INSANITY AND THE SWEET SINGER:
A BIOGRAPHY OF DAVID HYRUM SMITH, 1844-1904

by
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ABSTRACT

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David Hyrum Smith, 1844-1904, was the youngest son of the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith and his wife, Emma. Born after his father was killed, David grew up in Nauvoo, Illinois, and joined the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. This church was headed by his brother, Joseph Smith III, and opposed some of the theological principles, namely the practice of plural marriage and a concept of gathering in one geographical place, that were promulgated by the Mormon church in Utah headed by Brigham Young. David Smith served as a missionary for the RLDS church and traveled several times to Utah to preach and collect converts among the Mormons of Utah. There he associated with men who opposed Brigham Young's policies, e.g., William Godbe, William Shearman, and Amasa Lyman, but because of his engaging personality and his relationship to the founder of the Mormon churches he was quite popular. David possessed a fine sense of humor, and a keen intellect. He argued effectively in public forums for his cause. But a developing insanity overwhelmed him in 1873 and by 1877 he had to be institutionalized in the asylum at Elgin, Illinois. David Smith then became a disconcerting issue for both Mormon churches and was ignored in their histories. An examination of
his life illuminates many aspects of the strained relationships between the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence, Missouri, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.
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PREFACE

Many enigmas are connected to the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, headquartered in Salt Lake City, and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints located in Independence, Missouri. But none are more curious than the story of David Hyrum Smith, youngest son of the Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith, and his wife Emma. After Smith's death the main body of Mormons left Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1846-7. Many of those who stayed behind looked for an organization that would fill the void created by the absence of the church, but which would accomplish that end without the onus of polygamy. The loosely knit group that stayed in the midwest drafted Joseph Smith III, eldest son of the Mormon prophet, to become the president of a Mormon church in Illinois that rivaled that of Brigham Young in the west. He adopted the methods that his father had used and sent out prosleyzing missionaries. One of these was his brother, David, who would become the center of both sorrow and controversy for the two Mormon churches.

A poet, singer, painter, philosopher, in short a sensitive man of diverse talents, David Smith approached his tasks with enthusiasm, wit, and intellectual curiosity. He was revered by his people and some went so far as to claim that he would one day challenge his brother for leadership. Curious about the world in which he lived, he dabbled in seances and spiritualism, questioned the Utah Mormons about polygamy, and wrote clear and concise arguments to his brother, asserting that
reason had a place in religious philosophy. In the process of it all, David lost his own reason, and was admitted to the Illinois State Asylum for the insane at the age of thirty-two.

At that point, he became an embarrassment to the church, the people, and the family he had worked so long and diligently to serve. Uneasy with the question of insanity in church leadership, few historians have examined David's life. More often his work is unmentioned in their accounts. Two men, Paul Edwards and F. Mark McKiernan, in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints have written briefly about David's life and have published their conclusions.

My interest in David Smith's life grew out of work on a biography of his mother, Emma Hale Smith, done in collaboration with Linda King Newell. At the present time, January, 1984, Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith is in press at Doubleday & Co., Inc. The prologue following this introduction is taken to a great extent from the biography of Emma in order to describe the chaotic events leading to the birth of David Hyrum Smith.

While many people admit to some curiosity about a man who loses his reason, they question the purpose of a biography about a man whose end seemed sad and lonely and of no use to mankind, a man who became a burden to society. In response, David Smith contributed greatly to his church and family, he was a valuable person to the Reorganization, and he left sensitive, thoughtful, and humorous accounts of his life experiences that delight the reader who explores them. But even more, I believe strongly that people who are physically or mentally less than perfect make tangible contributions to our lives. They are valuable
persons; they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. While they puzzle us, aggravate us, and bring us face to face with spectres of incompetence that we all dread, they cannot be separated from us, for each reader of these words experiences his own degree and manner of imperfection. We all stand at the edge, as it were, and for David, perhaps insanity was the only acceptable reaction to an insane world.

I am indebted to Garland Downum, Professor Emeritus of History, Northern Arizona University, for financial support for part of the research involved in the preparation of this dissertation through his funding of the Downum award to aid in graduate research. Dr. Andrew Wallace served as chair of both the Master's and PhD. committees of my graduate work; I am grateful for his continual support. Professors Gerald E. Hansen, David H. Kitterman, Lawrence M. Davis, and Delno C. West, chair of the History Department at Northern Arizona University, read the dissertation and offered invaluable assistance. Dr. George Lubick and Dr. David Strate also served on the PhD. committee; I am grateful to them. Without archivist Madelon Brunson and the staff at the History Commission, Library-Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence, Missouri, this dissertation could not have been written and I am deeply in debt to them all. Mr. Lynn E. Smith, grandson of David Hyrum Smith, and his wife, Lorene, shared some of David's correspondence with me. I appreciate them and their contribution, but hasten to add that my conclusions about the Smith family may differ from theirs and I wish to cause them no embarrassment. Maxine Wood Campbell, long-time friend, remarkable typist, and scholarly critic has been a companion through several typing drafts
and hours of discussion. Her husband, Ralph E. Campbell, also read and re-read the manuscript. I appreciate them both. Platt Cline, Adjunct Professor Emeritus of History at Northern Arizona University and life-long newspaperman, added his invaluable comments to the work. And I am grateful to my children, Christopher, Maureen, Nathan, and Thad, and to my husband, Charles, for their help, encouragement, and support.
CHAPTER ONE

Prologue

In November 1844, the time of David Hyrum Smith's birth, Nauvoo, Illinois, still exhibited the profound shock brought to its citizens by the murder of their leader five months earlier. Joseph Smith, mayor of the city and president of the church organization whose members had settled the area, had been shot by a mob while in jail at the county seat of Carthage to face trial. His death left a temporary void in the structure of the community, and while hopeful successors to the church and city leadership maneuvered for positions of power and influence, his wife, Emma, prepared for the birth of her child. On November 17, a son was born whom she named David Hyrum Smith, a name previously agreed upon by his parents.

The unsettled and unusual conditions of David's birth presaged similar conditions in his life. A beginning at birth is not sufficient for David's life story. He found that events preceding his arrival would haunt and disturb him during his lifetime. David Smith would attempt to carry on his father's work, and like his father before him, would find that doing so ended his productive life prematurely. His father died by violence at the age of thirty-eight. At age thirty-two, David was committed to the Illinois State Asylum for the insane, where he died after twenty-seven years of residence. Because his work in furthering the church founded by his father engaged his talents to the
end, David's biography must begin with Joseph Smith's establishment of a new church in the United States.

The Smith family, Joseph Smith, Senior, his wife, Lucy, and their eight children moved from Vermont in 1816.¹ Their son, Joseph, Jr., born in 1805, remembered, "About the age of twelve years my mind became seriously imprest with regard to the all important concerns for the welfare of my immortal soul which led me to searching the Scriptures."² He later reported that when he was fourteen, he responded to revivals in the "burned-over" district of up-state New York.

On September 21, 1823, he received a divine manifestation; a visitor, surrounded by light, appeared in the night and explained that his name was Moroni and that he was a messenger from God. He had been sent to tell the youth that a book that gave an account of the "former inhabitants" of this continent was deposited in a hill nearby; Joseph Smith would be called upon to translate the book. for "the fullness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it."³

In 1825 Joseph Smith traveled with his father to Harmony, Pennsylvania, a hamlet lying along the Susquehanna River in the northern part of the state. The Smiths had been hired to dig for a lost silver mine. Young Joseph, nineteen years old, was reputed to be able to discern hidden treasure, the object of the money-digging obsession then sweeping Pennsylvania and New York. While he found no gold or silver, Joseph met Emma Hale, the daughter of Isaac Hale, who owned the inn in which the men boarded. Emma Hale, about five feet nine inches tall, with dark thick hair, brown eyes, and a clear complexion complimented the lithe blondness of six-foot Joseph in size as well as in person-
ality. In spite of Isaac Hale's stubborn refusal to allow them to marry, Emma and Joseph eloped on January 18, 1827, then fled north after their marriage to the Smith home in Palmyra.

Joseph's mother, Lucy Mack Smith, and a family friend, Joseph Knight, Sr., both described the events of the night of September 21, 1827, when Joseph and Emma together went to a nearby hill named Cumorah. While Emma waited with the wagon below, Joseph scaled the mound and returned with an object wrapped in his coat which they hid before returning to the Smith home. Joseph said he had been given gold plates by the angel named Moroni, and he was under obligation to translate them. As rumors of this assertion spread through the neighborhood, Joseph believed the plates were in danger of being stolen, so he and Emma decided to return to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to live with the Hale family while he labored over the translation. Though Isaac Hale deplored the apparently laziness of his son-in-law, Emma and Joseph remained in Harmony until the translation was complete. The resulting work, titled The Book of Mormon after the early inhabitant of the of the Americas who had been the last record keeper, appeared in print in 1830, the same year that Joseph formally organized his church in New York. The book gave an account of a people who supposedly immigrated to the New World about 600 B.C. and established a nation that was destroyed about a thousand years later. The book was not intended to usurp the position of the two existing Testaments as scriptural guidance to believers, but rather, to complement them. Included in the Book of Mormon chronicles is an account of the resurrected Christ visiting the peoples of the New World.
With the Book of Mormon in print, and the church organized under New York statutes, Joseph sent out missionaries to preach the new gospel. These missionaries fanned out from Fayette, New York, north into Canada, and west as far as Ohio where they found success among the existing congregations of the Disciples of Christ, the followers of Alexander Campbell.

Early in 1831 Joseph and Emma Smith and many of their followers moved to Kirtland, Ohio, where they began to build up the Church of Jesus Christ. The settlement at Kirtland, near Cleveland, originally began with about a hundred members, but missionary activity soon began to swell the numbers from poverty-ridden people who migrated to the village to make their homes. They came to live among a community of believers and to learn of the new gospel.

Periodically Joseph received divine instructions about temporal or religious matters that he repeated to his followers. This was termed 'receiving revelation' and gradually these guidelines were written and assembled into a body of scripture entitled The Doctrine and Covenants. In Kirtland, within a month of his arrival, Joseph Smith had a revelation establishing the Law of Consecration, a plan for communal life that consecrated land and goods to the Lord, but returned portions of the assigned land to the individual as 'stewardship.' All surplus would be administered by a bishop and used to further 'the Lord's work,' but many people bickered and chafed under the demands of communal living.

The Mormons lived in Kirtland from February 1831 until they left for settlements in Missouri in 1838. During this seven year period, Joseph established theological concepts and attempted to unify his
people. For the first three years the settlement grew relatively peacefully, although a mob tarred and feathered Joseph in March 1832. He established another outpost of Mormon settlements in Missouri and for several years the Mormons were in two isolated groups. In 1834, disturbances in Missouri prompted the formation of a military force called Zion's Camp. The march from Kirtland was a futile attempt to bring peace to the backwoods confrontations between the Mormons and the Missourians who resented the newcomers.

By 1836 a cooperative, united work force built a temple in Kirtland giving at one stroke a physical place in which to meet, and a symbol of their spirituality in the building itself. This period of church growth saw future leaders such as Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball join the effort; it also became a period of serious and widespread dissent. Juxtaposed over the accomplishment of publishing the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was a consternation felt by leaders such as Oliver Cowdery, who had participated in the Book of Mormon translation, and members of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, who believed that Joseph's behavior in secretly inaugurating plural marriage and in handling a Mormon bank were not seemly for a prophet.

A son who lived only a few hours had been born to Emma and Joseph Smith earlier in Harmony on June 15, 1828. Emma was pregnant with twins during the move to Kirtland in 1831, but those children, a son and daughter, also lived only a short time. Emma and Joseph adopted twins born about the same time to John Murdock and his wife in Kirtland. They named the boy Joseph and the girl Julia, but exposure to the elements during the night Joseph was tarred and feathered
aggravated a feverish measles attack and three days later the adopted boy died. Thus, Emma and Joseph had buried four children. Emma gave birth to a son on November 6, 1832, in Kirtland. This child lived, and was named Joseph after his father and grandfather. Called "Young Joseph" as a child, he became Joseph Smith III as an adult. In June 1836, a second son, Frederick Granger Williams Smith was born in Kirtland. Emma Smith opened her home to boarders for the first time in Kirtland, a practice that she would continue until her death in 1879. Also in Kirtland, Emma assembled and published a hymnal for the church, an assignment given to her through Joseph by revelation.

Joseph was absent from Kirtland much of the time that the Smiths lived there. When he was called to Missouri frequently, and traveled to New York on one occasion, Emma gradually assumed much of the responsibility for the welfare of the family. Joseph made her a de-facto partner in his business affairs, a position that caused her some discomfort when dealing with men who did not expect Emma to be responsible in a male sphere. For the most part, however, Emma Smith's domain was her home and family.

In late 1837 the disruption in Kirtland came to a head. Men representing dissenting groups in the church held angry meetings in the temple. Investors lost a great deal of money in the failure of the Kirtland Anti-banking Society, so named because the charter for the bank did not clear the legislature, but in the custom of the times, the Mormons continued with the bank regardless. The panic of 1837 ruined many such institutions in the United States. Other followers of Joseph found his leadership incompatible with notions of how prophets ought to
behave. Brigham Young had been forced to leave town several days earlier because of his forceful support of Joseph's policies. On January 12, 1838, Joseph and one of his counselors in the church presidency, Sidney Rigdon, fled Kirtland in the middle of the night. Emma and the children followed the next day, and for the second time, the Mormons were moving on--this time to the already troubled settlements in Missouri.

The distinguishing characteristic of the Mormon's brief stay in Missouri was armed conflict. Joseph had designated a site in Independence as the place to build an impressive temple and the Mormons regarded the areas in and around Clay, Daviess, Dewitt, Caldwell, Ray, and Carroll counties as consecrated to their use. They came to Missouri intent upon establishing their own prototype of the Puritan "City upon a hill" so desired by John Winthrop. Kenneth A. Lockridge aptly described the Mormon settlements and the resulting strife in his definition of a Christian utopian closed corporate community.

Christian because [the founders] saw Christian love as the force which would completely unite their community. Utopian because theirs was a highly conscious attempt to build the most perfect possible community, as perfectly united, perfectly at peace, and perfectly ordered as man could arrange. Closed because its membership was selected while outsiders were treated with suspicion or rejected altogether. And corporate because the commune demanded the loyalty of its members, offering in exchange privileges which could be obtained only through membership, not the least of which were peace and good order. 10

Settlers who had previously come to Missouri soon found the closed society and bloc voting tendencies of the Mormons to be intolerable. Arguments ensued over voting privileges, the liberality of the Mormons toward free blacks, and the ill-avoided statements made by
church leaders. For example, Sidney Rigdon's fiery rhetoric at a July 4th gathering in 1838 promised that the Mormons would embark upon a war of extermination toward the Missourians if peace was not soon made. In October the difficulties between the Mormons and Missourians broke into full scale war and the Mormon community of Far West was surrounded. Governor Lilburn Boggs had issued an order that "the Mormons must be treated as enemies and must be exterminated or driven from the state, if necessary, for the public good." Mobs had torn down Mormon cabins, and assaulted the people, who in turn had fled to the town of Far West. On October 30, Joseph Smith and other church leaders surrendered to the militia, and Joseph was taken prisoner. He spent a miserable winter in the Liberty, Missouri, jail while his followers straggled east throughout the winter to find asylum in the Mississippi River town of Quincy, Illinois.

Emma took young Joseph and visited her husband where he was incarcerated in Liberty jail with his brother Hyrum Smith and several others. On this occasion Joseph gave his young son a special blessing--one of several that were to prove controversial in the future church. Finally, seeing that she could be of no assistance to Joseph, Emma took the children: Julia, Joseph, Frederick, and the baby, Alexander, who had been born at Far West on June 2, and traveled east with them to Quincy, Illinois. Several thousand members of the Mormon church eventually found refuge in the area of Quincy, where through the generosity of the local citizens in sharing food and shelter, they waited out the winter in the early months of 1839.

Joseph and Hyrum Smith were allowed to escape from detention in
Missouri and joined the main group of refugees in April. Immediately the leaders cast about for another settling place. Fifty miles north of Quincy, the small settlement of Commerce lay on a broad isthmus formed by a sharp curve in the Mississippi River. The Mormon leadership negotiated for the purchase of the area around Commerce, and by May, the homeless Saints began to move into the area.

The Mormons soon renamed the town "Nauvoo," a word from Hebrew meaning "beautiful place." And at first sight the area was lovely. High bluffs ran from north to south, dropping abruptly to a flat broad area bounded on three sides by the river. Lush vegetation covered the land, and many small streams broke from the embankment and ran into the river. But the place already had a reputation for being "sickly" and the destitute Mormons soon faced a new problem. Many on both sides of the river contracted malaria and the first summer especially was very difficult. Emma and Joseph Smith had moved into a small two-story log cabin called the "homestead," but before long the house and yard were full of the sick. Emma nursed members of her own family as well as the suffering Saints camped in the yard. Determined that this would be a permanent settlement, Joseph selected "Twelve Apostles" to fill proselytizing missions to Europe.

Affidavits attesting to losses from mob action in Missouri totaled thousands of dollars, and Joseph left in November, 1839, to travel to Washington to petition President Martin Van Buren for redress. Apparently oblivious to the political pressures created by the issue of state's rights, he pressed Van Vuren to intervene in Missouri but was rebuffed. The mission was a failure in acquiring federal assistance,
and in addition, Joseph's frank comments about Missouri to a national forum exacerbated the differences between Missouri and the Mormons. Not content merely to have the Mormons gone, authorities in Missouri became determined to press charges against Joseph Smith. From that time, Joseph was repeatedly threatened with suits and warrants for his arrest from Missouri.

During the summer of 1840 the Mormons devoted their energies toward building their city. Houses, shops, wharfs, mercantile stores, and mills appeared under the industry of this people intent upon building a city that would exhibit to the world the benefits of their religious philosophy as well as to provide themselves with ways to make a livelihood and live comfortably. The population grew rapidly as converts gathered from neighboring states and from England. Most of the converts were skilled workers, were well-trained and of high moral character; and this was bemoaned by the British press.¹⁴

By 1840 a new convert of unknown, but dubious character arrived in Nauvoo in time to put to use his considerable powers of persuasion. John C. Bennett argued the benefits of the charters of Nauvoo before the Illinois state legislature, and secured very liberal powers for the new city. Under these charters, the city council passed laws, but also acted as a municipal court, and in addition controlled a military body to enforce the peace. Thus, for whoever was mayor, the three usually separate branches of government were vested in one body and one individual. The same group, headed by one man, legislated, interpreted, and enforced the law. While the charters were similar to other cities in Illinois, Joseph Smith carried the provisions further than was done
by other towns and incurred their enmity by what his neighbors perceived as repeated flagrant usurpations of rights. John C. Bennett was the only candidate for Mayor in the January 1841 elections, and the process was a mere formality.

Joseph Smith, self-appointed "lieutenant general," led the Nauvoo Legion, the military body which was composed of male members of the church who were motivated by the memories of depredations of the Missourians. Due to the influx of converts to the church, the Legion's numbers rose to over fifteen hundred men within a few months of its organization and soon tallied over two thousand. The Legion was divided into companies of cavalry and infantry. While the uniforms tended to be somewhat irregular, the men attempted to look and act the part of soldiers. Soon their fame spread through the countryside and drills of the unit brought out spectators from the neighboring towns. But it soon became apparent that the Mormons were quite serious in forming a strong and competent military force. As a result, citizens in the neighboring towns began to regard the Mormons with increasing unease and suspicion. The balance of power had abruptly shifted to the new-comers.

Construction efforts in the city continued unabated. Joseph and Emma built an imposing home near the Homestead house, then expanded it to include sleeping rooms for a hotel that was soon called the Mansion House. The foundations for an imposing temple rose on the bluffs above the lower town. The Mormons celebrated the founding of their church on April 6 and this year invited their neighbors to the city to share in the exultation. Thomas Sharp, editor of the Warsaw
Signal observed the events of the day, and instead of leaving the city impressed with the accomplishments he saw, he became an obdurate enemy of Joseph's. The Warsaw Signal would eagerly publish information detrimental to Joseph, and soon the defection of John C. Bennett offered him grist for his mill.

Bennett had come to Nauvoo as a gallant bachelor and had secured the attention of the women. Joseph's brother, Hyrum, on a mission to the east, wrote home to Nauvoo about Bennett's wife and children who charged him with cruelty. But a more subtle difference brewed between Joseph and Bennett. By 1841 Joseph had clandestinely introduced plural marriage to Nauvoo by taking Louisa Beaman as a plural wife on April 5, 1841. Bennett became aware that plural marriage was part of Joseph's doctrine of the "restitution of all things" discussed in the Bible, but Bennett plunged into immorality with alacrity unchallenged by any doctrinal motivation. The resulting disruption forced a break between the two men which was bitter and irreconcilable. Bennett resigned as mayor--Joseph had been the power behind the position all along--and left the church and Nauvoo. But his vitriolic pen attacked the Mormons, in general, and Joseph in particular, on every front. He found easy access to publication in the neighboring newspapers. Bennett's insinuations of improper marital conduct among the Mormons served to further widen the distance between them and their neighbors, even though plural marriage was extremely covert and practiced by only a few men.

In addition to the force of the Legion and the rumors of unusual marriages, the political position of Nauvoo became a source of contention. The Mormons tended to vote en bloc on the state level, and did so for
whichever candidates appeared to be favorable to their position. Their vote was alternately coveted and scorned, but never ignored. Joseph promised votes in return for favors, and sometimes reneged on his word. As a result neither the Whigs nor the Democrats were loyal to them. No friend would appear in time of need.

When an unknown assailant fired shots into the home of ex-Governor of Missouri, Lilburn Boggs, and wounded him, the blame immediately settled on the Mormons and Joseph Smith in particular as instigator. While circumstantial evidence certainly linked a friend of Joseph Smith's to the incident, no proof could be established. But Missouri still had charges against Joseph Smith stemming from his escape from custody in 1839. Joseph became Mayor of Nauvoo when Bennett left; his municipal court, under a liberal interpretation of the law, began to issue writs of habeas corpus. These defied the state courts by periodically releasing Joseph and other Mormons from custody under the extradition papers. Joseph went into hiding in and around Nauvoo, governing both the city and the church through messages sent by his wife or other friends who visited him. Joseph eluded arrest in this manner for about four months while Emma wrote to Illinois Governor Thomas Carlin attempting to convince him to remove the charges against her husband.

Carlin was sympathetic to Emma; but, angered at the action of the Nauvoo court, her pleas were to no avail. While Joseph was in hiding, Carlin was replaced as Governor of Illinois by Thomas Ford; Joseph Smith went to Springfield, faced trial, and was released. But the vexatious lawsuits from Missouri did not end, and Joseph would be
troubled by them again. In 1843 he was arrested while visiting his wife's relatives in Dixon, Illinois, but once again was freed by writs of habeas corpus from the Nauvoo court.

Joseph had introduced new religious doctrines to the church through revelation during this time. For example, he taught that living persons could be baptized for their dead relatives and thus ensure for the deceased the opportunity to accept membership in the church. And he initiated endowment and sealing ordinances, which promised that earthly ties between parents and children and between husband and wife would not be broken at death, but would continue beyond the grave. But in July, 1843, Joseph formalized a doctrine that would disrupt the church for the next hundred years. He had previously taken several women as plural wives--explaining to them that he had been commanded to do so by an angel. He quietly taught that plural marriage was necessary to fulfill the requirements for the restoration of all things spoken of in the Bible. While some persons argued later that perhaps he took wives in the "spiritual" sense, the wives' own testimonies exhibit that plural marriage involved full conjugal relations.

Emma was not aware of the full extent to which Joseph had involved himself in the practice of polygamy, but she had had prior knowledge of the attempt in Kirtland, and she was adamantly opposed to it. While Joseph might argue that he proposed it by divine command, Emma's genuine love for her husband coupled with her own pious upbringing allowed no place in her life for another wife for her husband. From July 1841 to April 1842 Joseph actively taught his closest followers about the principle of plural marriage and they began to take
additional wives. An observer named Joseph Lee Robinson commented, "It could not be expected that they could enter into this new order of things without difficulty and some severe trials for it is calculated in its nature to severely try the women, to nearly tear their heart strings out of them, and also it must severely try the men as well." 18

From 1841 until his death Joseph continued to take more wives. While twentieth century historians dispute about the number, around the turn of the century, church historian Andrew Jensen documented twenty-seven, biographer Fawn Brodie counted forty-eight. Current writers hesitate to tally the number.

The current biography of Emma Smith by Valeen Tippetts Avery and Linda King Newell documents that Emma knew about seven and may have known about others. Of these, six women lived in Emma's home. Under persistent pressure from Joseph, Emma finally agreed to "give" him four wives and she chose Emily and Eliza Partridge and Sarah and Maria Lawrence, two pairs of sisters who came to live with the Smiths after their families were unable for various reasons to keep them. A fifth woman, Eliza R. Snow, was Emma's age, well educated, and periodically lived with the Smiths both in Kirtland and Nauvoo. Several of the Walker children also lived with Emma and Joseph, and he married Lucy Walker after asking her brother for her hand. The date was May 1, 1843, but Emma was in St. Louis during this time purchasing goods for Joseph's store.

Secrecy surrounded the lives of the women who became plural wives in Nauvoo. Lucy Walker said that Joseph made it clear to Heber C. Kimball and Brigham Young that she was his wife, but that she and the
Lawrence sisters used their maiden names.\textsuperscript{19} Another wife, Melissa Lott, commented, "I did not go to church . . . was never seen on the streets or in public places with him as his wife."\textsuperscript{20}

An additional precaution served to keep knowledge of plural marriage from the general public. Joseph and the other church leaders developed a system of code words that enabled them to discuss plural marriage without being direct in their speech. Believing that God did not intend for practice of plural marriage to be public knowledge, but pressed to make some response to the rising clamor about the issue, church leaders began to find indirect ways to refer to "the new and everlasting covenant of marriage." George A. Smith, Joseph's cousin who was present in Nauvoo, wrote, "Any one who will read carefully the denials, as they are termed, . . . will see clearly that they denounce adultery, fornication, brutal lust and the teaching of plurality of wives by those who were not commanded to do so; eschewing clearly that it was understood that such commandment would be given to others."\textsuperscript{21}

In 1886 the Deseret News rationalized the use of code words and explained what they were. "When assailed by their enemies and accused of practicing things which were really not countenanced in the Church, they were justified in denying those imputations and at the same time avoiding the avowal of such doctrines as were not intended for the world." The article further stated,

Polygamy, in the ordinary and Asiatic sense of the term, never was and is not now a tenet of the Latter-day Saints. That which Joseph and Hyrum denounced . . . was altogether different to the order of celestial marriage including a plurality of wives. . . . Joseph and Hyrum were consistent in their action against the false doctrines of polygamy and spiritual wifeism, instigated by the devil and advocated by men who did not comprehend sound
doctrinenor the purity of the celestial marriage which God revealed for the holiest of purposes.22

The result of the use of these code words and public denials of "polygamy" was that Emma and other people in Nauvoo who were not privy to the programs of the church leadership heard men in leadership positions denounce the accusations. Further, those who were not initiated into plural marriage could quite sincerely deny that it had ever taken place in Nauvoo—in spite of many rumors to the contrary. While the device served Joseph's purpose for the time, it would create great problems in the future. It would split the church when those who knew that polygamy was a church tenet were in one branch of the Mormon church, and those of equal conviction who "knew" that polygamy was not a tenet of Joseph Smith's theological teachings built another church. Ironically, Joseph Smith's own children would be caught up in the struggle. They would argue that their father had had nothing to do with plural marriage. They would try to preserve his "good name" in the face of statements by the church in Utah that plural marriage was indeed instituted by their founder, Joseph Smith.

Emma Smith also found both relief and further problems in the secretive policies concerning plural marriage. After Joseph's death and the movement of the mainstream Mormons to Utah without her, little remained in Nauvoo to remind Emma that once she had participated in this unusual practice. To avoid scorn and protect her family, she remained silent about the issue. This silence led her children to erroneously assume that she and Joseph had not participated in plural marriage—an assumption that created deep problems for her sons.
Emma finally agreed to "give" Joseph four wives. One of them, Emily Partridge, reported about her marriage on May 23, 1843. "Emma seemed to feel well until the ceremony was over, when almost before she could draw a second breath, she turned, and was more bitter in her feelings than ever before, if possible, and before the day was over she turned around or repented of what she had done and kept Joseph up till very late talking to him."23 This was a difficult period for Emma. Her indecisiveness in regard to plural wives had resulted in formal marriages of young women to her husband. Emma now began to firmly urge Joseph to abandon the practice and she was adamant in her position. The young wives found themselves in the extremely uncomfortable situation of being in the center of a struggle for power between Emma and Joseph.

About six weeks after the marriages to the Partridge and Lawrence sisters, Joseph dictated the plural marriage revelation24 to William Clayton. His brother Hyrum volunteered to take it to Emma, but soon returned much chastened. Emma had refused to accept the written version of it as well as Joseph's verbal teachings.

A month later, in August, Emma again went to St. Louis on business. On her return she produced an ultimatum. William Clayton's journal entry for August 16, 1843, noted that Emma threatened to leave Joseph. To keep her, he had promised to "relinquish all," but in recounting the incident to Clayton, Joseph told him "he should not relinquish anything."25

While the tensions between Emma and Joseph increased, Emma continued to vacillate in her position, one day attempting to accept the situation with some resignation, another day finding herself angry
over the presence of other wives in Joseph's life. In the fall both Emma and Joseph were ill. The Christmas season brought some respite, but with the advent of the new year, the problem still remained. On January 17, Joseph ordained his young son, Joseph, to succeed him as eventual president of the church.²⁶ This action seemed to trigger Emma's determination to rid the church of polygamy, for she began again an intensive campaign to influence Joseph to end the practice. Emily Partridge recounted the events, saying that interviews between Emma, Joseph, and the young wives occurred frequently. "She sent for us one day to come to her room. Joseph was present looking like a martyr. Emma said some very hard things. Joseph should give us up or blood would flow. She would rather her blood would run pure than be polluted in this manner." Emily described her reaction to the scene, then reported, "Joseph came to us and shook hands with us and the understanding was that all was ended between us. I for one meant to keep this promise I was forced to make."²⁷

A young black girl who lived with the Smiths remembered that "they broke up the Mansion" house early in 1844.²⁸ Joseph leased to a friend a large part of his home to be used as a hotel. An acquaintance named Aroet Hale observed the conflict that Emma and Joseph experienced over the issue and later recorded, "Their never was a more dutiful woman than Emma Smith was to her husband till after the Prophet had made public the revelation of Seelctial marriage. He begun to take to himselfe Other Wives. This proved a grate trial to her."²⁹ When the young wives left the house, Emma's love for Joseph, which was so evident to Aroet Hale, found expression. Within a month she became
pregnant with the child that would be named David Hyrum Smith.

The peace that Joseph now found in his own household did not extend to the church affairs or to the climate of the city as a whole. In the church women's organization Emma actively repudiated plural marriage and this left the wives of the polygamous followers of Joseph in a quandary about their situation. At the same time, Joseph declared himself a candidate for president of the United States, stating that only in the event that he was elected would the Mormons achieve redress for their losses in Missouri.

Although most of his followers supported Joseph, a schism began to develop between Joseph and one of his counselors in the church presidency, William Law. Joseph was accused of being too familiar with Law's wife, Jane, and Emma learned of a visit Joseph had made to the woman. Joseph Lee Robinson reported, "it was at a time when [Emma] was very suspicious and jealous of [Joseph] for fear he would get another [wife]. If he did she was determined to leave and when she heard [of Joseph's visit to another woman] she became very angry and said she would leave and was making preparations to go to her people in the State of New York. It came close to breaking up his family." Robinson noted that Joseph "succeeded in saving her at that time, but the Prophet felt dreadful bad over it."31

While Joseph succeeded in salvaging his relationship with Emma, his association with William Law came to an end. Law joined with several other men who were disillusioned with Joseph's leadership. In May, 1844, word came to Nauvoo that a grand jury in the county seat of Carthage had a charge against Joseph for adultery that was established
on the testimony of William Law. The news came only two days after a
large cadre of men loyal to Joseph, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and
a hundred others, left Nauvoo to travel to the east coast to campaign
for Joseph's presidency. Joseph would face this crisis very much alone.

William Law, his brother Wilson, the Foster brothers, and the
Higbee brothers ordered their own printing press for Nauvoo and issued a
prospectus for a new newspaper. The only issue of the Nauvoo
Expositor appeared on June 7, 1844. It disclosed methods by which
women were approached in Nauvoo to become plural wives and painted a
dismal view of the situation of such women after they were married. The
newspaper pointed out faults in the political system of Nauvoo, criti-
cized many church doctrines not relating specifically to plural marriage,
and proposed wider reforms.

But Joseph still controlled the city council and on June 10, the
council issued an order to "abate the said nuisance," the disloyal press.
That same evening a posse and group of citizens dumped the press, the
type, and the printed sheets into the streets. The publishers left
town immediately.

In Carthage the reaction was immediate. By interfering with the
right of free press—even though Mormon presses had been attacked
earlier in Missouri—Joseph had left himself open to serious charges.
On June 12, Joseph and seventeen others were arrested for destroying the
press, but a friendly judge acquitted them all. Immediately a mob
gathered to take Joseph by force. He responded to threats of lynching
by mustering the Nauvoo Legion. Believing that he could expect no
justice from the state authorities, Joseph fled across the Mississippi
River with Hyrum, intent on going to Washington, D.C., to plead his case before higher authorities. But investors in the town who faced large property losses, prevailed upon him to return and face the charges. On June 24, Joseph rode to Carthage with Hyrum and several of his friends to give themselves up.

The mood in Carthage was menacing. Enemies of Joseph had collected there in hopes that he would eventually be consigned to the jail, and after he appeared the consensus was that he would not leave. Joseph, Hyrum, and two friends and associates, John Taylor and Willard Richards, remained in the jail in the late afternoon of June 27th. Suddenly a group of men, their faces blackened with gunpowder mixed with water, surged around the jail. The group overpowered the guards and some of them surged up the stairs to the second-floor room where the Mormons were being held. Shots through the door killed Hyrum; Joseph leaped to a window when the mob rushed into the room. Shot three times from both inside the room and from the courtyard below, Joseph cried, "O Lord, My God!" and his body plunged through the window and fell to the ground.

News of the murders sent the Mormons in Nauvoo into shock and mourning. In Carthage, the citizens fled the town when unfounded rumors said the Nauvoo Legion was going to march on them for retribution. Grim men sadly escorted the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum to Nauvoo, and buried them secretly in the unfinished basement of the Nauvoo House, a large hotel barely under construction. Joseph Smith's life ended at age thirty-eight, and his people were unprepared for the crisis at hand.

Emma Smith was halfway through her pregnancy when she buried the child's father. Immediately after the shootings, word flashed to the men
who campaigned for Joseph's presidency, and they gradually returned to Nauvoo. Brigham Young, president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, arrived in Nauvoo August 6, and faced a challenge to the quorum's ascendancy in the person of Sidney Rigdon. Brigham Young argued persuasively that "Joseph conferred upon our heads all the keys and powers belonging to the Apostleship which he himself held before he was taken away." By August 8, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, with Brigham Young as its head, was voted to be the successor to Joseph Smith.

Emma's immediate concern was to attend to the legal affairs necessitated by Joseph's death, but her husband had died intestate, and the attempt to settle the estate would last for years. Emma and Brigham Young soon found that they had conflicting views about the disposition of Joseph's property. He had not separated his personal holdings from that land which he controlled as trustee-in-trust for the church. Brigham Young approached the settlement of the estate from the point of view of a leader left to manage a large group of people and an impoverished church. Emma approached it as a widow with five children to raise who had rights to her husband's estate, and indeed, had helped to earn much of the income during their life together. The resulting conflict between Brigham Young and Emma Smith would serve to divide the church.

Certainly it seemed as if there should be assets connected with Joseph Smith's estate. Smith's ebullient personality and his gift for instilling his own enthusiasm in others had made Nauvoo hum with activity. The influx of immigrant converts, many of them from England, had swollen the population rapidly. Nauvoo promised to be the most
beautiful and the most productive city along the Mississippi River. Shortly before Joseph's death, an immigrant convert to the church from Canada enthusiastically wrote to his family about the building of the city, but in reality, the Nauvoo economy was built on speculation, and there were no riches. Both Emma and Brigham Young would be disappointed at the little yield coming to them from Nauvoo.

Emma opposed Brigham Young's influence because she knew about his involvement with plural marriage, and she knew that the practice would continue in the church if it were headed by him. She watched with apprehension as William Marks's bid for leadership was not successful, for Marks had refused to take plural wives, but had attempted to remain Joseph's friend. Simultaneously, ties between Brigham and Emma weakened and conflict between Marks and Young intensified.

Emma Smith's own circumstances absorbed her attention. She had rented the Mansion House to William Marks and during the week of November 4, 1844, she moved her family back into the old Homestead house across the street to gain a measure of privacy. The birth of her child was approaching.
CHAPTER TWO

The Youthful David 1844-1863

Immediately after Joseph Smith's murder, Illinois Governor Thomas Ford dispatched two agents to Nauvoo to determine if the Mormons were intent upon a retaliatory raid against the citizens of Carthage and other nearby towns that had contributed men to the assassination mob. The agents found the Mormons in no mood to march against their neighbors. Church leader Willard Richards' urgent messages to Nauvoo from Carthage had the desired effect. He wrote, "The citizens here are afraid of the Mormons attacking them. I promise them no!"¹ Repeatedly urged by their leaders not to seek revenge, the Mormons expressed a willingness to maintain the peace and to allow the law to pursue the murderers, and they reported this attitude to the governor's agents. But the citizens of the neighboring town of Warsaw had established an anti-Mormon committee that flatly stated peace could only come with the removal of all Mormons from the state. Ford pointed out that his constitutional powers did not allow forced removal of citizens, but he lacked enough forces to prevent another group from attempting just that.²

The climate of fear increased gradually,³ but no concrete action appeared until a leader in Warsaw outlined a plan to drive the Mormons out. He advertized it as "A great Wolf Hunt in Hancock County,"⁴ thereby giving a euphemism to mob action. This plan prompted the governor to send a representative to simultaneously quell the Warsaw
enthusiasm, and prepare the Mormons to defend themselves. Ford went to Nauvoo and commissioned Brigham Young the Lieutenant General of the Nauvoo Legion in September. The move further widened the rift between Emma Smith and Brigham Young, for Young used her deceased husband's military trappings and favorite horse. The incident prompted a dislike for Young in the twelve-year-old "young Joseph" who believed that the horse had been mistreated.  

