseph Smith, Sr., and his beloved mother, Lucy Mack Smith. Both had believed his story and had encouraged him in the work from the beginning.

No original minutes are available of the proceedings of the day, and there is perhaps a question about the exact order in which some of the events occurred, but there is agreement on what transpired.



We picture the young prophet calling the meeting to order, outlining the purposes for it, and inviting those assembled to join in solemn prayer to our Heavenly Father, thanking Him that He had seen fit to reestablish His church upon the earth and asking His blessings upon those assembled and the events of the day. One of the first orders of business, bringing into play the principle of common consent, was to ask those participating if they desired to have the church organized. To this they consented by unanimous vote. They were asked if they could sustain Joseph Smith, Jr., and Oliver Cowdery as the presiding officers of the Church. To this they also responded by unanimous vote. Joseph then proceeded to ordain Oliver an elder in the Church, and Oliver in turn ordained Joseph to that office. The sacrament of the Lord's supper was administered to those who had previously been baptized. As far as can be determined, this was the first time this holy ordinance had been performed by the Lord's chosen servants in this dispensation.

Sometime during the day baptisms were held. These ordinances may have been performed in nearby Seneca Lake, although this is not certain. The record states that "we then laid our hands on each individual member of the Church present, that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and be confirmed members of the Church of Christ." (DHC 1:78.) The Prophet also wrote: "Several persons who had attended the above meeting, became convinced of the truth and came forward shortly after, and were received into the Church; among the rest, my own father and mother were baptized, to my great joy and consolation. . . ." (DHC 1:79.)

Of this the mother of the Prophet writes: ". . . Joseph stood upon the shore, and taking his father by the hand, he exclaimed, with tears of joy, 'Praise to my God! that I have lived to see my own father baptized into the true Church of Jesus Christ!'" (Lucy Mack Smith, "History of Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), p. 168.)

Following the confirmations, "the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us to a very great degree -- some prophesied, whilst we all praised the Lord, and rejoiced exceedingly." (DHC 1:78.)

Another impressive event of the day was the receiving of a revelation by the Prophet Joseph Smith, which has become the twenty-first section of the Doctrine and Covenants. In this revelation the Lord manifested His acceptance of the Church and his recognition of those who were called to be its presiding officers.

The revelation reads: "Behold, there shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou (Joseph Smith) shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ,

"Being inspired of the Holy Ghost to lay the foundation thereof, and to build it up unto the most holy faith.

"Which church was organized and established in the year of your Lord eighteen hundred and thirty, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April.

"Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;



"For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.

"For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory.

"For thus saith the Lord God; Him have I inspired to move the cause of Zion in mighty power for good, and his diligence I know, and his prayers I have heard.

"Yea, his weeping for Zion I have seen, and I will cause that he shall mourn for her no longer; for his days of rejoicing are come unto the remission of his sins, and the manifestations of my blessings upon his works.

"For, behold, I will bless all those who labor in my vineyard with a mighty blessing, and they shall believe on his words, which are given him through me by the Comforter, which manifesteth that Jesus was crucified by sinful men for the sins of the world, yea, for the remission of sins unto the contrite heart.

"Wherefore it behooveth me that he should be ordained by you, Oliver Cowdery mine apostle;

"This being an ordinance unto you, that you are an elder under his hand, he being the first unto you, that you might be an elder unto this church of Christ, bearing my name --

"And the first preacher of this church unto the church, and before the world, yea, before the Gentiles; yea, and thus saith the Lord God, lo, lo! to the Jews also. Amen." (D&C 21.)

The Prophet further records: "We now proceeded to call out and ordain some others of the brethren to different offices of the Priesthood according as the Spirit manifested unto us; and after a happy time spent in witnessing and feeling for ourselves the powers and blessings of the Holy Ghost, through the grace of God bestowed upon us, we dismissed with the pleasing knowledge that we were now individually members of, and acknowledged of God, 'The Church of Jesus Christ,' organized in accordance with commandments and revelations given by Him to ourselves in these lastdays, as well as according to the order of the Church as recorded in the New Testament." (DHC 1:79.)

More than 140 years have passed since that April day in 1830. The Church, which began so humbly with six members has grown until it now has a membership of more than three million. The faithful of the Church bear testimony of the divinity of the work and agree with that which was written of Joseph Smith soon after his martyrdom on June 17, 1844:

"Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it . . ." (D&C 135:3.)

# EXCERPTS FROM THE HOUSE WHERE THE CHURCH WAS ORGANIZED

BY DR. RICHARD LLOYD ANDERSON

ERA, APRIL 1970

On April 6, 1830, a day that had been previously appointed by revelation as the day for organization, six young men gathered in the one-and-a-half story log house of Peter Whitmer, Sr., in Fayette, New York, to meet the numerical requirements of the state in organizing a church. Present were 24-year-old Joseph Smith; Oliver Cowdery, 23; Samuel H. Smith, 22; Hyrum Smith, 30; David Whitmer, 25; and Peter Whitmer, Jr., 20. By September membership was 30,000; 60,000 in 1850; 80,000 in 1860; 110,000 in 1870; 160,000 in 1880; 205,000 in 1890; 268,000 in 1900; 613,000 in 1925; 1.1 million in 1950; and in 1970 it is near 3 million. However, numerical growth alone is an inadequate index of the great truths, programs, influence, and accomplishments of the Church and its members that have blessed mankind since April 6, 1830. The day was an important one--and the events of it will forever be cherished in the hearts of millions of persons as "the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased....." (D&C 1:30)

Under the leadership of Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve and the direction of Elder Marion D. Hanks, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, the Church Information Service has sponsored a careful reinvestigation of the houses on the farm of Peter Whitmer, Sr., where the Church was organized. One may now conclude with assurance that the present home on the Whitmer property is not the place of Church organization.

A detailed study of the home that was Church headquarters in the founding years is of no small value. History of eternal significance was made in or near that house: the completion of Book of Mormon translation; the appearance of the angel displaying plates to the three witnesses; the first successful missionary work and resulting baptisms; the formal organization of the Church April 6, 1830; and the reception by the Prophet of almost two dozen revelations. To research the Whitmer home is to relive modern miracles.

Persons present during those events never forgot them; hence, their vivid recollections are a main source for incidental descriptions of the home. For example, Sidney Rigdon looked back upon a particular New York meeting: "I recollect in the year 1830, I met the whole church of Christ in a little old log house about 20 feet square, near Waterloo, New York....."

Orson Pratt's earliest known comments furnish simple descriptions: "In one small room of a log house, nearly all the Latter-day Saints, (east of Ohio) were collected together."

A reporter who visited with "members of the family" (but not David) wrote, "the house of the senior Whitmer was a primitive and poorly designed structure..." The present house on the Whitmer property is certainly not a "primitive structure."

Where did Peter Whitmer's house stand? Recorded in Bishop Joseph S. Black's notebook: "Sept. 28th, 5:20. I am now sitting on a rotten log, which



once formed part of the Whitmer house, in which the church was organized. It was a double log house, 1 1/2 story and is now torn down, and some of the logs lie by the well, which is a little northwest from the house and is good yet. They have built a new house a little to the northeast of the old location on a little higher ground. The place where the old house stood is now covered with beautiful clover."

It is now possible to complete an interior description. A "one and one-half story log house" obviously had space upstairs. In one of his most detailed interviews, David Whitmer related a story about the Prophet's translation of the Book of Mormon to show the need of constant humility. Joseph was out of patience with Emma on a household matter. David related: "Oliver and I went upstairs, and Joseph came up soon after to continue the translation, but he could not do anything." Only after "he went downstairs, out into the orchard" to pray, and then made reconciliation with his wife, could he continue the translation. A story of great spiritual significance, it incidentally describes the Book of Mormon translation as going on in the upper story.

