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# Historical Setting of Mormonism in Manchester, Ontario County, New York

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## Introduction

**T**HIS STUDY will examine the historical events of the Joseph Smith Sr. family residence in the township of Manchester, New York. It will tell about the Smith family and their experiences while residing there. It includes the earliest stories as heard by their neighbors. Another objective is to present documentation relating to the commencement of what became a new religious movement. It will show that Manchester is where the formal organization of the early church commenced.

Discussions about Native Americans who lived in what became Ontario County were held in the Smith home. Lucy Mack Smith, mother and chronicler of this family, is the source for the report of young Joseph Smith Jr. engaging the family in these tales. From what Lucy tells us in her history, these stories and various discussions about the prospect of obtaining a record were mentioned before her son Alvin died in November 1823. The final outcome was the publication in 1830 of a large religious volume titled the Book of Mormon. The present study contains the documents, letters, and revelations produced in Manchester.

## Palmyra, New York

After living in the state of Vermont, Joseph Smith Sr. (1771–1840) decided that it was time to relocate west to Palmyra, New York,<sup>1</sup> the town was in Ontario County. He left prior to his family making the trip. The Smith family included his wife Lucy (1775–1856) and eight children, from ages eighteen years to about nine months. Their

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1. Bonnie J. Hays, *Images of America: Palmyra* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, printed in Great Britain, 2004).

names with dates of birth and death years were: Alvin (1798–1823), Hyrum (1800–1844), Sophronia (1803–76), Joseph Jr. (1805–44), Samuel Harrison (1808–44), William (1811–93), Catherine (1813–1900), and Don Carlos (1816–41). The family made the journey by sled in early 1817 because it was easier than making a journey with the roads wet and muddy.

The Smith family lived on Main Street in Palmyra for the next few years. An important record kept at the time was the Palmyra Highway Tax Record. The town held its annual meeting on the first Tuesday in April. It is evident from the listing of Road District 26 that the west end of Main Street was where the family resided from April 1817 through April 1819. The oldest son, Alvin, remained in the town as he is listed for April 1820.<sup>2</sup> The record of April 1821 indicates that the family was living at the south end of Palmyra Township. The last daughter was born in Palmyra Township on July 18, 1821, and named after her mother Lucy (1821–82). Joseph Sr. and Alvin are also listed for April 1822. As will be explained, the Smiths moved out of Palmyra Township between June 1822 and July 1823.

### Land in Farmington, New York

Joseph Smith Sr. and his oldest son Alvin articulated for ninety-nine-and-one-half acres (rounded to one hundred acres) in the town of Farmington, Ontario County, out of three hundred acres of lot 1. Lucy Mack Smith, wife of Joseph Smith Sr., says in her memoir, “My Husband and 2 oldest sons set themselves about raising the means of paying for 100 Acers of land for which Mr Smith contracted and which was then in the hands of a land agent. Mr [blank] In one years time we made nearly all of the first payment The Agent advised [sic] us to build a log house on the land and commence clearing it we did so. It was not long till we had 30 acers ready for cultivation.”<sup>3</sup>

It is known that Joseph Sr. and Alvin articulated for their land from a November 1825 deed for land south of the Smith property.<sup>4</sup> The land agent that Lucy did not remember was Zachariah Seymour, who was appointed on July 14, 1820, and died July 2, 1822. The Smiths could not complete their final payment to the land agent since he had passed away.

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2. Additional background can be found in H. Michael Marquardt, *The Rise of Mormonism: 1816–1844*, 2nd ed. (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2013), 1–7.

3. Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy's Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 318–19, cited hereafter as *Lucy's Book*. This work includes a textual history, the manuscript draft of 1844–45 and a comparison of the final revised manuscript, completed in 1845, with the 1853 printing. Manuscripts in Church History Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (cited hereafter as LDS Church History Library).

4. Deed recorded in Deed Liber 44:219–21, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York.

Because the articling document for the land has not been located, it is unknown of the exact details of the arrangements for payments. A printed Articles of Agreement would include the date of purchase, the cost per acre, space for recording payments and, in some cases, a stipulation to erect a building, clear land for cultivation within one year and to pay all taxes and assessments. The approximate timing of the signing can be determined from the 1820 United States census for Farmington (enumerated between August 7, 1820 and February 5, 1821) that lists the Joseph Smith family, even though they were still residing in Palmyra.

In 1821 Farmington was divided to create a new township named Burt, renamed Manchester in April 1822. It appears that the Smith family built their log house, cleared land for planting and made other improvements, leaving their Palmyra residence sometime between June 1822 and July 1823. The one hundred acres of lot 1 was located in the northwest corner of Manchester Township. Joseph Sr.'s assessment for July 24, 1823, was \$300 more than the previous year which indicated the work already completed on their new Manchester farm. Palmyra village was where the Smiths did the majority of their business and received letters. In 1823 a newly formed county was formed, placing Palmyra into Wayne County.

### Log Home Location

Lucy Smith stated that the family built a log home on their hundred-acre lot. The precise location is not known. In 1830 Hyrum Smith was taxed for fifteen acres on lot 1. How this relates to Roswell Nichols (married to Mary Durfee, daughter of Lemuel Durfee Sr.) being taxed for one hundred acres on the same lot the record does not indicate. The Smith family could have been working on another portion of the lot. Their log house was where a number of men performed scribal work in making a copy of the original manuscript for the printer to set type for the forthcoming Book of Mormon. Visitors to the Smith log home described their residence as being in Manchester. In addition letters dated 1829 and revelations proclaimed in 1830 give the location as Manchester and were written in the Smith log home.

### Stone Found in a Well on the Chase farm

The Chase family lived in the northern part of the township of Manchester, east of the Smith farm. The parents were Phebe Mason Chase (1772–1854) and Clark Chase (1770–1821). They had ten children. The children enumerated in the 1820 census probably included Mason Chase (1795–?), Willard Chase (1798–1871), Sarah (Sally) Chase (1800–1880), and Edmund Chase (1803–93). What may not be known is that it was on the Chase farm where Joseph Smith Jr. borrowed a peep-stone from Willard Chase who stated:

In the year 1822, I was engaged in digging a well. I employed Alvin and Joseph Smith to assist me; the latter of whom is now known as the Mormon prophet. After digging about twenty feet below the surface of the earth, we discovered a singularly appearing stone, which excited my curiosity. I brought it to the top of the well, and as we were examining it, Joseph put it into his hat, and then his face into the top of his hat. It has been said by Smith, that he brought the stone from the well; but this is false. There was no one in the well but myself. The next morning he came to me, and wished to obtain the stone, alledging that he could see in it; but I told him I did not wish to part with it on account of its being a curiosity, but would lend it. After obtaining the stone, he began to publish abroad what wonders he could discover by looking in it, and made so much disturbance among the credulous part of [the] community, that I ordered the stone to be returned to me again. He had it in his possession about two years.<sup>5</sup>

### Death of Alvin Smith

Lucy Smith mentions “when the month of November 1822 [*sic*; 1823] arrived the House was raised and all the Materials procured for completing the building.” Alvin wanted a frame home for his mother and father to live in. But on November 15, 1823, Alvin took sick. Though doctors came to attend him the sickness worsened. He called his siblings together and gave his dying council. He told his brother Hyrum, “I now want you to go on and finish the House” and to Joseph Jr., “do everything that lays in your power to obtain the records.” On November 19 Alvin died.<sup>6</sup>

There was a rumor in September 1824 that Alvin’s grave had been opened, evidently right after his burial in 1823. So Joseph Sr. and some associates went to the place where he was buried, dug up the body and found that the rumor was false. He placed the following announcement in Palmyra’s *Wayne Sentinel*:

To the Public. Whereas reports have been industriously put in circulation, that my son *Alvin* had been removed from the place of his interment and dissected, which reports, every person possessed of human sensibility must know, are peculiarly calculated to harrow up the mind of a parent and deeply wound the feelings of relations—therefore, for the purpose of ascertaining the truth of such reports, I, with some of my neighbors, this morning repaired to the grave, and removing the earth, found the body which had not been disturbed.

This method is taken for the purpose of satisfying the minds of those who may have heard the report, and of informing those who have put it in circulation, that it is earnestly requested they would desist therefrom; and that it is believed by some, that

5. Affidavit of Willard Chase, Manchester, Ontario County, New York, before Justice of the Peace, Frederick Smith, December 11, 1833, in E. D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville [OH]: Printed and Published by the Author, 1834), 240–41, emphasis omitted.

6. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 349–52.

they have been stimulated more by a desire to injure the reputation of certain persons than a philanthropy for the peace and welfare of myself and friends. JOSEPH SMITH.<sup>7</sup>

After Alvin's death work slowly continued on the frame house. A neighbor, Russell Stoddard (1789–1873), worked on the home and had to bring suit against Joseph Sr. for payment of his labor and the lumber he provided. Stoddard went before Peter Mitchell, Justice of the Peace in Manchester, with his complaint of nonpayment of \$66.59. Justice Mitchell heard the case on February 18, 1825. Joseph Sr. confessed owing Russell the money but he pled that he did not intend to defraud any creditor. The transcript of the judgment against Joseph Smith Sr. was sent to the Common Pleas in Canandaigua:<sup>8</sup>

Ontario Justice Court  
 Russell Stoddard } Before Peter Mitchell Esq one  
 . vs. } of the Justices of the peace in  
 Joseph Smith } & for the County of Ontario  
 Ontario County ss.

Joseph Smith the said defendant in this cause being duly sworn saith that he is honestly & justly indebted to the plaintiff in the above suit in the sum of sixty six dollars & fifty nine cents money of account of the United States it being for work & labour & lumber which the said plaintiff did for me in building a dwelling house which said sum is over & above all just demands which he the said defendant hath against Russell Stoddard the said plaintiff & that the confession of judgment about to be made by him the said defendant for the sum of sixty six dollars & fifty nine cents is not to be made for the purpose of defrauding any creditor.

Joseph Smith

Sworn before me this  
 18<sup>th</sup> day of February 1825  
 Peter Mitchell J. P.

Included in the transcript is a copy of another document which indicated, like the above, that the elder Smith admitted owing Stoddard for services rendered the Smith family:

Russell Stoddard } Before Peter Mitchell Esq  
 vs. } one of the Justices of the  
 Joseph Smith } peace in & for the County of  
 } Ontario

7. "To the Public," *Wayne Sentinel* (Palmyra, New York) 2, no. 1 (September 29, 1824): 3, emphasis retained. The advertisement is dated September 25, 1824. The notice also appeared in the issues of October 6, 13, 20, 27 and November 3, 1824. The placement in the local newspaper was not mentioned in Lucy Smith's family history.

8. "1825 Common Pleas Transcripts," AM21-101, Box No. 19302, Ontario County Records Center and Archives.

I Joseph Smith the defendant in the above cause do hereby confess that I am honestly & justly indebted to Russell Stoddard the above named plaintiff in the sum of sixty six dollars & fifty nine cents money of account of the United States & do hereby authorize you the said Justice to enter judgment against me the said defendant in favour of Russell Stoddard the said plaintiff for the same

Given under my hand this 18<sup>th</sup> day of Feb 1825 Joseph Smith

Russell Stoddard } Peter Mitchell Esq. one of the Justices  
 vs. } of the peace in & for the County  
 Joseph Smith. } of Ontario  
 Ontario County ss

By virtue of the above authorization of Joseph Smith the defendant in this suit I do hereby enter judgment against him the said defendant in favour of Russell Stoddard the above named plaintiff for sixty six dollars & fifty nine cents damages & twenty five cents costs –

Given under my hand this 18<sup>th</sup> day of Feb. 1825 Peter Mitchell J. P.

I certify the foregoing to be a true transcript of the proceedings in my court in the case of a judgment by confession acknowledged by Joseph Smith in favour of Russell Stoddard –

Given under my hand this 18<sup>th</sup> day of Feb. 1825 - Peter Mitchell J. P.

Fees for this transcript 25 cents -

The outside of the transcript contains:

Russell Stoddard  
 vs  
 Joseph Smith  
 Transcript  
 Execution issued 20th  
 May 1825  
 Filed 19th February 1825.

What financial arrangement entered into by Joseph Sr. to pay Russell Stoddard is not known. Their house may not have been completely finished. This does show that Joseph Sr. acknowledged his debt and was willing to pay it.<sup>9</sup> The Smiths lost their land in December 1825 as discussed below.

9. The judgment of \$66.59 and 25 cents cost of transcript was “Satisfied” and entered April 19, 1826. Court Records, 1821–1852, Disposition of Court Cases, Box AMO1-173, Ontario County Records Center and Archives. Special thanks to Don Enders for a copy of this document.

