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Études historiographiques Braudéliennes on the
Socio-Economic Policies of Early Mormonism“

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Mag. Robert C. Kahlert

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The main purpose of this dissertation is to better understand the core historiographical tools of event and structure.¹ Since sources describe events alone, historians discover structures inductively from event descriptions. Conversely, induced structures can suggest additional sources to consult and assist in the identification of additional events. Ideally, structures should be broader than the events of their context of discovery suggest—otherwise, the structures “overfit” the events and circumscribe them too narrowly. Furthermore, it would seem that the temporal extent of the structures is decoupled from the temporal extent of the events. If this is so, should it not be possible to take one set of structures, inductively acquired from one set of events, and transfer them to a historically unrelated set of events, with a consequent broadening of understanding? Investigating this possibility is my core interest here.

However, mere armchair analysis of historiographical tools, is fraught with dangers:

¹ Structures describe the pragmatic, conceptual or real-world limits on the options of agents in events. Consider the case of transportation. Before the invention of the railroad, the fastest transportation mode that people had access to were galloping horses—a real-world limit. However, even after the introduction of the railroad, people might choose not to take the railroad, either because they considered it unsafe—a conceptual limit—or too expensive—a pragmatic limit to the options of the agents.

that approach has every possibility of drifting off into vague abstractions, impractical speculations or ideological philosophy of history. Grounding the analysis in a concrete set of specific events is the proper corrective. Therefore, the secondary purpose of this dissertation is to elucidate a specific topic in church history, the socio-economic policies of the early Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, also colloquially known as the Mormonites, the Mormon Church, or the Mormons,² a key movement within nineteenth-century American restorationism. This topic provides the historical material upon which the historiographical tools can be brought to bear.

Given the importance of this historical grounding, I will first introduce the topic and its context, namely early Mormonism within nineteenth-century American Restorationism. Only then will I explicate the planned analysis of the historiographical tools. Together, these two form the core constituents of my historiographical transfer experiment. In the third section, I document the experimental procedure I used. In the final section, I summarize both the organization and the findings of the monograph.

1.1 Nineteenth-Century American Restorationism

[E]xistence within a nomic world may be sought at the cost of all sorts of sacrifices and suffering—and even at the cost of life itself, if the individual

² It is important to understand that “Mormons” is an external label, derived from one of the key documents, the *Book of Mormon* (in the following abbreviated as “BoM”), published in March 1830, which was in the past often meant and taken as derogatory, as was its variant “Mormonites”. When the church was organized in April 1830, its members called themselves “Church of Christ”, following a verse from the BoM (3 Nephi 27:8); cf. Dan Vogel, ed. (1996). *Early Mormon Documents*. Vol. 1. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, p.92 Fn 82. Unfortunately other movements, such as the Campbellites, also laid claim to that semantic space; the self-description of practicing members as simply the “Saints” has the same problem. To avoid confusion, the name was extended to “Church of the Latter Day Saints” in 1834 and to “Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints” (LDS for short) in 1838; cf. H. Michael Marquardt and Wesley P. Walters (1994). *Inventing Mormonism*. 1st ed. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, p.156. In the present age, members seem to have come to terms with this label, if the name of the worldrenowned Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the website mormon.org (visited April 17th, 2014) are any indication. This document uses “Mormon” and “Mormon Church” here in the modern, nonderogatory sense to refer to any congregation that traces its ancestry to the founding events in April of 1830.

believes that this ultimate sacrifice has nomic significance.³

In times of socio-economic and cultural turmoil, religious thinking looks backward to a restoration of a prior, pristine state, a return *ab ovo*. In the context of Protestant Christianity, that pristine state was the Pentecostal world of the New Testament immediately following the Ascension, when the first disciples and theologians such as Paul worked out the original Christian church.⁴

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the United States of America found itself in such times of upheaval, causing people to look for ways to stabilize the rate of socio-economic change. The Industrial Revolution in the United Kingdom was already at full speed. The development of the steamboat and the train had begun and their full-scale deployment was on the horizon. The United States as a political entity, even more strongly decoupled from the British Empire due to the war of 1812, was busily developing its nascent Republicanism. Large numbers of citizens were streaming toward the frontiers to settle the open spaces. Social and economic mobility was at a dizzying high.

Given that impressive set of changes, the world of the Apostolic Age—with its paternalistic and despotic institutions, lack of manufacturing, and transportation plateaued at the rate of horse and sailboat—was moving away from the contemporary culture at an accelerating pace. Predominantly it was agriculture that seemed to connect the two ages, as well as the importance of family—the two institutions that underpinned the westward expansion of the pioneer households.

Nevertheless, several religious groups in the United States, which historians of religion describe under the phenomenon of Restorationism or Christian Primitivism, reacted to

³Peter L. Berger (1967). *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, p.22.

⁴ A Catholic theologian would claim that, through the traditions and teachings handed down through the unbroken succession of ordained representatives, the contact with the Apostolic Age had never been truly lost within the institutionalized Catholic Church.

these changes with an attempt to connect to the Apostolic Age in an unmediated fashion. Given the real differences in social, cultural, economic and technical context between the first and the nineteenth century, this attempt was bound to encounter difficulties.

The thematic concern of this dissertation, then, is the description of how the early history of one of these Restoration movements played out. Specifically, I analyze the socio-economic policies of Joseph Smith Jr, the first prophet of the Mormon church. I use case studies to document and explain how the interaction between the Apostolic ideals and the socio-economic constraints played out.

These case studies are selected from key events in the chronology of the years of Joseph Smith Jr's leadership: the publication of the *Book of Mormon* and the establishment of the church; its expansion into Kirtland, Ohio and its absorption of both the Rigdonites and additional converts into a new egalitarian society; economic devices such as the United Firm and the Kirtland Safety Society; and finally, the settling of Nauvoo and its development into what was then the largest city in Illinois.⁵

1.2 Historiographical Intention

Historiographically, this dissertation is a comparison between the role of the events and the influence of the structures.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the standard historiographical approach is to take a set of documents and extract the regularities of the events narrated therein. By clustering and categorizing these events' details, it becomes possible to tell the story of the regularities as exemplified by the events.⁶

Given that this approach amounts to the historiographical *status quo*, the examples are

⁵ For reasons of space, many other key events, such as the Missouri war and the temple-construction efforts, can only be alluded to.

⁶ Some of these regularities will be called *scripts* in the following, cf. below p.28.

legion, but one particularly successful and respected example of this approach is *Montaillou*,⁷ where Le Roy Ladurie reconstructs the social fabric of an entire village from the legal records of a church inquest.⁸

This standard approach is challenged by Fernand Braudel's classic monograph on the Mediterranean.⁹ Braudel, when tasked with writing a typical diplomatic history of Philip II of Spain's Mediterranean policy, draws upon his geographical training to foreground the constraints imposed by the geographical setting, the prevailing wind patterns, the state of technology and the patterns of agricultural life as factors that dominate Philip II's diplomatic options. Braudel confirms the suspicion, raised above, that the structures have applicability beyond their context of discovery. Braudel argues that these factors have their own temporal extent that allows one to distinguish long-term structures, valid for hundreds of years, from medium-term structures, valid for several units of social time, such as generations.

In order to stage a comparison between these two approaches to historiography, exemplified here by Le Roy Ladurie and Braudel, I will take my *Montaillou*-style reconstruction

⁷Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie (1978). *Montaillou: the promised land of error*. 1st ed. New York: G. Braziller. ISBN: 0807608750.

⁸ A comparably sensible choice might have been Goitein's five-volume opus *A Mediterranean Society*, which reconstructs a whole Medieval maritime community from the content of a *genizah*, a Jewish document "graveyard", discovered in the old Synagogue in Cairo (medieval Fustat). Cf. S. D. Goitein (1967). *A Mediterranean society: the Jewish communities of the Arab world as portrayed in the documents of the Cairo Geniza*. Vol. I: Economic Foundations. Berkeley: University of California Press; S. D. Goitein (1971). *A Mediterranean society: the Jewish communities of the Arab world as portrayed in the documents of the Cairo Geniza*. Vol. II: The Community. Berkeley: University of California Press; S. D. Goitein (1978). *A Mediterranean society: the Jewish communities of the Arab world as portrayed in the documents of the Cairo Geniza*. Vol. III: The Family. Berkeley: University of California Press; S. D. Goitein (1983). *A Mediterranean society: the Jewish communities of the Arab world as portrayed in the documents of the Cairo Geniza*. Vol. IV: Daily Life. Berkeley: University of California Press; S. D. Goitein (1988). *A Mediterranean society: the Jewish communities of the Arab world as portrayed in the documents of the Cairo Geniza*. Vol. V: The Individual. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁹ Fernand Braudel (1990a). *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*. 9th ed. Vol. 1. Armand Colin; Fernand Braudel (1990b). *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*. 9th ed. Vol. 2. Armand Colin; Fernand Braudel (1990c). *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*. 9th ed. Vol. 3. Armand Colin.

of the socio-economic history of early Mormonism and bring to bear upon this reconstruction the conceptual models that Braudel developed for the Mediterranean. Alternate viewpoints should highlight alternate aspects of the events, identify limitations and biases in the sources, and point to new events worthy of consideration.

Given that nineteenth-century Restorationism was an explicit reaction to the shifting constraints of the times, a movement such as Mormonism is a fitting subject for this experiment. There are even some interesting parallels between Philip II of Spain and Joseph Smith Jr, including their belief in their divine responsibilities, as well as in being the final arbiter for their respective communities. The transformational time of the early 1800s in the young United States of America was as socially volatile as the tussle for Mediterranean control between the Spanish and the Turkish empire, especially on the economic and technical sector.

1.3 Overall Process

I now describe how I actually carried out the historiographical experiment of applying Braudel's conceptual models to my socio-economic reconstruction of early Mormonism, including the development of the *Montaillou*-style narrative as well as the identification of the Braudelian structures.

1.3.1 Pilot Study and Initial Hypothesis

I first performed a pilot study. This pilot study allowed me to identify basic structures of everyday life as well as gain familiarity with the research matter.

The pilot study used a small subset of the relevant documents¹⁰ specifically focusing on

¹⁰ Vogel, (1996); Joseph Smith Jr (1839-1843). "History, 1838-1856, vol. A-1". JS, History, 1838-1856, vol. A-1, created 11 June 1839-24 Aug. 1843; handwriting of James Mulholland, Robert B. Thompson, William W. Phelps, and Willard Richards; 553 pages, plus 16 pages of addenda; CHL. This is the first

topics that are important in Braudel’s narrative as well: transportation, economics, trade, social trust and urbanity.¹¹ It equally used a small subset of the secondary literature.¹²

Some of the insights from that pilot study found their way into a separate publication;¹³ some parts were used in the introductory chapters that sketch nineteenth-century economic life and the early childhood of Joseph Smith Jr.

At this point, I was able to formulate a preliminary research hypothesis regarding Joseph Smith Jr’s socio-economic policies.

1.3.2 Archival Research

Next, I spent three weeks at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, working both in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections on primary sources, as well as in the BYU Family History Library, where most of the secondary literature is housed. My research focused on the men who assisted Joseph Smith Jr in developing his socio-economic policies: Newell

volume of a six-volume manuscript history of the church. This first volume covers the period from 23 December 1805 to 30 August 1834; the remaining five volumes, labeled B-1 through F-1, continue through 8 August 1844.; Lucy Mack Smith (1844–1845). “History”. handwriting of Martha Jane Knowlton Coray and Howard Coray; 240 pages, with miscellaneous inserted pages; CHL.; Lucy Mack Smith (1845). “History”. handwriting of Howard Coray and Martha Jane Knowlton Coray; 337 pages; CHL.; Lucy Mack Smith (1853). *Biographical Sketches Of Joseph Smith The Prophet And His Progenitors For Many Generations*. Ed. by Orson Pratt. Liverpool.

¹¹ <http://http://nonrhodiantraces.blogspot.co.at/> has been my online research journal, and I stored my write-ups at <https://bitbucket.org/canonicalchris/braudel-smith-jr/src>.

¹² Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery (1994). *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*. Urbana, IL — Chicago: University of Illinois Press; Todd Compton (1997). *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books; Leland Homer Gentry and Todd Compton (2011). *Fire and sword: a history of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri, 1836-39*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Greg Kofford Books. ISBN: 9781589581203; Henry Caswall (1843). *The city of the Mormons: or, Three days at Nauvoo, in 1842*. London: Printed for J. G. F. and J. Rivington; John A Clark (1842). *Gleanings by the Way*. Philadelphia: W.J. and J.K. Simon; Lowry Nelson (1952). *The Mormon Village: A Pattern and Technique of Land Settlement*. 1st ed. Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah press; Bradon S. Plewe, S. Kent Brown, and Donald Q. Cannon, eds. (2012). *Mapping Mormonism: An Atlas of Latter-Day Saint History*. 1st ed. Brigham Distributing.

¹³Robert C. Kahlert (2015). “Waiting for Jesus in Missouri: Mormon City and Zion Planning in the Age of Jackson”. In: *Empfehlenswert und praktisch! Perspektiven junger Theologinnen und Theologen auf die Lebensdienlichkeit christlicher Religionskultur*. Ed. by Bernhard Kirchmeier. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, pp. 131–153.

K. Whitney, Edwin Woolley, Edward Partridge, Edward Hunter, W.W. Phelps, Frederick G. Williams, Sidney Rigdon, as well as Wilson and William Law. I also researched socioeconomic topics, such as the Red Brick Store in Nauvoo, the steamboat “Maid of Iowa”, the construction of the Kirtland Temple, the United Firm and the Law of Consecration and Stewardship.

Bracketing Joseph Smith Jr himself in this fashion was possible due to the Joseph Smith Papers Project, a research effort that attempts to make all of Joseph Smith Jr’s papers freely available as high-quality scans and scholarly transcriptions on the Web. This allowed me to draw upon Smith Jr’s papers from any place with Internet access. I did spend one day at the Church History Library in Salt Lake City as well, where I consulted additional sources on Joseph Smith Jr, esp. with respect to the “Maid of Iowa”, as well as some of the card-files from the Nauvoo Restoration project.

1.3.3 Case Analysis

Based on the research at BYU, I and my adviser, Univ. Prof. em. Dr. Wolfgang Wischmeyer, identified eight case studies for testing the hypothesis. I also wrote up the methodology I was planning to use. Next, I worked my way through the list of case studies. In the summary of the case studies, I explicitly confronted the hypothesis with the research to generate my findings, documenting any shifts from my preliminary understanding. Case studies plus summaries constitute the middle part of this monograph.

I gathered the necessary background information for understanding the case studies into the first part of the dissertation: the socio-economics of everyday life in nineteenth-century America; the life of Joseph Smith Jr up to the first case study; the religious context in which the *Book of Mormon* appeared. The methodology chapter belongs here as well.

The first part of the monograph, the methodological discussion and the background

information, and the second part, the case studies plus summary, together form what I have called my *Montaillou*-style narrative of early Mormonism's socio-economic policies.

1.3.4 Constraint Identification and Application

With the case studies completed, I turned to the transfer of Braudel's Mediterranean constraints; that transfer and its results comprise the bulk of the third and final part.

I extracted the regularities that structured Braudel's narrative in the second volume,¹⁴ concerned with social time, based on their potential applicability to the case studies, and evaluated them for transferability. Then I chose a set of regularities that provided a different angle on the problems of early Mormon church history, one that I had not encountered in the case studies. I applied one such set. Pragmatically, this meant that I had to extend the document corpus of the secondary literature, as it raised themes I had not yet investigated. I catalogued that extension.

With the application completed, I evaluated the insights gained on the one hand, while on the other examining the reasons for previously having missed these issues. I closed out the third part with a theological reflection on how Smith Jr's salvation-historic strategies for coping with modernity could be applied to present-day Protestantism in the face of the functional differentiation of society.

1.4 Monograph Organization and Findings

The monograph is organized into three parts.

The first part, entitled "Groundwork", lays the foundation for understanding the case studies in terms of methodology, background information on nineteenth-century everyday life and Joseph Smith Jr's biography into early adulthood.

¹⁴Braudel, (1990b).

The second part presents case studies for eight key socio-economic events or developments in early Mormon history that aid in evaluating the research hypothesis. This part closes with a summary of these evaluation insights and the transformation of the research hypothesis into the key research finding.

These two parts together constitute my *Montaillou*-style narrative of the socio-economic policies of early Mormonism.

The third part, “Models and Narratives”, extracts explanatory models from Braudel’s *La Méditerranée*, applies them to the socio-economic reconstruction generated via the case studies, and evaluates the transfer experiment. The part closes with some thoughts on how the Mormon notion of salvation history could be transformed and modernized for the purposes of contemporary Protestantism under the conditions of the functional differentiation of society.

1.4.1 Groundwork

In chapter 2 (“Methodology”), I introduce my research hypothesis:¹⁵

Though Joseph Smith Jr was supportive of transportation improvements and technological innovation, he exhibited a systematic bias against developing capitalism, that is: manufacturing, mechanization and financing. This bias was fueled by the cultural ideal of the gentleman farmer, by his childhood experiences, and by the economic models of the Bible. Though Joseph Smith Jr’s closest collaborators included economically astute and successful people, Smith Jr never acquired an appreciation for manufacturing, mechanization, finance or banking, with at times detrimental consequences for his congregation.

I explain (2.5) how I will evaluate that research hypothesis through case studies of key socio-economic events.¹⁶ Historiographically (2.2.1), I extract regularities from specific events.¹⁷ Where feasible, I describe the regularities (2.2.4) before using them in the expo-

¹⁵ Cf. p.27 below.

¹⁶ Cf. p.41 below.

¹⁷ Cf. p.28 below.

sition.¹⁸ I then explain (2.3.1) the temporal theory that underpins Fernand Braudel's *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* and how that temporal strategy supports the model transfer experiment.¹⁹ Finally, I reject (2.4), on methodological grounds, the false choice between the competing kerygmatic calls prevalent in the literature: to see Joseph Smith Jr as either a true prophet or a complete scoundrel. Instead, I view him as a theologian convinced of his own inspiration.²⁰

Chapter 3 ("Nineteenth-Century Economic Life") sketches the socio-economic expectations of Americans in the early Republic. Land was the key value. The social ideal was the Gentleman Farmer (3.7) in the style of George Washington or Thomas Jefferson.²¹ Frontier settlements were dispersed (3.2); villages and towns agglomerated near transportation hubs.²² Pioneer families (3.3) were almost self-sufficient by means of exploiting their environment, allowing them to live in isolation.²³ Larger settlements (3.4) offered comfort beyond the subsistence level through goods and services, that is, non-essential imports and non-agrarian specialization.²⁴ At the same time, transportation was undergoing a massive shift due to the construction of roads (3.5.4) and canals (3.5.4), with consequences for trade and mobility (3.5).²⁵ What little manufacturing existed (3.6) was small and local.²⁶ Cash was rare (3.1) making promissory and bank notes the key modes of payment, whenever barter was not an option.²⁷ In the aftermath of the War of Independence and the War of 1812, the climatic catastrophe of 1816 and the economic crisis of 1819, many people became concerned about the socio-economic disruptions.

¹⁸ Cf. p.32 below.

¹⁹ Cf. p.34 below.

²⁰ Cf. p.38 below.

²¹ Cf. p.84 below.

²² Cf. p.44 below.

²³ Cf. p.47 below.

²⁴ Cf. p.52 below.

²⁵ Cf. p.64, p.68 and p.55, respectively.

²⁶ Cf. p.78 below.

²⁷ Cf. p.43 below.

Chapter 4 (“Joseph Smith Jr’s Socio-Economic Baseline”) shows how Joseph Smith Jr’s childhood and early manhood played out in the larger context sketched in the chapter on nineteenth-century economic life. Though it is often insinuated otherwise, Joseph Smith Jr’s nuclear family had been well-off in his early years (4.2.1), but was pauperized by the typhoid epidemic of 1813.²⁸ Joseph Smith Jr’s extended family contained several highly successful businessmen and entrepreneurs (4.2.2).²⁹ It also had its share of religious seekers and missionaries: Puritanism, Primitivism, Communitarianism and Utopianism were all represented. In Palmyra, where the Smith Sr family moved after 1817, Joseph Smith Jr was trained as a farmer and cooper. The economy of Palmyra and environs exposed him to small-scale manufacturing (4.3.1), the land-trade-driven banking of Canandaigua (4.3.3), and the transportation possibilities of the Erie Canal.³⁰ A key economic event in his early life was the stock company (4.4) that he joined as a well-known treasure-seeker, whose expertise was considered a valuable commodity and a valid contribution to the company’s stock.³¹

Chapter 5 (“A New Scripture”) reconstructs the mentality of those religious seekers who would later become Mormon converts. These seekers lived in a society that was predominantly Protestant, Biblical, factional, and often millenarian or revivalist. Seekers believed that lack of faith and a disobedient church had caused the loss of the Apostolic charismata. By the same token, the Biblical canon was incomplete (5.1) through the willful malice of the canonists employed by the Roman Catholic state church.³² Therefore, these seekers expected that in the time of the Millennium, a new revelation and dispensation would augment and complete the message of salvation. This new dispensation would link

²⁸ Cf. p.98 below.

²⁹ Cf. p.104 below.

³⁰ Cf. p.118 and p.121, respectively.

³¹ Cf. p.123 below.

³² Cf. p.135 below.

the Abrahamic covenants to the New World's immigrants and natives (assumed to be the "Lost Tribes" of Israel). The form of the new dispensation (5.2) would fulfill the prophecies of the Old Testament regarding a hidden book.³³ Unlike the King James Bible, the new dispensation would be available as an impeccable translation (5.3), above all those scriptural disputes that seemed to cripple Protestantism incessantly.³⁴ That new revelation would also spell out solutions (5.4) for the confusing socio-economic developments:³⁵ The socio-economic optimum in the *Book of Mormon* is communitarianism embedded in the omnipresence of Apostolic charismata (4 Nephi), while the pessimum is wealth-based class stratification (5.4.2), where the poor lack access not only to the bare necessities, but also to education and even the Apostolic charismata.³⁶

1.4.2 Case Studies

In chapter 6 ("Funding the Book of Mormon"), I describe the affluent farmers (6.2) who funded this religious project they cared about deeply.³⁷ Printing was expensive; copyright and plagiarism were concerns (6.3).³⁸ At the same time, making money through doing the Lord's work was an acceptable stance from the point of view of Congregationist covenant theology.

In chapter 7 ("Raiding the Campbellites"), I describe the Campbellite movement—nowadays, known as the Church of Christ—another Restorationist movement (7.1) in the Eastern and Northern United States during the 1820s.³⁹ Founders of the Campbellite movements were two Scotch ministers, a father-and-son team, Thomas and Dr Alexander

³³ Cf. p.145 below.

³⁴ Cf. p.147 below.

³⁵ Cf. p.151 below.

³⁶ Cf. p.153 below.

³⁷ Cf. p.168 below.

³⁸ Cf. p.175 below.

³⁹ Cf. p.181 below.

Campbell. The Campbellite movement (7.2) had several talented evangelists and preachers,⁴⁰ the best of whom perhaps was Sidney Rigdon.⁴¹ Over the decade that Rigdon worked within the Campbellite movement, he began to differ with Thomas and Alexander Campbell on communitarianism, millenarianism and continuationism. I argue that his communitarian stance was influenced by the debate between Alexander Campbell and Scottish philanthropist Robert Owen (7.2.11).⁴² However, neither Rigdon nor the Campbells realized the growing estrangement before the Mahoning Association meeting in Austintown in 1830 (7.2.12), where the break between Rigdon and the Campbellites occurred.⁴³ That fall, Sidney Rigdon became a Mormon: not because he helped to write the Book of Mormon, as some claim,⁴⁴ but because its message matched his then-held convictions. Converting Rigdon (7.2.13) brought a large and wealthy congregation of pro-communitarian, pro-millenarian, charismata-seeking Restorationists in and around Kirtland, Ohio into the Mormon fold.⁴⁵ An excursion on the problem of compensating for religious work (7.3) sketches the discourse on an issue between different Restorationist movements.⁴⁶

When the New York Mormon church moved to Kirtland, Ohio (8.2) after January of 1831,⁴⁷ Joseph Smith Jr and the church leadership found themselves confronted with the failing communitarian “Family” experiment spearheaded by Isaac Morley among the Kirtland Rigdonites. I argue that the “Law of Consecration and Stewardship”—whence the title of chapter 8—was a reaction to these circumstances. The Law of Consecration and Stewardship differed from other communitarian or utopian visions in its a greater focus on individual responsibility. The implementation of the law was made possible by two

⁴⁰ Cf. p.185 below.

⁴¹ Cf. p.189 below.

⁴² Cf. p.199 below.

⁴³ Cf. p.206 below.

⁴⁴ Cf. p.182 below.

⁴⁵ Cf. p.210 below.

⁴⁶ Cf. p.216 below.

⁴⁷ Cf. p.231 below.

successful businessmen, Edward Partridge (8.1), the first Mormon bishop,⁴⁸ and Newell Kimball Whitney (8.3), the second Mormon bishop.⁴⁹ In its content (8.5), the Law of Consecration and Stewardship was predominantly agrarian, conceptualizing wealth as akin to seeds. Nevertheless, the difficulties of building a utopian communitarian society along these lines were formidable.⁵⁰ Not all conceptualizations in the law meshed with prevailing social attitudes (8.6): Stewardship was American; Consecration was not, as it moved the personal ownership of property elsewhere; covenanting personally with God to consecrate was American again.⁵¹ Furthermore, the conflation of Bishop's storehouse and general stores—of Whitney in Kirtland, Ohio and of his partner Gilbert in Independence, Missouri—engendered entitlement and complicated profitability. The ratio of rich to poor was insufficient (8.7) for the consecration model to support the rapidly growing church.⁵² When lack of resources entailed the aggressive subdivision of plots (8.6.3), this produced tracts of land held in stewardship that were too small to yield any surplus.⁵³

Chapter 9 (“The United Firm”) describes the socio-economic contributions of this private enterprise (9.1) that happened to have the key church leaders as its members.⁵⁴ The United Firm replicated the pattern of consecration and stewardship (9.2) at the level of the entrepreneurial ventures of the upper echelons of church leadership.⁵⁵ The firm was managed through revelations. However (9.3), as the church labored to move its basis of operation to Missouri, the United Firm suffered from slow communication and divided attention.⁵⁶ Membership in the firm fluctuated as the church leadership changed. The

⁴⁸ Cf. p.228 below.

⁴⁹ Cf. p.232 below.

⁵⁰ Cf. p.244 below.

⁵¹ Cf. p.252 below.

⁵² Cf. p.257 below.

⁵³ Cf. p.256 below.

⁵⁴ Cf. p.265 below.

⁵⁵ Cf. p.268 below.

⁵⁶ Cf. p.273 below.

conflation of private and Church matters complicated both profitability and transparency of its dealings. Describing the dealings of the firm has always been complicated (9.5) by the fact that, once debt mounted and the revelations were ready for publication, the identities of those involved in the firm had to be anonymized.⁵⁷

Chapter 10 (“The Kirtland Safety Society”) is a key chapter for my argument and therefore worked out in considerable detail. It focuses on one of the most contentious sequence of events in early Mormon history. I improve upon previous descriptions by emphasizing the national and state-level forces at work in Ohio banking.

1. Chartered banking in Ohio was controlled by the state legislature (10.1.1), which approved or rejected charters.⁵⁸ During most sessions in the 1830s, excepting 1834, the Ohio legislature had rejected almost all charter requests. Part of the legislature’s stance can be explained by the fact that banks were at that time often chartered to provide easy credit for the founders,⁵⁹ not to lend their capital as an investment; I use the story of the Owl Creek Bank (10.1.2) as an illustration.⁶⁰ The rejection of the Kirtland Safety Society charter by the Ohio legislature in December 1837⁶¹ and February 1838⁶² was entirely predictable.
2. The majority of banks in Ohio (10.1.1) were funded from out-of-state, either by East Coast capitalists or international investors;⁶³ I illustrate this pattern by reference to the Old Bank of Michigan (10.1.3).⁶⁴ In addition, there was a nationwide pool of professional tellers, cashiers and banking experts (10.1.3) that had been developing

⁵⁷ Cf. p.286 below.

⁵⁸ Cf. p.297 below.

⁵⁹ Cf. p.306 below.

⁶⁰ Cf. p.308 below.

⁶¹ Cf. p.325 below.

⁶² Cf. p.331 below.

⁶³ Cf. p.298 below.

⁶⁴ Joseph Smith Jr’s uncle Colonel Stephen Mack had served as a founding director; cf. p.314 below.

since the 1800s, and the capitalists and investors who held majorities in the banks recruited from this pool.⁶⁵ The charter of the Kirtland Safety Society Bank was unprofessional in terms of the huge amount of capital planned, the large number of directors needed,⁶⁶ the prescribed dividends and the insufficient down-payments for stock shares.⁶⁷ As a result, the Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking company opened its doors (10.2.5) with too little cash deposited.⁶⁸

3. Due to the speculation in federal land sales, inflation was rampant (10.1.1) in Kirtland, Ohio in 1836-7.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the Ohio legislature pressured banks to withdraw all notes under \$5,⁷⁰ causing liquidity problems for the economically disadvantaged locals. The Kirtland area could not sustain a bank by itself (10.2.1), due to its lack of economic prowess, as the small denominations of the printed bank notes document.⁷¹
4. The Banking Crisis of 1837 affected the Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking company only insofar (10.2.8) as it made its connection to the chartered Bank of Monroe, Michigan ineffective.⁷² Even if the Kirtland Safety Society had been chartered (10.2.7) and there had been no Banking Crisis, the Mormon leadership would probably have been ousted by potent investors and replaced by professional bankers in within a short time.⁷³
5. The rate of apostasy after the failure of the bank (10.3) was not due to actual financial

⁶⁵ Cf. p.314 below.

⁶⁶ Cf. p.324 below.

⁶⁷ Cf. p.324 below.

⁶⁸ Cf. p.328 below.

⁶⁹ Cf. p.303 below.

⁷⁰ Cf. p.303 below.

⁷¹ Cf. p.320 below.

⁷² Cf. p.334 below.

⁷³ Cf. p.333 below.

losses incurred, but rather to the feeling that prophecy could not control modern economics and finance after all.⁷⁴

Chapter 11 (“Settling Nauvoo”) details the church’s move to Illinois (11.1) after its expulsion from Missouri.⁷⁵ I show that the purchase and resale pattern of acquisition expressed the same anti-competitive expectations for fundraising (11.1.3) as had the church stores in Kirtland.⁷⁶ At the same time, the competition of non-Mormon land speculators and investors caused a bi-focal economic development, subverting the monopolistic assumptions. The build-out of Nauvoo, including the temple, took on the character of a public-works employment project. Fortunately for the Mormon church, its aggressive missionary activity had produced a cadre of economic talent (??) outside Kirtland, which the church could now draw on to replace those leaders who had been disfellowshipped in Missouri.⁷⁷

Chapter 12 (“Ruling Nauvoo”) discusses how the Mormon leadership tried to deal with the massive influx of additional converts that made Nauvoo the largest city in Illinois (12) within six years.⁷⁸ Key among the levers of control was the Nauvoo City Charter (12.3.1), which combined executive, legislative and judicial powers to an unprecedented extent and placed them into the hands of the church leadership.⁷⁹ At the same time, the church leadership needed money to service the loans for purchasing Nauvoo. Various ventures, such as the “Red Brick” store (12.2.1) or the steamboat “Maid of Iowa” (12.2.2), produced social institutions rather than profits.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, many members of the church leadership did well financially, and class differentiation became a problem. Efforts such as the Fe-

⁷⁴ Cf. p.335 below.

⁷⁵ Cf. p.337 below.

⁷⁶ Cf. p.342 below.

⁷⁷ Cf. p.?? below.

⁷⁸ Cf. p.367 below.

⁷⁹ Cf. p.390 below.

⁸⁰ Cf. p.375 and p.383, respectively.

male Relief Society (12.1.2), the first city-wide social project,⁸¹ and the church-sponsored Nauvoo House (12.3.2) tried to mitigate socio-economic differentiation while simultaneously exacerbating it through their membership restrictions.⁸² Eventually, the revelation on plural marriage in all its disruptiveness (12.4) divided the church leadership itself into two classes,⁸³ leading indirectly to the lynching of prophet Joseph Smith Jr and patriarch Hyrum, his brother.

Chapter 13 (“Nauvoo Loose Ends”) discusses five smaller issues that individually did not merit a full chapter. The arrival of the non-agrarian Mormon converts from Britain (13.1), largely drawn from the poor of the English working class, brought the lack of manufacturing in Nauvoo to the doorstep of the church leadership.⁸⁴ The formation of an Agricultural and Manufacturing Association (13.2) attempted to address the issue but failed.⁸⁵ At the same time, Nauvoo found its economic efforts divided (13.3) between two economic centers, a division the fledging city could ill afford.⁸⁶ And as the shipping details and the later Nauvoo Reconstruction effort make obvious (13.4), Nauvoo never managed to break free from its economic dependence on St Louis—fantasies about gaining the “spoils of the Gentiles” notwithstanding.⁸⁷ Finally, these economic difficulties should not blind the observer to the superb handling of organization and administration (13.5) within the Mormon church, especially when compared to Amos S. Hayden’s 1875 enumeration of organizational mistakes of the Campbellite movement.⁸⁸

In the summary chapter on the case studies, I sketch the evolution of the Mormon socio-economic policy. Clearly, Joseph Smith Jr felt that his special expertise of as prophet

⁸¹ Cf. p.371 below.

⁸² Cf. p.394 below.

⁸³ Cf. p.398 below.

⁸⁴ Cf. p.413 below.

⁸⁵ Cf. p.416 below.

⁸⁶ Cf. p.417 below.

⁸⁷ Cf. p.421 below.

⁸⁸ Cf. p.423 below.

and translator was worth a significant amount of remuneration (14.1), just as his skills as a treasure hunter had suggested.⁸⁹ In his socio-economic dealings, Smith Jr developed a basic pattern of collaboration, the stock company (5). He reimplemented that basic pattern from his treasure hunting days in several situations: the funding of the Book of Mormon, the Anti-Banking version of the Kirtland Safety Society, the Nauvoo House and the Nauvoo Agricultural Association.⁹⁰ Likewise, Smith Jr's approach to mercantile ventures made no allowance for natural economic competition. He reimplemented the same basic pattern in the Kirtland Bishop's storehouse, in the temple financing mechanisms, in the Kirtland Safety Society, in the Nauvoo land purchases, in the ferryboat services of his steamboat and in the Red Brick store in Nauvoo.

At the same time, Joseph Smith Jr had little patience (1) for the nuts and bolts of mercantile endeavors. Possibly due to the theological gradient between prophet and believers, Joseph Smith Jr learned little from his many talented business associates, accepting their resources and assistances more readily than their advice.

The law of consecration and stewardship (14.1.1) shifted the focus from consecration to stewardship, which then transitioned into tithing, but never lost the family household as its unit of granularity.⁹¹ The rising population, coupled with increasing wealth concentration in Nauvoo, was incapable of stemming the class differentiation against which the *Book of Mormon* had protested. The ratio of poor to wealthy church members never reached equilibrium for the Mormon church during the period of my investigation.

I therefore transform my research hypothesis into my core research finding (14.2).⁹²

Coming from a background steeped in Biblical nonconformism and the ideal of the gentleman farmer, Joseph Smith Jr's socio-economic vision for his restora-

⁸⁹ Cf. p.433 below.

⁹⁰ Cf. p.443 below.

⁹¹ Cf. p.437 below.

⁹² Cf. p.439 below.

tionist community was a class-effacing communitarianism that emphasized private ownership of farm land, craftsmanship and education. Joseph Smith Jr understood trade and appreciated modern transportation improvements, but he lacked a sensibility for the disruptive potential of mechanization and manufacturing, and showed little awareness of the systemic roles of national monetary policy and global integration of financing. These limitations to Smith Jr's vision hampered the church's socio-economic policies in Ohio and Illinois and dispelled the illusion that the economic system was under Divine control.

1.4.3 Models and Narratives

In chapter 15 ("Braudel's Mediterranean Models"), I focus the analysis of transferable models on the second volume of *La Méditerranée*, which discusses social time. As candidate topics for the transfer experiment (15.1), I identify the economic measure of distance, specie and inflation, the grain trade, the imperial state, the elite in society, the Middle class, the poor and the outlaws.⁹³ For each of these topics, I summarize Braudel's structures in a separate section.⁹⁴

In chapter 16 ("Evaluating Mediterranean Models"), I analyse how the topics of the economic measure of distance, specie and inflation, the grain trade, the imperial state and social change find counterparts in the sources for my reconstruction.⁹⁵ I then (16.6) select the trope of counterfeiting as well as the exemplar of the claimed lawlessness of the independent city for the transfer experiment proper.⁹⁶ The transfer analysis shows that counterfeiting (16.6.1) served both as a rhetorical tool for denigrating opponents and as an economic tool in areas short of cash and governmental control.⁹⁷ Investigating the question of lawlessness exposes a more general pattern, a cultural acceptance of violence (16.6.2), especially along the frontier.⁹⁸ The absence of strong governmental control as well as the

⁹³ Cf. p.448 below.

⁹⁴ Cf. on pp.450ff below.

⁹⁵ Cf. p.463 below.

⁹⁶ Cf. p.469 below.

⁹⁷ Cf. p.470 below.

⁹⁸ Cf. p.475 below.

amateur status of law enforcement and legal proceedings led to vigilante justice⁹⁹ on the one hand and the rise of private detectives, headhunters and paid informers (16.6.5) on the other.¹⁰⁰ In Nauvoo (16.6.3), policing was tightly coupled to security for the church leadership and enforcement of its wishes.¹⁰¹ The officers of the Nauvoo militia as well as the police squads were intimately connected to the Danite paramilitary groups from the Missouri conflict, as well as to the personal bodyguards of Joseph Smith Jr. Thus, the transfer experiment successfully corrects the bias in my previous reconstruction (16.6.6) of nineteenth-century economic life.¹⁰² This bias I trace back to biases in my sources on pioneer life,¹⁰³ with their rural and laudatory orientation that is at odds with the social volatility of urban Nauvoo and the Mississippi frontier.

In chapter 17 (“Salvation History in the Age of Microhistory”), the final chapter, I show that the *Book of Mormon* presupposes the verbatim veracity of the Old Testament (17.2), which modern Israelite archeology has invalidated.¹⁰⁴ I furthermore argue that the *Book of Mormon* mirrors the Old Testament in its theological speculation,¹⁰⁵ each imagining geographies and political histories in answer to their respective ages’ quest for meaning.

By following the Old Testament approach to salvation history, Joseph Smith Jr imported state-level “big men” history into Mormonism (17.3), which I illustrate from the *History of the Church*.¹⁰⁶ Yet such “big men” history obfuscates the contributions of men of lesser importance, the women and the apostates.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, Mormon women sponsored counter-history since Eliza Snow gave her support to Edward Tullidge’s epic *Women of*

⁹⁹ Cf. p.478 below.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. p.486 below.

¹⁰¹ Cf. p.480 below.

¹⁰² Cf. p.488 below.

¹⁰³ Cf. p.491 below.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. p.497 below.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. p.498 below.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. p.499 below.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. p.502 below.

Mormondom, while Mormon apostates wrote their own exposés.

The present-day LDS church supports Mormon believers¹⁰⁸ in finding their own position in salvation history with computer and archival resources for purposes of the baptism of the dead. Yet for larger Protestantism (17.5), the *theologumenon* of salvation history was dismantled by Rudolf Bultmann's work on demythologizing,¹⁰⁹ rescue efforts by Oscar Cullmann notwithstanding.¹¹⁰

Nevertheless, with the functional differentiation (17.5.3) of Western society,¹¹¹ the responsibility of theologians shifts (17.5.4) to assisting believers in the construction and maintenance of their personal religious identity, as Falk Wagner has argued.¹¹² Protestant theologians can assist believers in constructing their own salvation history (17.6.2) using the tools of oral history,¹¹³ provided the participatory and plural character of such salvation histories (17.6.1) is understood.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁸ Cf. p.505 below.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. p.506 below.

¹¹⁰ Cf. p.510 below.

¹¹¹ Cf. p.512 below.

¹¹² Cf. p.513 below.

¹¹³ Cf. p.520 below.

¹¹⁴ Cf. p.519 below.

Part I

Groundwork

Chapter 2

Methodology

2.1 Research Thesis

For the classical historiographical part of my dissertation, I analyze the difficulties of a Primitivist religious strategy in early nineteenth-century America by focusing on one religious group, the early Mormons, and one area of experience, their socio-economic policies. My research thesis is as follows:

Though Joseph Smith Jr was supportive of transportation improvements and technological innovation, he exhibited a systematic bias against developing capitalism, that is: manufacturing, mechanization and financing. This bias was fueled by the cultural ideal of the gentleman farmer, by his childhood experiences, and by the economic models of the Bible. Though Joseph Smith Jr's closest collaborators included economically astute and successful people, Smith Jr never acquired an appreciation for manufacturing, mechanization, finance or banking, with at times detrimental consequences for his congregation.

It is the purpose of the present chapter to outline the methodological toolkit for confirming or rejecting my research hypothesis. First, I will sketch my stance on event interpretation. Then, I will present Braudel's historiographical method. Next, I will how

my research will deal with the fact that Joseph Smith Jr¹ and his adherents considered many of his ideas divinely inspired. Finally, I will give an overview of the structure of my undertaking.

2.2 Event Interpretation

I now describe how the relationship between events and structures in historical writing works in more detail. This section substantially follows the argument I made in *Danto's Recipe for Clio*,² but shifts the focus to problems of historiography.³

2.2.1 Scripts and Events

There is a hermeneutic dependency between the details of any particular event and the expected regularities underpinning events of this type.⁴ The cognitive sciences speak of events on the one hand, and more conceptual structures such as scripts, goals, and plans on the other hand,⁵ to distinguish the imposition of conceptual regularities on the particulars of experience. Events are typed by identifying the scripts that structure them; and scripts are induced from sets of events.

¹ For reasons of precision, I use the fully qualified names of Mormon founder Joseph Smith Jr and of his father and first Patriarch of the Mormon church, Joseph Smith Sr, throughout this work. Furthermore, I continuously refer to the father as senior, even though, technically, he was not until Joseph Jr's birth in 1805.

²Robert C. Kahlert (2008). "Danto's Recipe for Clio: Leveraging Narrative Insights for Modeling Historiography in Symbolic Knowledge Bases". In: *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences* 2.5, pp. 317–324.

³ An analysis that compares and contrasts this approach, which is predominantly inspired by the cognitive sciences and the American traditions of analytic and pragmatic philosophy, to the approach of Alfred Schütz (and Thomas Luckmann) in *Structures of the Life-World* from 1982 on the one hand, and Ludwig von Mises' tack in *Theory and History* from 1957 on the other hand, remains an urgent desideratum.

⁴ This is not to imply that every event has exactly one type; or that the assignment of types to events is easy, obvious, straight-forward or uncontested, either among contemporaries or diachronically.

⁵R.C. Schank and R.P. Abelson (1977). *Scripts, Plans, Goals, and Understanding: An Inquiry Into Human Knowledge Structures*. The Artificial Intelligence Series. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. ISBN: 9780470990339.

Scripts frame the events. They box up a subset of what happened, the circumstances, and transform them into event details. The script assigns actors in the event to specific roles within the event. Other agents may be present, but if the script has no role for them, they belong to the circumstances and are backgrounded in the description. The same takes place with regard to non-agentive components, sometimes referred to as *materiél*, that is, the equipment and resources needed for the processes of the script. Things that are not assigned such a quality are again backgrounded.

Assume that I identify a goal: I want to eat a slice of pumpkin pie. In an attempt to satisfy this goal, I form a plan: I will bake the pumpkin pie myself. That plan has a sub-goal: I need to obtain a pumpkin. One way to achieve that goal is to go to the market and purchase one. These activities in turn devolve into cascading trees of subplans and subgoals, but I will for the moment focus on the purchase event itself.

The locus of the purchase event is the market stand of some farmer. In the event, I occur as an actor, in the role of the buyer. One of the people working for the farm, for example, the farmer's wife, occurs as an actor as well, in the role of the seller. The pumpkin functions as the object purchased, and the cash that I give the farmer's wife in return, as the monetary value transferred in the purchase event. The event has a unity of time and space that is appropriate to a face-to-face interaction.

This script captures the essence of the economic transaction, while smoothing over the complexities of the world. The script pulls into focus a few things and eliminates an astonishing amount of information.

For example, there may be other people at the stand at the same time, customers and employees, passerbys, police officers and pickpockets, but the script assigns no role to them. There may be other agents present, such as a small dog milling through the legs of the people, or doves picking at dropped produce. The script has no roles for them either.

The weather might have been windy or rainy that day, but the script has no slot for that information. All of this complexity is backgrounded by the script.

The complexity reduction does not just occur at the level of the circumstances, but even at the level of the sequence of the sub-events. What happened may not have fit the script perfectly either; I might have dropped a coin, or taken a cellphone call in between; the farmer's wife may have answered another customer's query about a price while I counted out the change, or sneezed and looked for a tissue.⁶

2.2.2 Enculturation

My competency as a member of my culture was acquired as a child, when my mother took me along to the market. There I learned the script of the purchase event, including all of its failures and exceptions, by watching many events performed as if for me. As a child, I had different goals and plans from my mother, so the scripts would have initially looked very different to me. If the farmer's wife brought her cute little dog, I may have associated buying produce with petting that dog. I might have even asked to go buy pumpkins because I wanted to play with the dog. But as the examples mounted, and with explanations from the competent adults, I would have understood that cute little dogs are not part of the script, but belong to separate scripts.

Other script aspects would have been clarified in formal education. Thus, while I would have understood the exchange aspect of the purchase, giving something in return for something else, it would have been my mathematics lesson in elementary school that would have trained me to associate prices with goods, distinguish coins, and check change received.

The continued absence of possible alternatives would have also shaped my script under-

⁶Arthur Coleman Danto (1965). *Analytical Philosophy of History*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.162.

standing. Though my society has a variety of payment forms in addition to cash—including checks, credit and charge cards, online payment systems such as Paypal, wire transfers, gift cards, electronic wallets, mortgages and loans, and even foreign currencies—market purchase events involve none of these. As I acquired competency and knowledge about these payment forms, I would have noticed that they never occurred at the market. Eventually, I learned that cash has the lowest overhead cost, explaining the observed regularity. As electronic wallets become ubiquitous, this might change. Perhaps paying in cash at the market will be as odd to future generations as paying with a credit card is now.

2.2.3 Events in the Historical Record

The foreigner, the child and the historian all face the same dilemma: They are confronted with event details for which they lack the scripts. They can employ the scripts that they already have in order to assimilate the event data to the point where they can postulate new scripts. This process of iterative adaptation is a hermeneutic process.⁷

Other than the child, and possibly the foreigner as well, the historian is in a difficult position because there is no one to ask for advice on the script construction. The sources themselves generally assume familiarity with the scripts, unless they are describing an exceptional situation. Therefore, they often only record the most specific event details.⁸

The historian thus faces a description that has been filtered twice: first by the complexity reduction of the scripts themselves; and secondly by the selection of the most salient features of a script, as per the viewpoint of the authors.

⁷ “Gleichartige Ereignisse erläutern sich gegenseitig, und ihre Vergleichung führt zu einem tieferen Verständnis des Einzelfalls.” Eduard Meyer (1912). *Ursprung und Geschichte der Mormonen mit Exkursen zu den Anfängen des Islams und des Christentums*. Halle a.S.: Max Niemeyer, p.12 (“Similar events explain each other, and their comparison leads to a deeper understanding of the individual case.”; translation RCK)

⁸ The key exception are nomological sources, such as instruction manuals or legal texts, as well as sources that discuss choices among alternative script sets, e.g. accepted forms of payment in newspaper advertisements.

Furthermore, the historian has to deal with the problem that scripts can differ between places and will change over time. In order to understand an event, the historian may have to use a script attested in temporal and geographical proximity, with the validity of that analogizing depending on the similarity of the locales. That similarity may be difficult or impossible to determine.⁹

2.2.4 Linearization Strategies

As Marshall McLuhan pointed out, narratives linearize time. One thing happens, and then the next thing happens, and so on and so forth. For historical reconstructions, this process is complicated in two ways.

1. Given the plurality of agents and natural processes in actual time, many things happen and happened at the same time. The fact that the beam of reconstruction can only shine on one event at a moment, thus covering sequentially what occurred synchronously, is an unfortunate effect of this narrative linearity applied to the currency of the lifeworld.
2. Given that the historical events attest the historical scripts, while the historical scripts are needed to understand the events, the historian is faced with a conundrum of what to present first. To understand any particular event, both kinds of information

⁹ Nowhere may this be more apparent than in the case of William Shakespeare, who remains a shadowy figure in an age that is extremely well researched. As a result, in his definitive analysis of Shakespeare's life, Greenblatt constantly has to refer to others' reminiscences to make up for the lacunae in documentation:

... would he [i.e. John Shakespeare, William's father, RCK] have taken his five-year old son to see the show [then performed in Stratford upon Avon, RCK]? Certainly other fathers did. In his old age, a man named Willis, born the same year as Will, recalled a play (now lost), called *The Cradle of Security*, that he saw in Gloucester—thirty-eight miles from Stratford—when he was a child. Stephen Greenblatt (2005). *Will in the World: How Shakespeare became Shakespeare*. London: Pimlico (Random House), p.30

Greenblatt is particularly explicit about the justifications for his analogizing, citing both the spatial and the temporal overlap.

need to be available: the details about the event, and the scripts that the event instantiates. Foregrounding the events obfuscates the underlying scripts and scatters the explanations over the chronological narrative; foregrounding the scripts removes the scripts from their context of discovery.

These issues have no easy solution. But the most important information is the chronological sequence, and so that ordering must form the backbone of the narrative.

2.2.5 Narrative Strategy

The strategy that I have adopted here is inspired by Hassig's *Aztec Warfare*.¹⁰ Hassig describes the scripts in the first part, then narrates the events in chronological order in the second part. I aspire to improve upon Hassig's work by making the link between events and scripts more explicit where possible, pointing forward from the scripts to the chronological narrative, and backward from the narrative to the scripts.¹¹

Chronologies become complicated when additional actors enter the narrative. Here I have chosen the expedient of briefly backtracking to give the background story for the new actors, as they come into the focus of the narrative. This acknowledges that their participation in the narrative is the justification for including them in the chronology in the first place. Simply sorting all of the events, across all the actors, into a chronological framework results in annals, not a story.

2.3 Braudel's Historiographical Method

The following is a brief analysis of Braudel's historiographical method. The purpose is to show how Braudel puts the structures into the foreground and allows them to dominate

¹⁰Ross Hassig (1988). *Aztec Warfare: Imperial Expansion and Political Control*. The Civilization of the American Indian Series. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

¹¹ Modern word processing makes it easy to do what would have been a major undertaking in 1988.

the events.

2.3.1 Braudel's Trifurcated Historical Time

Braudel operates with a “triple-decker” or “sandwich-model” of time. Braudel distinguishes between *le temps géographique*, *le temps social* and *le temps individuel*.¹² Alternatively, Braudel calls these time distinctions *la longue durée*, *l'histoire des groupes et groupements*¹³ and *l'histoire événementielle*.¹⁴

Braudel provides clues to their interpretation by associating them with different rates of change: *l'histoire quasi immobile*, *l'histoire lentement rythmée*, and *l'histoire à l'oscillations brèves*.¹⁵

Braudel's key concern is that the history of the events, in its rapid change and “frothy” nature, might mislead the historian, if the deeper temporal structures are improperly handled.

A dangerous world, but one whose spells and enchantments we shall have exorcised by making sure first to chart those underlying currents, often noiseless, whose direction can only be discerned by watching them over long periods of time. Resounding events are often only momentary outbursts, surface manifestations of these larger movements and explicable only in terms of them.¹⁶

¹² Braudel, (1990a), p.18 (cf. Fernand Braudel (1995a). *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. trans. by Sian Reynolds. Vol. 1. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 9780520203082, p.21) When I cite Braudel in English, it is according to Siân Reynolds' translation *ibid*. Fernand Braudel (1995b). *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. trans. by Sian Reynolds. Vol. 2. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 9780520203082. I provide the French original in the footnotes. I have provided my own translation—and noted so in the footnote—only in cases of significant disagreement, but give the corresponding page number to Ms Reynolds' translation for easy reference. My own translations remain deeply indebted to Ms Reynolds' achievement.

¹³ Braudel would have preferred *l'histoire sociale*, but that term had already drifted elsewhere semantically Braudel, (1990a), p.17 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.20).

¹⁴ Braudel, (1990a), pp.16f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.20f). The term is borrowed from François Simiand.

¹⁵ Braudel, (1990a), pp.16f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.20f) Braudel complicates the issue by also talking of cycles. Braudel assigns the seasonal cycle to the unchanging history of long duration, and the business cycle to the social history. What makes this confusing is that each iteration of the seasonal cycle is annual, while each iteration of the business cycle can go over a generation or more. Thus, an element of the long duration has a shorter iteration time than an element of social time.

¹⁶ Braudel, (1990a), p.18 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.21)

Thus, fast-forwarding the terminology to the present day, Braudel proposed to introduce into the classical historiographical distinction of structure and event—or background and foreground—a temporal qualification within the structure (or background) side of the explanation, namely the geographical versus the social time. That added distinction is justified by their different rates of change—quasi-immobile versus slow-moving.

The more convincing one finds the idea of distinguishing the background influences by their rate of change, the less convincing the distinction between only two “buckets” becomes. Do the rates of change in universal constants, plate tectonics, cloud and landscape formation, or technological innovation deserve to be distinguished and segregated in the same way? What about issues of biology, such as speciation, or the biosphere, or environmental aspects such as habitats and ranges?

The reason why Braudel has no more than three distinctions, however, is theoretical. For while *la longue durée* represents the immobile and the *l'histoire événementielle* the quick time, social time, *l'histoire lentement rythmée*, is the coupling point between the slow and the fast, the mediator.

This second book . . . is concerned with social structures, that is with mechanisms that are slow to change; it is also concerned with their movement. It mixes together, therefore, what we would call *structure* and *conjuncture*, the immobile and the moving, the slow and the exceedingly fast. These two realities, as economists are well aware, from whom we received their true distinction, are associated in everyday life, partaking continuously of what changes and what persists.¹⁷

Un monde dangereux, mais dont nous aurons conjuré les sortilèges et les maléfices en ayant, au préalable, fixé ces grands courants sous-jacents, souvent silencieux, et dont le sens ne se révèle que si l'on embrasse des larges périodes du temps. Les événements retentissants ne sont souvent que des instants, que des manifestations des ces larges destins et ne s'expliquent que par eux.

¹⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.7f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.352) [translation RCK] In quotes that span page boundaries, I use a vertical bar marker, to wit: |, to indicate the position of the page boundary in the quote.

. . . le second livre . . . s'intéresse à des structures sociales, donc à des mécanismes lents à

2.3.2 Analysis

Braudel's proposal calls for a change in the argumentation and the presentation of the historical narrative. But it cannot imply a change in the approach of the historian, because the immobile is inferred from the moving, to put it in Braudel's terms. Structures are induced from the events, with all the complexities of the hermeneutic problem which that entails. Like all good historians, Braudel is adamant about letting the sources speak for themselves,¹⁸ offer up their own categories, be met on their own terms.

Consider the *ritratto*,¹⁹ a type of land improvement of the Venetian *terra firma*, with its complex network of terminology including dykes (*argil*), entry points for water (*presi*) and the canals and trenches for distributing the irrigation streams (*scalladori*). This conceptual model is Braudel's reconstruction as extracted from the Venetian sources, not something he found unmediated in the *Archivio di Stato*.

There are indications that Braudel confuses the co-dependence of the Hermeneutic circle and the problem of the linearization of the exposition—see below p.32—with the synthetic prior of the event. In the introduction to the third volume, Braudel notes:

After the first edition of this book, André Piagniol wrote to me saying that I could have reversed the chosen order: begin with the event, then move beyond those brilliant and often fallacious aspects, attend next to the structures, then to the permanencies. Assuredly, the hourglass can turn over. And that image dispenses us from a long discourse.²⁰

s'user. Il s'intéresse aussi à leur mouvement. Et il mêle, finalement, ce que notre jargon nomme *structure* et *conjuncture*, l'immobile et la mouvant, la lenteur et l'excès de vitesse. Ces deux réalités, comme le savent les économistes à qui nous devons leur vraie distinction, sont associées dans la vie de tous | les jours, patragée sans fin entre ce qui change et ce qui persiste.

¹⁸ The *Livre de Poche* edition, which I used for the French quotes, lacks this section, entitled *Sources*.

This book was written primarily from manuscript sources. The plentiful published literature on the subject was studied only after research in the archives and then for the purposes of confirmation, correlation of results and complementary evidence. Braudel, (1995b), p.1245

¹⁹ Braudel, (1990a), p.87 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.87).

²⁰ Braudel, (1990c), p.9 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.902f) [translation RCK] André Piagniol m'écrivait, après

But, clearly that hourglass metaphor can only apply to the exposition, and not to the reconstructive process.²¹ The reconstructive process is not symmetric in this way at all. Furthermore, the duration of the extracted conceptual model is not something that can be simply read off its surface. Braudel wrongly insinuates that we can posit which bag a structure belongs to a priori. That exhibits the paralogism of the *petitio principii*, of assuming what needs to be argued. The onus lies on the researcher to show that no change occurred over time. If a structure is assessed to exhibit *la longue durée*, such an assessment is a posteriori, and valid only with respect to a fixed event sample. Maybe these structures will statistically cluster into long – geographical, slow change – social; maybe they will not.

Braudel's insight could also be applied to argumentation, but there Braudel leaves us in the dark. It is he himself that compares his third book, the event history—unfavorably—to political history in the style of Leopold von Ranke.

It was only after much hesitation that I decided to publish this third part, under the sign of events; it connects to a frankly traditional historiography. Leopold von Ranke would recognize its advice, its way of writing and thinking.²²

The main distinction that Braudel sees is that the then-present time (i.e. 1966) works with two distinct chains of events: one in the economic field, with its structures and conjunctures; the other in the political field—the “big men” event history of the nineteenth century. Braudel insists that the contemporaries of the events, such as Philip II, thought that the only chain was the political one; the economic only became available as a

la première édition de ce livre, que j'aurais pu renverser l'ordre choisi: commencer par l'événement, puis en dépasser les aspects brillants et souvent fallacieux, atteindre ensuite les structures, puis les permanences. Le sablier peut assurément se retourner. Et cette image nous dispensera d'un long discours.

²¹ For the problem of whether to present the events or the structures, however permanent first, see the discussion below p.??, which agrees with Braudel in fronting the structures.

²² Braudel, (1990c), p.7 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.901) [translation RCK]

J'ai beaucoup hésité à publier cette troisième partie sous le signe des événements; elle se rattache à une histoire franchement traditionnelle. Léopold von Ranke y reconnaîtrait ses conseils, sa façon d'écrire et de penser.

product of the research of the economic historians of the 1930s to 1960s.²³ Braudel admits that other chains are imaginable—he names the social, the cultural, collective psychology—but his main concern is to ward off an either-or between the economic and the political chain, or a reductive absorption of the one by the other.

But if the geographical conditions and the *milieu* are not completely contained within the structures of the social history, as the background for the conjunctures, then they should rear their heads within the history of the events—not just as a shared background understanding, but in the actual arguments and explanations. Yet this seems to be rarely the case in the Third Book, and the close proximity to the Leopold von Ranke style of political history seems to suggest that this is not even necessary. Such a stance gravely undermines Braudel’s effort in the first two books.

2.4 Inspiration and Biases

Like many inspired people before him, Joseph Smith Jr brought a new revelation to the world. In the Abrahamic religions, revelations as communications from the Divine, originating with the very source of existence, are existential. Revelations demand of their hearers a transformational decision: to accept the validity of the revelation and to adjust their lives accordingly; or to be segregated from the source of life and accept the (possibly eternal) consequences. Those that hear the call to discipleship, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer put it, drop their nets and follow.

Their discipleship will henceforth color their interpretation of the world. Thus, distinguished Mormon historian D. Michael Quinn writes:

I feel it necessary to state my biases at the outset. I believe in Gods, angels, spirits, and devils, and they have communicated with humankind. In Mormon

²³ Braudel, (1990c), p.8f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.902f).

terms, I have a personal “testimony” of Jesus as my Savior, of Joseph Smith, Jr. as a prophet, of the *Book of Mormon* as the word of God, and of the LDS church as a divinely established organization through which men and women can obtain essential priesthood ordinances of eternal consequence.²⁴

The existential pushiness of the call to discipleship raises the hackles of those who find themselves unconvinced, or, possibly worse, who lapse from conviction.²⁵ Instead of disciples of the revelation, they become disciples of rationalism, for want of a better word, who now pursue with equivalent zeal the unmasking of the “priestly deception”, the exposition of the colluding scoundrels, and the demythologizing of the narratives of salvation. Some proselytize just as aggressively for their oppositional stance as the believers do for the acceptance of the revelation.

As a historian of religious thought, I cannot accept either position.²⁶ And I emphatically reject the kerygmatic either-or that underpins the options. By definition, I will disagree existentially with almost all revelatory claims that I will ever encounter in my studies.²⁷ Therefore, my agreement or disagreement cannot be the point of the effort. To me, the point of the analysis is to elucidate the historical context in which the revelation arose; to describe how it differed from other revelations; to explain the needs and assumptions of those who accepted it (which includes the revelator), so as to make transparent their choice to accept the calling; and to show what happened, both to the revelation and to the adherents, when the revealed stance came into contact with a complex and unsupportive

²⁴Michael D. Quinn (1998). *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*. 2nd ed. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, p.xxxviii.

²⁵ Richard Bushmann believes that a significant part of the scholarly literature on Joseph Smith Jr is due to former Mormons who feel the need to explain their departure; Richard Lyman Bushman (2005). *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*. 1st ed. New York: Knopf, p.xix.

²⁶ “Many studies of early Mormon history subordinate historical inquiry to proving that Joseph Smith was either a saint or a scoundrel.”; Elwin C. Robison (1997). *The First Mormon Temple: Design, Construction and Historic Context of the Kirtland Temple*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, p.xii.

²⁷ In the words of Mormon historian Shippis, “all truth claims are potentially divisive” and thus call into the decision—what I have termed the kerygmatic either-or—whether they are true or false Jan Shippis (1985). *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition*. Urbana, IL — Chicago: University of Illinois Press, p.27.

world.²⁸

I hope to explain Joseph Smith Jr as a theologian, who had revelations concerning the nature of God and the expected actions of His congregation. I hope to show how Joseph Smith Jr's revelations were an answer to the concerns that he and the converts to his movement had. I hope to show the interrelationship between the socio-economic actions that Joseph Smith Jr had to set in motion, as president of a church, and his theological development.²⁹

At the same time, I am not interested in the question of whether the angel Moroni ever appeared in Joseph Smith Jr's bedroom, or what such a vision could mean. I am not interested in what, if anything, Joseph Smith Jr found in the Hill Cumorah and how that may or may not relate to the *Book of Mormon* published in Palmyra in March of 1830. These questions smack of the call to discipleship of either the apologists or the demythologizers.³⁰ My interests begin where contemporaries respond positively to these claims and change their lives to accommodate their new-found calling.³¹

2.5 Organization

This monograph is structured into three large parts: the groundwork; the socio-economic case studies; and the application of the Braudelian models with their evaluation.

The groundwork, to which this methodological chapter belongs, gives theoretical and

²⁸ In terms of bias identification, notice that this form of reconstruction goes against the grain of the "irresistible grace" of a Jean Calvin but is rather Arminian in accentuating the choice of the individual. However one may feel about the theological issues concerned, the Arminian view corresponds more to the religious seeker's plurality of conversions and even baptisms.

²⁹ Shipps faults the prominent role of the so-called First Vision, only reported in 1838, within the theological narrative, for "hiding the dynamism of the developmental process by which Mormonism's present theological system involved"; cf. Shipps, (1985), p.33.

³⁰ Meyer, (1912), pp.10-12.

³¹ Apologists can misinterpret such an interest. The fact that people were willing to transform their lives or risk their all is not a validation of the kerygma, but an indication of these people's faith in the kerygma.

pragmatic background information. It reconstructs eclectically in the second chapter those parts of everyday life in the United States of America at the beginning of the nineteenth century needed to understand the narratives. In the third chapter, it enumerates the preconditions of Joseph Smith Jr's understanding of social and economic policy, the so-called baseline, up to the autumn of 1827, the traditional date for discovering the plates of Moroni at Cumorrah Hill. The part concludes with a chapter that explicates the theological foundation of Mormonism, the Book of Mormon, as a new revelation: who expected a new revelation; why they expected one; and what formal and internal criteria such a revelation had to meet in order to make converts.

The second part, the socio-economic case studies, are the heart of the argumentative effort. Spatially, the case studies focus on Kirtland on the one hand, and on Nauvoo on the other, because the socio-economic evidence for Missouri beyond the Law of Consecration and the United Firm is too sketchy for my purposes. In those chapters, I explore decisive socio-economic challenges that Joseph Smith Jr and his advisors had to manage for the budding church, and align these with the ongoing theological work that Joseph Smith Jr was doing at the respective times. Where germane, I introduce new advisors to Joseph Smith Jr, so that over the entire second part, most of the key economic counselors—men such as Martin Harris, Sidney Rigdon, Whitney K. Newell, Edward Partridge, Frederick G. Williams, Edward Hunter, Edwin Wooley, and the Brothers Law—enter the stage as well. The second part concludes with a summary and evaluation of the main research thesis, to wit, whether Joseph Smith Jr had systematic theological biases against specific forms of economy, such as manufacturing or banking, that were then just developing in the United States but lacked any clear exposition in the Scriptures.

If the first and the second part present the Le Roy Ladurie style of historiography, Part III gives Braudel a chance to respond. The first chapter within that part identifies

conceptual models from the second book, on social time,³² on the Mediterranean that could shed new light on the interpretation of Joseph Smith Jr's socio-economic policies, as presented in Part II. The second chapter applies and evaluates these models for their potential contributions, while also analyzing the shortcomings of the Braudelian approach.

The third and final chapter looks to the overall historiographical outcome and considers appropriate forms for intra-denominational self-reconstruction, i.e. Church History. What puts Mormonism squarely in the camp of the Abrahamic religions is that Mormonism sees itself as taking the Old Testament salvation story that started with Abraham and extend its narrative arc right into the Americas. Yet that notion of a salvation story is based upon a “big men” historiographic conception, written at the resolution of the families, groups and people that these “big men” rule. The final question to address will therefore be, how such a “big men” history, with its grand sweep that bypasses the individuals, and salvation history in general, is possible in an age where bottom-up history, the end of the great narratives, and the demythologizing of Biblical narratives are the watchwords of the day.

³²Braudel, (1990b).

Chapter 3

Nineteenth-Century Economic Life

3.1 Introduction

In 1810, when the young Republic completed its latest census, the following socio-economic picture presented itself.

America ... [was in 1810, RCK] a large, thinly populated country of seven million, devoted almost exclusively to agriculture. Much cotton, wheat, and tobacco were exported abroad, while the remainder of the agricultural produce was largely consumed by self-sufficient rural households. Barter was extensive in the vast regions of the frontier. Commerce was largely devoted to the exporting of agricultural produce, which was generally grown close to river transportation. The proceeds were used to import desired manufactured products and other consumer goods from abroad. Major export products were cotton and tobacco from the South, and grain from the West. The cities, which contained only 7 percent of the country's population, were chiefly trading depots channeling exports to and from abroad. New York City was becoming the nation's great foreign trade center, with Philadelphia and Boston following closely behind.¹

In the following pages, I will unpack this terse, brilliant sketch of the then-existing socio-economic situation to give an appreciation of what this state of affairs meant for the

¹Murray N. Rothbard (2002). *The Panic of 1819: Reactions and Policies*. online. Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, p.1.

everyday life of ordinary people—such as the members of Joseph Smith Jr’s family.²

3.2 Settlement

Ever since John Smith the explorer and his compatriots had stepped off the boat to found the Virginia Colony in 1607, the pattern had been roughly the same for a good 200 years. Those newly arrived apparently found land that was sparsely settled, if at all, by Native Americans. Plenty of space and plenty of resources beckoned for the taking.³

The pioneers would put basic infrastructure in place, first for themselves and then for their community. They were busy clearing land, developing farms, setting up industries like mills,⁴ and building the first shops, churches, schools and taverns. More settlers would arrive, and the demand for already cleared land would raise the prices and the values of the existing acreage. As the space between the farmsteads disappeared, hamlets would come together to form townships, with civil government infrastructure in the tow, plus other accoutrements of civilization such as libraries, academies, banks and civic associations. Counties linked these townships via the legislatures into the large political configurations of the state.

This process would not only push out the natives, and eliminate the large apex predators, but eventually make life too expensive for the new arrivals or the new generation. These “newcomers” would eventually find it cheaper to pick up and follow the trade routes used by the woodsmen, pelt traders and trappers, be they on the rivers or on overland roads, and move closer to the frontier.

² In 1810 Joseph Smith Jr was five and living in Royalton, Vermont; cf. Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed. (2001). *Lucy’s Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith’s Family Memoir*. 1st ed. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, p.169.

³ For a systematic analysis of the biases in overselling these impressions back in the Old World, cf. William Cronon (1983). *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England*. New York: Hill and Wang, pp.34f.

⁴ On mills, cf. below on page p.79.

Even if only on paper, the frontier almost always belonged to someone, even if they got to agree to the settling only after the fact⁵. Palmyra in upstate New York, for example, was part of the Phelps-Gorham Purchase, which was administrated by a land agent with an office in Canandaigua. Ohio was part of the Western Reserve. Even Utah, into which the Mormons would emigrate in 1846, nominally belonged to Mexico then.



Figure 3.1: Present-day Map of the State of New York. For license, see page 550 below.

Simplifying roughly, the two centuries of this process had produced three bands, extending from the East to the West, in the New Republic.

The first band, mostly along the Atlantic Coast, were regions like New England, which contained large cities and well-settled communities with decades of experience in civil

⁵Nelson, (1952), p.10.

governance, the beginnings of manufacturing, commerce and education. These regions were well-connected and had the best transportation infrastructure.

The second band were regions like Rochester, Canandaigua and Palmyra in upstate New York, townships with a few thousand inhabitants, which were just crossing over into the “settled” status in terms of their goods and services, and even beginning to treat their pioneer days as nostalgic objects of fond memories of a “simpler life” within the founding families.

And the third and Westernmost band were regions like Missouri and Ohio, which were under active cultivation of the virgin forest and soil, with scattered small communities along the arteries of transportation—generally rivers and canals.

Distinct patterns of settlement corresponded to these bands. The first-band settlements, if they had not grown into large towns, produced a pattern, the New England farming village⁶. The farming village was inspired by the English village form that the seventeenth century settlers had brought over from the mother land. The further west one moved, the sparser the settlement patterns became.

The nuclei of the pioneer settlements would coalesce into villages, but the periphery would be ever further separated family farmsteads. Part of this had to do with the size of the farms; though there were many rectangular ways to arrange 100 acres, many of the practical arrangements placed quite a bit of buffer space between the individual families living along the same road.⁷

In the Westernmost band, it would not be unusual for farmsteads to be 30 miles away

⁶Nelson, (1952), pp.7-11.

⁷ On the map of the Palmyra and Manchester Townships in the 1820s (Plewe, Brown, and Cannon, [2012], p.17), contrast the density of settlement in the villages of Palmyra, Macedon and Manchester, with the sparser settlement along the Armington Road. Along the Stafford Road, where the Smith Sr family had their farm, the density appears to be about 5 farmsteads to the mile.

from their nearest neighbor.⁸ As Nelson pointed out,⁹ the advantage of the isolated farmstead settlement was, that it optimized for the local work pattern of the families. Social and economic interactions outside the family setting were disadvantaged and required travel. The lack of roads, or the low quality of the existing ones, contributed to this separation.

3.3 Pioneer and Farm Life

The pioneer life was the basic pattern. It was the rhythm that tamed the wilderness. Each move away from existing infrastructure required the pattern to be repeated all over. Settled life was pioneer life with more neighbors and amenities.

The settlers that moved into the Phelps and Gorham Purchase during the 1800s found streams and abundant wildlife in forests that only housed small groups of Indians and trappers.¹⁰ In their eyes it was a paradise: huge forests populated with deer (p.192); lakes with huge flocks of ducks and wild geese (p.399); streams teeming with salmon, bass, pickerel and speckled trout (p.266). There was land aplenty, as well as trees to use for building materials. Of course, this paradise was a bit of a fixer-upper: Panthers (that is, mountain lions) (p.375); bears (p.401; 418); packs of wolves (p.191; 209); and timber

⁸ John Clark relates the woes of a landlady from an isolated part of Illinois, where there was no physician within a 30-mile radius to help her sick family, nor any ministers to perform the funerary rites once the sickness had run its lethal course; cf. Clark, (1842), p.119.

⁹Nelson, (1952), p.12.

¹⁰ The following description is almost entirely drawn from the reminiscences that O. Turner collected; Orasmus Turner (1851). *History of the Pioneer settlement of Phelps and Gorham's Purchase Morris' reserve; embracing the counties of Monroe, Ontario, Livingston, Yates, Steuben, most of Wayne and Allegany, and parts of Orleans, Genesee and Wyoming*. Rochester: William Alling This is legitimate, if one keeps in mind the limitations of the source: The contributors' families were the "winners" of the pioneer settlement; those that had encountered difficulties had moved away and could not be interviewed 40 years later. Because of the generational turn-over, some of the contributors had only been children at the time of the events narrated and might have never experienced them directly. Furthermore, the narratives are replete with thrilling, sensational or humorous anecdotes, especially with respect to bear encounters, where witnesses clearly indicate that they are only relating the most entertaining ones. Finally, they are narrated with moralistic intent, celebrating the hardiness of the pioneers and deploring the soft ways of the successor generation who mistake "a healthful breeze" or "to black their own boots" for hardship Ibid., p.220f.

rattlesnake colonies along the river banks (p.412) initially made for difficult neighbors.

The pioneers had come in small groups, usually of males, bringing with them guns, tools and, if possible, seeds (p.221). The important part was to get enough infrastructure—a hut (p.379) of some kind,¹¹ and a minimal agriculturally productive area¹² (p.382)—put into place so that enough food could be grown and enough shelter made available to make it into the next spring. Fish (p.409), waterfowl, and deer (p.380) complemented the diet until the first harvest was ready. Maple trees provided syrup (p.273). Alternatively, the pioneers hunted for trade goods, such as pelts of beaver (p.382) and fox (p.383) and raccoon (p.409); or prepared dried deer hams (p.209), salted pigeon breasts (p.409), and smoked or dried fish. Any surplus was bartered away to make up for any momentary lack (p.380), as nearby as with the local Indians, or as far away as Boston (p.353) and other eastern markets (p.209), or across Lake Ontario into Canada (p.411).

Once this minimal infrastructure was in place—and some never completed that stage, remaining deer hunters and trappers indefinitely—it was possible to bring in the Missus and the children (p.379); farm animals (p.380); and vegetable and fruit tree seeds (p.405). A variety of means of transport¹³ were available to haul in the belongings such as clothes, the minimal furniture and household goods: batteaux (p.388) for the waterways; horse and ox carts (p.380), and sleds (p.382) in the winter—a preferred time for moving, since it was an agriculturally inert season anyway and the snow and ice smoothed over the rutted paths.¹⁴

¹¹ In their most basic form, the log huts were simple single-story constructions, with but one room that served as kitchen, living area and bedroom. More elaborate huts either had a cellar-like cool room under the baseboards, for keeping stores fresh, or a garret for sleeping quarters. Upstairs apartments separated the parental room from the children's. Given the limited space, siblings slept together in a single bed into their teens, segregated by gender.

¹² Land would be cleared of tree and brushwood, but not even plowed before sowing corn.

¹³ On the details of mobility and transportation infrastructure available, cf. below on page p.55.

¹⁴ Not all families waited. One family, consisting of two parents and nine children, came with oxen, cows and sheep during the winter on sleighs, which they covered tipi-like until the spring sowing was done and the blockhouse could be built. The family had come with a year's supply of stores and supplemented their

The wife and the children provided additional labor in terms of agriculture and the necessities of life, freeing the men to extend the family holdings and thus provide economic security. Bartering was expensive (p.411); it was preferable to be self-supporting; and if there was a surplus to trade with, even better.

While the husband would continue to hunt and fish as necessary, he was primarily responsible for getting more land cleared, fenced¹⁵ and under cultivation. In the remaining time, he would improve the existing buildings (p.347), or build new ones: pens for sheep and pigs, with high walls to keep out the wolves (p.409); chicken coops (p.406); barns and workshops (p.381); bedroom extensions to the log house for the growing family. Some were able to set up saw mills and grist mills (p.389), powered by the plentiful streams, which provided for additional income.¹⁶ Whiskey distilleries converted excess grain into a lighter¹⁷ yet higher-priced trade good (p.383). Others burned plant matter to produced potash (p.279), an important component of soap and gunpowder.¹⁸ Finally, the husband was also responsible for physical security, going out even in the dark of night (p.191) to confront the local apex predators that threatened the livestock or the family.

While the older boys and young men assisted the father in his tasks, the younger ones were responsible for supervising the animals (p.191). Since there were no pastures, horses, cows, sheep and pigs were allowed to roam the woods freely during the day for sustenance, then brought back into their pens and corrals at nightfall. The boys accompanied the animals and alerted the adults if predators were nearby. The boys also took on time-consuming, off-farmstead tasks, such as taking grain via pack horse to a mill for grinding,¹⁹

diet with venison and barter with the Indians (p.380).

¹⁵ The classical split-rail fencing of upstate New York, where sections of a tree are hewn into long rails and stacked in a zig-zag pattern on the side of the fields, has the advantage that the logged trees do not have to be moved very far. See Figure 4.2 on page p.102 below.

¹⁶ On mills, cf. below on page p.79.

¹⁷ On distilleries and other weight-reducing processes, cf. below on page p.80.

¹⁸ For asheries, the manufacturing locale for potash, cf. below on page p.81.

¹⁹ Cf. Eber D. Howe (1878). *Autobiography and Recollections of a Pioneer Printer*. Painesville: published

running errands (p.214) or relaying messages to neighbors.

The wife was in charge of all forms of food processing, in the absence of refrigeration, the only type of food that would keep. Fruit was preserved, sauced (p.191) or baked into pies; legumes and beans dried; meats and fish dried and smoked. The wife tended the kitchen garden, where vegetables were grown, as well as the fruit orchards. If the family had cows (p.211), the milking, butter-churning and possibly the manufacture of cheese (p.225 Note) would have also been under her supervision. The wife was responsible for clothes and shoes, either from deerskin (p.192) or from wool (p.211); linen had to be imported. In all of these tasks, she was assisted by her daughters to the extent that they were available and old enough, and by the male family members during the evenings (p.191). In the absence of the men, the women were responsible for defending the homestead against predators (p.192), though they avoided confronting them directly. Finally, the wife gave birth to additional family members. In the isolation of the frontier, sometimes Indian squaws were the only other women available to assist in that life-threatening task (p.426 Note).

Though children were essential farm labor, parents were conscious and desirous of the need for schooling. The men pooled their resources and labor to build block house schools; and the children attended these during the winter months, often walking 2-3 miles each way in the snow; the community collected funds to employ teachers (p.193). The quality of these schools must have varied considerably; Eber D. Howe remembers the Scots drunkard that taught at his.²⁰ The use of the birch to urge “some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge”,²¹ as Washington Irving put it, seems to have been ubiquitous.²²

by the author, p.4, who speaks of a “two to ten miles” journey, involving two to three bags of wheat at a bushel each, thus too heavy for the children to lift themselves: should any bag slide off the horse, they had to wait for a grown-up to happen by.

²⁰Howe, (1878), p.2.

²¹Washington Irving (1907). “The Works of Washington Irving (15 vols.)” In: vol. 1. New York: Jenson Society. Chap. The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, p.479.

²²Howe, (1878), p.2.

What news and information traveled in these dispersed settlements came from chance or trade encounters. Trappers and traders formed the wide-ranging part of this information exchange, while the local population traveled as far as the outmost service point, such as the mill, that they required. In an area with but a smattering of inns, hospitality was a key component, and the boarding of travelers (p.417) must almost be counted among the local entertainments. Given the restricted choices of mates, it is not surprising that some of these encounters²³ ended with permanent ties.²⁴

In the process of fixing up their Eden, the pioneer settlers had a profound impact on their ecological context.

The apex predators were sorely tempted by the livestock. Bears were especially interested in the cows (p.191) and pigs (p.409); probably the same was true for the panthers. Wolves had a preference for sheep (p.191; p.409). Foxes and birds of prey targeted the chickens (p.375). However, the settlers were better equipped for the resulting confrontations with their guns and steel tools (p.198). It did not help that many of the large predators had valuable pelts (p.409). The communities explicitly supported the elimination of what they perceived as threats: in a time where a farm laborer earned roughly \$9 a month, plus room and board,²⁵ bounties for wolf skins started at \$2 (p.170) to \$5 (p.402) per “scalp” (p.223) and ran as high as \$20, when the state, county and local bounties were added together (p.191). Farmers hired trappers to take out entire packs (p.191; p.532) or organized wolf drives (p.537).²⁶ Any bear that could be killed safely was dispatched (p.198). At the transition times to hibernation, in late fall and early spring (p.412), men

²³Western Presbyterian Church’s Women Society, ed. (1907). *Palmyra, Wayne County, New York*. Rochester: Herald Press, p.8.

²⁴Famously, Joseph Smith Jr’s marriage to Emma Hale of Harmony, Pennsylvania, came about through a boarding engagement; cf. Newell and Avery, (1994), pp.16-19.

²⁵Stanley Lebergott (1964). *Manpower in Economic Growth: The American Record since 1800*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Tables A-23 and A-24, pp.257ff.

²⁶Wolf drives were “productive” in that they usually flushed out a whole range of large animals, including deer, bear and foxes (p.537), that either had value as providers of meat and leather or for their pelts.

would take their canoes up the creeks to the rattlesnake dens and slaughter them by the hundreds (p.425) as the reptiles were sluggishly basking on the banks in the sun.²⁷

The pioneers had a similar impact on other pelt producing animals, though they were not contending with them over their live-stock. Local beaver colonies would disappear within a few years (p.380).

The pioneers also shifted around the fish stocks, moving pickerel from Lake Ontario into some of the local creeks, which decimated the trout population (p.375). Among the unintended consequences of settlement was the introduction of feral pigs (p.265 Note). These feisty creatures were quite capable of dealing with the bears, wolves and panthers (p.426) that still remained, and naturalists considered them the scourge of the rattlesnakes.²⁸ Eventually, the pioneers had to take on this evil that they had introduced and hunt them as well. Other species simply followed the newcomers, because they could adapt to their lifestyles and the changes they caused in the predator pool: “The crow, the grey squirrel, the quail, came in with civilization. New species of birds have been coming in almost yearly. The opossum is a new comer [sic RCK].” (p.381)

3.4 Settled Life

The transition to settled life was gradual, which makes it difficult to track. Settled life required points of agglomeration, such as transportation hubs—natural harbors or river crossings. The first Indian trade store or the first tavern attracted additional businesses,

²⁷ It is unclear whether the pioneers in New York and Ohio ate rattlesnake meat, as people in the American Southwest do to this day; they did however prepare medicines from rattlesnake oil (p.425). While bites were common, medicinal care for rattlesnake bites was in its infancy; and the newspapers published “efficacious remedies” of dubious success. The May 8, 1816 *Ohio Register* recommended an “application of kali preparation to the wound” and dissolving “a lump [of the chemical kali, RCK] the size of a hazel nut” in vinegar as a oral medication, to be taken every half hour “during effervescence”; cf. Anthony Banning Norton (1862). *A History of Knox County, Ohio, from 1779 to 1862*. Columbus: Richard Nevins, p.200

²⁸ John Edward Holbrook (1838). *North American Herpetology*. 1st ed. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: J. Dobson, p.84 (for the Timber Rattlesnake *crotalus horridus* Linneaus, 1758)

which complemented the offers of goods and services.

Consider the case of Palmyra. Former Revolutionary War soldier Captain John Swift built a log cabin alongside Mud Creek. Swift also constructed a storehouse for trading purposes, and the locale became known as Swift's Landing.²⁹ The location anchored the road network for Palmyra, forming the basis for the intersection of what would become Main Street and, with the arrival of the Erie Canal in 1822, Canal Street. More and more pioneers continued to arrive. Those that bought farming land would settle at a distance from the others. Those that offered goods and services would settle close to the developing infrastructure, houses then doubling as stores and family accommodations.

By 1796, enough families had arrived that they could vote to incorporate the village of Palmyra³⁰ and make Captain Swift the head of the town militia. During this consolidation period, the somewhat limited local possibilities meant that some of the young men left the area to learn a profession or pursue mercantile interests elsewhere, then returned to marry locally and settle down with a new business, near their extended family (p.381).

Eventually, the local populace would grow to a size that was sufficient to sustain a service industry in the stricter sense of the term, beyond the occasional tavern or professions. Newspapers and bookstores, banks, churches, libraries and meeting halls for civic organisations, such as the Freemasons, would appear. Itinerant professionals, such as preachers and doctors, had enough customers to settle down. Better schooling would become available through academies and finishing schools. Wood constructions would be replaced by brick and stone; streets and sidewalks would be paved. Stores would start to carry goods beyond the basic necessities, such as fine teas and coffees, wines and spirits, fashionable fabrics and patterns, delicate furniture, china and tableware.

Depending on the location and the economic opportunities, as well as the general

²⁹Turner, (1851), p.379.

³⁰Society, (1907), p.9.

economic climate, settlements could grow very rapidly.³¹ Other settlements might lose population, as catastrophic harvests, exploited soils, or rising prices per acre made it prudent to make a living elsewhere. Cheaper land, lower taxes,³² greater independence and new opportunities always seemed to beckon a few hundred miles further west.³³

The duration of the “sweet spot” of low population and low prices was typically very short, but economically highly significant. While the average farm laborer’s salary, including room and board, hovered around \$9 per month in the 1810s and 1820s for the Northeastern United States, outside the New England towns³⁴ where land cost from \$10 per acre upwards,³⁵ farm hands in newly settled areas could earn as much as \$1 per day, or about \$30 per month, but buy land for 25 cents per acre (p.212).

The increase of population density that settlements brought with them also meant a significant increase in the types of diseases that people were exposed to. In the dispersed settlements of the frontier, infections had few places to go beyond the immediate families.³⁶ But larger agglomerations of people, especially in conditions that were insufficiently sanitary—be they camps or lower-income wards in the large cities—allowed diseases to spread rapidly.

³¹ In the first thirty years of its existance, Palmyra basically grew by over a thousand people per decade. 530 in the 1800 Census (New York, Reel 28, Ontario County, f.514-B); 2189 in the 1810 Census (New York, Reel 33, Oneida & Ontario County, f.802); 3734 in the 1820 Census (New York, Reel 62, Ontario County, f.19).

³² Taxes were considered especially onerous, since they had to be paid in specie, thus burdening the notes and account debt system supported economy. Pioneers claimed that some of their friends had been forced to sell land to obtain the cash for their taxes (p.383).

³³ On the planned move of the entire congregation of the Brush Run Church from Buffalo, Pennsylvania, to Zanesville, Ohio, see below, p.187.

³⁴ Lebergott, (1964), Tables A-23 and A-24, pp.257ff.

³⁵ Vogel, (1996), I.B.5, p.321 Fn 128.

³⁶ Daniel Walker Howe (2007). *What Hath God Wrought. The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*. Kindle. Oxford History of the United States. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.33.

3.5 Mobility and Trade

3.5.1 Using Person Power

By default, people walked.³⁷ Walking was the only mode of locomotion that worked in every part of the native forests. It required only paths, not roads. Such paths were created by the animals or by the native Indians. There were two problems with walking: The amount of goods one could carry were limited (p.381); and it was too slow to escape large predators (p.203) or hostile parties (p.379), or to keep urgent appointments.

3.5.2 Using Animal Power

The basic approach to increasing the rate of locomotion was to use something other than the human body to provide the energy. The two main alternatives were horses and oxen.

A horse's speed is dependant on many factors, including breeding and size, but one core factor is the gait. Horses typically walk at 4 mi/h (or 6.4 km/h); trot at 8-12 mi/h (or 13-19 km/h); canter at 12-15 mi/h (or 19-24 km/h); and gallop at 25-30 mi/h (or 40-48 km/h).³⁸ The trot is the working gait of a horse and can be sustained for hours; fast gallops are only sustainable for 1-2 miles (1.6-3.2 km) before the horse needs to rest. Canters can be sustained for greater distances than gallops, but not as long as the trot.

In order to haul larger amounts of freight, horses were combined into teams and harnessed in front of a coach, sleigh or packet boat. The rates achieved varied significantly. An interview from 1905 with a teamster from Indianapolis, who operated in Ohio in the 1830s, reports:

³⁷ For normal-weight adults, the preferred walking speed is 1.4 m/s, which translates to 3 mi/h or about 5 km/h, as this is the minimum energy cost required to walk a given distance; cf. Raymond C. Browning et al. (2006). "Effects of obesity and sex on the energetic cost and preferred speed of walking". In: *Journal of Applied Physiology* 100, pp. 390-398, p.390 c.2.

³⁸ Susan E. Harris (1993). *Horse gaits, balance, and movement*. New York: Macmillan, p.32-49.

Under favorable conditions ten days to and from Madison or Lawrenceburg, and twelve days for the Cincinnati trip were counted on; but sometimes it took almost twice that long, and in the latter cases the profits of the business were meager. The tariff [sic RCK] was about \$2.00 to \$2.50 a hundred weight [sic RCK],³⁹ and with fair roads thirty hundred weight could be hauled with four horses.⁴⁰

With the distance of Indianapolis to Lawrenceburg estimated at 98 miles, and the distance from Indianapolis to Madison at 103 miles, the team would average 8.2 miles per day. The distance to Cincinnati, Ohio is at 115 miles between 17 and 12 miles longer, which squares well with an estimated extra two days (rounded up) of travel time. Coaches with more horses and less weight could go faster, of course; in 1817, the route from New York to Philadelphia took 8h 35m to complete, at an average rate of $11 \frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour.⁴¹

Going as far back as antiquity, rates for ox-carts were comparable to slow horse carts. Gabriel estimates nine miles a day for an ox-drawn cart loaded with a thousand pounds of weight, compared to nineteen miles a day for mule-drawn carts.⁴² During the Peninsula War (1807-1814), Wellington found that his supply networks, based on mules and ox carts, reduced the rates of advance of his armies to about fifteen miles a day.⁴³ Gabriel argues that horses, donkeys and mules—equipped with panniers, pack saddles or wooden frames—were able to carry loads both farther and faster, on or off road, at less forage: horses managed 200 lbs at thirty-two miles per day; mules 300 lbs at 40 miles per day. Generals like Philip of Macedon were able to take advantage of the improved mobility achieved through this approach.⁴⁴

³⁹ A hundredweight is 100 lbs or 45.35 kg.

⁴⁰George S. Cottman (1908). “Early Wagon Transportation”. In: *The Indiana Quarterly Magazine of History* 4.1, pp. 7–8, p.8.

⁴¹Caroline E. MacGill et al (1917). *History of Transportation in the United States before 1860*. Ed. by Balthasar Henry Meyer. Washington: Carnegie Institute of Washington, p.63.

⁴²Richard .A. Gabriel (2007). *The Ancient World. Soldiers’ lives through history*. Portsmouth, NH: Greenwood Press. ISBN: 9780313333484, p.102.

⁴³Christopher David Hall (1992). *British Strategy in the Napoleonic War, 1803-15*. Manchester New German Texts. Manchester University Press. ISBN: 9780719036064, p.37.

⁴⁴Gabriel, (2007), p.102.

Since one of the fundamental costs of locomotion is overcoming surface friction, winter weather and ice-covered ground significantly reduced the energy consumption. Sleigh teams (p.382), drawn either by horses or by oxen, were commonly used for moving goods in the wintertime.⁴⁵ On the lake shores, ice skating was a mode of rapid transportation, for example, in courier and mail services.⁴⁶

3.5.3 Water Transportation

The European colonists had come to what for them was a New World, crossing the Atlantic Ocean using water transport. For the entire colonial period, the latitudinal integration with the countries of origin, via the Atlantic, dominated mobility and trade. The longitudinal integration, channeled through the Appalachian Mountain system, which segregated the coastal plain from the Ohio-Mississippi-Missouri river system, was negligible,⁴⁷ as roads were absent or awful.

... the colonies throughout the colonial period were commercially closer to Europe than they were to one another.⁴⁸

Just as the ocean and coastal traffic had its bewildering variety of craft, so did the river traffic, with boats becoming smaller and smaller as the waters required. Some were powered by sails; some by currents; some by human or animal power. Steam power for propulsion of boats was just beginning to make its appearance at that time.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ See also page p.75 below.

⁴⁶ Oliver Culver relates having carried mail with ice skates in the winter of 1805, from Cleveland to Huron (p.429), a distance of approximately 52 miles, in four hours—an average speed of 13 mi/h (or 20 km/h), or four times the preferred adult walking speed; cf. Fn 37 on p.55 above.

⁴⁷ MacGill et al, (1917), pp.3-4.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.3.

⁴⁹ The railroad was also in the development, but its acceptance would come at different times in different locales—mostly on the East Coast first, then in South Carolina, surprisingly quickly in Ohio. But none of these railroads were in operation before September of 1827, the cut-off for this description. By the late nineteenth century, the pioneering role of the steamship had been forgotten, as the railroad and its contribution to the Civil War had changed the American transportation landscape. Thus, when A. Fraser-

Batteaux

Many of the early settlers of the Phelps-Gorham purchase came up the rivers by batteaux (p.388), flat-bottomed boats ideally suited for shallow water. Batteaux are either rowed with oars, carried by the current, or equipped with small sails.⁵⁰

Canal Boats

On the canals, horses drew packet boats up river, and the current carried them back down river. The fundamental limitation to their dimensions was the size of the locks—on the Erie canal, 90 by 15 feet.⁵¹ Boats ranged from forty to eighty feet in length, with a boxy cabin on the deck. The only space outside was on top of the cabin, which was reachable through a small staircase. The boats carried between forty and a hundred passengers and were pulled upriver by one to three horses.⁵² Over time, the packets became more luxurious on the inside and lighter in construction on the outside, e.g. from 20 tons down to 10 tons by 1831.⁵³ Many of the boats were built locally (p.428), with Rochester quickly becoming the center of construction.⁵⁴

The experience of traveling on the canal boat was, akin to modern air travel, everywhere

Macdonald published his book on steam navigation in 1893 with Chapman & Hall, he could call the book *Our Ocean Railways*.

⁵⁰ During the English-French war of 1758, after the destruction of Fort William Henry, the English sunk 260 batteaux, 4 radeau gun platforms, one sloop, as well as whale- and gunboats in Lake George, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the French. This “sunken fleet” is still preserved on the lake bottom and was archaeologically mapped in the 1960s, thus providing detailed information on the construction of the boats involved; cf. Joseph W. Zarzynski and Bob Benway (2011). *Lake George Shipwrecks and Sunken History*. Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, pp.19-21, especially the drawing of a batteau on *ibid.*, p.22.

⁵¹Ronald E. Shaw (1966). *Erie Water West: A history of the Erie Canal 1792-1854*. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, p.201.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.201f. Steam experiments amounted to naught, because the sides of the canal were too dangerous and there was a speed limit of 4 mph; cf. *ibid.*, p.204. When pitching the Erie Canal to the New York legislature in 1817, De Witt Clinton estimated a 30 mile-per-day rate of progress for a boat drawn by horse; cf. Archer Butler Hulbert (1904). *The Great American Canals. Volume 2: The Erie Canal*. Vol. 14. Historic Highways of America. Cleveland, Ohio: Arthur H. Clark Company, p.64.

⁵³Shaw, (1966), p.202.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p.203.

between comfortable and terrible.⁵⁵ In general, canal travel was relatively safe; the terrible accidents of steam boating,⁵⁶ such as overheating⁵⁷ or exploding boilers⁵⁸ or fires,⁵⁹ were absent in canaling. Furthermore, the canals were very shallow, 4 ft⁶⁰ or “knee-deep”⁶¹ in the case of the Erie canal, so drowning was an unlikely event.⁶² The cabin had benches along the walls, dining tables in the middle, and a small library or perhaps a writing desk.⁶³ In the summer, the cabins were stuffy, and people headed for the upper deck, where they might have to duck low bridges.

On the Great Lakes, schooners were used, propelled either by sail or drawn with yokes of oxen (p.427). The transport of lumber was handled by scows, packet boats that were square at the ends.⁶⁴

North Eastern Steamboat Navigation

The beginning of steamboat navigation in the United States is complicated by competing claims and monopolies. Suffice it to say that by 1807, Robert Stevens was operating the steamboat *Phoenix* on the Delaware River. By 1809, the *Cremont*, owned and operated by Robert Fulton and its financier Chancellor R. Livingston,⁶⁵ was doing its daily run from

⁵⁵Ibid., p.205.

⁵⁶Clark, (1842), p.80.

⁵⁷ E.g. the 1811 incident on the steamboat *Hope*, where the boilers had both become empty; R. A. Fletcher (1910). *Steam-Ships: The Story of their Development to the Present Day*. London – Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., p.39.

⁵⁸ On April 1838, the Mississippi River steamer *Moselle* blew up right outside Cincinnati with all passengers, estimated between one and two hundred, lost; cf. *ibid.*, p.53.

⁵⁹ Two of the fastest early steamboats, the *Lexington* and the *Richmond*, were lost to fire in 1840 and 1843, respectively; cf. *ibid.*, p.46.

⁶⁰Hulbert, (1904), p.105.

⁶¹Shaw, (1966), p.205.

⁶² Shallow canals were a construction advantage for the many cases where aqueducts had to be thrown across valleys and ravines; cf. Hulbert, (1904), pp.94f.

⁶³Shaw, (1966), p.206.

⁶⁴Ibid., p.203.

⁶⁵Fletcher, (1910), p.35.

New York to Albany. These early steamboats were masted, ran sails⁶⁶ for turning,⁶⁷ and used paddle wheels, though John Stevens had experimented with screws as early as 1804.⁶⁸

In 1817, the *Firefly* established regular service from New York to Newport in Rhode Island. The competition with the sail packets was stiff, and the steamboats were not able to outrun them if the wind was good.⁶⁹ In 1818, the first steamboat was in operation on the Great Lakes.⁷⁰ By December of 1821, the steamboat *Chancellor Livingston* was running 170 trips per season from Albany to New York, some 25,000 miles,⁷¹ showing the viability of the technology. In 1822, the steamer *Robert Fulton* made the first successful voyage from New York to New Orleans.⁷²

Western Steamboat Navigation

In 1811, Fulton inaugurated steamboat service on the Mississippi with the *New Orleans*, which made the run from Pittsburgh to New Orleans in 14 days.⁷³ However, her draft was so high that she could only run during “bank-full” times on the Ohio and Mississippi. With the *Washington*, the design changed: her captain, Shreve, decked the hold over and placed the boiler onto the main deck, adding flues to make the engine more efficient. Shreve laid the cylinders down on solid bed-timbers to deal with the vibrations. Twin high-pressure engines maintained a steady motion of the wheel.⁷⁴

⁶⁶Fletcher, (1910), p.42.

⁶⁷ Since both wheels could only revolve backward or forward at the same time, early Fulton steamboats needed the sails to turn around, until Fulton added clutches to decouple the wheels individually; cf. George B. Merrick and William R. Tibbals (1911). “Genesis of Steamboating on Western Rivers”. In: *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, pp. 97–151, pp.100f.

⁶⁸Fletcher, (1910), p.29.

⁶⁹Ibid., p.43.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp.51f.

⁷¹ Ibid., p.43. This distance is equivalent to the circumference of the Earth, as Fletcher points out.

⁷²Ibid., p.44.

⁷³Ibid., p.42.

⁷⁴ Merrick and Tibbals, (1911), p.103. Unfortunately, as happened to so many other Mississippi steamboats, the *Washington*’s boilers exploded on June 9, 1817, killing twelve and seriously scalding Captain Shreve, his engineer, and several others; cf. *ibid.*, pp.104f

Over time, the steamboats worked their way up the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio river system. In 1815, the *Zebulon M. Pike* was the pioneer steamboat above the mouth of the Ohio. Built on a keel boat hull, the *Pike* ran between St Louis and Louisville at 3.5 mi/h against the current. Her engines were so weak that her crew had to support her with the setting poles.⁷⁵

By 1817, the *Etna* and the *Vesuvius* were doing service on the Mississippi,

... which were each of 450 tons, carried 280 tons of merchandise, 100 passengers and 700 bales of cotton.⁷⁶

Thereafter, the steamboat fleet expanded rapidly.

In 1819 there were sixty-three steamers on Western waters; in 1832 there were 230; and in 1842, 450, with a total of 126,278 tons; ⁷⁷

The expansion in business was reflected in the steamboat accidents as well, however.

Between the years 1817 and 1848, there were 233 boiler explosions, great and small, with a loss of 2,563 lives, and 2,092 seriously wounded.⁷⁸

Above the mouth of the Ohio, the steamboats were going as far as Franklin, on the Missouri river, by 1819. By 1822, there were six steamboats operating out of St Louis.⁷⁹ By 1823, the first steamboat ships were arriving in the vicinity of what is now Minneapolis/St Paul, at Fort Snelling.⁸⁰ In 1843, the *Rock River* made two trips up the Wisconsin

⁷⁵Ibid., p.106.

⁷⁶Fletcher, (1910), p.45.

⁷⁷Merrick and Tibbals, (1911), p.105.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.105. After 1848, the government cracked down in boiler inspections and licensing of engineers, reducing the numbers for 1848-1871 to 66 explosions; cf. *ibid.*, pp.105f. Such licensing came into use only after the 1840s and was much resented by the pilots and engineers; cf. Wilson Daniels (1915). "Steamboating on the Ohio and Mississippi before the Civil War". In: *Indiana Magazine of History* 11.2, pp. 99-126, p.125.

⁷⁹Merrick and Tibbals, (1911), p.107.

⁸⁰Ibid., p.108.

River to Portage, Wisconsin, but got stuck in the ice on the return, during the winter at Prairie du Chien at the mouth of the Wisconsin.⁸¹

Steamboats were mostly constructed from wood, which meant that as they became longer, they would either sag in the middle or hog, that is, bend down at the ends.⁸² Because of the great distances involved, and the lack of infrastructure along the routes, American steamboats had to carry more provisions and passengers for a longer time, while retaining a lower draught than their English cousins,⁸³ whose concerns were narrow rivers and low bridges.⁸⁴

In his memoir, Daniels describes the Mississippi steamboat *Randolph*, on which he worked as a pilot in the early 1840s:

She [i.e. the *Randolph*, RCK] was 180 feet long, very narrow hull within, six feet depth of hold, ... She had a full length cabin, very heavy crown in the roof, no sky-lights, only two little boxes that resembled a carpenters tool-chest in size and shapen, one of these placed over the ladies' cabin and one over the gentlemen's cabin. There were four rooms in the gentlemen's and six in the ladies' department, with all the balance of the capbins open with curtains to hide the bunks.⁸⁵

When the steamboats came into shallow water, as was often the case on the Mississippi, one pilot would take to the yawl, a small sailboat of Dutch origin, to sound out the water with the sounding stick, until they had found a passage and signaled the steamboat to follow slowly. As the steamboat would go through the shallow, the leadmen would measure out the feet and call the depth up to the pilot.⁸⁶

Most of the ships used wood to fuel their engines. Owners of lots along the river would stack up wood for sale in a rick, and the captains would announce their interest in purchasing

⁸¹Merrick and Tibbals, (1911), p.110.

⁸²Fletcher, (1910), p.46.

⁸³Ibid., p.46.

⁸⁴Ibid., p.47.

⁸⁵Daniels, (1915), p.123.

⁸⁶Ibid., pp.105f.

by ringing their big bell—which also told their crew that they were landing.⁸⁷ Similarly, potential passengers would stand on the side of the river and hail the steamboats. The boat clerk could pay premiums per passenger picked up, to ensure that the pilot kept a sharp lookout for customers.⁸⁸

Pilot training was through apprenticeship with an older pilot.⁸⁹ The main point was to memorize the particulars of the rivers so as to have proper expectations about the river depth at the various water levels.⁹⁰

3.5.4 Transportation Infrastructure

The improvement of the means of intercourse between different parts of the same country, has always been considered the first duty and the most noble employment of government.⁹¹

For a country that was producing and exporting raw materials, good internal transportation was essential. This was especially true while the United States had insufficient infrastructure to take care of its own manufacturing needs, as the trade deficit after the War of 1812 indicated.⁹²

Though the latitudinal integration of the United States' waterways was the bigger problem, the roads were first, because they were cheaper to put in place and connected the river networks across the watersheds. Furthermore, the Native Americans had already done some of the exploratory work for the settlers; many of the early roads followed courses

⁸⁷Ibid., p.111.

⁸⁸Ibid., p.117.

⁸⁹Ibid., pp.105f; 109f; 117.

⁹⁰ “Thus I could see the river twice every week, once up and once down, and only sleeping four hours out of twenty-four [to maximize exposure, RCK] I soon picked up all there was in it and before the season was over I was a full-fledged pilot.”; cf. *ibid.*, p.117.

⁹¹ Quoted from De Witt Clinton's 1807 memorial pitching the construction of the Erie Canal to the New York state legislature; cf. Hulbert, (1904), p.63

⁹²Katharine Coman (1905). *The Industrial History of the United States*. New York: Macmillan, p.180.

already established, through use, by the original inhabitants,⁹³ and survey commissions often could not improve upon their layout.⁹⁴ Portages and trails connected the waterways, such as those leading to the Great Lakes with those leading to the Ohio.⁹⁵

However, even early on, the roads were in competition for funding with the construction of canals, because canals would benefit more people, i.e. potentially everyone living along any of the connected waterways, and there were fewer of them to build.

Roads

Roads came in different types: There were roads just for walking, which required pack animals for transport; and then there were roads for horsemen and wagons, suited for riders as well as carriages and other wheeled forms of conveyance.⁹⁶ Wagon roads could be as wide as 30 feet, suitable for transporting up to one ton of weight over them;⁹⁷ some reached widths of 60 feet.⁹⁸

The construction of roads was not limited to the road per se, but could include the construction of bridges, fords and ferries, as well as the ongoing maintenance. The land around the road was to be cleared, if forested, to a width of several rods, from all trees.⁹⁹ Roads were ditched on both sides, and the elevated part consisted of a stratum of a specified thickness of stones. The stone size was regulated by giving a requirement of the size of a ring through which all stones had to be able to fit.¹⁰⁰ The stone was covered with gravel and rolled down with an iron roller.

In a country that was sworn to low rates of taxation and a weak central government, the

⁹³MacGill et al, (1917), p.6.

⁹⁴Ibid., p.20.

⁹⁵Ibid., p.21.

⁹⁶Ibid., p.8; 10.

⁹⁷Ibid., p.9.

⁹⁸Ibid., p.16f.

⁹⁹Ibid., p.17.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp.16f.

problem of how to implement infrastructure build-out was a difficult one. The preferred method was to set up systems of payment that collected the funds after the fact of the construction, by fees for usage: the road would receive turnpikes and toll gates to recoup the investment and pay for the upkeep.¹⁰¹ Often the initial collection of funds was started through private initiative,¹⁰² but the federal government remained involved because of the need for providing mail services.¹⁰³ Other approaches put taxes on land sales¹⁰⁴ or on real estate in general.¹⁰⁵ North Carolina used a lottery for financing the construction.¹⁰⁶

Upon the admission of Ohio to the Union in 1803, 5 per cent of the net proceeds of the sale of public lands within that State were set apart for the laying out and making of roads, 3 per cent of which should be expended on roads within the State under the direction of the State legislature, leaving the other 2 per cent as a fund to be expended under the direction of Congress for the construction of roads to and through the State.¹⁰⁷

In the first two years of Ohio as a state, this approach raised some \$12,625 for the road fund.¹⁰⁸ Even with all these financing approaches, the price of a road remained prohibitively high: the initial segment of the Cumberland road to Uniontown cost, “including all expenses of survey and location, salaries, bridges, and some repairs”, some \$9,745 per mile.¹⁰⁹ Thus, for the Ohio state road fund, two years of public land sales did not even amount to two miles of road.

¹⁰¹ Consider the fee schedule for the Schenactady and Utica Turnpike, 68 miles long, which was structured for 10 mile intervals: “. . . the cost to a horse and rider over the whole distance from Schenactady to Utica would be about 34 cents, ... A private coach . . . would be charged nearly \$3. A stage would pay from about 60 cents to \$1.25 . . .”, depending on the number of horses. Vehicles with narrow wheels, i.e. under 6 inches, paid extra, due to their damaging of the road surface. In some cases, narrow wheeled vehicles were not allowed on the pike roads at all during the winter and spring months, or restricted in the weight they were allowed to carry. Cf. *ibid.*, p.69.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, p.9.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, p.13.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, p.13.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p.21.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p.28.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, p.13.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p.13.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, p.16.

Table 3.1: Total Expenditures by 1823 for Cumberland Road, from Cumberland, Maryland, to Wheeling, Virginia (130 miles); cf. MacGill et al, (1917), p.16.

Expenditure	Amount (USD)
Surveying and Locating	29,144.25
Construction	1,544,882.70
Repairs	16,160.19
Salaries (Superintendents & Assistants)	53,034.61
Miscellaneous	2,457.45
<i>Total</i>	1,645,679.20

A price tag of 1.65 million USD for 130 miles¹¹⁰ makes more sense when considering the effort involved in the construction.¹¹¹ The Cumberland Road,¹¹² named after its eastern terminal in Cumberland, Maryland, was 60 feet wide. The adjacent trees had to be cleared for 4 rods, i.e. 66 ft, on either side, adding another 132 ft of clearing.¹¹³ The stone stratum was 15 inches thick.¹¹⁴ All stones used had to pass through a three-inch ring.¹¹⁵ Toll-houses were erected every fifteen miles and equipped with strong iron gates.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ For comparison, the entire Louisiana purchase, consisting of payments and debt write-offs, amounted to \$15 million USD, equivalent to a road from New York to Minneapolis (1227 mi) or Miami (1279 mi).

¹¹¹ The roads were built by the Macadam system; cf. William Mitchell Gillespie (1850). *A manual of the principles and practice of road-making : comprising the location, construction, and improvement of roads (common, macadam, paved, plank, etc.) ; and rail-roads*. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co, pp.

¹¹² Alternative names were the National Road, the National Pike or Old Pike.

¹¹³ Clearing proceeded lengthwise, not widthwise, so that lanes of the road would be usable before the whole was finished. For example, in two years, half of the total width of 192 ft had been cleared between Cumberland and Brownsville, Pennsylvania; cf. MacGill et al, (1917), p.16.

¹¹⁴ At 60 ft width and 130 miles (= 686400 ft) length, and 1.25 ft of thickness, that amounts to 51.5 million cubic feet of stone. At an estimated 130 lbs per cubic foot, that would amount to almost 3.35 million US tons of stone that needed hauling. Gillespie explains these 15 inches as the combination of 12 inch of foundation, cf. Gillespie, (1850), p.200, and 3 inch as a “coating”, cf. *ibid.*, p.201.

¹¹⁵ MacGill et al, (1917), p.16f. Gillespie confidently observed that the “expense of sifting will be more than repaid by the superior condition of the road formed by the purified material, and the diminution of labor in keeping it in order”; cf. Gillespie, (1850), p.193.

¹¹⁶ MacGill et al, (1917), p.17.

The effort was justified, however, as the opening of the Cumberland Road to the Ohio river caused an immediate surge of transportation, enabling Baltimore and Wheeling to increase their trade to Ohio. New taverns sprang into being along the road, and the transportation of mail was greatly accelerated.

It was said that in 1822 a single one of the five commission houses at Wheeling unloaded 1,081 wagons, and paid for the freightage of goods the sum of \$90,000.¹¹⁷

Where no such funding model could be found, cheaper roads had to be constructed. For example, in Indiana, the early roads were constructed at the base of the hills, to save on the grading, which meant that the roads were crooked and flooded continually.¹¹⁸ Along such roads, carriages could move no faster than 12 miles a day.

As settlements radiated outward from the waterways, similar roads had to be put in place, but their quality was such

... that the cost | of transportation by this method over any considerable distance amounted to as much as the produce was worth at market.¹¹⁹

By the 1830s, people looking for cheaper alternatives to road construction hit upon the idea of plank roads, roads constructed from wood planks.¹²⁰

... two parallel rows of small sticks of timber (called indifferently *sleepers*, *stringers*, or *sills*) are embedded in the road, three or four feet apart. Planks, eight feet long and three or four inches thick, are laid upon these sticks, across them, at right angles to their direction. A side track of earth, to turn out upon,¹²¹ is carefully graded. Deep ditches are dug on each side, to ensure perfect drainage ...¹²²

¹¹⁷Ibid., p.18.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p.20.

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp.20f.

¹²⁰Ibid., p.299.

¹²¹ The side track is twelve feet wide; cf. Gillespie, (1850), p.234. Its purpose is to make way when two carriages meet head on, allowing one to “turn out” until the other has passed; cf. *ibid.*, p.237.

¹²²Ibid., p.231.

The first plank road in Canada in 1834 cost about \$2,100 per mile; a significant cost savings over the ten to thirteen thousand dollars per mile for the Old Pike Road mentioned above.¹²³ Furthermore, the lumber struck during the clearing could be used directly for road construction.¹²⁴

The cost for the Syracuse plank road, the first constructed in New York, was between \$1,000 and \$2,400 per mile (not counting bridges or secondary, supporting earthwork).¹²⁵ That road handled some 161,000 teams in the first two years, which wore it down by one inch.¹²⁶

Eventually, over 2,000 miles of plank road were constructed in New York, and several thousand more in the remainder of the US.¹²⁷ At some point after 1834, Palmyra and Manchester were connected by a plank road, that went straight past what became known as the “Mormon Hill”.¹²⁸

Canals

For heavy goods, the costs of land transportation within the United States were so high that the goods might not even be produced. A report compiled for the US Senate in February of 1816 illustrated the way this injunction functioned:

A coal-mine might therefore exist in the United State not more than 10 miles from valuable ores of iron and other materials, [and thus provide the foundation for heavy industries, RCK] and both of them be useless until a canal were established between them, as the price of land carriage was too great to be borne by either.¹²⁹

¹²³ Cf. above on page 66. I assume that the majority of the cost resides in the clearing of the forest, in the grading, that is, in the digging of the drainage ditches, in their proper shaping, and in the setting up of the foundation; cf. Gillespie, (1850), p.236f.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p.234.

¹²⁵ MacGill et al, (1917), p.299.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p.299.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p.299.

¹²⁸ Turner, (1851), p.213; for this hill and its role in Mormon orthodoxy, see below on page p.133.

¹²⁹ Quoted in: MacGill et al, (1917), p.90.

On the other hand, the arrival of a canal was a huge boon for the local economy, basically from the moment that construction started.

When a canal was proposed [in Ohio in the 1830s, RCK], towns sprang up along its would-be route. During construction, stores and taverns flourished and farmers found a constant demand for produce. Local laborers were solicited to help with construction, as were unskilled migrant workers. The cash wages shortly modernized the old barter economy of rural areas. Once the canal was completed, it allowed easy transport to larger markets and importation of eastern goods, which made pioneer life easier and subsidized a new class of merchants.¹³⁰

This section describes, *pars pro toto*, the construction and impact of the Erie Canal, one of the key engineering feats of the early Republic, which unlocked the Northwest of the United States for settlement and commerce. New York statesman De Witt Clinton, petitioning the legislature in 1817, put it thus:

The commerce of the ocean, and the trade of the lakes, passing through one channel [i.e. the Erie Canal, RCK], supplying the wants, increasing the wealth, and reciprocating the benefits of each great section of the empire [i.e. the United States of America, RCK], will form an imperishable cement of connexion, and an indissoluble bond of union.¹³¹

In 1814, Robert Fulton, co-founder of commercial steamboating in the United States, wrote a letter to New York Governor Morris.¹³² Fulton pointed out that the canal route from Albany to New York, a distance of about 130 miles, cost 2 shillings for transporting a barrel of flour and 3 shillings for a barrel of potash.¹³³ However, land transport for a

¹³⁰Leonard J. Arrington (1976). *From Quaker to Latter-Day Saint: Bishop Edwin D. Woolley*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., p.53.

¹³¹Hulbert, (1904), p.102.

¹³² Governor Morris had called Fulton and Livingston to serve in the Erie Canal commission in 1811; cf. *ibid.*, p.56.

¹³³ There are 20 shillings to a pound, and the exchange rate for the British pound to the US dollar in 1814 was \$4.24; cf. Lawrence H. Officer (2015). *Pound Exchange Rate from 1791*. (Visited on 02/21/2015). Thus, 1 shilling was worth approximately 21 cents. The barrel of flour therefore was worth 42 cents, and the potash barrel 63 cents.



Figure 3.2: Present-day Map of the Great Lakes region. For license, see page 550 below.

130 miles of a barrel of flour cost around \$2,¹³⁴ which Fulton considered a check on the agricultural development of the country.¹³⁵

Canal building in New York had many inspirations: Governor Morris had visited canals in the United Kingdom in 1795,¹³⁶ while the committee reporting on the improvements for the Mohawk river from August 1792 mentioned the Pennsylvania and Virginia works as critical exemplars.¹³⁷ In the fall of 1803, Gouverneur Morris and General Surveyor Simeon De Witt happened to spend the night at the same tavern in Schenectady; there they may have discussed the canal.¹³⁸

In December 1806, President Thomas Jefferson told Congress in his address for the Legislative Session of 1807 to spend any developing surplus on infrastructure improvements.

Their patriotism would certainly prefer its continuance, and application to the great purposes of the public education, roads, rivers, canals, and such other objects of public improvement, as it may be thought proper to add to the constitutional enumeration of Federal powers. By these operations, new channels of communication will be opened between the States; the lines of separation will disappear, their interests will be identified, and their union cemented by new and indissoluble ties.¹³⁹

But nothing gave the Erie Canal public impetus like the fourteen-part essay series that John Hawley¹⁴⁰ started publishing in the *Genesee Messenger*, in Canandaigua, under the pen-name of “Hercules”, in October of 1807.¹⁴¹

¹³⁴ Thus, land transport was 4.76 times as expensive as water transport, according to the conversion rate used in footnote 133 above.

¹³⁵ MacGill et al, (1917), p.84.

¹³⁶ Hulbert, (1904), p.44.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p.34.

¹³⁸ Ibid., pp.39ff.

¹³⁹ *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States* (1807). Vol. 5. Washington: US GPO, p.469.

¹⁴⁰ On John Hawley, cf. also below on page p.92.

¹⁴¹ Hulbert, (1904), p.47; Merwin S. Hawley (1868). *The Erie Canal, its Origin, its Success, and its Necessity. A Paper Read before the Buffalo Historical Club*. Joseph Warren & Co. Buffalo, New York, p.7.

Those Papers [i.e. the essays of John Hawley, RCK], after pointing out the feasibility of a canal on nearly the identical line now occupied by it, recommending its size to be one hundred feet wide and ten feet deep, estimating its cost with great accuracy, and in many ways urging public attention to its important and the propriety of an actual survey, proceed to point out other important improvements in other States, some of which have since been constructed; among which are the Ohio Canal, the Wabash Canal, the St Marie Canal, to open navigation into Lake Superior, the Fox and Wisconsin river connections, the Illinois and Michigan Canal the Canal around the falls of the Ohio river, etc.¹⁴²

When the survey commission went out July 1, 1810, tasked with “exploring the whole route for inland navigation from Hudson’s river to Lake Ontario and Lake Erie”,¹⁴³ they brought

... with them in that tour of exploration the essays of Mr. Hawley, ... a long letter from Joseph Ellicott, giving information of the country between Niagara and Genesee rivers, with an explanatory map, and the report by James Geddes of his surveys in 1808.¹⁴⁴

Then came the War of 1812 against Great Britain, Canada and its Indian allies, and all efforts ceased. Even the New York law authorizing the canal commissioners to borrow \$5 million on credit of the state of New York was repealed in 1814.¹⁴⁵ It was only with De Witt Clinton’s memorial¹⁴⁶ to the state legislature in 1817 that the project became popular once more and moved to the forefront of the legislative focus.¹⁴⁷

In his memorial, Clinton goes out of his way to argue that the Erie Canal is superior to other canal projects then under discussion, such as a canal to bypass Niagara Falls,

¹⁴²Hawley, (1868), p.7.

¹⁴³Ibid., p.28.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p.11.

¹⁴⁵Hulbert, (1904), p.59.

¹⁴⁶ Reprinted in its entirety in: *ibid.*, pp.62-103. Clinton estimated a reduction by a factor of 32 in transportation cost, cf. *ibid.*, p.64. Many of the prices that Clinton gives are in British pounds; from the computations of the cost of the canals in England—cf. table and discussion on page p.73, taken from *Ibid.*, p.90—it appears that Clinton is assuming an exchange rate of \$4.47 to the British pound.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p.61.

because it benefits the interior of New York state, not Montreal—and thereby indirectly, the enemy of the just completed war, the “foreign power”: the English.¹⁴⁸

A barrel of flour is now trans- | ported from Cayuga Lake to Montreal for \$1.50, and it cannot be conveyed to Albany for less than \$2.50.¹⁴⁹

The main sticking point for the Legislature is the cost, of course, especially a mere two years after the expensive war against the British Empire and its Canadian allies. Clinton tries to meet that concern with candid estimates of the cost per mile of various other canals.

Table 3.2: Actual costs per mile in US dollars for various canals built in Europe before 1817, sorted by ascending cost; assuming an exchange rate of \$4.47 to the British pound sterling; country designation as in source; cf. MacGill et al, (1917), pp.88-91 and footnote 146.

Canal	per Mile (USD)
Canal of Languedoc, France	13,410
Forth to Clyde Canal, Scotland	23,000
Kenneth and Avon Canal, England	24,069
Grand Junction Canal, England	24,833
Leeds and Liverpool Canal, England	27,720
Holstein Canal, Germany	30,000
Ellesmere Canal, England	31,368
Rochdale Canal, England	41,422
<i>Average</i>	26,977
<i>Median</i>	26,277

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., pp.77f; p.81; pp.100f.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., pp.81f.

After considering proposals for other canal works in the United States with their cost estimates,¹⁵⁰ and mentioning the Middlesex Canal of Pennsylvania, the success story¹⁵¹ of canal building of its day, De Witt Clinton proposes an estimate of \$20,000 per mile for the 300 miles of canal estimated, or some \$6 million,¹⁵² and a construction time of ten to fifteen years.

Having thus established necessity and feasibility,¹⁵³ De Witt Clinton has to argue for acting at the present time. Clinton suggests it will be worse to build the canal in the future:¹⁵⁴ land prices will rise;¹⁵⁵ delays will cause the implementation of costly work-arounds;¹⁵⁶ during the War of 1812, the United States could have made good use of the canal, having often spent as much on the transportation of matériel as on the matériel itself;¹⁵⁷ the price differential between New York and Montreal of 15% is already causing smuggling and making life difficult for US merchants.¹⁵⁸

On April 15, 1817, the legislature passed the act that gave birth to the Erie Canal.¹⁵⁹

Planning for the canal proceeded in three large sections: The Western Section reached from Buffalo, a port town on Lake Erie, to the Genesee River; the Middle Section, from

¹⁵⁰Hulbert, (1904), pp.91-93.

¹⁵¹Ibid., pp.93f Fn 31; p.105.

¹⁵²Ibid., p.96.

¹⁵³ Perhaps the most interesting factoid is that, supportive individuals, in the true Republican spirit, apparently, had already subscribed some 106,632 acres of land for the canal building effort, intended for sale by the state government for cash; cf. *ibid.*, p.97; p.179.

¹⁵⁴ Perhaps the most suprising concern is the one for latitudinal integration of the country: "However serious the fears which have been entertained of a dismember of the Union by collisions between the north and the south, it is to be apprehended that the most imminent danger lies in another direction, and that a line of separation may eventually drawn between the atlantic and the western states, . . ."; cf. *ibid.*, p.101.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p.99.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., pp.99f.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.100; cf. also MacGill et al, (1917), pp.90f, who estimate an astonishing \$60 million expended on transportation for the war effort. The fear of a replay of the War of 1812 was powerful in 1817; leading New York statesman like Vice President Tompkins and Chancellor Kent worried that the Treaty of Ghent of 1815 was a mere truce, with England preparing for another war within two years, i.e. 1819; cf. Hulbert, (1904), pp.110f.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., pp.100f.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p.110; Appendix B.

Seneca River to Rome; and the Eastern Section, from Rome to Albany.¹⁶⁰

As befitting such a project of national interest, work was begun formally on July 4, 1817, in Rome, the connection point between the Middle and the Eastern section.¹⁶¹ The fact that the sections were contracted out in small pieces was a boon for the cash-strapped local economy; in fact, many of the contractors were “well-to-do New York farmers, and three-fourths of the army of laborers . . . were native born”.¹⁶² The excavation was done with plow and scraper, classical farming tools, and three men could excavate three rods, or almost 50 ft, to a depth of 4 ft, in some five and a half days;¹⁶³ the men made \$1.80 each day for the work.