Early in November Emma Smith rented the Mansion House to William Marks, and moved with her family back across the street into the old Homestead House where she and Joseph had first lived in Nauvoo. The move occurred during the week of November 4, and placed the family in their quarters only two weeks before Emma's pregnancy would come to term.  

Julia, the adopted daughter, was almost fifteen; Joseph, the eldest son, turned thirteen on November 6th. Frederick was eight and Alexander was six. Several servant girls probably lived with the family as Emma usually had young women who needed homes live in her house as helpers. Emma gave birth to her ninth child four months past her fortieth birthday at nine o'clock in the morning of November 17, 1844. Emma named the baby David Hyrum in accord with her husband's wishes.  

Dr. John M. Bernhisel, a physician who had also been Joseph Smith's friend, was rooming with the Smiths. Bernhisel was an "urbane, cultured, and refined physician" who visited his patients in a long frock coat and a high silk hat. With the birth of David, both Emma and the good doctor had their hands full. Oliver Huntington reported that, "When [David] was 3 or 4 weeks old he took a notion or [it] was in his nature rather, as soon as it began to be dark at night, he
would commence to cry and scream, and appeared to be afraid, and seemed as if he would go into fits. He kept it up for 2 or 3 weeks every night. Dr. Bernhisel and Emma, together, by medicine and management finally overcame it in him.\textsuperscript{10}

The birth of this child fathered by the now-martyred prophet elicited more than ordinary interest. Joseph Smith had intimated that future greatness would attend this son, (the question of its future had it been a girl is never mentioned in the documents) and without question many of the church members were anxious to see the child and wish its mother well. But two women in particular celebrated the birth. Eliza R. Snow and Emily Partridge called on Emma. Both women had been plural wives of Joseph Smith, but neither had borne him children.\textsuperscript{11} Eliza was considered a poetess of some ability and soon a work dedicated to the child David appeared in the \textit{Times and Seasons}, a local newspaper in Nauvoo. It read in part:

\begin{verbatim}
Sinless as celestial spirits--
lovely as a morning flow'r
Comes the smiling infant stranger
in an evil-omen'd hour.\textsuperscript{12}
\end{verbatim}

Emily Partridge, still smarting from the conflict with Emma while Emily was married to Joseph, also came by the Homestead House to see Emma and the new baby. "She was very gracious," Emily remembered later, "for there was no Joseph to be jealous of then."\textsuperscript{13}

The ensuing winter was relatively quiet in the two-story log home by the river. The outside threats of retaliation against the very presence of Mormons in Illinois cooled with the chill weather, and the leadership of the church in the city met frequently to determine their
course of action. While the quorum of the Twelve Apostles led the Church, Brigham Young as president of the quorum assumed more and more leadership responsibility. Earlier in October he had stated publicly, "If you don't know whose right it is to give revelations I will tell you. It is I."14 With that, Young began to be the dominating personality of the city.

He worked under emergency conditions and under criticism about the powers given to the Nauvoo city government. The Illinois state legislature repealed the charter on January 27, 1845. The state provided no substitute government, in effect leaving Nauvoo to its own devices. Church government, and an informal Council of Fifty to which some non-members of the church belonged still operated, but neither group had legal right to run the city. Out of this vacuum developed the Mormons' answer to keeping track of and removing undesirable characters. This was the whittling and whistling brigades. These groups of men and boys with long knives carelessly whittling away on sticks of wood closely followed unwelcome visitors to the city until the visitors took their business elsewhere. Oliver Huntington joined the brigade and remembered he helped whittle "a real Mormon-eater" out of town. "No one liked the sight of ¾ dozen large knives whittling carelessly about their ears and not a word said."15

Little is said of the bereaved family's first Christmas. The crying baby and the growing young people occupied most of Emma Smith's time. Young Oliver Huntington had come to board with Emma shortly before David's birth. He found the vagaries of young love almost more than he could bear. He and Julia and Joseph were all invited to the
same New Year's party. The young people came home and made molasses candy to usher in the new year. Oliver asked Julia to attend another party with him later. At Julia's rebuff, the two boys left without her, but Oliver discovered on his return that he had offended the young lady by not asking her a second time. Julia, hurt and angry because her game of hard-to-get had been misunderstood by the unsophisticated lad, made a few sharp comments that were conveyed to Oliver. Unable to discuss the issue, Oliver commented in his journal, "she was young and inconsiderate. Soon I went out of doors, laid down on the woodpile and gave vent to my feelings in womanish tears."¹⁶ Joseph was a peacemaker between the two, and soon the issue passed. Whatever extra concern Oliver's presence caused Emma, he more than repaid for it by helping with the baby. He spent hours holding the child and trotting him on his knee, and when David began to move about the floor, Oliver would take the small hands in his large ones and walk him around the house to keep him from crying.¹⁷

As spring came, Emma appeared looking "rather fresher and stouter than before. She had been too much worried by Joseph's conduct with the sisters."¹⁸ By May a friend visited Emma and commented, "Her little baby is a very fine child. . . . She takes much comfort with it and seems to get along as well as we can expect. She feels attached to the church, not withstanding her great sufferings that she has had to endure."¹⁹

By the time David was ten months old, the leaders of the church bowed to external pressure and determined to leave the city built at so much expense by his father. On September 24, the Mormons formulated
a statement promising to leave by spring, if they could properly dispose of their property. The citizens of Hancock county cheered the news, but were far too cagey to rush in to buy property for fair prices that could be had later for nothing. The Mormons had considered Texas, Oregon, and California as places of refuge, but chose the great basin of Utah Territory as their destination. With that decision, observers who did not understand the Mormon's attitude saw the energies of the citizens spent in two seemingly opposing directions. On the one hand, Nauvoo seemed to prosper. Workers struggled daily to finish the large white temple on the bluff overlooking the city and the river. The unfinished Nauvoo House hotel near the river opposite the Homestead House grew to the first story. New homes started up and the population of the city swelled as immigrants from England and other mission areas swarmed to the area in the great "gathering." To the casual observer, it did not appear as if the Mormons ever intended to abandon their city.

On the other hand, the Mormons turned their city into a vast factory for preparation to cross the western plains. Governor Ford wrote in his History of Illinois, "All the houses in Nauvoo, even the temple, were converted into workshops; and before spring, more than twelve thousand wagons were in readiness. The people from all parts of the country flocked to Nauvoo to purchase houses and farms, which were sold extremely low, lower than the prices at a sheriff's sale, for money, wagons, horses, oxen, cattle, and other articles. . . . which might be needed by the Mormons in their exodus into the wilderness." All the houses in Nauvoo but Emma Smith's, that is. She had assessed her financial situation and discovered that even in the face
of disputes over what property belonged to her as widow of the Mormon
prophet, and what belonged to the church, she would still own the Nauvoo
Mansion, the uncompleted Riverside Mansion, the Homestead, and the farm
a short distance from town.

Emma differed with Brigham Young over the direction of the
church. While she did not aspire to a leadership position, she firmly
opposed the principle and practice of plural marriage which she was
certain would continue in the church under Young's leadership. An
acquaintance commented, "Soon after the prophet's death. . . . the
course pursued by the Twelve, . . . and especially the course of Presi-
dent Brigham Young, she strongly disapproved. . . . She told him,
however, frankly and fearlessly as all who knew her will feel assured
she would do."22 Unwilling to marry any of the church leaders as a
plural wife as so many of Joseph's other wives had done, Emma had
decided to remain in Nauvoo.23

On February 4, 1846, the first wagons crossed the Mississippi
in preparation for the spring march. Three weeks later the temperature
plunged and Mormon wagons crossed the river on the ice. The crossing
continued steadily through the winter and spring of 1846 until only a
few families were left in the town. As the Mormons left, new settlers
came into Nauvoo to take up farms and businesses that were left behind.
The complexion of the town changed as Emma and her children bid good-bye
to old friends. Emma had perceived the hardships most of them would
experience on the western trek and had tried to warn them. "They might
have known better than to have gone, and many of them did know better,
for [I] told them better," she remarked.24
Unsure of herself and her future, Emma pondered going south to Quincy, but remained in the half-deserted city. Not believing that the Mormons were actually leaving, a group of citizens met in Carthage in June to plan a 4th of July celebration. Declaring that Hancock County was not free until all the Mormons left, the committee sent a delegation to Nauvoo to enforce the evacuation. All through the summer the situation steadily deteriorated and by September bands of marauders moved unmolested through the countryside making overland travel increasingly dangerous. The anti-Mormon groups did not want supplies or equipment brought into the city, and warned the riverboat captains not to stop at Nauvoo under threat of retaliation.

Emma had leased the Mansion House hotel to Abram van Tuyl and now planned to leave it in his care. While the mobs positioned outside the city gained in numbers and bravado, Emma gathered her children and prepared to leave. David Hyrum Smith was not quite two when his mother packed her supplies on the morning of September 11, 1846. At 7:00 in the morning the temple bell clanged a warning of attack. Throughout the day the sound of gunfire indicated that the war in Nauvoo had begun in earnest. Fifty Mormon sharpshooters prepared to defend the town against an unknown number of assailants from the outside.

All through the night of September 11, Emma undoubtedly waited anxiously for the coming day. On the 12th a crusty riverboat captain named Grimes defied the mob's orders and pulled his boat up to the dock in Nauvoo. Emma and the five children were ready. She boarded the Uncle Toby with them and a housekeeper named Servilla Durphee. The craft soon left upstream at a top speed of eight miles per hour.
The spires of the temple disappeared as they rounded the northern bend.

Emma had not left a moment too soon. By eleven o’clock the same day, the battle raged in Nauvoo. Two Mormon men were killed, and the fighting continued for four days. Ironically, the battle was not so much between Mormons and non-Mormons as it was between the citizens of Nauvoo, be they new or old, and the mobs from the surrounding country. On September 16, the citizens surrendered and agreed to terms that left them unarmed and without recourse to help. The city was immediately overrun and houses and shops sacked.

During this time, the Uncle Toby with Emma and her children aboard moved up the river for six days. On Friday, September 18, Emma stepped ashore at the small hamlet of Fulton, about one hundred fifty miles upstream from Nauvoo. She found a small apartment to rent through the winter months. By January, 1847, Emma received a letter from one of the new citizens of Nauvoo named Lewis Bidamon. She answered his inquiry about renting the Mansion House in the negative because she had already rented it. Emma apparently gave the letter and the writer little thought, but before the end of the year Lewis Bidamon would become her second husband.

The following month, John Bernhisel wrote Emma that van Tuyl, the renter of the Mansion, intended to steal the furnishings to outfit a houseboat. Emma abruptly decided to return to Nauvoo and fight a second time for her property. In the midst of a cold winter Emma packed two-year-old David and her four other children into a carriage, hitched the favorite family horse, Charlie, to the shafts, and began the hundred-fifty mile trip to Nauvoo with only young Loren Walker
accompanying her. They drew up in front of the Mansion House and surprised van Tuyl in the act of carting off the furniture. The dishonest renter hastily exited the city, and by late February, 1847, Emma Smith was again mistress of the Mansion House.28

But the city to which Emma Smith returned to raise her children was destroyed. After the Mormon war, many houses stood vacant, some boarded shut, some with doors and windows gaping vacantly at the empty streets. The reporter for the Hawkeye wrote, "Not a human being was seen. Houses appeared suddenly deserted as though the inmates had precipitously fled from a pestilence. . . . It appeared as if the vengeance of the Almighty rested on this doomed city."29

In addition to the physical destruction, Nauvoo was devastated in another way. The Mormons' evacuation left a social vacuum which the conflict had denied the opportunity of filling with reliable immigrants. Devoid of law enforcement and civic power, Nauvoo became a rough river town. Young Joseph observed the men who came to his mother's hotel and wrote, "From 1846 to as late as 1855 Nauvoo, which once enjoyed a good reputation, was a place of disgrace and disorder. Saloons were many and ran wide open, proprietors and patrons alike being shiftless, drinking, boisterous, and thoroughly unprofitable citizens. . . . Considerable transient traffic moved to and fro up and down the river and the Mansion House drew its share of this sort of public patronage. . . . whom we termed 'river men.'"30 Such men were unlikely to pay their boarding bills, and Emma despaired of collecting through lawsuits. The family faced a future of hard work and meager income, but by the time that David Smith was three, the fortunes of the family had been cast.
On the plains west of the river, Mormon immigrant wagon trains strung out over the prairie on their way west. By July 24th, 1847, the first immigrant party reached the valley of the Great Salt Lake, and the subsequent phenomenal growth and hegemony of the western Mormon empire is a matter of history. From this time the presence of the large Mormon group in what would become Utah cast a long shadow on the lives and actions of the Smith family in Nauvoo, and did not dissipate, but rather increased with time.

Emma turned forty-three the same month Brigham Young first entered the Salt Lake Valley. She was "an intelligent woman, ... rather large and good looking, with a bright sparkling eye. ... she must have been a handsome woman when some years younger." To men her age she was still handsome. Two men courted Emma Smith during the summer, 1847, but Lewis Bidamon's suit was successful. Bidamon had known Joseph Smith, but had not joined the Mormon church. He had operated several businesses in Canton, Illinois, and had been married twice (his first wife died and he divorced his second). Bidamon came to Nauvoo early in 1846, fought on the side of the Mormons, and earned the sobriquet "Major" which followed him to his death. Bidamon was a handsome man, forty-five years old; young Joseph said his step-father was "a fine-looking man, six feet tall, with a high forehead and splendid bearing." The man had an engaging personality, was open and cordial with his friends, and dressed well enough to seem even debonair for Nauvoo. He had a good sense of humor, could laugh at himself easily, and was charming to women. He was not a teetotaler, in his drinking habits, nor was he a drunkard as he is sometimes
portrayed. Bidamon would earn the love and respect of Emma's boys, and this sentiment would be expressed by them when they were adult men of past middle age. With Bidamon's coming, the family found both a provider and a protector.

The marriage took place on December 23, 1847. A "grand shivaree" followed the ceremony and the next day a ball was given; three-year-old David was described as "very sick" at the time.

Thus, by 1848, the Smith family--now headed by Lewis Bidamon--settled in Nauvoo and let the troubled years and their intimate associations with Mormonism fade into the past. After David's illness at the wedding, no mention is made of a major illness in his childhood or youth, but documentary evidence relating to the family during this period is very sparse. When David was a father himself at the age of twenty-nine, he wrote to his mother about his own son, "In being rough and ready, headlong and fearless, he is rather different from his Papa, in youth, but in his love of pets, his care of all his playthings, keeping them all carefully unbroken, his cloths untorn, and generally unsoiled he resembles him considerably in that age." At least David viewed himself as a careful, reserved child, even a little fearful of the usual bruises and painful bumps collected by a rambunctious boy. Emma was made legal guardian of David in 1847, and records which she kept and signed in accordance with the provisions of the statutes attest that as the child's legal guardian for 1848 she provided "boarding, clothing & all necessary expenses" totaling $122.60 for the year.

Of course news that the Mormons had left a city behind filtered up and down the Mississippi, and seemed attractive to some groups
looking for places to settle such as a group of French socialists led by Etienne Cabet. The Icarians, as they were known, arrived in Nauvoo in 1849. Yet the Icarians clearly did not represent vital new interests which would breathe new economic life into the town. In the early spring of 1849 the Major succumbed to gold fever and he and his brother left Nauvoo for California. Soon after their departure John Bernhisel visited the city and wrote back to Brigham Young, "Nauvoo presents a most gloomy and desolate appearance. The lots and streets with few exceptions are overgrown with weed and grass—Few of the houses, ... are inhabited; the remainder are in a state of desolation and utter ruin. ... The character of the population was represented to me as being very bad, and growing worse."  

Lewis Bidamon wrote several letters to his wife while he was in California. Only one of Emma's responses is extant. While it described the routine events in Nauvoo, it was also clearly a love letter. As she composed the last of it, five-year-old David stood at his mother's elbow while she wrote his message. "David often wishes it was not so far to Sacramento he thinks that he will be very tired of traveling before he gets home. He is by me now and says he loves his pa because he promised to bring him some gold in a little box and he is a going to love him till he gets home." Emma clearly encouraged affection between Lewis and her young son and acted as an intermediary in fostering it.

Lewis returned to Nauvoo in 1850 after a year's absence. The family faced several financial problems. The dwindling size of the city drew few paying guests to the hotel, and on August 9, the United States
Attorney filed to recover the debt Joseph Smith had owed the national government from the 1840 purchase of the steamboat Nauvoo. He demanded that payment be made by selling all the land that Joseph owned at his death. In the spring of 1852, the Mansion House, the Homestead House, the Nauvoo House, and the farm were all sold to pay the debts of David's father. Emma had to use her dower money to buy back her properties to secure them for the children.

Julia had married in 1850 and subsequently moved to Galveston. Her letters reflect the affection and tolerance the family felt for the youngest child. Homesick for her family, Julia found comfort "in seeing thos Drawings of Davids god Bless his little Soul for remembering his absent Sister and tell him his Sister had a long Crying Spell over them and She Kissed them over and over again and (She will treasure them long as a Hole yr prise) . . . I wish I could see him to Night and kiss him."

Joseph, too, loved the little brother in the family. Writing to a young woman in 1855, he described himself and his brother Alexander to a friend who had not seen any of them for several years, then indulgently commented about his eleven-year-old brother, "But David is the boy of all boys, the pet of the family and the very personification of gentleness and goodness."

At least as young as eight David had begun to draw and he used this facility to communicate with others. When David was nine a visitor who was a talented artist visited Nauvoo as part of his journey through the United States and the territories to the Great Salt Lake. Frederick Piercy visited the Smiths in November, 1853, and sketched young Joseph on his twenty-first birthday. Nine-year-old David's
likeness looks directly at the viewer through large eyes in a sweetly solemn face. He was a beautiful child and obviously Piercy caught the combination of intelligence, curiosity, and a desire to please that was part of the boy's personality. "He is of mild, studious disposition, and is passionately fond of drawing," the adult artist wrote about the aspiring one, "seeming to be never so happy as when he has a pencil and paper in his hand." The experience of having his portrait sketched as a boy could only have reinforced his interest in drawing.

The family in Nauvoo received many visitors who traveled to or from Utah, and who had their own reasons for seeking out the widow of the prophet. These people often made note of the visit with the Smiths in their journals or letters, for meeting Emma and the children was a major point of interest whether they were sympathetic or antagonistic to her position. Most of them would have preferred that Emma dutifully follow the Saints west, or that she would have lived in Nauvoo keeping a lonely vigil over the dead prophet's grave. To find her well, and even thriving, in the company of Lewis Bidamon was oftentimes unnerving. The prophet's children also excited some curiosity. For the most part relationships between Smith family members who practiced plural marriage in the West and those who remained in Nauvoo were strained, but cordial. In October 1856, George A. Smith reported with somewhat more vindictiveness than had others. He commented that "Emma spoke to us in cold stile & Retreted. Fredrick & Alesand maintained the coldest and Stern Reserve that could well be Imagined. Young David Hyram Samed to want to make our acquaintance but Repetedly called away." Further entries in the journal indicated that George A. and his companion interviewed
Joseph about his beliefs about the church in Utah which his father had established. The men concluded that Joseph was "totally ignorant" of his father's teachings. Emma and Lewis were not disposed to look upon such interviews with approval, and George A. Smith's questions may have been posed with some hauteur. In spite of their differences, Joseph seemed to bear them no ill-will, and probably communicated none to David.

A month later in 1856, two more visitors approached the Mansion House looking for Joseph. They were Samuel H. Gurley and Edmund C. Briggs. These two men represented a Mormon church of which the Smiths knew little or nothing. When the main body of Mormons went to Utah from 1847 on, some who had lived in Nauvoo refused to go under Brigham Young's leadership, mainly because they opposed polygamy and the concept of gathering together as Mormons instead of living in the community with other faiths. These Mormons who stayed behind sometimes followed schismatic leaders such as Lyman Wight in Texas, or James J. Strang in Wisconsin, or Sidney Rigdon in Pennsylvania, before leaving those groups also. When the Utah Church publicly admitted in 1852 that plural marriage was a tenet of their faith, the announcement did not come as news but rather confirmed a clandestine practice that had become an open secret. But the announcement further solidified the opposition of the Mormons who chose not to go to Utah.

From the early 1850's branches of the church began to form in Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Most of these people knew that young Joseph had reached his majority, and many of them knew that before the death of his father, young Joseph had been blessed by him to someday
lead the church. Basing their hopes for unity, prophetic utterances, and leadership on the youthful son of the first prophet, they waited with some impatience for the Lord to call Joseph to his position, or for Joseph to make known that he had received such a call. In 1856 it had not been forthcoming.

Joseph had married Emmaline Griswold in October, and the young couple lived outside Nauvoo on the family farm. Joseph had received a good education for the time, reading law in Canton, Illinois, before his marriage. He had exhibited only a cursory interest in matters of the church and the splinter groups. George A. Smith found Joseph's remarks about the Utah church "Diplomatic & Evasive in the extrem" and left Joseph's presence with "a Sad Heart Indeed." But the newly-married young man had turned his interests to the farm, leaving David, Alexander, and Frederick still in the Mansion House with their mother and step-father.

When Briggs and Gurley approached Nauvoo, then, in 1856 they faced a formidable obstacle in convincing Joseph that he should become a prophet for them. They approached Nauvoo with great anxiety. Undoubtedly aware that the Utah church also took some interest in Joseph, but having been instructed not to return to Wisconsin until Joseph accepted their invitation to become their leader, Briggs and Gurley found the young man on the farm on December 6, 1856. The first meeting was not propitious. After waiting restlessly with Emmaline until Joseph came in from the fields, Samuel Gurley at once blurted out that they were missionaries from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and thrust a letter into Joseph's hand. Obviously new at
this kind of diplomacy, Gurley expected Joseph to make a most important
decision thoroughly unprepared. The strongly worded letter urged Joseph
to immediately assume his place as the ecclesiastical leader of the
group. Joseph read the letter, handed it back and said, "I will talk
with you on politics or any other subject, but on religion will not allow
one word spoken in my house."

Gurley burst into tears; Joseph threatened to evict them.
Briggs and Emmaline calmed the tempers and the men ate together in a
tenuous peace. In short, Joseph did not accept the offer, and Gurley
returned home. But Briggs quietly stayed on in Nauvoo to work with
Joseph on the farm, and not incidentally, to teach the young man what
he knew about the religion he was asking him to lead. Joseph was not
ready to lead the church when Briggs left a year later, but the seed
had been planted.\footnote{50}

David approached his teen-aged years apparently quite unaware of
the import of the decision Joseph struggled to reach. The four years
from twelve to sixteen passed with little record kept of them. The small
town associations with businessmen and shopkeepers were a supportive
network. At one point the youthful David sent a note to a local shop-
keeper asking for "2 oz. Mandrake, 2 oz. Golden Seai and Gambage,
5 cents worth. Please send the above articles to me for Mother, she
seems to be in very poor health. (tell us the cost)." To which the
druggist replied, "I did not send so much as you wanted I thought you
had no need for so much."\footnote{51} Left to his own devices the growing boy
acted much like other teenagers. He once secretly ate so much in the
pantry that he became ill. Emma said nothing, but at the next mealtime,
she put a plate of food in front of him and urged him to eat more and more, until David had rather she whipped him.\textsuperscript{52}

David read in the books that Emma had provided for the children's education. She had bought Gibbons histories of Rome, Greece, England, and the continent, and the history of the reformation. John Bernhisel, always a family friend, occasionally sent books to Nauvoo from his post in Washington as the territorial representative of Utah. Emma herself had taught school and her usage of English was excellent for the most part. David early acquired a unique facility with the language which he coupled with his drawing.

As a youth he developed an affection for nature that never dimmed. A recess in the bank of the river near the house formed a natural cove that the family soon named David's Chamber because he spent such long pleasant hours there. While most people would have approached the sleepy river town deploring its inactivity and lack of growth, the romantic David roamed the woods and explored the streams along the river. While prosperity found no roots and the family struggled to maintain financial security, the boy's imagination found fertile ground. But he was no idle dreamer and worked steadily at his drawing. In the 1860 census, the sixteen-year-old youth confidently listed his profession as "portrait painter."\textsuperscript{53} David left no record of when or how he studied religion; probably he had little formal training. Emma chose to bring up her children understanding Christian principles, but not adhering to an organized church after the Mormons left Nauvoo.

A correspondent from the Missouri Republican visited Nauvoo in 1857 and wrote about his visit. The article centered around David and
voiced a remarkable attitude the family carried toward the boy. The writer sat at the table with the family including Frederick, Alexander, and David, "a lad of some twelve or thirteen years." Lewis Bidamon expressed his view that the whole family did not believe in Mormonism, which topic then prompted the subject to turn toward David. "I was told that Joe Smith prophesied, some two years before this young lad was born, that a son was to be born to him, at or about a certain time; that at the time stated his wife did give birth to a son. At that time he also stated that his son's name would be David, (not Joe,) and that is the name of the lad, for I heard him answer to it. Joe also said that his mantle of greatness would fall upon this son and lineal heir, David, who he stated, would be as wise and powerful as David of old. The fact of the birth of this child following according to Joe's prophecy, strengthened the belief that had already so strong a hold upon his followers."

The correspondent described Emma as a "masculine, intelligent-looking lady, of forty-five or forty-seven years," almost ten years younger than her age. The visitor said the older boys worked a "splendid farm" four miles from Nauvoo while David went to school. "David is an uncommonly intelligent lad, of massive forehead, and bright expressive eyes. His step-father intimated that he cares as little about Mormons and Mormonism as one that has never heard the names, notwithstanding that thousands of the followers of his father believe him to be a great high priest, a prophet, and seer, (in embryo,) etc. He knows that they worship his name equal to that of Jesus Christ; and yet, I am told, the lad is too intelligent to allow it to make any
impression upon him. Probably the fact of all the family being unbelievers in it is the cause."\textsuperscript{54}

The article is puzzling in that the writer never makes clear how much of the belief in David stems from conversations with Mormons, presumably those in Utah, and how much of this came from the family itself. Apparently the writer came to Nauvoo specifically to see David, and if so, he learned about the boy from sources other than the family before he came. He also intimates that David was aware of the expectations being held regarding his leadership, but this was probably exaggerated, for no documents extant from the Smith boys or the family indicate that they held David in greater or lesser esteem because they believed that he would be a great spiritual leader. Indeed, Emma's experiences with her first husband had been quite convincing that leaders of religious groups found their lives fraught with more than ordinary problems. Emma had never encouraged Joseph to assume his "mantle of leadership" given to him personally by his father; much less would she harbor and encourage such tales floating about the head of a child David's age.

But Joseph was struggling with his own decision about leading the Reorganization. In late 1859 he wrote to his parents' old friend William Marks, "I am soon going to take my father's place at the head of the Mormon Church."\textsuperscript{55} The church to which Joseph referred was not the populous church in Utah headed by Brigham Young, but the struggling groups who had not joined the Utah Mormons. William Marks, Israel Rogers, and W. W. Blair, all leaders in the reorganization, came to Nauvoo in early 1860. Suspicious of self-appointed prophets after
following several who proved to be ineffective leaders, William Marks bluntly told Joseph, "We have had enough of Man-made prophets, and we don't want any more of that sort. If God has called you, we want to know it."56 Joseph traveled to Plano, Illinois, in April 1860, accompanied by his mother, and there at the general conference of the church, he was presented in an emotionally charged meeting. Introduced by Zenos Gurley, who simply stated, "I present to you, my brethren, Joseph Smith." Joseph told them, "I come not here of myself, but by the influence of the spirit." Joseph's remarks were direct and to the point and he spoke for about thirty minutes. Before he ended he drew out for himself a very difficult path and committed himself and his followers to it before either he or they could correctly evaluate the historical evidence that would prove him wrong. Stating that he had been told that his father had believed and taught the doctrine of plural marriage, Joseph flatly insisted, "I have never believed it and never can believe it."57

Joseph in his maturity became a fairly rigid man, not allowing other people's arguments to sway him, somewhat stubbornly adhering to a chosen course in the face of reasonable evidence that another person also had a valid point of view. But of all those people connected with the church, young David would find his life most dramatically affected by his brother's obdurate stand in the face of evidence that could have allowed a more tolerant approach to his father's participation in plural marriage.

Joseph returned to Nauvoo with the intention of establishing the headquarters of the church there. At first the residents of the town
and the surrounding area were not pleased that another Mormon settlement would rise in their midst on the banks of the Mississippi, but Joseph soon persuaded them that he preached a different brand of Mormonism than that of either his father or Brigham Young. Tom Sharp, newspaper editor whose vitriolic pen attacked the first Joseph Smith with such vengeance, now recognized the difference in Joseph's stance and proclaimed, "Young Jo is a different man from Old Jo, and don't seek to gather all the faithfull together, that he may use them politically and financially, as the Brighamites do. There is nothing objectionable in Young Joe's church, that we have heard of." 58 Joseph held the first church meetings in Nauvoo in the old Homestead House, across the street from David's quarters in the Mansion.

Apparently the interest in David's being the future leader of the church had waned, or had been non-existent among the Smith family in Utah, for in July, 1860, Samuel H. B. Smith, and Joseph Fielding Smith, both cousins of David, visited Nauvoo. They wrote home about their visit, but were so engrossed in Joseph's position as leader of a new church that rivaled their own that they did not mention David's name. 59

David had not been idle while Joseph struggled with his decision to lead the reorganization. When David was nine he had procured a small sketchbook and began to draw and write in it. As early as 1853, David began to sketch things he saw around him--leaves, rabbits, a pile of books, a horse's head and hind leg, a butterfly, a classic American eagle in several poses. The book was used intermitantly from 1853 for eleven years until 1864. By 1860 David included lines of poetry as well as sketches. The second poem in the book, written before 1862,
romantically addressed the circumstances of the death of the father he had never known. Undoubtedly David had heard much of his father's name. He tried to determine how to resume the course and continue on in his footsteps. Prompted by filial concern, David composed "A Lament:"

Sing a song of wondrous sweetness
But a sound both sweet and slow
For again is Zion hopeless
Nauvoo now is vailed in woe

David pictured a crowd from Nauvoo collecting in the temple to wreck vengeance on Carthage for the murder of his father when his mother requested that they "cross not Heaven's will."

They still wait for heaven's vengeance
To appease this mighty wrong.60

By August, 1861, David had taken the formal step that united him with the Reorganization. John Shippy, early missionary for the church, baptized and confirmed David a member of the church. In reporting his activities to the church offices, Shippy commented, "He bore testimony to the truth of the work." When Joseph wrote about David's baptism, he said, "He is to be one of our church pillars, for the Spirit says so."61 David commemorated his baptism with verses in his notebook,

Tis the morn of my baptism
That the Lord my soul may save
And I go with fear and trembling
Down into my watry grave

Now the waves are rushing o'er me
Dark the waters are and cold
Thus my savior years before me
Lay within the grave of old.62

David watched and mourned as his older brother, Frederick, lingered very ill while his mother nursed him. On February 17, 1862, he wrote "An
Appeal to my Brother Frederick When on His Sick Bed," noting,

Remember Brother dost thou not
    What Mother used to say?
       ...............  
Remember how she taught us fine
    in faithfulness to pray?
       ...............  
O! shall we stand above her grave
    And in our conscience say
That on life's road we have not walked
    As Mother showed the way?
You know how righteous she has been
    Through all the weary years
Let's turn to her example then
    Lest we repent with tears.63

After Frederick's death in April 1862, David wrote a memorial poem to his brother.

He has suffered long, and borne it well
    His sorrows came thick and fast.
Oh! Call him not back in pain to dwell
    He has gone to sleep at last
Then go dig him a grave, on the warm hillside
    'Neath the shade of the green locust tree.
    Where the birds will sing,
    And the flowers will spring.
And the long grasses wave mournfully.64

Seventeen-year-old David then addressed a poem to Frederick Smith's only surviving child, a young daughter named Alice Fredericka. Because he had never known his own father, David sympathized strongly with the child, and wrote much of his own feeling into "Little Alice's Song."

My father stood in manhood prime
    At the door of death on the share of time
The latch was raised by an unseen hand
    And he passe\b within the better land
       ...............  
It seems to me I see his face
    and I sometimes think of his loving ways
His eyes from pain wore a piteous look
    His form was bent his low voice shook
So I am his poor little fatherless one
    whose father has passed away
I must bid him farewell and journey on
Along life's stormy way

David's poetry caught the imagination of the early leaders of the church who saw in him great potential. Fondly, affectionately, they nick-named the youngest brother of their leader the "Sweet Singer of Israel" in reference to his fine singing voice and his fluent pen. The earliest reference occurs in Charles Derry's journal entry of December 22, 1862. Derry, with several companions visited Nauvoo for the first time. They were very interested in the Smith family, and described David and his mother:

Sister Emma is just such a woman as I thought she was, a woman of staid appearance, very intelligent. In fact, she appears to come as near being a good woman in every sense as you will generally meet. She has been handsome and to day she is very good-looking for a woman of her age, she will be sixty years of age, next June. David, the younger son is tall and slender, was 18 yrs. of age, sometime last Nov., I think. He is a very intelligent young man, of light complex, blue eyes and of a warm temperament, quick perception powers, rather impulsive, I should judge, but is kind generous, enthusiastic and I understand very obedient to his mother. He is a Natural poet, very gifted indeed, and he is truly entitled to the epithet of 'Sweet Singer of Israel.' My acquaintance with him, as yet is limited.

Charles Derry remained in Nauvoo several days, and wrote on the 27th that he drove with "Bro. David" and others around Nauvoo in a carriage. Noting that the area still looked "down-trodden" in spite of its beauty, Derry and his party passed by the ruins of the temple. "David remarked there were only three pillars standing in perfection, and one that was broken off. So there are but three brothers of us, and one is dead, Frederick; Joseph, Alexander, and David Hyrum alone remained. Says he, 'There are three stars left, and there are three missionaries going to England.'"
Charles Derry immediately thought that David referred to Derry's intentions of going to England on a mission with two companions who had not yet appeared. About them Derry replied, "One of the stars has one of its points broken. The other is all broken and only one remains in perfection."
But David apparently had a clear message in mind that dealt with his own situation for he would use the three temple pillars as a symbol to quell a problem that bothered him.

Charles Derry continued, "The other evening David came over and sang and played some of his pieces for us. He is all life, full of poetry, of a very sensitive nature, but I notice that he studies his mother's wish in all things. He is passionately fond of Joseph. The other day he remarked, 'Who is there that can live a year with Joseph and not love him?'

Then Derry focused upon a dilemma in the Smith family. "Bro. Jens Gorgenson (a Danish man) has been teaching that David will come out and lead the church instead of Joseph. This hurt David much; and he told him to his face, it was false, and he must never utter the words again."

Whether David had already written the poem that reflected his feelings toward those who presumed to announce that he would usurp his brother's position, or whether he used the occasion of his conversation with Charles Derry as the catalyst, David composed a poem that addressed the issue of who would be president. Frederick was gone, only three Smith brothers remained. He titled the poem "Words of Advice to Those Who Look For Me to be the Prophet." The Herald referred to in the first line was the periodical edited by Joseph that became the news organ of
the Church.

Little Herald, stop a moment
   Ere you journey on your way;
I have something of importance
   That I wish that you would say
Unto those who, not contented
   With the leader God hath sent.
Still declare that I shall lead them,
   Though I gave them no consent.

Go and tell them I am loyal
   To the counsels of the Lord:
Tell them I have no desire
   To dispute his mighty word.
Joseph is the Chosen Prophet,
   Well ordained in God's clear sight;
Should he lose it by transgression,
   Alexander has the right.

Joseph, Alexander, David,
   Three remaining pillars still;
Like the three remaining columns
   Of the Temple on the hill.
Joseph's star is full and shining,
   Alexander's more than mine;
Mine is just below the mountain,
   Bide its time and it will shine.

David's statement apparently endeared him to the members of the Reorganization, for they were not eager to see infighting among the Smith brothers for the leadership position. David's self-effacing statement averted a struggle for power, though there were those in the Reorganization who found Joseph's leadership unsatisfactory and who had sincerely hoped the more genial David would assume the lead.

David soon began composing hymns. Joseph wrote to Charles Derry a year later in 1863, "Rev. Jason will bring you a song rec'd [of] our brother David, one of Israel's Sweet Singers." A month later Edmund C. Briggs visited Nauvoo and heard David sing at the Sunday service. "It was a delightful musick. Bro David told me today he could by the Spirit
sing off new hymns in new tunes often when the Spirit rested on him, he said he knew Joseph was a prophet and any honest man who will become acquainted with him will know it, too, he says, often when the Saints come here and soon as they touch his hands the Spirit witnesses to them that Joseph is a proph, he (David) bore strong testimony of the Book of M[ormon] and the Reorganization and of its doctrines being true.\textsuperscript{70}

David had now found an outlet for his talents and he improved upon them at every chance. When Joseph baptized Alexander in June, 1862, all three brothers were members of the church. With some enthusiasm John Shippy reported from his missionary trips about Alexander joining the church, then added, "Bro. David H. Smith is gaining fast and will soon astonish the nations, some of his writings will soon appear in print, especially his poetry."\textsuperscript{71} At the semi-annual church conference in 1863, Joseph Smith and W. W. Blair ordained David to the priesthood office of Elder in the church.\textsuperscript{72} Not yet nineteen, David stood poised for his life's work.
CHAPTER THREE

Poet and Preacher 1863-1868

The American Civil War raged during David's maturing years. After he and Alexander joined the church, their membership posed a dilemma. Joseph described it, "As ordained ministers in a church whose rules of government and doctrine did not warrant the shedding of human blood except it became necessary in defense of our families or ourselves, we felt it should be contemplated only as a last resort. In spite of this firm conviction, our spirits stirred deeply to the call of patriotic duty." They resolved the issue by deciding not to enlist, but to wait for the draft, for such action relieved them of the willful responsibility for military combat. Alexander was drafted, and mustered at Quincy, but the war was over before he saw action. David left no record of his reaction to the conflict, while Nauvoo passed through the war years relatively unmarked. Whether David viewed the war as a gallant romantic endeavor in which he wished to take part, or whether his inclination toward nature meant he abhorred war is a matter of conjecture.