A remarkable Latter-day Saint source does the same. In 1829 Sarah Conrad was an unmarried housekeeper in the Whitmer home and was converted through watching the unusual process of translation. Oliver B. Huntington met her at an old folks outing in 1897 and recorded her story in his diary:

"I conversed with one old lady 88 years old who lived with David Whitmer when Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were translating the Book of Mormon in the upper room of the house, and she, only a girl, saw them come down from the translating room several times, when they looked so exceedingly white and strange that she inquired of Mrs. Whitmer the cause of their unusual appearance..."

Obviously the spiritual power of the inspired servants of God was what bewildered 18-year-old Sarah and impelled her to investigate. But once again an occupant of the household fixes "the translating room" as an "upper room of the house." Sarah Conrad Bunnell stressed both points as she told the same story to her granddaughter, Pearl Bunnell Newell, who at 86 vividly remembers her grandmother's description: "And she said they would go up into the attic, and they would stay all day. When they came down, they looked more like heavenly beings than they did just ordinary men."

One main question concerning Father Whitmer's house has been raised but not answered -- its precise location. In haying operations equipment ran over and uncovered part of the foundation of a small building: "So my son and I completed uncovering it, and we took the measurements. It was 20 feet wide and 30 feet long."

These stones were subsequently removed in an attempt to preserve them, destroying the markers of the precise location pointed out by Jenson to Giles and by Giles to the caretakers of this property. However, Irvin T. Nelson, Church landscape architect, became interested in the knowledge of William Lee Powell, who returned and identified the location of the stone foundation. After his markers were removed to facilitate farming operations, the Church Information Service authorized another trip this past summer for Brother Powell, who relocated the site of the rock foundation.

The Church Information Service also sought to obtain any knowledge that archaeology might throw on the original Peter Whitmer home. Dale L. Berge, BYU faculty member with considerable experience in excavating Mormon



homes in Nauvoo, brought a small crew to the Whitmer site in late summer of 1969. Other foundation stones were found on the site, together with remnants of human activity. These were confined to a location "approximately thirty by forty feet and nearly in the same area pointed out by Mr. Powell. Professor Berge found that objects, "including cobble stones, dramatically disappeared" as trenches moved away from the supposed cabin site. Therefore he concluded:

"Some type of structure must have occupied this location. If it had been a barn, corral, corn crib, tool shed, or any other type of farm structure, one would expect a completely different assemblage of artifacts than was unearthed. We found bottle glass, glass dishes, porcelain, ironstone, shell cartridges, drainage tile, square nails, and coal. All of these artifacts reflect a structure designed for domestic use."

When the tourist arrives at the Whitmer property today, he sees not the rustic house in which the Church was organized, but a white and columned Greek Revival home, which contains exhibits portraying the founding revelations of the Church. Obviously historic in its own right, this house brings inevitable questions concerning its date of construction.

One precise historical tool fixes 1852 as the latest date possible for the present home on the property. The collections of the Waterloo Library and Historical Society contain a large roll-type map (approximately 3' x 4 1/2') of Seneca County, published in 1852, which contains a plat of all properties and owners. The map is distinctive because it diagrams house shapes. The "Mormon farm" was then owned by John Deshler, whose house appears in the distinctive "L-shape" known to visitors until 1969, when remodeling added an east wing. The 1852 map accurately pictures the outline and directions of the pre-1969 house.

The discoverer of the above map was John S. Genung, prominent Waterloo businessman and historian of the society, without whose constant help LDS research in Seneca County would not have been possible. Recently he and Larry C. Porter made a thorough check of about twenty houses built prior to 1852, and their shapes all corresponded precisely to the 1852 map. Such local correlation insures accuracy. Larry C. Porter is now field representative for the BYU Library in New York and has spent untold hours in Utah and New York to make the conclusions of this article sound.

Since it is now certain that the present home was built by 1852, its builder was evidently John Deshler, who purchased the Whitmer property in 1831. At that time Deshler ("late of the state of Pennsylvania") was a young married man of 25 with a two-year-old child. Six more children were born in the next dozen years. On a new farm he would probably not have the means to build the Greek Revival home until sometime in the 1840s.

Latter-day Saints visit the Whitmer home to commemorate the spirituality of the infant church. They should envision the pioneer home, a symbol of industry and simplicity of the God-fearing Whitmers. Perhaps the known features of this early log house will provide a model for reconstruction to permit the visitor to "step into 1830." Orson Pratt had strong feelings about the latter-day realities symbolized by the Whitmer home: "That house will, no doubt, be celebrated for ages to come as the one chosen by the Lord in which to make known the first elements of the Organization of His Kingdom in the latter days."



## OF GOODLY PARENTS

### BY RICHARD LLOYD ANDERSON

Honor thy father and mother is a strict requirement of many cultures. The youth who learns its meaning prepares for rich wisdom, seeking the best from all generations that preceded him. Joseph Smith sought wisdom of God (following James 1:4-5), but long before that he sought wisdom of religious teachers and particularly his parents. As Nephi did in the Book of Mormon, Joseph opens his earliest personal history by observing that he was born "of goodly parents, who spared no pains to instruct me in the Christian religion." This and many other clues show that the Prophet grounded his life on the moral foundations of his parents. If one would know Joseph, Jr., he must understand the personality of Joseph, Sr.

In turn, Joseph Smith, Sr., is fully understood only against the background of his father. One could reach back indefinitely, as the New England lady who could not name her famous ancestors but reported that they had been descending for centuries. But continuing personal characteristics are realities in families. On an exterior level Joseph Smith, Sr., learned the trade of his father. Asael Smith is repeatedly named a cooper (a barrel maker) in New England deeds. That illuminates the life of Joseph Smith, Sr., when the son earned money cooping in the county prison after legal harassment upon refusing to deny the Book of Mormon. There are other personal continuities from father to son here, for handing down his best qualities was an open goal of the father of Joseph Smith, Sr.

The name of Asael Smith connotes honesty and responsibility. He in turn was the son of Samuel Smith, an influential man in Topsfield, Massachusetts, who exercised local leadership through the Revolutionary War. Samuel's oldest son (another Samuel) had priority of inheritance of his father's land, so Asael, the second son, learned a trade and purchased a farm in Derryfield (now Manchester), New Hampshire. There he was town clerk for seven years, and his handwriting can be easily seen in the microfilm of his town record book, which includes the personal notations of the births of most of his children. Asael faced crossroads at the death of his father, taking the path of personal sacrifice. Everyone ultimately faces such crossroads, and many apparent sacrifices are disguised opportunities for personal development through serving others. In Asael's case, his brother came from Massachusetts to explain that the obligations against his father's estate exceeded the assets, so he recommended settling the debts on a percentage basis. But Asael said simply that he would not allow his father's name to go down as that of an insolvent debtor. So he and his brother exchanged farms, and Asael moved to Topsfield to attempt the impossible. The postwar depression decreed minimal profits on farming, but for seven years he applied his total resources to supporting his large family and reducing the debts of his father. Finally he sold the land to satisfy every creditor, and moved to Vermont with just about \$100, enough to buy timbered land there and start over in a log cabin.

Through industry Asael and his oldest sons, one of whom was Joseph Smith, Sr., gained reasonable property in Vermont. But he considered his most valuable asset the wisdom of a well-spent life, and he gave this possession in equal shares to his wife and children--and all descendants after them. In 1799 Asael Smith penned "a few words of advice" to his family, an articulate 11-page document encouraging his family to follow his faith in God and in Christ by living



as "scripture and sound reason" would dictate. His common sense stopped at giving superfluous advice on marriage, believing that "God hath created the persons for each other, and that nature will find its own." Yet he stated simply what was central in his life. Speaking to his own sons and daughters about their children, he emphasized: "Make it your chiefest work to bring them up in the ways of virtue, that they may be useful in their generation." Such a concern is intense within every sincere parent. Mormons belong to a church of millions actively handing down the best values of their ancestors by teaching virtue to new generations. Out of such a process came the founder of their faith.