Work had to stop during the winter months, so the time was used instead to move equipment and provisions forward using sleds over the icy roads, especially along the Genesee Road between Utica and Syracuse, claimed to be “useless for heavy loads in the summer season”.¹⁶⁴ The engineering problems of cutting their way through the native forests around Utica, Syracuse and Rochester led to the invention and construction of machines for pulling down trees, plucking out stumps and slicing through the rootwork.¹⁶⁵

A problem less easily solved in the early nineteenth century was the sickness of the large army of workers during the summer months. Especially along the sluggish Seneca river, the workers took sick from the fever and the ague, which had already caused grief among the pioneers.¹⁶⁶

At one time, a thousand men on the Erie Canal were stricken down in this region, and in some instances the work on certain “jobs” [tasks? assignments?

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., pp.106-110. See also the fold-out plan, Ibid., pp.107f.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p.116.

¹⁶² Ibid., p.119.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p.122.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p.122; the milder winter of 1818-19 prevented such a solution; cf. *ibid.*, p.129.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., pp.124-128.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p.129.

sections? sic RCK] was entirely abandoned for several weeks.¹⁶⁷

By 1820, enough of the Middle Section was completed that the ninety-six miles between Utica and the Seneca river could be used in May;¹⁶⁸ by 1821, the section was already bringing \$23,001.63 in tolls.¹⁶⁹ By June 1823, Rochester to Schenectady, just up-canal from Albany, came online; 220 miles of 300 now were navigable.¹⁷⁰ In October of 1824, the canal was completed and had already made \$294,546.62 in tolls that year on the completed sections.

The spectacle of the opening of Grand Erie Canal would make an interesting case study for the then-existing notions of pageantry. Suffice it to say that the festival fleet of canal boats started in Buffalo, where Jesse Hawley and De Witt Clinton, by then Governor, held speeches;¹⁷¹ that the display included a large painting of “Governor Clinton as Hercules in Roman costume resting from hard labor”;¹⁷² and that one of the boats was named *Noah’s Ark* and carried “beasts, birds and creeping things—a bear, two eagles, two fawns, several fish, and two Indian boys, all traveling under the title of ‘products of the West’.”¹⁷³

Not all was agreeable, however: the citizens of Rome were miffed that the canal’s path had not included the old Western Inland Lock Navigation Company canal “upon which the village of Rome had grown up”; a procession “bearing a black barrel filled with water from the old canal” staged a kind of funeral by emptying the old canal water into the Erie Canal.¹⁷⁴ Schenectady, the former “Mecca for wagon lines and wagons” on the one hand, and the “terminus of Mohawk shipping” on the other, “terminus of the old overland portage of sixteen miles from Albany”, was a town that “had grown in size and wealth” from all the

¹⁶⁷Hulbert, (1904), p.129.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p.132.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p.135.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p.135.

¹⁷¹Ibid., pp.138f.

¹⁷²Ibid., p.139.

¹⁷³Ibid., p.140.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p.143.

freight switching; now its residents believed the canal to be “the ruin of Schenectady”.¹⁷⁵ Consequently, only the cosmopolitan students of Union College were happy to see the flotilla, and no other festivities were prepared.¹⁷⁶

At New York, the celebrations reached their highlight with the “wedding” of the waters of Lake Erie and the Atlantic Ocean.¹⁷⁷ In response, the New Yorkers sent back “Neptune’s return to Pan. New York, 4th Nov, 1825. Water of the Atlantic” in a barrel.¹⁷⁸ The waters arrived in Buffalo on November 23, 1825, and were duly poured into Lake Erie.

Overall, the canal cost almost \$7 million, or \$19,255.49 per mile.¹⁷⁹ Though the estimates for the expenses of the individual sections of the Erie Canal were off by as much as 30%, the estimates for the expected income were so far below the actual income received that this counterbalanced the mistake.¹⁸⁰ In the ten years from 1826 to 1834, the canal took in \$8.5 million instead of the expected \$6.3 million.¹⁸¹ In fact, so successful was the canal that it was deemed too small, and by 1835 the discussion had moved to enlarging it.¹⁸²

The influence of the Canal was far-reaching.

The cities of Chicago, Milwaukee, Toledo and others may be said to have been born of the Canal.¹⁸³

The Erie Canal, which had been preceded by the Champlain Canal (completed 1823), was followed by the Oswego Canal (completed in 1828) and the Cayuga and Seneca Canal (completed in 1829).¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁵Ibid., pp.144f.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., pp.144f.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., pp.146f.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p.150.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p.189.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., p.185.

¹⁸¹Ibid., p.186.

¹⁸²Ibid., pp.190-192.

¹⁸³Hawley, (1868), p.30.

¹⁸⁴Hulbert, (1904), p.166.

Just after the completion of the Erie canal in 1825, petitions for other canals had poured in from almost every county in the west.¹⁸⁵

3.6 Manufacturing and Industry

3.6.1 Bootstrapping the Process

When the pioneers claimed native land for their settlements, there were a variety of goods and services that they lacked. However, since some industries were dependant on others, there was a sort of “natural order” in which these industries were established, as some industries assisted in creating others.

The easiest industry to begin with was some form of an *extractive* industry. Here, the resource is found in a form that is useful and saleable with minimal processing. Among these industries are hunting, fishing and trapping for fur and skins,¹⁸⁶ as well as basic forms of mining, as of salt from naturally occurring salt springs (p.124).

The next industry is some point of exchange, where the extracted resources can be traded for manufactured goods and foodstuffs. The so-called Indian Trade Store was such an entredepot that served as the exchange location (pp.427; 429f). The local surplus of extracted resources and the manufactured goods had to be moved; this was the task of the traders and transporters. Whether by batteaux or sleighs, the extracted resources were transported to the larger cities—Detroit, Schenectady, Rochester—and manufactured goods shipped back in exchange.

It was far cheaper to grow foodstuffs locally and reserve the extracted resources for non-local commodities. Fields sown with corn and grain, as well as apple orchards, required no supervision. Unfortunately, corn and grain are not directly edible for humans. Milling is

¹⁸⁵ Hulbert, (1904), p.167.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. page p.51 above.

the process that removes the hard part of the seed and exposes the germ or endosperm, the nutritious part.¹⁸⁷ The most basic equipment to do this was the stump mortar (p.376), which was “very hard work” (p.381) in the view of a people used to hard work. The next step up from the mortar was the hand mill (p.271). However, both of these tools could only grind small amounts of wheat at a time. The next logical step was to build a water-powered grist mill, but in practice, the pioneers often preferred to have a sawmill for board production first (p.449; p.584), so that they could build frame houses.

By sense extension,¹⁸⁸ machines for processing other agricultural products—sawing lumber into boards, turning wood pulp into paper, or fulling wool into cloth¹⁸⁹—were referred to as mills as well. All of these mills used water power for the repetitive mechanical action. These mills required iron components, which had to be brought by the pioneers (p.593) themselves or imported from the East (p.347; p.406 †; p.449). Strictly speaking, it was sufficient to bring the necessary equipment—anvil, tools and bellows—then make the mill irons directly (p.525 Note) from iron scrounged up locally—sunk ships (p.27), old hatchets found during plowing (p.377; p.472f), etc. The resulting iron forge was an independently useful industry in terms of nails for construction.

Once grist mills were in place, nearby communities that lacked them would team up to get their milling done there. In 1790 Noah Porter took an ox team with all the pooled corn of the Palmyra settlers to the Friend’s mills in Jerusalem, a ten-day round trip (p.381). Eventually, someone closer by would set up the first grist mill; in the case of Palmyra, Jonah Howell took the honors (p.389). However, the ubiquity of the mills mentioned should not trick one into thinking that every mill was guaranteed to be a money-maker. The most

¹⁸⁷ This is not to denigrate the importance of the bran and the fiber as residue in the flour, both in terms of vitamins and for human digestion in general.

¹⁸⁸ The Latin root for “mill”, *mola*, is reconstructed to derive from the Proto-Indo-European **melh₂*, meaning “to grind, crush” (MISSING 2099).

¹⁸⁹ Fulling, also known as tucking or waulking, is a process of cleaning and thickening wool that has been carded.

famous counter-example is the Allen Mill at what would eventually become Rochester, which was built in 1790 but languished for a good 20 years, requiring occasional visitors to even repair the mill¹⁹⁰ before it was usable (pp.577f).¹⁹¹

3.6.2 Refining and Processing

The two key constraints on transportation are volume and weight. By definition, a US bushel of wheat is equal to eight dry gallons of volume, and weighs 60 lbs.¹⁹²

Reducing the weight or the volume of a good makes it possible to ship more at the same price. This is especially true for removing water, as water is both incompressible and heavy (1 kg per 1 L at 4 degrees Celsius, or 2.20 lbs). Thus, drying fish, salting deer hams (p.209) and pigeon breasts (p.409), and roasting corn decreases the moisture contents and thereby reduces the weight.¹⁹³ A similar strategy processed apples to cider brandy (p.427) or grain into whiskey (p.429). This required building a distillery (p.210). Burning lime in a kiln (p.381) equally removed water, making this primitive fertilizer easier to transport.

Other forms of processing produced more of the same product, but at a higher quality. Consider salt production: instead of boiling down a bucket of salt water from a spring, as Col. Danforth had done in 1792 (p.124), the company of Norton & Richards of Canandaigua purchased the English salt work tracks in 1806 and drilled deep wells to bring up the brine for commercial exploitation (p.525).

¹⁹⁰ This indicates that, once the basic infrastructure and especially the irons were in place, a grist mill was at the level of complexity an adult pioneer could handle.

¹⁹¹ On the low quality of the mill's construction, cf. H. O'Reilly (1838). *Settlement in the West: Sketches of Rochester*. Rochester: William Alling, p.357.

¹⁹² At 13.5% moistness of the wheat, cf. William J. Murphy (2014). *Tables for Weights and Measurements: Crops*. (Visited on 12/17/2014).

¹⁹³ As a positive side-effect, it also increases the durability of the good.

Excursion: Asheries

Asheries washed potash out of ashes. The ash was either produced on site, from dead plant matter, or purchased from the neighborhood. The main categories of ash were household ashes, which fetched a premium; ashes from agricultural processes, such as land clearing and harvest burnoffs; and ash produced on site from local combustibles.

Ashes being a shilling per bushel, enabled the settlers, generally destitute of money, to get some store trade. (p.427)

Potash was a base material for industrial processes, such as wool cleaning, glass¹⁹⁴ and black gun powder¹⁹⁵ production. In 1803, the ashery at Irondequoit Landing, Monroe County, was able to ship 108 barrels of pearl ash to Montreal.¹⁹⁶

Several manuals existed to explain the potash production process. The basic “modern” text was Lavoisier’s memoir of 1779¹⁹⁷, which was available in the young Republic through the 1785 translation of Charles Williamos.¹⁹⁸

Improvements of that important process were an ongoing area of research. The first US patent granted, in 1790, was to the Philadelphia inventor Samuel Hopkins, for an improvement in the pearl-ash process by virtue of a new vessel. Hopkins, who wrote up his improved process as *An address to the manufacturers of pot and pearl ash, with an*

¹⁹⁴Mark L. Staker (2003). “‘Thou Art the Man’ — Newel K. Whitney in Ohio”. In: *BYU Studies* 42.1, pp. 75–138, p.86.

¹⁹⁵Robert Fite (1951). “Origin and Occurrence of Commercial Potash Deposits in the United States”. In: *Proceedings of the Academy of Science of Oklahoma* 32.D, pp. 123–125, p.123.

¹⁹⁶Pearl ash is potash that has been chemically modified with potassium bitartrate, then known as “cream of tartar”.

¹⁹⁷Antoine L. Lavoisier, ed. (1779). *L’art de fabriquer le salin et la potasse, publiée par ordre du Roi, par les Régisseurs généraux des Poudres & Salpêtres*. Paris: L’imprimerie Royale.

¹⁹⁸Antoine L. Lavoisier (1785 [n.a.]). *The Art of Manufacturing Alkaline Salts and Potashes: To which Will be Speedily Added an Appendix Stating Sundry Experiments Intended to be Made on the Different Species of Woods, Shrubs and Plants of North America, in Order to Ascertain the Value of Their Ashes, as Well as the Quality and Quantity of Alkaline Salts Contained in Them*. Trans. by Esq. Charles Williamos. Royal Academy of Sciences; Staker, (2003), p.94 Fn 80; for the story behind both the memoir and its translation, see Denis I. Duveen and Herbert S. Klickstein (1956). “The “American” Edition of Lavoisier’s *L’art de fabriquer le salin et la potasse*”. In: *The William and Mary Quarterly* 13.4, pp. 493–498.

explanation of Samuel Hopkins's patent method of making the same and had it printed with a copy of his patent by Childs & Swain in New York in 1791, sent a complimentary copy of his write-up and patent to Thomas Jefferson¹⁹⁹, who had it bound with Williamos' translation. Aaron Dexter's 1793 memoir to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences²⁰⁰ was another example of the ongoing effort to make the process more efficient.

The leached ashes left behind were apparently still useful as fertilizer; Staker suggests²⁰¹ that farmers would use the leached ashed for "broadcasting on their fields". This is somewhat surprising, since the contribution of unleached woodash is far better understood than of leached woodash.

Pioneers practiced whole-tree harvesting, since they wanted to plant wheat on the fields. By burning trees and brush, and spreading the ashes, the pioneers covered their fields in unleached woodash. Tree harvesting increases the acidity of the soil; and unleached woodash can assist in reducing soil acidity.²⁰² At least part of that reduction comes via its influence on the ratio between nitrogen and phosphorus, a key indicator of soil balance; unleached woodash can be considered a "N[itrogen]-free fertilizer" in this way.²⁰³

The problem of how already leached woodash helps here is less studied, since the leaching process is no longer used to produce potash commercially. However, solubility studies on wood ash could provide some clues. The potassium salts are the most easily leached components of the woodash, followed by calcium and magnesium.²⁰⁴ However, phosphorus remains "relatively insoluble",²⁰⁵ allowing leached wood ash to continue to

¹⁹⁹ "To Thomas Jefferson from Samuel Hopkins, 27 June 1791," Julian P. Boyd, ed. (1982). *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson: 1 April - 4 August 1791*. Vol. 20. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.582.

²⁰⁰ Aaron Dexter (1793). "Observations on the Manufacture of Pot Ash [sic!]" In: *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 2.1, pp. 165–170.

²⁰¹ Staker, (2003), p.94.

²⁰² A. Demeyer, J.C. Voundi Nkana, and M. G. Verloo (2001). "Characteristics of wood ash and influence on soil properties and nutrient uptake: An Overview". In: *Bioresource Technology* 77.3, pp. 287–295, p.290.

²⁰³ Ibid., p.291.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p.291.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., p.291.

function as a phosphorus-carrying fertilizer.

3.6.3 Goods and Transportation Services

In his memorial advising the New York Legislature to tackle the construction of the Erie Canal, De Witt Clinton lists the goods that the advocacy group was expecting to be shipped across the new canal:

The whole line of canal will exhibit boats loaded with flour, pork, beef, pot and pearl ashes, flaxseed, wheat, barley, corn, hemp, wool, flax, iron, lead, copper, salt, gypsum, coal, tar, fur, peltry, ginseng, bees-wax, cheese, butter, lard, staves, lumber, and the other valuable productions of our country; and also, with merchandise from all parts of the world.²⁰⁶

De Witt Clinton was clear that the canal would not just benefit the producers of the raw materials, but also the manufacturing and the transportation service industries—what modern economists would call the primary, tertiary and quaternary sectors of the economy, respectively.

Great manufacturing establishments will spring up; agriculture will establish its granaries, and commerce its warehouses in all directions.²⁰⁷

In the sources, the transportation services are difficult to spot. The price of the conveyance and the portage is often remarked on, but not the companies that provided these services. Clearly, the boats had shipping agents in their major ports of call that were in charge of procuring loads for shipping.²⁰⁸ It seems unlikely that an agent could live from procuring for only one boat. Above on page p.67, I gave the amount of work a commission house, as they were called, that serviced the Cumberland road was able to attract. Above

²⁰⁶ Cited in: Hulbert, (1904), p.78.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p.78.

²⁰⁸ Daniels, (1915), p.115.

on page p.76, I noted that the portage and transfer at terminals of roads and canals was a great source of income for the communities settling there.²⁰⁹

However, not all placed their trust in commission houses. Some merchants preferred to take care of the shipping themselves and accompanied their wares in person.

As far as the actual men working in transportation were concerned, their social acceptance was low. For example, the operators of the mule groups pulling the boats, the hoggees, were recruited from the city orphans and formed a segregated social group. Dismissed as the “canawlers”, their social position was decidedly among the lowest stratum.²¹⁰

Thus, though these companies and men moved large quantities of goods and provided the arteries of the economy, the transportation service providers remain undeservedly in the shadows.

3.7 The Gentleman Farmer

The Gentleman Farmer was a social ideal that reflected the correct economic life in the agricultural community. The gentleman farmer was a *primus inter pares*, who had wealth but was not wealthy. As a result, the farmer was able to exhibit Christian charity and to support projects of the community that he agreed with, such as funding the construction of a church house;²¹¹ holding political office; supporting the courts through guardianship of minors or execution of testaments;²¹² and assisting the elder or less fortunate.²¹³

The gentleman farmer had a great tradition to look back on that mirrored the way in

²⁰⁹ This explains the consternation of these communities, when infrastructure development made their services obsolete.

²¹⁰ Carol Sheriff (1997). *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress*. New York: Hill and Wang.

²¹¹ See Edward Hunter’s sponsorship of the West Nantmean Seminary on his own land below, on page p.362.

²¹² See Edward Hunter’s role as executor of the will of Linda Ford below on page p.362 footnote 183, and as guardian of the Lewis’ children, below on page p.362 footnote 184.

²¹³ See Frederick G. Williams assisting Joseph Smith Sr with his farming work, below on page p.275.

which the American founding fathers were channeling the Roman patrician attitude toward owning an agricultural estate.²¹⁴

3.7.1 Some Great Exemplars

After each stint in public service, Thomas Jefferson had returned with pleasure and excitement to Monticello to become a gentleman farmer once more. In a letter to Charles Willson Peale, himself an excellent example of a gentleman farmer,²¹⁵ from August 20, 1811, Thomas Jefferson wrote:

No occupation is so delightful as is the culture of the earth.²¹⁶

Similarly, in December 1788, George Washington wrote in a letter to the famous English agronomist Arthur Young, editor of the *Annals of Agriculture*, and publisher of several books on agriculture:

The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs, the better I am pleased with them; insomuch, that I can no where find so great satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits. . . . how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth than all the vain glory which can be acquired from ravaging it, by the most uninterrupted career of conquest.²¹⁷

Haworth shows that this attitude in Washington reached back into his boyhood days, citing a copy-book of the young Washington now in the Library of Congress:

²¹⁴ Cf. Cincinnatus in Livius; Columella's *De re rustica*; Cato's *De agri cultura*, whence the word *agriculture*. For an explication of how these were attitudes, not actual handbooks for being a farmer, see Moses I. Finley's *The Ancient Economy*, Berkeley — Los Angeles (University of California Press), 1973 (= Sather Classical Lectures, vol. 43).

²¹⁵ See below on page p.87.

²¹⁶ Quoted in: M. L. Wilson (1943). "Thomas Jefferson - Farmer". In: *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 87.3, pp. 216–222, p.216.

²¹⁷ Quoted in: Paul Leland Haworth (1915). *George Washington: Farmer. Being an account of his home life and agricultural activities*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, p.2.

True Happiness

These are the things, which once possess'd
 Will make a life that's truly bless'd
 A good Estate on healthy Soil,
 Not Got by Vice nor yet by toil²¹⁸

Here, the final stanza is critical for the social attitude I am describing. A gentleman farmer was not just in possession of a good farm that held the potential for success; he was also pursuing this without straining himself. Clearly, farm work was hard work, and doing such hard work was not what was praiseworthy. Rather, it was the theoretical interest, “always alert for better methods, willing to take any amount of pains to find the best fertilizer, the best way to | avoid plant disease, the best methods of cultivation”,²¹⁹ in a word, farming as a “mental effort”, an intellectual challenge.²²⁰

Perhaps the most famous example of such mental effort is the sixteen-sided barn on Washington's farm Dogue Run, for which he completed designs in 1792. The sixteen-sided barn solved the problem of how to thresh wheat in a weather proof fashion when using treading horses to separate the stalks from the kernels.²²¹ Washington had a two-storied barn constructed, consisting of two nested polygons, an interior octagon and an exterior hexadecagon. An earth ramp gave the horses access to the upper story. Threshed grain would fall through the slits in the wooden floor into the lower story, where it could be winnowed and taken for milling. The high number of sides of the polygon approximated the circle, a great figure for the threshing horses to walk but difficult to construct in wood using then-existing technology.

Similarly, Thomas Jefferson in 1788 during his stay in France wrote a memorandum that proposed a new mould board for a plow designed to minimize resistance. The design

²¹⁸Haworth, (1915), p.5.

²¹⁹Ibid., pp.6f.

²²⁰Ibid., p.6.

²²¹Dennis J. Pogue (2014). *16-Sided Barn*. (Visited on 10/06/2014).

won Jefferson a gold medal from the French Society of Agriculture.²²²

In another letter to Andrew Young, Washington expressed the gratification that rewarded the gentleman farmer who met that intellectual challenge:

It [i.e. farming, RCK] is honorable, it is amusing, | and, with judicious management, it is profitable. To see plants rise from the earth and flourish by the superior skill and bounty of the laborer fills a contemplative mind with ideas which are more easy to be conceived than expressed.²²³

Washington was not a gentleman farmer in the pejorative sense, someone suffering from the eighteenth century equivalent of a midlife crisis, “a man who in middle age buys a farm as a plaything and tries for the first time the costly experiment of cultivating the soil”.²²⁴ Washington was born and raised on a plantation; he knew what agricultural life looked like.²²⁵ His holdings on Mount Vernon alone were extensive, over 8,000 acres,²²⁶ divided into five farms, called Mansion House, Union, Dogue Run, Muddy Hole and River Farm, respectively.²²⁷

As in the case of Jefferson’s estate, the actual agricultural work on Washington’s farms was done by slaves: fifty to sixty at the River Farm, which had the largest acreage; thirty at the Muddy Hole Farm; fifty at Union Farm; forty at Dogue Run. They were all supervised by an overseer, who had a house at each of the farms.²²⁸

But not all gentlemen farmers had to be slaveowners. In 1809, Charles Willson Peale decided to retire. Peale looked back on a distinguished career of entrepreneurship. As one

²²²Russell L. Martin III and Lucia C. Stanton (1988). *Jefferson’s Plow Moldboard of Least Resistance*. Monticello: Thomas Jefferson Foundation.

²²³Haworth, (1915), pp.2f.

²²⁴Ibid., p.3.

²²⁵Ibid., p.3.

²²⁶ Haworth gives a reproduction of a map of Washington’s estate, drawn by Washington himself; cf. *ibid.*, insert between pp.62-63.

²²⁷Ibid., p.61.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.61-63. For the Mansion House Farm, Haworth only writes of “quarters for the negroes and other servants engaged upon that particular estate”, providing no estimate; cf. *ibid.*, p.61.

of the premier American painters, he had executed over sixty portraits of George Washington alone. Peale had been involved in numerous inventions, including a polygraph²²⁹ for writing a letter²³⁰ and its duplicate at the same time with rod-connected pens, which he used himself.²³¹ Peale and his sons had opened the first scientific museum of the United States in Philadelphia, complete with a three-dimensional reconstruction of a mastodon skeleton.²³² Inspired by his brother-in-law Henry Moore, who maintained a farm in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, and his friend Thomas Jefferson, who had just settled back in Monticello again, Peale purchased a large²³³ farm he eventually²³⁴ named Belfield²³⁵ as his rural retreat.²³⁶

The Man<s>tion is old fashioned with 10 or 12 Rooms, a Stone Barn with a Stable room for 6 Horses & 12 Cows—beside a Wooden stable for 5 Horses & a waggon house, Chaize House, Smoke house, hen house, Spring-House with a

²²⁹ Cf. the collection letter to Benjamin Henry Latrobe, February 10, 1810, Charles Willson Peale (1999). *The Belfield Farm Years, 1810-1820*. Ed. by Lillian B. Miller. Vol. 3. The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and his Family. New Haven, CO: Yale University Press, pp.13f, for the \$51 dollars such a machine cost.

²³⁰ Peale's letters are labeled by the date on which he *started* the letter. Often, Peale was interrupted and had to continue several days later. For example, in the February 3, 1810 letter to his son Rembrandt then working in Paris, Peale first describes his intention of purchasing a farm, and then continues the letter on February 9 with the farm already purchased; cf. *ibid.*, p.6. The majority of the time to write the letter to Rembrandt started July 22, 1810—especially to draw the farm sketches—was afforded by an accident on July 29, *Ibid.*, p.53; by the end of the letter, August 12, Peale was already feeling better; cf. *ibid.*, p.59.

²³¹ Hence the wealth of his letters that have survived, as Peale was able to bind the copies into letterbooks by year's end; cf. *ibid.*, p.xxxi.

²³² Florike Egmond and Peter Mason (1997). *The Mammoth and the Mouse: Microhistory and Morphology*. Baltimore — London: John Hopkins University Press, pp.7-18. Thomas Jefferson had alerted Peale to the bones, who first sketched them and later built a bucket pump system to excavate the bones. The room in his museum that housed the mastodon also held a large painting of the excavation, which depicts the pump; cf. the reproduction in *ibid.*, p.9 Fig 1.

²³³ Peale paid \$9,500 for a 104.5 acres farm, 6 miles from Philadelphia; cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, February 3, 1810, Peale, (1999), pp.6f. The farm had several buildings in disrepair and two mill streams crossing the property, with a drop of 7 and 20 feet, respectively; cf. Letter to Angelica Peale Robinson, March 11, 1810, *Ibid.*, p.30.

²³⁴ His first name choice was "Persevere", cf. the prescript of the Letter to Rembrandt Peale, June 8, 1810, *Ibid.*, p.42.

²³⁵ Fortunately, Peale was a painter, and he left full-fledged oil paintings as well as ink sketches in his letters of various views of his farm; cf. the five ink sketches in the Letter to Rembrandt Peale, July 22, 1810, *ibid.*, p.52; pp.54-59, and the map of the property with legend in the same, *ibid.*, p.53.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.xxv.

fine Stream[, RCK] 2 | Stories high the upper to making Cheese; a tolerable good house for the Tennant, and sundry conveniences in the House way, with an excellent Garden with respect to situation . . . I have built a Bath House to receive the Water from a fish Pond which the spring of the Spring-house gives a sufficient supply of running water. in my Bath I shall put my Kettle & small Still.²³⁷

Though Peale was not a farmer, and had no farm experience, he was a naturalist and had many notions of the health benefits derived from living on a farm outside the big city of Philadelphia.²³⁸ Peale was determined to run his farm according to the latest scientific principles,²³⁹ corresponding with his many friends to study up as quickly as possible.²⁴⁰ Pennsylvania was a good place to do so; it was the breadbasket of the country and had an active agricultural association, where members discussed the latest papers or reported on their experiments.²⁴¹

Peale was also an inventor; and he set out to equip his farm with labor saving devices²⁴² such as various mills²⁴³ along the two mill streams that he had purchased.²⁴⁴

I intend to build a Mill-house this fall [of 1810, RCK] on a plan which will

²³⁷ Cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, June 8, 1810, Ibid., pp.44f.

²³⁸ Ibid., p.xxv. See also footnote 233 above.

²³⁹ Peale logged temperature measures on a regular basis and was able to cite these values weeks later; cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, February 3, 1810, citing a pair of temperature reading from January 19 and 20 of same year, “at 8 o’clock AM [the temperature, RCK] was at 4 degrees above zero”; cf. *ibid.*, p.2. The fact that Peale glosses these as “a most intense cold season” suggests that he was using the Fahrenheit scale, where 4 degrees corresponds to -15.5 degrees Celsius. Even though Thomas Jefferson was interested in a decimal system, most thermometers at the time were Fahrenheit, e.g. in the Lewis and Clark expedition’s temperature readings; cf. Vernon Preston (2007). *Lewis and Clark: Weather and Climate Data from the Expedition Journals*. Boston: American Meteorological Society, p.4f.

²⁴⁰ Peale, (1999), p.xxviii.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p.xxv.

²⁴² In his letter to James Thackara, March 8, 1810, Ibid., p.26 Peale expressed the hope that the United States would make itself independent of Europe in manufacturies. This interest in “the progress of American Manufacture” Peale shared with his son-in-law; cf. Letter to Angelica Peale Robinson, March 11, 1810, Ibid., p.31.

²⁴³ Peale was planning for cotton or wool carding; cf. letter to Rembrandt Peale, June 8, 1810, Ibid., p.43; p.46.

²⁴⁴ A stream to power machines that would beat corn into hominy, wash clothes and churn butter in the mansion house had already been a requirement during the search; cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, February 3, 1810, *ibid.*, p.5.

admit of enlargement [sic RCK] when wanted, for the purpose of Churning & pounding Butter, Pounding homony [sic RCK], . . . Grinding paist [sic RCK] and perhaps a pr. [i.e. a pair, RCK] of Stones for flour, all the first mentioned things may be done wit Bands, i.e. broad-straps of Leather, therefore attended with little expence [sic RCK] of Machinery.²⁴⁵

Peale also conceived new farming tools, building a milk wagon that had a suspended container so that the milk would not spill;²⁴⁶ and he probably had more ideas than he ended up implementing. I am unclear if Peale ever built the roller that he felt was necessary for breaking up soil clods when sowing small grains.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, Peale enthusiastically experimented with new seed regimes, treating his farm as an agricultural laboratory, rather than following tried and true approaches.²⁴⁸

But Peale did not actually do any of the farm work. Peale had a tenant, Mr Hutchison,²⁴⁹ who had his own house next to the mansion, and the agreement between the two had them pool their stock equally and split the profits evenly;²⁵⁰ yet Peale provided the farm and the tenant the labor.²⁵¹ In addition, they hired day laborers as needed. Such workers were expensive²⁵² and needed supervision and provisioning.²⁵³

²⁴⁵ Cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, June 8, 1810, Peale, (1999), p.46.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, July 22, 1810, Ibid., pp.50f.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, July 22, 1810, Ibid., p.51.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p.xxviii-xxix.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p.33 Fn 7.

²⁵⁰ Cf. Letter to Angelica Peale Robinson, March 11, 1810, Ibid., p.31.

²⁵¹ Occasionally he even referred to his tenant as his “farmer”; cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, July 22, 1810, Ibid., p.49.

²⁵² In his letter to Rembrandt Peale, June 8, 1810, Peale complains that “no labouring Men to be hired except by the day for a dollar, which price I could not afford to give, yet was necessitated to do it for many parts of the necessary work”; cf. *ibid.*, p.42.

²⁵³ Ibid., p.xxviii. Peale recorded in his *Daybook 2* for July 6, 1810, that he and his tenant Mr Hutchison had gone to see Nathan Sellers, the father-in-law of Peale’s son Coleman. They inquired of Sellers the usual way to reimburse the tenant and the laborers for threshing grain they had bought from someone else, i.e. not grown on their own. “Mr Sellers says the Tenant should be allowed $\frac{1}{2}$ the Wages paid for cutting the Grain with reasonable allowance for vituals [sic RCK] [and RCK] liquors for the labourers, also half the expence [sic RCK] of threshing out the crop—his own labour & the management of the business to go against his accomodation [sic RCK] of House &c. on the place & against his absence at that time from the business of the farm.”; cf. *ibid.*, p.33.

Agriculturally, the farm was a success. His butter sold well,²⁵⁴ and Peale switched to cream cheese when he learned that it made more money.²⁵⁵ However, in terms of economics, with the costs of labor and the many experiments and improvements, Peale did not make much of a profit on his farming endeavor.²⁵⁶

It is true that money laid out on farms will not bring an Interest equal to purchasing property in the City, . . . —yet the pleasure of making improvements, the living | in a more salubrious air, and withall that independent state of a Farmer if he manages well, is fields & Stock, will certainly to a thinking man be nearly an equivalent of hords [sic RCK] of treasure.²⁵⁷

By 1815, frustrated with the supervisory aspects of farming, Peale handed all day-to-day operations to his tenants and returned to painting.²⁵⁸ The “amusement” of farming shifted to that of gardening, and his “Vaux Hall of Germantown”,²⁵⁹ as he called, it drew visitors from Philadelphia, replicating in an external setting the fusion of nature and art Peale had looked for in his Philadelphia museum.

3.7.2 The Projected Image

Almost by definition, not all men could be as wealthy as George Washington, as multi-talented as Charles Willson Peale, or as intelligent as Thomas Jefferson. But the example that these gentlemen set was the ideal that shaped the perspective of what lesser men dreamed of accomplishing: To theorize about farming and let the tenants, slaves or day laborers deal with the implementation; to contribute to the nation’s improvements by

²⁵⁴ Cf. Letter to Angelica Peale Robinson, February 11, 1810, *Ibid.*, p.15.

²⁵⁵ Cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, June 8, 1810, *ibid.*, p.45.

²⁵⁶ Peale was philosophical about this outcome, observing in his autobiography that “happiness is worth millions”, cf. *ibid.*, p.xxix, an easy stance to take for a gentleman farmer not dependent on the farm for his livelihood.

²⁵⁷ Cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, July 22, 1810, *Ibid.*, pp.49f.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.xxix.

²⁵⁹ The allusion is to the famous pleasure gardens in Kendington, on the south bank of the Thames, near London. For example, on May 29, 1662, noted London diarist Samuel Pepys took his family by boat for a walk there.

designing new tools or discovering new approaches; to conduct experiments to replace opinions about what should happen in the fields and the stockyard with hard evidence; to make economical gains as proof of superior method, not to obtain one's income or avert starvation.²⁶⁰

An anecdote from the construction of the Erie Canal might assist in understanding how this ideal played out in people's perceptions. In the aftermath of the enormous success of the Erie Canal, there was a great contention between numerous influential players of the canal's implementation over who had first conceived of the idea of the Erie Canal. In this context, the biographer of Governor De Witt Clinton, a medical doctor named David Hosack, communicated with Jesse Hawley on the origin of the Erie Canal project.²⁶¹

In his reply from July 24, 1828, written at Rochester, Jesse Hawley insists on the public contribution that he has made with his original suggestion.²⁶²

I claim the original and the first publication of the overland route of the Erie Canal from Buffalo to the Hudson—that, in it, I have been a benefactor to the public in general, and to the state of New York in particular—and I bless the author of my existence, that I have lived to see it finished, which was almost beyond the hope of my expectations when I was writing my essays—and, as chairman of the Rochester visiting committee [in charge of the celebrations at the opening of the canal, RCK], to deliver the first address at the opening of its celebration at Buffalo.²⁶³

But this is as far as Hawley wants to go, socially, and he brings back the ideal of the gentleman farmer as his reward.

²⁶⁰ Without this projected image, the “midlife crisis” farmer that Haworth so disparaged in his study of George Washington, is not explicable; it provides the very exemplar that the “midlife crisis” farmer is emulating.

²⁶¹ On how Jesse Hawley's fourteen-part essay series on the Erie Canal contributed to public support of the construction, cf. above on page p.71.

²⁶² David Hosack (1829). *Memoir of De Witt Clinton: with an appendix, containing numerous documents, illustrative of the principal events of his life*. New York: J. Seymour, pp.304f.

²⁶³ Ibid., p.304.

But this is all the notice that I have ever received from the state, or people, of New York, for [i.e. the Canal, RCK] in any wise: nor would I complain of that, having, in the mean time, by laborious industry, attained from bankruptcy to a comfortable moderate competency, and pleasantly located within a mile of this village [i.e. Rochester, RCK] and the canal.²⁶⁴

That homestead, a mile outside the city of Rochester, can only be his farm. Here, as Hawley himself put it, he had attained a comfortable life of appropriate moderation and financial competency.²⁶⁵ This was all the reward a benefactor of the State of New York should reasonably aspire to: a veritable Cincinnatus returned to his plowing.

3.8 Outlook

The following quote by Cook, summarizing the socio-economic life of the United States around the 1820s, is driven by some of the very exuberance that it tries to describe.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the United States proved one of the most enterprising and innovative nations on earth. This spirit of enterprise derived from many sources. Territorial expansion opened up the continent of almost limitless assets, promising the industrious success and achievement. The egalitarian ideology of the Revolution encouraged mobility and raised expectations among the middle class and the poor. The industrial revolution introduced the tools of technology to economic enterprise. And running through all these forces of change was the American capacity for innovation.²⁶⁶

This at any rate was the socio-economic situation of the country in which Joseph Smith Jr, born on December 23, 1805, was raised. How growing up in this context, in the particular family that he was born into, influenced his outlook on socio-economic issues: that is the story of the next chapter.

²⁶⁴Ibid., pp.304f.

²⁶⁵ As a former wheat merchant, Hawley did not work the farm himself, I am convinced. Nor would he have considered himself comfortable until he had found tenants and day laborers.

²⁶⁶Lyndon W. Cook (1985). *Joseph Smith and the Law of Consecration*. Provo, Utah: Grandin, p.1.

Chapter 4

Joseph Smith Jr's Socio-Economic Baseline

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I sketch a baseline for Joseph Smith Jr's socio-economic policy. The chapter enumerates potential influences on Smith Jr's social and economic thinking that he could have inherited from his environment during his childhood and and early adulthood.¹

After a few methodological remarks, I will consider the influences of his extended family, the geographical setting, and the business dealings that Joseph Smith Jr was exposed to.

4.1.1 Methodological Considerations

The validity of this approach rests on the fact that Joseph Smith Jr was not born into a cultural vacuum, but grew up in a family and communities embedded in larger socio-

¹ For a more theoretical underpinning of how this could work, consider Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, pp.58-60, especially the chapter entitled *Society as Objective Reality*, which sketches the process of cultural transfer between parent and child.

economic contexts.

Nevertheless, the approach has methodological difficulties. Any reconstruction, based on these influences is tentative in two ways. First, the reconstruction can only draw on descriptions of what his environment was like. Whether Joseph Smith Jr actually was influenced by these potentialities is in general impossible to show, and can only be surmised. Conversely, there will be things that actually did influence Joseph Smith Jr that left no trace in the historical record as recovered so far.

Second, in some cases the reconstruction has no contemporary documents to go by. In those situations, the reconstruction has to work backwards from later descriptions. When doing so, it is crucial to separate the time of analysis and the time of recording, so that information that was available at the time can be distinguished from hindsight and retro-projections. Only the information available contemporaneously could potentially have been influential for Joseph Smith Jr.

Temporally, the endpoint of this investigation is the time prior to the beginning of his occupation with the Book of Mormon, that is, up to the late summer of 1827.

4.1.2 On Extended Family Influences

Until his move to Harmony, Pennsylvania, where he went to work for Josiah Stowell in October of 1825,² Joseph Smith Jr lived with his immediate family: Joseph Smith Sr, Lucy (née Mack) Smith, and his brothers and sisters. The socio-economic experiences of this nuclear family provide one key source of influences upon Joseph Smith Jr.

Furthermore, the members of the larger Smith and Mack families had socio-economic experiences that differed from his nuclear family's, often markedly in scale and success. If her memoirs are any indication,³ Lucy Mack Smith felt warmly toward her relatives,

²Smith, (1853), pp.92f.

³ On the large role that Lucy Mack Smith's reminiscences play in this effort, cf. Appendix, pp.528ff.

and could have spoken well of their socio-economic deeds to her children. Similarly, father Joseph Smith Sr was on generally good terms with his relatives.

4.1.3 On Geographic Influences

After their departure from Vermont, the Smith family spent the majority of their time in the environs of Palmyra and Manchester township. Palmyra was connected to the Erie Canal in 1822,⁴ which brought an upsurge of economic activity in a town that was booming.

Near to Palmyra and Manchester was Canandaigua, the base of operations for the land agents and the banking for this area of the country. Though I do not know whether Joseph Jr visited Canandaigua, both his father Joseph Sr⁵ and his brother Hyrum⁶ did.⁷

Thus, the economic activities of these three towns have the potential of being familiar to Joseph Smith Jr and deserve enumeration. This section will also discuss some of the family's friends.

4.1.4 On Business Influences

Other than day-labor jobs and possibly purchases, Joseph Smith Jr had no formal business arrangements until November 1, 1825, when father and son entered into a treasure-hunting agreement with Josiah Stowell and several other treasure hunters in Harmony, Pennsylvania.⁸

I hope to show that this treasure hunting-agreement decisively shaped Joseph Smith Jr's perception of the relationship between physical work and spiritual work.

⁴Hulbert, (1904), p.135f.

⁵Smith, (1853), p.98.

⁶Ibid., p.92.

⁷ Joseph Jr's brother Samuel did go to Canandaigua, when his father was there in debtor's prison, but this was after the cutoff of 1827; cf. *ibid.*, p.166.

⁸Dan Vogel, ed. (2002). *Early Mormon Documents*. Vol. 4. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, p.407.

4.2 Socio-Economic Family Influences

4.2.1 The Nuclear Family

The basic childhood and adolescence of Joseph Smith Jr is well-worn ground that has been covered repeatedly. The basic consensus that has emerged can be obtained from a variety of sources, studies and monographs.⁹ The following sketch draws on these predecessors, but places its primary focus on the social and economic specifics.

A Socio-Economic Family Sketch

Much has been made of the fact that Joseph Smith Jr spent a good part of his upbringing poor and working hard, with little opportunity for education or refinement. In his 1875 interview with the *Chicago Tribune*, Book of Mormon witness David Whitmer described the Smith family as “mud-sill”;¹⁰ but that is misleading, because they had not started out that way.

When Joseph Smith Jr was born in Sharon, Vermont, in 1805, his parents were working a farm they had rented from his maternal grandfather, Solomon Mack. Joseph Sr was also teaching school during the off-season.¹¹

But working a farm by himself was not what Joseph Sr had set his heart on. He had brought a farm into his marriage to Lucy Mack in 1796, located in Tunbridge, Vermont. Lucy Mack hailed from an economically successful family and brought a wedding present

⁹ The core chronology comes from Lucy Mack Smith's memories, Smith, (1853). In the endless sea of Joseph Smith Jr biographies, I found the following particularly interesting or illuminating, though the older they are, the more in need of revision they at times may be. Fawn M. Brodie (1971). *No Man knows my History: The Life of Joseph Smith*. 2nd ed. New York: Alfred Knopf; Marquardt and Walters, (1994); Quinn, (1998); Dan Vogel (2004). *Joseph Smith: the making of a prophet*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books. ISBN: 1560851791 (alk. paper); Bushman, (2005).

¹⁰Dan Vogel, ed. (2003). *Early Mormon Documents*. Vol. 5. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, I.3, p.18.

¹¹ On referring to the father of the Smith family as Joseph Sr, even though, technically, he was not until Joseph Jr's birth in 1805, see also footnote 1 above on page p.28.

of \$1,000 into the marriage.¹² In 1802, the couple rented out their own farm to set up a merchant shop in Randolph, Vermont.¹³ In addition to taking on store goods on credit from Boston merchants worth \$1,800, Joseph Sr speculated in ginseng, an export article to China at that time. However, Joseph Sr was swindled out of the proceeds in 1803,¹⁴ and the failure of the ginseng enterprise bankrupted their commercial undertakings. The Tunbridge farm had to be sold, and the \$1,000 wedding present added, to cover the debts to the Boston merchants.¹⁵ The family was reduced to a lowly tenant status in Tunbridge.

Thus, when Solomon Mack, Lucy's father, purchased land in Sharon in 1805, the Smiths rented it from him and worked it, with an eye toward regaining financial comfort.¹⁶ By 1807 they were ready to move back to Tunbridge, and by 1808 to Royalton, Vermont. In 1812 the family moved to Lebanon, New Hampshire.¹⁷ Lucy Mack Smith recalls them as stocking up for a new mercantile venture, and the family was comfortable enough to send their second oldest son Hyrum to an academy.¹⁸

The second store was not to be. The family was pauperized by the typhoid epidemic of 1812, which had left all of their children sick, for months on end, consuming their financial savings with the costs of doctors, nursing and medicines.¹⁹ These expenses included a leg operation to remove osteomyelitis, a bone infection caused by the typhoid fever, in Joseph Smith Jr's leg. The operation was right at the cusp of the then-existent medical state of the art, involving several doctors, and cannot have been cheap.²⁰

Smith Sr attempted to regain their economic footing by farming in Norwich, Vermont

¹²Smith, (1853), p.45.

¹³ Ibid., p.49. This is the first step on the road to becoming a gentleman farmer; cf. above on pages pp.84ff.

¹⁴Ibid., p.49f.

¹⁵Ibid., p.51.

¹⁶Ibid., p.56.

¹⁷Ibid., p.59.

¹⁸Ibid., p.60.

¹⁹Ibid., pp.60-62; p.66.

²⁰Ibid., pp.64f.

starting in 1815, but then came the famous “Year without a Summer” of 1816,²¹ with an estimated temperature drop of 1 degree celsius. In Vermont in 1816, snow fell in June and destroyed the second harvest for the Smith family.²² Their economic hand forced, the Smiths relocated to Palmyra, New York, by January of 1817.²³ The fact that Joseph Sr preferred the high land prices in the booming town to the cheaper land prices in Ohio and the Western Reserve, may be attributed to his interest in once again opening a store in an urban context.²⁴

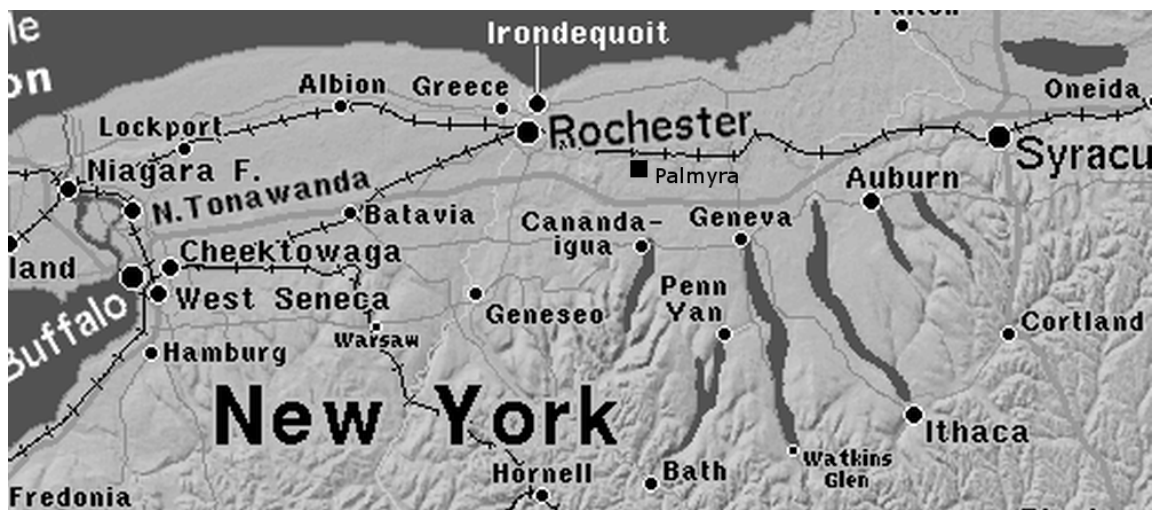


Figure 4.1: Detail of a Present-Day Map of the Great Lakes region, with Palmyra added. The so-called “Finger Lakes Region” was where Joseph Smith Jr spent his teens and early years of adulthood. For full map, see page 70. For license, see page 550 below.

²¹ Most likely, these globally unfavorable climatic conditions were due to sustained volcanic activity. In 1812, La Soufrière on Saint Vincent in the Carribean and Awu in the Sangihe Islands of Indonesia erupted; in 1813, Suwanosejima in the Ryuku Islands of Japan. In 1814, the Mayon in the Philippines broke out. The overall build-up of dust in the atmosphere contributed to a general cooling effect, and poor harvest returns up to and including 1815. Then in May 1815, Mount Tambora on the Sumbawa island in Indonesia erupted, causing a global change in the weather pattern; cf. Vogel, (1996), p.270 Fn 65.

²²Smith, (1853), pp.66f.

²³Ibid., pp.67-70.

²⁴ Palmyra did have a good harvest even in the year without a summer; cf. O'Reilly, (1838), p.367. Perhaps this was to be attributed to the the superior soil; cf. Horatio Gates Spafford (1824). *A gazetteer of the State of New-York : embracing an ample survey and description of its counties, towns, cities, villages, canals, mountains, lakes, rivers, creeks, and natural topography ... with an appendix ...* Albany: B. D. Packard, p.400.

In Palmyra, the Smiths rented a house on Main Street²⁵ and sold foodstuffs from a small store as well as from a hand-cart during public festivities.²⁶ Their concern now was to raise enough money to purchase another farm. The men hired themselves out as day laborers, and Lucy Mack Smith painted and sold oil cloth. By 1819 they began to build a log cabin for themselves on land, which they either squatted on or rented, right outside Palmyra Village, along the Manchester county line.²⁷

In July of 1821, they were able to obtain a mortgage for 100-acres next to the log cabin.²⁸ They had already commenced clearing the land earlier, producing fruits and maple syrup for sale. In 1822, the family began to build a framehouse on the property under the leadership of their oldest son, Alvin. The addition to the farm buildings included a workshop, where Joseph Sr taught Joseph Jr how to cooper barrels.²⁹ The family also commenced treasure-hunting operations on their farm and in the neighborhood around this time.

Tragedy struck in November of 1823, when the hard-working Alvin died.³⁰ Possibly due to the loss of Alvin's contribution to the family income, the Smiths failed to make the last mortgage payment in 1825. They were only able to save themselves from eviction in December of 1825 by convincing local Quaker Lemuel Durfee to buy the farm instead,³¹ then rent it back to them.³² In return for tenancy, son Samuel was hired out to Durfee for

²⁵Marquardt and Walters, (1994), p.117.

²⁶Pomeroy Tucker (1867). *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism*. New York: Appleton, p.12.

²⁷Marquardt and Walters, (1994), p.5.

²⁸Smith, (1853), p.71.

²⁹ The workshop would serve as a hiding place for the golden plates of the Book of Mormon after 1827, as would a bean barrel most likely made by Joseph Smith Jr.

³⁰ Smith, (1853), pp.87-89. Alvin succumbed to medical maltreatment, an overdosis of Calomel. Joseph Jr was so traumatized by this experience, that he could still refer to ignorant doctors as "Calomel Doctor" in April of 1843; cf. Willard Richards (1843). "President Joseph Smith's Journal: Dec 1842-June 1844. Book 2, 10 March 1843-14 July 1843". handwriting and signatures of Willard Richards; 1,045 pages; JS Collection, CHL., p.131.

³¹Smith, (1853), p.98.

³² The Smiths eventually lost the farm in 1829, when Durfee's daughter married and the property was designated for the newlywed; cf. Larry E. Morris (2007). "The Conversion of Oliver Cowdery". In: *Journal*



Figure 4.2: The Joseph Smith family farm in Manchester in 1907, by George Edward Anderson (October 28, 1860–May 9, 1928) Public Domain, Courtesy of LDS Church Archives – Harold B. Lee Library, Digital Collections, Religious Education Image Archive.

six to seven months as a day-laborer beginning in April of 1827.³³

Joseph Jr missed much of the excitement surrounding the failed mortgage payment. He had been hired, together with his father, by Josiah Stowell, from South Bainbridge, New York, who needed his treasure-hunting expertise in locating a suspected silver mine in Harmony Township, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, in October 1825.³⁴ Given their mortgage arrears, the Smiths jumped at the opportunity. A formal money-digging company was assembled and contracted in November of 1825, and the diggers boarded at the home of Isaac Hale, future father-in-law of Joseph Smith Jr.

When the company of money diggers disbanded on November 17, Joseph Jr remained as a farm hand with Josiah Stowell until March of 1826, attending school with Stowell's children during the winter.³⁵ Once Stowell could no longer afford to search for the treasures, Smith Jr hired with Joseph Knight, Sr, of Colesville, Broom County, Pennsylvania,³⁶ where Smith Jr continued to lead treasure-hunting operations in the area.

Summary of Influences from the Nuclear Family

As the above sketch indicates, Joseph Smith Jr's nuclear family exposed him to a variety of socio-economic activities during his childhood and adolescence. His father had been both a farmer and a tenant, a shopkeeper and a food peddler, a speculator in agricultural long-distance trade, a cooper and a school teacher. His mother had, in addition to supporting the family's farming activities, produced and sold oil cloths. Joseph Jr had learned the craft of coopering.

of *Book of Mormon Studies* 16.1, pp. 4–17, 81–83, p.12.

³³Dan Vogel, ed. (2000). *Early Mormon Documents*. Vol. 3. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, III.L.10 p.457.

³⁴ Smith, (1853), pp.91f. I discuss this event fully below on pages pp.125ff.

³⁵Vogel, (2002), IV.B.1 p.80.

³⁶Dean C. Jessee (1976a). "Joseph Knight's Recollection of Early Mormon History". In: *BYU Studies* 17.1, pp. 1–11, p.2.

Both he and his brothers had engaged in day laboring, working for hire or in exchange for tenancy, as well as being farm hands. The family's attempts to purchase their farm had exposed him to credit, mortgages and the vagaries of acquiring land and property.

Finally, his treasure-hunting activities introduced Smith Jr to that important legal instrument, the company, where persons of mutual interest pooled their resources—money, tools, know-how—for a common economic goal, with a binding division of the spoils.

4.2.2 The Extended Family

Both Joseph Smith Sr and Lucy Mack Smith came from large families. Some of their siblings made their mark in the world economically and socially. As proud siblings, the Smith parents could have shared these achievements with their children. Such stories may in turn have influenced Joseph Smith Jr's perceptions about socio-economic policy.

Methodological Differences

Extended family differs from the nuclear family in that members of one nuclear family may only have sporadic and incomplete access to information about the other nuclear families of the extended family.

This is especially true if geographic distance inhibits communication. In order to reconstruct opportunities of influence prior to the summer of 1827, attention must be paid to when communication could have taken place, and what could have been communicated, so as to not over-attribute exemplars due to the hindsight of the sources.

Consider the case of Colonel Stephen Mack, Lucy's second older brother.³⁷ Though the Smiths and Stephen Mack lived proximate to each other in Vermont for the first years of the Smith marriage, somewhere between 1802 and 1810, Stephen moved his business interests

³⁷ For a mini-biography of Stephen Mack that deals with some of the chronological difficulties of the sources, see the relevant section in the Appendix, starting on page p.531.

to Detroit, then in the Michigan territory. His wife, Temperance née Bond, and his children remained behind in Vermont, often living near the Smiths. In 1817, the Smiths departed the state for Palmyra. In the 1820s, Temperance and the children followed Stephen to Pontiac, Michigan. It is unclear how much communication the Smiths and the Macks of Pontiac had until Stephen's death in Pontiac, Michigan, in 1826.

In April of 1830, his daughter Almira Mack came to Manchester and was baptized into the newly established Mormon church. In the spring of 1831, Lucy Mack Smith, having just moved to Kirtland, traveled to Pontiac with Almira, to visit the widowed Temperance Bond Mack, both Lucy's sister-in-law and Almira's mother.

Thus, if not already in April of 1830, then definitely by the summer of 1831, when Lucy Mack Smith returned to Kirtland, she would have been "caught up" on the Michigan time of her brother's life, as far as his nuclear family members knew about it.³⁸

Consequently, when Lucy Mack Smith began to dictate her rough-draft manuscript history to Howard and Martha Jane Knowelton Coray in the fall of 1844, she had a basic grasp of her late brother's social and economic activities in Michigan. But only a subset of her knowledge in 1844 would have been available to her before the summer of 1827 to tell her children about. Not every remarkable achievement of Colonel Stephen Mack mentioned in the rough draft manuscript could have influenced Joseph Smith Jr's social and economic thinking prior to the endpoint of our analysis.

A similar argument applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the other nuclear families of the extended family. Which events could have been known will have to be noted on a case-by-case basis.

³⁸ For example, Stephen Mack may have chosen not to relate his involvement in the entirely forgettable proceedings of the "Star Chamber" court, an odious example of frontier humor that Durant felt compelled to preserve for posterity; cf. Samuel W. Durant (1877). *History of Oakland County, Michigan*. Philadelphia: L. H. Everts et Co., p.70f.

Maternal Grandfather Solomon Mack

Lucy Mack Smith's father, grandfather Solomon Mack to Joseph Smith Jr, died in 1820, when Joseph Smith Jr was fifteen. Though Lucy Mack Smith may not have known everything about her father that modern historians, with access to diaries and letters and county records, have been able to determine, it seems reasonable that she would have been informed of the broad strokes of his economic career. Joseph Jr would have had plenty of opportunity to learn about his grandfather's many accomplishments.

Solomon Mack had started out in a comfortable home in Lyme, New London county, Connecticut; his parents owned a large property and lived in style.³⁹ However, the family ran into financial difficulties, and Solomon Mack had to hire himself out to a neighboring farmer until twenty-one years of age.⁴⁰ This prevented his ever receiving any schooling.⁴¹

After fighting in the French and Indian Wars around Lake George and Lake Champlain, where he acquitted himself with bravery,⁴² his fortunes waxed and waned as "merchant, land developer, shipmaster, mill operator and farmer".⁴³ Operating a store at Crown Point at the lower bottom of Lake Champlain, was unsuccessful due to lack of accounting know-how, but Solomon Mack had made a tidy sum during his army service.⁴⁴ He invested that money in 1,600 acres of wilderness in Granville, New York, but could not hold on to it, as a leg injury prevented him from fulfilling the contractual obligations of erecting a specified number of log cabins.⁴⁵ An attempt to make money at sea, transporting goods from New England to New York, was dashed on the rocks of Long Island.⁴⁶

³⁹Smith, (1853), p.15.

⁴⁰Ibid., p.15.

⁴¹Richard Lloyd Anderson (2003). *Joseph Smith's New England Heritage*. 2nd ed. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., p.7.

⁴²Ibid., pp.7-9.

⁴³Ibid., p.9.

⁴⁴Smith, (1853), p.10.

⁴⁵Anderson, (2003), p.10.

⁴⁶Ibid., p.10.

After farming in Lyme, Connecticut and Marlow, Southern New Hampshire, Solomon joined his brother Elisha Mack at Gilsum, New Hampshire, where the two operated a saw and grist mill.⁴⁷ During the Revolutionary War, Solomon Mack helped round up saltpeter for gun powder and operated a baggage carriage, as well as enlisting with the artillery.⁴⁸ Together with his sons Jason and Stephen, Solomon Mack privateered under Captain Havens⁴⁹ on the sloop *Beaver*.⁵⁰

Back in New Hampshire, around 1777,⁵¹ a series of accidents—a felled tree, a fall onto the mill wheel during inspections, and a falling tree branch—crippled Solomon Mack severely.⁵²

With the end of hostilities, the sons and the father joined the merchant marine,⁵³ taking a ship plus cargo to Liverpool, Nova Scotia,⁵⁴ and selling both.⁵⁵ For four years, they undertook fishing voyages off of Nova Scotia. After the return journey with Captain Foster, they bought the ship from him.⁵⁶ They took on passengers to Connecticut, and then ran onto a reef near Halifax with the boat loaded with dry goods.⁵⁷ Solomon Mack sold the wreck and worked his way up to another ship of 40 tons, but was forced to abandon the sea for health reasons⁵⁸ and returned “completely destitute”.⁵⁹

Back at home, everything was in shambles: creditors had foreclosed the farm in Gilsum and put the family onto the street, and the returning sea captain had nothing to show for

⁴⁷Ibid., p.11.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp.12f.

⁴⁹Smith, (1853), p.19.

⁵⁰Anderson, (2003), p.15.

⁵¹Ibid., p.18.

⁵²Ibid., p.13.

⁵³ Anderson estimates that this would have been 1784-1788.

⁵⁴ This is made clear by context from the Jason Mack story; cf. Smith, (1853), p.52 and below on page p.109.

⁵⁵Ibid., p.20.

⁵⁶Ibid., p.20.

⁵⁷Anderson, (2003), p.17f.

⁵⁸Ibid., p.18.

⁵⁹Smith, (1853), p.20.

four years of hard-working absence.⁶⁰ The family worked hard to earn enough to move to Tunbridge, Vermont.

In the 1790s, we find Solomon working with his brothers Elisha and Samuel on dams and mill projects on the Connecticut River. Samuel was hired by an English company to build a dam there, and Solomon, with his son Solomon Jr, assisted him.⁶¹ Elisha participated in a toll bridge in 1792 and in canal, lock and dam construction projects during that time.⁶² In 1793, Stephen Mack moved his family from Gilsum to Tunbridge, Vermont, bringing along his sister Lucy to help with the children. Here she met and married Joseph Smith Sr in 1796.⁶³

In 1810 in Windsor, Solomon, now deeply interested in religion, published his autobiographical sketches⁶⁴ in pamphlet form.⁶⁵ Solomon and his wife Lydia resided in Sharon with their son Daniel Jr, until the wife's death in 1818. In the winter of 1816, the Joseph Smith Sr family left for Palmyra; at that point, though unbeknownst to him, Solomon had completed all of his economic achievements. After Lydia's death, Solomon moved back to Gilsum, New Hampshire, to live out his days with his son Solomon Jr, dying in 1820.⁶⁶

Jason Mack

Most of what is known about Jason Mack derives from his sister's biographical comments in her history⁶⁷, which sometimes relied on the written recollections of her father Solomon Mack. Born in 1766, Jason became a Primitivist (or "Seeker" in the terminology of the time) in 1782, when Lucy was seven, and a minister four years later.

⁶⁰ Anderson, (2003), p.19.

⁶¹ Ibid., p.19.

⁶² Ibid., p.20.

⁶³ Ibid., p.21.

⁶⁴ Reprinted in edited form in: *ibid.*, pp.39-73.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p.29.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.32.

⁶⁷ Smith, (1844–1845), bk.1, p.5.

The oldest <son> jason ... before he attained his 16th year he became what is termed a Seeker a beleiver in the power of God manifest through the medium of prayer and faith he held that there was no church in existence which held to the pure principles of the Gospel but labored incessantly to convince the people that by an exercise of prayer the blessings and privileges of the ancient disciples of jesus might be obtained and eventually would be. At the age of 20 he became a minister of the gospel.⁶⁸

During a business trip with his father Solomon⁶⁹ to Liverpool, Nova Scotia,⁷⁰ Jason lost his fiancée to a postal employee, who intercepted and substituted his letters to trick the fiancée into thinking that Jason had died. Finding the wealthy young lady married upon his return, Jason emigrated to Nova Scotia for good.⁷¹

Jason visited the Smiths on their Tunbridge farm at some point before 1803.⁷² At that time, Jason was running a commune in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, consisting of thirty families, and coasting with his own schooner to Liverpool, Nova Scotia. The rough-dictation notes imply that the commune produced agricultural products as well as plaster of Paris and lime, two early forms of fertilizer.⁷³ The fair-copy version clarifies that Liverpool was the market of choice for selling their products, and that Jason was using his schooner to bring their products to market there.⁷⁴

Lucy Mack Smith mentions Jason's social engagement, beyond operating a commune, in having taken in a "friendless orphan" and giving \$15 to a newly widowed mother, together with a suit of clothes for each of her six children⁷⁵, or a new dress and shoes to a poor

⁶⁸Ibid., bk.1, p.5.

⁶⁹ On Lucy Mack Smith's father Solomon, Joseph Smith Jr's maternal grandfather, see below on page p.106.

⁷⁰ The identification is supported by Anderson, cf. Anderson, (2003), p.17.

⁷¹Smith, (1845), pp.8-10.

⁷²Smith, (1844-1845), misc, p.1.

⁷³Arrington, (1976), p.26.

⁷⁴Smith, (1845), p.46.

⁷⁵ cite[misc, p.1]mack-rough-1844 (= ibid., p.45)

woman,⁷⁶ which articles, as the fair copy clarifies,⁷⁷ he took from the store goods that Jason had brought as presents for his sisters and mother.

Stephen Mack

Like her oldest brother Jason Mack, Lucy's second oldest brother was a socially and economically impressive man to his younger sister.⁷⁸

Colonel Stephen Mack's impact in the Territory of Michigan was such that he is mentioned in the local histories⁷⁹ as well as legal documents from the time, mainly relating to the Bank of Michigan and other business ventures. Thus, there is a number of sources that need to be reconciled, as they at times are at variance with each other.⁸⁰

Stephen Mack, after privateering with his father and brother Jason during the Revolutionary War, set himself up in 1787 as a merchant in Gilsom, New Hampshire, where one half of the Solomon Mack family was residing. In addition, Stephen set up a store and a large hotel⁸¹ or tavern⁸², located along a scenic sidearm of the White River known as "the Branch", in Tunbridge, Vermont, where the other half of Solomon Mack's family lived. Stephen cultivated an extensive farm.⁸³ In 1793, he moved to Tunbridge,⁸⁴ and brought his sister Lucy with him to take care of the children. Stephen Mack opened a tanning

⁷⁶Smith, (1844–1845), misc, p.1.

⁷⁷Smith, (1845), p.45.

⁷⁸ At the same time, it remains unclear why her sister Lydia, who apparently was equally economically successful and socially engaged received such short shrift; cf. *ibid.*, p.23f (= Smith, (1853), p.33). The rough draft manuscript history provides no obvious answers here; cf. Smith, (1844–1845), bk.1, p.15.

⁷⁹ Seeley's history—Thaddeus De Witt Seeley (1912). *History of Oakland County, Michigan*. Vol. 1. New York: Lewis—is dependent on Durant's earlier history—Durant, (1877)—to a plagiaristic degree; the description of Elvira Jamieson in Seeley, (1912), p.76 is copied verbatim from Durant, (1877), p.71. I will thus cite Seeley only when it contributes new information.

⁸⁰ The contributions of the individual sources are enumerated in the Appendix, cf. page p.531 below. All the date information is derived from other sources than Lucy Mack Smith's accounts, cf. Anderson, (2001), p.287, as she offers no dates.

⁸¹Durant, (1877), p.70.

⁸²Seeley, (1912), p.75.

⁸³Smith, (1844–1845), bk.1, p.14.

⁸⁴Anderson, (2003), p.21.

business in Tunbridge, possibly with John Mudget as partner.⁸⁵

When Lucy married Joseph Smith Sr in 1796, Stephen and his business partner John Mudget gave \$500 each as a wedding present to Lucy.⁸⁶

During the 1800s, Stephen Mack became a colonel in the Green Mountains regiments of Vermont⁸⁷ and began to reorient himself commercially.

Around 1803, Stephen Mack rented out commercial real estate in Tunbridge, for example to the ginseng merchant Stevens, for manufacturing purposes.⁸⁸

Sometime after 1807, but definitely by 1810,⁸⁹ Stephen Mack began to operate wholesale and retail establishments in Detroit. As a former colonel of the Vermont militia, he served under General Hull in the defense of Detroit.⁹⁰ The officers of the occupying British forces used his beautiful house as quarters and confiscated his merchandise;⁹¹ an employee assisted in hiding the money.⁹²

Sometime during his Detroit stay, Stephen Mack owned a boat on Lake Erie. Years later, when the young Mormon church moved from New York to Kirtland, Ohio, Lucy Mack Smith would meet Stephen's former employee, Captain Blake, who had since Stephen's death taken over the boat.⁹³

In 1818, as an agent of the Pontiac company, Stephen Mack was instrumental in the founding of Pontiac, Oakland County, Michigan and financed the first turnpike from Pontiac to Detroit out of his own pocket. Stephen also funded public works, to give employment to the local poor.⁹⁴

⁸⁵Smith, (1853), p.31.

⁸⁶Ibid., p.45.

⁸⁷Durant, (1877), MH, p.i.

⁸⁸Smith, (1844–1845), bk.2, p.6.

⁸⁹Durant, (1877), p.70.

⁹⁰Smith, (1844–1845), bk.1, p.14.

⁹¹Smith, (1853), p.32.

⁹²Smith, (1844–1845), bk.1, p.14.

⁹³Ibid., bk. 11, p.7.

⁹⁴Smith, (1853), p.31.

Also in 1818, Stephen Mack was one of the founding members in the establishment of the Bank of Michigan,⁹⁵ where he served as a director until at least 1825.⁹⁶ James McCloskey became the cashier of the bank, and Stephen Mack was one of his bondsmen on the bond of \$20,000 against his obligations toward the Bank of Michigan.⁹⁷ During the winter of 1818-1819, the company of Mack, Conant & Sibley built the first dam in Pontiac, and there the first sawmill.⁹⁸

Between 1810 and 1820, Stephen Mack had visited his family only sporadically in Tunbridge, Vermont.⁹⁹ Then, in 1820, Stephen brought his family from Tunbridge to Detroit, and thence to Pontiac, Michigan, where he set up his business and bought two farms.¹⁰⁰

Stephen Mack's business continued to grow, and by November of 1820, he was operating multiple stores, in Michigan and in Ohio, the largest of which employed six clerks.¹⁰¹

Stephen Mack also built a grist and saw mill in Rochester, Michigan.¹⁰²

Stephen Mack built a distillery in 1823 and in 1824 a woolen mill¹⁰³ that did carding, spinning and weaving.¹⁰⁴ That same year, Stephen Mack represented Oakland County on the territorial council.¹⁰⁵

Stephen Mack died in 1826. His estate was first embroiled and then consumed by the defalcation of the Bank of Michigan,¹⁰⁶ for whose cashier Stephen Mack had been a

⁹⁵Friend Palmer (1905). "The Old Michigan Bank". In: ed. by Lansing. Vol. XXX. Michigan Old Pioneer and Historical Collection. Michigan Historical Commission, pp. 410-423, p.411.

⁹⁶William Wirt Blume, ed. (1935-1940a). *Transactions of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Michigan, 1805-1836*. Vol. 1824-1835 v1. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, p.72.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, p.430.

⁹⁸Durant, (1877), p.70.

⁹⁹Smith, (1853), p.31.

¹⁰⁰Smith, (1844-1845), bk.1, p.15.

¹⁰¹Smith, (1853), p.31.

¹⁰²Smith, (1844-1845), bk.1, p.15.

¹⁰³ Lucy Mack Smith reported it to be a cotton factory; cf. *ibid.*, bk.1, p.15.

¹⁰⁴Durant, (1877), p.71.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p.21.

¹⁰⁶ See also the Appendix, page p.535.

bondsman.¹⁰⁷ When justice had run its course in December of 1828, the \$30,000 worth of damages was collected from the Stephen Mack estate, leaving the estate destitute,¹⁰⁸ and not with a “legacy of \$50,000 clear of incumbrances”,¹⁰⁹ as Lucy Mack Smith reports.

Lucy most likely saw Stephen last in 1807, when he departed for Detroit and the Smiths moved back to Tunbridge.¹¹⁰ The Smiths and Stephen Mack’s wife and children may have crossed paths and exchanged information in Norwich in 1816, where Stephen’s son Almon visited the military academy,¹¹¹ and the Smiths farmed unsuccessfully in their last effort to remain in Vermont.¹¹²

William Moore has pointed out¹¹³ that the Mack family, when finally relocating to Michigan in 1822, most likely took the Genesee Road from Vermont to Buffalo, there to board a lake vessel to Detroit. At that point, the Erie Canal was only connected up to Rochester; the Erie Canal reached Buffalo only in 1825. The Genesee Road led through Palmyra, so the Macks could have spent time with the Smiths in Manchester in 1822.

I am unaware of any other opportunities for communication between the siblings after 1816, up to Stephen’s death in 1826. If Lucy received additional information about her brother’s doings through the obituaries following his death, such information would have been late to the game of shaping Joseph Smith Jr’s thinking prior to 1827.

Thus, any economic achievement of Stephen Mack, from his Vermont time until his departure to Detroit, would have been well known to the Smiths. If a meeting in Norwich took place in 1815, they may have been informed by Stephen’s wife about his affairs in

¹⁰⁷Durant, (1877), p.71.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p.71.

¹⁰⁹Smith, (1844–1845), bk.1, p.15.

¹¹⁰ If they missed each other then, Stephen Mack’s wife and children would still have been there (Durant, (1877), p.70, Smith, (1853), p.31), and could have supplied information on Stephen’s recent business achievements.

¹¹¹Durant, (1877), p.70.

¹¹² Smith, (1853), p.66; Anderson, (2001), p.312.

¹¹³William L. Moore (2005). *The 1823 Detroit Manuscript: A Book of Mormon Prequel*. (Visited on 03/01/2005).

Michigan up to then, including his defense of Detroit and the threat to his assets under the War of 1812.

As the Smiths themselves moved to Palmyra in 1817, the connections became more difficult to maintain. They may or may not have heard about Colonel Mack's involvement in the founding of Pontiac, Michigan and the related economic events, such as his financing of the turnpike to Detroit and other public works, the dam project for the saw mill in 1819, and such: Much depends on whether they communicated somehow, possibly by getting together during the move of the Macks to Detroit along the Genesee Road in 1822.

Even then, the Smiths still would not have known about the distillery, the wool-carding mill, or the steam mill operated in Rochester, Michigan, which came after 1822. Nor would they have learned about the inheritance fiasco until Almira Mack's 1830 visit to Manchester. The fact that Almira Mack did come to visit in 1830, just as the Book of Mormon was published, is however an indication that some exchange of information may have continued.

Paternal Grandfather Asael Smith

Asael Smith was the youngest child and second son of Samuel Smith of Topsfield, Massachusetts. Asael grew up in a family that was intimately connected with local politics; his father Samuel Smith was equally active in the cause of the Revolution.¹¹⁴

[Samuel Smith served, RCK] . . . a half-dozen terms in the state legislature, a dozen terms as governing selectman of his town, and sometimes town clerk. . . . Captain in the militia and a grass-roots leader in committees that successfully promoted Revolution, Samuel Smith was a solid representative of local aristocracies that had much to lose by pledging lives, fortunes and sacred honor for the cause of American independence.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴Anderson, (2003), pp.115f.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p.115.

As the second son, Asael learned a trade: coopering.¹¹⁶ In 1767, Asael married Mary Duty;¹¹⁷ their third child, Joseph, the future father of Mormon prophet Joseph Smith Jr, was born July 12, 1771 and baptized, like all their children, into the Congregational church.¹¹⁸ During the Revolutionary War, Asael enlisted under Captain John Nesmith and went to protect New York's northern frontiers.¹¹⁹

By 1785, when his father Samuel died, Asael lived in Derryfield (now Manchester), New Hampshire, "serving his seventh" and final "term as town clerk".¹²⁰ The inheritance of Samuel Smith was complicated, and his sons consulted to disentangle the mess, being much concerned to avoid the impression that their father "should have it said of him that he died insolvent".¹²¹ Eventually, Asael traded places with his brother Samuel Jr, taking the Topsfield farm to work off the debt, which he accomplished,¹²² while Samuel Jr took the Derryfield property.¹²³

In 1791, Asael rented a dairy farm and left its operation in the hands of his wife Mary and the younger children, while he headed for Vermont with his oldest son Jesse in search of virgin land to clear. Then, Jesse and Joseph, 23 and 20 years old respectively, went ahead to build a cabin,¹²⁴ a 14 by 10 foot affair loosely built and covered in elm bark.¹²⁵ The family followed with wagons pulled by yokes of oxen. The family had to cut their own road and build their own bridges to provide access to their property.¹²⁶

¹¹⁶Ibid., p.117; p.120.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p.117.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p.118.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p.118.

¹²⁰Ibid., p.117; p.120.

¹²¹Ibid., p.121.

¹²²Ibid., p.124.

¹²³Ibid., p.122.

¹²⁴Ibid., p.127.

¹²⁵Ibid., p.128.

¹²⁶Ibid., p.128.

Asael and his family homesteaded 83 acres in “Tunbridge gore” in 1791,¹²⁷ then another 83 acres adjacent to the west in 1794, and then another 100 acres to the north of the farm.¹²⁸ The local crops were “hay, wheat, meat, and dairy products”¹²⁹ as well as corn and fruit in orchards. “Many maples were left standing and sap was gathered and processed into sugar in early spring ”.¹³⁰

The trio of farms, operated by Jesse, Joseph and Asael Jr, brought Asael Sr into good community standing. Asael Sr held positions such as selectman (1793-1795), moderator of the town meeting, highway surveyor, and juror.¹³¹ Among Asael's new friends was impressive businessman Stephen Mack, which led to the marriage of Stephen Mack's sister Lucy to Asael's second son Joseph Sr.¹³²

Though active in local politics, Asael minded his own business with respect to national politics. The main exception was the issue of slavery, which Asael strongly opposed, translating an anti-slavery pamphlet by Benezet, *A Caution and Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies*, which he bequeathed to Joseph Smith Jr's cousin George A. Smith later in life.¹³³

In 1793, Asael and his son Jesse helped to found the Universalist¹³⁴ Society in Tunbridge, purchasing pews to fund the construction of the building.¹³⁵ In 1799, Asael Smith penned his personal religious testament¹³⁶ for his descendants,¹³⁷ a document that is often investigated for the light it might throw “on the values of Joseph Smith Sr and his son and

¹²⁷Anderson, (2003), p.128.

¹²⁸Ibid., p.129.

¹²⁹Ibid., p.129.

¹³⁰Ibid., p.129.

¹³¹Ibid., p.129.

¹³²Ibid., p.131.

¹³³Ibid., pp.131f.

¹³⁴ Universalists reject the notion of an eternal hell; they believe in temporary punishment, but a final reconciliation of all with God. Cf. also *ibid.*, p.134.

¹³⁵Ibid., p.133f.

¹³⁶ Edited in: *ibid.*, p.160-176.

¹³⁷Ibid., p.134.

namesake, Joseph Smith Jr”.¹³⁸

When a fight over the inheritance broke out between Asael and the oldest son Jesse, the remaining five brothers, one unmarried sister and the parents relocated to Potsdam and Stockholm on the New York frontier in 1814,¹³⁹ and pioneered new farms once more. In 1816, the Joseph Smith Sr family departed for Palmyra.

Asael Smith died on October 31, 1830, in Stockholm, New York.¹⁴⁰ By that time, the Book of Mormon had been published and his second son Joseph Smith Sr had traveled the two hundred miles to Stockholm to present him with a copy, which Asael came close to finishing.¹⁴¹ Asael saw in the book a revelation to break the “ecclesiastical tyranny”.¹⁴² Eventually, most of the siblings of Joseph Sr, though not Jesse, would join the Mormon church, and in 1836 move to Kirtland, Ohio.¹⁴³

4.2.3 Summary

If the Smith Sr family were “mud-sills”, as David Whitmer had sneered, they had only become so recently.

Both on their father’s and their mother’s side, the family had nothing to be ashamed of. At the marriage, every indication had existed that Joseph Smith Jr and his siblings would grow up in style and comfort.¹⁴⁴ The ancestors and siblings of the parents had been successful business folk and politically active citizens. They had shown entrepreneurship, leadership, patriotism, a willingness to take risks, and the ability to pick up and start over when their hard labor had not met with the often well-deserved reward.

¹³⁸Ibid., p.135.

¹³⁹Ibid., p.142-147.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p.147.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p.148.

¹⁴²Ibid., p.148.

¹⁴³Ibid., p.149.

¹⁴⁴ The time in Lebanon, New Hampshire, where Hyrum attended the academy, was the closest they ever got to this economic ideal; cf. Smith, (1853), p.60.

Of course, the Smiths and the Macks were impressive, but not unique in that regard. Other families, in similar circumstances, had behaved just the same and had profited equally. The pioneer stories¹⁴⁵ with their bias for the local achievers provide plenty of examples. The same is true for the apostates; David Whitmer could sneer at the Smith Srs, because his own family was just as comfortable and well-established as grandfather Asael Smith and his sons had been.¹⁴⁶

In some cases, the lines of inheritance run clear, as when Asael Smith's coopering was handed down via Joseph Smith Sr to Joseph Smith Jr. In other cases, one can only surmise how much Joseph Smith Jr knew or how much he felt inspired by his relatives and ancestors.

4.3 Influences of the Local Economy

4.3.1 Palmyra

As of August 1822, immediately after becoming connected to the Erie Canal,¹⁴⁷ the township of Palmyra, Ontario county, had a population of 3724.¹⁴⁸ The township had 748 engaged in agriculture, 190 in manufacturing, and 18 in commerce and trade.¹⁴⁹

The Mud Creek provided several mill sites. Palmyra had 10 grist mills, 17 sawmills, 2 fulling mills, 2 carding machines, 1 iron works, 6 distilleries, and 2 asheries.¹⁵⁰ With some 7,734 sheep, the textile production was "43830 yards of cloth made in 1821".¹⁵¹

In 1821, 1253 children had been taught in the 25 school districts for 5 months.¹⁵²

In the village of Palmyra, there was a post office. Due to the canal, there was consider-

¹⁴⁵Turner, (1851).

¹⁴⁶ On the Whitmers, cf. below on page p.171.

¹⁴⁷Hulbert, (1904), p.135f.

¹⁴⁸ Of these, 1048 were children; cf. Spafford, (1824), p.400.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p.400.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p.400.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p.400.

¹⁵²Ibid., p.400.

able business, ranking Palmyra third in the county. Several large stores and store houses, related to the canal trade, were in operation.¹⁵³ The village was a stop on the line from Pittsford, Monroe County, to Utica, with two canal packets per day.¹⁵⁴ There were three spacious basins on the canal, one including a dry dock.¹⁵⁵

The Village had 2-3 school houses, an academy, “13 dry good stores, 3 druggist shops, 3 inns, 2 tanneries, one of which is [in 1822, RCK] so extensive as to employ 40 hands, and a number of other mechanical establishments.”¹⁵⁶ There was also a printing office.¹⁵⁷

A turnpike to Montezuma was under construction in August 1822.¹⁵⁸

Reminiscences claim that Joseph Smith Jr would come into town to sell farm products and linger a bit, frequenting the dry-good stores, where the young people tried to debate the issues of the day, as well as the printing office to pick up his father’s newspaper.¹⁵⁹ Presumably he was also familiar with the druggist shop of Drs Gain Robinson and Alexander McIntyre, who were not only the family physicians,¹⁶⁰ but also friends.¹⁶¹

4.3.2 Manchester

Manchester was separated from Farmington¹⁶² into its own township in April of 1822 by an act of legislation.¹⁶³ The last census had been conducted prior to the separation, and the local estimate was that the population had divided evenly between Farmington and

¹⁵³Ibid., p.400.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p.401.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p.401.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p.401.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p.401.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p.401.

¹⁵⁹Turner, (1851), pp.213f.

¹⁶⁰Smith, (1853), p.87.

¹⁶¹Ibid., p.95.

¹⁶²Spafford, (1824), p.171.

¹⁶³Ibid., p.302.

Manchester.¹⁶⁴ Of the combined population of 4214,¹⁶⁵ 929 were engaged in agriculture, 192 in manufacturing, and 3 in commerce and trade.¹⁶⁶

The total industries for both townships amount to 2 gristmills, 14 sawmills, 6 fulling mills, 8 carding machines, 2 cotton and woolen factories, 1 iron works, 5 distilleries and 5 asheries.¹⁶⁷ Given the large number of textile industry, and some 10,208 sheep, it may not be surprising to hear that the production amounted to “35,319 yards of cloth made in families in 1821”.¹⁶⁸ The locals saw themselves as dairy farmers, who had brought their tradition from Cheshire, Massachusetts.¹⁶⁹

As far as Manchester alone was concerned, the Canandaigua outlet was powering many mill-seats, as well as the Ontario Manufacturing Co., which was destroyed by fire in the winter of 1821-1822.¹⁷⁰ The town was a stop on the post road from Canandaigua to Palmyra.¹⁷¹ About one mile outside of town, a spa area was developing in the 1820s, based on sulphurous fountains called *Clifton Springs*. Spa visitors could find accommodation at the Clifton Hotel, which sported a small library.¹⁷²

The Smith farm was part of Manchester township. Joseph Smith Jr's parents would send him to Manchester village on business at times.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁴Spafford, (1824), p.171.

¹⁶⁵ Some 972 were children, i.e. “between 5 and 15”; cf. *ibid.*, p.171.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.171. Other than the statistics for Canandaigua, cf. *ibid.*, p.81, the correspondants used “farmer” for “engaged in agriculture” and “mechanics” for “engaged in manufacturing”.

¹⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p.171.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p.171.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p.171.

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p.302.

¹⁷¹*Ibid.*, p.303.

¹⁷²*Ibid.*, p.303.

¹⁷³Smith, (1853), p.98.

4.3.3 Canandaigua

Canandaigua was located 13 miles south of Palmyra village.¹⁷⁴ In 1822, of the entire population of 4680,¹⁷⁵ 802 were engaged in agriculture, 226 in manufacturing, and 29 in commerce and trade.¹⁷⁶

In 1821, 1113 children received instruction at their school.¹⁷⁷ The town had 3 grist mills, 3 saw mills, 1 fulling mill, 1 carding machine, 3 distilleries and 2 asheries.¹⁷⁸ The town center was located $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the lake up the hill, on a broad main street¹⁷⁹ which ran a mile long.

Canandaigua then hosted the court house, the county prison,¹⁸⁰ a fire-proof clerk's office, a state arsenal, an academy three stories tall, five school houses, a Masonic hall, two banks, and two land offices, "the one by the Agent of the State of Connecticut, and the other by the Agent of various extensive proprietors in Europe".¹⁸¹

There are 3 or 4 printing offices, and three Gazettes, 40 stores, several of which are extensive, and extensive book-store and bindery, 80 mechanics' shops, 35 offices, a brewery, several elegant inns, and by far too many taverns and groceries [as there are every where, in such places,] several asheries, &c &c.¹⁸²

Canandaigua was a very stylish and attractive place, as one might expect from a "seat of a great deal of business, and wealth,".¹⁸³

¹⁷⁴ Spafford, (1824), p.401. See also Figure 4.1 above on page p.100.

¹⁷⁵ Some 1196 were children, i.e. "between 5 and 15"; cf. *ibid.*, p.81.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.81.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.81.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.81.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.81.

¹⁸⁰ The prison was built at a cost of \$30,000; cf. *ibid.*, p.81. Father Smith would reside there just before the early Mormon church removed to Kirtland, Ohio, on charges of unpaid debt, in order to pressure him into recanting the *Book of Mormon*; cf. Smith, (1853), pp.164-166

¹⁸¹ Spafford, (1824), p.81.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p.81.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.82. The authors expressly exempted the banks from this assessment, "which really add nothing to the capital of any place, and which are rather a curse than a blessing in any but great commercial places"; cf. *ibid.*, p.82.

The private mansions of many individuals are extensive and elegant, having spacious courts, gardens, &c. and combining every convenience of art and every elegance of taste.¹⁸⁴

With the Erie Canal running 12 miles north of the town, there were expectations in 1822 of a canal to connect Canandaigua Lake to the great canal.¹⁸⁵ Currently, the lake was connected to the Seneca River via the Canandaigua Outlet or Creek,¹⁸⁶ “a very good mill stream”.¹⁸⁷

The land agent representing the owners of the land that the Smiths were trying to purchase resided in Canandaigua; so when the Smiths had to deal with the agent, they had to go there.¹⁸⁸

4.3.4 Summary

Joseph Smith Jr spent his teenage years not on the frontier proper, but on uncultivated land adjacent to bustling towns, and, just before his eighteenth birthday, along one of the main traffic arteries of the Northern United States, the Erie Canal. With populations in the several thousands, prosperous farms and textile production, this was not the boondocks. Furthermore, these towns hosted some significant businesses, such as the large tannery in Palmyra employing some 40 people, giving him some exposure to manufacturing.

Commerce, travel and trade were playing important parts with the poastal road system and, even more, with the availability of the Erie Canal, as the significant number of stores and inns suggests. There were iron works in both Farmington and Palmyra. The abundance of water power made steam power unnecessary.

¹⁸⁴Spafford, (1824), p.81.

¹⁸⁵Ibid., p.81.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p.81.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., p.81.

¹⁸⁸Smith, (1853), p.92; pp.95f; p.98.

Nevertheless, mechanization was dominated by the agricultural domain, as well as the processing of raw materials. And there was no financial sector outside of Canandaigua.

4.4 Joseph Smith Jr, Supernatural Consultant

Though Joseph Smith Jr had been a cooper, an agricultural and a day laborer, as well as a seller of farm products for several years, at the latest¹⁸⁹ by October 1825 it became clear that his most marketable skill was as a consultant for the supernatural. That month, Josiah Stowell hired him to come down to Harmony, Pennsylvania, and advise a group of treasure-hunters with regards to the powerful enchantment that had kept them from locating a Spanish silver mine and coin mint.

4.4.1 Defusing the Treasure-Hunter Stigma

Framing Joseph Smith Jr's involvement in this and other treasure-hunting activities in terms of the neologism of "consultancy of the supernatural" helps to defuse the controversial role that Smiths' treasure hunting activities have played in the past. The frontlines in this debate are clear. The detractor side argued that the treasure-hunting activities showed Joseph Smith Jr to be either a scoundrel or naive, as well as lazy, and that these illegal activities¹⁹⁰ somehow also resolved the vexing issue of the *Book of Mormon* and its validity as a revelation.

The apologist side had initially denied, then downplayed, and finally, since the appear-

¹⁸⁹ Quinn has an elaborate argument to show that Joseph Smith Jr was already working in the Susquehanna Valley as a consultant of the supernatural since 1822; cf. Quinn, (1998), p.54f. If this is so, it strengthens my argument.

¹⁹⁰ The term for the misdemeanor was glass-looker, and Joseph Smith Jr was sued in court on these charges in Bainbridge in 1826; cf. Gordon A. Madsen (2014). "Being Acquitted of a "Disorderly Person" Charge in 1826". In: *Sustaining the Law: Joseph Smith's Legal Encounters*. Ed. by Gordon A. Madsen, Jeffrey N. Walker, and John W. Welch. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Studies. Chap. 4, pp. 71–92.

ance of Quinn's excellent book,¹⁹¹ admitted that Smith Jr had engaged in treasure-hunting "in his youth", as had everyone else then; and that such work may have assisted in locating the golden plates from which the *Book of Mormon* had been translated;¹⁹² but that Smith Jr had kept separate the sacred from the profane with respect to the golden plates. Morris observed:

As for claims that Joseph Jr had promised to share [the golden, RCK] plates [that he retrieved from the Hill Cumorah near Manchester, in the fall of 1827, RCK] with others, it is perfectly possible, given the popularity of treasure seeking throughout New York and New England during this time, that Joseph and various neighbors had agreed to split the profits of any treasure that any of them found. Although Joseph viewed the plates in religious terms, quite apart from the kind of treasure he sought while working for Josiah Stowell, the neighbors made no such distinction.¹⁹³

I propose to sort out the debate as follows:

1. The apologists are right that to equate Joseph Smith Jr's treasure-seeking activities—in a culture rife with them, as documented by Quinn—with duplicity or naiveté is an *ad hominem* attack and unproductive for determining anything about the revelatory claims of the *Book of Mormon*.
2. The detractors are right in that there is a fundamental continuity between the treasure-hunting and the translation process in terms of the supernatural involved.¹⁹⁴ The distinction between magic and religion has been a complicated one for millennia, and Joseph Smith Jr and his time did not distinguish that boundary any more cleanly than early Christianity or the Reformation had.

¹⁹¹Quinn, (1998).

¹⁹² On the *Book of Mormon* and its translation, as well as the role of the plates, cf. below page p.147.

¹⁹³Morris, (2007), p.8.

¹⁹⁴ Care has to be taken with reminiscences like those of Henry R. Sayer, who was interviewed in 1885 for Arthur B. Demming's *Naked Truths about Mormonism*. Here, Sayer reports that "Joe [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] claimed to receive revelations from the Lord, where to dig."; cf. Vogel, (2002), V.C.7 p.367. This is not the continuity I mean.

My interest inr stepping into this debate is not only because the agreement of the treasure seekers is one of the first business contracts that we know of that Joseph Smith Jr signed. And it is not only because it cast Joseph Smith Jr in the appealing social role of an esteemed expert, rather than a manual laborer.¹⁹⁵ It is also because I believe that it forms a pattern for the way Joseph Smith Jr would conceptualize his role as a prophet in society, and especially within his church.

4.4.2 Searching for the Silver Mine

According to Quinn, William Hale of Delaware County, New York,¹⁹⁶ had learned around 1822 from a “peeper”, as people who could see underground were called at that time,¹⁹⁷ that a treasure was hidden in a hill northeast of Harmony, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania.¹⁹⁸ Hale had a distant relative, Isaac Hale, living in Harmony, and went to investigate the matter and to discuss it with his relative. After some fruitless searching on his own, William Hale decided to bring in more helpers, especially some economic muscle. Hale partnered¹⁹⁹ with Oliver Harper, of Windsor, Broom County, New York,²⁰⁰ and Josiah Stowell, a propertied farmer of Bainbridge, Chenango County, New York.²⁰¹

In 1822, Harper hired a large group of people, fourteen men, to dig continuously in two

¹⁹⁵ According to some sources, Joseph Smith Jr had been in Susquehanna County around 1820, when he was some fourteen years old, helping to cut timber; cf. Quinn, (1998), p.50. Whether this is true or not, it is in line with the types of jobs Smith Jr normally was able to get.

¹⁹⁶Ibid., p.49.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., p.48.

¹⁹⁸Ibid., p.48.

¹⁹⁹ Quinn believes that at this early time already, Smith Jr was brought in as a “peeper”, cf. Ibid., p.48, and expends much ingenious argumentation on proving this point, cf. *ibid.*, pp.49-54; Vogel believes that this is too early, because Joseph Smith Jr only found his white seer stone from the well in 1823; cf. Vogel, (2002), p.183 Fn 7. I side with Vogel on this issue, as the Willard Chase source that Vogel uses is from 1833 and an aggrieved party, while Quinn’s source is William R. Hine’s account of 1885, which is marred by other chronologic problems as well, such as dating the translation effort to 1825 rather than 1827; cf. *ibid.*, IV.D.10 pp.185f. However, their disagreement has no impact on my argument.

²⁰⁰Quinn, (1998), p.49.

²⁰¹Ibid., p.48.

groups of seven.²⁰² After expending some \$2,000 without success, Oliver Harper refused to fund any more work.²⁰³

Tragically, Oliver Harper had been murdered in 1824.²⁰⁴ His widow had took his place in the business structure,²⁰⁵ and in 1825, the effort resumed. They worked “during a considerable part of the . . . summer”,²⁰⁶ but without any success.

In this situation, Josiah Stowell went up to Manchester, Ontario County, New York,²⁰⁷ to the Smith farm to recruit Joseph Jr. As Quinn correctly points out, this is indicative of the reputation that Smith Jr and his father must have had as “peepers” already.²⁰⁸

Lucy Mack Smith recalls Stowell’s arrival and request.

[In October of 1825, RCK] . . . a man, by the name of Josiah Stool [i.e. Stowell, RCK], came from Chenango county, New York, with the view of getting Joseph to assist him in digging for a silver mine. He came for Joseph on account of having heard that he possessed certain keys, by which he could discern things invisible to the natural eye.²⁰⁹

Joseph Smith Sr accompanied his son,²¹⁰ and they boarded at the house of William

²⁰²Quinn, (1998), p.49.

²⁰³Ibid., p.49.

²⁰⁴Newell and Avery, (1994), p.6f.

²⁰⁵Quinn, (1998), p.55.

²⁰⁶Vogel, (2002), V.E.1 p.412.

²⁰⁷ Vogel believes that Stowell was visiting his son, Simpson Stowell, who lived in Palmyra, by then Wayne County, New York; cf. Dan Vogel (1994). “The Locations of Joseph Smith’s Early Treasure Quests”. In: *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 27.3, pp. 197–231, p.213.

²⁰⁸ Quinn, (1998), p.55. There is an important difference here between Vogel and Quinn with respect to the *geographical extent* of that reputation. As mentioned before, Quinn is trying to show that Smith Jr had been digging around Harmony, as well as consulting “remotely” on the Stowell silvermine, since at least 1822, if not before; crucially, that would give Smith Jr a reputation that involved the New York and Pennsylvania borderlands; cf. *ibid.*, pp.49-54 and footnote 199 above on page p.125. Vogel argues that Smith Sr and Smith Jr coming down to Harmony in October of 1825 is the “only known Smith-inspired dig in Pennsylvania”, and that only “Joseph Smith Jr.’s activities in the Palmyra/Manchester area as a treasure seer were well known”; cf. Vogel, (1994), p.213. To suss out the difference: in the Vogel model, meeting the Smiths could have been an afterthought on Stowell’s part, hatched upon arriving in Palmyra and hearing about the Smiths’ reputation; in Quinn, the meeting with the Smiths would have been conceivable even before the start of the trip, due to their three years of prior collaboration.

²⁰⁹Smith, (1853), p.91f.

²¹⁰ Father Smith was a well-known treasure hunter in his own right. In fact, a common apologist strategy

Hale's relative, Isaac Hale.²¹¹

The company of silver mine seekers signed formal articles of agreement, which I will discuss below, on November 1, 1825. The company disbanded on November 17, 1825. Isaac Hale recalls, that they got discouraged, because Joseph Smith Jr stated that "the enchantment was so powerful that he could not see"²¹² anything; Joseph Smith Jr claimed that he convinced "the old gentleman"²¹³, presumably Josiah Stowell, to stop the digging.

Either way, Stowell and Smith Jr ended on friendly terms, as Smith Jr spent the winter of 1825-1826 with Stowell's children, going to school, and thereafter worked as his farm laborer.²¹⁴ Neither did Joseph Smith Jr stop treasure hunting in the area, as his court hearing in March of 1826 indicates.²¹⁵

4.4.3 The Articles of the Agreement

Treasure-hunters signed articles of agreement in advance to prevent any disagreement over how to divvy up the spoils after the fact. Such agreements treated the sought treasure akin to common stock that everyone had some share in. In addition there were laborers, who were either salaried or in on the cut.

Josiah Stowell, William Hale and Oliver Harper, now represented by his widow, had been involved in the project for almost two years by this point, when they were bringing

used to be to claim that Joseph Jr's ventures had actually been Joseph Sr-led ventures that Smith Jr was possibly even forced to come along on; cf. Quinn, (1998), p.44, citing Richard L. Bushman.

²¹¹ Here, Joseph Smith Jr met his future wife, Emma Hale. See also the statement of Isaac Hale from 1834; cf. Vogel, (2002), V.A.1 pp.281f, Eber D. Howe (1834). *History of Mormonism, or, A faithful account of that singular imposition and delusion: with sketches of the characters of its propagators : to which are added inquiries into the probability that the historical part of the The Golden Bible was written by one Solomon Spaulding, and by him intended to be published as a romance.* Painesville: Printed and published by the author, pp.262-266.

²¹²Ibid., p.264.

²¹³Vogel, (1996), I.A.15 p.8.

²¹⁴Vogel, (2002), IV.B.1 p.80.

²¹⁵ Quinn, (1998), p.55; Madsen, (2014).

on board consultants of the supernatural. The articles of agreement needed updating.²¹⁶

The agreement states that it covered the discovery²¹⁷ of

... a valuable mine of either | Gold or Silver and also to contain coined money
and bars or ingots of Gold or Silver, ...²¹⁸

So far the company organization had distinguished between shareholders and laborers. There were majority shareholders, like Josiah and Calvin Stowell²¹⁹ as well as William Hale, who would take two thirds²²⁰ of the find to divide three ways amongst themselves. The minority stock holders, Charles Newton, William Wiley and the Widow Harper, would take one third²²¹ of the find and divide that amongst themselves.

Joseph Smith Sr and Smith Jr then were treated as having a right to two elevenths “of all the property that may be obtained”²²², basically by each third contributing to these elevenths.

This left the problem of the laborers: John F. Shepard, Elihu Stowell²²³, and John Grant. Recall that during the 1822 campaign under Oliver Harper, the laborers had received a salary,²²⁴ which had eventually incurred expenses of some \$2,000 that caused Harper to call the dig off.

To avoid a replay of this situation, presumably, the laborers are told explicitly that they only get something “if anything should be obtained; otherwise they are to lose their time,

²¹⁶Vogel, (2002), V.E.1 pp.401-403.

²¹⁷ I am unclear what would have happened if they had found something radically different from what they expected, e.g. a treasure chest of diamonds instead of gold and silver, or a salt mine. On treasure hunts targeting salt, cf. Quinn, (1998), p.53.

²¹⁸ Vogel, (2002), V.E.1 pp.401f

²¹⁹ Just to reiterate Quinn's point, how thin the veneer between magic and religion was and how socially acceptable the pursuits of the former, Josiah's brother Calvin was a deacon of South Bainbridge Presbyterian Church; cf. *ibid.*, p.402 Fn 11.

²²⁰*Ibid.*, V.E.1 p.402.

²²¹*Ibid.*, V.E.1 p.402.

²²²*Ibid.*, V.E.1 p.402.

²²³ Vogel agrees with Larry Porter's suggestion that this was the nephew of Josiah and Calvin Stowell, that is, the son of their half-brother Abishai Stowell; cf. *ibid.*, V.E.1 p.402 Fn 15.

²²⁴Quinn, (1998), p.49.

expense and labor”.²²⁵ However, they are told this last, i.e. after the “success branch” of the decision graph, which states that they will share equally in the *mining operation*, but not in any of the already mined or minted precious metals.

... to consider them as equal sharers in the mine, after all the coined money and bars or ingots are obtained by the undersigned, their shares to be taken out from each share; ²²⁶

The crucial word here is “by the undersigned”, as the signatures of the non-share holding laborers are critically missing from the document—thus proving that the three laborers did not count as undersigners.²²⁷ This caveat also explains why the agreement continues that

... and we further agree to remunerate all the three above named persons [i.e. the laborers, RCK] in a handsome manner for all their time, expense and labor which they have been or may be at, until the mine is opened, ...²²⁸

Such an “instant bonus” and “bridge funding” make sense only under the assumption that the laborers would only share in the mine; otherwise the precious metals already mined would reward them immediately.²²⁹

This leaves the problem of the expenses, which is the topic of interest of the third and final paragraph. Here, the beginning of the mining operations is the key event. Anything before then is an expense born by those who have thirds, “the proprietors”.²³⁰ All expenses, once operation of the mine has commenced, are born by all those owning shares equally.²³¹

²²⁵Vogel, (2002), V.E.1 p.402.

²²⁶Ibid., V.E.1 p.402.

²²⁷ Ibid., p.413. This to my mind suggests that this is the *company-internal* document, and that another agreement must have existed between the company and the laborers, which these undersigned.

²²⁸Ibid., V.E.1 p.402.

²²⁹ It is for this reason that I do not understand Dan Vogel’s explanatory example computation for \$1,000 found, cf. *ibid.*, p.408, at all, since the example makes no distinction between profit from the mine and profit from coins and ingots, a distinction crucial to computing the cut of the laborers. In his diction, I think the agreement spells out his scenario B, and the ambiguity he sees that would hint for scenario A requires a forced interpretation, in my mind.

²³⁰Ibid., V.E.1 p.403.

²³¹Ibid., V.E.1 p.403.

4.4.4 Evaluating Joseph Smith Jr's Consultancy

In November 1825, the *fama* of Joseph Smith Jr's treasure-hunting abilities, as well as those of his father's, were substantial enough that Josiah Stowell was willing to contract for their expertise in dealing with the supernatural, after yet another fruitless summer of treasure hunting. In the articles of agreement, Joseph Smith Jr and his father play a role that is grafted onto those of the proprietors of the effort, who would take all the coins and ingots and bars already mined. They do not complement the trio of laborers, whose compensation would come from their share in the mine.

The accounts of other treasure-hunting ventures by various friendly and hostile parties differ on whether the Smiths were contributing manual labor as well, or only handling the supernatural side of the operation. My intuition in this case is that the Smiths were not digging actively, any more than Josiah Stowell would have been. To use a medical analogy: Akin to anesthesiologists, the Smiths contributed their special expertise, but did not execute the surgical parts of the operation, leaving that to the surgeon and the nurses.

For the 20-year old Joseph Smith Jr, this must have been a watershed experience that put him into a qualitatively different social setting. It is one matter to be the lead on a treasure-hunting operation that one has instigated oneself; it is quite another to have wealthy farmers like Josiah Stowell contact one; or have men of social influence like Deacon Calvin Stowell defer to one's judgements. This was a situation quite different from the day-labor experiences that Joseph Jr had had before—or would experience immediately afterwards, when becoming Josiah Stowell's farm hand. Even if they never found the Spanish silver mine: the agreement alone told Joseph Jr what his supernatural expertise was worth on the market.

I argue that this agreement provided Joseph Smith Jr with a conceptual template for taking divergent forms of capital—funding, supernatural expertise, and labor—and welding

them into a common purpose: whether it be in his role as the Prophet in the early Mormon church,²³² in the Literary and the United Firm in Kirtland;²³³ or during his mayorship in Nauvoo.²³⁴ In all of these settings Joseph Smith Jr had to find a way to combine these three elements into a working whole. The problem of this alignment would remain one of the lifelong themes for Joseph Smith Jr as spiritual and worldly leader of the early Mormons.

4.5 Summary

By the summer of 1827, we find 22-year old Joseph Smith Jr as the son of the impoverished branch of a family tree containing leaders, patriots, successful farmers and talented entrepreneurs. Though poor themselves, they knew what economic success was, what one had to attempt to achieve it, and what it looked like when one succeeded.

Smith Jr had worked hard for the previous 15 years of his life, contributing to his family's socio-economic recovery after the typhoid epidemic of 1812 had wiped out their savings. Smith Jr had learned his father's trade, coopering, and was conversant with farming techniques. For the last decade, he had lived in or near the booming agricultural city of Palmyra, with its developing manufacturing powered by the transportation opportunities of the Erie Canal, which had opened in 1822. He was however not much exposed to finances, beyond the mortgaging basics of farming, and he was unclear on the larger efforts of pushing America forward in manufacturing, an effort that men like Thomas Jefferson or Charles Willson Peale²³⁵ had been fretting about since the 1810s.

Joseph Smith Jr had dabbled in the supernatural side of nineteenth-century American

²³² Cf. D&C 25:9.

²³³ Cf. below on pages pp.265ff on the United Firm, especially pages pp.271ff on the Literary Firm.

²³⁴ Cf. below on pages pp.367ff.

²³⁵ On Peale's interest in the progress of American manufacture, cf. above Fn 242 on page p.89.

life for long enough at this point that his reputation led him to be consulted for high-risk, high-payoff ventures. Here, he was treated not as yet another farm hand, but as a specialist whose gifts were recognized.

It was in this mindset that Joseph Smith Jr entered the “next big thing” in his own life, the discovery and translation of the *Book of Mormon*.

Chapter 5

A New Scripture

At this point in the argument, I have given an idea of what ever-day life in the nineteenth century United States¹ was like for the people who participated in the story of early Mormonism. I have then situated the genesis of Joseph Smith Jr's socio-economic thinking in that background sketch.² Chronologically, these discussions bring me up to the autumn of 1827. In Mormon orthodoxy, this is when the Golden Plates were taken from the Hill of Cumorah, the translation of which is the contents of the *Book of Mormon* published in March of 1830. Understanding the socio-economic stance of the *Book of Mormon* will allow me to transition into the case study of the socio-economic challenges that Joseph Smith Jr and his advisors faced when presiding over the young church.³

In keeping with my theoretical stance,⁴ I am not interested in stepping into the ongoing debate of what happened in the autumn of 1827 or thereafter to produce the *Book of Mormon*, nor do I inquire into the precise understanding of the role that Joseph Smith Jr,

¹ Cf. pp.43ff above.

² Cf. pp.95ff above.

³ For a summary of the contents of the constituent books of the *Book of Mormon*, see in the appendix below, cf. pages pp.525ff.

⁴ Cf. above on pages pp.38ff.

his scribes, or anyone else for that matter, played in its literary production.

What is historically beyond doubt is that there were hundreds of people in upstate New York and Ohio who, in 1830 and 1831, would pick up a copy of the *Book of Mormon* and see in it the revelation that complemented their religious yearnings and answered their innermost questions. That the book was the answer to some people's prayers, but not to most others', says nothing about the validity or invalidity of the book, only about the distribution of the expectations.⁵ As David Hume drily noted with respect to his own enquiries, many books fall stillborn off the press. The *Book of Mormon* emphatically did not. Putting aside the theories and speculations regarding its origin, both supportive and detractive, brings into focus the concerns and expectations of its early readers and how the *Book of Mormon* was an answer to these.

In the following, I will analyse several questions:

1. Why was the Bible felt to be incomplete and in need of a complementary revelation?
2. What were the properties and characteristics that allowed early converts to recognize for themselves that the *Book of Mormon* was a translation of divine revelations?
3. Whence the marked differences in the translation process between the Biblical texts and the Golden Plates?

The *Book of Mormon* had answers on many religious and social questions and continued many theological traditions. Most germane to my undertaking, the *Book of Mormon* worried about social equality in the face of differential economic success. The analysis of this topic will close out the chapter and take us into the socio-economic challenges that Joseph Smith Jr and his advisors tackled.

⁵ Societal reform presupposes the "majority of one" in the sense of Henry David Thoreau, the undemocratic assumption that everyone else is mistaken.

5.1 The Unexpected Openness of the Canon

What is true for the Hebrew Bible, is *mutatis mutandis* true for the New Testament as well: Neither are mere compilations of theological writings, nor do they have the uniformity of thought and style of a single author. Furthermore, as the apocryphal and deuterocanonical works show, the canonical writings were always some group's sub-selection of the writings available with a claim to theological status.

During the earliest history of the Church, there was a segregation process held together by core agreements while buffeted by the acceptance or rejection of the outliers. Internal doctrinal conflicts, like the teachings and revisions of Markion, and external separation processes, like the decoupling from Judaism, forced a clarification of what was canonical and what was not. The consensus reached remained a political compromise, leaving sutures and rough edges and unresolved issues for future generations to fret over.⁶

5.1.1 Which Bible

In the Western tradition, a theological stance like the reformatory *sola scriptura* put inordinate emphasis on the ability of the lay persons to have access to the "best version" of the Word of God possible. While earlier supporters of vernacular bibles had mostly looked to the Vulgate Latin version as a source, the rising Humanist movement after 1450, with the increase of manuscripts and philological capability, allowed later translators to return to the Hebrew and Greek sources. For the English-speaking world of the early nineteenth century, the consolidation point of that development had been the King James Version of the Bible of 1611. The translation was based on the Bishop's Bible and relied on other translations to cross-check, rather than ancient source material, with a clear focus on supporting the Anglican Church stance. The translation was designed to sound good when

⁶ Harmonization attempts, like Tatian's *Diatesseron*, never achieved more than regional following either.

read aloud in public.⁷

The version familiar to Joseph Smith Jr and his contemporaries would not have been the 1611 edition, but the revisions of the Authorized Version from the late eighteenth century. After twenty years of effort, Francis Sawyer Parris had published his Cambridge edition in 1760. That edition formed the basis for Benjamin Blayne’s 1769 Oxford revision.

The editing work of Parris and Blayne had not only updated and made consistent the spelling of the text, it had also extended the cases of “supplied words”. The King James Version emphasized words that had been supplied by the translators—due to the grammatical and lexical mismatches between Hebrew and Greek on the one hand, and English on the other—in the translated text by italicizing them. Furthermore, by dropping cross-references to the apocrypha in the notes, Blayne made it possible to print a copy without the apocrypha, which had been bundled in its own intertestine part in the past.

The 1769 edition of Blayne became one of the most published books in the English language.⁸ It formed the de-facto standard for most of the nineteenth century and was typically mass reprinted. Printers cut on costs by leaving off notes and the apocrypha. Text extracts from that edition were part of the “primers” New England schools used to teach children how to read.⁹

However, the King James Version was still tied to the decisions of the Early Church on the canon, thus inheriting all of the problems of that consensus.

⁷ Cf. David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible*, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

⁸ This should not blind one to the fact that hundreds of different English translations were available in the United States during the 1820s and 1830s, and that the dominance of the KJV did not stop university trained men from producing new translations, as Alexander Campbell did. On Alexander Campbell, see page p.185 below.

⁹Dennis A. Wright and Geoffrey A. Wright (2004). “The New England Common School Experience of Joseph Smith Jr, 1810-1816”. In: *The New England States*. Ed. by Donald Q. Cannon, Arnold K. Garr, and Bruce A. Van Orden. Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, pp. 237–261.

5.1.2 The Textual Incompleteness of the Canon

In 1887, David Whitmer, one of the witnesses of the *Book of Mormon* and longtime associate of Joseph Smith Jr, recalled his view of the incomplete status of the canon.

Our Bible comprises only the books which the canons decided to compile. There are many inspired books that have never come down to us. There are over fifteen books spoken of in the Bible that are not in the Bible. In the following passages are some of the books spoken of that are not in the Bible. 2 Chron. ix:29. 1 Chron. xxix:29. Num. xxi:14. 1 Kings xi:41. 2 Chron. xiii:22. 2 Chron. xii:15. 2 Chron. xx:34. 2 Chron. xxvi:22. Gen. v:1. Ex. xxiv:7. 1 Sam. x:25. 1 Kings iv:32. 2 Chron. xii:15. In 1 Cor. v:9, a third epistle to the Corinthians is mentioned; we have only two. In Col. iv:16, the epistle from Laodicea. In Jude iii, a second epistle of Jude is spoken of; we have but one. I have a copy of the book of Jasher;¹⁰ It is spoken of in 2 Sam. i:18 and Joshua x:13.¹¹

This quote is helpful in a number of ways. First, it shows that those worried about the incompleteness of the canon were careful readers using a plausible surface interpretation.

However, in contrast to many other avid Bible readers of the period, such as Thomas and Alexander Campbell,¹² David Whitmer was convinced that these missing books were inspired as well and that their suppression was due to sloppiness or downright malice. Thomas Campbell specifically insisted that any silence of the Bible on a subject was purposeful, not due to the vagaries of history: all that was needed was there; all that was missing was missing for a reason.¹³ Campbell's assertion made sense in the context of the Protestant insistence, *contra* the Roman Catholic Church, that the Bible was sufficient to learn God's will for the Christian life and no apostolically guaranteed side-tradition of the

¹⁰ Unfortunately, several different books claiming to be the lost Book of the Just (the translation of the Book of Jasher) were floating around since the sixteenth century. I am unaware of any information allowing us to pin down more particularly which version Whitmer owned.

¹¹ David Whitmer (1887). *An Address to all Believers in Christ: By A Witness to the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*. Richmond, MI: Published for the Author, p.19.

¹² Cf. below pp.185ff.

¹³ Cf. below p.214.

teachers was required. But in terms of dealing with lacunae in the canonical tradition, such assertions were less successful.

Perhaps the most famous example of this type is the startling passage in Jude 1:9 about Satan and the archangel Michael disputing over the body of Moses.¹⁴ Clearly the Bible was not silent on this issue; the dispute was after all mentioned. At the same time, it seemed odd that no additional information about this apparently important event was given.¹⁵ Applying Thomas Campbell's heuristic to this case led to a rather confusing and unsatisfying outcome.

Taking the next logical step, the differences translated to expectations about the relationship between the Creator and the Created.¹⁶ Essentially, Thomas Campbell and those of his opinion were not willing to assume that God had let the corruption of mankind progress to the point that the tools of salvation were under assault. Yet David Whitmer and those of his opinion were willing to believe that God had granted the creature enough rope to hang itself even in this regard. Thus, even if the Scriptures promised that the Christ would be with his church until the end of time (Mt 28), the dispensation could be compromised enough to require a new revelation.

5.1.3 The Conceptual Insufficiency of the Canon

James Christianson has documented the role of the covenant notion in Puritanical thinking, and how it figured into establishing the boundaries of responsibilities between the Creator and the Created in such a way as to support an intelligent, self-acting and self-actualizing

¹⁴ This passage would gain an even more decisive role in the question of whether and how the celestial body had to be conceptualized, in the latter doctrinal development of the Mormon Church.

¹⁵ Since Origen at least, exegetists suggested that the author of Jude was citing here from a lost apocryphal or inter-testamental text, *The Assumption of Moses*. But this explanation was unhelpful to both the Whitmer or the Campbellite point of view, given its theological implication of weakening the inspirational status of the Scriptures.

¹⁶ Cf. below p.138.

person guided by reason, integrated into the economic possibilities of the discovered new continent of North America and its colonies.¹⁷ James Christianson has also pointed to faith as the proper response of the Created to the divine offerings, which in turn made these efficacious.¹⁸

In line with this notion of covenanting, American Protestants in the early nineteenth century shared a view of the Old Testament as an unproblematic, unified narrative of a Divine History of Salvation, structured through a series of such covenants. Internally, such a covenant is organized along the scheme of Divine prophecy and fulfillment, positively or negatively. However, the story of salvation as related in the Old Testament is incomplete; it has extra-testamental “hooks” into the future for prophetic fulfillment. Some of these prophecies were satisfied in the New Testament, others are yet to be fulfilled—including that perennial issue of Millenarians, the conversion of the Jews (Rom 11:25ff).

[The messianic-millennarian, RCK] theodicy will be rational to the extent that it involves a coherent theory of history (a condition . . . that is generally fulfilled in the case of messianic-millennarian movements within the Biblical orbit.) It will be actually or potentially revolutionary to the extent that the divine action about to intervene in the course of events requires or allows human co-operation.¹⁹

Jan Shipps²⁰ is the author who has most eloquently argued that the North American Christians²¹ felt omitted from the story of salvation, or the continuous sequence of

¹⁷James Christianson (1988). “Puritanism and Mormonism: Parallel Paths, Parting of Ways”. In: *New England*. Ed. by Donald Q. Cannon. Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, pp. 15–32, pp.21-26.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp.23f. In the words of John Corrill (1839). *A brief history of the Church of Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly called Mormons) including an account of their doctrine and discipline; with the reasons of the author for leaving the church*. St Louis: s.n., “Where the Scriptures hold out fair promises to the believers, they [i.e. the Mormons, RCK] believe those promises will be fulfilled, just in proportion to their faith.”; cf. *ibid.*, p.14.

¹⁹ Berger, (1967), p.69. Berger defines theodicy as any explanation of anomic, marginal or socially destabilizing phenomena couched in terms of religious legitimations; cf. *ibid.*, p.53.

²⁰Shipps, (1985).

²¹ On American *versus* European sentiments on Christian revelations, cf. p.210 below.

covenants from Abraham to the present.²²

The situation throughout the union was unsettled and things were extremely fluid in this period [after the war of 1812, RCK] where all America seemed to be streaming westward after | the Revolution. A new physical universe was there to contend with. A new and somewhat uncertain political system existed and Americans had to operate within it. The bases of social order were in a state of disarray, and as a result of the nation's having cut its ties with England and her history, a clear lack of grounding in the past was evident.²³

There was a yearning for something that would combine

speculation about the origin of the American Indian and America's place in the grand scheme of things into synthesis with the story of the Hebrews, generally as redacted by New Tes- | tament writers ...²⁴

One route for the inclusion of the American Indians into the history of the Hebrews was the patriarchal blessing of Jacob for his sons in Genesis.²⁵ In particular, the image of the bough that reaches across the wall (Gen 49:22; 26) and the promise given to Ephraim and Manassah (Gen 48:16 & 19) that they should be a plurality of nations in the middle of the Earth, engendered expectations of a place, far away from the Jewish homeland, to harbor the lost tribes.²⁶

5.1.4 The Lost Tribes

Despite of all the ethical and linguistic diversity that the Native Americans presented, the majority of nineteenth-century Americans assumed that the Native Americans or "Indians" had a single origin.²⁷

²² Shipps uses the term "dispensations" instead (Shipps, [1985], p.2), but the point remains the same.

²³ Ibid., p.33f.

²⁴ Ibid., p.35f.

²⁵ This passage has invited extensions for a long time; consider the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, probably of Ebionitic origin.

²⁶ Corroll, (1839), p.14.

²⁷ Dan Vogel (1986). *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon: Religious Solutions from Columbus to Joseph Smith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, p.9.

People in the United States had some notions of the cultural achievements of the native American groups. Both the “impressive ruined cities of the Maya of Central America and the Inca of South America”²⁸ were common knowledge. Books like Alexander von Humboldt’s *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, published in New York in 1811, and Antonio del Rio’s *Description of the Ruins of an Ancient City, Discovered Near Palenque, in the Kingdom of Guatemala*, published in 1822, were widely read and cited.²⁹

These books were used to make sense of the mounds that people in the United States found closer to home: some 3,000 tumuli identified along the Ohio River, and the tumuli dotting the Allegheny Mountains region.³⁰

Three general types of mounds were described: temple or altar mounds, believed to have been erected for worship, either as altars or as platforms for temples which had long since deteriorated; burial mounds, believed to contain the bodies of mound builders who had been slain in a terrible battle; and fortification mounds, believed to have been built by mound builders in defense against attack by savages.³¹

Thus, when the Reverend Solomon Spalding wrote his romance of the Indians before 1816, supposedly a translation from an ancient record, his audience would not have been surprised to hear that the record had been discovered in a mound.³² Though the record is located in a stone box, in Spalding’s romance, the mound contains parchment, not the kinds of metal plates³³ that had been found in several mounds.³⁴

One figure in the scientific debate about the Indian antiquities and their origin was

²⁸Ibid., p.21.

²⁹Ibid., p.23.

³⁰ Ibid., p.24. For a list of the mounds in the vicinity of Joseph Smith Jr’s teenage homes of Palmyra and Manchester, cf. *ibid.*, p.27.

³¹ Ibid., p.24. Notice that both battles and defenses against savages would play a role in the wars between the Nephites and Lamanites in the *Book of Mormon*.

³²Ibid., p.19.

³³Ibid., p.19.

³⁴Ibid., p.18f.

Ethan Smith, a clergyman from Poultney, Vermont,³⁵ whose *View of the Hebrews* of 1823³⁶ tried to aggregate much of the Indian information available, for purposes of showing them to be descendants of the Lost Tribes.³⁷ Ethan Smith assumed that, a thousand years prior to his writing,³⁸ the Indians had built walled towns, forts, watch-towers and temples.³⁹ Such complex works required metal tools, either of iron or copper, and Smith speculated that, where such tools could not be found, these had been destroyed by rust;⁴⁰ there were mounds where these metals, as well as silver, had been found.⁴¹ Ethan Smith proposed that the Hebrews had traveled over the ice of the Bering Strait to come into the North American continent.⁴²

The question of the origin of the native American was developed in the larger question of their Adamite descent. Paracelsus may have been the first one to suggest that they did not descend from Adam;⁴³ and the Bourdeux Calvinist Isaac de la Payrere may have been the first to work out this theory as a book-length exposition, published in 1655.⁴⁴ For a world that took the Bible as a literally true history of the world, these were difficult suggestions. Counter-arguments were usually based on the shared common stock of legends, such as the deluge or creation, or even the language confusion.⁴⁵

Once the Adamite origin of the Indians had been argued, the question of course became which Adamite stock they should be attributed to. Though fringe theories like Atlantis,

³⁵ In explaining the origins of the *Book of Mormon*, much has been made of the fact that Oliver Cowdery lived in Poultney, Vermont, as well—from 1809 to 1826—and had been a treasure hunter there in his youth; cf. Vogel, (1996), p.603-605; *ibid.*, p.619f; Quinn, (1998), p.37. Mainly it shows how pervasive the interest in these antiquities was.

³⁶ It's popularity required a second edition in 1825; cf. Vogel, (1986), p.19 Fn 50; p.42.

³⁷ Bushman, (2005), p.97-97.

³⁸ Vogel, (1986), p.29.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.24.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.28.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.28.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.45.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.36.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.36.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.38.

Carthage and Wales were vented as early as the seventeenth century, the Hebrews were suggested, with the assumption that the language confusion at Babel was at fault.⁴⁶ This theory was only revised when some started to argue that the Indians had the mosaic law, as well as other Jewish practices, that post-dated the language confusion.⁴⁷

Here, the fact that nineteenth century King James Bible editions included the apocrypha was helpful, because 2 Esdras (13:40f; 45), told of the ten tribes going into a faraway land named Arsareth, where no one had previously settled.

These are the ten tribes, which were carried away, prisoners out of their own land in the time of Osea the king, whom Shalmanaser the king of Assyria led away captive, and he carried them over the waters, and so came they into another land. But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt . . . For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called Arsareth. (2 Esdras, 13:40-41, 45, in KJV)⁴⁸

In theological circles, the idea had originated with the 1567 publication of Janones Fredericus Lumnius' book, *De Extremo Dei Judicio*, in Antwerp. Perhaps the most influential account was that of a Portugese Jew, Antonio de Montezinos (Aaron Levi), who had encountered descendants of Ruben in Peru who could still recite the Sh'ma Yisrael. De Montezinos brought this news to Amsterdam in 1644, whence it was included in Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel's Portugese book *Esto es, Esperança de Israel* of 1650, also published in London the same year as *Hope of Israel*. Rabbi Manassah was the first to see in the discovery of the Peruvian Israelites indications of the coming of the Millennium.⁴⁹

These millennial ideas were enthusiastically received by those favoring missionary work amongst the Indians. In 1660, a mere decade later, John Eliot of Massachusetts, "Apostle

⁴⁶Ibid., p.39.

⁴⁷Ibid., p.39.

⁴⁸ Quoted in: *ibid.*, p.40.

⁴⁹Ibid., p.41.

to the Indians”, teamed up with Thomas Thorowgood to write *Jews in America, or Probabilities that those Indians are Judaical*. The work was meant to secure funding from the Puritans for the missionary effort.⁵⁰ This work convinced many theological writers that the Indians were indeed the lost tribes, a conviction shared by such seventeenth-century greats as Roger Williams or William Penn.