## Native Americans in the Region

The area of the township of Manchester was occupied by Native Americans prior to any settlement of land holders. Conflicting claims of what land was owned by which different states and treaties made with tribes were settled by the time of the Smith family's arrival in Ontario County.<sup>10</sup> There were a variety of artifacts scattered above and below the ground. One local author wrote:

The only mementos we have of the red man's occupancy in this region are numerous flint arrow heads, plowed up here and there in the fields, remains of a number of forts, specimens of uniquely decorated pottery, pipe-bowls, pots of red ochre, strings of wampum— from which we may read that the original inhabitants lived by the chase, fought in deadly conflict one with another, had tasted of the fruit of good and evil that grows on the tobacco stem, had the common human weakness for adornment and sought to tone down their high cheek bones and ornament the coppery sheen of their complexions by adventitious means, had food to store and wealth to barter.<sup>11</sup>

Lucy recalled that Joseph Jr. recounted during his teenage years the religion and warfare of the natives as though he had lived with them:

In the course of our evening conversations Joseph would give us some of the most amusing recitals which could be imagined he would de[s]cribe the ancient inhabitants of this continent their dress thier man[n]er of traveling the animals which they rode The cities that were built by them the structure of their buildings with every particular of their mode of warfare [and] their religious worship as particularly as though he had Spent his life with them.<sup>12</sup>

## Revival includes Manchester

There was a religious revival or awaking in the Palmyra area that included Manchester during the fall of 1824 and early 1825. The local newspaper reprinted a Presbyterian periodical that chronicled the events: "More than two hundred souls have become the hopeful subjects of divine grace in Palmyra, Macedon, Manchester, Phelps, Lyons, and Ontario, since the late revival commenced."<sup>13</sup> These figures undoubtedly reflect Presbyterian gains. A note in the same issue of the Palmyra paper adds this balancing information: "It may be added, that in Palmyra and Macedon, including Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist Churches, more than 400 have al-

10. James H. Hotchkin, *A History of the Purchase and Settlement of Western New York, and of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Presbyterian Church in that Section* (New York: Published by M. W. Dodd, 1848), 1–12.

11. Charles F. Milliken, *Ontario County, New York and Its People* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1911), 2.

12. Lucy Mack Smith History, 1844–1845, LDS Church History Library; also in Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 345.

13. "Moral and Religious," *Wayne Sentinel* 2, no. 23 (March 2, 1825): 4.



ready testified that the Lord is good. The work is still progressing. In the neighboring towns, the number is great and fast increasing."<sup>14</sup> James Hotchkin wrote about the Western Presbyterian Church of Palmyra at this time, "Another copious shower of grace passed over this region in 1824, under the labors of Mr. [Benjamin] Stockton, and a large number were gathered into the church, some of whom are now pillars in Christ's house."<sup>15</sup>

### Joseph Smith Jr. and Treasure Digging

The possibility of finding buried treasure fascinated many in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America. Reports of searching for such riches were widespread in the Palmyra area,<sup>16</sup> and extant accounts show that treasure was generally sought through supernatural means. Locations for buried wealth and lost Spanish mines were sometimes claimed through dreams. Treasures could also be sought by using divining rods, often made from "witch hazel," or by looking in special stones or crystals. Sometimes when a stone was used, the person would place a stone in a hat and then conjure the guardian treasure spirit. After finding a spot where the cache was supposedly hidden, the seekers would draw a magic circle on the ground around the hidden treasure. Sometimes they would maintain absolute silence, but at other times they would recite magical charms or religious verses used as charms. Whatever the means, money-diggers claimed the need to overcome the guardian spirit who had enchanted the treasure; otherwise the treasure would slip back into the earth.

Willard Chase explained that the stone returned by Joseph Jr. was borrowed this time by Hyrum Smith with a promise to return it to Chase when requested. Chase wrote:

I believe, some time in 1825, Hiram Smith (brother of Joseph Smith) came to me, and wished to borrow the same stone, alledging that they wanted to accomplish some business of importance, which could not very well be done without the aid of the stone. I told him it was of no particular worth to me, but merely wished to keep it as a curiosity, and if he would pledge me his word and honor, that I should have it when called for, he might take it; which he did and took the stone. I thought I could rely on his word at this time, as he

14. "Religious," *Ibid.*, 3.

15. Hotchkin, *A History of the Purchase and Settlement of Western New York*, 378.

16. Newspaper articles mention unnamed individuals who claimed to have found vast treasures. The *Orleans Advocate* published in Albion, New York, contains the following: "A few days since was discovered in this town, by the help of a mineral stone, (which becomes transparent when placed in a hat and the light excluded by the face of him who looks into it, provided he is fortune's favorite,) a monstrous potash kettle in the bowels of old mother Earth, filled with the purest bullion." Reprinted in "From the Orleans Advocate," *Wayne Sentinel* 3, no. 14 (December 27, 1825): 2, and the *Livingston Register* (Geneseo, New York), December 28, 1825.

had made a profession of religion. But in this I was disappointed, for he disregarded both his word and honor.<sup>17</sup>

Joseph Capron (1791–1874), a neighbor living south of the Smith family on lot 1, who had met Joseph Smith Sr. in 1827, also reported on the use of the stone:

The family of Smiths held Joseph Jr. in high estimation on account of some supernatural power, which he was supposed to possess. This power he pretended to have received through the medium of a stone of peculiar quality. The stone was placed in a hat, in such a manner as to exclude all light, except that which emanated from the stone itself. This light of the stone, he pretended, enabled him to see any thing he wished. Accordingly he discovered ghosts, infernal spirits, mountains of gold and silver, and many other invaluable treasures deposited in the earth. He would often tell his neighbors of his wonderful discoveries, and urge them to embark in the money digging business.<sup>18</sup>

An 1832 letter written at Canandaigua, New York, south of Manchester and the Ontario County seat of government, reported that Joseph Jr. “had been engaged for some time in company with several others of the same Character in digging for money ... and for a time were supported by a Mr Fish an illiterate man of some property.”<sup>19</sup> Mr. Fish is Abraham Fish (1773–1845) of Manchester, and was a neighbor of the Smith family. Abraham Fish was well acquainted with Joseph and his father. Fish lived south of the Smith land on lot 1. That Fish was illiterate is evidenced in the Nathan Pierce Docket Book when he signed his name with an “X” identified as “his mark.” A receipt dated March 10, 1827, received by the younger Joseph from the Thayer store in Palmyra reads: “Palmyra, 10th March 1827, Recd of Joseph Smith Jr Four dollars which is credited to the account of A. Fish” and signed J & L Thayer. Joel and Levi Thayer were the owners of the store.<sup>20</sup>

Another supporter in treasure-digging lore was Josiah Stowell Sr. (1770–1844) of Chenango County, New York. The treasure seekers also went into northern Pennsylvania where Isaac Hale (1763–1839) and his wife Elizabeth (1767–1842) lived. They boarded at his residence where Joseph Jr. met his future wife Emma (1804–79). On November 1, 1825, soon after their arrival in Harmony and in anticipation of their discoveries, Stowell’s treasure-digging company drew up “Articles of Agreement.” This agreement stipulated, “If anything of value should be obtained at a certain place

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17. Affidavit of Willard Chase, December 11, 1833, in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 241.

18. Statement of Joseph Capron, Manchester, Ontario County, November 8, 1833, in *Ibid.*, 259. Capron died in Manchester and was buried in the Palmyra Cemetery.

19. Retained copy of a letter from six leading citizens of Canandaigua, New York, January 1832, in answer to a query about Mormons from Rev. Ancil Beach, in the Walter Hubbell Collection, 1831–1833 Correspondence, Princeton University Libraries, Princeton, New Jersey, strikethrough words omitted. See Dan Vogel, ed., *Early Mormon Documents*, 5 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996–2003), 3:15.

20. Joseph Smith Collection, under Receipts, in LDS Church History Library.

in Pennsylvania near a Wm. Hale's, supposed to be a valuable mine of either Gold or Silver and also to contain coined money and bars or ingots of Gold or Silver," each member would receive a share, including a share to Oliver Harper's widow. According to this agreement, Joseph Sr. and his son Joseph (who both signed the agreement) would receive "two elevenths of all the property that may be obtained."<sup>21</sup> Isaac Hale wrote about the money digging during this time:

[Joseph] Smith, and his father, with several other "money-diggers" boarded at my house while they were employed in digging for a mine that they supposed had been opened and worked by the Spaniards, many years since. Young Smith gave the "money-diggers" great encouragement, at first, but when they had arrived in digging, to near the place where he had stated an immense treasure would be found—he said the enchantment was so powerful that he could not see. They then became discouraged, and soon after dispersed. This took place about the 17th of November, 1825; and one of the company gave me his note for \$12[.]68 for his board, which is still unpaid.<sup>22</sup>

### Smiths Lose Land

Eventually a new agent, John Greenwood (1798–1887), was given power of attorney on May 17, 1824. The Smiths knew they needed to make their final payment in order to obtain the legal right to hold their one hundred acres of land. The trip to locate a mine in the fall of 1825 did not bring in the money they needed to pay off the land. So on December 20, 1825, Lemuel Durfee Sr. (1759–1829) purchased their farm<sup>23</sup> for \$1,135 and let them remain in the frame house and on the farm.

Joseph Jr. continued to work for Josiah Stowell and to attend school. He also worked with his peep-stone to find lost objects. On March 20, 1826, he was brought before Justice of the Peace Albert Neely (ca. 1798–1857) of Bainbridge, Chenango County, on a charge of disorderly conduct or being a "glass looker." His docket book recorded the examination of Joseph Smith and witnesses, including Josiah Stowell:

Prisoner [Joseph Smith] examined: says that he came from the town of Palmyra, and had been at the house of Josiah Stowel[1] in Bainbridge most of time since; had small part of time been employed in looking for mines, but the major part had been employed by said Stowel[1] on his farm, and going to school. That he had a certain stone which

21. "An Interesting Document," *Daily Tribune* (Salt Lake City), April 23, 1880, 4 from the *Susquehanna Journal*, March 20, 1880. The original document is not extant. See Vogel, *Early Mormon Documents* 4:407–13.

22. Affidavit of Isaac Hale, Harmony, Pennsylvania, before Justice of the Peace, Charles Dimon, March 20, 1834, in "Mormonism," *Susquehanna Register*, and *Northern Pennsylvanian* 9 (May 1, 1834): 1, original newspaper in the Susquehanna County Historical Society, Montrose, Pennsylvania. The testimonies from the Register were reprinted in *The New York Baptist Register* 11 (June 13, 1834): 68, original in Colgate University Archives. Also in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 263.

23. Deed Liber 44:232–34, Ontario County Records Center and Archives.

he had occasionally looked at to determine where hidden treasures in the bowels of the earth were; that he professed to tell in this manner where gold mines were a distance under ground, and had looked for Mr. Stowel[1] several times, and had informed him where he could find these treasures, and Mr. Stowel[1] had been engaged in digging for them. That at Palmyra he pretended to tell by looking at this stone where coined money was buried in Pennsylvania, and while at Palmyra had frequently ascertained in that way where lost property was of various kinds; that he had occasionally been in the habit of looking through this stone to find lost property for three years, but of late had pretty much given it up on account of its injuring his health, especially his eyes, made them sore; that he did not solicit business of this kind, and had always rather declined having anything to do with this business.

Josiah Stowell Sr. testified:

[Stowell] says that prisoner [Joseph Smith] had been at his house something like five months; had been employed by him to work on farm part of time . . . that prisoner had looked for him sometimes; once to tell him about money buried in Bend Mountain in Pennsylvania, once for gold on Monument Hill, and once for a salt spring; and that he positively knew that the prisoner could tell, and did possess the art of seeing those valuable treasures through the medium of said stone<sup>24</sup>

Justice Albert Neely considered Joseph Smith guilty and notified two other justices. No formal trial was held.

On November 2, 1826 Jerusha Barden (1805–37) married Hyrum Smith in Manchester. Emma Hale married Joseph Jr. in South Bainbridge, Chenango County, on January 18, 1827, returning with his wife to the Manchester farm. Sophronia Smith was married on December 30, 1827 to Calvin W. Stoddard (1801–36). Hyrum and Jerusha's two daughters were both born in Manchester: September 16, 1827 for Lovina and June 27, 1829 for Mary.<sup>25</sup>

### Working for Lemuel Durfee Sr.

Samuel Harrison Smith worked for Lemuel Durfee Sr. in 1827, as recorded in one of Durfee's account books: "April the 16 day the year 1827 S. Harrison Smith Son of Joseph Smith began to Work for me by the month, is to Work 7 Months for the use of the place Where Said Joseph Smith Lives."<sup>26</sup> The Smith family lived in the

24. Charles Marshall, "The Original Prophet. By a Visitor to Salt Lake City," *Fraser's Magazine* (London, England) 7 (February 1873): 229; reprinted in the *Eclectic Magazine* (New York) 17 (April 1873). Neely's docket book is not extant.

25. "Records of Early Church Families," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* (Salt Lake City) 26 (July 1935): 103.

26. Lemuel Durfee Account Book 1815–1829, Ontario County Historical Society Museum and Research Library, Canandaigua, New York.

frame home through the courtesy of Mr. Durfee for just over three years, January 1826 through March 1829. In a separate account book Durfee noted for 1827 the following:

Joseph [Sr.] and Hiram Smith Dr [debit] to three barrels of Cider at 9/ per barrel  
May the Last 1827 [9 shillings per barrel]

June the 26 day Joseph Smith Dr. to Veal hind Quarter 23 pound \$0.69 also one fore  
Quarter Wt. 22 pounds \$=55 55

august Credit by Joseph Smith by mo[w]ing three days & Joseph Smith Ju Jnr. two  
days mowing & Hiram Smith one day mowing even

Sept. first to two barrels of Cider racked of[f] to Joseph & Hiram Smiths at 9/ per  
barrel \$2=25

For the year 1828 Lemuel Durfee noted:

May the 13th Joseph [Sr.] & [Samuel] Harrison Smith Dr. [debit] to three barrels  
of Cider the Lique at \$3=38

June the 18 day the year 1828 Credit By Hiram & Har[r]ison Smiths a hoeing one  
Day a piece

June the 20 day Joseph & Harrison Smiths Dr. to the Lique of three barrels of  
Cider at 9/0 per barrel \$3=38

July 7 day Credit by J. Smith & Rockwell by hoeing three days

July 20 Jos. Smith & Harrison Cr. by Work binding Wheat one day of william and  
three days of Harrison Work

august 7 Credit <by> Rockwell to two days Mowing for me by Harrison Smith by  
three days a Mowing for me <sup>27</sup>

### Manchester, New York Story

The story of Joseph Smith Jr. receiving a visionary experience in September 1823, with instructions to visit a nearby hill about a mile away each year, was expressed outside the family as early as the fall of 1826. The final outcome regarding the visit to the hill occurred in the fall of 1827. At this time Joseph Jr. related to neighbor and fellow treasure-seeker Willard Chase that he had taken a book of plates from a hill. In a statement that Chase made in his 1833 affidavit, and published in 1834, he describes elements of the earliest story of Joseph Smith's claim of going to the hill, later known as the Gold Bible Hill, and further concealing the record from prying eyes. Chase recalled that Joseph Jr. explained to him:

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27. Lemuel Durfee Account Book (1825–1829), King's Daughters Library, Palmyra, New York in 1973, original record currently not extant. Wesley P. Walters, Concerning the Lemuel Durfee Account Book, October 23, 1988. Angled brackets indicate writing above the line. This is a separate account book and should not be confused with a similar ledger cited in note 26.