The father of Joseph Smith, Sr., gave advice that reminds everyone of the importance of family gatherings. Talking of "yourselves within yourselves," he expressed a "last request and charge" that his children would share "an undivided bond of love." Asael felt strongly about the need of family association:

"Visit as you may each other. Comfort, counsel, relieve, succor, help and admonish one another. And while your mother lives, meet her if possible once every year. When she is dead, pitch on some other place . . . If you cannot meet, send to and hear from each other yearly and oftener if you can. And when you have neither father nor mother left, be so many fathers and mothers to each other, so you shall understand the blessings mentioned in the 133 Psalm."

Asael Smith's scripture could well be the theme of any family association: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

The life of Joseph Smith, Sr., may be sketched through questions designed to bring him close. First, what did he look like? We have no known photographs or contemporary paintings. Bill Whitaker's accompanying painting goes far to capture the personality of Joseph Smith, Sr., which combines power with sweet humility. But the artist's use of family models only approximates appearance. Yet we can envision the first Joseph Smith through descriptions of those who knew him. William Henry Bigler reported: "He was like his son the Prophet, large but not fat, rather tall and big-boned and heavy muscled." His grandson Joseph, III, implies that the first Joseph was taller than his Prophet-son: "In stature he had no superior in the family. Not one of his sons excelled him in physical appearance." Thus the description of the official history is confirmed a man of 200 pounds, six feet two in height, "very straight and remarkably well proportioned."

How did the senior Joseph make a living? The scope of his activities is very interesting: he was a farmer; he kept store; he ventured into the importing business; he taught school some winters; he had a cooper shop in New York where he sold other things. In the 1820 census there are three males in the Joseph Smith family: two of them are listed in agriculture and one in manufacturing. Joseph Smith, Sr., undoubtedly was running the cooper shop, manufacturing brooms and barrels. In New York the Smiths contracted for 100 acres of heavy timberland and made it into a farm. They had a sugar operation; Lucy Smith says (in an unpublished manuscript) that they harvested 1,000 pounds of sugar every spring. But wheat was their main crop. Of course, they burned the felled trees and sold the ash as potash. Some of their neighbors later said that they were lazy, but that is the wrong adjective. That just doesn't fit the facts. William said



that if you had wanted to find his brother Joseph, you couldn't even talk to him unless you walked around and watched him while he rolled logs. So Joseph Smith, Sr., established industry as the environment of his sons.

What was the personality of Joseph Smith, Sr.? Heber C. Kimball said, "Father Smith was one of the most cheerful men I ever saw." That means something, coming from a man well-known for his humor. Other contemporaries commented on his modesty and great faith. Look at Paul in the New Testament. This man could say that he was not worthy even to be called an apostle because he persecuted the church of God. (1 Cor. 15:9-10) And if you placed a period and closed the book then, you would assume that Paul disqualified himself from further activity. But if you finish the thought, it says, "but I labored more abundantly than they all." And there you have Joseph Smith, Sr. In addressing his family in Kirtland, he said that his inadequacies had caused him grief. But one must finish the thought: "The Lord has often visited me in visions and in dreams." And that is a powerful statement, for his wife's history describes seven of his dreams that were prophetic. There is no doubt that his family had the gift of spirituality.

What were the religious convictions of Joseph Smith, Sr.? They follow a sequence. He was first a seeker. He believed the Bible but not the theologies of his day. Like Asael Smith he was a universalist. William Smith he was a universalist. William Smith said about Joseph Smith, Sr.: "My Father's religious habits (were) strictly pious and moral." William then described his father's faith in the "universal restoration doctrine," meaning that all men would be raised to salvation, not just a few: this "brought him into contact with the advocates of the doctrine of endless misery. The belief in the ultimate and final redemption of all mankind to heaven and happiness brought down upon my father . . . opprobrium." But that didn't matter to him because he stood for the love of God even if it brought the hate of man upon him. There is something very appealing in that. Some who heard him were deeply impressed with the senior Joseph's conviction that all men could progress indefinitely. In 1860 Brigham Young recalled that Joseph Smith, Sr., the Patriarch, would typically say after giving a blessing: "If I have not promised blessings enough on your head and stated enough in the blessing I have given you, sit down and write every good thing you can think of and . . . your neighbor can think of, and put all into your blessing--and I will sign it, and promise the whole to you, if you will only live for it." There is a man with unlimited faith in everyone.

What did he lack in his days when he believed that God would save all men? He lacked the knowledge of how. His wife related his final dream before the organization of the Church. A messenger came to him and said, "I . . . have always found you strictly honest in all your dealings. Your measures are always heaped. . . There is but one thing which you lack in order to secure your salvation." And Joseph, Sr., passionately sought this information in the dream. The messenger agreed to write it down. But suddenly the dream closed. And that was just before the Prophet received his visions, as Lucy Smith related the sequence. As we have seen, Joseph Smith, Sr., looked back to this period to say that "the Lord has often visited me in visions and in dreams." He had intimations of the coming restoration of the gospel.

What is the record of Church service of Joseph Smith, Sr.? When he accepted the restored gospel, he found himself. Although previously skeptical of all organized religion, he believed at once in his son's visions. He physically protected the Prophet during the translation of the plates. He then brought people into the Church as a missionary to the northeastern



United States and to his family. In 1833 he was called as Patriarch to the Church. There were other offices: member of the first high council in 1834 and even counselor in the First Presidency for a short time in 1836. But Mormon diaries show that his greatest impact on his fellow Church members was through the blessings given as Patriarch. Many of those blessings were prophetic for Church members who came west. A young college student who attended blessing meetings in Kirtland, Ohio, was Lorenzo Snow, then a nonmember and later president of the Church. His sister, Eliza R. Snow, had induced him to come from Oberlin College to study with the competent Hebrew instructor employed by the Church for the missionaries. She had hoped that he would be exposed to Mormonism while studying Hebrew, and it was Joseph Smith, Sr., who impressed him most toward conversion. For Lorenzo felt his strong inspiration and discerned the appropriateness of instruction given to different people. In recalling his first impressions, Lorenzo Snow later said: "I looked at Father Smith and silently asked myself the question: Can that man be a deceiver? His every appearance answered in the negative.....I had never seen age so prepossessing." His strong convictions attracted strong men to the Church. The most influential Smith of the second generation in Utah was George A., cousin of the Prophet and counselor to Brigham Young. His Uncle Joseph, the Patriarch, visited northern New York to meet initial ridicule of the Book of Mormon even from his family, most of whom were later converted. George A. Smith, then a bright and brash teenager, began to read the Book of Mormon but with the purpose of gathering devastating objections against it. The sequel was not as he expected. In his own words: "On the return of my Uncle Joseph, I undertook to argue with him upon the subject, but he so successfully removed my objections and enlightened my mind, that I have never since ceased to advocate its divine authority." Other converts left records that show the unquestionable sincerity and deep convictions of Joseph Smith, Sr. His total loyalty to the restored church is itself a strong argument for the authenticity of the prophetic mission of his son.

This last issue makes a final question most significant. What was the home environment produced by Joseph and Lucy Mack Smith? Obviously the moral training of the Prophet came in the home of his parents, and his own integrity must be assessed in the light of his response to their early teachings. Reliable children generally come from homes of healthy love without weak permissiveness. Unquestionably the love of family ran deep in Joseph Smith, Sr. A simple illustration of him as "a tender husband and father." Yet there was the discipline of hard work in the home combined with personal respect for differences. Joseph Smith's brother William gave solid insights into the religious leadership of Joseph Smith, Sr.: "We always had family prayer since I can remember." He described his father's reaching for his glasses as the signal for prayer: "And if we did not notice it, mother would say, 'William,' or whoever was the negligent one, 'get ready for prayer.'" The father led out in daily devotions, and the mother actively supported him. Joseph Smith, Sr., exercised quiet but firm initiative as the head of his household. The home of such parents is a valuable tool in assessing the sincerity of the young prophet who saw visions. It was the unpublicized integrity of Joseph Smith, Sr., that greatly influenced the career of Joseph Smith, Jr.