The most detailed form of the argument was published in 1775 by an English trader, James Adair, who had spent over two decades among the Cherokees and the Chickasaws. Adair identified twenty-three parallels between the Indians and the Hebrews. Though his arguments strike modern ethnographers as strained, contemporaries found these arguments convincing. His book became the standard upon which future writers, such as Elias Boudinot in 1816 and Ethan Smith in 1823, relied heavily.⁵¹

The question of the Lost Tribes of Israel remained in the public interest to such an extent that even fringe theories such as Captain Symmes’ Theory of Concentric Spheres, a variant of the Hollow Earth theory,⁵² required no explanation for the readers when mentioned in the newspapers.⁵³ Under Symmes’ theory, the Lost Tribes would be residing in one of these underground regions, accessible only via the holes at the poles, guarded behind snow and impassable mountains.⁵⁴

⁵⁰Vogel, (1986), p.41.

⁵¹Ibid., pp.41f.

⁵² Captain Symmes formulated his theory in 1818 and took it to the lecture circle in order to raise an expeditionary force to go and explore these underground spaces. It was Symmes’ “disciple” James McBride that wrote the theory up in 1826 as *Symmes’ Theory of Concentric Spheres: demonstrating that the Earth is hollow, habitable within, and widely open about the Poles*. These were not crackpots; McBride was well-known in the American Antiquities movement and contributed drawings, measurements and notes of Mound-Builder forts and installations in Ohio to the inaugural effort of the Smithsonian’s new *Contributions to Knowledge* series, the ground-breaking 1848 *Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley* by Squier and Davis, who acknowledged these contributions in their preface (p.xxxv).

⁵³ E.g. the *Morning and Evening Star* from July 1833, Section *Worldly Matters*, p.6, quoting a piece from the Poughkeepsie Telegraph. Cf. Dale Broadhurst’s <http://olivercowdery.com/texts/1818symm.htm>, visited 2014-09-08.

⁵⁴ It is unclear whether Joseph Smith!Jr subscribed to this theory; Booth (Howe 1834, p.127) and Turner (Turner 1842, p.190) certainly thought so. It could explain D&C 133:26: “And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no

5.2 Recognizing a New Revelation

John Corrill, assistant to first Bishop Edward Partridge, Third Bishop of Missouri in 1833, supervisor on the Kirtland Temple construction and dissenter after the Kirtland Safety Society fiasco of 1837, wrote a brief history of his experience,⁵⁵ in which he detailed his own conversion process. This process involved recognizing the Book of Mormon as a complementary revelation to the Bible. Corrill thus enumerates the Biblical passages that formed the glove into which the Book of Mormon would fit like the hand.⁵⁶ Though this information was recorded after the fact by a source no longer friendly to the church, Corrill has every reason to make his initial decision to join the church sound reasonable. I will assume that his expectations were accurate remembrances and capture a shared state of thinking, at least in large parts.

Corrill not only noticed the missing books, as David Whitmer had,⁵⁷ which undercut his assumption that indeed the canon had been closed; rather, from the fact that, in the prophetic and apocalyptic literature, books were shut to be revealed at the end of time, Corrill concluded that the unveiling of such a prophetic book would be part and parcel of the arrival of the fullness of time.⁵⁸

Corrill also pointed to Ezekiel (Ez 37,15-21), who prophesized that there would be two records⁵⁹, one for the house of Judah, and one for the house of Jacob:

Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah,

longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.”. The verse is the *hapax legomenon* of “ice” in the *Doctrines and Covenants*, a word that does not occur in either the *Book of Mormon* or *The Pearl of Great Price*.

⁵⁵Corrill, (1839).

⁵⁶ Corrill points out that the cessation of the charisma of prophecy, which is so prevalent in the Old Testament, where there is a continuous calling of new prophets within the narrative, intrigued him (ibid., p.10).

⁵⁷ Cf. p.137 above; cf. ibid., p.13.

⁵⁸Ibid., p.13.

⁵⁹ The text speaks only of sticks, but because these sticks had names written on them by the prophet, people may have interpreted them as records.

and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. (Ez 37:16f)

This gathering of the records⁶⁰ would gather Israel back together,⁶¹ in preparation for the restoration of the house under one king, which the Christians interpreted to be the Christ.

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: ... (Ez 37:21)

Shippo concurs that this stance was widely shared in America at that time.

Americans in the 1830s generally regarded the Bible as the actual "stick of Judah" to which, so Ezekiel had said, the "stick of Joseph" would someday be joined.⁶²

Thus, a revelation that would bring about the gathering of the Jewish tribes would be a clear signal that the Millennium, the fullness of time, was finally at hand.

5.2.1 The Process of Revelation

From various biblical passages, it was even possible to piece together the overall structure of the discovery of such a record of revelations. The discovery of a lost revelation was not even a first, but had happened before: the discovery of the Deuteronomistic Law as part of the Josianic Restoration (2 Kg 22).

There were also some clues about the revelation document, if one drew the pieces together from the prophetic writings. Just as in 2 Kg 22, the revelation would reveal old

⁶⁰Corrill, (1839), p.13.

⁶¹ There were multiple scriptural references to such a gathering in the last days, such as in Ez 37; Is 2 and Is 11; Mi 4; Jer 16; or Eph 1; cf. *ibid.*, p.15.

⁶²Shippo, (1985), p.29.

covenants that God would be about to honor. A passage in Habakkuk suggested that these revelatory texts would be recorded on plates, as the KJV speaks of making the vision “plain upon tables” (Hab 2:2). However, the document would be sealed (Dan 12) and it would be incomprehensible to the wise, who would pass it back and forth among themselves, unable to determine its true meaning (Is 29:10-12).

5.3 The Impeccable Translation

According to Mormon orthodoxy, in the autumn of 1827, Joseph Smith Jr retrieved the Golden Plates from the hill Cumorah, a few miles south of the Smith Sr family farm, with the assistance of his wife of nine months, Emma Hale Smith.⁶³

The plates were written in “Reformed Egyptian” (Mormon 9:32), a hitherto unknown language.⁶⁴ Smith Jr translated the plates with either his seer stone placed inside his hat, or the Ummim and Thurim of Aaron, which had been found in the stone box with the plates. During the translation, the plates were present, but Smith Jr never consulted them.⁶⁵ All translation was by revelation. There was a brief setback when Martin Harris, who assisted on the first translation effort as a scribe, lost some 116 pages of the draft manuscript, which were probably destroyed by Mrs Harris. However, with the spring of 1829, Oliver Cowdery became Smith Jr’s scribe, and the work progressed rapidly, translating some 600 pages in roughly three months, almost seven pages per day.⁶⁶ Once the translation process

⁶³ Smith, (1845), p.105-107; Howe, (1834), p.245.

⁶⁴ Vogel points out that the comparison between Mayan, that is, Indian writing, and Egyptian hieroglyphics was then a common scholarly occurrence; cf. Vogel, (2004), p.113.

⁶⁵ The only exception to this was when Smith Jr copied off characters, cf. Royal Skousen (2006). “Translating and Printing the Book of Mormon”. In: *Oliver Cowdery: Scribe, Elder, Witness*. Ed. by John W. Welch and Larry E. Morris. Essays from BYU Studies and Farms. Provo, Utah: Maxwell Institute. This was the case when Martin Harris wished to consult East Coast experts like Professor Charles Anthon of Columbia University; cf. Vogel, (2004), pp.113-116.

⁶⁶ Cf. Philip L. Barlow (1991). *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion*. New York — Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.25. On the one hand, the Book of Mormon quotes large passages from the prophet Isaiah, the Sermon on the Mount, and other Biblical texts; on

had reached completion in the summer of 1829, the angel Moroni took the plates again.

While much has been written about the process, I want to focus on the following points that are raised perhaps less often.

1. The translation of the Book of Mormon into English is the Impeccable Translation.⁶⁷

It is the divinely revealed translation of a text, engraved on plates that are guarded by angels, written in an otherwise unknown dead language.

Thus, not only was there no reason to challenge the translation, but there was no practical way to go about such a challenge either. No one else could try their hand at it, suggest an alternate reading, or verify the existing translation.⁶⁸

The kind of verbal jousting over the meaning of a Biblical passage⁶⁹, which had characterized the denominational battles in Europe since the Reformation and crossed into America with the revivals, was thereby stopped in its tracks.

2. The Book of Mormon had a conceptual continuity with the Bible, but a material continuity with Indian antiquities. Even though the plates seem to serve no purpose in the translation process, which could have been performed independent of them through Urim and Thummim or the seer stone, it was a tangible indicator of the fusion between the Old and New Testaments on the one hand, and the American continent on the other.

the other hand, there are variations with respect to the KJV-received forms of these texts. Any possible advantages in the production rate are probably mitigated by the variations.

⁶⁷ When Joseph Smith Jr recalled the Professor Anthon anecdote in 1838, where Martin Harris had shown a set of characters purportedly transcribed from the golden plates, Anthon had not only deemed the characters genuine, but stated that “the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen from the Egyptian.”; cf. Vogel, (2004), p.115, quoting the JS Manuscript History; cf. Vogel, (1996), p.9.

⁶⁸ Critics have sometimes bemoaned the fact that the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon witness the existence of the plates, not the correctness of the translation; cf. Howe, (1834), p.99. But that was precisely the point: given the Divine origin of the translation, there was nothing to witness.

⁶⁹ Cf. HC I:4; see also Barlow, (1991), p.15.

3. The catastrophe of the lost 116 pages was that differences would be found. This was a problem—not, as detractors have argued, because that would unmask⁷⁰ a fraud—but rather because the monolithic and unimpeachable nature of the translation would have been threatened. The endless cycle of discussion over which translation was better, or more reflective of the divine thought, which the Book of Mormon setup was trying to prevent at all costs, would have restarted.

Functionally, the Book of Mormon resolves questions of inter-denominational arguing by recourse to an independent revelation, which in the quality of its translation shared none of the actual and perceived weaknesses of the King James Version.

While the democratization processes in republican America had freed individuals to turn to the Bible, liberating them⁷¹ from the impositions of then-preaching clergy and their denominational affiliations,

Scriptures served as a social equalizer. Armed with the Bible, the common man—and occasionally the common woman—could confront the highest temporal authority. After 1800, democratic values and patterns of biblical interpretation flowed together.⁷²

Joseph Smith Jr, equally unhappy with the clergy of his days, wanted to be free of the past clergy—and their creeds—as well, whom many religious seekers then saw as careless and malicious canonists that had corrupted the Biblical tradition.⁷³ A clear cut, a Restoration to the unmaligned message was required.

The Book of Mormon, as a new and clarifying view on the Bible, brought upon the earth by the dawn of the spiritual Millennium, satisfied the expectations of many of the

⁷⁰ Howe, (1834), p.22f; Turner, (1851), pp.215f.

⁷¹ Cook correctly points out that revivalism was equally liberating, as it “undermined doctrinal beliefs and emphasized personal experience instead”; cf. Cook, (1985), p.2.

⁷² Barlow, (1991), p.8.

⁷³ On the malicious canonists, cf. above on page p.137.

independent Bible reading Christians in the religious battleground of upstate New York and Ohio.

This [i.e. the Book of Mormon, RCK] looked to me very much like the record of Joseph in the hand of Ephadins (kept by his seed) that should be joined to the record of Judah (our Bible) for the restoration of the house of Israel, according to the prophecy of Ezekiel [cf. Ezekiel 37,15-21, RCK], ...⁷⁴

Men like David Whitmer, John Corrill, and the hundreds of other converts the book made in the first year of the church's existence, who shared the presuppositions I outlined in this chapter, saw in this new revelatory document no strange idea. Their Bible reading had prepared them for a new and complementary revelation in the form of a sealed book incomprehensible to the wise,⁷⁵ and they knew it when they saw it.

And when their hopes were dashed, as they were for disaffected dissenters like David Whitmer, they resumed their original expecting stance. When interviewed in the 1870s about his role as a witness to the Book of Mormon's plates, Whitmer recalled that the tablets had sealed portions, and that there were additional tablets whose time had not yet come.⁷⁶

Or perhaps Whitmer was led to this stance by the fact that, somewhat surprisingly and perhaps even ironically, there are "lost scriptures" mentioned in the Book of Mormon as well. The words of the prophets Zenock, Zenos, and Neum are alluded to (1 Nephi 19:10; Alma 33:3-17). Furthermore, 2 Nephi 3:4-22 gives a prophecy of Joseph in Egypt and Alma

⁷⁴Corrill, (1839), p.13.

⁷⁵ Cf. the emphasis of Joseph Smith Jr in 1832, when recalling the Anthon anecdote mentioned above on page p.148, on the linguist to read the "words of a book that is sealed" (i.e. Isaiah 29:11); cf. Vogel, (2004), p.115.

⁷⁶ When Whitmer was interviewed in December of 1877 by Edward Stevenson, he mentioned both extra plates—cf. Vogel, (2003), IV.A.5 p.35—and sealed portions of the Book of Mormon plates; cf. *ibid.*, IV.A.5 p.38f. Whitmer repeated these assertions in the Poulson interview of April 1878, cf. *ibid.*, IV.A.6 p.43 and *ibid.*, IV.A.6. p.45, respectively.

46:24-26 quotes a prophecy of Jacob, neither of which is attested anywhere.

5.4 The Socio-Economic Stance of the Book of Mormon

With the completion of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon, the socio-economic thinking of Joseph Smith Jr had reached its maturation—either because the translation of the plates bent his thinking in their direction, as an apologist might argue; or because the inspired writing expressed his thinking in the translation, as a dissenter might see it.

As such, this section serves as a transition from this analysis to the socio-economic case studies that follow. The fact that the publication of the Book of Mormon will form the first of these⁷⁷ is a fortuitous coincidence.

In the following, I argue that the socio-economic stance of the *Book of Mormon* is reminiscent of the prophetic critique of the wealth of the traders in the Old Testament, with an eye toward the disparities in economic equality that this creates among the believers. The socio-economic optimum is the early apostolic church, without religious or monetary divisions, an optimum that is easily lost when people prosper too much. Any separation into social and economic classes, and especially into religious classes, is glossed critically in the *Book of Mormon* and tied to the effects of trade⁷⁸ as a cause of differential prosperity. I will consider Alma 32, Helaman 6 and 3 Nephi 6 as examples of trade,⁷⁹ and then close out the discussion with the depiction of socio-economic paradise in 4 Nephi 1, and the

⁷⁷ Cf. pp.?? below.

⁷⁸ The following exposition uses the materials referenced in Allen J. Christenson (1992). “Nephite Trade Networks and the Dangers of a Class Society”. In: *The Book of Mormon: Helaman Through 3 Nephi 8, According to Thy Word*. Ed. by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. Provo, Utah: Religious Study Center, Brigham Young University, pp. 223–240, though it considerably differs from Christenson’s conclusions; cf. the discussion on page p.156 below.

⁷⁹ In the orthodox chronology of the Book of Mormon, the book Alma is named after the chief justice Alma [the Younger], who dates to 91-73 BCE. His grandson was the prophet Helaman, who gave his name to the book. The events described in Helaman date to 29-23 BCE. His son was the prophet Nephi, the author of 3 Nephi, and the events referenced here date to 26-30 AD.

description of the state of affairs during the discovery of the plates of Mormon in Mormon 8.

5.4.1 The Role of Trade in the Book of Mormon

In Alma 32, the prophet Alma is finding a reception for his message of repentance among the economically disadvantaged, who have been humbled already by their lack of worldly possessions and social shunning from their economic betters.

And it came to pass that after much labor among them, they began to have success among the poor class⁸⁰ of people; for behold, they were cast out of the synagogues because of the coarseness of their apparel.

In Helaman 6, the Nephites are entering a period of peace and prosperity through trade.

And it came to pass that the Lamanites did also go whithersoever they would, whether it were among the Lamanites or among the Nephites; and thus they did have free intercourse one with another, to buy and to sell, and to get gain, according to their desire. And it came to pass that they became exceedingly rich, both the Lamanites and the Nephites; and they did have an exceeding plenty of gold, and of silver, and of all manner of precious metals, both in the land south and in the land north. (Helaman 6, 8f)

But the riches make the people wicked; the chief judges are murdered, and the terrible gang called Gadianon's robbers and murderers begins to trouble the Nephites. Through a terrible war, the robbers are suppressed and peace is restored. But then trade returns, and the riches return, and with it the class divisions.

And it came to pass that there were many cities built anew, and there were many old cities repaired. And there were many highways cast up, and many

⁸⁰ The word "class" is not used in the KJV. Though as a description for the orders of Roman society it is attested since Titus Severus, the social usage in English begins with Thomas Blount's *Glossographia* of 1656 (spelled "classe"); cf. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C Weiner (1989). *The Oxford English dictionary*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press. ISBN: 0198611862 (set), Art. "class", vol.3 p.279 c.3.

roads made, which led from city to city, and from land to land, and from place to place. (3 Nephi 6, 7f)

But it came to pass in the twenty and ninth year there began to be some disputings among the people; and some were lifted up unto pride and boastings because of their exceedingly great riches, yea, even unto great persecutions. For there were many merchants in the land, and also many lawyers,⁸¹ and many officers. And the people began to be distinguished by ranks,⁸² according to their riches and their chances for learning; yea, some were ignorant because of their poverty, and others did receive great learning because of their riches. (3 Nephi 6, 10-12)

This time, the whole church is destroyed, that is, the religious community is torn asunder, and only a few carry on the true belief.

Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world. (3 Nephi 6, 15)

Fortunately, new prophets are then raised that preach against the elites of high priests and legal experts to get the people to return to God.

5.4.2 The Socio-Economic Optimum and its Loss

Just as in Helaman 6 the good interactions between the Lamanites and the Nephites lead to peace and prosperity, the immediate aftermath of the preaching of Jesus in the Americas leads to a state that expresses the socio-economic optimum, embedded in a religious optimum.

⁸¹ In the KJV, the word “lawyer” occurs in the New Testament only and is the translation of the Greek *ho nomikos*, which in the New Testament koiné means “interpreter and/or teacher of the Mosaic law”, “doctor of the Jewish law” in the diction of Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott (1961). *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Ed. by Sir Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie. 9th. London – Glasgow – New York et. al.: Oxford Clarendon Press, p.1179 c2. In the *Book of Mormon*, the word is used as in modern English, to mean forensic advocates and prosecutors; cf. Alma 10:29-Alma 11:20, where the lawyers are accused of being after recompense, not justice.

⁸² The KJV uses “rank” only for military terminology, not for social distinctions.

And it came to pass that the thirty and fourth year passed away, and also the thirty and fifth, and behold the disciples of Jesus had formed a church of Christ in all the lands round about. And as many as did come unto them, and did truly repent of their sins, were baptized in the name of Jesus; and they did also receive the Holy Ghost.

And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year, the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another.

And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.

And it came to pass that the thirty and seventh year passed away also, and there still continued to be peace in the land.

And there were great and marvelous works wrought by the disciples of Jesus, insomuch that they did heal the sick, and raise the dead, and cause the lame to walk, and the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear; and all manner of miracles did they work among the children of men; and in nothing did they work miracles save it were in the name of Jesus. (4 Nephi 1,1-5)

Even past the initial departure of the apostles, the peace continues, to the point where even denominational strife and racial distinction have been obliterated.

And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.

There were no robbers, nor murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor any manner of -ites; but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God. (4 Nephi 1,16-17)

It is only when the second generation of believers in Christ has passed on, that the riches of the world, the consequences of the peace, puff up the people once more; but since such pride in their appearance is at variance with Christ and his church, they end up forming their own churches, with the added benefit of economic gains.

And now I, Mormon, would that ye should know that the people had multiplied, insomuch that they were spread upon all the face of the land, and that they had become exceedingly rich, because of their prosperity in Christ.

And now, in this two hundred and first year there began to be among them those who were lifted up in pride, such as the wearing of costly apparel, and all manner of fine pearls, and of the fine things of the world.

And from that time forth they did have their goods and their substance no more common among them.

And they began to be divided into classes; and they began to build up churches unto themselves to get gain, and began to deny the true church of Christ. (4 Nephi 1,23-25)

Not surprisingly, with the rise of separate churches and people bent upon their personal gains, the “-ites” (or, as one might say nowadays, the “-isms”) are back (4 Nephi 1:35-38).

Thus commences another long fall from grace, that eventually wipes out all true believers of Christ in America and leaves the Lamanites in a degenerate cultural state, with part of the fullness of the Gospel captured on the plates of Mormon buried in the hill of Cumorah.

But the records will be brought forth again, at the pleasure of the Lord, when the evils of money are running high again, when the Holy Spirit and the associated miracles are lost—“and it shall come in a day when it shall be said that miracles are done away” (Mormon 8, 26); when grace is for sale—“when there shall be churches built up that shall say: Come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins” (Mormon 8 :32). The people are puffed up in pride over their fineries and the churches over their gains.

And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; and there are none save a few only who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts.

For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.

Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not? (Mormon 8:36-37; v39)

5.4.3 Discussion

Does Mayan Illuminate Nephite History?

Any apologetic attempt to prove the historicity of the Book of Mormon must place its narratives geographically. Furthermore, it must confront the Book of Mormon with present-day knowledge about the indigenous peoples of the Americas and show their compatibility. In this spirit, Christenson has argued that the archaeological knowledge of the extensive Mayan trade networks can help to illuminate Nephite history.⁸³

In an ironic twist, such attempts at proving the historicity of the Book of Mormon have been about as successful as proving the historicity of the Patriarchal narratives, the Exodus or the Conquest narratives in Biblical archaeology.⁸⁴ All in all, the Mayans do not form a good template for understanding the actions of either the Nephites or Lamanites.

Specifically, some of the passages in the Book of Mormon, such as Helaman 6, describe general and equalizing prosperity, but the trade networks among the Mayans were predominantly restricted to the elites,⁸⁵ who dominated whatever was profitable, whether it was the long-distance trade of luxury goods or local markets, leaving little opportunity for others to grow

rich.⁸⁶

⁸³Christenson, (1992).

⁸⁴Robert C. Kahlert (1998). "Der israelitische Monotheismus bei Günter Dux". In: *Ende der Religion – Religion ohne Ende? Zur Theorie der "Geistesgeschichte" von Günter Dux*. Ed. by Falk Wagner and Michael Murrmann-Kahl. Vienna: Passagenverlag, pp. 229–245.

⁸⁵Robert J. Sharer and Loa P. Traxler (2006). *The Ancient Maya*. 6th edition. Stanford University Press, pp.632-634; p.635; pp.659f.

⁸⁶Elite control of trade is conspicuously attested in the Old Testament. Solomon obtains cedars for the temple through Hiram, the king of Tyre (1 Kg 5), because cedars were a luxury building material and under tight royal control. By the time of Ezra, only the king has changed—it is now Cyrus of Persia—but the

Furthermore, there seems nothing comparable to Gadianton's Robbers, or any of the other secret combinations, in Mayan history; inter-polity aggression was mediated by the shared belief system of the elites, which found in the existing states a depiction of the cosmos, to the point where if any dynasty was accidentally wiped out in inter-polity warfare, the victors would immediately re-establish the dynasty, as in the case of the king of Calakmul restoring the House of Naranjo.⁸⁷

The Socio-Economic Message of the Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon's socio-economic message is that riches not mediated by membership in the true Church are dangerous, both to the individuals as beings covenanted to God, and to the societal fabric. Only the spirit of the true Church guarantees that the socio-economic disparities are taken care of. The communism of the believers addresses the issue of the hungry, the needy and the naked. The charismata of the Holy Spirit provide the miracles to control those ills that cannot be tackled by redistribution, such as the illness, blindness, deafness, mobility impairments, and even death itself.

The Book of Mormon is not opposed to wealth. Indeed, when all live in the Christian spirit, the community as a whole does prosper, and does so equally and evenly, because all social intercourse occurs in justice and all distinctions of rank and class have been leveled.

But as soon as some consider their amount of wealth indicative of self-worth, and thus puff up with pride, the societal fabric is under strain. Articles of external appearance are used to distinguish people, and to mark the classes and ranks that develop. Though the Book of Mormon is very unclear on the precise mechanics of this, even the state of distributed wealth of holding all in common still somehow allows for some to become better than others.

need for royal permission has not (Ezra 3).

⁸⁷Sharer and Traxler, (2006), p.94.

As the class segregation splits the social contract, those on the losing end fall back into being poor, hungry and needy. Crucially, they are even cut off from education, thereby eliminating one of the ways in which they could better themselves.

But this state of society is not condoned by the true church of Christ. So, in an attempt to resolve “cognitive dissonance”, to use modern parlance, the rich begin to make their own churches, where their wealth and prestige absolves them from their asocial behavior, and where the true gospel, which could call them to repentance, is not preached. In these churches, the poor are rejected based on their external physical appearance alone, thus making their suffering invisible and easier to ignore. Anyone reminding the rich in any way of their lapsed state is the subject of perrsecution.

5.5 Outlook

By 1830, Joseph Smith Jr had the manuscript for a theological message for the world that was integrative with respect to the long-running Abrahamic history of salvation, both for the Americans of European descent and the American Indians; packaged as the type of canon-rectifying revelation that many avid Bible readers had come to expect; and filled with a message of primitivist⁸⁸ religious, social and economic harmony that had been lost to the evils of wealth disparity due to differential opportunities of trade and access to education.

Here was a message that could find followers. All that was needed was to make it public. In the age before the Internet, reaching broad audiences required publishing a

⁸⁸ This larger phenomenon of primitivism or Apostolic restorationism stretches from the 1650s well into the end of the 19th century proper, and never really subsided fully. Though Richard T. Hughes and C. Leonard Allen (1988). *Illusions of Innocence. Protestant Primitivism in America 1630-1875*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press trace its origins all the way into the Luther-Karstadt debate, as an issue of ecclesiastical organization, its connection with the narrative of American religion is through its adoption as a core tenant of Purtian thinking; cf. *ibid.*, pp.7-14

book, an expensive undertaking. The process of publishing the *Book of Mormon* provides the contents of the first of the socio-economic case studies I wish to undertake.

Part II

Socio-Economic Case Studies

Chapter 6

Funding the Book of Mormon

6.1 Introduction to the Case Studies

The story of how *Book of Mormon* was translated and published is my first socio-economic case study. A few words about the case-study approach are in order.

Modern Mormon scholarship is very biographical in its orientation. Every individual main or side character is reconstructed in as much detail as possible, down to individual receipts, deeds or letters. Encounters and interactions are depicted vividly and with local color, often by drawing upon contemporary descriptions of analogous events.

Consider this sketch of Oliver Cowdery and Samuel Smith stopping over with David Whitmer on their journey to visit Joseph Smith Jr, who was residing in Harmony and working on the translation of the Golden Plates.¹

Oliver and Samuel must have been cold and tired and hungry by the time they arrived at the twenty-by-thirty-foot, one-and-a-half story log home where David [Whitmer, a friend of Oliver Cowdery's, RCK], the fourth of eight children, lived

¹ The following is not intended as an *ad hominem* argument against Morris, a good researcher and a talented historical writer. Modern Mormon scholarship is replete with such passages.

with his parents, Peter and Mary Musselman Whitmer, both in their fifties.²

While outwardly presenting itself as a “slice of life” depiction, this detail-studded sentence is almost completely irrelevant to the following discussion of how Oliver Cowdery became Joseph Smith Jr’s scribe. Morris gives the dimensions of the home, the name of the parents, their ages and the total count of the children. Nothing follows from any of this information.

The passage then continues.

“[Oliver] did go [to Harmony]”, David [Whitmer, RCK] later wrote, “and on his way stopped at my father’s house and told me that as soon as he found out anything either truth and untruth he would let me know.” The Whitmers were respected members of the Fayette Township, with Peter serving as a school trustee and oldest son Christian as a constable. Subsequent events indicate that Oliver and Samuel were welcomed into the home, where they may have told what they knew about the ancient record while savoring a warm meal. They were likely introduced to three or four of David’s brothers and sisters, including his youngest sister, fourteen-year-old Elizabeth Ann, the young woman Oliver Cowdery would marry almost four years later.³

Even the biographically important detail that Oliver Cowdery ended up marrying David Whitmer’s sister is not relevant to the present narrative; the text explicitly says that that marriage was four years later, long after the article at hand ends. It does not even qualify as foreshadowing, as the resolution takes place in another text.

If none of these details are conducive to the argument at hand, what are they doing in the narrative? What is going on?

6.1.1 Apologetics

I argue that the basic point of the whole paragraph is apologetic. David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery, two of the three witnesses for the *Book of Mormon*, who had in fact met

²Morris, (2007), p.14.

³Ibid., p.14.

while discussing the veracity of the Golden Plates in Palmyra,⁴ are revalidated as honest seekers of the truth here. Cowdery is willing to take on the tiring journey to determine “truth and untruth”; the Whitmers are respectable members of the community that are hospitable toward travelers. The message of the subcontext is: Surely such excellent people would have spoken out if the *Book of Mormon* was anything but a revelation from the Lord!

Of course, there is every reason for depicting the strenuous circumstances of life at that time realistically.

Lucy [Mack Smith, mother of Joseph Jr and Samuel, RCK] recalled that both [i.e. Oliver Cowdery and Samuel Smith, RCK] “suffered much” from the miserable weather and from fatigue, which in Samuel’s case was complicated by his lingering illness. Oliver also endured a frostbitten toe.⁵

Medicine was in its infancy, and people suffered from sicknesses for a long time after falling ill. Travel was hard work, and the low quality of clothing and equipment could lead to serious and painful injuries. All of this is true; it is part of the task of the historian to emphasize the difference between the past and the present. But the disparities in the depiction of stress and strain across the entirety of the article give pause. Consider the following passage.

On June 15, Joseph and Emma, then living in Harmony, Pennsylvania, near Emma’s parents, lost their firstborn child, a son named Alvin, who died shortly after his birth. For two weeks, Joseph nursed Emma, who seemed, “for some time,” wrote Lucy, “more like sinking with her infant into the mansion of the dead, than remaining with her husband among the living.”⁶

In an effect that is surely heightened by the use of the long quote, this passage is almost Victorian in the way it boxes up the blood and the sweat, the pain and the strain, of child

⁴Ibid., p.7.

⁵Ibid., p.14.

⁶Ibid., p.6.

birth. Similarly, Emma's post-partum suffering is anemically wrapped into a "sinking . . . into the mansion of the dead".⁷ This is partially because Emma is not the sole focus here. Joseph Smith Jr is fully participatory in the loss of the child, and is in fact the main actor in the two-week nursing effort—cf. the passive terminology of "sinking" and "remaining".

But, in my view more importantly, poor Emma's suffering cannot be used to support the narrative of the Restoration of the true Gospel.⁸ In fact, her difficult birth is just the opening volley in a section entitled "The Loss of the 116 Pages",⁹ referring to the manuscript from the initial translation attempt of the Golden Plates, a manuscript that Martin Harris had failed to keep safe. Emma's life-threatening situation is merely illustrative of a "traumatic summer",¹⁰ but pales in comparison to the key disappointment of the Smith families' religious hopes.¹¹

6.1.2 Dominating through Details

There remains the question of the narrative function of the aforementioned details, minutiae such as the dimensions of the Whitmer's log house or the total number of siblings. I am not advocating historical narratives here that are slim concatenations of a few core events. I merely dispute that these details are presented solely to add narrative interest or vividness.

I worry that these minutiae serve as defensive measures of apologia. They function as supposed minimum requirements of contribution. The unstated claim here is that those

⁷ I am unclear whence Lucy Mack Smith took that expression. It might be inspired by Proverbs 2:18: the strange woman, whose house inclines toward death. The word "mansion" occurs in the KJV only in John 14:2, used to designate the places that Jesus prepares for his apostles in the Father's house.

⁸ Similarly, the narrative does not truly care about the frost-bitten toe *qua* injury, but rather functionalizes it as a symbol of the dedication that Oliver Cowdery exhibited while investigating the potential truth of the restored Gospel.

⁹ Morris, (2007), p.6.

¹⁰ Ibid., p.6.

¹¹ To assess the importance that the translation held in the Smith family's own understanding, consider the dying words of the oldest Smith brother Alvin to Joseph, from November 19, 1823, as remembered by his mother Lucy Mack Smith, "... do everything that lies in your power to obtain the Record." cf. Smith, (1853), p.88.

who do not know these minutiae are not—yet—qualified to join the conversation on how to interpret the narrative of the Restoration. These antiquarian details, bespeaking of long hours of research in the archives and of a firm grasp of the secondary literature, symbolize an authority of those in the know, whose arguments should trump the opinions of those lacking such qualifications.

It is attitudes such as these that have led to the “mega-tomes” of Mormon scholarship, hefty “bricks” weighing in at a thousand pages or more, filled with meticulous research into the details, nooks and crannies of specific individuals.¹² These are no longer historical arguments; these are “Materialschlachten”, battles of attrition of matériel.

If my supposition is correct, then I challenge this attitude. Without denying that significant time is required to familiarize oneself with the primary and secondary literature, it is in general not necessary to stray into these picturesque details, if they predominantly do not contribute to the argument. The same observation applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to some of the personae involved. With all due respect, to the story of Oliver Cowdery’s conversion *as told by Morris*, neither Mrs Mary Musselman Whitmer nor Mrs Polly Knight¹³ make any significant contribution.¹⁴ Their mentions amount to historiographical name-dropping.

6.1.3 Argumentative Focus

From the point of view of current Mormon biographically-guided historiography, the following case studies will appear devoid of some of the usual actors. From the preceding discussion, it should be clear that this is a conscious decision.

For example, the discussion of how the translation and publication of the *Book of*

¹²Frederick G. Williams (2012). *The Life of Dr Frederick G Williams: Counselor to the Prophet*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press.

¹³Morris, (2007), p.15.

¹⁴ There may indeed be many other ways of telling that story, that assign significant roles to these two women, and there probably should be; see chapter 17 (“Salvation History in the Age of Microhistory”), especially pp.502ff.

Mormon was accomplished financially will make almost no mention of Oliver Cowdery.¹⁵ This is purposeful. Oliver Cowdery was Joseph Smith Jr's scribe, writer of the clean copy for the printing, one of the three witnesses of the *Book of Mormon*, and holder of many important roles in the Church leadership, before apostasizing in the aftermath of the Kirtland Safety Society disaster; however, up to the point of the narrative here, he had tried "blacksmithing, store clerking and school teaching"¹⁶ only. He had little money himself. True, Oliver Cowdery made the publication cheaper by not charging for his extensive scribal services.¹⁷ And Cowdery may have been the Smiths' link to the Whitmer clan via his friendship with David.¹⁸ But that would be the extent of Cowdery's contributions to financing the translation and publication of the *Book of Mormon*.

6.2 Scribes and Sponsors

As I mentioned before, many well-to-do farmers of the nineteenth century saw it as their communal responsibility to support financially those religious projects that were important to them personally.¹⁹ The publication of the *Book of Mormon* was dependent on three such prosperous farmers: Martin Harris of Palmyra, Joseph Knight Sr of Colesville, and Peter Whitmer Sr of Fayette. All three supported the translation effort, and Martin Harris ended up shouldering the burden of the printing. All three participated out of their personal religious convictions, however much they differed in that regard when compared to each other.

¹⁵ To "make it up" to him, I gave him a prominent role in the methodological reflection.

¹⁶ Richard Lyman Bushman (2009). "Oliver's Joseph". In: *Days Never to Be Forgotten: Oliver Cowdery*. Ed. by Alexander L. Baugh. Provo, Utah: Religious Study Center, Brigham Young University, pp. 1–14.

¹⁷ Cowdery was reimbursed for his contributions to translating and publishing the *Book of Mormon*, as well as other early scribal duties, once the Literary Firm had been founded; cf. below on page p.271.

¹⁸ See below on page p.171

¹⁹ Cf. above on page p.84 and below on page p.220.

6.2.1 The Knight Family

The head of the Knight family, Joseph Knight Sr, of Colesville, Broom County, Pennsylvania, was a prosperous farmer, who owned a farm, a gristmill, a sawmill, and a carding machine.²⁰ His son Jewel expressed the gentleman farmer ideal when he wrote,

[He, RCK] was not rich, yet possessed enough of the world's goods to secure to himself and family the necessities and comforts of life.²¹

Knight Sr had been a business partner of the Smith family as early as 1825, purchasing wheat from them.²² Joseph Smith Jr had worked for Knight Sr in Colesville in late 1826, just before getting married,²³ as a hired hand on the farm and possibly in the Knights' sawmill.²⁴

On the night of September 21, 1827, on which according to Mormon orthodoxy Joseph Smith Jr obtained the Golden Plates, Mr Knight was visiting with the Smiths,²⁵ and Smith Jr was familiar enough with him to borrow his horse carriage without asking, for the purpose of bringing the plates home. The family shared the story of the record with Mr Knight during the same visit. When some of the locals attempted to take the plates from the Smiths, Mr Knight assisted them in keeping it safe.²⁶

In the winter of 1828, Smith Jr had no scribe and was living in Harmony, Pennsylvania, close to his in-laws, who were opposed to the translation project. In his personal recollections, Knight Sr recalled assisting Joseph Smith Jr during these difficult times. Un-

²⁰ Jessee, (1976a), p.1 knows of the carding machine and the gristmill; the phrase is straight from Newel Knight's autobiographical sketch; cf. Vogel, (2002), p.45. Hartley speaks only of a sawmill; cf. William G. Hartley (1989a). "The Knight Family: Part I". in: *Liahona*. With respect to the mills, Knight Sr may have owned both, or operated a combination sawmill, with an attachment for grist milling.

²¹ Jessee, (1976a), p.1; Vogel, (2002), IV.A.3, p.45.

²² Smith, (1853), p.92.

²³ Jessee, (1976a), p.2.

²⁴ Hartley, (1989a).

²⁵ Smith, (1853), pp.99-101.

²⁶ *ibid.*, pp.105f; Jessee, (1976a), p.3.

fortunately, Knight Sr was hard up too and could only give him “a pair of shoes and three dollars in money to help him a little”.²⁷

Joseph Smith Jr’s historical sketch does not record this act of kindness. Both sources agree that “about the same time”²⁸ as the May 1829 revelation to Hyrum Smith (= D&C 11), during the final stages of the translation of the *Book of Mormon*, Joseph Knight Sr repeatedly came to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to bring provisions²⁹ for the Smith Jrs as well as their assistants, Hyrum Smith³⁰ and Oliver Cowdery,³¹ so that they would not have to interrupt their translation work.³² Knight Sr received revelation D&C 12 for his support of the project.³³

After the publication of the *Book of Mormon* had been completed and the Church organized in April 1830, Knight Sr and his family became the nucleus of the so-called “Colesville Saints”.³⁴ When Joseph Smith Jr was arrested on trumped-up charges during one of his visits in Colesville, Knight Sr hired the legal assistance to defend him.³⁵

²⁷ Jessee, (1976a), p.4.

²⁸ Joseph Smith Jr (1839). “History, [ca. June–Oct. 1839], draft”. handwriting of James Mulholland; twenty-five pages; CHL, p.2.

²⁹ To wit: a barrel of mackerel; lined paper for writing; ten bushels of grain; five to six bushels of potatoes; a pound of tea; cf. Jessee, (1976a), p.5.

³⁰ Unless Knight Sr is thinking of a different trip, he is incorrectly recalling Samuel as being there; cf. *ibid.*, p.5. This is unlikely, because Knight Sr believes that with these supplies, they “had provisions enough to last till the translation was done”; cf. *ibid.*, p.5. Earlier, Samuel had accompanied Oliver Cowdery to Harmony to introduce Cowdery to his brother Joseph Jr when there was still snow—cf. Morris, (2007), p.14—and had departed after his baptism, leaving Cowdery there; cf. Smith Jr, (1839), p.2.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.2.

³² While Smith Jr’s recollections make it sound as if Knight Sr came on his own accord, in Knight Sr’s account Cowdery and Smith Jr had come to Colesville to tell of their difficulties in obtaining provisions, but failed to find him there; cf. Jessee, (1976a), p.5

³³ A rather impersonal revelation: it does not mention the name of the recipient at all. Much of the imagery is the same as Hyrum’s, D&C 11.

³⁴ Hartley, (1989a).

³⁵ Jessee, (1976a), p.6. These men were “respectable farmers, men renowned for their integrity, and well versed in the laws of their country” (= HC 1:89); in a word, gentlemen farmers.

6.2.2 The Whitmer Family

The Whitmer family resided in Fayette, near Palmyra. They were of German Reformed descent and well respected in their community: father Peter Whitmer was school trustee; brother Christian was constable. The family worked a one-hundred-acre farm.³⁶ They worshipped at the German Reformed church in West Fayette.³⁷

In late 1828, during a business trip to Palmyra, David Whitmer heard the stories about the discover of the Golden Plates. On the same trip, Whitmer struck up a friendship with Oliver Cowdery, who was then staying in Palmyra as a schoolteacher.³⁸ Cowdery was boarding with the Smiths and thus acquainted with them. Whitmer undertook his own investigations locally. The two decided to remain in contact about the “Golden Bible business”, as the issue was colloquially known.

In his *Chicago Tribune* interview of 1875, David Whitmer remembers talking to Smith Jr directly during his Palmyra investigations, and receiving a demonstration of the Urim and Thummim;³⁹ but that is probably mistaken, because during Cowdery’s stay in Palmyra, Smith Jr had already resided in Harmony, Pennsylvania, for over a year—including the translation of the 116 pages with Martin Harris in the summer of 1828, which Whitmer’s account skips.⁴⁰

In the early summer of 1829, David Whitmer received several letters from Oliver Cowdery. Cowdery informed Whitmer in the first that Cowdery was now in Harmony, assisting in the translation of the “Golden Bible”. In the second letter, Cowdery wrote that he believed the plates and their contents to be genuine. Finally, upon Joseph’s request, Cowdery inquired whether David could come and help relocate them to Fayette.⁴¹

³⁶Morris, (2007), p.14.

³⁷Ibid., p.8.

³⁸ Ibid., p.7.

³⁹Vogel, (2003), VI.A.3, p.20.

⁴⁰Ibid., VI.A.3, p.21 Fn 8.

⁴¹ Cf. the April 1878 interview with Poulson, in: *ibid.*, VI.A.6 p.44.

In the 1839 manuscript history, Joseph Smith Jr recalls the sequence of events differently:⁴² here, the acquaintance with Peter Whitmer Sr and some of his family is dated to the beginning of the translation process, possibly prior to the Cowdery-David Whitmer friendship. Here, David Whitmer is portrayed as merely doing his father's bidding. Whitmer Sr offers not only free room and board but also another writing assistant to entice the prophet and Cowdery into coming. The translators are swayed by "being informed that the people in the neighborhood were anxiously [a]waiting . . . the opportunity to enquire into these things."⁴³

Presumably the difference in emphasis is due to the acrimonious separation in 1838 between the Whitmers and the Mormon Church in Far West, Missouri, which left each party emphasizing its own importance in the recollections.⁴⁴

David Whitmer's religious stance leaned toward the prophetic and miraculous. Even late in life, he insisted that he had only been able to come get the Smith Jrs and Cowdery because a miracle completed his plowing for him; and that Smith Jr had demonstrated his prophetic skills to David Whitmer's satisfaction by recounting the waystations of Whitmer's 160-mile journey from Fayette to Harmony, including the inscriptions on the signs of the various taverns.⁴⁵

There seems to be consensus that the translators stayed with the Whitmers until the translation was completed and the copyright secured.⁴⁶ John Whitmer,⁴⁷ one of David's brothers, joined the translation effort as a scribe.⁴⁸

⁴²Smith Jr, (1839), p.3.

⁴³Ibid., p.3.

⁴⁴ On the cutting off of the Whitmers, see also below on page p.401.

⁴⁵ Cf. the April 1878 interview with Poulson, in: Vogel, (2003), VI.A.6 p.44.

⁴⁶Smith Jr, (1839), p.3.

⁴⁷ John Whitmer would later become the advance party for the exodus of the New York Saints to Kirtland, Ohio—cf. page p.231 below—as well as the first historian of the Church; cf. page p.428 below.

⁴⁸Smith Jr, (1839), p.4.

6.2.3 Martin Harris

Nathan Harris was a pioneer of the Palmyra settlement who came to settle in 1792 or 1793 with his family⁴⁹ and purchased 600 acres at \$300.⁵⁰ Harris was the first hunter and fisher in Palmyra, catching salmon in Ganargwa creek, and organizing “husking frolics” for his neighbors.⁵¹ The son of this founding settler, Martin Harris, grew up to be a prosperous farmer⁵² and substantial landowner, owning 320 acres. Harris married his first cousin Lucy in 1808.⁵³ He resided in Palmyra, as did his brother, Preserved Harris.

Like many men of his age, Martin Harris was a religious seeker. Similar to Joseph Smith Sr, Harris had realized early that he was not meant to support any of the existing creeds.⁵⁴ In his community, he had a reputation for both being “a firm believer in dreams, and visions, and supernatural appearances, such as apparitions and ghosts”⁵⁵ as well as possessing “an extensive knowledge of the scriptures”.⁵⁶

By 1827, when the rumors of the “Golden Bible” started to make the rounds in Palmyra, Martin heard about them from Preserved.⁵⁷

How Martin Harris and Joseph Smith Jr met remains unclear. Bushman believes that Joseph had done farmwork for the Harrises before 1827.⁵⁸ Lucy Mack Smith simply introduces Harris as a “confidential friend” of the family.⁵⁹ Joseph Smith Jr recalled that the persecution⁶⁰ in Manchester required him to move back to Harmony, Pennsylvania, where

⁴⁹Vogel, (2000), III.F p.253.

⁵⁰Susan Easton Black and Larry C. Porter (2005). “For the Sum of Three Thousand Dollars”. In: *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14.2, 4–11, 66f, p.6.

⁵¹Turner, (1851), p.384.

⁵² In the 1820s, he routinely won prizes from the Ontario Agricultural Society for his woven materials; cd. Black and Porter, (2005), p.6.

⁵³Ibid., p.6.

⁵⁴Vogel, (2000), III.F p.253.

⁵⁵ Interview with John A. Clark, 1827 & 1828; cf. *ibid.*, III.F.1 p.262; Tucker, (1867), p.40.

⁵⁶ Interview with John A. Clark, 1827 & 1828; cf. Vogel, (2000), III.F.1 p.262; Tucker, (1867), p.40.

⁵⁷ On Preserved Harris, see also page p.258 below.

⁵⁸Bushman, (2005), p.62.

⁵⁹Smith, (1853), p.109.

⁶⁰ Joseph Smith Jr’s former treasure-hunting companions had developed an intense interest. Some may

his wife's family resided, and that Martin Harris sponsored the move with \$50.⁶¹

In April 1828, Harris travelled to Harmony himself to assist as Joseph Smith Jr's scribe in the translation effort.⁶² Martin Harris brought back the manuscript of the first 116 pages translated to convince his family of their genuineness, but lost it during this time.⁶³ Thus, in the spring of 1829, Joseph Smith Jr had to start the translation work over.⁶⁴

Lucy Harris remained suspicious of the translation effort, because Smith Jr continued to keep the plates sequestered from her. Lucy tried one last time to stop the endeavor by suing Joseph Smith Jr in March of 1829 in a Lyons court for defrauding her husband.⁶⁵ However, when Martin Harris testified that he had given all his money willingly and on his own initiative, the judge dismissed the case.⁶⁶

With the help from Samuel Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, and funding from the Knights and Whitmers,⁶⁷ Joseph Smith Jr and his scribes completed the translation of the *Book of Mormon*⁶⁸ in June of 1829.⁶⁹

have felt that they deserved a cut in the find of the "Golden Bible"; cf. Smith, (1853), pp.102-109.

⁶¹Joseph Smith Jr (1841a). "History, [ca. 1841]". Draft 3, handwriting of Howard Coray; 102 pages and one attached slip; CHL., p.12.

⁶²Bushman, (2005), p.66.

⁶³ Whether Harris' wife Lucy sequestered or destroyed the draft, as Tucker surmised—cf. Tucker, (1867), p.45f—or other parties did, as Bushman, (2005), p.67 is willing to assume, remains an issue of speculation.

⁶⁴Ibid., p.70.

⁶⁵ The editors of the legal chronology of Joseph Smith Jr remain dubious that the trial actually took place; they point out that "no documents from this action have survived" and place the event, if it occurred at all, in Palmyra, not Lyons; cf. N.N. (2014). "Legal Chronology of Joseph Smith". In: *Sustaining the Law: Joseph Smith's Legal Encounters*. Ed. by Gordon A. Madsen, Jeffrey N. Walker, and John W. Welch. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Studies, pp. 461–514, p.463.

⁶⁶Black and Porter, (2005), p.8.

⁶⁷ On the contribution of the Knights and the Whitmers, cf. above on pages pp.169ff and pp.171ff, respectively.

⁶⁸ For a summary of the contents of the constituent books of the *Book of Mormon*, see in the appendix below, cf. pages pp.525ff.

⁶⁹Marquardt and Walters, (1994), p.xxxiii.

6.3 Presses, Proofs and Book Publishing

In June 1829, Joseph Smith Jr secured the copyright for the *Book of Mormon*⁷⁰ by submitting a copyright form to the United States District Court in Utica.⁷¹ In a possible misunderstanding of how to comply with the copyright law, Joseph Smith Jr identified himself as “author and proprietor” of the work, rather than as its translator,⁷² an apparently endless source of amusement to detractors.⁷³

Next, Joseph Smith Jr, Hyrum Smith, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris entered into negotiations with the Palmyra printer Grandin for the publication of the book.⁷⁴ Grandin, who was a friend of Harris and worried about Harris being tricked by the Smiths and Cowdery, initially refused and repeatedly attempted to persuade Harris to drop the matter.⁷⁵ Two printers in Rochester were then approached: Mr Thurlow Weed, who refused; and Mr Elihu F. Marshall, who gave them terms.⁷⁶ Using Marshall’s terms, Harris convinced Grandin that his resistance would not stop the publication.⁷⁷ Grandin consented and quoted \$3,000 for 5,000 copies,⁷⁸ or 60 cents a copy.

To comply with copyright laws, Grandin printed the title page of the planned book in his newspaper, the *Wayne Sentinel*, on June 26, 1829. Strictly speaking, the federal laws

⁷⁰Bushman, (2005), p.80.

⁷¹Nathanial Hinckley Wadsworth (2014). “Securing the Book of Mormon Copyright in 1829”. In: *Sustaining the Law: Joseph Smith’s Legal Encounters*. Ed. by Gordon A. Madsen, Jeffrey N. Walker, and John W. Welch. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Studies. Chap. 5, pp. 93–112, p.100; p.103.

⁷²Ibid., p.103.

⁷³*Pars pro toto*, cf. Howe, (1834), p.20. Even Tucker, who as an editor and publisher should know better, cannot resist the barb; cf. Tucker, (1867), p.65.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p.50. Tucker worked at Grandin’s print shop at the time, cf. Bushman, (2005), p.80, and is therefore a good source for the details of the endeavor. Other parts of his recollections are less useful, e.g. his dating the marriage of Emma Hale and Joseph Smith Jr to the fall of 1829, or confusing Martin Harris with Josiah Stowell when telling the story of Smith Jr borrowing a suitable set of clothes for his wedding; cf. Tucker, (1867), p.56.

⁷⁵Ibid., p.52.

⁷⁶ Black and Porter point out that Marshall was quoting an “exorbitant price”; cf. Black and Porter, (2005), p.9.

⁷⁷Tucker, (1867), p.52.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp.52f.

would have required publishing the text of the copyright certificate, printed on the back of the book's title page, as well,⁷⁹ but Wadsworth suggests that most publishers were not aware of this requirement.⁸⁰

Initially, Martin Harris and the Smith brothers were responsible for coming up with \$1,500 each.⁸¹ Others had tried to contribute to the undertaking—Orrin Porter Rockwell proffered \$50. Joseph Smith Jr approached family friend George Crane, but was refused; Josiah Stowell could not help either.⁸² The Smiths were not able to match Harris' contribution.⁸³

Eventually, a revelation (= D&C 19:26-35)⁸⁴ settled that Harris was to pay the entire sum. For this Harris had to mortgage the main farm and homestead.⁸⁵ The terms of the agreement, dated August 25, 1829, were such that the 150 acres of land would be used as collateral for the printing of the *Book of Mormon*. If the \$3,000 were not repaid by February 25, 1831, then Grandin would be at liberty to sell the land.⁸⁶

In January of 1830, while the printing was approaching completion, Martin Harris and Joseph Smith Sr signed a contract that would allow Harris to sell copies of the *Book of Mormon* on his own.⁸⁷ As Vogel explains:

The wording of the agreement indicates that as of 16 January 1830, Harris

⁷⁹Wadsworth, (2014), p.104.

⁸⁰Ibid., p.105.

⁸¹Smith, (1853), p.142.

⁸²Black and Porter, (2005), p.9.

⁸³Ibid., p.5.

⁸⁴ Vogel dates this revelation to March 1830, not to the summer of 1829, which changes the narrative somewhat; cf. Vogel, (2000), III.L.14 p.474

⁸⁵ Lucy and Martin Harris had separated by this time, possibly over supporting the *Book of Mormon*, and Martin now owned "the main farm and homestead, about 150 acres of land", cf. Tucker, (1867), p.54. Tucker suggested that the 80 acres that Lucy Harris held had been deeded to her as part of the separation—cf. *ibid.*, p.54—but as Vogel points out, that deeding already took place November 29, 1825, almost two years before Joseph Smith Jr's recovery of the plates in the Mormon orthodox chronology; cf. Vogel, (2000), III.L.14 p.475 Fn 3.

⁸⁶Ibid., III.L.14 pp.475-477.

⁸⁷ Smith Sr and Martin Harris Agreement, 1830; cf. *ibid.*, III.L.17 p.485.

anticipated that the sale of the books would fully pay off his \$3,000 mortgage to Grandin, and that the surplus would go to Joseph Sr and his friends.⁸⁸

This basically made it impossible for Harris to profit from the endeavor.⁸⁹ Other than the computation that Tucker had made for Harris,⁹⁰ assuming the sales price of \$1.25 fixed by revelation,⁹¹ Harris would not make over 108% on the investment.⁹²

The printing took until March 1830, when the Wayne Register announced that the book was ready for sale. Apparently, the public in Palmyra boycotted the book.⁹³ Joseph Knight Sr later recalled that Martin Harris complained about the books not selling well and wanted a commandment;⁹⁴ Harris was worried for the right reasons, though, since he did not want to lose his property. In this situation, Hyrum Smith suggested that a Canadian copyright to the *Book of Mormon* could be obtained in Toronto and sold there. According to David Whitmer's later recollection, Joseph Smith Jr obtained a revelation that this would succeed, but when Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery traveled to Canada to execute on this plan, they came back empty-handed.⁹⁵

By April of 1831, after the merger with the Rigdon-led Campbellite congregation in

⁸⁸Ibid., III.L.17 p.484.

⁸⁹ The interpretation offered by Black and Porter, that Grandin had suspended printing and needed more money to be convinced to start again, makes little sense, as Grandin already had the full guarantee of Martin Harris' farm. Even rumors that Harris could not sell were irrelevant, because the money was not due for another year. Furthermore, how could the agreement between Harris and Smith Sr calm Grandin's fears, if it reduced Harris' profits? *Contra* Black and Porter, (2005), pp.9f.

⁹⁰Tucker, (1867), p.55.

⁹¹ Howe, (1834), p.252; David Marks Account, 1831–cf. Vogel, (2003), VI.F.1 p.304.

⁹² 5,000 copies at \$1.25 equals \$6,250; at \$3,000 initial investment, this gives \$3,250 profit, or 108 $\frac{1}{3}$ %. This (truncated) profit of \$1.08 per copy is explicitly mentioned in the the David Marks Account of 1831; cf. *ibid.*, VI.F.1 p.304.

⁹³ For a narrative of the difficulties that Samuel Smith experienced in selling some of the books on his first mission, June 30, 1830, cf. Smith, (1853), pp.152-153.

⁹⁴ Jessee, (1976a), p.5, but it makes no sense to consider D&C 19 the answer to that request.

⁹⁵ John Whitmer et al. (1831-1835). "Revelation Book 1". ca. Mar. 1831–July 1835, 208 pages (18 pages missing) and four inserted leaves; volume at CHL and four loose leaves in Restoration Scriptures Collection at CCLA., pp.30f; David Whitmer Address, 1887, p.31; cf. Vogel, (2003), VI.A.33 p.198f. See also Black and Porter, (2005), p.10.

Kirtland, Ohio⁹⁶ and the beginning of the exodus of the New York Saints to Ohio,⁹⁷ Martin Harris sold his 150 acres to Thomas Lakely, receiving the money three weeks later to pay Grandin, before departing for Ohio himself.⁹⁸

6.4 Conclusions

The publication of the *Book of Mormon* was a watershed event and the condition for the transformation of the new movement into a church. Even though various members had been baptized earlier, in the aftermath of the restoration of the degrees of priesthood the religious document pulled the community together in a way the revelations and restorations of authority could not have.

Financially, the book was not a success. The full weight of the failure was borne by Martin Harris. If, as Lucy Harris and her sister Abigail claim, Martin Harris had promised his wife to make money off the business,⁹⁹ then he had not succeeded.¹⁰⁰

6.4.1 Supported by Gentlemen Farmers

Against almost all odds, Joseph Smith Jr had succeeded in translating and then publishing the *Book of Mormon*. Many people had contributed various amounts of their resources and time to the effort, people who either belonged to his family or would become his friends and collaborators in the early Mormon church for many years to come.

⁹⁶ Cf. below on page p.210.

⁹⁷ Cf. below on page p.231.

⁹⁸ Vogel, (2000), III.L.14 pp.474f. The transaction was not actually certified before the commissioner of deeds until January 28, 1832; cf. Black and Porter, (2005), p.11.

⁹⁹ See the statements of Abigail Harris and Lucy Harris; cf. Howe, (1834), pp.253-257.

¹⁰⁰ As Black and Porter point out, “Let it be remembered that no other early believer in the Restoration contributed more financial support to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon than Martin [Harris, RCK].”—cf. Black and Porter, (2005), p.11. Joseph Smith Jr would later use the context of his next publication venture, the Literary Firm, to have Harris reimbursed for his expenditures; cf. below on page p.271.

Socio-economically, these had been difficult times for the young Smith Jr family. Joseph Smith Jr's translation task had consumed all of his attention, preventing him from managing his own farm. As a result, he had been more subsisting than living on the largesse of some of his patrons, which was at time also unreliable. The situation was not all that different for Oliver Cowdery, or some of the other members of the Smith family clan, now that the frame house had been lost.

However, not all was well with his patrons either. Though the Knights and the Whitmers were well off, they were unlikely to be in any position to support Smith Jr's revelatory work exclusively in the near future.¹⁰¹ The only patron better funded than these supporters, Martin Harris, had been weakened significantly by the printing of the *Book of Mormon* and its weak sales.

With the church growing, scattered over locales as distant as Manchester, Colesville and Fayette, there was a need for visitation and supervision, baptizing and preaching. Somehow, this work would have to be funded, in the sense that the families of the missionaries and preachers had to be fed.¹⁰² The early Mormon church was not the only community that faced this issue. But perhaps, due to the socio-economically weak status of its leading religious authorities, it found this issue especially pressing.

6.4.2 Outlook

At this point in his young life, Joseph Smith Jr had run the gauntlet of dictating a major book and seeing it through publication. These were two core activities to which he would remain committed for the rest of his intellectual and economic life.

Unsurprisingly, Joseph Smith Jr was not the only man working toward a restoration of the ancient order of things through writing and publishing. The lack of meaningful

¹⁰¹ They had been unable to contribute to the printing effort of the *Book of Mormon*.

¹⁰² On nineteenth-century attitudes toward the funding of a ministry, see below on page p.216.

direction was after all a public malaise within the United States. Some of these men had been working on the problem for a much longer time than Joseph Smith Jr had. The fledgling movement that was beginning to nucleate around the newly published revelations was about to come in contact with one of them: the restoration movement spearheaded by Thomas and Alexander Campbell.

Chapter 7

Raiding the Campbellites

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The Split between the Baptists and the Disciples

In the late fall of 1830, the states of Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio were reverberating ecclesiastically from a “civil war” inside the Baptist denomination. The main body was ejecting a sizable reform movement, the future Disciples of Christ or Church of Christ, then known as the Campbellites.

The Campbellite reform movement had been the work of two Scottish theologians, former Presbyterians, the father and son team of Thomas and Alexander Campbell. They had spent the previous two decades preaching the restoration of the “ancient order of things”, the church from before the different creeds, on the basis of the sufficiency of the Gospel for salvation, with an eye toward trans-denominational unity. Using the organizational tool of the Mahoning Association, founded in 1820 by Adamson Bentley, and Alexander Campbell’s journal *The Christian Baptist* to disseminate their viewpoint since 1822, the Campbells and their top preachers—Sidney Rigdon, Walter Scott and William Hayden—

had been reforming close to a thousand Christians, mainly of the Baptist denomination, per year since 1827.

Now the Baptist organizations were putting on the breaks. Associations evicted their member churches, congregations split asunder, and a veritable firestorm of pamphleteering raged. The hope of trans-denominational post-creedal unity, which the Campbells had been working toward, was lost.

Into this firestorm stepped the proselytizing efforts of the budding Mormon Church. In November 1830, the fledgling movement managed to convert the Campbellite star preacher Sidney Rigdon, and through him many of his most devoted congregation members, often termed “Rigdonites”, in and around Kirtland, Ohio. The “corporate raid” brought not only a seasoned minister and an enthusiastic congregation, but also some of the most loyal and wealthy Mormons of the early church into the fold: the Pratt brothers, Orson and Parley; Edward Partridge; Newel K. Whitney; Dr Frederick Williams; Lyman Wight; Eliza and Lorenzo Snow. As a result of that conversion success, the majority of the Mormons from upstate New York, including the prophet and his family, moved to Kirtland in 1831. Kirtland remained the operational base of the Church until 1837. Understanding this conversion event is crucial to understanding the socio-economic situation of the first decade of the Mormon church.

7.1.2 The Spaulding-Rigdon Thesis

The surprise conversion of Sidney Rigdon to the new denomination and the mismatch between the narrative complexity of the *Book of Mormon* and the apparent literary skills of Joseph Smith Jr almost immediately led to suspicions of conspiracy and subterfuge.

The publication of Doctor P. Hurlbutt’s research into the origins of the *Book of Mormon*, *Mormonism Unveiled* [sic RCK], by Painesville, Ohio, newspaper editor Eber D. Howe in

1834¹ marked the birth of the so-called “Spaulding-Rigdon Thesis” for explaining the origin of the *Book of Mormon*. This thesis posits that Rigdon, using the draft for an Indian romance by the late Reverend Solomon Spaulding, had been a secret but major contributor to the authoring of the *Book of Mormon* since before 1827, providing Cowdery and Smith Jr with the text, and had consequently faked his own conversion to the new faith in November of 1830.

Many nineteenth-century histories of the Campbell Movement² simply assume that the Spaulding-Rigdon Thesis is true and speak of Rigdon as the author of the *Book of Mormon*. This is not surprising: Rigdon was one of their star preachers; they knew his rhetorical capabilities. At the same time, the Campbellites had only disdain for the literary capabilities of Cowdery, a schoolteacher, and Smith Jr, a mere farmer.

Since then, volumes have been dedicated to tracing in minute detail how Rigdon could have obtained the draft, met and communicated with Smith Jr as well as Oliver Cowdery, and then dropped hints about a coming revelation to friends and fellow Campbellites, as the project moved from “translation” to publication.³

Understandably, apologists for the *Book of Mormon* have worked, just as hard as the Spaulding-Rigdon champions have, to refute or even discredit the thesis. Because the argument was advanced in 1834, counter-arguments start to appear soon thereafter. Already the 1839 draft of the Church History describes the first meeting between Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith Jr on April 1829 in terms couched to counter the Spaulding-Rigdon

¹Howe, (1834).

² Robert Richardson (1870). *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co.; Amos S. Hayden (1875). *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve, Ohio*. Cincinnati: Chase and Hall Publishers.

³ Most recently Wayne L. Cowdrey, Howard A. Davis, Arthur Vanick, *Who really wrote the Book of Mormon? The Spaulding Enigma*, St Louis (Concordia Publishing House), 2005, picked up that baton (partially for reasons of dealing with descent from the maligned Oliver Cowdery). Advanced statistical and linguistic techniques have been brought to bear on the problem, most recently Matthew L. Jockers, Daniela M. Witten & Craig S. Criddle, “Reassessing Authorship of the *Book of Mormon*”, in: *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 23:4 (Dec 2006), pp.465-491.

thesis.

On the fifth day of Aprile Eighteen hundred and twenty nine Oliver Cowdery came to my [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] house, *untill* [sic RCK] when I had never seen him [emphasis RCK].⁴

This phrasing presupposes a claim that Cowdery and Rigdon had collaborated in authoring the *Book of Mormon* prior to April 1829. The translation of the *Book of Mormon* had been completed that same June.⁵

7.1.3 Outlook

In the following, I dispense with the Spaulding-Rigdon Thesis as the basis of understanding the corporate raiding of the Campbellite congregations of the Western Reserve. It is true that the thesis raises many interesting points and has led to a detailed scrutiny of the life and whereabouts of Sidney Rigdon. It is equally true that many of the counter-arguments offered by the apologists are unhelpful.

Nevertheless, I will focus on the relationship between Alexander Campbell and Sidney Rigdon. This requires a reconstruction of the Campbellite Movement and Rigdon's place in it, which I will offer in the first section. There, I will argue that Alexander Campbell and Sidney Rigdon had every reason to believe that their theological thinking was congruent prior to the Austintown Meeting in the summer of 1830, two months before Rigdon's conversion. The *casus belli* of their separation was the common stock experiment of Isaac Morley and others from Rigdon's Campbellite congregation at Kirtland. I hope to show that Rigdon's support for that experiment hails from misunderstanding a stance that Alexander Campbell took in his debate with the Socialist utopian Robert Owen.

⁴Smith Jr, (1839-1843), p.13.

⁵ Cf. above on page p.174.

The reconstruction will also show that the question of the remuneration of preachers was a key issue, both for the Campbellites, the Mormons and the other Christians living in the Western Reserve. I will summarize that issue in the second section.

Finally, through the conversion of the Kirtland community, the communitarian experiment at Kirtland was imported into Mormonism. When Joseph Smith Jr arrived in Kirtland in January of 1831, the prophet had to deal with the socio-economic situation in Kirtland, for the arriving members as well as for the resident members of the church. Thus, he had to abolish the old system and establish a new one. The criticism of the common-stock approach and its replacement system, known as the Law of Consecration, implemented under the first Mormon bishop, Edward Partridge, deserves its own chapter.⁶

7.2 The Campbellite Movement

7.2.1 Alexander Campbell

Alexander Campbell (12 September 1788 – 4 March 1866) was the son of Scottish minister Thomas Campbell; his mother was Huguenot.⁷ The family lived in Ireland.

At the close of the eighteenth century, this was an environment that was as intensely “burned over” in terms of exhaustion after religious awakenings, as upstate New York would be in the 1815s and 1820s. Just as in the Colonies, the awakenings had involved thousands of people and swoons, convulsions and cataleptic seizures.⁸

The intense religious interest awakened in Great Britain and Ireland by Wesley, Whitefield and their coadjutors, had, toward the close of the [eighteenth,

⁶ Cf. below on pages pp.227ff, especially pages pp.244ff. On Edward Partridge, see in the same chapter, pages pp.228ff.

⁷Robert Richardson (1868). *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*. Vol. 1. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., p.21.

⁸Ibid., pp.72f.

RCK] century, given place to a great degree of indifference and worldly conformity. The diffusion of infidel principles from France, political commotions [i.e. French Revolution, RCK] and a variety of circumstances connected with the American and French wars, seem to have been chiefly instrumental in inducing a change which was deeply lamented by the pious and earnest men in the different religious communities.⁹

In 1807 his father emigrated to the United States, and when the family attempted to follow in 1808, their ship was wrecked in a storm on the Scottish coast.¹⁰ The resulting delay was long enough for Campbell to study theology formally at the University of Glasgow, his father's alma mater. Here, Campbell came into contact with the Scottish Common Sense realists, which severely curtailed his interest in miracles and charismata,¹¹ effectively making him a cessationist.¹²

Both father and son became disappointed with the Presbyterians at that time. In 1809, Thomas Campbell founded the Christian Association, and in 1811 Alexander became licensed as a minister within this reform movement, also known as the Brush Run Church.¹³ Because of their rejection of infant baptism—pedo-baptism in the language of the time—they felt most akin to the Baptists and aligned with the Redstone Association of the Baptist Church.¹⁴

⁹Richardson, (1868), p.73.

¹⁰Ibid., p.114.

¹¹Lynne Wilson (2009). "Joseph Smith's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit Contrasted with Cartwright, Campbell, Hodge and Finney". PhD thesis. Marquette University, p.84.

¹² The English theological literature distinguishes between Cessationism and Continuationism. Cessationists argue that the gifts of the spirit had already ceased in the early Church; Continuationists argue that they continue on. Among the theologians influential for the following discussion, Calvin was a cessationist—cf. Institutes, IV.19.6f; IV.19.19—while the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, was a continuationist—cf. his long letter to the Reverend Dr Middleton, written January 4 to 24, 1749 (*The Works of the Reverend John Wesley, A.M.* [1831]. First American Complete and Standard Edition. Vol. 5. New York: John Emory and B. Waugh, p.705-761), in refutation of Middleton's *Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers* of the early Christian Church (Conyers Middleton [1749]. *A free inquiry into the miraculous powers, which are supposed to have subsisted in the Christian church, from the earliest ages through several successive centuries. By which is shewn, that we have no sufficient reason to believe, upon the authority of the primitive fathers, that any such powers were continued to the church, after the days of the apostles.* London: Richard Manby and Henry Shute Cox), also published in 1749.

¹³ Richardson, (1868), p.367; Wilson, (2009), p.85.

¹⁴Richardson, (1868), p.365f.

Though Campbell's theology is complex enough to deserve its own historical reconstruction, analogous to the approach I am using here for Joseph Smith Jr, there were two key tenets that he adhered to, in some form or another, throughout his adult life:¹⁵ (1) that the Bible should be sufficient to settle all disputes about questions of religion, including church government; and (2) that Christian unity was more important than creeds or denominations. The second is related to the first, because if the Bible is sufficient then the creeds are based on misunderstandings that it ought to be possible to eliminate.

In 1811, Alexander Campbell had married into the Brown family in Buffalo, resided at his wife's parents' house, and participated in the affairs of farming.¹⁶ By 1814, the members of the Brush Run Church were thinking about relocating, so that their members could live closer to each other.¹⁷ The proposal was to move to Zanesville, Ohio. Mr Brown, not wanting his daughter to live that far away from her parents, undercut the plan by transferring his farm to Alexander and taking up a grocery store in Charlestown instead.¹⁸ With the Campbells staying, the community also abandoned their migration plans, despite their being "infected somewhat with the prevailing spirit of migration".¹⁹ The farm that Campbell had received from his father-in-law was spacious enough for him to start a seminary for young men in his own house in 1818.²⁰

In 1820, Alexander Campbell was invited to participate in a debate, arguing for adult baptism against pedo-baptist Presbyterian minister Walker. The debate gave Campbell the opportunity to show, in an exemplary fashion, how the self-sufficient Biblical canon could expose the accretion of human traditions around the simple message of the Gospel. The

¹⁵ Ibid., p.75 dates these tenets into his youth already.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.365.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.460.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.461.

¹⁹ Ibid., p.459.

²⁰ Ibid., p.491.

debate, which Campbell released in print the same year²¹, made Campbell either famous or notorious, depending on the viewpoint of the audience. For example, Richardson points out²² that, in the aftermath of the Walker debate, the “undenominational independence of belief”, a consequence of Alexander Campbell’s anti-creedal attitude²³, was becoming a problem for the members of the Redstone Association. As early as 1818, and thereafter at each annual meeting, it took all the influence of Campbell’s friends in the association to quash charges of heresy leveled against Campbell by William Brownfield and his fraction.²⁴

7.2.2 Adamson Bentley

Adamson Bentley (4 July 1785 – 2 Nov 1864) hailed from Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, but as a young man moved to Brookfield, Trumbull County, Ohio,²⁵ which was then still pioneer country. Bentley began preaching as a Baptist with Calvinist convictions at age 19,²⁶ often wondering which of his children would be among the lost.²⁷ In 1810 he settled in Warren and was ordained,²⁸ then voted pastor in May 1811.

To complement his limited salary²⁹ in the face of an increasing family, Adamson Bentley was also a dealer in merchandise.³⁰ He was socially talented, popular and influential; Hayden considered him a gentleman of culture, who was “possessed of more than the average

²¹ Alexander Campbell, *Infant Sprinkling Proved to be a Human Tradition: Being the Substance of a Debate on Christian Baptism, between Mr. John Walker, a Minister of the Secession, and Alexander Campbell, a regular Baptist Minister*, Steubenville, Ohio (James Wilson) 1820.

²² Richardson, (1870), p.43.

²³ When asked about not joining any denomination, Campbell famously replied, “Which party would the Apostle Paul join if now on earth? Or, in other words, which party would *receive* him?” (Richardson, [1868], p.353)

²⁴ Ibid., p.489.

²⁵ Hayden, (1875), p.102.

²⁶ Ibid., p.102.

²⁷ Ibid., p.103.

²⁸ Ibid., p.103.

²⁹ Ibid., p.104.

³⁰ Richardson, (1868), p.217.

education and reading existing among the Baptist clergymen of that day”.³¹

Interested in reform and self-improvement, he founded the Mahoning Association as a self-improvement society for Baptist clergy.³² Campbell attended that association’s 1821 meeting in Warren, Ohio, during his first visit to the Western Reserve.

Adamson Bentley and Thomas Campbell had once taken a meal at the same inn, when Bentley was on his way to Philadelphia to purchase a stock of goods for his trading, and Campbell was meeting his family coming from Scotland.³³ They had not been properly introduced at that occasion³⁴ in the fall of 1809³⁵, but Bentley had heard the father say grace and saw the son in the moving wagon on the street.³⁶

7.2.3 Sidney Rigdon

Sidney Rigdon (19 Feb 1793 - 14 July 1876) was born in St Clair township, Allegheny county, State of Pennsylvania, of Irish and Scottish stock.³⁷ Rigdon grew up the youngest of four on a farm. The middle son Loami (or Loammi) was too weak for farm work and thus given an education in Lexington, Kentucky, eventually becoming a physician in Hamilton, Ohio. With his oldest brother established on a nearby farm and his sister married off, Sidney was left as the farm helper, a position against which he rebelled by voraciously reading anything he could find,³⁸ often until late into the night.

³¹Hayden, (1875), p.38.

³²Ibid., p.39.

³³Richardson, (1868), pp.215-217.

³⁴Richardson, (1870), p.43.

³⁵Richardson, (1868), p.205.

³⁶Ibid., p.217.

³⁷ As White pointed out, anyone wishing to reconstruct Rigdon is faced with the problem that “three different churches still consider him an apostate”; to wit: the Baptists, the Campbellites, and the Mormons; cf. Joseph Welles White (1947). “The Influence of Sidney Rigdon upon the Theology of Mormonism”. MA thesis. Graduate School of Religion, University of Southern California, p.22.

³⁸Karl Keller (1962). ““I never knew a time when I did not know Joseph Smith”: A Son’s Record of the Life and Testimony of Sidney Rigdon”. In: *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1.4, pp. 15–42, pp.19f.

Biographers have also commented on Rigdon's riding accident as a seven-year old, where his foot got caught in the stirrup and the horse pulled him behind it for a distance, causing possible head injuries.³⁹ However, to reduce Rigdon's life-long interests in and fascination with visions, heavenly voices, angels and revelations to the medical after-effects of this incident is too facile and reductionistic.

In 1818 Rigdon became a member of the Regular Baptists under Welshman David Phillips. In 1819, Rigdon finally left the farm and went to stay with the Reverend Andrew Clark, also a Regular Baptist, where Rigdon acquired a preaching license.⁴⁰ In the summer of 1819, Rigdon moved to Warren, Trumbull County, State of Ohio, where he took up residence with the aforementioned Adamson Bentley. The next year, 1820, he married Adamson's sister-in-law, Phoebe Brook, daughter of the local Baptist minister.⁴¹

7.2.4 The Mahoning Baptist Association

Bentley had been interested in the self-improvement of the Baptist ministry, organizing "ministers' meetings" in the Western Reserve, where they discussed issues of doctrine and church membership, heard each other's sermons—"discourses" in the parlance of the day—and provided feedback. From these meetings, on August 30, 1820, the Mahoning Baptist Association was formed.⁴²

In 1821, Bentley read the Walker Debate. Bentley was profoundly affected and decided to visit Campbell. When Bentley and Sidney Rigdon, who was becoming the great orator within the Mahoning Association, were travelling on association business, they took a day's

³⁹Richard S. Von Wagoner (1994). *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, p.116.

⁴⁰ Sidney Rigdon's third-person autobiography, submitted to the Nauvoo newspaper *Times and Seasons* (Vol IV, No 12, May 1, 1843), glosses the licensing, with evident satisfaction, as "returning to farming occupations no more" (p.177 c.2).

⁴¹Richardson, (1870), p. 47.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p.44.

ride detour to stop over in Buffalo, Kentucky and converse with Campbell. Campbell recalls that they talked all night; he saw this visit as Bentley and Rigdon joining the restoration project.⁴³ Henceforth, the three collaborated closely. That same summer, Alexander Campbell began to attend the Mahoning association's meetings.⁴⁴

7.2.5 Pittsburgh

In November 1821, Phoebe and Sidney Rigdon travelled to Pittsburgh to present themselves as newlyweds to their relatives. During that stay, Rigdon preached in Pittsburgh⁴⁵ and was offered a position at the First Baptist Church. Rigdon accepted and the family left Warren in February of 1822.⁴⁶

Rigdon was not the only collaborator of the Campbells' in Pittsburgh. George Forrester, a student of Robert and James Alexander Haldane's Scottish institution for the education of ministers,⁴⁷ operated a school with a small congregation attached.⁴⁸ Forrester had befriended another Scottish immigrant, Walter Scott, who had studied at the University of Edinburgh. Forrester convinced Scott of the lack of scriptural basis for pedo-baptism. Scott started his own classical and English high school,⁴⁹ while teaching New Testament classes to Forrester's congregation. Scott and Alexander Campbell became friends during one of Campbell's Pittsburgh visits and decided to labor for a common cause. Campbell wanted Rigdon and Scott to join forces⁵⁰ and merge their respective congregations as well,

⁴³ Ibid., p.44; Hayden, (1875), p.19.

⁴⁴ Richardson, (1870), p.47; Hayden, (1875), p.39.

⁴⁵ Keller, (1962), pp.20f.

⁴⁶ Richardson believes that Alexander Campbell's continued influence with the Redstone Association and occasional preaching in Pittsburgh Baptist churches helped Sidney Rigdon to receive that call from the Pittsburgh Baptist church in 1822; cf. Richardson, (1870), p.47. In his autobiography, Rigdon does not even mention the Mahoning Association or his visit to Buffalo with Bentley; the biographical sketch provided by his son John Wickliffe Rigdon does not either; cf. Keller, (1962).

⁴⁷ Richardson, (1868), p.487.

⁴⁸ Hayden, (1875), p.62.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.63.

⁵⁰ Richardson, (1870), p.48.

but their communities had so far resisted this idea.⁵¹

To the Redstone Association, all three men were equally suspicious because of their doctrinal stance. In the words of Sidney Rigdon, “the doctrines maintained by that society [i.e. the Free Baptists, RCK] were not altogether in accordance with the | scriptures”.⁵²

For Rigdon, this was not just a question of theological truth, but also of livelihood. The established Free Baptists paid their ministers well, and Rigdon did not have the training to teach school as Forrester and Scott did.

... if he was to disavow the doctrine of the Church with whom he was then associated, he knew of no other way of obtaining a livelihood except by manual labor, and at that time had a wife and three children to support.⁵³ | On the one hand was wealth, popularity and honor, on the other, appeared nothing but poverty and hard labor.⁵⁴

7.2.6 The Christian Baptist

By late 1822, exhausted from the labors of the Buffalo Seminary, Alexander Campbell closed the school and switched to a mode of supporting the restoration that took a cue from the success of the publication of the Walker debate.⁵⁵ After consultation with his father Thomas Campbell and his friend Walter Scott, Alexander Campbell issued a prospect for a new journal, *The Christian Baptist*, in the spring of 1823.⁵⁶

Campbell built his own printing office on his farm “near the creek-fording, at the foot of the cemetery hill”, purchased type and press, hired skilled laborers and “issued of his

⁵¹ In his autobiography, Rigdon does not introduce Campbell or Scott until 1824; cf. T&S IV.13 192. In the sketch of his son, John Wickliffe, Campbell comes in even later, around 1826; cf. Keller, (1962), p.22. John Wickliffe does not mention Scott at all.

⁵² T&S IV.13 178f.

⁵³ Scott married in 1826 (Richardson, [1870], p.128); Campbell had been independently well-to-do since 1815, when his father-in-law Mr Brown deeded him the farm in Buffalo, Kentucky, cf. p.187 above.

⁵⁴ T&S IV.13 178.1-193.1. Rigdon’s autobiography was serialized in the *Times & Seasons*, and this particular quote happens to straddle the boundary between the No.12 May 1 and No.12 May 15 issue.

⁵⁵ Richardson, (1870), p.48.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p.49f.

own works . . . no less than forty-six thousand volumes” over the next seven years.⁵⁷

The *Christian Baptist*⁵⁸ became the organ of the restoration movement that the Campbells and their various collaborators were attempting to implement.⁵⁹ Campbell father and son, Walter Scott, and possibly even Sidney Rigdon (most likely under the pseudonym “Titus”⁶⁰), published in the journal.

The journal was not just for disseminating a theological position; it was also an important recruitment tool. Many of the most loyal preachers of the Campbellite movement after 1828 had been readers of the *Christian Baptist* before—men in the Western Reserve such as William Hayden⁶¹ or Jonas Hartzel⁶²; men in Tennessee, such as Silas Shelburne⁶³, or in Virginia, such as Francis Whitefield Emmons⁶⁴, or in Maine, such as W.W. Ashley⁶⁵.

The printing press also gave Campbell both a scope⁶⁶ and a degree of freedom to disseminate his thinking that few other ministers possessed before the advent of electronic mass media.

There were also financial aspects to consider. According to its self-advertisement,⁶⁷ the *Christian Baptist* was selling for a yearly subscription of \$1, consisting of 12 issues. Assuming that the *Christian Baptist* dominated the volume count of 46,000 volumes men-

⁵⁷Ibid., p.50f.

⁵⁸ Cited *CB* with volume, number, date, page and column number, following the seven-volumes-in-one edition by David S. Burnet; cf. Alexander Campbell and David S. Burnett, eds. (1835). *The Christian Baptist: Seven Volumes in One*. Vol. 1. Cincinnati: David S. Burnett.

⁵⁹Hayden, (1875), p.21.

⁶⁰William H. Whitsitt (1891). “Sidney Rigdon, the Real Founder of Mormonism”. Unpublished MS., Library of Congress AC1158; Typescript and annotation by Dale R. Broadhurst; Checked against 1988 typescript by Byron Marchant at BYU Lee Library Spec. Coll.: BX 8670.1 .R44w 1988, Bk 1, p.2.

⁶¹Richardson, (1870), p.250.

⁶²Ibid., p.254.

⁶³Ibid., p.290.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp.290f.

⁶⁵Ibid., p.291.

⁶⁶ Francis Whitefield Emmons sent a set of *Christian Baptist* magazines to Jonathan Wade, a missionary in Burma; cf. *ibid.*, p.292. Copies of the *Christian Baptist* and Campbell’s debates, which he had sent back to his relatives in Ireland, ended up winning correspondents for the cause; cf. *ibid.*, p.294.

⁶⁷Alexander Campbell, ed. (1825-1826). *The Christian Baptist*. 1st ed. Vol. 3. Buffaloe [sic RCK] Printing Office: Alexander Campbell, p.74.

tioned,⁶⁸ rather than the New Testament Campbell printed in 1826, that would amount to some \$3,800 of cash flow over the seven year period.

7.2.7 The McCalla Debate

In May 1823, a Presbyterian minister and former lawyer, William Latta McCalla, from Augusta, Kentucky, began to correspond with Alexander Campbell regarding a new debate on pedo-baptism.⁶⁹ They settled on Washington, Kentucky as the place and October 14, 1823 as the time for their debate.

In October 1823, with the Ohio River too low for steamboat navigation, Alexander Campbell travelled by horseback to Kentucky to debate Mr McCalla. He was accompanied “by the pastor of the Baptist church in Pittsburg [sic, RCK], Sidney Rigdon, who wished to be present at the discussion”.⁷⁰ Sidney Rigdon not only provided emotional backup, but his notes were a key contribution⁷¹ to the publication of the debate results afterwards, as the preface makes clear.⁷²

7.2.8 Rigdon as a Campbellite

By 1824, Alexander Campbell had moved to Wellsburg, Brook County,⁷³ in what is now West Virginia,⁷⁴ and represented that congregation in the Mahoning association at the

⁶⁸Richardson, (1870), p.50f.

⁶⁹Ibid., p.51.

⁷⁰Ibid., p.70.

⁷¹Ibid., p.99.

⁷²Alexander Campbell (1824). *A Debate on Christian Baptism: Between the Rev. W. L. MacCalla, a Presbyterian Teacher, and Alexander Campbell, Held at Washington, Ky. Commencing on the 15th and Terminating on the 21st Oct. 1823, in the Presence of a Very Numerous and Respectable Congregation; in which are Interspersed and to which are Added Animadversions on Different Treaties on the Same Subject, Written by Dr. J. Mason, Dr. S. Ralston, Rev. E. Pond, Rev. J. P. Campbell, Rector Armstrong, and the Rev. J. Walker.* 1st ed. Buffaloe [sic RCK] Printing Office: Campbell & Sala, p.ix.

⁷³Richardson, (1870), p.100.

⁷⁴West Virginia was a construction of the Civil War, created by the Wheeling Conventions of 1861; cf. Otis K. Rice and Stephen W. Brown (2010). *West Virginia: A History.* 2nd ed. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, pp.118-124. It was accepted as a state into the union on June 20, 1863; cf. Ibid., p.152.

Hubbard, Trumbull County meeting. Campbell had brought his printing office from Kentucky and continued to issue the *Christian Baptist*,⁷⁵ which was steadily gaining admirers and readers at that time.⁷⁶

In 1824, Rigdon and Scott took the leap, leaving the Free Baptists and uniting their congregations.⁷⁷ For Rigdon, this meant working as a tanner in his brother-in-law's establishment⁷⁸ to feed his family. This move changed his social status noticeably, bringing him, as the class-sensitive Rigdon described it in hindsight, "sorrow and humiliation".⁷⁹ Though Campbell mentioned the "two bishops" Rigdon and Scott as positive examples for a properly apostolic church, because they worked with their hands but served their congregations—rather than being salaried hired hands for the wrong cause, as the broader context of the comment makes clear⁸⁰—it was the social differential between teaching school, as the university-trained Scott did, and engaging in the smelly tanning business, as Rigdon had to, that explains the different reactions.

Rigdon's main theological satisfaction must have come from reading the *Christian Baptist* where, in February of 1825,⁸¹ Campbell started a new series of essays on the *Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things* that would eventually run to 32 essays and become the theological program for the Restoration movement. In the series, Campbell clarified basic terminology. For example, since there was nothing to improve about the New Testament

⁷⁵ In 1828, in order to facilitate his sending of letters and publications, Campbell became postmaster of a new post-town called Bethany, conveniently located at his mansion; cf. Richardson, (1870), p.181. This saved Campbell repeated trips to the next-nearest post office, four miles away, at West Liberty. The position came with franking privilege for his own letters, a significant cost reduction.

Thus, when Sidney Rigdon wrote his autobiography in 1843, where he first mentions Campbell when narrating the events of 1824, Rigdon means the Campbell Mansion at Wellsburg when writing "Bethany"; cf. T&S IV.13 p.192 c.1.

⁷⁶ Hayden, (1875), p.351.

⁷⁷ Richardson, (1870), p.99; Hayden, (1875), p.64.

⁷⁸ Keller, (1962), p.22.

⁷⁹ T&S IV.13 p.193 c.2.

⁸⁰ Cf. CB II.2 91:2.

⁸¹ CB II.7 1825-02-07 127:2.

Church, it had to be a restoration, not a reformation.⁸² Campbell equally addressed conceptual issues. For example, the start of the millennium was a process, not an abrupt time point.

Just in so far as the ancient order of things, or the religion of the New Testament, is restored, just so far has the Millennium commenced, and so far have its blessings been enjoyed. For to the end of time, we shall have no other revelation of the Spirit, no other New Testament, no other Saviour, and no other religion than we now have, when we understand, believe and practice the doctrine of Christ delivered to us by his apostles.⁸³

And Rigdon remained connected to the Mahoning Association, whose 1825 annual meeting⁸⁴ happened to be in Palmyra.⁸⁵

Rigdon was able to continue as a professional tanner and part-time minister for two years; then, in 1826, he accepted a position in Bainbridge, Geauga County, Ohio.⁸⁶

From this time forward, he devoted himself to the work of the ministry, . . .⁸⁷

Scott also left Pittsburgh, newly wed, in 1826 and went to Steubenville, Ohio, where he started an academy.⁸⁸

The Campbells, Rigdon and Scott met again at the 1826 Mahoning Association meeting at Canfield.⁸⁹ For Scott, this was his first visit to the Western Reserve.⁹⁰

⁸² CB II.7 1825-02-07 127:2.

⁸³ CB II.7 1825-02-07 128:2.

⁸⁴ Hayden, (1875), p.24.

⁸⁵ Did Joseph Smith Jr hear Alexander Campbell or Sidney Rigdon during the 1825 Mahoning Association meeting at that time? The frame house was only a few miles away, and Smith Jr frequently went into Palmyra proper for other reasons, such as picking up supplies or his father's newspaper; cf. Turner, (1851), pp.213f and above on page p.118.

⁸⁶ T&S IV.13 p.193 c.2.

⁸⁷ T&S IV.13 p.193 c.2.

⁸⁸ Richardson, (1870), p.128.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p.163.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.164.

By 1827, Rigdon had accepted the position of the minister in Mentor, Ohio. The congregation had offered Rigdon this position based on the eloquence of the funerary oration that Rigdon had held for their deceased minister.⁹¹

Scott had become much interested in the millennium and issued a prospectus for a new publication, the *Millennial Herald*.⁹²

Theologically, Scott became even more focused on the “union of Christians on apostolic ground”⁹³ with its concomitant rejection of “creeds, confessions of faith as terms of membership and communion, articles of church government separate from the New Testament, and distinctive of the sect”.⁹⁴ This focus on the scriptures produced a clear program for the economy of salvation. Hayden summarizes the argument as follows:

Conversion without faith is impossible; but faith comes of testimony—divine testimony, the word of God. Rom X:17. But this must be preached; and so it is the preaching of the gospel which produces faith in Jesus Christ.⁹⁵

The individual phases of the conversion process thus could be summarized as a six-step program.

(1) Faith; (2) Repentance; (3) Baptism; (4) Remission of sins; (5) the Holy Spirit; (6) Eternal life, through a patient continuance in well doing.⁹⁶

7.2.9 Walter Scott’s Evangelizing

In August of 1827, the Mahoning Association met in New Lisbon, Columbiana County.⁹⁷

Alexander Campbell brought Walter Scott, then owner of the Steubenville academy, who

⁹¹Hayden, (1875), pp.191f.

⁹² Ibid., p.64. The extent to which Scott inspired Rigdon with these interests is a source of endless speculation in the secondary literature, e.g. Ibid., p.186.

⁹³Ibid., p.66.

⁹⁴Ibid., p.66.

⁹⁵Ibid., p.67.

⁹⁶Ibid., p.71.

⁹⁷Ibid., p.55.

had initially planned not to attend this meeting. A committee that included Sidney Rigdon⁹⁸ then elected Scott as “evangelical preacher” and proposed to fund his work by “voluntary and liberal contributions”.⁹⁹ The initial collection of funds resulted in \$11.75.¹⁰⁰ The fact that Scott enthusiastically shut down his academy, abandoned his plans for the *Millennial Herald*, and left his family behind in Steubenville to ride the circuit gives some indication of the expectations that Scott had for himself with respect to his ministerial calling.

By the time of the association meeting in 1828 in Warren, Ohio,¹⁰¹ Scott presented the initial balance of a year’s worth of work: over one thousand new members. The association was excited¹⁰² and, with support from Sidney Rigdon, voted to give Scott an assistant in William Hayden, a fine musician and talented preacher.¹⁰³

To the attendees of the 1828 convention, it appeared as if the restoration of a creed-free primitive Christianity was coming within reach. Even when thinking back in 1875, Hayden was able to jubilate:

This great occasion was a grand demonstration of the possibility of the union of Christians on original Bible ground. It was no longer a theory. It was then an actual, accomplished fact.¹⁰⁴

Here were Methodists, no longer Methodists, but still Christians; Baptists surrendering the title, yet holding the Head, even Christ; Restorationists, giving up their fruitless and faulty speculations, now obedient to the faith once delivered to the saints; Bible Christians, recovered from their negative gospel to the apostle’s method of preaching, together with very | many from other forms of religious belief—all rejoicing together, “perfectly united in the same mind and

⁹⁸Richardson, (1870), p.174.

⁹⁹Hayden, (1875), pp.57f.

¹⁰⁰Richardson, (1870), p.175.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p.244.

¹⁰²Ibid., p.248.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p.252; Hayden, (1875), p.174. William Hayden was the brother of Amos Hayden, author of *ibid.* Amos estimated that his brother traveled ninety thousand miles and preached nine thousand sermons in the 35 years of his ministrations of the Gospel *Ibid.*, p.181.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p.162.

the same judgement.”¹⁰⁵

7.2.10 Spreading the Restoration

For the next two years, the Campbellite movement had its greatest expansion in the Western Reserve. New congregations were formed or stabilized, new converts made.

In 1828, Sidney Rigdon and Thomas Campbell were holding meetings in Ravenna¹⁰⁶ as well as preaching in Shalersville.¹⁰⁷ Walter Scott was converting many in Nelson, Hiram and Mantua, after Rigdon had laid the groundwork.¹⁰⁸

In 1829, Rigdon stabilized Waite Hill after initial work by Thomas Campbell.¹⁰⁹ Rigdon also organized the church in Perry.¹¹⁰ In the fall, upon invitation by Luther Dille, Rigdon converted the rump church in Euclid.¹¹¹ In collaboration with Clapp, Rigdon founded the church in Birmingham, Erie County,¹¹² as well as the church in Elyra in Lorain County.¹¹³

Clearly, Rigdon had played a decisive role in the ongoing restoration of the primitive gospel in the Western Reserve.

7.2.11 Debating Robert Owen

The third of the “Big Five” debates of Alexander Campbell¹¹⁴ took place in 1829 in Cincinnati, Ohio, against the Welsh-born Scottish industrialist and philanthropist Robert Owen.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp.162f.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p.155.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p.334.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp.237f.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p.204.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p.346.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp.408f.

¹¹²Ibid., p.465.

¹¹³Ibid., p.467.

¹¹⁴ The term was coined by J.J. Haley, cf. Chapter 2 in Jesse James Haley (1920). *Debates that made history; the story of Alexander Campbell's debates with Rev. John Walker, Rev. W. L. McCalla, Mr. Robert Owen, Bishop Purcell and Rev. Nathan L. Rice.* St Louis: Christian Board of Publication.



Figure 7.1: Present-day Map of the State of Ohio. During the late 1820s and into the 1830s, the Campbellite restoration effort was missionizing and finding converts through-out Ohio. For license, see page 550 below.

After successfully operating a worker-focused¹¹⁵ mill at New Lanark, Scotland, for several years¹¹⁶, Owen had formalized his system of social reform and taken it to the United States to implement. Owen purchased land from George Rapp in Indiana¹¹⁷, not far from Cincinnati, Ohio, and attempted to implement his utopian society based on communistic principles. However, by 1827, Owen's New Harmony experiment was generally considered to be a failure and abandoned.¹¹⁸

Nonetheless, Owen, unwilling to give up so easily, continued to tour the United States, lecturing on the "natural laws"¹¹⁹ underpinning his utopian strategy and trying to elicit support from various funders and governments, such as Mexico.¹²⁰ Owen's "natural laws" were in conflict with revealed religion, as Owen understood it, giving an atheistic bent to his argumentation.¹²¹ Alexander Campbell, who had been following the Owen experiments, commented on their intentions in a series of five essays.¹²² Campbell also commented on the atheistic philosophy of the *New Harmony Gazette* and its editors.¹²³

During a lecture in New Orleans in March of 1828, Owen had issued a challenge to the clergy of the United States to debate him,¹²⁴ a challenge that Campbell promptly published

¹¹⁵ Owen established on-site daycare for the workers' children (Richardson, [1870], p.265), for example.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p.264.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p.265.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p.265.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p.268; p.271.

¹²⁰Ibid., p.265; p.275.

¹²¹Ibid., p.266.

¹²²Ibid., p.234.

¹²³ Campbell submitted the following problem to the editors of the *New Harmony Gazette*:

The Christian idea of an Eternal First Cause uncaused, or of a God, is now in the world and has been for ages immemorial. You say it *could not* enter into the world by reason, and it *did not* enter by revelation. Now, as you are philosophers and historians, . . . , *how did it come into the world?* (ibid., p.237)

Campbell argued a variant of this problem during the debate; cf. ibid., p.272.

The New Harmony editors responded in their Volume 2, Issue 46, dated Wednesday, August 22, 1827, on p.364, where they criticized Campbell by recourse to Kant, modern anatomical insights, electricity and galvanism. The New Harmony journal is digitized in the Working Men's Institute, part of the Indiana University Digital Library project.

¹²⁴Ibid., p.239.

and volunteered to accept.¹²⁵ Owen and Campbell became friends while hashing out the debate guidelines in Bethany, Virginia.¹²⁶ They settled on the second Monday of April 1829 as the time, and Cincinnati, Ohio, as the location of the week-long debate.

They met in the Cincinnati Methodist society's largest meeting house.¹²⁷ It is unclear whether Sidney Rigdon was present¹²⁸ or read the published form of the debate in 1829.

Richardson reports that an estimated 1200 people were in attendance and that some visitors had to return home, after failing to obtain seats for two days.¹²⁹

The importance of the subject and the reputation of the disputants had created an intense and widespread interest in the discussion, so that when the time arrived, many persons were in attendance, some of whom had come even from New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, | Tennessee and Mississippi.¹³⁰

Unfortunately, the parties “hardly ever came into logical conflict”:¹³¹ Owen had prepared a lengthy manuscript of “nearly two hundred pages foolscap folio”,¹³² which spelled out his positions on the condition of man, rather than addressing the propositions contained in his original challenge.¹³³

Campbell was not opposed to social systems of co-operation; rather, he was dubious about attempting it without the social cement of religion.¹³⁴ Crucially, Campbell argued

¹²⁵Richardson, (1870), p.240.

¹²⁶Ibid., p.242f.

¹²⁷Ibid., p.268.

¹²⁸ Brodie, (1971), p.105, opines that Rigdon was present, but provides no sources. Richardson only mentions Thomas Campbell as accompanying Alexander, though Rigdon's companionship and contribution had received explicit mention for the McCalla debate. Perhaps Rigdon was not as much needed this time, with court stenographer Charles H. Sims, Esq, handling the note taking; cf. title page Alexander Campbell and Robert Owen (1829a). *Debate on the evidences of Christianity : containing an examination of the social system, and of all the systems of scepticism of ancient and modern times, held in the city of Cincinnati, for eight days successively, between Robert Owen, of New Lanark, Scotland, and Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, Virginia*. Vol. 1. Bethany, Virginia: Alexander Campbell.

¹²⁹Richardson, (1870), p.268.

¹³⁰Ibid., pp.267f.

¹³¹Ibid., p.268.

¹³²Ibid., p.271.

¹³³Ibid., p.271.

¹³⁴ Campbell had argued this point already in his five essays; cf. *ibid.*, p.235.

that Owen's experiments had not been independent of religion; that the initial impulses that had inspired Owen, via his father-in-law and mill owner Mr. Dale, at New Lanark were Christian in origin;¹³⁵ and that, furthermore, the mill workers at New Lanark were predominantly Presbyterian and Independents.¹³⁶

Campbell then laid claim to the positive ideas of Owen's, calling them Christian either in origin or at least in sentiment.

I do not doubt but that Mr. Owen has asserted many truths, and some useful truths. But not one good idea has he submitted which has not been derived, or which is not derivable, from Christianity.¹³⁷

The exemplar for successful communism was not New Lanark and definitely not New Harmony, but the Jerusalem congregation in Acts. And their success was not due to the sharing *per se*, but due to principle which happened to entail shared property.

There was a society in the New Testament which had all things in common; but their happiness was not derived from a community of goods, but from that principle which issued, *in their circumstances*, in a community of goods.¹³⁸
[emphasis RCK]

And just in case, Campbell laid claim to all future successes of social reform that Owen might be planning, tying them back to the Christian principles that supported any truths that Owen might have.

I most sanguinely anticipate a restoration of the ancient order of things, and a state of society far superior to any thing yet exhibited on earth. I believe

¹³⁵Ibid., p.276.

¹³⁶ Alexander Campbell and Robert Owen (1839). *Debate on the evidences of Christianity : containing an examination of the social system, and of all the systems of scepticism of ancient and modern times, held in the city of Cincinnati, for eight days successively, between Robert Owen, of New Lanark, Scotland, and Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, Virginia.* Panyer Alley, London: R. Groombridge, p.380; Richardson, (1870), p.277.

¹³⁷Campbell and Owen, (1839), p.379.

¹³⁸Ibid., p.379.

that there will be what is commonly believed by all christians [sic RCK], a millennium; a period, a long period of general or universal peace, happiness, and political and religious prosperity. And that some of the views of Mr Owen may then be realized as the legitimate fruits of Christianity, I would not deny.¹³⁹

From Campbell's position, this was an entirely reasonable stance to take. Campbell viewed the communism of love of the early Jerusalem congregation in Acts as due to then-existing circumstances, and he had said so. In spite of the name of his new magazine, *The Millennial Harbinger*, Campbell was actually not millennial in outlook;¹⁴⁰ his carefully vague use of the future tense—"there will be"—indicates this. The millennium was a process that would be initiated by the restoration of the New Testament Church, a position that Campbell had held as far back as the first essay in the *Ancient Order of Things* series.¹⁴¹ And the claim of the millennial church to implement "some of the views of Mr. Owen" was part and parcel of Campbell's attempt to separate Owen's laws from the positive benefits of the actual social reforms.

But rereading the paragraph from the millennial stance of a theologian like Sidney Rigdon or Walter Scott gives an entirely different impression. Sidney Rigdon reasonably could hear Campbell as calling for a restoration of the communism of love as a contribution to the general restoration of the ancient order of things. And Campbell seemed to predict that in doing so, the Campbellites ironically would beat the anti-religious Owen at his own game. Their millennial restoration of the ancient order of things, by including the Jerusalem communism of love, would realize, "as legitimate fruits of Christianity", the very reforms Owen was after. Here was no claim to theoretical priority; here was a call to action.

As with the previous debates, Campbell quickly turned around to publish the work in

¹³⁹Campbell and Owen, (1839), p.379.

¹⁴⁰White, (1947), p.128.

¹⁴¹ Cf. CB II.7 1825-02-07 128:2.

two volumes,¹⁴² buying out Owen's stake in the work.¹⁴³ A decade later, a single volume octavo version was published in London¹⁴⁴, indicating continued interest, mostly as an able English defense of Christianity, it would appear.¹⁴⁵

Whatever success Campbell had in stemming the attack on Christianity, Campbell made no impact on either Owen¹⁴⁶ or, for that matter, the utopian-community craze.

Secular experiments included . . . Indiana, the North American Phalanx in New Jersey, Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands in Harvard, Massachusetts, and George Ripley's transcendental Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education at West Roxbury, Massachusetts, which became the center of Fourierism in the United States.¹⁴⁷

As late as October 1840, Ralph Waldo Emerson could tell his correspondent Thomas Carlyle

We are all a little wild here with numberless projects of social reform. Not a reading man but has a draft of a new Community in his waistcoat pocket.¹⁴⁸

And few were as ready to embark on such a new community as Campbell's trusted co-reformer Sidney Rigdon.

¹⁴² Campbell and Owen, (1829a); Alexander Campbell and Robert Owen (1829b). *Debate on the evidences of Christianity : containing an examination of the social system, and of all the systems of scepticism of ancient and modern times, held in the city of Cincinnati, for eight days successively, between Robert Owen, of New Lanark, Scotland, and Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, Virginia.* Vol. 2. Bethany, Virginia: Alexander Campbell.

¹⁴³ Richardson, (1870), p.284.

¹⁴⁴ Campbell and Owen, (1839).

¹⁴⁵ Richardson, (1870), p.283f.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p.284.

¹⁴⁷ Cook, (1985), p.3.

¹⁴⁸ Emerson to Carlyle, Letter of October 30, 1840, Concord (Charles Eliot Norton, ed. [1888]. *The correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1834-1872.* Vol. 1. Boston: Ticknor, pp.334); see also Brodie, (1971), p.105.

7.2.12 Disagreement at Austintown

Back in Mentor, Rigdon could not evoke any interest in his community project from his congregation proper. But in Kirtland, Isaac Morley and his family were willing to assist in the restoration of this aspect of the ancient order of things. In February of 1830, Isaac Morley, Lyman Wight (who then lived in Warrenville) and Titus Billings formed the seed¹⁴⁹ of a common-stock company; eight more families joined shortly thereafter.¹⁵⁰

Other Owenite experiments in the vicinity of Kirtland may have made it easier for Rigdon to make his case,¹⁵¹ but they hardly functioned as his source of inspiration.¹⁵²

Thus, when summer of 1830 came, and the Mahoning Association met in Austintown, Rigdon was most likely under the impression that he was on schedule with the restoration plans of the Campbellite reformation: A common-stock system, akin to the one in Acts, had been implemented in Kirtland, and Rigdon was going to report on it, the same way the evangelists and others in the association reported on their progress and achievements. Rigdon arrived at the meeting as one of the key contributors to the amazing gains the Campbellites had made in the last few years; as an inspiration to the younger preachers in terms of his rhetorical skill; and as a seasoned member of the restoration team, who had been on board for at least nine years. Rigdon was the star preacher of a theological success story of regional scope, who had nothing to gain and everything to lose from leaving the trail on purpose.

Unfortunately, the narrative in Amos S. Hayden's work from 1875 seems to be the only eyewitness account of the confrontation that followed.¹⁵³ Furthermore, it was committed

¹⁴⁹ Jermy Benton Wight (1996). *The wild ram of the mountain: the story of Lyman Wight*. Bedford, WY: J.B. Wight. ISBN: 0965116379[p.48]

¹⁵⁰ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.50.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., ???

¹⁵² The general uptick in Rigdon actively raising millennial expectations is often attributed to his clandestine participation in the *Book of Mormon*, which was at that time going to press—cf. *pars pro toto* Whitsitt, (1891). For my arguments against this view, cf. above on pages pp.182ff.

¹⁵³ Hayden, (1875), p.299. The earlier Richardson, (1870) makes no mention of the event. Von Wagoner,

to paper 45 years after the fact, fully cognizant of all that would happen to Rigdon and the Mormon movement. Given its consequences both for the history of Mormonism and for the Campbellites, it bears quoting at some length and careful analysis.

On Saturday, Rigdon introduced an argument to show that our pretension to follow the apostles in all their New Testament teachings, requires a community of goods; that as they established this order in the model church at Jerusalem, we were bound to imitate that example.¹⁵⁴

Rigdon was known for echoing the latest word of either Scott or Campbell,¹⁵⁵ and so it stands to reason that Rigdon saw himself as amplifying the point that Campbell had made at the Owen debate—as Rigdon had understood it. The context was plausible, because the implementation of just such a community was Rigdon’s contribution to the association. Once again, Rigdon had spearheaded an effort for the Campbellites. If anyone, Rigdon was trying to motivate the rank-and-file association members, not the members of the leadership.

The sagacious mind of Mr Campbell saw at once the confusion and ruin that would result from such doctrines plausibly presented before a large, eager multitude, many of whom were new converts. He arose and offered a correction of the mistake. This did not satisfy the zealous Rigdon. He rejoined.¹⁵⁶

I argue that Rigdon was surprised, confused and possibly frustrated, but not zealous. Rigdon knew Campbell well; they had been collaborating for almost a decade at that point in time. Rigdon must have known that a position counter to Campbell’s could not be sprung on the man *coram publico* in this fashion. Rigdon was surprised, because from his point of view, Campbell was now reneging on the argument made in Cincinnati; and

(1994), who in turn is often cited, relies on and quotes from Hayden’s account.

¹⁵⁴Hayden, (1875), pp.298f.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p.186.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p.299.

this after Rigdon had implemented the scheme with the Morley company. Unexpectedly, Rigdon found himself at variance with Campbell. Instead of providing leadership, Rigdon was suddenly isolated.

Campbell then took a half hour to settle the matter, to paraphrase Hayden. Only one detail of the argument is relevant here, namely, the focus on “the special circumstances attending that case [in Acts 2:44, RCK]”.¹⁵⁷ This notion of the “circumstances” is the same phrase that Campbell used in the Owen debate when discussing Acts.¹⁵⁸ In Campbell’s view, the circumstances had been exceptional, because Acts 2:44 stands as the sole mention of such a system in the New Testament corpus.

Rigdon finding himself foiled in his cherished purpose of ingrafting on the reformation his new community scheme, went away from the meeting at its close, chafed and chagrined, and never met with the Disciples in a general meeting afterward.¹⁵⁹

Indeed, since Rigdon became a Mormon only two months later, in November of 1830, he trivially never met with the Disciples again. However, I see no indication that this outcome was clear to any of the participants at that point in time.

Rigdon most likely was “chafed and chagrined”, but not for having been foiled in his purpose of “ingrafting on the reformation his new community scheme”—as if Campbell were the man on whom one could pull such a coup. Rather, Rigdon most likely had not seen this as “his” scheme only, but rather as *his and Campbell’s*,¹⁶⁰ and had thus expected Campbell to be supportive.

And the consequences: No doubt the Morleys and their partners thought they were contributing to the restoration of the ancient order of things in the spirit of Alexan-

¹⁵⁷Hayden, (1875), p.299.

¹⁵⁸Campbell and Owen, (1839), p.379.

¹⁵⁹Hayden, (1875), p.299.

¹⁶⁰ Rigdon understood the Campbellite restoration movement to be the sole brainchild of himself and Alexander Campbell, as Rigdon’s son reports; cf. Keller, (1962), p.22.

der Campbell's discourses. Though his Kirtland followers were more "Rigdonites" than "Campbellites", in the summer of 1830 that was still a difficult proposition. Thus, how to explain this at home?

At the same time, Alexander Campbell cannot have recognized how precarious the situation was.¹⁶¹ The disagreement between Rigdon and Campbell must have appeared as a mere side-show in a meeting dominated by great news—over one thousand new converts—on the one hand, and the concerns about the life-cycle of the association itself on the other.

Many members of the Mahoning Association were distracted that summer with the association's transformation into an annual meeting for prayer. This dissolution was motivated by the power grab of the other Baptist associations in the process of separation between the Baptists and the Campbellites: rather than being abused by their own creation, the members of the Mahoning Association preferred to pour out the baby with the bath water and dismantled the association.¹⁶²

Campbell would have much preferred for the association to continue its work,¹⁶³ especially its evangelical outreach, but merely managed to transform its complete demise into an annual meeting.¹⁶⁴ Almost twenty years later, in 1849, Campbell could still write wistfully about the association's demise.¹⁶⁵ Hayden himself saw this aspect of the meeting as a watershed event, and an opportunity lost for the movement.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ *Contra* Von Wagoner, (1994), *ibid*, who casts Campbell as simply putting down a case of insubordination in his "imperious" style.

¹⁶² Richardson, (1870), p.328.

¹⁶³ Hayden, (1875), p.296.

¹⁶⁴ That Campbell let the association do what he clearly disagreed with, counter-indicates Van Wagoner's claim that Campbell had an "imperious" style; cf. above footnote 161.

¹⁶⁵ Hayden, (1875), pp.297f.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.296-298.

7.2.13 Rigdon and the Rigdonites Become Mormons

If Rigdon's bitter complaint *vis-a-vis* Brother Austin, that Campbell and Scott were monopolizing the praise and honor in the Mahoning Association, is any indication,¹⁶⁷ Rigdon did leave the meeting reconsidering his position in the association.

On more prolonged reflection it must have become clear to Rigdon how far he and Campbell had grown apart, especially on issues such as millennialism or the charismata. With the Austintown experience behind him, Rigdon saw that Campbell would never shed enough of his Scottish common-sense rationalism to allow for the signs and visions that Rigdon and so many of his congregation members ardently sought. Perhaps the educational differential, that Scott and Campbell had received the university education Rigdon had wished for as a young man, also amplified the estrangement. Finally, the Campbells as well as Scott were not American-born, and though Rigdon must have felt connected to them by his Irish-Scottish ancestry, Rigdon did not share their Old World sentiments.¹⁶⁸

In economic matters, Rigdon was a prudent man, and his Mentor congregation was just about to give him a farm with house, expressly built for him.¹⁶⁹ It made no sense to rock the boat externally. Thus, as Von Wagoner has documented, Rigdon continued to announce his discourses as a "Campbellite minister" in the local newspapers, well after the Austintown meeting.

But in his own thinking, Rigdon began to look for an alternative; he had no plans to go back to being a tanner. Perhaps the dissolution of the Mahoning association, which limited the future support Rigdon could expect from those quarters, made that decision

¹⁶⁷Hayden, (1875), p.299.

¹⁶⁸ This is clearly not a sufficient argument, as Bentley and the Hayden brothers were American-born as well. But if there is any validity to Shipps's thesis, that the American aspect of the contents of the *Book of Mormon* was decisive to its acceptance—cf. pp.139ff above—then some difference in the experience between the European and the American enculturation has to be assumed as well.

¹⁶⁹ Keller, (1962), p.23; Larry N. Poulson (1966). "The Life and Contributions of Newell Kimball Whitney". MA thesis. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, p.17.

easier.

Then in November 1830, the Mormon missionaries arrived, including his former student, Parley P. Pratt, and Joseph Smith Jr's scribe and confidant, Oliver Cowdery. Within two weeks, the members of the Isaac Morley common-stock company had converted. On November 14, 1830, Rigdon converted,¹⁷⁰ together with his wife. Oliver Cowdery ordained the experienced preacher an elder.¹⁷¹

7.2.14 Rigdon's Conversion

One of the main arguments behind the Spaulding-Rigdon Thesis¹⁷² lies in the assumption that the *Book of Mormon* was too good a fit for Rigdon to be authored independently of him. Supporters of the Spaulding-Rigdon Thesis place special emphasis on the observation that the *Book of Mormon* presents a "Campbellite"-style theology and, on numerous theological issues, sides with Rigdon against Campbell.

But that argument inverts the logic of conversion. It is like saying, that Goldilocks must have helped to make the porridge, since she thought it tasted "just right". The potential compatibility of a theological message is the precondition for its acceptance. Indeed, if the *Book of Mormon* was incompatible with Rigdon's thinking, why would he have accepted it as a revelation? Assume for sake of argument that the *Book of Mormon* had rejected the restoration of the apostolic charismata, and thus sided with Campbell against Rigdon and his congregations, Rigdon would have disavowed the book outright, and his students—e.g. Parley P. Pratt—and congregation members would have refused it as well. Far from the compatibility being a smoking gun indicating nefarious activities, it was the necessary

¹⁷⁰Scott Partridge (2003). "Edward Partridge in Painesville, Ohio". In: *BYU Studies* 42.1, pp. 51–71, p.56.

¹⁷¹John Whitmer (1831-1847). "History". John Whitmer, History, 1831–ca. 1847, as found in "The Book of John, Whitmer kept by Comma[n]d," ca. 1838–ca. 1847; handwriting of John Whitmer; ninety-six pages (two additional leaves missing); CCLA. Includes redactions, editing marks, and archival marking., p.1.

¹⁷² Cf. above on p.182.

precondition for the success of the corporate raid.

As Alexander Campbell would point out in his review of the *Book of Mormon*, only months after Rigdon's conversion,¹⁷³ the *Book of Mormon* was brimming with issues that had been relevant and debated in upstate New York—and the Western Reserves, for that matter—for years, even settling some of them. Its topicality, that it addressed and proposed resolutions for issues relevant to its readers, was the feature that made the *Book of Mormon* convincing to its adherents.

7.2.15 Differences Explored

Despite the forces of new scripture and the presence of a modern prophet, popular notions and forms of evangelical Protestantism significantly influenced the Church during its first decade.¹⁷⁴

After being ordained an elder by Oliver Cowdery,¹⁷⁵ Sidney Rigdon came to Palmyra, New York, to visit with Joseph Smith Jr, bringing his congregation member Edward Partridge¹⁷⁶ with him.¹⁷⁷ The revelation that Rigdon received from Joseph Smith Jr spoke not only of the Millennium being nigh, but also of the charismata and wonders of the Apostolic Church.¹⁷⁸ Rigdon was called to be a scribe to the prophet and a preacher of the gospel.¹⁷⁹

The contents of the revelations given to Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge—D&C 35 and D&C 36f, respectively—highlight key theological disagreements between the Campbellites and the Mormons in addition to the difference already discussed: a new form of

¹⁷³Alexander Campbell (1832). *Delusions. An analysis of the Book of Mormon; with an examination of its internal and external evidences, and a refutation of its pretences to divine authority.* Ed. by Joshua V. Himes. Boston: Benjamin H. Greene.

¹⁷⁴Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook (1983). *Far West Record: Minutes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1844.* Kindle. Desert Book Company, Introduction, loc.101f.

¹⁷⁵Whitmer, (1831-1847), p.1.

¹⁷⁶ For more information on Edward Partridge, see below p.228.

¹⁷⁷Whitmer, (1831-1847), p.2.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p.3.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p.4.

social communion and the re-establishment of the apostolic charismata.

- *Laying of Hands for Receiving the Holy Spirit* For Campbellites, baptism brings the Holy Ghost; and the laying on of hands, also known as the imposition of hands, is superfluous as well as a prerogative of the primary apostles only.¹⁸⁰

When D&C 35:5-6 commands Rigdon to baptize for the remission of sins, but to then lay his hands onto the newly baptized, so that they can “receive the Holy Ghost”, Rigdon is instructed to behave “even as the apostles of old”.

The commandment was amplified in the first revelation given to Partridge, D&C 36:2, where Rigdon is instructed to baptize Partridge and lay his hands on him, thereby allowing God to lay His hands on Partridge by proxy.

Notice that Sidney Rigdon—and probably Edward Partridge—were not the only ones who felt that the laying on of hands was necessary; the same held for Campbellite preacher Symond Ryder Amos S. Hayden (1875). *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve, Ohio*. Cincinnati: Chase and Hall Publishers, p.249, who would, for a short time, become a Mormon during the summer of 1831, for precisely that reason.¹⁸¹

- *Openness of the Gospel* John Whitmer writes that Sidney Rigdon “was in search

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Walter Scott’s stance in Hayden, (1875), p.71f. This stance is essentially Calvinistic in nature. Calvin discusses the imposition of hands in the *Institutes* in the context of his rejection of the Roman-Catholic notion of seven sacraments (IV.19), and condones it exclusively for bestowing blessings (IV.19.4). As far as the actions of the apostles are concerned, Calvin writes:

If the ministry which was then executed by the apostles were still continued in the Church, imposition of hands ought also to be still observed: but since such grace is no longer conferred, of what use is the imposition of hands? (IV.19.6) (= Jean Calvin (1816). *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Trans. by John Allen. First American from the last London Edition. Vol. 3. Philadelphia—New Haven: Philip H. Nickling and Hezekiah Howe, p.484)

Of course, the continuation of that ministry and the conferring of these graces was the precise point of contention between the Campbellites and the Rigdonites.

¹⁸¹ See also the reason for conversion of Elizabeth and Newel K. Whitney below p.239.

after” something like the *Book of Mormon*,¹⁸² “the Fulness [sic!] of the gospel of Jesus Christ: first unto the Gentiles and then unto the Jews”.¹⁸³

As Alexander Campbell had put it when describing the restoration of the ancient order of things:

For to the end of time, we shall have no other revelation of the Spirit, no other New Testament, no other Saviour, and no other religion than we now have [i.e. the religion of the New Testament, RCK], when we understand, believe and practice the doctrine of Christ delivered to us by his apostles.¹⁸⁴

And as far as questions regarding the role of the Indians and position of the American continent in the Divine Story of Salvation were concerned: Thomas Campbell had insisted that the Campbellites obey the strictures of the Bible in terms of what was and what was not explained.

... the principle which Thomas Campbell had adopted [was, RCK], “where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent,” as it was ... necessary ... to prohibit the addition and admixture of human opinions. ... the chief mistake of Protestantism consisted in substituting for the silence of the Bible human opinions and speculative theories.¹⁸⁵

If God said nothing about the Indians, or what role the United States were to play in the story of Salvation, that was not the fraud of the sloppy copyists: To a Campbellite, that was a purposeful Divine decision. If the *Book of the Just* was missing from the canon, it was because God did not require it.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸²Whitmer, (1831-1847), p.1.

¹⁸³Ibid., p.1.

¹⁸⁴CB Vol II.7 1825-02-07 128:2.

¹⁸⁵Richardson, (1868), p.352.

¹⁸⁶On the worry that books were missing from the Bible, cf. above on page p.137.

Thus Campbellites rejected extending the Holy Scriptures as well as requesting revelations; in their view, the contents of such revelations could at best be speculative theories.

- *A Sign for Faith* At the end of the *Book of Mormon*, the reader is encouraged to pray for a sign from God to find out whether to have faith in the Book of Mormon and its revelations.¹⁸⁷ The importance of the prayer for faith was not restricted to the initial conversion experience, as D&C 42:14¹⁸⁸ explains, “And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith”.

For the Campbellite, this was an odd construction, as faith had an entirely different part in their economy of salvation. As Hayden explained:

The reason the delusion [i.e. Mormonism, RCK] made little progress among the Disciples, save only at Kirtland, where the way for it was paved by the common-stock principle, is to be found in the cardinal principle every-where taught and accepted among them [i.e. the Disciples, RCK], that faith is founded on testimony. . . . They [i.e. the Disciples, RCK] never “pray for faith”, since “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”¹⁸⁹

- *The Segregation within the World* For the young Mormon Church, the move to Ohio was understood as a separation from the bad influences of their environment. “And go ye out from among the wicked. Save yourselves. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.” (= D&C 38:42) The Campbellites had no notion of such a withdrawal from their worldly context, as it conflicted with their goal of uniting all Christians across all sects, creeds and denominations.

Of course, the Campbellites mainly suffered “persecution” in terms of Baptist asso-

¹⁸⁷ Moroni 10:4f.

¹⁸⁸ On the key role of D&C 42 for understanding the Kirtland period of Mormonism, see page p.245f below.

¹⁸⁹ Hayden, (1875), p.216.

ciations pushing them out, not in the terms of ham-fisted enforcement of community cohesion that the Mormons experienced as early as Colesville in the summer of 1830.¹⁹⁰

Considering these differences taken together, it becomes apparent that the theological programs of Rigdon and Campbell had indeed grown incommensurate. If Rigdon could agree with the Mormon position, then he was indeed no longer a Campbellite.

7.3 Excursion: The Problem of Compensating Religious Work

In the process of reconstructing the Campbellite restoration movement, I detailed the means by which Sidney Rigdon and other Campbellite preachers made their living while serving their congregations. Since this issue of compensation for religious work remained a charged question, both theologically and socially, with economic consequences for the ministry, I want to focus on this problem briefly.

The criticism of the “hireling” minister or priest¹⁹¹ has a long tradition in Protestantism and would continue to excite strong sentiments. Alexander Campbell expressed this anti-Catholic stance that many shared:

That any man is to be paid at all for preaching, i.e. making sermons and pronouncing them; or that any man is to be hired for a stipulated sum to preach and pray, and expound scripture, by the day, month, or year, I believe to be a relic of popery.¹⁹²

Those who were interested in the “public advocacy of the cause”, that is, the spreading of the Gospel, were expected to show “noble disinterestedness and an unselfish devotion”.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰Vogel, (1996), I.A.15, p.109-112.

¹⁹¹ CB III.9 1826-4-9 233:1.

¹⁹² CB III.9 1826-4-9 225:2.