That on the 22d of September, he arose early in the morning, and took a one horse wagon, of some one that had stayed over night at their house, without leave or license; and, together with his wife, repaired to the hill which contained the book. He left his wife in the wagon, by the road, and went alone to the hill, a distance of thirty or forty rods from the road; he said he then took the book out of the ground and hid it in a tree top, and returned home. He then went to the town of Macedon to work.

After about ten days, it having been suggested that some one had got his book, his wife went after him; he hired a horse, and went home in the afternoon, staid long enough to drink one cup of tea, and then went for his book, found it safe, took off his frock, wrapt it round it, put it under his arm and ran all the way home, a distance of about two miles. He said he should think it would weigh sixty pounds, and was sure it would weigh forty.

On his return home, he said he was attacked by two men in the woods, and knocked them both down and made his escape, arrived safe and secured his treasure.—He then observed that if it had not been for that stone, (which he acknowledged belonged to me,) he would not have obtained the book.<sup>28</sup>

Lucy Smith heard that her son Joseph “went to bring the record which he had deposited in a cavity in a birch log 3 [*sic*] miles distant and covered it with the bark of the same he took the plates from their place and wrapping them in his linen frock put them under his arm and started for the house.”<sup>29</sup>

Martin Harris, interviewed thirty years later, stated: “These plates were found at the north point of a hill two miles north of Manchester village. Joseph had a stone which was dug from the well of Mason Chase, twenty-four feet from the surface. In this stone he could see many things to my certain knowledge. It was by means of this stone he first discovered these plates.” Harris’s understanding of the events is that Joseph Jr. “went to the place where the plates were concealed, and while he was obtaining them, she [Emma] kneeled down and prayed. He then took the plates and hid them in an old black oak tree top which was hollow.”<sup>30</sup>

As Martin Harris understood the story:

The plates remained concealed in the tree top until he got the chest made. He then went after them and brought them home. While on his way home with the plates, he was met by what appeared to be a man, who demanded the plates, and struck him with a club on

28. Affidavit of Willard Chase, December 11, 1833, in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 245–46.

29. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 385, crossed through words omitted.

30. In late January 1859, Martin Harris, who resided at Kirtland, Ohio, was interviewed by Joel Tiffany. “He [Harris] says that Joel Tiffany, well known as a leading Spiritualist some time since, has been out from New York lately on a visit to him, Harris, and that for four successive days without intermission, he unfolded the mysteries of godliness to Joel, which the latter copied at the time and is about to publish.” “Mormon Times in Kirtland,” *Cleveland Daily Plain Dealer* 15 (May 18, 1859), Cleveland, Ohio. The interview by Tiffany was titled, “Mormonism—No. II,” and printed in *Tiffany’s Monthly: Devoted to the Investigation of the Science of Mind, in the Physical, Intellectual, Moral and Religious Planes Thereof* 5 (August 1859): 163–70, New York City. An original copy is located at the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.

his side, which was all black and blue. Joseph knocked the man down, and then ran for home, and was much out of breath. When he arrived at home, he handed the plates in at the window, and they were received from him by his mother. They were then hidden under the hearth in his father's house. But the wall being partly down, it was feared that certain ones, who were trying to get possession of the plates, would get under the house and dig them out. Joseph then took them out, and hid them under the old cooper's shop, by taking up a board and digging in the ground and burying them.

Harris indicated: "I had the account of it from Joseph, his wife, brothers, sisters, his father and mother. I talked with them separately, that I might get the truth of the matter." Martin mentioned that Lucy Smith came and visited the Harris home. Among other things, "She wished my wife and daughter to go with her; and they went and spent most of the day. When they came home, I questioned them about them. My daughter said, they were about as much as she could lift. They were now in the glass-box, and my wife said they were very heavy. They both lifted them. I waited a day or two, when I got up in the morning, took my breakfast, and told my folks I was going to the village, but went directly to old Mr. Smith's." Harris continued:

I found that Joseph had gone away to work for Peter Ingersol[1] to get some flour. I was glad he was absent, for that gave me an opportunity of talking with his wife and the family about the plates. I talked with them separately, to see if their stories agreed, and I found they did agree. When Joseph came home I did not wish him to know that I had been talking with them, so I took him by the arm and led him away from the rest, and requested him to tell me the story, which he did as follows. He said: "An angel had appeared to him, and told him it was God's work." ... Joseph had before this described the manner of his finding the plates. He found them by looking in the stone found in the well of Mason Chase. The family had likewise told me the same thing. Joseph said the angel told him he must quit the company of the money-diggers.

Harris was at the Smith home after Joseph Knight Sr. (1772–1847) and Josiah Stowell Sr. had left to return to their homes in southern New York. Lucy Smith outlined the time frame from when Joseph Jr. allegedly went to the hill, hid the plates, and brought them home. It appears that the day Joseph Jr. reportedly retrieved, ran through the woods, brought something home, and talked to his family was on Monday, October 1, 1827.<sup>31</sup> Joseph Jr. explained in the Preface to the 1830 Book of Mormon: "I would also inform you that the plates of which hath been spoken, were found in the township of Manchester, Ontario county, New-York."<sup>32</sup>

31. Lucy Smith on October 8, 1845 said "it was eighteen years ago last monday since she commenced preaching the gospel, being cal[l]ed upon by Joseph to go & tell Martin Harris & family that he [Joseph Smith] had got the plates." Ronald O. Barney, ed., *The Mormon Vanguard Brigade of 1847: Norton Jacob's Record* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2005), 53.

32. Preface to Joseph Smith, Junior, *The Book of Mormon* (Palmyra: Printed by E. B. Grandin, for the Author, 1830), iv, cited hereafter as 1830 Book of Mormon.

Young Joseph left Manchester with the monetary assistance of Martin Harris to live in Harmony, Susquehanna County, in northern Pennsylvania. While there Isaac Hale mentioned Joseph Smith's prior workings in the area and what he knew of Smith "reading" the gold plates. Hale reported: "his occupation was that of seeing, or pretending to see by means of a stone placed in his hat, and his hat closed over his face. In this way he pretended to discover minerals and hidden treasure.... The manner in which he pretended to read and interpret, was the same as when he looked for the money-diggers, with the stone in his hat, and his hat over his face, while the Book of Plates were at the same time hid in the woods!"<sup>33</sup>

Lucy Smith said that a man named Oliver Cowdery (1806–50) was accepted to teach school and boarded with the Smith family. Cowdery started hearing accounts about the plates, and eventually Joseph Sr. explained to him what he knew. Oliver therefore determined to visit Joseph Jr. in Harmony. The Smiths had to vacate the frame house started by Alvin and crowd back into their former log house with Hyrum's family<sup>34</sup> because Mary Anne Durfee (1799–1883), daughter of Lemuel Durfee Sr., needed to move onto the farm as it was the property of her late father. She had married Roswell Nichols (1795–1880) in 1822 after Roswell's first wife, Maria Gibson (1799–?) died.

The Nichols family moved in 1842 to Illinois. A brief account of the life of Roswell Nichols mentions, "About the year 1828, Mr. Nichols removed to Ontario County, N. Y., and settled on what was known as the Jo Smith farm ... The Prophet [*sic*; Smith family] occupied a log house on one corner of the farm for some months after Mr. Nichols took possession."<sup>35</sup> The Smith family's move occurred about April 1829, and they resided there for a year and a half until October 1830.

### Writing the Book of Lehi and the Book of Mormon

At Harmony, Pennsylvania, Joseph Smith Jr. dictated over one hundred manuscript pages of text which he described as the Book of Lehi.<sup>36</sup> His main scribe was Martin Harris who asked to borrow the pages to show to family members. Joseph finally gave the pages to Harris, who lost them. Not hearing anything from Harris since he had left, and after burying their first child, Smith made the trip to Manchester. This was a trying time for Joseph, as explained by his mother, who described her son's reaction when he learned from Martin Harris that the pages were lost:

33. Affidavit of Isaac Hale, before Justice of the Peace, Charles Dimon, March 20, 1834, in *Susquehanna Register, and Northern Pennsylvanian* 9 (May 1, 1834): 1; also in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 263–64.

34. Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 431–38. Oliver's half-sister wrote that he "taught [in] the District school in the Town of Manchester." Lucy Cowdery Young to Brigham H. Young, March 7, 1887, LDS Church History Library.

35. *Portrait and Biographical Record of Hankakee County Illinois* (Chicago: Lake City Publishing Co., 1893), 336.

36. Preface to 1830 Book of Mormon.



Joseph who had smothered his fears till now sprang from the table exclaimed Oh! Martin have you lost that manuscript? have you broken your oath and brought down condemnation upon my head as well as your own[?] Yes replied Martin it is gone and I know not where—Oh! My God My God said Joseph clenching his hands together all is lost is lost what shall I do I have sinned it is me that tempted the wrath of God ... he wept and groaned walking the floor continual[1]y<sup>37</sup>

Joseph Jr. returned back to his home and to Emma in Harmony and pronounced his first recorded “revelation” in July 1828. Oliver Cowdery arrived in early April 1829 and became the major scribe for a large part of the Book of Mormon. Though it was a struggle for Joseph about what to do regarding the pages that Harris lost, Joseph decided to replace the lost initial pages by repeating the story of Lehi in a different way. These manuscript pages were written at the home of Peter Whitmer Sr. (1773–1854), in Fayette, Seneca County, New York. Whitmer’s sons assisted Oliver Cowdery as scribes in replacing the basic story that was lost the previous year from the Book of Lehi. The writing of the Book of Mormon was completed at the Whitmer home about the end of June 1829.

Eight men said that Joseph Jr. displayed to them the Book of Mormon plates and that they had handled them. The members of these two families (Hiram Page married Catherine Whitmer in 1825) added their names to a testimony concerning the plates. Lucy Smith is the source that this event occurred in Manchester:

the male part of the company repaired to a little grove where it was customary for the family to offer up their secret prayers. as Joseph had been instructed that the plates would be carried there by one of the ancient Nephites. Here <it> was that those 8 witnesses recorded in the Book of Mormon looked upon the plates and handled them<sup>38</sup>

#### THE TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES<sup>39</sup>

BE it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jr. the Author and Proprietor of this work, has shewn unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated, we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record, with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shewn unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety, that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen: and we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

37. Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 418.

38. *Ibid.*, 455–56.

39. 1830 Book of Mormon, [590].

CHRISTIAN WHITMER,  
JACOB WHITMER,  
PETER WHITMER, JR.  
JOHN WHITMER,  
HIRAM PAGE,  
JOSEPH SMITH, SEN.  
HYRUM SMITH,  
SAMUEL H. SMITH.

There are various interpretations regarding this joint statement. Since there is no date or location for the statement it engenders interesting observations. There is no evidence that Joseph Smith Jr. used the gold plates to translate the text of the Book of Mormon. What were said to be the plates were hidden from scribes during the writing of the book. If the plates were in plain view as Joseph translated, no one would have sound reason to doubt their existence, and the story of how they were obtained would at least be a good possibility. The purpose of the above testimony was to convince the public that there actually were plates.

### Obtaining a printer for the Book of Mormon

Joseph Smith Jr. received his copyright dated June 11, 1829. Smith and Martin Harris visited Rochester, New York, to find a printer that could publish the Book of Mormon. They went to Thurlow Weed (1797–1882), a newspaper editor, who declined printing the book. They also went to Egbert B. Grandin (1806–45), editor of the *Wayne Sentinel* in Palmyra who, after Harris promised to mortgage his farm, agreed to print the book. Harris's mortgage is dated August 23, 1829. The indenture between them included the amount; "in consideration of the sum of three thousand dollars." The typesetting, printing and binding of five thousand copies of the Book of Mormon were subsequently agreed upon.<sup>40</sup> The following announcement was printed in the *Wayne Sentinel*:

Just about in this particular region, for some time past, much speculation has existed, concerning a pretended discovery, through superhuman means, of an ancient record, of a religious and divine nature and origin, written in ancient characters, impossible to be interpreted by any to whom the special gift has not been imparted by inspiration. It is generally known and spoken of as the "Golden Bible." Most people entertain an idea that the whole matter is the result of a gross imposition, and a grosser superstition. It is pretended that it will be published as soon as the translation is completed. Meanwhile we have been furnished with the following, which is represented to us as intended for the title page of the work<sup>41</sup>

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40. Mortgages, Liber 3:325, Wayne County Courthouse, Lyons, New York.