In the fall, 1863, David accompanied Joseph on a missionary trip through western Iowa in order to attend the semi-annual conference of the North Star branch of the church near Council Bluffs. David and Joseph traveled in a lumber wagon outfitted with a good top, a lunch box (probably more resembling a chuck wagon's supplies than the
modern-day lunch box), and places for satchels and gear. They traveled as far as Vincennes the first day, then swung into southern Iowa, noting that few men labored in the fields and surmised that most of the absent farmers served in the war effort. David and Joseph spent several nights with Ebenezer Robinson, a friend of their father's in the early Nauvoo days of the church and co-editor with their uncle Don Carlos Smith of the Times and Seasons before Don Carlos's untimely death.

Robinson would later, in 1891, publish detailed accounts of events in Nauvoo, including specific references to accepted practices of plural marriages. Joseph made no record of the conversation between the men, but Robinson knew far more about actual events in Nauvoo before David's birth than either of the brothers suspected. On their arrival in Council Bluffs, the two Smiths found their lodging among members of the congregation there. These members, for the most part, had belonged to the church in Nauvoo, but had dropped out of the westward exodus some ten or fifteen years earlier.

At this time David met Charles Jensen, a man to whom he would later write detailed letters and with whom Joseph would discuss David's illness in detail. W. W. Blair, who also had turned back from the western movement, was in charge of the branch. Blair was outspoken in his teaching of the gospel principles, and David and Joseph found that some people were quite upset over Blair's alleged teachings that electricity was the "power used by Lucifer." Both David and Joseph broached the subject with Blair, but he insisted that he had been misunderstood and the matter was dropped.

David and Blair "got into a close discussion over the Godhead,"
according to Joseph. Blair had preached only one person in the Godhead. David opposed the idea and apparently argued well for an inexperienced young man. "The conversation was a prolonged one, but not at all bitter, for we thought the subject of sufficient importance for us to spend considerable time over it." Joseph supported David in his arguments, and the subject was finally settled by playing with words in such a manner that both Blair and David were satisfied. But Joseph, as official leader of the Reorganization, sided with David and approved of his reasoning. 3

David's beautiful singing voice was an asset at these gatherings. Plagued with a sore throat for ten days, David began to feel like himself in Council Bluffs. He "tuned his pipes" as W. W. Blair expressed it, and joined with several families who were reputed to be "sweet singers." David "sang the songs of Zion, many of them his own compositions till we all forgot the sorrowful world without, and felt that paradise was well nigh regained, and we were made to rejoice." 4 David was sensitive to the tunes and melodies; he had learned to play the melodeon at his mother's home. 5 At an evening prayer meeting in Manti, Iowa, David first heard the tune of the hymn "Fading Flowers." Joseph "spoke in prophecy, relative to the work the Lord had lately begun in that place; immediately upon this David arose in the congregation and in the Spirit of the Lord, sang the two first verses of [a] beautiful hymn." 6 That hymn, "Let Us Shake Off the Coals From Our Garments" became a favorite in the early Reorganization. 7 Blair remembered that "the congregation seemed spell-bound; as with eagerness they listened to catch the heaven-inspiring song, as it fell
from his lips in all its richness and power." Blair commented on the reception that the people gave David and Joseph, admitting that they were so warmly received because they were the sons of the first accepted prophet. They traveled some thirty days before standing again on the banks of the river waiting to be ferried across to Nauvoo.

David's creative abilities always endeared him to his people. Emma commented that this son was like Jack Frost, "upon whatever he touched he left a flower." David once sat in a conference meeting under an arbor covered with boughs to provide a roof. He sat folding a white handkerchief into petals until a beautiful white rose emerged, undoubtedly delighting tired children like Alexander's oldest boy, who remembered the incident many years later.

As early as 1862 when David was seventeen, he became a published poet. While his works were not notable for their literary qualities, and his editor was Isaac Sheen, a good friend, David still made a contribution to the struggling Saint's Herald. "The March to Zion, A Song of Triumph," published in August, 1862, celebrated the organization of the church, the preaching of the gospel, and the church's acceptance as "the holy city enter[s] in" to Zion. By May 1863, anticipating that he and Joseph and Alexander would emerge as the missionary leaders, David published "To the Three Missionaries" calling them "chose.: messengers of glory" who preach repentance, baptism, the resurrection under God's protection. For the June, 1863 issue, Isaac Sheen accepted two of David's poems, "The Testimony" and "Music of Creation." The latter was a celebration of the musical sounds of nature, a harmony that always held David as spellbound as he held his
own listeners. By August, David turned back to biblical themes, taking "The Terror of the Priests In The Temple At Jerusalem" from his readings. The introduction of the poem read, "It is mentioned by Josephus that a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, the priests going by night into the inner court of the temple to perform their sacred ministrations at the feast of Pentecost fell quaking and heard a rushing noise, and after that a sound as of a great multitude, saying, 'Let us depart hence.'" Two other poems, "An Anthem" and "Reason for Hope" appeared in the same issue.

David honed his poetic ability with practice. By January, 1864, he wrote in a different style. While all his verses are not of uniformly even quality David apparently did little editing and rewriting. The value of David's poetry lies in both the content and style of his verse and in what that content revealed about his character and personality. Trying a new format David wrote in part:

Upward
Curls the Fire,
While around the altar kneeling,
Noah's little family, feeling
That salvation hath been given, by the God
whom they adore.
Radiant on the cloud appearing,
Comes the rainbow each heart cheering,
Like an angel sweetly telling that the flood
will come no more.
While the glad hymn round the fire,
Rises higher.

A hymn titled "Go Bring a Garment" appeared in February. By March when Joseph offered his resignation as president of the Nauvoo Branch of the church in order to devote his time to the duties of president over the whole church, David's name was offered for the position of Nauvoo
Branch President. The minutes report only that "on consideration" David's name was withdrawn, and his brother Alexander was nominated and elected presiding officer of the group. The presidency decision was probably made in favor of Alexander's age; he was twenty-five, and David was nineteen.

David's poetry continued to appear with regularity in the Herald; "Two Voices Calling" depicted one voice beckoning:

\begin{verbatim}
Behold the World, and all its goodly pleasures see;
and another reminding
Soul, goodly things thou'lt gain,
And serving God is neither pain nor woe.
\end{verbatim}

David continued to find contentment in the meetings, "A Song By The Spirit" stated,

\begin{verbatim}
A calm and gentle quiet reigns to-night,
There's not a cloud upon a single brow,
And every heart is swelling with delight,
And peace is brooding sweetly o're us now.
\end{verbatim}

But David's poetry did not always recognize that some brows in the circle of his family were sadly clouded. Lewis Bidamon, his charming step-father, was fifty-eight years old. Tall, erect, and as well-dressed as the family's often straitened circumstances would allow, the Major was a handsome man. He had been married to Emma Smith for seventeen years. David knew no other father and Lewis seems to have been quite fair and affectionate with David as a child and youth. But the Major's eye was wandering and came to rest on a petite widow named Nancy Abercrombie who was twenty-four years younger than Emma Smith. Nancy Abercrombie lived on a farm with the Luce family and her own two
children. She had dark hair and eyes, a soft voice, and a quiet self-effacing manner, a sweet woman who was also a little shy. On March 16, 1864, Nancy Abercrombie gave birth to Lewis Bidamon's son. No attempt seems to have been made to deny the paternity of the child and the incident undoubtedly caused some gossip in the small town. While Lewis's infidelity must have caused her some personal unhappiness, publicly Emma gave no indication that the incident would break up the family. Ironically, Emma again lived with a man who found other women attractive, but Lewis Bidamon did not expect her to condone his actions or to lead out in setting an example for other women to follow in giving their husbands other wives as Joseph Smith had done. Emma was free to forgive Lewis and at the same time oppose adultery as a matter of principal. The child, named Charles Edwin, stayed with its mother for four years, and then at Lewis's request, Emma would take the child to raise.

David left no record of his reaction to this unusual event in his life. No hint of it appears in his 1864 poetry, and no mention is made of the child until the little boy came to live with them, at which time David seemed to accept him matter-of-factly.

He himself seemed as secure as he pictured the saints to be, encircled in the arms of "The Watcher,"

There is a mighty angel
His arms are wonderous strong,
Encamping round the righteous,
Deliv'ring them from wrong.
He guardeth well their pathway,
Through trials long and hard.
This pure and holy being,
The angel of the Lord.
Thus safe in his protection,
From every harmful snare,
As long as we are faithful,
The angel's camp is there;
Then let us serve and fear the Lord,
Lest this bright watch depart,
And shapes of death and darkness,
Take charge of mind and heart.

By 1865 David attempted a more ambitious project than the simple four or six stanza pieces he had published. "An Offering," introduced by the epigram, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear," appeared throughout the year in eight issues of the Herald. The long narrative poem begins with a justification that fame is not what prompts the writer, but

The poet's harp sound truly sweet
When lesser subjects tune its strings,
But O, with greater joy we greet
Its sound when praise to God it brings.

Inadvertantly presaging the struggle he would face in the future, David wrote about the gift of poesy granted to those who turned their efforts into baser subjects than praise of the Lord.

The gift they turned to fire at length
Burn'd out, and left them wretched things,
No faith, no hope, no love, or strength
To keep their souls

Thus all that worketh wrong
And brings confusion misery and shame,
Degrad ing man with fetters vile and strong,
Is called a sin. We should reject the same.

He argues strongly against the notion of predestination, asserting instead that men chose their destiny by their acts.

We are not mere machines propelled thro' life
For each can make their actions right or wrong.
The poem was an ambitious attempt to deal with the principles of Christian example and doctrine as promulgated by the newly organized church. A certain piety of the author is exhibited in the phrases that urge the sinner to acts of goodness and repentance, but David's theology was not a harsh censure of humanity. Rather he saw in nature, and the creator exemplified by the creation, a tolerance and acceptance in humanity striving to improve itself. This long narrative poem appeared under one of the several pseudonyms David would eventually use. "Aoriul" and "Abel" would appear again as authors.

A second poem appeared in the fall 1865. Titled "The Two Fates" the poem expressed a new concern that David felt toward the use of liquor. Some have used the poem to suggest that David directed it specifically at Lewis Bidamon. Bidamon was not an abstemious man, but neither was he the drunkard pictured in the poem. Nauvoo offered enough liquor establishments to supply the demand, and many other persons beside Lewis Bidamon could have been the prototype for it.

Two Fates

An old horse stood at the "grocery" door,
And a weary long time he had stood:
His line was half-tied, he was aged and poor,
Yet he would not depart, though he could.

His master was in at the sloppy bar,
I felt sad for the weary old horse;
But felt as I looked at the two, by far
That the fate of the master was worse.

One bore in meek patience what heaven had willed,
Thus degraded not by his own will;
The other with poison and blasphemy filled,
Cursed fate and yet willed it so still.

David signed and dated this work with his name, but wrote other pieces
as "Abel." 26

The years in Nauvoo from 1860 to 1866 allowed David to work with his elder brother almost daily. While the actual running of the Church affairs was entirely in Joseph's hands, David accompanied him on some of his rounds. In the winter months of 1865 a sort of epidemic swept through the members of the Nauvoo branch. A persistent low-grade fever and accompanying feelings of weakness and disability were part of the disease. No record exists as to whether David was stricken, but he and Joseph were kept constantly busy administering to the sick with as many as twenty-two people being down at the same time. No physicians were called in and Joseph reported the "exercise of faith seemed to bring gratifying rewards, for out of the twenty-two only three were lost." 27 Joseph apparently placed some importance to the healing of sick by the process of "administering" to them, and viewed the surcease of disease as an indication of God's acceptance. In 1867 when Joseph's eldest daughter Emma Josepha contracted pneumonia in Nauvoo, his mother-in-law wanted to call a doctor, but Joseph argued for the ministrations of faith. Because his mother-in-law had opposed his marriage and his faith, the issue was very important to Joseph, and had ramifications beyond just the healing of his daughter. The ordinance of administering to the sick was done by anointing the afflicted one's head with oil and then blessing them by praying while touching their head with the hands. Joseph asked David and another elder in the church to perform the blessing. When the child recovered, Joseph had made a strong point with his in-laws, but had done it with David. 26

Joseph commented in his journal on Sunday, March 12, 1865, that
David addressed the evening meeting "in a good endeavor," but he is otherwise not mentioned. Joseph and Alexander frequently went after firewood, but David did not join them. By the middle of April, Joseph became editor of the Saint's Herald which Isaac Sheen had edited from Plano. Thus, from March 1865 on, David would submit his works to his brother for publication.

Only three of David's poems appeared throughout 1866. "The Joys That Are With Us" admonished the reader

    Then let the joy and work that come,  
    Today receive our care,  
    Remembering that for the hour  
    All things sufficient are.  

"Courage and Diligence" appeared in July authored by "Abel" and "The Sisters," a commemorative piece written on the death of two friends, appeared in October. Whether David had turned his talents elsewhere, which is probably the case, or whether Joseph needed to re-define the gospel that David was subtly preaching through his strong and repeated use of natural themes is not known.

Through the fall, 1865, Joseph closed his law practice, finished his business as Justice of the Peace, and prepared to move to Plano. After the move was accomplished early in 1866, David wrote to him, "kind and indulgent brother mine, I rec. yours of February 7th and though more than I could have hoped for, it was very welcome," indicating the closeness between them. David hoped he could afford to travel from Nauvoo to conference in Plano, and commented that he supposed that Joseph would send him the money to come. To avert this David explained,

I naturally despised to ask Mr. B[idamon] for so much money to be spent in such (as it seemed to him) an useless journey,
so I went to work. I had some difficulty in obtaining leave of absence from hewing posts; but I sat firmly down like a donkey on its rump, and the weather seconding my motion, settled down to, snapping cold, at that, and the way I made my brush and pencil (I got a new set in Keokuk) twinkle was a caution to the stars and in a week's time I had $7.25 cts in my pocket dedicated to take me up to conference. So please do not send me any money wherewith to come. . . . My hand seemed inspired, it fairly flew over the paper. I painted two pictures a day some times at six bits apiece, making $1.50 a day. Winter, (a bust of a young girl dressed in firs) with thin fail dotted with snow); Spring, Ruth's Answer; Numbering the Faithful (your dream) were some of the prettiest subjects. I am going to bring the sketch of your house with me to conference it is too large for an envelope. I will compose that song in time.

David, in his twenty-first year, had filled a great many of the family's dreams for him. He had become a powerful preacher, to the extent that Charles Derry sent in a report about one of David's sermons that Isaac Sheen published in the Herald. David's approach was endearing as he began his sermon. "I give you a kindly greeting," he told his audience. "I feel that the major part of you are my brethren and sisters, and the rest of you are my friends, and I am standing as a weak mortal to set forth the word of life." David argued eloquently for the validity of the Bible. "Suppose all the characters represented in that book were represented as being very perfect, and yet human; we should then have reason to believe it was totted up by some romantic individual, whose imagination created all humanity, as the highest possible grade of perfection, when we know that perfection is not found in humanity. . . . The word of God portrays the weakness of mankind, and teaches them where they can obtain strength." He then introduced his subject: the laying on of hands after baptism for confirmation of the spirit. After baptism by immersion, David argued, it was necessary
to have the "sealing power, or the Holy Ghost." "We cannot think that the good God who created us would leave us in darkness on this point. Would we, if we had the power, create a world and people it, and refuse to tell them what is for their good, and give them no ray of light and comfort? The deepest of human research, aided by the most powerful of human inventions, cannot find out God; and who is so capable of giving that light as God himself?" David's eloquent delivery and obvious sincerity could not be discarded. Not formally educated in seminary or institutions, David had at least deeply pondered the issues he addressed.

David preached the resurrection with the same assurance. "Our reason, lighted up by the truth of God, tells us [death] is not the end; . . . but to pass away and know nothing of the future is not good, and we ask what is that future? but our unassisted reason cannot solve the problem, we cannot devine it." After using the example of the resurrected Christ to make his point, David continued, "I know nothing of the 'Elysian fields' portrayed by poets and other imaginative minds, but this I do know, that the bodies of the saints shall be raised in glory; and we shall be like our glorious Master. . . . We cannot pierce the veil of the future, and tell you exactly how it shall be. . . . There is no joy that is so great as that which is brought by doing good."34

David's future concerned his mother. Joseph had clearly chosen his path as president of the church, and Alexander, who still farmed in Nauvoo, seemed destined to assist his brother in the church. At a Council of the Twelve meeting in Nauvoo in April, Alexander had been
appointed to take charge of the California Mission of the church.\textsuperscript{35} But David had no profession. Emma wrote to her eldest son in October, 1866, "Now, Joseph, as for David, I am as much at a loss what advice to give as you can possibly be, and I shall submit the matter to yourself and him. Your letter speaks of his being a teacher. I would ask of what, of music or painting or both?" She continued, "I would like to have him know something about legal lore, as you call it, if he could obtain it without too much sacrifice of other things. I believe a little knowledge of common law helps a man sometimes to keep out of the limbos." But Emma shared the common attitude that exhibited the taint of disrespectability that surrounded the legal profession in the 19th century. "I know very well that if your Father had been a little acquainted with the laws of the country he might have avoided a great deal of trouble, and yet I have a horror of one of my children being entirely dependent upon being a lawyer for a living."\textsuperscript{36} But David would pursue his own course, and it would not be law.

As 1865 began David still lived with his mother and Lewis Bidamon in the Mansion. The house was now more than twenty years old and beginning to show signs of deterioration; the financial situation in Nauvoo had never grown to prosperity. Emma and the Major still struggled to earn a little money, but in the face of it all, Emma found a solace. Joseph had acted with honor in Nauvoo and left it respected by the townspeople. Alexander, the hunter and wanderer along the riverbanks, had supported Joseph in his position, and David, the endearing child of earlier years, had grown to be a talented and capable young man. "If there is anything in this world that I am or ever was
proud of it is the honor and integrity of my children but I dare not allow myself to be proud," she wrote to Joseph, "as I believe that pride is one of the sins so often reproved in the good book. So I am enjoying the better spirit and that is to be truly and sincerely thankful and in humility give God the glory, not trying to take any of it to myself for it is him that has led my children in the better way. . . . No one knows the solid heart-felt pleasure I take in comparing my sons with others, and them too, that has had fathers of their own to guard them." The old antagonisms and troubles that had been so much a part of the early Nauvoo years before the majority of the Mormons moved west were obviously things of the past, but unwittingly Joseph in Plano moved to re-introduce association with the Utah Mormons into the family.

He had struggled from the time he assumed the presidency of the church to increase the membership. David had traveled with him to preach in the surrounding area and steadily the converts trickled in. But Joseph saw a more fruitful ground in the west. No plum looked more ready to harvest than that group of Mormons who had known and supported his father and who had then accepted Brigham Young as his successor and moved to the west. His reasons were valid. Western Mormons had already accepted the basic Mormon religious belief, they regarded the Book of Mormon as scripture, the frequent visitors to the Smith family from Utah invariably reacted with warmth to the sons of Joseph Smith, and lurid press accounts ridiculed the Mormon practice of plural marriage, hinting that perhaps Brigham Young's hold on the church members was loosening enough to allow other ideas to prevail in Utah.
Three years earlier in 1863 Joseph had sent Edmund C. Briggs and Alexander McCord to Utah where the "Josephite" missionaries met with Brigham Young and some twenty-five or thirty of the church leaders of Utah in an assembly that was not cordial. The situation was difficult for Brigham Young because he had not attempted to poison the attitude of the people in Utah toward the sons of Joseph Smith. Now that those sons were governing a rival church, some of the membership in Utah seemed to react favorably toward them. Attempting to diffuse Joseph's influence, Orson Hyde, a long-time leader in the western church, told a group in eastern Utah that the Joseph Smith who was president of the Reorganized church was not the son of the prophet Joseph Smith of Nauvoo.40 In the meeting in Salt Lake City, Brigham Young promised Briggs and McCord that no private home or meetinghouse in Utah would welcome missionaries from the Reorganization. According to Briggs, Brigham Young blamed Emma for the establishment of the Reorganized church and told them, "Emma Bidamon is a wicked, wicked, wicked woman and always was . . . Joseph is led by his mother and is now acting under the direction of Emma. . . . I know more of Emma, Joseph, Alexander, and David than they know of themselves."41 The statement was an exaggeration of course. Brigham Young had not seen the Smith children since at least 1847 when they were youngsters and David a child of three. But he referred to the association he had had with their father and the expectations he held for their future, which in their obvious obstinacy they were not fulfilling. "The matter of Josephism rests upon the brethren," commented Jesse N. Smith, a relative of Joseph's, to the Parowan, Utah, School of the Prophets. "Emma was ambitious and sought the power to
lead the people. Brigham told her a woman could not lead the people." He then told a story of a Spanish woman that illustrated how long a woman would wait for a chance to get revenge "by rearing their children and instructing them to take advantage of circumstances. So it was with Emma, she dwarfed the minds of her children until they were not the men that they should be."42

In spite of the charges and hostility, Briggs and McCord preached a three-pronged message to the Utah Mormons. First, that Joseph Smith of Plano was the true leader of the entire Mormon church by virtue of his birthright; second, that Brigham Young usurped his position; and third, that the practice of plural marriage was an abomination introduced to the church by Brigham Young and had never been practiced by Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism. Their message was not calculated to endear themselves to President Young. They did win converts, most of whom immediately left Utah for California or returned to the midwest. Though Briggs and McCord tried to build up the resident membership in Utah, they were largely unsuccessful because the pressures of living in the western church area after embracing the tenets of the eastern church were too much for most people.

Three years after the Briggs-McCord missionary trip, Joseph assigned his brother Alexander to take charge of the California mission. Alexander still lived in Nauvoo with his wife Elizabeth and their two children, one, a daughter named Vida, a derivative of David's name.43 Alexander Smith was twenty-eight; he was a farmer in Nauvoo, but his reputation as a skilled hunter and marksman was greater than that as a farmer.44 Of a stocky athletic build, Alexander was slow to anger, and
reacted with reason and calmness to the vicissitudes of life. On May 20, 1866, Alexander finished his preparations to leave his family behind and went to the California mission, passing through Utah as he did so. Concerned with the reception Alexander would meet in Utah, his mother wrote to Joseph, "I think it might be right for him to go and discharge his duty to them and leave them without excuse." Emma added, "I look upon their case as a hard one." In reference to members of the Smith family who lived in Utah, Emma commented, "May be that God will consider them in their ignorance and convict and convert them and cleanse them from their abominations and make them fit for more decent society. I hope he will, that is those who were taken there when too young to know any better." In another letter, Emma tried to comfort Joseph when he was upset about some of the statements coming out of Utah. The tone of her remarks indicates that she viewed the Utah Mormons with some apprehension and distrust, and it was probably with some reluctance that she watched Alexander prepare to pass through there. These same anxieties would come back again when David visited Utah. To Joseph she wrote, "Now you must not let those L.D.S.'s trouble you too much. If they are determined to do evil, they will do it, and such as are anxiously willing to make you trouble are not worth laboring very hard to save from the dogs." In reference to her own somewhat bitter experiences with the church administration after her first husband's death, she continued, "You may know that you are not the first one who had been misunderstood or misapplied, or misquoted and misrepresented in every way, and in every conceivable shape, neither is it certain that you will be the last afflicted one."
But Alexander intended to fill his mission and on May 20, 1866, he left his home in Nauvoo with 25¢ to pay for the ferry crossing to leave Nauvoo. Smiling at his own lack of faith, Alexander returned to his house, gave his wife Lizzie the quarter, and started out again. He met a friend who, upon finding out that Alexander walked down the streets of Nauvoo on his way to California, offered to row him across the river in his skiff.47

Alexander met his companions and they continued on their journey. At Fort Laramie they joined a Mormon immigrant wagon train and Alexander mused about his unusual position. Three "Josephite" missionaries who were strongly antagonistic to the Utah church traveled in the midst of several hundred devout Mormons immigrating to Utah.48

Alexander entered Salt Lake City late in August and greeted his cousin John Smith, who held the office of patriarch in the Utah Church. The newspapers announced that Alexander intended to advance his brother's claims in California, but when Alexander preached at Independence Hall and Fox's Gardens in Salt Lake City and Provo, he found that another cousin, Joseph F. Smith had been sent by church leaders to speak against him. Alexander remained in Salt Lake only fifteen days, then continued on his way to California. No mention is made of his meeting Brigham Young, but the Mormon leader undoubtedly took a keen interest in the young man's activities. Alexander worked in California until late 1867 then returned to Nauvoo. He soon moved his family from Nauvoo to Plano to be near Joseph and the church work there, leaving David the remaining son in Nauvoo.

David greeted the new year, 1867, with two poems celebrating
the "Old Year Out" and the "New Year In." He wrote eloquently about the changing seasons and the respective colors that spread over the earth, then commented:

The year is with the past. A single note  
In God's great song. A notch of time.  
An inch  
Of all eternity.

O! if my hand might raise the vail between  
My clouded eye, and all the year contains,  
The vail would pendant be, I would not lift  
The blessed curtain; better that we meet  
Our labors one by one, and conquer them.

Two months later another poem appeared, titled, "Speak Out." It encouraged each church member to be bold in proclaiming the truths they accepted. By the middle of March, 1867, a regular new column was added to the Herald. A new aspect of David's personality began to be apparent. A gradual shift from the earnest exhortatory style to a light hearted sense of fun appeared when David authored a column for children. Titled "Little Folks," the introductory article amused the children by telling how permission for the column was received. "My little friends, to tell you a secret, great men are often very particular and must be approached through the proper channel." As to subject of the column, David confided that the "whole universe of God teems with beautiful and exhausterless themes--The earth upon which we live--the air we breathe--the grand old forest which supply us with comforts innumerable."

A month later David asked the children in print, "Why do I call you rose buds? you may ask. Because a rose bud is very pretty and little children are too; and you know that a rose bud may bloom into a big rose, looking so lovely and full. . . . Rose buds look fine all
over the rose tree, peeping out from under the leaves like a little chicken, from under the old hen's wing or a little face out of a pleasant window. One thing I tell you, this little rose bud must stick to the stem, to the rose bush, or it can never be a rose. So must a little boy or girl stick to Pa and Ma, and mind what they say. There is someone else they must cling to also. . . . So it is God affords us our food, and clothes, the great potatoes that break open, so mellow and fine, when Ma boils them, wheat of which the little loaf is made, and wool for Lizzie's magenta dress, cotton for her white apron, all good things we use or look upon."

David made a point with a glass of water:

"Will you please bring me a glass of water, Jennie?"

Yes sir, quick as I can. Here it is.

Thank you, Jennie, that is beautiful."

In three lines David set up his scene and then stressed the value of saying "thank you." When he explained that the water was what was beautiful the child replied, "Why, that is nothing but a glass of water!". . .

"Let us set it down, right there on the corner of the table where this little ray of sunshine may shine into it. Ah! see the little rainbow colors at the bottom of it, the merry sparkles all through the glass, the shimmering bubbles on the surface, and the bead like drops around the rim. . . . We must learn to use our eyes, Jennie, for purest pleasure we shall enjoy in life will be in looking at the works of God and man."

Beautifully illustrative of the way David had trained himself to be observant, the imagined conversation reflects an attitude
that speaks of strength and the ability to find something beautiful when others around him were imprisoned by the ordinary. David gently poked fun at human nature in "A Few Exceptions."

O! I will be at rest,
    My heart shall beat in peace;
No hatred shall disturb my breast;
    All war with me shall cease;
The golden rule I will fulfill
    To all my neighbors round;
Except—that old scamp on the hill,
    That good for nothing—Brown,
I will forgive my foes,
    Though they may do me wrong--

    . . . . . . . . . . .
In humble mood I still can find
    Kind words to bless them with;
Except that injury unkind,
    Received from—Sister Smith!

    . . . . . . . . . . .
I dedicate a contrite heart
    To perfect righteousness;
But then—to bear a decent part
    One needs—a new silk dress. 52

By the middle of July, 1867, David addressed the subject of death, a favorite topic of serious poets. David's attempt was a somewhat melancholy outlook, but at twenty-three he had much yet to learn about the sources of joy in living. He titled his work "The Parting," and used it to express his religious fervor, "The gospel of the Son of God is true. His spirit rests upon me, and I know. . . ." expressed David's firmly held convictions.

I stand upon the shore of a wide sea;
    Whose unknown depths profound I soon must cross;
    When the last sands of life run out for me.
The clouds have fled. I look back on my life
    And find it brighter than I was aware.
With opportunities of goodness rife;

    . . . . . . . . . . .
Now, gentle friend, release thy clinging hold;
The spray beads rest upon thy forehead cold;
The tide is ebbing out, and o'er its swell,
I must away across the solemn sea. Farewell. 53

David was the only brother without the responsibilities of a
family when the Church needed missionary work done in Iowa and Michigan
in 1868. David had proven his mettle with his preaching in the vicinity
of Nauvoo and with his frequent publications.

At the 1868 General Conference Jason Briggs requested the names
of persons ready to accept missionary work. When the names were handed
in, David's name was first. 54 He arrived in the mission field in June;
by the middle of August he reported to Joseph that he had baptized an
elderly widow "once a child of Zion in the old church" referring to the
period before the exodus to the west. Added to earlier baptisms, David
had baptized eight new members in a short time in the area around
Hopkins, Michigan. 55 In November David wrote that in Grand Rapids
"There is such an opening there and here [Hopkins] and in the region
round about, that I do not feel at liberty to come home just yet,
unless you insist ... The people say, stay with us, we wish to hear." 56

A few weeks later David wrote to Joseph, "My mission has been blessed
beyond my utmost expectation. I feel the presence of the spirit
testifying to the reality of our sacred ministry." Emphasizing that
"my clothes are not yet dry from the baptism of three precious souls,"
David encouraged the representatives of the church to teach with love,
"cutting and slashing seldom does good." In closing he added, "God
bless you, my brother, under whose hands I was confirmed unto a lively
hope in Christ, when the voice of prophecy promised the sheaves. I am
now gathering." 57
David's ways with people earned him their affection while he served this mission. At one time he picked a rose, fixed it in the back-swept hair of Mrs. Henry C. Smith, in whose home he was staying, and then sketched her portrait. Her family lived in a small log house "in the wilds of Michigan" and such touches were much appreciated. The six-year-old daughter of the house, Fannie, trotted around at David's side. Her unusual description of him was, "His heart was full of love for all animals. He made friends with ants and studied their ways. A large toad came everyday to be fed by him in an old stump." David good-naturedly helped wash the dishes and plant the potatoes. "He was a happy man, and loved by us."\textsuperscript{58} David's response to these friends was, "Kindly I was welcomed, refreshed, administered to by their pure blessed hands, and went out from their midst strong again in the Lord."\textsuperscript{59} When he prepared to leave Hopkins, a church member wrote, "Brother D. H. Smith is about to leave us. We can hardly bear the thought of this. He has been a brother to us, always cheerful.... He has done a great deal of good here."\textsuperscript{60} He traveled to Decatur, baptizing converts in cold water and inclement weather, in February,\textsuperscript{61} before returning home to Nauvoo.

David found time to write poetry while he traveled. "The Crystal Lake" began,

\begin{verbatim}
Eye of the woodland, by thy fringed lid
How could I linger, thoughtless of the time,
Watching thy clear depths tranquil in the light
Of midsummer.

Far am I from home,
Yet seem no stranger on by sun-lit sands
That gleam around my feet;

Above thy children thou dost brood; I see
\end{verbatim}
In thy transparent waters spreading moss,  
And feathery water plants with emerald fronds;  
While anchored by long stems, broad lily leaves  
Float on thy surface, shading many a bed  
white gravel where the sun-fish sport,  
Of fresh  
Turning their scaly sides of burning hues  
Toward the sun to catch his sheeny gold,  
All their prismatic colors to unfold.  

David's feeling for words as well as his vocabulary had grown  
and become more expressive. While a feeling of homesickness comes  
through, David also found the same companionship in nature that had  
been his friend in Nauvoo. Preoccupied with both nature and the work  
of spreading his message, David expressed in "The Second" a scene that  
passed before his eyes, a scene of blue waters shimmering with corals  
and silver fishes upon which boats glided to the sound of music; great  
lush plains that swept to the edges of beautiful cities where the  
buildings carried a "glory beyond compare," then abruptly passed.  

David dated the composition of a long narrative poem titled  
"Eloran" at Hopkins, Michigan, September 8, 1868, indicating that he  
found time for the luxury of composing during his pleasant stay in the  
area. Remarking, "I am oft alone, / when I of happy multitudes am  
counted one. / I sing not often sadly--do not heed." David intro-  
duced the story of a romanticized account of love made impossible  
because the hero, Eloran, was unjustly confined to prison. He shared  
his bread with a fugitive young woman who hides in a cave from an  
unnamed evil. The woman steals stone cutting tools and frees her lover  
just as the guards begin to starve him, but he dies in her arms of  
malaria, a disease with which David was much more familiar than the  
usual consumption. The heroine cuts her wrists with the stone cutter's
tools and both are found dead in each other's arms. While the story line was not new, David wrote it well and the action compels the reader on. But the account presaged David's life uncannily, he would spend far more time confined than Eloran, and the woman who loved him would wait in vain for him to leave the prison of his own mind to join her.

David also noted some topics for sermons. Invariably David found that nature offered him ideas for his essays. In "Sabbath Thoughts" a wild bird made captive serves as the example of the inefficacy of man when he does not work for food and shelter, but expects them to be provided without care. "Man, in the condition we have imaged him, would not be happy. Satiety would steal all the sweetness from his worthless un-bought treasures. Inaction would suffocate him. Monotony, that most tiresome of all wearinesses, would drive away all peace with its ceaseless unvaried tread." David wrote that "God is self-supported. If all the universe were turned against Him, He could still exist, all creation could not abate one power in his possession. He cannot be limited, circumscribed or destroyed. His profound peace, undisturbed complacency, extreme felicity are in and of Himself. He will that we approach toward this perfection." David signed this work "Aoriul," thus changing his pen name from the Biblical Abel to one with more romantic connotations.

David's public writings portrayed a man dedicated to the unremitting service of God, accompanied by a gravity befitting his station. But privately, the humorous and funloving aspects of his personality emerged. Writing to Joseph early in 1868, David drew a delightful caricature out of the "B" of Burlington, Iowa, and depicted a wind-
blown Father Time. Joseph opened the letter to read:

    Hail! Brother of
    the rapid pen
    and airy thought that as a dove
    Flies lightly over hill and glen
    Alighting in it's home of love.
    ........................................
    Hail--Ah--you may not wish to hail
    Well blow awhile and rest yourself
    My verse machine seems bound to fail
    It lies too long upon the shelf.

The letter was written to thank Joseph for a fifty page album for photographs. "Tis not such preasants cheer me most, My brother, tis the love I need." From Hopkins, Michigan David wrote:

    Br Joseph I am very
    Much obliged for your kind note,
    It produced a very merry
    Cathunation in my throat.
    As you are somewhat my debtor,
    But a few words I will say,
    And presume it will be better
    In this idle gingling way.

The rhyming continued while David ordered tracts to use in his missionary efforts, asked about the theological position of the Adventists regarding Sabbath on the seventh day, confessed that he himself could not argue effectively against their case, asked for an extension of his mission into Ohio, where perhaps he could visit the old Mormon settlement of Kirtland, and closed his light-hearted letter with a sensitive description of the approaching nightfall.

    David probably wrote many poems during this time that did not carry a date and place, and which were later published. He developed a solid commitment to the church, became effective as a public speaker, honed his talents for communicating with people, and revealed in his mind's ability to play with words and ideas and arrange them into works
that expressed his love and affinity for nature and the growing awareness of ideas and philosophies. David returned home from this mission self-confident and assured. His relationship with Joseph was strengthened, his mother remained strongly supportive, and the gospel he preached assured him that his life was of value. He could only look ahead to new horizons.
CHAPTER FOUR

Utah 1869

By the spring, 1869, Joseph Smith had firmed up his plans for further westward expansion of the church. His mother came to Plano for the April conference; David attended also.\(^1\) Usually plans for missions and further expansion were presented at these conferences. The three brothers determined to see once again if the church members in Utah were dissatisfied enough with Brigham Young and would allow the Reorganization to enter. Alexander and David were called to travel to Utah, then go on to California before returning home. This would be David's longest missionary period, but he had worked well in Iowa and Michigan earlier, and seemed well-prepared.

The two brothers were contrasts. Older by eight years and built more stockily, Alexander reacted with impatience to the irritations caused by people around him. Alexander's patience was reserved for the hunt and the quiet stalking of wild animals. Thoroughly at home with firearms, Alexander was a crack shot and had been barred from entering the marksmanship contests in Nauvoo because he always won. In contrast, David was only now reaching his maturity in physical size and in his personality. David stood a slim six feet two inches tall\(^2\) with blue eyes and a fair complexion. He abhorred guns with as much fervor as Alexander liked them.\(^3\) And he reacted with diplomacy and tact to the opposition he met, especially in regard to religious issues.
Both men, however, shared a firm commitment to their work; the differences between them were of style and not conviction.