¹⁹³ Richardson, (1870), p.262. When Methodist Deacon Beckwith challenged Mother Smith about the

The things said and written against a salaried clergy, as well as the newly-discovered simplicity of the gospel, had almost entirely suspended all contributions for the ministry, and the recently-formed churches had as yet adopted no co-operative system or regular plan of operations. Hence the individuals who felt impelled to use their efforts for the spread of the truth were obliged to do this not only without the prospect of present remuneration, but to the neglect of their own affairs and the expenditure of their own limited means.¹⁹⁴

That the “newly-discovered simplicity of the gospel” contributed to this debate was not surprising. Yet the New Testament not only mentioned some of the basic strategies for dealing with the issue—self-support and receiving donations—but also re-iterated the ambiguity and complexity of choosing between these strategies. That ambiguity was already present in the *Corpus Paulinum*.¹⁹⁵

Paul’s overriding concern was to make the acceptance of the Gospel as easy as possible (1 Cor 9:12), and supporting himself and his companions by their own hands, even at the cost of toiling “night and day” (1 Thes 2:9; 2 Thes 3:8), ensured this for Paul (1 Cor 9:15; 2 Cor 12:13), as it removed the gain-motive as a hindrance (1 Cor 9:18; 2 Cor 11:17) to accepting the Gospel. Nevertheless, Paul knew that the Lord had ordained the right of the workers for the Gospel to get support from its recipients (1 Cor 9:14; cf. Gal 6:6) even in Old Testament times (1 Cor 9:9; cf. 1 Tim 5:18). The sentiment of the workers deserving their just wages is echoed in Matthew (Mt 10:10) and Luke (Lk 10:7), although the KJV restricts this wage to nourishment—meat in Matthew, food and drink that is offered in Luke.

At the same time, the preachers needed to live somehow. And the preachers were

“golden bible”, she retorted that the *Book of Mormon* exhibited “a similarity” with “the simplicity of the Gospel taught by Jesus Christ in the New Testament”, which raised the hackles of the denominations, because the “Universalists are alarmed lest their religion should suffer loss, the Presbyterians tremble for their salaries”; cf. Smith, (1853), p.146.

¹⁹⁴Richardson, (1870), p.262.

¹⁹⁵ Since all of the Christian denominations under discussion here believed the New Testament to be inspired *verbatim* by God, modern-day distinctions within the *corpus* such as true and pseudo-epigraphic letters, or deutero- and trito-Pauline letters, are foreign to the times analyzed here.

not the only ones who needed to live. The majority had families, an issue that Paul had consciously side-stepped. The wives of the ministers were expected to support and share in the privations of their husbands for the divine work.¹⁹⁶

Thus, when the recently married Alexander Campbell contemplated entering the ministry after his first year on the preaching circuit,¹⁹⁷ Campbell saw himself faced with the “silent pleadings of a comfortable home, and the quieter and more profitable pursuits of agriculture”.¹⁹⁸ This would have made life simpler for his wife and their expected children as well. But among the arguments for resisting that siren lure, Campbell enumerated his wife and companion—Item VII—and her being “congenial to my inclination of serving Him”.¹⁹⁹ Thus, even though the support of the wife was expected, it was commended when given; cf. Sidney Rigdon recalling the supportive stance of his wife in 1822.²⁰⁰

7.3.1 Salaries

The established denominations, especially in the large cities on the East Coast, preferred to pay their pastors outright. Thus, when Sidney Rigdon first received his call to work for the First Baptist Church in Pittsburgh in February of 1822, he received a salary.

Smaller congregations, especially on the frontier, used subscriptions to raise the money to pay a preacher. The Universalist Congregation in Shalersville, Ohio, had raised \$100 in this fashion to pay future Campbellite preacher Ebenezer Williams²⁰¹ for his quarter of a preacher position—indicating that the annual salary would have been \$400.

However, salaries and subscription tied the preachers and ministers very strongly to their congregations and took away some of their ability to say what the preachers felt

¹⁹⁶Richardson, (1868), p.364ff.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., p.379f.

¹⁹⁸Ibid., p.380.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., p.381.

²⁰⁰T&S IV.13 193.2.

²⁰¹Hayden, (1875), pp.155-157.

their congregations needed to hear. As the split between Baptists and Campbellites was developing in 1830, the Reformer Jacob Creath Sr was told by Jeremiah Vardeman that they would starve if they went with the Campbellites.²⁰² Vardeman thus chose financial security over the stance he had supported ideologically so far. Both Rigdon²⁰³ and Campbell²⁰⁴ at least agonized over that decision, even if they did not have to sell out. In the same vein, members in Ebenezer Williams' Universalist congregation threatened pecuniary consequences should Williams continue to preach Campbellite doctrines: "many said they would not pay their subscriptions for such preaching".²⁰⁵

7.3.2 Collections

Recall that the Mahoning Association tried to fund its evangelists with collections and contributions. When they called Walter Scott as their first evangelist in 1827, their first round of collections gathered a mere \$11.75.²⁰⁶ Things did not get much better, even in the face of the phenomenal success of the itinerant ministers. Richardson estimates that all of the contributions to the itinerant-preacher service of the Mahoning Association during the year spanning summer 1829 to 1830 "scarcely exceeded five hundred dollars";²⁰⁷ at that point, the association was funding several full-time evangelists.

Collections were also taken up in the congregations after the services. Again, the preachers had little to rely on here. The following anecdote is instructive, because it gives some price points as well, that make it possible to contextualize numbers such as \$11.75 for missionizing support, or an annual salary of \$400.

On one occasion one of them [i.e. the preachers, RCK], having a series of

²⁰²Richardson, (1870), p.324.

²⁰³ T&S IV.13 193.1.

²⁰⁴Richardson, (1868), p.379f.

²⁰⁵Hayden, (1875), p.157.

²⁰⁶Richardson, (1870), p.175.

²⁰⁷Ibid., p.329.

appointments to meet, and being without a horse to ride, borrowed one from a neighbor, for the shoeing of which he was to pay two dollars. Having filled his engagements and received nothing but compliments, he had, upon his return, to work four days for the blacksmith in order to pay the debt he had incurred.²⁰⁸

At the same time, relying on the kindness of interested parties was felt to be a more honest approach, one that appropriately placed trust in the Lord. Doing so was giving the preachers more credibility and thus supporting their work, just as Paul had argued in his letters to the Corinthians.

These noble men were, however, the praise of the churches and the glory of Christ. The advancement of the cause seemed to depend upon their free efforts
²⁰⁹

Or, as Ebenezer Williams put it with respect to losing his Universalist position in Shalersville when he became a Campbellite,

Thus I turned my back on the four hundred a year. I have never since received over half that amount, but having obtained the help of God, I continue until this day.²¹⁰

7.3.3 Patronage

Patronage was similar to taking collections, in the sense that the commitment of the donating parties was of longer duration. Patronage was an ongoing relationship, and those that supported a minister in this way had to be of good economic standing.

For example, in 1811, Thomas Campbell purchased a farm about 1.5 miles outside of Mount Pleasant, but only accepted that deal because

²⁰⁸Richardson, (1870), p.262.

²⁰⁹Ibid., p.262.

²¹⁰Hayden, (1875), p.157.

[H]is kind friends and neighbors were ready to render him every possible assistance in the management of the farm, his own attention being almost exclusively devoted to religious interests.²¹¹

7.3.4 Independence

Some ministers found ways to be well off without having to compromise on their congregational work. An example of such a minister who did not even expect to live off of his congregation's support was Mr Tassey from Pittsburgh, a friend of Mr Forrester.

[A RCK] Mr. John Tassey also, who had been educated for the ministry in one of the seminaries established by R. Haldane, emigrated with his family from Ireland, and engaged in the mercantile business in Pittsburg [sic!]. He succeeded in gathering together a few individuals as an Independent church, meeting for weekly communion, and became their pastor.²¹²

In addition to his mercantile business and the pastorship, Tassey found time to write books, one of which, *An Essay on the Supreme Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in Religious Matters Maintained*, Alexander Campbell reviewed in a five-part series²¹³ in his *Christian Baptist*.

Adamson Bentley was another minister who was of independent means, due to his engagement in the mercantile business.²¹⁴

Alexander Campbell had his farm, for a time his seminary, the Buffaloe School, and his printing press—cf. p.192—to contribute to his family income. Presumably the offer of the Mentor congregation,²¹⁵ to build Sidney Rigdon and his family a house, on a farm on the edge of the village, was intended to make Rigdon equally independent.

²¹¹Richardson, (1868), p.365.

²¹²Ibid., p.486.

²¹³Starting CB IV.7 1827-2-5 303:2.

²¹⁴Cf. p.188 above.

²¹⁵Keller, (1962), p.23.

7.3.5 Bishops are not Preachers

In August 1824, in his *Christian Baptist*, Campbell favorably compared the "two bishops" of a church in Pittsburgh to the salaried Baptist Reverend Mr Greatrake that Campbell was polemicizing against in that editorial.

[There is a church in Pittsburgh who has two bishops, RCK] ... who while they watch over and labour among the saints, labor, working with their own hands, according to the apostolic command; and not only minister to their own wants, but are ensamples to the flock in beneficence and hospitality ²¹⁶

Most readers knew that Campbell was talking about Scott and Rigdon.

As strongly as Campbell argued against "hireling" preachers, he argued equally strongly for remuneration of the bishops. Bishops were in his mind second-tier managers and unlike the preachers. That stance may have been influenced by the experiences of Scott and Rigdon, who had left their Pittsburgh congregations in 1826.

Campbell devoted the twelfth²¹⁷ and thirteenth²¹⁸ essay in his series on the *Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things* to the question of the Bishop's office. As a teacher and president of the congregation (232), the bishop differs crucially from the hireling because he receives his call from the congregation, and accepts it as a favor to the congregation (233:1). The remuneration that the bishop receives, which is sanctioned by the New Testament (232:2), is not for preaching, but for shepherding the community.

For laboring among them in teaching and watching over them, in admonishing them, in presiding over them, in visiting them in all their afflictions, and in guarding them against seduction, apostasy, and every thing that militates against their growth (233:1)

²¹⁶ CB II.2 91:2.

²¹⁷ CB III.9 1826-4-9 231:2-233:2

²¹⁸ CB III.11 1826-6-5 241:2-243:2

Campbell then alludes again to the discussion of Paul and the Corinthians, reminding the readers that supplying the wants of the bishop with “food, raiment or money” is an entitlement of the bishop, a right the bishop can choose to waive—as Paul did, but a right not lost by lack of use (233:2).

7.3.6 The Mormon Stance

Mormonism shared the Protestant criticism of “the hireling priests whose god is the substance of this worlds [sic!] goods”.²¹⁹ In fact, the similarity between Mormonism and Campbellites on this issue is often adduced by Spaulding-Rigdon supporters as proof of Rigdon’s authorship of the *Book of Mormon*.

The translation of the *Book of Mormon* itself had only been made possible by the patronage of Martin Harris and the Knights and the Whitmer families.²²⁰

The *Book of Mormon* spoke a clear language here: both the clergy and the missionaries of the church should provide their own support.²²¹

Similar to the bishop in the Campbellite conception, however, the uppermost echelon of the hierarchy deserved remuneration. What was initially just the prophet, and what would eventually become the first presidency, shared in the right of support that Paul had mentioned in Corinthians. Thus, the revelation from July 1830, given in Harmony, Pennsylvania, to Emma Hale Smith, specifically states that Joseph—and thus Emma and their household—would be supported by the Church (D&C 25:9).

Later revelations confirmed this general pattern. The Mormons were instructed that each man was “to prepare and accomplish the things which I have commanded” “with the labor of his hands”, whether they be “Elder, Priest, Teacher, and also member” (= D&C

²¹⁹Whitmer, (1831-1847), p.5.

²²⁰ Cf. above on pages pp.??ff.

²²¹ Cf. Alma 1:3 for both; Mos. 18:24-26; Mos. 27:4f; Alma 1:26; Alma 30:31f; 2 Nephi 26:31 for the missionaries only; Alma 35:3, 1 Nephi 22:23 for the clergy only.

38:40).²²².

In February 1831, with the leadership of the Church now in Kirtland, Ohio, the revelation that commanded a house for the prophet equally commanded accommodations for Rigdon (D&C 41).²²³

This difference in treating the upper-echelon versus the other believers would continue to vex the detractors of Mormonism. Those who felt the *Book of Mormon* to be a scam and the revelations mere humbug could point to upper-echelon support like D&C 41 to claim that Mormonism was intended as a money-making device for the extended Smith family and their key “conspirators” Rigdon and Cowdery.

Yet as I have tried to show, this stance followed from a specific reading of the letters of Paul as well as the theological discourse of the time, especially within the Campbellite movement. Even the idea of the house was not novel, but simply what the Mentor congregation had offered to the Rigdons.²²⁴

Nonetheless, as the complexity of the church organization would increase over the 1830s,

²²²Whitmer, (1831-1847), p.9.

²²³ The textual history is interesting here; the earliest manuscript, Revelation Book 1, provides Rigdon, who had a wife and several children at this point, merely with a room; cf. Whitmer et al., (1831-1835), p.62.

again it is meet that my servent Joseph should have a house built in which to live & translate
& again it is meet that my Servent Sidney should have a comfortable Room to live in

The 1833 editions of the book of commandments changed Rigdon’s room to “should live as seemeth him good”; cf. *A Book of Commandments, for the Government of the Church of Christ, Organized according to Law, on the 6th of April, 1830* (1833). incomplete (printing interrupted). 60 pp.; includes typeset signature marks and copyright notice. The copy presented herein is held at CHL; includes twenty-two pages of handwritten texts; also includes early and later marginalia as well as archival stamps and notations. Zion [Independence], MO: W.W. Phelps and Co., p.88.

The 1835 edition added “inasmuch as he keepeth my commandments”; cf. Joseph Smith Jr et al. (1835a). *Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints: Carefully Selected from the Revelations of God, and Compiled by Joseph Smith Junior. Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, Frederick G. Williams, -[Presiding Elders of said Church.]- Proprietors.* i-iv, 5-257, 25 pages of back matter paginated i-xxv; includes typeset signature marks and copyright notice. The copy presented herein is held at CHL; includes marginalia and archival markings. Kirtland, OH: F.G. Williams and Co., p.189.

²²⁴ The fact that the house was to be built for the prophet and not simply some house provided for Smith Jr is in some sense more interesting.

and councils and groups, such as the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, were added to the structure, to accommodate the increase in members and concomitant tasks, the distinction would become blurry and the exact remunerations non-obvious. In a conference in April of 1838, whose proceedings were published in the Nauvoo paper *Times & Seasons*, Joseph Smith Jr was at great pains to refute Church-internal rumors that the members of the Quorum of the Twelve were being paid \$2 per day for their services.²²⁵

7.4 Outlook: Transition in Kirtland



Figure 7.2: Detail of a Present-Day Map of the Great Lakes region. The New York Saints moving to Ohio would travel down the Erie Canal to Buffalo, whence they would board ships suitable to the stormy waters of Lake Erie to take them to Mentor and Kirtland. For full map, see page 70. For license, see page 550 below.

In preparation for the move of the church to Ohio, Joseph Smith Jr sent his trusted

²²⁵ T&S IV.12 181.2.

friend John Whitmer to Kirtland to take charge of the church there until the prophet's arrival (= D&C 69).²²⁶ John Whitmer had been assisting Joseph Smith in compiling revelations since the summer of 1830 and would in the future assist him as a Church historian.²²⁷

The Kirtland community had grown to about three hundred believers, but the charisma had swamped the community.²²⁸ In addition to the common stock experiment on the Isaac Morley farm, there were many other manifestations of apostolic patterns of behavior taking place.

Fusing the two communities, with their different religious heritage, into one church under one set of socio-economic principles that provided both an escape from the world and a haven for the newcomers would be a significant challenge. Joseph Smith Jr, Sidney Rigdon and the other leading men had their work cut out for them.

²²⁶Smith, (1844–1845), bk. 10, p.7.

²²⁷ Cf. below on page p.428.

²²⁸Corrill, (1839), pp.16f.

Chapter 8

Consecration and Stewardship

The Mormon practice of consecration ... [during, RCK] ... Joseph Smith's lifetime was a clear response to the economic needs of a rapidly | growing church and its poor members as well as an attempt to conform to the economic ideal of having "all things in common", mentioned in the New Testament. But importantly, it was also a response to the religious fervor and the social upheaval of the period.¹

Over the first few months of 1831, a set of revelations and the interactions with the Kirtland converts clarified for Joseph Smith Jr and the church leadership a set of socio-economic principles that became known as the *Law of Consecration and Stewardship*. The story is a complex one to tell, because so much theological innovation was taking place at the same time. Key among the elements of the story are two wealthy men, Edward Partridge and Newel K Whitney; the developing office of the bishop in the young church; the twin church foci of Kirtland, Ohio and Zion (i.e. Independence), Missouri; and the interactions between the revelations on the one side and the "realities on the ground" (as the modern expression goes) on the other.

¹Cook, (1985), p.4.

8.1 Edward Partridge

Edward Partridge was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, August 27, 1793.² He trained, probably as a hatter, with a Mr Governor in Pittsfield, and at age 20, finished with his apprenticeship, traveled to New York and became a journeyman with one Asa Martin. Partridge and Martin formed an economic partnership in the hat-making business in Clinton, near Albany, in 1813. Around 1814 or 1815, Partridge was in Painesville on business, liked the area, and decided to open a branch office there.³ In 1817, he bought a large lot on Main Street (now Mentor Avenue), where he had both his residence and his factory.⁴ The lot was only two miles from Lake Erie's shore with its excellent trade and transportation connections.⁵

Painesville was an ideal location for his new business. It was far enough into the frontier to provide access to the furs he needed to make hats, and yet close enough to more populated Eastern cities to provide access to their markets.⁶

In a short time, Partridge was doing so well he bought out Martin's interest and carried on the business himself, employing several hands and operating both a factory and a store.⁷

Edward married Lydia Clisbee in August 19, 1819. The couple resided in Painesville and raised five daughters. The business continued to grow, allowing Edward to purchase additional properties.⁸

But starting in January 1828, Partridge began to offer his properties for sale, giving his wish to "quit the Hatting [sic RCK] business and leave Painesville"⁹ as the reason.¹⁰ Being

²Partridge, (2003), p.52.

³Ibid., p.52.

⁴Ibid., p.52.

⁵Ibid., p.52.

⁶Ibid., p.52.

⁷Ibid., p.52.

⁸Ibid., p.53.

⁹Ibid., p.55.

¹⁰Ibid., p.54.

unsuccessful, Partridge tried again in June of 1829. At that time, he owned: “a house, a hat factory, a hat shop, a barn, two lots next to the public square, a twenty acre wood lot, a one-hundred-acre farm in Ashtabula County, and a house in Kirtland”.¹¹

Painesville was an important town for early Mormonism in the 1830s. As the Mormon missionaries raided the Campbellite movement,¹² they had many successes here. It was also the home of Eber D. Howe and his newspaper, the *Painesville Telegraph*,¹³ an opponent of the Mormon cause from the beginning.

Like many early converts to Mormonism, Partridge had become a religious seeker over time. For a long time adhering to no religion at all, Partridge next joined the Universal Restorationers, until in 1828 he became a member of Sidney Rigdon’s branch of the Campbellite movement.¹⁴ The fact that Partridge converted to Mormonism two years later, following Rigdon’s conversion on November 14, 1830,¹⁵ suggests that the Campbellite movement did not have the answer to Partridge’s yearnings either.

But Partridge was still not completely satisfied and concluded within another year or two that it was ‘absolutely necessary’ for God to ‘again reveal himself to man and confer authority upon some one, or more, before his church could be built up in the last days.’¹⁶

A new prophet fit that bill nicely.¹⁷ Yet Partridge took his time to study the issue out, even though he was one of the first members of the Rigdonites that the newly converted Sidney visited.¹⁸ Partridge found a copy of the *Book of Mormon* insufficiently persuasive, and therefore resolved to accompany Rigdon on his visit to Joseph Smith Jr in Manchester,

¹¹Ibid., p.55.

¹²Ibid., p.51.

¹³Ibid., p.51.

¹⁴Ibid., p.55.

¹⁵Ibid., p.56.

¹⁶Ibid., p.56.

¹⁷Ibid., p.56.

¹⁸Ibid., p.56.

New York.¹⁹

By December 7, 1830, Rigdon and Partridge arrived in or near Fayette, New York.²⁰ There they learned of the persecution of the young church in New York.²¹ On December 9, 1830, Joseph Smith Jr gave a revelation for Partridge, D&C 36.²² The following day, Partridge attended a meeting,²³ where Smith Jr taught a lesson. Partridge was baptized December 11, 1830, in the Seneca River.²⁴ On December 15, he received the Melchizedek Priesthood²⁵ and was ordained an Elder by his Painesville pastor, Sidney Rigdon.²⁶

Partridge's first mission took him to Massachusetts, where he tried to convert his parents and siblings, but was rejected with hostility²⁷ or suspected to be mentally ill. While Edward was in Massachusetts, Parley Pratt converted Lydia Partridge.²⁸

¹⁹ Some sources indicate that other members of his Campbellite congregation wanted him to go and check out the prophet for them, possibly even contributing travel funds to offset his expenses; cf. Partridge, (2003), p.56. If so, they were disappointed when, upon his return, Edward Partridge insisted that Joseph Smith Jr as a seer; cf. *ibid.*, p.59.

²⁰ Cf. the introduction to D&C 35, the revelation for Rigdon.

²¹ Partridge, (2003), p.57.

²² Compared to revelation D&C 35, which runs for 27 verses and is studded with theological *topoi* that Rigdon was interested in, I find D&C 36 at a mere 8 verses unpersonal and almost bland in its apocalyptic generality—a mere “form revelation”, if such a thing existed. vv5-7 are addressed to all elders, thereby indicating that the specific calling given in v1 is one that Partridge shares with them, and is not his special calling in any interesting sense. The only personal touch—that Partridge will receive the holy spirit through the hands of his old pastor, Sidney Rigdon—has the curious effect that Sidney Rigdon is mentioned more often in Partridge's revelation than Partridge himself is. Rigdon's revelation, D&C 35, has been taken by Joseph Smith Jr's detractors as evidence that at least some revelations were prepared ahead of time—here, supposedly through discourse with Parley P. Pratt, cf. Howe, (1834), p.107. If this is so, then D&C 36 could serve equally well as evidence that Smith Jr had nothing specific to say to people he did not know well yet.

²³ Smith, (1844–1845), Bk 10 p.11.

²⁴ Partridge, (2003), p.57.

²⁵ H. Michael Marquardt challenges that view; he argues that prior to the June 3, 1831 conference, no one received that priesthood; cf. H. Michael Marquardt (2008). “Emily Dow Partridge Smith Young on the Witness Stand: Recollections of a Plural Wife”. In: *Journal of Mormon History* 34.3, pp. 110–141, p.112 Fn 4.

²⁶ Partridge, (2003), p.57.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.58.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.58. Marquardt disagrees and has Lydia converted before Edward leaves for New York to visit Joseph Smith Jr with Sidney Rigdon; Marquardt, (2008), p.112.

8.2 The Economics of Moving the Fayette Saints

Partridge points out that the Ohio branch was growing rapidly; John Whitmer had been sent to preside in Kirtland,²⁹ and by mid-December the northeastern Ohio branch had several times more members than the New York branch, prompting Whitmer to contact Joseph for more help.³⁰

On January 2, 1831, at the Church Conference in Fayette, NY, the church was nine months old and had approximately 280 members.³¹ At that conference Joseph Smith Jr recorded a revelation (D&C 38) for the entire church to move to Ohio. This revelation describes an office that might appear suspiciously similar to that of the bishop in later times.

And now, I give unto the church in these parts [i.e. Upstate New York, RCK] a commandment, that certain men among them shall be appointed, and they shall be appointed by the voice of the church; And they shall look to the poor and the needy, and administer to their relief that they shall not suffer; and send them forth to the place which I have commanded them; and this shall be their work, to govern the affairs of the property of this church. And they that have farms that cannot be sold, let them be left or rented as seemeth them good. See that all things are preserved; and when men are endowed with power from on high and sent forth, all these things shall be gathered unto the bosom of the church. (= D&C 38:34-38)

But the similarity is deceptive. This is not a proto-description of the office of the Bishop. It is crucial not to read this revelation in the light of the latter law of consecration and stewardship. When the revelation speaks of “the church” or even “this church”, it means no separate legal entity, but simply the body of the members of the church in that

²⁹ Cf. above on page p.225.

³⁰ Partridge, (2003), p.58. Parkin gives some of the sources from which numbers for Ohio can be estimated for December 1830 to December 1831; cf. Max H. Parkin (1966). “The Nature and Cause of Internal and External Conflict of the Mormons in Ohio between 1830 and 1838”. MA thesis. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, p.45, Fn 39.

³¹ Partridge, (2003), p.58.

locale, i.e. upstate New York. An expression such as “the voice of the church”, as well as the fact that “among them” refers back to “the church” as a pool of men from which to draw appointees, makes this clear.

The revelation asks for a plurality of men, to be appointed by *vox populi*, “to govern the affairs of the property of this church”. Again, this means the property of *the members of this church*, not any property consecrated to the church as a legal entity in its own right. This becomes clear when “the affairs of the property” are enumerated: members who have no property at all, who are thus poor and needy and ill prepared for the long journey to Ohio; and members who cannot dispose of their property quickly enough, which will limit their financial mobility upon arriving in Kirtland. These are not problems of the organization’s property; these are difficulties individual members face with respect to their own property.

The long-term strategy is that all is “gathered unto the bosom of the church”, even if that means renting out the farms they cannot sell—an inconvenience, in terms of the long-distance administration of the property—or just letting them sit around altogether unused—a waste of resources. It is the expression “the bosom of the church” that sounds most as if a separate legal entity is envisioned; but such an abrupt shift in meaning with respect to the remainder of the passage seems implausible. Rather, the intention is that the urgency of the short-term move will be counterbalanced in the long run by maximizing the economic viability of the members.

8.3 Newel Kimball Whitney

From November 1830 until his death in Utah in 1850 Whitney devoted his life to the cause of the Church. Moreover, evidence indicates that Newel used his places of business, particularly during the Kirtland period of Church History,

and his business talents to support the economy of the Church membership.³²

8.3.1 Early Life

Newell Kimball Whitney was born in Marlborough, Windham County, Vermont, on February 5, 1795.³³ Marlborough was located a few miles south of Sharon, where Smith Jr was born nine years later.³⁴ At age nineteen, Whitney was working as a sutler or merchant in Plattsburg, New York, next to Lake Champlain,³⁵ participating in the Battle of Plattsburg fought in September of 1814.³⁶ Though the battle was successful for the American forces, thanks to the intercession of the American Navy,³⁷ Whitney lost his possessions. In the aftermath of the battle, Whitney moved via Monroe,³⁸ to Green Bay, Lake Michigan,³⁹ where he engaged in the Indian Trade. It was here that he met his longtime business partner, Algernon Sidney Gilbert, who was setting up a small store in Monroe.⁴⁰

Poulson speculates that Whitney's far-ranging trade-related travels brought him to Kirtland, Ohio, where he would meet his future wife Elizabeth Ann Smith.⁴¹ Whitney set up his first residence in Ohio at Painesville, on the shores of Lake Erie,⁴² in 1819 and apparently brought Gilbert along.⁴³

Gilbert had taken out a loan from two New York financiers with classical New Holland names, William L. Vandervoort and John S. Van Winkle: close to \$1,100, "almost three

³²Poulson, (1966), p.2.

³³Ibid., p.5.

³⁴Ibid., p.8.

³⁵Ibid., p.9.

³⁶Ibid., p.9.

³⁷Ibid., p.10.

³⁸Staker, (2003), p.76.

³⁹Poulson, (1966), p.10.

⁴⁰Staker, (2003), p.78.

⁴¹ Poulson, (1966), p.11. She was not related to the family of the prophet Joseph Smith Jr, but hailed from Connecticut; cf. *ibid.*, p.12. She had accompanied a wealthy spinster aunt to Ohio, cf. *ibid.*, p.13, probably to evade problems at home with her mother; cf. Staker, (2003), p.78.

⁴²Poulson, (1966), p.11.

⁴³Staker, (2003), p.79.

year's wages for a typical laborer"⁴⁴ for six months, with interest. Gilbert had repaid little of that sum when the note became due in March of 1820, so he sold the Monroe store for some \$765, but did not receive the money immediately to pay off his New York creditors.

At the boundary between Mentor and Painesville, a few miles north of Kirtland—and Elizabeth Ann Smith's home—Gilbert purchased an acre on Ridge Road from James Olds in the fall of 1820.⁴⁵ From the price of the store that Gilbert built, \$500, Staker estimates that the frontier store had over 2,500 squarefeet of floor space, "a massive frontier store".⁴⁶ Gilbert took on Whitney as a clerk and taught him the practices of bookkeeping.⁴⁷

In November 1820, the buyer of Gilbert's Monroe store defaulted,⁴⁸ and in the spring of 1821,⁴⁹ Gilbert was forced to deed his Mentor store over to the New York financiers instead. Witney, who was only a clerk and not a partner, moved to Kirtland during this time.⁵⁰

Though the financiers did not enforce a missed deadline and allowed Gilbert, who had married in 1823, to continue to live in the store until 1825, the store had been theirs since 1824. However, since the store was worth less than 40% of the loan with interest, the financiers lost out,⁵¹ moreover failing to sell the property. By 1826, Gilbert had finally sold the Monroe property, and moved to Kirtland as well.

⁴⁴Staker, (2003), p.79.

⁴⁵ James Olds was the owner of Olds' tavern, at a valuation of \$1,000 the most expensive building in the county; cf. *ibid.*, p.79.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p.79.

⁴⁷Poulson, (1966), p.12.

⁴⁸Staker, (2003), p.80.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p.81.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p.81.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p.82.

8.3.2 Doing Business in Kirtland

Whitney had more success starting a log cabin store “on the north end of Kirtland Flats”, near the horseshoe bend in the Chagrin River, in 1821-2.⁵² But the busiest spot in town was the intersection of the Chardon Road with the Chester or Chillicothe Road.⁵³ The northwestern part of that intersection belonged to local pioneer and surveyor Peter French, who used it as an apple orchard.⁵⁴ On June 1, 1822, Whitney bought the orchard and built a two-story house, its ground floor serving as an 800 ft store, the so-called “Red Store”.⁵⁵

Whitney’s Ashery

On September 5, 1822, Whitney purchased the half-acre lot diagonally across from the “Red Store”, where the Stony Brook ran by, and developed the lot as an ashery.⁵⁶

Whitney’s competitor in South Kirtland, Mr Latimer’s ashery at Peck’s Corners, paid 4 cents a bushel for agricultural and 7 cents for household ashes.⁵⁷

Whitney not only profited from the sale and export of the potash (Painesville hatter Edward Partridge was one of Whitney’s customers, using the potash for soap to clean the wool for the felt of his hats⁵⁸), but his buying of wood and other dead plant matter helped the local economy deal with the scarcity of cash⁵⁹ by turning Whitney into an intermediary. As one local, Christopher Crary from the southern end of the Kirtland Township, recalled:

⁵²Ibid., p.83.

⁵³ Cf. the map in *ibid.*, p.84. See also Figure 9.1 below on page p.266.

⁵⁴Ibid., p.85.

⁵⁵Ibid., p.85.

⁵⁶ For details on asheries, cf. page p.81 above. For details on Whitney’s ashery specifically, see Benjamin C. Pykles, *An Introduction to the Kirtland Flats Ashery*, *BYU Studies* 41, no. 1 (2002), pp.164-66; see also below p.280; Max H. Parkin (2007). “Joseph Smith and the United Firm: The Growth and Decline of the Church’s First Master Plan of Business and Finance, Ohio and Missouri, 1832-1834”. In: *BYU Studies* 46.3, pp. 5–66, p.22; p.22 Fn 66.

⁵⁷ Staker, (2003), p.88. Household ashes sometimes contained household refuse that people threw on the fire, e.g. the pipe fragments that Staker found in the ash pit during the archeological dig in September 2000; cf. *ibid.*, p.107, Fig.7.

⁵⁸Ibid., p.87.

⁵⁹Ibid., p.87.

I paid him[i.e. the Chatfield blacksmith, RCK] at N.K. Whitney's store, and paid Whitney with wood at his ashery.⁶⁰

Whitney had the advantage over ashery competitors, because people wanted to buy items at his store anyway, thus making his notes more attractive.⁶¹

On October 20, 1822, Newel wed Elizabeth Ann.⁶² The couple experienced the separation from their respective families⁶³ as a common bond. They built a family house behind the "Red Store", freeing their former living quarters above the store for storage and display of salable goods.⁶⁴

The Red Store, with its excellent location across from Peter French's log cabin inn,⁶⁵ and the ashery continued to do good business. Whitney repeatedly shipped his potash to New York and brought goods back to his store, as indicated by a business trip from the fall of 1825, for which the expense account has survived in the Whitney papers.⁶⁶

When the last leg of Erie Canal opened, transportation prices dropped by two-thirds,⁶⁷ an enormous business opportunity. By 1826, Whitney's store held goods worth \$2,500, as indicated by the Kirtland tax records; for comparison purposes, the largest store in the county was a \$4,500 operation in Painesville.⁶⁸ Whitney purchased another lot,⁶⁹ across the street to the northeast from Peter French and built the so-called "White Store".⁷⁰

⁶⁰Staker, (2003), p.87.

⁶¹Ibid., p.87.

⁶² That the ceremony was officiated by a Presbyterian minister—cf. Edward William Tullidge (1877). *The women of Mormondom*. New York: n.a., p.34—has often been taken to suggest that the couple was leaning toward that denomination at that time, e.g. Staker, (2003), p.95 Fn 84.

⁶³Poulson, (1966), p.14.

⁶⁴Staker, (2003), p.88.

⁶⁵Ibid., p.88.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp.88-91, especially 90f.

⁶⁷Ibid., p.89 Fn 58.

⁶⁸Ibid., p.88.

⁶⁹ Staker, *ibid.*, p.92 points out that not everything went smoothly for Whitney; for example, during November 1826, the gales on Lake Erie blew a cask of his goods off the deck of the ship *Morning Star*.

⁷⁰Ibid., p.89.



Figure 8.1: The so-called “White Store” of Newel K. Whitney, as presently restored, in Kirtland, Ohio. From the photo “NK Whitney Store” by Wikipedia contributor JonRidinger - Own work. Licensed under CC BY 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons

8.3.3 Newel K. Whitney and Company

Given the business opportunities of the Erie canal opening, Whitney decided to take on his old friend Gilbert as a partner, to better exploit the situation. Gilbert was still struggling to recover from his credit problems, but was thus restored financially.⁷¹ By January 1827 Gilbert had moved to Kirtland to participate in “Newel K. Whitney and Company”.⁷² There may also have been tax benefits associated with the partnership. In preparation for the collaboration, Whitney closed out his old accounts and attempted to collect on the outstanding debt by year’s start.⁷³ The first business notes mentioning the partnership’s name date from February of 1827.⁷⁴

Tax records indicate that the company was now responsible for the \$2,500 worth of merchandise as well as some land. Staker points out⁷⁵ that Kirtland residents continued to use “Whitney’s store” as a reference point, for example in boundary documents. The use of this name suggests that the locals understood that Whitney was the dominant partner in the venture.

Whitney hired his former clerk, Orson Hyde⁷⁶, who had already worked at the Red Store for “a year or two”.⁷⁷

Gilbert brought his nephew, James Rollins, on board as a clerk.⁷⁸ Hyde recalled that business was rather slack in 1827; there was not enough work for all. The company therefore

⁷¹Staker, (2003), p.93f.

⁷² Gilbert and his family moved into the Red Store, which became exclusively a residence; *ibid.*, p.93.

⁷³*Ibid.*, p.93.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p.93.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p.93.

⁷⁶ Orson Hyde would go on to become an important member of the church’s hierarchy. Hyde marched in Zion’s Camp in the summer of 1834; married Marinda Johnson of the John Johnson family—cf. page p.277 below—in September of 1834; was elected to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in February of 1835; missionized in Jerusalem in 1842; brought the Nauvoo Temple to completion in 1846; and presided over the British mission from 1846 to 1847; cf. Andrew Jenson (1886). *The Historical Record*. Vol. 5. Salt Lake City, Utah: Andrew Jenson, p.36-38.

⁷⁷Staker, (2003), ???

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p.94.

transferred Hyde to the ashery. The company then expanded the ashery in 1828, under Gilbert's supervision. Local sawmill operator John Burk provided the wood. Local mason Reynolds Cahoon was hired to build the foundation, that is, dig the foundation trench and place twenty cords of stone.⁷⁹ An adjacent brick area may have either served to burn the seasoned wood,⁸⁰ or as a lumber kiln during the construction of the adjacent sawmill.

In 1829, the company purchased "the southeast corner lot at the intersection of Chilli-cothe and Chardon Roads across the street and directly south of the White Store"⁸¹ from Peter French, who had operated a livery operation there previously.

8.3.4 The Fullness of the Gospel

By 1827, the wave of religious turmoil reached Kirtland. A nearby Methodist camp meeting netted members for that movement.⁸² At the same time, Sidney Rigdon from nearby Mentor began to baptize locals into the Restoration movement.⁸³ The Whitneys joined the Campbellites,⁸⁴ and their justification was the common one of finding their doctrines "most in accordance with the scriptures".⁸⁵ Yet the Whitneys remained spiritually dissatisfied.

With the hindsight of their conversion to Mormonism, Elizabeth Ann Whitney interpreted the couple's dissatisfaction as follows:⁸⁶

We had been praying to know from the Lord how we could obtain the gift of the Holy Ghost.

⁷⁹ Reynolds Cahoon would go on to become an important member of the church's hierarchy, serving with Hyrum Smith as Whitney's counselor after February of 1832, once Whitney had become the second bishop of the church in December 1831; cf. *ibid.*, p.12. His occupation showed in his digging the foundation trench—again with Hyrum Smith, cf. Robison, (1997), p.28—for the Kirtland Temple, as well as building the temple foundation together with Canadian mason Bump; cf. *ibid.*, p.28; p.30; p.51.

⁸⁰ Staker, (2003), p.94.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.95.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p.95.

⁸³ Hayden, (1875), p.194.

⁸⁴ Poulson, (1966), p.11.

⁸⁵ Cf. Orson F. Whitney (1885). "Newel K. Whitney". In: *Contributor* 6, pp. 123–132, p.125 (= Tullidge, (1877), p.35).

⁸⁶ Internal quotation marks omitted.

My husband, Newel K. Whitney, and myself, were Campbellites. We had been baptized for the remission of our sins, and believed in the laying on of hands and the gifts of the spirit. But there was no one with authority to confer the Holy Ghost upon us. We were seeking to know how to obtain the spirit and the gifts bestowed upon the ancient saints.

Sister Eliza Snow⁸⁷ was also a Campbellite. We were acquainted before the restoration of the gospel to the earth. She, like myself, was seeking for the fulness [sic RCK] of the gospel. She lived at the time in Mantua.⁸⁸

Fundamentally, Campbellites and Mormons disagreed on the degree to which the creature could hinder the tools of salvation offered by the Creator.⁸⁹ The Whitneys believed that the promise of the ongoing authority of the Christian tradition, as given in Mt 28, had been violated; a new dispensation for its restoration “to the earth” was required.

For Campbellites, the question of authority was a non-issue. Walter Scott and the Campbells had argued that the “laying on of hands” was unnecessary: receiving the Holy Ghost was an inseparable part of the act of baptism⁹⁰ and needed no special conferral by any authority.

It is therefore important to understand that Elizabeth Ann Whitney states the problem in the reverse order. The Whitneys expected to obtain “the gifts bestowed upon the ancient saints”, and so did Eliza Snow; that was their primary concern. They referred to that expectation with the phrase “the fulness [sic RCK] of the gospel”. And when this expectation was not fulfilled within the Campbellite movement, they began to wonder whether the spirit had even been obtained at all, which in turn cast doubt on the validity of the Campbellite restoration. The absence of the gifts raised the problems of authority and conferral. In that situation, they either remained unimpressed or found no solace in the argument of the Campbells and Calvin, that the charismata were reserved for the primary

⁸⁷ On Eliza R. Snow, future plural wife of Joseph Smith Jr and sister of future Mormon prophet Lorenzo Snow, see below p.350 Fn 84, pp.371ff, p.505 and p.505 Fn 33.

⁸⁸ Tullidge, (1877), p.41.

⁸⁹ Cf. above p.138 with respect to the openness of the Biblical canon and the sufficiency of the contents.

⁹⁰ Cf. above on p.213.

apostles.

In the end, their recollections do not tell how it came about that they converted to a cessationist movement with a continuationist expectation. Was Sidney Rigdon already preaching a continuationist message in 1828? Did Rigdon diverge from Scott and Campbell that early? That would make the Whitneys, as well as the Snows, Rigdonites rather than Campbellites. Or was the theological fork in the road for Rigdon and Campbell still in the future (as I argued was the case for communitarianism)?⁹¹ Then the expectations of the congregation members would be trumping the specifics of the message.

Perhaps the fundamental issue in a Bible-savvy world was that the cessationist stance never had as much scriptural support as the continuationist stance could muster. The charismata figure prominently in the Gospels, for example, in the sending forth of the disciples into Israel (Mt 10) or into the world (Mk 16). They loom large in key writings of Paul—Rom 12, 1 Cor 12, Eph 4—and are present in the apostolic letters, e.g. 1 Peter 4. The main passage for the cessationist stance is 1 Cor 13:8-12, a complex passage that has a continuationist reading as well. Indeed, Calvin does not even give a scriptural argument when declaring that the charismata are a thing of the past.⁹² Similarly, the Campbells' stance was in the end more due to Alexander Campbell's Scottish common-sense rationalism than the scriptures.

Not all Campbellites in Ohio shared these concerns. But some did, including preachers like Sidney Rigdon and Symond Ryder. People who chose their religious affiliation based on perceived proximity to the Gospels were swayed by Biblical references. And when the next religious movement—the Mormon missionaries led by Rigdonite Parley Pratt—arrived in Kirtland in October 1830, these Campbellites saw in the *Book of Mormon*⁹³ the arrival of

⁹¹ Cf. above on pages pp.205ff.

⁹² *Institutions* IV.19.6.

⁹³ Cf. 4 Nephi 1:1; 1:3; and 1:5, all quoted above on page p.154.

the Fullness of the Gospel, and converted.

Having joined [the Campbellites, RCK], they [i.e. Elizabeth Ann and Newel K. Whitney, RCK] remained members of that church, of which Sidney Rigdon was the local head, until Parley P. Pratt and other “Mormon” Elders preached in Kirtland the fulness [sic, RCK] of the Everlasting Gospel. To hear, with Sister Whitney, was to believe, and to believe, to be baptized.⁹⁴

What is fascinating about this report, written by a Whitney descendant, is that Elizabeth Ann Whitney argued like a Campbellite at the precise moment when she was leaving that restoration movement: The sequence of testimony leading to faith leading to baptism was at the very heart of the Campbell program.⁹⁵

8.4 The First Bishop

Partridge and Rigdon accompanied Joseph Smith Jr and his wife Emma Hale Smith back to Kirtland. Here, the Smith Jrs stayed with the Whitneys for the first few weeks.⁹⁶

Cook describes the situation that Smith Jr and Rigdon encountered there as follows:

Nearly all the Ohio converts had been followers of Sidney Rigdon, and many of them had been experimenting with communal living arrangements before they were baptized Mormons. Some lived on Isaac Morley’s farm near Kirtland, Ohio, others lived in Mayfield, and others in Chardon.⁹⁷ They were all part of a group called “the Family,” and were attempting to have “all things common,” as indicated in Acts, chapter 2.⁹⁸

“The Family” sought to implement equal distribution and community of property or possessions. . . . Community of property did not imply confiscation,

⁹⁴Whitney, (1885), p.125.

⁹⁵Hayden, (1875), p.67; p.71.

⁹⁶Partridge, (2003), p.58.

⁹⁷ Hayden claimed that communitarianism was restricted to the Kirtland congregation—cf. Hayden, (1875), p.195; p.207. Poulson argues that Hayden was underplaying the extent of the communitarian impulses of Rigdon’s preaching and that communitarianism was more widely appreciated; cf. Poulson, (1966), pp.14-16.

⁹⁸Cook, (1985), p.6.

but there was to be a transition from private to common ownership. Members possessing capital would invest it. The propertyless members would contribute labor. In the end, the possession of all within the community would be united and equal because all | would have contributed equally, whether in money or labor, to the common stock.⁹⁹

In terms of ministering to the needs of the church, Joseph Smith Jr and his counselors had to focus on integrating the incoming New York and the local Ohio communities in a hostile neighborhood. Aside from the badly functioning communitarianism of “the Family”, the charismatic excesses¹⁰⁰, and the need for finding accommodations for all the incoming Saints, the Campbellites had swooped down to try to stabilize their communities and were beginning to sharpen their pens.

Thomas Campbell had wintered in Mentor 1830-1831.¹⁰¹ The letter of Thomas Campbell against Sidney Rigdon’s challenge to disprove “the new Bible” dates from February 4, 1831,¹⁰² and was most likely not available to Joseph Smith Jr until after revelation D&C 41 was dictated, but possibly on February 9th, when the first part of revelation D&C 42,1-72, was given.

Alexander Campbell’s statement on the Book of Mormon, published under the heading of *Delusions* in the *Millennial Harbinger*, was dated February 7, 1831 and signed February 10, 1831.¹⁰³ Published in Bethany, that edition of the *Millennial Harbinger* probably did not reach Ohio until after February 23, 1831, when the remainder of D&C 42, vv.73-93, the law proper, was revealed.

Either way, the economic dysfunction of Rigdonite communitarianism and the charismatic excesses practiced in the Rigdonite congregation provided an avenue of attack for the

⁹⁹Ibid., pp.6-7.

¹⁰⁰Howe, (1834), p.116.

¹⁰¹Hayden, (1875), p.216.

¹⁰²Howe, (1834), pp.116-123.

¹⁰³Campbell, (1832), p.4; p.16.

Campbellites and other detractors that could only confuse the new Mormon converts.¹⁰⁴ The first issue that was settled, however, was the question of who would spearhead the implementation of the necessary reforms. Revelation D&C 41—commingling the issue with questions of who would live where—demanded obedience to the law, called Edward Partridge to be “a bishop” of the Church, and tasked him with implementing that law which the Lord would give in the near future.¹⁰⁵

While the position of “a bishop” had thus neither precedent in the young church nor a clearly defined job description,¹⁰⁶ there had been bishops in the Baptist and Campbellite movement: Sidney Rigdon and Walter Scott had been bishops in their shared Pittsburgh congregation in 1824, and their work had been favorably commented on by Alexander Campbell. Indeed, Campbell had devoted two essays in his *Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things* series to the office of the bishop, who received his calling from the congregation as well¹⁰⁷ and was entitled to the congregation’s support.¹⁰⁸

8.5 Phase I: The Beginning

The revelation that had selected Partridge had also promised a new law for Kirtland, and on February 9, 1831, twelve elders (probably including Partridge) went to Smith Jr for a revelation of that law. Smith Jr dictated the law, in their presence, as D&C 42 (verses 1-72), establishing what would become known as the *Law of Consecration and Stewardship*.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ The excesses of charismata would be dealt with in revelation D&C 43 and are not directly relevant to the topic under discussion.

¹⁰⁵ Verse 9 takes the *vox populi* formula “by the voice of the church” from D&C 38:34 and strips it of all meaning, for what can a *commandment* to appoint someone “by the voice of the church” signify? Acclamation?

¹⁰⁶ Partridge, (2003), p.59.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. pages pp.222ff above.

¹⁰⁸ The earliest reference to remuneration of the bishop occurs in D&C 51:13, dating to May 20, 1831; D&C 42:73 was only added in 1835; cf. below on page p.245 Fn 110.

¹⁰⁹ Partridge, (2003), p.60.

Another two weeks later, on February 23, the current D&C 42 was completed with the addition of what is now verses 74-93.¹¹⁰

8.5.1 Revelation D&C 42

D&C 42 functions as a founding document for a community that is in the process of separating itself from the wickedness of the world,¹¹¹ in the eschatological expectation of the revelation of the locality of the New Jerusalem (vv.61-69),¹¹² where its members expect to receive the kingdom together with the remnants of the House of Israel.¹¹³

... the purpose was to join people together so as to face collectively the challenge of the frontier or to confront as a united group the trend toward industrialization.¹¹⁴

Thus, the revelation deals with rules of inclusion and exclusion based on appropriateness of behavior (vv.18-29), and the interaction with the surrounding worldly powers (vv.74-93) with respect to sinful behavior that was also covered by the penal code. The revelation outlines the relationship between the Bible, the *Book of Mormon* as the “fulness [sic RCK] of the Gospel” (v.12) and the ongoing covenants and revelations, whose incomplete status prevents the “fulness [sic RCK] of ... scriptures” (v.15). But the revelation also organizes the economic survival of the community, and this is the focus of the current analysis.

¹¹⁰ The verse in D&C 42 that addresses the issue of the remuneration for the Mormon bishop, D&C 42:73, was not added until the 1835 edition of the revelations as printed in the *Evening and Morning Star*, January 1835 to June 1836, p.31; cf. Cook, (1985), p.13. It was probably back-added due to D&C 51:13 from May 20, 1831, which had established the bishop’s dependence on the storehouse for his support. Previously, D&C 42:70-72 had only established that the consecrated property was to be used for the support of the families of the “elders or high priests who are appointed to assist the bishop as counselors in all things”.

¹¹¹Ibid., p.3.

¹¹² The location was then only known to be “westward” (v.8), which made sense insofar as that was the part of the continent not yet fully settled.

¹¹³ See also footnote 116 on page p.246 above.

¹¹⁴Cook, (1985), p.3.

The exposition of the law of consecration and stewardship begins with the commandment to “remember the poor” (v.30), thus connecting directly to the “laws concerning these things . . . given in . . . [the] scriptures” (v.28), which those who love the Lord will keep, thereby serving him (v.29).

True members of the community consecrate their property for the support of the poor, irretrievably (v.30), by placing it before the bishop—at that time, Edward Partridge, who had been confirmed in this office in v.10 of said revelation—and his counselors (v.31). What remains of the property, or what the poor receive from the bishop for the support of their family, is the stewardship before the Lord. That stewardship is the responsibility of an individual believer, for which the believer as steward is “accountable unto me [i.e. the Lord, RCK]” (v.32). Anyone who has more than they need is commanded to donate that “residue” (v.33) to the bishop, to be kept in the Lord’s storehouse (v.34). The bishop is to dispense to the needy from it according to the decisions of either the high council of the Church, or the bishop and his council (v.34). Alternatively, the bishop can employ that residue to buy lands “for the public benefit of the church, and building houses of worship, and building up of the New Jerusalem” at the yet-to-be-revealed location (v.35), as a place of gathering for the day of the return of the Lord to His temple.¹¹⁵ Those who are cast out for their transgressions have no claim to their consecrations (v.37), and the riches of the Saints will be used to uplift the poor among the Native Americans (v.39).¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ The reference here is presumed to be Malachi 3:1. Cf. also D&C 36:8, the Edward Partridge revelation, which speaks of Jesus Christ as the Son of God coming to his temple. These two passages are the earliest references to the Lord’s temple in the revelations.

¹¹⁶ The “poor of my people who are of the House of Israel” (v.39) are the Lamanites, or Native American Indians, not the Saints; the Saints belong to those “among the Gentiles” “who embrace my Gospel” (v.39). It is important to recall that the Lamanite mission was then still ongoing; Oliver Cowdery would not pen his letter to General William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, for permission to missionize the Shawanees and Delawares and the other tribes, until February 14, 1831, five days after the revelation; cf. Leland H. Gentry (1996-1997). “Light on the “Mission to the Lamanites””. In: *BYU Studies* 36.2, pp. 226–234, pp.233f. That effort was only doomed for good when General Clark failed to respond.

Among the forbidden behaviors is idleness (v.42);¹¹⁷ to prevent it, stewards should “stand in the place of thy stewardship” (v.53). Whatever a brother has needs to be purchased not taken (v.54),¹¹⁸ and any surplus is to be considered residue for the storehouse (v.55). Such stewardship is prescribed for the priests and teachers (v.70), and even the members of the bishop’s council (v.72), unless it is decided that they are to be remunerated from the store directly (v.71).¹¹⁹

Thus, the office of the bishop had been defined as the nexus of a consecration and stewardship system, where the surplus was taken for the benefit of the poor and the general benefits of the church, while individuals were tasked with taking responsibility for the share allotted to them.

Curiously, almost as soon as it was conceptualized, the office of the bishop began to accumulate additional tasks and responsibilities, beyond the considerable effort of implementing the law of consecration and stewardship. As early as D&C 42, the bishop was commanded to be present “if it can be” at investigations, where a member is “condemned by the mouth of two witnesses” (v.81). D&C 46 added to that the responsibility of the bishop and the elders of the church to discern gifts of the spirit, i.e. to catch out those gifts “not of God” (v.27).

¹¹⁷ This is a common problem in communitarian approaches, which tend to attract freeloaders and inspire other forms of “gaming” the system; cf. Partridge, (2003), p.63.

¹¹⁸ There is the common topos that members of the Family were taking each others’ clothes without asking; cf. Cook, (1985), p.7; p.10, which is referring to John Whitmer’s history; cf. Whitmer, (1831-1847), p.11. The revelation alludes to this taking of garments. However, Whitmer did not start work on the history until the summer of 1831; cf. *ibid.*, p.25. Thus, the wording in the history is influenced by the revelation, and not the other way around.

¹¹⁹ For the discussion on how the remuneration of the bishop was added later (v.73), see footnote 110 on page p.245 above. The fact that the revelation declined to decide the matter of the counselors of the bishops is somewhat surprising, but may have been interpreted, within the Protestant covenant framework, as the Lord leaving room for human decision-making.

8.5.2 Discussion

Partridge cites Arrington, Fox and May's classic *Building the City of God* to summarize the law of consecration and stewardship:

Briefly, the law was a prescription for transforming the highly individualized economic order of Jacksonian America into a system characterized | by economic equality, socialization of surplus incomes, freedom of enterprise, and group economic self-sufficiency.¹²⁰

Partridge stresses that participation in this scheme was not voluntary, but rather expressed a basic stance on church membership.¹²¹ Indeed, as a group that wished to segregate from the “wicked” (D&C 38:42), economic self-sufficiency of the congregation was a must and entailed socialization of surplus incomes and economic equality. However, unlike Utah in the late 1840s, neither Kirtland nor the area around Independence, Missouri, were isolated enough to make significant progress on such self-sufficiency.¹²² And people who were willing to sacrifice their all for religious reasons and move to the promised places were by disposition enterprising. There was no straight-forward way to curb these sentiments.

Cook points to the key differences with respect to other programs underway in the United States at that time.

These principles differed little from those of other religious communities of the day, all based in the requirement of consecrating all of one's possessions to a common fund for the purpose of eliminating poverty and assisting in the payment of common debts through personal sacrifice. However, the implementation

¹²⁰ Partridge, (2003), p.61, citing the first edition; cf. in the second edition (the only one I was able to access) Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May (1992). *Building the City of God. Community & Cooperation among the Mormons*. 2nd ed. Urbana, IL — Chicago: University of Illinois Press, p.15.

¹²¹ Partridge, (2003), p.61.

¹²² As the Mountain Meadow Massacre—cf. John D. Lee (1877). *Mormonism Unveiled; or the Life and Confessions of the Late Mormon Bishop, John D. Lee*. St Louis: Bryan, Brand & Company, p.218; p.225—suggests, even in Utah, such economic isolationism was not possible and in the end, not even desirable.

of these principles in the Mormon practice of consecration differed considerably from other idealistic communities.¹²³

The program was distinctly communitarian in that it required total consecration of all possessions as well as yearly donation to the Church of all surplus profits. It did not allow for private ownership of property and it contained strong elements of group control and supervisory management by the bishop. On the other hand, the system encouraged many features of individualism and personal economic initiative. Stewards were given specific property for which they were responsible. There was freedom of enterprise in production and in the management of properties held as stewardships as well as basic freedom of economic activity. Furthermore, a limited profit incentive existed, and the forces of supply and demand and wholesale and retail pricing influenced production decisions.¹²⁴

The consecration and stewardship approach could be applied to crafts and especially commerce, as the United Firm illustrates,¹²⁵ by assigning the entire firm or operation to a group of people, and then dividing up the profits, just as in a business partnership. But the fundamental idea was conceptualized in terms of the family farm. No saint would have been happy to receive just a tannery or a shoe store.

Although the Saints welcomed the application of machinery and encouraged a combination of manufacturing with agricultural labor, the system of consecrat[i]on was conceived almost exclusively in agrarian terms. Access to the land had long signified social standing and it was considered crucial to survival. In an agrarian economy, not far removed from the subsistence | level, control of land meant that when harvests were bad, some members could count on surviving while others, landless and those with few resources, could not be so sure.¹²⁶

Parkin concurs with this assessment.

¹²³ Cook, (1985), p.8.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p.8.

¹²⁵ Cf. page p.280 below.

¹²⁶ Cook, (1985), pp.11f. This was even more so the case when considering the kitchen garden and fruit orchards that were part of the farmsteads. During the prophet's childhood, the Smiths had survived their first year of crop failure in Norwich, Vermont, in this fashion; cf. Smith, (1845), p.63.

The plan [for the implementation of the Law of Consecration and Stewardship, RCK] directed the faithful who would gather to Zion . . . to consecrate or grant their property¹²⁷ by certificate to Bishop Partridge, the Church agent there over temporal affairs. Then, Bishop Partridge would return to them as stewards their personal property, adding tracts of agricultural land by lease, to provide them stewardships | or inheritances. By this grant and lease transfer system, the gathering Mormon settlers to Missouri, even the poor, were positioned to prosper as farmers, craftsmen and shopkeepers.¹²⁸

The strategy of division and redistribution at the same time was too abstract. It ignored the problem of granularity. There were bounds of usefulness; not every sub-unit of land made for a sensible plot for farming.¹²⁹ Furthermore, saints still needed their own housing.

8.5.3 Early Implementation in Ohio

[The Bishop's, RCK] . . . job was to redistribute the wealth of the stewards and regulate their lives so as to maintain temporal equality and spiritual unity. The bishop met with individual members to work out the details of each consecration and subsequent stewardship.¹³⁰

Edward Partridge rose to the challenge of implementing the law of consecration and stewardship. Bishop Partridge opened his own house, “three miles from the boat landing and nine miles from Kirtland”,¹³¹ to the arriving saints, and someone or other was always staying with them while the Partridge family remained in Ohio, as his daughter Emily recalled.¹³²

¹²⁷ Parkin notes that records of such transfers exist, e.g. in William E. Berrett and Alma P. Burton, *Readings in LDS Church History from Original Manuscripts*, 3 volumes, Salt Lake City (Deseret Books), 1953-1955, vol 1, p.113-117; cf. Parkin, (2007), p.9 Fn 9. I was not able to inspect this volume.

¹²⁸ Ibid., pp.8-9. Notice that this enumeration of prosperous positions excludes manufacturing, which would become a rising force in American economy within the decade; cf. below on pages pp.298f.

¹²⁹ Cf. the discussion of small plots in Missouri below, on page p.256.

¹³⁰ Cook, (1985), p.9.

¹³¹ Partridge, (2003), p.61.

¹³² Ibid., p.61f This influx may have made the family more susceptible to disease, such as a measles epidemic—cf. Marquardt, (2008), p.113—or the lung fever that Eliza suffered from; cf. Partridge, (2003), p.62. On the general connection between population density and disease, see p.54 above.

One problem Bishop Partridge faced was that the scattered members in Ohio only had confused notions of the new economic system. When education attempted to fix that and elders went to preach the new system, this only resulted in more confusion.¹³³ Partridge quotes Church historian Whitmer on the situation:

... the time has not yet come that the law [i.e. D&C 42, RCK] can be fully established, for the disciples live scattered abroad and are not yet organized; our numbers are small and the disciples untaught, consequently they understand not the things of the kingdom.¹³⁴

In addition, the promise of sharing of surplus attracted freeloaders¹³⁵, as Whitmer noted.

Bishop Partridge was disturbed to have so little prepared for the arriving saints, and he consulted with the prophet, who gave revelation D&C 48, which proposed:

... that the Saints in Ohio were to share their surplus property with the new arrivals; and that if more land was needed, the newcomers were to purchase additional property.¹³⁶

By summer of 1831, the church leadership had gone to Missouri to locate Zion, leaving Partridge in charge of the new stake.¹³⁷ In late August 1831, Newel K. Whitney became Partridge's agent in Ohio, mainly "to receive moneys to purchase lands in Zion".¹³⁸ Whitney was ordained on September 1, 1831, and in December 1831 was made bishop.¹³⁹ In February 1832, Hyrum Smith and Reynolds Cahoon were called as counselors of Whitney.¹⁴⁰

¹³³Ibid., p.62.

¹³⁴Whitmer, (1831-1847), p.17.

¹³⁵Partridge, (2003), p.63.

¹³⁶Ibid., p.63.

¹³⁷ See below on page p.252.

¹³⁸Cook, (1985), p.12.

¹³⁹Ibid., p.12.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p.12.

Bishop Whitney's calling was subordinate to Partridge's and was limited to eastern Ohio. While Partridge was commanded to establish all of the 1831 consecration law among the Saints in Missouri, Bishop Whitney's assignment in Ohio was more to encourage the spirit of consecration.¹⁴¹

The appointment made sense, because the stores operated by Whitney in Kirtland, Ohio, and by his partner Gilbert in Independence, Missouri, were both storehouses of the church and retail businesses.

In actual practice, the Church storehouse often doubled as a retail business (for example, Whitney's store in Kirtland and Sidney Gilbert's store in Independence functioned in both capacities), selling goods to stewards who could afford to buy and | allocating goods at no cost to stewards who could not. Separate accounts were logged for goods sold for profit and goods given to the poor for which compensation was to be received.¹⁴²

The problem remained that the numbers did not work out; the poor came, but the resources of the wealthier members could not offset the needs of the newly arrived.

... the financial needs of the poor and the rapid growth of the Church exceeded the stewards' surplus consecrations, and placed demand on these businesses which ultimately resulted in their failure.¹⁴³

8.6 Phase II: Independence, MS

Many of the converts in Northern Ohio had begun moving to Jackson County, Missouri, in 1831. In June 19, 1831, Edward Partridge was sent to join them, leaving his family and especially his sick daughter Eliza behind.¹⁴⁴ At that point, Partridge was so exhausted from his labors as bishop that he fell from his horse.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹Cook, (1985), p.13.

¹⁴²Ibid., p.19f.

¹⁴³Ibid., p.20.

¹⁴⁴Partridge, (2003), p.63.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p.63.

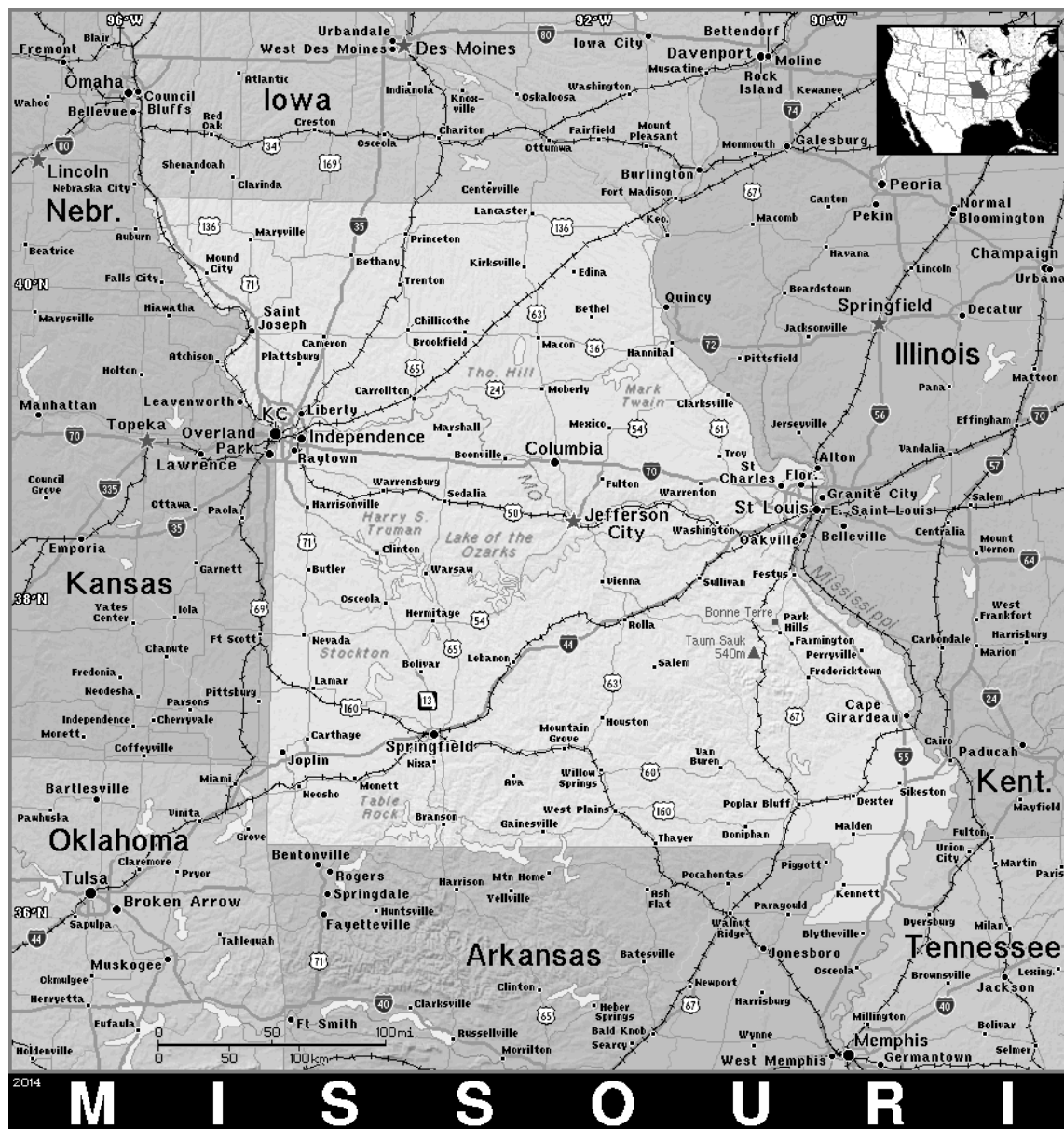


Figure 8.2: Present-day Map of the State of Missouri. Some of the cities founded by the Mormons during their efforts to settle in Missouri, such as Far West, are not depicted because they have since turned back into farmland. For license, see page 550 below.

Bishop Partridge traveled with the prophet,¹⁴⁶ Sidney Rigdon and five other saints, on the search for the location of Zion.¹⁴⁷ Though they found the temple site and identified Zion, by August 1831 the majority of the church leadership returned to Ohio, and Partridge was left in Missouri by himself.¹⁴⁸

8.6.1 Bringing the Partridge Family

Partridge sketched his situation to his wife Lydia¹⁴⁹ and left it up to her when she would join him. She joined Issac Morley and his family “late that same year”, with her five daughters ranging from eleven years to seventeen months of age.¹⁵⁰

The trip by lake steamer, canal boat, river boat and barge brought them only within a hundred miles of Independence, where too much ice on the Missouri stopped their voyage.¹⁵¹ Lydia Partridge disembarked on Arrow Rock, to escape unwanted attention from the barge captain, and took board with an African-American family in a log cabin, renting their back room.

They remained there for over two weeks and during that time had a terrifying experience when a very large rattlesnake was discovered in their woodpile. The owner of the cabin, apparently accustomed to rattlesnakes, turned his largest hog into the room. While it crunched on the snake¹⁵², the girls huddled on the bed, screaming.¹⁵³

Fortunately, they managed to get wagons and make more progress toward Independence, whence Edward Partridge and Isaac Morley came to escort them forward.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁶Partridge, (2003), p.63.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p.64.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p.64.

¹⁴⁹Marquardt, (2008), pp.114f.

¹⁵⁰Partridge, (2003), p.65.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p.65.

¹⁵² Hogs as rattlesnake killers are discussed above on p.52. The Partridge anecdote is too vague to determine what genus the specific rattlesnake belonged to.

¹⁵³Partridge, (2003), p.65.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p.65.

8.6.2 Consecration upon Arrival

When the trunks of the Partridge family arrived in Independence, Bishop Partridge consecrated their contents to the storehouse,¹⁵⁵ despite protests from his family. Selling his properties in Painesville remained a difficulty, and his daughter Emily recalls that their agent did not manage to get a good price.¹⁵⁶ Always exemplary, what money Partridge made back in Painesville, he consecrated to the church.¹⁵⁷

The church expected all new arrivals to do as the Partridges had done; if they did not, they were not allowed to settle with the other church members—a difficult situation to find oneself in.¹⁵⁸ The process of consecration in Missouri was highly standardized.

Printed forms were used containing the deed of gift contract on the left-hand side and a “stewardship agreement” on the right.¹⁵⁹ These contracts were both properly signed and witnessed.¹⁶⁰

Taxes on the property were the responsibility of the steward. Children could not inherit stewardships and had to negotiate their own upon reaching majority in general.¹⁶¹

In spite of these contractual safeguards, the notion of consecration was so un-American that a former member named Bates from London, Ohio, successfully sued Bishop Partridge “for return of his consecrated properties”.¹⁶² The Missouri Court found in Bates’ favor, considering consecration to be “contrary to the standards of fairness”.¹⁶³ No contract could sign this away.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p.66.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p.66. The county records only show the sales prices for the hat shop and for two of the lots, selling for a combined \$1,100.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p.67.

¹⁵⁸Cook, (1985), p.16.

¹⁵⁹ Arrington, Fox, and May, (1992), pp.365-371 depicts example deeds of consecration, e.g. Joseph Knights’, with transcriptions.

¹⁶⁰Cook, (1985), p.17.

¹⁶¹Ibid., p.17.

¹⁶²Ibid., p.20.

¹⁶³Ibid., p.21.

... private accumulation and control of wealth was viewed by Americans as an essential guarantee of every citizen of the United States.¹⁶⁴

In the context of such legal challenges, and the developing difficulties in interaction with the Missouri population, the Church leadership decided to back off from the implementation pressure and emphasize its voluntary nature, as a private covenant between God and the believer.¹⁶⁵ Instead of contracts, deeds for the property and deeds for the inheritance were issued, clarifying the transaction legally.¹⁶⁶ Newly acquired land was held from the beginning by the believer who had purchased it.¹⁶⁷ This shift also extricated the bishop from the tricky role of correctly estimating the properties from which to draw the consecration.¹⁶⁸ Some members, such as Wilford Woodruff, continued to practice consecration as a private choice.¹⁶⁹

8.6.3 The Problem of Atomization

The skew in the numbers between poor and rich church members had a leveling-down rather than a leveling-up effect. As a result, there was not much surplus, because the farmsteads were so small.¹⁷⁰ Numerous sources estimate the farmsteads in Jackson County in the range of twenty to thirty acres.¹⁷¹ For example, David Pettigrew's 159 acres farm, located six miles west of Independence, was divided seven ways, resulting in twenty-three

¹⁶⁴Cook, (1985), p.21.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p.30f.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p.29, citing the May 2, 1833 letter from Joseph Smith Jr to Edward Partridge; cf. (MISSING 2099).

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p.35.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p.30.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p.39, which gives an inventory of the \$240 worth of possessions that Woodruff brought to his covenant with the Lord. The fact that the majority of the property, \$150, was in "Notes which are doubtful and uncertain" is another indicator of the strained economic circumstances of the Mormons in Missouri. The second largest item, at \$20, was a due bill payable in a year's time; the third, \$18, a "trunk of books, mostly".

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p.21.

¹⁷¹Ibid., p.22.

acre inheritances.¹⁷²

Apparently managing the needs of a rapidly growing poor Mormon population into [sic, RCK] Jackson County (about 1,200 in 1833) exceeded the bishop's financial capabilities. Clearly, the stewards consumed more than they produced, and new techniques to enhance productivity were either too expensive or totally unavailable on the frontier.¹⁷³

8.7 Phase III: Donations Replace Consecration in Ohio

As the consecration system began to falter and was gradually abandoned, the Saints continued to follow it in spirit through donations.

... members in Kirtland and vicinity (and in many other branches of the Church) manifested the true spirit of sacrifice and consecration by liberally giving money, labor and donations in kind.

Often these donations were for the purchase of lands in Missouri; at other times for the poor, the construction of the Kirtland Temple, or the personal needs of the prophet Joseph Smith and his family. Entries of such liberality, found in the Prophet's diary alone,¹⁷⁴ not to mention scores of other sources, are numerous.¹⁷⁵

Nevertheless, indebtedness plagued church leaders in Ohio. With the rapid increase in membership, constant travel to regulate Church branches, the purchase and development of several properties (including the temple), and the purchase and/or operation of many business enterprises,¹⁷⁶ the meager member donations were quickly spent. From the pulpit,

¹⁷²Ibid., p.22.

¹⁷³Ibid., p.22.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. the entry from December 8, 1835, where members of the audience of an evening sermon propose to draw wood (i.e. cut and transport wood) for the prophet afterwards; or December 9, 1835, when Elder Noah Packard, who held a note of \$12 against the prophet, gave that note back; cf. Warren Parrish et al. (1835-1836). "Sketch Book for the use of Joseph Smith, jr". Journal, Sept. 1835-Apr. 1836; 195 pages; JS Collection, CHL, p.58. That same evening, at the Temple Committee's store, a dozen and a half Saints pooled their resources to give over \$40 to the prophet; cf. *ibid.*, p.59.

¹⁷⁵Cook, (1985), p.38.

¹⁷⁶ For an enumeration of Kirtland stores in Mormon possession in 1836, cf. Marvin S. Hill, C. Keith Rooker, and Larry T. Wimmer (1977). "The Kirtland Economy Revisited: A Market Critique of Sectarian Economics". In: *BYU Studies* 17.4, pp. 391-476, p.403

the prophet Joseph Smith Jr and other church leaders urgently requested the saints to make additional sacrifices and liberally donate or consecrate their possessions to the church.¹⁷⁷

8.7.1 Enforcing Donations

The leadership did not stop at exhortations. The church seriously cracked down on those not contributing to the church's efforts. The High Council, which was then meeting in the newly finished temple, took on the task of the executive. Consider the case of Preserved Harris, the brother of Martin Harris, who had borne witness to the *Book of Mormon* witness and financed its first printing. Preserved Harris, during the June 16, 1836 council meeting, was charged by the prophet himself¹⁷⁸

... with a want of benevolence to the poor and charity to the church.¹⁷⁹

Preserved Harris had “not assisted . . . in relieving the poor”, Bishop Whitney testified; he had given fifty dollars for Zion once, but others had been much more liberal.¹⁸⁰ There was evidence that others had done more: the recipients of support had thanked God for the liberality of others, but not of Brother Harris.¹⁸¹ Other anecdotes suggested an unwillingness to contribute to collections: Jonathan Hampton had taken up donations for a cow for Brother Fisher, and Harris had failed to contribute.¹⁸² When Harris argued that he “got his property by hard work” and even groused that “some that are liberal with others' property do not labor to get much to give to the poor themselves”,¹⁸³ that stance received no sympathy. As Frederick G. Williams pointed out,

¹⁷⁷Cook, (1985), p.71.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p.39.

¹⁷⁹Warren A. Cowdery et al. (1832-1837). “Minute Book 1”. ca. 3 Dec. 1832–30 Nov. 1837; 258 pages; CHL., p.212.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., p.212.

¹⁸¹Ibid., p.212f.

¹⁸²Ibid., p.213.

¹⁸³Ibid., p.214.

The church poor, Zion to be built and we have not means to do it unless the rich assist & because the rich have not assisted, the heads of the church have to suffer and are now suffering under severe [economic, RCK] embarrassments and are much in debt.¹⁸⁴

By unanimous consent of the council, the hand of fellowship was withdrawn from Preserved Harris.

8.7.2 Relief from other Branches

By December 1836, the Church decided that it was up to the branches who were sending their poor to Kirtland to provide for them.¹⁸⁵ At the April Conference in Kirtland in 1837, the pecuniary embarrassment of the Church led to appeals and exhortations.¹⁸⁶ In their mid-1837 letter to the many branches of the Church, Bishop Whitney and his counsellors, Reynolds Cahoon and Vinson Knight, enumerated the reasons for the enormous expenditures.

These included the “building the House of the Lord”, publishing “the word of the Lord,” and financial assistance to a “large number of poor”.

... by and large voluntary offerings still remained irregular and insufficient. This was not necessarily due to selfishness or disobedience on the part of the members. Instead, in most cases, it reflected the depressed economic conditions of the time.¹⁸⁷

8.8 Phase IV: The Move to Far West, Missouri

By the summer of 1836, the “extreme shortages of money” and inadequate “loan services” tempted the church leadership into planning the Kirtland Safety Society as a banking

¹⁸⁴Ibid., p.214.

¹⁸⁵Cook, (1985), p.71.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p.72.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., p.72.

company.¹⁸⁸ When the Kirtland Safety Society failed economically, the game was up for the church.

Ultimately, the prophet Joseph Smith decided to abandon Kirtland as a headquarters for the Church. He and his family moved to Far West, Missouri, in the early months of 1838. During the remainder of that year thousands of Latter-Day Saints did likewise.¹⁸⁹

By 1837, the church leadership in Missouri was basically out of money. Bishop Partridge had taken out a loan¹⁹⁰ of \$1,000 at 10% to pursue the lawsuits against the Jackson County mob, and needed to be reimbursed, having a large family and no income. In this context the church decided to switch to tithing, with an annual inventory assessment, a 2% contribution, and exemptions for everyone who fell below the \$75 threshold.¹⁹¹ The system did not last long, and with Joseph Smith [Jr, RCK]'s arrival in Far West, around April or May 1838,¹⁹² the old approach to consecration, including a storehouse under the auspices of the bishop, was restored.¹⁹³ The result was the revelation (= D&C 119) on tithing, which encompassed a wide form of consecration.¹⁹⁴

Even though people continued to consecrate willingly,¹⁹⁵ the financial pressures caused by the influx of Mormon believers did not subside.

By the following month, August 1838, as many as 30 wagons of poor Mormon families were arriving daily in the city [of Far West, Missouri, RCK]. The rapidly growing settlement was living wholly by | subsistence agriculture and subsistence crafts. With extremely limited credit opportunities and little capital, impossible demands were placed on the Church funds and private resources.¹⁹⁶

¹⁸⁸ Cf. below on pages pp.293-??.

¹⁸⁹ Cook, (1985), p.72.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p.75.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p.75.

¹⁹² Ibid., p.76.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p.77.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p.77.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p.79.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p.80.

The economic situation in Far West was so dire that cooperatives were formed operating on food-bartering schemes.¹⁹⁷ But even with intense cooperation, the brethren could not build more than one house per day,¹⁹⁸ and they were constantly distracted by the Missouri mobs in September 1838.¹⁹⁹ Food was so expensive that the prophet called for the consecration of beef, corn and firewood.²⁰⁰ It was the absence of wholesale markets that made the food so expensive.

Per | bushel, corn was 20 cents, beans \$1, wheat 88 cents, potatoes 31 cents, and apples 75 cents. Butter was 12 cents per pound, butter 7 cents, beef from 2-4 cents, and pork 3-4 cents. Soap was exorbitant at 19 cents per pound. Salt cost from 12-13 cents per quart, and firewood \$2 per cord. Clothing cost almost twice as much as it did in the East.²⁰¹

Then, in October and November 1838, sixty members of the Mormon leadership were arrested, and the governor ordered the Mormons to leave the state. The Mormons, once again poorer than before, migrated into Illinois.²⁰²

8.9 Outlook

Thus, from almost a state of beggary, the family of Smiths were immediately well furnished with the “fat of the land” by their fanatical followers, many of whom were wealthy.²⁰³

The failure of the law of consecration and stewardship to solve the pressing economic problems of the early Mormon church, both in Kirtland and Independence, disproves this often repeated assertion of Eber D. Howe’s 1834 exposé. In fact, not enough of the followers

¹⁹⁷Ibid., p.80.

¹⁹⁸Ibid., p.81.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., p.81.

²⁰⁰Ibid., p.81.

²⁰¹Ibid., pp.81-82.

²⁰²Ibid., p.82.

²⁰³Howe, (1834), p.112.

were wealthy to compensate for the very significant number of converts who, either through fire sales or lack of any property to begin with, confronted the bishops in Missouri and Ohio throughout the 1830s with simply insoluble problems.

Men like Edward Partridge, Isaac Morley, Joseph Knight Sr, Whitney Kimball Newel, John Johnson²⁰⁴ or Frederick G. Williams²⁰⁵ were indeed wealthy and had poured significant resources into the implementation of this ideal of a community of saints. But the sheer numbers of converts, some of whom were no doubt attracted by the economic prospects of receiving a leg up from their wealthier brethren, eclipsed the resources that the saints could muster.

This imbalance in resources undercut the positive effects that the fundamentally American and independent notion of stewardship should have had: with no surplus forthcoming from the small plots of inheritance, the only option was to continue to dilute the resource pool.

The situation was exacerbated by the volatile situation in Missouri, where the conflicts of 1833 through 1839 meant the loss of thousands of dollars of property and investment for the Saints.²⁰⁶

The large influx of Mormons was the flipside of the aggressive proselytizing strategy that was part and parcel of community-founding revelations such as D&C 42. The rate of conversion underscored the timeliness of the revelations and the message that the church was proclaiming. Yet one cannot overlook that the very economic troubles which made people receptive to the Mormon message were disproportionately affecting the economically less fortunate.

²⁰⁴ See below page p.277.

²⁰⁵ See below page p.275.

²⁰⁶ I am not aware of any study that breaks out the losses of the 1833 disturbances from the larger petitions of redress from the 1840s, edited by Clark V. Johnson in his definitive *Mormon Redress Petitions : Documents of the 1833-1838 Missouri Conflict*, Provo (FARMS) 1992. These petitions also include the 1836 relocation to Caldwell County and the 1838-39 "Mormon War" among the losses.

The church would have one more opportunity under the leadership of Joseph Smith Jr to try to build the true community of believers, when fleeing to Quincy, Illinois. Like Utah later on,²⁰⁷ Nauvoo was only intended as a holding position until the return to Independence, Missouri, would become possible. Independence was Zion—the revelations were clear on that. Yet the city of Nauvoo that the saints were then construct along the banks of the Mississippi River would, in its heyday, at twelve thousand inhabitants, be the largest in the state of Illinois.

²⁰⁷ Anecdote has it that, to his dying day, Brigham Young kept a team of horses harnessed and ready to go, just in case the revelation to return to Independence, Missouri, would come at last.

Chapter 9

The United Firm

9.1 Introduction

I have argued above—cf. page p.242—that from the moment of his arrival in Kirtland, Joseph Smith Jr was involved with matters of economic policy. There were two main parts to this effort: the division of economic potential within the community, what became known as the *Law of Consecration*, the topic of the previous chapter; and the setup of “a management team that helped direct the church’s early business affairs”¹, in the words of Parkin.²

This growing board of managers printed the first collection of Joseph Smith’s revelations; planned for the new city of Zion [at Independence, Missouri, RCK] and its temples, as it did for Kirtland; operated the Lord’s storehouses [at these two locations, RCK]; and fostered other commercial interests.³

This team of managers came together under a private business organization and partnership called the *United Firm*. The United Firm was a business forum for those members

¹Parkin, (2007), p.5.

² Parkin’s article reset the playing field on the United Firm in 2007 and forms the main interlocutor, positive or negative, for any analysis of the topic.

³Ibid., p.5.

of the Church whose agreement to socio-economic policies was prerequisite to their successful implementation. It placed the voices that had to be heard into one unified economic framework.

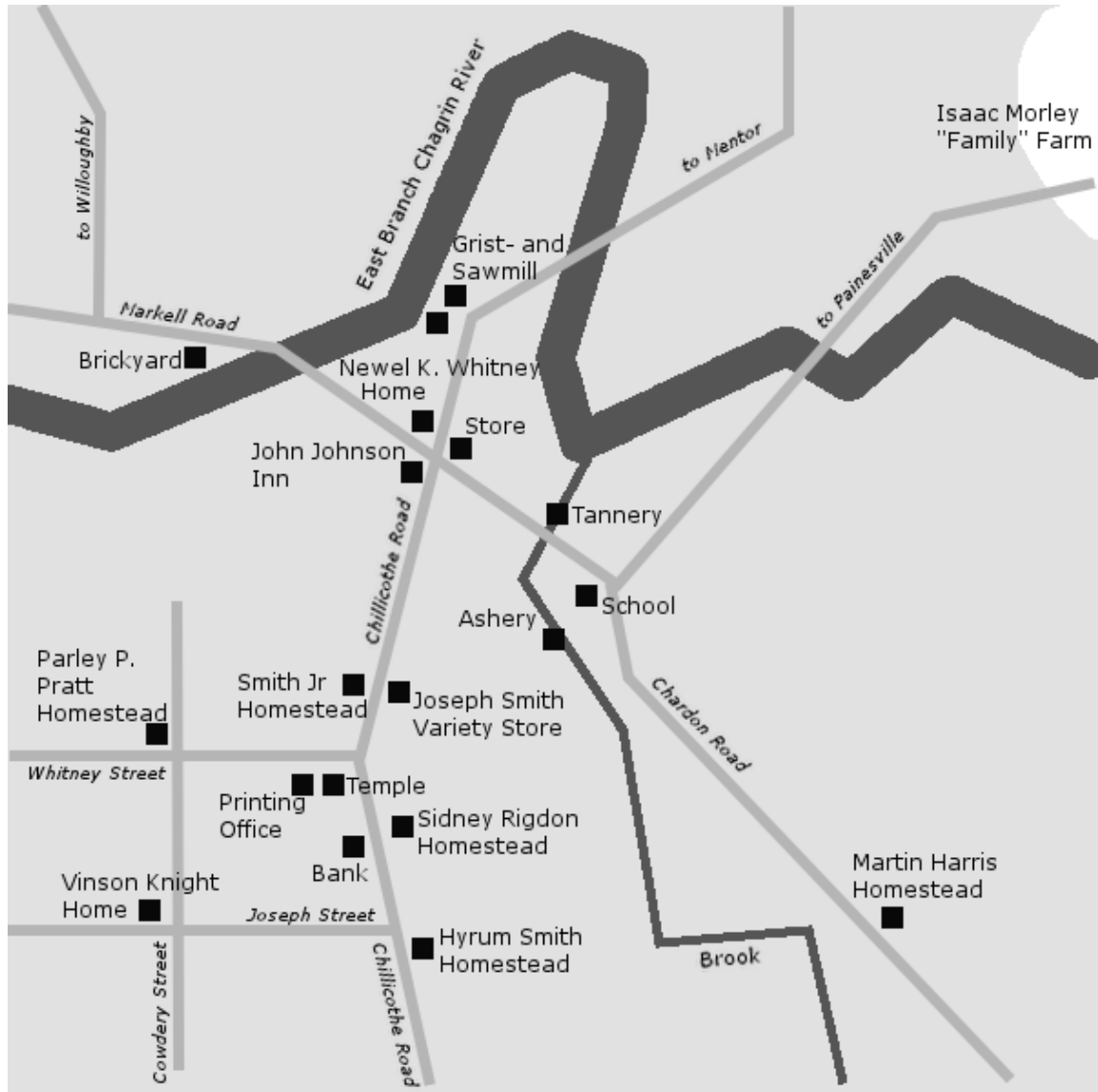


Figure 9.1: Schematic of Kirtland, Ohio around 1837/1838. Many of the properties managed through the United Firm are indicated, including the printing offices, the tannery and the ashery and the Johnson Inn. Drawing by the author.

The origin story of this firm, its shifting memberships, and its economic successes and difficulties are the subject matter of this chapter. The fact that the members of the United Firm were responsible for operating the Lord's storehouses shows their close affiliation with the Law of Consecration. Their internal redistribution of wealth and holdings echoes the tenets of the Law of Consecration and Stewardship. But the United Firm was organized independently of that law.

Several circumstances complicate the reconstruction of the history of this business management association. First, even though the United Firm was a private business partnership, it was nevertheless governed by revelations, many of which made their way into the standard D&C.

Second, at some point the financial difficulties of the United Firm made it advisable for the participants to use code names for the members, business properties and locales mentioned in the revelations,⁴ as well as code names for the firm, such as "United Order" or "Revelation given to Enoch"—cf. D&C 104.⁵

Third, the United Firm only existed until Spring of 1834, but its members continued to collaborate thereafter, dealing partially with the aftermath of the firm's business ventures, and participating in the highest echelons of the church's leadership and hierarchy.

Fourth, when Brigham Young rebooted the consecration and stewardship approach in Utah, Young unfortunately reused one of the code names and spoke of the "Utah *United Order*".⁶ Such semantic recycling tricked researchers into thinking that the United Firm was connected to the Law of Consecration and in continuity with it—not through the persons involved, but in some other manner, perhaps economically or theologically. But

⁴ Unraveling this obfuscation took until the middle of the nineteenth century and was mainly the work of Orson Pratt in 1852. Cf. also Parkin, (2007), p.6; p.58f.

⁵ While the real names were added back in brackets in the 1878 edition by Pratt, and the code names removed in the 1981 edition, the firm's code words "order" and "United Order" persisted; cf. *ibid.*, p.50

⁶*Ibid.*, p.6.

Young had never been a member of the original United Firm, and had no special insights into its workings.

Finally, the Kirtland Period in general was anything but a period of calm theological development; the church continued to struggle with general acceptance in Missouri and Ohio, with doctrinal developments, with a steady increase in often poor membership, concurrent with the beginning of estrangement among core members,⁷ and with economic difficulties. The United Firm, in all its complexity, was just one strand in a skein that was already difficult to comprehend.

9.2 Initial Founding

By February 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio, he [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] began to inquire about economic matters [i.e. the so-called Law of Stewardship and Consecration, RCK], and by July, the twenty-five-year-old Joseph Smith embarked on a path of land acquisition, community planning, and other commercial ventures. He operated his businesses under the principles of consecration and stewardship and coordinated his enterprises through a business management company he named the United Firm. He supervised the firm by revelation, including a final lengthy revelation in April 1834 | that terminated the company.⁸

The United Firm arose from a revelation in response to deliberations in Independence, Missouri, in 1832, over founding a mercantile business.⁹

They [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr and other Church leaders gathered at Independence, Missouri, RCK] joined the new branch with an already established business in Kirtland and named the unified enterprise the United Firm.¹⁰

Then, after the firm had experienced two years of lively financial activity, debt encroached, and Joseph Smith received a revelation on April 23, 1834, to re-

⁷ Apostasy and disfellowshipment would not become virulent until the 1838-39 period in Missouri, when the crash of the Kirtland Anti-Banking Society set emotions high and brought long-simmering differences out into the open; cf. below pages pp.293ff.

⁸Parkin, (2007), pp.5-6.

⁹Ibid., p.6.

¹⁰Ibid., p.6.

trench and set the firm in order. This lengthy revelation, D&C 104, directed the Prophet to terminate the firm as then organized and redistribute its Kirtland business properties and urban and rural real estate to its officers for their own use or management. While naming the properties, the revelation provides readers with a rich inventory of the company's Kirtland holdings.¹¹

Detractors will point out that the established business in Kirtland was merely Newel K Whitney's and Gilbert's store, and later, the land-holdings of men like Johnson and Williams. This pool of resources was used to provide the livelihood of Joseph Smith Jr, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris.

The United Firm was segregated into the United Firm at Kirtland and the United Firm at Missouri.¹² Parkin offers an annotated version of the earliest known manuscript form of the revelation¹³ taken from Orson Pratt's manuscript notebook C.

Joseph Smith Jr and his family had been accompanied to Kirtland by Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge and arrived around February 1 of 1831.¹⁴ The main tasks for Joseph Smith Jr during the first months in Kirtland were, in Parkin's reconstruction, determining the economic plan¹⁵ and the location for Zion, as well as publishing the revelations.¹⁶

Joseph Smith Jr had designated Edward Partridge, a Plainsville merchant, as the first bishop of the Church on February 4, 1831.¹⁷

By June 1831, key members of the future United Firm visited Jackson County, Missouri, and determined that Independence would be the future Zion.¹⁸ Of the Church elders present, Joseph Smith Jr selected a local team to put the economic infrastructure for Zion in place.

¹¹Ibid., p.7.

¹²Ibid., p.7.

¹³Ibid., pp.41-57.

¹⁴Ibid., p.8.

¹⁵ Cf. the discussion of that plan in the previous chapter, above on pages pp.227ff.

¹⁶Parkin, (2007), p.8.

¹⁷Ibid., p.8.

¹⁸Ibid., p.10.

At Independence, a revelation [dated July 20th, 1831, RCK] appointed Bishop Partridge to administer the new economic program of consecration and stewardship in Missouri; Algernon Sidney Gilbert, Whitney's mercantile partner in Kirtland, to establish a store at Independence; and William W. Phelps to serve there as "printer unto the Church" with Oliver Cowdery as his assistant. (= D&C 57) Phelps, who had converted to the Church only a month before, was suited to the job, having served as editor or publisher of newspapers in New York.¹⁹

In December of 1831, Newel K. Whitney became the bishop in Kirtland, and was told by revelation to put his company and store at the disposal of the church as the bishop's storehouse.

[Newel K. Whitney, RCK] consecrated his two-story, white-frame store, the anchor of his N.K. Whitney & Company, to the service of the Church. After doing so, he continued to operate the store not only for public use but also for use as the Lord's storehouse, which sometimes helped poor Saints, needy missionaries, and later the officers of the United Firm.²⁰

After the United Firm was organized in the Spring of 1832, Whitney continued to consecrate more of his property for the use of the United Firm, including:

a residential lot on the hill near the site of the future temple and properties near his store at the crossroads in the main village center, located a half mile north of the temple lot and in the valley or flats of the east branch of the Chagrin River. The properties near his house comprised a lot for his residence and another house, a commercial lot he owned with a business partner, and a profitable ashery.²¹

In the summer of 1831, after returning from Missouri, Joseph Smith Jr directed his attention to his publication pursuits²², moving to Hiram, Portage County, where his family lived with John and Elsa Johnson, as Smith Jr worked on editing the "New Translation" of

¹⁹Parkin, (2007), p.10.

²⁰Ibid., p.9.

²¹Ibid., p.9.

²²Ibid., p.11.

the Bible²³ and preparing the revelations for publication.²⁴ The press for these publications was purchased by Phelps in Cincinnati.²⁵

The process of publishing the revelations required five conferences with various leading elders, held from November 1 to 13, 1831.²⁶

At their final meeting, they organized a “literary firm”, an antecedent to the United Firm, to manage Church publications and provide an income for its officers. Named at a meeting with a “claim on the church for recompense” for past publishing services were Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, John Whitmer and Martin Harris. (= D&C 70)²⁷

Joseph Smith said, “Br. Oliver has labored with me from the beginning in writing &c Br Martin has labored with me from the beginning, brs John and Sidney also for a considerable time, & as these sacred writings are now going to the Church for their benefit, that we may have claim on the Church for recompense.”²⁸

The only change that the conference made was adding Phelps to the list of officers to help manage the literary firm in Zion.²⁹

Until the literary firm could generate enough income of its own, however, the officers were allowed to draw from the Lord’s storehouses for their needs; once acquired, surplus earnings from the sales of publications were to be turned over to the storehouse for the Church’s use. (= D&C 70; D&C 42; D&C 72)³⁰

Whitmer and Cowdery travelled to Independence, Missouri, departing November 20, 1831 and arriving January 5, 1832, where they began to work on the printer’s copy of the revelations. By June 1832, the new publishing company of W. W. Phelps & Co, was

²³ This “new translation” was intended to eradicate mistakes and suppressions by past canonists and back-ported much of Christian theology into the early biblical books, e.g. Genesis. On the malicious canonists, cf. above on page p.137.

²⁴ Parkin, (2007), p.11.

²⁵ Ibid., p.11.

²⁶ Ibid., p.11.

²⁷ Ibid., p.11.

²⁸ Ibid., p.11 Fn 20, citing Cannon and Cook, (1983), p.32.

²⁹ Parkin, (2007), p.11.

³⁰ Ibid., p.12.

publishing *The Evening and the Morning Star*, “which contained imprints of the revelations awaiting fuller publication in the Book of Commandments”.³¹

With revelation D&C 78, given March 1, 1832, the prophet and his team began to tackle the growing economic and financial interests of the church.

“The time has come,” stated a revelation (D&C 78) in March 1832, for Newel K. Whitney, Joseph Smith, and Sidney Rigdon to “sit in council” with the Saints in Missouri. A crucial but unpublished part of the revelation informed the prophet as to their specific purpose for going to Missouri. There “must needs be . . . an organization of the literary and mercantile establishments of my church both in this place and in the land of Zion,” it declared.³²

Thus they were directed to operate the Church’s mercantile and literary interests as a united enterprise to be governed by a single board of managers.³³

Through their partnership in this “everlasting covenant” the managers would be “equal in both heavenly and earthly things”.³⁴ On March 8th, 1832, Joseph Smith Jr appointed Jesse Gause³⁵ to be one of his councilors (Sidney Rigdon being the other); along with Newel K. Whitney, they left for Missouri April 1, 1832, arriving April 24, 1832.³⁶ Armed with an additional revelation (D&C 82) given on April 26 in Independence, the leaders set up their business structure on April 27, 1832.

The following day, April 27 [1832, RCK], compliant to the March commandment to organize the mercantile establishment in Missouri, they established Gilbert, Whitney and Company, a business that would manage the store in Independence to serve the public and the Saints as the bishop’s storehouse in Zion. At the meeting, the leaders joined the new company with the N. K.

³¹Parkin, (2007), p.12.

³²Ibid., p.12.

³³Ibid., p.13.

³⁴Ibid., p.13.

³⁵ On Gause, see Michael D. Quinn, *Jesse Gause: Joseph Smith’s Little Known Counselor*, BYU Studies 23, no 4 (1983), p.487; Robert J. Woodford, *Jesse Gause—Counselor to the Prophet*, BYU Studies 15, no 3 (1975), p.362-364; cf. *ibid.*, p.14 Fn 27

³⁶Ibid., p.13.

Whitney and Company of Kirtland and named the newly integrated mercantile establishment the United Firm. (= HC 1:270)³⁷

Parkin notes that Gilbert had already been operating a church store from his house at that time.³⁸

On April 30, the officers of the United Firm met and shaped a guiding policy allowing the firm to expand when “special business” was introduced to it. Nine of the firm’s ten members attended this meeting [Martin Harris was absent;³⁹ RCK]. The ten officers of the firm were Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Newel K. Whitney, Jesse Gause, and Martin Harris of Kirtland, and Oliver Cowdery, William W. Phelps, Edward Partridge, John Whitmer, and Algernon Sidney Gilbert of Independence. Phelps and Gilbert drafted a bond to bind the members of the partnership, and Whitney and Gilbert were appointed as financial agents for their respective branches.⁴⁰

Critics have argued that, in effect, Whitney and Gilbert were subsidizing Smith Jr, Rigdon, and possibly even Harris and Whitmer.⁴¹

Possessing managerial, financial or publishing skills, members of the United Firm consecrated their time, money, property and energy and pledged their cooperation to advance the business of their new joint stewardship.⁴²

9.3 Shifts and Realignments

9.3.1 Independence and Connectedness

While income from the firm’s various enterprises was stated to be available for the temporal needs of the officers (= D&C 82), each member was to manage his own stewardship or

³⁷Ibid., p.13.

³⁸Ibid., p.13 fn 34.

³⁹Ibid., p.14 Fn 37.

⁴⁰Ibid., p.14.

⁴¹ Parkin makes no mention of what Phelps and Gause had consecrated to the United Firm. Parkin does not mention Partridge either, but the fact that Partridge consecrated generously I established earlier; cf. above on pages pp.228ff.

⁴²Ibid., p.15.

responsibility within the firm for the benefit of the Church, requiring at times that the partners assist each other.⁴³

Parkin gives as an example a June 1833 missive from the Presidency to Bishop Partridge in Independence, which instructs Partridge to support the printing of the D&C with the income from the store in Zion.⁴⁴ Newel K Whitney, in a letter to S[amuel] F. Whitney (possibly from October 2nd, 1842), pointed out

that by seeking the interest of one another and effecting the success of their united cause, but without ever holding “any property in common”, . . . , they could achieve the firm’s ultimate fiscal goal of enabling the Church to stand financially “independent of all creatures” . . .⁴⁵

This meant that neither did the company own what it managed, nor that ownership was shared among the partners.

The deed titles to its [i.e. the United Firm, RCK] businesses remained in the names of individual Latter-day Saint landowners or business proprietors. Various officers of the United Firm owned and managed the following properties: N.K. Whitney and Company; Gilbert, Whitney and Company; W.W. Phelps and Company (entities previously identified); F.G. Williams and Company; Whitney’s Kirtland ashery; the firm’s real estate—including a commercial lot owned jointly by Whitney and Gilbert; the farm of Frederick G. Williams; the former Peter French | farm at Kirtland; and Bishop Partridge’s stewardship lands in Missouri—and other properties.⁴⁶

The only changes in the board membership occurred in December 3, 1832, when Jesse Gause was excommunicated and thus removed from the board;⁴⁷ and in 1833, when John Johnson⁴⁸ and Frederick G. Williams, who had been part of the First Presidency for one week,⁴⁹ joined the board.

⁴³Parkin, (2007), p.15.

⁴⁴Ibid., p.15.

⁴⁵Ibid., p.15.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp.15-16.

⁴⁷Ibid., p.14 Fn 37.

⁴⁸Ibid., p.14 Fn 41.

⁴⁹ This took place on March 15, 1833, cf. *ibid.*, p.14 Fn 40. For Williams joining the presidency, cf.

9.3.2 Dr Frederick G. Williams

Frederick G. Williams had made his 144-acre farm available to the arriving Saints in February of 1831;⁵⁰ Joseph Smith Jr had settled his aging parents thereupon.⁵¹ Parkin sees an example of consecration and stewardship in Lucy's comment that any surplus became available "for the comfort of strangers".⁵² The Smith Srs stayed there until December 1835, when Joseph Jr took them into his own house.⁵³

By January 5, 1833, however, a revelation directed Frederick G. Williams to sell the farm altogether, possibly to fund the printing of the revelations in Zion.⁵⁴ Together with Peter French's farmland and the breaking of ground for the Kirtland Temple in June 5, 1833, the Williams farm became part and parcel of a "much larger vision of Kirtland municipal planning, in which both the Williams farm and the French farm would play a major role".⁵⁵

This planning found expression in a plat map⁵⁶ of Kirtland from 1833 for the "foundation of the city of the stake of Zion" (= D&C 94).

The Williams farm would provide most of the southwest quarter of the proposed city and the French farm would provide most of the northwest quarter.⁵⁷

The plat map | showed the city divided into forty-nine ten-acre blocks and blocks subdivided into twenty half-acre building lots. The temple lot on the southeast edge of the French farm was combined with a similar, adjacent temple lot on the northeast edge of the Williams farm; together they formed the easter

below on page p.276.

⁵⁰Ibid., p.16.

⁵¹ Williams assisted the Smith Srs with the farm work; cf. (MISSING 2099). This is a case of patronage toward the First Patriarch of the Church in the same vein as Thomas Campbell had received from his neighbors; cf. above on page p.220.

⁵²Ibid., p.16.

⁵³Ibid., p.17; p.17 Fn 52.

⁵⁴Ibid., p.17.

⁵⁵Ibid., p.17.

⁵⁶Ibid., p.18 Fig 4.

⁵⁷Ibid., p.18.

third of the city's new center block.⁵⁸

The lot would house not only a temple, but also offices for the Presidency and a large publishing house for the church.⁵⁹ This part fell to Smith Jr when the United Firm disbanded.

Two weeks after Joseph received the April revelation [i.e. April 1834, D&C 104, involving the dissolution of the United Firm, RCK], Frederick G. Williams transferred title of his farm to Joseph Smith in two separate deeds, one for the temple lot on his farm, and the other for the rest of his farm, which then was just over 142 acres.⁶⁰

The Peter French farm, 103 acres “located on the flats of the Chagrin River and southward up the hill to the Williams farm”⁶¹, had been purchased by “short-term Church land agent”⁶² Joseph Coe, with \$2,000 down and “the remaining balance of \$3,000 [to be paid, RCK] in two equal payments in April 1834 and 1835”.⁶³ On June 4, 1833, a revelation moved the Peter French farm into the possession of N.K. Whitney as the holding company,⁶⁴ which acquired the debt⁶⁵ and managed it.⁶⁶

D&C 96 wanted the lots of the combined French and Williams farms to be sold off to benefit the Revelation publication project.⁶⁷ Williams, possibly in recognition of his consecration, was added to the United Firm board in March of 1833⁶⁸; he had already replaced Gause as counselor in the First Presidency earlier.⁶⁹

⁵⁸Parkin, (2007), p.18.

⁵⁹Ibid., p.19.

⁶⁰Ibid., p.19.

⁶¹Ibid., p.19.

⁶²Ibid., p.19.

⁶³Ibid., p.19.

⁶⁴Ibid., p.19.

⁶⁵Ibid., p.21.

⁶⁶ The deed is dated June 17, 1833; cf. *ibid.*, p.21 Fn 58.

⁶⁷Ibid., p.21.

⁶⁸Ibid., p.21.

⁶⁹Ibid., p.21.

9.3.3 The Johnson Family

John Johnson originally hailed from Pomfret, Windsor County, Vermont, a town close to Sharon, where Joseph Smith Jr's had been born. In 1818, Johnson moved his family to Hiram, Portage County, Ohio. Through his own contributions, as well as through the work of two of his sons, Luke and Lyman, and his son-in-law Orson Hyde, who had married John's daughter Marinda, the Johnson family was very influential during much of the Kirtland period.⁷⁰

By February of 1831, when Joseph Smith Jr and his wife Emma Hale Smith arrived in Kirtland, the Johnsons had been practicing Methodists in the congregation of Ezra Booth for four or five years. After Smith Jr cured the chronic rheumatism in Elsa Johnson's arm,⁷¹ John and Elsa, as well as Marinda and another son, John Jr, were baptized.⁷² The Johnsons invited the Smiths and the Rigdons to take up residency with them,⁷³ to support the Bible-Translation project that Smith Jr and Rigdon were then working on.

John Johnson

John Johnson joined the United Firm in June of 1833,⁷⁴ with the expectation that he would consecrate the sales of his Portage County, Ohio, farm, to the United Firm.⁷⁵ As Johnson moved from Hiram to Kirtland, the two-and-a-half story brick house on Peter French's farm, also known as the former French Inn, became his "stewardship and residency"⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Luke Johnson (1864). "History of Luke Johnson by Himself (Part I)". in: *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 26.53, pp. 836–840; Luke Johnson (1865). "History of Luke Johnson by Himself (Part II)". in: *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 27.1, pp. 7–8; Keith Perkins (1979). "A House Divided: The John Johnson Family". In: *Ensign*, pp. 54–59; Jenson, (1886).

⁷¹ Contemporary accounts enthuse that the next day she did her washing "without difficulty or pain" (= HC I:215f).

⁷² John Jr apostasized in March of 1832, and another son, Olmstead, never joined in the first place; cf. Perkins, (1979)

⁷³ Cf. page p.242 above.

⁷⁴ Parkin, (2007), p.21.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p.21.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p.21.

and thenceforth was known as the Johnson Inn.⁷⁷ In February of 1834, John became a member of the newly established High Council of the Church.⁷⁸ On February 14, 1835, John together with his sons Luke and Lyman were called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.⁷⁹

When the great apostasy took place in Kirtland, in 1837 and 1838, [John, RCK] Johnson, like many others, was affected thereby, and finally died as a non-member, in Kirtland, July 30, 1843.⁸⁰

Luke Johnson

Luke Johnson, born in 1807, was baptized into the Mormon Church in May of 1831⁸¹ and undertook several mission trips, one with Sidney Rigdon. In February of 1834, Luke was also chosen to become a member of the High Council of the Church.⁸² Luke and his brother Lyman, whom I discuss next, participated in Zion's Camp and famously rowed across the Missouri river to discharge three rounds from within Jackson County.⁸³

Luke attended the Hebrew School organized for the elders and received his temple endowments in 1836.⁸⁴ In 1837, in the aftermath of the Kirtland Anti-Banking Society's collapse,⁸⁵ Luke and his brother Lyman, together with John F. Boynton, were initially cut off from the Church at the Conference held in Kirtland, September 3, 1837, but confessed, gave satisfaction and were restored the next Sunday.⁸⁶

Luke was a good friend of the Smith family, helping the prophet in escaping Kirtland

⁷⁷ The ownership of the French farm was transferred from Whitney & Co to Johnson in 1836, two years after the dissolution of the United Firm; cf. Parkin, (2007), p.22.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.33; Johnson, (1864), p.835.

⁷⁹ Johnson, (1865), p.5; Jenson, (1886), p.54.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.32.

⁸¹ Johnson, (1864), p.835.

⁸² Ibid., p.836.

⁸³ Ibid., p.836.

⁸⁴ Johnson, (1865), p.5.

⁸⁵ Cf. below page pp.293-??.

⁸⁶ Johnson, (1865), p.6; Jenson, (1886), p.43.

on January 12, 1838, as well as assisting both Father Smith Sr⁸⁷ and Dr Frederick G. Williams in “vexatious” suits.⁸⁸ However, in Far West, Missouri, on April 13, 1838, he was finally cut off for apostasy.⁸⁹ After many years of living near his in-laws in Cabell County, Virginia, he reconciled with the Church in 1846 in Nauvoo and relocated to Utah.⁹⁰

Lyman Johnson

Lyman Johnson,⁹¹ born in 1812, was baptized by Sidney Rigdon in February of 1831; accompanied his older brother Luke to Zion’s Camp in 1834; and was ordained an Apostle on February 14, 1835. Lyman attended Hebrew School with his brother. In 1836, he entered into merchandising. Like Luke, Lyman was disfellowshipped and rejoined in September of 1837, then was finally cut off in Far West, Missouri, on April 13, 1838. He continued friendly relations with the Mormons during the Nauvoo era, practicing law in nearby Davenport, Iowa. Lyman drowned in the Mississippi River at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, on December 20, 1856.⁹²

Marinda Johnson

Nancy Marinda Johnson is best known as the daughter of John Johnson, sister of Luke and Lyman Johnson, and wife of Orson Hyde.⁹³ During Orson Hyde’s long mission to Palestine, she was sealed to Joseph Smith Jr, who apparently shared her with his then-secretary, Willard Richards.⁹⁴ As an initiate of the inner circle for spiritual wifery, she served as

⁸⁷Eliza R. Snow (1884). *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Co., p.22f.

⁸⁸Johnson, (1865), p.6.

⁸⁹ Luke Johnson does not mention this event in his own history, making it sound as if he never followed the church to Missouri, but rather went straight to Virginia.

⁹⁰Jenson, (1886), p.43f.

⁹¹Ibid., p.54.

⁹² Perkins reports that Wilford Wood suggested that the drowning was a suicide; cf. Perkins, (1979).

⁹³Jenson, (1886), p.37.

⁹⁴Von Wagoner, (1994), p.294.

chaperon for some of the “recruiting” meetings, e.g. in the case of Nancy Rigdon.⁹⁵

9.4 The United Firm at Work

9.4.1 Businesses in Kirtland

Newel K. Whitney had originally purchased the lot for his ashery⁹⁶ from Peter French in 1822, when newly wed.⁹⁷ After he consecrated his ashery, Whitney continued to operate it profitably for the United Firm.⁹⁸ The ashery may be one of the better-known businesses, but was by no means the only business the United Firm operated.

Other industries used or operated at Kirtland by Latter-day Saints included a brickyard, a stone quarry, a saw mill, and a tannery, some of which were supervised by the United Firm.⁹⁹

The brickyard, for example, had been purchased by Joseph Coe as part of the French farm and was supervised by Frederick G. Williams.¹⁰⁰ The tannery had been established by Arnold Mason, a non-Mormon, who had bought the lot from French as well.¹⁰¹ On April 2, 1833, Ezra Thanner was authorized by the council of high priests to buy the tannery for the church.¹⁰² The purchase was only completed after the dissolution of the United Firm, on May 3rd 1834; nevertheless, the tannery was included in the property list of the firm.

9.4.2 Properties in Missouri

Joseph Smith Jr had emphasized buying land in Missouri as early as 1831.¹⁰³

⁹⁵Von Wagoner, (1994), p.295.

⁹⁶ Cf. above page p.235

⁹⁷Parkin, (2007), p.22.

⁹⁸Ibid., p.22.

⁹⁹Ibid., p.22.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p.22.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p.23.

¹⁰²Ibid., p.23.

¹⁰³Ibid., p.23.

Buy “every tract lying westward” to the Indian border and southward “every tract bordering by the prairies” pronounced a revelation (= D&C 57) in Independence that July [i.e. July 1831, RCK]. The Prophet Joseph and others immediately scouted much of the area in Kaw township from the Blue River west of town to the Indian line, ten miles west of the Jackson County courthouse.¹⁰⁴

That same month [i.e. July 26th, 1831,¹⁰⁵ RCK], Bishop Edward Partridge purchased 356 acres in four tracts in Kaw township.¹⁰⁶

On August 8, . . . , Partridge bought two adjacent town lots, one for Phelps’ printing house, a half block south of the courthouse [in Independence, Missouri, RCK].¹⁰⁷

As funds became available, Bishop Partridge acquired a total of 2,136 acres in Jackson County, most of which he distributed to the Latter-day Saints as stewardships¹⁰⁸ of about twenty acres each.¹⁰⁹

Other than in Ohio, where 100-plus acres of developed land could cost several thousand dollars¹¹⁰ by this time,¹¹¹ Bishop Partridge was able to snap up the 63 acres for the temple lot, a half-mile west of the courthouse, for \$130 on December 19th, 1831.¹¹²

Partridge was not the only one buying land in Jackson County.¹¹³ Sidney Gilbert had bought a town lot with a log building on Lynn Street, a block southeast of the courthouse, for his own residency and initial church store.¹¹⁴ In November 1832, six months after the organization of the United Firm, Gilbert bought a lot “facing the courthouse on the northwest corner of the intersection of Lexington and Liberty streets” for the mercantile firm Gilbert, Whitney and Company.¹¹⁵ On December 29, 1832, Phelps & Co, in the persons

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p.23.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p.24 Fn 74.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p.23.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p.24.

¹⁰⁸ For the continued development of stewardships in Missouri, cf. the discussion on page p.252 above.

¹⁰⁹Parkin, (2007), p.24.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p.19.

¹¹¹ For a discussion of the shift from low to high land prices, cf. above page p.54.

¹¹²Parkin, (2007), p.24.

¹¹³Ibid., p.25.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p.25.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p.25.

of Phelps, Cowdery and Whitmer, purchased four lots on Liberty Street at \$160.¹¹⁶ Gilbert, Whitney & Co added four more lots on Liberty Street, a block south of the courthouse and across from the Phelps & Co lots, paying \$50 for more than an acre on August 14th, 1833.¹¹⁷ Finally, Gilbert, Whitney & Co bought 154 acres on the Missouri River,¹¹⁸ immediately west of the the principal freight landing, Blue Mills landing, and five miles northeast of Independence.¹¹⁹ Most likely they “considered it valuable in developing a landing for their use in the mercantile business and for Mormon immigration to the county”,¹²⁰ Parkin speculates.

On June 25 1833, a package was distributed within the United Firm that described the urban planning envisioned for Zion.¹²¹ The plat described Zion as a mile-square block with two fifteen-acre center lots for twenty-four buildings, dedicated to worship and education. Because of the great need for a meeting house and school, the first of the twenty-four temple buildings was intended for that purpose (= D&C 97). The second package, which Oliver Cowdery had had helped prepare upon his return to Kirtland, contained the corrections from August 6, 1833, for a two-mile square block, with five more tiers of blocks and two ten acre blocks in the middle for the temple buildings, plus a pattern for larger buildings.¹²² Unfortunately, the Missouri saints could not implement these suggestions, as the situation in Jackson County had escalated dramatically before the second package had arrived.

9.4.3 Missouri Operations Disrupted

Severe conflict flared up on July 20, 1833, when the local citizens demonstrated against the Mormons [in Independence, Missouri, RCK] by tarring and feather-

¹¹⁶Parkin, (2007), p.25 Fn 82.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p.25 Fn 81.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p.25.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p.26.

¹²⁰Ibid., p.26.

¹²¹Ibid., p.26.

¹²²Ibid., p.27.

ing Edward Partridge and Charles Allen on the courthouse square. That same day, the brawling citizens next attacked the store, which Gilbert quickly closed to save it, and tore down the nearby two-story brick house and printing shop of W.W. Phelps and Company. They threw the type and unfinished papers of the *Book of Commandments* and *The Evening and the Morning Star* into the street, demolished the building to its foundation and gave the Saints an ultimatum that required them to leave the county beginning at the end of the year.¹²³

When the Mormons decided to stand their ground, the situation grew worse, and in October and November of 1833 the citizens of Jackson County attacked the Mormon settlements and institutions,¹²⁴ damaging the Gilbert & Whitney store as well as its goods and leaving accounts receivable unpaid.¹²⁵ With the majority of Mormons chased into Clay County, most of the assets of the United Firm in Missouri were “either destroyed or unavailable”.¹²⁶ Obtaining legal redress dragged on, with judgement from the Circuit Court only handed down in 1836, opposing the mob defendants, but merely awarding 1 cent to Bishop Partridge and \$750 to Phelps for trespassing charges.¹²⁷ In short:

The Missouri officers of the United Firm received little recompense from the Missouri courts of law.¹²⁸

9.4.4 The Literary Firm Moves to Ohio

Smith Jr decided immediately to get the Literary Firm moved to Kirtland until the Missouri situation was sorted out, writing on August 18, 1833:

We shall get a press immediately in this place and print the [Evening and Morning, RCK] Star until you can obtain deliverence [sic RCK] and git [sic

¹²³Ibid., p.29.

¹²⁴Ibid., p.30.

¹²⁵Ibid., p.30.

¹²⁶Ibid., p.30.

¹²⁷Ibid., p.31.

¹²⁸Ibid., p.31.

RCK] up again.¹²⁹

By September 11, 1833, Oliver Cowdery had arrived from Missouri to represent that branch of the United Firm, and together with Smith Jr, Rigdon, Whitney and Williams, the new Kirtland publishing firm of F. G. Williams & Co. was established. Williams as the publisher was authorized to re-issue and print the *Evening and Morning Star*, while beginning work on its replacement, the new Latter-day Saints *Messenger and Advocate*, both papers edited by Oliver Cowdery.¹³⁰ The press was brought from New York in December 1833; the first printing was set up in the upper room of the Johnson Inn (formerly the French Inn),¹³¹ and soon the first issue of the *Evening and Morning Star* was published.¹³² Sometime between August and October 1834, the operation moved into the top floor of the school building next to the temple lot,¹³³ and the first issue of the *Messenger & Advocate* was issued there.¹³⁴ Phelps and Whitmer were brought back to Kirtland to help with the publication of the revelations; they arrived May 17, 1835, and Whitmer became editor of the *Messenger & Advocate* in June 1835.

9.4.5 Disagreements in the United Firm

The challenges that the United Firm faced, especially with the establishment of Zion in Missouri, were serious and at times appeared crippling. Unsurprisingly, emotions ran high and frustrations came to the fore. Dissent and tensions were part of everyday life within the United Firm.

As the United Firm was established, its leaders made a covenant of solidarity. Sometimes, however, they had trouble fulfilling their ideal. Distance, differ-

¹²⁹Parkin, (2007), p.31.

¹³⁰Ibid., p.32.

¹³¹Ibid., p.32.

¹³²Ibid., p.32.

¹³³Ibid., p.32.

¹³⁴Ibid., p.32.

ing views on administrative policy, misunderstandings and perhaps personality variances sometimes got in their way.¹³⁵

The first disagreements in the United Firm went all the way back to the disappointing initial conversion results in Independence, Missouri, which had led Ezra Booth to leave the church.¹³⁶ Partridge had shared Booth's doubt in the face of Smith's optimism, and Rigdon continued to bring up this episode until Partridge and Rigdon reconciled in Independence in April 1832.¹³⁷

Bishop Partridge was briefly threatened with replacement in November 1832 (= D&C 85),¹³⁸ but the crisis passed.¹³⁹ There were problems with Bishop Whitney as well.¹⁴⁰ Even during the crisis in Independence, Zion and Kirtland exchanged sharp reprimands.¹⁴¹

In the final revelation for dissolution of the United Firm,¹⁴² which was supposed to have been an "everlasting" institution, the transgressions that caused the Lord to alter His plans are the "covetousness" as well as the "feigned words" of the Missouri branch.¹⁴³

9.4.6 The Introduction of High Councils

In February 1834, Joseph Smith Jr undertook a reorganization of the Church hierarchy.

A new "standing high council of the Church in Kirtland" was convened, consisting of "fifteen high priests, three presidents and a body of twelve counselors" with "legislative and ecclesiastical authority".¹⁴⁴ Of the Kirtland branch of the United Firm, Joseph Smith Jr, Sidney Rigdon, Frederick G. Williams, Oliver Cowdery, John Johnson, and Martin Harris

¹³⁵Ibid., p.35.

¹³⁶Ibid., p.35.

¹³⁷Ibid., p.35.

¹³⁸Ibid., p.35.

¹³⁹Ibid., p.36.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p.35 Fn 129.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p.36.

¹⁴²Ibid., p.41.

¹⁴³Ibid., p.41 Fn 162; p.41 Fn 163.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p.33.

were part of the high council;¹⁴⁵ Bishop Whitney was not.

Whether the dissolution of the United Firm was already in the cards at that point, and influenced the reorganization, or whether the reorganization merely made it easier to dissolve the United Firm post facto, is unclear to me. Due to the distances involved, Joseph Smith Jr had no opportunity to reorganize the Missouri branch until the summer of 1834, with the march of Zion's Camp to liberate the Saints in Missouri. By then, the United Firm had been dissolved for over two months.

On July 7, 1834, Smith Jr organized the High Council of Zion, with David and John Whitmer as well as W.W. Phelps as presidents, and a group of twelve high counselors to assist them.¹⁴⁶ Bishop Partridge was not a member. On June 29, 1834, Algernon Sidney Gilbert had succumbed to the cholera epidemic raging in Zion's Camp.¹⁴⁷ His demise, eight days before the re-organization on July 7, 1834, leaves the question of whether or not he would have been part of the High Council unanswerable.

9.5 Separation and Obfuscation

By March 1834, it was clear that the United Firm was heavily in debt. Whitney had been authorized to acquire a \$5,000 loan for the firm back in 1832, and with those funds the firm had stocked the stores in Zion and Kirtland and bought the paper for Phelps' printing work.¹⁴⁸ Another press required another loan, and in spring of 1834, both the French loan and some of the New York loans came due.¹⁴⁹

There was internal debt as well.

Partners of the firm in Kirtland accrued debt as they drew from the Whitney

¹⁴⁵Parkin, (2007), p.33.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p.34.

¹⁴⁷ On the connection between population density and disease, see also page p.54 above.

¹⁴⁸Parkin, (2007), p.37.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p.38.

store either as paying customers or as beneficiaries of the Lord's storehouse. Nevertheless, Whitney kept a record of accounts receivable on members of the firm. In spring 1834, Joseph sought to have these internal debts canceled.¹⁵⁰

An internal revelation required that "every one of which were then called the firm to give up all notes and demands that they had against each other . . . and all be equal".¹⁵¹ Whitney's accounts showed the following situation of debt (as of April 23, 1834):¹⁵²

Oliver Cowdery	\$68.57
John Johnson	\$567.68
Sidney Rigdon	\$777.98
Joseph Smith [Jr]	\$1,151.31
G. Williams & Co	\$584.14
F. G. Williams [personally]	\$485.67

The reason that Oliver Cowdery's debt is so small in comparison to all the others is related to the fact that Cowdery spent most of his time in Missouri and thus had less opportunity to draw upon the store's credit.

Whitney lost \$3,635.35 and Williams never received any payment for his large farm.¹⁵³ Attempts to raise the missing money in the East failed to bring the estimated \$2,000 the prophet had been hoping for.¹⁵⁴ On April 23, 1834, the United Firm was dissolved by revelation (= D&C 104).

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p.38.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p.38.

¹⁵² The entries have been sorted by family name for ease of reference. In the original document, found in the Newell K. Whitney papers at BYU, the order of names is Williams & Co; Smith Jr; Cowdery; Rigdon; Williams personally; Johnson.

¹⁵³Parkin, (2007), p.38.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p.39.

9.5.1 Publishing an Indemnifying Revelation

When it was time to publish Section 104 of the D&C, the prophet and the other church leaders made adjustments such as pseudonym use to obfuscate the intent of the revelation from their creditors.¹⁵⁵ Fifty-four changes were made to the names of officers, business properties and places in the April 1834 revelation, with perhaps the most significant change being the pseudonym “Order” for “Firm”.¹⁵⁶

As early as 1852, Orson Pratt contextualized this change for Brigham Young in order to get it reversed. In a letter to Brigham Young in Orson Pratt wrote that “fictitious names” were put in the revelations so that “their creditors in Cainhannoch (New York) should not take advantage of this Church firm”.¹⁵⁷

In the 1876 edition, Pratt put the original names back in brackets, but it was not until 1981 that the names were restored. The code words “order” and “United Order” persisted.¹⁵⁸

9.6 Reorganization and Debt

Parkin provides a heavily annotated version of the Orson Pratt copy of the revelation in Book of Commandments Law and Covenants (which became D&C 104) that dissolved the United Firm.¹⁵⁹

The revelation awarded the tannery to Sidney Rigdon,¹⁶⁰ who afterwards managed it as a successful personal stewardship and business.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁵Parkin, (2007), p.58.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p.58.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p.59.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p.59.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp.41-57.

¹⁶⁰ Apparently Sidney Rigdon was fine *owning* a tannery, but not *being* the tanner; cf. above p.195.

¹⁶¹Parkin, (2007), p.23.