41. "Just about in this particular region," *Wayne Sentinel* 6, no. 40 (June 26, 1829): 3, emphasis retained. For additional information on the secular and religious background of the Smith family see, Marquardt, *Rise of Mor-*

Another article was published in August in the *Palmyra Freeman* which included additional information to the public:

The greatest piece of superstition that has ever come within the sphere of our knowledge, is one which has for some time past, and still occupies the attention of a few superstitious and bigoted individuals of this quarter. It is generally known and spoken of as the "*Golden Bible*."—Its proselytes give the following account of it: In the fall of 1827, a person by the name of *Joseph Smith*, of Manchester, Ontario county, reported he had been visited in a dream by the spirit of the Almighty, and informed that in a certain hill in that town, was deposited this Golden Bible, containing an ancient record of divine nature and origin. After having been thrice thus visited, as he states, he proceeded to the spot, and after penetrating "mother earth" a short distance, the Bible was found, together with a huge pair of Spectacles! He had been directed, however, not to let any mortal being examine them, "under no less penalty" than instant death! They were therefore nicely wrapped up, and excluded from the "vulgar gaze of poor wicked mortals!" It was said that the *leaves* of the Bible were *plates* of gold, about eight inches long, six wide, and one eighth of an inch thick, on which were engraved characters or hieroglyphics. By placing the Spectacles in a hat, and looking into it, Smith could (he said so, at least,) interpret these characters.

An account of this discovery was soon circulated. The subject was almost invariably treated as it should have been—with *contempt*. A few, however, believed the "*golden*" story, among whom was *Martin Harris*, an honest and industrious farmer of this town. So blindly enthusiastic was Harris, that he took some of the characters interpreted by Smith, and went in search of some one, besides the interpreter, who was learned enough to *English* them; but all to whom he applied (among the number was Professor Mitchell, of New York,) happened not to be possessed of sufficient knowledge to give satisfaction! Harris returned, and set Smith to work at interpreting the Bible. He has at length performed the task, and the work is soon to be put to press in this village!! Its language and doctrines are said to be far superior to those of the Book of Life!!!

Now it appears not a little strange that there should have been deposited in this western world, and in the secluded town of Manchester, too, a record of this description: and still more so, that a person like this Smith (very illiterate) should have been gifted by inspiration to read and interpret it. It should be recorded as a "*new thing under the sun*." It is certainly a "*new thing*" in the history of superstition, bigotry, inconsistency, and foolishness! It should, and it doubtless will, be treated with the neglect it merits. The public should not be imposed upon by this work, pronounced as it is, by its proselytes, to be superior in style, and more advantageous to mankind, than the Holy Bible!

The following, it is said, will be the title page of the work:

"*The Book of Mormon; an account, written by the hand of Mormon upon plates, taken from the plates of Nephi:—*

"Wherefore it is an abridgement of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, written to the Lamanites, which are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to the Jew and Gentiles; written by way of commandment, and also by the

spirit of prophecy and of revelation; written and sealed and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed,—to come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof—sealed up by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by the way of the Gentile—the interpretation thereof by the gift of God: an abridgement taken from the book of Ether.

“Also, which is a record of the people of Jared, which were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to Heaven; which is to shew unto the remnant of the house of Israel how great things the Lord hath done for their fathers: and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever; and also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations. And now, If there be fault it be the mistake of men: wherefore condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment seat of Christ.—By JOSEPH SMITH, Junior, Author and Proprietor.”<sup>42</sup>

Oliver Cowdery was staying at the log home where the two Smith families were living. He began making a copy of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon for the printer to typeset. The manuscript Oliver prepared is known as the printer’s manuscript. Enough of the text from the original manuscript was copied to supply the main typesetter, twenty-seven-year-old John H. Gilbert (1802–95). According to Lucy, “Peter Whitmer [Jr.] was commanded to remain at our house to assist in guarding the writings.”<sup>43</sup> Tradition is that the paper used to print the Book of Mormon came from the mill of Case, Abbey & Company.<sup>44</sup>

A number of individuals visited the Smiths during the printing of the Book of Mormon. Their recollections cover a time period of 1845–82. Stephen S. Harding (1808–91) remembered that during the summer of 1829 he went to the *Wayne Sentinel* office and to the Smith residence in Manchester, which he described as “a log house, not exactly a cabin. Upon our arrival, I was ushered into the best room in company with the others.” Oliver Cowdery read from the Book of Mormon manuscript. When Harding returned to the printing office a few weeks later, he was given a copy of a proof sheet that included the title page.<sup>45</sup>

Another interested individual was Solomon Chamberlain (1788–1862), who visited the Smith family: “I soon arrived at the house, and found Hyrum walking the

42. “Golden Bible,” *Palmyra Freeman* 1, no. 38 (August 11, 1829): 2, emphasis retained. Digital copy from the Richmond Memorial Library, Batavia, New York. The article was reprinted in the *Niagara Courier* (Lockport, New York), August 27, 1829. Also published in the *Rochester Daily Advertiser and Telegraph* (Rochester, New York) August 31, 1829 and *New-York Telescope* (New York City) February 20, 1830.

43. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 459. Both the printer’s and the original manuscripts were used for the typesetting the 1830 Book of Mormon.

44. “Manchester in the Early Days. No. XXI,” *Ontario County Times* (Canandaigua, New York) 25, no. 11 (March 17, 1875): 1.

45. Letter of Stephen S. Harding, Milan, Indiana, February 1882, in Thomas Gregg, *The Prophet of Palmyra* (New York: John B. Alden, Publisher, 1890), 41–42, 48, 52.

floor; as I entered the room, I said peace be to this house; he looked at me and said 'I hope it will be peace.' I then said is there any one here that believes in visions and revelations. He [Hyrum] said yes, we are a visionary house."<sup>46</sup> Thomas B. Marsh (1800–1866) arrived in Palmyra from Massachusetts after hearing from a lady about a golden book found by Joseph Smith. Marsh described visiting the Grandin printing office:

I returned back westward and found Martin Harris at the printing office, in Palmyra, where the first sixteen pages of the Book of Mormon had just been struck off, the proof sheet of which I obtained from the printer and took with me. As soon as Martin Harris found out my intentions he took me to the house of Joseph Smith, sen. . . . Here I found Oliver Cowdery, who gave me all the information concerning the book I desired. After staying there two days I started for Charleston, Mass., highly pleased with the information I had obtained concerning the new found book.<sup>47</sup>

A letter that Oliver Cowdery wrote to Joseph Smith Jr. states that he received a letter from Thomas Marsh and in addition states that he had copied the text of the original manuscript to page 161 of the printer's manuscript. Two of Cowdery's letters includes passages from the Book of Mormon manuscript (original spelling retained):

Manchester November the 6th 1829

Brother Joseph Smith Jr.

I received your let[t]er yesterday bearing date Oct. 22d I had long time expected to hear from you and had often enquired at the post office for a letter and of course it was gladly received by us all we rejoice to hear that you are well and we also rejoice to hear that you have a prospect of obtaining Some mon[e]y and we further rejo[i]ce that you are at rest from your percecutors [persecutors] and we rejoic[e] the most to hear of your faithfulness in christ

my dear Brother when I think of the goodness of christ I feel no desire to live or Stay here upon the shores of this world of iniquity only to to Ser[v]e my maker and be if possible an instriment [instrument] in his hands of doing Some good in his cause with his grace to assist me when I consider and try to realise [realize] what he has done for me I am astonished and amazed why Should I not be for while I was rushing on in sin and crouding [crowding] my way down to that awful gulf he yet Strove with me and praised be his holy and Eternal name

he has redeemed my Soul from endless torment and wo not for any thing that I have me[r]ited or any worthyness there was in me for there was none but it was in and through his own mercy wraught [wrought] out by his own infinite wisdom by preparing from all Eternity a means whereby man could be saved on conditions of

46. Account of Solomon Chamberlain, published in Dean C. Jessee, ed., "The John Taylor Nauvoo Journal," *Brigham Young University Studies* 23 (Summer 1983): 45, copied into Taylor's journal in the spring of 1845. Original in LDS Church History Library.

47. "History of Thos. Baldwin Marsh," *Deseret News* (Fillmore City, Utah Territory) 8 (March 24, 1858): 18.

repentance and faith on that infinite attonement which was to be mad[e] by a great and last Sacrif[i]ce which Sacr[i]fice was the death of the only begotten of the Father yea the eternal Father of Heaven and of Earth

that by his reserection [resurrection] all the Family of man might be braught back into the presance [presence] of God if therefore we follow christ in all things whatsoever he comma[n]deth us and are buried with him by baptism into death that like as christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Eternal Father even So we also Should walk in newness of life and if we walk in newness of life to the end of this probation at the day of accounts we Shall be caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air

but I need not undertake to write of the goodness of God for his goodness is unspeakable ne[i]ther tell of the miteries [mysteries] of God for what is man that he can comprehend and Search out the wisdom of deity for Great is the misteries of Godliness therefore my only motive in this writing is to inform you of my prospects and hopes and my desires and my longing to be freed from Sin and to rest in the kingdom of my Savior and my redeemer

when I begin to write of the mercies of God I know not when to Stop but time and paper fails I would inform [you] that Hiram [Hyrum Smith] and Martin [Harris] went out to fayette last week they had a joyful time and found all in as good health as could be expected Martin thinks of coming to the South in the course of two or three weeks and will callculate to take back that horse

the printing goes rather Slow yet as the type founder has been sick but we expect that the type will be on and Mr. Granden [Grandin] Still think[s] he will finish printing by the first of feb[r]uary we all send respects to yourself and Emma

My dear Brother I cannot hardly feel to close this letter as yet without informing you that we received one from Mr [Thomas B.] Marsh from Boston[,] Masacuchsetts [Massachusetts] dated the 25th Oct. he informs us that he wishes to hear from us and know of our welfare he says he has talked conside[r]able to Some respecting our work with freedom but others could not because they had no ears

my great desire is that we may be faithful and obedient and humble children of Christ here that we may meet together in his kingdom of Eternal Glory to go no more out to Spend an Ete[r]nity where the wicked ce[a]se from troubling and the humbl[e] and penitent child in christ finds rest I remain with much Esteem and profound respect your Brother and compa[n]ion in tribulation and persecution in the kingdom of patience and hope of a Glorious reserrection in christ our Savior and rede[e]mer Amen

Oliver Cowdery

Joseph Smith Jr

P S I have Just got to alma[s] commandment to his Son in copping [copying] the man[u]script we are all in tolerable hea[l]th here but my Father[s] health is poor<sup>48</sup>

48. Oliver Cowdery to Joseph Smith Jr., November 6, 1829, copied in 1832 into Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:6–8, LDS Church History Library. Words added above the line in the two copied 1829 letters are not included in angled brackets.

The following comes from a printed copy of a November 9, 1829, letter of Oliver H. P. Cowdery. It was cited by Cornelius C. Blatchly (1773–1831) of New York City with Blatchly's comments interspersed between the contents of the letter. Cowdery wrote to Blatchly at the request of Martin Harris and others:

"Palmyra, Wayne, co., N. Y., Nov. 9th, 1829.

Sir;— You wrote to Mr. Harris, some time since, respecting the book of Mormon, of which he was concerned in the publication."—

"Your first inquiry was, whether it was proper to say, that Joseph Smith Jr., was the author? If I rightly understand the meaning of the word author, it is, the first beginner, or mover of any thing, or a writer.<sup>49</sup> Now Joseph Smith Jr., certainly was the writer of the work, called the book of Mormon, which was written in ancient Egyptian characters,—which was a dead record to us until translated. And he, by a gift from God, has translated it into our language. Certainly he was the writer of it, and could be no less than the author."

"This record which gives an account of the first inhabitants of this continent, is engraved on plates, which have the appearance of gold; and they are of very curious workmanship."

"The reason stated in a prophecy written before the coming of Christ in the flesh, why the record should not be shown to all the world, at the time of its coming forth to the children of men is that the book should be sealed, by the power of God."

"The prophecy also states there shall also be a revelation sealed in the book, which will reveal all things from the foundation of the world to the end thereof." And because of the iniquity of the world, at the time of its coming forth; it shall be hid from the eyes of the world; that the eyes of none shall behold it, (save it be that three witnesses shall behold it by the power of God) besides him, to whom the book should be delivered. And none other should see it, only a few,—if it should be wisdom in God."

"And after that which was not sealed, was translated, the book should again be hid-up, unto the Lord, that it might not be destroyed; and come forth again, in the own due time of him, who knows all things unto the children of men."

"You also wished Mr. Harris to inform you respecting his seeing this book, whether there could not possibly have been some juggling at the bottom of it. A few words on that point may suffice.—

"It was a clear, open beautiful day, far from any inhabitants, in a remote field, at the time we saw the record, of which it has been spoken, brought and laid before us, by an angel, arrayed in glorious light, ascend out of the midst of heaven."

"Now if this is human juggling—judge ye."

Yours with much esteem,

OLIVER H. P. COWDERY

49. The same definition offered by Cowdery can be found in [John] Walker's *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Expositor of the English Language*. Abridged. By the Rev. Thomas Smith, London (Canandaigua [New York]: Printed and Sold by J. D. Bemis & Co., 1824), 39. Brought to my attention by Rick Grunder.