Young Jesus "was subject" to his parents. (Luke 2:51.) Such cooperativeness signals great character; and his home increased his social abilities and reverence for God. Joseph Smith's home left similar marks upon him. Parents' full influence cannot operate without their children's willing consent, so it is important to realize that his mother considered Joseph,



Jr., "a remarkably quiet, well-disposed child." In the mainstream of family life he absorbed the basic traditions of his family. His father laid hands on his 28-year-old son, then president of the Church and looked back on his growing years in the household of Joseph Smith, Sr., and wife Lucy Mack Smith: "Thou has been an obedient son. The commands of thy mother, thou has respected and obeyed.

This suggests concerned and strong leadership from these parents. A grandson had precisely that impression of the Prophet's mother: "There never was more earnest and social body in the Smith family than Grandma Smith." There are physical sketches of the aged Lucy Mack Smith but they are a hollow shell without knowing the vital interior convictions that sustained her through a demanding life of 80 years. These can best be seen by reading her biography of her family, which is virtually her own autobiography. Sometimes depicted as ignorant in unsympathetic literature, Lucy writes with the power and clarity of a bright mind. Although her history has been generally understood as dictated to and polished by others, over 200 pages of her handwritten manuscript exist in clear legible writing with highly accurate spelling. The Prophet's mother was well educated and possessed a creative mind, practiced in articulate expression.

Lucy Smith's written self-portrait is one of unconquerable faith, and her spiritual strength was certainly rooted in the practical determination of her father and the profound convictions of her mother. Significantly, the mother of the Prophet begins her story with the exploits of her father, Solomon Mack, whose adventures in colonial wars make exciting reading. At an early age he was a man of decision, boldness, and awareness of his fellowmen. His exploits included saving himself and a companion by charging a party of Indians with no weapon but nerve--and saving a companion during an ambush when in full retreat and risking his own life. His lifetime of business ventures after that was just as heroic, for his enterprise built back financial stability after continued reverses. He was in turn a land developer, farmer, shipper, contractor, miller, privateer, and schooner owner, finally retiring to his Vermont farm to find God in answers to his prayers for relief from physical and spiritual agony. Something of the home that trained Lucy comes out in his injunction to parents to bring their children up with consistency: "Never bid them to do anything that is out of their power, nor promise them only what you mean to fulfill. Set good examples in word, deed, and action.

Solomon Mack's writings show a love of family, including his wife, Lydia Gates. As the youngest of Lydia's children, the Prophet's mother received the full force of what Solomon Mack called her "pious and devotional character." Solomon also paid a high tribute to Lydia for teaching prayer and love in daily family worship. Lucy confirms this by reporting her mother's parting instructions to "continue faithful in the exercise of every religious duty." Thus the Prophet's mother was trained in a home where the children learned, in their father's phrase, "piety, gentleness, and reflection."

But Lucy Mack was no carbon-copy Christian. Although knowing God through scriptures and prayerful communion, she doubted the religions that claimed to speak for him. Early in marriage she showed double qualities of devotion and independence. A severe respiratory infection brought a high fever, and Lucy's life hung in the balance. Weakened and semi-conscious, she was informed by her shaken husband that the doctors expected her to die. But that night powerful prayers stirred within her weakened frame.



She sought life in order to "bring up my children, and be a comfort to my husband." Making her "solemn covenant" with God, she heard a voice assuring her (in scriptural language), "seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Her solid recovery began from that hour, as she vigorously assured her watching mother that "the Lord will let me live."

After this miraculous healing, Lucy intensely sought a church where she could express her deep commitment. But she found trivia and superficiality instead of answers. Nevertheless, she knew that she could rely on "Jesus and his disciples for my guide," so she tested her faith on the Bible rather than any church. Since the Bible commanded baptism, she found "a minister who was willing to baptize me, and leave me free in regard to joining any religious denomination." The Prophet's mother had surrendered her will to God, but to no man, even differing with her husband religiously as she investigated Methodism and later became a Presbyterian. Only after her son's visions was the family religiously united.

But the meaning of honesty was agreed on from the beginning of the marriage of Lucy Mack and Joseph Smith, Sr. They met after she came to Tunbridge, Vermont, to help the family of her brother Stephen, a well-to-do, enterprising landowner and merchant. He and his business partner, John Mudgett, gave Lucy \$1,000 as a wedding present, an amount that she frugally saved for years. Her husband had an asset of equal value in his share of his father's farm, but the time came when both gave their possessions to preserve their honor. Some eight years after their marriage they operated a country store and also invested in exports to China. But profits of their China venture were dishonestly kept from them, and hundreds of dollars of store accounts were uncollectable from the neighbors. Nevertheless, they still owed Boston wholesalers for the goods that they had sold. So Lucy gave her dowry, and Joseph, Sr., sold his interest in the farm in order to pay nearly \$2,000 owed their suppliers. It would have been all too easy to move away with debts unpaid, but the Smiths kept their word. Thus the children raised in their home were given high ideals of trustworthiness.

Driven by crop failures and attracted by western opportunity, the family moved to western New York when the Prophet was about ten. Joseph, Sr. had gone on ahead to investigate the new situation; he then sent for the family. Mother Smith displayed considerable independence and ability in settling New England debts and traveling west. But she treasured her role as mother, as she shows in her words about rejoining her companion in Palmyra: "The joy I felt in throwing myself and my children upon the care and affection of a tender husband and father doubly paid me for all I had suffered." Now the family started over from nothing, meeting daily expenses, acquiring household furnishings, and paying installments on a farm that they soon contracted for. In this Lucy not only carried her load as wife and mother of eight but helped produce family income through a thriving business of making and decorating oilcloth table coverings. One senses in her the self-reliance of her father as she tells of assisting the family through her initiative after losing most of her personal possessions in the expense of moving west. Her description of their new log cabin implies much about the quality of family life within its walls. "A snug, comfortable though humble habitation; built and neatly furnished by our own industry."



Lucy Smith's later life is more familiar, since her story merges with the story of the Church. In her history one glimpses the three witnesses returning to report their joyous experience of seeing the angel and plates, the move to Ohio and the faith of the Saints in building a new city and their first temple, her move to Missouri and miraculous healing after contracting severe infection after days traveling in the rain, the trauma of parting with loved ones and loss of possessions in the Missouri persecutions, and the settlement in peace in Illinois to be her home until death. But if Illinois gave new security for the Mormon people, it also brought personal tragedy, for Lucy's husband died in 1840, followed the next year by her tall, handsome son Don Carlos. In three more years she stood by the bullet-torn bodies of Joseph and Hyrum and soon after grieved over Samuel, weakened or injured by his ride to join his brothers at Carthage. The close ties of this family made these partings doubly hard, but Lucy knew that God gives and takes away. During inexpressible grief she could, nevertheless, feel the peace that the next life offers, virtually hearing her sons say, "We have overcome the world by love....Ours is an eternal triumph."

Joseph's mother stayed in the Nauvoo area rather than going west, for her remaining family was there, including three daughters. "Here in this city lay my dead," she explained in an impromptu 1845 talk, "my husband and my children." But her interest remained lively in the work of the western Saints. Enoch Tripp visited her in 1855, the year before her death. They had been close friends when he taught school in Nauvoo. Finding her very feeble, Enoch stepped to her bedside and identified himself: "She arose in her bed and, placing her arms around my neck, kissed me, exclaiming, 'I can now die in peace, since I have beheld your face from the vallies of the mountains.'" After inquiring after her Utah friends, she remarked that she was on the verge of meeting "with her beloved ones beyond the veil." As he left, Enoch received a "farewell blessing from this great mother in Israel."

For a quarter of a century Lucy was familiarly known as "Mother Smith" to Church members, a mark of esteem in her greatest calling. Consistently warm to her loved ones and hospitable to all, her innate generosity drew gratitude from her son, Joseph: "Blessed is my mother, for her soul is ever filled with benevolence and philanthropy." Though Joseph Smith, Jr., was nurtured in the warmth of intense love, it was supplemented with express training in industry, intellectual growth, and religion. In her 1845 speech to the Church, Lucy Smith listed the ingredients of her home, an atmosphere of "love, goodness and kindness," where "the fear and love of God" were taught. She undoubtedly spoke indirectly of the Prophet's upbringing when she advised parents to give their children "books and work to keep them from idleness." And she spoke indirectly of herself when she called parents "accountable for their children's conduct" and advised them "never to do in secret what they would not do in the presence of millions."