9.6.1 High Councils Replace the United Firm

With the dissolution of the United Firm, there was still fiscal and economic policy to be made for settling Zion and Kirtland. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the high councils, created two months earlier,¹⁶² took over the roles of the separated United Firm of the City of Kirtland. Parkin notes that this development is otherwise than the revelation D&C 84 had suggested.

By September 1834 the council was managing issues that the United Firm had handled before—here authorizing Smith, Rigdon, Williams and Cowdery, to handle a project for the literary firm.¹⁶³

[The High Council, RCK] advised Bishop Whitney on the operation of his store, directed the payment of debt, and counseled Church members on their land purchases in Missouri ¹⁶⁴

Similarly, “the High Council and Bishop of Zion” were appointed “to do business for Zion”.¹⁶⁵

9.6.2 Battling the Debt

Smith passed the titles of the Williams Farm on to William Marks, “a recent arrival in Kirtland”¹⁶⁶, with the hope of selling lots. But little development took place.¹⁶⁷ Marks bought the north temple lot from Joseph Smith on April 10, 1837¹⁶⁸ and mortgaged the temple to the New York City firm of Mead, Stafford and Company.¹⁶⁹ Johnson and Whitney

¹⁶² Cf. above page p.285.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p.33.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p.34.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p.34.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p.60.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p.60.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p.60.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p.61; p.61 Fn 243.

continued to sell lots on the French farm. The remaining 80 acres Johnson sold to his son John Jr for \$5,000¹⁷⁰.

The Literary Firm of Kirtland did well in 1835, publishing not only the *Messenger & Advocate* and D&C, but also *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* and a political newspaper, the *Northern Times*.¹⁷¹ In June 1836 Phelps and Whitmer returned to Missouri, and Cowdery used the opportunity to buy out Williams to become sole editor and proprietor.¹⁷² Whitney's ashery burned down in 1835—"an economic disaster for the Church"¹⁷³—and he had to sell it.¹⁷⁴

Other members of the United Firm continued to dabble in mercantile ventures.¹⁷⁵ Joseph Smith Jr added a variety store on Chillicothe Road across from the temple;¹⁷⁶ Reynolds Cahoon, Jared Carter & Co. operated a store for the temple committee to raise funds for the temple construction; and John F. Boynton and Lyman E. Johnson operated a store close to Joseph's.¹⁷⁷ The additional merchandise purchased in New York increased the debt.¹⁷⁸ And they sold town lots at sometimes inflated prices.¹⁷⁹

Concurrently with all these economic ventures, the revelations continued to restructure the Church hierarchy to deal with the shifting needs and loyalties of the various members of the upper echelon. In February and March of 1835, Joseph Smith Jr gave revelation D&C 107, which established the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁰Parkin, (2007), p.61 Fn 244.

¹⁷¹Ibid., p.61.

¹⁷²Ibid., p.61.

¹⁷³Ibid., p.63.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p.63.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., p.62.

¹⁷⁶ Not unlike Sidney Rigdon, Joseph Smith Jr was choosy about which parts of store management he liked. Smith had accompanied Whitney to New York in October 1832 on a re-stocking trip and found the task "tedious". Ibid., p.37 This tendency would surface again with the Red Brick store in Nauvoo; cf. page p.376.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., p.62 Fn 252.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p.62.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p.62.

¹⁸⁰ The term "quorum" is not a King James Bible term, but was found in nineteenth-century business

Something had to be done to restore the financial status of the church. The solution that the First Presidency hit upon was to start their own bank, the Kirtland Safety Society. This economic adventure, which ended in an unmitigated disaster and almost destroyed the fledgling church, is the topic of the next chapter.

language. For example, articles of association for banks would prescribe the number of board members that had to be present to take action on behalf of the bank legally; cf. Articles 6 and 7 of the Owl Creek Bank dating from 1814 discussed below on page p.309. Similarly for the Kirtland Safety Society, cf. below on page p.324.

Chapter 10

The Kirtland Safety Society

Notwithstanding they [i.e. the church, RCK] were deeply in debt, they had so managed to keep up their credit, so they concluded to try mercantile business.¹ Accordingly, they ran in debt in New York and elsewhere, some thirty thousand dollars, for | goods, and shortly after, some fifty or sixty thousand more, as I was informed;² but they did not fully understand the mercantile business, and withal, they suffered pride to arise in their hearts, and became desirous of fine houses, and fine clothes, and indulged too much in these things, supposing for a few months that they were very rich. They also spent some thousands of dollars in building a steam mill,³ which never profited them anything. They also bought many farms at extravagant prices, and made part payments, which they afterwards lost, by not being able to meet the remaining payments. They

¹ It is puzzling that Corrill should say this, because the United Firm was doing mercantile business as early as 1832, using Newel K. Whitney's store. But then, Corrill never belonged to that elite economic institution. Perhaps Corrill was referring to the six other mercantile firms that Joseph Smith Jr, Hyrum Smith, John Boyington with Lyman Johnson, Orson Hyde and Parley P. Pratt were operating at the time—in addition to Whitney's store. For an enumeration of Kirtland stores in Mormon possession in 1836, cf. Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.403

² Brodie gives \$60,000 for the second loan; cf. Brodie, (1971), pp.200f.

³ A saw mill, cf. Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.403.

also got up a bank, for which they could get no charter, so they issued their paper without a charter, and, of course, they could not collect their pay on notes received for loans, and, after struggling with it awhile, they broke down.⁴

John Corrill wrote this analysis in 1839, two years after the facts narrated. Corrill had been excommunicated in Quincy, Illinois that same year. Since 1831, Corrill had moved at the highest levels of the church hierarchy, as an advisor to Bishop Partridge in Missouri⁵ and as supervisor in charge of finishing the construction of the Kirtland Temple in the summer of 1835.⁶ It is important to keep in mind that Corrill was actually not present during the operation of the Kirtland Safety Society. Corrill had been helping to set up Caldwell County and Far West in Missouri since March of 1836. Though he was well-connected and knowledgeable about some of the financial dealings of the church, on matters of the final two years in Kirtland Corrill was only reporting the spill-over from the controversies that reached Missouri in January of 1838, when Smith Jr and Rigdon fled Ohio to come to Far West, Missouri for good.

Nevertheless, this type of interpretation became the canonical narrative for the interpretations that followed. In 1977, Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer took a heroic stand to try to reverse that tide.⁷ Not only did they aggregate much data relevant to the problem at hand, such as population levels, prices and industries, but they also pointed out that terms such as “overspeculation”⁸ lack explanatory power and smack of hindsight.

⁴Corrill, (1839), pp.26f.

⁵Cook, (1985), p.12.

⁶ Corrill, (1839), pp.21f. This role makes Corrill’s estimate of \$40,000 as the total cost of the Kirtland Temple construction especially believable. His estimate for the debt of the church after the completion of the Temple are potentially more suspicious: Corrill gives two estimates within five pages, “13 or \$14,000” (p.21) and “fifteen to twenty thousand dollars” (p.26).

⁷ Their summary of the historiography of that event does not take Corrill’s pamphlet as its point of departure, but begins with Kennedy’s monograph from 1888, written some fifty years after the events; cf. James Harrison Kennedy (1888). *Early Days of Mormonism*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons; Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.392-394.

⁸ Ibid., p.406. Reinhart and Rogoff make a similar point with respect to the term “bubble”; cf. Carmen

Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer hoped to exculpate Joseph Smith Jr and the Church leadership by showing that

the economic reversals in the Kirtland economy involved a change in economic conditions that “reasonably prudent” economic men probably would not have anticipated.⁹

Unfortunately for the authors, the issue was never what reasonably prudent economic men might or might not have done. The contention was always that *a prophet* should not have been surprised by any economic reversals. What use was a prophet that could not anticipate the economic future?¹⁰

Warren Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery’s brother, in a July 1837 editorial in the *Messenger and Advocate*, had tried to excuse at least the prophet, and possibly the Church leadership, by a similar strategy: pointing to the scientific status of banking.

We believe that banking . . . is as much a regular science, trade or business, as those of law [or] physics . . . , and that a man may be an eminent civilian, and know nothing of consequence of the principles of medicine.¹¹ He may be a celebrated divine . . . and be as liable to fail in the management of a bank as he would in constructing a balloon ¹²

But the very fact that the economics of banking belonged to the few areas of everyday experience that were nebulous to the “can-do” society of Jacksonian America,¹³ rather

M. Reinhart and Keith Rogoff (2011). *This Time is Different: Eight Centuries of Financial Folly*. Reprint 2010. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

⁹Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.394.

¹⁰ I will return to this issue in the summary discussion of the socio-economic case studies; cf. pages pp.443ff below.

¹¹ Recall that Warren Cowdery practiced medicine; cf. Dale W. Adams (1983). “Chartering the Kirtland Bank”. In: *BYU Studies* 23.3, pp. 467–482, p.478f.

¹² Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.458, quoting *Messenger and Advocate* 3 (July 1837), pp.539f. Adams concurs with Cowdery and adds, “Scriptures are a particularly poor source of guidance on how to set up viable financial institutions”; cf. Adams, (1983), p.480. Von Wagoner insists that Joseph Smith Jr’s “relish for competition in sports, matched by his ambition in commerce and politics, was not what people expected from a divine”, yet Smith Jr embraced that stance fully; cf. Von Wagoner, (1994), p.290

¹³ Leonard Arrington tells the anecdote that Brigham Young had marked his deposits into the coffer

than exculpating the prophet, highlighted his failure in the eyes of Smith Jr's congregation. By the same token that made miraculous healings powerful in the face of a tenuous understanding biology and medicine, the economic failure of a bank demythologized the prophetic claims more than the military reversals of Zion's Camp ever had.¹⁴ Not only was there more precedent for military reversals in the Old Testament, but the fact that a post-Biblical conception like banking could not be controlled through revelation undermined the whole program of taming modernity through relinking with the chain of covenants of Salvation History.

My strategy for wrestling with the material necessary to understand the failure of the Kirtland Safety Society is to present all of the economic background information first. Perhaps surprisingly, the section reuses some of the classical economic studies on Ohio banking,¹⁵ that other commentators have used. Nevertheless, there were still nuggets of wisdom to be mined there, and presenting them will allow me to assess the Kirtland situation differently. I will show that the 1836 Ohio banking scene was, as Warren Cowdery had suggested, a highly professional endeavor. The capitalization of the existing banks was dominated by foreign investors,¹⁶ and the domestic part by wealthy East Coast families.

of the society and was surprised to see them surface in business transactions; cf. Leonard J. Arrington (2012). *Brigham Young*. Reprint 1986. New York: Knopf, p.444 Fn 49, citing Andrew Jenson (1888). *The Historical Record*. Vol. 7. Salt Lake City, Utah: Andrew Jenson, pp.433f. Apparently Jenson did not understand that aspect of banking either. Understanding this aspect of banking has become such a part of cultural literacy that it can function as a funny situation in children's stories; cf. Michael J. Bond's *Paddington the Bear* stories, first published in 1958. Famously, Paddington writes his mark with jam on the five-pound bank note he deposits, then expects his bank note with jam marks back when withdrawing the money later.

¹⁴ Contra Marvin S. Hill, *Cultural Crisis in the Mormon Kingdom: A Reconsideration of the Causes of Kirtland Dissent*, in: *Church History* 44 (September 1980), 286-297, who wants to let the Kirtland dissent begin with Zion's Camp in 1834.

¹⁵ A. B. Coover (1913). "Ohio Banking Institutions, 1803-1866". In: *Ohio Historical Quarterly* 21, pp. 296-320; Charles Clifford Huntington (1915). *A History of Banking and Currency in Ohio Before the Civil War*. Ohio Archaeological and Historical Publications. Columbus: F.J. Heer Printing Co.

¹⁶ The American-centric historiography of the United States tends to forget how heavily the nineteenth century Republic was still externally influenced. Recall that the land agents for the European proprietors of the Phelps-Gorham purchase in upstate New York operated their own office in Canandaigua; cf. above on page p.121.

Banking in Ohio was tightly controlled by the legislature, some of whose actions put the banks on such solid footing that only a single bank failed during the Crisis of 1837. The Kirtland Safety Society, by contrast, was bringing a knife to a gun fight.

In a second section, I will unify the proposed explanatory narratives available to me onto a chronological framework to give a short history of how the episode played out. Even if the bare outlines of the resulting narrative are well-known at this point, the explanatory power derives from the details. Gross simplifications, such as the contention that the Kirtland Safety Society was done in by the Banking Crisis of 1837, have been and must be rejected based on such attention to the specifics.

In a third and final section, I will summarize the short and long-term consequences of the failure for the budding Church and its leadership.

10.1 Banking in Ohio

This section sketches the Ohio banking scene into which the Kirtland Safety Society stepped in January of 1837. Such a sketch includes not only a look at the general economic picture of Ohio, but also the political discussions around banking control in the Ohio legislature. Key components of this picture are the Owl Creek Bank, a cautionary tale of unchartered banking, and the identification of useful indicators of bank health, such as accounting leverage.

10.1.1 Chartered Banking in Ohio 1831-1836

Huntington calls the period from 1831 to 1836 the “Second Period of Expansion” in Ohio banking.¹⁷ Ohio was then involved in some general trends that were shaping the United States economy.

¹⁷Ibid., pp.124-155.

National Infrastructure and Business Expansion

The build-out of the internal transportation network—mostly in terms of canal construction, but increasingly after the 1830s, railroads as well—allowed an increase in agricultural and mineral production to reach the East Coast and the foreign markets.¹⁸ The increase in production was made possible by the creation of new farms on the Western frontiers on the one hand,¹⁹ and the massive increase in population on the other.²⁰

The internal improvements were funded through foreign loans. The United States were operating at a significant trade deficit, about \$140 million during the period under consideration, yet foreign investors poured additional specie into the country.

In 1834, for example, the exports of coin and bullion amounted to only \$400,500, while the imports totaled \$16,235,374. The foreigners, instead of demanding the payment of the trade balance in specie, were leaving it invested in the United States and sending us money besides.²¹

The investment targets were the stocks that states such as Ohio issued to fund their infrastructure improvement projects, some 9 million at 6% interest for canal construction in Ohio from 1826 to 1839 alone.²²

All of these factors combined to create a period of marked business expansion, which ended in a contraction in 1837.

During this period [from 1831 to 1837, with the most active period being 1834-1837, RCK] there was not only a steady growth in population, agriculture, and foreign trade, but manufacturing, having recovered from the depression which followed the War of 1812, was beginning to be developed on a large

¹⁸Huntington, (1915), p.125.

¹⁹Ibid., p.127.

²⁰ The increase had been largely indigenous before 1830. Huntington estimates a 4% contribution of immigration to the population growth of 9 million by 1829; cf. *ibid.*, p.124. The contribution of immigration increased steadily after 1830.

²¹Ibid., p.126.

²²Ibid., p.126.

scale, while domestic commerce and wealth had nearly doubled. It was an era of great territorial and business expansion, and, as usually happens, this was accompanied, especially towards the close of the period, by excesses which later caused waste and loss.²³

Investors were looking for opportunities to put their money to use, and given the territorial expansion, land purchases for speculation were common. This required borrowing money at the local level, leading to a rapid growth of local banking, especially after President Jackson had vetoed the recharter of the United States Bank in July of 1832, and assured that stance with his reelection.²⁴ Moving ten million US dollars, in 1833, from the United States Bank into the local banks added dramatically to local liquidity.²⁵

[W]hile the number of banks and their capital practically doubled, their circulation increased three-fold and their loans and discounts nearly four-fold²⁶

Furthermore, the increase in import duties from foreign trade and the income from land sales²⁷ caused the United States Treasury to run a surplus, estimated at nine million a year for almost a decade by a contemporary Senate committee.²⁸ After paying off the national debt in 1836, a staggering \$28 million were distributed to the states as an interest-free loan “never expected to be recalled”.²⁹ Ohio used its \$2 million for internal improvements, either paying for construction directly or providing low-interest loans.³⁰ In addition, the capital that formerly had supported the national debt was now available for further investments.

The strong demand for money tempted the local banks into overextending themselves. Thus, by 1837, almost \$150 million in outstanding local bank notes accounted for two-thirds

²³Ibid., p.126.

²⁴Ibid., pp.127f.

²⁵Ibid., p.128.

²⁶Ibid., p.127.

²⁷ \$15 million in 1835 alone; cf. *ibid.*, p.128.

²⁸Ibid., pp.128f.

²⁹Ibid., p.129.

³⁰Ibid., p.129.

of the \$220 million of money in the United States.³¹

The notes issued by the bank to the speculator would commonly be invested in government land, as that was the main subject of | speculation at the time. The land receiver usually would then deposit the notes in a local bank, frequently in the same bank that issued them, and again they would be ready for issue, perhaps to the same speculator, to purchase more land. Thus the local banks and the government surplus became involved in a common network of credits.³²

The Economic Conditions in Ohio

Ohio participated fully in these national developments.

The increase in population had pushed Ohio from the fifth to the third most populous state in the two decades after 1820, with the absolute growth during the 1830s totaling half a million Ohioans.³³

The number of authorized local banks trebled from eleven in 1830 to 33 by 1837; the circulation almost doubled from \$5.2 to \$9.7 million in the year 1835 alone.³⁴ The loan volume doubled from January 1835 to May 1837.³⁵

The legislature was slow to grant charters, however—one in 1831, and another in 1832.³⁶ Fortunately, unused charters were available and were now put to new use. Some banks had suspended their operation and paid off their shareholders before their charter had expired.³⁷ Others had been chartered when there was a glut of banks and their stock books never opened for subscription.³⁸ Some banks had downright failed.³⁹

³¹Huntington, (1915), p.130.

³²Ibid., p.130.

³³Ibid., p.125.

³⁴ In comparison: The 25 banks chartered in Ohio in 1819 had managed a combined circulation of about \$1.3 million; cf. *ibid.*, p.131.

³⁵Ibid., p.127.

³⁶ The Bank of Norwalk was chartered February 1831; cf. *ibid.*, p.131. The Bank of Zanesville was chartered January 1832; cf. *ibid.*, p.134

³⁷ E.g. the Dayton Manufacturing Company; cf. *ibid.*, p. 131

³⁸ E.g. the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati, originally chartered in 1829; cf. *ibid.*, p.132

³⁹ E.g. the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie, chartered in 1816, failed in 1820 from the after-effects of the

To become operational again, all that these banks required was capital stock. The stock sale for one such bank, the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati, on February 14, 1831, is instructive.⁴⁰ Subscribers had thirty days to pay down \$10 on each share, a value that most likely expresses 10% of the share price.

This stock [i.e. in the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati, RCK] was quickly taken, a great part of it by foreign capitalists, ... On May 28 the stock in this bank rose from 5 to 15% premium, . . . [closing at 17%, RCK]. Orders to purchase this stock received from eastern cities were said to have contributed to this rise.⁴¹

The situation was similar when the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie was reorganized in 1832. Looking to subscribe 1000 shares at \$100, but with the privilege to issue as many as 5000 shares, 1269 shares were subscribed and \$43,797 paid in, an average of almost 35% of the share price.

A large majority of the stock was said to be held by the Dwights of New York and Massachusetts and their friends.⁴²

All this new capacity of bank notes still proving insufficient, the Ohio legislature toyed with the idea of a state bank capitalized at \$2 million,⁴³ before settling on increasing the stock of the Commercial Bank of Cincinnati by half-a-million and chartering the Franklin Bank of Cincinnati in February of 1833 with another million of capital stock.⁴⁴

The fact that over 70% of the stock of Ohio banks was in the hands of non-residents, whether on the East Coast or outside the United States altogether, began to raise concerns

1819 banking crisis; cf. *ibid.*, p.134 The Urbana Banking Co and the Miami Exporting Co, which had failed in 1822, were re-capitalized in 1834; cf. *ibid.*, p.144.

⁴⁰ The nominal capital stock was \$500,000; cf. *ibid.*, p.136.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.132.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.134.

⁴³ Cf. *ibid.*, pp.134-136. The state bank was also designed to compensate the lack of expenditure, as the state's expenditures on canal building in 1833 came to a close; cf. *ibid.*, p.137. The state bank effort was finally defeated in January 1834; cf. *ibid.*, p.139

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.137.

about capital flight. Since stock holders received around 9% dividends on average, and non-residents held \$3.35 million of the \$4.73 million in capital stock in Ohio, the *Cincinnati Republican* calculated that an estimated \$300,000 was leaving the state annually.⁴⁵

In February and March of 1834, the Ohio legislature finally took decisive action, chartering an astonishing ten banks with combined capital of \$4.4 million.⁴⁶ There was such demand that the capital stock for these banks was oversubscribed by between 25% and 30%. By year's end, 28% or \$1.25 million of the capital stock had been paid in.⁴⁷

At least one small bank, the Bank of Wooster,⁴⁸ managed to be subscribed almost exclusively by residents of the town and the county.⁴⁹ However, the out-of-state influence continued unabated; the Ohio Monitor of March 14, 1836 reported that the majority of the stock of the huge⁵⁰ Ohio Life Insurance & Trust Co was held "by the Wall Street gentry of New York" and that only three of the twenty members⁵¹ of the board of trustees who managed the company were residents of Ohio.⁵²

Nevertheless, the Ohio banks found themselves in good condition at the beginning of 1835. Some 49% of their authorized capital stock of \$12 million was paid in, 43% of it in specie, with a circulation of \$4.5 million, of which 75% was in denominations above \$5. All in all, the banks held more paid-in stock than they had notes in circulation and \$1 of specie on hand for every \$2 in circulation.⁵³

⁴⁵Huntington, (1915), pp.137f.

⁴⁶ Cf. the table in *ibid.*, p.140.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p.144.

⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the Wooster bank also belonged to those that were overleveraged, and failed; cf. the bank's entry in the table on leverage ratios below on page p.316.

⁴⁹Huntington, (1915), p.141.

⁵⁰ In January of 1836, the company had given loans worth \$1,858,099 in 67 counties of Ohio, secured by pledges of real estate that were worth \$4,338,117; cf. *ibid.*, p.143.

⁵¹ Members had to hold at least \$5,000 worth of stock; cf. *ibid.*, p.142.

⁵²*Ibid.*, p.143.

⁵³*Ibid.*, p.145.

Hard Money and Inflation Concerns

Then in 1836, the hard-money wing of the Democrats, alternately called the “no bank” or the “Loco focus” faction, came to power within the state legislature.

This faction . . . were inclined to believe with [former President Andrew, RCK] Jackson that gold and silver were the “true constitutional currency” of the country, and to look askance upon the rapid increase of banks and paper money.⁵⁴

The 1836 legislature saw no compelling reason to charter new banks. Their legislative committee had found that many of the existing charters allowed banks to extend their authorized capital stock to \$500,000. There had been few takers, yet the other economic indicators for Ohio were good: produce and property were high in value, while the price of labor had remained roughly the same. The committee concluded that an increase of banking capital was not necessary at the time.⁵⁵

An issue that did concern the legislature was the request by the United States Secretary of the Treasury to suppress small bank notes, i.e. those less than \$5 in denomination. The Federal level had multiple concerns with the small bank notes. People who had received small notes were often poor and therefore less likely to exchange them at the bank; exchanging small notes also required proportionally more effort than exchanging the big ones. As a result, small notes tended to stay in circulation, which drove out specie in obedience to Gresham’s Law, requiring more small notes to be issued.⁵⁶ In 1831, Albert Gallatin had equally urged all states to suppress small notes, because specie was national while small notes were local. This functioned as an insurance in the case of bank failure: those holding small notes, which would be predominantly the poor, would be adversely affected, while those holding specie would not.⁵⁷

⁵⁴Ibid., p.149.

⁵⁵Ibid., p.150.

⁵⁶Ibid., p.150.

⁵⁷Ibid., p.151.

These concerns pointed to serious issues in the New England states, New York, and New Jersey, where over half the notes in circulation were denominated at less than \$5. In Ohio, the ratio was 3:1 in favor of the large denominations, as indicated previously.⁵⁸ Thus, by 1835, New Jersey and Maine had passed laws prohibiting small bank notes, while other states such as Pennsylvania, Maryland or Virginia “were all without a circulation of bank notes less than \$5”.⁵⁹

The Ohio legislature, after unenthusiastic responses from the banks⁶⁰ regarding the issue, passed a law in March 1836 that raised the tax on the dividend for banks from 5% to 20%, unless they phased out \$3 notes by July 4, 1836 and \$5 notes by July 4, 1837 and surrendered their right to issue those.⁶¹ 28 of the 33 banks complied.⁶² The measure shaved over \$1 million off the circulation of the Ohio banks—at a time when stock, deposits, loans and specie continued to increase.⁶³

Triggering the Panic of 1837

By the summer of 1836, President Andrew Jackson, a hard-money Democrat, became frustrated with the flood of depreciated bank paper that the sales of public land had washed into the treasury in 1835 and 1836. On July 11, 1836, the Treasury issued its “specie circular”, which insisted on specie only for Federal land sales. This move slashed land sales from \$25 million in 1836 to \$7 million in 1837, to 28% of the previous amount. The stress of this reduction was borne by the Western banks, which passed along their difficulties to the East Coast banks.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Cf. Huntington, (1915), p.152. See also the discussion of the financial condition of the Ohio banks in 1835, above, on page p.302.

⁵⁹Ibid., p.152.

⁶⁰Ibid., p.153.

⁶¹Ibid., p.154.

⁶² See *ibid.*, p.155 Fn 143 for the five dissenting banks.

⁶³Ibid., p.155.

⁶⁴Ibid., p.157.

At the same time, in January of 1837, the government began to distribute the surplus windfall to the states, which put additional strain on the specie part of the monetary system. Furthermore, financial difficulties in England caused English creditors to call in their loans worldwide, including the United States. The United States trade deficit had remained significant, but now foreign importers were no longer interested in investing their profits in the United States. Capital flight from the United States ensued.

This [all taken together, RCK] . . . caused a heavy drain for coin upon the banks in the seaboard cities with the result that, on May 10, 1837, the New York banks suspended specie payment.⁶⁵

As the first banks began to suspend specie payment, the other banks all had to follow suit, since all had more notes than specie.⁶⁶ On June 5, 1837, twenty-three of the chartered thirty-two banks of Ohio held a convention in Columbus to adopt a common strategy of preserving their specie and localizing their notes as well as establishing regular communication channels among themselves on their financial situation.⁶⁷

Resumption of Specie Payments and After-Effects

General payment of specie resumed on August 13, 1838, led by the banks of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore that had attended the July 23, 1838 Philadelphia bank convention. The Ohio banks had tied themselves to the same schedule.⁶⁸

In October of 1839, the Philadelphia banks had to suspend specie payment once more, sending another shockwave through the South and the West, but sparing Ohio, where suspension was limited to a few banks and lasted less than thirty days even in those cases.⁶⁹

⁶⁵Ibid., p.157.

⁶⁶Ibid., p.159.

⁶⁷Ibid., p.160.

⁶⁸Ibid., p.162.

⁶⁹Ibid., p.163.

The Ohio legislature, always active in banking questions, passed the Bank Commissioner Law in February 25 of 1839, which

provided that the amount of bills a bank might circulate at one time should not exceed three times the amount of specie, exclusive of deposits, in its vaults and actually belonging to the bank.⁷⁰

If it did, the onus for the difference was on the directors and the general shareholders thereafter. Furthermore, banks that failed to make payment in “gold, silver, or current notes of other banks” for more than thirty days in one year “were to be closed up”.⁷¹ The three bank commissioners appointed by the law issued their first report that December, where they criticized the “large loans and discounts made to directors and other stockholders . . . almost unlimited in amount and time of payment”.⁷² In this context, the commissioners bemoaned

that as many banks were created in the state [of Ohio, RCK] by persons who wished to borrow instead of lend money, thus bringing about large issues of notes without any liability for their redemption . . .⁷³

In the end, only one bank had failed, and the overall economic activity in Ohio, after bad harvests in 1837 and 1838, continued to increase over the next years, as Huntington documents with the canal receipts and shipment at Cleveland.⁷⁴ However, the times remained hard because the prices that goods could command had imploded as well.⁷⁵ The bank commissioners attributed this to “equal production in other states, as well as abundant crops in other parts of the world”.⁷⁶

⁷⁰Huntington, (1915), p.164.

⁷¹Ibid., p.164.

⁷² Cf. *ibid.*, p.164, internal quotation marks omitted. For an example tabulation of director and officer indebtedness, cf. the table from 1842 in *ibid.*, p.165.

⁷³Ibid., p.166.

⁷⁴Ibid., p.167.

⁷⁵Ibid., p.167.

⁷⁶Ibid., p.171.

... the price of wheat at Cincinnati, which had risen from 62c a bushel in 1834 to \$1.25 in 1836, dropped to 65c in 1839 and 60c in 1840; flour dropped from \$8.25 a barrel in 1836 to \$3.60 in 1840; and hogs from \$7 a cwt [i.e. a centum weight, 100 lbs or 45.36 kg, RCK] to \$4.75 in 1840, \$2.25 in 1841, and \$1.75 in 1841 [sic RCK].⁷⁷

Summary

From 1830 to 1836, in the context of a massive rise in population, governmental income, infrastructure expenditure and economic activity in the United States, the banks in Ohio were heavily involved in the land speculation of governmental land sales based on bank notes.

The demand for local notes spurred a huge demand for local banks as well. The Ohio legislature throughout this period kept the banks on a short leash, granting charters in well-defined amounts. Bankers responded by reactivating old charters and expanding the authorized capital stock. The vast majority of the capital stock was owned by foreign investors, who parked some of the trade surplus from their imports there, and investment families from the East Coast.

As the hard-money wing of the Democratic party rose to ascendancy in the Ohio legislature, inflationary concerns came to the fore. Despite the fact that Ohio was not in danger of small-denomination notes flooding its system, as New England and other East Coast states were, the legislature pressured the majority of the banks into withdrawing all notes under \$3 by mid-summer 1836, and all under \$5 by mid-summer 1837, shedding a ninth of the banks' note circulation in the process.

When the treasury suspended the sale of public lands for bank notes in the summer of 1836, the credit system that fueled the land speculation began to unravel. In addition, the national government needed specie to distribute states' respective shares of the national

⁷⁷Ibid., p.171.

surplus. An ill-timed credit contraction in England caused a further drain of specie from the coastal cities, which in March of 1837 triggered a suspension of specie payments by the majority of the US banks, including those in Ohio, that would last for over fourteen months.

The majority of the Ohio banks had been in sound condition, not least because of the withdrawal of the small notes, before the summer of 1837, and thus all but one weathered the panic. The legislature used the opportunity to push through oversight legislation that prescribed stock-to-circulation ratios and addressed the abuse of favorable loans by bank officers and stockholders.

The aftermath of the crash in land prices in Ohio coincided with a glut of agricultural production elsewhere, following the bad harvests of 1837 and 1838, leading to depressed prices well into the early 1840s that hindered the post-panic recovery.

10.1.2 The Infamous Owl Creek Bank of Mount Vernon

The Owl Creek Bank of Mount Vernon was a reaction to the dearth of money all over the United States after the War of 1812.⁷⁸ Its founders were among the many in the West and Ohio who “conceived the idea of multiplying the quantity of paper in lieu of money by manufacturing what is called ‘currency’”.⁷⁹ The notes issued by the bank, colloquially referred to as “owls” due to the birds depicted in their engravings, came “in every denomination, from the shinplaster form of 6½ cents up to \$10”.⁸⁰ The small denominations indicate how these issues were intended to alleviate the local shortage of small change.

The supporters of what would become the Owl Creek Bank had formed as early as December of 1814, drawn up articles of association, and had petitioned the state legislature

⁷⁸ Norton, p.172f. Coover, (1913), p.312f quotes some of the key passages, without page numbers, from Norton’s work.

⁷⁹Norton, (1862), p.173.

⁸⁰Ibid., p.172.

to grant a charter to an association with \$150,000 of capital stock, issues in shares of \$50. The legislature denied the grant.⁸¹

Undeterred, the supporters met on April 10th, 1816, confirmed their “right and privilege to have charters granted when we shall petition the legislative body of this State for this purpose”,⁸² and organized a committee to draft new articles of association. That drafting meeting took place on April 17, 1816.⁸³

Article 1 requested \$250,000 as the minimum capital stock,⁸⁴ provided for a ceiling of \$500,000, and set a minimum of \$25,000 of paid-up stock as the point of “commencing business”, where “paid up” meant “subscribed” in the stock books.⁸⁵ The stock was divided into units of \$50 shares each and the stock books opened for subscription⁸⁶ before July 1816.⁸⁷ The articles of association were patterned after those of a joint stock company, with the “expressly and deliberately declared” purpose of shielding the contributors to the stock from any future debt-related liabilities against the company.⁸⁸

Unlike many of the other frontier banks, a description of the actual location and the building of a frontier bank is available.

The bank shall be established as near the court-house, in Mount Vernon, as

⁸¹Ibid., p.173.

⁸²Ibid., p.174.

⁸³ Significant excerpts of these articles are given in Ibid., p.173-180.

⁸⁴ *Contra* Coover, (1913), p.312, who reports the capital stock from the 1814 articles as the 1816 amount.

⁸⁵Norton, (1862), p.174.

⁸⁶ The subscription process was regulated in Article 2 and 3, including down payments and follow-up payments; caps on stock subscription; and a lottery system in the case of over-subscription; cf. *ibid.*, p.174f

⁸⁷ Possibly due to the way in which the December 1814 articles were rewritten in April of 1816, the document contains conflicting information as to when the subscription lists were to open. Article 3 states “the first Monday in March next”—cf. *ibid.*, p.174—as the opening date for the subscription books, which in an April 1816 document would mean March 1817. That is clearly too late. At the same time, Article 20 called for thrice publishing the articles, “at least two months before the books are opened” (*ibid.*, p.179) in the public newspapers of Knox county, to give interested parties a chance to read the articles of association before subscribing. That would place the opening sometime in June of 1816. This would conform to the definite *terminus ante quem* provided by a newspaper notice dated July 3, 1816, where the bank commissioners called on “all persons holding books for the sale of shares” to forward the installments due by July 20; cf. *ibid.*, p.180

⁸⁸ Cf. the long and complicated Article 17, *Ibid.*, p.178f.

may be thought most convenient by the board of directors, . . .⁸⁹

The bank building was a rough, yet substantial piece of workmanship, a mixture of Doric and Corinthian styles of architecture, weather-boarded; and with four-penny nails thickly driven through the batten door and window-shutters, so thieves could not cut in and steal. On the ground it covered about fourteen square feet [about 1.3 m², RCK], and was one story in height, and painted red!⁹⁰

There is insufficient evidence to to determine what ailed the Owl Creek Bank as early as the winter of 1816. The cashier attempted to collect the next \$2 installment from the shareholders in November 1816. In December 1816, the *Zanesville Express* reported that two gentlemen had successfully redeemed Owl Creek Bank bills “for a large amount”, receiving “chartered paper and specie” in return. In March of 1817, the Bank paid a “dividend of six per cent, on account of stock actually in Bank”.⁹¹ Nevertheless, during the legislative session of winter 1816-17, when the Owl Creek Bank re-applied for a charter, the term “unchartered” was a popular derogatory word in the Ohio capital Columbus, freely applied to “all evil doers”.⁹²

By the summer of 1817, the battle for the public’s confidence in the bank notes had moved into the local newspapers, where the supporters of the bank editorialized against its detractors.⁹³ For example, in the August 6, 1817 edition of the *Ohio Spectator*, Bank president James Smith claimed that the lack of paying outstanding subscriptions and loan debts was the cause of the bank’s insolvency.

If you, sirs, . . . would pay your engagements, or one half thereof, the Owl

⁸⁹Norton, (1862), p.176.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.183; emphasis in the original. *Contra* Coover, (1913), p.313, who dispensed with emphasis and exclamation mark.

⁹¹Norton, (1862), p.182.

⁹²Ibid., p.182.

⁹³ Ibid., p.187f only gives the *ad-hominem* attacks of the detractors—mostly Samuel Williams, a tavern keeper, and the medical Dr Moore B. Bradley, cf. *ibid.*, p.186—but not the substance of their arguments. I currently have no independent access to the relevant editorials in the *Ohio Register* from August 20, 1817 outside of what Norton quotes in his history.

Creek Bank of Mount Vernon would be completely prepared to pay and give satisfactory exchanges for their notes in circulation.⁹⁴

Smith also complained that people who were indebted to the bank ought to accept its paper in payment.

... to refuse the paper of this bank, while you are in debt to the bank, is a full sacrifice of every spark of your honor.⁹⁵

... both the principle of moral justice and honor enjoins on every person indebted, to receive it [i.e. paper from the Owl Creek Bank, RCK].⁹⁶

In January of 1818, the Owl Creek Bank made another attempt to fortify its reputation. John Shaw, James Miller, Major Joseph Brown and William Stanbery took out advertisements in the newspapers offering to sell land or settle debts, especially the onerous tax debts,⁹⁷ in “Owl Creek paper”.⁹⁸ In another newspaper notice from January 1, 1818, the Bank blamed “the impossibility of obtaining such goods as are wanted by the citizens with this kind [i.e. Owl Creek paper, RCK] of paper” for the “depreciation of the Owl Creek paper of late”.⁹⁹ In order to resolve the difficulty, the Bank gave a \$700 loan to the mercantile company of Burr, Green & Co,¹⁰⁰ so that they would “bring on a complete assortment of goods, and to retail the same for Owl Creek paper, at prices as low as they can be purchased for in chartered paper”.¹⁰¹ This effectively transformed Owl Creek paper into something like “company money”.

⁹⁴Ibid., pp.186f.

⁹⁵Ibid., p.186.

⁹⁶Ibid., p.187.

⁹⁷ Taxes had to be paid in cash; cf. page p.54 above.

⁹⁸Norton, (1862), pp.183f.

⁹⁹Ibid., p.184.

¹⁰⁰ The money was “to be paid back in good chartered paper, in installments, within one year”; cf. *ibid.*, p.185

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.185. It is likely that the Mr Green in Burr, Green & Co. was John Green, who had been on the committee for drafting the articles of association and a commissioner of selling Owl Creek shares in 1816; cf. *ibid.*, p.174; p.175.

At the same time, on January 6, 1818, the stockholders of the Owl Creek Bank scheduled a meeting for March 12, 1818, to discuss “the propriety of closing the business of said Company”.¹⁰² Implausibly, the bank lumbered on.¹⁰³

In 1822, another attempt was made to settle the affairs of the Owl Creek Bank. Holders of Owl Creek notes established a group of trustees, who would take “their notes, with security”, until \$15,000 were “subscribed”. However, the list of subscribers reported indicates that the subscription amounted to less than \$6,100, or 40% of the needed amount.¹⁰⁴

In 1829, a Bill in Chancery was filed in the Supreme Court in Ohio for the county of Knox, to assist one Luke Walpole to recover almost \$8,500 and cost of suit from former shareholders of the Owl Creek bank, which Walpole had been granted in the 1826 term.¹⁰⁵ Thus began the famous “Owl Creek Bank Case”, which ran over a period of some thirty years.¹⁰⁶ In the process, the bank was broken into and some of the shareholder records destroyed,¹⁰⁷ requiring the lawyers to painstakingly recreate the information, resulting in “one of the largest volumes of record in the Clerk’s office of Knox county.”¹⁰⁸

The tabulation of shares and paid-up amounts¹⁰⁹ suggests that, though the 2059 shares issued should have raised \$102,950 in paid-up capital stock, they never raised more than \$11,747.75, or 11%. This means that, even at this virtual level of maximal contributions, the Owl Creek Bank missed its self-declared operating minimum of \$25,000—the launching point for “commencing business” per Article 1 of its association document—by 54%. Fur-

¹⁰² Given the restricted dimensions of 14 squarefeet reported for the Bank building—cf. Norton, (1862), p.183—it is unclear what to make of the fact that the stockholders’ meeting was to be held “at the Banking House in Mount Vernon”; cf. *ibid.*, p.185.

¹⁰³ It is noteworthy that it apparently survived the 1819 bank crash.

¹⁰⁴ Norton, (1862), pp.188f.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.189f.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.196.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p.190.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.191.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.191-193. It is unfortunate that the tabulation uses “ditto” notation for the values paid in; it is unlikely that John Green paid in \$900 when his 10 shares suggest that he owed \$500 only.

thermore, it failed to sell some 2941 shares, or 59%, of its minimum capital stock potential, which, at a pay-up rate of 11%, would have at least provided \$27,500, or \$2,500 above the operating minimum.¹¹⁰

While there is truth to bank president James Smith's allegation that not enough was paid up, in terms of loans and contributions, for the bank to operate successfully,¹¹¹ the fact remains that the Owl Creek Bank should never have opened its doors, according to its own articles of association. Nevertheless, the Owl Creek Bank chose to ignore its own sage advice and ended up owing some \$26,796.20 by September 18, 1837, according to Master Commissioner Henry B. Curtis' report.¹¹²

In his "funerary oration" for the Owl Creek Bank, Norton can claim, that the institution and its demise was an international sensation.

... the Owl Creek Bank ... [is, RCK] an institution which, in part from its outre name, has acquired more notoriety than any other that has ever existed in America—if not in the world! ... Nations civilized and tribes savage have seen and handled its money.¹¹³

But this poetic license seems unjustified. The very problem of the Owl Creek Bank was that its founders could never muster the stock needed to operate it. As the tables compiled by Master Commissioner Henry B. Curtis indicate, the Owl Creek Bank was entirely financed from within Ohio.¹¹⁴ In the economic climate of its founding year of 1816, that was probably unavoidable. In the 1830s, banking in Ohio would be overwhelmingly backed with out-of-state capital, whether from the East Coast or from foreign investors.

¹¹⁰ Cf. page p.309 above.

¹¹¹ Cf. page p.310 above. James Smith himself only paid \$316 of the \$2,500 he owed, based on the 50 shares he subscribed, or 13%. Founding member Gilman Bryant was the most conscientious in terms of the absolute amount, having paid in \$900 of his subscribed 50 shares, or 36%. James M. Gibeny with 15 shares and \$725 in contributions of the expected \$750 came within 4% of carrying his full weight.

¹¹² Norton, (1862), p.193f.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.197.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., pp.191-193.

It seems anachronistic to say that “nations civilized”, such as the English investors that pulled their funds from the United States during the panic of 1837, ever handled Owl Creek Bank money.

10.1.3 Excursion: The Old Bank of Michigan

It is at this point instructive to take a look across the border at the state of Michigan, where additional banking information is available. The particular bank of interest is the so-called Old Bank of Michigan, in whose founding the famous uncle of Joseph Smith Jr, Col. Stephen Mack, had been intimately involved.¹¹⁵

While this example will re-demonstrate the insight that the majority of the funding of West banks was due to East coast capitalists, it highlights another aspect of 1820s and 1830s banking: the professionalism of some of the officers and directors involved. The sparse mention of names in the secondary literature employed so far has obscured the fact that even then, real banks used trained people for their day-to-day operations.

The Old Bank of Michigan had been founded in Detroit in 1818 by a group of pioneers of Michigan that included Colonel Stephen Mack.¹¹⁶ The bank had been given a conventional charter, \$100,000 of capital stock, with the option of expanding to \$500,000 if needed. The initial stock subscription, about \$33,000 of which \$16,000 had been paid,¹¹⁷ had been sparse within Detroit, until the Eastern money showed up.

A small portion of the stock only had been subscribed. The bank went into operation with very limited means, and did but small business until 1824, when David Stone, a capitalist of Massachusetts, and his associates in New York, took up the balance of the stock [i.e. about \$67,000, RCK] ¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ On Colonel Stephen Mack, see pages pp.110ff above.

¹¹⁶Palmer, (1905), p.411.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p.412.

¹¹⁸Ibid., pp.411f.

The East Coast capitalists sent a Mr Day from Springfield, Massachusetts to be their local representative, and when he expressed concern, asked the teller of the Bank of Geneva, Eurotas P. Hastings, Esq, to look into the matter.¹¹⁹

In the 1830s, when the general land rush commenced in Michigan, the situation described for Ohio replayed.

The rush at the land office was enormous. Money was abundant, and everybody appeared to be prosperous. . . . Most of the securities that were furnished at the bank at that period, were based upon improved real estate or wild lands, eligibly situated. There was then but little cash capital in the State excepting that furnished by the bank.¹²⁰

In 1832 the Bank of Michigan was selected as “one of the depositories for the safe-keeping and disbursement of public moneys” that were to replace the Bank of the United States, which was about to expire.¹²¹

By 1836, one of the principal stockholders of the bank was Henry Dwight, of Geneva, N.Y., “an eminent banker and a large capitalist, [who, RCK] . . . was connected with able capitalists in Massachusetts.”¹²²

The Dwight family were among the heaviest capitalists of New York and Massachusetts, and were not only largely interested in the Bank of Michigan, but also owned two banks in Cleveland,¹²³ one in Buffalo, and one in Springfield, ...¹²⁴

When the position of cashier became vacant in 1836 in the aftermath of the circular of the treasury, Henry Dwight engineered the employment of H.K. Sanger, Esq,¹²⁵ with promises of additional support in the coming difficulties.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p.412. The resulting fraud that was uncovered by Mr Hastings is documented in the appendix; cf. pages pp.535ff below.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p.416.

¹²¹ Ibid., p.418. On the demise of the Bank of the United States, cf. also above on page p.299.

¹²² Ibid., p.419.

¹²³ One of these was the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie; cf. Huntington, (1915), p.134.

¹²⁴ Palmer, (1905), p.421.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p.419.

Table 10.1: Ohio Bank Leverage Ratios (1837)

City	Bank	Paid-up Stock (\$)	Circu- lation (\$)	Leverage ($x : 1$)
Canton	Farmer's Bank †	80,000	172,446	2.16
Cincinnati	Miami Exporting Co. Bank	292,955	383,645	1.31
	Ohio Life Insurance & Trust Co	628,594	392,535	0.62
Cleveland	Bank of —	205,025	242,834	1.18
	Commercial Bank of Lake Erie	400,000	356,133	0.89
Columbus	Clinton Bank	299,500	115,046	0.38
	Franklin Bank of —	481,500	272,396	0.57
Dayton	The — Bank	167,203	65,612	0.39
Granville	Bank of —	146,129	101,213	0.69
Hamilton	Bank of — †	33,062	106,343	3.22
Lancaster	The — Bank	200,000	274,423	1.36
Marietta	Bank of —	101,090	120,271	1.19
Massillon	Bank of —	200,000	320,181	1.60
Mount Vernon	Owl Creek Bank †	12,000	26,797	2.23
New Lisbon	Bank of Columbiana	60,000	150,000	2.50
Norwalk	Bank of —	161,245	187,874	1.17
Painesville	Bank of Geauga	87,000	178,813	2.05
Putnam	Muskingum Bank	123,000	136,876	1.11
Sandusky	Bank of —	100,000	108,217	1.08
Steubenville	Farmers' & Mechanics' Bank	273,000	401,281	1.47
St. Clairsville	Bellmont Bank of —	193,790	273,292	1.41
Urbana	The — Bank	108,866	157,488	1.45
Warren	Western Reserve Bank	165,837	213,900	1.29
West Union	Bank of — †	20,000	48,301	2.42
Wooster	Bank of — †	150,221	194,289	1.29

[Mr Sanger, RCK] . . . commenced his career as a bank clerk at Utica, in 1824, where he subsequently served in the capacity of teller in the branch of the United States Bank, until 1835, when he was appointed cashier of the Utica Branch Bank in Canandaigua, remaining there until he was called to Detroit [by Henry Dwight, RCK] in 1836. . . . Just previous to the closing up of the Bank of Michigan, Mr Sanger was reappointed cashier of the Utica Branch Bank, at Canandaigua, whither he proceeded, and was the chief financial officer of that branch until the charter of the mother institution expired in 1850. . . . At the close of Mr Sanger's career at Canandaigua, he was appointed cashier of the Michigan Insurance Company bank of Detroit, . . .¹²⁶

With support from Henry Dwight and his friends, who provided infusions of up to \$300,000 to offset financial difficulties in the aftermath of the panic of 1837, the bank limped on until 1842, when the East Coast financiers balked at another round of \$75,000 rescue funding, cut their losses, and liquidated the institution.¹²⁷

10.1.4 Leverage in Ohio

In his 1913 summary of early banking in Ohio, Coover gives capitalization information for 36 banks and paper circulation information for 33 banks.¹²⁸

Of those banks with capitalization information, 27 have paid-up information. Comparing paid-up capitalization with paper circulation provides leverage assessments for 25 banks, tabulated in Table 10.1 on page p.316 above. Of these 25 banks, 19 were over-extended: they were circulating more paper than their paid-up stock was covering.¹²⁹

Put differently: Dividing the circulation by the paid-up stock of a bank yields the (accounting) leverage of that bank. By definition, a bank with a leverage ratio up to and

¹²⁶Palmer, (1905), p.420.

¹²⁷Ibid., p.420f.

¹²⁸ Cf. the tables extracted from this summary in the Appendix below, on pages p.548 and p.549, respectively.

¹²⁹ All circulation data is from 1837, most likely from the information exchange decided on during the meeting of the Ohio Banks in Cleveland in the summer of 1837; cf. p.305 above. Banks marked with a dagger (†) failed. Leverage has been rounded to two significant digits after the comma, by adding .005 and truncating.

including 1 : 1 cannot fail, and six banks fall into this category. Of the thirteen banks with a leverage ratio below 2 : 1, only one failed. Of the five banks with a leverage ratio below 3 : 1, three failed.¹³⁰ The only bank with a leverage ratio above 3 : 1, the Bank of Hamilton, did fail and was subject of a lawsuit against its operating officers in 1842, due to the suspicion that they had issued more paper than their charter allowed for—which would explain its over-extension.¹³¹ Recall that in the Bank Commissioner Law of February 1839, the Ohio legislature had defined a leverage of 3 : 1 as the legal boundary of prudent banking practice.¹³²

Leverage and Population

In their analysis of the Kirtland economy, Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer argue that the size of the Kirtland population should have been able to support a bank.

... Kirtland at this time was one of the larger communities in northern Ohio—a number of smaller communities already possessed banks. Judging from the successful experience of other banks in Ohio, one with as little as \$20,000 in paid-up capital, Kirtland probably could have supported a modest bank.¹³³

Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer go on to enumerate:

... smaller communities with banks in northern Ohio included Warren (3), Ravenna (2), Canton (2), Salem, Youngstown, Elyria, Ashtabula, and Cuyahoga Falls. Cleveland, which had perhaps twice as many people, had eleven [sic RCK] banks.¹³⁴

Unfortunately, these claims are very much misleading. Specifically, as the above table shows, the Bank of West Union, which had operation with only \$20,000 in paid-in capital,

¹³⁰ The Canton's Farmers Bank failed April 1838; cf. Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.443.

¹³¹ Coover, (1913), p.309.

¹³² Cf. page p.305 above.

¹³³ Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.433.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p.433 Fn 61.

failed when leveraged at 2.42 : 1. Furthermore, as the tables in the Appendix show,¹³⁵ we possess capitalization and circulation information for only two of the twelve banks from smaller communities, and two of the twelve banks of Cleveland.¹³⁶ Of the other banks counted, nothing more is known than that at some time, paper was issued in their names.¹³⁷ Crucially, this gives no information upon which to judge their success. If anything, one should expect them to have failed: Coover notes that in 1835, according to the Secretary of the Treasury, there were 24 banks operating in Ohio, and that the number had dropped to a mere eight by 1845.¹³⁸ With eleven banks in Cleveland and twelve claimed for the smaller communities of northern Ohio,¹³⁹ that would have accounted for almost the entire 1835 bank census for the state.

A further point against Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer is best illustrated by taking the example of Cleveland, about twice as big as Kirtland at that time. For the two banks of Cleveland that we have paid-up stock data for—the Bank of Cleveland and the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie—their combined paid-up stock amounts to \$605,025. The Western Reserve Bank of the smaller Warren had \$165,837 of paid-up stock, and even Canton’s Farmer’s Bank had \$80,000. This suggests that population may in fact be a very poor predictor for the sustainability of a bank, because it says little about the amount of disposable wealth available to be deposited as stock in that population.

¹³⁵ In the Appendix below, on pages p.548 and p.549, respectively.

¹³⁶ It is possible that Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer did not count the Cleveland branch of the Ohio Life Insurance & Trust Company as a bank; cf. Coover, (1913), p.304.

¹³⁷ This holds for two of the Warren banks, both of the Ravenna banks, one of the Canton banks, and the banks of Salem, Youngstown, Elyria, Ashtabula and Cuyahoga Falls, as well as ten of the twelve banks for Cleveland. Recall that Coover undertook his analysis of the Ohio Banks as a long-time collector of “antiquated paper money”; cf. *ibid.*, p.301. It is not clear that all of these banks even existed; for example, the Chillicothe’ Farmers’, Mechanics’ and Merchants’ Bank was suspected to exist only on paper; cf. *ibid.*, p.302.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.300, though some of the older banks simply did not have their charters renewed, e.g. the Cincinnati Commercial Bank in 1844, for which no paid stock data is available, cf. *ibid.*, p.303; or the Franklin Bank of Columbus in 1843, which was leveraged at a safe 0.57 : 1 in 1837; cf. *ibid.*, p.306.

¹³⁹ Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.433 Fn 61.

Furthermore, given the predominance of foreign and out-of-state investors in Ohio banking, as frequently noted before, there are subject-matter-related reasons for doubting the connection between population and bank success that Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer argue for.

10.2 The Short History of the Safety Society

10.2.1 Cash Flow and Cash Constriction

While the specific amount remains elusive, there is general consensus that, by the beginning of 1836, both Joseph Smith Jr individually and the church in general were in dire financial straits. Though securities in terms of land existed, the short nature of the loans—between 60 and 180 days—caused continuous problems of cash flow.¹⁴⁰

This situation was not improved by the anti-inflationary clamp-down of the Ohio legislature, who under the ascendancy to power of the hard-money Democrats adopted the national anti-small-bill campaign. Many members of the Kirtland saints belonged to precisely the group that the framers wanted to protect from owning small bills; that much follows from the denomination spreads that the Kirtland Safety Society issued when it became operational.¹⁴¹ Thus, the Mormons in Kirtland were especially hard hit when the Ohio legislature blackmailed the Ohio banks with a conditional 20% tax on dividends into withdrawing the \$3 notes from circulation by summer of 1836.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Adams, (1983), p.468. The notes coming due in December 1836 and January 1837 that Adams mentions are much too late in the chronology to have any explanatory power, especially given the short nature of the loans that Adams rightfully stresses.

¹⁴¹ Specifically, the society printed only \$1, \$2 and \$3 notes on their first run in January 4-8, 1837; cf. Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.445. The estimates that Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer calculated suggest about 5,000 \$1 notes; less than 2,000 \$2 notes; and about 2,300 \$3 notes. In their February run, the society printed around 900 \$1 notes, 950 \$2 notes, some 3,000 \$3 notes, less than 2,000 \$5 notes, around 1,200 \$10 notes, and some 600 \$20 notes. This makes for less than 5,000 notes under \$5, and less than 4,000 notes above \$5.

¹⁴² Cf. above on page p.304.

10.2.2 Unclear Origins of a Bad Idea

While no clues have been discovered as to where the bank idea originated, it makes little sense to look among the members of the Democratic party in the legislature:¹⁴³ The legislators were well-informed about banking, did not support chartering new banks, saw unrealized potential for capital stock in Ohio and worked against the small notes that the Mormons needed.

Since 1830 at the latest, the most vocal advocates for more charters for new banks and the staunchest supporters of the existing banks had been the real-estate speculators, who needed the notes of the local banks to buy federal land.¹⁴⁴ Given the extensive real-estate transactions that the church leadership engaged in, it makes sense to look for the idea of a bank coming from contacts in that area. These contacts would have appreciated the benefits a bank could provide to borrowing,¹⁴⁵ while being ignorant about how to operate a bank, or whether—given the larger economic and banking trends—starting one had any hope of success.

Then, on July 11, 1836, the Treasury issued its “specie circular”, henceforth insisting on hard money for the purchase of federal lands. Many knowledgeable people realized immediately that this spelled disaster for the way local banks were working. For example, the cashier of the Bank of Michigan, resigned, and Geneva capitalist Henry Dwight had to promise his replacement, Mr Sanger of the Utica Branch Bank, additional support, merely to convince Sanger to accept the position.¹⁴⁶

Not so the Kirtland saints and their “pro-bank” advisors, whoever they may have been. Thus, in August 1836, we find Oliver Cowdery travelling to New York to discuss acquisition

¹⁴³ *Contra* Adams, (1983), p.468.

¹⁴⁴ Huntington, (1915), pp.127f; see also above on page p.299.

¹⁴⁵ As the Bank Commissioners would note in their report, many banks in Ohio had been set up with an eye toward borrowing, not lending. Cf. above on page p.306.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. the discussion above on page p.315.

of and possibly securing credit for a set of engraved printing plates for the society to issue notes with.¹⁴⁷

In September of 1836, Joseph Smith Jr, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon and Oliver Cowdery returned from a trip to Salem, Massachusetts,¹⁴⁸ where they had searched for a “large amount of money . . . secreted in the cellar of a certain house”,¹⁴⁹ in the hope of thus alleviating their financial difficulties.¹⁵⁰ Later letters indicate that on the return from this trip, Smith Jr finalized his decision to found a bank.¹⁵¹

10.2.3 Founding a Bank Differently

Founding a bank had a socially and legally accepted pattern, followed even in the case of the notorious Owl Creek Bank, to wit: write articles of association; obtain a charter; announce and open the subscription books; choose governing board from among the highest invested stock members; and, when enough stock had been paid up, open doors for business. Possibly because of the loans coming due, the Kirtland saints decided that they could not proceed in this fashion.

They chose to collect the subscriptions, write articles of association, select a board, and

¹⁴⁷Adams, (1983), p.468f.

¹⁴⁸Jeffrey N. Walker (2014b). “Looking legally at the Kirtland Safety Society”. In: *Sustaining the Law: Joseph Smith’s Legal Encounters*. Ed. by Gordon A. Madsen, Jeffrey N. Walker, and John W. Welch. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Studies. Chap. 9, pp. 179–226, p.183.

¹⁴⁹Von Wagoner, (1994), p.181.

¹⁵⁰ It would have been incongruous of the Church leadership to pray for financial relief (= HC 2:291), on the one hand, while on the other not giving God an opportunity to assist them by failing to investigate a buried treasure. Cf. also Williams, (2012), p.342. Indeed, Smith Jr received a revelation during this trip, D& 111, which asserted the correctness of having undertaken the trip (v.1) and encouraged them to trust in His assistance in paying off the debt (v.5). Perhaps more disturbingly, the revelation also promised for the Lord to “give this city into your hands, that you shall have power over it” and promising that “its wealth pertaining to gold and silver shall be yours” (v.4). Such terminology echoes the wording in the “Conquest of Canaan” narrative in the Old Testament, e.g. Joshua 8:18.

¹⁵¹ Walker, (2014b), p.183; Mark L. Staker (2009). “Raising Money in Righteousness: Oliver Cowdery as Banker”. In: *Days Never to Be Forgotten: Oliver Cowdery*. Ed. by Alexander L. Baugh. Provo, Utah: Religious Study Center, Brigham Young University, pp. 143–254, Fn 26. The letter was published in the *Messenger and Advocate*, September 1836, pp.374–376.

then get a charter in January of 1837, when the Ohio legislature commenced its session, with the intent of opening for business as soon as possible thereafter.

By October 1836, as the Ohio banks were busy pulling their \$5 notes from circulation so that they could meet the July 4, 1837, deadline, the Kirtland Safety Society Bank opened its ledgers for buying stock. As in the case of the Owl Creek bank discussed earlier,¹⁵² interested parties had to make a down payment on the full value of the stock only; the full amount was due later.

Though the stock size of \$50 was low¹⁵³ but not unreasonable,¹⁵⁴ the amount of stock the society planned to issue, 80,000 shares, as well as the capital stock of \$4 million,¹⁵⁵ was comically large. Recall that in 1834, the Ohio legislature had granted ten charter requests which resulted in a *combined* authorized capitalization of \$4.4 million.¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, the initial down payments were insignificant and small quarterly payments of \$0.13¹⁵⁷ per share—which, it is true, lowered the threshold for participation—left the coffers basically empty, though 69,636 shares were subscribed of the 80,000 available.

Rigdon, whose name is listed first in the Safety Society stock ledger, purchased 2,000 shares of stock for \$12 on 18 October 1836. The following month he added another 1,000 shares.¹⁵⁸ Rigdon, Smith and two others [i.e. Edmund Bosley and John Johnson,¹⁵⁹ RCK] subsequently held 3,000 shares each,¹⁶⁰ making

¹⁵² Cf. page p.309 above.

¹⁵³ Walker, (2014b), p.183f.

¹⁵⁴ It was the same as the Owl Creek Bank's; cf. page p.309 above.

¹⁵⁵ Adams, (1983), p.477.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. above page p.302.

¹⁵⁷ Walker, (2014b), p.183.

¹⁵⁸ At that point, November 16, 1836, Rigdon also made his first payment of \$818, having now paid a total of \$890 of the \$15,000 stock's face value, or 6%; cf. D. Paul Sampson and Larry T. Wimmer (1972). "The Kirtland Safety Society: The Stock Ledger Book and the Bank Failure". In: *BYU Studies* 12.4, pp. 427–436, p.428.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p.428.

¹⁶⁰ Walker, (2014b), p.193 claims that 3,000 shares was the "maximum allowed" for any individual investor, but gives no indication of whence this restriction hails. It is neither in the December 1836 constitution, cf. Orson Pratt (1836). "Minutes, Kirtland, OH, 2 Nov. 1836". *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate*, Extra, Dec. 1836. Includes endorsements., nor in the January 1837 constitution published in the *Messenger and Advocate*, pp.441-443.

them the largest stockholders.¹⁶¹

As a group, the extended Smith clan was the socially largest shareholder, at a total of 12,800 shares,¹⁶² over 18% of the total stock subscribed and 16% of the total stock. This ensured adequate control of the company, which required a whopping 32 directors to manage and two-thirds of the directors present to form a quorum.¹⁶³

The stock issue for the Kirtland Safety Society was huge. Rigdon's initial purchase alone was equivalent to the entire amount of stock available for the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie, whose stock sold for \$100.¹⁶⁴

To outside investors, this would have looked unusual and therefore either unprofessional, which is what it most likely was, or indicative of attempted fraud. What was most suspicious was that the Safety Society was willing to require such an insignificant percentage of the share price, well below even a percent,¹⁶⁵ as the initial subscription outlay. The Commercial Bank of Cincinnati had required paying 10% of the share price at the end of thirty days.¹⁶⁶ In the case of the just mentioned Commercial Bank of Lake Erie, the subscribers had paid 35% of the stock by the end of the subscription period.¹⁶⁷ Under similar circumstances, Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith Jr would each have been on the hook for \$15,000 to \$52,500, by the end of November 1836, and the extended Smith family for between \$128,000 and \$448,000.¹⁶⁸

In October of 1836, Oliver Cowdery departed for Philadelphia and obtained engraved

¹⁶¹Von Wagoner, (1994), p.182.

¹⁶²Walker, (2014b), p.183.

¹⁶³Ibid., p.84f.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. above on page p.301.

¹⁶⁵ Sampson and Wimmer report that the majority of the shares were purchased for $26\frac{1}{4}$ cents per \$50 share, or \$262.50 per a thousand shares; that is 0.6% of the share price; cf. Sampson and Wimmer, (1972), p.429.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. above on page p.300.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. above on page p.301.

¹⁶⁸ Of course, if they had had that kind of money, they would not have needed to start a bank.

plates from the firm of Underwood, Bald, Spencer and Huff.¹⁶⁹ Joseph Smith Jr took care of purchasing a safe.¹⁷⁰

Unlike the Owl Creek Bank case, where the articles of association preceded the opening of the stock ledgers, the constitution for the bank and the election of its chief officers followed in early winter.¹⁷¹ The articles were then printed in the *Messenger & Advocate*, in a special extra edition¹⁷² in December of 1837.¹⁷³

Rigdon was elected president and Smith [Jr, RCK] cashier [on November 2, 1836, RCK]. Cashiers at that time were commonly the chief operating officers, responsible for daily operations including transactions, bookkeeping, accounts, records, and personnel, answering to the president.¹⁷⁴

This was in line with the fact that Rigdon and Smith Jr were two of the four largest stockholders in the company.¹⁷⁵

Orson Hyde was entrusted to obtain a corporate charter from the Ohio Legislature. Hyde was a member of the Whig party, and the representatives for Kirtland were Whigs, so this seemed like a sensible choice. The other most plausible candidate for this mission, Oliver Cowdery, was still on his trip to Philadelphia for obtaining the plates.

Von Wagoner, echoing Adams's assessment¹⁷⁶ of the situation and especially of the role of Grandison Newell, notes:

All three legislators representing the Kirtland area were Whigs, politicians too savvy to support a Mormon bank in a Democrat stronghold. Furthermore,

¹⁶⁹Von Wagoner, (1994), p.183.

¹⁷⁰Adams, (1983), p.470.

¹⁷¹ Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.433, citing HC 1:467f.

¹⁷²Walker, (2014b), p.184.

¹⁷³ I was not able to locate a copy of that special edition. Its outlines are given in: *ibid.*, p.184f; The articles, minimally modified in January 1837 to transform the bank into a stock company, were printed in the regular January 1837 edition of the *Messenger & Advocate*, pp.441-443.

¹⁷⁴Von Wagoner, (1994), p.182.

¹⁷⁵ For the Kirtland Safety Society's major stockholders, cf. above on page p.323.

¹⁷⁶Adams, (1983), p.472f.

these three Geauga legislators were closely linked to Grandison Newell, a rabid anti-Mormon who in 1837 practically singlehandedly drove Rigdon and Smith from Ohio under a barrage of legal encumbrances.¹⁷⁷

But this emphasis misses the decade-long history of tight control that the Ohio Legislature, across party lines, had maintained with respect to the charter of new banks. Granting ten charters out of some thirty petitions in 1834¹⁷⁸ was the major exception of the 1830s. The 1835 legislature had turned down all charter requests; the 1836 legislature had granted one out of seventeen,¹⁷⁹ an edge case related to territorial disputes between Michigan and Ohio.

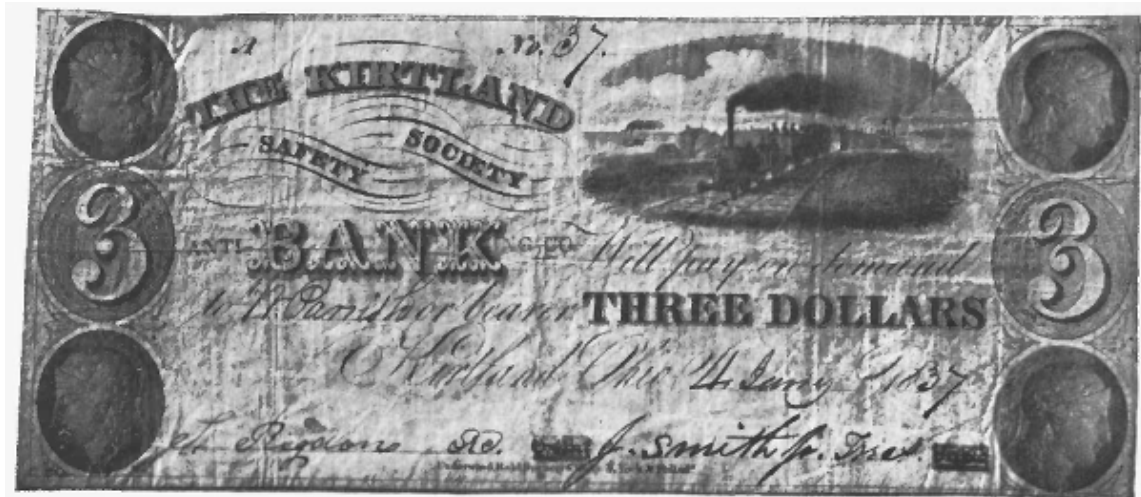


Figure 10.1: Bank note number 37 from the Kirtland Anti-Banking Safety Society. The note is denominated at three dollars and dated January 4, 1837. Sidney Rigdon (bottom left) and Joseph Smith Jr (bottom right) both signed the note. The “spliced” ANTI-, between the image of the number three on the left side, and the word “Bank”, is somewhat difficult to make out. Illustration from William Alexander Linn’s *The Story of the Mormons*, New York (McMillan) 1902, p. 142, now in the public domain due to expired copyright.

¹⁷⁷Von Wagoner, (1994), p.183.

¹⁷⁸Adams, (1983), p.474.

¹⁷⁹Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.437.

Recall also that the amount of authorized capital stock was carefully weighed against the need for establishing a state bank,¹⁸⁰ and that just a year before, in 1836, the legislature had pointed to the unrealized potential of larger authorized capital stock in some of the existing bank's charters as a justification for granting no charters.¹⁸¹

10.2.4 Going it Alone

With the *non placet* of the Ohio Legislature, the presidency drafted a new set of articles, "Articles of Agreement" for a stock company that named itself the "Kirtland Safety Society Anti-Banking Company",¹⁸² not least because of the ease with which the notes could be adjusted.

They ... issued their first notes ... on January 6 [1837, RCK].¹⁸³ Redemption of these notes in specie lasted just over two weeks. The institution continued to function beyond this date, though its notes were thereafter subject to a heavy discount.¹⁸⁴

When the doors opened, the bank¹⁸⁵ had some \$15,000 in paid-up contributions in its coffers.¹⁸⁶ This was the approximate amount that the Owl Creek Bank and the early Bank of Michigan had been able to muster in their communities, though they had issued much less stock for that.

Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer and others have often suggested that during these first few weeks, the safety society effectively ran on full backing, or 1 : 1 leverage, because it issued

¹⁸⁰ Cf. above on page p.301.

¹⁸¹ Cf. above on page p.303.

¹⁸² Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.434.

¹⁸³ That would have been a Friday and is backed by Wilford Woodruff's diary. Adams prefers Monday January 9 as the more logical business day; cf. Adams, (1983), p.469.

¹⁸⁴ Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.434. Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer interpret the January 27, 1837 edition of the *Painesville Telegraph* such "that the Mormons were still trying to redeem their notes, but in land rather than specie"; cf. *ibid.*, p.434 Fn.62

¹⁸⁵ For the location of the bank in Kirtland, see Figure 9.1 above on page p.266.

¹⁸⁶ Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.451.

some \$15,000 notes with \$15,000 in specie in the coffers. But if Joseph Smith Jr was planning to use these bank notes to pay off some \$7,000 in loans coming due that month, that would have halved their reserves. It is implausible that the creditors would have waited to cash the notes for a just-founded bank which even lacked a charter. After all, this was the purpose for which the bank had been set up.

10.2.5 Leverage and Circulation

An analysis of the stock ledger suggests that the paid-up capital was too small to sustain the company.¹⁸⁷ As I have argued,¹⁸⁸ this was due to the fact that the customary rules of financial backing of subscribed stock had not been implemented. Depending on whether 10% or 35% of the \$50 share price had been required, which should have been determined by the articles of association,¹⁸⁹ the coffers should have been well stocked. If the analysis of the stock ledger by Sampson and Wimmer is correct,¹⁹⁰ 205 people had subscribed a total of 69,636 shares,¹⁹¹ at a face value of approximately \$3,481,800. Yet the paid-up cash reserves eventually totalled a meager \$20,725.¹⁹² Under a 10% rule, the paid-up cash reserves should have been at \$348,180, and possibly as high as \$1,218,630 under a 35% rule.

¹⁸⁷ As Kimball puts it, “The grand totals [of the stock ledger, RCK] eloquently reveal the inherent weakness of the project . . .” Stanley Kimball (1971). “Sources on the History of the Mormons in Ohio: 1830-1838”. In: *BYU Studies* 11, pp. 524–540, p.532 The quote would pack more punch if it were not based on an inaccurate share count; cf. the discussion in footnote 191 below.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. above page p.324.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. Pratt, (1836), as well as the summary in Walker, (2014b), p.184f.

¹⁹⁰ Sampson and Wimmer, (1972), p.428.

¹⁹¹ *Contra* Von Wagoner, (1994), p.185, whose estimate of 79,420 shares is based on the earlier “cursory analysis” conducted by Kimball; cf. Kimball, (1971), p.532.

¹⁹² As noted before, when the bank doors opened, it was about \$15,000; cf. Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.451. Unfortunately, Sampson and Wimmer give no alternate estimate for the eventual cash reserve; the value here comes from Kimball, whose share count is suspicious, at least; cf. footnote 191 above. No other estimate seems to be available; the most recent study I consulted, by Walker, gives “approximately \$21,000 cash”—cf. Walker, (2014b), p.188 Fn 43—without any source information. The value looks suspiciously like Kimball’s \$20,725, rounded up.

In reality, the \$20,725 actually available corresponded to about 30 cents per share.¹⁹³

This fact is a strong argument against any theory that posits that the Kirtland saints were doing well economically.¹⁹⁴ Their stock subscription had been running for three months and this was all that the community had managed to muster.¹⁹⁵ The only other community-funded Ohio bank in then-recent memory, the launching of the Wooster Bank,¹⁹⁶ had been oversubscribed by 25% within the allotted open-books period. Typically, subscribers had one month to pay a significant remainder of the subscription price, maybe \$10 on stock worth \$50. The Wooster community seems to have come through, though, and the bank was overfunded by 50% three years later.¹⁹⁷ The majority of the other banks had been funded predominantly by out-of-state investments, but that would of course be impossible without a charter.

By 1 February the \$70,000 worth of notes were being discounted at 12.5 cents on the dollar.¹⁹⁸

Unfortunately, no precise record exists of the total amount of paper in circulation; Von Wagoner's \$70,000 is an estimate. Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer provide both a "comfortable" and an "upper bound" estimate, respectively \$85,000 and \$123,000. These estimates

¹⁹³ This meshes with Sampson and Wimmer, (1972)'s observation that the "fairly consistent" share price of about $26 \frac{1}{4}$ was paid in; cf. *ibid.*, p.429.

¹⁹⁴ Staker gives a few examples of poverty among the Mormons, including examples for depressed wages; cf. Staker, (2009), Fn 21; Fn 22.

¹⁹⁵ That this reflected their economic capabilities, rather than a misunderstanding of the levels of backing required, is evidenced by the fact that Joseph Smith Jr on January 2, 1837, *before the Bank even opened*, had already taken out a forty-five day loan at the Bank of Geauga for another \$3,000. Thus, he must have been uncomfortable with the level of deposit as well, yet had nowhere else to go; cf. Adams, (1983), p.476.

Staker suggests that the loan was intended to bring the Bank of Geauga to recognize the Kirtland Safety Society's notes by making them financially interested in the success; cf. Staker, (2009). This theory has two flaws: First, the proper way to assist recognition of notes was to *deposit* money at another bank. The church leadership could have borrowed such money in Cleveland, as they did for the \$3,000 draft to buy their stake of the Bank of Monroe. Second, given their dire financial straits, once the Bank of Geauga failed to recognize their notes, if recognition had been their only goal, would they not have canceled the loan and returned the sum?

¹⁹⁶ Cf. above on page p.302.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. above on page p.316.

¹⁹⁸ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.185.

are based on a mathematical strategy that takes advantage of the serial numbers of the surviving notes. From these estimates one can compute leverage amounts.¹⁹⁹

Table 10.2: Leverage Estimates for Kirtland Safety Society

Source	Type	Circulation (in \$)	Leverage ($x : 1$)
Von Wagoner		70,000	3.38
Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer	comfortable	85,000	4.10
Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer	upper-bound	123,000	5.93

Notice that all of these are above the highest leverage in the table for bank leverage in Ohio presented previously, the Bank of Hamilton's leverage.²⁰⁰ They would also have been in violation of the Ohio Bank Commissioner law that the legislature would go on to pass in 1839, which capped the leverage at 3 : 1.²⁰¹

It is important to note that the Nauvoo House,²⁰² whose construction was delegated to a stock company in 1841, did not repeat the mistake of the Kirtland Safety Society. Organized by revelation D&C 124, stock was only given for fully paying the \$50 of a share (vv.67f) at joining time; mere down payments were not permitted.

10.2.6 Further Attempts to Charter

The lack of a charter enabled legal action against Rigdon and Smith Jr. After the February 1, 1837 edition of the *Cleveland Weekly Gazette* raised the question of the legality of the

¹⁹⁹ This assumes that the initially paid-up cash reserve remained at the \$20,725 reported; cf. Von Wagoner, (1994), p.185. For the discussion regarding the accuracy of that cash-reserve estimate, see footnote 192 above.

²⁰⁰ Cf. page p.316 above.

²⁰¹ Walker, (2014b), p.188 Fn 43 agrees that, given their cash reserves of "approximately \$21,000", banking practice in Ohio would have limited the issue of notes to between \$20,000 to \$40,000.

²⁰² Cf. below on page p.394.

notes issued, Orson Hyde tried again to obtain a charter from the Ohio legislature.

Reapproaching the Legislature

... Orson Hyde again applied on 10 February 1837. The eleven Mormon names attached to this application included Rigdon, Smith, Whitney, Warren Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, and Oliver Cowdery. Non-Mormon signatures included Benjamin Adams (Painesville postmaster and local Democrat leader), Nehemiah Allen (prominent citizen of nearby Willoughby), Benjamin Bissell (Rigdon's and Smith's personal lawyer, also a prominent Democrat), Horace Kingsbury (prominent Painesville citizen and Democrat), and H.A. Sharp (prominent Willoughby citizen). Despite this list of supporters, the charter bid again failed.²⁰³

The Second Attempt reduced the capitalization from the laughable \$4,000,000 to the still ambitious \$300,000; half to a third of that amount was far more typical.²⁰⁴ Given the Safety Society's desperate need for a charter, and the necessity of eliminating as many obstacles to the uphill battle as possible, it is interesting to speculate why they did not lower their capitalization more aggressively. What made Joseph Smith Jr and Sidney Rigdon think they would need this much?

Despite the fact that the team managed to identify a sponsor, the pro-soft-money Democrat Samuel Medary, who was willing to let the Kirtland charter ride on an amendment, the legislature again blocked all new bank chartering attempts that session.²⁰⁵

Collaboration with the Bank of Monroe

Another way to bypass the charter question was to become a branch or subsidiary of an already chartered bank located in another state.²⁰⁶ This meant that one member of the Church leadership had to withdraw from the safety society and then join the out-of-state

²⁰³Von Wagoner, (1994), p.190 Fn 47.

²⁰⁴Adams, (1983), p.477.

²⁰⁵Ibid., pp.477-479.

²⁰⁶Walker, (2014b), p.189.

bank at a sufficiently high level of management. Oliver Cowdery did just that, dissolving Oliver Cowdery and Company as well and transferring the establishment to Smith Jr and Rigdon.²⁰⁷

On February 10, 1837, the church leadership accompanied Cowdery to Monroe, Michigan, equipped with a \$3,000 Cleveland draft, and bought a controlling stake in the Bank of Monroe,²⁰⁸ chartered in 1827. The bank was probably chosen because Newell K. Whitney and Sidney Gilbert had lived in Monroe, and its president Captain Smith was an old army acquaintance of Whitney's.²⁰⁹ The purchase of the controlling stake made Oliver Cowdery a director and vice-president of the Bank of Monroe. In return, the Kirtland Safety Society received "notes totaling more than \$20,000" of the Bank in Monroe.²¹⁰

Legal Consequences of Failed Chartering

Shortly thereafter, a frontman for "prosperous Kirtland farmer and businessman Grandison Newell"²¹¹, who had already intrigued against issuing a charter to the company,²¹² sued Rigdon and Smith Jr as being in violation of the 1816 Ohio illegal-banking statute. A hearing on March 24, 1837 set a trial date in the fall of that year.

10.2.7 Would the Charter have Helped?

Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer believe that the lack of a charter was the Kirtland Safety Society's biggest obstacle to success. Though they admit that the company was poorly

²⁰⁷Staker, (2009), Fn 112.

²⁰⁸ A credit attack on the bank in 1836 had caused its officers to publish the bank's accounts on August 24, 1836; this revealed that four-fifths of its stock were held by New York investors and that the bank had \$2.50 paid-in for each of its 2,000 shares; cf. *ibid.*, Fn 113; Fn 116; Fn 117.

²⁰⁹*Ibid.*

²¹⁰Walker, (2014b), p.190.

²¹¹Von Wagoner, (1994), p.186.

²¹² Grandison Newell was a founding member in the Bank of Geauga; cf. Staker, (2009). Nevertheless, he did not block the \$3,000 loan that Joseph Smith Jr had taken out January 2, 1837 to assist the cash-starved safety society. Perhaps he was confident that this would only increase Smith Jr's predicament.

capitalized, they argue that a charter would have made raising more capital possible or at least easier.²¹³

In the spirit of “virtual history”, one can assume that Samuel Medary had come through for fellow Democrat Oliver Cowdery and that the second charter had passed, leaving the Kirtland Safety Society as a bank with authorized capital of \$300,000.

First of all, the shares would have to be scaled down proportionally, 80,000 to 6,000 (or 7.5%). Thus, Sidney Rigdon’s 3,000 shares would have translated to 225—a much more manageable size. All in all, the 69,636 shares subscribed would have deflated to 5,223 shares, leaving 777 shares for new subscribers, almost 13%.

With a chartered bank and a bundle of available stock subscriptions on the market, the wealthy East Coast investors such as David Stone, who bought up the remaining 66% in the old Bank of Michigan, or Henry Dwight and his friends, who had monopolized the stock subscription for the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie in Cleveland and were the majority owners of the Bank of Michigan in 1837, would have purchased most of the remaining stock.²¹⁴

One look at the history of the charter and the initial issuance of banking notes would have convinced the professional investors that Rigdon and Smith Jr were out of their depth, and not just financially. By hook or by crook, the investors would have bought out enough of the stockholders to get a controlling majority on the board, then brought in their own people, with professional banking experience. Thus, within weeks Joseph Smith Jr and Sidney Rigdon would have found their relationship with the Kirtland Safety Society Bank indistinguishable from their relationship to the Bank of Geauga that had provided the

²¹³ Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.435; Sidney Rigdon’s son Wycliff later recalled that Rigdon had made a similar argument; cf. Von Wagoner, (1994), p.182. Oliver Cowdery’s brother Warren, who was then editing the *Messenger and Advocate*, agreed in an editorial in August of 1837; cf. Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.436f.

²¹⁴ Cf. above on pages p.314 and p.315, for the Bank of Michigan, and above on page p.301 for the Lake Erie bank.

\$3,000 bridge loan in January 1837.

Alternatively, the investors might have preferred to let the bank default “naturally”, then purchased the only valuable part, the charter, and finally reorganized the bank, in the same way that other failed banks, such as the Commercial Bank of Lake Erie, had been brought back for a second lease on life.²¹⁵

10.2.8 The Banking Crisis

In March of 1837, the Banking Crisis swept the land.²¹⁶ By this time, the company had been in trouble for about two months, so the correlation between the bank’s failure and the crisis is at best indirect. However, the crisis forced the Bank of Monroe to suspend payments,²¹⁷ and the fortunes of the Kirtland Safety Society were now entangled with that institution.²¹⁸

Joseph Smith Jr and other Mormon leaders often gave the banking crisis of 1837 as an argument for the failure of the company, but this was only true in the sense that it took the indirect charter away.²¹⁹ The general banking crisis did reduce available credit,²²⁰ which did not help those Church members that had credit notes coming due.

In a replay of Owl Creek bank president James Smith’s plea that members should accept its notes, cashier Joseph Smith Jr also appealed to the Mormons to accept the company’s notes, predicting that the company would be unable to continue its operation without their support.²²¹ By June 1837, Smith Jr withdrew from the bank,²²² and Frederick G.

²¹⁵ Cf. above on page p.300.

²¹⁶ Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.343.

²¹⁷ Walker, (2014b), p.192.

²¹⁸ Oliver Cowdery resigned his position as vice-president, returned to Kirtland and became a justice of the peace instead; cf. *ibid.*, p.192.

²¹⁹ Cf. HC 2:487f; for additional examples, see Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.435 Fn 75.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.432.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p.436.

²²² Von Wagoner, (1994), p.186.

Williams and Warren Parrish—by then already disaffected from the church—took over the day-to-day operations of the Kirtland Safety Society.²²³

At the jury trial in October 1837 Rigdon and Smith were both found guilty and fined \$1,000 each plus court charges. Although they appealed, both fled the state [in January of 1838, RCK] before their court date.²²⁴

The bank finally closed its doors in November of 1837,²²⁵ almost a year after the drafting of its constitution.

10.3 The Fall-Out

These conditions, coupled with other local problems and a national financial panic in 1837, caused Kirtland's economy to fail, which induced a failure of faith among many Saints. Some members | withdrew from the Church, and several leaders in Missouri and Ohio became dissenters or were sympathetic to them, including some former members of the United Firm.²²⁶

The list of dissent was impressive indeed, and some of the rifts would take years to heal, or never heal at all.

Frederick G. Williams, William W. Phelps, Oliver Cowdery, John Johnson [and his sons, RCK], Martin Harris, and John Whitmer all left the Church. Frederick G. Williams followed the Saints to Illinois and was restored to fellowship in April 1840, dying in full faith at Quincy in 1842. . . . Phelps returned to the faith two months later [i.e. July 1840, RCK]. Years passed before Cowdery and Harris returned.²²⁷

Others included Orson and Parley Pratt, as well as Warren Parrish. The departure of John Johnson was especially difficult, because his 3,000 shares in the Kirtland Safety

²²³Walker, (2014b), p.194.

²²⁴Von Wagoner, (1994), p.186.

²²⁵Ibid., p.186.

²²⁶Parkin, (2007), pp.62-63.

²²⁷Ibid., p.62.

Society were backed by his extensive property, and thus were crucial to keeping the society solvent.²²⁸

In the face of these mounting legal and financial difficulties, Joseph Smith designated Oliver Granger as his agent²²⁹, and Smith Jr and Rigdon left Kirtland for Far West, Missouri, on January 12, 1838.²³⁰

With the departure of the Mormons to Missouri, the real-estate market became saturated; land prices dropped in Kirtland, making it even more difficult to recoup the losses²³¹ and settle the debts.²³²

²²⁸Walker, (2014b), p.193.

²²⁹Parkin, (2007), p.62.

²³⁰ Luke Johnson claimed that he was the one to tip off Joseph Smith Jr. In Johnson's tale, Luke heads off an arrest by Sheriff Kimball by getting to the prophet first; cf. Johnson, (1865), p.5

²³¹Parkin, (2007), p.64; p.64 Fn 262.

²³² Consider the case of Newell K. Whitney. Deeply troubled by the economic situation and the "disaffection of his brethren" *ibid.*, p.64, he had left his Kirtland properties in the hands of his brother Samuel F. Whitney and followed the saints to Far West, Missouri. When Whitney died in 1857 and Samuel was executor of the estate, Samuel had to sell off the properties to pay off Kirtland debts, including \$1,000 that Newel still owed Samuel; cf. *ibid.*, p.64.

The note for the Peter French farm was finally cancelled as "paid in full" on September 18, 1848; cf. *ibid.*, p.61.

Chapter 11

Settling Nauvoo

The decisive factor in determining the exact location of the new gathering place [i.e. Nauvoo, RCK] was the opportunity to possess Galland's tract [i.e. Commerce, RCK] for no money down and long years to pay. Land for farming and for townsites was the basic Mormon economic requirement, and the river offered commercial opportunities for the future.¹

11.1 Aftermath of the Mormon War

11.1.1 Preventing the Scatter

On November 29, 1838, Judge King's court of inquiry into the circumstances of the Mormon War sentenced Joseph Smith Jr and Sidney Rigdon, together with Hyrum Smith and several others, to imprisonment in the Clay County jail at Liberty, Missouri, on the charges of treason. Rigdon acted as his own barrister and managed to obtain bail and release; the Smith brothers and the others, represented by Alexander Doniphan, remained in prison.²

¹Robert Bruce Flanders (1965). *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi*. Urbana, IL — Chicago: University of Illinois Press, p.34.

²Von Wagoner, (1994), p.254. Von Wagoner argues that this court of inquiry and the request for over one million US dollars in reparations together scuttled the Mormon quest for redress for the violation of their freemen rights: The sum alarmed the Missouri representatives, which then provided the US government

A grand-jury trial date was scheduled for March 1839.³ The prisoners pleaded *habeas corpus* and achieved an earlier trial date, January 25, 1839, before Judge Jorl Turnham of Clay County.⁴

As a result, the church presidency had thenceforth to act from afar, with Smith Jr writing letters from jail to Rigdon and the other leaders, who had joined the other Mormon refugees in the environs of Quincy, Illinois.⁵ The Mormon leadership was unclear on what to do; the lack of funding and the fear of offering an easier target for retributions if they gathered again led them to toy with the idea of scattering the church's members across a wider area.⁶ The lack of access to God's will through Joseph Smith Jr's revelations was felt acutely.

[Our, RSVW] leader is gone, we have none to tell us what to do by direct Revelation.⁷

Rigdon, who had been scouting for new gathering places in the vicinity of Quincy, identified Commerce, Illinois and the so-called "Half-Breed Tract"⁸ on the Iowa side of the Mississippi as potential locales. The town had been part of a land boom earlier, platted in 1824,⁹ and several land promoters had carved out their niches there, not necessarily

of President Martin van Buren with the court transcripts. The transcripts documented the retaliatory measures of the Mormons as well as the activities of the Danites, thus eliminating all sympathy for the maltreatment the saints had received; cf. Von Wagoner, (1994), p.271.

³Ibid., p.252.

⁴Ibid., p.254.

⁵ Brigham Young, who was still in Kirtland, would not join them until March 17, at the conference in Quincy; cf. Flanders, (1965), p.26.

⁶ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.262. Albert Rockwood told his father in a letter from mid-February 1839, that the prophet had advised "to scatter, hold no meetings in [Quincy, RSVW] & be wise servants that the wrath of the enemy be not kindled against us"; cf. *ibid.*, p.262. William Marks and Bishop Partridge were also supportive of the idea; cf. Flanders, (1965), p.25.

⁷ Albert Perry Rockwood to his father, letter from January 30, 1839; quoted in: Von Wagoner, (1994), p.262.

⁸ The Half-Breed tract was named after mixed-blood Fox and Sauks tribes that had received the land in an 1824 land-cession treaty; cf. *ibid.*, p.262

⁹Flanders, (1965), p.40f.

independently of each other or backed by appropriate titles. One promoter was Isaac Galland, a former Indian agent now associated with the New York Half-Breed Land Company. Galland had recently converted to Mormonism and was ready to meet with Rigdon by mid-February.¹⁰

11.1.2 Purchasing Commerce and Environs

At that time, Commerce was a “paper town”¹¹ largely promoted by Isaac Galland. However, other land speculators were selling lots there, including Vermont cousins of Heber J. Kimball, who had lived there since the platting well into the 1830s.¹² Additional developers were promoting lands surrounding Commerce proper—men such as Herringshaw and Thompson, who had a plat for the high prairie behind the bluffs overlooking the city.¹³ Sales had been slow for a while, and the land promoters were willing to grant lenient terms, with little money down and long-term credit, in order to make any sales at all.¹⁴

Rigdon was originally skeptical of Galland, but Galland was a persistent salesman,¹⁵ and by March 1839 Smith Jr decided that the Mormons should sell off their consecrated lands in Missouri.¹⁶ On March 11, Rigdon took initial steps to buy, through land-swaps for Missouri properties, \$18,000 worth of Nauvoo land and \$80,000 worth of Half-Breed Tract land.¹⁷ As a signing bonus, Galland immediately vacated his two-story brick house adjacent to a spring, and the Rigdons claimed it as their new home.

By April 1839, the remaining imprisoned leaders had managed to bribe their guards

¹⁰Von Wagoner, (1994), p.263f.

¹¹ Flanders, (1965), p.30. On the speed with which plats were developed, cf. below page p.347. On the small amount of build-out, cf. below page p.348.

¹² They may have helped attract Mormon attention to the place but ended up playing only a minor role in the settling of Commerce; cf. *ibid.*, p.31.

¹³*Ibid.*, p.43.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p.39.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p.31.

¹⁶Von Wagoner, (1994), p.262.

¹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p.263f, who unfortunately intermingles the chronology quite a bit.

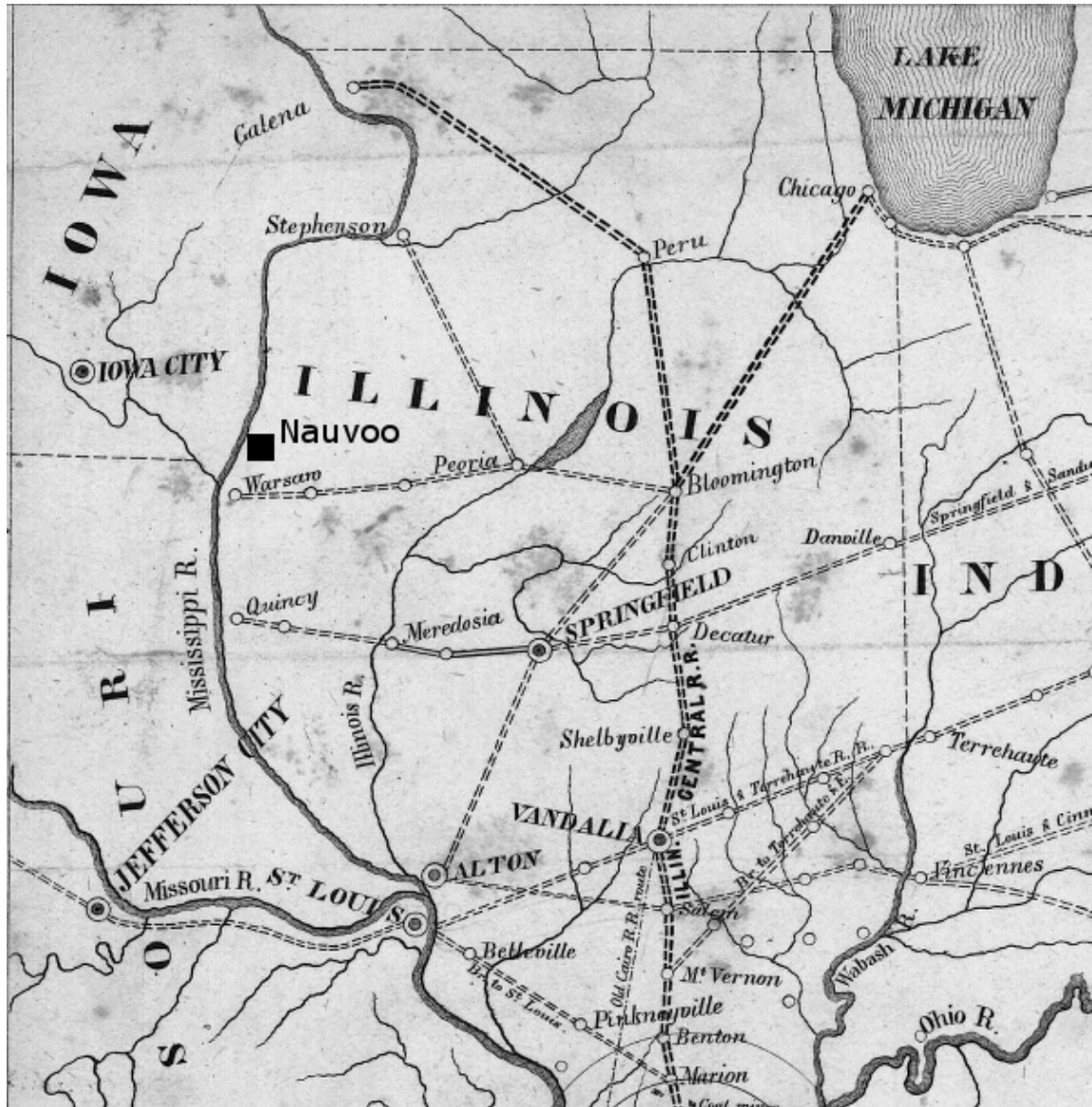


Figure 11.1: Detail of the 1850 “Map of a part of the Southern S-Western States showing the contemplated route of the New Orleans & Ohio Railroad and the Central Railroad of Illinois”, projected by William McBean. Position of Nauvoo added by RCK. Before the purchase of the lands around Nauvoo, Quincy was the main rallying point for the fleeing church members. This work is in the public domain due to expired copyright.

during a change of venue. They arrived in Commerce on April 30. On May 1, 1839, the land purchases in Commerce—the 123.4-acre Hugh White farm¹⁸ and the 47.17-acre property¹⁹ of Galland—were confirmed.²⁰

In May and June, the Mormons purchased more land on the Lee County side of the river in the Half Breed Tract, through their agents Vinson Knight and Oliver Granger almost fifteen thousand acres for almost thirty-nine thousand dollars.²¹ Galland managed to obfuscate the complexity of the underlying conflicting claims²² by founding a new company, the “Half Breed Land Company”, and selling stock in it, exchangeable for acreage.²³

The church also bought 500 acres, the so-called Hotchkiss-Gillet purchase,²⁴ about 80% of the acreage of the bottom flats along the Mississippi river.²⁵

That summer, the Mormons made their first acquaintance with the malaria fevers,²⁶ which crippled a planned European missionary tour of the Quorum of the Twelve, and left bedridden the church presidency and hundreds of Mormons, some of whom even succumbed to the disease.²⁷

¹⁸ The price was \$5,000, over \$40 an acre; cf. Flanders, (1965), p.35.

¹⁹ The property was adjacent to the White farm and sold for \$9,000, almost \$191 per acre. In fact, Galland had bought that property only two years earlier for \$2,000—still over \$42 per acre—and then developed it himself into something Galland euphemistically called “a hotel”; cf. *ibid.*, p.35.

²⁰ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.265.

²¹ Cf. Flanders, (1965), p.36. This works out to the more reasonable \$2.60 per acre.

²² *Ibid.*, pp.28-30.

²³ *Ibid.*, p.36f.

²⁴ The purchase totalled \$114,500 over the twenty-year period and had a complex payment structure involving multiple notes of different times of maturation; cf. *ibid.*, p.42. Over the entire time period, the price works out to about \$229 per acre.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.41. The remaining 125 acres were on the western end of the peninsula.

²⁶ As Joseph Smith Jr pointed out in the official church history, “Commerce was so unhealthful very few would live there, but believing it might become a healthful place by the blessing of heaven to the Saints, and no more eligible place presenting itself, I considered it wisdom to make an attempt to build up a city.” (= HC 3:375); cf. *ibid.*, p.38.

²⁷ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.266f. When Sidney Rigdon, Smith Jr and others departed to present their redress petition to President Martin Van Buren in Washington, DC, a doctor had to accompany them to deal with Rigdon’s malaria-induced chills; cf. *ibid.*, p.268. In an 1847 recollection, the doctor wrote to the prophet’s son Joseph Smith III, that his father had told the doctor that it was the will of God for the doctor to make this journey cf. *ibid.*, p.269.

11.1.3 The Church as Land Promoter

Unfortunately, the church leaders in this process had taken on \$150,000 in debt that the sale of lands to the arriving new converts—some three thousand members of the English working class, mostly poor, would arrive before 1846—would be hard pressed to recover.²⁸ The saints who had fled from Missouri were for the most part²⁹ impoverished as well.³⁰

The purchases in the “Half Breed Tract” would in hindsight turn out to be especially onerous. While Nauvoo at least boomed and grew by leaps and bounds, mushroom-like³¹ in the analogy of George Miller,³² Zarahemla, the Iowa side of the development, never quite caught on in the same way. By summer 1840, when Nauvoo was rapidly approaching 3,000 inhabitants,³³ Zarahemla had a mere 750,³⁴ though the Iowa side, at an estimated \$80,000, was more than half the cost of the \$150,000 purchase.³⁵ The sluggish development—683 church members in August of 1841 for the entire Zarahemla Stake,³⁶ which spanned three counties—continued until 1842, when the stake was abandoned altogether.³⁷

²⁸Von Wagoner, (1994), p.278.

²⁹ A good counter-example is Norman Buell, husband of Presendia Lathrop Huntington, who had already grown cool during the Missouri time and would finally apostasize in the Nauvoo era. His ability to save most of his financial means meant that they could start over in Lima, Illinois, 30 miles south of Nauvoo, immediately; cf. Compton, (1997), pp.120-122.

³⁰ In a letter to Edward Hunter—see page p.359 below— from Nauvoo, dated November 21, 1841, his builder James Rodeback wrote that he was still looking for his own place, since church land was too dear and the swamp too wet; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 8.

³¹ Launius and McKiernan argue that the analogy was supposed to capture the fits and starts of the effort, not the rapid speed at which mushrooms grow; cf. Roger D. Launius and F. Mark McKiernan (1985). *Joseph Smith Jr's Red Brick Store*. Western Illinois Monograph Series 5. Macomb, IL: Western Illinois University Press, p.9.

³²Flanders, (1965), p.51.

³³Ibid., p.51.

³⁴Ibid., p.56.

³⁵Von Wagoner, (1994), p.263f.

³⁶ It is unfortunate that the population information is so sparse that one needs to use branch member numbers to estimate population numbers. This is partially due to the fact that some communities such as Zarahemla ceased to exist after the Mormon departure in 1846.

³⁷ S. Kent Brown, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard H. Jackson, eds. (1994). *Historical Atlas of Mormonism*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p.58. To add insult to injury, in an 1850 US Supreme Court decision, all of the church's claims to ownership were invalidated as well; cf. Plewe, Brown, and Cannon, (2012), p.59.

Overall, the Mormons had not managed to get a good bargain.

The obligations of the Hotchkiss[-Gillett, RCK] purchase . . . determined that city lots in Nauvoo would not be inexpensive.³⁸

That said, it is unclear what else the church leadership could have done. Though the people in and around Quincy had been extremely generous in supporting the influx of Mormons from Missouri, there was no point in overstaying their welcome. Most of the Mormons had no money on hand; they had left their lands behind in Missouri; and the processes for redress were unlikely to yield any funds in the near term. The planting season was upon them. These needs fit hand in glove with the eagerness of the various land promoters, who were willing to engage in complex reimbursement schemes in order to move inventory.

The only potential wealth the Mormons could access collectively were the lands they had been forced to leave behind. But consider the difficulties of that scheme: Land speculation in general had hit bottom with the Treasury's "specie circular" of July 11, 1836,³⁹ which had insisted on hard cash for every acre of governmental land. Furthermore, the Kirtland market was glutted, due to the fire sales accompanying the departure of the Mormons since 1838. In the early 1830s, the significant differential between the land prices in Ohio and Missouri had assisted Bishop Partridge in getting the Mormons established there.⁴⁰

Now the sale proceeds of those consecrated lands would have to be used in the Illinois real-estate market, whose prices resembled those in Ohio back in the mid-1830s: \$5,000 for the 123-acre Hugh White farm⁴¹ was barely 20% better than the \$5,000 for the 103 acre Peter French farm back in Kirtland.⁴² Moreover, the poorer among the saints had only

³⁸ Flanders, (1965), p.42. There may have been some confusion about whether there would be interest on the loan or not; the contracts at any rate specify such interest.

³⁹ Cf. above on page p.304.

⁴⁰ Cf. above on page p.281.

⁴¹ Flanders, (1965), p.35.

⁴² Parkin, (2007), p.19; cf. above on page p.276.

held inheritances of less than 30 acres to begin with.⁴³

A final difficulty was that the church leadership was unable to buy out the entire region. Thus, when the time came to turn around and sell the lots to the church members, the church was competing against the other land promoters still hovering around the edges, who had none of the economic strictures that the church leadership faced, and could accommodate prospective clients on price. Though the church's economic straits would have required a monopoly to resolve, the church lands were in fact offered in an open market, where better deals were available than the church could offer. Most likely, the resolve of many saints to buy from the church made the deals even sweeter for those who bought elsewhere.⁴⁴

There was one case where Joseph Smith Jr by design wanted the saints to buy land outside the city proper: when establishing farms. As early as the summer of 1833, the plat for the City of Zion in had already envisioned a city surrounded by a greenbelt of agriculture,⁴⁵ and as late as summer of 1843, Joseph Smith Jr was still in support of that vision of segregating living space and agricultural space.⁴⁶

All kinds of improvements are going on rapidly in Nauvoo and vicinity. Houses are going up in every direction in the city, and farms are being inclosed without [i.e., outside the city proper, RCK]. (= HC 5:524f)

But in cases of outside purchases, it became especially tempting to forgo the expensive church lots and buy land from others, up on the high prairie. This was doubly true for the "absentee landlords" in the style of Edward Hunter,⁴⁷ who bought these farms as

⁴³ Cf. on page p.256 above.

⁴⁴ Lyndon W. Cook (1994). *William Law: Biographical Essay–Nauvoo Diary–Correspondences–Interview*. Orem, UT: Grandin, p.21 Fn 63.

⁴⁵ Plewe, Brown, and Cannon, (2012), p.44.

⁴⁶ In fact, as a first step on his own voyage of become a gentleman farmer, Joseph Smith Jr purchased a farm outside the Nauvoo city limits. Smith Jr would ride there to hoe some potatoes and have lunch with his tenant; cf. the July 9, 1842 entry, William Clayton et al. (1841-1842). "Journal, December 1841–December 1842". 90 pages; in "The Book of the Law of the Lord," Record Book, 1841–1845, CHL., p.127.

⁴⁷ Cf. below page p.363.

investments to rent out or as “agricultural factories”; they did not even have to live there.

Thus the church leadership found themselves in an awkward position. They had taken on an enormous financial burden in order to obtain goods whose price was too high for the average member to pay.⁴⁸ It is an interesting question whether this gave rise to the very classes against which the *Book of Mormon* had argued so aggressively.⁴⁹ The leadership expected all members to buy their land from the church, but not all members could.⁵⁰

The leadership reiterated this expectation to the immigrants. When Pratt and Richards brought 200 new English converts in April 1842 to Nauvoo on the steamboat *Maid of Iowa*⁵¹ Joseph Smith Jr took the opportunity of the welcoming ceremony on the following day, April 13, to warn the new arrivals of the “speculators who would get away your property”, arguing that the immigrants should listen to the “heads of the church” who were dedicated to Nauvoo and thus “better qualified to tell you [i.e. the newly arrived, RCK] how to lay out your money”.⁵² “If any man say here is land, or there is land, believe it—not—we can beat all our competitors in lands, price &”.⁵³ Joseph Smith Jr had no qualms about casting such economic transactions in religious terms:

If the speculator run against me, they run against the buckler [i.e. the shield, RCK] of Jehovah. . . . in the last days, he [i.e. Jehovah, RCK] has promised to fight the battle himself [= D&C 98:37; 105:14, RCK].⁵⁴

Equally, in an advertisement in the *Nauvoo Neighbor* of January 1, 1844, William Clayton, clerk at the Temple Recorder’s Office, scribe and confidant to the prophet, reminded

⁴⁸ Cf. footnote 30 on page p.342 above.

⁴⁹ Cf. 4 Nephi 1,23-25, and the general discussion of the socio-economic stance of the Book of Mormon above on pages pp.151-158.

⁵⁰ Joseph Smith Jr would not turn this expectation into a requirement until 1843, when it would lead to conflict with saints that had engaged in real estate themselves, such as the Law brothers, cf. Cook, (1994), p.21, or Brigham Young, who was dealing in lots with and without houses, cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor* May 3, 1843, page 3 column 6. On the Law brothers, see below on pages pp.351ff.

⁵¹ Cf. below on pages pp.384ff.

⁵² Cf. Richards, (1843), p.123; internal editing marks omitted.

⁵³ Cf. Ibid., p.128; internal editing marks omitted.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp.129f; internal editing marks omitted.

the “emigrants” [sic! RCK] that

there is in the hands of the Trustee of the Trust [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK], a large quantity of lands, both in the city and adjoining Townships in this county, which is for sale—some of which belongs to the church and is designed for the benefit of the poor, and also to liquidate debts owing [sic RCK] by the church, for which the Trustee in Trust is responsible.

If the brethren who move in here and want an inheritance will buy their lands from the Trustee in Trust, they will thereby benefit the poor, the Temple and the Nauvoo House, and even then only be doing that which is their duty ⁵⁵

11.1.4 Containing Financial Troubles

The church leadership actively pursued strategies to resolve the incurred financial difficulties. For example, Oliver Granger, Steven Markham and Lyman Wight were engaged to collect monies and press the matter, convincing Eastern saints to make over their land to the church. However, the trickle of income this generated did not even pay the interest rates on the promisory notes.⁵⁶

Furthermore, the church leadership hired the Commerce City Company, also known as Hotchkiss, Gillett & Tuttle, to sell the consecrated lands outside of Illinois and use the money to pay down the debt.⁵⁷ All these combined efforts would ultimately prove in vain. By 1842, the situation had become so hopeless that the Smith brothers and Sidney Rigdon decided to initiate bankruptcy proceedings⁵⁸—much to the frustration of Mr Hotchkiss and partners.

⁵⁵ *Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 1, 1844, page 4, column 1; the ad had been running since December 16, 1843.

⁵⁶ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.278.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.278.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.279.

11.2 Plats and Lots

As Flanders observed, in the heyday of the mid-1830s land rush in Hancock and Lee counties, every promoter had a plat of a city—one that was sure to become the county seat!—in their pocket.⁵⁹ Like others before him, Joseph Smith Jr wanted to draw his own plat, and thus Commerce received a new structure.⁶⁰

We only have a *terminus post quem* for the platting of Nauvoo, due to a diary entry of Joseph Smith Jr's from June 11, 1839. This entry is the first to make reference to block and lot numbers that follow the plat.⁶¹ The plat followed the old survey, keeping the majority of the streets at three rods, or 49 $\frac{1}{2}$ ft.⁶² In comparison to Zion and Far West, the lot sizes had increased and the reserved central lots had been omitted.⁶³ A few streets were exceptionally wide: Main Street was to be 87 ft wide;⁶⁴ Water Street was to be 64 feet wide. Joseph Smith Jr's block hut and then later the Nauvoo House⁶⁵ were located at the intersection of these main thoroughfares. These thoroughfares were apparently intended for commercial development.⁶⁶

With the plat in place, the church leadership could now sell the town lots⁶⁷ to recoup their investment.⁶⁸ Smith Jr began to promote the Mormons' migration to Nauvoo with urgent apocalyptic warnings.

⁵⁹Flanders, (1965), p.27.

⁶⁰Ibid., p.31.

⁶¹ Ibid., p.42; the plat was recorded by Rigdon, Smith Jr and Robinson in the county's plat book in September of 1839; cf. *ibid.*, p.43 Fn 47.

⁶²Ibid., p.42.

⁶³ Ibid., p.43. The plan was most likely to place these special buildings on the bluffs, but that land was privately owned by two Gentile land developers, Herringshaw and Thompson, who kept apace with the replatting of Nauvoo.

⁶⁴ On the ship canal that was supposed to run down the middle of Main Street, cf. *ibid.*, p.43 and see the discussion below on page p.390.

⁶⁵ Cf. below on page p.394.

⁶⁶Flanders, (1965), p.43.

⁶⁷ Cf. page p.342 above.

⁶⁸Flanders, (1965), p.31.

I prophesy, that the man who tarries after he has an opportunity of going [to Zion or one of its stakes, such as Nauvoo, RCK], will be afflicted by the devil. Wars are at hand; we must not delay; The time is soon coming, when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes. (= HC 3:390f)

11.3 Settling the Swamp

Commerce was located on a bulge of lowland jutting from the Illinois side into Iowa; on three sides, the river surrounded this peninsula, whose swampy bottoms were connected to the high prairie by a series of bluffs.

The peninsula, the bluffs, and a considerable area of the adjacent prairie were to be included in the City of Nauvoo.⁶⁹

The wetness of the bottoms was due to springs and streams rising in the bluff and cascading down to the river, and the Mormons ended up having to dig a drainage ditch to get the problem under control.⁷⁰

When the Mormons purchased Commerce, almost none of the plat was developed.⁷¹

When I [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] made the purchase of White and Galland, there were one stone house, three frame houses, and two block houses, which constituted the whole city of Commerce. Between Commerce and Mr. Davidson Hibbard's, there was one stone house and three log houses, including the one I lived in, and these were all the houses ⁷²

Joseph Smith Jr credited Elder Theodore Turley with raising the first house built by a Mormon in Nauvoo⁷³ in June of 1839. Given the speed at which it was constructed, it was not surprising that it was a block hut built of logs.

⁶⁹Flanders, (1965), p.39.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p.40. On the ditching effort as a source of work for poor members, cf. below on page p.370.

⁷¹ Ibid., p.39.

⁷² (= HC 3:375).

⁷³ (= HC 3:375).

By October of 1839, enough Mormons had immigrated there that the semi-annual meeting could declare Nauvoo a stake and elect William Marcks stake president, as well as calling the bishops Whitney,⁷⁴ Partridge and Vinson Knight to take care of the three city wards.

In November 1839, the first issue of the *Times & Seasons* was published by Ebenezer Robinson and Don Carlos Smith, as a monthly periodical.

On April 21, 1840, the U.S. Post Office department changed the name of the new settlement from Commerce to Nauvoo. Sidney Rigdon had used his influence in Washington, DC, to capture the lucrative position of postmaster for his son-in-law, George W. Robinson, who according to a Rigdon family tradition had studied Hebrew under Professor Seixtas in Kirtland and coined the name Nauvoo.⁷⁵ This was just one of the many positions available in the developing town as sources of income. Previously, Robinson had held the ferry rights for the Mississippi,⁷⁶ but during a March 15, 1840, meeting of the High Council, Joseph Smith Jr claimed these rights for himself.⁷⁷

Not all the counselors that Joseph Smith Jr recruited to help him set up a sequestered society for the Mormons to worship in peace were without guile. In the summer of 1840, Dr. John C. Bennett, a former Campbellite who knew Rigdon from Ohio, joined the church leadership in Nauvoo.⁷⁸ Dr. Bennett was an active man, a former brigadier-general in the Illinois cavalry, and a political force. He breathed new life into the redress effort and secured the city charter for the saints.⁷⁹ In January of 1841, Smith Jr dictated revelation D&C 124 for Dr. Bennett, speaking well of him and promising him rewards.

⁷⁴ Smith Jr had invited Whitney to come to Illinois in a letter dated May 24, 1839, when the settlement was still called Commerce; cf. HC 3:363.

⁷⁵ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.277.

⁷⁶ Flanders, (1965), p.35.

⁷⁷ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.277. The ferry landing was located on the Western spur of the town; see also Figure 11.2 below on page p.365.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.280f.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p.281.

In April of 1841, the ceremony for the laying of the cornerstone of the new temple in Nauvoo took place; after Zion and Kirtland, this was the third cornerstone laying, as speaker Sidney Rigdon emphasized.⁸⁰ Rigdon, who was alternately suffering bouts of depression and malaria, was at that time forced to cede his position in the church presidency to General Bennett, as Dr. Bennett was by then known. General Bennett would henceforth hold this “Assistant President” position until Rigdon had recovered.⁸¹

By July of 1841, Nauvoo had developed significantly.

The community had two sawmills, a steam flour mill,⁸² a foundry, a tool factory,⁸³ schools,⁸⁴ bridges, paved streets, a host of shops,⁸⁵ a planned hotel, dozens of cultivated fields, gardens, and orchards, and a cooperative farm on the outskirts of town.⁸⁶

We have some idea of the level of effort and expenditure involved in putting up a “comfortable house” in Nauvoo during the 1840s from the subscription that Joseph Smith Jr undertook for his then-scribe Willard Richards to support his second bride, taken in plural marriage.⁸⁷

A subscription has been got up to build a house for Elder Willard Richards, to which I [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] subscribed a city lot. The brethren subscribed \$25 cash, 10 cords of stone, 30 bushels of lime,⁸⁸ 105 days work, \$59 in work, 15,900 bricks, glass, lumber, and other materials, together with a

⁸⁰Von Wagoner, (1994), p.283.

⁸¹Ibid., p.284.

⁸² Most likely this is the Law brothers’ mill, established in 1839; cf. below on page p.351.

⁸³ Most like this is the one operated by Edwin Woolley before August of 1842; cf. below on page p.354 and Arrington, (1976), p.89.

⁸⁴ This includesthe one sponsored by Sidney Rigdon where Eliza R. Snow was teaching; cf. Von Wagoner, (1994), p.266.

⁸⁵ The Law brothers operated a store, as did Edwin Woolley, and there was of course Joseph Smith Jr’s famous Red Brick store, to name just a few. For the Red Brick store, cf. below on page p.375.

⁸⁶Von Wagoner, (1994), p.282.

⁸⁷Arrington, (1976), p.118.

⁸⁸ Edwin Woolley, whom I discuss in more detail below on page p.354, subscribed for the lime; cf. *ibid.*, p.118.

quantity of produce. I hope the day is not far distant when my clerk [i.e. Elder Willard Richards, RCK] will have a comfortable house for his family.⁸⁹

11.4 Experienced Hands

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Kirtland Safety Society, the church had lost an inordinate number of top-echelon members and leaders.⁹⁰

Thanks to the ongoing missionary efforts, new converts were already waiting in the wings, men who were financially well-off and economically skillful, to step into the gaps and take positions of leadership. In the following, I will introduce two future bishops⁹¹ and two brothers, one of whom was a member of the church presidency, the other of the militia called the Nauvoo Legion. These four men contributed decisively to the development of the socio-economic policies in Nauvoo and are representative of the economic acumen accessible to Joseph Smith Jr.

11.4.1 The Law Brothers

William Law was born in Northern Ireland in 1809, the youngest of five brothers, and emigrated with his family to Pennsylvania around 1819-20.⁹² However, cheap land in Ontario drew William to Churchville, 25 miles northwest of Toronto, where he farmed, operated a mill and served as postmaster; here he also married Jane Silverthorn. Parley P. Pratt's missionary success in Toronto had made Churchville a Canadian stronghold of Mormonism, and William and Jane Law converted in 1836.⁹³

⁸⁹ HC 5:525.

⁹⁰ Cf. above on pages pp.335f.

⁹¹ Though in Mormon historiography, Edward Hunter and Edwin Woolley are often referred to as Bishop Hunter and Bishop Woolley, they received that calling only after the death of Joseph Smith Jr, and thus beyond the cut-off point for my analysis. Consequently, I will refer to them simply as Hunter and Woolley.

⁹² Cook, (1994), p.1f.

⁹³ Ibid., p.2.

The importance of modern revelation and proper priesthood authority to act in God's name are notions which consistently find expression in William Law's writings.⁹⁴

By 1837, Law received the Priesthood of Melchizedek, the leadership of the Churchville branch, and a visit from Joseph Smith Jr.⁹⁵ Ontario and Quebec were then rioting against the British government,⁹⁶ and so Joseph Smith Jr advised the Canadian brethren to sell and move to Zion. William and Jane left Ontario in 1838, and waited for the settlement of the Silverthorn estate in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, until about 1839. This was their good fortune, as they were spared the Mormon War in Missouri.⁹⁷ Once it had become clear how the story of the Mormons would continue, William Law led a seven-wagon caravan of Canadian believers, including William's brother Wilson, to Nauvoo, where they arrived in the first week of November 1839.⁹⁸

Like many other saints, William Law saw no conflict in aspiring to both religious salvation and financial comfort.⁹⁹

With his brother, Wilson, as partner, he [i.e. William Law, RCK] purchased properties, opened a store, and proceeded to build a much-needed steam mill.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴Cook, (1994), p.7 Fn 18.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p.2. The Smith Jr visit is recorded in the diary of Joseph Horne.

⁹⁶Ibid., p.3.

⁹⁷ In the abstract, Law was not disturbed by persecution. "For William Law, religious persecution resulted in a stronger commitment to Mormonism because he regarded such persecution as God's test of his worthiness", as Cook points out; cf. *ibid.*, p.7. However, Law was confronted by the resistance of his family to joining the Mormons; cf. *ibid.*, p.8.

⁹⁸Ibid., p.3.

⁹⁹ In March 1887, William Law was residing in Shullsburg, Wisconsin, as a retired doctor. Here, Law was interviewed by German journalist Wilhelm Wyl—a *nom de plume* for Wilhelm Ritter von Wymetal. Wyl had just published the first part of his exposé *Mormon Portraits*; cf. Wilhelm Wyl (1886). *Joseph Smith, the prophet, his family and his friends. A Study Based on Facts and Documents*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Tribune Print and Publishing Co. In the interview, Law suggested that his original intentions for Nauvoo had been to become a doctor, not a capitalist, but that Joseph Smith Jr had urged him to "[b]uy lands, build mills and keep a store to keep you running. As to practicing and not making anything, *let some Gentiles come and do that*. You look out for business and profit."; quoted in Cook, (1994), p.130; Wyl's emphasis.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p.8. The *St Louis Daily Evening Gazette* for June 17, 1844, reported that the mill had cost

For the wealthy Laws, the steep real-estate prices in downtown Nauvoo were not an issue. The Laws bought lots from Joseph Smith Jr in the lower parts of the city (blocks 139 and 148) for the residences of the brothers and a partial block for the steam mill (block 152).¹⁰¹ However, the Laws were also too business-savvy not to see the opportunity afforded by the presence of alternate land promoters. Therefore, they also bought farm land on the outskirts of Nauvoo, 580 acres, and a dozen full-sized building lots near the location of the Temple.¹⁰²

The Laws were well integrated into Nauvoo society. The Partridges were their friends and had their daughters Emily and Eliza stay with them on arrival in Nauvoo.¹⁰³ The Laws assisted the daughters financially during the final days of Bishop Partridge.¹⁰⁴

The Laws had already met Joseph Smith Jr in Canada, and now that they were in the same city, they became his financial supporters and friends.¹⁰⁵ William Law contributed \$100 to the Washington, DC travel fund, in order to bring the grievances of the Missouri Mormons before President Martin van Buren.¹⁰⁶ In 1841, he was called into the First Presidency and undertook missionary work in Philadelphia with Hyrum Smith.¹⁰⁷ When

\$15,000.00 to construct; cf. Nauvoo Restoration Inc. Card Index Files, CR 387 30, Box 8, Lyon's Research Cards, Card 238, CHL, Salt Lake City.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p.21 Fn 63.

¹⁰² Ibid., p.21 Fn 63. The Laws had come to Nauvoo in 1839, and the cornerstone for the Nauvoo Temple was placed in April of 1841; cf. Von Wagoner, (1994), p.283. Unfortunately, it is not clear from Cook's description whether the Laws bought the building lots before the location of the Temple had been determined, or afterwards.

¹⁰³Marquardt, (2008), p.118.

¹⁰⁴Cook, (1994), p.9 Fn 24.

¹⁰⁵ On August 11, 1842, Emma Hale Smith and a group of supporters met Joseph Smith Jr, who was on the run from the authorities, on an island in the river Mississippi, between Nauvoo and Zarahemla; cf. Newell and Avery, (1994), p.122-124 and Cook, (1994), p.9. On August 16, 1842, Joseph Smith Jr's scribe William Clayton recorded a blessing by the prophet on these his loyal friends: "These I have met in prosperity and they were my friends, I now meet them in adversity, and they are still my warmer friends."; cf. Clayton et al., (1841-1842), p.164. William Law was present; cf. *ibid.*, p.164; Wilson Law, then in the Nauvoo militia as Major General and therefore unable to attend, is mentioned as equally deserving of the Lord's blessing; cf. *ibid.*, p.165.

¹⁰⁶Cook, (1994), p.9.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p.9.

the scandal over John C. Bennett broke in 1842, William Law spoke out publicly to defend Joseph Smith Jr's character,¹⁰⁸ and Wilson Law took over the Major General position in the Nauvoo militia from Bennett on August 3, 1842.¹⁰⁹

11.4.2 Edwin Woolley

Edwin Woolley grew up in Newlin Township in Chester County, near the Brandywine,¹¹⁰ the descendant of Quakers. After his mother's death in 1826,¹¹¹ Woolley followed some of the family's Quaker neighbors to Ohio, in order to buy his own farm.¹¹² Woolley walked most of the way and kept detailed notes, suggesting that he was already planning to bring his family members to Ohio.¹¹³ Woolley was especially impressed with Pittsburgh, which he reached on the twelfth day of his journey, with both the developing industry and the city as the river gateway for store goods to the West.¹¹⁴

[Edwin Woolley writes in his journal, RCK :] There is every kind of manufactories driven by steam here [in Pittsburgh]. One manufactory that I visited was the glass which is singular and interesting, having a great number of hands employed therein.¹¹⁵

In Ohio, Woolley reconnected with friends and neighbors, including his future in-laws, and then returned to Pennsylvania to report to the family.¹¹⁶ By March 1831 he was back in Ohio, marrying his former neighbor Mary Wickersham on March 24, 1831.¹¹⁷ The newly-weds returned to Pennsylvania to settle with Edwin's family, and their first child was born

¹⁰⁸Cook, (1994), p.9.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p.139 Fn 2.

¹¹⁰Arrington, (1976), p.23.

¹¹¹Ibid., p.29.

¹¹²Ibid., p.32.

¹¹³Ibid., p.39.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p.40.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p.39.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p.41.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p.45.

there; but the Woolleys were ready to depart for Ohio. When Edwin's father died as well, the brothers Edwin and Taylor packed up the remaining siblings and moved to live closer to the Wickershams.¹¹⁸ With the Mainline Canal not yet operational, they had little choice but to travel by the Conestoga wagon, an invention of the Pennsylvania Dutch and the precursor of the prairie wagons.¹¹⁹ They had quite a sizable family group.