David was twenty-four and Alexander thirty-one when they met at their mother's home in Nauvoo, wandered through the old rooms, and built Emma a small wooden fence before their departure. After sitting at Emma's table for a piece of strawberry shortcake in honor of Alexander's birthday, the men took their leave. Four years earlier David had written a poem called "Farewell to Nauvoo." In it he stated, "I am going to leave you," and expressed some apprehension at the thought of Brigham Young's power and influence in the west.4 "David was the idol of the family," wrote Inez Smith later, "his mother was almost heartbroken at the thought of sending her youngest into the place, whose dangers she knew only too well."5 Her sentiments were not shared by David, who now looked upon the chance to see Utah as a great adventure. "We are fairly on the wing," he wrote the Herald less than a week into their journey. From Montrose, to String Prairie, Iowa, "there was quite a company in the wagon, and our pleasant conversation robbed our departure of sadness. One poor unfortunate enveloped in a sack, attracted much attention by his squealing, and finally managed to leap out the back of the wagon, to our amusement." These were inauspicious beginnings, to be sure, traveling across Iowa in a crowded wagon with a pig squalling in the rear.6

David and Alexander stopped frequently to teach and preach along the way. One member of the church wrote from Denison, Iowa, to another: "Alexander and David Smith was with us at our quarterly conference. . . . They go out to Utah and Cal. . . . Joseph, Alexander
and David are there as good boys as the Sun ever shone upon." At Vincennes they boarded the train and sped away in sight of a Brother Griffith's house. The front porch was crowded with people waving their farewells with "snowy kerchiefs" bringing Alex and David to the curious attention of other travelers. Again David met with his father's old friend, Ebenezer Robinson, who was very knowledgeable about events in Nauvoo in an earlier period, but who apparently said little to David and Alexander about his experiences.

David arrived at Council Bluffs by June 10, still visiting small branches of the church along the way. "Farmington gave me the impression of being quite an old town, very much dilapidated in some parts, reminding me of Nauvoo, in its being somewhat scattered, and interspersed with trees," he wrote. At De Moines they walked quite a distance from town to find some of the member's homes, then turned back at night. "The walk back to Mr. Anderson's was rough and slightly muddy from rain, but wit and wisdom, with the lantern's yellow rays, lit up the pathway."

They moved on to Council Bluffs by June 10, the town taking its name from the Mormon migration west some eleven years earlier. From there on June 21st David excitedly began a letter, "Oh! Mother Mother I have got a new hat. ... My hat is a fur like, light-colored one the same hues the other was, cost 5 1/2 dollars. Br. McCord gave it to me." His enthusiasm in sensing that he was a valuable and necessary member of the missionary team is apparent. "We came back to this place and attended the dedication, Alex took cold and could not speak above a whisper and Br. Derry and my own important self had the preaching to do,
and we did it up brown." With exuberance David confided, "I am well and full of mischief. . . . How's Christine? How's your own blessed self? . . . I dreamed that I saw you sitting sadly alone and I tried to comfort you but could not wholly do so. Ah! me I fear I was a trial instead of a help. I am like my father was, I love my friends half to death, kiss and hug them but only torment and never help them only sing to them and preach to them, and don't practice myself."

He assured her about their journey, "Don't be lonely Mother,—only one year more. God will be your company. . . . How's the embroidery? How's the fence? How's Rose and Ed?" Again his delight in the trip was apparent. "I am enjoying myself quite well, if Alex was well of hoarseness I would be quite happy." David described a heavy rain, "It stormed awfully in the city, and water ran every where, round some houses, under others, and through the rest. Carrying away bridges and side walk, gullying out the rail road tracks and playing hob generally." Referring to his tendency to play with words, to find descriptive phrases that fit every occasion, David commented, "Well Mother your son had not got the gift of continuance, so he proves himself, spreads his airy wings, and with a burst of song glides away with a cloud delicately perfumed, and vanishes into thin air. . . . Remember me to Pa Bidamon." And with that, David prepared to exhort the Saints of Council Bluffs to do well by their newly dedicated meeting hall.\(^9\)

North of Council Bluffs David met Edmund L. Kelley and discovered they had both been born on the same day in the same year. E. L. Kelley had joined the church four years earlier; he would become the presiding Bishop and then a Counselor in the church presidency. "A
peculiar bond of union seemed to attach" David and Kelley from this time. David and Alexander left for the west, boarding the train at Omaha, and spending some time at the small gathering in Columbus. From this point the "Great American Desert" began—a desert that was one only in the minds of travelers accustomed to more rich soils and more frequent rains than the western prairies saw.

David delighted in every new scene that met his eye as they traveled, and he proved to be an observant companion to the stolid Alexander. The straight line of telegraph poles stretching away to infinity seemed like guardian angels protecting the railway line. The currant cake his hostess had packed in his lunch delighted him; everything he saw outside the windows of the railway car attracted him; hills and grassy plains like none he had ever seen, an old buffalo skull, a jack rabbit, a sage hen elicited a comment. The valleys and ravines covered with "purple larkspur, white poppies, and mountain daisies" held him enthralled. And the mountains had never seemed so unusual to Alexander as they did now as he viewed them through David's artist's eyes.10 While they rode along in the comfort and convenience of a railway car, Alexander regaled David with stories of his experiences traveling the same route by wagon three years before the last spike went in at Promontory Point, Utah. The thirty-five mile ride in a stagecoach from the depot near Ogden to Salt Lake City was dusty and rough—the worst part of the trip.

David and Alexander registered at a hotel upon their arrival July 15, then went to call on the one relative in Utah who had made Alexander welcome earlier. Their cousin John Smith was not at home,
and in spite of urgings by his wife, Helen, to stay, the brothers turned back to the hotel, only to be overtaken shortly by John Smith who adamantly insisted that his relatives should not be subjected to public lodging while he had a home in the city. The following day, John Smith took them to meet George A. Smith in the Historian's office. Arriving at 10 a.m., the brothers stayed only a few minutes, but the observant David had time enough. George A. Smith was a rotund man whose genial-appearing son was with him in the office. David observed that the son "promised to do credit to his father in the portly line." The visit was stiff and uncomfortable in some respects, but enjoyable nonetheless.

They drifted through the city as it lay in the July sun with the waters of City Creek tumbling down the flume, and the grass and trees speaking of the dedication necessary to grow them here on what had been a barren valley. To their consternation they learned that a municipal law prohibited preaching in the streets; they would have to find a hall to rent. Learning that the meeting place of the Utah Church known as the Tabernacle was sometimes made available for other religions by Brigham Young, they arranged an interview with the church president. Brigham agreed to meet them, but was occupied with a visiting Senator and his party, and David and Alexander waited impatiently and probably with some anxiety for about two hours. Just as they were ready to leave, feeling somewhat ill-treated, a messenger informed them that Brigham Young would see them. They entered a room to find nineteen or twenty men waiting for them, among them such church leaders as John Taylor, Daniel Wells, George A. Smith, Joseph F. Smith, and others. The room was nicely furnished and hung with portraits, but chief among
them was that of their father, Joseph Smith. David, especially, noticed the irony and remarked on it later. David and Alexander sat in the room with people whom they perceived to be their enemies and prepared to negotiate for preaching space under the likeness of their father, a man revered by both churches who now vied for the Mormon converts.

After the introductions were made Alexander stated that he and David were aware that other churches used the tabernacle on occasion, and he requested that they be allowed to preach the message of the Reorganization there. Brushing aside the request, Brigham Young asked Alexander to retract some of the statements he had made at public meetings three years earlier. When Alexander refused to do so, Brigham asked him for the source of his information. "From your mother?" he asked.

"Yes, Sir; and I have confidence in her word."

This answer angered Brigham Young to the extent that he launched into a tirade about Emma Smith. At this point, if the conversation was reported correctly, both Alexander Smith and Brigham Young were using Emma for their own purposes and neither knew the full story behind their position. By their own admission, Emma had told her sons virtually nothing about plural marriage in her own home in Nauvoo, but Alexander and Joseph and David drew their own erroneous conclusion that their father would never have participated in polygamous marriages because it seemed so distasteful to them. Alexander was undoubtedly wrong in ascribing his position to Emma, and Brigham Young knew that Emma knew far more about the issue than Alexander's statements led people to believe. Nowhere did Alexander state what particular remarks Brigham
Young wanted him to retract, but without question the issue was probably over plural marriage and Brigham Young's succession to Mormon leadership.

Brigham also erred in his evaluation of Emma, for he believed Emma had tried to poison Joseph and was unsuccessful. Joseph himself accused her of it in front of other leaders in the church, but Joseph's projectile vomiting of blood undoubtedly came from an untreated peptic ulcer and not from any potion added to his food. Thus David and Alexander Smith, and Brigham Young faced off over an issue that neither of them understood.

Unaware of Emma Smith's actual position in both their arguments, Alexander and Brigham's conversation grew more heated. Brigham accused Emma of stealing the family portraits, and Joseph's ring—all items which Emma probably had a widow's right to possess. But then in front of Emma's sons, Brigham called her "a liar, the damndest liar that ever lived."

David spoke up with some serenity, "You may as well try to rub silver off from the moon as to attempt to destroy the purity of my mother's character." He wondered later, "Why is it not better to talk of men and principles, and not attack the character of another in Israel whose life is at home, and whose occupation with the care of her family?"

Before leaving Nauvoo Emma had told David and Alexander, "Don't be angry at anything they may say about me." With some difficulty Alexander held his temper and told Brigham to stop, that he had gone far enough; the things he was saying were false and Brigham knew it.

Someone in the room attempted to ease the great tension by
remarking, "We love you boys for your father's sake."

Alexander retorted, "That makes no impression upon me. I expect to live long enough to make for myself a name, and have the people of God love me for my own sake."

Alexander reported that at this, President Young stood up, clenched his fists, and emphasizing his words by repeatedly raising himself up on his toes and dropping down on his heels, exclaimed, "A name, a name, a name. You have not got God enough about you to make a name. You are nothing at all like your father. He was open and frank and outspoken, but you; there is something covered up, something hidden, calculated to deceive."

"Time will tell," countered Alexander, and challenged Brigham or another church representative to a debate. Alexander goaded, "You say you have the truth, what need you fear? You are men in full vigor of mind and reason, we are but boys. If it is as you say, you can easily overcome us, if we are in the wrong; but if it proves that we are right, the sooner you get right the better." Then Alexander broached the issue that was so galling to him. "Unfortunately for us, a Mormon legislature has made laws prohibiting preaching upon the streets of Utah, so we are denied means used by your missionaries to convert thousands; but you have not made it a misdemeanor to preach upon the mountain side, and we propose to get the ears of this people."

At this, Alexander turned to David and said, "Come, David, let us go; it is useless to prolong this controversy."

Brigham Young polled the room for the other men's opinion, which was unanimous in the negative. George Q. Cannon chose to speak.
"So far as I am concerned, I can soon express myself. After we whose hair has grown gray in the service of God and after we have borne the heat of the day in persecution and suffering on land and sea, and have labored long and hard in heat and cold to build up a name for their father; for these boys to come now and tear down what we have been so many years in building up, to me, is the height of impudence, and I will not give my consent to it."

David responded with some heat, "We will not deny that you have traveled far, suffered much, and labored hard to build up a name for our father, but what sort of a name is it? A name that we his sons are ashamed to meet in good society, and it shall be our life's work to remove from our father's name the stain you have heaped upon it."

Again, a misunderstanding of the issues divided the men. Those men in Utah knew with certainty that Joseph Smith had introduced the principle of plural marriage for he himself had instructed most of them to take additional wives, arguing that it was commanded of God that they do so. And from their point of view, polygamy as it was practiced in Utah lifted the stain of adultery from Joseph's name and elevated sexual association with more than one woman to a commandment. Alexander and David could see no more than the breaking of the traditional Christian law of chastity.

When the men in the room were unanimous in their decision, Brigham Young turned to the younger brother, "No, David, we do not think it best to let you have the tabernacle."

But the confrontation saddened Brigham; he had always harbored a hope that the sons of Joseph the martyr would someday be a part of
his church. As David and Alexander prepared to leave the room, he said, "Boys, I would gladly take you to my bosom, if I did not think it would be taking a viper to my bosom that would sting me to death."

David reported, "Much was said on both sides, but I am happy to state that neither my brother nor myself exhibited any anger, neither did we, although tried severely, once lose control of our language or deportment, while the conference lasted," and then summarized, "the upshot of it all was, we were refused the Tabernacle and went on our way rejoicing." The firm of Walker Brothers, merchants in Salt Lake who were not Mormons, raised $200 and rented Independence Hall where David and Alexander preached to overflowing crowds. "Of course the people were counseled to stay away, but that only advertised the meetings."

By the end of July Emma wrote to Joseph that she had received one letter from Alexander and two from David since they had been in Salt Lake City; probably these letters contained a description of their meeting with Brigham Young. To Joseph Emma remarked, "I tried before they left here to give them an idea of what they might expect of Brigham and all of his ites, but I suppose the impression was hardly sufficient to guard their feelings from such unexpected falsehoods and impious profanity as Brigham is capable of." She went on, "I hope they will be able to bear with patience all the abuse they will have to meet. I do not like to have my children's feelings abused, but I do like that Brigham shows to all, both Saint and sinner that there is not the least particle of friendship existing between him and myself. How long," she asked with some anxiety, "do you expect the boys to stay in Utah?"
David and Alexander called on Territorial Governor Durkee and Judge Stickland, non-Mormon officers appointed by the United States government. The brothers found them friendly and willing to use their influence in procuring a place to speak, but the availability of the Independence Hall precluded the necessity. Alexander commented, "Brigham did us a good turn when he refused us the Tabernacle; we do not want it now." Further feeling the sentiment against them, the two Smith brothers sensed that their presence in John Smith's house could prove difficult for him, and though urged to stay, they used upper rooms rented to them by a reorganized church member named Brother Horlick for small meetings, and had their meals prepared by a Sister Thimbleby, who fed them on donations of flour, fruit, cheese and mountain trout brought by the various members of the Reorganized church. They found sleeping rooms at the William Browning residence; David baptized Mrs. Browning. "We are nicely accommodated for writing and study at either place, at liberty to entertain visitors, run to the post office to receive the welcome epistles from home, (or go back crestfallen without)." David found time to climb to the top of one of the mountain peaks near the city and was repaid by the expansive view. He and a friend descended through a canyon, "feasting on service berries and camping under a clump of small trees of the maple tribe. Building a fire we enjoyed a racher of bacon and slice of bread, listening to the music of the murmuring brook."

But such idyllic pastimes did not remove the genuine concern David felt at the inconvenience he and Alexander brought to their friends by their very presence in the city. Gentiles, meaning anyone
in Salt Lake City or the Mormon settlements who was not a member of the Utah church, had difficulty making a living. The Josephites, the commonly accepted term for members of the Reorganized church, found this especially difficult. Brigham Young's economic policies had long been that the Mormons would trade only with each other and boycott attempts by outsiders to enter their financial and mercantile circles.²⁰ David and Alexander did not intend to add to the difficulty of either the John Smiths or the Josephites in Utah, but they did need assistance and help. Often when the "Smith boys" were introduced to members of the Utah church, the members were discomfitted and ill at ease, drawn toward these sons of the man whom they revered as a prophet, but repelled that they would preach a religion counter to the Mormonism to which they were accustomed. David, the more sensitive and social of the two, found this unwillingness to be friendly difficult to understand and accept.

The Mormons had good reason to be concerned, for David and Alexander stubbornly insisted that plural marriage was not a tenet of their father's and thus not a valid tenet for the Utah church. This controversy was reported with some alacrity by the Corinne Reporter. Corinne was a Gentile town, built in hopes that the junction of the north-south railroad line to Salt Lake would be placed there rather than at Ogden twenty-five miles southeast. Corinne was a "hell on wheels" railway camp where non-Mormon investors had built nineteen saloons and an Opera House.²¹ The little town delighted in finding issues that would irritate the church-controlled interests in Salt Lake, and the newspaper was happy to give ample space to the endeavors of the Reorganized church.
The presence of David and Alexander demanded a rebuttal and the Utah church felt compelled to clarify their position. A reporter for the Corinne Reporter sent his copy to the paper reporting on a meeting at which Joseph F. Smith spoke. "He is my favorite among their preachers," he wrote, "But I never remember seeing him so excited and nervous as he was on this occasion; and well he might be, for the case was on to try [him]." The reporter identified Joseph F. Smith as "the son of Hyrum Smith, the nephew of Joseph Smith, and the cousin of young David." The writer's opinion was that Joseph F. Smith had a heavy task to perform. Be it remembered that the date of this pretended revelation in favor of polygamy is as early as July 12, 1843, but that it was never published until September, 1852;22 that in February, 1844, Joseph and Hyrum published a card in the Times and Seasons in Nauvoo, denying that they received any such revelation;23 that in April, 1844, Hyrum Smith made an address to the elders starting on a mission in which he emphatically denied the doctrine and forbade their preaching it;24 that about the same time he wrote a letter to the mission in Lapierre County, Michigan, again denying that such was a doctrine of the church, and that all these things were published in the church paper, and are not denied by the Brighamites, and it will be plain that if the latter prove polygamy did then exist, they only prove Joseph and Hyrum to be most inveterate liars.

David and Alexander had used these denials very strongly in their preaching. "These denials have been made much of by the sons of Joseph, and in view of these facts, in presence of a large and excited audience, Joseph F. stood up to prove his own father a liar. And I must add that he succeeded in doing it."

The reporter summed up the argument, "He began by announcing that many would run after the young Smiths simply because they were the sons of Joseph, who would treat with contempt any other person who preached the same doctrine. In view of this fact, it had been
determined to hold a series of meetings in this and other wards, to
answer the statement of David Hyrum, and before they were through the
Brighamites purposed to present testimony to convince any honest mind
who heard it and damn any who rejected it."

Thus, the battle lines were drawn. The Utah church, using as
its official representative, Joseph F. Smith (son of Hyrum Smith and
Mary Fielding), was forced into a defensive position as much by the
presence of the Prophet's sons as by their charges. That the sons had
no idea of their father's participation in plural marriage only fueled
their determination to clear his name. When Joseph F. Smith addressed
the meeting, he began by stating that he possessed twelve affidavits
of women now living who were "spiritual wives" of Joseph Smith, and
that he knew that Hyrum had married two other women, in addition to
his mother.25 The reporter noted, "This seemed proof enough, but
Joseph F. was powerfully wrought up, as well as the audience, and he
went on at some length in an interesting account of affairs at Nauvoo."

Joseph F. Smith said,

I cannot help the position this places my father and Joseph
in as to their denials. I only know these facts. But
everybody knows the people then were not prepared for these
things, and it was necessary to be cautious. They were in
the midst of enemies, and in a State where this doctrine
would have sent them to the penitentiary. The brethren were not
free as they are here; . . . When Joseph and Hyrum left Nauvoo,
while the mob was after them, . . . that man [William] Marks
and Emma Smith joined in writing them a letter, in which they
called them cowards, unfaithful shepherds who had left the
sheep in danger and fled. And when Joseph read that letter,
his great heart was overcome, and he said; 'If that is all my
best friends care for my life, then I don't care for it,' and
he and Hyrum came back, gave themselves up, and were taken to
Carthage and murdered. And the blame rests on that woman, their
mother, Emma Smith.26
Joseph F. Smith acknowledged the position and feelings of David and Alexander, "This is hard, but I want these men to know that if they come here to raise their party, we will give them facts, and some of these facts will cut, and if they don't want them told, let them go away and keep their mouths shut. And I say in plain fact, that the blood of Joseph and Hyrum is upon the souls of Marks and Emma Smith, and there it will remain until burned out by the fires of hell!" 27

David prepared a rebuttal to Joseph F. Smith's comments, and while he probably used these arguments in public meetings, he was also astute enough to use the facilities of the press. Immediately after the August 8th meeting in which Joseph F. Smith spoke, David wrote a letter to the Corinne newspaper. It was dated August 13, 1869, and was published in the paper two days later. In it he explained that he was using the paper because the usual channels for reaching the people were closed and explained that because Alexander was "otherwise occupied, the representation of our mission and views, principles, and idea devolves upon myself."

"As a beginning, I was informed lately that, having heard both sides, I had become sick of 'Josephitism.' This is the greatest city for rumors that I have ever visited, ... My free, willing independent, unfaltering service, faith, countenance, aid, and influence, I give to my brother Joseph, because, in the first place my knowledge of him finds him a man every way worthy such trust." David listed the qualities of Joseph's character that he recognized as being worthy of such trust, including that his father did "anoint, appoint, and dedicate, by laying on of hands, his eldest son 'head of his posterity' to stand in his
place in God's own time as President and Prophet to the church." He went on, "I have given you four sound reasons why I would stand hand in hand with my two brothers, . . . so with patience I will give some of the reasons that many have endeavored to make me swallow to make me sick of 'Josephitism,' but, sir, my pipes are too small for such sized doses, and as to 'Josephitism' I am sound as silver, spry as a bird, and thankful as I well may be."

"They say to me, 'My dear young friend, your father taught polygamy and practiced it, and I know it.'" David then cited the February 1, 1844 Times and Seasons for his father's and Hyrum Smith's denials to the principle of polygamy. After he listed his father's accomplishments and his persecutions received in the process of publishing the Book of Mormon he concluded, "I am sick, but not of Christ's gospel or sacred books, that I should throw them away for that which is contrary and evil; but sick of seeing this people, many, many of them go about with that within they dare not declare, fearing for the sake of their bread and butter to speak the convictions of their souls, yielding to the stream of oppression, because they dare not stand upon their feet and be men free in the gospel, and beneath the flag of our blessed land. Oh! Saints of God, arise, assert your rights; be men and women, free and pure; cease to bow submissively to the arm of flesh and the doctrine and commandments of men; open the word of God and read the doom of evil; shake the harp of Zion until its harmonies shall drive away the spirit of bondage for ever." 28

The editor of the Corinne Reporter published David's letter, and offered an unsolicited editorial in the same newspaper. The title,
"The Son of Promise," referred to the sentiment among many in Utah that while they rejected the claims of "Young Joseph" as successor in the presidency of the church, they were nonetheless ready to accept the more accommodating and genial David. The editorial read, in part:

'THE SON OF PROMISE'.--Those of liberal sentiment—and we hope no others are among our readers—will peruse with curious interest the communication of David Hyrum Smith published in another column. The question will at once arise: How is it that 'the son of promise' the successor and son of the Prophet should use the Reporter as a medium to reach the public? Be it known that while no people talk so incessantly of 'persecution' as the Brighamites of Utah, none are so bitterly intolerant and proscriptive to the extent of their power. Alexander and David Hyrum have petitioned in vain for the right to meet their opponents in the public buildings at Salt Lake City; the sons of the Prophet are forbidden a hearing by the man who claims to be his successor, and though daily maligned and their mother vilified by the men who profess their father's faith, they are denied space to reply in the columns of the Mormon papers. The Brighamite editors dare not let their people hear both sides. The young Smiths are driven to a Gentile paper to get a hearing. . . . We war against no man's religion; to us Mormonism is nothing; we contend only against the theocratic despotism set up by Brigham Young.29

David viewed his work more philosophically. He reported to the Herald, "We have continued our labors in the city, preaching in Independence Hall, and visit about among the brethren in the city, preaching by the fireside, or by the place where the fire is wont to be made in winter, distributing tracts, refuting doctrine, and contradicting the thousand and one rumors continually set afloat by the laborers in the other camp." David reported the conversions numbered fifteen "and the best of it is, they are of the readers, the steadfast, upright, and refined people."30

One branch of the Reorganized church had prospered more than the other apparently because it was geographically situated some
distance away from Salt Lake City. The most stable group of the
Reorganized church members during the nineteenth century was estab-
lished in 1866 in Malad, Idaho. The settlers of the Malad valley were
comprised mostly of Welsh immigrants who had been particularly
receptive to the message of the Reorganization brought to them by
James W. Gillen and Thomas Job in 1866, the same year that Alexander
had made his first visit to Utah. The numbers of the branch at Malad
swelled occasionally when Josephites from Salt Lake City or other Mormon
towns joined them to find security. 31

David and Alexander soon received an invitation to speak at a
conference of the Reorganization at Malad. On August 23rd they left
Salt Lake City for the one-hundred-fifteen mile journey in the company
of a Brother Moore who had come from Malad to be their guide and
companion. David found the trip fascinating and reported that they
stopped to look at hot springs "gushing out from under a mountain" so
warm they could not hold their hands in the water. The strong sulphur
odor reminded David of stories of hell. "The fresh free breezes, the
wide valleys, undulating hills; lofty, craggy cloud-capped mountains,
covered with their cedars and pines were a continual delight." They
were furnished lodging along the way by Josephites happy to see and
host the two brothers.

At conference the following day, the brothers spoke to the group,
then David baptized three to add to the nine that E. C. Brand, who
worked there as a missionary, had converted. They held meetings nightly
in Malad. David noted, "Alexander, with his skill in the law, and
freedom among the revelations, makes error shake. The Saints here call
him Paul and me Apollos."

David interested himself in the climate, finding the spring and fall rains sources of lush growth that the dry summer withered. Wood for building homes came from the mountain canyons. Irrigation was a novel idea to David. "Locating upon some mountain stream, they turn the water from its bed, and, by a system of ditching and damming, they spread it over their fields at will, when required. . . . The broad, ample, well-clad fields of Illinois and Iowa, would send up a merry sound of laughter, could they see the little patches called fields here." David commented on the pure dry air and the mineral tainted water, noting that the scarcity and inaccessability of building materials means that the houses were made of logs and sun-dried bricks "so one often has the pleasure of entertaining big bugs. On the whole, I think I would rather live in a land where even the weeds look thrifty and careless, and not wear a look as if they were clinging to dear life, and that they would die any how, if once they gave up their desperate hold."32

By the 2nd of September they were again in Salt Lake City. The differences in the personality of the two brothers became reflected in their public addresses. David attempted to be more accommodating and tactful in his sermons and writings. He used the more acceptable term "plural marriage" or "polygamy" while Alexander railed against "adultery" and refused to see that the Mormons viewed their participation in the plural marriage as a chaste and moral conduct required by God. David referred to the Mormon concept of "blood atonement" as "that relic of barbarism" while Alexander flatly accused the Mormons of murder. Alexander earned the bitter antagonism of the members and
leaders of the Utah church by his blunt, critical statements, but David communicated with less hostility and was more readily accepted. Alexander often expressed his concern for establishing a name for himself. Among the members of his own church he was always Joseph Smith's brother, or David Smith's brother. Alexander's fiery rhetoric was probably prompted much by his desire to win his own place in the Reorganization.

Only one contemporary reaction to David's preaching is extant. A man in Utah identified only as 'William' wrote to a relative in the East identified only as 'Brother John' while David and Alexander were in the city. He did not believe that Brigham was the authorized successor to the church founder, nor did he accept polygamy. On the other hand he found some things lacking in the Reorganization. "I have heard Alexander and David talk considerable. I like their doctrine very much; but... I fail to see, how that church has not progressed in knowledge of principles. ... David advocated the version of Moses in the creating of Adam and Eve. Now that to me is monstrous.... I have a higher conception of the God who created the heavens and the earth than to charge him with making a machine and after completing it to tear it to pieces to make the counterpart. ... Now I have good ground to believe that David's father had a more exalted idea of the existence or creation of man. ... Tomorrow I hope to talk with the boys on this subject and get their views on it.... David, Alexander and I are all big friends and no doubt will soon agree on all things." This man then explained that he was in the process of "selling off" and would probably leave for Omaha. "I am thinking of doing some..."
little writing and talking on 'Utah and her Institutions' when I get to the States—if I get there alive, as my life has been twice threatened for speaking too plainly." 35 Before leaving Utah permanently, David and Alexander returned briefly to Malad, Idaho, then met the train at Corinne to travel westward to California. 36
CHAPTER FIVE

Advent of Illness 1869-1871

Free passes were given to clergymen by the Union Pacific Railroad, courtesy of Leland Stanford. At seven p.m. on December 5, David and Alexander boarded the train for two nights' and two days' journey to San Francisco. Crowded in a car with "gamblers and rough customers generally" they turned to watch the scenery with the light of day. Scratching the ice painted on the windows--Jack Frost may have deliberately followed the gifted David on his travels--the two travelers watched the greasewood vegetation and alkali flats pass by. At Carlin, Nevada, Indian women appeared on the station platform to uncover the faces of their babies so the travelers could see their children in return for pieces of bread. Boredom finally drove David and Alexander to turn to pictures of their family for solace. "God bless photographers!" David exclaimed.

They arrived in Sacramento by December 8 and David wrote to his mother. After assuring her that all went well with them, "We had a glorious time at Malad," he reported the delights of California, "Roses are blooming here and the gardens are quite fresh yet, this is what they call winter here and complain of the cold. . . . This is a warm productive land, I like it much, . . . So Mother, the Lord is very gracious and brought us through in safety and health, keeping us from the hands of enemies and sheltering us in the warm bosom of friendship,"
blessed and praised be his holy name, especially for the gift of so good a Mother. Your son Davy." David had passed his twenty-fifth birthday in Utah.

Still writing under the pen-name Aoriul, David published a long poem titled, "The Inebriate's Soliloquy." The poem appeared in the Herald on December 15; whether it was submitted before he left Illinois, or while he was in Utah is not known. The poem decried the hold that liquor had on those unable to resist, but offered solace to those who heard the call of religion and turned away from their "rash ruin." 

While David and Alexander were in California, Emma in Nauvoo received visitors from Salt Lake. Joseph C. Rich wrote his impressions of a visit with Emma Smith Bidamon to Bishop Edward Hunter in Salt Lake. Rich called at the Mansion House in Nauvoo on or near Christmas Day, 1869; the letter was published in the Deseret Evening News on January 7, 1870. The apparent purpose of publishing the letter was to blacken the character of Emma Smith in an effort to counteract David and Alexander's influence while they were in Salt Lake City. Rich's attitude of supercilious superiority was evident before he arrived at the Mansion. He described visiting the Peck family who had formerly been Mormons. "They were so pious that their faces hung down longer than mules and their religious righteous groans resembled the woeful lamentations of a Pi-ute squaw in the loss of her last 'purpose.'" While ridiculing their faith, Rich accepted their hospitality and was offered bed and breakfast, but believed himself hurried off the following morning. "They were evidently determined I should not be too late for the train. Brethren let us pray."
When Joseph Rich arrived at Nauvoo, he remembered, "I have always venerated the name of the Prophet and... look upon Nauvoo and the places frequented by Joseph as almost holy ground. Judge then my feelings when I crossed the threshold of the Mansion House... I stepped into the office where, perchance, angels once visited, and there... old Bidamon, the present husband of Emma, sat spitting on the stove... the furniture and general appearance of the room was old, unclean, and decidedly shabby." Rich saw Emma for the first time in his life when the dinner was served. "Emma looks very old and broken;" he pictured her as silent and taciturn, "Now she is the wife of a man who, even among his friends, is reproached as a drunkard and an adulterer. Only recently an illegitimate child had been sent him that calls Emma grandmother. Holy God!" Emma was sixty-five and still keeping the hotel. Rich's portrayal of both Emma and Lewis Bidamon was prejudiced and superficial, and to allow the letter to be reproduced in its entirety in the newspaper smacked of sensationalism.

Unaware of the visit to Emma in Nauvoo, and of the report circulating in Utah about their mother, David and Alexander enjoyed the company of friends in California. They stayed in the Aaron Garlick home in Sacramento, then traveled to T. J. Andrews' house in San Francisco. The California Mission of the Reorganized church was easier in some ways for the proselytizing missionaries because the Mormon stronghold did not extend so far, and David and Alexander were greeted warmly and welcomed by many members of both churches.

Only one shadow fell over the journey. Later commentators report that "under the strain of the Utah mission David's health was
broken," and even the friends and flowers of California, two essentials of his beauty-loving nature, failed to restore him. Alexander's mind was constantly full of anxiety for this loved younger brother, and he tried place after place, vainly hoping that the climate might restore David's broken health.4 This leaves the impression that the experiences in Utah were the cause of the illness for David. But the infirmity, which is not described but only hinted at in retrospect, seemed to come on David not in Utah, but in California.

On August 30, 1869, David had written, "Since my recovery from the slight attack of sore throat, my health had been better than before," but he also indicated that "my visits to the water more numerous, so that in all I have baptized in the city fifteen since writing last."5 His letters from Malad were optimistic and forward-looking, giving no hint of any physical or mental incapacity. While in Utah, Alexander had apparently felt some concern over David, but probably no more than would be the normal concern of an older brother for a younger. Alexander's daughter wrote, "My father's pleasure at having the association of his younger brother with him was clouded by anxiety for his safety. . . . The older brothers were fearful, not for themselves, but for the delicate, poetical, highly sensitive child of sorrow; they shrank from the contact, but he went and in the diary written by my father in whose times there appeared a note of anxiety and tenderness. . . . But his gentle courteous, smiling defense was as firm and unmistakable as the bolder, fire flung bolts of my father's ringing denunciations."6 The impression this writing gives is erroneous. When David arrived in Sacramento he wrote his mother on
December 8, 1869, "All is well with us. . . . We are both remarkably well, Alex suffered a little from head ache but he fasted it away."

The two brothers enjoyed the flowers and sunshine and friends in California then "David's health began to break, and in vain they moved about from place to place; now at Santa Cruz near the ocean, now back into the mountains, with times of renewed vitality and again returning weakness." No description exists of the nature of David's illness, whether it was strictly physical in its symptoms, or whether some mental disturbance also accompanied it. By early spring, Alexander received word that his wife, Elizabeth, was very ill with "lung fever." The two brothers took the train home to Plano. The car was crowded and cold. David was wrapped in coats and made as comfortable as possible; Alexander found a place to sit on the woodbox. With his coat buttoned closely around him, worried over the health of both his wife and his younger brother, Alexander's homeward travel was in marked contrast to the carefree and exciting journey west.

On March 2, 1870, Alexander and David arrived in Plano. Emma had come from Nauvoo to care for Elizabeth, the winter destitute of provisions while Alexander was in Utah and California had weakened her greatly. Elizabeth lived through the ordeal, and the church soon made provision to care more efficiently for the families of missionaries.

On the day after their arrival Joseph wrote to Lewis Bidamon in Nauvoo that "Alexander and David returned last night. Alex is in good health, David is quite unwell." He explained that Emma was well, but Alexander's wife was very frail and weak. "How can David travel home without a little rest?"
Within two weeks of David's return to Plano, the Herald carried an advertisement announcing The Bible Versus Polygamy, a fourteen page tract by Elder David H. Smith, was available for $1.90 per hundred, 30¢ per dozen, and five cents a single copy. David probably wrote the text for the pamphlet after he had been in Utah long enough to have heard the arguments of the polygamists supporting their case. No indication is given whether David was well enough in California to have written the tract during his illness, or whether it was essentially finished before its onslaught. In the pamphlet David refutes the Utah position that plural marriages descended from Adam's biblical example as well as Lamech's and Noah's. The Mormon position about Abraham, as David reviewed it in his pamphlet, was that the example set by this ancient prophet should be continued, and that since permission to take another wife was granted by the Prophet of the church, i.e., Brigham Young, the Mormon's practice was consistent with Biblical example. David's refutation of the Old Testament polygamous unions reveals a thorough study of the Bible, and a genuine attempt to reason through the examples given. But he approached the subject from a point of view that did not allow him to see the Mormon's side of the issue. He pointed out the problems inherent in the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Judges, Samuel, and Kings, and devoted one or two double column pages to each subject. When David Smith dealt with the example of the Biblical King David, he addressed his contemporary polygamist friends, "Now ye sticklers for Abraham's and King David's examples, do the works of these men that were worthy of imitation. Put away the bondswoman, the many wives and concubines." The conditions of marriage described
in the New Testament prompted him to write, "It is with surer feeling of mind in regard to our subject that we enter upon their new ground, for the ushering in of the gospel in purity, the fulfillment of the law of carnal commandment brings in more decided lines of right, with deeper, clearer insight into the eternal nature of truth." David argued, "Marriage is not said by our Savior to affect our future condition."

The Utah church reasoned that since having more than one wife placed a man higher than monogamists, those who never married at all would become "ministering angels" to the married. To which David answered, "As for getting above [angels] by marrying, the idea is imbecile and ridiculous. The doctrine of inequality in the celestial kingdom, one sitting in great glory with many wives, another with less glory because of a few wives, and another with none because of no wife is pernicious in the extreme. . . . Can an unmarried person be saved?" asked David. "Reader, please do not laugh; for although this question would be preposterous in and of itself elsewhere, in Utah it is made of vital import. A woman must be sealed or married, for sealing is by polygamists called plural marriage or she cannot come up in the resurrection of celestial glory. A man is a servant in the future, if unmarried, without glory or salvation, in fact is 'damned.'" As an added indictment, David included examples of the human discomfort occasioned by more than one wife in a family.

Throughout the tract, David's arguments were well-written and exhibited both considerable Bible study and a great deal of restraint given the tendency to excited hyperbole whenever the topic of plural marriage was presented. But in drawing his arguments to a close, he
included a shibbeloth that was without foundation but which had been repeated in the popular press about Mormon polygamy. This was that the children of polygamous marriages were inferior in stature, character, and mental ability because of their parent's marriage. David recounted an interview with a medical doctor whom he did not name who stated, "Nature strives to correct it, for the male children born in it are in the majority, and degenerate also, extremely liable to precocity in the direction of the social evil.... It is universally conceded that their children are much more liable to die than others, and if they live they are remarkable examples of natural depravity."

But his following statement had some substance, "It is the habit of the Utah elders to cast severe reflections upon the habits of the world around them, as if prostitution and infidelity to the marriage covenant were the universal order of the day, hoping thereby to make their rotten order look a trifle clean by blackening everything around them.... They are fond also of misrepresenting the census, stating that an overplus of women made this order necessary, although frequently shown that is just the contrary in the United States, and in Utah, too."