Lucy Smith's picture of early home life is verified by the youngest son, William, who vividly remembered her influence in his boyhood: "My mother, who was a very pious woman and much interested in the welfare of her children, both here and hereafter, made use of every means which her parental love could suggest, to get us engaged in seeking for our soul's salvation."

Joseph Smith's lifelong sensitiveness to his mother is a mark of



her powerful influence in molding his early character. He could call her "one of the noblest and the best of all women" for her sacrifices and the excellence of her example. Careful study shows that both parents labored to teach high ideals to their children. The Prophet said so at the peak of his career: "Words and language are inadequate to express the gratitude that I owe to God for having given me so honorable a parentage." This comment tells much about the parents, but also much about Joseph Smith himself. They were God-fearing and strictly honest, and he loved them because he treasured their characteristics in his own life. Such parents furnish profound insights into the true character of their son who proclaimed revelations from God.

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The Mormon missionary believes sincerely, indeed, he knows, that his message is the priceless gift of undoubted truth, God made and revealed, which has the power, if used, to enrich mankind beyond measure in daily happiness on earth and in the life hereafter. Such certain knowledge gives him courage and makes his labors joyful. He meets the issues of the day with a song in his heart.

---John A. Widtsoe

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To have the approval of your conscience when you are alone with your thoughts is like being in the company of a true loving friend. To merit your own self respect gives strength of character. Conscience is the link that binds your soul to the spirit of God.

---President David O. McKay

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Strong, pure, and happy thoughts build up the body in vigour and grace. The body is a delicate and plastic instrument, which responds readily to the thoughts by which it is impressed, and habits of thought will produce their own effects, good or bad, upon it.



## THE APPROVAL

(SEPT. 1823)\*

BY PRESIDENT S. DILWORTH YOUNG  
OF THE FIRST COUNCIL OF THE SEVENTY

At mid-morn of September 22nd,  
On that fall day  
In eighteen twenty-three,  
Joseph Smith came back  
Into the field and  
Sought his father out:  
Feeling better son?  
I've not been home  
But rested under  
Yonder tree.  
Father--the voice was taut with urgency--  
There's something I must tell:  
An angel came three times  
Last night, repeating  
Thrice a message  
From the Lord.  
There is a hill  
Near here....  
And so with simple words  
He told his father what had come to pass,  
Of prophecy fulfilled,  
And more to be,  
Of ancient men on this  
Fair country's shore,  
Of how a book  
Engraved on plates of gold  
Would be a witness of  
The Christ,  
His coming to this land,  
A land of promised freedom  
To all men  
As long as they  
Will worship him.  
He told his father of a  
Box of stone, buried  
To the Lord  
Full fourteen hundred years ago

Upon a nearby hill,  
And shown him  
By the angel in the night,  
Who said to meet him there,  
But tell his father first.  
And now, the tale unfolded,  
Joseph waited  
On his father's word.  
He had obeyed the angel  
Of the Lord;  
Mindful, too, to still another  
Ancient law of God  
To render full obedience  
To his father.  
The father listened,  
And watched the eyes, the face,  
Of this his son,  
As lip-formed word and sentence  
Etched the scene of night before  
Into his soul.  
The boy paused,  
Waiting for his father's word  
Of judgment.  
The words were measured, weighted, slow:  
This is of God,  
Yes, go! By all means, go!



## LUCY MACK SMITH, WOMAN OF GREAT FAITH

By JAYNANN PAYNE

As the sun slanted down in bright shafts of light from the cloud overhead and spotlighted green fields and the woods beyond, Lucy pondered the significance of the magnificent vision of the Father and Son that young Joseph had just related to her.

Her soul thrilled with joy and anticipation, for significant spiritual experiences were not new to Lucy, nor to her husband, Joseph, Sr. Lucy recalled her own father, Solomon Mack, testifying of answered prayers. Her beloved husband, Joseph, had been blessed with numerous visions and dreams of spiritual import. Lucy herself had knelt in a grove to plead with the Lord that her husband would find the truth, and she had received a beautiful vision that brought peace to her soul. And when she lay near death from consumption at the age of 27, her prayer of faith to be healed was answered and she was assured that she would live to care for her family.

All these experiences were as a prelude to the appearance of the Father and Jesus Christ to Lucy's son. At last her spiritual yearnings were being fulfilled. Every particle of her being cried: "Yes, it is true!"

Lucy Mack Smith was a woman for all seasons. Through sunlight and shadow her faith in the family was of eternal scope. It showed itself in the trusting love she had for her parents and brothers and sisters; in the respect and honor she showed her beloved husband; in the inspiring way in which she nurtured the tender faith of her own children, especially young Joseph; in her faith in herself as a capable homemaker and mother; in the faith to hold family nights that were unforgettable; in her compassionate service to the Saints and her fellowmen; in the powerful testimony she bore of the truth of the Book of Mormon; and finally in her faith in her eternal family, which brought the only comfort possible in that darkest hour as she leaned over the biers of her dearest ones hewn down as martyrs. Her faith verified that they had indeed "overcome the world by love" and that a loving and merciful Father had taken them to himself that they might have rest.

Lucy's faith, like a prism, showed multicolored lights from every facet of her life. She, like Mary, also proclaimed; "My soul did magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior."  
(Luke 1:46-47.)

The Lord had prepared Lucy through her intelligent and devoted mother, Lydia Gates Mack, and her honest and intrepid father, Solomon Mack, to become the culmination of her ancestors' faith in the eternal family.

Lucy was born July 8, 1775, just after the battles of Lexington and Concord. As a child she loved to hear her father tell of his adventures fighting in the French and Indian wars and the Revolutionary War. His stratagems to frighten the Indians in an ambush and his daring rescue of a wounded comrade during battle were later chronicled by Lucy.



From her father came her love of liberty and country. From her father also came the power of command and decision. Solomon was away on sailing and business expeditions from the time Lucy was about nine until she was nearly seventeen, and he returned impoverished. But even though her family lacked material possessions, and wilderness conditions precluded an education for her children, Lydia Gates Mack provided a rich spiritual and cultural atmosphere for them.

Lydia had been a schoolteacher from a wealthy and cultured family before her marriage to Solomon Mack. This was a great blessing, for with Solomon's absences from the family, the great responsibility for her children's temporal, intellectual, and spiritual welfare devolved upon her. She not only taught them school subjects, but also called them together both morning and evening to pray; they were taught to love each other and to honor and love God.

Lucy's appreciation and love of her mother is reflected in the poignant scene of parting in 1816, as the Smith family decided to move from Vermont to Palmyra, New York. Lucy wrote that she had "to take leave of that pious and affectionate parent to whom I was indebted for all the religious instructions as well as most of the educational privileges which I had ever received." Her mother asked her to continue faithful in the service of God so that she might have the privilege of being reunited with her after death, for she had a premonition that they would never meet again.

Lucy inherited her mother's self-reliance, refinement, and great gift of language. She wrote valuable diaries, letters, and biographies in a day of frontier life when there was little time for writing. Her History of Joseph Smith relates not only brief biographies of her parents, brothers, and sisters, as well as the Prophet and her own family, but it is also an exciting, witty, poignant, and spiritually thrilling literary gem, shining in the dusty archives of history.

As the youngest of eight children, Lucy was dearly loved, but not spoiled, for she had gladly accepted the burden of nursing her two older sisters, Lovisa and Lovina, during their illnesses, from the time she was thirteen until their deaths when she was nineteen. Both of her sisters, who were in their late twenties, had tuberculosis, or consumption, as it was then called.

An experience that tremendously impressed Lucy but left her with many unanswered questions was Lovisa's miraculous healing and subsequent reversal. After two years of sickness she seemed to sink into a death coma for three days, but at two A.M., she had called for Lovina and said: "The Lord had healed me, both soul and body - raise me up and give me my clothes, I wish to get up!"