Edwin had in his party eight souls: he and Mary and little John; Sarah, the eldest sister; the twins, John and Phebe Ann; Samuel; and the fourteen-year-old black boy, John. Taylor and his wife, Mariah, took with them Susan, the second daughter, probably to help with their two infants.¹²⁰

Edwin Woolley and family settled adjacent to Taylor, on almost 162 acres at \$5.12 per acre, near East Rochester, in Columbiana County. The families worked through two tough pioneer years.¹²¹ The pioneer living was such that East Rochester was only platted on Christmas 1834, two years after their arrival.¹²² Though the canal boom of the mid-1830s narrowly missed Columbiana County, the planned canal did increase prices, and so Woolley rented out the farm and took over the village tavern in East Rochester.¹²³ The new position allowed him to flex his economic muscles, working his way toward the position of a gentleman farmer.¹²⁴

[In 1836, RCK] ... Edwin formed a mercantile partnership with J. Emmons, ... Edwin bought another forty-eight acre farm, which he rented out, and bought a house and lot on which he resided in town. The farms rented well, with new settlers coming in on account of the canal. Both the old and new farms were underlaid with coal ¹²⁵

¹¹⁸Ibid., p.47f.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p.48.

¹²⁰Ibid., p.48.

¹²¹Ibid., p.48.

¹²²Ibid., p.51.

¹²³Ibid., p.54.

¹²⁴ On the notion of the gentleman farmer, cf. above on pages pp.84.

¹²⁵ Arrington, (1976), p.54.

In 1839 Edwin purchased a fourth lot, on which in later years at least, stood blacksmith's, wagoner's and undertaker's shops.¹²⁶

Throughout the Ohio frontier in the 1830s, church services and revival meetings were a major source of entertainment, even mental stimulation.¹²⁷ There was fierce competition between the various denominations missionizing in Ohio—the Methodists, the Baptists, the Campbellites, and the Mormons.¹²⁸ Even though the Mormon stay in Ohio had almost run its course by late 1837, it was only then, on November 26, that Mary Wickersham Woolley converted to Mormonism.¹²⁹ The inspiration may have been two of the Woolleys' tenants, John and Rebecca Sherry, on the one hand,¹³⁰ and the person of Mormon missionary Lorenzo Barnes¹³¹ on the other.

With his wife converted, Edwin Woolley had to investigate the matter for himself. Wolley traveled to Kirtland to speak with the prophet. However, not finding Joseph Smith Jr there, he went to New Portage, where Joseph Smith Sr was staying to guard the papyri and the mummy and the *Book of Abraham*.¹³² Woolley essentially recruited Father Smith as his personal missionary and brought him back to his family for a two-week visit. Edwin Woolley was baptized on Christmas Eve in 1837.¹³³

Almost a year later, January 1839, Woolley joined his acquaintance Lorenzo Barnes on a mission to Chester County, Pennsylvania, with the intent of converting his former family members.¹³⁴ Here, they would make the acquaintance of Squire Edward Hunter and preach in the West Nantmeal Seminary located on Hunter's farm.¹³⁵ Woolley failed to make any

¹²⁶Arrington, (1976), p.55.

¹²⁷Ibid., p.56.

¹²⁸Ibid., p.57.

¹²⁹Ibid., p.58.

¹³⁰Ibid., p.60.

¹³¹Ibid., p.61.

¹³²Ibid., p.64.

¹³³Ibid., p.65.

¹³⁴Ibid., p.67.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p.73f; see also below on page p.362.

converts in Chester County, however.¹³⁶

There is some evidence that, in the summer of 1839, Edwin Woolley accompanied the prophet and other church leaders on an inspection tour of what would become Nauvoo, where these men chose homesites for their families.¹³⁷ Having returned to Ohio, Woolley leased out his Ohio properties and moved his family to Quincy, Illinois in the fall of 1839.¹³⁸

Woolley was able to use his financial resources to rent a block hut with a loft and put two additions in place.¹³⁹ Woolley's family had food and shelter, unlike many of the Missourian refugees. In spring of 1840, Woolley deeded his Ohio holdings to the First Presidency, who used the money toward paying off the mortgages on the Nauvoo purchase.¹⁴⁰ In return, Woolley received an improved lot of roughly two hundred and sixty rods in Nauvoo.¹⁴¹

In the fall of 1840, Joseph Smith Jr assigned the compilation of the church's history to the young brother Howard Coray and to Edwin Woolley, though they both at first protested.¹⁴² The collaboration between Coray and Woolley failed, however, due to differences in education and style. A journalist, Dr Miller, had to step in and take Edwin's spot.¹⁴³ In October 1840 the Woolleys left Nauvoo and its malaria behind for a few days to settle affairs in East Rochester.¹⁴⁴ They traveled on the steamboat *Maid of Iowa*¹⁴⁵ to Welleville, Ohio. Delayed by a brief missionary stint in Pennsylvania, they would not return to Nauvoo until November 10, 1841.¹⁴⁶ But they spent the year of 1842 in Nauvoo, Edwin Woolley busily setting up his mercantile business, while his brothers worked in a

¹³⁶Ibid., pp.69f.

¹³⁷Ibid., p.79.

¹³⁸Ibid., p.78.

¹³⁹Ibid., p.81.

¹⁴⁰ On the church debt, cf. above on page p.342.

¹⁴¹Arrington, (1976), p.82.

¹⁴²Ibid., p.83.

¹⁴³Ibid., p.83.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p.84.

¹⁴⁵ For more information on that famous steamboat, see below on page p.383.

¹⁴⁶Arrington, (1976), p.85.

local quarry and contributed to the temple building effort.

Woolley's economic success continued unabated.

In the spring [of 1842, RCK], Edwin constructed a larger, more comfortable house with a two-story brick store adjoining using his savings and merchandising profits to expand his new headquarters.¹⁴⁷

Most of his mercantile goods and supplies were purchased in St. Louis and brought to Nauvoo by steamboat: then Edwin, with the help of Sammy and John, stocked the shelves of his new enterprise. Sometimes Edwin himself went to St. Louis on business.¹⁴⁸

Though Woolley did not belong to the inner circle as the brothers Law did, the prophet seemed to esteem Woolley and used his home as a hiding place.¹⁴⁹ Arrington even claims that the prophet's diary substantiates Joseph Smith Jr's asking Edwin Woolley for business advice.¹⁵⁰

Like his friend Edward Hunter,¹⁵¹ who finally arrived in Nauvoo in the summer of 1842, Woolley was always ready to assist the prophet financially,¹⁵² and to trust him implicitly.¹⁵³

Woolley continued to build out his operations, planning a hardware store and a tool-making shop. In August of 1842, he bought a thirty-acre farm about two miles outside of Nauvoo, on the plateau.¹⁵⁴ He lived in one of the finest houses in Nauvoo.¹⁵⁵

It had five rooms, including a sitting room downstairs and two bedrooms upstairs. As Rachel [Woolley's daughter, RCK] wrote:

The yard was very large, but it was beautiful and green. In the street almost in front of our house, there was a mount. I suppose it was a burial ground for

¹⁴⁷ Arrington, (1976), p.86.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p.86.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p.86; p.88.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p.86.

¹⁵¹ See below on page p.359

¹⁵² Arrington, (1976), p.87 (= HC 5:45).

¹⁵³ On Joseph Smith Jr testing that trust, cf. below on page p.402.

¹⁵⁴ Arrington, (1976), p.89.

¹⁵⁵ See Figure 11.2 on page p.365 below.

some of the Indians spoken of in the Book of Mormon, for I distinctly remember watching the men while digging the mount away to make the street. They found many bones of humans. One in particular I heard them talking about as being very large — a thigh bone.

Across the street was Edward Hunter's red brick home, built by the same Chester County craftsmen Edwin had hired.¹⁵⁶

Woolley went on a mission with William Law, when the latter accompanied Hyrum Smith to the East Coast in September 1842.¹⁵⁷ Again they traveled by steamboat, taking advantage of the deck walks to have debates on Mormonism with often hostile audiences.¹⁵⁸ When Woolley finally returned in 1843, after nine months of missionary work, the polygamy debate was raging among the church leadership.¹⁵⁹

11.4.3 Edward Hunter

Edward Hunter hailed from Delaware County, Pennsylvania. In his youth he had been trained in curing and tanning, then in surveying, but finding a glut in the surveying profession, did not practice it.¹⁶⁰ In 1816,¹⁶¹ Hunter and his friend Lewis Davis went to Pittsburgh to make business connections in St Louis with the intent of settling there. They had letters of recommendation for two well known St Louis merchants, John Cromwell and Jos. Charles (or Charless), a renowned druggist.¹⁶² In these pre-steamboat days, their boat failed them at Louisville, and they had to go south via Kentucky and Tennessee. When

¹⁵⁶Arrington, (1976), p.109.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p.89.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p.93.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p.106.

¹⁶⁰Edward Hunter and Edward E. W. Hunter (2009). *Copy of Record written by Edward Hunter, now in the hands of Lyman Hunter*. (Visited on 01/08/2009), pp.2f.

¹⁶¹ This was the famous "Year without Summer" that had ruined the Smith family's farming chances in Vermont; cf. above on page p.100. Hunter called it "the cold summer when there was a spot on the sun"; cf. *ibid.*, p.3.

¹⁶² One recommendation for Hunter and Davis is the letter of John Cromwell to Jos. Charles, Pittsburgh, October 5, 1816; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 5.

they finally arrived in St Louis, the wages offered were too low to hold their interest.¹⁶³

Hunter made his way back through the South, “Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, to Philadelphia”¹⁶⁴, where he went into a mercantile partnership with a Mr D. Beaumont Jr, who owned a store about twelve miles outside Philadelphia. Hunter operated the store for some six years, in an economic climate still under “the effects of the war of 1812-14”.¹⁶⁵

In 1821, Hunter returned to Delaware County, Pennsylvania,¹⁶⁶ where he farmed for several years. Invitations for the years 1823 to 1827 indicate his social standing.¹⁶⁷ Hunter was active in the community. He served as a County Commissioner for three years¹⁶⁸ and was tapped by the Delaware County Court as executor of the Testament of Isaac Rees.¹⁶⁹

Succeeded in business. Made property. Had a farm of 500 acres of good land, well stocked and paid for. I [i.e. Edward Hunter, RCK] occcupyed [sic RCK] the whole of it.¹⁷⁰

In October 1827, Hunter bought a farm in West Nantmeal Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.¹⁷¹

In this situation, he was able to marry Ann Standly, from an “honest and respectable” family.¹⁷²

¹⁶³Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.3.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p.2.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p.3.

¹⁶⁶ The ranges of years that Hunter provides in his autobiographical sketch suggest 1822-3, but there is the letter from Isaac Bailey to Edward Hunter, dated July 29, 1821, where Bailey wants to borrow good clothes from Hunter, to wear at Bailey’s admittance as an attorney to the bar at Chester Court; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 5. This suggests to me that Hunter was already near Chester County in 1821.

¹⁶⁷ November 3, 1823 invitation for party at Thomas Pucker’s; November 9, 1823 invitation for dinner at William Hening’s; November 4, 1824 invitation for dinner by Lydia Gannett; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 5. January 1, 1827 New Years Ball invitation at Chester; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 6.

¹⁶⁸Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.3; p.8.

¹⁶⁹ Selection as executor of the Testament of Isaac Rees in Delaware County Court, April 21, 1826; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 6.

¹⁷⁰Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.3.

¹⁷¹ See Articles of Agreement with John Fischer of Hamilton, regarding a farm in West Nantmeal, Chester County, of 172 acres, dated October 25, 1827; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 6.

¹⁷²Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.3.

Hunter's basic religious stance was that religious freedom trumped religious denominations, a conviction he had inherited from his father, who formulated the maxim that Hunter "kept sacred":¹⁷³

We do not belong to any religious sect but keep sacred that all man have a right to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience.¹⁷⁴

Hunter's interest in an appropriate relationship with God is documented by the text of a hymn that Hunter wrote. Here Hunter urges the sinner to heed the call to repentance today, keeping in mind the proximity of death and the destiny of the flesh to be consumed by "crawling worms". In return, even the vilest can expect "rich mercy, . . . | abundant pardon peace with god | all given entirely free".¹⁷⁵

In keeping with his father's maxim and his own inclinations, Hunter worshiped in various churches and with different congregations, supporting their common right to follow in the dictates of their own conscience while not joining any of them.

There had previously been an old school and meeting house on Hunter's farm in West Nantmeal, called the "Wallace School Hous[e]",¹⁷⁶ which had been lost to fire. When Hunter acquired the property, the community requested the privilege of rebuilding the house "for education and holding meetings".¹⁷⁷ Hunter was supportive, giving a 99 year lease and helping to erect what became the "West Nantmeal Seminary",¹⁷⁸ under the proviso that "they would allow all persons or persuasions to meet and worship in it".¹⁷⁹

¹⁷³Ibid., p.3.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p.3.

¹⁷⁵ A Hymn on Death, dated July 30, 1826; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 6.

¹⁷⁶Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.4.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., p.4.

¹⁷⁸ For a picture of the seminary, see Stephen J. Fleming and David W. Grua (2005). "The Impact of Edward Hunter's Conversion to Mormonism in Chester County, Pennsylvania: Henry M. Vallette's 1869 Letter". In: *Mormon Historical Studies* 9, pp. 133–138, p.134. This time around, the house was apparently built of stone.

¹⁷⁹Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.4.

For the next decade, Hunter continued to prosper,¹⁸⁰ using the surplus from his farming successes—his own family remained small, due to child mortality—to expand his holdings. His business dealings were largely centered around raising and selling livestock¹⁸¹ and haying.¹⁸² His social standing is documented by the courts appointing him to execute wills¹⁸³ and to be the guardian of orphans.¹⁸⁴ By 1839, according to the county tax records, he was the second-wealthiest man in the township.¹⁸⁵

In January 1839, Mormon missionaries arrived in the area, including Edwin Woolley, whose family lived in Chester County.¹⁸⁶ The locals were reluctant to let the Mormons use West Nantmeal Seminary for their preaching, but Hunter threatened to rescind the lease, and the locals agreed.¹⁸⁷ In the winter of 1839-1840, Hunter received Joseph Smith Jr as his visitor.¹⁸⁸

By October of 1840, Hunter was ready to abandon his posture of denominational aloofness. Hunter joined the Mormons and was baptized by Orson Hyde.¹⁸⁹ At a Philadelphia conference that year, Hunter met Hyrum Smith and donated \$200 to the Temple-building effort and \$200 to the Nauvoo House.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁰ Consider the check with an amount of \$3,128.35 issued to Edward Hunter by the Chester County Bank, located in West Chester, dated March 30, 1833; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 7.

¹⁸¹ See the letter exchange from 1831 and 1832 with his brother William about the price of beef and sheep in Folder 7 of the Edward Hunter Collection.

¹⁸² Hunter made extensive use of manure, lime and plaster to cultivate his grassland; cf. Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.4. Arrington speculates that this fertilizer strategy was common practice in Chester County, and that Edwin Woolley's Quaker father would have done the same; cf. Arrington, (1976), p.26.

¹⁸³ The receipts for the funds dispersed to Rebecca Parsons, as requested by the will of Linda Ford, by Edward, sometimes through his brother William, are spread across two folders: March 16, 1833 (Folder 7), the sum of \$7.50; October 14, 1836 and December 4, 1838 (both Folder 8); cf. Edward Hunter Collection.

¹⁸⁴ On November 5, 1839, the Orphans' Court of Chester County, Pennsylvania, made Edward Hunter the guardian of Ellen and Thomas Lewis, minors; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 8. A schooling bill for Thomas and Ellen, dated July 18, 1840, and amounting to \$3.87 $\frac{1}{2}$, is preserved in Folder 10.

¹⁸⁵ Fleming and Grua, (2005), p.138 Fn 11.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p.134.

¹⁸⁷ Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.4f.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p.5.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p.5.

¹⁹⁰ For the Nauvoo House, cf. below on page p.394.

Though Hunter wrote to his uncle in May of 1841 about Nauvoo—describing its lay, the quality of the soil, and the 700-men Nauvoo Legion, as well as the Baptism of the Dead as a principle—he probably did not go to Nauvoo until the fall of 1841.¹⁹¹ Hunter did visit Nauvoo in September of 1841,¹⁹² where he had many conversations with the Smith brothers.¹⁹³ He also bought a farm, as well as four city lots, two for \$1,000 and two for \$800.¹⁹⁴ Hunter also hired a builder, James Rodeback, to construct a house for him in Nauvoo.¹⁹⁵

In the spring of 1842, Hunter was ready to move to Nauvoo. He obtained a letter of good standing from the church at Brandywine,¹⁹⁶ and in June 1842 transferred his household.

I took with me seven thousand dollars in goods of different kinds, about 4 or 5,000 dollars worth [of cash, RCK] and let Joseph have them all.¹⁹⁷

Hunter's socio-economic success continued; he acquired some "ten or fifteen town lots"¹⁹⁸ which he developed, and employed many hands at his various projects. Like the Law brothers, he also held farms outside of Nauvoo proper, "East of Nauvoo"¹⁹⁹, into which he poured thousands of dollars in terms of improvement²⁰⁰ and which realized up to seven thousand bushels of grain per annum for him.²⁰¹

¹⁹¹Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.6.

¹⁹² Cf. the promissory note for Joseph Smith Jr, dated September 18, 1841, for purchasing city lots, in Folder 11 of the Edward Hunter Collection.

¹⁹³Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.6.

¹⁹⁴ William Law claimed to have paid \$700 "in gold" for his city lot; cf. Cook, (1994), p.127.

¹⁹⁵ See the correspondence with Rodeback, dated November 21, 1841, in which Rodeback requests Pennsylvania augers and chisels to replace the inferior local tools; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 11.

¹⁹⁶ The letter was made out by Elijah Malin, an old business associate of Hunter—cf. the \$100 promissory note from October 21, 1840, in Folder 10—and Jacob Bauer, dated May 11, 1842; cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 12.

¹⁹⁷ Hunter and Hunter, (2009), p.6. Joseph Smith Jr would later remember this as \$15,000; perhaps the \$2,000 worth of dry goods Hunter had sent via Brother Potter in the Fall of 1841 were included in that estimate? Cf. *ibid.*, p.6.

¹⁹⁸*Ibid.*, p.6.

¹⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p.7.

²⁰⁰*Ibid.*, p.6.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.7. According to the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, wheat at St Louis on June 7, 1843 was selling for

Though farming was where his heart was, a large consignment of iron wares from G.W. Vauleer, at St Louis, for which \$816.07 had been paid in cash, documents his other business dealings.²⁰² These and other wares, such as edge tools, some of “which he [i.e. Edward Hunter, RCK] makes at his manufactory”, were for sale in his store, “near the corner of Partridge and Knight St”.²⁰³

At the same time, his city tax contributions were surprisingly small—\$9.70 for 1842; \$11.90 for 1843— especially in terms of the amount on which the tax was levied: \$4.40 of personal property, \$1,500 of real estate for 1842; \$605 of personal property, \$1,675 of real estate for 1843.²⁰⁴

City of Nauvoo, July 6th, 1843, Received of Edward Hunter the sum of 9 dollars and 70 cents, being the amount of tax due the said city for the year AD 1842 in the 4 ward. Personal property, valued at \$4.40, amount of \$2.20. Description of Land and town lot: Lot No 2, Block 82, valued at \$1,000; amount of 5 dollars; Lot No 1 on Block 83, valued at \$200; amount of 1 dollar; 2 lots vers. 182, Block 9, valued at \$300, amount of \$1.50.²⁰⁵

between 52 and 66 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents per bushel; barley between 37 and 40 cents; rye between 25 and 35 cents; corn between 22 and 35 cents; oats between 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 14 cents. 7,000 bushels of wheat would sell for between \$3,640 and \$4,637.50; the same amount of barley between \$2,590 and \$2,800. In order to justify several thousand dollars worth of improvements, Hunter probably mostly grew wheat.

²⁰² The consignment, consisting of iron bars, plough parts, bundles and bands, boilers and cast steel, had been brought to Nauvoo by the steamboat *St. Louis Oak*. The document is dated August 21, 1843. Cf. Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 13.

²⁰³ *Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 1, 1844, page 4, column 3; the ad had been running since November 22, 1843. See also Figure 11.2 on page p.365 below.

²⁰⁴ Perhaps there were tax advantages to keeping the large farms outside of the city proper, in addition to escaping the steep real-estate prices charged by the church.

²⁰⁵ Edward Hunter Collection, Folder 13. As the drawing in Figure 11.2 below indicates, I interpret Lot 2 on Block 82 to be his home, and Lot 1 on Block 83 to be his store.

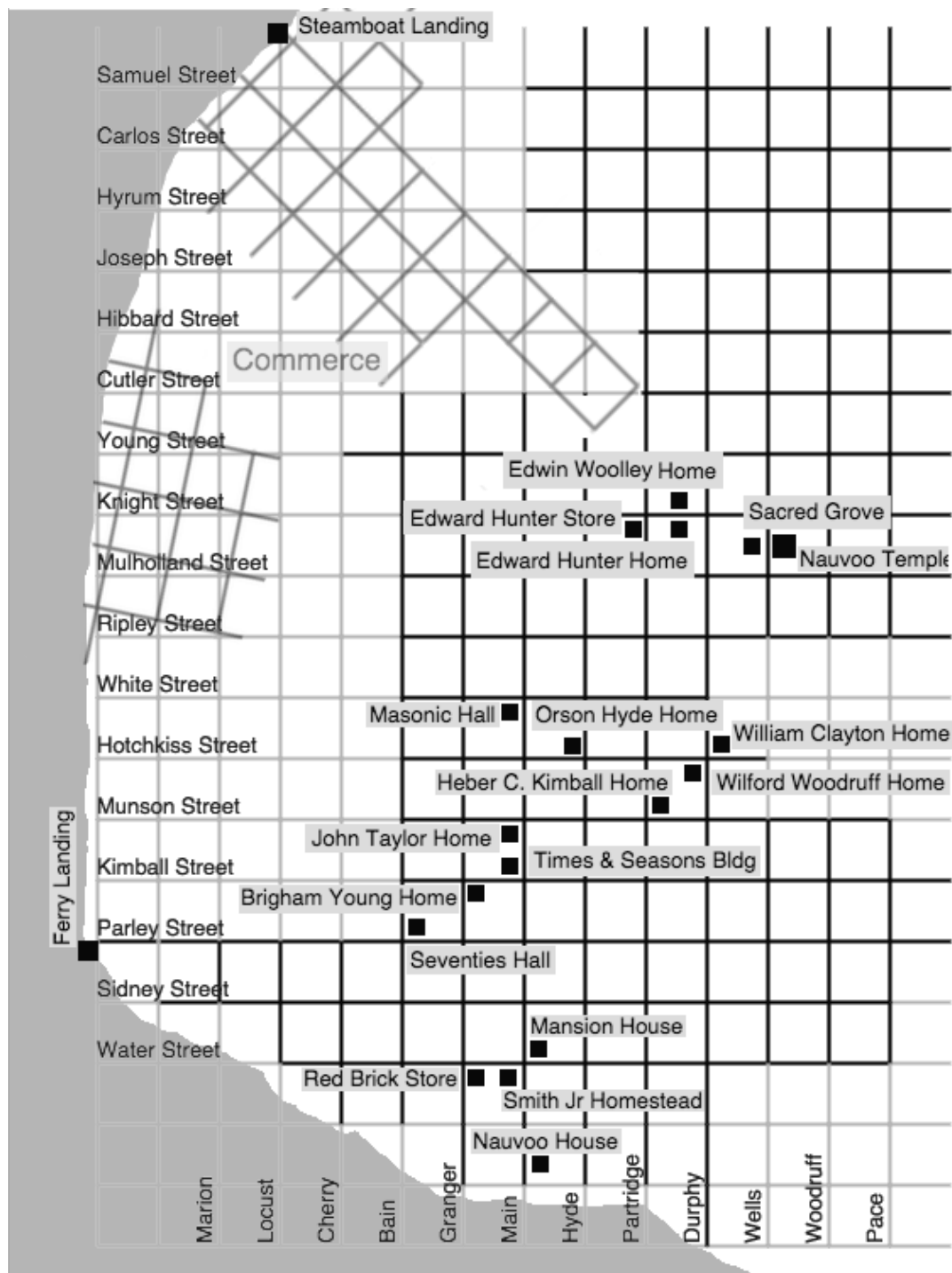


Figure 11.2: Schematic of Nauvoo around 1844. Notice how Nauvoo and Commerce are plated against each other. At the bottom, the Water and Main street economic district, with the Red Brick Store, the Mansion, the original Joseph Smith Jr homestead, and the Nauvoo House. The Nauvoo temple to the north-east, along Mullholland Street, was surrounded by the second economic center. To the West and North West, the landings for the ferries and the steamboats, respectively. Drawing by the author.

Chapter 12

Ruling Nauvoo

When Joseph Smith Jr arrived in Kirtland in February of 1831, there were probably between two to five hundred Mormons in New York and Ohio. By the time the Mormons left Kirtland, there were no more than 2,500 Mormons in a population of about 3,700.¹ When the Mormons left Caldwell County, the population was estimated at 5,000, of which only a small fraction were “gentiles”.²

In Nauvoo, the Mormons started somewhere between Kirtland and Caldwell County in terms of their population. An estimate of 3,000 for Nauvoo in an August 1840 letter to

¹Dean May (1992). “A Demographic Portrait of the Mormons, 1830-1980”. In: *The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Past*. Ed. by D. Michael Quinn. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books. Chap. 7, pp. 121–136, p.121.

² The often-cited 4,900 is clearly not an estimate, but rhetorical flourish to mean “almost all”; cf. Ora Merle Hawk Pease (1886). *History of Caldwell and Livingston counties, Missouri, written and compiled from the most authentic official and private sources, including a history of their townships, towns and villages, together with a condensed history of Missouri; a reliable and detailed history of Caldwell and Livingston counties—their pioneer record, resources, biographical sketches of prominent citizens; general and local statistics of great value; incidents and reminiscences*. St Louis: National Historical Company, p.113. Neither is that number an appropriate estimate for *solely* the town of Far West, as Porter seems to think when using it as a the upper bound for his estimate of the population size of Far West; cf. Larry C. Porter (1992). “Art. Far West, Missouri”. In: *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. Ed. by Daniel H. Ludlow. New York: Macmillan, p. 500. Neither is that estimate due to W.W. Phelps, as an editing error in Chapter 3 of Gentry and Compton’s excellent *Fire and Sword* suggests; footnote 19 attributes to the Phelps’ letter a quote that the authors most likely took from Andrew Jenson’s article on Caldwell County cited in footnote 18.

John C. Bennett³ (= HC 4:133) seems reasonable, though living conditions may have been either deplorable or cramped or both.⁴ Thus, by summer of 1840, things were still moving within population magnitudes that Smith Jr had become accustomed to.⁵

By April 1842, however, an anonymous but sympathetic observer from Adams County reported a Nauvoo population size estimate⁶ of some 7,000 inhabitants,⁷ which would have meant that the population had more than doubled in 15 months. At the same time, the observer was impressed by the apparent industry of “a peaceable and law-abiding people”.

The population would almost double again before Joseph Smith Jr’s lynching in Carthage jail, as Nauvoo continued to grow.⁸ Thanks to the intervention of Cyrus Walker, Joseph Smith Jr had escaped the Missouri sheriffs in Dixon, Illinois in 1843. Woodruff Wilson estimated some 7,000 people *attending* the “victory speech” at the Temple Grove.⁹

Clearly, a population of this size needed a different approach to city management than what had worked for a group of a few thousand. How such city management interacted with the socio-economic needs of the community is the focus of this chapter.

³Flanders, (1965), p.51.

⁴ Joseph Smith Jr estimated 250 houses in June of 1840, which would put the occupancy at around 12 persons per house, the majority of which presumably were log constructions; cf. *ibid.*, p.51.

⁵ The circular to the “Saints Scattered Abroad” from January 1841 simply reiterates the estimate of 3,000; cf. *ibid.*, p.51

⁶ T&S III:11 p.750 c.2. The observer had visited Nauvoo as part of a Masonic celebration that brought the Grand Master of the State to Nauvoo and drew a crowd “variously estimated from 5 to 10,000” in size; cf. T&S III:11 p.750 c.1. The observations were first printed in the *Columbus Advocate*; cf. T&S III:11 p.749 c.2.

⁷ The 1840 federal census for Hancock County was only 9,946; cf. Flanders, (1965), p.51. It is in this sense that Nauvoo began to dominate the population of Hancock County in the early 1840s, as Launius and McKiernan point out; cf. Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.9.

⁸ In December of 1845, before the Mormons departed Nauvoo and 18 months after the lynching, Nauvoo had 11,057 inhabitants within the city limits; cf. Donald L. Enders (1979). “The Steamboat *Maid of Iowa*: Mormon Mistress of the Mississippi”. In: *BYU Studies* 19.3, pp. 321–335, p.323.

⁹Gary Dean Guthrie (1969). “Joseph Smith as an Administrator”. Master of Science. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, p.156f.

12.1 Social Engagement

12.1.1 Managing the Poverty Relief

Just as had been the case in Kirtland and in Zion, poverty relief in Nauvoo was in the hands of the bishops of the individual wards. Though the consecration system was no longer the general rule, the mode of redistribution had not changed.

New arrivals were offered an inheritance in a form of a city lot, which might give them the opportunity to have “a comfortable cottage, a flourishing garden, and a good cow”, as Orson Spencer suggested.¹⁰ However, the reality was that city lots were expensive, because the Church leadership had to recoup their costs plus interest, and were at times not sufficient to make a living.¹¹ Not all could afford to accept that offer.

Bishop George Miller noted that

... the rich did not generally respond to the proclamation of the prophet to come with their effects, and assist in building the Temple and Nauvoo House.¹²

But the Nauvoo Temple and the Nauvoo House were the only consistent sources of income for the newcomers, because their construction required large amounts of effort and was at least rewarded in scrip and kind.

Both the Temple and the Nauvoo House were to become significant public works relief projects [after 1841, RCK].¹³

And the building industry was in some sense the only industry that functioned well.

¹⁰Flanders, (1965), p.144.

¹¹Ibid., p.144.

¹²Ibid., p.145.

¹³ Ibid., p.182. That gloss is appropriate, as the revelation for William Allred and Henry W. Miller of March 20, 1841 specifically advocated to undertake the Nauvoo House project so “that the poor of my people may have employment”; cf. William Clayton et al. (1841-1845). “”The Book of the Law of the Lord”, Record Book, 1841–1845”. CHL. Includes shorthand; also includes redactions and use marks., p.15.

The one industry which employed more labor and capital probably than all others in Nauvoo combined was the building industry. Most descriptions of Nauvoo speak of the continous raising of houses and public buildings.¹⁴

Other projects included the construction of ditches to drain the lowland swamps and eliminate the malaria infestations.¹⁵ In his April 13, 1842, address to newly arrived English converts, Joseph Smith Jr tried to recruit for the ditching project, estimating a need for some 200 to 300 men. The project was then supervised by Brother Garder.¹⁶

Hoever, only 10% of the poor, Bishop Miller estimated, found work.¹⁷ And those poor who found work were often paid in goods, not in money, making it difficult merely to survive, let alone build up an inheritance. On November 1, 1843, gentile Hiram Kimball advertised for an experienced yeoman, for up to six months, knowledgeable about horses and working around the barn and the house—but the pay was to be in bricks.¹⁸ Whatever the rich would not provide the bishops had to cover.¹⁹

The rich among us pretended to be too poor to barely feed themselves and nurse their speculations which they were more or less engaged in.²⁰

Of course, Bishop Miller was exaggerating; the Law brothers, as late as January 1844,²¹ willingly let Bishop's Elder Carn of the Sixth Ward lead a group of helpers to Big Island and take wood from their forest for the poor.²²

¹⁴Flanders, (1965), p.156.

¹⁵ On this effort from an engineering perspective, cf. Kyle M. Rollins et al. (2006). "Transforming Swampland into Nauvoo, the City Beautiful: A Civil Engineering Perspective". In: *BYU Studies* 45.3, pp. 125–157.

¹⁶Richards, (1843), p.134.

¹⁷Flanders, (1965), p.145.

¹⁸ *Nauvoo Neighbor*, November 1, 1843, page 3, column 3.

¹⁹ Flanders, (1965), p.145. There seems to have been some social engagement by the Nauvoo High Council as well, cf. James L. Kimball Jr (2014). "Protecting Nauvoo by Illinois Charter in 1840". In: *Sustaining the Law: Joseph Smith's Legal Encounters*. Ed. by Gordon A. Madsen, Jeffrey N. Walker, and John W. Welch. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Studies. Chap. 13, pp. 297–307, p.297, but the bishops handled the bulk of the burden, it appears.

²⁰Flanders, (1965), p.145.

²¹ On the chronology of the Laws' disenchantment with Joseph Smith Jr, see below on page p.408.

²² Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 31, 1844, page 2 column 3, *contra* Flanders, who gives "January 13", cf.

12.1.2 The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo

The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo²³ was founded in the Spring of 1842, initially intended as a way for women to contribute to the temple-building project.²⁴ Joseph Smith Jr was supportive of the idea, but proposed to pattern it not on a regular society, with a constitution and by-laws, but on the priesthood of the church.²⁵ Consequently, the twenty-seven founding members elected Emma Hale Smith to be the president. Just as a bishop had two counselors, the founding members elected two counselors for Emma as well: Elizabeth Ann Whitney and Sarah Cleveland, a friend of Emma's from Quincy. Eliza R. Snow, who had written the draft of the society's by-laws, which had been superseded by the priesthood arrangement, was chosen as secretary; Elvia Cowles as treasurer.²⁶ The initial contribution to the treasure chest were heavily weighted toward the men: Joseph Smith Jr gave a golden \$5 piece, and John Taylor three dollars; but the women had their own funding as well—Emma Hale Smith and Sarah Kimball gave \$1 each.²⁷

The society served both a social and a moral purpose.²⁸ Socially, they were to “do good”, and especially “look after the wants of the poor”.²⁹ But they were also meant to “correct the morals of the community”, “provoke the brethren to good works” and “save

ibid., p.146 Fn 6. The level of support for the poor, however, differed markedly from the level of support the prophet could expect. Some “200 choppers” to cut wood and “50 teams” to transport it turned out for the prophet and reassembled the following day to stack it, with the intent to “drive Jack Frost out of doors” of the prophet's house; cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 17, 1844, page 2, column 3.

²³ For the debates surrounding the name, cf. Newell and Avery, (1994), p.107f.

²⁴ The initial impetus seems to have come from Sarah Melissa Granger Kimball, a recent convert raised in New York, who had married into the extended family of Heber Kimball. As Newell and Avery put it, the “well-to-do new bride” was looking for a field of social activism; cf. *ibid.*, p.106; p.108.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.106.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.107.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.108.

²⁸ Women in general were viewed as the element of society best suited for improving morals: through their influence over their husbands and through their raising of morally upright children; cf. Howe, (2007), p.45. As Emma Hale Smith herself pointed out, “We can govern this generation in one way if not another—if not by the mighty arm of power we can do it by faith and prayer.”; cf. Newell and Avery, (1994), p.117

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.108.

the elders the trouble of rebuking”.³⁰ The society’s members were “to deal frankly with each other” in achieving this goal.³¹

The initial strategies for resolving social issues were finding work for women who needed it, via an “employment committee”, and to purchase goods that could be given to the poor, in lieu of providing them with cash.³²

On behalf of the society Emma [Hale Smith, RCK] had hired a poor man to plow and fence the lot of an elderly brother . . . [and, RCK] donations toward the man’s wages could be made in “provisions, clothing, and furniture.”³³

The labor market was a success;³⁴ and the women of the society, who included the wives of the leading men of the community, were influential enough to negotiate on behalf of widows when pay for labor was refused.³⁵

The meetings of the Female Relief Society became not only a social outlet for the women, but a separate spiritual one as well. Since Mormon women could not join the Mormon priesthood, but could participate in this society patterned after it,³⁶ they gladly expressed themselves in that spiritual context.

The organization gave them [i.e., the women, RCK] a focus for their religious energy and spiritual communion. In the Relief Society they expressed their opinions and became a part of the official church movement.³⁷

³⁰ Newell and Avery, (1994), p.108. Smith Jr also intended such correction to include teaching the members how women were to treat their husbands, with an eye toward easing their despair and providing solace; cf. *ibid.*, p.113

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.108. Since not every member of the community could be relied upon to act morally, the society required from its inception that the “character and reputation of each woman” was satisfactory to all members; cf. *Ibid.*, p.107. The prophet would later concur that “none should be received into the society but those who were worthy”, cf. *ibid.*, p.109.

³²*Ibid.*, p.108.

³³*Ibid.*, p.116.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p.117.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p.117.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p.117.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p.117.

All meetings opened with singing.³⁸ The women would celebrate the charismata of the Apostolic Church by speaking in tongues or healing members through the laying on of hands.³⁹ As had been the case in Kirtland,⁴⁰ Smith Jr was supportive of the healing, but not of the glossolalia.⁴¹

Membership grew steadily, reaching 600 women in May,⁴² and 800 by June.⁴³ By winter the membership rolls had some 1,100 members.⁴⁴ Clearly, some would have joined for social reasons; and the moral issues discussed at the meeting in particular provided a sort of “early warning” system for the rumors that were circulating in Nauvoo. Given the importance of a good reputation, it “was better to be at the meetings”⁴⁵ of the Relief Society and be forewarned of impending slander.⁴⁶

However, from the very beginning, the society’s task of moral uplift was marred by the fact that Joseph Smith Jr was concurrently teaching to an elect group of leaders and women the doctrine of plural marriage.⁴⁷ While adultery and spiritual wifery of the type that Dr John C. Bennett had practiced were precisely the kind of iniquities that the society was supposed to correct, the doctrine of celestial marriage was not. The distinction was difficult for those not directly in the inner circle. Furthermore, many of the women of the inner circle were active in the Female Relief Society as well. Some of Smith Jr’s plural wives such as Louisa Beaman⁴⁸ were members. Some of the plural wives were even in the

³⁸Ibid., p.116.

³⁹Ibid., p.110.

⁴⁰ Cf. above on page p.225.

⁴¹Newell and Avery, (1994), p.110.

⁴²Ibid., p.115.

⁴³Ibid., p.116.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.117. At that point, however, the Relief Society was disbanded. When Brigham Young took over the church leadership, he was in no particular hurry to reinstate it, claiming that Joseph Smith Jr had never supported it fully; cf. *ibid.*, p.352 Fn 27.

⁴⁵Ibid., p.117.

⁴⁶ Newell and Avery point out that women “never had their own judiciary body”, cf. *ibid.*, p.117, but that seems to overstate the role that the Relief Society was playing.

⁴⁷ On plural marriage, cf. below on pages pp.398ff.

⁴⁸Newell and Avery, (1994), p.108.

society's government, such as counselor Sarah Cleveland⁴⁹ or secretary Eliza R. Snow.⁵⁰ Elizabeth Durfee and Elizabeth Allred participated in the society—Smith Jr called these older women “Mothers of Israel” because they assisted the prophet in contacting and persuading younger women of the doctrine of plural marriage. Some members, such as Vilate Kimball and Elizabeth Ann Whitney,⁵¹ were the wives of church leaders who were already practicing plural marriage.

Crucially, however, Relief Society president Emma Hale Smith was in the dark, and her search for “iniquity” confronted the prophet with that contradiction. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the prophet backpedaled on the assignment of investigating moral issues as early as May 1842.⁵²

12.2 New Ventures

Throughout the Nauvoo period, Joseph Smith Jr was ready to undertake new socio-economic ventures that aligned with his interests. The income from these ventures was meant to avert the economic disaster that was nipping at his heels in the aftermath of the land purchases for Nauvoo and its surroundings.

Among the best-known ventures are the so-called “Red Brick Store”, whose importance as an actual store was completely dwarfed by its many other social functions, and the steamboat “The Maid of Iowa”. These two ventures exemplify the socio-economic development at Nauvoo in the early 1840s, as these ventures address the basic lack of goods and commodities available in the city: one through retail, the other through transportation.

⁴⁹Newell and Avery, (1994), p.119.

⁵⁰Ibid., p.119.

⁵¹Ibid., p.108f; p.128.

⁵²Ibid., p.115.

12.2.1 The Red Brick Store

The story of the Red Brick Store begins with its construction in the fall of 1841.⁵³ In the bifurcated business environment of Nauvoo,⁵⁴ the store belonged to the southern industrial focal point of the city,⁵⁵ along Main and Water streets,⁵⁶ and was located near the house of Joseph Smith Jr, the Nauvoo House, and the store run by the brothers Law.⁵⁷

On the southern end nearest the river were several general stores and manufacturing concerns, most notably the store operated by William and Wilson Law, two wealthy church members from Canada, and virtually all of the business enterprises that required water power such as grist mills and lumber yards.⁵⁸

There were already several successful stores being operated in Nauvoo by members of the church: in addition to the Laws' store, Edward Hunter and Edwin D. Woolley had general stores.⁵⁹ Joseph Smith Jr, who was still trying to come to terms with the costs of the purchase of the Nauvoo lands,⁶⁰ was seeking to participate in the economic success of the brethren to help pay off the credit that the church had taken on. The church leadership had used stores as sources of income to finance important projects as early as Kirtland, where they had established a temple store to raise funds for construction⁶¹ and Smith Jr had operated a variety store on Chillicothe Road.⁶²

⁵³ Smith Jr commenced the "large New Building" during Edward Hunter's visit to Nauvoo Joseph Smith Jr (1842a). "Letter, Nauvoo, IL, to Edward Hunter, West Nantmeal, PA, 5 Jan. 1842". handwriting of Willard Richards; four pages; JS Collection, CHL. Includes endorsements., p.1; this probably was the September 1841 visit, cf. above on page p.363, footnote 192.

⁵⁴ Cf. below on page p.417.

⁵⁵ Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.11.

⁵⁶ See Figure 11.2 on page p.365 above.

⁵⁷ On the Law brothers and their intimate connections to the upper echelons of the Church leadership, cf. above on pages pp.351ff.

⁵⁸ Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.11.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.10. On future bishops Hunter and Woolley, cf. above on pages p.359 and p.354, respectively.

⁶⁰ Cf. above on page p.342.

⁶¹ Cf. above on page p.290.

⁶² Cf. above on page p.290.

The two-story brick house, in a city with probably less than a hundred brick houses at that time, was a significant structure. The ground floor had a ceiling height of ten feet.⁶³ Joseph Smith III recalled the fine quality of the building materials;⁶⁴ the window and stepping stones were imported from across the river.⁶⁵

... the counters, drawers, & pillars present a very respectable representation of Oak. Mahagony [sic RCK] & Marble for a back woods [sic RCK] establishment.⁶⁶

The Red Brick Store was at least as impressive as most of the stores in St. Louis, the main mercantile center, and more so than those outside of St. Louis.⁶⁷ Construction lasted until mid-December of 1841.⁶⁸

The Red Brick Store as a store

Far from feeling threatened by the store venture in their own mercantile pursuits, key members of the Church hierarchy supported Joseph Smith Jr in setting up the store. Newell K. Whitney, who had already aided the prophet in operating the Chillicothe Road store in Kirtland, obtained the first \$5,000 of goods for Smith Jr back in Cleveland.⁶⁹ In December of 1841, Smith Jr acknowledged receipt of a shipment of goods from Edward Hunter, who sent the stock to reimburse the prophet for land and the cost of construction

⁶³Smith Jr, (1842a), p.2.

⁶⁴Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.11.

⁶⁵Ibid., p.12.

⁶⁶Smith Jr, (1842a), p.2.

⁶⁷ Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.12. As Smith Jr noted to Edward Hunter *apropos* of the opening, “The foundations of the building is [sic RCK] somewhat spacio[u]s, (as you will doubtless recollect,) for a country store, ...”; cf. Smith Jr, (1842a), p.1.

⁶⁸Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.12.

⁶⁹ Newel K. Whitney (1841). “Letter, Cleveland, OH, to JS, Nauvoo, IL, 29 Oct. 1841”. handwriting of Newel K. Whitney; one page; JS Collection, CHL.; Whitney mostly purchased “Woollen clothes[, RCK] Calicoes & Domestic Cottons” and tried to get the shipment onto one boat “as I do not like to have them [i.e. the goods, RCK] too much scattered”. Smith Jr received the letter November 8, 1841; cf. Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.12.

of the Hunter family house⁷⁰ in Nauvoo.⁷¹ Shortly before Christmas, more goods arrived from St Louis, “the leading commercial center on the Upper Mississippi”,⁷² that had been unloaded at Warsaw, about a dozen miles south on the Mississippi River from Nauvoo, and packed onto thirteen wagons.⁷³ The wagons carried “sugar, molasses, glass, salt, tea, coffee, &c.”.⁷⁴

All in all, Joseph Smith Jr managed to put together a decent assortment of goods for the opening in January of 1842, especially given the “different purchases made by different individuals,—at different times, and under circumstances which controuled [sic RCK] their choice to some extent”.⁷⁵

The Economic Failure of the Store

The trouble with the [Red Brick, RCK] store was the trouble with the whole Nauvoo economy; business was brisk, but there was too much credit and too little cash. The steady flow of goods from the shelves and bins suggested that the enterprise was prospering, when in fact it was approaching insolvency.⁷⁶

The evidence regarding the store’s success is unambiguous: it was a great deal of work for Joseph Smith Jr. As early as Spring of 1842, mere months after opening it, day to day operations were delegated to Ebenezer Robinson and David Yearsley, a Nauvoo businessman.⁷⁷ Furthermore, it made very little money and was not able to offset the impending personal bankruptcy of 1842.

⁷⁰ Cf. above on page p.342, footnote 30.

⁷¹ Joseph Smith Jr (1841b). “Letter, Nauvoo, IL, to Edward Hunter, West Nantmeal, PA, 21 Dec. 1841”. handwriting of Willard Richards; three pages; JS Collection, CHL., p.1. Smith Jr expected Hunter to send him another shipment of goods in the spring; cf. *ibid.*, p.3. Other than the Whitney letter, the Hunter letter does not mention the kinds of goods shipped.

⁷² Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.12.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.12.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.12.

⁷⁵ Smith Jr, (1842a), p.2.

⁷⁶ Flanders, (1965), p.162.

⁷⁷ Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.17f.

Brigham Young argued that Joseph Smith Jr was simply too good a fellow to run a store, giving the poor too much on credit and possibly being unable to demand payment after the fact.⁷⁸ Launius and McKiernan also believe that there was too much credit and too little cash involved.

Joseph Smith Jr himself reports that on the day of the store opening, he gave goods away as fast as he could, to offset the meagre Christmas and New Year's dinners that some of the saints had enjoyed.

The store has been filled to overflowing all day, & I have stood behind the counter dealing out goods as steady as any clerk you ever saw to oblige those who were compelled to go without their <usual> christmas & New year, dinners. for the want of a little Sugar, Molasses, Raisins⁷⁹ &c. &c, — & to please myself also for I love to wait upon the Saints, and be a servant to all hoping that I may be exalted in the due time of the Lord.⁸⁰

It is possible that Smith Jr was then unable to discontinue the practice, once it had become established in this fashion. Smith Jr at any rate considered the continuation of the store important for local morale and was not above redirecting funds earmarked for the Nauvoo Temple or the Nauvoo House to the procurement of commodities.⁸¹

On the other hand, the account book of the store showed that almost all of the important people in the southern end of the city purchased some of their goods at the Red Brick Store.⁸² Respectable businessmen like Dr. Robert D. Forster, who lent Edward Hunter the

⁷⁸Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.17.

⁷⁹ *Contra* Joseph Smith Papers Project, which transliterates 'Rasions', a reading mainly supported by the absence of one of the i-dots in the source.

⁸⁰ Smith Jr, (1842a), p.2; transliteration provided by the Joseph Smith Papers Project. Angle brackets <... > indicate words written above the text in the source.

⁸¹ Edward Hunter (1842). "Letter, West Nantmeal, PA, to JS, Nauvoo, IL, 10 Feb. 1842". handwriting of Edward Hunter; two pages; JS Collection, CHL. Includes endorsements.; Joseph Smith Jr (1842b). "Letter, Nauvoo, IL, to Edward Hunter, West Nantmeal, PA, 9 and 11 Mar. 1842". handwriting of Willard Richards; four pages; JS Collection, CHL. Includes endorsements and an addition by William Law.; cf. also Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.16.

⁸² Ibid., p.14. Individuals who had accounts with the store included Nauvoo Legion general John C. Bennett, Joseph Smith Jr's secretaries William Clayton and Willard Richards, Kirtland dissenter John F.

money to build his house,⁸³ transacted their business through the store's ledger. Joseph W. Coolidge, another businessman, borrowed \$1,000 at the Red Brick Store at 12% interest⁸⁴ but repaid regularly.

Perhaps 1842 was too late to setup a new store in Nauvoo, despite the fact that many church members lacked the items that Joseph Smith Jr sold or gave them. Launius and McKiernan believe that the business environment in Nauvoo had become overly competitive, especially considering the fact that the non-Mormon stores of the upper business district were better capitalized and thus able to achieve better prices.⁸⁵ This squeezed the margins of profit attainable, even in the case of a well-paying clientele.

The Red Brick Store as Social Venue

In spite of these economic difficulties, the Red Brick Store was a rousing success as a social venue. Even after letting go of the store, Joseph Smith Jr continued to use the upper floor of the building as his office and as a workplace for producing revelations and supervising publications.⁸⁶ Here Joseph Smith Jr worked on the decisive plural-marriage revelation, D&C 132,⁸⁷ as well as on the publication of the *Book of Abraham*,⁸⁸ a translation of Egyptian papyri that Joseph Smith Jr had bought in Kirtland in 1835.⁸⁹

Boyington, Dr. Robert D. Forster, Edward Hunter, Dimick Huntington, Heber Kimball, Bishop Vinson Knight, the Law Brothers, stake president William Marks, Kirtland "Family" farmer Isaac Morley, United Firm member W.W. Phelps, *Times & Seasons* editor Ebenezer Robinson, Smith Jr's body guard Orrin Porter Rockwell, the Smith brothers, counselor John Taylor, and Bishop Newel K. Whitney. The list is taken from *ibid.*, p.78 Fn 24. Some customers, like Brigham Young, had no accounts with the store but presumably settled all purchases immediately; Launius and McKiernan report that Brigham Young purchased leather goods from the Red Brick Store in preparation for the Fourth of July festivities in 1842; cf. *ibid.*, p.14.

⁸³Smith Jr, (1841b).

⁸⁴Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.15.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.16. Cf. also below page p.417.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.18; p.19; p.26; cf. also Smith Jr, (1842a).

⁸⁷Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.27.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p.28. This document is canonical only for the LDS branch of the Mormons.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p.27.

There were separate rooms in the upstairs that could be used for various social functions until the Nauvoo community had time to build dedicated buildings. In the store's assembly room,⁹⁰ school was taught by Eliza R. Snow, and the Nauvoo Seminary by Joseph C. Cole and his daughter Adelia, until the Fall of 1843.⁹¹

The assembly room was also used by the Nauvoo Freemasons; the Nauvoo chapter had been granted in October of 1841, and Joseph Smith Jr joined it in March 1842.⁹² Meetings continued in that room until the Freemasons completed a three-story Masonic Lodge in 1844.⁹³

It was in this Masonic meeting room that the founding members of the Female Relief Society⁹⁴ were organized by Joseph Smith Jr and other men of the Church hierarchy "under the priesthood after a pattern of the priesthood".⁹⁵ This reuse of venue later caused difficulties for the Nauvoo Masons, making it appear as if the Nauvoo Mormons had inducted women, an impression that contributed to the repeal of the charter in October 1844.⁹⁶

The Nauvoo Agricultural and Manufacturing Association also used these offices.⁹⁷

Finally, the original temple ordinances were taught here to "a select gathering of associates"⁹⁸ as early as 1842,⁹⁹ since the temple had not been completed (and would not reach completion until after Joseph Smith Jr's death).

⁹⁰Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.20.

⁹¹ Ibid., p.21. However, the *Nauvoo Neighbor* was still running a July 1843 advertisement for the school, with a tuition schedule, as late as January 3, 1844. For a semester of 12 weeks (or 65 days), the Coles charged \$2 for reading, writing and spelling; \$2.50 for English Grammar and Geography; \$3 for Chemistry and Natural Philosophy; and \$4 for Astronomy; cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 3, 1844, page 4, column 5.

⁹²Ibid., p.21.

⁹³Ibid., p.19.

⁹⁴ Cf. above on page p.371.

⁹⁵Newell and Avery, (1994), p.106.

⁹⁶Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.21.

⁹⁷ On the association itself, see below on page p.416. For an example of a meeting scheduled in the store's offices, cf. the notice in the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 10, 1844, page 3, column 3.

⁹⁸ For an enumeration of that select group, cf. Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.29. As the ordinances were developed, people not among those initially selected felt left out; William Clayton for example petitioned to be included and was allowed to join; cf. *ibid.*, p.29.

⁹⁹Ibid., p.28.

The prophet believed that the ceremonies could only be conducted in an upper room, and the assembly room of the Red Brick Store was the only place of adequate size in Nauvoo during 1842 and 1843 where people could assemble with relative privacy.¹⁰⁰

Of high religious significance for the Reformed Latter Day Saints movement was the anointment of Joseph Smith III on January 17, 1844, as his father's successor to the prophetic office.¹⁰¹ Unfortunately, Smith III was only twelve years old at the time; he would not assume the mantle of Prophet-President in the RLDS movement until 1860.¹⁰² Furthermore, most of the Twelve Apostles, who effectively took control in the summer of 1844 after Smith Jr's lynching,¹⁰³ were not present at this event.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, most of the church leaders present at the such, anointing as John Taylor or Newel K. Whitney or Reynolds Cahoon, followed Brigham Young to Utah. The youthfulness of Smith III and the bitter animosity between Brigham Young and Emma Hale Smith must have contributed to this outcome.

The rooms were considered public, appropriate for meetings of all parties and interests. On February 21, 1844, an Episcopalian Reverend debated Joseph Smith Jr there.¹⁰⁵ Drama performances took place there¹⁰⁶ until the completion of the two-story Seventies Hall in 1844.¹⁰⁷ The rooms were also used for local governance and party meetings. For example, in February 8, 1844, Joseph Smith Jr explained his recently announced candidacy for the United States presidency in that room.¹⁰⁸

Since the store held Joseph Smith Jr's office, it was also a core locale for church gov-

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p.28.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p.31f.

¹⁰²Ibid., p.32.

¹⁰³Ibid., p.24.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p.31.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p.22.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p.22.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p.19.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p.22.

ernance. Men such as Sidney Rigdon, John C. Bennett, and William Law would come to consult with Smith Jr there.¹⁰⁹ The same was true for the Twelve Apostles, who met in these rooms and conferred with Joseph Smith Jr, or received instruction on theological principles.¹¹⁰

Given the significant socio-economic impact of the Nauvoo Temple, the fact that the Temple Committee had its Recorder's office there, on the first floor in the store's counting room, cannot be underestimated. Willard Richards set up that office on December 13, 1841,¹¹¹ even before the store was opened. The main task of the Temple committee turned out to be procurement, of both construction materials and provisions for the laborers. Because of the size of the building effort, William Clayton was chosen as Richards' assistant in February of 1842. Clayton worked with Richards at that office, and eventually succeeded Richards in the position of Temple Recorder.¹¹²

Many of the Church members who wished to donate to the temple-building effort had no cash, and so the Temple Recorders were willing to accept "Meal, Flour and Provisions of every kind", as well as "almost every conceivable thing, from all kinds of implements and men's and women's clothing, down to baby clothes and trinkets".¹¹³ Thus, the Red Brick Store functioned in a manner akin to the Bishop's storehouse in the Kirtland and Zion period of the church.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.23.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p.24.

¹¹¹Ibid., p.24.

¹¹²Ibid., p.24.

¹¹³Ibid., p.25.

¹¹⁴ Cf. above on page p.252.

12.2.2 Joseph Smith Jr's Steamboats

Steamboats were a boon to transportation, due to their carrying capacity and their rate of travel.¹¹⁵

Travel by steamboat was the number one mode of transportation in America of the 1840s. Although it sometimes did involve difficulties, these difficulties were infrequent. Usually steamboat travel was economical, reasonably fast, and relatively free of the difficulties and discomforts that attended traveling by land.¹¹⁶

The steamboat landing was located along the waterfront in the North-Western part of the city.¹¹⁷

The Maid of Iowa

The steamboat *The Maid of Iowa* was the second steamboat¹¹⁸ that Joseph Smith Jr was financially involved with.¹¹⁹

The steamboat was built¹²⁰ and outfitted for some \$4,000. Her original captain was Dan Jones, a Welsh adventurer and experienced captain, who had at one point trained for the clergy; his partner was Levy Moffit,¹²¹ a businessman from Augusta.¹²²

¹¹⁵ In August of 1840, it briefly looked as if Nauvoo might participate in a railroad construction project to 20-mile-distant Warsaw, which would be located below the Des Moines Rapids and ameliorate cases where the Mississippi water was too low for steamboats to brave the rapids. Unfortunately, despite charters and support, nothing ever came of it; cf. Flanders, (1965), pp.150f.

¹¹⁶Enders, (1979), p.331.

¹¹⁷ See also Figure 11.2 on page p.365 above.

¹¹⁸ He had previously signed as surety for Peter Haws' acquisition of the steamboat *Nauvoo*, later wrecked by the Holland brothers when driven outside the channel.

¹¹⁹ Upon the lynching of Joseph Smith Jr, Newel K. Whitney took on Smith Jr's business papers. Thus, the documentation is now in the Newel K. Whitney Papers at BYU, Box 5, Folders 10-15. As of spring 2015, the digitization of the Whitney Papers has progressed to box 3, so, as of this writing, no scans of these documents are available online.

¹²⁰ For a pencil sketch of the steamboat, cf. Enders, (1979), p.322.

¹²¹ Dr. Levi Moffit's share of this cost was \$1975.44. By September 1842, Moffit had reduced his balance on paying that cost to \$1,544.99. cf. Whitney Papers, Box 5, Folder 10, "Account of building the steam boat *Maid of Iowa*". See also the paper "Buyout Levi Moffat", which uses the \$1,544.99 as the base of its computations; Whitney Papers, Box 5, Folder 10.

¹²²Enders, (1979), p.321; p.323f.

On her deck were located the engine room, the cargo and storage areas, the dining | room, and the cabin accommodations for approximately thirty people. Atop these were the hurricane deck through which protruded the boat's two smokestacks. The pilot's cabin was located on the hurricane deck.¹²³

At 115 feet in length and 60 tons of weight, “compared even to the smaller boats, the *Maid* was a dwarf”.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, trade on the Mississippi had been increasing, and the *Maid* was meant to capitalize on that growth.¹²⁵

Among the first Mormons that the steamboat transported were Edwin Woolley¹²⁶ and his family, who took the boat up the river to Welleville, Ohio, in October 1840.¹²⁷ However, this random encounter created no lasting connection.

The Mormons next encountered the *Maid* through a charter arrangement; Captain Dan Jones, who had wintered in the lower Mississippi, agreed to take Parley P. Pratt, Levi Richards, and two hundred newly arrived British converts,¹²⁸ who had been forced to winter in St Louis, up to Nauvoo.¹²⁹ After an 11-day journey,¹³⁰ the *Maid* arrived in Nauvoo on April 12, 1842, loaded to capacity. During the welcome reception, Captain Jones and President Smith Jr met and became friends.¹³¹ Within a month, the Jones' family converted to Mormonism, while Joseph Smith Jr began negotiations to buy out the share of Levi Moffit.¹³²

For the remainder of the 1842 season and the spring of 1843, the documentation for the *Maid of Iowa* is spotty as to its location, but not as to its expenses. Presumably as

¹²³Enders, (1979), p.321; p.323.

¹²⁴Ibid., p.232.

¹²⁵ Enders reports that river tonnage registered in New Orleans had jumped from some 233 thousand tons in 1832 to almost 522 thousand tons in 1842; an increase of 124%—*contra* Enders, who computes “nearly 120%”; cf. *ibid.*, p.325.

¹²⁶ In Edwin Woolley, cf. above on page p.354.

¹²⁷Arrington, (1976), p.84.

¹²⁸Enders, (1979), p.325.

¹²⁹Richards, (1843), p.116.

¹³⁰Ibid., p.116.

¹³¹Enders, (1979), p.326.

¹³²Ibid., p.326.

part of the negotiations to buy out Moffit, Joseph Smith Jr received several tabulations of the costs of the steamboat operation.¹³³

A tabulation entitled *Liabilities*¹³⁴ specifies the outstanding costs of the *Maid of Iowa*, from October 1, 1842 to May 12, 1843, a 32-week time period, amounting to some \$1,568 and 45 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents—an average of some \$49 a week. Over half of that amount, \$876 45 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents was wages, with Captain Jones at \$629 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents receiving the most; J. Brierley, one of the pilots, with \$101 in second place; and an engineer, B. Artis, in third place, with \$33 and 32 cents. During that season, the *Maid of Iowa* blew two cylinders, which incurred a total of \$50 for towing by the steamboat *Amaranth*, parking the boat and replacing the cylinders.

Steamboats not only consumed wood while traveling the river and required maintenance of the engine and machinery, but also had to buy foodstuffs, so that the passengers could be served meals. On the *Maid of Iowa*, the Captain's wife, Jane Jones,¹³⁵ most likely did the cooking. During the seven-and-a-half month run, the crew and the passengers had consumed some \$40 worth of meats from the "Butcher at Burlington" and \$29 from "Mathews the Butcher"; \$38 worth of bread from "Garneau's" and \$6.50 from the Burlington baker Andrews; and \$12.66 worth of vegetables purchased in St Louis. Overall, the provisions, including clothing for the "hands" at \$8.50, had amounted to \$286.76.

Finally, the liabilities included some remaining bills for "building the boat", amounting to another \$355.28.

The *Maid of Iowa* continued to provide river transport, because in the spring of 1843, a barrel of sugar belonging to J. Kay Alton III went missing after unloading from the

¹³³ The tabulations have temporal overlap, unfortunately, complicating their disentanglement.

¹³⁴ Whitney Papers, Box 5, Folder 10.

¹³⁵ Enders, (1979), p.329.

steamboat, and one L. Richards¹³⁶ advertised in the papers for its return.¹³⁷

In May 1843, Jones and Smith Jr decided to put the boat to use¹³⁸ as a ferry¹³⁹ between Nauvoo and Montrose on the Iowa side, a much-needed transportation improvement that was positively commented on in newspapers within and outside of Nauvoo.¹⁴⁰

On August 24, 1844, Mr. D.C. Davis presented his bill for provisions that he had supplied to the *Maid of Iowa* while she was anchored at Montrose. The receipt runs from May 12, 1843 to July 19, 1844.¹⁴¹ The *Maid* had most likely topped off her provisions every now and then, as suggested by the small amounts purchased: Tea, sugar, and coffee in the few-pounds range; one knife or a basket; a few dozen eggs at a time; one crock or some tobacco; fabrics such as linen, mull or calico in quantities of a few yards. The entire bill amounted to \$42 84 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents, plus thirteen months of interest. Payment was received by D.C. Davis and the bill canceled on September 4, 1844, i.e. after the lynching of Joseph Smith Jr.

The reason that the *Maid of Iowa* needed to buy so little at Montrose was that, in

¹³⁶ One would expect either the cashier or the local agent for the steamboat to submit the advertisement. This may have been the Levi Richards who had just returned from England with Parley Pratt on the *Maid of Iowa* in April of 1842; cf. above on page p.384.

¹³⁷ *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 17, 1843, page 4 column 4. The annotation of the advertisement with “May 2nd, 1843” in the signature line, which usually specifies the date of the submission of the ad, is confusing, since the advertisement is not printed in either the May 3 or May 10 edition of the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, and the loss did not occur until the “13 inst[ante mense]”, which would suggest May. The other explanation would be that the barrel was lost on April 13, *before* the first edition of the *Nauvoo Neighbor* on May 3, and when the ad was put in, the “inst[ante mense]” was not corrected to “ult[imo mense]” to denote April correctly.

¹³⁸ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 17, 1843, page 3, column 6.

¹³⁹ Recall that Joseph Smith Jr had claimed all ferry rights for Nauvoo in March 15, 1840; cf. Von Wagoner, (1994), p.277. See also above on page p.349. For the location of the ferry landing, see Figure 11.2 above on page p.365.

¹⁴⁰ Enders, (1979), p.327. Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 17, 1843, page 2 column 5f. Enders’s outside newspaper example, a note in the *Iowa City Standard*, dates from April 10, 1842, which probably means that the *City Standard* commented on the need of such a ferry service only.

¹⁴¹ Whitney Papers, box 5, folder 12. The editors of the guide to the Whitney Papers speculated that this was a “List of Goods shipped, with costs, on the *Maid of Iowa*”, but the prices and the amounts— $\frac{1}{2}$ a gallon of vinegar, or 1 box of matches—make that exceedingly unlikely.

the main, she was provisioned¹⁴² from Joseph Smith Jr's "Red Brick" Store.¹⁴³ Thus, the expenses enumerated for fitting her out¹⁴⁴ on August 30, 1843 are paralleled in the daybook for the store.¹⁴⁵ The specific purchases give some indication of the various parameters for the ship. For example, the 4 table cloths and 4 platters suggest that there were four tables in the dining area. There were most likely 40 bunks in the cabin, if the 41 pillows, 80 pillow slips, 47 mattresses, 94 sheets and 40 quilts are any indication.¹⁴⁶

But the use of the steamboat was not restricted to ferry use; the *Nauvoo Neighbor* of June 21, 1843 reports a pleasure cruise on the Mississippi in the "Maid of Iowa".¹⁴⁷ And for multi-day trips, accommodations became a point of concern.

For those who could afford it, | cabin accommodations, which included meals and a reasonably comfortable place to sleep out of the weather, certainly made travel by steamboat more enjoyable. The fare, however, was nearly three times the amount of deck passage.¹⁴⁸

The alternative was to stay on deck the whole time.

Accommodations on the open deck were uncomfortable and generally dirty; passengers were exposed to the fluctuating weather and to the sparks and cinders from smokestacks. Deck passengers generally took their own food and utensils and cooked their meals on a stove provided for that purpose. . . . The decks were usually crowded with people and baggage, and deck passengers were prone to guard jealously the little spot of deck they reserved for sitting, sleeping, eating, and socializing for the time they were aboard.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴²Enders, (1979), p.328.

¹⁴³ On the "Red Brick" Store, cf. above on pages pp.375ff.

¹⁴⁴ Whitney Papers, box 5, folder 10, "Steam Boat Maid of Iowa".

¹⁴⁵Enders, (1979), p.328.

¹⁴⁶ I assume these numbers mean that the *Maid of Iowa* had one spare pillow, seven extra mattresses, and fourteen spare sheets, and that the pillow cases were either changed most frequently, or the pillows doubly-slipped.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, June 21, 1843, page 3, column 1f.

¹⁴⁸ Enders, (1979), pp.331f.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p.332.

On May 12, 1844, Joseph Smith Jr computed how much money it would take to buy out Dan Jones' share of the *Maid of Iowa*.¹⁵⁰ Doing so freed up Dan Jones to go on a mission in his home country, where he would become a most successful missionary among the Welsh.

Thomas Bullock was the clerk of the ship *Maid of Iowa* after Joseph Smith Jr acquired ownership of the vessel. Thomas Bullock kept accounts in four different documents: a log for freight; a log for passengers; an account of monies received; and a paid account that tracked expenditures.¹⁵¹ These accounts are interesting for the details they provide about the trips between May 14 and June 15, 1844. For example, according to the passenger log, on the May 24 trip from Rock River to St Louis, four of the seven passengers booked deck, three cabin. Four passengers embarked at Davenport, three at Bloomington. Three traveled to Montrose, three to Nauvoo, and one to Fort Madison. One of the passengers, Frederick H. Moeser, also shows up in the freight log; he was transporting fourteen barrels of flour from Bloomington to Nauvoo. Another passenger, John Carpenter, was taking four horses from Bloomington to Nauvoo. Not all freight was accompanied by its owner; John Hammer had embarked the household of S.B. Fleake at "Wappelo" with destination of Keckuck, at a cost of \$9.¹⁵²

On May 18, four days into the trip, one of the hands fell ill and had to be treated with for sickness with "Cayenne Pepper & Salts & ale",¹⁵³ for which Thomas Bullock had to dispense 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Whitney Papers, Box 5, Folder 10.

¹⁵¹ Whitney papers, box 5, folder 14f. Unfortunately, not all pages for all trips are legible or have survived.

¹⁵² The household consisted of: one secretary; one bureau; one stand; one wardrobe; two tables; one wash stand; seven bedsteads; one frame; five chairs; one safe or cupboard; one doughtray; one trunk; two roles of carpet; three tubs and a washboard; one wagon; one barrel of soap; one lantern and frame; one barrel of bacon; one barrel of lard; one tin plate stove; and one item that I was not able to decipher; cf. the freight log.

¹⁵³ The list suggests that the hand was suffering from malaria, as cayenne pepper and salts are classical malaria medications of the time; cf. Fn 31 on page p.419 below.

Possibly as a result of the hand being sick, there was some kind of boiler incident on this day. The boilers and the hulls had to be inspected, for which Bullock issued a \$10 bill; and C.C. Webber,¹⁵⁴ Bernard Adams, and Anderson & Thompson, whose wheat had been damaged through the boiler incident, had to be reimbursed with bills amounting to \$55 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents, \$9.28 and \$0.40 cents respectively. If one juxtaposes the amounts received, \$351.70 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents, with the expenditures, \$351 72 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents, then the trip made no money.

On June 5, 1844, on the return trip from Iowa City to Keocuck, the *Maid of Iowa* took on board a “pleasure trip”, as the passenger log puts it, a party of 17. One member of the party refused to give his name and was entered simply as “a gentleman”.

Within a month of acquiring the *Maid of Iowa*, Joseph Smith Jr rented the boat out to Arthur Morrison and Pulaski S. Cahoon on June 15, 1844, for \$100 a month, with the proviso that one of Smith Jr’s men could travel on the boat at all times, at the cost of the renters, “as a witness to testify in case of accident to the said boat, but such to have authority to control in command the said boat in any manner whatever”.¹⁵⁵

In his “thrilling adventures” of some of the criminal elements operating in the Mississippi Valley, Bonney assigns the *Maid of Iowa* one final role to play on the last day of Joseph Smith Jr—as the getaway vehicle for his and Hyrum Smith’s families to safety.

Smith, before leaving had instructed his wife [Emma Hale Smith, RCK] to take her children, with the family of his brother Hiram [sic RCK], on board the Steamer “Maid of Iowa”, then lying at the foot of Main street ready for departure, and leave the city. With these instructions, however, she refused to comply, and remained home.¹⁵⁶

More prosaically, the *Maid of Iowa* was ordered to be sold by Brigham Young on April

¹⁵⁴ Webber had shipped 500 bushel of wheat at 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents with the *Maid of Iowa*, for a total of \$62.50, on May 15, 1844, per the freight log.

¹⁵⁵ These articles of agreement are located in MS 9670 folder 7, CHL.

¹⁵⁶ Edward Bonney (1856). *The Banditti of the Prairies. A Tale of the Mississippi Valley: An Authentic Narrative of Thrilling Adventures in the early Settlement of the Western Country*. Chicago: D.B. Cooke & Co, p.22.

8, 1845, for “what they [i.e. the bishops, RCK] could get”; cf. HC 7:395.

An Aside: Steamboat Harbor

In 1841, John C. Bennett proposed to run a “ship canal from near the inlet south right down the middle of Main Street until it regained the river on the lower side of the peninsula”.¹⁵⁷ Though this would have provided a millrace for water-powered manufacturing and a steamboat harbor for the winter, geology interfered, and the limestone stratum that blocked the entrance in the North was instead used as a quarry for temple construction.¹⁵⁸

12.3 Administrating the City

12.3.1 The Nauvoo City Charter

The Nauvoo High Council, which had come into existence through the organization of the Nauvoo Stake in October of 1839, decided in December 1839 to petition the Illinois state legislature for a charter.¹⁵⁹ However, the legislature failed to respond to these overtures, so at the October 1840 conference, a committee was formed—consisting of Joseph Smith Jr, John C. Bennett, and Robert B. Thompson—and tasked with drafting a city charter.¹⁶⁰ The charter was strongly inspired by the charter adopted for Springfield in February of 1840.¹⁶¹

While the Nauvoo Charter was unique in its right to establish a university and in its definition of the mayor and the aldermen as the chief justice and associate justices of the Nauvoo Municipal Court, its other key provisions were not unique.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷Flanders, (1965), p.151.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p.151.

¹⁵⁹Kimball Jr, (2014), p.297.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p.298.

¹⁶¹Ibid., p.299.

¹⁶²Ibid., p.299.

Among such provisions, inspired by the charters of Galena and Springfield, were the ability of the mayor to call out the militia, or the right to declare and remove nuisances.¹⁶³ The charter passed the Illinois legislature December 17, 1840 and went into effect February 1, 1841.¹⁶⁴ In Nauvoo it was subsequently printed in the *Times & Seasons* on January 15, 1841.¹⁶⁵ Joseph Smith Jr referred to the document proudly as “our *magna charta*”.¹⁶⁶

Kimball Jr points out that the Nauvoo charter gave the city far-reaching powers; while the most similar, the Peoria charter, had granted Peoria the right to draw up ordinances that had to be “not repugnant to, nor inconsistent with, the constitution of the United States or this State [i.e. Illinois, RCK]”,¹⁶⁷ the Nauvoo charter’s wording eliminated the clause “nor inconsistent with”.

Not mentioned [in section 11 of the charter, RCK] is any need to conform with other state laws or county regulations.¹⁶⁸

The broad provisions of the Nauvoo Charter were intended to enable the Mormons to establish a peaceful sanctuary, free from the kinds of violence and harassments they had experienced at the hands of Missouri officials.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³Ibid., p.299.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p.300.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. T&S II:6 281-286; a selection is reprinted in: *ibid.*, p.303-307.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. T&S II:6 p.274 c.2. The allusion here is to the English *magna carta*, a document that had been a peace offering by King John Lackland to the feudal barons of England in June of 1215. Extracts of the charter, plus a commentary by Sir Edward Coke, had been printed in the colonies as early as 1685 by William Bradford. The client for the printing was William Penn, founder of the Massachusetts colony, who was a great admirer of the charter and used it in his own legal defenses; cf. William Penn (1897). *The excellent privilege of liberty and property: being a reprint and facsimile of the first American edition of Magna charta, printed in 1687, under the direction of William Penn by William Bradford*. Philadelphia: Philobiblion Club, pp.xf. To refer to this document as “Magna Charta” seems to have been common usage in the nineteenth century, as indicated by the title of the reprint; the section title, cf. *ibid.*, p.13 and repeated on each page as header thereafter; and the comment of the author of the introduction, Fredrick D. Stone, Litt D; cf. *ibid.*, p.ix. Sir Coke, in his commentary, *ibid.*, pp.60f introduce the anachronistic notion that rights such as *Habeas Corpus* and trial by jury were covered by the charter, cf. Ralph V. Turner (2003). *Magna Carta Through the Ages*. Harlow: Pearson Education, p.148f. This stance was then adopted by in the colonies, cf. *ibid.*, p.209, and might explain why this analogy came to Smith Jr’s mind, given his avowed interest in *Habeas Corpus* as a tool for limiting cross-jurisdictional interference.

¹⁶⁷ Kimball Jr, (2014), p.301 Fn 25; see also the identical formulation in Section 35 of the Springfield charter, cf. T&S II:6 p.286 c.2.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p.301.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.302. Unfortunately, these defensive measures were read as offensive by the Mormons’ neigh-

The charter places the city under a government, the City Council, consisting of a Mayor, four Aldermen and nine Councillors.¹⁷⁰ These in turn had the power to appoint a “Recorder, Treasurer, Assessor, Marshal, Supervisor of Streets, and all such other officers”.¹⁷¹ The exclusive powers within the city were explicitly patterned after the charter for Springfield from February 3, 1840.¹⁷² That charter gave the city the right to “establish, support and regulate”—though that was not the formulation used in all cases—schools; contagious-disease measures; debts and city expenses; hospitals; nuisances; water; roads; bridges; wards; markets; needful buildings; public grounds; “auctioneers, merchants and retailers, grocers, taverns, ordinaries, hawkers, pedlars, brokers, pawn brokers, and money changers”; transportation and portage; theatres, exhibitions and other amusements; fire prevention, including chimney and stove supervision; storage of combustibles; partitions and fences; inspections of goods; weights and measures; population enumeration; elections of city officers; compensation of courts; and police.¹⁷³ The city was also empowered to “tax, restrain, prohibit and suppress” disorderly forms of entertainment, such as “tipling houses, dram shops, gaming houses, bawdy and other disorderly houses” as well as “billiard tables, and from one[-pin, RCK] to twenty pin alleys, and every other description of gaming or gambling”.¹⁷⁴

The charter was also unusual in making the Municipal Court, to which appeals against decisions of the Mayor or Aldermen were delegated, be composed of the “Mayor as Chief Justice, and the Aldermen as the Associate Justices”,¹⁷⁵ thereby effectively short-circuiting

bors, and within two years, there were those in the Illinois senate considering the repeal of the charter; cf. Kimball Jr, (2014), p.302 Fn 18

¹⁷⁰ Sect 4; cf. T&S II:6 p.281 c.2.

¹⁷¹ Sect 9; cf. T&S II:6 p.281 c.2.

¹⁷² Sect 13; cf. T&S II:6 p.283 c.1. The relevant sections from the Springfield charter were quoted in full after the Nauvoo Charter in the *Times & Seasons* article; cf. T&S II.6 285.1-286.2.

¹⁷³ Sections 3 to 20; 22 to 34; cf. T&S II.6 285.1-286.2.

¹⁷⁴ Sections 21 and 35; cf. T&S II:6 p.286 c.1-2.

¹⁷⁵ It was however possible to appeal from the Municipal Court to the Circuit Court of Hancock County, provided proper standing existed.

the separation of the executive and the judicial power in that sphere of governance.¹⁷⁶ The reuse of officials did not end there: The Recorder in charge of keeping “accurate records of all ordinances made by the City Council” doubled as the Clerk of the Municipal Court.

This Municipal Court was able to issue “writs of habeas corpus in all cases arising under the ordinances of the City Council”.¹⁷⁷ This in effect meant that the mayor could grant writs of habeas corpus,¹⁷⁸ putting a juridical power into the hands of the executive.

Once Joseph Smith Jr was able to combine these powers, he used them effectively to shield himself from what to his eyes were persecution and harrassment. For example, per city ordinance, the penalty for attempting to arrest Joseph Smith Jr related to the Missouri charges would have been a life sentence.¹⁷⁹ Or when the then-apostate John C. Bennett instigated Governor Carlin of Missouri to send a sheriff to arrest Joseph Smith Jr and bring him to Missouri, a writ of habeas corpus to be heard at the Nauvoo Municipal Court released Joseph Smith Jr again.¹⁸⁰

Just as the office of mayor [a position to which Joseph Smith Jr was elected on May 19, 1842, RCK] was an adjunct to the Prophet’s position as President of the Church, so was the city government a legal and constitutional apparatus of the whole Mormon sacerdotal structure of leadership.¹⁸¹

Furthermore Joseph Smith Jr delegated to himself, through city ordinances, powers that he felt he required to manage Nauvoo effectively.

¹⁷⁶ Section 17; cf. T&S II:6 p.283 c.1-2.

¹⁷⁷ Section 17; cf. T&S II:6 p.283 c.2.

¹⁷⁸ Walker defines *habeas corpus* as follows: “A writ of habeas corpus is essentially an order directing one who has a person in custody to deliver that person to a court so that the reasons for the incarceration can be independently reviewed.” It is crucial to understand that there may be two courts involved in this process, as the court that can grant the writ need not be the court that hears the writ at a specific time and place, the so-called “return”. The three possible outcomes of such a hearing are that “the prisoner is remanded back to jail, allowed to post bail, or discharged and released.”; cf. Jeffrey N. Walker (2014a). “Invoking Habeas Corpus in Missouri and Illinois”. In: *Sustaining the Law: Joseph Smith’s Legal Encounters*. Ed. by Gordon A. Madsen, Jeffrey N. Walker, and John W. Welch. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Studies. Chap. 16, pp. 357–399, p.357.

¹⁷⁹Guthrie, (1969), p.146.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., p.147f.

¹⁸¹Ibid., p.143.

The ordinances that were passed by the Nauvoo City Council are evidence that the Prophet, as Mayor, regarded the city under its charter as a “city state”.¹⁸²

Because of his numerous difficulties with the law, and his ability to receive revelations, Joseph Smith Jr considered himself quite capable of handling legal questions.

I am a lawyer, I am a big lawyer and comprehend Heaven, earth and hell to bring forth knowledge that shall cover up all lawyers, doctors and other big-bodies.¹⁸³

12.3.2 Funding Change—The Case of the Nauvoo House

The idea of the Nauvoo House, a boarding house for visitors of the city,¹⁸⁴ is first mentioned in a revelation in 1841 (D&C 124). The revelation discusses the purpose and construction of the house (vv.22-24) as well the organization of the Nauvoo House Association (vv.56-83) responsible for building it. The association is organized as a stock company, whose details—e.g. the share price of \$50 and the ceiling on purchase of 300 shares—are described in the revelation. Unlike the Kirtland Safety Society stock company,¹⁸⁵ this time the stock had to be paid in full upon joining (vv.67f).

The revelation not only tapped a specific quorum of four men to head the effort—to wit, George Miller, Lyman Wight, John Snider, and Peter Haws (v.62)—while expressing no preference as to the president of that quorum; it also specifically mentioned who should take stock in the Nauvoo House, to wit: Joseph Smith Jr (v.72); Vinson Knight (v.64-76); Hyrum Smith (v.77); Isaac Galland (v.78f); William Marks (v.80); Henry G. Sherwood (v.81); and William Law (v.82).

¹⁸²Guthrie, (1969), p.145.

¹⁸³Ibid., p.145.

¹⁸⁴ The religious significance of the Nauvoo House was that the church leaders expected the upper echelons of world society to come and visit Nauvoo to see the Temple; cf. Flanders, (1965), p.179. “[The, RCK] kings and queens, the princes and the nobles, the rich and the honorable of the earth will come hither to visit the Temple of our God” (= HC 4:449). This expectation made proper accommodations for these visitors a necessity.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. above on page pp.293ff, especially pages p.324 and p.329.

However, the revelation went beyond economic articles of association in that it pinned the share price never to fall below \$50 (v.64). The stock was not perceived as an investment vehicle in the ordinary sense; rather, it expressed a stake for a man and his family, “from generation to generation”, in the Nauvoo house.¹⁸⁶ Such a stake was conditional on doing the will of the Lord, however.

The revelation specifies that the monies raised through the stock sale are for the benefit of the Nauvoo House only (v.70), and that any such reappropriation has to be remunerated four-fold to escape the accursement of the Lord (v.71).

The revelation was then turned into a request of incorporation with the state legislature of Illinois, who passed the incorporation on February 23, 1841.¹⁸⁷

The building was to be in an L shape with the two wings, each 120 feet long and 40 feet deep, facing Main Street and the river. A stone basement story was to be topped by three upper stories of brick ¹⁸⁸

Joseph Smith Jr gave the association the land for the Nauvoo House.¹⁸⁹

George Miller and Lyman Wight were then instructed to raise the funds to feed the workers and to operate the “pinery”,¹⁹⁰ where the church leaders hoped to cut good wood whose sale would finance the various building projects.¹⁹¹ In the first season, the working party under George Miller and Peter Haws ran into opposition from a competing claim,¹⁹² but they returned with “a raft of 90,000 feet of boards and 24,000 cubic feet of timbers”.¹⁹³

As the actual construction of the House of Nauvoo and the temple progressed, some of

¹⁸⁶ For Joseph Smith Jr, this entailed a right to residency (v.56).

¹⁸⁷ *Laws of the State of Illinois passed by the Twelfth General Assembly* (1841). Springfield, Illinois: Wm. Walters, Public Printer, pp.131f.

¹⁸⁸ Flanders, (1965), p.182.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p.182. See also Figure 11.2 on page p.365 above.

¹⁹⁰ The pinery was a piece of land in Wisconsin up the Black river from the Mississippi river, cf. *ibid.*, p.156, that functioned akin to a Mormon lumbering camp.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p.183.

¹⁹² Ibid., p.183.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p.184.

the wealthier church members began to resent the monopoly on labor that Joseph Smith Jr claimed for the city projects.¹⁹⁴

William Law and [Dr, RCK] Robert Forster, who were the chief contractors in the city, began to resent Joseph's monopoly of the management of real estate in and about the city. They purchased part of the lumber floating down the Mississippi from Wisconsin, which had been intended exclusively for Church buildings, and began to build houses and stores. Since they paid wages, while Joseph [Smith Jr, RCK] paid in goods and city scrip, a labor crisis resulted.¹⁹⁵

The labor crisis meant that less progress was being made on the Nauvoo House and the Nauvoo Temple. Joseph Smith Jr threatened and cajoled the workers to shift the emphasis back on House and Temple.¹⁹⁶ At the Special Conference, on April 6, 1843, the council discussed construction progress on the Nauvoo House.¹⁹⁷

A prejudice exists against building the Nauvoo House, in favor of the Lord's House, and the conference are [sic RCK] required to give stress to the building of the Nauvoo House. This is the most important matter for the time being, for there is no place in this city, where men of wealth, and character, and influence, from abroad, can go to repose themselves, and it is necessary we should have such a place. The church must build it or abide the result of not fulfilling the commandment.¹⁹⁸

The acquisition of the funds, however, had its own problems, as not all the monies received through donations were making their way into the coffers of the Church.

The agents have had too great latitude to practice fraud, by receiving donations and never making report. The church has suffered loss, and I [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] am opposed to that system of collecting funds when any elder may receive moneys. I am opposed to any man's handling the public funds of the church who is not duly authorized.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ This problem was not independent of the bifocal economy that was developing in Nauvoo; see below on page p.417.

¹⁹⁵ Guthrie, (1969), p.147.

¹⁹⁶ Flanders, (1965), pp.186f.

¹⁹⁷ The discussion was reported four weeks later, on May 1, 1843; cf. T&S IV.12 181f.

¹⁹⁸ T&S IV:12 p.181 c.1.

¹⁹⁹ T&S IV:12 p.181 c.2.

Specifically,

the traveling expenses of the agents shall not be borne out of the funds collected for building these houses [i.e. the Nauvoo Temple and the Nauvoo House, RCK]²⁰⁰

Joseph Smith Jr took the opportunity to refute the rumor that the members of the forum of the Twelve were being paid \$2 a day for their services²⁰¹—an enormous accusation in the cash strapped economy of Nauvoo. Positively, Joseph Smith Jr stated,

The Twelve need not spend all their time abroad, they can spend the time belonging to the Temple, for to [sic RCK] collect funds; and the remainder of the time they may labor for their support; and they may call on the public to supply their wants. It is no more for the Twelve to go abroad and earn their living this way than it is for others.²⁰²

And to quash any worries about his own behavior, which were circulating in the non-Mormon media and detractive pamphlets at the time at least, Smith Jr added

I am bold to declare that I have never taken the first farthing of church funds for my own use, till I have first consulted the proper authorities. When there was no Quorum of the Twelve or high priests for me to consult, I have asked the Temple Committee, who had no particular business with it, but I did it for the sake of the peace.²⁰³

In the summer of 1843, after another difficult lumbering seasons of bad weather and Indian troubles, Miller returned with another 170,000 feet of timbers, lumber and sawed shingles,²⁰⁴ to help fund the Nauvoo House and the temple efforts.

But all of this squabbling with the Twelve and the other Nauvoo developers was not contributing to the completion of the Nauvoo House. By Summer of 1843, Joseph Smith Jr

²⁰⁰ T&S IV:12 p.181 c.2.

²⁰¹ T&S IV:12 p.181 c.2.

²⁰² T&S IV:12 p.183 c.1.

²⁰³ T&S IV:12 p.183 c.1.

²⁰⁴ Flanders, (1965), p.184.

was ready to admit that the Nauvoo House was not going to relieve his own home, always overflowing with guests,²⁰⁵ in the immediate future. Instead, the Nauvoo Mansion was upgraded²⁰⁶ with another wing, two stories high, dining room and kitchen on the ground floor, and six single and four double rooms upstairs.²⁰⁷

In the end, the construction of the Nauvoo House stopped at the second level in 1843,²⁰⁸ as a result, the Nauvoo House was never roofed.²⁰⁹ That said, the workmanship was fine indeed: even in the 1960s, before the Nauvoo Restoration Project came in to renovate Nauvoo in general, Flanders could write that “the bricks and joints have weathered a century and a quarter with little wear”.²¹⁰

12.4 The Interference from Polygamy

Polygamy is the titillating part of Mormon church history. Here it concerns me for the sheer disruptive force that this doctrine exerted among the church’s leadership during the Nauvoo period. Polygamy became an administrative shibboleth. Those in the know formed a separate class within the elite if they participated—people like John Bennett, William Smith, Hiram Smith, Brigham Young, Willard Richards, Heber C. Kimball, Newell K. Whitney and Edwin Woolley. Those who abstained—people like the brothers Law, Sidney Rigdon, William Marks and Parley P. Pratt—became relegated to a group of secondary importance.

For example, the departure William Law,²¹¹ of one of the top economic advisors to Joseph Smith Jr, which—however unintentionally—triggered the arrest of the Smith broth-

²⁰⁵Flanders, (1965), p.185.

²⁰⁶Ibid., p.190.

²⁰⁷Ibid., pp.175f.

²⁰⁸Ibid., p.182.

²⁰⁹Ibid., p.179.

²¹⁰Ibid., p.182.

²¹¹Cook, (1994), p.28.

ers and their lynching at the Carthage jail, cannot be understood without understanding the role of polygamy within the church hierarchy.

As Joseph Smith Jr's scribe William Clayton noted:

During the last year of his life, we were scarcely ever together, alone, but he was talking on the subject [of plural marriage, RCK], and explaining that doctrine and principles connected with it ²¹²

Smith Jr had already learned in 1835 in Kirtland that polygamy was a divisive issue, when his sealing with Fanny Alger introduce upon his good relationship with Oliver Cowdery, to be forgiven by Emma Hale Smith, but never to be forgotten by Cowdery,²¹³ who could only see it as an adulterous affair.²¹⁴ With the failure of the Kirtland Safety Society, Oliver Cowdery and his brother Warren had cut their losses and withdrawn from the church.²¹⁵

While the specifics of the development of plural marriage in Joseph Smith Jr's thinking remain controversial,²¹⁶ its function in the larger restoration effort—to link the American story of salvation to the Old Testament patriarchs and their covenants with the Lord—remains clear.²¹⁷

²¹²Von Wagoner, (1994), p.293.

²¹³Ibid., p.291.

²¹⁴Brian C. Hales (2009). "Fanny Alger and Joseph Smith's Pre-Nauvoo Reputation". In: *Journal of Mormon History* 35.4, pp. 112–190, pp.161-166.

²¹⁵Kathryn M. Daynes (1996). "Mormon Polygamy: Belief and Practice in Nauvoo". In: *Kingdom of the Mississippi Revisited: Nauvoo in Mormon History*. Ed. by Roger D. Launius and John E. Hallwas. Urbana, IL — Chicago: University of Illinois Press. Chap. 8, pp. 130–146, p.131f. On the departures in the aftermath of the Kirtland Safety Society, cf. also above on page p.335.

²¹⁶The passage in the *Book of Mormon* relevant here is Jac 2:30 "For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up a seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things", where the term of the seed is taken to allude to the Old Testament verse Mal 2:15. The official revelation for plural marriage did not appear until D&C 132, recorded July 12, 1843—at which point Smith Jr had already wed several wives.

²¹⁷Daynes, (1996), p.131, who in turn cites Shipps, (1985), p.61. Though the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob clearly had multiple wives in Genesis, no such information is given for Isaac. Thus, the expression common in literature on Mormon polygamy of the "plural marriage practiced by the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"—*pars pro toto* Daynes, (1996), p.131—is, strictly speaking, incorrect; *contra* D&C 132:1.

Ephraimite Roots

The notion of “seed” and “lineage” is complicated by the fact that Joseph Smith Jr, somewhat surprisingly, considered himself a direct descendant of Ephraim—cf. 2 Neph 3:7, 3:15—whose coming was foretold by his ancestor Joseph, son of the patriarch Jacob, while in Egypt. Though there seem to be few direct statements from Smith Jr on this, later leaders of the church, such as Brigham Young and Joseph Smith Fielding, argued that the majority of the Mormons were of Ephraimite descent,²¹⁸ specifically descending from offspring of Ephraim that had intermarried into European population groups. Thus, they conceptualized the remnant of Jacob as scattered through intermarriage among the European “gentiles”, and now needing to be gathered through the Mormon missionary efforts.

The function of this *theologumenon* remains obscure. Paul’s notion of becoming part of the seed of Abraham (Gal 3:26-29) by virtue of accepting the Gospel of Jesus Christ should suffice to make the Christians partake in the inheritance of the Jews.²¹⁹

Some comments seem to assume that the preference of Ephraim over Manasseh, receiving a “richer blessing” from Jacob in Gen 48:19f, entitles the descendants of Ephraim to be the leaders of the restoration and the chosen “work force” of the Lord during the latter days.²²⁰ Clearly Smith Jr and his congregations saw themselves as the engine driving the restoration. But the justification seems to run in the other direction: precisely because they were the workers supporting the restoration, they would have to descend from Ephraim—rather than Dan or any other of the tribes, or merely the Gentiles.

²¹⁸ Daniel H. Ludlow (1991). “Of the House of Israel”. In: *Ensign* 21.1, pp. 51–55.

²¹⁹ In private life, Joseph Smith Jr had a very inclusive stance toward family. Emma Hale Smith and Smith Jr adopted children, Joseph and Julia Murdock, in addition to having their own; cf. Newell and Avery, (1994), p.39. And much of the plural marriage argumentation, as Daynes correctly points out, runs toward establishing new family relationships—relationships that do not exist when viewed from the point of seed or lineage; cf. Daynes, (1996), p.132.

²²⁰ Ludlow, (1991).

A continuous vexation for Millennial Christians since Paul has been that the Jews seem uninterested in becoming jealous—cf. Rom 11:11—and are not rushing to accept Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah. From a Millennial point of view, this is a roadblock that needs removing. The conversion attempts of the Lamanites partially address this difficulty; that put a Jewish population within reach of the Mormons, whom they could at least in principle interact with. Perhaps the idea of descent from Ephraim was taken as licence to circumvent such obvious stasis on that front, above and beyond, the Lamanite conversion.²²¹

Nevertheless, Joseph Smith Jr must have known that, even if he was an Ephraimite by a European blood line, Smith Jr was no Jew, at least not in the view of Paul, who took the “descent laws” of Ezra 10:2f—a Jew by birth must have a Jewish mother—for granted.

12.4.1 Excursion: Testing the Followers

Daynes argues that the apostasies at the top levels of the various Mormon hierarchies in the aftermath of the Kirtland Safety Society fiasco impressed upon the prophet the need to test the remaining ties.²²²

The fall-out had demonstrated clearly to the prophet the difference between family and friendship. And the exemplar was the apostasy of the majority of the witnesses²²³ of the *Book of Mormon*. All of the “three witnesses”—Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris and David Whitmer—had apostasized. As if to demonstrate the strength of family bonds, the four Whitmers among the “eight witnesses” had been cut off with their brother David. And, as if to underscore the power of marriage, Hiram Page, brother-in-law of the Whitmers, had followed them.²²⁴ Of the witnesses, only the Smith family members—Father Joseph,

²²¹ Brooke equally suspects that the failure of the Lamanite mission contributed to the rise of the doctrine of Ephraimite descent in Smith Jr’s theology; cf. John L. Brooke (1996). *The Refiner’s Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644-1844*. Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, p.213.

²²² Daynes, (1996), pp.130-133.

²²³ Ibid., p.132.

²²⁴ Equally, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer were not only friends, witnesses and alumni of the United

Hyrum, Samuel—had remained.²²⁵

The Old Testament, in the divine commandment to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22), provided a pattern for testing the loyalty of the believers. Joseph Smith Jr at times took advantage of that *topos* to convince himself of the loyalty of his followers.

For example,²²⁶ Joseph Smith Jr requested of Edwin Woolley that he pack up all of his store and consecrate it to the kingdom of God. Smith Jr waited until Woolley had crated his wares before revealing that this had only been a test of Woolley’s loyalties.²²⁷

There are situations, however, where one cannot shake the feeling that Smith Jr used the testing *topos* as an excuse to get out of a situation that had spun out of control socially. When Joseph Smith Jr first requested Brigham Young to prefer a charge against his own brother William Smith, who “had been guilty of adultery and many other sins”²²⁸, and then argued against the prosecution at the trial in strong words, it may have been a test for Brigham Young; then again, with Emma Hale Smith’s observation that “charges preferred against William would injure the Smith Family and the Church image”,²²⁹ it may have been a convenient form of back-pedaling.²³⁰

12.4.2 Bonding and Proximity

By 1842, Smith Jr was teaching the principle of plural marriage to an elect group of members of the Nauvoo Church leadership.²³¹

Firm, but brothers-in-law, as Oliver had married David’s sister Elizabeth Ann; cf. Vogel, (2003), IV.A.5 p.37.

²²⁵ This is not to say that Joseph Smith Jr lost *all* friends in the Missouri turmoil; the Knight family for example remained loyal, supporting the prophet in Nauvoo without becoming part of his family; cf. William G. Hartley (1989b). “The Knight Family: Part II”. in: *Liahona*.

²²⁶ See also Smith Jr testing Heber Kimball by requesting his wife in plural marriage, discussed page p.404, below.

²²⁷ Arrington, (1976), pp.86f.

²²⁸ Guthrie, (1969), p.160.

²²⁹ Ibid., p.160.

²³⁰ Ibid., pp.160f.

²³¹ Cf. Compton, (1997); Newell and Avery, (1994).

Only those whose loyalty was established were initiated; although some of them rebelled at the idea.²³²

For its supporters, the connection with Smith Jr through plural marriage was interpreted as bringing them closer to or even into his family, akin to an adoption.²³³ It was not enough merely to test the ties;²³⁴ the ties needed to be strengthened where the testing had shown loyalty.²³⁵

In some cases, plural marriage created family ties among church leaders, with the strong moral responsibilities that attend familial relationships; in all cases, entering plural marriage was a sign of loyalty to Joseph Smith [Jr, RCK]. Plural marriages were solemnized by a religious ritual involving covenants that bound the families together for eternity, thus emphasizing even more strongly the moral obligations to each other.²³⁶

Arrington and Bitton concur.

What was needed was to enlarge the core of strong, faithful families, tying them to each other and to the church.²³⁷

Daynes argues that introducing polygamy at that moment in Nauvoo clarified loyalties. Precisely because it was such a momentous departure from existing family sensibilities, it functioned as an effective litmus test.

Entering plural marriage was a sacrifice—one mechanism that increases commitment.²³⁸

²³²Marvin S. Hill (1996). "Religion in Nauvoo: Some Reflections". In: *Kingdom of the Mississippi Revisited: Nauvoo in Mormon History*. Ed. by Roger D. Launius and John E. Hallwas. Urbana, IL — Chicago: University of Illinois Press. Chap. 7, pp. 119–129, p.124.

²³³ Cf. Ann Eliza Young (1876). *Wife No. 19, or The Story of a Life in Bondage, Being a Complete Exposé of Mormonism and Revealing the Sorrows, Sacrifices and Sufferings of Women in Polygamy*. 1st ed. Hartford: Dustin, Gilman & Co., p.67; Hales, (2009), p.154.

²³⁴ Cf. above on page p.401.

²³⁵ Daynes, (1996), pp.130-133; Brooke, (1996), pp.265f.

²³⁶ Daynes, (1996), p.132.

²³⁷ Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton (1992). *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints*. 2nd ed. University of Illinois Press, p.204. Though this quote is referring to the time after Joseph Smith Jr's death, the sentiment is equally applicable to the 1842 time period.

²³⁸ Daynes, (1996), p.137.

Bishop Whitney had never apostasized, and with his family the prophet tightened his relationship by taking their daughter Sarah Ann as a plural wife for eternity on July 27, 1842. The revelation describing the ceremony gives a clear indication of the relationship between priesthood and lineage that Joseph Smith Jr envisioned.

Verily thus saith the Lord unto my se[r]vant N. K. Whitney the thing that my se[r]vant Joseph Smith has made known unto you and your Famely [Family] and which you have agreed upon is right in mine eyes and shall be crowned upon your heads with honor and immortality and eternal life to all your house both old & young because of the lineage of my Preast [Priest] Hood saith the Lord it shall be upon you and upon your children after you from generation to generation By virtue of the Holy promise which I now make unto you saith the Lord.²³⁹

During the cat-and-mouse game of hiding from the Illinois authorities in the summer of 1842, Joseph Smith Jr sent a letter to the Whitneys, requesting that Sarah Ann and her parents come visit him in his hiding place.

I take this oppertunity to communi[c]ate, some of my feelings, privetely at this time, which I want you three Eternaly to keep in your own bosams; for my feelings are so strong for you since what has pased lately between us, that the time of my absence from you seems so long, and dreary, that it seems, as if I could not live long in this way: and if you three would come and see me in this my lonely retreat, it would afford me great relief, of mind, if those with whom I am alied, do love me, now is the time to afford me succour, in the days of exile, for you know I foretold you of these things.²⁴⁰

Clearly, Joseph Smith Jr and his trusted associate Bishop Whitney strengthened their bond through this plural marriage.²⁴¹

²³⁹H. Michael Marquardt (1999). *The Joseph Smith Revelations: Text and Commentary*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, pp.315f.

²⁴⁰ Dean C. Jessee (1984). *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., pp.539f; Newell and Avery, (1994), p.125 gives only part of this paragraph.

²⁴¹ On Bishop Whitney taking over Joseph Smith Jr's business papers after his death, cf. above on page p.383.

In other cases, Joseph Smith Jr would combine testing and plural marriage, as in the case of Heber C. Kimball, “by requesting that he give Joseph his wife to him in plural marriage.”²⁴² Poor Kimball fasted and wept and prayed for three days before he complied with the request. It was only when presenting his wife to Smith Jr that the prophet exposed the test as such.²⁴³ I find it surprising that such testing strengthened their relationship, but Smith Jr obviously knew Kimball well.

The harshness of this litmus test of loyalty, however, did not always lead to the expected outcome.

12.4.3 Failure to Convince

Among those that Smith Jr approached in vain was Nancy Rigdon, the 19-year-old daughter of Sidney and Phebe Rigdon.²⁴⁴ There had been rumors back in Kirtland already that Smith Jr was interested in sealings with Athalia and Nancy Rigdon, who were then 16 and 15 years old, respectively;²⁴⁵ Warren Cowdery had denied these rumors in a *Messenger and Advocate* statement in the September 1837 issue.

Using his spiritual wife Nancy Marinda Johnson Hyde²⁴⁶ as a go-between and chaperon, Smith Jr secretly met with Nancy Rigdon at the printing establishment of her brother-in-law George W. Robinson, where Willard Richards and Nancy Hyde were then living. Once the intentions of the prophet became clear, Nancy Rigdon refused, in spite of Nancy Hyde’s arguments, and threatened to call for help.

²⁴² Guthrie, (1969), p.160. There was at least the perception that asking followers for their wives was a common way for Joseph Smith Jr to test them; cf. the comment of Jedediah M. Grant, cited in: *ibid.*, p.161.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.160.

²⁴⁴ Von Wagoner, (1994), p.290.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.291; Hales’ discussion of the episode—cf. Hales, (2009), pp.127-129—misses the point of Von Wagoner’s statement and fails to consider Warren Cowdery’s denial in the September 1837 *Messenger and Advocate*.

²⁴⁶ On the Johnson family, cf. page p.277 above.

A few days later, Nancy Rigdon received a letter from Smith Jr, making a second attempt to convince her of the principles of plural marriage.²⁴⁷ Nancy gave the letter to her parents, who were furious with Smith Jr, not least for the reason that a proper marriage proposal should have been made to the intended's father, not to the girl.²⁴⁸ For a while, the relationship between the prophet and the president was so strained that they communicated by letters,²⁴⁹ even though they lived in the same neighborhood.²⁵⁰

Smith Jr's letter to Nancy Rigdon was published, probably by General Bennett, who was the commanding officer of Nancy's boyfriend Higbee, which created a public uproar.²⁵¹

In Joseph Smith Jr's terms, the Rigdons had failed the test. When complaints about Rigdon's supervision of the Post Office accumulated, and allegations surfaced that Rigdon had communicated with ex-Governor Carlin and apostate John C. Bennett, Smith Jr had Rigdon's status reviewed in a special conference in October 1843.²⁵² Through the support of Hyrum Smith, Williams Marks, Almon Babbitt and William Law, Rigdon was sustained, though Joseph Smith Jr "signified his lack of confidence in his [i.e. Sidney Rigdon's, RCK] integrity and steadfastness, judging from their past intercourse".²⁵³

12.4.4 Loyal Dissent

It is worth remembering that some followers denied the revelation yet remained loyal to Joseph Smith Jr in their rejection. The most interesting case may be William Marks, the

²⁴⁷Von Wagoner, (1994), p.295.

²⁴⁸Ibid., p.296.

²⁴⁹Ibid., p.297.

²⁵⁰Ibid., p.282.

²⁵¹ Newell and Avery believe that John Bennett was equally pursuing Nancy Rigdon and thus had an interest in blocking Smith Jr's advances. Bennett may have warned Nancy prior to the secret meeting; cf. Newell and Avery, (1994), p.111.

²⁵² Cf. T&S IV:21 p.329f c.2f.

²⁵³ T&S IV:21 p.330 c.2. Guthrie quotes Joseph Smith Jr as stating, "I have thrown him [i.e. Sidney Rigdon, RCK] off my shoulders, and you have again put him on me. You may carry him, | but I will not."; cf. Guthrie, (1969), p.159f. However, the T&S article provides no such quote, and Guthrie gives no other source for this declaration.

stake president of Nauvoo.²⁵⁴ Marks is also one of the few to report any regret on Joseph Smith Jr's part with respect to the introduction of polygamy. Marks reported in 1853 that

Joseph Smith confessed shortly before his death that "he had done wrong" and desired Marks's help in putting down "this damnable heresy" [of plural marriage, RCK].²⁵⁵

12.4.5 The Fight with the Law Brothers

In the aftermath of the departure of John C. Bennett in May of 1842, stake president William Marks, patriarch Hyrum Smith and William Law had worked together to investigate the details of the polygamous goings-on and spoken out against them in public.

As much as the Laws shielded the prophet, they were also unhappy with his aggressive city management style, especially with respect to his subsidy for church lands and development projects.

However, in May 1843,²⁵⁶ with the help of Brigham Young, Hyrum accepted the revelation and joined Joseph's side, thus alienating Law. In July or August of 1843, Hyrum gave William Law the revelation to read.²⁵⁷

William Law was doubly embarrassed because he had ridiculed "spiritual wifery" when defending Smith Jr against Bennett's accusations previously.²⁵⁸ William and Jane could not reconcile themselves to the revelation. Furthermore, Joseph Smith Jr had asked to have other men's wives sealed to him for eternity;²⁵⁹ Law could only interpret this as "breaking up families".²⁶⁰

²⁵⁴ Daynes, (1996), p.140; Brooke, (1996), p.264.

²⁵⁵ Daynes, (1996), p.140,

²⁵⁶ Cook, (1994), p.24.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., p.24.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., p.24.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., p.25.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., p.25.

Law and Smith Jr had reached an impasse; Law was willing to accept that he needed to be sealed to his wife Jane for eternity. But Smith Jr made Law's acceptance of the principle of plural marriage the precondition,²⁶¹ and refused to administer the sealing blessing until such time.²⁶²

The rupture was completed in January of 1844,²⁶³ when Law tearfully begged Smith Jr to reject plural marriage, and the prophet refused.²⁶⁴ On January 8, 1844, Law was voted out of the Quorum and the First Presidency. Reconciliation attempts by Law's former missionary partner²⁶⁵ Hyrum Smith in March of 1844,²⁶⁶ and Sidney Rigdon in May of 1844,²⁶⁷ failed to bring any resolution.

The combination of the socio-economic control that Joseph Smith Jr had exerted in terms of real estate earlier,²⁶⁸ and the socio-cultural control that Smith Jr now exerted through pressure to conform to plural marriage, led the Law brothers to start their own newspaper, the *Nauvoo Expositor*. Nauvoo Mayor Joseph Smith Jr responded to its single edition printed June 7, 1844 by sending Nauvoo police under Marshall J.P. Green to wreck the printing office, as a response to this public nuisance.²⁶⁹ The aftermath of this act placed the Smith brothers in Carthage jail,²⁷⁰ where they were lynched on June 27, 1844.²⁷¹ Though the Laws were uninvolved in the lynching, William Law saw therein

²⁶¹ Tanner argues that Joseph Smith Jr had attempted to wed Wilson Law's wife Jane; cf. Terence A. Tanner (1996). "The Mormon Press in Nauvoo, 1839-1846". In: *Kingdom of the Mississippi Revisited: Nauvoo in Mormon History*. Ed. by Roger D. Launius and John E. Hallwas. Urbana, IL — Chicago: University of Illinois Press. Chap. 6, pp. 94-118, p.108. From Smith Jr's point of view—cf. above page p.402—it would have expressed the importance of the Law family in Smith Jr's life; from the Laws' point of view, it desecrated their relationship with Smith Jr and the Mormon church.

²⁶²Cook, (1994), p.25.

²⁶³Ibid., p.27.

²⁶⁴Ibid., p.28.

²⁶⁵Ibid., p.9.

²⁶⁶Ibid., p.29.

²⁶⁷Ibid., p.29.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., p.21; cf. also above footnote 50 on page p.345.

²⁶⁹ ibid., p.56; Tanner, (1996), p.109.

²⁷⁰ Arrington, (1976), p.124.

²⁷¹Cook, (1994), p.30f.

retribution of a “blasphemed God” who had taken vengeance for the distortions to Divine doctrine promulgated by the Smiths.²⁷² Joseph Smith Jr, who probably suspected that the authorities in Carthage would be unable or unwilling to keep him safe,²⁷³ most likely only saw therein a world not yet ready to receive the dispensations the restoration wanted to bless them with.

12.5 Outlook

Nauvoo did not have an economy that was able adequately to support its population and signs of economic immaturity were readily apparent, especially in the early years.²⁷⁴

Throughout his time governing Nauvoo, Joseph Smith Jr struggled with the insufficient economic infrastructure of the new settlement. The large population required support, but the ratio of wealthy to poor was making it difficult to feed the hungry mouths, be they from England or from the United States.

The heavy demand for goods and services which had been expected to invigorate the economy tended to depress it instead, since the capital to finance both production and consumption was inadequate.²⁷⁵

Joseph Smith Jr pursued a twin strategy, attempting to establish charitable relief on the one side, through institutions such as the Female Relief Society, and new economic activities on the other. The Red Brick store and the steamboat *Maid of Iowa* were ventures to offer the goods and services the community needed so badly. Projects that prefigured those of the Work Progress Administration, such as the construction of the Nauvoo House or the

²⁷²Ibid., p.31.

²⁷³ Cf. D&C 135:4, first published in the 1844 edition; cf. Joseph Smith Jr (1844). *The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; Carefully Selected from the Revelations of God*. 2nd ed. Nauvoo, IL: John Taylor, p.444.

²⁷⁴Flanders, (1965), p.144.

²⁷⁵Ibid., p.145.

ditching of the Nauvoo flats, were to provide the necessary work so that people could help themselves.

Even though the Nauvoo Charter entwined the legislative, executive and judicial powers of Nauvoo, and placed it all in the hands of Joseph Smith Jr and his advisors, Joseph Smith Jr was not able to construct a closed economy. In spite of all his fulminations, the Nauvoo House eventually had to take second place to the Nauvoo Temple, which in turn was beaten out in the quest for manpower and resources when the materials shipped in were bought up and used for building out the upper hill and the houses of the wealthy.

In the midst of all these difficulties, Joseph Smith Jr was continuously harried by the Missourian government and over time, by the government in Illinois as well. The large concentration of people suspected to be at Smith Jr's beck and call made outsiders feel unsafe, and a good amount of saber-rattling on both sides of the divide exacerbated the situation.

It is a testament to Smith Jr's religious dedication that he insisted on teaching the divisive concept of plural or celestial marriage at this point in time. Though the very divisiveness of the conceptual shift also made for a loyalty test, a strategy Joseph Smith Jr had learned from the Old Testament and come to employ increasingly after the Missouri War, the secrecy, the ensuing rumors and marital disruptions wrecked not only the Female Relief Society, but also brought out intra-Mormon opposition to a perhaps unexpected extent. If the theocratic streak had already bothered those who wanted to conduct economics as usual in Nauvoo, the attack on traditional marriage finalized the resolve of those feeling disenfranchised by Smith Jr's policies.

Thus, when Joseph Smith Jr sent out the guards to shut down the *Nauvoo Expositor*, though he in essence only repeated what he had done before, he overplayed his hand in a way that only became obvious after the fact. Prophetically, Joseph Smith Jr understood

that his martyrdom, as he conceptualized his death, was at hand.

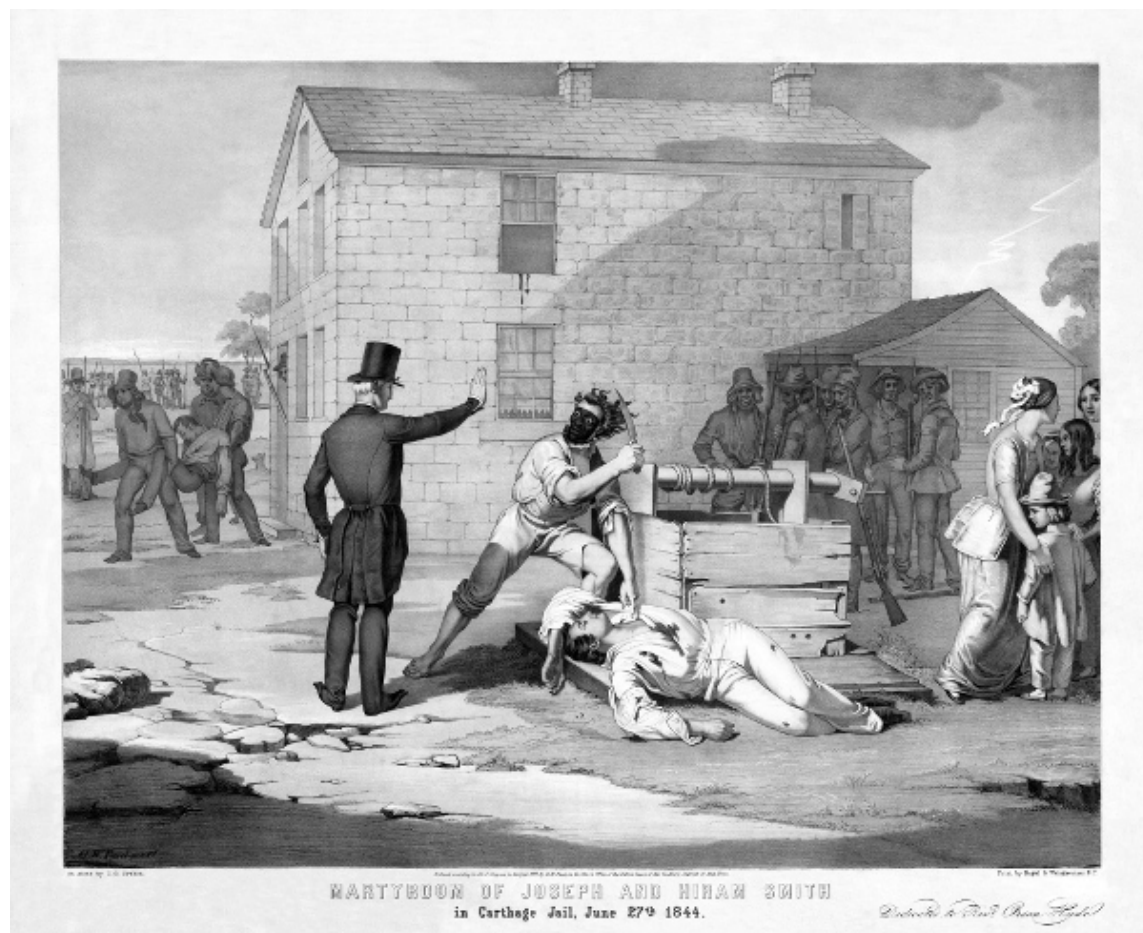


Figure 12.1: Martyrdom of Joseph and Hiram Smith in Carthage jail, June 27th, 1844 G.W. Fasel pinxit [i.e. painted it]; on stone [i.e. turned into a lithograph] by C.G. Crehen ; print. by Nagel & Weingaertner, N.Y. Dedicated to the Reverend Orson Hyde — Library of Congress. Notice the blood on the window of the second floor; Joseph Smith Jr jumped out of the window in an attempt to escape his assailants, but had already been wounded at that point. The body being carried out of the house is the body of Smith Jr's brother Hyram. This work is in the public domain due to expired copyright.

Chapter 13

Nauvoo Loose Ends

13.1 The British Influence

... our city is not 6 or 700 years old as those you come from, it is only a ...
3 year old [city, RCK].¹

With the arrival of converts from industrialized Britain, the American church leadership found itself confronted with believers who would be unable to make their living through farming.

Many English immigrants were experienced factory workers, including weavers and other textile laborers, bootmakers, potters and carriage makers. They naturally urged the creation of manufactories in Nauvoo.²

In November of 1841, Joseph Smith Jr was worried about the lack of industrial infrastructure, writing to Edward Hunter:

As it respects Steam engines & mills my opinion is we cannot have too many of

¹ Willard Richards's notes of Joseph Smith Jr's address of the newly arrived English converts, April 13, 1843, cf. Richards, (1843), p.126, internal editorial marks omitted.

²Flanders, (1965), p.147.

them. This place has sufferd exceedingly for such mills in our midst & neither one nor two can do the business of this place ³

Progress proved difficult for lack of investment. When on June 13, 1842 Joseph Smith Jr attended a general council focused on employment for the poor, the English saints were still treated as a separate problem.

Many of the English Saints have gathered to Nauvoo, most of whom are unacquainted with any kind of labor, except spinning, weaving, etc; and having no factories in this place, they are troubled to know what to do.⁴

In a welcome address on April 13, 1843, Joseph Smith Jr advised the English converts that “no industrious man need suffer in this land” and that “the farmers wants [sic RCK] your labors”.⁵ Smith Jr also proposed that they hire with Brother Garder, who was supervising the drainage ditching project,⁶ and termed that “a good job”—an understandable assessment from someone who had spent his teenage years digging wells.⁷ But while ditching required less training than farming, it is doubtful that the factory-working English converts were better prepared for that task.

The poor of course adapted, having little choice. Prominent Mormons assisted this re-orientation, imparting the necessary background knowledge in the papers. In May of 1843, for example, Lydia Knight, who had married into the Colesville Knights clan in Kirtland, Ohio,⁸ published a process outline for turning stalks into straw braids for making straw hats.⁹

³Smith Jr, (1841b).

⁴ Joseph Smith Jr’s diary entry for June 13, 1842, quoted in: Flanders, (1965), p.146.

⁵Richards, (1843), p.127.

⁶ Cf. above on page p.370.

⁷Smith, (1853), p.102.

⁸ On the Knight family, cf. page p.169 above.

⁹ *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 10, 1843, page 3, column 1. The process involved cutting the stalks at the right time, before the husks opened; scalding them in hot soapy water; drying them in the sun for multiple days (with an eye out for inclement weather); and husking and cutting them into shape; scalding them again

In May of 1843, John Taylor, editor of the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, commented on the disadvantages of such retraining for Nauvoo:

Men that have been accustomed to manufacturing cotton goods are making ditches on the prairie; woolen manufacturers are carrying the hod [i.e. work as brick carriers in construction, RCK], . . . potters have got metaphormorphised [sic RCK] into builders and wood choppers.¹⁰

But while Taylor praised the enterprising individuals, he chastised the overall development:

[We, RCK] . . . think that they [i.e. the manufacturers who have been retrained, RCK] would look much better, be more comfortable, and be more usefully and profitably employed at their own several trades . . .¹¹

Taylor's point was that "good crockery ware is as much needed here as in any other place; we have as good potters as can be found elsewhere".¹²

Conversely, one wonders how well these manufacturers, even when retrained, must have fared compared to their eastern brothers who had grown up as farmers.¹³ Presumably they needed a much more hand-holding and supervision than the American church members, especially when assigned to farming tasks. A few months after Taylor's editorial, when Hiram Kimball was advertising for a yeoman in November of 1843, he gave express preference to one arrived "lately from the east",¹⁴ as he required horse teaming experience and farming know-how.¹⁵

with hot soapy water; and finally, smoking them in a barrel over burning brimstone for four days. The making of the straw braids themselves goes unexplained. The hat weaving is left to the experts, as Knight hoped that "some who have a little capital would step forward to buy all the braid they can get, then get it made into hats and bonnets."

¹⁰ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 31, 1843, page 2, column 2.

¹¹ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 31, 1843, page 2, column 2.

¹² Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 31, 1843, page 2, column 2.

¹³ Taylor was specifically talking about "men"; cf. the quote on page p.415 above.

¹⁴ The majority of the English members would have arrived in New Orleans, and thus from the South.

¹⁵ *Nauvoo Neighbor*, November 1, 1843, page 3, column 3.

Flanders also pointed out that, though the English converts were themselves well-trained in their respective trades, they did not include enough members with managerial know-how to run an operation such as the pottery.¹⁶

13.2 Agricultural Association

Properly called the Nauvoo Agricultural and Manufacturing Association, the association was yet another stock company that Joseph Smith Jr chartered to raise money and improve the socio-economic situation of the early Mormons in Nauvoo. Its charter was granted by the Illinois Legislature on February 27, 1841.¹⁷ The charter states as its “sole object and purpose” the “promotion of agriculture and husbandry, in all its branches, and for the manufacture of flour, lumber and such other useful articles as are necessary for the ordinary purpose of life”.¹⁸

The joint stock company was capitalized at \$100,000¹⁹ with the option of increasing to \$300,000, at a share price of \$50 per share. Selling the shares was the responsibility of the presidency of the Mormon church—which phrase the law does not use—to wit: “Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon and William Law”.²⁰ The initial board of trustees and associates was accepted as specified in the charter.²¹

Though the agricultural association took up the idea of constructing a pottery plant in the following year²² to make effective use of their quality English potters, the initiative dragged on, and by May 1843, John Taylor could fulminate in his *Nauvoo Neighbor* that

¹⁶Flanders, (1965), p.178.

¹⁷(1841), pp.139-141.

¹⁸Ibid., p.139 Sect.2.

¹⁹Ibid., p.139 Sect.3.

²⁰Ibid., p.150 Sect.5.

²¹ Ibid., p.139 Sect.1; Flanders gives an ordered list that distinguishes trustees from associates and sort them alphabetically by name; cf. *ibid.*, p.149 Fn 22

²²Flanders, (1965), p.149.

... we would ask of the agricultural and manufacturing society, or of its officers, or those concerned, why it is that the building for the pottery is not progressing this spring?²³

Sidney Rigdon, president of the Agricultural Association, emphasized all that the association had already accomplished for the pottery, but saw the fault for the delay in the lack of legal certainty, which scared off the necessary investors: With talk in the Illinois legislature about repealing the Nauvoo Charter again, no one wanted to see their capital caught in Nauvoo.²⁴ While at that time it might have seemed like an easy excuse, in hindsight it turned out to be prophetic; after the lynching of Hyrum and Joseph Smith Jr in June of 1844, the legislature indeed moved to repeal the Nauvoo Charter.²⁵

By January 1844, the Agricultural Association was still trying to make a difference, convening in President Smith's Red Brick Store in January 10, 1844 and announcing these meetings in the local paper.²⁶ But the association never contributed in the way that its founding members had hoped for.

13.3 Economic Bipolarism

As Flanders has argued, and I have tried to document, with too much of the capital bound up in land and construction, industrial development, even with the skills of the English church members, remained stunted.

Lacking capital, large-scale power sources, and machinery, Nauvoo's economy remained mostly pre-industrial.²⁷

²³ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 31, 1843, page 2, column 2.

²⁴ Cf. *Nauvoo neighbor*, June 21, 1843, page 3 column 1.

²⁵ Though Brigham Young, previously leader of the Twelve Apostles and Joseph Smith Jr's majority successor, had until June 1845 been optimistic about making Nauvoo economically viable, by September, Young declared it necessary for the church members to abandon the city; cf. Flanders, (1965), p.153

²⁶ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 10, 1844, page 3, column 3.

²⁷ Ibid., p.154.

It is therefore doubly ironic that this pre-industrial economy gave rise to not one, but two economic centers in Nauvoo. The competition that developed between these two centers in 1842 and thereafter contributed to the difficulties within the Church hierarchy.²⁸



Figure 13.1: A daguerrotype by an unknown creator of the area around the temple in Nauvoo, Illinois, taken after the Mormon departure in 1845 but before the damage to the temple caused by a tornado in 1850. The temple bluffs do not give the impression of the posh neighborhood anymore that it had been for the first half of the 1840s. This work is in the public domain due to expired copyright.

Arrington writes:

Two business districts developed in the city [by January 1842, RCK]. One was on the southern end along Main and Water streets, where the Nauvoo

²⁸ Cf. above on page pp.407ff.