"The marriage state," David argued, "is like a spring once given to a people who were told that so long as they considered [it] sacred and kept it pure, it would be the source of life and health to them, giving ceaseless and unalloyed joy; but if they should pollute it and disesteem it, it would be a pestilent source of most loathsome corruption and unhappiness.... LET EVERY MAN HAVE HIS OWN WIFE, AND LET EVERY WOMAN HAVE HER OWN HUSBAND."12
David was unusually preoccupied with the idea of marriage during his missionary trip to Utah, for shortly before leaving Nauvoo he had determined to marry. From Council Bluffs on the way to Utah David confided to his mother in a letter, "Mother, I want you to read this to your self. You must love Clara C. Hartshorn, for your boy does, and she is worthy, and if you cannot love her, love me enough to make it up, even if I am not worthy. For she shall be my wife someday if all goes well. Don't never tell anybody, if you do I will be cross." Worried that his mother might find his leaving difficult, David assured her, "Don't think but what my heart is big enough to love you still the same, the dear being whose form gave shape to mine, whose blood is in my veins, and from whose pure spirit I inherited all the virtues"—here David modestly inserted a question mark—"and the few good qualities I have, and who never imparted evil in any shape."

David was too ill in March, 1870, to consider marriage; and Emma apparently stayed with him for a short period of time. In April, Joseph wrote from Plano to a church member named Richard Lambert and asked, "What is there preventing you from taking an active [oversight?] that part of the country once known as the Nauvoo district: That is, by way of preaching? Bro. Revel, David, your two boys, certainly form a very good basis for labor." The letter indicated that Joseph had no fears about assigning David to a preaching position six weeks after his return from California. At the April Conference in Plano, Alexander had given a glowing report of the progress in Utah and California. "He and his brother David had gone, trusting that God would preserve them, and it had been so," the minutes read. Alexander
stressed that they had circumvented Brigham Young's attempts to thwart their preaching, and that they "had overflowing congregations. . . . now was the time to strike, and that great efforts ought to be put forth to save that people." In support of their evaluation W. W. Blair wrote from Utah, "Liberty of thought and speech is claimed and enjoyed to a greater degree than at any time hitherto in this (Utah) Territory. Brothers Alexander and David sounded the keynote of religious and civil freedom, and it met with a hearty response in the bosoms of many." At this conference an attempt was made to return Alexander and David to the Utah Mission, but Alexander objected quietly to Joseph and the matter was temporarily dropped. But henceforth, David and Alexander would be associated with success in the Utah mission and the area in a sense belonged to them as their jurisdiction.

The mission put aside for the present, David was well enough to marry Clara Charlotte Hartshorn, nineteen-year-old daughter of William and Charlotte Eastman Hartshorn, who lived in Sandwich, DeKalb County, Illinois. Clara Hartshorn was an exceptionally pretty young woman, with a serene expression and a half smile around her lips. She dressed fashionably with short sleeves, a modestly low neck on her dress, and a bobbed hairdo. David had corresponded with Clara from San Francisco and his letter to his mother about his forthcoming marriage indicated that he traveled on this mission with her in his thoughts. Undoubtedly his attitude toward the polygamous marriages he saw in Utah was colored by his heightened expectations of his own relationship with Clara. In love with Clara, David undoubtedly found the idea of two wives especially repugnant. David's marriage ceremony was performed at
Sandwich, and the young couple immediately made their home in Nauvoo. They lived in the Mansion House with Emma and Lewis, but occupied separate quarters from his parents throughout the summer.

By August, Alexander wrote to Nauvoo from Plano. He reported the news of friends around the Sandwich area, duly reporting the sale of businesses and the arrangements of domestic affairs, "Mc and wife have gone to living together again," and then with some enthusiasm Alexander noted, "Base Ball is on the rampage here again, and of course your humble servant plays." Alexander and Elizabeth were preparing to move to Nauvoo. "Tell Mother we will try and be there bag and baggage by Friday of next week. . . . Cholera Morbus and summer complaints raging generally here." Alexander speculated on the railroad's prospects of coming through, and reported about the church office assistants, "Patrick's been on a spree, left the office, went to Chicago drunk, came back, black eye & etc. old story, fell down & etc. came back to office, gave him place again." He reported a scandal that he termed a "nasty mess." "Too bad if one tenth true, don't believe it all, try to have charity, hard matter, too apt to judge harshly, could not 'cast the first stone' not without sin myself, not of that nature, however." Alexander asked to be met at the railroad station, and casually informed David and Clara that Clara's mother may come with them."

After Alexander and his wife and four children had moved to Nauvoo from Plano, both families lived in the Mansion House but occupied separate apartments. Emma and Lewis Bidamon and six-year-old Charles Edwin also lived in the house, but Bidamon worked steadily on a
new home constructed from brick taken from the foundation of the un-
finished Nauvoo House across the street. When Emma and Lewis moved into
their new quarters in 1871, David and Alexander's families lived in the
old Mansion, and treated it as an inheritance.

But the puzzling illness that plagued David refused to leave.
Two weeks after his wedding David wrote to Joseph from Nauvoo. "Your
most kind letter of late date is at hand. Many thanks. You can not
guess how much good it has done me. I did not wish to grieve you but
felt myself sinking again, but trust that God will aid me and answer
your prayers in my behalf." David spoke of preaching every Sabbath in
the Nauvoo branch to assist Thomas Revel. He sang in the meetings,
"Clara, Emma, [Joseph's daughter, named for her mother and grandmother,
had come to Nauvoo for the summer to live with Emma and her uncles] and
myself make quite a band of singers." But the activity did not indicate
a general return to health. "Mother says I will come all right in a
year or two more, perhaps less time.... The trouble is in my left
side near my heart, what ever it is, it is much lighter now and my
general health is better." But his weakness galled him. "Do not
trouble yourself to write much to me," he asked Joseph, "You are driven
beyond your strength now and I regret my inability to aid you more."

Though his mother had kept a boarding house since long before
his birth, the roomers irritated David. "Mother sends her love and
says she is in considerable confusion to day as there is a boatload of
people from Keokuk here on a pleasure excursion. They are dancing now
and fluting. I am so weary with their folly and noise and of having
the old home desecrated by them, the flowers destroyed, the trees
barked and the garden tramped. I would they were at home in better business."23

The letter hints of discouragement and some depression, but not enough that David was insensitive to some joy around him. "Everybody seems well pleased with Clara and you may believe I am," he confided to Joseph. Clara became pregnant about a month after her marriage. This letter indicated that David was in some definite physical discomfort, and was discouraged over his health with some justification. He had fought the illness for about five months and expected to have recovered earlier.

Through the summer David worked on a hymnal for the church, and by September Joseph's secretary, Mark Forscutt, wrote the Librarian of Congress requesting a copyright on the hymnbook titled, The Saint's Harp. David, Joseph, and two other men were given the responsibility for the book at a general conference.24

Through the summer pressure remained constant that the Smith brothers should return again to Utah. Mark Forscutt wrote to J. W. Shaffer, Governor of Utah Territory, that "None of the Smith brothers can come at present. Joseph cannot be spared from this office, Alexander is so engaged in business matters that he can hardly leave until late fall if then. David the youngest of the three is recently married and can hardly be expected to leave under the circumstances. Your wish that one of the Smith brothers could reside in Utah--I too endorse the wish."25 The urgency to have the Smiths in Utah was because he perceived he could loosen the hold of Brigham Young if his power with the Mormons were diluted by the presence of one of the Smith
boys.

Alexander came home from a mission to a financial situation described only as poverty-stricken. During the summer of 1870 Alexander hired out as a carpenter in Keokuk and returned to Nauvoo on the weekends. David and Alexander worked together in the Nauvoo District of the church and in the Nauvoo branch, traveling together to the outlying regions.

David and Joseph traveled west to Burlington, Iowa, and on November 11, David sent a report of his activities to the Herald. "So then, we are on the way again, Br. Joseph and myself." Abruptly David included the following description in his letter. "There is something grand in the blowing of the north wind; wildly the great volumes of air sweep over the earth and water, singing its hoarse anthem in the tree-tops, and giving an idea of nature's motive power; the little ferry stems the tide and air, like--well, like a christian in adversity." David took advantage of the opportunity to visit the interior of several churches, buildings more opulent even for frontier churches than the Reorganization could afford to build. 26

By late fall, David had traveled to Utah probably taking advantage of the passes on the railroad that were provided to clergymen, for his financial situation could have justified the trip no other way. Traveling with Josiah Ells, David was in Salt Lake City by the middle of November, 1870. He assessed the situation in Utah and wrote to Joseph, "There is now among the brighamites a favor in our favor towards us; this I know to be a fact. It is not an effort to convert me, they are now hoping that we would stand by our integrity--and
they would now despise us did I come over to them. I am going more among them to get up a happy social feeling." David expressed some concern about whether he should travel on—probably he was not specifically assigned to work long in Utah but his visit was more in the nature of a stopover while passing through. "The universal voice is for me to stay here. We must save them from their enemies the mobites, and from their own doctrines." Then David advocated a more moderate stance. "Bear a little with their ideas, dancing for instance and be a little more trustful of them. We must be more careful of being bitter." Again he asked, "Shall I stay here longer?" He and Joseph had probably discussed disarming the Utah church with a more conciliatory attitude. "You are right about being angry. The Authorities are desirous to aggravate us into a bitter line of conduct. I advise you in the Herald to strongly recommend a policy of mercy to the government."

David found himself the object of keen interest by a third group in Salt Lake City. Besides being of great interest to the Mormons because he preached against them, and to the Reorganites because he preached for them, a group of non-Mormons and ex-Mormons were challenging Brigham Young's power. They were anxious to use the Smith boys to effectively curtail or circumvent the church's dominance in the valley. Therefore, David counseled Joseph, "If a movement should arise recommending you to the governorship of Utah do not fight the idea. Endeavor to conciliate the liberal party. . . . I have a letter written by Br. E. Tullege in 1869. He will write to you soon from his own stand point at this time and also the liberal party. I think the weight of our mission is beginning to dawn upon them also. Help me every way
you can."27

The chronological events of David's life now become puzzling.

He wrote at least three poems during this period of time and dated them San Francisco, December 25, 1870, and December 28, 1870. The poems reflect his concern with missionary life, "The Way of It" begins,

My dear Elder Jones, what a shocking hat!
And O, what a loose fitting coat!
And why in the world don't you wear a cravat;
And a shirt front ruffled to boot?
You're shabby.

......

Now poor Elder Jones was dressed in his best;
His garments, though humble, were clean;
And a good wholesome scorn of the world he possessed,
He knew it both shallow and mean--
His hat, like his face, was old fashioned. 28

A short poem titled, "The Fragment" seemed to reflect a wish for the more peaceful times in Nauvoo.

Rock in the top of the cherry tree,
Bird that is gone to rest;
Heed not the wild wind strong and free,
Bide in your downy nest.

Swing and sweep,
Sing in your sleep,
High in your downy nest;
Nestle the polished eggs under your breast. 29

But the most telling poem, titled "Discontent" he dated simply "California, Dec. 28, 1870." In it he plead,

Let me be happy too. O! restless soul,
Fold thy quick limbs and rest from care a while;
Watch the great cloud in fleecy volumes roll;
The lakelet in the sunshine seems to smile;--
Would God my friends were here to share my thought,--
Would I could find the rest I long have sought. 30

Either some of his poetry is misdated, or David restlessly traveled to Michigan, then back to California between November 14, and
December 25, 1870. On December 5, 1870, (the date is unmistakably clear in the original letter) David wrote to his mother from Galien, Michigan. The letter expressed sentiments and feelings that were accurate and customary for David, but the rhythm of his words was strangely out of order. He began:

Well Mother
mine author of my feble mind [illegible] encouraging my true and pure tastes and discouraging all of the evil. You know mother many stand by the vacant chair and lowly grave and regret that kinder words had not been spoken when the proper hour was given in which to speak, and now I feel an irresistible desire to tell you how much I love you and how I reveal your name next to that of my Father now so long gone, who is to me all of many and priestly nobility.

In reference to his illness, he continued, "Dear Mother do not remember me as a fretful, as tearful and despondent and disappointed, ah! Mother lay all this to that febleness of frame, and over abundant depth of thought and susceptibility of feeling, that under less motherly care would have gone home long ago to live with Jesus."

An absolute determination toward optimism then showed itself in the letter. "Dear Mother think of me as happy think of me as hoping for the dawning of that new life in which I hope to live again which I will trust God be a fountain of ambition and hope. Think of me as talking with nature and warning my fellow men of good and evil, as endeavoring to leave a lasting impression for good before my days are passed; and preaching and doing well, too well treated, and too abundantly cared for." David then expressed hope that his mother was well and sent her the regards of people in the area who knew her. Then, clearly mentioning a disability that was again a physical symptom, and not an emotional one, he wrote, "If I could walk as I once did I would
send you means, but I remember your advise and so am obliged to keep
funds on hand. I send a dollar for Clara." After this letter was
written, did David return to the west coast and spend Christmas there
as indicated by his dated poetry? It seems implausible, but not
impossible, for by this period, David was not finding the peace he so
desired.

David was in Nauvoo by March, 1871. "We did all we could in
Utah from and with our standpoint," he wrote to Joseph. With some
relish he described a theological battle then engaging them in Nauvoo.
Stating he did not know the opposition, "or do I care fur him either
neither teither," David described a newcomer who "preached in the
school house . . . and sent a shot into our camp. Alex replied in the
afternoon and peeled the old man, he called a meeting in the evening
on Monday and peppered Alex. Alex called a meeting . . . the old man
was soundly answered the house was crowded every evening much good was
done by this controversy. . . . Everybody has been out to the contro-
versy, all the old settlers and neighbors or at least a good share of
them. Nauvoo took a real gospel dose. Alex is the he:ô now."

David appeared happy and contented with his private life, "As
regards my home, it is peace. Clara is a good girl, a loving wife and
patient with our poverty . . . we have eked out our means as long as
possible without absolute meanness. Clara had done her own work
through it all and will only have a girl [someone in to help] in the
worst of it when it comes. Send us a prayer; we will return it with
interest." Four days later, on March 8, 1871, Clara gave birth to a
son in room number ten in the Mansion House. David wrote to Joseph,
"Very weak and tired, walked all the way from heaven, got there the night of the 8th, about 7 o'clock a little (very fine large) boy ... hair light brown, skin light brown, too, for that matter. We feel very happy, very glad ... more one than ever ... it is our first, you can guess our state of mind ... Clara lies like a lily newly bloomed, beautiful with motherhood. She seems fuller of health, more willowy, and livelier than I gave her credit for being ... We have named him Elbert Aoriul, may he be the Lord's."

Then, quite abruptly in the middle of the summer, David went again to Utah. The Salt Lake Tribune carried an anonymous letter to the editor commenting about his activities. "As young David is creating such a stir at the Institute by lecturing on the subject of successorship to the Prophetic office, and other subjects, I beg the privilege to express a few thoughts through the columns of your paper." Pointing out that David did not claim the office of prophet for himself, but argued for it in behalf of Joseph, and that David assured his hearers that he had no personal interest in coming to Utah other than liberating the people in Utah Territory from the 'bondage' of Brigham Young, the writer declared that such actions on David's part smacked of waging a crusade against the position of Brigham Young, and against the claims of Brigham Young's sons when he died. The writer accused David and his brothers of looking "forward to the demise of President Young with all the carnivorous intensity which characterizes that bird of prey, not, probably, to devour his dead body, but rather his living substance, which he holds by virtue of his office." As reason for
David's arguments in support of his brother Joseph's position, the writer proffered the prize of Joseph as president, and David and Alexander as first and second counselors, sharing in the booty of power and influence.

The letter writer argued that the people of Utah could leave whenever they wished and therefore were not in bondage and because of Brigham Young's enlightened leadership, they had been led into freedom in Utah. Accusing Joseph of being neither a prophet, seer, nor revelator, the author continued, "It may be urged, if Brigham Jr., who by right is the successor of his father, were to take his place, that he is no prophet, but it must be remembered that he legally holds the priesthood and apostleship already, and were he to be ordained to the position of his father the spirit of his office and calling would rest upon him, and qualify him for the duties appertaining thereto." Then, referring to the preaching ability of the Smith sons, the writer noted, "There is not a Mormon Elder that ever attempted to address an audience and make more impression on their minds of the importance of his mission than can any of the sons of Joseph." And after this rather back-handed compliment, the letter noted, "They are no better than the Methodists: they come to preach either for hire or for worldly honor. If for the latter I think it would have been far more honorable for the boys to have adopted another religion rather than to disgrace their father by exposing him and destroying his works." The letter was signed "Not a Josephite," and no other indication of the identity of the writer was given.

An unexpected defender came to David's aid. A Mrs. Harriet F.
Cadwell took issue with the criticism directed toward David and defended his mission to the valley. Her letter of rebuttal assured the reader that she was a member of neither Mormon church, and therefore attempted to speak with some impartiality. Her indignation at Brigham Young became apparent, however, and reveals that David probably attracted a considerable following from such disaffected citizens of Salt Lake City. The woman said that Joseph "has never counseled his followers to gather unto him; never has asked for tithing; never robbed them of their gold and silver; never required the sacrifice of their fair daughters to gratify sensuality. Never, to my certain knowledge, has he caused to be transported over the river of death these whose honest convictions of duty caused them to differ from him in thought or feeling. . . . The despotism which Brigham has inaugurated in this beautiful valley is without a parallel in the world's history."36 A third party watched the exchange with some interest, then picked up a pen to refute the assertion by the first correspondent that Brigham's son by right would assume the presidency. "Our President must be elected under the influences of the Sprit of God and sustained by the esteem of the people."37

David served a unique purpose on these short trips to Utah. His presence crystallized the opinion among both the Mormons and non-Mormons who opposed Brigham Young, that "the Reorganized Church was simply the spasmodic effort of misguided personal ambition, of which Bro. David Smith was but an eloquent echo."38

Because official minutes of the meetings of the Reorganization do not mention David's call to Utah at this time and because no letters
survive wherein David reported as he customarily did, he probably went to Utah on this mission without authorization from Joseph. But he would not do so again, and for a future mission to Utah, David impatiently waited for Joseph's approval.
CHAPTER SIX

The Developing Missionary 1872

To all appearances David handled his problems and responsibilities well in 1871 and 1872. He attempted to help his mother, but wrote to Joseph on March 4, 1871, "I fear she helps all of us more than we do her." He evaluated his work around his home, "Nauvoo is very slow. My pigs grow nicely. My heifer also... I have been to conference at Montrose today. We had a good time. Went over [across the river] in Alex's skiff the 'Vida.'... much good business was done." David worked on a painting for George Blakeslee, a staunch friend who lived in Michigan. "Mother thinks it natural. She is critical, you know. When it is done I shall hunt for a small work." Short of money--he only had $40 on hand--David needed to have another painting commissioned in order to afford to travel to Conference in Plano. "Mother is very lively. Mr. Bidamon tinkers away on his building. Alex seems to be in good spirits."¹ All around him his family busied themselves with their projects. Lewis Bidamon still labored to build a three story solid brick house on the foundation of the unfinished hotel that stood abandoned across the street. While David called it "tinkering" the Major finished the house by the end of the year.² Another letter to Joseph reported, "My health is tolerable, my frame is not over strong, never was, but maturity may develop me more I hope so." The slim young man probably envied the physical substance of the
more stocky Alexander and Joseph.

David's concerns shifted when he assumed family responsibilities, and the inability to see how he could establish his family above the poverty level nagged at him. A cynicism began to develop in his private letters to Joseph. "If wealth were our goal we have taken a false position to get it," he wrote Joseph. "We did not expect acceptance with the world, if we were less in earnest and had less faith in goodness we would take better with the world. But can we be so? We can not, therefore we must walk slow. We must be content with small returns and little progress. We have no policy, we cannot have. I realize your burdens, your anxiety, your trials. Desiring to do great works, we are obliged to divide a dime between sugar and salt; while the battle lingers we write hymns." Beautifully expressing his frustrations at the gap between the reality of preaching to an indifferent people and the dream of spiritual fulfillment, David continued, "With longings to walk in temples and build schools and benefit multitudes, with aspirations of great good, we meet in bars, wear plain clothes, and bear insults. . . . Well, it is better to be noble and not be esteemed so than to be esteemed noble and be just the other thing." And David found the people reluctant to be consistent in their loyalty. "Sometimes they want one to preach, and all but pester him to pieces. They put money in his hand and meet him with smiles. Another time he is forgotten." Then he put down his discouragement and exhorted Joseph, "Let us be still more faithful, Joseph, more earnest, oh! the world is vain, bloodthirsty, avaricious, double-faced. Let us have a pure position, and honest in reality. . . . Lock mankind in their paltry,
faltering, shallow eyes and make them toe the line." A curious sense of superiority emerges here, as if David were not part of mankind. "We have a most dignified and worthy mission."

Worried that the coming spring conference would prove especially taxing to his brother, David counselled him, "Rest your mind as much as possible. . . . If you are fresh and cheerful the same hopeful spirit will pervade." Speaking from experience of many meetings, David observed, "A good cheerful beginning to any entertainment makes a good spirit throughout. Confiscate the women, they are a whining degenerate set. Look at Mother who chores and builds fires and carries on her household affairs like a host, while those of the second generation can't can't can't. Don't let them depend on you too much, they are a shirkful set. . . . Well, I have presumed enough I presume. I have ventilated my ignorance sufficient, but one consolation I have and that is this, the most of men are in the same bad canoe."³

Fighting off both lack of money and less than perfect health, David did attend the April conference at Plano. He was ordained President of the Second Quorum of Elders and assigned to oversee the church work in the Nauvoo area where David was made president of the Olive Leaf Branch, the first organized group in the church, but which often dwindled into inactivity.⁴ "The appointment suits me exactly," he wrote Joseph. "I dreaded a foreign mission at this present time for reasons peculiar. . . . Being president of the branch here I will labor steadily in the vineyard until I can get ready to take the tour you name [apparently through Iowa and Michigan] and anticipate much happiness in the rout."
Further expressing his personal desires, David added, "Although my love of the changing scenes and novel sights of a long tramp would almost tempt me to go, even while wisdom in consideration of a fluctuation state of health would say wait until riper years give their strength." 5

Unless David was concealing a very deep and insupportable private despondency and depression, his letters give no hint of mental instability or uncertainty. He referred several times throughout the year since his prolonged illness in California to a general physical weakness, alluding to his light frame, or his lack of mature growth. David was tall, but he was slight of build, and impatiently waited the coming of strength that he associated with greater physical size. In spite of whatever weakness he sensed or felt, he looked forward to his church work. "The saints of Buffalo Prairie have agreed to grieve the track for Alex and I to attend their two-day meeting in June. . . . We promised to go."

David worked regularly at his easel during the spring. He was commissioned to do a painting for "Oliver Reeves of the river" and at the same time, at Joseph's instigation, he ordered canvas on which to paint his mother. Joseph probably ordered the portrait as much to help David financially as to own the portrait but David wasn't fooled. "I see the kindness underlying your speaking for that picture and only the knowledge that it ought to be painted to preserve her likeness prompted me to send for the canvas." Two paintings of their parents, one of Joseph and one of Emma in their youth, hung on the walls of the Mansion House, but Emma at sixty-seven did not appear the same as the vibrant
young woman of the earlier portrait. In a curious manner, David seemed not to sense that his father too, would have changed in appearance as he aged. "The oil picture we have of her does not represent her, though father doubtless is a perfect picture as far as it goes." David did paint his mother's portrait, a picture with a babe in her arms. David's baby Elbert was probably the model for the child.

Lewis Bidamon was absent from Nauvoo late in June. David wrote to his stepfather, addressing him as "illustrious Juror" in reference to Bidamon's recent election as Justice of the Peace. Breezily, David began, "This is to inform you that your wife and Edwin [Lewis's son by Nancy Abercrombie] are well, and that times are pretty bright in spite of weeds in the grapes and trouble with Mrs. Hodges." This neighbor woman disputed with Bidamon over what she perceived an infringement on her property rights.

A new publication was instituted in the church. David noted, "I have been trying to find time to write . . . but bread, bread, bread, there's the rub." Obligations to earn a little money took a frustrating precedence over his creative impulses. But by July he had found time to compose a treatise, "Written Sermons." "'We do not believe in them,' says the reader of the Herald." David argued that the written sermon constrained the speaker. "When he comes to the hour of reading, the fire, the interest, the force of his intellect and imagination have evaporated long ago, and the presentation of his production is altogether a tame affair." David urged the preacher to be attentive to the audience, to the promptings of inspiration, and to the "state of the air, the time of day, the season and nature of the
day." To illustrate his point, David wrote, "A preacher reading elo-
quently his written sermon, wherein, firstly, secondly, thirdly, &c
each had their appropriate place, had treated fully his 'firstly,'
and 'secondly,' and had just opened grandly upon the 'thirdly,' when
it was evident that there was something wrong about 'thirdly,' for
dwelling upon the word with pompous assurance, 'thirdly,' he began
searching diligently over the desk, and between the leaves of the Bible,
and 'thirdly, my dear hearers,' said he in evident confusion, while,
his 'dear hearers' grew almost as desperate as himself, as spellbound
they almost prayed that he might find the odious 'thirdly,'--and
'thirdly,' groaned he faintly, still searching in despair when an old
lady in the congregation piped up, 'Methinks I see thirdly flee out
the window.'" David inserted a surprise 'fourthly' in his little
sermon--it was to urge the reader to read the written sermons of the
New Testament and the teachings of Joseph Smith, but not to allow them
to be read to them. "If this my written sermon is received, I will
write another one," he promised. 10

In March David had commented, "I have thought over a piece for
the Herald. 'The location of Heaven.' but whether it ever is born or
not remains to be seen." By September, the piece found its way into
the Herald. David had apparently thought a great deal about the issue,
and he presented a rational, if not theological, argument. He pointed
out that the people of his church were "eminently practical," in that
they accepted literal interpretations of Biblical passages whenever
such literal meanings could be presented. He rejected the argument of
some other faiths that "a spirit, having no qualities essential to
matter, needs no space for existence, and can occupy the same space at the same time with another spirit, or thousands of spirits . . . that it can fill an immensity or dwell in an atom, so that all heaven could occupy the space of one square foot." Thus disposing of the "thousand angels on the head of a pin" theory, David further pointed out, "They teach that we shall be around the throne of God . . . and sing praises. . . . that we shall move swiftly from place to place."

Thoughtfully he asked, "If beyond space, how could the relationship of centre and circumference exist. How could we be around?" How does song occur without the vibration of air, he asked. How does motion occur if nothing exists to move? David noted that the whole idea of heaven being a place would be absurd if Jesus had not addressed a Father in Heaven. This obligated the thinker then to determine where that physical place could be. Using Webster's definition of "place of the blessed," David set out to locate heaven. "From the forming of a crystal to the emanation of a thought of the sublimest intellect, all things open in any degree to our views, are governed by laws harmonious and eternal. Matter and its attributes, forces and motions, constitute all things; even so must heaven be, from center to center, inner and inner, greater, more glorious, stupendous, radiant with light, elec-tricity, heat and . . . doubtless countless other powers, principles, and forces unknown to our finite senses." David found the idea of spherical nebula and the repeated spherical pattern he found evident in the universe to be an archetypal pattern. "Heaven is in the center," he concluded, looking at the universe, "[it] is perfected; and must evidently be a great globe beyond our faintest conception in
glory and magnitude. Upon it dwell the great God and his holy, highest, most immediate ministers; from it flows out the silent, stupendous eternal forces that hold together and control the universe." And having found heaven to be in the center of the natural creation he most loved, the world seemed ordered to this eager Aoriul.

But by the middle of November, David found that order was very difficult to maintain, especially when the facets of his life and interest came in conflict. A letter to Joseph began, "I wish to write to you today freely and truly. The hard bitter exterior that I have learned to bear to the world I wish to lay by and talk with out reserve. I have so much to say to you that I scarcely know how to begin, the interests of the Church and private concerns are so mixed up in my confused mind that my ideas shoot in so many directions it is hard to begin." David explained that he was "in the field" near Montrose, Iowa, and that he would preach in a college in the area. A professor Thrasher had asked David to talk about Salt Lake City. "I feel the spirit prompting me to preach," he wrote, and stated that he had left his wife with a supply of meat, flour, and coal—then modified it to explain "meat and coal enough to do all winter, flour not so much, and no debts."

But David was bothered by two serious concerns. He explained the first, "You have given me a mission to western Iowa, well, it is a good mission. But there is one thing I feel to tell you. Every man of business sagacity says to me why are [you] not in Utah? Why is not Alex and especially yourself in Utah? Now is the time, the very best time, why do you not go immediately there? . . . Maybe the repeated
calls from Utah have awakened an interest that I ought not to feel, but I have been compelled as it were against my will to write to you . . . since before leaving home, I have been that distressed with a haunting idea that we were letting the very best time slip by us for a raid on Utah."

Then David faced the second concern directly. It was that Joseph did not consider him well or stable enough to go to Utah. "Then again something says to me, 'He distrusts your stability. You would desire to return too soon,' or again, 'He distrusts your health.'" Quite concerned about his brother's opinion of his strength and ability, David continued, "Well, as to health, I would say that my health is better than usual, in fact, I have worked this last summer like a Trojan, but God knows my health did not cause my return formerly although I desired at first to come. Yet Lizzie's [Alexander's wife] sickness brought us back, for I would have stayed even if I had died there, but of course no man knows as to health." If Joseph had been privately concerned about David's health, this challenge from the younger brother would now force the issue in the open. In a conciliatory manner, David admitted, "I will say, however, that I am somewhat wiser and will not suffer myself to be over worked, over preached, or excited as was done before."

He further argued, "There have been times in my life a voice recommended measures that caution forbade and retreat has ever been my thoughts in regard to them." Here David expressed a source of conflict that undoubtedly was very distressing to someone as committed to doing the correct thing and living by the inspiration of the spirit
as he was. This dilemma between what measures he believed he was
prompted to do in Utah and what measures reason dictated were in excess
of his abilities would be a constant tension to him. But he assured
Joseph, "One thing has been developed greatly in me and that is my
judgement has been strengthened. It has hammered out decision from
days and nights of thought but there I am, half frightened at what I
have planned. . . . Do not misjudge me my Br[other] this is not conceit
but a desire to do the one right thing, the most important step, the
one work that can not be neglected. Life is short and our iron is
hot," David urged Joseph, "shall we strike or withhold? Let us be
united." But one problem remained, a difficult one for both the
brothers to solve. "As to means, I have not got the means to go."
David hoped that a sum that the church Bishop might have could be
augmented with donations from the members.

Then it occurred to David that he may have been usurping
Joseph's place, that perhaps Joseph himself planned a "raid" on Utah.
"If I have struck a wrong vein please tell me and I will subside and be
content with smaller work." Assuring Joseph that his wife and "blessed
boy" were well, and admonishing him to look after their mother, David
grew on his way.16

The fall conference of the church in Plano was only weeks away.
Joseph oscillated on the Utah issue, and the conference minutes noted
that Alexander and David worked in the area of Nauvoo. "They had been
appointed to labor in Utah, but circumstances had prevented their
going."17 This was neither a yea nor a nay to David's request, but
the formal designation for a Utah trip had been done. By the 7th of
November secretary Mark Forscutt signed David's "Certificate of Removal" from the Plano Branch, probably a routine item of business that had been neglected when David assumed the presidency of the Branch at Nauvoo.

At the same time as David wrote the private "raid on Utah" letter, he sent a second letter to Joseph. This one kept up a more joyous front; Joseph published it in the Herald. "I am once more a wanderer, outward bound." David earned a little money with his paintbrush as he preached. Alexander traveled with him as a companion on this journey, but David did not reveal how much of his private thoughts he shared with Alexander. Had he talked quite frankly with Alexander and had Alexander agreed or disagreed with David's argument, he probably would have mentioned it to Joseph. The assumption is that David kept his thoughts somewhat to himself. And for the time being, David acquiesced. "It shall be as you and the Twelve say in regard to Salt Lake City." 19

David returned briefly to Nauvoo; there caught the steamboat Northern Line south to St. Louis. "Packing a valise is a sour subject," he commented, "but then one ought to take leave gracefully and be off, as loitering tires patience and evaporates sentiment." He spoke as one who knew. He had crossed the Mississippi in a skiff the night before the boat left, and noticed that the "cares and vexations of everyday toil drop off ... The judgement is left clear to occupy itself with the better, deeper, and purer questions of life." His spirits up once on board, David watched the feathery willows on the bank, felt his boat catch on the rocks in the rapids and swing around
to back off, and found a motherly old German lady to talk to. David said they chatted as well as they could; he dredging up his childhood German learned from growing up in Nauvoo. They discussed the respective merits of Germany and the United States, criticized the farmsteads lining the river, commented upon Catholicism, and deplored the notions of social dancing. David found the woman well versed in the Bible, and he obviously held his own in the language. At Keokuk they transferred to a larger steamer, the Lake Superior. David called it a floating palace. Freshly painted cabins with landscapes painted on the center door panels greeted the passengers. On board quite a number of people played the piano; a group danced to a violin and piano, and one has the impression that David enjoyed the trip enough to feel a little guilty about it. While he struggled to accept his poverty and the requisite humility demanded by his position, the graceful movement of the dancers as the riverboat ploughed its way downstream caught his attention.

David attended conference in Alton, preached a sermon to a crowd that had magically grown after gaining knowledge that he would speak, and visited the site of the old penitentiary. Inevitably the sight of cells and stone walls stirred some reflections about the wages of sin, but David and his guides left the crumbling structure through a hole in the wall and David rather enjoyed the idea of such a prison break. His letter describing the trip was light-hearted; David loved to travel, even though packing the bag to leave was difficult.

David transferred to the railroad at Alton and traveled to St. Louis with several members of the Alton branch. The car in which he
rode stopped some distance from the shelter of the depot and it was raining. As the arriving passengers stepped out of the train and ran for the station, the alert David caught them in motion. "There was quite a crowd in front of the depot, evidently highly entertained with the various modes of running exhibited. There were elephantine, lumbering, fat, rich men, puffing into port, umbrella and all, threatening to go through at every step--there was also the uncertain wafting, witch-like locomotion of the tall and spare--there was the dainty precise little tat-rat-rat of the elegant and refined, with a suppressed 'ouch' at every mis-step, for we were in mortal danger of slipping off the pavement into the mud or shooting feet foremost into the crowd to bring down a half-dozen on top of us--then there was the downright slap-slap-slap of the broadfooted and ignorant, banging against every one in the way and bringing up square with a thump against the depot wall." By what manner David negotiated the rainy gauntlet he did not say, only that he made it through with character but not dignity. This was probably the first time he had seen St. Louis and it was the largest city he had visited. "It impressed me three ways," he wrote "First . . . however right the gospel is, here was a great power that regarded it a bubble. A great, well dressed, influential power also, that prided itself on being just exactly the realization of perfection, and if brought to notice us at all, . . . would do so through its eye-glass in unmitigated scorn, or with that nonchalant curiosity that it would show over a specimen of fossilized lizard." Intimidated by the apparent sophistication of the town, David observed, "Here were heathen, but who dared speak to them?" He was impressed in the second place by the
great wealth on one side and the haunting poverty on the other, both visible in this city he called Babylon. And he found a third aspect, one suited to his nature that delighted him. "Here were stores of art, pictures of beauty and truth, carvings of delicate design and lesson. Here were enough of pleasant and instructing sights to see, to last one a lifetime, and cultivate his finer, better nature." David and two friends learned of a play that was running in one of the theaters. Of course such frivolity as play-going was frowned upon by the church leaders, but the men decided to go very quietly and discreetly and say nothing about their visit. They deliberately took seats on the balcony where they could see, but not easily be seen.

The play was highly absorbing, and these three members of the audience watched entranced. At the climax, just as the villain was about to plunge a knife into the backs of the hero and heroine, one of David's companions forgot where he was, leaped to his feet, and yelled, "Look behind you! Look behind you!" The lower audience craned their necks about and stared up into the balcony directly at the men who so desired to be inconspicuous.

David noticed a change in the custom of giving names to places. "Once," he wrote, "Steamboats, cities, and towns rejoiced in the application of names selected with some regard to music, gentle liquids, and mellow vowels . . . with just enough consonants to give articulation to the euphonious appellations. Thus, 'Aurora,' 'the Pembina,' . . . But to name a town 'East St. Louis' . . . or 'New Boston,' or 'Brockle-burn-bangumstrad' is as good an argument for total depravity, if not quite as great a piece of cruelty as to call a helpless little innocent
'Habakkuk.' And with precisely such oblivion as he ridiculed, David did not see that his young son would hate being named "Aoril!"

This discourse on names reminded him of the new communal settlement that the church had planned in Iowa. "Lamoni" pleased him for the name of the site of the "Order of Enoch." David visited Shaw's botanical gardens in St. Louis, "I have a faint notion of what paradise will be. Here, within this lovely place, is gathered every species of plant and tree and flower possible. A reward is offered by the rich and eccentric owner for any plant not represented."

Still self-conscious of his country mannerisms among the sophisticated of St. Louis, David observed that "the saints in the city have many opportunities of polishing their manners, and of being rendered refined and at ease in their deportment," but noticed also that the city offered equally more opportunities for vice and corruption. But David believed that the visit there had done much to smooth his own rough edges and add some increased refinements and sensibilities to his demeanor. He thought of Clara and the baby at home, and concluded, "If that friend of mine [Clara] in Nauvoo who shovels the rich coal into the warm fire and that other friend who sits in a nice high chair and pounds the table with a wooden iron spoon, with all the condescension imaginable, were consulted, the verdict would evidently be that it was for my benefit. Thanks, brethren of St. Louis." David wrote this letter from Pleasanton, Iowa, three days after Christmas, 1871. He did not mention whether he had been able to spend the holiday with his family in Nauvoo.