Both sisters died within months of each other in 1794, leaving Lucy lonely and melancholy, for the severe religious creeds of the day gave her no comfort nor peace of mind. Her spiritual needs went unfulfilled. Thus, when her brother Stephen, seeing her depression, invited her to come to Tunbridge, Vermont, and live with him for awhile, she accepted and was grateful for new surroundings and faces. Here she met a tall, gentle-voiced young man named Joseph Smith. After a year's acquaintance, they were married on January 24, 1796, at Tunbridge.



Lucy's bright blue eyes widened in surprise as she heard the conversation turn to a wedding gift for her. John Mudget, her brother Stephen's business partner said: "Lucy ought to have something worth naming, and I will give her just as much as you will."

"Done," said Stephen. "I will give her five hundred dollars in cash!"

"Good," said John, "and I will give her five hundred dollars more!"

The prospect of a thousand dollar dowry to furnish her own home made Lucy feel very important and loved. It was a huge sum of money in 1796, for land could be bought for a dollar an acre, so her wedding gift represented great buying power as well as the generous love of her family. Since her strong, handsome Joseph was already a very successful farmer, Lucy wisely kept her dowry for the future.

Lucy and Joseph thanked Stephen and John, and after a visit with her parents in nearby Gilsum, New Hampshire, they returned to Tunbridge.

They prospered on their farm for about six years, and Lucy gave birth to Alvin in 1798 and Hyrum in 1800. Then in 1802 they moved to Randolph and opened a mercantile establishment. It was here that Lucy, now 27 years old, caught a cold that developed into tuberculosis after weeks of fever and coughing. Joseph was grief-stricken, for the doctors all said she would die. Lucy prayed with all the fervor of her soul and made a covenant with God that if he would let her live she would serve him. She heard a voice say: "Seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Let your heart be comforted; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Her mother leaned over the bed just as Lucy's speech returned, and in amazement she said, "Lucy, you are better!" Lucy replied, "Yes, mother, the Lord will let me live, if I am faithful to the promise which I made to him, to be a comfort to my mother, my husband, and my children."

Following this significant experience, Lucy hungered for more spiritual knowledge, but upon visiting several different churches, to hear the "word of life", she became disheartened. Her comments are prophetic:

"....but after hearing him (the minister) through I returned home, convinced that he neither understood nor appreciated the subject upon which he spoke, and I said in my heart, that there was not then upon earth the religion which I sought. I, therefore, determined to examine my Bible and, taking Jesus and His disciples for my guide, to endeavor to obtain from God that which man could neither give nor take away..... the Bible, I intended should be my guide to life and salvation."

Two other examples of Lucy's faith in the power of healing are noteworthy. Typhus fever raged through Lebanon, New Hampshire, in 1813, and all eight of her children caught it. Sophronia, who was ten, was critically ill for nearly three months and the doctors despaired for her life. When she stopped breathing altogether, Lucy grabbed her and paced the floor, praying fervently. Those present told Lucy, "It is all of no use; you are certainly crazy, your child is dead." But Sophronia gasped for breath and lived as her mother's prayers were answered.



Joseph, Jr., was eight when the typhus infection settled in his leg, and he had to undergo three excruciating operations. The surgeons desired to amputate but Lucy objected. Then cords were brought to bind him but he refused; he also rejected liquor as an anesthetic. She later wrote that Joseph implored:

"Mother, I want you to leave the room, for I know you cannot bear to see me suffer so; father can stand it, but you have carried me so much, and watched over me so long, you are almost worn out.' Then looking up into my face, his eyes swimming in tears, he continued: 'Now mother, promise me that you will not stay, will you? The Lord will help me, and I shall get through with it.'....

"When the third piece (of bone) was taken away, I burst into the room again - and oh,...what a spectacle for a mother's eye! The wound torn open, the blood still gushing from it, and the bed literally covered with blood. Joseph was pale as a corpse, and large drops of sweat were rolling down his face, whilst upon every feature was depicted the utmost agony!"

Joseph recovered quickly after the operation, but as a result he was lame for several years and walked with a slight limp the rest of his life.

Lucy Mack Smith had faith in herself as a woman and as a homemaker. Her unique combination of traits seemed paradoxical; she was impulsive and determined, yet she relied upon the promptings of the Spirit to temper and give authority to what she did and said. When an unscrupulous teamster tried to steal her horses, wagon, and all their possessions as they were moving to Palmyra, she showed her spunk by confronting him in the inn in front of all the travelers present (for Joseph, Sr., had gone on to Palmyra several weeks previously):

"Gentlemen and ladies, please give your attention for a moment. Now, as sure as there is a God in heaven, that team, as well as the goods, belong to my husband, and this man intends to take them from me,.... leaving me with eight children, without the means of proceeding on my journey."

Then to the thieving driver she said:

"Sir, I now forbid you touching the team, or driving it one step further. You can go about your business; I have no use for you!...."

Lucy didn't tolerate injustice for long. They arrived at Palmyra safely but with "barely two cents in cash."

Despite their destitute circumstances, Lucy's faith in her own capabilities and those of her family produced amazing results that first year in Palmyra. With the spectre of crop failures and business reverses plaguing them since their marriage, Joseph and Lucy had moved eight times before arriving in New York. Now in Palmyra they industriously cleared thirty of the hundred acres they were buying and built a log house. Lucy earned enough money painting oilcloth coverings to provide food and furniture.



After two years, Alvin drew plans for a new home that would be comfortable for his parents in "advanced life." Lucy was 45 at the time, with baby Lucy only two years old! She loved her new home and it was almost completed in November 1823, when Alvin got a stomach ailment and died after an incompetent physician treated him with calomel. On his deathbed Alvin counseled Hyrum to finish the house; Joseph to be faithful and obtain the plates; and all the children to be kind to their father and mother. The whole family and neighbors grieved at his death, for Alvin was only 25 and was loved by everyone. Lucy's enjoyment of her new home was short-lived, for unscrupulous men cheated the Smiths out of their developed farm and home.

Lucy was interested in religion from an early age and searched earnestly for the truth. After Joseph Smith, Sr., had become disenchanted with attending any church meetings because of the warring and discordant atmosphere, Lucy became depressed and prayed that he would find the true gospel and accept it. She received a beautiful dream that brought reassurance that Joseph would hear and accept the pure and undefiled gospel of the Son of God at some future time. Joseph also had a number of interesting dreams and visions, which Lucy accepted and found very significant. She honored her husband as the head of her home long before he held the priesthood and became the first latter-day Patriarch to the Church.

The love of Lucy and Joseph Smith, Sr., had been refined and ennobled in the fiery crucible of trial and persecution. As he closed his eyes in death on September 14, 1840, the future for Lucy seemed "lonesome and trackless" and she could not imagine a more dreadful calamity nor greater grief. And yet, during the next four years she would also suffer through the deaths of four sons, four grandchildren, and two daughters-in-law.

The brightest side in her prism of faith was as a mother. Lucy nurtured the budding faith of each of her children by teaching them to read and love the Bible, to pray and honor God. She raised nine of her eleven children to adulthood. When young Joseph, at 14, related to her the glorious appearance of God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, Lucy believed with all her heart. Her soul rejoiced in the gradual day-to-day unfolding of the restoration of the true gospel she had so long awaited. She was justifiably proud of the mission and achievements of her son and family.

Lucy led the whole family in prayer each day for young Joseph to be instructed in his duty and protected from the snares of Satan. She was patient, encouraging, and perceptive while Joseph was suffering through those four long years of tested growth until Moroni finally entrusted the plates and that part of the work of the restoration to him.

Alvin suggested that everyone rise earlier so the farm work could be finished before sunset and that Mother Lucy have supper early so they could all gather around and listen to Joseph. The family rejoiced that God was about to light their lives with a more perfect knowledge of the plan of salvation.



Lucy longed to know more of the ancient peoples whose record Joseph was translating. And when finally she saw and read the Book of Mormon, she meditated upon all the frustrations and anxiety they had suffered for years, and she felt that the "heavens were moved in our behalf and that angels...were watching over us." She could truly say: "My soul did magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiced in God my Savior."