“P. S. I write this at the request of Messrs. Harris and others. The edition of this work now printing will not possibly be finished before the first of next February 1830. [“]”<sup>50</sup>

Near the end of December Oliver Cowdery explained that Joseph Sr, was planning on visiting Joseph and he indicates that he has “become a printer” (original spelling retained):

Manchester Dececember [December] 28th AD 1829  
Brother Joseph Smith Jr

It may Seem Supe[r]fluous for me to write as Father [Joseph Smith Sr.] is going directly to your country but knowing that if a line from under my hand is as gladly rec[e]ived by you as one from you would at all times be by me I cannot in duty to my feelings let this oppertunity [opportunity] pass u[n]improved Your great anxiety will probably be to know of the progress of the work in the which we are So deeply engaged and possibly our Souls wellfare al[1] of which Father can make known unto you

it may look rather Strange to you to find that I have So Soon become a printer and you may cast in your mind what I Shall become next but be as[s]ured my cahngeing [changing] business has not in any degree I trust taken my mind from meditateing [meditating] upon my mission which I have been called to fulfill nor of Slacking my diligence in pray[e]r and fasting but but Some times I feel almost as though I could quit time and fly away and be at rest in the Bosom of my Redeemer for the many deep feelings of Sorrow and the many long Struglings in prayr [prayers] of Sorrow for the Sins of my fellow beings and also for those who pretend to be of my faith almost as it were Seperateth my spirit from my mortal body

do not think by this my Brother that I would give you to understand that I am freed from Sin and temptations no not by any means that is what I would that you Should understand is my anxiety at some times to be at rest in the Paradice [Paradise] of my God is to be freed from temptation &c. You have our pray[e]rs and our best wishes

Yours in Christ Amen  
Oliver H P Cowd[e]ry

Joseph Smith Jr  
P S we Send our respects to Emma [Smith] &c<sup>51</sup>

The Smiths maintained control over the printing and sale of the book. Joseph Smith Sr. made an agreement with Martin Harris on selling copies of the forthcoming Book of Mormon to pay for the publication of the Book of Mormon:

50. “The New Bible,” *Gospel Luminary* (New York City) 2, no. 49, (December 10, 1829): 194, emphasis omitted. Brought to my attention by Erin Jennings Metcalfe. The letter was referred to by Blatchly in “Caution Against the Golden Bible,” *New-York Telescope* 6, no. 38 (February 20, 1830): 150.

51. Oliver Cowdery to Joseph Smith Jr., December 28, 1829, copied in 1832 into Joseph Smith Letterbook 1:4–5, LDS Church History Library.



I hereby agree that Martin Harris shall have an equal privilege with me & my friends of selling the Book of Mormon of the Edition now printing by Egbert B Grandin until enough of them shall be sold to pay for the printing of the same or until such times as the said Grandin shall be paid for the printing the aforesaid Books or copies[.]

[s] Joseph Smith Sr

Manchester January the 16th 1830

Witness [s] Oliver H P Cowdery<sup>52</sup>

The cost of printing each book, including binding, was sixty cents. As mentioned, with a total of five thousand copies printed, the total cost was \$3,000. Martin Harris was assured of having enough books to sell to recover his investment in the printing.

On January 19, 1830, Lemuel Durfee Jr. (1801–71) brought a suit against Joseph Smith Sr. and Abraham Fish for \$39.92, which was paid on August 28. Durfee received his money on September 13. The suit was heard by Nathan Pierce, a justice of the peace in Manchester, Ontario County, where Joseph Sr. was residing while Durfee was a resident of Palmyra, Wayne County. This suit and the next one against Hyrum Smith are important as they further indicate the residence of the Joseph Sr. and Hyrum Smith families in Manchester, Ontario County.

New York law indicates that action can be brought by a plaintiff who resides in a different county than the defendant. Where actions of debt are claimed not to exceed fifty dollars, “no person shall be proceeded against by summons, out of the county in which he resides.”<sup>53</sup> The first case against Joseph Sr. of Ontario County was brought by Lemuel Durfee Jr. of Wayne County. The second case against Hyrum Smith who was also of Ontario County was brought by Levi Daggett of Wayne County. Both cases were held before Nathan Pierce, a Justice of the Peace in Ontario County.

The following transcription is from the Nathan Pierce Docket Book, case of Lemuel Durfee Jr. vs. Joseph Smith Sr. and Abraham Fish, January 19, 1830:

In Justice Court before Nathan Pierce Justice	25
Lemuel Durfee	The hereby [defendants] confess Judgement in this cause
vs	at the suit of the above named plaintiff
Joseph Smith	for thirty nine dollars and ninety two cents
Abraham Fish	damages this 19th day of January 1830
	and consent that the said Justice enter Judg ment against us accordingly

52. In Simon Gratz Autograph Collection, Case 8, Box 17 (American Miscellaneous), under Smith, Joseph, Sr., Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

53. “Of the Jurisdiction of Justices’ Courts,” *The Revised Statutes of the State of New-York* (Albany: Printed by Packard and Van Benthuysen, 1829), 2:228, section 13.

[s] Joseph Smith  
his  
Abraham + Fish  
mark

Judgement Rendered on the above confession for the said  
sum of thirty nine dollars and ninety two cents Damage  
against the Said Joseph Smith and Abraham Fish in favor  
of the said Lemuel Durfee  
January 19th 1830  
Nathan Pierce Justice of the peace

Damage	\$39.92
Costs.	___31
Judgement.	\$40.23
Execution	.19
Interest	___84
	[ \$41.24 ]

7th May 1830 Execution Issued to S. Southworth  
28th August 1830 received the damage and my costs  
of S. Southworth

Damage	\$39.92
Interest.	1.52
	[total: \$41.44]
Costs.	___60
\$41.44	\$42.04

13th Sept 1830 received my damage  
Lemuel Durfee<sup>54</sup>

Transcription from Nathan Pierce Docket Book, case of Levi Daggett Sr. (1768–1835) of Palmyra, Wayne County, vs. Hyrum Smith of Manchester, Ontario County:<sup>55</sup>

[Left side of Document:]

[Body of Document:]

Levi Daggett  
vs.  
Hiram Smith.  
14th August 1830  
Execution issued  
to Erastus Cole  
13th September 1830  
this Execution returned  
in [hand?] by N. Harrington  
that he had collected  
\$12.81 and paid plaintiff  
9.94 by receipt on  
Execution and  
I received of said  
constable \$1.79 court  
costs

8th June 1830 Sum[mons] plea trespass on the Case  
Ret[urned] 18th June my house 3 oclock after noon  
and returned served by copy by S. Southworth  
18th June 1830 another Summons issued Ret[urned] 28th  
day of June 1830 at one oclock after noon to  
S. Southworth and returned served by Copy 21st of  
June 1830                    Smith  
28th June 1830 Joseph ^ father of the Defendant appeared  
and the Case was called and the plaintiff declared  
for a note and account    Note dated 7th  
April 1830 for \$20.07 on Interest and on account  
for Shoeing horses of ballance due on account \$0.69  
oseph Smith sworn and saith that his Son the Defendant  
engaged him to Come down at the return of the sum  
mons and direct the Justice to enter Judgment against  
the defendant for the amount of the note & account

54. Nathan Pierce Docket Book, 1827–30, 25, Manchester Town Office, Clifton Springs, New York.

55. *Ibid.*, left of page 77, and execution in docket book.

The above Execution	Judgment for the plaintiff for twenty one dollars seven cents	
	\$21.07	
received and returned	Costs S. Southworth Court fees \$0.80	Paid by Justice
to plaintiff this	Witness fees	12½ 4th April 1831. <u>1.60</u>
27th Sept 1830	Lamar [Pick?] served sub[poena]	12½ 22.67
for to collect this	Justice costs	.55
amount due-		1.60
26th October 1830		
Execution returned		
no property nor body		
to be found by		
N. Harrington Constable		

Printed form of Execution Order in regular type with handwriting in bold concerning the case of Levi Daggett Sr. vs Hyrum Smith, August 14, 1830:

Execution

County, ss.—The People of the State of New York, by the Grace of God Free and Independent:

To any Constable of the said County, Greeting:

WHEREAS Judgment was rendered before me **Nathan Pierce** Esq. one of the Justices of the Peace of the said county, on the **28th** day of **June 1830** against **Hyrum Smith** in favor of **Levi Daggett** for **twenty one** Dollars **Seven** Cents, the damages, and **one** Dollars **Seventy nine** Cents, the costs:--THESE are therefore to command you to levy on the goods and chattels of the said defendant (except such as are by law exempted from execution) the amount of the said judgment, and bring the money before me, on the **13th** day of **September 1830** at my office in the town of **Manchester** in the said county, to render to the said plaintiff. And if no goods or chattels can be found, or not sufficient to satisfy this execution, then you are hereby commanded to take the body of the said defendant and convey **him** to the common Jail of the county aforesaid, there to remain until this execution shall be satisfied and paid. Hereof fail not at your peril. Given under my hand, at **Manchester** this **14th** day of **August** in the year of our Lord, 1830

Damages	\$21.07
Costs.	1.79
Interest.	<u>18</u>
	\$23.04

This Execution renewed for to Collect this amount due thereon this 27th September 1830

**fees 19 cents**

[s] **Nathan Pierce** Justice of the Peace.  
Sold by Bemis & Ward, Canandaigua.

[End of Execution form]

[Reverse of Execution form]

Received of Nathan Harrington \$9.94 Cents for Levi dgget [Daggett] September the 13th 1830

**Levi Daggett**  
By  
[s] **A K Daggett**

**Received on this execution \$12.81 this 13th day of September 1830**

[s] **Nathan Harrington**  
**Constable**

**No property to be found Nor Boddy and I return this Execution October the 26—  
1830**

[s] **N Harrington**  
**Constable**

**\$23.04**

**1.59**

**\$24.63**

**12**

**\$24.75**

[End of handwriting]

Only part of what was due had been paid with interest and court cost accruing. Hyrum Smith departed Manchester and went to Colesville, Broome County, New York. About October 1830 Joseph Smith Sr. was arrested for a supposed debt and spent time in the county jail in Canandaigua.

### **Idea of Selling Book of Mormon Copyright in Canada**

One incident that occurred about January 1830, while the Book of Mormon was at the printer's, throws light on the importance Joseph Smith Jr. placed on his copyright to the book. The revelations Smith received at Manchester were evidently written down inside the log home of Joseph Smith Sr. and Hyrum Smith. The first one was the Canadian copyright revelation. Hiram Page (1800–1852), in an 1848 letter, explains that the revelation originated at father Smith's. This may explain why the original Book of Mormon manuscript was brought to the printer and used to set the

type rather than the printer's manuscript. The text suggests displeasure at Martin Harris.

A Revelation given to Joseph [Smith Jr.] Oliver [Cowdery] Hiram [Hiram Page] Josiah [Stowell] & Joseph Knight [Sr.] given at Manchester Ontario C[ounty] New York

Behold I the Lord am God I Created the Heavens & the Earth & all things that in them is wherefore they are mine & I sway my scepter over all the Earth & ye are in my hands to will & to do that I can deliver you out of ev[e]ry difficulty & affliction according to your faith & dilligence & uprightness Before me & I have covenanted with my Servent [Joseph Smith Jr.] that earth nor Hell combined againsts him shall not take the Blessing out of his hands which I have prepared for him if he walketh uprightly before me neither the spiritual nor the temporal Blessing & Behold I also covenanted with those who have assisted him in my work that I will do unto them even the same Because they have done that which is pleasing in my sight yea even all save M[ar]tin [Harris] only it be one only

Wherefore be dilligent in Securing the Copy right of my work upon all the face of the Earth of which is known by you unto my Servent Joseph & unto him whom he willetth accordinnng as I shall command him that the faithful & the righteous may retain the temperal [temporal] Blessing as well as the Spirit[ua]l & also that my work be not destroyed by the workers of iniquity to their own distruction [destruction] & damnation when they are fully ripe

& now Behold I say unto you that I have covenanted & it Pleaseth me that Oliver Cowdery Joseph Knight Hiram Page & Josiah Stowel shall do my work in this thing yea even in securing the Copy right & they shall do it with an eye single to my Glory that it may be the means of bringing souls unto Salvation through mine only Begotten Behold I am God I have spoken it & it is expedient in me

Wherefor[e] I say unto you that ye shall go to Kingston seeking me continually through mine only Begotten & if ye do this ye shall have my spirit to go with you & ye shall have an addition of all things which is expedient in me & I grant unto my servent a privelige [privilege] that he may sell a copyright through you speaking after the manner of men for the four Provinces if the People harden not their hearts against the enticeings of my spirit & my word for Behold it lieth in themselves to their condemnation or to their salvation

Behold my way is before you & the means I will prepare & the Blessing I hold in mine own hand & if ye are faithful I will pour out upon you even as much as ye are able to Bear & thus it shall be Behold I am the father & it is through mine only begotten which is Jesus Christ your Redeemer amen<sup>56</sup>

56. Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds., *Revelations and Translations: Manuscript Revelation Books, Facsimile Edition* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2009), 30–33. Joseph Knight Sr. does not mention the copyright revelation in his recollection. This revelation was not included in the Book of Commandments, the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants or current printings of the Doctrine and Covenants.

Hiram Page related his experience about the trip to Canada to William E. McLellin (1806–83) eighteen years later. In his letter Page criticized Joseph Smith because the expected outcome of their trip was unfulfilled. Page wrote:

Joseph heard that there was a chance to sell a copyright in Canada for any useful book that was used in the states. Joseph thought this would be a good opportunity to get a handsom[e] sum of money which was to be (after the expenses were taken out) for th[e] exclusive benefit of the Smith family and was to be at the disposal of Joseph accordingly Oliver Cowdrey, Joseph Knights, Hiram Page and Joseah Stoel [Josiah Stowell] were chosen ([as I understood by revelation) to do the business; we were [living from] 30 to 100 miles apart the necessary preparation was [made] (by them) in a sly manor [manner] So as to keep Martin Harris from dra[w]ing a s[hare] of the money, it was told me we were to go by revelation but when we had assembled at father Smiths; the[re was] no revelation for us to go but we were all anxious to get a revelation to go; and when it came we were to go to Kingston where we were to sell if they would not harden their hearts; but when [we] got their; there was n[o] purchaser neither were they authorized at Kingston to buy rights for the province; but Little York was the place where such business had to be done; we were to get 8000 dollars [we] were treated with the best of respects by all we met with in Kingston — by the above we may learn how a revelation may be received and the person receiving it not be benefitted<sup>57</sup>

Eight thousand dollars was a great deal of money in Smith's time. It is unlikely that anyone would have invested such a large amount of money for a copyright. Page said they went to Kingston, Ontario, Canada, and "were treated with the best of respects." He indicated, however, that Smith was "not benefitted," meaning they obtained no money so they returned empty handed.