Finding that once again David was in the Montrose area,
Professor Brasher of the Riverside Institute, the college at which David had spoken before, asked David to open the 1872 course of study with a lecture on Salt Lake City. The Mormons in Utah had become favorite lecture subjects across the United States because of the continuing attempts to institute anti-polygamy legislation into Congress. Utah and the peculiarities of the people there had become objects of curiosity as well as contempt, and anyone who had ever visited the territory was regarded as an authority. Brasher capitalized on this interest to draw students to his classes, and used David as his visiting lecturer. Profiting from the halt in his travels, David "plied his brush" and painted a canvas on commission for a church member in Montrose.\

At Fort Madison David held several successful meetings then traveled to Farmington, to String Prairie, back to Farmington, on to Pulaski, and then to Bloomfield. There David rode his first "iron horse" locomotive train; the passage to the west in 1869 was steam powered. Bloomfield was the end of the line. From there he walked, describing, "I took an express train up the railroad, minus rails, myself at once passenger and baggage car, chiefly baggage." He caught a ride with travelers who had a wagon. "I invited them to let me ride, they did so very reluctantly; they were bashful I suspect, their opportunities for riding with distinction were probably few. After finding out that I was not a pedlar, an intimation I repelled with some scorn, their respect for me increased." David spent the night with a family from Virginia and enjoyed their southern hospitality. "They had a Bible, we had religious discourse; they were intellectual, we had
philosophy; they had some of the most elegant silk quilts I have ever seen, and needle-work of real art and beauty. They had a piano, we had music." David remarked lightly that his ability with music "made me more friends than my good looks."

David left the Bloomfield area, finding his ride to the railroad station genuine pleasure. "The carriage was so fine and jaunty, the robes so warm and comfortable." David arrived at Lineville, talked a tavern keeper into reducing the cost of lodging, and woke to find drifting snow six inches deep. He left his baggage with the inn keeper, and began a sixteen mile walk to Ebenezer Robinson's house. "Alas! the miles grew on me.--They were India Rubber miles.--One foot slipped back while the other went forward.--I had to crawl up hill and slide down.--There were fourteen hills in one mile. At last I arrived at a little square house near a factory. It was the house of a good sister, and I staid all night;--I was glad to stop."  

By January 5th he had arrived at Lamoni, Iowa. David traveled with several members of the church, "the ground was frozen and slippery with ice, and presented the smooth appearance of a nutmeg-grater, many times magnified." The rough ground forced the tire off the hind wheel of the wagon in which they rode. "This cheerful incident" put them behind a day, but they arrived at Lamoni where the Order of Enoch, an attempt at communal living, had purchased their land. David described the area in positive terms, "good soil, of open, level, pleasantly inviting appearance," even in winter. From Lamoni David and two companions went to Allevenville, Missouri. When the sleigh in which they were riding broke, they stopped at a farmhouse to repair it, giving
David an opportunity to make a social commentary, "The house was built of logs; windows, minus sash or glass; doors open to the wintry wind and snow. The fireplace was large, but so was the chimney flue. The wind made one rush in at the door, and another up the flue. The hearth was six inches below the surface of the earth, and the surface of the earth covered everything in the house, including the poor woman and the frost-bitten little girl. I afterwards learned that the parties were well-off; the man of the house was a cattle dealer and had riches."

At Allenville David relished an encounter with the local Baptist congregation. David preached a sermon on the "spirit of man" which prompted the Baptist rejoinder that the visitors were now routed, having "hung out their doctrine on the fence." The following meeting found the hall filled to overflowing when "judgement" was the subject. David reported with some relish, "After the meeting, Baptist and Methodist were silent; very quiet were they."

But David was uneasy with a situation where the feelings of the people ran so high, and he soon left the area to travel to western Iowa.

At Manti, Iowa, he found time to write letters to both his mother and Joseph. "I have not much time to write you," he told his mother, "only to state my love and respect to you is always and forever the same." He assured her that he was "well and doing well... I am very happy in the good work and well clothed, fed, and cared for." He reported seeing some of her acquaintances, "They remember you in much kindness. I told you they remember the roses and forget the thorns."

He noted that, "Some of them by their uncanny tricks have disgraced themselves, and brought shame upon themselves even to leaving
the country in deep disgrace." David probably alluded to the practice of polygamy, for he continued, "It is becoming well known that the church is one of integrity and these false brethren may disgrace themselves and not us for they can not do so."

David had a young heifer in Nauvoo that he prized highly. Probably only David would have named a calf Zenia, but the animal had apparently caused some mischief about the home place. David enclosed five dollars to reimburse his mother for feed, but commented, "Now something whispers to me that you will not wish to [accept it] but I had rather you would." The money was dearly earned, and Emma probably knew it. "If you will not accept this money, Mother, See how much I owe Alex and pay him. But I had much rather you would keep it and use it on the precious little heifer's account . . . I am proud to think of the fact that I redeem my promise to send you something for your trouble with Zenia." David ended the letter urging his mother, "Please kiss the dear boy for me, Mother, and his worthy little Ma."27 The letter indicated much about David's attempts to be fair and financially responsible to his family in the re-payment of debts.

From the same place and at about the same time, David wrote a letter to Joseph that was extraordinarily compassionate in the philosophy it contained and the support it offered. David's affection for his brother is most evident. Referring to a letter Joseph had written to him before Christmas "sometimes previous to the annual of Santa Clause," in which Joseph had seemed discouraged, David answered that he was grieved to think him so burdened. "The storm that causes a ship in the sheltering harbor to feel its weight falls doubly severe upon
one stationed to guard a rocky headland against opposing currents in a position—I am not going to flatter now—of toil and perplexity, uncertainty, and vexation your daily portion. ... Now this is manifestly not for print [in the Herald] and if I could only pull aside every vail of formal misunderstanding or coldness, I would gladly pull in the vine and oil of encouragement upon your storm-beaten brow and grief-laden heart."

Knowing the problems that Joseph faced, David continued, "I would say courage and trust and labor, my brother. Many victories have been ours, very many achievements glorious in nature and result have been yours and mine through Christ. Much of energy, of self-denial, and control, much of refinement, much independence and strength not naturally ours have we gained." David pointed out another aspect, "And one thing more I would mention, whereas many, through the bitterness of trial that is needful to render them more pure, only gather a stoical callousness, and inward inability ever to be sincere true, or trusting, or happy again, we thank God that we are more tender inwardly, more pure and kind in heart. If contact with cruel minds has caused us to wear a mask for common, yet the sincerity is still within, refined and pure for its discernment. Men and things have sunk in our estimation by familiarity with both, but God and Christ and the higher paths of the gospel, the broad deep truths his from superficial observation, have risen in proportion to our withdrawal from the eyes of the common rabble." While David's eagerness to offer support to Joseph is evident, but so too is his sense of superiority and distance from his fellow man. But he found strength in the adversity that he met.
"So that out of doubt, uncertainty, dependence, fear, bitterness, misappreciation, and betrayal, we are determined to hew strength, purity, sagacity, forethought, combativeness (for me), independence self-respect, true nobility. Such is the work we are engaged in, my Brother. Look where we will there are none engaged in a brighter or better, even though it be half or wholly hidden. The fact that pleased me was that you confided your trials to me. God bless you with help and comfort always."

Then David referred again to the concern he had felt for some time. He had garnered thirty dollars, some of it contributions which the donors wished to be credited for tithing, but used for a mission to the west. "The door is about open for my departure for the salt-land . . . If it is fully opened I shall go with W. W. Gaylord . . . Br. Wm. will probably raise the remainder at Council Bluffes." David intended to return the fund to the donors if the long anticipated journey did not materialize. "But in all probability," he informed Joseph, "I shall be in Utah very soon, as you say go on to victory . . . I shall probably go to Utah shortly."

Then David addressed two nagging problems he carried with him. One was a sense that he would somehow be forced to sacrifice more than he wanted in the building up of the church. He expressed it, "Men are unkind habitualy as long as the soldier stands in the gap and despite toil, pain, privation, beats back the enemy. [But] he is applauded if he fall perforce of shere exhaustion. . . . I despise the approval or disapproval of the course multitude . . . but if I knew that victory or failure would alike land me in the arms and hearts of brethren
[that is, men of his own faith] then I could fight the world and the
devil with greater strength." And the second nagging worry was that
the sacrifice exacted from him would come from a physical weakness.
When he referred to failure that would bring him to the arms of friends,
he could not conceive that failure could come to him from lack of
character, or desire to do the work, or succumbing to a worldly vice or
temptation, for he believed himself equal to dealing with such. "I
refer, of course, to failure through lack of vitality that I cannot
remedy, or the shafts of sickness that I am peculiarly vulnerable [to],
or over exertion that is sometimes thrust upon me despite my better
pleadings." 28

But the plans for Utah were again thwarted. David wrote again
to explain that "Br. Wm. Gaylord ran afoul of Br. W. W. Blair, who
advised him to go on [probably to Utah] without me, as he [Blair]
desired me to remain until after the 20th of April. David explained
his disappointment, "So W. Gaylord went on without me and now the
spirit of go has gone back on me again." Dutifully, David promised,
"I shall of course labor in western Iowa until after advice from you,
labor in faith and as if for all summer." And he promised to waive
the question of going to Utah until he heard "from headquarters."

Joseph had apparently written to David and asked if he himself
should visit Utah. David sorted out the ramifications of the visit in
his answer. "In regard to your going, brother, I do not know how to
advise you. I feel badly to have you leave the head of affairs in the
states, and I feel worse about your facing the thousand and one
embarrassments and dilicate possitions and responsibilities such a move
would incur. Yet I realize also the sending of the king to rise . . . into the battle." Then, his respect and concern for Joseph evident, and his opinion of Utah obvious, David concluded, "It certainly looks like giving more dignity to Utah than it deserves."

On the positive side, David pointed out that Joseph's influence was good for the people there, that Joseph needed a rest and a change, and that some good would inevitably come from the visit, "overestimated by many" in their hopes that Joseph could alter the course of Utah Mormonism. "Ask of God," David advised, and deferred resolution of the issue to a higher authority.

Coincidental with his concern about Joseph was his concern about Clara. It was difficult to be as poor as David was and be able to send something to Clara. David referred to the uncertainty of the Utah decision several times in the letter, "I dislike hanging on a thread. I find that uncertainty is the common lot of mankind, and a philosopher who can bear it well has learned many lessons. . . . I came over here [to Homa-ah, Nebraska, as David put it] . . . on a play day to rest from preaching and full dispepsia, but alas and alack, ran into a trap and am to preach tomorrow night. . . . Well, keep a good heart. We have our health, our wives, our boys, you know those famous boys, bless the dears. . . . I make friends of the Brethren of my own tastes and so escape many temptations." 29

Two weeks later, still in Omaha, and in a different mood, David wrote the Herald and chided the editor gently for delaying the publication of his letters. "You are a great one! We send you a friendly note to our four-hundred and one dear friends written amid the roaring
winds of autumn, and it comes to their eyes upon the balmy breath of spring? Do you really think it interesting to learn about the middle of May, that the Mississippi is just frozen over?" 30

Throughout all his travels, David kept in mind that he waited for a call to Utah. When it did not come he returned to Sandwich, to the home of his wife's family in Illinois where Clara was temporarily staying. Writing to a friend he explained, "I am at home; my trip west was delayed so long that I determined to come home on a short visit before departing for the great west."

This letter reveals much about David's attitude toward his friends and family. "Your letter is splendid; full of good cheer and kind words, full of peace, and was worth living to receive. . . . What a grand letter you have written me, almost like being with you, oh! if ever I do see you again I will improve my time you better believe. It seems as the sun shone always when I write to you. Your presence and impress has not left me yet, it seems that ages before we had met and that in that realm to come where in the pure and beautiful will meet in eternal and without shadow, we shall in reality 'know each other there.' The sky is blue, crossed by lines of small white clouds in a row like white sheep in a flock. The fresh green verdure of hill and trees rest the winter weary eyes and the unfolding upspringing of love in the bosom warms the heart to bounding life. Clara is well pleased with your picture and recognizes one whom she could like readily and without fear." Of his wife and child the proud father commented, "I find my Clara and Elbert well and in the best of spirits. Elbert especially [is] the grandest michief in all creation. I could not tell you half
his tricks. . . . How shall I tell you of Elbert's blue eyes, tiny red lips, and fearless high forehead?" 31

Sandwich was close enough to Plano that David and Joseph were able to confer about the business of the church. Joseph placed him in the informal position of acting as his counselor. "Bro. David H. Smith and myself agree that it would evidently be unnecessary for you to come east and then quickly return to California," Joseph wrote to C. W. Wandell in California. 32 On June 5 from Sandwich David wrote to "Gentle Mother Mine" to say, "You, of course, by this, know that I am well and where I am, by my letter to Alexander. Clara is in good health also." David told Emma that the money for the mission to the west was accumulating, Joseph's family were well, and the church affairs progressing. He promised her that if it were possible he would come by and "see how every thing progresses down hill at my dear old home." David explained Clara's decision to live at Sandwich, "Clara has received many presents while here, and we have more with less anxiety than while at home. She receives more attention, has more society, though Lizzie [Alexander's wife] and you and Br. Revel's people were good society as she could ask." Wistfully, David added, "Yet, if providence so ordered it, I would like a home of my own." David found some peace in Sandwich. "I am at rest on most mundane subjects." But the jewel of the letter was David's comments about his little son. "Elbert is growing nicely and is, I tell you, a remarkably fine boy. Mischievous as he can hold together, trotting about all day into all sorts of trouble, laughing and squealing, but very seldom crying. A very sunbeam, a delight all the time." 33
But the west drew David like a fateful magnet, and the delights of the child could not hold him at home.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Return to Utah 1872

Pressured by David, and anxious to make strides among the Utah Mormons himself, Joseph Smith made a decision he later bitterly regretted. He called David to a mission in Utah at the spring conference in St. Louis in April, 1872. Funds for the trip came for the most part from the generosity of the saints in and around Sandwich, Illinois. David left his wife and the son of which he was so proud in Sandwich on June 24th, and went to Nauvoo for two days. He visited with Emma, and made a pastoral visit to the church members there where Alexander had become the leader in David's absence. David traveled to Burlington, then to Council Bluffs, reporting that at the Bluffs he spent some time "getting a good ready" for the western trip.

On the second of July he crossed the Missouri accompanied by his friend Charles Jensen. With lunch basket and valise in hand, he took the ferry from Council Bluffs to Omaha, where he boarded the train. A note of melancholy pervaded his departure, "When I bid Br. C. J. Jensen good bye, I felt as if the desert and strangers were before me." Later he commented about this leavetaking, "a strange wierd sunset filled me with conjecture in regard to the termination of the mission," almost as if he had a premonition that this last visit he would make to Utah would end in tragedy. David literally rode into the sunset from Omaha, for he reported, "It blazed up in a wonderful golden display of

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light, a bright promise of good."²

David's letters to the Herald reporting on this missionary trip differ markedly from the ones he sent in earlier. With gusto he had reported the names of the people whom he met and described the progress of the meetings. The letters from Utah report mostly about the scenery and the natural features that surrounded him, almost as if he could deal effectively with such natural phenomenon, but avoided mention of the controversy growing in his own mind as he learned more about the traditions of his father as they were promulgated by the western church. From this time, July, 1872, David's letters written in private deal with his attempt to solve the complexities which plural marriage and the Utah church presented to him; his public letters reported on such things as prairie dog cities, antelope, and mountains.

And David wrote beautifully about these things. He traveled west in the observation car as much of the time as he could, and wrote home, "The expression of the plains is exactly that of the sea; [David had seen the Pacific Ocean on his mission to California in 1869-1870] vastness, what Ruskin calls infinity, and freedom. The mind seems to expand while gazing upon them; thoughts of eternity, of everlasting life swell the heart with grateful praise. This, sometimes, in looking upon the far stretches reaching away to the horizon is impressed so keenly on the mind as to be almost painful; accompanied, as it is, by a sense of loneliness."

David enjoyed the people who traveled west in the observation car. "It was delightful; laughing, talking and singing, we flew along over the high trestle work and through the dark tunnels." Arriving at
length at Ogden, David met a reporter for the Elizabeth (New Jersey) Herald. As the two men rode south from Ogden to Salt Lake City on the Mormon owned spur line that connected the two towns, David attempted to keep his identity secret, but with some small delight reported, "It was of no avail; many recognized me, and came and spoke to me, and on alighting at the depot I had considerable difficulty in getting away from their urgent hospitality." David walked to his lodging at William Browning's absorbed in an animated conversation over the relative merits of the two churches with a "Brighamite elder" who carried his valise. David found Judge A. D. Boren waiting for him. Boren had traveled from San Bernardino to work in the mission with David. It was the fourth of July. The day after David's arrival, they opened the Utah mission.3

Early in his life, in the spring, 1862, David wrote a scrap of poetry in a small journal. In it he bid "Farewell to Nauvoo" to roam alone in the "dark wilderness." Part of that wilderness seemed to be personified by Brigham Young, for he noted,

And Brigham has come  
How I hate his dread power  
The Salt-land for my home will not do  

Brigham Young had also been pondering David's role throughout the years, and had done so from before David's birth when Joseph Smith had confided to Brigham Young his hopes for this unborn child. In a speech Brigham Young made in Salt Lake City on October 7, 1866, he referred to a conversation with Joseph Smith in 1844. He spoke to a group in the Bowery at the time Alexander Smith had made his first visit to Utah. Attempting to counter the interest Alexander had drawn, Brigham Young attacked Emma first and publicly called her "one of the
damndest liars I know of on this earth." But he quickly turned to the subject of Emma's youngest son:

"Young David Smith seems to be the pet of the company, he is heart and hand with his brother Joseph, and with a hundred others who are apostates from the true faith of the gospel, and who were one with the mob who persecuted and slew the Prophet. When Joseph the Prophet was killed his wife Emma was pregnant. Joseph said previous to his death, 'She shall have a son, and his name shall be called David, and unto him the Lord will look.' I am looking for the time when the Lord will speak to David, but let him pursuc the course he is now pursuing, and he will never preside over the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in time or in eternity. He has got to repent of his sins, and turn away from his iniquity, to cease to do evil, and learn to do well, embrace the Gospel of life and salvation, and be an obedient son of God, or he never can walk up to possess his right. It would be his right to preside over this church, if he would only walk in the path of duty. I hope and pray that he and the whole family will repent, and be a holy family.

David, at the time, was quite happily writing poetry in Nauvoo. Then, conscious that he may have introduced an idea whose consequences he could not tolerate, Brigham further admonished his people, "Now, you old Mormons, stop your talking about Young Joseph, and about David going to preside over the Church by and by! I wish he was prepared for it, would repent of his sins, and come in the door, and be one of us, and walk up to the Twelve and the First Presidency, saying, I am one with you, and I am your servant." These sentiments were echoed and re-echoed around Utah. John Hawley, later a convert to the Reorganized church, wrote that since Joseph was not going to do anything for the Utah church, "Our hopes was David the child of promis would eventialy se the eror of his ways and yet come to the Church." As early as 1856 Heber C. Kimball told a congregation of Mormons assembled in the Bowery in Salt Lake City that "At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems
to be perfectly calm with them, but by and by God will wake them up, and they will roar like the thunder of Mount Sinai!" 7 At this early date, Joseph had not yet assumed the presidency of the Reorganized church. When Alexander and David approached Utah then in 1866, the "roaring thunder" inviting them to join the Reorganization was not what the Mormons in Utah wanted to hear from Joseph's boys. After Joseph became president of the Reorganization the attention shifted to David. The Herald reported in 1861 that "Brigham now repudiates the truths he has uttered concerning Joseph, and says, 'David is the man to lead this church.'" Angry at the presumption shown by Utah in expecting Joseph and David to lead a polygamous church, the Herald continued, "Neither Joseph nor David has any right to lead that church, because God never gave, and therefore never will give authority to any man to preside over that church." 8 The refrain was again repeated. Jason Briggs quoted Brigham Young, "There was a son born in November 18 in 1844, and . . . Joseph told me that David would lead this church, and others can testify to this." 9 Briggs was probably quoting the following remarks of Brigham Young given in the Bowery, on October 7, 1863. "Long before his death Joseph said to me, 'I shall have a son born to me and his name shall be called David; and on him in some future time, will rest the responsibility that now rests on me. . . . While the sun shines, the water runs, the grass grows, and earth remains, young Joseph Smith will never be the leader of the Latter Day Saints! But if the one that Joseph the prophet predicted, should step forward to become the leader of this Church, he will come to us like a little child." 10 In refuting Joseph's claim, Brigham did not deny David's. "But David,
who was born after the death of his father, I still look for the day to come when the Lord will touch his eyes."

This prevailing idea that David would lead the Utah church prompted an angry letter from E. L. Kelley in 1875, two years after David had left. Kelley published his letter in the *Messenger*, a periodical published by the Reorganized church. In it, he succinctly outlined the objections that the Reorganized church had to such talk that David would lead the other group. "The idea has obtained, that if David would come and assume the leadership, that his very touch would sanctify and Celestialize sin and abomination. That what is now manifestly wicked and ungodly, would become purity and holiness by the magical touch of one of Joseph's sons. Vain, delusive hope!" Kelley argued that the institutions established by the Utah church would have to rest on their own merits without looking for one of the sons of Joseph to legitimize them. "The people should look at the principles upon which the great organization rests, as to whether they are true or false, rather than for some meritorious leader to come, whose touch will imbue it with a heavenly charm and give it permanency and strength."

Kelley decried the treatment the Utah church gave David in calling him a "brute and his immortal mother the 'd--dest liear that lives.'" Kelley continued, "Notwithstanding all this, the hopeful wail sent up by the Utonians, is that David will come and take the lead. Mount the old corrupt system, and endeavor to keep it off the shoals and breakers, or from falling to pieces with its own corrupt weight." To the people in the Utah church he charged, "Your cherished hope lies
in making one of Joseph's sons a transgressor. . . . You desire to sacrifice the Smiths for the glory of the Youngs." Kelley noted that the people of Utah sanctioned the right of Joseph's sons to a leadership position, but refused to follow that leadership, requiring rather that the sons of Joseph come to Utah to be led rather than lead. The issue was essentially without substance for the invitation to lead the Utah church was never extended, nor would either David or Joseph give serious consideration to doing it.

Undoubtedly quite unaware of the implications of the leadership controversy that divided the two Mormon churches in their attitudes and actions regarding him, David Smith, age twenty-seven, walked jauntily through the streets of Salt Lake City on July 5, 1872, vociferously arguing the fine points of the gospel with the stranger who carried his baggage.

David and Judge Boren soon discovered that the facilities of the Liberal Institute were again open to them. David reported the meetings were crowded "to the utmost capacity. The excitement is very intense." The newspapers reported on the controversy, and some persons in the city spoke up publicly. "We receive the support of many noble minded, not of our ranks, and the sympathy of all opposed to the tyrannical rule here; besides, the secret sympathy of many in the ranks of the polygamists."

"We aim our arrows," David wrote, "at polygamy, secret penal oaths, and wicked convenants for binding the people under penalty of death. . . . We do not condscent to personality, nor narrow minded abuse, however, they are aimed at us by the opposite power." John Smith remained congenial to David in spite of the increasing polari-
zation of the valley, and David also enjoyed his cousin Samuel. But he wrote to Joseph about their cousin Joseph F. Smith, the son of their Uncle Hyrum Smith and Mary Fielding, "Joseph F is—well, he is uncongenial to me. I retain too vivid a recollection of his abuses to Alexander to mingle freely with his spirit. . . . As for George A. [Smith] his false and slanderous assertions in regard to yourself are too much for my charity. He called you in public a drunkard, a horse-racer, a gambler, and a lawyer. I shall keep clear of him as I fear the results of an interview with him. He is much despised here."

An argument developed between the men from the Reorganized church and the Utah Mormons over whether or not George A. Smith had invited the young Joseph Smith to come west with them. In a public debate, Judge Boren asserted that George A. had urged Joseph to come and take the position of president of the church in Utah. George A. and Joseph F. Smith denied the statement in a letter to David. On July 23, David wrote Joseph, "It is unpleasant, but just cudgel your brain once more and tell the judge by way of me how it was. Did He, or any brighamite ever ask, invite, or acknowledge that it was your place, to you [to] come here and preside?" Joseph's answer to David on this issue is unknown, but George A. Smith had indeed written a letter to Joseph inviting him to come west, but the letter did not offer the presidency to him. On March 13, 1849, George A. Smith had written from Kanesville, Iowa, to the then sixteen-year-old Joseph Smith that he intended to move with his family to the Utah valley in the summer of 1849. "I should be happy if you could find it convenient to accompany me," he wrote. "One great work accomplished by your father
was the building up of the Church . . . About five thousand of that body are already congregating in the Mountains who would be much pleased to enjoy your company. . . . If you cannot go on to the valley with me, I should be very much pleased to receive a visit from you."16

In 1854 George A. Smith and John L. Smith together wrote to Joseph, "The people here are universally endeavoring with all their might . . . to carry out all the instructions councils and plans given them by your Father. . . . Therefore we say Come over & help us, all your Father's friends would be glad to see you in our midst & none more than the Presidency."17 And from Council Bluffs, on April 3, 1860, just two or three days before Joseph was scheduled to assume the presidency of the Reorganization at Plano, John Smith urgently wrote Joseph that he had talked to some of the people who encouraged the move Joseph was about to take. "It is all a speculation and they do not a d----for you only to make a tool of you to carry out there schemes that they may get gain and I hope you will not take a step in the matter without fully considering the importance of such step. . . . I wish you would come over here everybody would like to see you very much."18

As in most arguments of this type, both parties were right. George A. had invited Joseph to the west, hinting that he would have a place in the affections of the people, but he did not offer the presidency to a sixteen-year-old boy. Other correspondence between George A. Smith and Joseph Smith III dealing with the presidency offer has not come to light, but they continued to correspond over the years.

Only four days after writing this letter to Joseph, David wrote another letter addressed to "Bro. Sherman" that revealed the depth of a
second controversy, that of polygamy. David found himself in a most
difficult position in regard to the issue. He could not discuss his
questions and doubts with his brother Joseph, for Joseph had taken an
intractable posture regarding the issue.

When Joseph was a young man of twenty-three he had written to a
childhood friend, Emma Knight, that "The Mormons of Salt Lake City are
not the Mormons of my father's faith." He explained that "they teach
doctrines that are bound to carry those believing and practicing them
to eventual destruction." The doctrine which Joseph opposed in
particular was plural marriage, and he had thought about the issue and
his father's place in it. By 1862, two years after assuming the presi-
dency of the Reorganization, Charles Derry and Joseph discussed the
issue in Nauvoo. Derry, who traveled about as a missionary for the
fledgling church, was apparently concerned over what his response
should be to charges connecting the founder of Mormonism with plural
marriage. He reported that Joseph answered his query, "Br. Derry, I
will tell you. I was but about twelve years old when my father was
killed, and I am not supposed to know all the privacies of my father's
family; but I do know there were other females in the family besides
my mother. I knew them while they lived under my father's roof, and
for two years after, and I do know they never bore children. All the
world knows my father was a proper man, and if these women had been
his wives, or if he had so used them, they would have borne children as
well as my mother." 21

Thus the line of reasoning and the determination was set. The
alleged proof that Joseph Smith did not father children with his other
wives became a standard argument of the Reorganized church. William E. McLellin, a former apostle in the church who was closely associated with Joseph's father, had written to him shortly after his acceptance speech at Amboy in 1861. With some authority McLellin had then urged Joseph to "go to your own dear mother, she can tell You that he [Joseph Smith] believed in Polygamy and practiced it long before his violent death! That he delivered a revelation sanctioning, regulating, and establishing it. . . . Take not your own dear Father for a pattern in your religious career."22 McLellin's long and detailed letter must have been disturbing to Joseph, but Joseph refused to look at plural marriage as a possible religious tenet and chose instead to regard it in the same class as fornication or adultery. Therefore, he himself would suffer in reputation if polygamy should remain attached to the Smith name. "The prestige of my father's name belongs to me; and it is now assured to me; hence it could not be wrested from me," Joseph wrote to his uncle, William Smith. "My personal influence at home and abroad is good."23 Again, Joseph wrote to his uncle William, "I have long been engaged in removing from father's memory and from the early church, the stigma and blame thrown upon him because of polygamy; . . . if you are the wise man I think you to be you will fail [to] remember anything refuting the lofty standard of character at which we esteem those good men."24 Joseph went further. Again to William Smith, who had had plural wives himself, Joseph asked, "Now, if you will make a statement in writing before a magistrate in respect to the fact that at no time in father's lifetime. . . . was there a revelation . . . sanctioning spiritual wifery, plural marriage, or polygamy . . . if such
is truth I will greatly prize it." 25 William obliged. 26

George A. Smith wrote to Joseph in 1869 detailing his father's participation in plural marriage, and listing seven women who had been married to him in addition to his mother, Emma. "The inauguration of these principles were a severe trial to your mother. At times she received and resolved to act upon the Same. She gave your father four wives with her own hands; this intelligence I had from your father's mouth." 27

David found himself caught between his brother who refused to consider evidence that their father had instituted plural marriage and his mother to whom he could not speak of the subject because of the sensitive nature of the subject, and his growing personal conviction that his father had indeed instituted and participated in the practice. This conviction came from one mission and two previous brief visits to Utah and his friendship with men who matter-of-factly referred to his father's participation in the practice. David formed a strong friendship with Amasa Lyman in Salt Lake City. Lyman had married Eliza Partridge as a plural wife. Emma Smith had given her husband two pairs of sisters as plural wives in 1843: Eliza Partridge, and her sister Emily, and Sarah and Maria Lawrence. While the Partridge sisters' relationship with Emma was sometimes difficult because of her profound opposition to plural marriage, still they regarded Emma and her sons with respect. David's appearance in Salt Lake City, in Amasa Lyman's home, certainly must have been of great interest to the family, and in the course of time, Lyman undoubtedly found occasion to tell David that his father had been married to Eliza.
Amasa Mason Lyman had joined the Mormon church in 1832 and subsequently served it during fifteen missions, and as counselor to Joseph Smith, and apostle to Brigham Young. Lyman concluded through his long association with the church that truth should be pursued above all else. Eventually that pursuit led him to embrace spiritualism, free thought liberalism, and to align himself with critics of Brigham Young's policies in the Great Basin. Brigham Young and the first presidency dropped him from the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles early in May, 1867, for his spiritualist activities, and for almost two years he retreated from church activity. By August 1869, Lyman became acquainted with men such as William S. Godbe, Elias Harrison, and Edward Tullidge who opposed Brigham Young's policies and who proposed beginning a new church called the New Movement or the Church of Zion. When David arrived in Utah for the first time in 1869, Amasa Lyman was just beginning to become excited about the new opposition movement; such excitement and support of the issues led to his excommunication on May 12, 1870.28

David and Alexander Smith had greeted Amasa Lyman as a valuable aid in their opposition to the Utah church, and Lyman viewed the Smith sons in the same light. Both parties were willing to cooperate with each other in their mutual goal of bringing down Brighamism, and though they were strange bed-fellows, they adapted to each other's interests. David encouraged Lyman to communicate with Joseph in Plano, even though the conservative Joseph found Amasa Lyman's ideas too liberal. "Continue to write to Amasa Leyman," David had urged from Utah in 1870, indicating that he gave credence to Lyman's ideas and position.
Probably urged by Amasa Lyman, and given names and information by him, David began to seek out his father's former wives and interview them, but he reported none of this activity to his mother or to his brothers. Judge D. H. Morris reported that he interviewed Joseph Smith's plural wife Lucy Walker in 1879. "During the conversation I had with Lucy Kimball . . . she told me that David Smith, the youngest son of Joseph Smith by his wife Emma, came to Utah for the purpose of inquiring as to the rumor of his father being a polygamist and he visited her at Provo and asked her the question direct if she was a plural wife of his father, Joseph Smith the prophet. She told him she was and gave him all the details pertaining to the marriage as well as the names and addresses of the man who married her and the two witnesses, all of whom were living in Salt Lake City at that time. She told me that these people afterwards told her that David Smith visited each of them and they confirmed [her] statement."29 Reason argues that since he was careful enough to seek out each lead given him by Lucy Walker, he also approached the wives of his father who were in and around Salt Lake City itself. Only six months earlier, David had written his mother that some of the old acquaintances they had known had "brought shame upon themselves," but that the headway made by the Reorganized church had given them a reputation for integrity. "Thank God there is no such disgrace attached to our family," he wrote, confident that others' vices had never touched them. But he was forced by the situation to look again at the evidence.30 Sadly, now both David and his mother carried their private burdens of knowledge about the establishment of plural marriage, but neither could bring themselves to broach the
painful subject with the other.

On July 27th, from Salt Lake City, David answered a query from a friend named Sherman, who apparently lived in Pontiac, Michigan. The letter began, "We are making grand headway here in this city against the evils here. I hope the day will come when they will be done away."

Abruptly changing to the subject of polygamy, he continued,

It is an unpleasant subject to me. If I knew in regard to the subject I would tell you the truth. You, I think, know well enough to know I never would deceive you in anything, cost what tears it would. I would tell you if I thought my brother was a deceiver, I would save you from deception. . . . God forgive me if I am wrong--how can I tell you? If I did not love you, I could not. I believe there was something wrong. I don't know it, but I believe it, the testimony is too great for me to deny. Now you may give up everything if you must and cease to regard me as your friend, but I never did deceive you and never will. If my father sinned I can not help it. The truth to me is the same; he must suffer for his sin. I do not know that he did, and if I had not received such convincing testimony of the gospel my faith might fail, but it does not, even though he did sin. . . . I hope you will burn up this letter and not let it shock your faith. If I could tell you otherwise, I would. Oh! how gladly. If neglecting to answer the question would be right, I would do that. . . . Trust me, Sherman, to tell you the truth, hard or soft--be my dear friend still and please write me a long and kind letter to hold me up. I wish you were here to administer to me. The excitement is great--Brighamism is on the decline the decline, while the Reorganization is triumphant.

Still preoccupied with the problem after the letter was signed, David turned it over and added a postscript. "When I was with you before, I did not know as much as I do now in regard to my father's life. Even if he did wrong, he repented and told the saints that polygamy was a false and wicked doctrine." Then, David attempted to relieve some of the blame resting on his father by making the women also responsible. "It seems natural for women to love good men, and they most always sin in that line. If my experience is anything, this is true. But the
gifts of the gospel prove it [the gospel] true, even if he did miss it in one respect, though God has kept me so far, from that sin, still I know men are liable the best." Even in attempting to put polygamy off onto his view of human nature, David was forced to admit that his father's participation in it could not be altogether the result of the attraction of women. Joseph Smith, being a man, was "liable the best." 31

The problem nagged and persisted. "I have prayed and suffered, and can suffer no longer and so tell you what I think the truth is," David confided to Sherman.

But unknown to him, and in an ironic coincidence of time, in the same month that David wrote to Sherman, William E. McLellen wrote a second letter to Joseph on the same subject. McLellen had been a member of the first council of Twelve Apostles organized in Kirtland, Ohio, but had left the church in 1836. He associated with various factions of the church while he practiced medicine in Independence, Missouri. 32 Similar to the letter to Joseph written in 1861, eleven years later another letter arrived. "Now Joseph I will relate to you some history, and refer you to your own dear mother for the truth." 33 McLellen then described for Joseph how his father had taken plural wives in Kirtland. Unknowingly, Emma Smith herself had established the veracity of the man. In 1867 she wrote Joseph, "I hope that Wm. E. McLellin will unearth his long buried telents and get them into circulation before it is ever-lastingly too late ... for he certainly is a talented man." 34 Joseph apparently never mentioned the McLellen letters to his mother, nor did the brothers broach the subject themselves. Thus a third member of the
family struggled with the issue of plural marriage in the summer of 1872. Joseph became adamant in his resolution never to acquiesce that his father may have instituted plural marriage; David concluded otherwise.

But all the while David maintained his missionary efforts though the fires that fueled his accusations directed toward the Utah church may have been weaker in his speeches. To the Herald he wrote, "When I was here in this valley before, I could not separate the spirit of the people, their doctrine, and faith, from the aspect of the country; now I have succeeded in doing so." David accepted evidences that "the same merciful providence presides over the natural economy of this territory that does over the other portions of our favored land." Unable to report the full extent of his activities, David lunged for safety in a travelogue. In the process he produced a description of irrigation that was beautiful literature in itself. "In our country the clouds gather over the level plains and discharge their moisture, leaving the husbandmen the toil of seeding the land and killing the weeds; here, the long summer months are without rain almost, yet the high mountain lands and crags are loaded with snow that all the summer melts and descends in cold crystal streams to refresh the fields below. These streams are turned in upon the land at the will of the tiller of the soil." David continued on, pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of this method of watering the land.35

On August 1, 1872, David and Judge Boren left Salt Lake to go north to Malad, Idaho. It always irked David to travel on "Br. Brigham's Railway" but the spur line was the most efficient way to
travel north. He and Boren stopped to swim in the Great Salt Lake, "We could float and swim with remarkable ease, the only difficulty being the inclination of one's feet to fly out of water, and his head to fly under; in that case the waters are bitter and salt as grief." David came out of the lake to find his body coated with salt crystals that had to be removed by fresh water. "I think I have hit the key of the melody of this strange land; I appreciate and enjoy its primeval cadence, hold communion with its talking streams; appreciate the silent, dry expanse of its hoary sage plains; but enjoy myself most in watching the decline of day across its mountain heights. . . . I look up at their lonely, inaccessible places, sacred to silence and solitude, and think the strangest, old wierd thoughts."36 They stopped in Corinne after preaching in Ogden. David and Boren were welcomed in Malad, and David reported picnics, and outings in the mountains, but the branch at Malad was torn by dissension which David did not discuss in his cheery letter to the editor.37

David and his companion arrived to find the branch at Malad divided among themselves and at odds with the local members of the Utah church. When the Josephites grew to be more numerous, they allied themselves with the local gentiles, and the area literally split into two geographical camps. The Josephites and Gentiles lived on the east side of Deep Creek, and the Mormons on the west. Late in 1872 many members moved north into Montana, but the majority traveled back to Missouri. The Malad Branch was decimated, but not abandoned.38

From Malad David went to Cache Valley noticing along the way that "a real Utah home is a curiosity, pine log walls, dirt roof, and
often a brush patch in front, and a flower garden of sage brush enclosed in a very eccentric fence of poles, or brush or rock, or anything that comes handy. Looking over the valley David noted, "I was not expecting so lovely a scene; the harvest was fully ripe, and the wide rich fields of grain in the numinous little settlements upon the lovely crystal mountain streams." Lonely for Clara in the midst of the unexpectedly beautiful Cache Valley, David found a moment to write:

Every scene has lost a charm
That thy presence here would bring;
We might wander arm in arm
Or beside the streamlet sing.