She loved the Book of Mormon and bore a powerful testimony to its truths to all who would listen. Once a man called out from a crowd of several hundred: "Is the Book of Mormon true?" She replied for the whole world to hear:

"That book was brought forth by the power of God, and translated by the gift of the Holy Ghost; and, if I could make my voice sound as loud as the trumpet of Michael, the Archangel, I would declare the truth from land to land, and from sea to sea, and the echo should reach every isle, until every member of the family of Adam should be left without excuse. For I testify that God has revealed himself to man again in these last days, and set his hand to gather his people upon a goodly land, and, if they obey his commandments, it shall be unto them for an inheritance...."

A woman of great empathy and compassion, Lucy displayed prayerful concern over the Prophet and her family long before they were hunted and persecuted. She seemed intuitively to know when her children needed her prayers most.

Her prayers of faith were also extended to many others. After her baptism she became a great missionary, especially to her own family. She visited her relatives and wrote them letters explaining the gospel. Solomon, her brother, joined the Church as a result of her letters and interest.

Another of her prayers was answered when Joseph revealed the work of salvation for the dead and she was assured that Alvin could obtain the blessings of baptism and temple work vicariously. He had died just a few weeks following the appearance of the Angel Moroni in 1823.

Hyrum married Jerusha Barden in 1826, and Joseph married Emma Hale on January 18, 1827. Lucy loved her daughters-in-law. After the martyrdom left both women bereft, Lucy spent her last years living with Emma, who faithfully cared for her until her death in 1856. Lucy loved her grandchildren, and when Joseph and Emma lost four children in childbirth, it grieved Lucy as if they had been her own.

All who loved God were made welcome in Lucy's home. Many nights she and her husband offered every bed in their home to visiting brethren, while they slept on the floor.

Oliver Cowdery called Lucy "Mother" and she treated him like a son, giving him her faith and encouragement in the work of translation. Her faith and love were also extended to Martin Harris, in spite of the trouble and heartache his breach of trust brought upon the Prophet and his family.

Although Lucy was a loving and amiable woman, she could chatise with fire when the occasion demanded. Her great devotion to the cause of the Lord and her fine sense of justice made her an authoritative figure.

Her leadership qualities were put to the test in the early spring of 1831. The Saints had been commanded to move to Kirtland from the Palmyra



area. Most of Lucy's family had gone on ahead in January, and Lucy was chosen to lead a company of eighty Saints from the Waterloo Branch with only her two young sons, William and Don Carlos, to assist her.

The trip down the Erie Canal by flatboat had taken five days and was a nightmare, for most of the Saints had not provided adequate food for themselves, and the exposure to the harsh weather was hard on the women and children. When they arrived in Buffalo, some members of the Colesville Branch were also there, seeking boat passage to Kirtland. The harbor was ice-locked and the Saints were stranded.

When the Colesville brethren informed Lucy's group that they must not tell anyone that they were Latter-day Saints, for then they wouldn't find a boat or lodging, Lucy spoke up boldly: "I shall tell people precisely who I am, and if you are ashamed of Christ, you must not expect to be prospered; and I shall wonder if we do not get to Kirtland before you!"

This was a prophetic statement, for through Lucy's faith and prayers, she found passage for her group. As her beloved Saints waited upon the deck of their ship arguing and complaining loudly, William rushed up to his mother and said: "Mother, do see the confusion yonder; won't you go and put a stop to it!"

Lucy was not tall, but she straightened up regally and with fire in her icy blue eyes walked right into the noise and confusion. Her voice rang out with authority:

"Brethren and sisters, we call ourselves Saints, and profess to have come out from the world for the purpose of serving God at the expense of all earthly things; and will you, at the very onset, subject the cause of Christ to ridicule by your own unwise and improper conduct? You profess to put your trust in God, then how can you feel to murmur and complain as you do! You are even more unreasonable than the children of Israel were; for here are my sisters pining for their rocking chairs, and brethren from whom I expected firmness and energy, declare that they positively believe they shall starve to death before they get to the end of their journey. And why is it so? Have any of you lacked? Have not I set food before you every day, and made you, who had not provided for yourselves, as welcome as my own children? Where is your faith? Where is your confidence in God?....Now brethren and sisters, if you will all of you raise your desires to heaven, that the ice may be broken up, and we be set at liberty, as sure as the Lord lives, it will be done."

Only moments later, Lucy's faith was rewarded as the ice parted and they sailed into Lake Erie. The boat was so loaded that the bystanders were certain it would sink. In fact, they went to the newspaper office and published the news that the Mormon boat had sunk with all on board. When Lucy and the Saints arrived in Fairport, they were amused to read in the papers the news of their own deaths.

Lucy's tremendous faith bore fruit in the many gifts of the Spirit she evidenced throughout her life: prophecy, testimony, faith to be healed, discernment of spirits, and wisdom and knowledge. Her prophecies astounded both Saints and enemies alike. The pastor of a Protestant church in Pontiac, Michigan, upon being introduced to her, said scoffingly: "And you are the mother of that poor, foolish, silly boy, Joe Smith, who pretended to translate the Book of Mormon."



She looked him straight in the eye and replied, "I am, sir, the mother of Joseph Smith; but why do you apply to him such epithets as those?"

"Because," said Reverend Riggles, "that he should imagine he was going to break down all other churches with that simple 'Mormon' book."

"Did you ever read that book?" Lucy asked.

"No, it is beneath my notice," he retorted.

Lucy then bore her testimony that "that book contains the everlasting gospel...and was written for the salvation of your soul, by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost."

"Pooh," he replied, "nonsense--I am not afraid of any member of my church being led astray by such stuff; they have too much intelligence."

Lucy replied with the emphasis of the spirit of prophecy: "Now, Mr. Ruggles, mark my words--as true as God lives, before three years we will have more than one-third of your church; and sir, whether you believe it or not, we will take the very deacon, too!"

The Reverend Mr. Ruggle's sneering expression changed rapidly, and well it might, for within two months Joseph sent Jared Carter as a missionary to Michigan upon Lucy's advice. Jared converted seventy of the minister's members and his deacon, Samuel Bent, was baptized in January 1833 and became a stalwart in the Church!

Joseph paid tribute to his mother during the dark days of persecution in 1842: "My mother also is one of the noblest and best of all women. May God grant to prolong her days and mine, that we may live to enjoy each other's society long, yet in the enjoyment of liberty, and to breathe the free air."

Her family was Lucy's treasure, and she merited the prophetic tribute that her beloved husband gave to her on his deathbed:

"Mother, do you not know, that you are the mother of as great a family as ever lived upon the earth? The world loves it own, but it does not love us. It hates us because we are not of the world; therefore, all its malice is poured out upon us, and they seek to take away our lives. When I look upon my children, and realize that although they were raised up to do the Lord's work, yet they must pass through scenes of trouble and affliction as long as they live upon the earth; and I dread to leave them surrounded by enemies."

Joseph, Sr., and Don Carlos died after great persecution in 1840 and 1841 respectively. Then Samuel was chased by the mobs on his way to Carthage to rescue Joseph and Hyrum; after years of exposure and persecution, that hard ride on his beautiful black horse for many hours was too much, and he died just a month later. And, of course, there was the tragedy at Carthage jail, where the Prophet and Hyrum were slain by the mob. Yet bitterness or self-pity were never part of Lucy's nature; her faith in God and her eternal family brought her peace and comfort.

At the conference of the Church at Nauvoo in October 1845, before President Brigham Young led the Saints West, Lucy Smith was honored by the General Authorities, who asked her if she wished to say a few words.



"She commenced by saying that she was truly glad that the Lord had let her see so large a congregation... There were comparatively few in the assembly who were acquainted with her family. She was the mother of eleven children, seven of whom were boys. She raised them in the fear and love of God, and never was there a more obedient family. She warned parents that they were accountable for their children's conduct; advised them to give them books and work to keep them from idleness; warned all to be full of love, goodness and kindness, and never do in secret, what they would not do in the presence of millions."