Page did not see anything wrong with Smith wanting to sell the copyright. David Whitmer (1805–88), who recounted the event many years later, did not seem concerned either, but was disturbed because Smith allegedly received a revelation through the seer stone that did not come to pass.<sup>58</sup> The revelation to sell the copyright in Canada was written down and recorded but not published until recently.

The idea of obtaining money by securing a copyright in Canada appears to be a way to bypass Martin Harris, since the revelation says that Smith's associates have done what was pleasing in God's sight "all save M[ar]tin." David Whitmer said that Hyrum Smith "was vexed with Brother Martin and thought they should get the money by some means outside of him and not let him have anything to do with the publication of the Book or receiving any of the profits thereof if any profits should

57. Hiram Page to William E. McLellin, February 2, 1848, Fishing River, Missouri, photocopy of retained copy, Community of Christ Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri. The above is from my standardized version.

58. David Whitmer in an interview published in the *Des Moines Daily News*, October 16, 1886, and David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ* (Richmond, MO: author, 1887), 30–31.

accrue.”<sup>59</sup> Hiram Page’s understanding was that part of the trip to Canada was to keep Martin Harris from having a share of the large amount of the money that was going to be realized.

Why all this emphasis relating to temporal money is an interesting question. As far as Egbert B. Grandin was concerned, he held the mortgage to a portion of Martin Harris’s property that was executed in August 1829. The agreed amount for publishing the Book of Mormon was \$3,000.

Since about September 1828, Lucy as well as Hyrum and Samuel Harrison stopped attending the Palmyra Presbyterian Church, and in March 1830 the church suspended them from participating in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.<sup>60</sup> They had been attending the church in Palmyra from about March 1825 to September 1828.

### Church of Christ Organized at Manchester, New York

During the last week in March 1830, Martin Harris made it to the Smith home and complained that copies of the Book of Mormon were not selling. He was still told to pay the printer’s debt. Joseph Knight Sr.’s recollection tells of his experience with Harris (original spelling retained):

Now in the Spring of 1830 I went with my Team and took Joseph [Jr.] out to Manchester to his Fathers when we was on our way he told me that there must be a Church formed But Did not tell when. Now when we got near to his fathers we Saw a man Some Eighty Rods Before us run acros the Street with a Bundle in his hand. there Says Joseph there is martin going a Cros [across] the road with Some thing in his hand Says I how Could you know him So far[?] Says he I Believe it is him and when we Came up it was Martin with a Bunch of morman [mormon] Books he Came to us and after Compliments he Says the Books will not Sell for no Body wants them Joseph Says I think they will Sell

well Says he [Martin] I want a Commandment Why[?] Says Joseph fullfill what you have got But says he [Martin] I must have a Commandment Joseph put him off But he insisted three or four times he must have a Commandment

we went home to his Fathers and Martin with us Martin Stayed at his Fathers and Slept in a bed on the flore [floor] with me Martin awoke me in the nite [night] and asked me if I felt any thing on the Bed I told him no Says I Did you[?] yes I felt Some thing as Big as a gr[e]at Dog Sprang upon my Bre[a]st Says I was you not mistekened [mistaken] [?] no Says he it was So I Sprang up and felt But I Could see nor feal [feel] no thing.

59. *Ibid.*, 31.

60. “Records of the Session of the Presbyterian Church in Palmyra,” 2:11–13, March 3, 10, 24, 29, 1830. Original at the Western Presbyterian Church of Palmyra, Palmyra, New York.

in the morning he got up and Said he must have a Commandment to Joseph and went home. and along in the after part of the Day Joseph and Oliver Received a Commandment whi[c]h is in Book of Covenants Page. 174 <sup>61</sup>

It is of interest that although the writings in the Book of Mormon explain that the wicked would expect a hell that had no end and was therefore endless, this commandment to Harris indicates that God's name and nature are endless, but the duration of his individual punishments is not.<sup>62</sup>

### Commandment for Martin Harris<sup>63</sup>

*A commandment of God and not of man to you, Martin, given (Manchester, New-York, March, 1830,) by him who is eternal:*

Yea, even I, I am he, the beginning and the end: Yea, Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord, the Redeemer of the world: I having accomplished and finished the will of him whose I am, even the Father: Having done this, that I might subdue all things unto myself: Retaining all power, even to the destroying of satan and his works at the end of the world, and the last great day of judgment, which I shall pass upon the inhabitants thereof, judging every man according to his works, and the deeds which he hath done.

And surely every man must repent or suffer, for I God am endless: Wherefore, I revoke not the judgments which I shall pass, but woes shall go forth, weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth: Yea, to those who are found on my left hand, nevertheless, it is not written, that there shall be no end to this torment; but it is written endless torment. Again, it is written eternal damnation: wherefore it is more express than other scriptures, that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men, altogether for my name's glory:

Wherefore, I will explain unto you, this mystery, for it is mete unto you, to know even as mine apostles. I speak unto you that are chosen in this thing, even as one, that you may enter into my rest. For behold, the mystery of Godliness how great is it? for behold I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand, is endless punishment, for endless is my name:

Wherefore—

Eternal punishment	} Endless punishment
is God's punishment:	} is God's punishment:

61. Joseph Knight "Reminiscences," circa 1835–1847, LDS Church History Library. The commandment that Knight refers to was first published in *A Book of Commandments, for the Government of the Church of Christ (Zion [Independence, MO]: Published by W. W. Phelps & Co., 1833)*, chapter 16, and includes the date March 1830.

62. 1830 Book of Mormon, 32, 37, 80–81, 114, 140, 339, 582. Oliver Cowdery's November 9, 1829, letter includes, "he has redeemed my Soul from endless torment."

63. Book of Commandments, chapter 16. The Book of Mormon was advertized as being available for purchase on March 26, 1830, in the *Wayne Sentinel*. Shortly afterward, Martin Harris was at the Smith home in Manchester and insisted on having a commandment. The revelation would have been given between March 26 and 31, 1830.



Wherefore, I command you by my name, and by my Almighty power, that you repent: repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore: How sore you know not! How exquisite you know not! Yea, how hard to bear you know not!

For behold, I God have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer, if they would repent, but if they would not repent, they must suffer even as I: Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, both body and spirit: And would that I might not drink the bitter cup and shrink: Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men:

Wherefore, I command you again by my Almighty power, that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit. And I command you, that you preach nought but repentance; and show not these things, neither speak these things unto the world, for they can not bear meat, but milk they must receive: Wherefore, they must not know these things lest they perish:

Wherefore, learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit and you shall have peace in me, Jesus Christ by the will of the Father. And again: I command you, that thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. Nor seek thy neighbor's life. And again: I command you, that thou shalt not covet thine own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the book of Mormon, which contains the truth and the word of God, which is my word to Gentile, that soon it may go to the Jew, of which the Lamanites are a remnant; that they may believe the gospel, and look not for a Messiah to come which has already come.

And again: I command you, that thou shalt pray vocally as well as to thyself: Yea, before the world as well as in secret; in public as well as in private. And thou shalt declare glad tidings; yea, publish it upon the mountains, and upon every high place, and among every people which thou shalt be permitted to see. And thou shalt do it with all humility, trusting in me, reviling not against revilers. And of tenets thou shalt not talk, but thou shalt declare repentance and faith on the Savior and remission of sins by baptism and by fire; yea, even the Holy Ghost.

Behold this is a great and the last commandment which I shall give unto you: For this shall suffice for thy daily walk even unto the end of thy life. And misery thou shalt receive, if thou wilt slight these counsels; Yea, even destruction of thyself and property. Impart a portion of thy property; Yea, even a part of thy lands and all save the support of thy family. Pay the printer's debt. Release thyself from bondage. Leave thy house and home, except when thou shalt desire to see them. And speak freely to all: Yea, preach, exhort, declare the truth, even with a loud voice; with a sound of rejoicing, crying hosanna! hosanna! blessed be the name of the Lord God.

Pray always and I will pour out my Spirit upon you, and great shall be your blessing: Yea, even more than if you should obtain treasures of earth, and corruptibleness to the extent thereof. Behold, canst thou read this without rejoicing, and lifting up thy heart for gladness; or canst thou run about longer as a blind guide; or canst thou be humble and meek and conduct thyself wisely before me: Yea, come unto me thy Savior. Amen.

The text includes the commandment, “thou shalt not covet thine own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the book of Mormon” and “Pay the printer’s debt.” Harris had already mortgaged his farm for \$3,000 to printer Egbert B. Grandin in August 1829. The amount was to be paid by February 25, 1831 eighteen months after the signing. It was not until April 1831 that Martin Harris sold about 150 acres, twenty dollars an acre, to long time Palmyra resident Thomas Lakey.

### Minutes of the Town of Manchester on Tuesday, April 6, 1830

Annual town meetings including the election of local officials were held in the state of New York on the first Tuesday in April. It is therefore of interest that in 1830 the date was April 6 the same day that the Church of Christ was established.

We the undersigners [under signers] certify that the following persons were duly Elected at the annual town meeting held at Jacob Vanderhoofs 2<sup>d</sup> Inn in Manchester on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of April 1830 (to wit) Nicholas Howland Supervisor Nathaniel Bement town Clerk Jacob Cost James Harland William L. Drum assessors Sylvester Southworth Collector Jedediah Dewey and Stephen Alling overseers of the Poor Job Howland Sands M<sup>c</sup>Camly and Stephen Aling Comissioners of highways Azel Throop Jedediah Dewey J<sup>unr</sup> and Carlos Harmon Com= of Schools Alonzo Plat and Sands M<sup>c</sup>Camly and Oliver L. Cooper Inspectors of Schools Sylvester Southworth Joseph Adams and Nathan Harrington Constables and Peter Mitchel Justice of the peace

Dated 7 <sup>th</sup> April 1830	David Howland	J. P.
Gahazi Granger Clerk of	Nathan Pierce	J. P.
the meeting	John Schut	J. P.
Recorded 1 <sup>st</sup> May 1830	Nathaniel Bement	Clerk <sup>64</sup>

### No Minutes of Church of Christ Organization

There are no known minutes that have surfaced for the organizational meeting on Tuesday, April 6, 1830. Therefore we have to depend upon other revelatory records and recollections. Oliver Cowdery, the second church elder, kept a record, but its location is unknown. John Whitmer recorded in 1831 six revelations pronounced by Joseph Smith Jr. These revelations were printed in the Book of Commandments (which went to press in 1833). In May 1834 in Ohio, the name of the Church of Christ was changed to The Church of the Latter Day Saints, and the place of organization to Fayette, Seneca County.<sup>65</sup> It is also possible that image-consciousness played a role. It may have seemed impressive to advertise the church’s founding at a distant location, away from the Smiths’ humble log cabin and critics of the family. More than

64. Manchester Town Records, April 6, 1830, Manchester Town Office.

65. “Communicated,” *The Evening and the Morning Star* (Kirtland, Ohio) 2, no. 20 (May 1834): 160.

likely, this was a motivation to render ambiguous the church's legal history at a time when creditors were demanding satisfaction, a rationale which might also explain why the church's name was changed in 1834.<sup>66</sup>

### Revelations of April 6, 1830

The earliest copies of revelations pronounced in Manchester were recorded in 1831 by John Whitmer (1802–78).<sup>67</sup> The texts were first printed in the Book of Commandments. They included five revelations for individuals and one for the church. These revelations were said to have been “given in Manchester, New-York.” In 1835 they were combined into one revelation with the location and day of the month being dropped in a new publication called the Doctrine and Covenants.

Only one revelation retained the same date when published in 1835. This was 1835 Doctrine and Covenants, section 46, which mentions that a record should be kept and that Smith should be ordained by Cowdery.<sup>68</sup> While the Book of Commandments and Revelations (BCR) manuscript book has the revelation as “given at Fayette Seneca County State of New York,” the location was corrected in the Book of Commandments, chapter 22, to “given in Manchester, New York.” Oliver Cowdery, who was present on April 6, assisted in the printing of the Book of Commandments. All indications confirm that Smith and Cowdery were present at the Smith residence at the time of this historic meeting.<sup>69</sup>

Below is the text from the manuscript volume. For comparison purposes, after the manuscript heading, listed as BCR, the heading as printed in the Book of Commandments follows, and then is cited the text from the BCR. While the headings have changed the text is the same.

#### *Revelation for Oliver Cowdery*

BCR: A Revelation to Oliver given at Manchester Ontario Co[unty] State of New York  
Soon after his calling to the Ministry

Book of Commandments, chapter 17:

66. For a possible reason to change for legal protection see H. Michael Marquardt, “Manchester as the Site of the Organization of the Church on April 6, 1830,” *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 33, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2013): 148–52.

67. Robin Scott Jensen, et al., *Revelations and Translations: Manuscript Revelation Books, Facsimile Edition*, 26–31. The revelations were copied into the Book of Commandments and Revelations manuscript book. The text of the six revelations cited come from this manuscript volume. They were included in Book of Commandments, chapters 22 and 17–21.