For the strong electric force
Of your presence, I await;
........................
So I long to lean my head
On the absent one's kind breast;
There to feel the strong, true arms,
Round about me tightly pressed.  

Returning to Malad, David wrote to Charles Jensen, "my health is remarkably good." He reported that Clara was well, and so was his little son. "He weighed 25 pounds and stands 2 feet eight inches and one half in bare feet. Quite a boy is he and begins to talk lively." David listed the subjects about which he had recently read, chemistry, philosophy, science, and urged Jensen to follow his example. 

On September 17, David was in Soda Springs, Idaho, still on a mission, but the letter to the Herald written from there was entirely a descriptive travelogue. Justifying it, David commented, "I have written thus on the natural features of the country, knowing that the members of the church are, many of them, fond of all that throws light on the works of God in nature."
One senses he felt an ease, a content, when he could put aside the controversial aspects of the works of man. "Brighamism has a strong grip on the people through polygamy. This you know lies near the hearts of many men. Spiritualism and free-loveism, liberality in every sense of the word mark the age here and it's hard to confine mans belief in any proper direction. Get them out of the narrow track of Brighamism and away they fly to the other extreme." David's association with Amasa Lyman well substantiated this observation.

Lyman's protest against the confines of the church took many forms. One of them was the embrace and acceptance of spiritualism, the belief that communion with the dead could be held through seances and rappings. During David's brief stay in Utah in 1870 he had written Joseph, "Don't be too bitter against Spiritualism. It activates many here. If we can get its sanction, what matter so that a little hold is obtained for more good?" Without question Joseph himself had introduced David to spiritualism. In 1855 when Joseph was twenty-three and David was eleven a visitor to Nauvoo from Utah reported, "Joseph is a very strong spiritual medium and claims that he through writing can converse with his father." Ten days later on December 4, Joseph wrote to a friend that he did not know how to distinguish good from evil spirits, adding, "I have seen considerable of Medium experiences, not so much as thousands of others, however, and I must confess that I cannot see the probability or conceive the reason why when these better spirits . . . should after all the shackling influence of the body were left behind, stoop to tell a discriminating mortal spirit an indirect or direct falsehood. . . . I can scarcely see how we can
have real tangible intercourse with departed spirits. I do not doubt their existence. I feel that it must be so, yet I feel we are cheating ourselves when we think that we are conversing with them." 46 Joseph soon let the matter drop and turned his activities elsewhere, but the interest he exhibited was part of a national fad that swept the country including among its adherents such people as Horace Greeley, Mary Todd Lincoln, Victor Hugo, William James, and Arthur Conan Doyle. 47 Thus, having been introduced to the spiritualist movement by Joseph's early interest, and living in a period of intense interest nationally, David accepted the opportunity to participate in seances when Amasa Lyman invited him to do so.

The free-thought Godbeites also distanced themselves from the traditional stance of the Mormon church by their involvement in spiritualism. Amasa Lyman's first experience was in San Bernardino in 1853, but he still publicly denounced it as being unworthy activity of the church members until after his excommunication when he openly espoused the cause. By 1872 when David Smith arrived in Utah, Amasa Lyman was very involved in seances and spiritualism; 48 he was immediately attracted to David, and listened to his speeches. David had arrived in Utah on the 4th of July; Lyman went to David's lectures on July 7, 8, 14, and 21 and visited David personally at the home of George Bostwick and at David's boarding house, the William Brownings. 49

Before David returned to Salt Lake from his trip to Malad, Amasa Lyman met him in Logan on October 12 in the home of C. C. Goodwin and held a seance with him. This is the first recorded experience David had with spiritualism, but from this time he occasionally met
with Lyman in seances in the Logan area. The two men traveled together to Providence, and Box Elder where Lyman recorded, "Attended the Orthodox meeting in the morning and at night brother David H. Smith held meeting at Br. Thorne... following br. S. I addressed them."50

On October 22, David wrote to Joseph, "Amasa Lyman has been traveling with me a while. He wishes to correspond with you, perchance something could be done with him... He was formerly of the Twelve, was cut off from the Brighamite faction and is a liberal now." And Amasa Lyman was fast making a liberal out of David. He caught David at a discouraging period. David wrote quite frankly to Joseph that he needed to make some changes in his life. "I have some thing I wish to write to you alone," David began. "I have looked over the field of my life past and present and have come to some serious conclusions. I have all confidence in the destiny of the Church and its divine mission. Your future is, I presume, marked out; mine is not. And it behooves me to make some effort in my own behalf, not for myself alone." David's enjoyment of the missionary work he performed is evident, "If myself alone were in the balance I would lead a careless life and spend it preaching in behalf of our faith. But wife and boy, Thank God for them, are to be considered." Angry and bitter at the poverty that his church work brought to his little family, David continued, "Past experience has taught better than to look to the church for them." David reminded Joseph that the church did not contribute to the security of the wives and children of the missionaries, a problem that Alexander found had also grated upon him. "If in my endeavors for the right, I trust and smile and say nothing and keep the
bright side out, the Church is blandly ignorant of their existence."
David castigated the church members for not visiting his wife to lift
the "unsupportable burden" of her loneliness. "I know my wife is an
humble person, my boy of little moment to any one save me . . . But if
amid snows of winter when large congregations were listening to me and
I was out at the elbows and needed a coat to cover me against the
storm [and] the church had nothing for me, what guarantee have I that
when [more of my] children surround me, and the ability to teach and
please is gone, that I shall be remembered?"

Then David announced his decision. "I do not speak in bit-
terness, nor do I blame anyone, but I must work more for No. 2 and 3."
As a beginning solution to the problem David suggested that he assemble
his best poems, revise them, prepare them for publication, and the
church office print them and they would divide the proceeds. 51 Joseph's
answer to this letter is not preserved, but in three years, David would
publish a volume of his poetry.
CHAPTER EIGHT

Brain Fever 1872-1873

David had left Salt Lake City and traveled to Ogden where he apparently stayed for several days. After writing the rather conventional letter to Joseph stating his intention to work on the book of poetry, David immediately began another letter to his brother. This letter concerned issues even more sensitive and he did not wish to have his identity known if the letter were read by someone else. Therefore he suggested that he and Joseph conduct a correspondence without signatures in order to be very frank with each other, and still avoid the risk of exposure. "Attach no date, name, or place to it, but write as I have written and if it fall into the hands of philistines, they can not use it against you. You will know me by my handwriting," David assured him. This letter was written in an abrupt and stilted way with no personal references included that could be used to identify the writer should it fall into hands other than Joseph's. "You asked me to write to you privately, and your replies will be equally so--kept sacred," David assured Joseph. He began his long and well-thought out letter to the brother, who was also his prophet: "Reason is our only guide. You accept such principles of religion as are consistent to you-I to me. All men select their churches by its guidance, why not apply this test to the truths of religion?" He continued,

'Except you believe you shall be damned' is the first proposition
in the church. No matter whence its source, let us examine it simply by what it contains. In art, in science, in every department of life, intelligence is never required to give credence to, or act upon, any proposition unless it is capable of demonstration, actual demonstration, or it is based upon apparent fact, apparent even though their causes and mode be hidden. But in religion another basis is acted upon and we are expected to believe and stake our salvation upon this belief, without actual demonstration or knowledge. You may say that knowledge follows faith and obedience; this will not answer the dilemma. The seeker for salvation must first believe, and the vital object, salvation or damnation, hangs thereon. This is absurd.

David continued to explain why he perceived belief without demonstration absurd. "First because it is unjust. Unjust in that it requires intelligence to subvert itself without demonstration of the necessity and reasonableness of such requirial or revelation of the fact of its efficacy." To amplify his point, David offered an example.

I have a child, I keep myself obstinately hidden from him. I make no revelation to him but in an obscure and very doubtful way. The requirement of love and obedience comes to him. And death or life hangs on its acceptance. How very unjust. If he be ignorant, prejudice must guide him, if wise then reason tells him if I have a father he must come near me first. Love me and teach me to love him. . . . I do not argue the benefit of Faith and trust in God as a general application of moral principle, but the attaching of salvation upon such ambiguous grounds is unjust.

David then addressed his second reason for the absurdity of belief without demonstration. "It is absurd in its manner of speech. It calls to us from Brighamite rank, from the Roman church, from the Josephite, and from all quarters. Believe as we do, or be damned." More to the point, he argued

If faith unto salvation was an eternal principle and true, it could be discovered and demonstrated so as to be of general benefit as the law of gravitation, or the rules of mathematics. But as it come to us it makes us subservient to our fallible fellow Man for eternal life, a most absurd proposition. But you again might speak, God has revealed himself. But here
again is an absurdity. Our fellow man brings us a revelation, and we are only guided by our faith in him. We do not know he has had this revelation, and eternal salvation depends upon our faith in our fellowman and his revelation. Unjust and absurd.

Then David turned his attention to the argument that each person can receive revelation pertaining to themselves, and pointed out the fallacy apparent to him in the line of reasoning.

But you say, we can receive revelation for ourselves. If this is so, it would constitute knowledge. Then the proposition would be, 'act on the knowledge given' not 'he that believeth shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned' as we all know well it is. The true and just requirement would be, 'Receive and act upon only such facts and laws as can be demonstrated beyond the possibility of a doubt and be saved.' And we might say we 'recommend faith in God as a peaceable source of pleasant trust and a motive to morality,' but the 'believe and be saved or disbelieve and be damned' of the churches is absurd, and is a lever whereby designing men force the trusting, ignorant, and unreasoning to obey them.

And here, David points out the fallacy of the above argument for obedience. "They may do so honestly, or from a good motive, or fate may all but compel them to do so, but should you be self-deceived or be blind yourself, however you may have to lead the blind." In a declaration worthy of Thomas Jefferson, David continued:

God, being reasonable and just, would exact only such service as he would make known as necessary and never would base eternal loss on any such haphazard rule as acceptance by faith, according to the light faith itself gives of God. Hence this great anxiety, sweat, and worry about being saved by faith is absurd. If we do the things plainly capable of proof as good, and shun the proven evil, we will be taken care of by the eternal powers, ceremony and faith being only recommendatory and often not that.

At this point David introduced a new subject: revelation. His application of the same reasoning extended from the discussion of faith.

If any man was saved and we could see that salvation and the escaped damnation, although we might not understand how faith saved him, if we saw he was actually saved by faith from the grave to eternal
life, we then might say salvation depended on faith, for it would be knowledge of existing fact, analogous to many primary facts in sciences known by demonstration to be true. But we have no such demonstration of 'Believe or be damned.' 'But we hear,' says one, 'Men say in the church they know they are right.' Alas! alas, yes. If they only could agree in that knowledge, we might then conclude that there was a power on earth demonstrating itself to man requiring justly their allegiance. But as fast as all outside adhered to it, they knew the truth and all outside knew it not. . . . But alas for human religion. The Josephite know you are called of God, polygamy false, and so on to the end of his creed. The Brighamite testifies before God and man that Brigham is of God. He knows it. Polygamy, human sacrifice, blind obedience, and so forth, all necessary to salvation. Morisites, spiritualists, Strangites, and others have a testimony of knowledge, all radically disagreeing.

In the face of such conflicting claims, David attempted to find an acceptable way to evaluate them rather than to dismiss them out of hand.

So we are thrown back upon our reason again. Ask them for demonstration. They have none, save the shifting sands of metaphor . . . or quotation of dead revelation which they testify was given by the same spirit that enlightened them in their contradictory testimonies. Who bears the strongest testimony? The weak, ignorant, prejudiced laity who mistake their own internal emotion, superstition, and misguided, but honest consciences for the eternal spirit of God. Who bears the weakest testimony? the cultivated, well-developed, experienced, observant reasoners, of whom I believe you are chief, God bless you.

David recognized that each group professed their own revelation, and that such revelation found expression in many attitudes and actions. "Revelation varies according to the man." He wrote, "If he is ignorant, they betray it grossly; if he is sensual, they are so; if he is avaricious, all his revelation tend to his own pockets. The revelation of each sect justify their ideas, and their dreams and visions are but reflection of their absurd, unjust dogmas." As pointed illustration of his thesis, David told Joseph, "In your own denomination the rank of a
member can be told by his or her spiritual testimony or revelation in intelligence and reasoning faculties. A smart man or cultivated woman speaks smartly or cultivatedly by the spirit." He was acquainted with persons who spoke "by their own wisdom. . . . Again, men pass through three different factions and bear testimony to them all." David was acquainted with men who had been members of his father's original church, who then followed the leadership of James J. Strang, or Robert Thompson, or Sidney Rigdon, or Brigham Young before finally accepting enthusiastic membership in the Reorganization. "Again, men bear testimony by the spirit to the most absurd propositions and reveal the profoundest nonsense. Again, persons of the lowest grade morally in the church receive apparently the greatest number of gifts from God, the Eternal God. How then are we to know the real spirit in this confusion?"  

"Why," David asks rhetorically, "not ascribe to the smartness, cultivation, and wisdom their results in eloquence and revelation, and not drag in a third agent that rises and falls and accommodates itself to every shade of intellectual and moral power of its medium and call it the spirit of God, alpowerful, unchangeable? It is absurd. Men mistake their emotions and loving thrills and mistaken, exaggerated mental states for revelations from deity."

"Tis folly to find fault and fail to remedy," David reminded Joseph, then offered him several rules of thumb.

Accept no proposition for a rule of action, or on trust unless it be clearly demonstrable or the observations of undeniable fact. Be content to let that which cannot be understood in any way remain for investigation, nor hand the fate of yourself and all man kind on the uncertain professions of faith and the mixed
contradictions of spiritual revelation. For all that you can not know, trust the wisdom and mercy of the unknown unknowable. Many of the moral propositions of religion are demonstrable beyond a doubt, but oh! so very many of her saving principles are clearly capable or susceptible of exposition as contradictory, absurd, unjust, unreasonable, and preposterously inconsistent with the idea of God or any intelligence.

In closing this remarkable letter, David commented philosophically, "I have written what I have written, if it amuse you, rest you, or you have time and can subvert it please answer." David gave him a name and address to which to send such letters in Ogden and closed with the comment, "You have a great chance for a good work to the people here and around you, perhaps there are circumstances that justify a line of conduct not--well, not otherwise proper or wise. May you be happy and prosperous."4

Obviously David had been forced to widen his viewpoint and to think through the persuasive arguments that were part of the liberal world in which Amasa Lyman lived. His sentiments were not so much that the Reorganization which he represented was theologically wrong, but that so many similar movements could make such powerful claims in their behalf also. But the move toward doubt had already been taken. That it was of very great importance in David's life is illustrated by a line or two he wrote to his friend Sherman in the letter acknowledging his father's participation in plural marriage three months earlier. "The Bible is my guide and Christ my pattern. There is no religion for me except the gospel we believe." And then, significantly, David added, "I know all men and all religions so well that no bridge catches me if Christ fails."5 The bridge that remained to catch David was his reason. Seven years earlier, before he heard
such heady arguments in favor of the human mind's ability to think things through, David had written,

Yuu say there is a candle in the brain
   called reason: which some great things can unfold.
Perhaps its light can make the question plain
   Come light it up and see what we behold.
The order of the world from day to day,
   Proclaims that it a great beginning had.
But who begun the word can reason say?
   Or will the mighty end be good or bad?

   Go from effect to cause and back again.
And search and argue now with all your might
And in the end acknowledge for your pain,
   Reason is after all a feeble light.  

On November 19th, David wrote again to Joseph, this time a conventional letter discussing the business of the church in Salt Lake City as it opposed the claims of the Mormons. In it he passed on a message to Joseph, "Amasa Lyman wishes me to say that he would be with us and help us do a good work provided a few eccentricities of doctrine in him be borne with. He is a good man and very moral. Seems to be returning to Christ again. I advise his acceptance. He will be of great influence if with us. Please write me. Shall we bear with those peculiarities of doctrine and take him in?" Amasa Lyman received a letter from Joseph on November 4, 1872, but its contents are unknown.

An affiliation between David's Reorganization and the liberal party who were opposing Brigham Young could have been put to strong use by the liberals. Therefore, it was of special interest to Young to halt the progress of the Reorganization on two fronts: that of doctrinal conversions to their religious beliefs, and that of cooperation with the dissident movement in Salt Lake City. Therefore, David advised Joseph, "The Brighamite policy is to set the Smiths here
against us." The Smiths in Salt Lake City were cousins to David, Joseph, and Alexander. David wrote here of a deliberate attempt to have the Utah members of the family oppose the Illinois members in public. "Do not write to Joseph F. Smith, he will only use it against you. If you do, let every word drop out honey. It is to set me up against you by flattering me into a 'thus saith the Lord,' dividing our land, to bribe me by donations to keep silent in regard to polygamy, endowment, and etc., as well as to aggravate us into abusing President Young. It is my principle to----well, never mind my principle."  

To these issues--strife between the two churches, a growing skepticism toward the efficacy of modern revelation, the undeniable participation of his father in the practice of plural marriage which David could not discuss with either Joseph or his mother, the lure of seances and spiritualism, and the responsibility of keeping up with the expectations of Josiah Ells and Judge Boren in the missionary work--was added a sixth challenge: That of providing for his family.

David knew that neither the church as an institution, nor the members of the church as individuals were providing Clara and the baby with funds for their support, and certainly he could not. "Past experience has taught better than to look to the church for them." The only inheritance David had received from his family was a portion of the old and crumbling Nauvoo Mansion House. While in Ogden in October David confessed, "I am hopeful, but when I think my only home is that old, rotten, tumbling down back end of the Mansion, and my income minus, I am for myself despondant." A month later, he again wrote to Joseph, "Clara asks me for a little money. I have only one dollar
to send her. Do look after the bishop, or her yourself. I can't stand everything." On learning that the year had been difficult financially for his mother, David advised her, "Stear strait for Joseph and if no other plan will do I will come home and give up preaching. ... If I could help you I would like it but I cannot now, being away from home. ... Here is a dollar, mother for you. It is only a little. Wish it was more. Get something to comfort you."

And yet a seventh vexing, nagging concern refused to go away. David had a painful memory of returning from his first missionary trip to Utah in a very sick and despondent condition. While he forced himself to sound and act completely normal in his dealings with others, he knew with some unspoken and unacknowledged certainty that all was not well with him. In January of the year while he worked in Iowa and assured others he was well and able to work "like a trojan" he composed a poem subsequently titled, "I Am Not As I Was."

I strive to win again the pleasant thought;  
The music only speaks in mournful tone;  
The very flowers wear a shade, and naught  
Can bring again the halo that is gone;  
And every company my soul hath sought,  
Though crowds surround me, finds me still alone.

I turn unto my tasks with weary hands,  
Grieving with sadness, knowing not the cause  
Before my face a desert path expands,  
I will not falter in the toil, nor pause;  
Only, my spirit somehow understands  
This mournful truth--I am not what I was.

Then, inexplicably, on February 14, David wrote a letter that evidences either great fatigue, a morbid sense of humor, lack of judgment, or a recurrence of his malady. The contents of the letter speak for themselves.
Dear Sir,

While I was in Allenville I learned that you would like to join our church but did not want any body to know it. Now on the last Sunday of this month you go to some suitable place on grand river, wade it to where the water is up to your waist, and fall over backwards, just exactly at 12 o'clock, and I will say the ceremony at the same time, and it will do as well as if I was there--then your name will be put on our books as a full member. You then go to brother Pinkerton, and he will furnish you with three more women. You must not tell any other person about it and no body will know about it.

I remain your brother in Christ
David Smith

At best, the letter depicts an unorthodox view of the baptism ceremony and reflects a sort of extended logic—if immersion in water was necessary, and a vocal repetition of the ordinance were required, why could not an omnipotent God be aware that both events had happened, and disregard the distance factor. At worst, the letter indicated an irreverence for the church ordinances unbecoming to one who held David’s position of responsibility and trust. What it probably represented was a recurrence of the illness that plagued him and which by sheer effort of will he seemed to fight down. At the beginning of his insanity, David’s actions were only slightly awry, only a small degree away from the accepted norm, enough to be deemed eccentric or uncharacteristic, but no more. But David knew something was happening to him, and he fought back the knowledge. With rare candor he wrote to Joseph from Ogden on October 22. "I have been wandering in spirit round the old mansion with its mould, its dense leaves, its cracks and shatters and of the chances should I break down again please write to me. Of course I am well but then how can it ever be repaired." Two weeks later, November 2, David wrote to his mother, "I am in good health, extra good, and all goes well with regard to my mission. I intend to
go to Cala. in a few weeks, I will spend the winter further south in southern California. That will agree with me better, but then, my health is so very well established that I have no fears to that whatever. . . . Never mind the old Mansion's being lonely. I am not. I am fat and well."

Perhaps so. But the fear of breaking down again haunted him.

By the last of October David returned to Salt Lake, and he met with Amasa Lyman on the 29th. Lyman's diary records, "At night had a seance with D. H. Smith and company" on November 1. The next night Lyman noted, "Had a seance at night and forgot my meeting at Independence Hall." The following day David spoke at the Liberal Institute, and by this time he had again attracted the interest of the Salt Lake Tribune which gave him excellent publicity for his addresses. David had noted to Joseph that "They report us in the Tribune and profess to help us all they can underhandedly. They do advertise our appointments and do write both for and against us, and so keep the hall open. This is an actual help." Throughout the late fall, the Tribune seemed to cheer David on.

The Salt Lake Daily Tribune noted on November 4th that David H. Smith's subject for a talk at the Liberal Institute was "The Destiny of the Earth" taken from the first chapter of Ecclesiastes. David used his interest in the natural surroundings to compare the "development of the earth as revealed in Geology, the succession of its varied orders of life from the lowest to the high." Ten days later the Tribune announced that David would again lecture at the Liberal Institute on a Sunday afternoon on the subject of "Light." The paper noted,
David is becoming a popular lecturer in Utah among all classes of society. We predict a future for him unprecedented in the history of the L.D.S. Church. He is the only man that can in harmony with Mormon declarations be the successor of B.Y. Mr. Smith's ideas are original and brilliant, his eloquence fluent and his views cosmopolitan. When his father declared before his advent to our atmosphere that he should lead 'Israel' it was one of the truest inspirations he ever had. All our esteemed young friend has to do is to mould the minds of others in harmony with his own inspiration. He has much of his father in him.22

After the Sunday lecture, the Tribune writer analyzed the speech, and from its generally effusive tone, David had almost converted the reporter.23 After David spoke a week later at the Sunday meeting, the Tribune writer again commented at length on the speech, summing up the presentation of his discourse by noting that it "promised well for what may be expected from Mr. Smith in the future."24 On November 30, the paper again announced David's forthcoming speech on "Eternal Judgement," commenting, "the discourse, we venture to say, will not be as orthodox as its title would imply. Mr. Smith has in him the makeings of a popular speaker."25

Whatever enthusiasm David was able to convey to his audience, and undoubtedly there was much, his private musings were of a deeper and more somber nature, enough so that one suspects that more was at hand than the romantic musings of the poet. David wrote at least three poems during the month of November in Salt Lake City. Facing his melancholy mood directly, he composed "My Message" on November 2. In part it read:

Heed not thou the dark sad spirit
That would speak to thee of death!
Turn away and do not hear it,
There is weakness in its breath.

There are small feet close beside you,
That no hand but yours may guide;
And deep sorrow will betide you
Should you let them walk aside.

... . . . . . . . . . . . . .
For their sakes, then, bid the angel
Up and fly to heaven's shore;
Be you healed, be brave, be happy,
And resume you[r] work once more. 26

On the 17th he addressed the problems of "Real and Ideal."

With half-shut eyes we walk our earthly path,
And try to bend the best reality
To suit some idle dream or fancy wreath,
That we have formed in ideality:
Supposing that our gaudy, half-formed dreams,
Are better than the matchless living scenes,
Whose gracefulness with holy purpose teems,
From which our blinding image intervenes.

... . . . . . . . . . . . . .
But then we bend our dreams to suit our work,
To set the part we play in its best light,
We are surprised to learn how much may lurk
Of beauty, hidden from our earlier sight;

... . . . . . . . . . . . . .
'Tis like the Hindoo, in the eastern land,
Bowing before the uncouth idol form,
Whose hideous lines, carved by his unskilled hand,
Are shamed by those, his children, living, warm,
Present to him, while they are sacrificed
Before the rude barbaric imagery
His own perverted mind has thus devised;
Once far more shapely as the forest tree. 27

Finally, toward the end of the month, David flung out a challenge to
himself as well as his reader. Called the "Song of Endless Life," David urged,

Though the waves of death flow o'er thee,
'Tis the rest that gathers power
For the endless life before thee;
Fear no dying;
Like the resurrection flower,
Death defying.28

Early in December David wrote to Amasa Lyman; on December 1 and
2 he wrote to Charles Jensen,29 but essentially no record exists of
David's activities from the first of December 1872 through January,
1873. On February 6, 1873, the following item appeared in the Tribune. "Personal. We regret to learn of the serious illness of Mr. David H. Smith, from an attack of brain fever. He was, however, improving rapidly yesterday afternoon." 30

Six days later on February 12, the Tribune announced, "We are pleased to learn that Mr. David H. Smith, whose illness we referred to a few days since, is so far recovered as to be about again. We learn that by invitation he will lecture at the Institute on Sunday evening next, taking for his subject 'The Mission of Christ.'" Freely advertising the lecture, the editor averred that "This subject . . . is sure to be highly interesting and we trust a generous turnout of visitors will testify their appreciation of the speaker and subject." 31 As if afraid that some might miss the coming event, the Tribune followed that announcement three days later with another reminder. "It will be remembered that, as previously announced, [David H. Smith], who has recovered from a severe illness, speaks at the Institute tomorrow evening, on the 'Nature of Christ's Mission' [a] subject which in Mr. Smith's hands will doubtless, be highly interesting." 32

But no report of the speech as it occurred was made by the paper, contrary to the accustomed habit of the reporter. David probably was either not able to deliver the speech, or did not deliver it well. The David Smith that his family and friends knew and loved so well would be no more. His mind unable to function properly, David wandered from lucidity to irrationality and back again until his insanity dominated his life.

The exact nature of David's illness is not known. Brain fever
was a tragically common ailment. Amasa Lyman's journal did not mention
david's illness nor his symptoms, nor his recovery, a remarkable
omission considering the friendship existing between the two men. But
Lyman did describe the sufferings of the daughter of some of his friends
who was struck by the disease. His journal entry for January 12, 1873,
read, "Mr. and Mrs. Marsden were expected but they were called away to
the Warren Ranch to bring home their daughter who was sick with brain
fever. Our party . . . visited the sick girl in the evening at the
residence of her father. The pain in her head from the inflammation of
the brain was most excruciating. She was relieved slightly by
nursing."

Three weeks later his diary reads, "Called on the Marsdens
found the sick daughter improving slowly. She is still very weak and
still suffering much in brain and spine."\(^{33}\) Not until March 15 did
Amasa Lyman mention David, then Lyman notes, "Called on and past an
hour with Mr. D. H. Smith at Wm. Browning's." The following day after
dinner, Amasa Lyman went to hear David speak, but added nothing else.\(^{34}\)
This is puzzling because the Tribune on February 22, three weeks
earlier, had carried the following story. Its injured tone implies
that the writer expected better things of David than the following
report.

WASH AWAY THY SINS.--It is rumored extensively on the
streets that David H. Smith, the coning man of the Mormons,
has lately applied to the ecclesiastical authorities here in
Utah, for the privilege of being baptized into their church.
Whether the rumor be true or false, it is what the Mormon
people have been looking forward to for many years, in which
thousands of them are strong believers to-day. That David
would sooner or later 'join the church' was repeatedly
affirmed by Mormons in our hearing yesterday, thereby showing
they have an abiding faith in the prediction made by Joseph Smith immediately prior to his death, and which has been repeatedly reaffirmed by Brigham Young subsequently thereto. It is hard to say what the course of events will bring forth in this direction, but there can be no doubt that David's acceptance of the rite of baptism would be hailed with enthusiastic joy by tens of thousands of the Mormon people, and would undoubtedly ultimately result in incalculable benefit to the church at large. 35

The rumors did not abate, and again on March 6, the paper dealt with the subject. "Dame rumor, which always claims to be correct in her statements, says that D. H. Smith is anxious to become possessed of the 'Urim and Thummim' alias the 'peep-stone,' 36 and not being positive as to its present place of concealment, had his horoscope cast for the purpose of knowing what his 'lucky stars' had revealed on the subject. When the astronomical figure was complete it was ascertained that the 'peep-stone of Laban' was in safekeeping in this Territory, to obtain which it was necessary to the 'coming man' [David] to be baptized by the authority of one of the old Apostles whom his father 'Joseph' ordained to that office, and thus enter the fold by the door, instead of 'climbing up some other way' according to the saying of scripture. How's that David, eh?" 37

One Isaiah Coombs reported in his journal on the 8th of March, 1873, "Br. Wm. Willes... says that David, youngest son of the Prophet Joseph Smith had been baptized lately. David came out to Utah some years since a bitter enemy of this people and determined not to believe that his father ever had more than one wife. For a long time he fought the truth but has yielded at last to evidence that is incontrovertible and will no doubt verify the prediction of his father before he [David] was born that he should be a great leader in
Israel. 38

On March 15, the same day that Amasa Lyman visited with David at Brownings, David penned a long letter to Joseph, but it was written in the form of a revelation. On the surface the writer sounds lucid, but the words and message are unlike David. "Thus saith the Spirit--," the letter began,

Unto you my servant David and humble and obscure elder moreover in fault many times but growing in grace and power nevertheless, write unto him who now stands at the head of the Church and say that in as much as he can not go back that it is his duty to go forward with increased energy and power. Say also that the time has come more fully to organize my church, and to take the best material presentable and use it to my honor and should it in time become of no service that it shall be rejected and more suitable material employed. For truly the Church languishes for the lack of missionaries and officers, and power and behold there is no one quorum in full, so that there is a grievous lack of power in the councils and labors of the Church, Ye have wisely thought to keep out a balance of power in one direction, but to do nothing is to die, so now consider and act, in reference to organization.

There is Alexander a stout and valient heated saint of wisdom in council. Let him become a councilor to Joseph, or a Bishop or, one of the Twelve, but as he has a large family and is a son of Joseph the martyr let him stand with his elder brother in council. Then behold my laborer Thomas W. Smith a valient soldier let him be made an apostle unto me, behold these are young but shall ye wait until they are enfeebled with age? Nay withhold them not but give me their youth and strength when they can move the world. 39

... And unto the order of Charity among my servants the sisterhood of the Church I am well pleased to say go on and organize farther and more effectually, and labor more dilligently. Cease to fight each other and study to build up and establish. Now this is by way of recommendation to the church through an humble [elder] by the way of suggestion to him who stand at its head.

Grace and Peace Abound
(signed) David H. Smith

I have not written the above as an expression of my desire to be elevated.
I am content with my present position.
I shall write for the Hope and Herald more especially the Hope.
I shall also correspond freely with the interest of the church in view. More anon. David. 40

What was Joseph's response to this? Probably he shrugged it
off as being somewhat unusual, but Joseph was accustomed to receiving letters from David that were written in rhyme, or that boldly announced "Reason is our only guide!" By itself the letter was quite innocuous if one did not take it too seriously, but when compared with other letters written later when David was clearly out of control, this letter carries similar disturbing messages. 41

Again, in a striking and ironic coincidence, Joseph in Plano also had a revelation suggesting that since the quorum of the first presidency was incomplete, new counselors should be chosen. A revelation to that effect was presented to the April, 1873, conference and the preface to it was dated March 1, 1873, only two weeks before David wrote his "Thus saith the Lord letter."42 David was unaware that he had already been chosen for a counselor. And Joseph was unaware that David was very seriously mentally ill.

The revelation presented to the conference stated, "Behold, it is wisdom in me, and expedient in my church that the chief quorums should be more nearly complete. Thus saith the Spirit. Let my servant William W. Blair and David H. Smith be chosen and ordained to be counselors to my servant, the presiding elder of my church."43

Because the ailment was unknown, and mental illness in the 19th Century little understood, people apparently discussed David in hushed whispers, for nothing is said about him during the late winter and early spring, 1873. Only a reminiscence written in 1893 deals with this period. Referring to David's 1873 visit in Salt Lake City, Edward Stevenson remembered, "It was fifteen years since I last saw and conversed with David. Then he was a slim, trim young man,
investigating the difference that exists between the Reorganized Church and that organized by his father the Prophet in 1830. The result of his researches convinced him that he had imbibed in his young and tender years some ideas contrary to the truth. Thus, I believe, operated on his tender mind. I well remember that on the occasion of my last conversation he stated that his health was failing him and he would be obliged to discontinue public speaking."\textsuperscript{44}

David returned to Plano sometime in the spring, 1873, probably around the first of May, under the watchful eye of Josiah Ells. It soon became embarrassingly painful to see that something indeed had happened to change David. The homecoming was not pleasant. When David returned to his mother, she approached to embrace him. David put out his hand, kept her off, and said with uncharacteristic abruptness, "Mother, why have you deceived us?"\textsuperscript{45}
CHAPTER NINE

The Burden of Insanity 1873-1877

The missionary trip to Utah had not been a great success in establishing the Reorganization there. Judge Boren returned to San Bernardino angry and disillusioned that he had not been greeted with warmth by his old friends in Utah. He avoided further efforts on the behalf of either church and died a short time thereafter.¹ Josiah Ellis returned to the midwest knowing that his efforts in Utah had not dented the solidarity he found there, and believing that his efforts had not been satisfactory in filling either his own desires or the expectations of the presidency who had appointed him.² And David, alternating between periods of rationality and incoherence, clearly needed time to rest and heal. Joseph kept David with him in Plano to work on the editorial staff of the publications.

The July 1, 1873, issue of the Herald, probably assembled immediately after David's return, carried an article titled "De Profundis" that David probably wrote in Utah, and carried home with him. The ideas expressed were very similar in tone and content to the long letters he wrote to Joseph arguing for "reason." "The Holy Book teaches a Trinity in the Godhead. We see something like this in His works. There are three grand powers in our present habitation, Matter, Law, and Force." David argued that matter was supreme to law and force in the same way that God was the supreme member of the Trinity, and in

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a clearly developed analogy, he outlined his answer to "Whence the origin of matter." "The majority of theologians teach us that God created matter; that he created the earth out of nothing. . . . Many, however, have taught that matter was co-eternal with God."

David saw problems with both ideas. "If we say that God created Matter, we make a statement that even should it be true, means nothing to us. We cannot comprehend how he created it, and to say from nothing seems a woful impossibility even with him. . . . If we doubt the creation of Matter by the Eternal, and subscribe the modification of it to him, it amounts to the same degree of worship. . . . My opinion inclines to the eternal existence of matter; . . . From eternity unto eternity shall it undulate, revolve, and vibrate, marshal, and dissolve, evolving from chaos to the heights of spiritual immortality, under the guidance of the great creative power, from the far still heights a voice seems whispering that this is truth, and therein is great consolation for the hope of immortality; for if the material is of this nature, more readily could its results be such." David's arguments resounded with references to the scientifically determined ages of the earth, the atom being the basis for all the elements. "The proposition that nothing can exist without a material existence is becoming well engrafted upon the human mind. . . . Our spirits therefore, may be, and are doubtless refined matter, and this quality of atom [that atoms are of many different sizes] may constitute to a great extent that refinement." David made use of many scientific experiments as examples of the actions of matter, force, and law that illustrate he was widely read in the fields of knowledge of the times. The treatise ran for eight
columns in the Herald. Its composition and arguments illustrate a bright and curious mind, one that was unwilling to let assumptions go untested and questions go unanswered. At this time David was twenty-eight. "De Profundis" was the last coherent piece he would write.

At first he preached occasionally in the Plano area. A correspondent to the Herald reported on a meeting in the Greenfield schoolhouse. He described David as "about thirty years of age, medium height and well built." Instead of taking the usual text and building his speech around it, David "opened at once on the subject, 'Religion.' At first he spoke deliberately and persuasively, growing more easy and rapid as he advanced." He quoted David's words directly, "We believe in immortality and a God, a future of bliss or punishment; and in the Bible, whose innate goodness had made it the basis of all our laws. The faults of the Latter Day Saints are not confined to them alone; the men of olden time had theirs and the Bible tells us of them, but does not give any evidence of those faults being approved." David referred to Corinthians 12 and Acts 8. "Except we have the Spirit of the God we can do nothing; we believe it is requisite. . . . We are willing to forego the opinion and approval of man, if we have the approval of God. . . . The dead, instead of going to God, shall remain in this earth, and Christ shall come to this earth." The editor added a line of correction stating that the righteous spirits of the dead rest in Paradise until Christ comes, "when they return with him and are clothed again with immortal bodies to reign with him on the earth. It was so stated in the sermon."4

Late in June a box arrived from Utah sent by the Browning family
with whom David had lodged. David thanked the sender by letter, noting "We are all well and in good spirits." David's humor showed again. Referring to members of the family, David recalled a particularly memorable meeting in Salt Lake. "I have been thankful that Ella went with me that night to Richards Hall, that just check-mated the devil nicely. I had need of several trumps to play him that season. I should not mind playing him again there, provided that I could [have] more cash on hand, so as not to tax friends I hold right highly." The general tone of the letter was buoyant and confident; David indicated he would be content to remain at home a year or two, if not longer, his son Elbert, now two, was "progressing." The old confidence and exuberance appeared again.