House and the Prophet's store were located. The other was in the upper part of the city along Mulholland and connecting streets. Here Edwin [Woolley, RCK]'s business neighbors included M. Adams' boot and shoe shop, Jasper Haven's drugstore, the tailors Davis and Williams, Power and Adams' books and shoes and matches, Joseph Hammer's comb manufactory, Joseph Horne's leather store, and P.S. Cahoon's auction room | at the Farmer's Exchange between Mulholland and Knight streets.²⁹

In addition, the segregation of business locales corresponded roughly to the separation between Mormons and "gentiles". Arrington observes:

Among the upper Mulholland Street businessmen were many gentiles, which helped to create competition between the districts that became a source of discord within the Church as well as among citizens; many later apostates [i.e. the Law brothers and Robert D. Foster, RCK] came from the ranks of the Mulholland businessmen. In [the summer of, RCK] 1842 Edwin [Woolley, RCK] and Edward Hunter had asked Joseph [Smith Jr, RCK] about starting a mercantile association that would improve the Mormons' commercial standing, for they usually had less capital than the gentiles. Joseph had asked them to wait a bit, and took advantage of the meeting to solicit a donation from them.³⁰

Part of the problem were the ongoing discussions about where one was safer from malaria³¹ and whether the water quality was better on the hill.

The location [on the hill, RCK] was drier, with fewer insects, than the "flat", and was therefore more healthful.³²

In his April 13, 1843 address to newly arriving English converts, Joseph Smith Jr, trying to ensure that the newcomers would buy the Church real estate,³³ could inveigh

²⁹Arrington, (1976), p.115; p.117.

³⁰ Ibid., p.117. The meeting took place on June 27, 1842. Joseph Smith Jr's diary does not record the discussion quite this way; the prophet proceeded "to lecture at length on the importance of uniting the means of the brethren. for the purpose of establishing manufactories of all kinds. [F]urnishing labor for the poor &c. Brothers Hunter & Wooley offered their goods. toward the general funds."; cf. Clayton et al., (1841-1842), p.126

³¹ Joseph Smith Jr recommended bitters, epsom salt, cayenne pepper, ipecacuanha [sic; ipecac? RCK], boneset, horehound, lobelia, and the bark of the butter-nut tree; cf. Richards, (1843), p.133 Fn 273.

³²Flanders, (1965), p.188.

³³ Cf. above on pages pp.342.

against the “Uptowners”:

The lower part of the town is the most healthy. In the upper part of the town the Merchants will say I am partial, etc, but the lower part of the town is much the most healthy. I tell you in the name of the Lord.—I have been out in all parts of the city, att [sic!] all times of night to learn these things.³⁴

There are many sloughs on the Islands, from whence Miasma arises in the summer, and is blown over the upper part of the city—but it does not extend over the lower part of the city.³⁵

Visually, the main attraction of the uptown was the temple. Flanders wonders whether the proximity of the Mulholland Street economic district to the temple was not part of the problem.

Smith[Jr, RCK] was annoyed that the neighborhood of his cherished Temple was becoming the focus of rival real-estate promotions by both Mormon and gentile entrepreneurs, ... But by 1843 Mulholland Street, which ran past the south side of the Temple, was becoming a rival commercial thoroughfare prompted by the residential neighborhood which had developed on the “hill”.³⁶

In the beginning of 1844, J. Hatch Jr opened a select school on Mulholland Street, promising to teach “the various branches of English Education”, including Latin and Greek.³⁷ Hatch Jr charged \$3 per quarter for English, and \$4 for Greek and Latin. The fact that those wishing references should contact “any Merchant on the Hill” indicates that “Merchant on the Hill” had become a designation of membership in a select and separate community.

By this point in time, Joseph Smith Jr

. . . was feuding bitterly with many of the promoters on the “hill”, an enmity which led finally to his [i.e. the prophet’s, RCK] death.³⁸

³⁴ Richards, (1843), p.130; internal editing marks omitted. I find the combination of empirical research and divine authority especially telling.

³⁵ Ibid., p.132; internal editing marks omitted.

³⁶ Flanders, (1965), p.188.

³⁷ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor* of January 3, 1844, page 4, column 3.

³⁸ Flanders, (1965), p.189.

13.4 Nauvoo—Periphery to Central St Louis

In his 1887 interview with Wilhelm Wyl, William Law related an anecdote about a meeting of the church leadership, probably in the beginning of 1844, concerned with the lack of redress for the Missouri despoilation of the Church.³⁹

In that meeting, according to Law's recollection, Hyrum Smith had proposed to get revenge and redress indirectly, by robbing the livestock salesmen of Missouri and the merchants of St Louis instead. According to Law's recollection, Hyrum Smith observed:

The simplest way would be if our people would go to Missouri and buy their horses and cattle on credit, and *then not pay for them*; and our merchants would go to St. Louis and take their large quantities of goods on credit and then, when the notes became due, simply not pay them; our people always go there and pay for everything.⁴⁰

Law argued against the proposal on grounds of impracticality and of morality and justice, possibly thereby making Hyrum his permanent enemy that way.⁴¹ But there was a larger lesson there, which not everyone in the church hierarchy was ready to admit: Nauvoo was economically peripheral to the central St Louis. Breaking with the merchants in St Louis would not have been like cutting off the nose to spite the face, as the proverb goes; it would have been like stabbing the heart.

When the *Nauvoo Neighbor* started publishing on May 3, 1843, St Louis merchants advertised their wares in Nauvoo.⁴² Then, on May 24, 1843, the *Nauvoo Neighbor* made the *St Louis Weekly Price Current* and the *St Louis Bank Note Table* a regular feature of their page 3,⁴³ until the May 22, 1844, edition, when publisher John Turner apparently

³⁹Cook, (1994), pp.123f.

⁴⁰Ibid., p.123.

⁴¹Ibid., p.124.

⁴² Cf. the advertisement for *Spring and Summer Clothing*, *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 3, 1843, page 3 column 6.

⁴³ For example, *Nauvoo Neighbor* June 7, 1843; July 5, 1843; August 2, 1843; September 6, 1843; November 1, 1843; January 24, 1844; May 1, 1844;

reorganized the *Nauvoo Neighbor* to make room for the coverage of the presidential election, into which Joseph Smith Jr and Sidney Rigdon had previously⁴⁴ thrown their hats.⁴⁵

Excepting Chicago and New Orleans, most of the goods sold at the Red Brick Store were shipped from St Louis.⁴⁶ Goods for prestige projects, such as the limestone sills and lintels for the Nauvoo House, were purchased and fetched from St Louis.⁴⁷ Equally, Edwin Woolley's house and mercantile goods for his store all hailed from St Louis.⁴⁸

Perhaps the capstone for this argument is the fact that when the Nauvoo Restoration project was incorporated in 1962 and began to construct its card file database, now housed in the CHL in Salt Lake City, they realized the significant use to be made of the goods offered for sale at St Louis in the 1840s, such as shutters, hinges, door-jamb catches, keys and knobs, to obtain the look and feel of Nauvoo.⁴⁹ St Louis could help restore Nauvoo because it had equipped it in the 1840s.

⁴⁴ The presidential campaign of General Joseph Smith, as the prophet styled himself for the election, referring to his military title in the Nauvoo militia, began in February of 1844, with announcements in the *Nauvoo Neighbor* on February 7, 1844, a type of press conference on February 8 in the Red Brick Store (cf. above on page p.381), and another announcement in the *Times and Season* on February 14, 1844; cf. Flanders, (1965), p.301.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 22, 1844, page 1, column 6, where Turner writes that "we have made arrangements to make our paper interesting during the present political contest[; RCK] everything interesting pertaining to our progress will be faithfully recorded, . . . and as it [i.e. the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, RCK] is the only correct medium at present, through which can be known all of our leading movements, the elders and our friends abroad will do well to give it extensive circulation." Given these aspirations and the interest in recruiting more subscribers outside the state, removing the St Louis information gained Turner almost two full columns; cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 8, 1844.

⁴⁶ Launius and McKiernan, (1985), p.15.

⁴⁷ Flanders, (1965), p.182.

⁴⁸ Arrington, (1976), p.86.

⁴⁹ Nauvoo Restoration Inc. Card Index Files, CR 387 30, Box 8, Lyon's Research Cards, Cards 154; 165; 166; 240; 242; 243; CHL, Salt Lake City.

13.5 Epilogue: Superior Organization

Hayden, in his chapter *Lessons of our Forty Years' Experience* of his history of the Campbellite Restoration movement,⁵⁰ reflects on the organizational distinction between the gospel and the church, “the evangelical and the ecclesiastical”.⁵¹ Hayden enumerates organizational mistakes that the Campbellites made. Understanding how the early Mormon church avoided most of these mistakes strikes me as a fitting conclusion to the analysis of Joseph Smith Jr’s socio-economic policies.

13.5.1 Organizational Shortcomings of the Campbellites

In the beginning, the recovery and the ancient gospel, as a lost jewel, so startled and excited all hearts, and the success attending the preaching of it was so marvelous that little was thought of but the speedy and certain capture of the world for Christ.⁵²

Rapid expansion took precedence over stabilizing the gains.

No one . . . consented to a loose, disorganized state of the churches But it was subordinate.⁵³

Because the converts and the congregations were not properly attended to, Hayden contends, they eventually lapsed “into dilapidation and were extinguished”.⁵⁴ As a result, Hayden comes to the hard conclusion:

It was a mistake to start so many churches.⁵⁵

Our gospel has won many friends who have been lost to us through feebleness of plan and want of system.⁵⁶

⁵⁰Hayden, (1875).

⁵¹Ibid., p.455.

⁵²Ibid., p.455.

⁵³Ibid., p.456.

⁵⁴Ibid., p.457.

⁵⁵Ibid., p.457.

⁵⁶Ibid., p.458.

Hayden is adamant about not placing any blame on the “fathers and pioneers of our religious work”⁵⁷ for the mistaken emphasis.

Hayden then complains about the lack of records of the churches in the Western Reserve, even down to missing records of members, snidely noting:

So, as the Scriptures gave no instructions about church records the whole matter was ruled out of order, and out of the church.⁵⁸

Hayden then laments the absence of that knowledge and data in a way that only a man who had just completed a history could have.

What would we not give now for a continuance of the records of the Mahoning Association, which met two years under that name after the records ceased [in 1828, RCK]? Why were there no records of our yearly meetings?⁵⁹

Oh, that [evangelist Walter, RCK] Scott had kept a diary! that our earlier men had written as well as talked!⁶⁰

Hayden then returns to what he considers the key mistake of the Campbellite movement, the abolishment of the Mahoning Association,⁶¹ which he glosses as “a state of apostasy”.⁶² While the Association had been able to call into service and fund the original evangelists of the movement—Walter Scott, William Hayden, Bentley and Bosworth—the annual meetings replacing the association were not able to replicate its organizational power.

They [i.e. the annual meetings, RCK] sent out no missionaries; they called for no reports; they performed no action for the churches, nor for the systematic

⁵⁷Hayden, (1875), p.458.

⁵⁸Ibid., p.459.

⁵⁹Ibid., p.459.

⁶⁰Ibid., p.460.

⁶¹ “This cause originated in conventional effort”, that is, an effort based around churches forming conventions to do their evangelical work; cf. *ibid.*, p.461.

⁶²Ibid., p.461.

diffusion of the gospel. They came as a cloud with blessings, poured out their treasure of gold, and departed.⁶³

Hayden criticizes that every effort to “form co-operation” was blasted as “priest-craft, or sectarianism”.⁶⁴ And Hayden points to the “beloved Hiram College”, formerly the Eclectic Institute, as an exemplar of how they had “joined hands around one good enterprise”⁶⁵ which had benefitted the movement tremendously.

13.5.2 Organizing the Restoration

There is no principled reason why the early Mormon church could not have run into the very same issues that aggravated Campbellite Hayden at the end of his church history. The fact that they did not indicates of the organizational skill that either Joseph Smith Jr himself or the men he attracted to Mormonism brought to the table. Thus, while Howe sneers:

Nearly all of their male converts, however ignorant or worthless, were forthwith transformed into “Elders,” and sent forth to proclaim, with all their wild enthusiasm, the wonders and mysteries of Mormonism.⁶⁶

Yet the fact of the matter was that the active involvement of the converts most likely contributed to the success, or prevented some of the very mistakes, that Hayden had noted.

Hayden had identified three mistakes and two successes to explain the fortunes of the Campbellites in the Western Reserve.⁶⁷

• Mistakes

⁶³Ibid., p.462.

⁶⁴Ibid., p.462.

⁶⁵Ibid., p.463.

⁶⁶Howe, (1834), p.115.

⁶⁷ Hayden also identified the validity of their message of the sufficiency of the Bible interpreted “by every man for himself” following “the ordinary, established rules” of interpretation; cf. Hayden, (1875), pp.454f; but that understandable partisan sentiment contributes little to a cross-denominational organizational comparison.

1. No supervision of the newly organized churches and converts.
2. Insufficient record-keeping.
3. Dissolution of the Mahoning Association as an executive body with binding resolutions for the member churches.

- **Successes**⁶⁸

1. Annual Meetings
2. Hiram College (formerly, the Eclectic Institute)

I argue that, though of course they did not do so immediately, the early Mormon church surpassed the successes and avoided the mistakes that Hayden identified in the ecclesiastical organization of the Campbellite movement. In addition, the early Mormon church undertook programs to solidify organizational control beyond the points mentioned by Hayden.

Such superior organization may help explain how the early Mormon church was able to weather some of the storms that the congregations encountered.

Formal Publishing

As mentioned above in the discussion of the Campbellite movement and its interaction with the early Mormon church, one of the key components of the Campbellite Restoration effort was Alexander Campbell as a publisher: his *Christian Baptist* was an important recruitment tool for the Western Reserve⁶⁹ and the source of a unified message. However,

⁶⁸ Hayden might have more properly considered them saving graces: “It is a marvel that the churches have stood so well—a proof of the truth and power of the principles of our pleading, rather than of the skill or wisdom of our management.” Cf. Hayden, (1875), p.457.

⁶⁹ Cf. above on page p.193.

this was not an institutionalized effort, but the propensities and talents of one man and his funding.

In the early Mormon church, through the Literary Firm⁷⁰ and the calling of publishing experts like W.W. Phelps, this approach was formalized. Joseph Smith Jr insisted on the unifying force of shared books, hymns, newspapers and missives. For example, in January 1833, the prophet instructed W.W. Phelps to publicize the rise of the church in their first periodical, *The Evening and the Morning Star*. Joseph Smith Jr fully expected to make the periodical “as interesting as possible”⁷¹ through this topic.

That line of publishing quality continued in the Nauvoo period with Ebenezer Robinson and Don Carlos Smith, who started the *Times & Seasons* in 1839,⁷² and the *Nauvoo Neighbor*, which John Turner had created out of the *Wasp* in May 1843, after taking over the *Times & Seasons* in November of 1842.⁷³

Church Presidency and Stakes

As early as 1832, in Kirtland, inspired by Isa 54:2f (and 3 Ne 22:2-5), the notion of tent stakes (or pegs) was carried over and turned into a metaphor for gathering places for the Mormons.⁷⁴

Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them [in Zion, RCK]; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion. (= D&C 101:21)

⁷⁰ Cf. above on page p.271.

⁷¹ Joseph Smith Jr et al. (1835b). “JS Letterbook 1, [ca. 27 Nov. 1832–ca. 4 Aug. 1835]”. handwriting of Frederick G. Williams, JS, Orson Hyde, and Oliver Cowdery; ninety-three pages, including one inserted leaf of an incomplete index (table of contents); JS Collection, CHL, p.20.

⁷² Tanner, (1996), pp.94-96.

⁷³ Ibid., p.102.

⁷⁴ Stan L. Albrecht (1992). “Art. Stake”. In: *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. Ed. by Daniel H. Ludlow. New York: Macmillan, pp. 1411–1414, p.1412 c.2.

The Kirtland stake, formerly organized in 1834, was managed by the First Presidency, which then was also the Presidency of the Church; but in the future, each stake would have its own Presidency, which would be under the Church's presidency.⁷⁵

Record-Keeping

As Faulring points out,⁷⁶ the documentation tradition within the early Mormon church goes all the way back to the organization of the church on April 6, 1830.

Behold, there shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou 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
.... (= D&C 21:1)

Though in the context of D&C 21, this primarily meant a record of “all the words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them” (= D&C 21:4), the revelation came to be understood in a broader sense.⁷⁷

John Whitmer was the first Church historian and called through revelation⁷⁸ “to write and keep a regular history” of the church as early as March 8, 1831. Whitmer did not begin keeping the history until June of 1831, however.⁷⁹

Joseph Smith Jr himself contributed to the history-writing effort by starting an autobiographical sketch, together with his scribe Frederick G. Williams, somewhere between July and November of 1832.⁸⁰

⁷⁵Kim S. Cameron (1992). “Art. Stake Presidency”. In: *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. Ed. by Daniel H. Ludlow. New York: Macmillan, pp. 1414–1415, p.1414 c.1.

⁷⁶Scott H. Faulring, ed. (1987). *An American Prophet's Record*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, p.xiii.

⁷⁷ For an assessment for the early Mormon documentation effort in the context of the then-prevalent archival standards, even at the level of the US government, cf. Dean C. Jessee (1976b). “The Reliability of Joseph Smith's History”. In: *Journal of Mormon History* 3.1, pp. 23–46.

⁷⁸ The revelation now is D&C 47, but was number 63 in the first publication of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, and number 50 in the *Book of Commandments*.

⁷⁹Whitmer, (1831-1847), p.25.

⁸⁰Faulring, (1987), p.9.

On November 27, 1832, possibly inspired by the work on the autobiographical sketch, Joseph Smith Jr started keeping diaries and journals,⁸¹ and to date ten of them have been identified and published.⁸² This documentation of the “minute circumstances that come under my observation”⁸³ was part and parcel of a larger documentation push undertaken by the prophet. On that same day, Smith Jr wrote to W.W. Phelps in Zion, as the early Mormon church called Independence, Missouri, about the necessity of record keeping with respect to the Law of Consecration. Extracts of this letter would later become D&C 85.

This text is interesting because it captures the importance that Smith Jr attached to documentation. In D&C 85, the language used for the administrative records alludes to the way the Book of Life is discussed in Rev 3:5 or Phil 4:3:

It is contrary to the will and commandment of God that those who receive not their inheritance by consecration . . . should have their names enrolled with the people of God.

Neither is their genealogy to be kept, or to be had where it may be found on any of the records or history of the church.

Their names shall not be found, neither the names of the fathers, nor the names of the children written in the book of the law of God, saith the Lord of Hosts.
(= D&C 85:3-5)

In order to obtain a letterbook for this letter, Joseph Smith Jr and his scribes flipped over the book used for the autobiographical sketch and started copying letters into its back.⁸⁴ They then populated the letterbook, following the inaugural letter to Phelps in Independence, MS, with older communications between Joseph Smith Jr, Hyrum Smith, Newell K. Whitney and Oliver Cowdery. The first contemporary letter thereafter dates

⁸¹ Faulring distinguishes diaries from journals in that journals are by definition kept by others, scribes and secretaries. That said, many of the entries in the diaries are also written by scribes, but crucially not all of them. Cf. *ibid.*, p.xiii.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p.xiiif. The editorial work of Faulring is now superseded by the Joseph Smith Papers project, which not only publishes facsimile editions, but also provides the contents online.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁸⁴ The autobiographical sketch was later excised; cf. *ibid.*, p.3.

from January 1833.⁸⁵

By December of 1832, about two weeks later, Joseph Smith Jr had his scribes begin what later became known as the “Kirtland High Council record”, a minutes book for the meeting of the High Council of the church while in Kirtland, Ohio.⁸⁶ The term is also used to distinguish it from the so-called Far West Record, the minutes of the High Council meeting in Far West, Missouri.⁸⁷

Not only were these council meetings recorded for internal purposes, but some of the findings of such meetings were subsequently published in the periodicals available to the Mormon church. This provided additional continuity in the relocations that the church was compelled to undertake. Thus, the first issue of the new Illinois Mormon periodical, *Times and Seasons*, published in July 1839 in what was still then Commerce, IL, reported a council meeting from April 26, 1839, that had been held at Far West, before the expulsion from Missouri.⁸⁸

When the Female Relief Society was founded in 1842, the ladies received a ledger as a present from Joseph Smith Jr’s secretary, Willard Richards, to keep their minutes and track membership. Richards kept the minutes until Eliza R. Snow was nominated as secretary by the founding members.⁸⁹

Finally, during the Nauvoo period, when the writing of the history of the church was seriously undertaken, Joseph Smith Jr took out ads in the local newspapers, encouraging the members to come forward with “documents, facts, incidents or other matter” in aid of

⁸⁵Smith Jr et al., (1835b), p.1.

⁸⁶Warren A. Cowdery et al. (1837). “Minute Book 1, [ca. 3 Dec. 1832–30 Nov. 1837]”. 258 pages; CHL..

⁸⁷Ebenezer Robinson et al. (1844). “Minute Book 2, 6 Apr. 1838–[ca. June 1838], [ca. Oct. 1842], [ca. June 1844]”. 178 pages, as well as indexing in tabbed pages at beginning of book; CHL.

⁸⁸T&S I:1 p.15 c.2.

⁸⁹Eliza R. Snow et al. (1842-1944). “”A Book of Records, Containing the proceedings of The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo,” Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 17 Mar. 1842–16 Mar. 1844”. 124 pages; CHL. Includes redactions and archival marking. Account book or ledger, 32 x 21 x 3 cm. The text block, containing 132 leaves, measures 31 x 20 cm. Tooling design around edges of cover. Spine, red stamp. Edges of pages, green, with some wear., Historical Introduction and Source Note.

the great project.⁹⁰

Conferences

The first church conference was held in June of 1830, about two months after the organization of the church in April of 1830 (cf. D&C 21), at the house of Peter Whitmer in Fayette, Seneca County, New York.⁹¹

Throughout the Kirtland period (1831-1837), conferences were “called as needed by the Prophet Joseph Smith”.⁹²

Those attending early conferences conducted the Church’s business, heard announcements of new revelations, and exercised the principle of common consent in approving leaders and doctrine.⁹³

For example, the decision to move to Ohio was revealed and discussed at the conference in Fayette, January 2, 1831.⁹⁴ At the conference in Amherst, Ohio, on January 25, 1832, Joseph Smith Jr was sustained as president of the high priesthood.

During the Far West and Nauvoo period, from 1838 to 1844, conferences were established to meet in April and October of every year, with a shift in emphasis to “expounding and teaching the doctrines of the Church”.⁹⁵

At minimum extracts of the minutes of conferences were published regularly in the periodicals available to the early Mormon church. Thus, the first issue of the *Times and Seasons* mentioned above⁹⁶ contains extracts of minutes from a March 17, 1839 conference, held in Quincy.⁹⁷

⁹⁰ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, May 31, 1843, page 4, column 5.

⁹¹ M. Dallas Burnett (1992). “Art. Conferences”. In: *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. Ed. by Daniel H. Ludlow. New York: Macmillan, p. 500, p.307 c.1.

⁹² Ibid., p.307 c.2.

⁹³ Ibid., p.307 c.2.

⁹⁴ Cf. above on page p.231.

⁹⁵ Burnett, (1992), p.307 c.2.

⁹⁶ Cf. above on page p.430.

⁹⁷ T&S I:1 p.15 c.1f.

13.5.3 Conclusion

It is tempting to speculate on what enabled the early Mormon church to act with such organizational circumspection. Perhaps one of the contributing factors might be the different uses the two denominations made of the Bible. When Hayden claims that the Scriptures say little about record keeping,⁹⁸ this is mostly true for the New Testament. There, the eschatological expectations of the imminent return of Jesus Christ make such organizational details optional.⁹⁹

But the Old Testament is steeped in the scribal tradition, and more often mentions records, chronicles, lists of cities and tribes, genealogies and the like. The *Book of Mormon* is itself an exemplar of record keeping on the part of the Nephites, in its self-understanding. The veneration and continued reclamation of Old Testament expectations, from patriarchal blessings to plural marriages, indicates the exemplary role that the Old Testament had for early Mormon thinking.

Clearly Joseph Smith Jr had a penchant for thinking in hierarchies, though it is less obvious what influences could have inspired him there. Perhaps such hierarchies emerged naturally from the titles for the various callings; as the roles and tasks multiplied, their mutual relationship and precedence was no longer obvious and required clarification. This would again point us to the participatory nature of the Mormon church that Howe felt to be so ridiculous. From the point of view of the criticism of Hayden, the joke is on Howe.

⁹⁸Hayden, (1875), p.459.

⁹⁹ The New Testament does mention the Book of Life, and, as noted above, Joseph Smith Jr saw a relationship between that concept and the administrative records of membership of the young church; cf. page p.429.

Chapter 14

The Evolution of Socio-Economic Policy

Although the Saints welcomed the application of machinery and encouraged a combination of manufacturing with agricultural labor, the system of consecrat[i]on was conceived almost exclusively in agrarian terms. Access to the land had long signified social standing ¹

14.1 Joseph Smith Jr's Solution

The seismic cultural shifts of the 1820s to 1840s in the United States generated a semantic crisis. In the face of this crisis, Joseph Smith Jr offered a solution, like many others at that time: a way of seeing the world that restored meaning to people's experiences. The description of that solution is the subject of this section, because the solution provides the background for all of the socio-economic actions that Joseph Smith Jr undertook.

At this point, I must briefly part company with the apologetic and Mormon historians. In their view, Joseph Smith Jr had genuine visionary experiences and responded to

¹Cook, (1985), p.11.

a prophetic calling from the Lord. The question of Smith Jr's solution is either incomprehensible or posed the wrong way. For the solution is the Lord's, who had foreseen the semantic crisis, and Joseph Smith Jr's role was to implement the predetermined solution, a moment that had been prepared for by the hiding of the plates in the hill Cumorah. Joseph Smith Jr is here the instrument of the Lord, in the same general way that the Lord makes covenants with chosen religious individuals in the tradition of the Abrahamic religions.

To an equal extent, I part company with the detractors of Joseph Smith Jr and the Mormon movement, going all the way back to Eber D. Howe in the early 1830s. They argue that financial security for his family was Joseph Smith Jr's personal response to the semantic crisis,² and he happened to find a pseudo-religious revelatory way to dupe people into providing this economic safety net for his clan. In short, religious fraud was Joseph Smith Jr's solution, in their argument.

To historians who do not share either of these two outlooks, such as Jan Shipps or Bruce Flanders,³ "solution" means a proposal for conceptualizing the world that restores meaning to the chaotic experiences of social and economic transformation: a framework for interpreting experiences.

In Jan Shipps' reconstruction,⁴ Joseph Smith Jr proposed first to connect the American experience to the Old Testament Abrahamic tradition, through the testament of the patriarch Jacob (Gen 42), and second for the members of the restored church to see themselves as the new Israel. The first part of this reconstruction is compelling; the second part

² "Thus, from almost a state of beggary, the family of Smiths were immediately [upon their arrival in Kirtland, Ohio, RCK] furnished with the 'fat of the land' by their fanatical followers, many of whom were wealthy."; cf. Howe, (1834), p.112.

³ It should come as no surprise that this list is very short. The vast majority of research in early Mormon history is done by either present-day Mormons or former Mormons, who fall naturally into either the apologetic or the detractive camp. "Just plain non-Mormon researchers have been very rare.", DePillis, another member of that elusive breed, concurs; cf. Mario S. DePillis (1966). "Hosea Stout's Diary and the Hidden Rhetoric of Mormon History: A Review Essay". In: *Southern California Quarterly* 48.2, pp. 195–201, p.195

⁴Shipps, (1985).

almost certainly false. To the Mormons, the Lamanites or Native Americans were always the Israelites; they were the Gentiles and they knew it. Admittedly, the picture is a bit muddled by the assumption of Ephraimitic descent.

Flanders' reconstruction⁵ argues that Joseph Smith Jr wanted to sanctify all of life's experiences, re-sacralizing the everyday. There are expressions of such a sentiment, e.g. Orson Hyde's 1845 speech in Nauvoo.

Mormons call everything an ordinance of religion that can tend to man's | perfection and happiness; whether it be to plow and sow the fields, to buy and sell goods, wares, and merchandise, houses or lands, to go to the polls and vote, to the prayer meeting, or to the sacrament of the Lord's supper . . . whatever we do we wish to do all to the glory of God.⁶

This approach goes a long way toward explaining the increasingly theocratic impulses of Joseph Smith Jr's policies, beginning in Far West, Missouri and coming to full fruition in the Nauvoo period. For almost all of the top-echelon members who apostasized after 1837, whether they be the Cowderies or the Whitmers or the brothers Law, one can point to specific expectations of control, be it in matters moral or economic or theological, that they felt the prophet was systematically taking out of their hands.⁷

The fact remains that people rarely want their entire life to be sacralized. Even at the height of the "Nauvoo theocracy", there was nothing sacred or sanctified about the way the Mormons made bricks for their buildings or cut stone for the Temple. And in a surprising sense, even the revelations took that into consideration; cf. the reluctance of the Nauvoo House revelation (D&C 124) to specify the president of the Quorum of the association, even though it prescribed all quorum members and some of the initial stock

⁵Robert Bruce Flanders (1996). "The Kingdom of God in Illinois: Politics in Utopia". In: *Kingdom of the Mississippi Revisited: Nauvoo in Mormon History*. Ed. by Roger D. Launius and John E. Hallwas. Urbana, IL — Chicago: University of Illinois Press. Chap. 9, pp. 147–159.

⁶Hill, (1996), p.120f.

⁷Cook, (1994), p.21; cf. also above footnote 50 on p.345.

buyers! As Joseph Smith Jr put it *vis-a-vis* a Catholic bishop, “I do not govern them [i.e. the Mormons, RCK], I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves.”⁸ Guthrie has suggested the term “theodemocracy”, cf. Gary Dean Guthrie (1969). “Joseph Smith as an Administrator”. Master of Science. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, p.155, for this form of governance.

With Peter L. Berger, I take the function of religion to be to provide the “Sacred Canopy”⁹ that grounds the social and the cultural expectations of a community and terminates the justificatory regress. The dissent between the church leadership on the one side and those who apostasized from the faith on the other was about the degree to which the revealed should influence matters of everyday life.

In my opinion, Shipps is on target in pointing to a basic narrative of salvation into which the American continent needed to feel integrated. This stabilizing premise is clearly one part of the solution. But the social and economic aspects of the solution need to be more tightly coupled to the problems they were designed to resolve. Though there is much in the Old Testament on socio-economic fairness in the prophetic diatribes, it is the primitivistic component of Smith Jr’s solution that points in the direction of socio-economic segregation.

14.1.1 Dynamic but Non-Agentive Processes

One distressing aspect of modernity is that it takes fundamental processes, especially the economy and the environment, out of the agentive framework of a divinely ordered universe. It makes these emergent aspects apersonal and therefore difficult to interact with, let alone control. For an agricultural society that is in daily contact with the environment and conducts business face-to-face, this is a difficult proposition. Joseph Smith Jr’s proposal does not re-sacralize these aspects of the world, but makes them intentional again, by

⁸ Quoted in: Guthrie, (1969), p.153.

⁹ Berger, (1967).

re-integrating them into the divine plan. Such was the promise of Priesthood: "... right-thinking and right-acting elders could draw upon divine power and make the universe subject to their needs".¹⁰ Recasting the view in these terms makes such emergent forces approachable once more, especially at the economic level.

The respective fates of the notions of consecration, tithing and stewardship illustrate this well. The notion of consecration had a spotty track record as an explanatory device. This is not surprising. Consecration clarifies the stance of the individual toward the community in terms of socio-economic support. It has no explanatory power with respect to the economic system, thus failing to quell any concerns from that direction. The notion of tithing, which successfully replaced consecration, was equally geared toward the community, but it was simpler to execute and avoided difficult discussions of how much was enough. The notion of stewardship, on the other hand, was right on target. Stewardship established a personal relationship with the economic aspects of life in a society proud of its self-reliance.

Once again it was possible to covenant with the most opaque aspect of modernity, the rapidly globalizing economy. Even if one did not understand fully how a bank was supposed to work, one could in all honesty and conviction say that even banks were subject to the principle of moral uprightness; that conducting banking business by "unrighteous principles" would make a bank fail.¹¹

¹⁰Hill, (1996), p.124.

¹¹ Cf. the statement of Joseph Smith Jr during the trial of John F. Boynton, cf. Joseph Smith Jr (1834-1838). "History, 1838-1856, vol. B-1". JS, History, 1838-1856, vol. B-1, created 1 Oct. 1843-24 Feb. 1845; handwriting of Willard Richards and Thomas Bullock; 297 pages, plus 10 pages of addenda; CHL. This is the second volume of a six-volume manuscript history of the church. This second volume covers the period from 1 September 1834 to 2 November 1838; the subsequent four volumes, labeled C-1 through F-1, continue through 8 August 1844., p.771; for more on the trial, see Von Wagoner, (1994), p.201.

14.1.2 The Beginnings of Specialization

The restriction to an agrarian society solved the problem of the rapid specialization of society. The Jacksonian principle that “everyone can do everything” was validated by the attempt to develop a society where this was plausible.

It was not until the arrival of the English converts in Nauvoo that it became clear that industrial specialization had already undercut this ideal beyond easy repair. Moreover, retraining them to become farmers was in some sense neither possible nor even desirable, all exhortations that it may have been “good work” notwithstanding.

As John Taylor pointed out in his *Nauvoo Neighbor* editorial,¹² society needed all of these skills, even if the contributions of industrial manufacturing were not taken into consideration in the Plat of Zion.

14.1.3 The Confluence of Problems

This analysis explains not only some of the persuasive power and the development of the socio-economic policies, but also the catastrophe of the Kirtland Safety Society failure. The primary consolatory aspect of Joseph Smith Jr’s message had been put into question, to say the least.

The event also went against a fundamental tenet of Jacksonian democracy, namely the independence of the individual in the face of everyday tasks. It was not just that some people were better at specific things, it was that some things had to be learned from scratch.¹³

There were not many jobs yet that had this property. William Law could still learn to become a doctor, and Oliver Cowdery could still learn to be a justice of peace. But

¹² Cf. above on page p.415.

¹³ This was a lesson that would have been difficult for Newell Granger, the Mormons’ Kirtland arch-nemesis, as well.

as the Warren Cowdery editorial showed,¹⁴ for physics experiments such as constructing balloons, this expectation was beginning to lose plausibility.

And here lies an interesting point of difficulty that apologetic historians have with the event. Such historians often focus on exculpating the prophet. “Who could have known?” And the answer is in fact that no one could have. But that was because the whole process was no longer of that type. Therein lies the reason why it makes so little sense to look at the specific individuals involved in the disaster, including the senators that should have passed the charter. There were now processes set in motion, albeit influenced by individuals, that proceeded against all human intentions—as surely as President Jackson did not mean to wreck the economy by shielding the US treasury from bad bank notes.

14.2 Research Findings

14.2.1 Research Hypothesis Reviewed

In light of the case studies, I am now in a position to transform my research hypothesis into the core research finding. I will first present that finding and then discuss the adjustments and transformations.

Recall that my research hypothesis was as follows:¹⁵

Though Joseph Smith Jr was supportive of transportation improvements and technological innovation, he exhibited a systematic bias against developing capitalism, that is: manufacturing, mechanization and financing. This bias was fueled by the cultural ideal of the gentleman farmer, by his childhood experiences, and by the economic models of the Bible. Though Joseph Smith Jr’s closest collaborators included economically astute and successful people, Smith Jr never acquired an appreciation for manufacturing, mechanization, finance or banking, with at times detrimental consequences for his congregation.

¹⁴ Cf. above on page p.295.

¹⁵ Cf. also above on page p.27.

As a research hypothesis, this statement was successful. However, I would point out the following shortcomings.

1. The hypothesis does not adequately capture the complicated relationship that Joseph Smith Jr had with trade and commerce, another engine of capitalism. Smith Jr liked to own stores—at least for a while—but he was not interested in stocking them. He showed even less interest in trade involving the mere transfer of goods between businesses. Smith Jr was, almost by necessity, more comfortable with real-estate deals and land speculation.
2. Joseph Smith Jr used the Bible as a source of social criticism, e.g. in his condemnation of lawyers and traders and of class divisions. He also used the Bible as a source for millennial models of socio-economic life, especially the communitarianism of Acts. But I was not able to show that the Bible provided him with any other positive economic models that he emulated.
3. The evidence on manufacturing strikes me as less clear than I had expected. When the English converts came, little manufacturing infrastructure was in place and the capital to set it up was lacking. Smith Jr clearly wanted all the English converts to have farms, because that would supply them with food in an unmediated way. But whether a bias for the social standing of the gentleman farmer is sufficient to constitute a bias against manufacturing and mechanization is a difficult call that the sources do not allow me to resolve completely.

Given these observations, I would transform my research hypothesis into the following core research finding.

Coming from a background steeped in Biblical nonconformism and the ideal of the gentleman farmer, Joseph Smith Jr's socio-economic vision for his restora-

tionist community was a class-effacing communitarianism that emphasized private ownership of farm land, craftsmanship and education. Joseph Smith Jr understood trade and appreciated modern transportation improvements, but he lacked a sensibility for the disruptive potential of mechanization and manufacturing, and showed little awareness of the systemic roles of national monetary policy and global integration of financing. These limitations to Smith Jr's vision hampered the church's socio-economic policies in Ohio and Illinois and dispelled the illusion that the economic system was under Divine control.

14.2.2 Concluding Theses

The following theses help to explicate the insight of the terse research finding.

1. Joseph Smith Jr's rewriting of the patriarchal history during the early 1830s in Kirtland shows that in the end, he was only able to understand religion as flowing from an *ab ovo* revelation, in which, as in a nutshell, everything had to be contained.

This approach is eminently understandable; as Hill points out, "millennialist hope grew out of a desire for a termination of social change",¹⁶ and the return to the beginning stopped the progress through a reset.

Yet this approach is supremely unsuited to the kinds of disruptive transformations that modernization brought with it. The beginning provides no vocabulary to conceptualize and deal with the processes taking place, making escapism and segregation the watchwords of the effort.

2. One theological issue that hamstrung Joseph Smith Jr systematically throughout his career was the lack of a content component to his concept of revelation. Put differently, Smith Jr was overly focused on the formal aspects of revelation. There was no way for Smith Jr to distinguish one burning of the bosom—cf. D&C 9:8—from another.

¹⁶Hill, (1996), p.122.

Other members of his congregation applied semantic criteria to revelations. The revelation on plural marriage¹⁷ was the one most contested in this regard: Oliver Cowdery, Emma Hale Smith, William Marks, and Jane and William Law all denied its status as a revelation, based on the content of the commandment—though their expressions of dissent differed significantly.

As a result, there was no stability to the theological system Smith Jr was revealing, and though he himself rapidly converged on understanding the trajectory of the revelations (I see every indication that his theological system was in place by 1834, after the completion of the Bible Translation Project) it was unsettling for the others.¹⁸

3. The other systematic theological problem that Joseph Smith Jr never made much progress on throughout his career was sorting out the mode of collaboration between divine and human agencies. This was especially problematic in Kirtland's banking scandal, but remains true for any of the many prophecies that Smith Jr made that did not come to pass.¹⁹

The problem is thorny and vexing: in order for any human to contribute truly to the divine plan, the possibility of thwarting the divine plan—the revelation regarding the loss of the 116 pages of the book of Mormon (= D&C 3) notwithstanding—has to exist.²⁰

Though Joseph Smith Jr and his followers wanted it otherwise, it was especially *the free will of the non-believers* that could not be eliminated from the picture, in a

¹⁷ See the discussion of plural marriage above, on pages pp.398-409.

¹⁸ When Hill notes that only David S. Whitmer had protested this revising of revelations—cf. Hill, (1996), p.123—he skips over the fact that those who could not deal with such a moving target left the church.

¹⁹ The Canadian copyright revelation, which did not make it into *Doctrines & Covenants*, comes to mind; cf. Whitmer et al., (1831-1835), pp.30f

²⁰ Paul Tillich (1984). *Systematische Theologie*. 8th ed. Vol. 2. Berlin — New York: Walter de Gruyter, pp.37-39.

system that had abandoned double predestination in the style of Calvin. After all, their whole missionary concept was based on the possibility that even the Missourians, or the lynch mob in Carthage, Illinois, could in principle be brought to convert to Mormonism.

4. Revelations that may or may not come true are much less useful than revelations that have the *maiestas dei* to ensure their coming to pass. And what Smith Jr and his followers were looking for was the certainty of the *Deus vult* from which the social transformations thundering around them could be stabilized effectively.

Couching these frustrations of the divine plan in terms of lapses of the believers was possible in the *post facto* reconstructions of the Deuteronomistic historians, on which Smith Jr patterned his historiographic sensibilities. It was not a helpful interpretive stance for the day-to-day situations in which the Church leadership found itself, e.g. with respect to Camp Zion (= D&C 105) or the Kirtland Safety Society. The Deuteronomistic historians were not required to point to individual cultic failures. For their project, it was sufficient so say that *something* had gone wrong, because their audience included none of those who had committed the claimed transgressions.

The Mormons required specifics, if the comfort provided by the revelations was to be sustained. The clarity of the Divine plan suffered if there was no obvious correspondence between the behavior and the outcome. It must have been very confusing for Joseph Smith Jr, to say what the Deuteronomistic historians had said, yet gain no explanatory traction.

5. Joseph Smith Jr embarked on his career as a specialist for the supernatural when assisting the silver mine quest of Josiah Stowell in Harmony, Pennsylvania, in the early winter of 1825, with a stock-company-like agreement in that it granted shares

of the silver mine to its members.

Joseph Smith Jr continued to use this pattern throughout his career. The United Firm, though it issued no stock and was by invitation only, effectively functioned this way as well, especially when considering how the properties of the United Firm were dispensed during its dissolution.

The Kirtland Safety Society, the Nauvoo House and the Nauvoo Agricultural and Manufacturing Association were all structured in this fashion; however, here one had to purchase one's membership in the company, through buying stock.

The stock company is an invention of the sixteenth century²¹ and has no precedence in the Biblical texts that the work of Joseph Smith Jr directly interacts with.

In his dealings with stock companies such as the Kirtland Safety Society and the Nauvoo Agricultural and Manufacturing Association, Joseph Smith Jr neglected one key aspect of a stock corporation, specifically the earnest money and the vesting period. I remarked earlier that ignoring this aspect, in contrast to all other chartered banks in Ohio, contributed to the downfall of the Kirtland Safety Society, letting it open its doors with insufficient cash on hand. This lowering of the bar to entry no doubt broadened appeal and increased participation, but restricted its efficacy.

By the time of the Nauvoo House, that lesson had apparently been learned by some of the parties involved, and the full amount of the stock was due at the time of joining.

²¹ The *Mystery, Company and Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers for the Discovery of Unknown Lands*, founded by Sebastian Cabot and others, through an allotment of shares, in London before 1552, cf. Dr J. Hamel (1857). *Early English Voyages to Northern Russia*. Trans. by John Studdy Leigh. New Burlington Street, London: Richard Bentley, p.3f, is usually cited as the first joint stock company in the English-speaking world.

Part III

Models and Narratives

Chapter 15

Braudel's Mediterranean Models

In the second volume of his *La Méditerranée*, Braudel presents an enumeration of configurations, between mankind and the things that mankind makes, that are subject to persistence and modification,

structure and *conjuncture*, the immobile and the moving, the slow and the exceedingly fast.¹

The purpose of this chapter is to see how well Braudel's configurations transfer, that is, whether they are applicable to the context of nineteenth-century Ohio, Missouri and Illinois. It would be interesting if some of them were, and if they could cast light on or suggest avenues of investigation outside of the analysis of Joseph Smith Jr's socio-economic policies investigated so far.

The identification of such plausible configurations is the purpose of this chapter. Their application to early Mormon history is the task of (16).²

¹ "*structure* et *conjuncture*, l'immoblie et le mouvant, la lenteur et l'excès de vitesse." Braudel, (1990b), p.7 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.352) [translation RCK].

² Cf. p.463 below.

15.1 Basic Topics

The key topics that Braudel identifies are as follows:

1. Economic Measures
 - (a) Distance
 - (b) Population
 - (c) Economic Model Building
2. Precious Metals, Money and Prices
 - (a) Gold of the Sudan
 - (b) American Silver
 - (c) Rise in Prices
3. Trade and Transport
 - (a) The Pepper Trade
 - (b) The Grain Trade
 - (c) Sailing Ships of the Atlantic
4. Empires
 - (a) Their Origins
 - (b) The State
5. Societies
 - (a) The Nobles
 - (b) The Bourgeoisie
 - (c) The Poor and the Outlaws
6. Civilizations
 - (a) Mobility and Stability
 - (b) Overlap
 - (c) The Jews
 - (d) Spread of Civilization
7. Forms of War
 - (a) Formal Warfare
 - (b) Piracy

15.1.1 Sifting the Topics

The early history of Mormonism plays out within the United States of America, which eliminates a whole group of concerns that Braudel grapples with: cultural overlap and spread of civilization; formal warfare and state-sponsored piracy. The problem of population sizes was “solved” by repeated ten-year census efforts albeit at that coarse-grained level;³ a similar statement holds for the economic model thanks to taxation, a free and active press, and the public nature of various economic enterprises.

Furthermore, some of the topics identified will not be directly helpful, but need to be applied via analogy. Though the role of rising prices is important, neither Sudanese gold nor Middle- and South-American silver had much of an impact. The grain trade had an unmediated impact; the pepper, much less so. On the other hand, steamboat technology—both on the American waterways and between the United States and England—was much more decisive than Atlantic sailing ships. As far as society was concerned: The United States had no blood-nobility, but the economic trajectories led to a monied elite, such as the East Coast financiers that we encountered when we discussed banking.⁴

I therefore propose to analyze the following topics of Braudel’s work, suitably analogized, for configurations that might help the reconstruction of early Mormon history.

1. The Economic Measure of Distance
2. Specie and Inflation
3. The Grain Trade
4. The Imperial State
5. The Elite in Society
6. The Middle Class
7. The Poor and the Outlaws

³ Though historians would have much preferred an annual census, especially for such “fast burning” towns like Nauvoo. Cf. also above on page p.367.

⁴ Cf. above on page p.293.

For each of these topics, I will choose those configurations of circumstances identified by Braudel that can conceivably carry over into the investigation of early nineteenth-century America.

15.2 The Economic Measure of Distance

15.2.1 Description

Braudel describes how courtiers, ambassadors and merchants fretted about the speed of their communications.⁵

However, Braudel then begins to conflate speed with reliability. While it is true that unreliable channels cause delays, brigands scaring couriers out of transporting mail at night⁶ is not a speed issue *per se*, but an issue of predictability.

The channels were also unreliable in the sense that the mails did not depart at predictable intervals and that their rate of transmission was subject to the weather.

Unfortunately, Braudel muddies the issue by claiming that “distances were not given one and for all”⁷ which is glossed with the “delays that impose themselves [upon those acting, RCK]”.⁸ Thus, Braudel must either be talking about rates of progress, or, more likely, about usable routes, as phrases like “passes blocked” or “roads flooded” suggest. However, that does not fit as well with sea travel, where the variance was due to winds and currents affecting the rate of progress.⁹

Braudel correctly emphasizes that frequency, reliability and rate of progress along some

⁵ Braudel, (1990b), pp.9-12 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.355-357).

⁶ Braudel, (1990b), p.11 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.357).

⁷ “L’espace ne pas . . . donnée, une fois pour toutes.” Braudel, (1990b), p.12 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.357) [translation RCK].

⁸ “des délais qui se imposeraient à lui”; Braudel, (1990b), p.12 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.357) [translation RCK].

⁹ The equivalent of a blocked pass in sea travel would be some form of physical obstruction in the water, such as a wreck, a landslide, land elevated by a sea quake or volcano, or an ice dam.

routes meant that route selection would be seemingly at variance with the geographical distance or configuration; the King of Portugal writing to Rome via Antwerp is a great example.¹⁰

In terms of methodology, Braudel points out that the fastest ship crossings establish a technological upper bound.¹¹ This point extends well to all types of transportation. Braudel gives upper bounds for galleys as 200 km per day¹² and horse-backed courier services as 140 km per day¹³ in a case with exceptional planning and preparation. In an age of private courier services, these top rates were often achieved for important news.¹⁴

News of Lepanto, 7th October 1571, reached Venice on 18th October, Naples on 24th, Lyons on 25th, Paris and Madrid on 31st.¹⁵

Braudel worries that in the face of the weather-induced variance for sea travel, averages might be misleading,¹⁶ because they give no idea of the boundary values of the distribution.

The courier services themselves were both public and private, often tied to individual political organizations and powers. Either way, they were very expensive.¹⁷ It is these regular and organized attempts of news communication that form the averages toward which any statistical analysis would most likely trend, because they would dominate.

¹⁰ Braudel, (1990b), p.12 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.357).

¹¹ Braudel, (1990b), p.13 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.358).

¹² Braudel, (1990b), p.13 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.358).

¹³ Braudel, (1990b), p.14 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.359).

¹⁴ Braudel notes that links in such relays were political, and thus information could be delayed dramatically, if this served the party controlling the relay station. Venice had little reason to share the capture of Nicosia, which it learned about on October 26, with Madrid, where that bit of news arrived two and a half months later, December 19; cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.14f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.359f). The victory at Lepanto took 13 days between Venice and Madrid.

¹⁵ “La nouvelle de L’epante, du 7 octobre 1571, parvenait à Venise le 18 octobre, à Naples le 24, à Lyon le 25, à Paris et à Madrid le 31.” Braudel, (1990b), p.14 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.359).

¹⁶ Braudel, (1990b), p.15 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.360). The main way in which averages can deceive is by obscuring skew. A simple test is to compare the mode, that is, the middle measurement, with the average. If they are close to each other, the data spread is even and no skew is obscured. For the particular time series of 13 measurements of sea travel times from Tunis to Leghorn, cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.16 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.361), the average of 11 days is close to the mode of 10 days, indicating that the data is indeed well spread—though the absolute difference between six and twenty days is of course high.

¹⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.22 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.367f).

The Tassis firm undertook to transport letters from Rome to Madrid in twenty-four days, between 1st April and September; in twenty-six days during the winter season. It is somewhere near these figures that we can locate not the average time taken by the letters of merchants and ambassadors (for the promises of the postmasters were rarely kept) but the upper limit of normal speeds.¹⁸

Braudel notes that the plurality of territories implied the possible disruption of mail and courier services due to uprisings or outright warfare for those places where the news had to travel through contested territories.¹⁹

Finally, the technology available for transportation ensured that its speed remained uniform in the Mediterranean for many decades.

Goods, boats, and people travelled as fast, or as slowly, in the days of the Avignon Popes or to Venice during the first half of the fifteenth century, as they did in the age of Louis XIV. Major change and advance did not occur before the end of the eighteenth century.²⁰

This fixed and slow rate of travel was problematic for a sophisticated economy that transacted in letters of exchange, for it curtailed the recovery options of the merchants and bankers.²¹

If there was a crisis or a panic, payments could not be made within a few days, for the money was in transit, held within the deadly sluggishness of distance.²²

¹⁸ "De Rome a Madrid, l'entreprise des Tassis s'est engagée à transporter les lettres en 24 jours, du 1^{er} avril à la fin de septembre; en 26 jours pendant l'autre semestre, cel d'hiver: c'est autour de ces chiffres que se situent non les délais moyens des lettres des marchands et ambassadeurs (car les promesses des fermiers des postes ne sont que rarement respectées) mais la limite haute des vitesses normales." Braudel, (1990b), p.24 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.368).

¹⁹ Braudel, (1990b), p.29 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.372).

²⁰ "Marchandises, barques, voyageurs vont | aussi vite, ou aussi lentement a temps des Papes d'Avignon, ou à Venise pendant la première moitié du XV^e siècle que durant le Siècle de Louis XIV. Il n'y aura novation, rupture qu'avec le XVIII^e siècle finissant." Braudel, (1990b), p.25f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.369).

²¹ Braudel will later attribute the sacking of Antwerp to the insufficient speed of transporting gold coin to the Spanish armies in the Netherlands; cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.186 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.507). Only the Genoese merchants had set up a system that could provide such speed of transport through bills of exchange; the Castillian and South German merchants tried but failed; cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.185f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.506f).

²² "Survienne une crise, ou une panique : les remboursements ne peuvent se faire en quelques jours, car

15.3 Specie and Inflation

With all its past stock and influx from newly attached resource centers—gold from the Sudan and silver from the Americas—the Mediterranean economy suffered from all the problems that could be caused by a fixed exchange rate of gold to silver.²³ The Mediterranean had a tradedeficit with the East, which induced a steady flow of precious metals eastward.²⁴ For the merchants, it was more profitable to bring back goods to sell than to try to limit the outflow of specie.²⁵

The Mediterranean in turn traded wheat for gold of the Sudan,²⁶ while gold from the Americas²⁷ and silver²⁸ were in the possession of the Spanish crown, which was protectionist about the influx of precious metals.²⁹ The majority of the precious metal arriving in Sevilla between 1580 and 1626 went to fund the conflict with the Netherlands.³⁰

All of this specie had to be transported physically and under guard, as brigands on land³¹ and pirates at sea were interested in these treasures. A single example may suffice where Braudel offers many:

[On, RCK] 14th May [1585]: nineteen galleys of Genoa and Savoy, eight of Naples, and twenty-five from Spain, being undermanned, take on five thousand troops at Barcelona. They are to transport to Italy 1,200,000 crowns; . . .³²

l'argent es en voyage, pris dans les lenteurs mortelles de l'espace." Braudel, (1990b), p.35 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.377) [translation RCK].

²³ Braudel, (1990b), p.136 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.462f).

²⁴ Braudel, (1990b), p.137 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.464).

²⁵ Braudel, (1990b), p.139 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.465).

²⁶ Braudel, (1990b), p.144 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.470).

²⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.146f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.472).

²⁸ Braudel, (1990b), p.150 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.476).

²⁹ Braudel, (1990b), p.152 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.476).

³⁰ Braudel, (1990b), p.154 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.479).

³¹ "In January, 1614, 140,000 crowns of the Genoese were carried off, six leagues from Barcelona, by a hundred robbers."; cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.170 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.493). [translation RCK] "En janvier 1614, 140 000 écus appartenant à des Genoïs étaient enlevés à six lieues de Barcelone par une centaine des voleurs."

³² "*Année 1585* . . . 14 mai: dix-neuf galères de Gênes et de Savoie, huit de Naples, vingt-cinq d'Espagne, avec de mauvais équipages embarquent à Barcelona cinq mille hommes de troupe. Elles porteront en Italie

The example also underscores the role of Italy as the “money pump” for Spanish silver and species in the Mediterranean.³³ This allowed Italy at least to make good on its trade imbalance with the Levant.³⁴

The key to the problem of sixteenth-century armies was the transport of gold coins,³⁵ and those that had perfected the system were the Genoese bankers,³⁶ whom the Spanish crown could not afford to replace. The fair at Piacenza was the context in which the inner elite of merchants equalized the accounts, reducing what needed to be actually paid to small sums of gold or new papers.³⁷ Braudel insists that the *lettere di cambio* were the future, despite Venetian criticism, and that the mistake of the Genoese was not in going that route and becoming financiers, but in leaving the Atlantic trade to the Northern Europeans through a misguided focus on the paper.³⁸

Though there was a massive inflation³⁹ after the 1550s in the Mediterranean, much lamented in picturesque detail,⁴⁰ it was only by the 1600s that people realized on a large scale that the influx of cheap gold and silver from the Americas was to blame.⁴¹ There are some mitigating indications—for instance, the price rise began in 1470 for Germany and parts of France, well before Columbus had even set sail;⁴² but on the whole the theory is probably correct.

1 200 000 écus; . . .” Braudel, (1990b), p.168 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.491).

³³ Braudel, (1990b), p.173 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.496).

³⁴ Braudel, (1990b), pp.176f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.499).

³⁵ Braudel, (1990b), pp.180-183 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.502-504).

³⁶ Braudel, (1990b), pp.183-187 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.505-507).

³⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.187 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.508).

³⁸ Braudel, (1990b), p.190 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.509f).

³⁹ The convention of calling a massive inflation a “price revolution” (*révolution des prix*)—cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.199 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.517), but also Braudel, (1990b), p.64 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.403); Braudel, (1990b), p.201 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.519); Braudel, (1990b), p.205 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.522); Braudel, (1990b), p.208 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.524f); Braudel, (1990b), p.293 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.594)—may have come to Braudel via Carlo M. Cipolla’s study of the bank of San Giorgio, which Braudel cites; cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.409 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.699).

⁴⁰ Braudel, (1990b), pp.199-203 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.517-521).

⁴¹ Braudel, (1990b), p.204 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.521).

⁴² Braudel, (1990b), p.207 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.524).

The influx had the usual effects on wages,⁴³ eroding their real purchasing power. Both old and new money tried to deal with the erosion of value by investing in land, whether to park capital without the threat of inflation,⁴⁴ or for retirement security.⁴⁵ Braudel correctly points out that the difference between account money and currency from the banks' perspective comes to the fore during an inflation.⁴⁶

If, after an interval of several years, a bank deposit registered in a money of account was repaid in the same terms as the original deposit, the depositor lost.⁴⁷ If a banker's advance was repaid in the same terms, the banker lost. Time operated against money registered in units of account if it lay idle.⁴⁸

Banks were in addition weakened by investing in long-term enterprises,⁴⁹ such as sea voyages.⁵⁰ Short-term crises then threatened their liquidity. Given the cycles of monetary influx and the credit needs of the royal house, the proper solution would have been to set up a state bank,⁵¹ in charge of such issues of public finance, but Philip II rejected that notion.⁵²

By the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, state banks like the *Casa di San Giorgio*⁵³ offered accounts pinned to gold, silver or Spanish pieces of eight⁵⁴—an anti-

⁴³ Braudel, (1990b), p.208 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.524).

⁴⁴ Extending land for wheat production was a profitable form of capitalism in the late sixteenth century in Italy; cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.300 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.598f).

⁴⁵ Braudel, (1990b), p.210f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.527).

⁴⁶ Braudel, (1990b), p.212 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.529).

⁴⁷ Inflation would devalue the deposit and the interest.

⁴⁸ "Si, à plusieurs années de distance, un dépôt en banque enregistré en monnaie de compte es remboursé au tarif du dépôt ancien, son propriétaire y perd; si c'est une avance du banquier qui lui revient dans ces conditions, la perte s'inscrit à son compte. Le temps travaille contre l'argent comptabilisé pour peu qu'il s'immobilise." Braudel, (1990b), p.212 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.529).

⁴⁹ Braudel, (1990b), p.212 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.529).

⁵⁰ Braudel, (1990b), pp.35-37 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.377f).

⁵¹ Braudel, (1990b), p.212f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.530).

⁵² Braudel, (1990b), p.192 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.511); Braudel, (1990b), p.403f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.695).

⁵³ Cf. Braudel, (1990b), p.410f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.700f), with graphs and long caption, where Braudel discusses Cipolla's work on the bond issue of the Genovese *casa*, the *longhi*, a stock on Genoa's public debt.

⁵⁴ Braudel, (1990b), p.216 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.531).

inflationary measure.⁵⁵ The crowns of course benefited from the inflation, as it addressed some of their debt concerns.⁵⁶

When the influx of American treasures slowed down in the 1610s and 1620s,⁵⁷ the effect was an increase in forged coins, an activity that involved members at the higher levels of government.⁵⁸ Both the profits and the negative impact on the Spanish empire made these activities politically popular.

The fraudulent exchange for good money was a way as good as any other to open a breach in the Spanish monopoly and to obtain some precious metals.⁵⁹

It was as if the age of African gold and the age of American silver had concluded with an age of anti-Spanish forgery.⁶⁰

15.4 The Grain Trade

Grain was a transportable but a bulky commodity. However precious it might be, it could not support heavy transport costs. On the overland routes, except of course in cases of famine or very high prices, grain was sent on only very short distances.⁶¹

In January, 1559, it was decided not to send barley from the villages of Santa Ella and La Rambla to Málaga, since the cost of wagon transport was as much as the barley itself.⁶²

⁵⁵ Braudel, (1990b), p.216 fn 37 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.531 fn 381).

⁵⁶ Braudel, (1990b), pp.217f (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.532).

⁵⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.223 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.536).

⁵⁸ Braudel, (1990b), p.225 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.538).

⁵⁹ "L'échanger frauduleusement contre de la bonne monnaie, c'était une façon comme une autre d'ouvrir une brèche dans le monopole espagnol et de prélever une part des métaux précieux." Braudel, (1990b), p.225 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.538).

⁶⁰ Braudel, (1990b), p.228 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.541).

⁶¹ "Le blé est une marchandise admirable pour les transports, mais pondeuse. Si précieuse soit-elle, elle ne peut supporter de gros frais de transport. Par route de terre, sauf bien entendu en cas de disette et de hausse extrême, le blé ne circule donc que sur de petites distances." Braudel, (1990b), p.272 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.576).

⁶² "En janvier 1559, on renonce à envoyer jusqu'à Málaga l'orge des bourgs de Santa Ella et de la Rambla,

Grain bought in Cracow at 8 Venetian *lire* per Venetian *staio* would cost another 23 Venetian *lire* to transport to Venice, almost three times as much as the original purchase price.⁶³

In the export of grain then, transport by sea was relatively cheaper than the other operations involved, ... And shipping costs did not correspond precisely to distance travelled; it cost the same to ship from Italy to Barcelona or Valencia; whether one left from Sicily or Tuscany.⁶⁴

Surplus grain would be baked into biscuits⁶⁵ and sold as ship stores to the fleets.⁶⁶

15.5 The Imperial State

Braudel notes that the Imperial states, that is, the Spanish Empire of Philip II and the Ottoman Empire, had a difficult time with enclaves escaping their direct control. Braudel points to the complaints of the Viceroy of Sicily concerning the republic of Messina, which by virtue of its lack of control was deemed a den of thieves:

“Your majesty knows,” writes [Viceroy Marcantonio, RCK] Colonna in June of that year [i.e. 1577, RCK], “how significant the privileges of Messina are, and how many outlaws and *matadores* she shelters in her territory”⁶⁷

le prix du voiturage valent autant que l’orge elle-même.” Braudel, (1990b), p.273 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.577).

⁶³ Braudel, (1990b), p.273 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.577).

⁶⁴ “Dans le déplacement du blé, le transport maritime coûte moins cher, relativement, que toutes les autres opérations, ... D’autant que ce prix ne tient pas un compte exacte de la distance : il ne change pas, que l’on aille d’Italie á Barcelona ou á Valence, que l’on parte de Sicile ou de Toscane.” Braudel, (1990b), p.274 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.578) [translation RCK].

⁶⁵ Braudel, (1990b), p.275 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.579); Braudel, (1990b), p.281 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.584).

⁶⁶ Braudel, (1990b), p.286 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.588).

⁶⁷ “Votre Majesté sait, écrit [vice-rois Marcantonio, RCK] Colonna, en juin de cette année-là [i.e. 1577, RCK], “de quelle importance sont les privilèges des Messine, combien de bannis et de *matadores* elle héberge sur son territoire, ...” Braudel, (1990b), p.400 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.692) [translation RCK].

15.6 The Elite in Society

Braudel argues that the Spanish nobility was doing better than is often assumed. Though the state was attempting to transfer its loyalties to the bureaucrats, who could hail from all walks of life and were prepared at the legal faculties of the numerous universities,⁶⁸ the nobility and their wealth were needed, because they could often foot the bills themselves—be it for ambassadorships⁶⁹ or for the defense of the border marches.⁷⁰

The nobles would compete with the royal government for the most conspicuous consumption, leading them to incur a constant stream of debts and loans,⁷¹ which in turn required them to receive endowments and positions from the crown⁷² or to aggressively exploit and improve their landed estates.⁷³ Any competition between the nobles⁷⁴ was gladly exploited by the kings to keep them divided against each other. Though the truly grand seats and estates were in the country,⁷⁵ during the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the nobility was beginning to move into the city, especially Madrid,⁷⁶ to be closer to the king. The *inurbamento* of the nobles had its beginnings there.⁷⁷

15.7 The Middle Class

The bourgeoisie was threatened in the sixteenth century, because those who were able to became nobility—usually via royal service. Those who had made fortunes in the financial

⁶⁸ Braudel, (1990b), pp.387f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.682f).

⁶⁹ Braudel, (1990b), p.430 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.714).

⁷⁰ Braudel, (1990b), pp.423f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.709f).

⁷¹ Braudel, (1990b), p.429 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.714).

⁷² Braudel, (1990b), p.430 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.715).

⁷³ Braudel, (1990b), pp.420f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.706f).

⁷⁴ Braudel, (1990b), pp.423f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.709f).

⁷⁵ Braudel, (1990b), pp.427f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.712f).

⁷⁶ Braudel, (1990b), pp.427-429 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.712-714).

⁷⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.437 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.720).

and commodity markets plowed these monies into estates and lands, thereby to preserve their wealth.⁷⁸ This was equally the goal of the civil servants, the *letrados*.⁷⁹ At the bottom rungs of the nobility, the much despised *hidalgos*,⁸⁰ were more worried about remaining noble. The bourgeoisie was staffed by men who were wealthy merchants but could not become nobles within their societies, if at all, for other reasons—Jews in Spain; Christians in Turkey.⁸¹

The ambition of these pseudo-bourgeois was to win the ranks of the aristocracy, to merge themselves into it, or at the very least to place their richly-dowered daughters.⁸²

Though these *mésalliances* were disparaged, they nonetheless occurred and restored many a noble to financial comfort.⁸³ The same held for marriages to culturally non-noble families, such as the *marranos* in Spain.⁸⁴

Not surprisingly, the interest created a market for patents of nobility, in which all those able to issue them gladly participated.⁸⁵ The resulting titular inflation put pressure on the purchasers to obtain titles above that of a *marquis*.⁸⁶ The flight into land also reinforced the social order underpinned by aristocratic privileges.⁸⁷ In some sense, the aristocracy allowed the upkeep of the social edifice to be financed by the wealthy bourgeoisie, who in return were admitted in small numbers.⁸⁸

⁷⁸ Braudel, (1990b), pp.444f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.725f).

⁷⁹ Braudel, (1990b), pp.445f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.727).

⁸⁰ Braudel, (1990b), pp.431-433 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.715-717).

⁸¹ Braudel, (1990b), p.446 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.727).

⁸² “L’ambition de ces faux bourgeois est de gagner les rangs de l’aristocratie de s’y fondre, pour le moins d’y placer leurs filles richement dotées.” Braudel, (1990b), pp.449 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.729) [translation RCK].

⁸³ Braudel, (1990b), p.450 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.730f).

⁸⁴ Braudel, (1990b), p.450 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.731).

⁸⁵ Braudel, (1990b), p.450f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.731).

⁸⁶ Braudel, (1990b), pp.451f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.732).

⁸⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.452 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.732).

⁸⁸ Braudel, (1990b), p.454 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.734).

15.8 The Poor and the Outlaws

Pauperization and oppression by the rich and powerful went hand in hand.⁸⁹

Braudel attributes this to the twin evils of overpopulation and economic depression through inflation.⁹⁰ The result was an avalanche of revolts, banditry and brigandage, urban upheavals and social wars.⁹¹ However, Braudel only knows of few examples of *class consciousness* in these outbreaks, and the revolts are against power, whether wielded by nobles or the state.⁹²

In the face of these disturbances, the vagrants and vagabonds became *personae non gratae* and were evicted from the cities.⁹³ They milled around the main arteries of travel between the large cities, and in specific quarters within the cities. Though they hailed from different quarters and pursued separate professions, they all share their low economic status and stunted social opportunities.⁹⁴ The tighter the regulations on idlers and vagabonds, the larger the bandit gangs outside the major cities grew.⁹⁵

Even the best-policed states like Venice and Turkey could only make small inroads on the problem of banditry that Braudel rightfully takes to be as old as organized settlements in the Mediterranean.⁹⁶ The bandits even interrupted royal communication lines and robbed the couriers of the Crown.⁹⁷ The fortified farm houses in the Rhône Valley and Catalonia attest to the lack of security.⁹⁸ The bandits exploited the shadowy areas of state

⁸⁹ "Paupérisation, dureté des riches et des puissants, tout va de pair." Braudel, (1990b), p.455 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.735).

⁹⁰ Braudel, (1990b), p.455 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.735).

⁹¹ Braudel, (1990b), pp.456-459 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.736-738).

⁹² Braudel, (1990b), pp.459-461 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.738f).

⁹³ Braudel, (1990b), pp.461f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.739f).

⁹⁴ Braudel, (1990b), p.461-463 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.740f).

⁹⁵ Braudel, (1990b), pp.462f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.741).

⁹⁶ Braudel, (1990b), pp.466-468 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), pp.743-745).

⁹⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.467 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.744).

⁹⁸ Braudel, (1990b), p.467 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.744).

power,⁹⁹ obscured by unclear claims, border disputes or to long-standing privileges.¹⁰⁰

Even when the states managed to organize a police action to mop up a section of their territory and captured some criminals, these actions did not alleviate the underlying social causes: overpopulation, poverty,¹⁰¹ and hunger.¹⁰² Furthermore, both pirates and bandits had local backing, sometimes from their family members in the villages,¹⁰³ sometimes from members of the local nobility.¹⁰⁴ Especially when impoverished nobles or cadet branches of poorer noble families joined the bandits, the interactions took on the character of a social war.¹⁰⁵ Surprisingly, much of what is known of the composition of these bandit groups comes from the lists of galleys, where those captured were put to the oars.¹⁰⁶

Reconsidering the development of the nobility, the disappearance of the bourgeoisie, and the poverty and pauperism in the lowest strata of society, Braudel finds that the sixteenth and early seventeenth century saw a rapidly increasing socio-economic disparity.¹⁰⁷

... noble houses on one side, overpopulated with domestics; on the other, *picardia*, the world of the black market, theft, debauchery, adventure, and above all misery, just as the purest, the most exalted religious passion coexisted with the most astonishing baseness and savagery.¹⁰⁸

It was this contradiction in society, fueled ultimately by despair, that gave rise to the Baroque.¹⁰⁹

⁹⁹ Braudel, (1990b), p.469 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.746).

¹⁰⁰ E.g. Messina; cf. above on page p.457.

¹⁰¹ Braudel, (1990b), p.472 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.748).

¹⁰² Braudel, (1990b), p.477 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.752).

¹⁰³ Braudel, (1990b), pp.472f (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.748).

¹⁰⁴ Braudel, (1990b), p.474 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.749).

¹⁰⁵ Braudel, (1990b), p.475 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.750).

¹⁰⁶ Braudel, (1990b), p.477 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.752).

¹⁰⁷ Braudel, (1990b), p.481 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.755).

¹⁰⁸ "... maisons nobles d'un côté, surpeuplées de domestiques; *picardía* de l'autre, monde du marché noir, du vol, de la débauche, de l'aventure, et surtout de la misère De même que la passion religieuse la plus pure, la plus exaltée voisine avec les plus étonnantes bassesses et sauvageries." Braudel, (1990b), p.481 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.756) [translation RCK].

¹⁰⁹ Braudel, (1990b), p.481 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.756).

15.9 On Model Transfers

I hope to have shown how configurations of circumstances and restrictions can be extracted from historical narratives in such an abstract form that they can conceivably be transferred into other times and spaces.

Among the most enduring examples of these are concerns such as economics and technology. It is important not to overplay one's hand at these issues, though. Even in the face of identical configurations, alternate reactions are possible. Braudel himself cites the case of the various ways in which vagabonds were treated around Dijon over two centuries.

In the sixteenth century, a beggar would be nursed or nourished before he was expelled [from the towns]. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, he would be shaved.¹¹⁰ Thereafter he was flogged, and by the end of the century, the final word of repression made him a convict.¹¹¹

In the following chapter, I will consider how the configurations that Braudel used in his analyses and that I have extracted here may be applied profitably to illuminate the early history of Mormonism.

¹¹⁰ Siân Reynolds suggests that the body part shaved was the head—cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.704 Fn 1—but Braudel really does not tell us.

¹¹¹ “Au XVI^e siècle, on soigne ou on nourrit le mendiant avant l’expulser [des villes]. Au début de XVII^e siècle on rase. Plus tard on le fouette, et à la fin du siècle, le dernier mot de la répression en fait un forçat.” Braudel quotes here the second edition of Gaston Roupnel’s, *La ville de la campagne au XVII^e siècle. Études sur les populations du pays dijonnais*, from 1955. Braudel, (1990b), p.417 Fn 1 (cf. Braudel, (1995b), p.704 Fn 1) [translation RCK].

Chapter 16

Evaluating Mediterranean Models

In this chapter, I evaluate whether the models extracted from the middle part of Braudel's *La Méditerranée*, the social history, can shed light on the analysis of early Mormon history. I will look at the topics selected¹ and identify cases that are brought into focus by these models, as well as problems that impede their application.

I conclude the discussion with a summary and analysis of the general success of the model transfer.

16.1 The Economic Measure of Distance

As Braudel predicts, the reliability of the communication and of its means finds mention in the sources.

In a real-estate purchase exchange, Clark Leal of Fountain Grun, writes to Joseph Smith Jr, then General of the Nauvoo Legion, that his reply from April 15, 1844 was a week later than he had intended, because “the Mail came 2 hours sooner than usual”²

¹ Cf. above on page p.449.

² Joseph Smith Jr collection, CHL, MS 9670 folder 5.

when Mr Leal was not yet ready to dispatch it.

Because communication was fraught with unreliability, writers did not necessarily assume that their correspondents had received all the information. Thus, Joseph Smith Jr begins a letter to Edward Hunter with the observation that

I wrote you on the 21 ultimo [i.e. December 1841, RCK], in reply to yours of the 27[th] of october [1841, RCK], but lest by any means the letter should fail to reach you I will recapitulate very briefly some important items therein contained, ...³

Equally, in the June 22 continuation of letter started June 8, Charles Willson Peale writes to his son Rembrandt in Paris:

I received your letter which came with the dispatches I think dated in April. . . . in that you note that you think it best to repeat the subjects in each letter, that you have done so.⁴

Like the *carpeta* of the Spanish monarchs,⁵ which records the dates of dispatch, arrival and processing, some of the letters mention comparable information, typically in the opening of the letter. If Joseph Smith Jr received Edward Hunter's letter—probably from West Nantmeal, Pennsylvania—dated February 10, 1841, on March 8, 1841 in Nauvoo, as he dictates,⁶ then one could, at least in principle, construct maps, such as the ones that Braudel gives⁷, and tables⁸ for rates of transport—for example, into Nauvoo.

Though communications sometimes arrived too late,⁹ as was the case in the exchanges between the church leadership in Kirtland and the leadership in Zion during the summer

³Smith Jr, (1842a), p.1.

⁴ Cf. Letter to Rembrandt Peale, June 8, 1810, Peale, (1999), p.47.

⁵ Braudel, (1990b), p.20; p.133 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.364; p.461).

⁶Smith Jr, (1842b), p.1.

⁷ Braudel, (1990b), pp.22-24 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), pp.366f).

⁸ Braudel, (1990b), p.19 (cf. Braudel, (1995a), p.362).

⁹ The peace treaty of Ghent arrived only after the United States had taken the city of New Orleans in January of 1815, an event that takes us into the time of the childhood of Joseph Smith Jr; cf. Howe, (2007), p.8.

of 1833,¹⁰ overall the economy of the United States was not sophisticated enough to suffer from the effects of slow communications to harm business decisions in the way that Braudel noted for the international merchants of the Mediterranean.

Though no case comes to mind where warfare disrupted courier or postal services for the continental USA during Joseph Smith Jr's leadership of the early Mormon church, Braudel's point stands. The situation in the young Republic continued to develop, and the possibilities waxed and waned: During the Paiute War in Nevada, in the late spring of 1860, Paiute raids on the Pony Express service stations caused a one-month delay in the May 25, 1860 mail going from San Francisco to St Joseph, Missouri.¹¹

This raises the general point that, as Braudel had observed, the eighteenth century had begun to bring about the changes in technology that would incrementally improve transportation rates. Joseph Smith Jr envisioned a steam boat and railroad for Kirtland in April 1837,¹² and obtained the former for Nauvoo.¹³

16.2 Specie and Inflation

The topic of this section is that Braudel is discussing the near-world economic interactions between the Mediterranean "nation states" such as they had developed by the early seventeenth century. This is not directly applicable to the city level of governance, the highest level of control Joseph Smith Jr ever achieved.

The trade deficit of the Mediterranean toward the East mirrors the deficit of the United States toward Europe and especially England. In the 1820s, United States exports were

¹⁰ On the disruption of the exchange regarding the plats of Zion through Missourian violence, cf. above on page p.282.

¹¹ Richard C. Frajola, George J. Kramer, and Steven C. Walske (2005). *The Pony Express: A Postal History*. New York: The Philatelic Foundation, p.18.

¹² Von Wagoner, (1994), p.186.

¹³ Cf. above on page p.383.

dominated by raw materials and produce.¹⁴

There had been a gold rush in North Carolina (1799-1835), and another in Georgia (1828-1840),¹⁵ and consequently two branches of the mint established in Charlotte, NC and Dahlonega, Georgia, by President Andrew Jackson in 1835. But most major gold finds in the United States all happened well past the lynching of Joseph Smith Jr—California in 1848; Colorado in the 1850s; Yukon in 1896; etc.

Braudel's suggested relationship between state banks and inflation is tantalizing with a view toward Kirtland. Indeed, if inflation was ramping up in the land-backed economy of Kirtland, should that not have assisted the church in dispensing with some of its debts?

An equally interesting issue is the problem of forgery. Joseph Smith Sr had been accused of being too closely associated with counterfeiting, before the family moved to Palmyra; and there were rumors of Joseph Smith Jr's "black-sheep" brother William being involved in counterfeiting during the Nauvoo era. Perhaps this issue should be reconsidered in terms of its economic implications, rather than as a form of character assassination.

16.3 The Grain Trade

American settlements in upstate New York, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois proceeded along the river lines. The rivers were needed to bring in settlers—who might then fan out along land routes—and would secondarily serve to sell the goods. Low prices for water-based transportation continued to benefit farmers, who were able to sell their wheat to the population centers on the East Coast.¹⁶ Water- and steam-powered mills ensured that enormous quantities of wheat could be processed and exported. In upstate New York, the

¹⁴Coman, (1905), p.180.

¹⁵David Williams (1993). *The Georgia Gold Rush: Twenty-Niners, Cherokees and Gold Fever*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.

¹⁶ Cf. the wheat prices at Rochester in: O'Reilly, (1838), p.367.

cradle of early Mormonism, the Finger Lakes area grew the wheat, Rochester milled and shipped it, and Canandaigua financed the operation.

Clearly, farm land was not excellent everywhere; the desertion of the Vermont farms after 1816, in the aftermath of the “year without summer”, documents this. But New York and Ohio, Missouri and Illinois produced wheat in abundance. It may have been easier to ship people to better land than it was to regularly ship wheat to the agriculturally productive areas. The flip side of the Mediterranean grain trade was the extension of the water network in the United States, through canal construction and the like. The point was not to feed the populace, which mostly managed on its own, but to give the ability to trade the surplus of corn and wheat, pork and leather.

Thus, the similarity of the transportation problem should not obscure the enormous difference that existed in terms of the possibilities for the population and their general level of health.¹⁷ The majority of the farms were owned by individual families, and their interactions with capitalists were typically restricted to the mortgage that made the purchase possible. Some of the church members bought and rented out land in Nauvoo and Ohio,¹⁸ but these were the exceptions. And the ideal, at any rate, was the self-sufficient and comfortable family of the gentleman farmer.

16.4 The Imperial State

Intriguingly, in the Spanish bureaucratic complaints of lack of state control over the geographical and political trouble-spots¹⁹ we find an echo of the criticism that the Illinois

¹⁷ Cf. Howe, (2007), p.33; the average American was 4 inches (almost 10 centimeters) taller than the average Englishman in 1815. Howe notes that even for slaves, the nutritional standard was high: “The reasonably good health of the enslaved population by standards of the day, evinced in their height and natural increase, can be attributed to a diet almost as nutritious as the one free farmers ate.” Cf. *ibid.*, p.58.

¹⁸ Cf. the biographies of Edwin Woolley and Edward Hunter above, pp.354ff and pp.359ff, respectively.

¹⁹ On the complaints about Messina, cf. above on page p.457.

public opinion leveled against Nauvoo and its generous charter.

16.5 Social Change

The social categories that Braudel uses—the nobles, the bourgeoisie and the poor and outlaws—do not provide a direct mapping to the socio-economic setting of the early Mormon church. Consequently, I have simplified the discussion here, for if Braudel makes any point at all, it is that these groups were mutually influencing each other and cannot be treated independently anyway.

There had been nobility in the United States, in Virginia, for example, and some of the other colonies. But whatever vestiges of this system had existed, the Revolution had abolished and eliminated it. Even a gentleman farmer of the stature of George Washington, arguably the richest man in the America of his time,²⁰ was conditioned upon the premise that, socio-economically, he was no more than *primus inter pares*.

Though the war of 1812 caused upheaval within the social order, as did the economic depression thereafter, including the banking crisis of 1819, there was enough fertile land to ameliorate much of that problem for people who were willing to move. In Braudel's Mediterranean, social mobility was horizontal and lateral, but led outside of the sphere of legality, into brigandage or onto the galleys, if anywhere at all. In Joseph Smith Jr's America, social mobility was also predominantly horizontal, but into the legality of national expansion, because there was always another wilderness to conquer.²¹

It was only within the larger cities of the West and Northeast, where this relationship would soon begin to falter; where the lack of affordable arable land lead to a resurgence

²⁰ George Washington left an estate of some three-quarters of a million dollars; cf. Haworth, (1915), p.34. For comparison, the Erie Canal, the biggest multi-year engineering project of the young Republic, cost over six million; cf. above on page p.77.

²¹ In the case of squatting, some of the legality was post-facto, but this only underscores the point I wish to make; cf. Nelson, (1952), p.10f.

of pauperism and prostitution.²² Low-paying jobs and the beginning of industrialization initiated slow decline of the farming part of the population.

There are dim indications of this in the final days of Joseph Smith Jr in Nauvoo. There are the liquor licenses and the house of ill-repute patronized by John C. Bennett and his compatriots.²³ There are reports of the use of Indians to intimidate or even threaten political opponents.²⁴ There are private detectives protecting the rich, as William Law told Wyl,²⁵ and hired guns or headhunters, such as Edward Bonney or Joseph H. Jackson, roaming the shadows. Taken as a group, these impressions give the first hint of an seedy urban underbelly, the opening act in the re-emergence of the *picardia*. The *picardia* with its aspects of deceitfulness and trickery made it possible to bring the charge of counterfeiting, of which we also find claims in the sources.

16.6 Model-Transfer Experiment

In this section, I will perform an experiment in model transfer, taking model relationships described by Braudel and applying them to the data we have on Nauvoo as a frontier community in the state of Illinois. Inspired by the broader context of the *picardia*,²⁶ I will apply, on the one hand, the *trope* of counterfeiting, which was tied to the *picardia* and its cash difficulties; and to the *exemplar* of the claimed lawlessness of the independent city—a concern of the Spanish viceroy in Naples *vis-a-vis* the city of Messina.

I will use these two historiographical tools to see if the question of law and order in

²²Jacqueline Shelton (2013). “Evil Becomes Her: Prostitution’s Transition from Necessary to Social Evil in 19th Century America”. electronic thesis. East Tennessee State University.

²³Newell and Avery, (1994), p.112.

²⁴Cook, (1994), p.120f.

²⁵Ibid., p.118; p.132.

²⁶The broader context of the *picardia* is alluded to, but not worked out in enough detail by Braudel himself to qualify for a transfer experiment. Furthermore, that model is so rich in its constituents and components that the model-transfer experiment would constitute a monograph in its own right.

Nauvoo can be analyzed in a new and interesting way. I will also see if the differences between *trope* versus *exemplar* will give me contrastive insights into the historiographical process.

Instances of analytical categories support historiographical reconstruction by focusing the research, that is, suggesting phrases, constellations or source types to look at. Furthermore, they identify candidate relations and roles that could be filled with agents and events identified in the sources. Finally, they provide event sequences, basic narrative structures, that can assist in telling the story of the identified historiographical material.

16.6.1 The Trope of Counterfeiting

Accusing someone of counterfeiting was a moral bludgeon of the first order,²⁷ because counterfeiting in a cash-strapped economy was a social crime of enormous proportions. Brooke has documented²⁸ how, from the 1650s to the beginning of the nineteenth century, counterfeiting had been both a problem and a crime severely punished.²⁹ Consequently, as

²⁷ Because of this rhetorical function, it often occurs in enumerations of moral failings, such as accusing someone of being “united with a gang of counterfeiters, thieves, liars, and blacklegs [i.e. a card shark, RCK] of the deepest dye”; cf. Brooke, (1996), p.230. It makes no sense to use these lists to conclude anything about the actual behavior of the persons accused in these situations.

²⁸Ibid., pp.105-128.

²⁹ The *topos* of counterfeiting as a social evil has a long history that would require its own study; but the issue was discussed beginning in Antiquity, for example: Dio Chrysostom, *Orationes*, Thirty-First Discourse (Rhodian Oration), §24. The metaphor of people being like good or bad coins, depending on their moral worth, is already found in Greek drama, for example: Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, vv.390-393; and in Aristophanes, *Frogs*, vv.718-737; for a discussion, cf. Benedikt Eckhardt and Katharina Martin, eds. (2011). *Geld als Medium in der Antike*. Heidelberg: Verlag Antike, especially *ibid.*, p.52. Among the Church Fathers, the topic was notably discussed when commenting on the “rejected silver”—*argentum reprobum* in the *Vetus Latina*—of Jer 6:29; e.g. Jerome, *On the Prophet Jeremiah*, Book VI. In his sixth letter, *To the Magnesians*, Ignatius of Antioch compares the religious believer to good money: “pius homo et religiosus vera moneta est”. From the reign of Emperor Constantine to Theodosius, both the punishment and the range of incrimination were ratcheted up markedly: forgers were to be tortured to catch their collaborators; all their property was confiscated; the property of those on whose land the forging took place could be confiscated as well; and the forgers were burned, as the crime was considered a capital crime and eventually high treason; cf. *Codex Theodosianus*, 9:21:2-9. (My thanks go to Prof em Johannes Divjak of Department of Classical Philology, Middle and New Latin at the University of Vienna, for pointing me to these references.) Suffice it to say that accusations of counterfeiting were just as effective for morally discrediting one’s opponent in Antiquity as they were in eighteenth-century New York or Nauvoo.

early as colonial times, convicted counterfeiters were often hung.³⁰

An execution sermon given by the Reverend Chauncy Graham at such a hanging in 1758 in Poughkeepsie, New York, is illustrative of the colonial attitude toward this social crime; here the counterfeiters are accused of “ruining whole Provinces and Colonies”, “eating out the Bowels [of these provinces and colonier, RCK]” through “their devilish Craft and Cunning”, “to let out the very Heart’s Blood of Communities”.³¹

Of course, ministers preaching at executions were supposed to express the view of the authorities. And those on the lower rungs of the social ladder may not always have agreed with these concerns of law and order.

[T]here is some evidence that counterfeiters enjoyed widespread support in back-country regions, where they may have provided the | only available paper currencies.³²

[T]hey provided a necessary function, . . . a source of cash in a cash-poor economy.³³

Much as local communities in Ohio had founded banks to obtain the small bills they needed to make their local trade work,³⁴ counterfeiters could serve a similar function in other contexts, “provided it [i.e. the fake coin, RCK] would pass in the treasury and was not known to be bad among the common people”, in the words of a New Hampshire counterfeiter.³⁵

Though the practice of counterfeiting may have been ambiguous with respect to social position and benefit, officially it served, with the same breathless invective as the Reverend

³⁰ E.g. Owen Sullivan in New York in 1756; Hermann Rosencrantz in Philadelphia in 1770; cf. Brooke, (1996), p.112f.

³¹ Ibid., p.114f.

³² Ibid., pp.119f.

³³ Ibid., p.120.

³⁴ Cf. the discussion of the Owl Creek Bank above on pages pp.308. However, this analogy with cash expansion gives no warrant to consider the episode of the Kirtland Safety Society a case of counterfeiting, as Brooke seems to do; *contra* *ibid.*, p.230.

³⁵ Ibid., p.120.

Graham displayed, as a convenient destroyer of character. The Mormon church leadership was willing to reach for that club when ridding itself of high-standing members.

Thus, Oliver Cowdery was accused of counterfeiting during his April 1838 excommunication, with Dr Frederick G. Williams, his fellow alumnus of the United Firm, contributing the anecdotal evidence.³⁶ Equally, the “Uphiller” Nauvoo dissenters, the Law brothers and Robert D. Foster, were excommunicated in June 1844 with a set of charges that included counterfeiting.³⁷

The councillors [i.e. the members of the Nauvoo city council, RCK] stood up one after another, . . . and related what they pretended to know. In this mode it was abundantly proved that the owners [i.e. the Law Brothers, RCK] of the proscribed press [i.e. the *Nauvoo Expositor*, RCK] were sinners, whoremasters, thieves, swindlers, counterfeiterers and robbers; the evidence of which is reported in the trial at full length.³⁸

Such rhetoric cut both ways, of course, and in the context of the Kirtland Safety Society disaster, as Peck pointed out, both the church leaders and the dissenters accused each other of being “engaged in purchasing and circulating Bogus money or counterfeit coin”.³⁹ This had little immediate effect, since the departure of the dissenters left the church leadership more fully in control.

More disturbingly for the church leadership in Nauvoo, the charge of counterfeiting was now leveled at the city of Nauvoo⁴⁰ and its leadership from the surrounding countryside of

³⁶ Brooke, (1996), pp.230f.

³⁷ Ibid., p.268f.

³⁸ Thomas Ford (1854). *A History of Illinois, from its Commencement as a State in 1818 to 1847*. Chicago: S. C. Griggs, p.323.

³⁹ Reed Peck (1839). “The Reed Peck Manuscript”. written at Quincy, Adams County, Illinois. Typescript copies are available at various Utah and Western libraries., p.18.

⁴⁰ At the April 6, 1843, general conference, Hyrum Smith condemned the thieves David Holman and James Dunn, two men thought to belong to a group also involved in making bogus money; cf. HC 5:332f. In April of 1844, the Warsaw Signal warned about bogus half-dollars dated 1828, “pretty good imitations of the genuine coin”, which the community called “Nauvoo Bogus” because they were believed to be manufactured in the city of the saints; cf. Kenneth W. Godfrey (1992). “Crime and Punishment in Mormon Nauvoo, 1839-1846”. In: *BYU Studies* 32.1-2, pp. 195–227, p.211.

Illinois,⁴¹ even before the dissenters published the *Nauvoo Expositor*.

The people affected to believe that with this power [i.e. the charter of Nauvoo, RCK] in the hands of an unscrupulous leader there was no safety for the lives or property⁴² of any one who should oppose him.

It was likewise asserted to be a fundamental article of the Mormon faith that God had given the world and all it contained to them as his saints; that they secretly believed in their right to all the goodly lands, farms and property in the country; . . . that consequently there was no moral offence in anticipating God's good time to put them in possession by stealing, if opportunity offered; that in fact the whole church was a community of murderers, thieves, robbers, and outlaws; that Joseph Smith [Jr, RCK] had established a bogus factory in Nauvoo for the manufacture of counterfeit money; and that he maintained about his person a tribe of swindlers, blacklegs, and counterfeiters to make it and put it into circulation.⁴³

Observe that the same character-assassinating terminology was used by all sides. The mention of swindlers and blacklegs was to be expected, as people were well aware that it required infrastructure to put bogus coins into circulation. Card sharks, who would play for bogus money, were one means of distribution; swindlers, who would palm bad coin off on their partners in economic transactions, another.

One of the few narratives I am aware of that directly speaks to the church leaders' involvement in counterfeiting or "bogus making" are the memoirs of Jackson.

He [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] then pressed me to stay, and enter into the manufacture of bogus, to which I [i.e. Jackson, RCK] consented, hoping to be

⁴¹ Milo Milton Quaife, editor of the *Lakeside Edition* of Governor Thomas Ford's *History of Illinois*, even surmises that, ironically, the charge of the church leaders' engaging in forgery became more plausible by virtue of Oliver Cowdery having been cut off on that same charge; cf. Thomas Ford (1946). *A History of Illinois, from its Commencement as a State in 1818 to 1847*. Ed. by Milo Milton Quaife. Vol. 2. The Lakeside Classics. Chicago: The Lakeside Press, p.168f Fn 29.

⁴² The fact that the Mormon newspaper, the *Times & Seasons*, of November 1840 itself warned in an editorial to "Look out for Thieves" in Nauvoo, cannot have helped; cf. T&S II:1 p.204 c.1, Godfrey, (1992), p.204. Godfrey attributes that editorial to Joseph Smith Jr, but gives no evidence. The attribution is unlikely, as the T&S was then still being published by Robinson and Don Carlos Smith.

⁴³ Ford, (1854), p.327. The similar enumeration in George Washington Smith (1927). *History of Illinois and her People in Six Volumes, Illustrated*. Vol. 2. Chicago — New York: American Historical Society, p.286 is at least structurally dependent on Ford's and not independent evidence of counterfeiting.

able to get a clue of another branch of his villainy. Shortly after this, he sent \$200, to St Louis for German plate, and went to work in a remote part of the town to fit up for operation.⁴⁴

The first attempts at Bogus making were rather rough; but in October, Messrs. Barton and Eaton, came on from Bufalo, having been sent by one of Joe's [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] | emissaries, and brought with them a splendid press and all the necessary tools and materials for operation. The press was put up in the south east room, up stairs, of the house formerly occupied by Joe, being the same room where the holy order had previously met.⁴⁵ The business was then rushed ahead in good earnest, and an excellent specimen of base coin produced.⁴⁶

The press continued to run until they had manufactured about \$350,000.⁴⁷

All the twelve Apostles except Orson Pratt and Eber [i.e. Heber, RCK] C. Kimball, were engaged in this business, . . . and took turns in working it.⁴⁸

Joe, [sic RCK] told me that in Ohio, he, Dr Boynton, Lyman Wight, Oliver Cowdery and Hyrum, were engaged with others in a Bogus establishment on Licking Creek, but that their operations were cut short by the bursting of the Kirtland Bank.⁴⁹

The first who detected the counterfeit paper money, were Holdridge, Gilman & Co., of the New York Store. The large amount of spurious money afloat, caused a great excitement in the city, and it became a common talk amongst the most wealthy class, . . . such as the two Laws, Dr Foster, F.M. Foster, C.K. Higbee and Mr Cole.⁵⁰

Jackson had been among a group of men, including Levi Williams, Thomas C. Sharp, the Law brothers and Robert D. Foster, that had been indicted in the fall of 1844 by a Nauvoo justice of the peace, Aaron Johnson, for the murder of the Smith brothers.⁵¹ However, by the time of the first trial in October of 1844, neither the Laws, nor Dr Foster,

⁴⁴Joseph H. Jackson (1844). *A Narrative of the Adventures and Experience of Joseph H. Jackson in Nauvoo*. Ed. by Karl Yost. reprint 1960. Reprint Americana 2. Warsaw, IL: Signal Office, p.10.

⁴⁵ Jackson seems to be confusing the Red Brick Store with Joseph Smith Jr's domestic arrangements, as the holy orders met in the store; cf. above on pages pp.375ff.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp.13f.

⁴⁷Ibid., p.14.

⁴⁸Ibid., p.14.

⁴⁹Ibid., p.14.

⁵⁰Ibid., p.14f.

⁵¹Thomas Gregg (1880). *History of Hancock County, Illinois, together with an outline history of the State, and a digest of State laws*. Chicago: C. C. Chapman, p.327.

nor Joseph H. Jackson remained among those indicted.⁵² Jackson went on to publish his exposé, “much in the same character as that of General [John C., RCK] Bennett”.⁵³

In the following, I prefer to use Jackson’s exposé as an illustration of the *types* of things that were possible in 1844, but not as a source of evidence that specific individuals did specific things. However, from the many details that Jackson mentions, such as the specific “Mothers of Israel” who assisted Joseph Smith Jr in teaching new spiritual wives,⁵⁴ it is clear that he was well informed on Nauvoo matters. I also will argue that Jackson was one of William Law’s “detectives”.⁵⁵

The US government did not act on charges that that the twelve and their helpers were coining “bogus” US dollars in Nauvoo until after the death of the Smith brothers.⁵⁶

16.6.2 A Culture of Violence

Quinn points out that beginning in the early 1800s, American men switched to an interpretation of male honor that required the willingness to display violence, be it in duels or revenge.⁵⁷

Joseph Smith Jr and the other Mormon leaders grew up in this culture, and several incidents in Smith Jr’s early life indicate both his ability to defend himself, and his pride therein.⁵⁸ As a religious leader and prophet, Smith Jr initially stuck to a “Quaker-like pacifism”,⁵⁹ even in the face of ridicule and mob attack, but with the conflict in Missouri

⁵²Ibid., p.329.

⁵³Ibid., p.328.

⁵⁴Jackson, (1844), p.13.

⁵⁵ Cf. below on page p.??.

⁵⁶ On October 23, 1845, gubernatorial troops searched Lucien Woodworth’s house for a press; cf. HC 7:485; December 23, 1845, federal troops from Springfield came to arrest Amase Lyman and Brigham Young, “on a writ from the United States court, charging him [i.e. Brigham Young, RCK] with counterfeiting the coin of the United States”; cf. HC 7:549. Also, cf. Brooke, (1996), p.270.

⁵⁷ Michael D. Quinn (2011). “The Culture of Violence in Joseph Smith’s Mormonism”. In: *Sunstone* 164, pp. 16–37, p.18 c.1f; Bushman, (2005), p.295.

⁵⁸Quinn, (2011), p.18 c.1.

⁵⁹Ibid., p.18 c.2.

that attitude changed. Quinn points out that in August 1833, Smith Jr dictated D&C 98:4-11 & 33, which expressly moved the “theocracy” into a “here-and-now reality, not some distant event connected with the millennial return of Jesus”.⁶⁰ The new revelation, for the first time, limited the number of attacks one had to bear to three, and permitted vengeance against enemies to the third and fourth generation; cf. D&C 98:23, 25f, 31, 37; D&C 103 (the “Camp Zion” revelation), 25f. Thus in October of 1833, when the Mormons in the Blue River Valley were attacked, it was the fourth time and the consequence was the “Battle of Blue River” on November 4, 1833.⁶¹

Joseph Smith Jr had several armed men guard him at night as early as January 1834.⁶² In June of that year, he placed his brother Hyrum as a captain over his “life guards”.⁶³ When the time came to select the twelve apostles and the quorum of the seventy, the prophet used military experience in the Zion Camp as the key requirement.⁶⁴ Smith Jr also abandoned pacifism in personal interactions, getting involved in four fist-fights in 1835 alone, including one with his brother; one with his brother-in-law; and one with a Baptist minister, who dined with Smith Jr and had insulted him a host by calling the prophet to repentance.⁶⁵

When, in the aftermath of the Kirtland Safety Society disaster, the Mormon leadership was run out of Kirtland in January of 1838 by a combination of non-Mormons and apostates, the basic narrative had already solidified: intimidation and violence were the only ways to eliminate the inner and outer threats from gentiles and apostates.⁶⁶ In Missouri, the church leaders had Sampson Avard organize the Danites, called so “because the

⁶⁰Quinn, (2011), p.19 c.1.

⁶¹Ibid., p.19 c.1.

⁶²Ibid., p.19 c.1.

⁶³Ibid., p.19 c.2.

⁶⁴Ibid., p.19 c.2.

⁶⁵Ibid., p.20 c.1.

⁶⁶Ibid., p.21 c.1.

Prophet Daniel has said [Daniel 7:18] the Saints [i.e. the Mormons, RCK] shall take the kingdom and possess it forever.”⁶⁷ Joseph Smith Jr saw as their purpose “intimidation of Mormon dissenters and . . . warfare against anti-Mormon militia units”,⁶⁸ in Quinn’s paraphrase.

Then, in June 17, 1838, Sidney Rigdon preached his famous “Salt Sermon”, warning the dissenters that they would be cast out and trodden underfoot—an allusion more to D&C 103:8 than to Mathew 5:13. This was followed by Joseph Smith Jr reporting on a surprising bit of vigilante justice from the New Testament: Judas had not hung himself, but as a traitor was hung by Peter.⁶⁹ A letter signed by over eighty Danites threatened the Kirtland dissenters, among them men like Oliver Cowdery, David and John Whitmer, Lyman E. Johnson and W.W. Phelps, to the point where the dissenters left Missouri in fear for their safety.⁷⁰ Quinn insists that this was no aberration, but a consequence of the D&C 103 revelation and the behavior it commanded for dealing with Mormons “in name only”.⁷¹

When Mormons were prevented by gentiles from voting at Gallatin in August 1838, the Danites on the scene mobilized and a brawl ensued that was the opening salvo in a four-county civil war in Missouri.⁷² In this context, the Danites pillaged two non-Mormon towns, Millport and Gallatin, burning the US post office and the county treasurer’s office.⁷³ Thus, the Mormon leadership had acquired a vigilante corps that targeted classes of

⁶⁷Ibid., p.22 c.1.

⁶⁸Ibid., p.22 c.1.

⁶⁹ Peck, (1839), pp.25f. Church leaders variously have stated that the apostles ganged up on Judas and spilled his bowels; etc. This interpretation would take on a life of its own within the Mormon doctrine of blood atonement, the idea that some sins were so heinous that even the suffering of Christ was insufficient for redemption, and the spilling of the blood of the individual in this world was the only way to begin making amends. On Brigham Young’s role in spelling out blood atonement, cf. Quinn, (2011), p.28 c.2.

⁷⁰Ibid., p.22 c.1f.

⁷¹Ibid., p.22 c.2.

⁷²Ibid., p.23 c.1.

⁷³Ibid., p.23 c.1.

individuals, rather than specific aggressors against Mormons.⁷⁴ The leadership may even have participated: at any rate, Joseph Smith Jr and Hyrum Smith were acquainted with the Danite secret symbols, unlike Apostle John Taylor,⁷⁵ for example.

However, after the Mormons killed one state militiaman and mutilated another, the Mormon War quickly went sour, and by October 27, 1838, Governor Boggs had signed the Mormon extermination order.⁷⁶ On October 31, 1838, the Mormon leadership at Far West surrendered and was tried for treason. Head Danite Sampson Averd testified against Joseph Smith Jr, causing the prophet to renounce the whole Danite organization.⁷⁷

By the time the Mormons had settled in Nauvoo, and the Nauvoo charter had given the church leadership the power to protect its members, Smith Jr had time to think back to the extermination order of Boggs, by then ex-governor of Missouri. Smith Jr blamed Boggs personally for the 1833 expulsions from Jackson County and the ignominious ending to the Mormon War of 1838.⁷⁸ Orrin Porter Rockwell was dispatched to execute Boggs, but the ex-governor, though bullet-riddled, survived the attempt.⁷⁹ Joseph Smith Jr denied his involvement publicly, but privately worked to extract Porter from his Missouri jail cell.⁸⁰ Smith Jr upgraded his bodyguard to a dozen, including many men known to be Danites.

The combination of a culture of violence and part-time law enforcement created a sense of justice whose enforcement was left up to the locals. Such “Lynch Law”,⁸¹ “Judge Lynch”,⁸² or vigilante justice became a conceivable community response. Thus, when a

⁷⁴Quinn, (2011), p.23 c.2.

⁷⁵Ibid., p.23 c.2.

⁷⁶Ibid., p.24 c.2.

⁷⁷Ibid., p.24 c.2.

⁷⁸Ibid., p.25 c.1.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p.26 c.2; Godfrey, (1992), p.206f. Rockwell was more successful extending vigilante justice to some of the men suspected to have lynched Joseph Smith Jr and Hyrum Smith in Carthage Jail; cf. Quinn, (2011), p.28 c.2.

⁸⁰Jackson, (1844), pp.5-7.

⁸¹Ibid., p.18.

⁸²Bonney, (1856), p.9.

Mississippi sailor narrowly escaped the river pirate gang of John A. Murril, he never even bothered to inform the authorities; he rounded up his friends, captured the pirates himself via a ruse, and then drowned them with heavy stones tied around their necks, such that “their heads went down and heels up”,⁸³ in the middle of the river.⁸⁴ Such vigilante justice was carried out in Nauvoo as well; when a man named Caesam or Chism was apprehended in March 1844 with goods burglarized from the Nauvoo store of Rollison and Finch, he was taken into the woods and beaten severely; the assailants were never apprehended.⁸⁵

Part of the preference for vigilantism may have been mistrust of the elected judicial officials and the jury system. Insufficient enforcement of the law and judicial professionalism had been a frontier problem in the past as well.

In 1816 and '17, in the towns of the territory, the country was overrun with horse-thieves and counterfeiterers. They were so numerous, and so well combined together in many counties, as to set the laws at defiance. Many of the sheriffs, justices of the peace, and constables, were of their number; and even some of the judges of the county courts; and they had numerous friends to aid them and sympathize with them, . . . | When any of them were arrested, they either escaped from the slight [i.e. insecure, RCK] jails of those times, or procured some of their gang to be on the jury; and they never lacked witnesses to prove themselves innocent. The people formed themselves into revolutionary tribunals in many counties, under the name of “Regulators”; and the governor and judges of the territory, seeing the impossibility of executing the laws in the ordinary way, against an organized banditti [sic RCK], who set all laws at defiance, winked at and encouraged the proceedings of the regulators.⁸⁶

The justice system could cut both ways; many influential men had been involved in

⁸³Daniels, (1915), p.112.

⁸⁴ It is in this context that one has to read Joseph Smith Jr’s alleged plan to silence apostate Richardson, a witness against Mormon horse-thief Avery. Smith Jr sent a posse under former Danites Jonathan Dunham and Hosea Stout, which included Joseph H. Jackson, to fetch Richardson in order to “tie an iron bar to his shoulders, and throw him into the Mississippi for cat-fish food”; cf. Jackson, (1844), p.19.

⁸⁵ Godfrey, (1992), p.212. The incident was reported in the *Warsaw Signal*, not in the Nauvoo papers. Allaman, cf. John Lee Allaman (1996). “Policing in Mormon Nauvoo”. In: *Illinois Historical Journal* 89.2, pp. 85–98, p.92 c.1, argues that this was the beginning of violent solutions in Nauvoo.

⁸⁶Ford, (1854), p.233.

vexatious lawsuits, either as parties or as jury members.⁸⁷ The delay involved in getting the machinery of justice to kick in meant extra time for the other side to rally support⁸⁸ or escape altogether.⁸⁹ Recapturing criminals that had escaped or been acquitted was hard and dangerous work; better to settle the matter before the complexities of the judicial system could supervene.

A sermon by John Taylor in April of 1845, held in the presence of police officers from outside Nauvoo, who had come to arrest the Twelve Apostles on counterfeiting charges, captures the fear of a partisan judiciary that was ultimately seen as not very different from Judge Lynch.

[I]f they [i.e. the police officers, RCK] wished to magnify the law and make it honorable they should bring to justice the murderers of Joseph and Hyrum, two of our [i.e. the Mormons, RCK] best men, who were treacherously butchered while in the custody of officers pledged for their safety; . . . under present circumstances the law is only powerful to hold men still while the lawless massacre them.⁹⁰

16.6.3 Policing Nauvoo

The Nauvoo charter had granted the city government, including the mayor Joseph Smith Jr, far-reaching executive powers. These, coupled with legislative powers, allowed the build-up of what even in Joseph Smith Jr's mind was a "city state",⁹¹ and which, in its focus on security for the church hierarchy, might nowadays be considered a police state.

⁸⁷ Accused men could bargain to appear before a specific judge; thus Sharp and William of Warsaw chose Judge Thomas, and were acquitted in October 1844; cf. Gregg, (1880), p.327. Even when the fort of a notorious gang of rogues in Pope County was finally stormed by the people, who had brought a piece of artillery (!), the surviving rogues were tried for their crimes, but never convicted; cf. Ford, (1854), p.233.

⁸⁸ The mob in Carthage had time to collude with the guards, the Carthage Grey, to gain admission to the jail holding the Smith brothers and their companions; cf. Gregg, (1880), p.326.

⁸⁹ In April 1839, the church leadership had escaped from their Missouri captors by bribing the guards during a prison transfer; cf. Flanders, (1965), p.34.

⁹⁰ Cf. HC 7:p.396.

⁹¹ Guthrie, (1969), p.145.

[Among the problematic ordinances that Joseph Smith Jr passed were: RCK] Empowering the city police to secure information and check the movements of all strangers within the city, enforce a curfew, and imprison as vagrants any persons out after 9 p.m. without cause; requiring hotels to divulge information concerning all guests; forbidding searches and seizures under any except municipal warrants; and an ordinance stating that any person trying to arrest Joseph Smith [Jr, RCK] on Missouri difficulties be subject to arrest and life imprisonment.⁹²

One of the tools available to the mayor was the Nauvoo Legion,⁹³ a city militia. In his January 15, 1841 circular, *A Proclamation to the Saints Scattered Abroad*, Joseph Smith Jr saw in the Nauvoo Legion a reliable tool—compared to the Missouri state militias—for the self-defense of the Mormons living in Nauvoo.

The “Nauvoo Legion” embraces all our military power, and will enable us to perform our military duty by ourselves, and thus afford us the power, and privilege, of avoiding one of the most fruitful sources of strife, oppression, and collision with the world. It will enable us to show our attachment to the state and nation as a people, whenever the public service requires our aid—thus proving ourselves obedient to the paramount laws of the land, and ready at all times to sustain and execute them.⁹⁴

At the same time, the Nauvoo Legion provided the mayor with a police force that could be used to rid the city of “nuisances”, as the Nauvoo Charter had termed them.⁹⁵ The militia was “at the disposal of the mayor in executing the laws and ordinances of the city corporation and the laws of the State.”⁹⁶

On February 3, 1841, Henry G. Sherwood, a member of the first council and a body-guard for Joseph Smith Jr, became the head of Nauvoo police, the marshal;⁹⁷ on March

⁹² Ibid., p.146, quoting B. H. Roberts’ *Documented Church History*, V:382, who “felt that these [ordinances, RCK] resulted from false legal and political counsel”, cf. *ibid.*, p.146.

⁹³ Its charter was published in the T&S on February 15, 1841; cf. T&S II:8 p.321f c.1f.

⁹⁴ Cf. T&S II:6 p.274 c.2.

⁹⁵ Kimball Jr, (2014), p.299.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Allaman, (1996), p.86 c.2, with reference to: Flanders, (1965), p.100f.

⁹⁷ Allaman, (1996), p.87 c.1.

1, 1841, the city was divided into four wards and one high constable appointed for each ward, to assist Sherwood. Of the four constables, one was a bodyguard of Smith Jr, the other two former Danites.⁹⁸

Among the duties of the marshal and his constables were enforcing the attendance of aldermen and councilors at city council meetings, serving warrants, executing search warrants, providing provisions for city prisoners,⁹⁹ keeping order at public meetings, and questioning and detaining strangers, vagrants and disorderly persons.¹⁰⁰

The Nauvoo Legion maintained this shifting role somewhere between a militia and a police force. The legion would participate in July 4th parades, a military show of patriotism, and would stage mock battles.¹⁰¹ By 1842, the Nauvoo Legion had 2,000 men at arms, the largest military organization in Illinois.¹⁰²

On May 19, 1842, Mayor Smith Jr, newly elected after the departure of John C. Bennett, received permission to organize a night watch by recruiting eight members of the Nauvoo Legion for a 12-hour watch, from 6 pm to 6 am. Two of the watchmen were former Smith bodyguards, and one of them was a constable, Dimick B. Huntington, thus giving the night watch the power to enforce laws as well.¹⁰³ Smith Jr upgraded the night watch with another eight members of the Nauvoo Legion on June 3, 1842.

On June 10th, 1843, the Nauvoo Legion resolved that they would build an arsenal.¹⁰⁴ The task of building the arsenal and being its chief armorer thereafter was assigned to former Danite Jonathan Dunham.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ Allaman, (1996), p.87 c.1. Given the predominance of former Danites among the security forces, one would have expected Sherwood to be a former Danite as well, but perhaps the sources are inconclusive.

⁹⁹ Nauvoo had no jail, a source of much criticism, and prisoners were kept outside in chains, probably working on construction projects such as roads; cf. Godfrey, (1992), p.201.

¹⁰⁰ Allaman, (1996), p.87 c.2.

¹⁰¹ Quinn, (2011), p.25 c.1.

¹⁰² Ibid., p.25 c.1.

¹⁰³ Allaman, (1996), p.88 c.1.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *Nauvoo Neighbor*, June 21, 1843, page 2, column 6. For a picture of the arsenal, see *ibid.*, p.89.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. HC 5:430f.

The use of the Nauvoo Legion, especially given its size and its armament, raised concerns. In a letter dated December 12, 1843, Illinois Governor Thomas Ford questioned Smith Jr's use of the Nauvoo Legion as a *posse committatus*.¹⁰⁶ Thus, December 21, 1843, John P. Greene, a formder Danite, was called to be the new marshal.¹⁰⁷ Greene recruited a police force in Nauvoo, called the Nauvoo City Police, on December 29, 1843,¹⁰⁸ under former Danite Jonathan Dunham as captain. Predictably, its members were almost exclusively¹⁰⁹ former Danites—men such as Hosea Stout, Charles Coulson Rich, Daniel Carn, Shadrack Roundy, Josiah Arnold¹¹⁰—and several of them continued their work as Joseph Smith Jr's bodyguards.¹¹¹

Their behavior was such as to give stake president William Marcks¹¹² and the Law brothers the impression that Joseph Smith Jr wanted them killed.¹¹³

By January 16, 1844, former Marshal Sherwood was recruited to compile a city directory.

The directory was to include the names of all householders in Nauvoo, their place of residence or business, and their profession or occupation.¹¹⁴

By 1844, the Nauvoo Legion had grown to some 5,000 men,¹¹⁵ at a time when the regular US army could muster 8,500.

¹⁰⁶Allaman, (1996), p.91 c.1.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p.88 c.1.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p.90 c.1.

¹⁰⁹Quinn, (2011), p.27 c.2 with a high estimate; Allaman thinks that only a third were former Danites; cf. Allaman, (1996), p.90 c.2.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p.90 c.1.

¹¹¹Quinn, (2011), p.27 c.2.

¹¹²Cf. above on page p.406.

¹¹³Quinn, (2011), p.27 c.2 In keeping with the culture of honor, an anecdote relates that, when the Law brothers went to talk things out with Hyrum and Joseph Smith Jr, matters became so heated that Wilson Law pulled a pistol on Joseph Smith Jr and had to be talked out of shooting the prophet on the spot by the cooler minds in the room, William Law and Hyrum Smith; cf. Jackson, (1844), p.23.

¹¹⁴Allaman, (1996), p.91 c.2.

¹¹⁵Quinn, (2011), p.25 c.1.

In the spring of 1844, Dunham was made the wharfmaster of Nauvoo, so that the waterfront,¹¹⁶ considered to be a corrupt and dangerous place by the city fathers, could be brought under control.¹¹⁷

The shutdown of the *Nauvoo Expositor* indicated how closely entwined the security forces had remained. Nauvoo City Police senior officers, Greene and Dunham, led two companies of the Nauvoo Legion to the *Nauvoo Expositor* office to demolish the press and the type.¹¹⁸

16.6.4 The Role of Drinking in Nauvoo

On February 15, 1841, the City Council passed an “Ordinance in Relation to Temperance”, under the mayorship of John C. Bennett. It restricted the size of sales of whiskey to over one gallon (almost 3.8 liters) and of spirits to over one quart (almost 0.95 liters). Thus, the ordinance enabled trade, but not consumption, of these valuable commodities. Exceptions required a medical justification, based “on the recommendation of a Physician duly accredited”, in writing, by the “Chancellor and Regents of the University of the City of Nauvoo”.¹¹⁹

One of the difficulties of discussing drinking in Nauvoo is the oblique references that were used in speaking of socially inappropriate venues. John Taylor, a teacher and namesake of the Apostle, recalled that John C. Bennett had established an “ill fame house” close to the temple.¹²⁰ The house was considered a public nuisance and in October 1842, with Bennett gone from the scene, two companies of the Nauvoo Legion were called out,

¹¹⁶ The Western waterfront was a remnant of the old plating of Commerce; see Figure 11.2 on page p.365 above.

¹¹⁷ Allaman, (1996), pp.91f.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p.92f.

¹¹⁹ Cf. T&S II:8 p.321 c.1.

¹²⁰ J. M. Orr, ed. (1893). *Abstract of Temple Lot Case United States Circuit Court*. Lamoni, Iowa: Herald Publishing House and Bindery, p.192.

put the house on rollers and threw it into a ravine. The house belonged to one John Eagle, who had operated a grocery store there; Eagle resisted the dismantling, but lost in a scuffle with the prophet, who personally accompanied the expedition.¹²¹ Newell and Avery think that the house was used as a brothel;¹²² Allaman believes that it was a grog shop.¹²³

As so often, the prophet was above the specifics of the city ordinance and could even decide upon medical exceptions without university accreditation.

It was reported to me [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK], that some of the brethren had been drinking whiskey that day in violation of the Word of Wisdom. I called the brethren in and investigated the case, and was satisfied that no evil had been done and gave them a couple of dollars with directions to replenish the bottle to stimulate them in the fatigues of their sleepless journey. ¹²⁴

According to the memories of Joseph Smith III, before October of 1843 Emma Hale Smith would not allow Joseph Smith Jr to keep a bar in the Mansion House, and did not even permit it temporarily until Orrin Porter Rockwell had opened a barber shop/bar across the street.¹²⁵ It is not clear how successful she was these efforts. In William Clayton's December 1843 newspaper notice to "emigrants" to buy plots from the Church, the ad mentions that Joseph Smith Jr could be found at "President Joseph Smith's Bar Room".¹²⁶

Former Governor Ford claimed that, by 1844, Joseph Smith Jr "permitted no one but himself to have a license in the city for the sale of spirituous liquor".¹²⁷ Nevertheless, people continued to petition the Mayor for liquor licenses. On January 18, 1844, Joseph Smith Jr received such a petition, signed by seventeen signatories, stating

We the inhabitants of the 3rd ward in said city would respectfully recommend

¹²¹Ibid., p.192.

¹²²Newell and Avery, (1994), p.112.

¹²³Allaman, (1996), p.88.

¹²⁴ *Millennial Star*, XXI.3 233; quoted in: Guthrie, (1969), p.156.

¹²⁵Ibid., p.159.

¹²⁶ *Nauvoo Neighbor*, January 3, 1844, page 4 column 1.

¹²⁷Ford, (1854), p.322.

Samuel Musick as a proper person to sell and retail spirituous liquors within said ward and would recommend him to your honor for license in the same.¹²⁸

I am unclear on whether the request was granted.

16.6.5 Detectives, Headhunters and Informers

It was a wise move in 1843 for Joseph Smith Jr to set up a police force that doubled as his bodyguard. At that time, Missouri governor Thomas Reynolds was corresponding with bounty hunters, such as L.B. Fleak of Keokuk,¹²⁹ for the kidnapping or capture of Joseph Smith Jr,¹³⁰ while men like Joseph H. Jackson were scheming with law enforcement—here, sheriff T.H. Wilson—to enter Joseph Smith Jr’s services, in order to expose Smith Jr from within¹³¹ and hand him over to Missouri authorities.¹³²

This was a general problem: The US government did not have the resources to police its vast territories effectively. Locally elected officials were one way of handling the situation, delegating some of the “monopoly of violence” espoused by modern democracies to men who were only part-time sheriffs. The other possible way was to pay for headhunters, spies and whistle-blowers.

To take a less violent example: Steamboat pilots preferred ropes to chains, because steering wheels were easier to turn when connected to the rudder with ropes. However, doing so was against the fire code: when the ropes burned through, the steamboats could no longer be maneuvered.¹³³ Therefore, informants in the 1840s were paid the then-huge

¹²⁸ Cf. Newel K. Whitney Papers, Box 5, Folder 44.

¹²⁹ According to Jackson, Fleak was on Joseph Smith Jr’s “rascal list”, which presumably means that Smith Jr was ready to expect a plot from that direction; cf. Jackson, (1844), p.26.

¹³⁰ Quinn, (2011), Fn 120.

¹³¹ Jackson, (1844), p.5.

¹³² See the affidavit of T.H. Wilson, cf. *ibid.*, p.31. In line with the male attitude toward honor, Joseph H. Jackson was motivated also by a sense of revenge, for he had been shot at during his first Nauvoo visit, cf. *ibid.*, pp.4f, and suspected that Joseph Smith Jr was behind it; cf. affidavits of Michael Barnes Jr and Alexander W. Barnes in: *ibid.*, pp.31f.

¹³³ Daniels, (1915), p.121.

sum of \$5 for reporting any such steamboat,¹³⁴ and men interested in earning that reward were awaiting the steamboats at every stop.¹³⁵

Although the police and the night watch functioned more as Joseph Smith Jr's private bodyguards, that was justifiable by virtue of his office. As a judge and a mayor, Smith Jr had to expect discontent and acts of revenge—as the attempt on the life of ex-Governor Boggs well illustrates.¹³⁶ Men of affluence like the Law brothers had no such official justification, but their wealth enabled them to hire private guards.

I previously mentioned that William Law, and presumably his brother Wilson, had hired detectives once they began to fear for their safety.¹³⁷ William Law told Wilhelm Wyl that a plot to poison him was uncovered by one of his detectives, who tipped him off;¹³⁸ and that in general he had only survived his final days in Nauvoo due to the “devotion of my detectives”.¹³⁹

In Jackson's narrative, he is the one who warns William Law about the impending assassination attempt, claiming to reach “a perfect understanding”¹⁴⁰ with Law. I interpret this to mean that Law had hired Jackson at this point. Furthermore, Jackson claims he learned about Hyrum Smith's proposal to poison William Law at a dinner party¹⁴¹ and passed on the information.

This to me suggests that Jackson was at least in the know about these attempts on Law's life, and even if one doubts that he was specific the detective in question, he most

¹³⁴Ibid., p.119.

¹³⁵ Eventually, using the old engineering trick of treating the exception as exceptional, Congress passed an ordinance for steamboats to have a separate, chain-steered wheel, to use in case of fire; cf. *ibid.*, p.121.

¹³⁶ Such threats of vengeance extended to family members and endured for generations; the widow of Sheriff Deming had to be rescued by a group of Mormons from a mob that attempted to burn down her house, because her deceased husband had maintained a Mormon-friendly stance; cf. Godfrey, (1992), p.217.

¹³⁷ They would also rely on friendship, e.g. the night they spent in the Laws' hall, warding off the Fox and the Sac Indians visiting Nauvoo in May of 1844; cf. Cook, (1994), p.120f.

¹³⁸Ibid., p.118.

¹³⁹Ibid., p.132.

¹⁴⁰Jackson, (1844), p.23.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p.24.

likely was among the other ones. Furthermore, as a non-Mormon from outside the city, he was probably more trustworthy to the Laws. It would be interesting to know who the other detectives might have been.

16.6.6 Evaluation of Historical Models

The historian has a tool available that is important for all historical research, the historical analogy. Similar events explain each other reciprocally, and their comparison leads to a deeper understanding of the individual case.¹⁴²

The experiment of finding correspondences in the historical data to the models identified did suggest new primary and secondary texts to look at: texts concerned with counterfeiting, policing, drinking and prostitution, banditry and vigilante justice.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, that use of additional research questions and the identification of new primary source material allowed me to draw a more detailed, interesting picture of life in early Mormon Nauvoo.

Extending the Literature

I only sought out and used the following literature as a result of the model transfer: Allaman,¹⁴³ Bonney,¹⁴⁴ Eckhardt and Martin,¹⁴⁵ Godfrey,¹⁴⁶ Jackson,¹⁴⁷ Orr,¹⁴⁸ Peck,¹⁴⁹ Quinn.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴² Meyer, (1912), p.12, translation RCK. “[Dem Historiker steht, RCK] ... ein für alle historische Forschung bedeutungsvolles Mittel zur Verfügung, die historische Analogie. Gleichartige Ereignisse erläutern sich gegenseitig, und ihre Vergleichung führt zu einem tieferen Verständnis des Einzelfalls.”

¹⁴³ Allaman, (1996).

¹⁴⁴ Bonney, (1856).

¹⁴⁵ Eckhardt and Martin, (2011).

¹⁴⁶ Godfrey, (1992).

¹⁴⁷ Jackson, (1844).

¹⁴⁸ Orr, (1893).

¹⁴⁹ Peck, (1839).

¹⁵⁰ Quinn, (2011).

I also used general histories of Illinois and Hancock County, to wit Ford¹⁵¹ (second edition: Ford¹⁵²), Gregg,¹⁵³ and Smith.¹⁵⁴

I had originally intended not to use Brooke¹⁵⁵ at all, because of my disagreement with his interpretation strategy of connecting Mormon cosmology to Hermetic lore. But reading Brooke had alerted me to the counterfeiting accusations against Smith Sr. Once I had elected to use the monograph for the model-transfer experiment, I used it in the Nauvoo chapters as well.

Evaluating the Exemplar of the Lawless Independent City

I was able to apply to Nauvoo the exemplar of the independent city accused of lawlessness. However, there were key differences. In the instance of Messina, the accusation of lawlessness, or lack of effective legal control, came from a royal official; in the case of Nauvoo the concern was expressed by the Illinois neighbors of the Mormon settlements in Nauvoo. The origin of the concern shows an inversion of power: whereas the royal official reports to the king, the governor of a state is answerable to the electorate.