68. *Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirtland, OH: Printed by F. G. Williams & co., 1835), 177–78.

69. H. Michael Marquardt, “An Appraisal of Manchester as Location for the Organization of the Church,” *Sunstone* 16 (February 1992): 49–57.

A Revelation to Oliver, given in Manchester, New-York, April 6, 1830.

BCR: Behold I speak unto you, Oliver, a few words Behold thou art Blessed & art under no condemnation but beware of pride lest thou shouldest enter into temptation make known thy Calling unto the Church & also before the World & thy heart shall be opened to Preach the truth from henceforth & for ever amen

#### *Revelation for Hyrum Smith*

BCR: A Commandment to Hyram given at Manchester Ontario County State of New York

Book of Commandments, chapter 18:

*A Revelation to Hyrum, given in Manchester, New-York, April 6, 1830.*

BCR: Behold I speak unto you, Hyram, a few words: for thou also art under no condemnation, & thy heart is opened, & thy tongue loosed; & thy Calling is to exhortation, & to strengthen the Church continually. wherefore thy duty is unto the Church forever; & this because of thy family. amen

#### *Revelation for Samuel Harrison Smith*

BCR: A Revelation to Samuel given at Manchester Ontario Co[unty] N. Y.

Book of Commandments, chapter 19:

*A Revelation to Samuel, given in Manchester, New-York, April 6, 1830.*

BCR: Behold I speak a few words unto you, Samuel. for thou also art under no condemnation, & thy calling is to Exhortation, and to strengthen the Church. & thou art not as yet called to prea[c]h before the world. Amen.

#### *Revelation for Joseph Smith Sr.*

BCR: A Commandment to given to Joseph at Manchester Ontario County State of New York

Book of Commandments, chapter 20:

*A Revelation to Joseph, the father of Joseph, given in Manchester, New-York, April 6, 1830.*

BCR: Behold I speak a few words unto you, Joseph: for thou art under no condemnation, & thy calling also is to Exhortation, & to strengthen the Church. & this is thy duty from henceforth & forever. amen.

*Revelation for Joseph Knight Sr.*<sup>70</sup>

BCR: A Commandment to Joseph Knight given at Manchester Ontario County State of New York

Book of Commandments, chapter 21:

*A Revelation to Joseph (K.,) given in Manchester, New-York, April 6, 1830.*

BCR: Behold I manifest unto you by these words, that thou must take up thy Cross, in the which thou must pray vocally, before the World, as well as in Seecret [Secret], & in thy family & among thy friends, & in all Places. & Behold it is thy duty to unite with the true Church, & give thy Language to Exhortation continually, that thou mayest Receive the reward of the Labourer [Laborer]. amen.

*Revelation for Joseph Smith Jr. and the Church of Christ*<sup>71</sup>

BCR: A Revelation to Joseph the Seer by way of commandment to the Church given at Fayette Seneca County State of New York<sup>72</sup>

Book of Commandments, chapter 22:

*A Revelation to Joseph, given in Manchester, New-York, April 6, 1830.*

BCR: A Revelation to me Joseph by way of commandment to the church Behold there Shall be a Record kept among you & in it thou shalt be called a seer a Translator [Translator] A Prop[h]et an Apostle of Jesus Christ an Elder of the Church through the will of God the Father & the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ being inspired of the Holy Ghost to lay the foundation thereof & to build it up unto the most holy faith which Church was Organized & established in the year of our Lord one thousand Eight Hundred & Thirty in the fo[u]rth Month on the Sixth day of the month which is called April

Wherefore meaning the Church thou shalt give heed unto all his words & commandments which he Shall give unto you as he receiveth them wa[l]king in all holyness [holiness] before me for his word ye shall receive as if from mine own mouth in all Patience & faith for by doing these things the gaits [gates] of Hell shall not prevail against you yea & the Lord God will disperse the Powers of darkness from before you & cause the Heavens to shake for your Good & his name[']s glory

for thus saith the Lord God him have I inspired to move the cause of Zion in Mighty power for good & his dilligence [diligence] I know & his prayers I have heard yea his weeping for Zion I have seen & I will cause that He shall mourn for her no longer for his days of rejoicing are come unto the remission of his Sins & the manifestations of

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70. Joseph Knight Sr. was not baptized at this time. He had not read the Book of Mormon and wanted to examine it more closely.

71. This revelation gives instructions for Oliver Cowdery to proceed with ordaining Joseph Smith as a prophet and seer over the church.

72. Book of Commandments 22:1 corrects the location to "given in Manchester, New-York."

my blessings upon his works for behold, I will bless all those who Labour [Labor] in my Vin[e]yard with a mighty blessing & they shall believe on his words which are given him through me by the comforter which manifesteth that Jesus was Crusified [Crucified] by sinfull men for the Sins of the world yea for the remission of sins unto the contrite heart

Wherefore it behooveth me that he should be ordained by you Oliver [Cowdery] mine Apostle this being an Ordinance unto you that ye are an Elder under his hand he being the first unto you that thou mightest be an Elder unto this Church of Christ bearing my name & the first Preacher of this Church unto the Church & before the world yea before the gentiles yea & thus saith the Lord God Lo. Lo. to the Jews also Amen

During preparations for publishing Joseph Smith's revelations, locations were provided where each revelation was spoken and systematically included. We find in the first church periodical, *The Evening and the Morning Star*, the earliest brief history dealing with the month of April.

Soon after the book of Mormon came forth, containing the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the church was organized on the sixth of April, in Manchester; soon after, a branch was established in Fayette, and the June following, another in Colesville, New York.<sup>73</sup>

### Baptisms on April 6, 1830

The baptisms of Joseph Smith parents, their neighbor Mrs. Sarah Rockwell (1785–?) and friend Martin Harris were part of the activities associated with the organization of the church. The draft of the church manuscript history follows an 1834 change in location to Fayette, New York. James Mulholland (1804–39) included in his draft the following:

Several persons who attended this meeting, but who had <not> as yet been baptized, came forward shortly after, and were received into the church having on that occasion got entirely convinced of the truth of the work. <Among th[e] rest Father Smith, Martin Harris & Mother Smith><sup>74</sup>

The final manuscript reads:

73. "Rise and Progress of the Church of Christ," *The Evening and the Morning Star* 1, no. 11 (April 1833): 84. Oliver Cowdery, present at the April 6 meeting, where he received his ordination as second elder, assisted in the printing of the *Star*.

74. Joseph Smith History, circa June–October 1839, draft by James Mulholland, LDS Church History Library. A notation: "Mother Smith & Sister Rockwell 2 or 3 days afterward" was not used for the above history draft as Lucy Smith was baptized on the same day as her husband.

Several persons who had attended the above meeting, and got convinced of the truth, came forward shortly after, and were received into the church, among the rest My own Father and Mother were baptized to my great joy and consolation, and about the same time, Martin Harris and a [blank space] Rockwell.<sup>75</sup>

Lucy Smith's narrative mentions the baptism of her husband and the joy her son Joseph experienced:

in the spring Joseph came up <and preached to us> after ~~the books were~~ <Oliver got throu[g]h> with the Book and <My Husband and> Martin H[a]rris was ba[p]tized Joseph stood on the shore when his father came out of the water and as he took him by the hand he cried out Oh! my God I have lived to see my father baptized into the true church of Jesus christ and <he> covered his face with and wept like and infant sobbed upon his father's bosom like an infant <in his father[']s bosom and wept aloud like for joy as did> Joseph of old when he beheld his father coming up into the land of Egypt this took place on the sixth of April 1830, the d[a]y on which the church was organized<sup>76</sup>

Joseph Knight Sr. wrote his account concerning obtaining bound copies of the Book of Mormon and also some of the events held on April 6 (original spelling retained):

I Stay[e]d a few Days wa[i]ting for some Books [of Mormon] to Be Bound. Joseph Said there must Be a Church B[u]iltup I had Be[e]n there Several Days old Mr Smith and Martin Harris Come forrod [forward] to Be Baptise[d] for the first they found a place in a Lot a Small Stream ran thro[ugh] and they ware Babtized in the Evening Because of persecution they went forward and was Babtized Being the first I Saw Babtized in the new and everlasting Covenant ...

there was one thing I will mention that evening that old Brother Smith and Martin Harris was Babtised Joseph was fild [filled] with the Spirrit to a grate Degree to See his Father and Mr Harris that he had Bin [Been] with So much he Bast [Burst] out with greaf and Joy and Seamed as tho[ugh] the world Could not hold him he went out into the Lot and appear[e]d to want to git [get] out of site of every Body and would Sob and Crie and Seamed to Be so full that he Could not Live oliver and I went after him and Came to him and after a while he Came in

But he was the most wrot [wrought] upon that I ever Saw any man But his Joy Seemed to Be full I think he Saw the grate [great] work he had Begun and was Desirus [Desirous] to Carry it out.

on the Sixth Day of April 1830 he Begun the Church with Six members and received the following Revelation Book of Covenants Page 177 they all kneel[e]d Down

75. Manuscript History, Book A-1:38, LDS Church History Library. The history was printed as the "History of Joseph Smith," ending, "about the same time Martin Harris and A. [sic] Rockwell." *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 1 (November 15, 1842): 12, Nauvoo, Illinois.

76. Lucy Mack Smith History, 1844-1845, LDS Church History Library; also in Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 477.

and prayed and Joseph gave them instructions how to Bild [Build] up the Church and ex[h]orted them to Be faithfull in all things for this is the work of God<sup>77</sup>

In her history Lucy does not mention her own baptism. But a neighbor, Cornelius R. Stafford (1813–?), recalled that as a young man he “saw old Jo Smith, his wife and Mrs. [Sarah W.] Rockwell baptized by prophet Jo Smith.”<sup>78</sup> Stafford says the baptisms were performed by Joseph Jr. other sources have Oliver Cowdery. It is possible that both did baptisms that day. Benjamin Saunders (1814–93), fifteen years old at the time, recollected: “I was there when they first baptized. Oliver Cowdery did the baptizing. Old brother <Smith> was baptized at that time and I think old Mrs. Rockwell.”<sup>79</sup> Martin Harris recalled that he was not baptized “untill the church Was organised by Joseph Smith the Prophet then I Was Babtised by the Hands of Oliver Cowdery.”<sup>80</sup>

The place of these baptisms was no doubt Crooked Brook (now Hathaway Creek), a stream in the northwest corner of the township of Manchester. Crooked Brook ran north past the Smith residence toward Palmyra. Joseph Knight described it as a “Small Stream,” which it still is.<sup>81</sup> According to a later newspaper account, the stream,

not more than si[x]ty feet from the highway, is the first Mormon Jordan, a little creek which the Smith boys dammed at Joe’s request and made a pool in which the first converts to Mormonism were baptized. It is a sing[i]n[g] meandering little brooklet about ten or fite[e]n feet wide, with two or three feet of water standing in pools in the bends of the stream, but ordinarily the water is but a few inches deep.<sup>82</sup>

A history of Ontario County describes the stream in terms congruent with the accounts of those who claimed to be present at the church’s organization: “Crooked brook, of Mormon fame, runs through the northwest part of the town[ship of Manchester], and it was in the waters of this stream that the Mormons baptized their early saints. Dr. [John] Stafford, an old resident of the village of Manchester, was

77. Joseph Knight “Reminiscences,” circa 1835–1847, LDS Church History Library. The revelation Knight refers to became chapter 22 in the Book of Commandments, and includes the date April 6, 1830.

78. Statement by C. R. Stafford, March 1885, in *Naked Truths About Mormonism* (Oakland, California) 1, no. 1 (January 1888): 3, original publication in the Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut. Mrs. Rockwell’s daughter Caroline Rockwell Smith (1812–87), baptized June 9, 1830, said, “My mother was one of the first Mormon converts.” “Mrs. M. C. R. Smith’s Statement,” March 25, 1885, *Ibid.*, 1, no. 2 (April 1888): 1.

79. Benjamin Saunders, interview by William H. Kelley, circa September 1884, Community of Christ Library-Archives.

80. Testimony of Martin Harris in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, September 4, 1870, Edward Stevenson Collection, LDS Church History Library. Harris was baptized on April 6, 1830.

81. Joseph Knight “Reminiscences,” circa 1835–1847, LDS Church History Library.

82. “Mormon Leaders at Their Mecca,” *New York Herald*, June 25, 1893.



present at the first baptism.”<sup>83</sup> John Stafford (1805–1905), oldest son of William Stafford, “knew the Smith family well, and was present at the first baptism, when old Granny Smith and Sally Rockwell” were baptized.<sup>84</sup>

### July 5, 1830 Manchester Assessment Record and August 1830 US Census

The Assessment Record for the purpose of taxes to be paid on land for lot no. 1 included Roswell Nichols, 100 acres; Joseph Capron, 5 acres; Hiram Smith, 15 acres; Edmund Chase, 29 acres; Amos Risley, 28 acres and Thomas Phillips, 60 acres. South of this lot was lot no. 3 with Squire Stoddard being taxed for land totaling 101 acres, which included land to the east on lot no. 2; James Kinley taxed for 75 acres also on lot no. 3 and for the next lot south on lot no. 5 David Stafford was taxed for 20 acres.<sup>85</sup>

The name “Joseph Smith” is listed twice under “Names of Heads of Families” in the 1830 US Census for Ontario County, enumerated in August 1830. One man was enumerated as residing in Farmington and the other in Manchester. Checking the ages, the Manchester one is our Joseph Smith being two families living together. The names of the Smith family members are included in parenthesis in the appropriate age brackets printed on the census page.