When she asked whether the congregation considered her a mother in Isarel, she was thrilled to hear five thousand voices answer "Yes!" Then she related the history, hardships, trials, and persecutions of her family in the eighteen years since Joseph had obtained the Book of Mormon. She moved the audience to tears with descriptions of the scenes when her sons had been dragged from their homes and condemned to be shot, or spent months in filthy dungeons on false charges. As all efforts to seek redress legally were futile, Joseph had said that he would lay them before the highest court in heaven. No heart is untouched as Lucy continues: "Little did I then think he was so soon to leave us, to take the case up himself. And don't you think this case is now being tried?"

"I feel as though God was vexing this nation a little, here and there, and I feel that the Lord will let Brother Brigham take the people away. Here, in this city, lay my dead: my husband and children; and if so be the rest of my children go with you, (and would to God they may all go), they will not go without me; and if I go, I want my bones brought back in case I die away, and deposited with my husband and children."

President Young then pledged himself and the congregation to do Mother Smith's bidding. But Lucy was too infirm to make the hard trek west. She died in May 1856, in the Mansion House in Nauvoo, at the age of 81.

Lucy Mack Smith's example has relevance and inspiration for the members of the Church today: faith to honor our ancestors through genealogy and temple work; faith to teach our children to love and honor God; faith to honor our husbands and the priesthood; faith to hold "never-to-be-forgotten" family home evenings; faith in ourselves as parents and homemakers; faith to endure trials and tribulations with steadfastness to the gospel of truth; faith to give all that we have to help build our eternal family; faith to bear our solemn witness of God's truths to our families and fellowmen everywhere; and faith to lead those souls of infinite worth, by example and precept, back to their eternal Father and family.



# A PROPHET'S WIFE

BY NELLIE CLOVE

In Harmony Pennsylvania  
Emma Hale was born, We're told;  
Unto a family rich with love,  
But very little gold.  
Her life was uneventful-  
She acquired no worldly fame,  
Until she met a handsome youth;  
Joseph Smith, by name.

While working for Josiah Stool  
She saw this stalwart youth.  
Some people thought his stories false,  
She knew they were the truth!  
And so in eighteen twenty-seven  
In the first month of the year  
They took their vows and started life-  
Youth has no thought of fear!

They had their share of sorrow  
And of course, some of life's joys.  
God sent them seven children;  
Five of them were boys.  
But most of them He took back home;  
So young - and Oh, so sweet.  
The grief of early parting  
Is very hard to meet.

It was on the seventeenth of March  
In eighteen forty-two  
That Joseph felt inspired to start-  
the Relief Society of Nauvoo.  
He named her as first president  
With counselors good and true;  
To give relief to those in need  
And expound the scriptures too.

By revelation she was asked  
To choose some hymns to sing;  
To add delight unto the soul  
And inspiration bring  
God told her to beware of pride,  
Show meekness - Murmur not.  
To comfort Joseph, and believe  
In all the things he taught.

He said if she would faithfully  
Cleave unto what was right,  
That glory would be hers, to have-  
And everlasting light!  
Her trials, here on earth were  
Sometimes, very hard to bear.  
Perhaps of worldly goods, she felt  
She didn't have her share.



For life gave her no precious stones;  
No jewels to grace her hand.  
No fancy clothes of linen fine;  
Just a simple wedding band.  
She was Joseph's queen, and didn't need  
Such earthly treasures rare.  
God gave her more, a hallowed gift -  
A prophet's life to share!

Her cup was full of sorrow,  
When Joseph's life was taken.  
There may be some who taught,  
That Emma's faith was shaken.  
Since she didn't join the saints out  
West  
To find a happier place;  
Some thought she felt resentment,  
Which may have been the case,

But still-who knows what lies within  
Another persons heart?  
We have no right to judge, unless  
We've played anothers part.  
But just the same, her love remained;  
This cannot be denied.  
She made the fond request - that she  
Be buried by his side!



## HOLY AND VENERABLE NAMES

Thomas Ford was governor of Illinois at the time a masked mob stained the new floors of Carthage jail with the fresh vintage of the martyrs' veins. He later wrote a book in a futile effort to justify himself in the eyes of his fellow politicians. This book was the sole legacy the politician bequeathed to his motherless children when he died in 1850. Two of his sons, Tom and Sewall, were lynched in Kansas as horse thieves. Whether they were guilty or not, the law left them as unprotected as their father had left Joseph and Hyrum Smith when a masked mob with smoking muskets retreated from the jail at Carthage.

Governor Ford was more prophetic with his pen than in his political philosophy. As if immersed in the spirit of futurity and endowed with the spirit that prompted the prophecies of Isaiah, he penned the following lines at the end of his chapter about the builders of Nauvoo:

"The Christian world, which has hitherto regarded Mormonism with silent contempt, unhappily may have cause to fear its rapid increase. At the time of the Prophet's death, 14 years after the first Mormon Church was organized, the Mormons in all the world numbered about 200,000 souls. A number equal perhaps to the number of Christians when the Christian Church was of the same age. It is to be feared that within the course of a century some gifted man like Paul, some splendid orator, who will be able by his eloquence to attract crowds by the thousands who are ever ready to hear, and be carried away by the sounding brass and tinkling cymbal of sparkling oratory, may command a hearing, may succeed in bringing new life into this modern Mohammedanism and make the mighty name of the martyred Joseph ring as loud and stir the souls of men as much as the mighty name of Christ himself.

Sharon, Palmyra, Manchester, Kirtland, Far West, Adam-ondi-ahman, Nauvoo, and Carthage jail may become holy and venerable names, places of classic interest in another age, like Jerusalem, Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives, and Mount Calvary to the Christian, and Mecca and Medina to the Turk. And in this event, the author of this history feels degraded by the reflection that the humble Governor of an obscure state stands a fair chance, like Pilate and Herod, of being dragged down to posterity with an immortal name attached to the name of a miserable imposter. There may be those whose ambitions would lead them to desire an immortal name in history even in these humble terms; I am not of that number."

The hamlets and cities listed above, have become holy and venerable names, places of classic interest akin to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Mecca, or Medina.

---from Nauvoo The Beautiful



## SACRED GROVE SONG

"Oh How Lovely Was the Morning" is the only hymn that celebrates the most holy and sacred occurrence in the history of the church. Joseph Smith's first prayer and the vision he received of the Father and the Son in the Sacred Grove.

The words of the hymn were written by George Manwaring who recorded that he was inspired by a painting, "The First Vision," by C.C. Christensen. The music was composed by Adam Smythe.

The hymn was first sung in public by Sarah Ann Kirkham as a solo in the Fourteenth Ward Assembly Hall.

Both the author and composer were English, both migrated to the United States, and both became converts.

George Manwaring was a talented musician and upon his arrival in Salt Lake City, he joined the Fourteenth Ward Choir. He was employed for a period by ZCMI (tradition holds that he decorated the first display window in the store), and later worked as a salesman for a music company. He was artistic by nature and learned to express his feelings in poetry. Some of his verses were put to music and are found in the hymnal used today. He died in 1889 at the age of 35.

A pupil of Sir Isaac Pitman, the inventor of Pitman shorthand, in Manchester England, Adam Smith came to the United States in 1864, was baptized and became a recorded in the Manti temple where he remained until his death in 1909. A skilled musician, he organized a juvenile opera company and conducted ward choirs. His music for "Oh, How Lovely Was the Morning" is one of the best known melodies in the Church.

The simple verses of the hymn tell of three great truths: the efficacy of humble prayer ("Humbly kneeling, sweet appealing, 'Twas the boy's first uttered prayer"); the reality of evil ("the power's assailing filled his soul with deep despair"), and the reality of the Godhead ("While appeared two heavenly beings"), of God, the Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ, as being separate, distinct personalities.

The vision that unfolded before the boy Joseph ushered in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times.

"Oh, how lovely was the morning! Radiant beamed the sun above. Bees were humming, sweet birds singing, music ringing through the Grove, When within the shady woodland, Joseph sought the God of love.