The distinctness with which this claim was stated is also different. In the one case, it was a diplomatic communication between the Spanish king and one of his officials; in the other case, it was unspecified rumors, that could only be repeated as rumors by the public media and the historians. There was no origin, and no specificity to the claims.

The expected benefits were also different. The viceroy in Naples had a lot more to gain from his accusation than did the Mormons' neighbors; the viceroy wanted to be assigned control of Messina, with all the advantages that would mean for his stature and income. As

¹⁵¹Ford, (1854).

¹⁵²Ford, (1946).

¹⁵³Gregg, (1880).

¹⁵⁴Smith, (1927).

¹⁵⁵Brooke, (1996).

such, he had to be prepared to argue specifics should Philip II request more information.

The Illinois neighbors were looking for reasons to have the Mormons removed from their midst. Most likely, they would have been uninterested in having the situation actually improve, e.g. a reduction in petty theft or a decline in the circulation of bogus money—assuming that those accusations were even true. Rather, they wanted to give the governor justifications to remove the Mormons from their midst, that is, run them out of the state as Missouri had done. If they had had specifics, they might have included them in petitions, but the large number of cases that went unsolved prevented them from making their case concretely.

Evaluating the Counterfeiting Trope

One of the claims of “lawlessness” raised against the city of Nauvoo was that it was the origin of counterfeited money—in one instance, even labelled as “Nauvoo Bogus”. Like the other cases of petty crime and larceny, this one accusation was difficult to prove. Other than in cases of theft, though, where people were caught red-handed or evicted from the community as consequence, no such incident had been reported.

Broadening the view, I showed that bogus money-making had been a problem since colonial times, and as an issue had incensed the citizens of Illinois during the trying times of 1816-17, to the point of forming vigilante committees of justice, the so-called “Regulators”. I also showed that the accusation of counterfeiting was a moral bludgeon, and was wielded eagerly and freely as a defamatory device, both inside and outside the church.

The crucial difference of a moral rather than a criminal accusation is that one can only blemish the character of those that have social standing. The accusation of counterfeiting was leveled against the top echelons of the Mormon church, never against its ordinary members. This was true whether the accusation was made from within the church or

from outside. Even if specific names were mentioned—Barton and Eaton from Buffalo, for example—the claim identified them as the “hired hands” of the rich and powerful within the church.

The members of the *picardia* then were not so much those supervising the production of bogus money, which was the focus in Nauvoo, but those spreading the bogus money, the “swindlers” and “blacklegs”, in the American terminology of the nineteenth century. Specifics about these persons and their deeds remain difficult to obtain.

Evaluating the Efficacy of the Experiment

In conclusion, I would like to speculate on why the experiment was as successful as it turned out to be. Though I provided a significant introduction to the everyday socio-economic life of the years when Joseph Smith Jr grew up—cf. pages pp.43-95 above—the issue of bogus money and vigilante justice did not arise.

I believe that part of the answer to this question lies in the biases of the sources that I employed, especially the use of pioneer reminiscences¹⁵⁶ as my core text to reconstruct the agricultural experience.¹⁵⁷ On the one hand, Nauvoo was a full-fledged city, with four times as many inhabitants as Palmyra township ever achieved before Joseph Smith Jr departed, yet a fraction of the industry, and very different means of water transportation, comparing the Erie Canal to the Mississippi. Furthermore, the pioneers’ remniscences had the remaining Indians, their Canadian allies, and most of all wild animals, as the enemy foils, not the urban poor or the banditti.

Though I branched out from these remniscences, and traced details of transportation and economic production and infrastructure development, it was only in the context of the Mississippi steamboating, which brought the narrative temporally and spatially into the

¹⁵⁶Turner, (1851).

¹⁵⁷ Recall the methodological discussion of these biases, Fn 10 on page p.47 above.

vicinity of Nauvoo, that the issue of criminal behavior surfaced—recall the anecdote¹⁵⁸ of the vigilante justice exacted on the Mississippi River pirates.¹⁵⁹ Again, with its dimensions and shifting course and absence of segmenting locks, the Mississippi was unlike the Erie Canal, even though both were key transportation arteries of the early Republic.

The only other context in which crime briefly surfaced, but only as a potentiality, was in the description of banking in Ohio and Michigan. There was talk of safes and vaults—a pointless acquisition if no one wishes to take away any money. However, no bank robbery was mentioned in the sources I reviewed.

The socio-economic focus of the latter development of the Mormon church, and the explicit bracketing of the Missouri developments, also conveyed a historical narrative more peaceful than it was. As Michael D. Quinn's investigations into a culture of violence suggested, the attempted lynching of Joseph Smith Jr and Sidney Rigdon in Kirtland, as well as the tarring and feathering of Bishop Partridge in Independence, could have suggested that I look into vigilante justice more broadly.¹⁶⁰

In short, the model-transfer identified not only additional sources that rounded out the picture, but also relativized elements of my own reconstruction.

¹⁵⁸Daniels, (1915).

¹⁵⁹ The shadier side life did surface in researching Danite D. H. Lee, cf. Lee, (1877), who, before becoming a Mormon, spent some part of his youth working as a shopkeeper and bar-tender at Galena, Illinois, a town located on the Mississippi, cf. *ibid.*, p.47; but the emphasis there was on barroom brawling, not criminality per se.

¹⁶⁰ I did briefly look into the scuffles between Joseph Smith Jr and his brother-in-law in Kirtland, as well as the claims of Smith Jr attempting the assassination of Grandison Newell, topics that Michael D. Quinn also raised. But they contributed little to the understanding of the Law of Consecration, the Kirtland Safety Society or the United Firm, my main areas of interest for the Kirtland era; thus I did not look into the matter further.

16.7 Summary

As I conclude this analysis of the relationship between model identification and model-transfer, two points merit emphasis.

1. The relationship between constraints and technologies to overcome them seems to be that, as the technologies fail unexpectedly, people fall back on prior technological solutions. This in turn reactivates the constraints of the prior times. This seems to me to be the major insight from Braudel's analysis of transportation rates and its application to the transportation issues of nineteenth-century America.
2. The importance of the cohesive nation-state cannot be overestimated for the the early Mormon church's experience. It effectively wrapped the church in a blanket of safety from international strife. The 1830s to 1840s were years of national safety in America. This might be an odd thing to consider, given how much internal resistance the Mormon church experienced, first in Missouri and then in Nauvoo, continuing well past the death of Joseph Smith Jr.

But compared to other periods of religious reformation and restoration, as experienced in Europe, where the competing nation-states were ready to benefit from the internal religious dissension at a moment's notice—the Thirty Years' War comes readily to mind—the Mormon church was able to operate within a framework of national tranquility. Not even an Indian war interrupted the rise of the Mormon church.

Chapter 17

Salvation History in the Age of Microhistory

17.1 Introduction

I take the *analogia entis* to be the invention of the Antichrist and believe that *for that reason* one cannot become Catholic. At the same time, I reserve the right to consider all other reasons for not becoming Catholic short-sighted and unserious.¹

In the previous chapters, I have taken a neutral stance toward the kerygmatic claims of the *Book of Mormon* and the Restoration narrative, for reasons of methodology.² Nevertheless, I have to admit that the hundreds of hours spent poring over the theological texts and historical documents have not led me to convert and become a Mormon. Karl Barth

¹ Karl Barth (1986). *Die Lehre vom Wort Gottes: Prolegomena zur Kirchlichen Dogmatik. Einleitung. Das Wort Gottes als Kriterium der Dogmatik*. Studienausgabe. Vol. 1. Die Kirchliche Dogmatik. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, p.VIIIff, [translation RCK]. “Ich halte die *analogia entis* für die Erfindung des Antichrist und denke, daß man *ihretwegen nicht* katholisch werden kann. Wobei ich mir zugleich | erlaube, alle anderen Gründe, die man haben kann, nicht katholisch zu werden, für kurzsichtig und unernsthaft zu halten.”

² Cf. above on pp.38ff.

advises us to focus our interdenominational dissent on the core disagreement in systematic theology. If I had to choose one theologumenon that separates me from Mormonism, it would be its covenant-theological approach to salvation history.³

In the following I show why Mormon salvation history has no historical plausibility, given the present-day understanding of the Old Testament and the historical development of Judah and Israel. However, I see this negative finding as an opportunity for Mormonism. Current Mormon salvation history uses a “big men” form of historiography. Shedding this dependence gives Mormonism a chance to distance itself from a form of historiography that is unnecessarily exclusionary, even of Mormon church members.⁴ As a quick look at the counter-currents of Mormon historiography from the nineteenth century onward indicates, those church members of reduced or even excluded status realized their position early on, and actively worked against it, albeit within frameworks and circumstances tolerated by the church leadership.

I then take a look at the problem of conceptualizing twentieth-century salvation history in the larger Protestant context, beginning with its fundamental critique in the demythologizing program of Rudolf Bultmann, and the inability of his critics, most prominently Oscar Cullmann, to mount a tenable defense.

Bultmann’s critique left the individual as the sole author of personal salvation history. This result fits well with a general description of the state of religion under the conditions of modernity, which I sketch using the toolkit of Falk Wagner.

The intriguing question remains: whether, even under the conditions of personalized salvation histories, the salvation experiences of individual believers could be leveraged

³ This covenant-theological approach is not a *proprium* of Mormonism, but a carry-over from its Puritan substrate; cf. Paul Jacob (1957). “Art. Bund IV. Föderaltheologie, dogmengeschichtlich”. In: *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Ed. by Kurt Galling. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr, 1518ff; See also Christianson, (1988).

⁴ In this critique of exclusion, I am especially pleased to find myself in agreement with the doyen of economic history of Mormonism, Leonard Arrington.

within the context of church historiography. Mormonism has found a way to do so that is successful in terms of practical theology but fails in terms of historiographic methodology. In my closing remarks, I speculate on whether that approach could be made viable for all Christian denominations through the tools and techniques of oral history.

17.2 The Implausibility of Mormon Salvation History

In the previous chapters, I have tried to show that one of the key influences on Joseph Smith Jr's socio-economic policies was a specific Utopian vision of a society based on the sensibilities and ideals of a Christian Primitivist gentleman farmer. However, unlike the Christian primitivism of competitors, such as the Campbells, Smith Jr wanted to integrate the American experience seamlessly through the line of Old Testament covenants back into the base covenant of the Patriarchal period, between Abraham and YHWH.

This means that the status of the *Book of Mormon* as verbally inspired is intimately tied to the assumption that the Old Testament was a verbally inspired work and of equally divine authorship. The importance of this decision cannot be overstated. The literal interpretation of the Old Testament⁵ is the core of the development of theologumena in Mormonism—tri-theism or physical body of the deity—that have led some, such as Jan Shipps, to question the status of Mormonism as a Christian denomination.

Like the vast majority of his countrymen, Joseph Smith Jr was unaware of the gulf that yawned between his time and the world of Biblical times. With the Biblical criticism in the “German style” just becoming *en vogue* in the Eastern centers of learning—specifically, Boston—in the 1830s, this issue was not in Joseph Smith Jr's purview.

My times, alas, are not that lucky. When I cut my theological teeth in 1998 with a

⁵Parley P. Pratt (1837). *Voice of Warning and Instruction to all People, containing a declaration of the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of the Latter Day Saints commonly called Mormons*. 1st ed. New York: W. Sanford.

summary study of the then-ongoing debate⁶ between the Copenhagen School and more conservative champions of Biblical archaeology, such as William F. Albright, the *opinio communis* finally begrudgingly adopted the stance that the Patriarchical narratives were not historical. James Maxwell Miller and John Haralson Hayes, in the first edition of their *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* from 1986, declined to reconstruct the Patriarchical history all the way through the Conquest of Canaan as anything other than—effectively—mythology, preferring to begin their investigation of epigraphical, archaeological and biblical sources with the eve of the Davidic monarchy.⁷

Any covenant theology that takes its departure from a historical covenant between YHWH and Abraham is already rendered implausible by this admission on the part of Miller and Hayes. However, their then-radical position has since become a conservative stance.⁸ Nowadays, with far better archaeological data⁹ and two more decades of excavations and research, the very notion of a united monarchy under the leadership of the house of David stands exposed as a theological construct.¹⁰

Thus, in a surprising form of historic irony, the *Book of Mormon* is closer to the Old

⁶Kahlert, (1998).

⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp.33f for literature and details.

⁸ Miller and Hayes updated their book in 2006; J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes (2006). *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*. 2nd ed. London: SCM Press. William Dever, the last William F. Albright student left standing, is trying to split the difference; cf. William G. Dever (2012). *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel. Where Archaeology and the Bible Intersect*. 1st ed. Grand Rapids, MI — Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmanns. Yet these attempts come across as rear-guard actions.

⁹ Jamieson-Drake had argued in 1991, with much worse data, on the basis of then-published archaeological information, and using the tools of process archaeology in the style of Colin Renfrew, that tenth-century BC Judah simply was not enough of a state—in terms of population, buildings, production, centralization and specialization—to support a scribal class, and that these literary preconditions were not met in Judah until the eighth century BC; cf. David W. Jamieson-Drake (1991). *Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah: A Socio-Archeological Approach*. 1st ed. The Social World of Biblical Antiquity 9. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press.

¹⁰ Israel Finkelstein (2013). *The Forgotten Kingdom. The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel*. Ed. by Ehud Ben Zvi and Roxana Flammini. 1st ed. Vol. 5. Ancient Near Eastern Monographs. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. Finkelstein had argued similarly in his books with Neil Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed* from 2001, and *David and Solomon* from 2006; however, in 2008, Finkelstein committed full-scale to the lower chronology for the Levantine, thereby rendering his own books published before 2008 in need of revision.

Testament than Joseph Smith Jr ever could have assumed. Both turn out to be works of theological speculation, imagining histories and geographies¹¹ to answer the questions of the times of their authorship.

It would have been cold comfort to Joseph Smith Jr—or Sidney Rigdon, for that matter—to know that this development would have been just as problematic for the theological program of the Campbellites. There, it effectively undermines the assumptions of the sufficiency and the completeness of the Biblical canon. In fact, it undermines the majority of Primitivist programs that were in currency in the nineteenth century.

17.3 A Farewell to “Big Men” Salvation History

The question remains as to what extent any of these developments is negative.

Mormon Salvation History is a “Big Men” history, that is, a historiographical and narrative strategy that emphasizes the decisions and actions of important members of the church leadership and their direct partners or antagonists. That narrative style is so pervasive that it can be illustrated by an example chosen at random.

Consider the following event from the so-called Mormon War in Missouri from October of 1838.

... I [i.e. Joseph Smith Jr, RCK] was informed by General Doniphan that a company of mobbers ... were marching toward a settlement of our people ...
(= HC II:161f)

The big men in this story are Joseph Smith Jr and General Doniphan of the Missouri militia, who in this section at least is collaborating with the Mormon leadership.¹² These

¹¹ By the Old Testament “imagining geographies”, I mean that some narratives assume settlement status for towns and villages that were already or not yet inhabited at the suggested datings of the narrative; the destruction of Jericho as part of the Conquest of Canaan under Joshua may be the best-known example; cf. Miller and Hayes, (2006), p.55.

¹² Though the limited context makes it appear as if General Doniphan was included in the “we” of “our

men are mentioned by name. At the same time, the rank and file of both the attackers and the defenders remain anonymous and are flattened into agentive groups.¹³

With the explosion of specialized social historiographic strategies since at least the 1960s, which pay attention to other groups and settings than leading men and political strife—such as gender and women, minorities, private life, the disadvantaged and marginalized—this narrative strategy seems needlessly restrictive.

Part of the problem is the Old Testament as root of the Mormon Salvation History narrative. How “lossy” that presentation is for Israelite and Judean religion has become clear with the archaeological and especially iconographic evidence of the last forty years. Already in the 1980s, religious scholars had begun to speak of the stratification of the Israelite and Judean religion. It became clear that the separate social levels—the family, the village and/or the clan, and the national government—all had their separate religious traditions and institutions.¹⁴

Under such a model, YHWH would have started out as the personal God of the ruling dynasty, e.g. the House of David. Initially, this national god status would have been at the level of the central government; the religious traditions of the clans and villages, and the personal religion of the individuals—especially with respect to fertility—remained the domain of other deities. Only as the monarchies managed to centralize religious authority in national shrines and tighten their rule over the clans, villages and families would the worship of the the national deity have trickled down as well, displacing even local traditions eventually.

Though Mormonism is not sensitive to the stratification of religion in the Old Testament, it has from the beginning been highly critical of the political component in the rise

people”, and thus considered the Mormons his people as well, the larger context makes it clear that the “our” in this case refers only to the Mormons, i.e. Joseph Smith Jr and his congregation.

¹³ See also below on page p.502.

¹⁴ Kahlert, (1998), pp.238-240.

of Christianity. A fundamental shift took place in the fourth century AD, as Christianity became first the personal religion of Constantine, and then under Theodosius the state religion of the whole Roman Empire. Whether this political shift qualifies for the gloss of “the Great Apostasy”,¹⁵ as the Mormon theological tradition has interpreted the stance in the so-called 1820 vision of Joseph Smith Jr—cf. HC I:18f—is a separate question. Similarly, whether the specific theologumena that were “lost” in that process are those that the LDS church now believes itself to have restored, such as the baptism of the dead or the authorities of the priesthoods, constitute a separate set of questions.¹⁶

There is also something correct in the Mormon practice of the Patriarchal blessing and personal revelation. Both assure that the role of the individual has not been subsumed completely by the larger process of a salvation history that is fundamentally political-territorial for the Old Testament. Similarly, the ritual of the baptism of the dead functions as an inclusion mechanism into the overall salvation history that leaves no potential ancestor out. At the same time, the baptism ritual for the dead, as so often in Mormonism, delegates the responsibility to the most interested parties—the descendants.¹⁷

All historiography is guided by interest, and thus glosses over detail, but the historiographic strategy of “big men” history throws away too much. Because the historical record is already biased toward the influential and/or powerful, “big men” history makes short shrift of the remaining members of society, such as the lower classes and the socially or economically disadvantaged. World History is only the judgement of the world if one happens to be a man of the world.

Even the *History of the Church* that Joseph Smith Jr inaugurated is as much “big men”

¹⁵Todd Compton (1992). “Art. Apostasy”. In: *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. Ed. by Daniel H. Ludlow. New York: Macmillan, pp. 56–58.

¹⁶ The practice of the baptism of the dead at least has 1 Kor 15:29 to refer to.

¹⁷ Nevertheless, it is a ritualistic and essentialistic inclusion; the members are not included in terms of their joys and concerns, their hopes and aspirations, their successes or their failures; they are included in their essence as “savable” people; this form of family time is ahistorical time. Blood replaces personality.

history as the Old Testament, on whose chronological sections the effort is patterned, and which the work is intended to continue—even to conclude in “these Latter Days”.

17.4 Within Salvation History and yet Excluded

At Nauvoo the power to perform marriages was apparently granted to any worthy Mormon elder since the community’s newspapers and official ledgers abounded with references to weddings conducted by scores of historically obscure men.¹⁸

In his insightful essay, “The Search for Truth and Meaning in Mormon History”,¹⁹ Arrington identifies five types of historiographical biases in Mormon history.²⁰

1. *The theological marionette bias*, which treats God as taking the lead and all church leaders as reacting, not as forces of history in their own right.
2. *The male bias*, which derives male importance from the importance of the office of priesthood, in the LDS branch restricted to males.
3. *The solid achievement bias*, which gives preference to “durable achievements [such, RCK] as the construction of canals and dams, temples and meetinghouses, houses and cooperative stores”,²¹ instead of to reflective and contemplative achievements.
4. *The centrifugal bias*, which expects change to emanate from the center to the periphery.

¹⁸Michael Guy Bishop (1988). “Sex Roles, Marriage and Child Rearing at Mormon Nauvoo”. In: *Western Illinois Regional Studies* 11.2, pp. 30–45, p.35.

¹⁹Leonard J. Arrington (1992). “The Search for Truth and Meaning in Mormon History”. In: *The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Past*. Ed. by D. Michael Quinn. Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books. Chap. 1, pp. 1–12.

²⁰Ibid., p.6f.

²¹Ibid., p.7.

5. *The unanimity bias*, which characterizes history in terms of “cooperation, concord, and consensus in thought and behavior”.²²

I argue that, to a significant extent, these are also the biases of the Old and New Testament, whose narratives form the root of Mormon history. And equally, these are the biases of the *Book of Mormon* as salvation history.

However, some qualification is in order. The Old and New Testament have powerful female protagonists—Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, Judith and the two Marys, to name just a few—thereby escaping the male bias to some extent, or at least lessening it.²³

The surge of professionalization in historiography during the eighteenth century led to a reduction of the role of women in historical writing in general. When the human couple of Genesis was replaced by the human as the protagonist of history, this left only the male as the carrier of culture, while women were classified as part of nature.²⁴ It is possible that the *Book of Mormon*, as a work of the nineteenth century, reflects this shift, mistaking this element of *Zeitgeist* as part of its theological message.

The *Book of Mormon*’s style of narrative is strongly inspired by a clan religion—such as the Old Testament depicts, where the conflict between the state religion and the clan religion powers much of the narrative—and a family religion—such as depicted in the New Testament, where households convert to the movement. This results in a salvation history of “Big Men” leading small- and medium-sized groups, an approach that becomes hardly more inclusive in the official *History of the Church*. Only those few who figure in the inner circles of ecclesiastical power move into the limelight.

²²Ibid., p.9.

²³ The Old Testament supports the reflective and contemplative through its poetic books and the wisdom literature.

²⁴Rebekka Habermas (2002). “Frauen- und Geschlechtergeschichte”. In: *Kompass der Geschichtswissenschaft: Ein Handbuch*. Ed. by Joachim Eibach and Günther Lottes. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 231–245, p.231.

Mapping these biases onto groups, the following believers within the early Mormon church remain systematically peripheral to the focus of the salvation narrative:

- Males outside the Church leadership
- Women not connected through family or marriage to the Church leadership
- Apostates

The last group may be the least expected, since it seems contradictory to assume that those who have departed from the salvation narrative should be represented. Yet the Old Testament examples of failures in leadership, be they royal such as Saul, or priestly such as Eli of Shiloh, indicate the importance of keeping track of the contributions of those who lapsed.

These observations are not trumped-up charges against Mormon salvation narratives by external detractors: all of these peripheral groups worked hard to stabilize their own contributions to the Mormon narrative through their own historiographical products.

As far as the apostates were concerned: Many, though by no means all, of those cut off from the church portrayed their contributions to the path afterwards. Men such as John C. Bennett,²⁵ Ezra Booth,²⁶ John Corrill²⁷ or John Doyle Lee²⁸ did so very soon after the fact; others, such as David Whitmer,²⁹ waited decades to do so.

An institution like the Female Relief Society³⁰ for a brief time gave some women an opportunity to be an active part of salvation history away from home and hearth. Admittedly, that institution had a short lifespan during the era analyzed here. But Mormon

²⁵John C. Bennett (1842). *The History of the Saints: An Exposé of Joe Smith and Mormonism*. Boston: Leland & Whitling.

²⁶His letters are included in: Howe, (1834).

²⁷Corrill, (1839).

²⁸Lee, (1877).

²⁹Whitmer, (1887).

³⁰Newell and Avery, (1994), p.110; p.116f.

women's letters and journals document their religious empowerment³¹ and the source of strength this provided for the women. And when English epic writer Edward Tullidge made himself available to Mormon historiography, he wrote an epic narrative of the *Women of Mormondom*,³² through the mediation of poetess Eliza R. Snow.³³ Thus poetic voice was given to that aspect of the salvation narrative—even if the restriction of the female role to mother and doting wife strikes modern historians as in need of revision.³⁴

Finally, the many autobiographies and narratives of their lives that form the backbone of family remniscences, authored by men and women sometimes close to, but usually distant from the center of ecclesiastic power in Mormonism, attest to the need of these individuals to locate themselves within the salvation narrative and to communicate that position to others.

As an example of a man near the center of decision making: Bishop Hunter's autobiography is available in transcript on his descendants' website.³⁵ The autobiographical writings of many other early members of the Mormon church are available online through the Book of Abraham Project.³⁶

Because genealogical research is necessary in the context of the baptism of the dead, the LDS church has been supportive of members researching their ancestors. For example,

³¹ Zina Diantha Huntington's diary reports how they performed administrations for health in 1849; cf. Compton, (1997), p.67; p.99.

³²Tullidge, (1877).

³³ Claudia L. Bushman (2000). "Edward W. Tullidge and The Women of Mormondom". In: *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 33.4, pp. 15–26. Eliza R. Snow published her poems regularly in the *Times and Seasons* throughout the Nauvoo period. She was exceedingly well connected in the church hierarchy, as plural wife first of Joseph Smith Jr and then Brigham Young; cf. Compton, (1997), pp.312f; pp.316f. She also wrote a biography of her brother Lorenzo Snow, who became the Fifth Prophet of the church; cf. Snow, (1884).

³⁴ As Anderson writes regarding Joseph Smith Jr's paternal aunts, "There is less historical information on Asael and Mary's four daughters, whose respectable lives were mainly documented by motherhood."; cf. Anderson, (2003), p.140.

³⁵Hunter and Hunter, (2009).

³⁶Book of Abraham Project (2014). *Journals, Diaries, Biographies, Autobiographies and Letters of Some Early Mormons and Others Who Knew Joseph Smith, Jr. and/or His Contemporaries*. (Visited on 12/16/2014).

at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, the Family History Library and the Family History Computer Lab are available for church members to consult documentation, such as immigration lists or old newspapers in microfiche, to put together, biographies of their ancestors, however bare bone.³⁷ Free courses in genealogy and the use of modern research equipment taught at these facilities complement the support for laypeople.

Indirectly, such infrastructure helps the members determine their own position within Mormon salvation history. From the perspective of practical theology, this is a successful endeavor. The main drawbacks are in terms of historiographical method: For one, the church's salvation narrative provides only a straight and narrow structure into which the individuals can insert their contributions. Furthermore, the resulting webpages are often antiquarian in tenor, presenting narratives of the deceased alongside photocopies of business transactions and transcriptions of letters.

17.5 Demythologizing Salvation History

For German Protestant theology, the concept of salvation history was decisively critiqued in the World War II years by the existential interpretation of Rudolf Bultmann. At the core of this attack was Bultmann's essay on demythologizing, the famous *Entmythologisierungsaufsatz*, of 1941.³⁸ To criticize the notion of salvation history was not Bultmann's primary intention, but a natural consequence of his analysis of how the writers of the New Testament presuppose and use mythology.

³⁷ Personal observations during my research stay at BYU in August 2014.

³⁸ For the convenience of English-speaking readers, I refer to the English translation of the essay by Reginald H. Fuller, as published in the debate's documentation: Rudolf Bultmann (1953c). "New Testament and Mythology". In: *Kerygma and Myth: A theological Debate*. Ed. by H. W. Bartsch. 1st ed. Vol. 1. London: S.P.C.K., pp. 1–44.

17.5.1 Rudolf Bultmann's Program of Interpreting Mythology

Bultmann identifies the crucifixion and the resurrection as the paradigmatic and only eschatological event.

Cross and resurrection form a single, indivisible cosmic event which brings judgement to the world and opens up for men the possibility of authentic life.³⁹

The crucifixion forms the historical part of this event; the resurrection, its redemptive part.⁴⁰

For salvation history, this leaves exactly this one historical event. Such a degenerate case of any history, but especially a salvation history, means that Bultmann blocks any salvation narrative that has an architecture. Under Bultmann's premises, neither the detailed event sequences of the apocalyptic visions of a Daniel or John, nor the multi-phase spreading of the *euangelion* of a Luke, form part of the structure of salvation history. The residue of this reduction is a mere *telos*, a trajectory for personal encounters with the crucified and risen Christ as preached by the congregation.⁴¹

Indeed, eschatology ... is concerned ... with the meaning and goal of the history of the individual and of the eschatological community.⁴²

That *telos* allows the believer to meet the divine in occasional encounters, without those encounters coalescing into a salvation narrative.

But from time to time the believer sees concrete happenings in the light of the word of grace which is addressed to him, and then faith can and ought to apprehend it as the act of God, even if its meaning is still enigmatic.⁴³

³⁹Ibid., p.39.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp.39f. Bultmann admits that this interleaving is a *skandalon* and sees no way of resolving that, as that *skandalon* is core to the message of the kerygma; cf. *ibid.*, p.44.

⁴¹Ibid., p.41; p.42.

⁴²Rudolf Bultmann (1953b). "A Reply to the Theses of J. Schniewind". In: *Kerygma and Myth: A theological Debate*. Ed. by H. W. Bartsch. 1st ed. Vol. 1. London: S.P.C.K., pp. 102–123, p.116.

⁴³Rudolf Bultmann (1953a). "A Reply to his Critics". In: *Kerygma and Myth: A theological Debate*. Ed. by H. W. Bartsch. 1st ed. Vol. 1. London: S.P.C.K., pp. 191–211, p.198.

The design of this theory is not accidental. For Bultmann, any reconstruction of the eschatological event that has the possibility of historical proof would either be mythical or scientific-historical, and both⁴⁴ would prevent the emancipation of faith⁴⁵ and block the Pauline-Lutheran “justification by faith alone apart from the works of the Law”.⁴⁶

That God has acted in Jesus Christ is, however, not a fact of past history open to historical verification. That Jesus Christ is the Logos of God can never be proved by the objective investigation of the historian.⁴⁷

It is also what suppresses the backslide of the paradigmatic event into mythology.

It is precisely its immunity from proof which secures the Christian proclamation against the charge of being mythological. The transcendence of God is not as in myth reduced to immanence.⁴⁸

Such an elimination of all external dependency makes it possible for the Word to be encountered as a personal and thereby redemptive experience in the eschatological present only.⁴⁹

That Scripture is the Word of God is something which happens only in the here and now of encounter; it is not a fact susceptible to objective proof. The Word of God is hidden in Scripture, just like any other act of his.⁵⁰

The eschatological event, which Christ is, is consequently realized invariably and solely *in concreto* here and now, where the Word is proclaimed (2 Cor 6:2; Joh 5:24) and meets with faith or unbelief (2 Cor 2:15f; Joh 3:18; Joh 9:39).⁵¹

⁴⁴ Such a postulated sibling relationship between the presentation modes of myth and science is a key strategy of Thieliicke's to eliminate the *skandalon* of the electric light; cf. Helmuth Thieliicke (1953). “The Restatement of New Testament Mythology”. In: *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate*. Ed. by H. W. Bartsch. 1st ed. Vol. 1. 138-174. London: S.P.C.K., pp.158-161. By rejecting either presentation mode as unbecoming the personal experience of the encounter, Bultmann undercuts Thieliicke's strategy.

⁴⁵ Bultmann, (1953a), p.210.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.211.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.207.

⁴⁸ Bultmann, (1953c), p.44.

⁴⁹ Thieliicke observes that Bultmann's critique makes “salvation history evaporate into this questionable ‘present’ of his”; cf. Thieliicke, (1953), p.156.

⁵⁰ Bultmann, (1953a), p.200.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp.208f.

With the objective—that is, visible for others—interpretation of the event blocked, speaking of grace requires speaking of the one who is saved.

... if the action of God is not to be conceived as a worldly phenomenon capable of being apprehended apart from its existential reference, it can only be spoken of by speaking simultaneously of myself as the person who is existentially concerned.⁵²

This key move in the argument is constructed in analogy to to the argument in Bultmann's 1925 essay *Welchen Sinn hat es, von Gott zu reden?*,⁵³ where Bultmann had established that talking "about God" (in German: "über Gott") in the discursive abstract is impossible due to God's role as "all-encompassing reality"—in German, "die alles bestimmende Wirklichkeit". Instead, only talking "of God" (in German: "von Gott") from the existential position of the affected individual—is possible. In the demythologizing program, therefore, Bultmann argues that this existential prerequisite extends from God to the acts of God.

To summarize: For Bultmann, the solution to the mythological contamination of the New Testament narratives lies in recourse to our shared anthropological status as existential.⁵⁴ From this existential self-understanding, the indivisible eschatological event of the historical crucifixion and the kerygmatic resurrection enables believers to see some events as addressed to themselves, *hic et nunc*, under the word of Grace. However, these occasional flashes, which leave the meaning of the event enigmatic, are private, not objective, and do not sum to a salvation historic narrative. They provide the believer with a *telos* of

⁵²Ibid., p.196.

⁵³ Rudolf Bultmann (1933). "Welchen Sinn hat es von Gott zu reden?" In: *Glauben und Verstehen. Gesammelte Aufsätze*. 1st ed. Vol. 1. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr, pp. 26–37. The title translates roughly as "What is the point of talking about God?"

⁵⁴ "... every existential self-understanding lies within the possibilities of human existence, and therefore every existentialist analysis based upon an existential self-understanding is generally intelligible."; cf. Bultmann, (1953a), p.196.

existence, not an eschatological narrative.⁵⁵

17.5.2 Cullmann's Counter-proposal: History as Salvation

In 1965, Swiss theologian Oscar Cullmann published his counter-proposal to the critique of Rudolf Bultmann.⁵⁶ Cullmann's monograph is dutifully cited in the relevant survey literature,⁵⁷ but fundamentally, Cullmann exhibits little appreciation for the problems that Bultmann is trying to solve.

Cullmann reconstructs salvation history as a selection of events from profane history that are identified through revelation and cause a re-evaluation of the already compiled salvation history.⁵⁸ This dynamic approach to salvation history, with its built-in feedback mechanism of continuity and contingency (*Kontinuität und Kontingenzt*)⁵⁹ is supposed to make it possible to see the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in the New Testament.⁶⁰ The terminal point of salvation history is the establishment of the Biblical canon,⁶¹ as the end of the chain of constituent events.

In order to make this interpretation work, however, Cullmann argues that mythology is confined to the beginning and the end of the Biblical books, that is, to the start of Genesis and the apocalypse of John,⁶² and that every event in between, which Cullmann can call

⁵⁵ Bultmann revisited the relationship between history and eschatology, with a clear critique of salvation history, in his 1957 Gifford Lectures entitled *History and Eschatology*. *Studienratin* Eva Krafft translated the lectures back into German for Bultmann, who then reworked them one more time; cf. Rudolf Bultmann (1964). *Geschichte und Eschatologie*. 2nd ed. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr. The lectures offer a more formal treatment of eschatology, especially in relationship to the idea of history (Collingwood) as well as the problem of the meaning of history (Löwith).

⁵⁶ Oscar Cullmann (1965). *Heil als Geschichte*. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr.

⁵⁷ H. Ott (1959). "Art. Heilsgeschichte". In: *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Ed. by Kurt Galling. 3rd ed. Vol. 3. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr, pp. 187–189; Friedrich Mildenerberger (2007). "Art. Heilsgeschichte". In: *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*. Ed. by Hans Dieter Betz et al. 4th ed. Vol. 3. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr, pp. 1584–1586.

⁵⁸ Cullmann, (1965), p.135.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp.104ff.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.67; p.69; p.75.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp.269ff.

⁶² Ibid., pp.118f.

the “historical middle piece”,⁶³ contains at least a historical nugget.⁶⁴ That nugget of an event may at worst be mythologically exaggerated,⁶⁵ but it can always be identified.⁶⁶

In fact, Cullmann is prepared to argue that including the mythological material in a historical framework already de-mythologizes it, at least better than any philosophy of history could.⁶⁷

At the same time, Cullmann operates with a very unmediated form of hermeneutics. He interprets *Vorverständnis* to mean the initial reading of the text, not the preconditions making even that initial reading possible.⁶⁸ Cullmann speaks of the ability to interpret a text correctly or to determine the adequacy of his personal faith in comparison to the faith of the first Christians.⁶⁹

Because of his insistence on the kernel of historical truth, Cullmann finds it easy to differentiate between the kerygma of Jesus of Nazareth and the kerygma of the Congregation,⁷⁰ and interprets the resurgence of the question of the historical Jesus among Bultmann’s students as validation of Cullmann’s approach.⁷¹ Cullmann denies that the delay of the Parousia was a significant issue for the early congregation,⁷² thereby eliminating one of the assumed sources of myth and kerygma formation in the Bultmann school’s model.

In short, Cullmann has a clear proposal for what salvation history could mean, but

⁶³ In German, “historisches Mittelstück”, cf. *ibid.*, p.133.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.77.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.77; p.118f.

⁶⁶ In the case of the history of Israel, Cullmann is willing to assume that the secular historian of the Ancient Near East would deal with the exact same events; cf. *ibid.*, p.135. This assumption extends to such extreme cases as the drowning of Pharaoh’s men in the “sea of reeds”; cf. *ibid.*, p.77. Note that Cullmann follows the Masoretic text here, which reads *Yam Suph* in Ex 15:4, meaning the “sea of reeds” or “sea of seaweeds”, rather than the LXX’s *en erythra thalasse*, whence the KJV’s translation of the “Red Sea”.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.120f. Cullmann does not seem to realize that this casts the Biblical authors as naive and incapable of distinguishing between myth and history; cf. *ibid.*, p.125.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.52-54.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.53f.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.76; p.88.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.30.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp.214-218; p.185.

only at the price of assuming a historical kernel of truth for every Biblical event (outside the admitted mythological frame) and a very direct relationship between reader and text.

Since all of these assumptions continued to become even less plausible than they already had been for Bultmann and his students this price seemed overly high. Consequently, Cullmann was unable to salvage salvation history.

17.5.3 Religion and the Functional Differentiation of Society

Although Georg Simmel and Emile Durkheim had prepared the discussion of the differentiation of society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was not until the late 1960s and 1970s that Talcott Parsons and his student Niklas Luhmann began to work out the functional differentiation of modern society in appreciable detail.

This means that neither Bultmann nor Cullmann had access to this interpretative mode of viewing society during their salvation-historical debate from the 1940s to the mid-1960s.

In some sense, it was only with the 1984 publication of Niklas Luhmann's *Soziale Systeme. Grundriß einer allgemeinen Theorie* that Luhmann's system-theoretic analysis of modern society as a group of autonomous communicating functional systems became a dominant paradigm in sociological analysis.⁷³

Many of the social systems that Luhmann identified had discussed in separate monographs after 1984: economy in 1988; science in 1990; law in 1993; the mass media in 1996; art in 1997;⁷⁴ both politics and religion, separately, in 2000; education in 2002; and morality in 2008, in collaboration with Detlef Horster.

⁷³ Many of the details had been worked out before, of course; for example, the function of religion in society in Luhmann's 1977 monograph *Funktion der Religion*.

⁷⁴ That same year, Luhmann also published a two-volume summary of his theory, *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*, which translates roughly as *The Society of Society*.

17.5.4 Applying Functional Differentiation to Theology

Among those who worked to apply Luhmann's analysis rigorously to religion and theology was my former teacher, Falk Wagner.⁷⁵ Here, religion is the only social system where the individual is topical as an individual; in all other systems the individual is topical in a functional role—consumer or seller in economics; voter or elected official in politics; etc.

The religion of modernity, which appears under the conditions of secularized society, is alone able to take the social position of the difference between personhood and sociability, thereby focusing on the subject of religion, the religious consciousness. For religious consciousness seeks out its access [to religion, RCK] for individually motivated reasons, such that the access has to be attributed to the individual as such. In this fashion, the religious consciousness, which knows itself as an individual, transcends the social expectations and role requirements that are in effect by virtue of its participation in the functionally described social systems.⁷⁶

However, such transcendence is not some external opposite of the individual, because transcendence is an action taken by the individual.

The concept of transcendence is only explicated adequately, when it is identified with the act of transcending.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ In his Viennese *Antrittsvorlesung* of 1989, Wagner had already investigated the status of the Christian religion in a society undergoing functional differentiation; cf. Falk Wagner (1996). "Christentum und Moderne". In: *Religion und Gottesgedanke*. Ed. by Falk Wagner. 1st ed. Vol. 7. Beiträge zur rationalen Theologie. Frankfurt a. M. – Berlin – Bern – New York – Paris – Wien: Peter Lang, pp. 247–268, pp.251–255.

⁷⁶ Falk Wagner (2014). "Kann die Moderne der Religion die Religion der Moderne ertragen? Religionssoziologische und theologisch-philosophische Erwägungen im Anschluss an Niklas Luhmann". In: *Christentum in der Moderne*. Ed. by Jörg Dierken und Christian Polke. 1st ed. Vol. 9. Dogmatik in der Moderne. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr. Chap. 14, pp. 337–370, pp.357. "Die unter der Bedingung der säkularisierten Gesellschaft auftretende Religion der Moderne konzentriert sich | also auf das durch das religiöse Bewußtsein repräsentierte Subjekt der Religion, weil sie allein auf diese Weise den sozialen Ort der Differenz von Personalität und Sozialität besetzen kann. Denn das religiöse Bewußtsein sucht seinen Zugang aufgrund individuell motivierter Entscheidungen, so daß dieser Zugang dem Individuum als solchem zuzurechnen ist. Auf diese Weise transzendiert das als Individuum sich wissende religiöse Bewußtsein die sozialen Erwartungen und Rollenerfordernisse, die ihm als Teilnehmer der sozialen Funktionssysteme gelten." All translations are my own.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p.360. "Das mittels des Begriffs der Transzendenz Ausgesagte wird vielmehr nur dann angemessen erfaßt, wenn es mit dem aktiven Vollzug des Transzendierens identifiziert wird."

The function of this action of transcending is to criticize the apparent condition of the world with the intent of changing it.

Transcending surpasses a world or social context (objective, social, spatio-temporal, historical or personal) with the intent of changing the immanent situation. Transcending views the immanent situation as changeable, that is, as a situation that could be different from the way it appears in its factuality.⁷⁸

Such criticism is part and parcel of the task of religion in functionally differentiated society, namely to resist any attempt by any other social system to convert a person into a means merely for systemic purposes.⁷⁹

But religion insists on the difference between social immanence and personal transcendence, to keep social ends and their means from hardening into ends in themselves, a status that religion (as well as, theoretically, law, morality, art and possibly other functional social systems) reserves for human persons.⁸⁰

However, the religious consciousness is not exempt from this criticism. In fact, its own claim to be an end in itself cannot transform either the social other or the personal other into mere means for its own ends.

The personal self-handling and the social world-handling correspond to the condition of a social consciousness of freedom, if in their realization of freedom they orient themselves, under changing perspectives, toward the co-present correspondence of personal self-being and social other-being, or of social self-being and personal other-being.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Wagner, (2014), pp.360f. “Durch ein Transzendieren wird ein als Immanenz erscheinender Welt- oder Gesellschaftszusammenhang (sachlicher, sozialer, raumzeitlicher bzw. historischer und personaler Art) in der Absicht überschritten, den immanent gegebenen | Zustand zu verändern. Durch das Transzendieren eines immanenten Zustandes wird dieser als veränderbar betrachtet, d.h. als ein Zustand, der auch anders sein könnte, als er in seiner faktischen Gegebenheit erscheint.”

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp.364f.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.365. “Aber die Religion hält ... an der Differenz von sozialer Immanenz und personaler Transzendenz fest, damit sich die sozialen Zwecksetzungen und ihre Mittel nicht zum Selbstzweck verfestigen, den die Religion (wie – prinzipiell gesehen – auch das Recht, die Moral, die Kunst und vielleicht auch andere Funktionsbereiche) allein der menschlichen Personalität vorbehält.” Similarly: Falk Wagner (1999). *Metamorphosen des modernen Protestantismus*. 1st ed. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr, p.190.

⁸¹ Wagner, (2014), p.366. “Der personale Selbstumgang und der soziale Weltumgang entsprechen daher

Given this empirical situation on the ground, and the difficulties in which Protestant theology found itself in terms of its dogmatic stance at the end of the twentieth century,⁸² the “religious experts” (Max Weber), that is, professional theologians, have to find new ways⁸³ to cater to the needs of the religious practitioners.

Since only the individuality of the individuals makes up the empirically experienced and the theoretically analyzable subject of religion, all other super-empirical and super-natural subjects of perception, which have been constructed during the long run of religious and theological traditions, must be reduced to those functions that they can provide for the build-up and the interpretation of an individuality that sees itself as religious.⁸⁴

Even though Wagner speaks broadly about “build-up and interpretation” (*Aufbau und Auslegung*) of the religious individuality, he only demonstrates this narrowly for the social consciousness of freedom.⁸⁵ As a result, Wagner wants to transform only the “super-empirical and super-natural subjects of perception” (*überempirischen und übernatürlichen Vorstellungssubjekte*) for the benefit of religious practitioners. As repeatedly demonstrated in Wagner’s oeuvre, the Trinity is recast from a ruling substance in the style of Karl Barth or Oscar Cullmann⁸⁶ to the structural origin of the co-present correspondence of personal

der Bedingung eines sozialen Freiheitsbewußtseins dann, wenn sie unter jeweils wechselnden Perspektiven ihre Freiheitsrealisierung an der kopräsenten Korrespondenz von von personalem Selbstsein und sozialem Anderssein oder von sozialem Selbstsein und personalem Anderssein sich orientieren.” Similarly: Wagner, (1999), p.177f.

⁸²Ibid., pp.52-74.

⁸³

Wagner has concrete proposals and recommendations, including a revamping of the curriculum for students of theology; cf. *ibid.*, pp.191-246.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p.186. “Da einzig die Individualität der Individuen das empirisch erfahrbare und theoretisch reflektierbare Subjekt der Religion bildet, sind alle anderen überempirischen und übernatürlichen Vorstellungssubjekte, die im Laufe langer religiöser und theologische Traditionen aufgebaut worden sind, auf die Funktion zu reduzieren, die sie für den Aufbau und die Auslegung einer religiös sich verstehenden Individualität leisten können.”

⁸⁵ There is some evidence that this was not meant as an exemplar fashion; in his analysis of Niklas Luhmann, Wagner specifically states that this narrow focus eliminates the arbitrary outcomes that speculation about transcendence and immanence can lead to; cf. Wagner, (2014), p.367.

⁸⁶ This is not to say that Falk Wagner would have agreed with Rudolf Bultmann’s conceptualization of God as “all-encompassing reality”—in German, “die alles bestimmende Wirklichkeit”. But Bultmann’s

self-being and social other-being, as a logical pattern for the social consciousness of freedom.

There remains the question of what happens to the other theologumena accreted during the long theological tradition. Religious individuals find themselves confronted with an odd choice: Though Wagner defends them against the dominance of the Protestant dogma and its professional gatekeepers, demanding that religion be about their own consciousness, Wagner offers no choices but apparently already knows what they should want as supportive of their “build-up and interpretation”.

I am not the first to notice this; Jörg Dierken and Christian Polke observe in their introduction to a collection of Wagner’s essays:

It is surprising that Wagner’s new view of the matter of religion under the auspices of the individual did not lead to an empirically richer description of religious practices. This is especially true for the realm of practiced Christian religion—other religious cultures were not really his thing anyway. The contours of his targeted “Religion for Modernity” remain faint.⁸⁷

Thus, I see myself as a critical student of Falk Wagner in proposing to investigate other theologumena and conceptualize their transformation under the conditions of the functional differentiation of social systems—provided I can show that there is empirical interest in their content and that they can plausibly contribute to the “build-up and interpretation” of the religious consciousness.

insistence that speaking of God is only possible from the existential position of the affected individual is much closer to Wagner’s argumentation strategy than either Barth’s or Cullmann’s position could ever be.

⁸⁷ Jörg Dierken und Christian Polke (2014). “Falk Wagner: Zur Einführung”. In: *Christentum in der Moderne*. Ed. by Jörg Dierken und Christian Polke. 1st ed. Vol. 9. Dogmatik in der Moderne. Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr, pp. 1–29, p.18 “Es ist erstaunlich, daß Wagners neue Sicht auf das Religionsthema im Zeichen des Individuellen nicht zu einer empirisch reichhaltigen Beschreibung religiöser Praktiken gelangt ist. Das betrifft gerade auch den Bereich der gelebten christlichen Religion, andere Religionskulturen waren ohnehin kaum sein Thema. Die Konturen einer von ihm angestrebten “Religion der Moderne” bleiben blaß.” All translations are my own.

17.5.5 The Present State of Salvation History

In 1959, when contributing to RGG3, Ott had still been hopeful that the difficulties facing salvation history could be resolved.

While avoiding any reification of the salvation historical course, one would have to explicate the importance of the existential interpretation of the Biblical testimony of the salvation historical past and future for faith. One would have to point out how the membership in the solidarity of the peoples of God across all times is a structural element of the faith of the individual.⁸⁸

At the present, however, the potential for salvation history to continue under the conditions of modernity are bleak.

Bultmann showed how the sole kerygmatic event, the crucifixion and resurrection of the Christ, transforms salvation history into a salvation telos. The historiographical analysis of the salvation histories of the Old Testament and the New Testament identifies a mismatch between the notions of factuality and temporal continuity of the Biblical times and the present.⁸⁹ For the *Book of Mormon*, the analysis exposed their antiquated “Big Men” conception of historiography and its consequent exclusionary practices. Furthermore, Reinhart Koselleck has documented⁹⁰ how the underlying notion of unified history is an outgrowth of covenant theology of the Reformation period and the switch from plural of “histories” to the singular “history” itself a modern conceptualization.⁹¹

Perhaps unsurprisingly, when writing for the RGG4 edition, Ott’s successor Mildenerger as author of the article on *Heilsgeschichtliche* recommended dropping the term

⁸⁸ Ott, (1959), sp.189. “Unter Vermeidung aller Objektivierung eines heilsgeschichtlichen ‘Ablaufs’ müßte in *existentialer Interpretation* des biblischen Zeugnisses das heilsgeschichtlich Gewesene und Künftige in seiner Bedeutung für das Selbstverständnis des Glaubens verständlich gemacht werden. Es müßte aufgezeigt werden, inwieweit die Zugehörigkeit in die Solidarität des Gottesvolkes aller Zeiten ein Strukturmoment des Glaubens des einzelnen ist.” All translations are my own.

⁸⁹ Mildenerger, (2007), col.1586. Mildenerger correctly points out that this mismatch is problematic for all except those who support stong verbal inspiration of Biblical writings; cf. *ibid.*, col.1585.

⁹⁰ R. Koselleck, *Art Geschichte*, V-VII, GGB2, 647-717.

⁹¹ Mildenerger, (2007), col.1584.

altogether.⁹²

While I can agree to drop the use of the term, I believe that one cannot ignore the underlying interests of the religious practitioners in this theologumenon. There is strong empirical evidence for such interest. In October of 2012, ABC News reported that European private equity firm Permira had bought the US genealogical website Ancestry.com for \$1.6 billion.⁹³ As the same article pointed out, the LDS branch of the Mormon church operates its own website, FamilySearch. Previously,⁹⁴ I mentioned the support that the LDS branch of the Mormon church provides, in terms of family history libraries and computer labs, for their members to finding their ancestors and their own positions in the Mormon salvation history.

Thus, rather than walking away from the problem, theologians should design a form of salvation history that supports the self-interpretation of the modern religious individual.

17.6 Participative Salvation Histories

To best serve the individual, theologians need to propose a transformation of salvation history that is usable by religious individuals while passing muster with respect to the current state of professional thinking on this subject.

In the following, I will first sketch the requirements for this theologumenon tasked with assisting in the construction and interpretation of the religious consciousness. From the requirements it should be clear why I propose to speak of *participative salvation histories*. I will follow up the requirements with a discussion of some of the implementation considerations.

⁹²Mildenberger, (2007), col.1586.

⁹³ Cf. Alan Farnham (2012). *Who's Your Daddy? Genealogy Becomes \$1.6B Hobby*. (Visited on 10/24/2012).

⁹⁴ Cf. above on page p.505.

17.6.1 Requirements

1. The term needs to be pluralized to express the multiplicity of interests that drive the interpretation effort. It must be clear how the production of history selects among events involving the peoples of God, to whom the individual wants to connect. For those like Kant, who were always uncomfortable with the sacrifice of Isaac demanded from Abraham, this “opt-out” capability will no doubt be a relief.
2. The constitutive involvement of the individuals needs to be stated clearly. The old salvation history as something externally given or decreed is gone, for the reasons given above.

Thus, Ott was both right and wrong. The resulting salvation histories will indeed be existential interpretations from the point of view of the religious individuals. But the theologumenon itself cannot be anchored in the faith of the believer as such. It is not a structural moment of the believer’s faith, but a component of the historical part of the religious consciousness.

3. Modern historiographical production is difficult. Because of the modern functional differentiation of social systems, historiography has specialized into its own separate profession and is now part of the social system of science. Thus, the believers need to be able to draw upon the theologians, who are trained in church historiography at least, as helpers in emplotting their salvation histories.

As a quick survey of some of the family websites concerning ancestors among the Mormons will indicate, these are largely antiquarian in structure, web-based treasure chests of family heirlooms. They feature collections of photos, scans and transcripts of a wide variety of documents, and such. These are the materials for articulating salvation histories, but they have not yet come together into a narrative.

Somewhat surprisingly, there seems to be much less support for this aspect of incorporation into salvation history within the LDS branch of the Mormon church. This may be due to the fact that for the ritual of the baptism of the dead, only fundamental dates about the individuals are necessary, no life story.

17.6.2 Implementation Considerations

Salvation histories are merely an offer made by the churches to the members of their congregations. Even if the paradigmatic event of the crucified and risen Christ combines a historical and a kerygmatic element—if histories provide no constructive or self-interpretative assistance to the religious consciousness, believers need not participate.

If believers want to participate, however, and reach out to the theologian for support in this endeavor, this poses the question of the appropriate historiographical methodology. How can the theologian as professional church historiographer and the believer as the origin of the event selection collaborate according to modern modes of historiography?

There are probably several approaches one could take, but in the following, I propose to make use of a technique developed in other contexts where professional historiographers and archivists want to leverage the knowledge of time witnesses in a controlled fashion: oral history.⁹⁵

Oral history as such is a technique for creating new sources through the interviewing of contemporary witnesses in a methodologically controlled fashion. In the context of a socio-psychological theory of commemoration, Oral history employs interview strategies and analysis strategies backed by general hermeneutics. Oral history provides general strategies for the acquisition, transcription and archival of the interviews, with the aim of

⁹⁵ The standard exposition of the theory underpinning Oral History remains Paul Thompson (1988). *The Voice of the Past. Oral History*. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press; I was unable to consult the new third edition in time for this work. A good summary of the classical discussions in this field is Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds. (2006). *The Oral History Reader*. 2nd ed. London – New York: Routledge.

securing the source for the long term.

Oral history differs from regular interviews or the use of personal documents through its collaborative and iterative nature. The interviewee is actively involved in the construction of the source, often through several iterations. Oral history also differs from oral tradition in that oral tradition is a social construct, collaboratively authored by the discourse of a collective, without guidance or planning. In contrast, oral history is a planned collaborative endeavor, and the interviewee actively participates in its direction.

As at any time, when a technique is transported from one context to another, there is both an excess and a shortfall of capability in this recourse to oral history. For example, it is not clear that the preservation of the interview recordings as primary source is as necessary for the context of participative salvation histories as it is for oral history projects in general.

There is also the danger that some of the more difficult aspects of oral history impede the narrative construction. For example, various gradients between the historian and the contemporary witness are known to distort the narrative: historiographical competency,⁹⁶ social status, or assumptions about the collaborator's expectations.⁹⁷ While in oral history this is primarily a nuisance, in participative salvation histories it could prove fatal to the efficacy of the result. The theologian after all has no other interest than supporting the believer in producing a salvation history that supports the maintenance of their religious consciousness.

⁹⁶ Oral history interviews are initiated by the historian using a catalogue of questions that express the interests of the historian. While this is a good way to start the conversation, there is a real danger that this preconfigures the narrative field in a way that prevents the believer from contributing all they would wish to include.

⁹⁷ This general problem is probably best studied for the extreme situation of the slave narratives compiled by the Work Progress Administration in the United States, where Caucasian interviewers and editors influenced the presentation, from biases introduced by their standing to downright editing in order to meet early twentieth century expectations; cf. Sharon Ann Musher (2014). "The Other Slave Narratives". In: *The Oxford Handbook of the African American Slave Narrative*. Ed. by John Ernest. 1st ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chap. 6, 101ff.

17.7 Conclusion

When faced with the socio-economic changes in the United States of America in the aftermath of the War of 1812, which decisively severed the connections with the former mother country Great Britain, Joseph Smith Jr embarked upon a Millennial restorationist project that would reground the American experience in the covenant theology of the Old Testament, a theological strategy many New Englanders had received from their New England Puritan heritage. The resulting *Book of Mormon* answered a need of its time with a conceptualization that allowed believers to participate in the latter days of salvation history. That approach to salvation history, which continued in its *History of the Church* commenced under the auspices of Joseph Smith Jr, reflects the assumptions of its time in its focus on “Big Men” history, leaving the excluded groups of the Mormon congregation—women and men of lesser import, as well as the apostates—to scrounge for their own ways to hook into salvation history.

The Biblical notion of salvation history that the Puritans had inherited from the covenant theology of the Reformation was decisively critiqued by Rudolf Bultmann and others in the twentieth century. Stabilizing actions like those of Oscar Cullmann failed, and by the close of the twentieth century systematic theologians were willing to relegate the theologumenon to the dustbin of ecclesiastical history.

However, under the conditions of accelerating modernity, with its functional differentiation of society into social systems, the focus of religion shifts to the practicing believers. It is the support and amplification of their self-interpretation that modern theology, across denominational lines, has to attend to. As the enormous interest in genealogy, ancestry and heritage corroborates, Joseph Smith Jr was decisively modern in understanding the important part that a historical localization can have for the redemptive experience.

Theologians are therefore neither asked to abandon the idea, nor called to reconceptu-

alize salvation history as a constitutive element of Christian faith in the abstract, but to develop a properly modernized notion of salvation history that can support the construction and self-interpretation of the religious individual.

Such a modernized notion will emphasize properly its pluralistic and participative structure. In its implementation, it will take the professionalization and specialization of historiography seriously by making the individual's participative salvation history a collaborative effort of the believer and a professional with historiographical and theological training. One successful model that suggests itself for such a collaboration, with all the caveats that must accompany cross-disciplinary transfers of technique, is oral history.

Chapter 18

Appendix

18.1 Overview of the Book of Mormon

At some five-hundred-plus pages, the *Book of Mormon* defies easy summary. Yet for those unfamiliar with its contents, a little information may prove helpful.

This section provides a quick overview of the contents of the *Book of Mormon* by extracting the summaries before each book. The summaries are taken from Wilford C. Wood's edition of the 1830 printing.¹ Where no such summaries were available—e.g. the Book of Enos, the Book of Jarom, the Book of Omni, the book called “Words of Mormon” or the Book of Mosiah, to mention a few—in 1830, I have used the summaries from the 1981 edition instead.²

18.1.1 First Book of Nephi

An account of Lehi and his wife, Sariah, and his four Sons, being called (beginning at the eldest,) Lama, Lemuel, Sam and Nephi. The Lord warns Lehi to depart out of the land of Jerusalem, because he prophesieth unto the people concerning their iniquity; and they seek to destroy his life. He taketh three days' journey into the wilderness with his family. Nephi taketh his brethren and returns to the land of Jerusalem after the record of the Jews. The account of their sufferings. They take the daughters of Ishmael to wife. They take their families and depart into the wilderness. The sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness. The course of their travels. They come to the large waters. Nephi's brethren rebelleth against him. He confoundeth them, and buildeth a Ship. They call the place Bountiful. They cross the large waters into the promised

¹Wilford C. Wood, ed. (1958). *Book of Mormon 1830 First Edition, reproduced from uncut Sheets*. 1st ed. Vol. 1. Joseph Smith begins his Work. n.a.: Wilford C. Wood.

²Joseph Smith Jr (1981). *The Book of Mormon. Another Testament of Jesus Christ*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

land, &c. This is according to the account of Nephi; or, in other words, I Nephi wrote this record.³

18.1.2 Second Book of Nephi

An account of the death of Lehi. Nephi's brethren rebelleth against him. The Lord warns Nephi to depart into the wilderness, &c. His journeyings in the wilderness, &c.⁴

18.1.3 Book of Jacob

The words of his preaching unto his brethren. He confoundeth a man who seeketh to overthrow the doctrine of Christ. A few words concerning the history of the people of Nephi.⁵

18.1.4 Book of Enos

Enos prays mightily and gains a remission of his sins—The voice of the Lord comes into his mind promising salvation for the Lamanites in a future day—Nephites sought to reclaim the Lamanites in their day—Enos rejoices in his redeemer.⁶

18.1.5 Book of Jarom

The Nephites keep the law of Moses, look forward to the coming of Christ, and prosper in the land—Many prophets labor to keep them in the way of truth.⁷

18.1.6 Book of Omni

Omni, Amaron, Chemish, Abinadom and Amaleki, each in turn, keep the records—Mosiah discovers the people of Zarahemla who came from Jerusalem in the days of Zedekiah—He is made king over them—The Mulekites had discovered Coriantumr [sic RCK], the last of the Jaredites—Men should offer their souls as an offering to Christ.⁸

³Wood, (1958), p.5.

⁴Ibid., p.59.

⁵Ibid., p.123.

⁶Smith Jr, (1981), p.136.

⁷Ibid., p.138.

⁸Ibid., p.140.

18.1.7 The Words of Mormon

Mormon abridges their history onto the plates of Mormon—He inserts the plates of Nephi into the abridgement—King Benjamin establishes peace in the land.⁹

18.1.8 Book of Mosiah

King Benjamin teaches his sons the language and prophecies of their fathers—Their religion and civilization have been preserved because of the records kept on the various plates—Mosiah is chosen as king and is given custody of the records and other things.¹⁰

18.1.9 Book of Alma

The account of Alma, who was the son of Alma the First, and Chief Justice over the people of Nephi, and also the High Priest over the Church. An account of the reign of the Judges, and the wars and contentions among the people. And also an account of the war between the Nephites and the Lamanites according to the record of Alma the First, and Chief Judge.¹¹

18.1.10 Book of Helaman

An account of the Nephites. Their wars and contentions, and their dissension. And also the prophecies of many Holy Prophets, before the coming of Christ, according to the record of Helaman, which was the son of Helaman, and also according to the records of his sons, even down to the coming of Christ. And also many of the Lamanites are converted. An account of their conversion. An account of the righteousness of the Lamanites, and the wickedness and abominations of the Nephites, according to the record of Helaman and his sons, even down to the coming of the Christ, which is called the Book of Helaman.¹²

18.1.11 Third Nephi

And Helaman was the son of Helaman, which was the son of Alma, which was the son of Alma, being a descendant of Nephi, which was the son of Lehi, which came out of Jerusalem in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, the king of Judah.¹³

⁹Ibid., p.143.

¹⁰Ibid., p.145.

¹¹Wood, (1958), p.221.

¹²Ibid., p.407.

¹³Ibid., p.452.

18.1.12 Fourth Nephi

An account of the people of Nephi, according to his record.¹⁴

The Nephites and the Lamanites are all converted to the Church of Christ—They have all things in common, work miracles and prosper in the land—After two centuries divisions, evils, false churches, and persecutions arise—After three hundred years both the Nephites and the Lamanites are wicked—Ammaron hides up the sacred records.¹⁵

18.1.13 Book of Mormon

Ammaron instructs Mormon concerning the sacred records—War commences between the Nephites and the Lamanites—The Three Nephites are taken away—Wickedness, unbelief, sorceries and witchcraft prevail.¹⁶

18.1.14 Book of Ether

The record of the Jaredites, taken from the twenty-four plates found by the people of Limhi in the days of King Mosiah.¹⁷

18.1.15 Book of Moroni

Moroni writes for the benefit of the Lamanites—The Nephites who will not deny Christ are put to death.¹⁸

18.2 The Role of Lucy Mack Smith's Reminiscences

Much in untangling early Mormon history hangs, to an unexpected extent, upon the reminiscences of Lucy Mack Smith. Her memoirs are the only source for many details about the Smiths' nuclear and extended family. However, her memoirs are a complex source with a character of its own.¹⁹

For the purposes of my reconstruction, it suffices to know the following information.

The reminiscences were a work commissioned by the church leadership with Lucy Mack Smith in the aftermath of the lynching of Joseph Jr and Hyrum in the summer of 1844. Lucy

¹⁴Wood, (1958), p.514.

¹⁵Smith Jr, (1981), p.465.

¹⁶Wood, (1958), p.469.

¹⁷Smith Jr, (1981), p.487.

¹⁸Ibid., p.518.

¹⁹For the authorial complexities underlying these memoirs, see Vogel, (1996), pp.227-230; more recently, cf. though largely in agreement, the *Historical Introduction* of the manuscript for the *Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1844-1845* in the Joseph Smith Papers project edition.

Smith first dictated her memoirs to Howard and Martha Jane Knowlton Coray between 1844 and 1845; this document, known as the rough-draft manuscript history, has the shape of dictation notes in Martha Jane Coray's hand²⁰. Lucy's memoirs are naturally apologetic and focused on depicting the religious and socio-economic decency of her family. As is common with oral history, her chronology is imprecise, and at times rendered impossible by the conflation of events.

One emotionally valent example, *pars pro toto*, may suffice. In December of 1825, Joseph Smith Sr and Jr are traveling to Pennsylvania together: Joseph Sr to collect money on a wheat contract with Josiah Stowell, Joseph Jr to fetch Emma Hale, who lived near the Stowells, and lead her into his parental home as his bride.²¹ Lucy Mack Smith recalls herself preparing the house for the return of Joseph Smith Jr with his expected bride Emma Hale²².

I felt that ~~for~~ pride and Ambition in do | ing this that is common to Mothers upon such occasions and My oldest son [i.e. Hyrum Smith, RCK] had ~~a~~ previous to this Married him a | wife, [i.e. Jerusha T. Barden, RCK] that was one of the most excellent of Women I anticipated, | much ~~jas~~ happiness with my second daughter in law²³

Evidently, Lucy Smith Mack has collapsed the event of Joseph Smith Jr wooing Emma Hale in 1825²⁴ with that of his bringing her home after their elopement in 1827, thereby bracketing the occasion of Hyrum Smith's marriage, which took place in November of 1826²⁵²⁶.

It may appear surprising, that a devoted mother like Lucy Mack Smith could not keep straight the wedding dates of two of her sons. Indeed, this "chronological conflation" need not be accidental, as it has some salutary side-effects for the depiction of the character of the Smith family.²⁷

1. The conflation eliminates the need to dwell on the details of Joseph Jr's having wooed Emma for two years, a potential source of embarrassment for the family, as it brought up Joseph Jr's low socio-economic status and raised the thorny issue of father Isaac Hale's resistance to the marriage.

²⁰Smith, (1844–1845).

²¹ Ibid., p.51. The structural parallelism made of two Josephs collecting valuables is found in the manuscript, but crossed out, in the phrase "one for money the | other for a wife" *ibid.*, p.51.

²²*Ibid.*, p.52.

²³*Ibid.*, p.52.

²⁴ It is an open question whether the event conflation imposed another trip to Pennsylvania on Joseph Smith Jr or not; cf. Vogel, (1996), p.313 Fn 18.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p.313 Fn 19.

²⁶Anderson, (2001), p.173.

²⁷ Based on Lucy's selection of material from Solomon Mack's autobiography, Lovina Fielding Anderson argues successfully that Lucy's point was to depict the impeccable patriotic and civic credentials of the Smiths and their extended family, the Macks. *Ibid.*, pp.19f

2. The narrative expectation of the newlyweds coming to Manchester to stay with Joseph's parents obfuscates the fact that Joseph and Emma had eloped, as they could not obtain Isaac Hale's consent. Depending on whether the Smiths knew of Joseph Jr's intention or not, they were either expecting its success with some trepidation, or surprised by the arrival of the newlyweds in Manchester altogether.
3. By emphasizing the wheat purchase with Josiah Stowell, the narrative glosses over the treasure hunting activities of the family. Joseph Jr had met Emma because he had boarded with her father Isaac while employed by Stowell as a treasure hunter.²⁸ In fact, it was the very disrepute of the Stowell treasure hunt that had contributed markedly to Isaac Hale's rejection of the young suitor.
4. Narratively speaking, the joyful anticipation of the new daughter-in-law helps to set up the imminent disappointment of the impending dispossession attempt against the Smith family's farm.²⁹

Still in 1845, and based on Martha Jane Coray's notes, but including additional research and editing, the Corays produced at least two notebooks with a clean-copy manuscript history. One copy was presented to the LDS church.³⁰ The other, Lucy Mack Smith's personal copy, formed the basis for Orson Pratt's 1853 edition of the memoirs, printed in Liverpool.³¹

A comparison shows that the Corays' contribution was significant:³² whole passages were struck or severely condensed³³ and entire new passages added, at times by leveraging additional sources.³⁴ Other adjustments helped the logical flow of the narrative.³⁵

Pratt's edition, unless they worked from a different stage of the manuscript,³⁶ did not follow the fair-copy verbatim either. Again, whole passages were struck.³⁷

²⁸ See also the discussion on page 103 below.

²⁹ Smith, (1844–1845), p.53.

³⁰ Smith, (1845).

³¹ Smith, (1853).

³² The synoptic edition of the rough draft history and Pratt's edition in Dan Vogel's *Early Mormon Documents*, Volume I, is extremely helpful in analyzing those changes, but restricted to book 2, that is, the nuclear family; cf Vogel, (1996), pp.227-450. The synoptic edition in Anderson, (2001) provides the entire text.

³³ E.g. the denunciation of the United States for not enforcing her family's right to due process, cf. *ibid.*, p.21f.

³⁴ E.g. *pars pro toto*, the introduction of the letter by Horace Stanly [sic RCK] into the Stephen Mack narrative, cf. Smith, (1853), pp.30-33.

³⁵ The Corays led with the Stephen Mack wedding present, from the ginseng incident—cf. Smith, (1844–1845), bk. 2, pp.7-8—to the beginning of the marriage—cf. Smith, (1845), p.38, and added the details about Mr John Mudget's contribution.

³⁶ Richard L. Anderson has warned that some differences may be due to the possibility that the clean copies produced by the Corays differed; cited in Vogel, (1996), p.227.

³⁷ Consider the closing *laudatio* of her brother Stephen Mack's patriotism—cf. Smith, (1845), p.23, which is missing in Smith, (1853), p.33.

Thus, researchers find themselves in an odd bind. Lucy's intentions are obscured by the contributions of her editorial collaborators, who had their own agendas. Yet, though the rough draft manuscript history is most proximate to Lucy's sentiments, it has biographical shortcomings that the various editors attempted to correct or work against.

18.3 Colonel Stephen Mack

The biography of Colonel Stephen Mack is difficult to reconstruct, as separate sources give contradictory information. In this appendix, I will itemize the individual contributions; the details of the bankruptcy of the Old Bank of Michigan are the concerns of the following section.³⁸

18.3.1 Stephen Mack in the Rough Draft

In the rough draft of her memoirs, Lucy gives the following information about her brother.³⁹

- In 1787, at 21 years of age, Stephen established himself, at Gilsum in merchandising. Stephen next setup a store and a very large tavern in Tunbridge. He cultivated an extensive farm.⁴⁰
- In 1796, Stephen gave \$1,000 to Lucy as a wedding present^{41, 42}
- Around 1803, Stephen rented out commercial real estate in Tunbridge to the ginseng merchant Stevens for manufacturing purposes.⁴³ Stephen traveled to Boston with \$1,800 to pay off the "demands against us" for the Smith Srs and brought back a receipt.⁴⁴
- Between 1807 and 1820, Stephen operated two wholesale and retail establishments in Detroit, where he also served as a captain under General Hull during the War of 1812. During the occupation of Detroit, he lost his merchandise but not his funds, thanks to the help of an employee.⁴⁵
- Sometime during his time at Detroit, Stephen Mack owned a boat on Lake Erie, which was purchased from his estate by his former employee, Captain Blake; the

³⁸ Cf. below on page p.535.

³⁹ All the date information is derived from other sources (Anderson, [2001], p.287), as Lucy herself provides almost no date information.

⁴⁰ Smith, (1844–1845), bk.1, p.14.

⁴¹ Ibid., bk.2, p.7.

⁴² In comparison, Lemuel Durfee bought the developed Smith family farm, 29 years later, for \$1,135; cf. Manchester, New York land records, 1820-1830, summarized in Vogel, (2000), p.427.

⁴³ Smith, (1844–1845), bk.2, p.6.

⁴⁴ Ibid., bk.2, p.8.

⁴⁵ Ibid., bk.1, p.14.

boat would transport Lucy and the other Manchester church members from Buffalo to Ohio.⁴⁶

- After 1820, Stephen moved his family first to Detroit, and then⁴⁷ to Pontiac [in Michigan RCK], where he set up his business, built a grist mill and a cotton factory, and purchased two farms.⁴⁸ In nearby Rochester, he built a grist mill and a saw mill. Upon his death in 1826, he left his “family with legacy of \$50,000 clear of incumbrances”.⁴⁹

18.3.2 Stephen Mack in the Clean Draft

The clean draft of the memoirs expands upon the social and economic information of this already impressive biography in several ways, often by relying on a letter by a former acquaintance from Vermont, Mr Horace Stanly [sic RCK] of Tunbridge.

- The wedding present in 1796 had been a combined gift from Stephen and his business partner John Mudgett, who pooled their respective cash contributions of \$500.⁵⁰
- Stephen also operated a tinning business in Tunbridge (possibly together with Mudgett).⁵¹
- Between 1810 and 1820, Stephen Mack only sporadically visited his wife and children, who had remained behind in Tunbridge, Vermont.⁵²
- Stephen’s business in Detroit was successful enough that he had a beautiful house, which was used to quarter British officers,⁵³ and kept thousands of dollars in his counting room.⁵⁴
- In 1818, as the agent of the Pontiac company, Stephen was instrumental in the founding of Pontiac, Oakland County, Michigan, and financed the first turnpike from Pontiac to Detroit out of his own pocket. He also funded public works to give employment to the local poor.⁵⁵
- In Pontiac, Stephen Mack engaged in farming and building, and operated a saw and a flour mill.⁵⁶

⁴⁶Smith, (1844–1845), bk. 11, p.7.

⁴⁷Ibid., bk.1, p.14.

⁴⁸Ibid., bk.1, p.15.

⁴⁹Ibid., bk.1, p.15.

⁵⁰ Smith, (1845), p.38 (= Smith, (1853), p.45)

⁵¹ Smith, (1845), p.20 (= Smith, (1853), p.31)

⁵² Smith, (1845), p.20 (= Smith, (1853), p.31)

⁵³ Smith, (1845), p.22 (= Smith, (1853), p.32)

⁵⁴ Smith, (1845), p.23 (= Smith, (1853), p.32)

⁵⁵ Smith, (1845), p. 20 (= Smith, (1853), p.31)

⁵⁶Ibid., p.31.

- By November of 1820, his mercantile business had expanded so that he operated several stores in Michigan and Ohio, one of which employed six clerks.⁵⁷
- Steven represented Oakland County at the territorial council.⁵⁸

18.3.3 Stephen Mack and the Oakland County Historians

The Oakland county historians provide additional economic information about Stephen Mack.

- The historians debate whether Mack operated a hotel⁵⁹ or a tavern⁶⁰. Either way, apparently it was one of the first painted houses in the neighborhood. The establishment was located along a sidearm of the White River, locally known as “The Branch”, and known for its scenic setting.⁶¹
- During the 1800s, Stephen Mack became a colonel in the Green Mountain regiments of Vermont⁶² and began to reorient himself commercially. Durant gives an upper bound of 1810 for Mack’s relocation to Detroit.⁶³
- Mack, Conant & Sibley built the first dam in Pontiac, and there the first sawmill, during the winter of 1818-1819.⁶⁴
- Colonel Mack built a distillery in 1823 and a woolen mill that did carding, spinning and weaving in 1824.⁶⁵
- Durant decisively challenges the notion of a large estate left by Stephen Mack.⁶⁶ Stephen Mack had been the bondsman for the cashier of the Bank of Michigan, James McClosky or McCloskey, who “defaulted to a large amount”, and the compensation of the loss left the estate broke.⁶⁷

⁵⁷Ibid., p.31.

⁵⁸ The Stanly letter implausibly has Colonel Mack serving on the territorial council of Michigan Territory for Oakland County in 1828 *ibid.*, p.31, two years after Colonel Mack’s death, rather than in 1824 Durant, (1877), p.21. I am unaware of a copy of the Stanly letter outside the quotations in the fair copy, against which to check these mistakes. The Pratt edition of 1853 Smith, (1853) inherits these errors.

⁵⁹Durant, (1877), p.70.

⁶⁰Seeley, (1912), p.75.

⁶¹ Cf. *Gazetteer of Towns: Gazetteer of Orange County, VT. 1762-1888. History of the Town of Tunbridge*, quoted in <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~vermont/OrangeTunbridge.html>

⁶²Durant, (1877), MH, p.i.

⁶³*Ibid.*, p.70.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p.70.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p.71.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p.71.

⁶⁷ Durant seems to imply that the defaulted cashier had led to the collapse of the Bank of Michigan, but the bank did in fact not collapse until the big banking crisis of 1837; cf. Palmer, (1905), pp.418-421.

... his [i.e. Colonel Stephen Mack's RCK] entire estate, with the exception of a moiety saved as dower for the widow, was absorbed in the settlement, and his heirs were virtually left penniless.⁶⁸

18.3.4 How the Bank of Michigan Made Colonel Mack Poor

Since there is a huge discrepancy between “penniless”⁶⁹ or “insolvent”⁷⁰ and “\$50,000 clear of incumbrances”⁷¹, I will briefly expand upon this issue.

In 1818, Stephen Mack had been one of the incorporators in the establishment of the Bank of Michigan,⁷² and he was a director until at least 1825.⁷³ James McCloskey had been the Bank's cashier since December 1818. The term “cashier” then designated the day-to-day operations manager of a bank.⁷⁴ As part of his employment, McCloskey had given a bond of \$20,000 against keeping his obligations toward the Bank of Michigan.⁷⁵ Stephen Mack was one of the bondsmen on that bond.

In 1824 Massachusetts capitalist David Stone took up \$100,000 of stock in the bank and sent Eurotas P. Hastings, Esq. of the Bank of Geneva (probably the one in New York), to investigate the state of affairs. At a board meeting on February 1, 1825, Hastings was elected to the board of directors, and with two other directors, Ralph Wadhams and Henry J. Hunt, formed a committee to investigate the books. During the investigation, “a defalcation of \$10,300 was discovered”.⁷⁶ The explanations of McCloskey were unsatisfactory, and he was removed forcefully from the bank on May 16th, 1825⁷⁷ and formally dismissed on May 18th, 1825.⁷⁸ The temporary management of the bank devolved on Mr Hastings.⁷⁹ It was at this point that Stephen Mack's fortunes became intimately tied to the cashier's.

The bondsmen came forward with a proposition that the bank should sue McCloskey, and if a judgement should be rendered against him, that they would secure one-half of the amount.⁸⁰

And in 1837, this was not because of McCloskey, but due to the policies of the US government after 1832, when the Bank of Michigan became one of those institutions, in lieu of the old Bank of the United States, charged with disbursing public monies; cf. Palmer, (1905), p.418f.

⁶⁸Durant, (1877), p.71.

⁶⁹Ibid., p.71.

⁷⁰Blume, (1935-1940a), p.73.

⁷¹Smith, (1844-1845), bk.1, p.15.

⁷²Palmer, (1905), p.411.

⁷³Blume, (1935-1940a), p.72.

⁷⁴Von Wagoner, (1994), p.182.

⁷⁵Blume, (1935-1940a), p.430.

⁷⁶Palmer, (1905), p.412.

⁷⁷Blume, (1935-1940a), p.435; Palmer, (1905), p.414

⁷⁸Blume, (1935-1940a), pp.432f.

⁷⁹Palmer, (1905), p.414.

⁸⁰Ibid., p.414.

McCloskey's trial started in October 1825⁸¹, but no clear charges were filed until March of 1826. The McCloskey team only responded in October of 1826, when the Bank of Michigan legal team requested default judgement for want of plea. At that time, four of the corporators and presumable bondsmen on the \$20,000 bond were charged as well, to wit: Henry J. Hunt, Gabriel Godfroy, Stephen Mack, and Austin E. Wing. At that point, Henry Hunt seems to have been dead already.⁸²

After a flurry of filings and motions from October to November of 1826, depositions were requested from New York City, and the whole affair fell quiet again. On November 11 of that year, Stephen Mack died, and on December 2, his sons Almon and John M. became administrators for his estate.⁸³

Over a year later, in December of 1827, after four days of presentation of evidence, as the Detroit Gazette noted in its December 25, 1827 edition, a jury handed down a conviction for McCloskey, awarding \$10,300 in damages and \$36.77 in court costs to the Bank of Michigan.⁸⁴

The motions for retrial and for arrest of judgement, filed by McCloskey's lawyer Cyprian Stevens,⁸⁵ could delay the inevitable for only another year. Perhaps it was this feeling that convinced Almon Mack to request probate judge Ogden Clarke, Esq, Oakland County, to discharge him as an administrator of the Stephen Mack estate.⁸⁶

In December 1828, the motions for McCloskey were struck down,⁸⁷ the cases against the dead bondsmen Hunt and Mack dismissed, and the cases against Godfroy and Wing discontinued.⁸⁸ Equally, John M. received a judgement against Almon and had the probate court verdict reversed, reinstating Almon as an estate administrator.

With the December 1828 confirmation, the verdict against McCloskey remained in effect, and the former cashier was sentenced to pay the additional \$20,000 in bond penalty as well. Unfortunately, McCloskey had already defaulted back in May of 1825,⁸⁹ when a search of McCloskey's premises revealed no trace of the missing \$10,300.

It is not entirely clear why Stephen Mack's estate remained the one to foot the entire bill. Durant speculated that Mack was the only one who could afford to pay,⁹⁰ which, though plausible, seems hardly just. Not many estates could have been able to pay over \$30,000, but even the Stephen Mack estate was left penniless thereafter.

⁸¹ For details on the trial and its side shows, see the section the trial with a detailed chronology pp.537-542 below.

⁸²William Wirt Blume, ed. (1935-1940b). *Transactions of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Michigan, 1805-1836*. Vol. 1824-1835 v2. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, p.67.

⁸³Blume, (1935-1940a), p.509.

⁸⁴Blume, (1935-1940b), p.98.

⁸⁵Blume, (1935-1940a), p.437.

⁸⁶Ibid., p.509.

⁸⁷Blume, (1935-1940b), p.139.

⁸⁸Ibid., p.142.

⁸⁹Palmer, (1905), p.414.

⁹⁰Durant, (1877), p.71.

18.4 The 1825 Defalcation of the Bank of Michigan

The following information about the incident is compiled transcriptions of the Michigan Supreme Court cases, edited by Wilhelm W. Blume⁹¹, as well as the discussion of the Old Bank of Michigan by Friend Palmer in the *Michigan Old Pioneer and Historical Collection*.⁹²

In December of 1828, James McCloskey, cashier of the Bank of Michigan from 1818 to 1825, was convicted of defrauding the Bank of Michigan of \$10,300, and charged with paying \$20,000 in bond against his failed obligations to the bank, plus \$33.76 in court damages. James McCloskey had already defaulted back in May of 1825.⁹³ Therefore, the bondsmen found themselves accountable for over \$30,000 in defalcation and bond money to the Bank of Michigan.

One of McCloskey's bondsmen had been Colonel Stephen Mack. With the death of Stephen Mack in 1826, his estate had taken on that financial and legal responsibility. With the death of Henry J. Hunt and the discontinuation of the cases against Gabriel Godfroy and Austin E. Wing in 1828, the Stephen Mack estate found itself the only financially capable legal entity left standing and thus responsible for the full amount. The settlement left the estate penniless,⁹⁴ prompting one of the sons, Almon Mack, to attempt to relinquish his position as executor of the estate against the protests of his brother John M. Mack.⁹⁵

18.4.1 Case Number Mapping

- James McCloskey's trial at the Michigan Supreme Court had case number 84/1825, 1136 in Blume's transcriptions.⁹⁶
- Henry J. Hunt's trial at the Michigan Supreme Court had case number 96/1825, 1196 in Blume's transcriptions.⁹⁷
- Gabriel Godfroy's trial at the Michigan Supreme Court had case number 97/1825, 1199 in Blume's transcriptions.⁹⁸
- Colonel Stephen Mack's trial at the Michigan Supreme Court had case number 98/1825, 1200 in Blume's transcriptions.⁹⁹

⁹¹ Blume, (1935-1940a); Blume, (1935-1940b).

⁹² Palmer, (1905).

⁹³ Ibid., p.414.

⁹⁴ Durant, (1877), p.71.

⁹⁵ Blume, (1935-1940a), p.509.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p.56.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p.70.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p.71.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p.71.

- Austin E. Wing's trial at the Michigan Supreme Court had case number 99/1825, 1201 in Blume's transcriptions.¹⁰⁰.
- John M. Mack's protest against Almo Mack's Petition to be relieved as administrator of the late Stephen Mack's estate had case number .../1828, 1285 in Blume's transcriptions.¹⁰¹.

18.4.2 Key Events in the McCloskey Trial

- Monday, October 3, 1825, Journal p.21,¹⁰² ruling to bring body of James McCloskey into court.
- Monday, October 31, 1825, Journal p.40,¹⁰³ James McCloskey brought into court.
- Monday, March 6, 1826, Attorney A. G. Whitney for the Bank of Michigan¹⁰⁴ filed indorsement Paper Nr. 9, for the payment of \$20,000 that McCloskey had bonded himself with to the Bank of Michigan on December 30, 1818 as providing upon request by his obligatory writing, "Sealed with his Seal".
- Thursday, October 12, 1826, Journal p.98,¹⁰⁵ motion for judgement by default for want of plea.
- Friday, October 13, 1826, Journal p.101,¹⁰⁶ default judgement overruled, defendant to plead issuably in two days after receipt of Copy of the Bond.
- Monday, October 16, 1826, Attorney Leib Stevens &c filed indorsement Paper Nr. 13, the plea for the defendant,¹⁰⁷ quotes the relative section of the obligation referred to in Paper Nr 9. above in full, which spells out the conditions under the adherence to which the bond becomes "void and of no effect". Defendant alleges that he fulfilled the obligations and thus the court should decide whether the President, Directors and Company of the Bank of Michigan "ought to have and maintain their aforesaid action thereof against him".
- Friday, October 20, 1826, Attorneys Larned, Farnsworth & Goodwin filed indorsement Paper Nr 14, the replication and assignment of breaches, in open Court¹⁰⁸, which enumerated five breaches of the obligations in response to the defendant's plea

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p.71.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p.98.

¹⁰²Blume, (1935-1940b), p.15.

¹⁰³Ibid., p.28.

¹⁰⁴Blume, (1935-1940a), p.430.

¹⁰⁵Blume, (1935-1940b), p.66.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p.67.

¹⁰⁷Blume, (1935-1940a), pp.430f.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp.432f.

from October 16, 1826. The first breach was to fail to keep safe a sum of twelve thousand dollars, which the plaintiff defaulted on. The second breach was the failure to keep regular books and accounts of all businesses and transactions. The third breach was not to hand over the \$12,000 upon termination of plaintiff's employment, as the obligation specifies, on May 18, 1825. The fourth breach¹⁰⁹ consists in that McClosk[e]y "fraudulently and deceitfully embezzled from the plaintiffs" the \$12,000. The fifth breach was not providing "true and Correct abstracts of the funds of the Company ascertaining the amount of debts and credits, the money on hand whether specie or notes and the amount of notes in circulation".

- Friday, October 20, 1826, Journal p.111,¹¹⁰ defendant two days to submit plea.
- Thursday, October 26, 1826, Journal p.120, William Wirt Blume, ed. (1935-1940b). *Transactions of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Michigan, 1805-1836*. Vol. 1824-1835 v2. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, p.80 rescinding of giving time to plead to defendant
- Monday, November 6, 1826, Attorney Cyprian Stevens for the defendant filed indorsement Paper Nr 16. in open Court¹¹¹ William Wirt Blume, ed. (1935-1940a). *Transactions of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Michigan, 1805-1836*. Vol. 1824-1835 v1. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, pp.433-435, which challenges that the sum of \$12,000 is not the sum put into his care. The indorsement then refutes each breach Ibid., p.434, namely that the monies put into his care were kept safely; that the books were kept accurately; that he did not owe any sums when removed from office, especially not any \$12,000; that he did not embezzle any sum whatever; and ibid., p.435 that he provided true and correct abstracts whenever requested to do so. And finally, the plaintiff points out that "citizens and strangers" were present in the bank with the President's and the Directors' permission during the plaintiff's work-related travels. And that on May 16, 1825, the keys of the Bank were wrested from the defendant by force by the President,¹¹² the defendant was forcibly removed from the bank (two days prior to his dismissal), and other people were allowed to go into the bank, by the President and the Directors, and "have free access to the Books, papers, specie, notes, deposits & other property of said Bank belonging to the Plaintiffs and others", effectively making it impossible for defendant to keep up his duties.
- Friday, November 10, 1826, Journal p.124,¹¹³ taking depositions of John Oscar Fox and Jacob Anthony of New York City as evidence

¹⁰⁹Blume, (1935-1940a), p.433.

¹¹⁰Blume, (1935-1940b), p.74.

¹¹¹ I am unclear as to why that is not in the list of the journal entries.

¹¹² See also Palmer, (1905), p.414.

¹¹³Blume, (1935-1940b), p.83.

- Friday, November 24, 1826, Attorneys Larned, Farnsworth & Goodwin for the plaintiffs filed indorsement Paper Nr. 17,¹¹⁴ their “Demurrer” to the defendant’s rejoinder from November 6, 1826, where they pointed out that the rejoinder was “insufficient in law to bar the said plaintiffs from maintaining their aforesaid action”, and that they were not required to answer the same. They also pointed out that two rejoinders were effectively filed, with two different excuses for the same breaches, and that the rejoinder was “uncertain informal and insufficient”.

To this Demurrer, Attorney Cyprian Stevens of the defendant, rejoined¹¹⁵ that defendant had “alleged sufficient matter in law to preclude” the action against him, and that the plaintiffs neither answer nor deny his rejoinder.

- Wednesday, December 5, 1827, Attorney Cyprian Stevens files indorsement Paper Nr. 24 for the defendant,¹¹⁶ requesting that the Plaintiffs produce “all the Books, records, papers & journals of the Bank of Michigan in relation to this case”, so that these may furnish evidence for the trial.
- Tuesday, December 11, 1827, Journal p.138,¹¹⁷ Rejoinder, demurrer & joinder withdrawn by leave of court upon defendant’s request.
- Monday, December 17, 1827, Journal p.146,¹¹⁸ jury sworn in, which includes James Trowbridge¹¹⁹ and Peter Desnoyers.¹²⁰
- Tuesday, December 18, 1827, Journal p.147,¹²¹ examination of plaintiffs’ testimony before jury
- Wednesday, December 19, 1827, Journal p.148,¹²² continuation of examination of plaintiffs’ testimony before jury
- Thursday, December 20, 1827, Journal p.149,¹²³ jury retires to consultation; Court records effort of witnesses: Charles J. Lanman, nine days and forty miles travel; Jairus Baldwin, eighteen days and twenty miles travel.

¹¹⁴Blume, (1935-1940a), pp.435f.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p.436.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p.436.

¹¹⁷Blume, (1935-1940b), p.91.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p.96.

¹¹⁹ James Trowbridge was perhaps a relation of Charles C. Trowbridge, the cashier of the Michigan Bank since 1825; cf. Palmer, (1905), p.417. See also Fn 125 on page p.540 below.

¹²⁰ Peter Desnoyers was one of the founding corporators of the Bank of Michigan; cf. *ibid.*, p.411.

¹²¹Blume, (1935-1940b), p.97.

¹²²Ibid., p.97.

¹²³Ibid., p.98.

- Friday, December 21, 1827, Journal p.150,¹²⁴ jury finds for the plaintiffs on all five counts of breaches, awarding \$10,336.77 in damages on breach number three; all jury members except Peter Desnoyers¹²⁵ discharged “with the thanks of the Court”.

The verdict was recorded as indorsement Paper Nr. 27¹²⁶, which notes that the finding was “Done at the Jury Room in Detroit this 21st Dec’ [sic RCK] 1827—at 2 OClock A.M.” and repeats the name of all twelve members of the jury.

- Monday, December 24, 1827, Journal p.152,¹²⁷ defendant gets new window for filing motions for a new enlarged trial.
- Tuesday, December 25, 1827, the *Detroit Gazette* runs an article on the trial based on the volunteer court reporting of a “gentleman who had leisure to attend the trial”, a multi-day affair that “occupied the court . . . for four days” [i.e. Dec 17-21, RCK?]. The *Detroit Gazette* commented on the amount of evidence provided and the emergent picture of laxity of oversight through the President and the Directors, concluding that “gross mismanagement was committed” by these.

The errors and false statements in the books commenced in March 1819 already, and such “depredations” continued until 1825, when Mr Hastings was instrumental in performing an audit of the books by committee. The committee investigated and determined a “deficiency in the funds” amounting to \$1,314 “and some cents”. The cashier also had taken \$7,200 from a wooden box in the vault, money that belonged to the Receiver of Public Moneys of the United States for the Detroit Land Office, under Colonel Lanman.¹²⁸

The trial proved that the cashier helped himself habitually to monies entrusted to him; pocketed transfers from the Branch Bank of the United States in New York City without properly crediting them; granted loans to individuals while keeping the interest; and helped himself to loose cash without record keeping.

Finally, the *Detroit Gazette* reported that during the trial there were competing ways of computing the total damages, ranging from “upwards of eleven thousand dollars” to “ten thousand and seventy-seven dollars and seventy cents”, with the Jury performing their own “variant” calculations, resulting in the verdict of \$10,300.¹²⁹

¹²⁴Blume, (1935-1940b), p.98.

¹²⁵ The fact that James Trowbridge was also discharged might suggest that perhaps he was not interestingly related to Charles C. Trowbridge, the cashier, at least not for the purposes of the court.

¹²⁶Blume, (1935-1940a), pp.436f.

¹²⁷Blume, (1935-1940b), p.99.

¹²⁸ Cf. Palmer, (1905), p.413, who gives the full name as Charles J. Lanman and locates the office at Monroe.

¹²⁹ The court reporter seemed to confuse the sum of defalcation and costs of the trial with the defalcation proper, as the *Detroit Gazette* reports the “verdict . . . to be a little upwards of ten thousand three hundred dollars”. Later historians, such as *ibid.*, p.414, considered the sum to be \$10,300 only, which was established in their narratives from the outset, that is in May 1825.

- Thursday. December 27, 1827, Attorney Cyprian Stevens filed indorsement Paper Nr. 29, motions and reasons for New Trial¹³⁰ with the clerk “before 10 O’Clock am”, alleging mistrial, because (1) “the verdict of the jury was contrary to law and evidence”; (2) that the jury had received knowledge of the Judge in charge of the Jury “from his own personal knowledge”; (3) that the objection against witness D. Cooper as incompetent, though he knew nothing without the books by his own admissions, was overruled; (4) that no loss to the Bank had been proven; (5) that the defalcation reporting committee did not consist of bonded stock holders, and was thus illegal; that the deposition from New York City contained references to drafts, papers and Books in a branch bank in New York City, without including those as an annex—another overruled objection; and (7) that the jury had remained unattended by their sworn officer at times.

On the same day, Attorney Cyprian Stevens also filed indorsement Paper Nr. 30, motion in arrest, “to be moved provided the privious [sic!] motion for New Trial does not prevail,¹³¹ again with the clerk “before 10 O’Clock am”. The motion to arrest judgement argued eight points, to wit: (1) that both the Charter for the Bank of Michigan and the law that created that charter were void, since the law was neither authorised by the law of Congress nor the Northwest Ordinance of 1787; (2) that the Bond was a joint one, signed by several people, with an annexed condition, “which was not set forth in the Plaintiffs declaration”; (3) the Plaintiffs assign five breaches, when the law allows only for one; (4) the demurrer & plea had been consensually withdrawn without prejudice to either party;¹³² that (5) McCloskey had not been proved to be a legally appointed cashier, nor (6) was he ever, nor did he hold that position for longer than one year from the date of the Bond; (7) the discharge from the Bank before May 18, 1825, was proved; (8) the verdict is bad because the jury found without damages for the Plaintiffs in all five but issue number three.

- Tuesday, May 20, 1828, Journal p.190, Blume, (1935-1940b), p.119 continued *nisi*
- Friday, December 12, 1828, Journal p.234, Ibid., p.139 attorney for defendant Stevens withdraws, motion for new trial overruled.

... it is considered by the Court that the said plaintiffs do recover against the said James McCloskey the sum of Twenty thousand Dollars being the amount of the penalty of the Bond upon which this action is founded, to be discharged upon the payment of the Ten thousand Three hundred and thirty six Dollars and seventy seven cents being the amount of the verdict of the Jury in this case together with the costs of suit.

¹³⁰Blume, (1935-1940a), p.437.

¹³¹Ibid., p.437.

¹³² I am unclear what Stevens wanted to happen instead.

From a modern point of view, among the intriguing incidents in the trial of James McCloskey is the fact that the founding corporator¹³³ and former Director of the bank, Peter Desnoyers,¹³⁴ who was at least implicitly chastised for his lax oversight by the trial and the *Daily Gazette*, was allowed to be on the jury.

This fact was not among the many problems that Cyprian Stevens, the attorney for James McCloskey, complained about regarding this trial; unless the complaint about the judge of the jury giving information from his personal knowledge—cf. claim 2 in paper 29 on page 541 above—is a dense reference to that situation.

18.4.3 Key Events in Henry J. Hunt's Trial

- Friday, October 13, 1826, Journal p.101¹³⁵, death of the defendant suggested.
- Monday, December 10, 1827, Journal p.137¹³⁶, continued *nisi*.
- Tuesday, May 20, 1929, Journal p.190¹³⁷, continued by consent.
- Tuesday, December 16, 1828, Journal p.239¹³⁸, abated by death of Defendant and on motion of Goodwin of Counsel for plaintiffs. Case dismissed.

18.4.4 Key Events in Gabriel Godfroy's Trial

- Friday, October 13, 1826, Journal p.101¹³⁹, Attorney for defendant Cole moves that default be taken off and time to plea granted.
- Saturday, October 14, 1826, Journal p.103¹⁴⁰, agreed by the counsel for the parties, that the default be taken off for want of a plea; defendant has time to plead until and including first Monday in June 1827 (= June 4, 1827).
- Monday, December 10, 1827, Journal p.137¹⁴¹, continued *nisi*.
- Tuesday, May 20, 1929, Journal p.190¹⁴², continued by consent.
- Tuesday, December 16, 1828, Journal p.239¹⁴³, on motion of Goodwin of Counsel for plaintiffs, discontinued.

¹³³Palmer, (1905), p.411.

¹³⁴Ibid., p.413.

¹³⁵Blume, (1935-1940b), p.67.

¹³⁶Ibid., p.91.

¹³⁷Ibid., p.119.

¹³⁸Ibid., p.142.

¹³⁹Ibid., p.67.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p.69.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p.91.

¹⁴²Ibid., p.119.

¹⁴³Ibid., p.142.

18.4.5 Key Events in Stephen Mack's Trial

- Friday, October 13, 1826, Journal p.101¹⁴⁴, Attorney for defendant Cole moves that default be taken off and time to plea granted.
- Saturday, October 14, 1826, Journal p.103¹⁴⁵, agreed by the counsel for the parties, that the default be taken off for want of a plea; defendant has time to plead until and including first Monday in June 1827 (= June 4, 1827).
- Monday, December 10, 1827, Journal p.137¹⁴⁶, continued *nisi*.
- Tuesday, May 20, 1929, Journal p.190¹⁴⁷, continued by consent.
- Tuesday, December 16, 1828, Journal p.239¹⁴⁸, abated by death of Defendant and on motion of Goodwin of Counsel for plaintiffs. Case dismissed.

18.4.6 Key Events in Austin E. Wing's Trial

- Friday, October 13, 1826, Journal p.101¹⁴⁹, Attorney for defendant Cole moves that default be taken off and time to plea granted.
- Saturday, October 14, 1826, Journal p.103¹⁵⁰, agreed by the counsel for the parties, that the default be taken off for want of a plea; defendant has time to plead until and including first Monday in June 1827 (= June 4, 1827).
- Thursday, January 18, 1827, William Woodbridge of Detroit writes to Austin E. Wing, then in Washington, DC.¹⁵¹
- Monday, December 10, 1827, Journal p.137¹⁵², continued *nisi*.
- Tuesday, May 20, 1929, Journal p.190¹⁵³, continued by consent.
- Tuesday, December 16, 1828, Journal p.239¹⁵⁴, on motion of Goodwin of Counsel for plaintiffs, discontinued.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p.67.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p.69.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p.91.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p.119.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p.142.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p.67.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p.69.

¹⁵¹Blume, (1935-1940a), p.71.

¹⁵²Blume, (1935-1940b), p.91.

¹⁵³Ibid., p.119.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p.142.

18.4.7 Key Events in John M. Mack's Petition

- Monday, December 1, 1828, indorsement paper Nr. 1 was filed in open Court, the petition in the matter of Almon Mack.¹⁵⁵ John M. Mack argued that he and Almon Mack of Oakland County had been appointed administrators of the Estate of Stephen Mack on or about December 2, 1826. The brothers gave bond jointly and continued their duties until August 9, 1828.

On August 9, 1828, the Judge of Probate, Hon Ogden Clarke Esq, ordered Almon Mack upon his own request relieved from being an administrator, acquitting him of all obligations. But at that time, Almon Mack already held “large sums of money[, RCK] the proceeds of the sale of the personal property of the estate”, as well as “money . . . collected from persons indebted to said estate”, and the probate judge discharged Almon Mack “without requiring [to RCK] render an account of the said sums of money”.¹⁵⁶ Neither had the judge investigated why Almon Mack was suddenly “unsuitable to discharge the aforesaid trust reposed in him”.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, John M. Mack did not even discover this situation until after the appeal period of the probate court had expired.¹⁵⁸

The paper then offered a statement by Almon Mack, who accepted the truth of his brother's petition, save for the claim that large sums of money had been received, and noted that he had received sufficient notice of the petition. That statement was signed on November 29, 1828, at Pontiac.

The validity of Almon Mack's statement was attested to in court by Gideon O. Whittemore, who would go on to represent John M. at the Court.¹⁵⁹

- Tuesday, December 2, 1828, Journal p.223¹⁶⁰, petition to enter the appeal in this Court.
- Monday, December 8, 1828, Journal p.228¹⁶¹ leave granted by Court to enter appeal upon the Docket of the Court.
- Wednesday, December 10 1828, Journal p.231,¹⁶² John M. Mack placed bond for “payment of intervening Costs and damages”. Almon Mack was called upon to show cause on December 20, 1828 for the Supreme Court not to reverse the decision of the probate court of Oakland County.

¹⁵⁵Blume, (1935-1940a), p.509.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p.509.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p.509.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p.510.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p.510; Blume, (1935-1940b), p.143.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p.134.

¹⁶¹Ibid., p.136.

¹⁶²Ibid., p.138.

On the same day, Gideon O. Whittemore filed indorsement paper Nr. 4, the appeal bond, in open court.¹⁶³ In this appeal bond,¹⁶⁴ Daniel LeRoy and Gideon O. Whittemore bound themselves to probate Judge Ogden Clarke Esq of Oakland; the sum was originall one hundred,¹⁶⁵ but was amended to \$300, and the conditions were that the obligation would be voided if John M. Mack “being interested and aggrieved” at the relief of his brother Almon as an estate administrator, “shall prosecute said appeal to effect . . . & pay all intervening costs & damages & such costs as said supreme Court [s]hall tax against him”.

- Monday, December 15, 1828, Journal p.236¹⁶⁶, Almon Mack appeared in person in court, admitted that no cause could be shown, and the Court revoked and annulled the decree of the Probate Court of Oakland County.
- Thursday, December 18, 1828, Journal p.242¹⁶⁷, the Court costs for the appeal, \$8.93 $\frac{3}{4}$, are settled upon by Almon Mack, upon proposal by council Whittemore.

18.5 Ohio Banks and Capitalization

In their 1977 article, Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer made use of a 1913 article by Coover, a collector of “Antiquated Paper Money”¹⁶⁸, for example in their claims about minimal sufficient stock.¹⁶⁹

The problem underpinning this argument is that the Ohio Bank enumeration that Coover provided is a mixed bag of information. The enumeration ranges from 1803 to 1861 and simply gives names for many of the banks, with no indication when or how long they were in operation. This makes¹⁷⁰ effectively useless, as one cannot count up banks without knowing their temporal overlap to make an argument about sustainability and community size.

The following tables extract those banks for which stock information and dates of operation are provided by Coover. For the capitalization information, see the table on page p.548 below; for the circulation information, see the table on page p.549 below.

Notice that the following corrections have been made to the data provided in the narrative:

- For the Mount Vernon Owl Creek Bank, the capital stock of 1816 is corrected to \$250,000 from the erroneous \$150,000. The paid-up stock is computed from the 1837

¹⁶³Blume, (1935-1940a), pp.510f.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p.510.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p.511.

¹⁶⁶Blume, (1935-1940b), p.140.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p.143.

¹⁶⁸Coover, (1913), p.301.

¹⁶⁹Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.433 Fn 62.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p.433 Fn 61.

Master Commissioner report, while the circulation is taken from the 1837 Master Commissioner report.

For details on the Owl Creek Bank corrections, see pages pp.309ff, especially p.313, in the main text above.

- For the Bank of Hamilton, the itemized narrative gives \$100,000, but the quoted source from the *History of Hamilton County* gives \$300,000 for the nominal capitalization.
- Any paid-up stock has been truncated to the dollar amount only.

Furthermore, we only assume that capital stock is paid up when Coover explicitly states that it is.

18.5.1 Notes

- The Chillicothe Farmers', Mechanics' and Merchants' Bank was suspected to be fraudulent, though notes issued under these names were circulated.
- The Granville Alexandrian Society suspended payment in 1817.
- The Bank of Hamilton had more issue in 1837 than its stock in 1817 when it was incorporated;¹⁷¹ though of course by then it might have added more stock. When the bank started operations, only slightly more than 10% had been paid in, i.e. \$33,062.68. When the bank closed in 1842, the directors were arrested and sued for issuing "more notes than their charter called for".
- From 1817 to 1839, the dividends of the Lancaster Bank averaged 13%.¹⁷²
- Incorporated in 1808, the Bank of Marietta had a "first safe [that, RCK] was merely a plank chest, barred with iron and secured by a padlock."¹⁷³
- Incorporated in 1812, the Western Reserve Bank of Warren started with a capital of \$100,000, which was extended to \$300,000.¹⁷⁴

During the general suspension of specie payment in 1814 and in 1836 this bank suspended for a few months.¹⁷⁵

- The Bank of West Union failed in 1841.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹Coover, (1913), p.308f.

¹⁷²Ibid., p.309.

¹⁷³Ibid., p.310.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p.319.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., p.319.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p.319.

In addition, the information has been augmented with the following material, drawn from other sources.

- The Canton's Farmers Bank failed April 1838.¹⁷⁷.

18.5.2 Skipped

The following banks were skipped, because they were incorporated after 1838, when Joseph Smith Jr and Sidney Rigdon had departed for Missouri.

- The Columbus Exchange Bank of the State Bank of Ohio, incorporated in 1845.
- The Columbus Franklin Bank of the State Bank of Ohio, incorporated in 1845.
- The Marietta Branch of the State Bank of Ohio, incorporated in 1845.
- The Knox County Branch of the State Bank of Ohio, incorporated in 1848.
- The Portsmouth Branch of the State Bank of Ohio, incorporated in 1846.
- The Wayne County Branch of the State Bank of Ohio, incorporated in 1848.

¹⁷⁷Hill, Rooker, and Wimmer, (1977), p.443.

Table 18.1: 1837 Bank Capitalization Information

City	Bank	Year	Capitalization (\$)	
			Nominal	Paid-Up
Canton	Farmer's Bank	1837		80,000
Chillicothe	Bank of —	1837	500,000	
Cincinnati	Bank of —	1814	140,000	
	Commercial Bank	1829	1,000,000	
	Farmers' & Mechanics' Bank	1813	2,000,000	
	Franklin Bank	1833	1,000,000	
	Lafayette Bank	1834	1,000,000	
	Miami Exporting Company	1803	500,000	292,955
	Bank			
	Ohio Life Insurance & Trust	1834		628,594
	Company			
Circleville	Bank of — (new)	1834	200,000	
Cleveland	Bank of —	1837		205,025
	Commercial Bank of Lake Erie	1837		400,000
Columbus	Clinton Bank	1834		299,500
	Franklin Bank of —	1837		481,500
Dayton	The — Bank	1837		167,203
Granville	Bank of — (Granville Alexan-	1837		146,129
	drian Society)			
Hamilton	Bank of —	1817	300,000	33,062
Lancaster	The — Bank	1837		200,000
Marietta	Bank of —	1837		101,090
Massillon	Bank of —	1837		200,000
Mount Pleasant	Bank of —	1837		194,495
Mount Vernon	Owl Creek Bank	1816	250,000	12,000
New Lisbon	Bank of Columbiana	1837		60,000
Norwalk	Bank of —	1837		161,245
Painesville	Bank of Geauga	1829		87,000
Portsmouth	Commercial Bank of Scioto	1817		268,621
Putnam	Muskingum Bank			123,000
Sandusky	Bank of —	1834		100,000
Steubenville	Farmers' & Mechanics' Bank	1817		273,000
St. Clairsville	Bellmont Bank of —	1816		193,790
Urbana	The — Bank			108,866
Warren	Western Reserve Bank	1812	300,000	165,837
Wooster	Bank of —	1834		150,221
Xenia	Bank of —	1834		100,000
Zanesville	Bank of —	1832		258,262
Zanesville	Muskingum Bank	1812	100,000	

Table 18.2: 1837 Bank Paper Circulation Information

City	Bank	Year	Circulation (\$)
Canton	Farmer's Bank	1837	172,446
Chillicothe	Bank of —	1837	472,477
Cincinnati	Commercial Bank	1837	1,115,548
	Franklin Bank	1837	485,878
	Lafayette Bank	1837	478,083
	Miami Exporting Company	1837	383,645
	Bank		
	Ohio Life Insurance & Trust	1837	392,595
	Company		
Circleville	Bank of — (new)	1837	145,741
Cleveland	Bank of —	1837	242,834
	Commercial Bank of Lake Erie	1837	356,133
Columbus	Clinton Bank	1837	115,046
	Franklin Bank of —	1837	272,396
Dayton	The — Bank	1837	65,612
Granville	Bank of — (Granville Alexan-	1837	101,213
	drian Society)		
Hamilton	Bank of —	1837	106,343
Lancaster	The — Bank	1837	274,423
Marietta	Bank of —	1837	120,271
Massillon	Bank of —	1837	320,181
Mount Pleasant	Bank of —	1837	195,980
Mount Vernon	Owl Creek Bank	1837	26,797
New Lisbon	Bank of Columbiana	1837	150,000
Norwalk	Bank of —	1837	187,874
Painesville	Bank of Geauga	1837	178,813
Portsmouth	Commercial Bank of Scioto	1837	248,857
Putnam	Muskingum Bank	1837	136,876
Sandusky	Bank of —	1837	108,217
Steubenville	Farmers' & Mechanics' Bank	1837	401,281
St. Clairsville	Bellmont Bank of —	1837	273,292
Urbana	The — Bank	1837	157,488
Warren	Western Reserve Bank	1837	213,900
Wooster	Bank of —	1837	194,289
Xenia	Bank of —	1837	69,635
Zanesville	Bank of —	1837	189,626

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¹⁷⁸ <http://ian.macky.net/pat/license.html>, visited 2015-06-08.

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Abstract

A semantic shift took place in the United States of America in the aftermath of the War of 1812. Among the religious movements that formed as a reaction to this shift was early Mormonism, a Millenarian Restorationist movement founded by Joseph Smith Jr. Mormonism used a new revelation, the Book of Mormon, and a new apostolically inspired church organization, including the office of prophet held by Smith Jr, to connect American antiquities to covenant-theological salvation history reaching all the way back to the Old Testament patriarchs. This grounded the Restorationist charismatic expectations and Millenarian self-interpretation of its United States adherents to the Abrahamic covenant of Genesis and in the spiritual gifts of the early Apostolic church.

The innovative religious strategy was coupled with a conservative socio-economic stance. The economic ideal was that of the gentleman farmer as head of a predominantly self-sufficient family. The social relationship between the family heads was intended to be egalitarian and classless. Artisan- and craftsmanship were deemed sufficient to meet non-agrarian needs. Trade and professionalization were suspect as sources of inequality. The resistance to the beginnings of industrialization co-existed with a ready acceptance of the steamboat and the early train.

The dissertation tracks the development of this socio-economic stance through the first fourteen years of the church's existence, from its incorporation in the spring of 1830 in New York, through Ohio and Missouri and Illinois, up to the lynching of Joseph Smith Jr in the summer of 1844. The material is presented through case studies focused on socio-economic problems. In order to correct for the agentive overtones so typical of standard Mormon historiography, both in its supportive and in its detractive stance, the explanatory models of social time from Fernand Braudel's classic *Mediterranean* are transferred to and applied in the nineteenth-century American context.

The first part of the dissertation, entitled "Groundwork", provides the background information for the exposition in the other two parts. The chapter "Methodology" introduces the research hypothesis and discusses the historiographical strategy, including the Braudelian model transfer and the problem of event interpretation. The chapter "Nineteenth-Century Economic Life" gives a sketch of nineteenth-century rural America, the rise of mechanization and transportation improvements, and an outline of the ideal of the gentleman farmer. The chapter "Joseph Smith Jr's Socio-Economic Baseline" enu-

merates the influences on Smith Jr, from both his childhood environment and his family members, as to socio-economic strategies and expectations, with a special focus on the Stowell Spanish silver-mine stock company that Smith Jr joined in the late fall of 1825. The chapter “A New Scripture” sketches the religious expectations of early Mormon converts that the Book of Mormon fulfilled.

The second part is entitled “Case Studies” and tests the research hypothesis through targeted socio-economic examples. The first case study, “Funding the Book of Mormon”, analyses how Joseph Smith Jr drafted and published the Book of Mormon with the help of gentlemen farmers Peter Whitmer Sr, Joseph Knight Sr and Martin Harris. The second study, “Raiding the Campbellites”, introduces another restoration movement, spearheaded by the Scotch father-son team of Thomas and Dr Alexander Campbell, and explains how and why the star preacher of the movement, Sidney Rigdon, and his Kirtland, Ohio congregation converted to Mormonism. The third case study tells the story of the law of “Consecration and Stewardship”, the Mormon program for communitarianism and social equality among the church members. The fourth case study discusses the “United Firm”, an enterprise of the top echelon of the Mormon church leadership. The fifth case study re-evaluates the role of the failed Mormon bank, the Kirtland Safety Society, in the context of Ohio banking. The sixth case study, entitled “Settling Nauvoo”, looks at the economics of purchasing the city on the banks of the Mississippi River in Illinois. The seventh case study, “Ruling Nauvoo” looks at the strategies of the Mormon church leadership to manage a city that grew to be the largest in the state of Illinois by the mid-1840s. The eighth analysis entitled “Nauvoo Loose Ends” combines smaller case studies of the Nauvoo period: the shift in socio-economic policy caused by the influx of British non-agrarian converts; the impotent agricultural association; the economic competition between the highlands and the lowlands in Nauvoo; the dependence of Nauvoo on St Louis. The second part concludes with a chapter that summarizes the overall development of socio-economic policy, updating the research hypothesis in light of the results and discussing systemic problems in the Mormon policy-development approach.

The third and final part, entitled “Models and Narratives”, performs the Braudelien model-transfer experiments, before concluding with a critical review of early Mormonism’s strategy for writing salvation history. The chapter “Braudel’s Mediterranean Models” extracts historiographical models from Braudel’s *magnum opus* that could be applied to explicate the Mormon situation. The chapter “Evaluating Mediterranean Models” analyzes the overlap with the existing case studies, before identifying and applying the model of counterfeiting and the trope of the lawless city-state to the Nauvoo phase. The final chapter, “Salvation History in the Age of Micro History”, locates Mormon salvation history in the nineteenth-century historiographic tradition and identifies the historical agent groups that such a type of salvation history excludes, before suggesting that salvation history in Protestantism could be modernized—under the condition of social differentiation and in spite of the damning critique of Rudolf Bultmann—by drawing upon inspirations from Mormon ancestor research and the strategies of oral history.

Zusammenfassung

In der Nachfolge des Krieges gegen England von 1812 fand in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika ein Kulturwandel statt. Zu den religiösen Bewegungen, die sich als Reaktion auf diesen Kulturwandel verstehen lassen, gehören auch die frühen Mormonen, eine milleniaristische, primitivistische Bewegung die von Joseph Smith Jr gegründet wurde. Die Mormonen benutzten eine neue Offenbarung, das Buch Mormon, und eine neue, apostolisch inspirierte Kirchenorganisation, die auch ein prophetisches Amt vorsah, welches anfangs von Joseph Smith Jr besetzt war, um das antike America durch eine föderaltheologische Interpretation der Heilsgeschichte bis in das Alte Testament hinein mit den Patriarchen in Bezug zu setzen. Dies begründete die primitivistischen charismatischen Erwartungen sowie die milleniaristische Selbst-Darstellung der US-amerikanischen Gläubigen im Abrahamitischen Bund der Genesis und in den Geistgaben der frühen apostolischen Kirche.

Dieser innovative religiöse Ansatz war mit einer konservativen Einstellung gegenüber sozial-wirtschaftlichen Fragestellungen verknüpft. Das Wirtschaftsideal war der “gentleman farmer” als Vorstand eines hauptsächlich selbstversorgenden Haushaltes. Die soziale Beziehung zwischen den Familienhäuptern wurde als gleichwertig und klassenlos vorstellig gemacht. Handel und Professionalisierung waren als mögliche Quellen von Ungleichheit verdächtig. Der Widerstand gegenüber der beginnenden Industrialisierung war ebenso vorhanden wie die begeisterte Aufnahme von Dampfschiff oder der ersten Lokomotive.

Die vorliegende Dissertation verfolgt die Entwicklung dieser sozial-wirtschaftlichen Einstellung durch die ersten vierzehn Jahre dieser Kirche, von der Gründung im Frühjahr 1830 in New York, durch Ohio und Missouri und Illinois, bis hin zur Ermordung von Joseph Smith Jr im Sommer 1844. Die Inhalte werden anhand von Fallstudien erarbeitet, die jeweils sozial-wirtschaftliche Probleme fokussieren. Um die Überbetonung von Handlungspersonen in der üblichen Mormonen-Geschichtsschreibung, sowohl der apologetischen als auch der feindlich eingestellten, zu korrigieren, wird auf die Erklärungsmuster der sozialen Zeit aus Fernand Braudels klassischem Werk, *Das Mittelmeer*, rekurs genommen. Diese Erklärungsmuster werden transferriert und auf den Amerikanischen Kontext des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts angewandt.

Der erste Teil der Dissertation, “Groundwork” (d.h. Grundlagen), vermittelt Basiswissen für die anderen beiden Teile. Im Kapitel “Methodology” (d.h. Methodik) wird die Forschungsfrage vorgestellt und die historiographische Strategie diskutiert, inklusive

des Braudelschen Mustertransfers sowie der Interpretation von Ereignissen. Das Kapitel "Nineteenth-Century Economic Life" bietet einen Überblick über das ländliche Amerika des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, das Aufkommen von Mechanisierung und Verkehrsverbesserungen, und stellt den Idealtyp des "gentleman farmers" (d.h. Grossgrundbesitzer) vor. Das Kapitel "Joseph Smith Jr's Socio-Economic Baseline" (d.h. Joseph Smith Jr's sozio-ökonomische Vorbildung) beschreibt die Einflüsse der Kindheit sowie der erweiterten Familie auf den Mormonenpropheten Joseph Smith Jr in Bezug auf sozio-ökonomische Strategien und Erwartungen, wobei ein besonderer Akzent auf die Gesellschaft zur Auffindung einer vermeintlichen spanischen Silbermine, welcher Joseph Smith Jr im Spätherbst 1825 beitrug, gesetzt wird. Das Kapitel "A new Scripture" (d.h. eine neue Heilige Schrift) beschreibt die religiösen Erwartungen der frühen Konvertiten, die durch das Buch Mormon erfüllt wurden.

Der zweite Teil der Dissertation, "Case Studies" (d.h. Fallstudien), wertet die Leistung der Forschungsfrage durch gezielte sozio-ökonomische Beispiele aus. Die erste Fallstudie, "Funding the Book of Mormon" (d.h. die Finanzierung des Buchs Mormon), untersucht, wie Joseph Smith Jr das Buch Mormon mit der Hilfe der "gentlemen farmer" Peter Whitmer Sr, Joseph Knight Sr und Martin Harris verschriftlicht und publiziert hat. Die zweite Fallstudie, "Raiding the Campbellites" (d.h. die feindliche Übernahme der Campbelliten), stellt eine weitere Restaurations-Bewegung vor, die vom schottischen Vater-Sohn-Team Thomas und Dr Alexander Campbell ins Leben gerufen wurde, und versucht zu erklären, wie und warum der Star-Prediger der Bewegung, Sidney Rigdon, und seine Kirtland, Ohio Gemeinde, zu den Mormonen wechselte. Die dritte Fallstudie handelt von der "Consecration and Stewardship" (d.h. Weihung und Haushalterschaft) Regel, dem Programm for Kommunitarismus und soziale Gleichheit unter den Gemeindemitgliedern bei den Mormonen. Die vierte Fallstudie behandelt die "United Firm" (d.h. die Vereinigte Firma), ein Betrieb der oberste Chargen der Kirchenführung der Mormonen. Die fünfte Fallstudie schätzt den Konkurs der Mormonenbank, der Kirtland Safety Society, durch Rekontextualisierung in die Ohio Bankszene neu ein. Die sechste Fallstudie, "Settling Nauvoo" (d.h. die Besiedlung von Nauvoo), betrachtet die wirtschaftlichen Probleme rund um den Ankauf der Stadt Nauvoo an den Ufern des Mississippi in Illinois. Die siebente Fallstudie, "Reigning Nauvoo" (d.h. Nauvoo Regieren), analysiert die Strategien mit deren Hilfe die Mormonenführung eine Stadt verwaltete welche in der Mitte der 1840er Jahre die größte im Bundestaat Illinois war. Die achte Fallstudie, "Nauvoo Loose Ends" (d.h. Nauvoo Miszellen), sammelt kleiner Fallstudien zur Nauvoo-Phase: die Verschiebung in der sozial-wirtschaftlichen Problemstellung, welche die Zuwanderung der nicht-agrarischen britischen Konvertiten nach sich zog; die nutzlose Agricultural Association (d.h. landwirtschaftliche Genossenschaft); der ökonomische Streit zwischen den Niederungen und dem Hang in Nauvoo; die Abhängigkeit Nauvoos von St Louis. Der zweite Teil schließt mit einem Kapitel daß die Entwicklung der sozial-wirtschaftlichen Problemstellung noch einmal zusammenfaßt, die Forschungsfrage dementsprechend korrigiert und dann systematische Probleme des sozial-wirtschaftlichen Handelns der Mormonenführung thematisiert.

Der dritte und abschließende Teil mit dem Titel "Models and Narratives" (d.h. Muster und Erzählungen) führt das Braudelsche Muster-Transfer-Experiment durch, bevor er mit einer prüfenden Durchsicht der heilsgeschichtlichen Strategie der frühen Mormonen schließt. Das Kapitel "Braudel's Mediterranean Models" (d.h. Braudels Mittelmeer-Muster) gewinnt historiographische Muster von Braudels Hauptwerk die auf die Situation der Mormonen erklärend angewandt werden könnten. Das Kapitel "Evaluating Mediterranean Models" (d.h. Evaluation der Mittelmeer-Muster) analysiert die Redundanz mit den bereits durchgeführten Fallstudien, um dann das Muster der Geldfälschung sowie die Trope des Stadtstaats mit zu vielen Freiheiten auf Nauvoo anzuwenden. Das letzte Kapitel, "Salvation History in the Age of Micro History" (d.h. Heilsgeschichte im Zeitalter der Mikro-Geschichte), weist den historiographischen Kontext der Mormonen-Heilsgeschichte als denjenigen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts nach und benennt die ausgeblendeten historischen Handlungsgruppen, um dann Vorschläge zur Modernisierung von Heilsgeschichte im Protestantismus, unter der Bedingung der funktionalen Ausdifferenzierung der Gesellschaft und trotz der vernichtenden Kritik von Rudolf Bultmann, zu machen, die sich von der Ahnenforschung der Mormonen und den Strategien der Oral History inspirieren läßt.

Curriculum Vitae

Robert Christian Kahlert, born in 1969 in Vienna, studied Computer Science with a minor in History at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, class of 1986, before transferring to the Faculty of Protestant Theology at the University of Vienna in 1990. After a semester each in Zurich and Tübingen, he took his *Magister* in Vienna in 1997 with a master's thesis on Spinoza and Karl Barth; his thesis advisor was Falk Wagner.

From 1997 to 1998, Robert worked as a contract assistant to the chair of philosophy of religion, Jörg Salquarda, at the Department of Systematic Theology, Faculty of Protestant Theology at the University of Vienna.

In the fall of 1998, Robert joined Cycorp Inc, based in Austin, Texas, as an artificial-intelligence researcher. He has published numerous articles on topics such as knowledge representation, natural language processing, and digital humanities.

Robert was an invited keynote speaker at the Languages for Special Purposes 2007 conference in Hamburg, Germany.

He currently resides in Korneuburg, Lower Austria, with his wife, two children, two cats, one rabbit and one mouse.