The male members were: 10–15, one (Don Carlos); 15–20, one (William); 20–30, two (Hyrum and Samuel Harrison); and 50–60, one (Joseph Sr., husband of Lucy). Female members were: under 5, two (Lovina and Mary, daughters of Jerusha and Hyrum); 5–10, one (Lucy, daughter of Lucy and Joseph Sr.); 20–30, one (Jerusha, wife of Hyrum); 30–40, one (female visitor not identified); and 50–60, one (Lucy, wife of Joseph Sr.).

The Smith household was living among known Manchester neighbors such as Pardon Butts, Abraham Fish, Orren [Orin] Rockwell, Roswell Nichols, Russel[l] Stoddard, David Stafford, Squire Stoddard, Joseph Caperin [Capron], James Kinley, Phebe Chase, Amos Risley, Thomas Phillips, and other members of the Stafford family.<sup>86</sup>

### Visitors to Smith’s Manchester Log Home

As the message spread, Almira Mack (1805–86), daughter of Lucy Mack Smith’s brother Stephen Mack, came from Pontiac, Michigan, in June 1830, and arrived at

83. John H. Pratt, in Charles F. Milliken’s *A History of Ontario County, New York and Its People* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1911), 1:418.

84. “Celebrated His Ninety-ninth Birthday,” *Shortsville Enterprise* (Shortsville, New York) 22, no. 12 (March 18, 1904): 2.

85. “Assessment Roll, of the Real and Personal Estate in the Town of Manchester in the County of Ontario,” July 5, 1830, Ontario County Historical Society Museum and Research Library, Canandaigua.

86. 1830 US Census, Manchester, Ontario County, New York, 169–70.

the Smith home in Manchester. Lucy said Almira “received the Gospel” and was baptized.<sup>87</sup> In August 1830, Hyrum was visited by Parley P. Pratt (1807–57), who recalled:

I accordingly visited the village of Palmyra, and inquired for the residence of Mr. Joseph Smith. I found it some two or three miles from the village. As I approached the house at the close of the day I overtook a man who was driving some cows, and inquired of him for Mr. Joseph Smith, the translator of the “Book of Mormon.” He informed me that he now resided in Pennsylvania; some one hundred miles distant. I inquired for his father, or for any of the family. He told me that his father had gone [on] a journey; but that his residence was a small house just before me; and, said he, I am his brother. It was Mr. Hyrum Smith. . . . He welcomed me to his house.<sup>88</sup>

That month Pratt returned and visited the branch in Fayette and was baptized about September 1 by Oliver Cowdery. The next month Parley Pratt again visited Manchester. He wrote:

Returning to western New York the same autumn, I saw for the first time Joseph Smith, the Prophet, at his father’s house, in Manchester; heard him preach, and preached in his house, at the close of which meeting we baptized seven persons. After this he [Joseph Jr.] enquired of the Lord and received a revelation appointing me a mission to the west, in company with Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, jun., and Ziba Peterson. We started this mission in October, 1830.<sup>89</sup>

Ezra Thayer (1791–1862) visited the Smith home and also heard the preaching of Hyrum Smith. What follows are excerpts from his account:

I had a half brother living with me and a nephew, and they took my horses and went to meeting, to hear Hyrum [Smith] preach while I was gone. . . . My half brother said that Hyrum said that Joseph had seen an angel. My nephew said that there was something in it, and that I had better go and hear him. . . . The next Sunday I went and there was a large concourse of people around his father’s house, so that they extended to the road, filling up the large lot. I rushed in and got close to the stand, so as to be particular to hear what was said. When Hyrum began to speak, every word touched me to the inmost soul.

Joseph was then in Harmony, Pa., and the next Sunday he came to his father’s house, and we assembled to see him. . . . He then asked me what hindered me from going

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87. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 478, 840.

88. Parley P. Pratt [Jr.], ed., *The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt* (New York: Published for the Editor and Proprietor by Russell Brothers, 1874), 38–39; (1994 ed.), 20, emphasis omitted.

89. “History of Parley P. Pratt,” *Deseret News* 8 (May 19, 1858): 53.

into the water, as Oliver Cowdery's mother was going to be baptized.... Then we started to the water.... We were baptized just below the mill. ... Parley P. Pratt baptized us<sup>90</sup>

Those baptized at this time included Ezra Thayer, Northrop Sweet and Oliver Cowdery's step mother Keziah Cowdery. Apparently they were baptized on Sunday, October 17, 1830.

### Revelation for Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson<sup>91</sup>

Two additional missionaries, Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson (circa 1810–49) were called to preach to the Native Americans, Book of Mormon "Lamanites." They traveled to Kirtland, Ohio, being there on October 29, 1830, and arrived at their destination at Independence, Jackson County, Missouri in January 1831.

Revelation to Parley Pratt to go to th[e] wilderness

And now concerning my servant Parley [P. Pratt] behold I say unto him that as I live I will that he shall declare my gospel and Learn of me and be meek and lowly of heart and that which I have appointed unto him is that he shall go with my servant Oliver [Cowdery] and Peter [Whitmer Jr.] into the wilderness among the Lamanites and Ziba [Peterson] also shall go with them and I myself will go with them and be in their midst and I am their advocate with the Father and nothing shall prevail and they shall give heed to that which is writ[t]en and pretend to no other revelation and they shall pray always that I may unfold them to their understanding and they shall give heed unto these words and trifle not and I will bless them amen

Manchester Oct 1830

### Missionary Covenant

MANCHESTER, Oct. 17, 1830.

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

90. "Testimony of Brother E. Thayer," *True Latter Day Saints' Herald* (Cincinnati, Ohio) 3, no. 4 (October 1862): 79–83.

91. Robin Scott Jensen, et al., *Revelations and Translations: Manuscript Revelation Books, Facsimile Edition*, 582–85. This revelation was copied into the manuscript Kirtland Revelations Book. It is included in LDS D&C 32; RLDS D&C 31. The revelation was not copied into the BCR and therefore not printed in the Book of Commandments.

## OLIVER COWDERY.

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

Signed in presence of  
 JOSEPH SMITH, Jun.  
 DAVID WHITMER.  
 P. P. PRATT.  
 ZIBA PETERSON.  
 PETER WHITMER.<sup>92</sup>

The ending of the covenant was evidently signed by the three missionaries in the presence of Joseph Smith Jr. and David Whitmer.

### Fayette Happenings

David Marks (1805–45), a Free-will Baptist evangelist, visited the Peter Whitmer Sr. (1773–1854) home on March 29, 1830. He wrote shortly after his visit, “we went to Fayette & held one meeting.”<sup>93</sup> Marks expanded his journal entry in an account of his life:

Sabbath, March 28, I preached twice to a small assembly in Geneva. Next day, we attended a meeting in Fayette, and tarried at the house of Mr. Whitmer. Here we saw two or three of his sons, and others to the number of eight, who said they were witnesses of a certain book just published, called the “*Golden Bible*,” or “*Book of Mormon*.”<sup>94</sup>

Two years later he also explained his visit:

On the 25th [sic] of March, 1830, I preached in Fayette and tarried the night at Mr Whitmer’s, where I had an interview with eight of the witnesses. Among the number were a brother of Joseph Smith and Oliver Powdery [sic; Cowdery], the scribe. They had just received a few copies of the book of Mormon from the press. I inquired for the original plates, but they said they were “hid up unto the Lord.”<sup>95</sup>

92. Ezra Booth to Rev. Ira Eddy, November 29, 1831, Letter No. 8, in “Mormonism,” *Ohio Star* (Ravenna, Ohio) 2 (December 8, 1831): 1; reprinted in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 213–14.

93. “Journal of D. Marks, Jun. No. 12,” *Morning Star* (Limerick, Maine) 4, no. 52 (April 28, 1830): 1.

94. *The Life of David Marks* (Limerick, ME: Printed at the Office of the Morning Star, 1831), 340, emphasis retained.

95. D[avid]. Marks, “For the Morning Star,” *Morning Star* 7, no. 45 (March 7, 1833): 177.

### David Whitmer's *Address to All Believers in Christ*

In 1887 David Whitmer published his current beliefs regarding if a church organization was needed in 1830. He said there were three branches of the church at the time:

Now, when April 6, 1830, had come, we had then established three branches of the "Church of Christ," in which three branches were about seventy members: One branch was at Fayette, N.Y.; one at Manchester, N.Y., and one at Colesville, Pa. [New York] ... we met at my father's house in Fayette, N.Y., on April 6, 1830, to attend to this matter of organizing according to the laws of the land<sup>96</sup>

The idea that the Church of Christ (known in its various sects as Mormonism) was established in Fayette has the problem of travel between Fayette and Manchester (a twenty-five-mile one-way trip). The revelation about ordaining Joseph Smith Jr. in this case would be received in Fayette. If this were the case then individuals would have to travel to Manchester for baptism. If the baptisms occurred in Manchester then the group would travel to Fayette for the organization meeting. Since the baptisms were performed in Manchester there was no need to travel to Fayette on April 6, 1830.<sup>97</sup>

#### Church at Fayette, Seneca County, New York and the First Church Conference, June 9, 1830

The 1839 manuscript history includes a list of those who were baptized in the months of April and May 1830. The dates of Sunday, April 11, April 18 and the last week in May contain the names of individuals who received the rite of baptism.

The first conference held by the newly formed church was at the Peter Whitmer Sr. home in Fayette, on Wednesday, June 9. The extant licenses certifying ordination, issued at the conference, mention the church organization and date, but include no location.

There were four individuals from the Fayette area and seven believers who traveled to the conference from Manchester that were baptized. Those from Manchester came from the two Smith families: Jerusha (wife of Hyrum); Catherine, William, and Don Carlos (daughter and sons of Lucy and Joseph Sr.) and from the Rockwell

96. David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ* (Richmond, MO: David Whitmer, 1887), 33. For additional information see H. Michael Marquardt, "David Whitmer: His Evolving Beliefs and Recollections," in Newell G. Bringham and John C. Hamer, eds. *Scattering of the Saints: Schism within Mormonism* (Independence, MO: John Whitmer Books, 2007), 70–72.

97. Mark A. Scherer has concluded Manchester as the organization location. *The Journey of a People: The Era of Restoration, 1820 to 1844* (Independence, MO: Community of Christ Seminary Press, 2013), 124–37.

family: Porter, Caroline, and Electa (son and daughters of Sarah and Orin). The names may have come from a membership list.<sup>98</sup> The officiators of early baptisms included Joseph Smith Jr., Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer.

### Church at Colesville, Broome County, New York

At the end of June about 13 or 14 individuals, including Emma Smith, were baptized. They were not confirmed until a later date. When Joseph Smith was planning on administering the Lord's Supper he said he received a message from an angel:

BCR: A Revelation to the Church given at Harmony susquehannh [Susquehanna] County State of Pennsylvania given to Joseph the Seer at a time that he went to purchase wine for Sacrament & he was stop[p]ed by an Angel & he spok[e] to him as follows Saying

Book of Commandments, chapter 28:

*A Commandment to the church of Christ, given in Harmony, Pennsylvania, September 4, 1830.*

BCR: Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ your Lord your God & your Redeemer whose word is quick & powerful for Behold I say unto you that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory Remembering unto the father my Body which was laid down for you & my blood which was shed for the Remission of your sins

Wherefore a commandment I give unto you that ye shall not Purchase Wine neither strong drink of your enemies Wherefore ye shall partake of none except it is made new among you yea in this my Father[']s Kingdom which shall be built up on the earth Behold this is wisdom in me Wherefore marvel not for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the Vine with you on the Earth & with all those whom my father hath given me out of the world Wherefore lift up your hearts & rejoice & Gird up your loins & be faithful untill I come even so amen<sup>99</sup>

Soon after this commandment was given, Joseph Smith returned to Colesville to confirm those baptized in June who had not yet received confirmation. Afterwards he and Emma Smith went to Fayette to live with the Whitmer family.

98. The names of those baptized are in Manuscript History Book A-1:39, 42, LDS Church History Library. The history has the date of the first conference as "the first day of June 1830" rather than the correct date of June 9.

99. Robin Scott Jensen, et al., *Revelations and Translations: Manuscript Revelation Books, Facsimile Edition*, 40–43, compare with LDS D&C 27; RLDS D&C 26.

## Joseph Smith Sr. in Ontario County Jail

Joseph Sr. was taken to the jail in Canandaigua for a debt and was there with prisoner Eli Bruce (1793–1852), who recorded for November 5, 1830:

Had a long talk with the father of *the Smith*, (Joseph Smith,) who, according to the old man's account, is the particular favorite of Heaven! To him Heaven has vouchsafed to reveal its mysteries; he is the herald of the latter-day glory. The old man avers that he is commissioned by God to baptize and preach this new doctrine. He says that our Bible is much abridged and deficient; that soon the Divine will is to be made known to all, as written in the *new Bible*, or *Book of Mormon*.<sup>100</sup>

### Epilogue

By presenting historical documentation for the town of Manchester we have a better understanding of some of the activities that occurred relating to the Joseph Smith Sr. family. We get to appreciate the struggles of this unusual family in the context of their time. The Smiths lived within their cultural setting that included belief in the supernatural. This helps explain the use of a stone that had special qualities.

The role of Joseph Smith Jr. as “prophet and seer” is important to Mormonism. This new religious tradition is understandable when the events are known about Smith's various experiences growing up in Manchester, Ontario County, New York. The church he founded was organized at this location. The revelatory messages that Smith proclaimed at Manchester have been presented and can be appreciated in the environmental setting of western New York.

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100. Robert Morris, *The Masonic Martyr: The Biography of Eli Bruce, Sheriff of Niagara County, New York* (Louisville, KY: Morris and Monsarrat, 1861), 266–67, emphasis retained. Bruce's journal is not extant.