Later in July David heard from his niece, Emma Josepha Smith, who was spending the summer with her grandmother, Emma Bidamon, in Nauvoo. Emma J. had written to Joseph's wife, Bertha Madison, with some concern about her grandmother's working too hard. David's response was concerned, but realistic. "I am sorry Mother has been sick and has to work so hard. But I cannot help the matter, one bit. If Mother was with us there is always enough on our table for one more, and we have a bed to spare, but I cannot keep up that tavern, nor finish that house, nor do I have a dime to spare to send. . . . sometimes I get a little and sometimes not, there is not much for any of us you know. When I get a little we are obliged to live on it till I get more, though we have never wanted enough, nor had too much. You see how it is, I wish mother was here, if She cannot be here it is but little I can do. If she was here she need not work so hard and yet she
could live well." And, writing to Nauvoo, the impulse to let them know about his child was too much. "Elbert grows to be a fine lovely boy, if I do say it, and is gentle, good, and sweet, too good and gentle for this rough life I fear." Tragically, it was not the child, but the father, who found life too much. David was still well a month later in August, when he wrote his mother, "Clara and Elbert are well, and myself am well likewise. We are all jubilant over attending conference this fall." Again the proud father speaks. "Elbert grows taller every day, races about the place all day, driving horses, drawing his cart, and bossing around generally. He generally has four or five black bruises; one on his nose, two or three on his forehead, and several bumps not in the catalogue ornamenting his head in various places. He is careless and reckless, thrashing about on the same plan he began with in life, by jumping off his grandmother's lap. He cares little wether the chair go over backward or forwards, wether he rolls off the lounge, or out the front door down the steps. In being rough and ready, headlong and fearless, his is rather different from his Papa, in youth, but in his love of pets, his care of all his playthings, keeping them all carefully unbroken, his cloths untorn, and generally unsoiled, he resembles him considerably at that age. He rarely or never looses anything, and laments sadly if anything happened to his playthings. He has good health." David here exhibits the same sensitivity and affection for his young son as was so evident in his writings about the nature he observed around him. One had the impression that during Elbert's early childhood he was much loved by his father.

David reported also that "We are well clad, Mother; Clara and I,
have enough to eat, and a good comfortable place to sleep and live in, indeed our house is quite cosy. We keep out of debt and keep no books. . . . It is quite a walk to and from the office from our place. We have a nice front room, two bed rooms upstairs, and a good kitchen and shed. Clara keeps a neat house, and we live like Naboos." David continued to give his mother news of Joseph's family and the church. He looked forward to going to conference, and asked about his sister, Julia. "Well, Mother dear, we remain very gratefully your children here." A similar letter notes, "I am delighted at present to help Joseph in the office and to make short preaching tours in the vicinity." He signed off "Battleing the wolf and hoping for the best," in reference to the family's precarious financial situation. Clara augmented the family income by working in the Herald office as a "folder."

David found the work in the office and his responsibilities at home took much of his time. He expressed this as an excuse for not writing his mother as frequently as he wished. "Having been busy some time and not being in condition of mind, by reason of the hurry and drive, to write to you, have delayed so long. Not that the desire of mind had not often gone out towards you and the friends at home, in the old home, for this had often been the case, and so at last I find myself addressing you once more." From August 1873 a period of time occurs wherein few documents illustrate what he was doing. A certificate signed by Thomas Revell noted, "that D. H. Smith was in good standing when he left Nauvoo and as such recommend him to any branch with which he may feel desirous to become united." An identical certificate was made for Clara C. Smith.
Whether this indicated that they were to travel on speaking tours of the branches, or whether they contemplated leaving Plano is unclear. But David had another attack of illness and despondancy sometime late in the winter of 1873. Shortly after the new year, on January 4, 1874, David wrote a sad letter to his mother. From the contents, it is clear that Emma had been called to Plano to help during David's illness, and had returned to Nauvoo by January. She had arranged to send a bed to David and Clara, probably after noticing they lived with precious little comfort in spite of the brave front. "I fear you have robbed yourself," David told her in acknowledging its arrival. "Dear Mother Mine," David began his letter,

I take my pen today to remember you in that spirit that I ever remember my Mother. The clouds that darkened my spirits have gone for a season in a little degree, but whether they will remain away or return again as they so often have remains to be seen. . . . I am very grateful that you came Mother. My constant regret is, that I can do but little for you, but I am determined to do more in future. And if ever I have added a sorrow to your heart, it has doubly troubled mine. Dear Mother, I know your reward in Heaven is sure, whatever mine may be, white robes and crown are awaiting for you. There are many suffering worse than we suffered. It is a good thing to walk among these, one learns contentment there. . . . Well, dear Mother, remember me as if I had been all to you I might have been.

Your boy,
David H. Smith.

David carried an additional burden in that after a seige of the illness, he knew he had been ill, and that he had caused much pain and anguish for those whom he loved. But now, in January, his spirits revived, he turned his attention again to his wife and son. "Our home looks bright and pleasant. Elbert is in the other room with the children playing. Clara is pretty well, she stands the work pretty well with Sarah's help."
I gave Bertie his first clinking last night, and strange to say he likes me better ever since."^{12}

Having made his apologies to his mother, David then found a moment to send a note to Joseph,

I do feel tonight to say that my inner soul doth mourn over mine often infirmities of flesh and spirit. It does seem as if the power to remain in that holy state of peace my heart once knew has departed. I may say that in deed and act my life has purified its self in a very great measure the last few years, and especially since my marriage and return home, but my talk is astounding to myself and I marval whence it cometh, as sure as I live it proceeds not from my heart nor is it David that speaks thus.

He attempted to describe the conflict he felt at the disintegration of his personality. "Within and apart sit my spirit with white wings, and robes, and mourns at the state of her broken tabernacle, and sighs at the storm about and around and nothing grieves it more than the thought that one so long beaten by the storm of the world and evil, against whom so much has been said and done so grievously, one so trusting and charitable and withall so excellent in steadfast faith and hope, should find so broken a tooth, so sore a broken joint on which to lean. As far as the hereafter I believe more than ever in a heaven of rest yet before me, and surely before you." David assured Joseph that he still loved and respected him, "as I see the largeness of charity your great tender heart possesses, and still the line of hope I feel is not broken for us in the future. As to this world I know not, but something still tells me not to despair but to cling to faith and hope for the best and to exhort you to the same." This sentence hints at severe difficulty between the brothers. Sadly David closed his letter, "Your brother, though to you no doubt a care."^{13}
On February 14, 1874 David wrote to Charles Jensen, "Do I dream it or is the same subtle evil surrounding you that I have to contend with here. It seems so at least. However be that as it may, I shall fight as long as breath is in me for that which is pure. And trust that you are for and with me as a friend. The change that you would find in me is simply a lack of health and vitality, this might prevent that even flow of spirits that you might expect. . . . Clara took care of me when I was so low, caused her to be a trifle less stout than formerly." But David was not as well as he pictured himself to be to his family and friends. Unknown to David, Joseph also wrote to Charles Jensen in Council Bluffs, only four days after David's letter. Joseph's message was, "David's health is not good. He is moody and absent minded and quite taciturn." Joseph blamed himself for overworking David. Indeed, all the family began to harbor guilt believing they might have done more for this brilliant younger brother. Joseph explained, "My stay away in the fall causing over-work over wrought his mind. It will be some time before he gets over the fever that he had. When you write don't name that I told you he was still sick; as he is morbidly sensitive." Taciturn, morbid--these were words not before used to describe the ebullient and gifted David.

Sometime in the early spring David went to Nauvoo. The restful old house by the river seemed to ease his mind for he seemed much improved during the several months of spring, 1874. In May he wrote from Nauvoo to Charles Jensen, "A voice of singing birds, of gratitude, and of peace can be given from your friend as ever. A fragrance of lilacs, of rose, bluebells and grasses can be presented, for it is
springtime and home to a great degree." David reported on the family's well-being, "Elbert has great liberty about the grounds and is consequently increased in happiness and welfare," and reported, "I record today the death of a favorite singer, a thrush that used to answer my calls in the garden. . . . I have been much concerned about you of late, but begin to rest securely in regard to you, trusting your guidance in your own hands, seeing that I cannot get to you. My sentiments are much the same as formerly, but everybody's sentiments are his own, you know. How we would enjoy a visit from you, Charley Jensen, you better believe, without any discount." Joseph again wrote to Jensen on June 11, and ordered copies of photographs of both David and Alexander which apparently were taken in Council Bluffs, and he mentioned no problems with David.

Anxious to place his family on a more secure financial footing, during this springtime period of lucidity David began to collect his poems and prepare them for publication in a book of poetry. Writing to Charles Jensen on February 14, he urged, "Do not mock my poor book, Charley, when it does, if it ever comes out." Bearing the publication date 1875, David's book of poetry was printed on the hand press of the newly established Herald Steam Book and Job Office. *Hesperis: A Book of Poems* was bound in Chicago in purple cloth with gilt edges. The dedication was to Emma, "a most noble and devoted Mother, her grateful son dedicates this the child of his mind, wishing it more worthy her memory." The volume was a hundred ninety-four pages, containing eighty-seven poems.

But the reprieve did not last long. Joseph explained that in
1877, David had been ill for three years, had partially regressed, "but a subsequent attack of fever again deranged him." On March 13, David wrote in his journal, "I sorrow at present under deep prejudice no rest from mental persecution by night and day. I find myself under a drain of unendurable aggression impossible to combat. I lie down to rest in the day I am abused for that and my toil is hindered forever." Emma Smith, aged seventy, cared for her thirty-year-old son through the spring and summer, 1874, but the situation became very difficult by July. When David became very ill and moody again in the summer, Joseph traveled to Nauvoo, and brought David home with him to Plano and kept him with him in his own home. On the first of August, Joseph wrote again to Charles Jensen. "I think that no special good would come to David by your visiting him just now though doubtless, if he happened to be feeling better he would be pleased to see you. His moods are variable, and sometimes those with whom he has been most intimate and friendly, he treats coldly, if not with suspicion." Voicing the sentiments of an elder brother, Joseph continued, "I would do anything to place him right again but am powerless, as yet, do not know what steps to take." The frustration and futility of trying to deal with David's irrationality are evident. "He will take nothing like medicine even refusing a cup of milk, for fear we have put something into it." Joseph by this time sensed that David's illness would require more than rest and time. With a sense of foreboding, he confided, "I, somehow, do not fear the ultimate, but the ordeal is a terrible one for us all. I pray strength to endure." Joseph thanked Jensen for his offer to visit, and assured him that David would be in his home "until we know
better what to do." In his delerium and confusion David turned away from the very sources that before gave him strength and hope. "He does not appreciate his wife and home associations at present. He is very sad and gloomy at times," Joseph wrote, an understatement explaining the hurt and rejection that Clara and Elbert both must have been feeling.

Two weeks later Joseph wrote Jensen again, "I have reason to think David has written to you." Joseph knew that David's actions needed an explanation. "You will, (if his letters to others indicate what his to you is) perceive that he is sadly out of balance mentally. He is terribly fearful, moody, and at times suspicious and almost violent. He fancies he has no friends. Cheer and control him all you can. My faith remains steadfast, but David is being fearfully tried. I almost fear it will result in injury to others, perhaps himself.""23

Unable to find solace and comfort for David in any of the known medicinal or medical treatments, Joseph reverted to prayer. "We have thought to make special intercession and administration for him and will as soon as we find him in a frame of mind to warrant the effort," he wrote to Jensen. In his memoirs Joseph described the occasion of the blessing for healing. "At the request of several of the brethren I asked the elders to administer to him. He offered no objections to the ordinance, but, as I saw him look up at them furtively, from under his eyebrows, with an expression that clearly signified to me that the spirit which at that time was in possession of his body and in control of his mental faculties, was not the spirit of my gentle brother, but rather that of some defiant malevolence.""24
David's mental unbalance created problems in Joseph's house. A friend of Joseph's, J. C. Clapp, said he arrived at the church offices and was told that David was possessed. "Nonsense," he replied, "I don't believe anything of the kind."

"You go to the house and see."

Clapp reported, "Upon arriving at the house I talked with the girls there, Joseph's daughters, and they said that David was possessed, that their father didn't think they knew it, but they did. They also said that there had been noise in the house day and night and that their father came home one day and rebuked that noise and it was never heard thereafter." Clapp reported that at about that time, David appeared at the top of the stairs and in a burst of poetry, invited him up. "When I reached the top of the stairs, he greeted me and then we sat down and conversed for an hour and all at once David jumped to his feet and said, 'Get away, Brother Clapp. They are coming.'"

"Nonsense, Dave, Nonsense, Dave, nothing of the kind," Clapp answered.

"Then Dave ran and put his hands to his face between his knees on the lounge and shouted, 'I told you they would.'" Clapp insisted that "his face was raw for four days from the vitral which he said the devils had thrown on him."25

David's condition was not a secret; he had been so enthusiastic an advocate of the church that his silence alone was telling. In March a notice in the Herald ran, "Brother David Smith is again ill. The abiding faith and prayers of the Saints are requested in his behalf. . . . constant inquiry is made about him."26 Portraying David's illness
as the result of overwork, the Herald later reported, "He should have
had rest from labor some time before he was compelled to take it. Tis
constant warfare tells on the toilers."27 Milton B. Oliver moved into
Joseph's home as a full time caretaker for David.28

The people in Utah were also concerned. But discovering the
real nature of David's condition was difficult for them. Samuel H. B.
Smith wrote to Joseph F. Smith in Liverpool, England, on August 13,
1874, "I hear that David has entirely lost his mind, and plays on the
floor with the children."29 In response, Joseph F. wrote, "I was sorry
to hear your report of Cousin David H. If you learn anything more
about him please let me know."30 Samuel wrote again in December to
report, "Someone right from Nauvoo says that David is hopelessly insane,
that he was with his mother. I saw by one of the Heralds he was recom-
mended to be prayed for."31 David wrote a few lines in a journal on
November 20, 1874. "Mentally at an ebb. Satan! Signal all that was
reassured by day light. The conduct of young men and women and
families to be looked after--their employment secure."32

By November 4, Joseph reported to Jensen that "David is in some
respects, better, but is not well by any means."33 In April 1875
Joseph reported, "He is now fishing assiduously every day from early
morn to dewey eve."34 Little change occurred over the summer appar-
ently, for David was not entirely well, but able to make a visit in
October, 1875. Joseph said he had left David with a friend in Lamoni,
"I sent his clothes and he is there still. How long he will remain or
how the trip, as a whole, affected him remain undecided. It is certain,
however, that he was . . . none the worse."35 Three weeks later,
David apparently was still in Lamoni, for Joseph wrote his mother, "I have no late word from David. Do not know how he is doing whether ill or well." 36 A week later, November 22, 1875, "We have not much news from David. He is in Lamoni still, how long he will remain there I do not know. A letter from him a few days ago, does not show much change in his condition. How it will terminate God alone knows." 37

David's condition steadily worsened. Describing these months, Joseph remembered, "By far the greatest burden life laid upon me at that time was the care of this brother David, the diseased condition of whose mind made the most careful surveillance necessary. It was a care and responsibility which had no interlude or cessation, day or night." 38 The burden of caring for David became heavy for the family. Clara was not able to deal with him; Joseph's family had stood much strain. Though Emma Bidamon acknowledged that "David's imbecility was her greatest trouble," 39 she left Nauvoo about the middle of March to go to Plano and help with sickness in the families in Plano. Alexander returned to Plano bringing David with him. 40 Emma waited a week until David was well enough to travel, then brought David home to Nauvoo with her. 41 Searching for a reason for his illness, she noted that his visits to Utah "neither did him nor the family any good," for the boys went there without her approval. 42 David did not stay long, and was back in Plano by April 26, when Joseph reported, "David is a[t] work, gardening every day, and seems to enjoy it." 43

Perhaps the gardening kept his rambling thoughts at bay. He wrote to his mother about this time, "I have painted your picture beautifully. When you were here Mother, they made you to say that I
was not your son, I saw it in a moment. You simply went up to the corner of that office square and touched it and they set it down against me. And again, you were in an extremity, and I and Clara were also in an extremity. And that you were not saved is a shame. This will make you comprehend many things." Bewilderment, confusion, feelings of persecution, marked David's erratic thoughts. This letter and others he would write in the future reveal a tortured personality trying to emerge through the mists that entrenched it. "It is gone, Mother, that unity that existed between you and Joseph. Peace be with you; you did not mean that I was a post. You were under their influence too much. I never say Grace comfort you any longer. Do not imagine but what I would say it if grace was accommodating. If ever the scale turns and I conquer circumstances I will remember you better." David had dealt with the image of touching a post earlier in his life and used it as an example of the loss of personal freedom. The poem told of a young man who was very bright with the exception of one compulsion.

Perchance while with you on the dusty way
   He spied a fence post on the other side,
Off he would go and touch it, naught could stay
   His hand from this. Then he would glide
Back to your side; but soon enough, alas
   His mind would wander from the beaten track
An heap of stones, a stump, a blade of grass,
   He needs must go and touch it, then come back.
Though poorly told the moral is quite plain,
   For when we sin along life's beaten track,
We touch the post and have to go again
   And yet again and touch it, then come back. 45

For some time Joseph had pondered the merits of a trip to the missions in California and Utah. David seemed calm; Joseph took him to Alexander who now lived near Andover, Missouri. David would remain,
"roaming at will through the woodland," until Joseph returned. This was Joseph's first trip to the west; after spending four months in California; he arrived in Utah the middle of November, 1876. On December 2, he made his first public speech at the Liberal Institute where David had been greeted with such warmth less than three years earlier. Joseph left Salt Lake City on December 11, 1876, after spending only three weeks in Utah. On his way home he picked up David, and brought him home with him to Plano. They arrived on December 19th. David was now impossible to deal with. Joseph remembered, "We all hoped that the quiet and benefits of rural life would build up his relaxed system and restore his broken health... It seems that at times he had shown evidences of violent disturbances, upon one occasion even striking Alexander, who had come to believe that his growing family should no longer be exposed to danger of injury through further outbreaks or frenzy on the part of the stricken man. I found him passive and docile enough, but with the darkening shadows of melancholia dementia already closing about him... it was, indeed, a tragic homecoming." 

Joseph soon discovered that the hoped-for rest had not helped David's condition; indeed, he had become worse. After frightening Alexander's family, David now became "dangerous" to Joseph's wife and children. Joseph noted, "In the face of an antipathy he formed to my wife... he was quite cross with my wife and her children; and I did not dare to run further pre-natal risks for the wife could not always keep her fears under control." Joseph wrote to Charles Jensen, "After his return to Plano he fancied himself to be Pres. of the Atlantic and Pacific RR and assumed the direction of affairs at the R.R. Station
here. They complained of the annoyance and I had to take some steps to stop it or they would. I tried to reason with David, but he insisted that I knew he was Pres. and was only trying to keep him out of his rights. &c." 49

David played out the part required by his fantasy. He went repeatedly to the telegraph office at the station, sometimes handing them as many as sixteen messages a day in his attempt to run the railroad. 50 Joseph went to the station agent to explain David's hallucination and attempt to convince the man to indulge David's desire because when his messages were interferred with, David became violent and made "dangerous demonstrations." This resulted in a delegation of businessmen, including the station agent, who called on Joseph and notified him that if he did not do something to have David taken care of they would see to it. "They stated that his actions had so affected the employees about the station that they were liable to make mistakes in their business, and that the very sight of him on the sidewalks of the town had made the people afraid of him." 51 David also interferred with the International Harvester works. 52 Joseph probably wrote to his mother and his sister Julia about the immediacy of the problem, and suggested to them, "in the voice of prudence as well as that of affection," that the family take steps to place David in an institution. Emma answered, "The condition of poor David has been a constant source of sorrow to me. It seems so terribly and unaccountably distressing." Faced with a choice that was no longer possible to avoid, his mother rallied to the task at hand. "It is very hard but I think it may be best to take him to the asylum." 53
On January 9, 1877, the news that Joseph sent to Charles Jensen was that David had been quiet for two or three days, intimating that the opposite had been the case much of the time.54 Five days earlier, probably during a period of much difficulty with David, Joseph had written the fateful letter. Directed to Dr. E. A. Kilbourne, in care of the Illinois State Asylum for the Insane in Elgin, Joseph asked, "What will be the likelihood of a patient being received from Kendall Co. now provided the legal steps are complied with?" Joseph explained that the prospective inmate believed himself to be the designer and architect of several places, and that he was a railroad president. "A brother who, by reason of undue mental excitement and an attack of fever, became unsettled in mind some three years since. . . . He has not been violent except upon two or three occasions when resisted in some of his ideas. His insanity we hoped to be temporary and that it would yield to home treatment and care. So far we can see but little change and have concluded that proper Hospital treatment may do for him what we have failed to accomplish." Joseph assured the doctor, "It is the only instance known to me in our family, so it is not hereditary. He has usually been clean in person, though a few times refusing to change clothing unless required to do so. He has been a man of rare natural gifts, can play well on organ or piano, even now usually spending some time each day at the organ."55 Immediately Joseph received an answer from the asylum accepting David. In response Joseph assured the director that he would take the proper steps. Then, poignantly, Joseph added, "For the kindly tone of your letter I thank you. It is hard for me to take this step, it would be harder still if I feared that he would fall into the hands
of men of unkind hearts."56

An affidavit, signed by acquaintances of David, including a Frederick or Frank Sherman, who may have been the recipient of David's anguished letter about his father's participation in polygamy, was prepared for the court on January 13.57 A jury was summoned, and a court was held with David present and defended by an assigned Counsel. The official findings were, "We, the undersigned jurors, find that David H. Smith is Insane, and a fit person to be sent to the State Hospital for the Insane."58 A warrant for David's arrest, directed to Joseph Smith, commanded him "forthwith to arrest David H. Smith, who has been declared to be insane, and to convey him to the Illinc's State Hospital for the Insane."59 The document allowed Joseph to take an assistant with him if he deemed it necessary. On January 19th, 1877, accompanied by the town constable of Plano, Joseph took David to the asylum where Dr. E. A. Kilbourne and his assistants "received him kindly."60

David Smith's productive life, as judged by the standards of the society in which he lived, was at an end. He would remain in the institution twenty-seven years until his death. David himself best described the torment that invaded his mind. As he and Alexander wandered from mountains to coast in California seven years earlier, David faced his "Discontent,"

Let me be happy too. O! restless soul
Fold thy quick limbs and rest from care awhile;

Would God my friends were here to share my thought,--
Would I could find the rest I long have sought.

Would I could speak the language of the hills;
Would their plush velvet grace I could make known;
Could I translate the talking of the rills
    That from their crowning dimples wander down,—
I would not sing, and yet I can not cease; 61
    I can not murmur, yet I have no peace.
CHAPTER TEN

Life in an Asylum 1877-1904

Within a week of his arrival at the institution at Elgin, David penned a note to his brother Joseph:

Dear Sir or Brother Mine,
I am well at present and trust to get along, or are well enough through all times to come, or to continue well.

Approaching coherency, David asked, "If you can secure the bundle of designs and writing paper I left at the house of Lydia Thomas either to your house or send them to me I will be obliged to you, as I dread to let them be about under survy, as they become common and stale please secure them in some manner."¹ The note is curiously devoid of reaction or feeling as to his surroundings, or to the abrupt change in his life that placed him there. Mercifully, David seemed unaware of the onus of insanity and the implications of asylum.

Immediately upon his return to Plano, Joseph began the sad task of informing his friends and associates that he had committed David. To Charles Jensen he wrote, "After long meditation, prayers, and in grief, I took David to the Hospital at Elgin for treatment. . . . I am sadly burdened about it, but have acted for the best as I now think."² To Charles Derry, "I was forced to take David to the Hospital for treatment. . . . I took advise of the brethren. . . . Like you I strongly believe he will by and by stand 'clothed and in his right mind.'"³ When news of David's commitment spread, some members sent their
condolences to the church headquarters. One member wrote, "Please give my respects to Br. David & say to him that the Lord will be here in a few short years & will remove that cloud of darkness from his mind and place him in his own where he will have the Urim & Thummim." 4

The attitude of the family was always that they had placed David in the institution for treatment, fully expecting that he would regain his equilibrium. Their correspondence reflects this hope. "There is no change in David's condition," Joseph wrote to his mother in May. "I saw a brother, however, who had been to see him and who spent some two hours in his company and who is inclined to think that he is improving." Hopefully, Joseph added, "In conversation with one of the physicians he learned that David might at any time return to himself, suddenly and be returned of his difficulty. I have myself thought this might result." 5 Emma Smith Bidamon, seventy-three years old, had experienced much of the traumatic and unusual in her lifetime, but serenity would be denied her in her old age also. She confided to a visitor that she felt the "deepest sorrow" at David's condition and described it as a "living trouble" to her. Expressing "intense regret" that David had ever gone to Salt Lake City she commented that she had warned him not to do so. 6 Wearily, Emma waited for a miracle that did not come.

While rumors of David's insanity had been common among members of both churches for some time, the actual commitment occasioned new accusations. Members of each church charged the other of perfidy in respect to David. Church members in Utah who believed that David had embraced their beliefs implied that he was committed by the
Reorganization because he returned home to insist the Utah church was true. Joseph in particular was stung by the implication that he would do such a thing. "There were those at enmity with me and the church who charged me with having had my brother confined in this asylum because he had changed his opinion, had accepted the theory and teachings of the Utah polygamists, and had conceded their position concerning our father's reputed connection with that dogma." Sensitive to such accusations, Joseph emphatically stated, "I have set it down elsewhere, and repeat it here, that this charge is not true. I loved my brother David most devotedly, and would never have laid a straw in the way of his fullest enjoyment of a normal earth life, no matter what his opinions might have been; but since it was decreed, for some reason, that such normal life were denied him, I acted for the best good and according to the best judgment I possessed when I placed him where he could best be cared for."  

To Joseph's credit he refused to allow the members of his organization to accuse the people in Utah of poisoning David while he was in their midst, a charge that originated among some of the members of the Reorganization who had known the brilliant David of earlier times. In answer to this Joseph wrote, "I am not prepared to say, whether or not my brother David was wrongly [done] by in Salt Lake City, as intimated in the slip sent me. His first attack was in the city, and occurred soon after a visit away from his regular boarding place. . . . I do not wish to believe the story, and so set it down as a rumor. If the story be true there are none of the facts known to me, or any one of his faith or kin." David was in no position to clarify the source
of his illness, and there the conjecture rested.

But Joseph had other thoughts about the events leading up to David's problems. Joseph knew that David had associated with spiritualists in the west. "I am convinced that insidiously there was inculcated into my brother's mind the idea that his father was with a polygamist in practice or that he was the spiritual author of the Utah plural marriage philosophy. . . . I do not believe my brother had the power to resist the danger of thus submitting himself to the uncanny will and influence of unseen spirits which, according to the teaching of the philosophy itself, lurk around in the twilight zone of human consciousness ready to take advantage of people still tabernacled in the flesh."10 Charles Jensen also blamed spiritualism for David's illness. David had become friends with a Dr. Paulson, and in a letter to Joseph, Jensen wrote, "He was talking to me about David's case and he thinks that while David was investigating Spiritualism in Utah an evil spirit gained control. The doctor says that when visiting a hospital for insane in California Dr. Clark who was in charge informed him that a thousand of the patients there heard spirit voices. He thinks that we are surrounded by innumerable spirits good, bad and indifferent, and that clairvoyent mediums give up their individuality to them and generally regain it, but when a bad spirit gains control they are not always able to shake off the influence . . . He thinks David under some such influence and wishes to go and see him as he thinks he can be demagnetized."11 Jensen himself questioned the efficacy of medical prowess in David's case and believed that David would be healed by the power of God. "Brother Joseph," he asked, "Why cannot we have a day of
fasting and prayer for David's recovery?" 12

Joseph's answer was brief and to the point, "The subject of a fast and prayer day for David's recovery had been a frequent discussion in my mind, and had frequently been suggested by others, many of whom have been far less considerate, kind, and true in their friendship for him than you. . . . One thing that has hitherto operated in my mind against it, was the thought that he gave himself up to the influence that took him captive." This for Joseph was the crux. He explained it further, "Could I in faith pray, and hope that God would hear our prayers! This was the query." 13

Joseph could not accept the notion that David was insane for reasons beyond his control. He believed that at some point David could have willed his derangement away, or, as Joseph himself had done years earlier, turned from the experience with spiritualism without any long lasting results. And Joseph could find no reason for David's weakness. "No man was more loveable than was my brother David Hyrum Smith, and no man ever received more love, esteem and tender devotion from those who knew him than was extended to him." 14 Sometimes the anguish of it all almost overwhelmed Joseph. "God pardon me; how I have rebelled when I have thought of David's condition. How I have struggled and fought and agonized--How defiant of the powers of the Devil and how crippled, hurt, and sad I have been. God forgive me if I have staggered under it all." 15

Clara also staggered under it all, but summoned up a remarkable resiliency. Immediately after David's commitment she moved back again to Sandwich to be near her parents. Her attitude was that she was a
widow who would have to bear the responsibility for herself and Elbert alone, but that she was also a wife who would wait for her husband. She explained to Joseph, "He may recover. If he does, he will find me his wife, as I was when he left me. His leaving was the result of misfortune for which neither of us was responsible, so far as my knowledge goes, and I wish to remain faithful to him."\textsuperscript{16} Within a short time, Clara's family moved to northwestern Iowa. Elbert chose from his toys a set of building blocks and a small iron bank. The family moved by train to the terminus at Storm Lake, then traveled by wagon to an isolated farm site. Clara's mother was an invalid; Clara kept house for her father. Elbert remembered, "perhaps incessant hard work helped mother over those difficult years."\textsuperscript{17} She communicated with Joseph in 1878 that she and Elbert were well and that David's seven year old son was "doing finely at school and at home."\textsuperscript{18}

Ten months after David's commitment he wrote to Joseph. The letter was strangely stilted and formal, and seemed to be so close and yet so far away from normal. "I expect my thoughts will appear a little strange to you in their unusual dress for I must confess that it had been some time since I ventured to use the pen. It is prominent to me that I shall write but not prominent that which I shall write. However, that I might more definitely do so, and that what must be said may be said I will more by theory write than by mere fancy." David's words sounded more like brilliancy than lunacy, but he was unable to stay on track. "In the first place as to local conditions I may say that my health had been good for longer period than usual. This fact is a very important constiuant at least to me and from manifold anxieties of the
past to yourself also an important constituent and as the state of health had been quite keenly well and of long duration I am quite grateful and enjoy that health keenly." Accustomed to expect incoherence from one judged insane, the reader of the letter searched for more solid indications of imbalance, but still the David of old does not appear. "I find myself well clothed in all respects, for which I would care at least. There are some sad thoughts connected with a man's ways for which the preparations of all gospels seem to fail. For those we need not care, indeed we need not care. Out of two reasons, the nature of man's trusted resources for one thing, and that we suppose that divine providence will in its pious care do all that in its power lies to enhance our welfare, and that we trust that Divine providence as implicitly as we presuppose it good and wise. We might not probably class ourselves with those supposed manly and great not to say conquering Spirits, who like Napoleon like remaking ancient history have so ruled or molded time and contended with events directing and inventing them as that they bent providence so to speak to their own will and no longer trust a providence supposed by them to be blind."

"As to the house, nothing could of its proportions and pretensions do better." David again began his subject with a clear sentence, but then wrote, "To be displeased were to show the stranger spirit of will to say strategy were to be noisy in fact a statement and proceeding quite out of the legitimate Christian line of our modern times. We might say extenuating circumstances, or 'pchatinghy' that it will result well, the house will I were susceptible of improvement, and one might put the finger of remark down there." The words and thoughts
fell from David's pen in a jumble. The remarkable vocabulary hinted of
the mind behind the barrier, but it never achieved clarity. "As to
Diet it is good diet it, the person of plenty linger near in response
to toil and careful diligence. Luxury might also be said to linger a
little longer than common or than she usually does in the shape of the
fruits of the season and a liberal supply of the more substantial
viands. The finger of Paecy is in the matter but little at present yet
shares her skill in 'little bits of color here and there.' unexpected
treasures of the more quiet tone or modest style of ornament or ex-
pression. The summer rounds to its close, or its terminal rose as wont
not however without some little choice tokens of extra notice." David
mentioned fruit, watermelon, and nutmeg melons and clusters of flowers.
"These I appreciate. They reward one may say the times and exertions
or ex-hintences of the past much. Of late especially I notice some
quite tasty offerings to the eye of taste."

He continued, "There are many things I might say were it not a
time of pass over as it were, that crowd the mind and throng the brain
to notice of what might be noticed, to state of what of regard or hope
that might be or ought to be stated one almost fails through will not
base neglect one would hope but of the existing surfaces of natures
interest that tracts at times and yet her repeated description fails
to enlost our attention." As if sensing his problems, David asked
rhetorically, "Do we surrender or not surrender too much to the lasi-
tudes of our abnormal state, or is exhortation to attention to the
bible and faith or wakeful exertion of weight or is it trite and stale
on the pallid ear the dull or the rightfully resisting ear of the mind?"
Without referring to his wife and child, or mentioning anyone he knew by name, David continued, "Memories of kindred grief and daily cross fret the brow and fill the throat with vague unrestful emotion to be or not to be repented of. The uncertain lapse of time or the certain known results of years the neglected thoughts of the heart are often of avail in times of grief. That is of great grief if in times of need of composition."

Pulling himself back again through the mists of his mind, David clearly addressed Joseph, "For the favors of solid comforts you brought and sent, appoint to yourself a portion of lifes best fare and profess that your brother remembers you at times. We so little need to go through life destitute of, well, its barest necessities, its needs, that any other course will only show absolute cowardice as it were. I hope you good rest of nights and peace by day. Do not fail me in any way, that you can." David told Joseph, "I find life not dreary thank you, not dreary. I am not so blind to its fallacies—as I might be. It is not all it seems to. Write a little more fully next time and be sure to keep in required posted condition as to your welfare. So Goodbye. David H. Smith."19 At the receipt of this letter, Joseph must have put his head down and wept. David was so close and yet so far.

As the Christmas holidays approached, Joseph sent a pair of shoes and some handkerchiefs to David and apples, nuts and candies for him to share with friends. "It is but little I send as it is but little I can do," the struggling father of a large family wrote.20 There is no indication that the family was required to pay a portion of the expense of keeping David in the institution.
At the first of the year, 1879, David wrote a letter to his mother. While it gave no evidence of the light, humorous David of old, he obviously had improved since the long October missive to Joseph. "It has been a long time since I wrote to you, I am sorry to confess," David began, "and while busy at work this morning, I concluded to write to you again, to see if I could get a line from you, as I desire very much to hear from my dear mother again. I have often thought of you at old Nauvoo of late and wondered how you have got along. If you had been well enough to enjoy Christmas this year." Without rambling incoherently with more thoughts than he could express, David discussed Christmas and its presents, "I did not receive so very many this year as I have some years." He referred to "almost precious times together in dear old Nauvoo." David was staying in the convalescent cottage near the asylum. "It is not so large as the Mansion used to be, but it is much finer, well, somewhat finer, though not very much, and not near as dear and humbly sweet as the natively flowery place used to be. I remember the columbines and wild honeysuckle, and well, the violets; and I sometimes long for the comforts of a home more exclusive, and though it may never be mine to find fault with those who have control, or govern affairs, I may say again that I am thankful for good health and the blessing of a dear pious Mother at Nauvoo, who is still spared to bless and comfort me by continuing to live in the good council of almighty God." David explained that he had a Bible to read and a chair on which to sit in the meetings of "Christian and pious people who do love to assemble."

"Well, Mother, hold on the faith and continue in the way of life
we long have found to lead to peace, and make for peace." David described his cottage, painted gray outside and wallpapered within, and told her simply, that it "affords a very good home." Whether David was truly improved, or whether he could deal better with the simple subjects of his letter to his mother than with the abstract philosophical ideas he tried to convey to Joseph is a matter of conjecture.

This was the last communication David and his mother had. Her health failed from the beginning of the year, and it was apparent to Joseph and Alexander that she would not live long. Pressured by the conflict over polygamy, they decided at long last to interview their mother. She granted the interview in February, 1879. The two sons asked many questions of her, but did not publish their report until six months after her death. In Alexander and Joseph's version, Emma denied any possibility of the practice of polygamy during her marriage to their father, but Emma never saw the published version of her discussion. She declined rapidly in the early spring and died in Nauvoo, with both Alexander and Joseph in attendance, on April 22, 1879, in her seventy-fifth year.

Joseph returned to Plano and sent a note to David. "Our dear mother was sick for a long time and the other day went to her eternal sleep with Alexander, Julia, and I watching with her. Quietly and peacefully she went to sleep. We buried her over to the hillside and there among the locusts and the lilacs she is resting from her long journey of life." Worried that the shock might be too much, Joseph sent the letter with a note to Dr. Kilbourne. "If the enclosed letter will, in your opinion, do David no harm give it to him; if it will,
please withhold it. ... I have sometimes thought he might recover through severe bodily sickness, his mental balance; I don't know."24

A year passed. Joseph waited in vain for David's improvement, lapsing into anger at times over the frustration and uselessness of David's life. "The thought that one so endowed as was he should so be put off mental balance is a terrible thought to me. There must be some subtle relationship between the unseen and men by which such disturbances are governed, produced, and removed--0 that it were found. ... My constant prayer is that his stay with you may result in his disembar- rassment, or that should his malady finally prove incurable that he may by his gentle ways have endeared himself to you all, fatal and foolish and weak though the causes of his intellectual [im]balance may have been."25 Joseph offered to visit David whenever he could.

From Plano Joseph tried to protect David from the cranks who tried to reach him, and in one instance misjudged. The Dr. Paulson with whom David had exchanged books planned to visit David at Elgin. Joseph wrote to Dr. Kilbourne, "This Dr. Paulson, a man of ability and learning, is, and had been for years, a spiritualist, and at one time thought by his friends was a little off. Of this I cannot say. He is a friend to David, my brother, but I fear his influence would not be to David's good. Of this I am assured, Paulson is crazy enough to fancy that he can cure David. But I am exceedingly distrustful of the man in any influence he might use over him. Can you aid me in getting rid of him? And will you?"26 By June 20, 1880, Joseph thanked Dr. Paulson for visiting David and explained, "I had heard that you were strongly tinctured with Spiritualism and if so, I did not know what effect an
interview with David might have. I am satisfied in my own mind that
David's contact with Spiritualism was an injury to him. Since your
visit here, the last one, my feelings toward you have changed consid-
erably and in your favor. . . . I am now glad that you visited him."27

In 1881 John M. Bernhisel, who had retained an interest in
David from the time he had assisted in his birth, forwarded a letter
from Dr. Kilbourne to John Taylor, president of the Utah church since
Brigham Young's death in 1877. Kilbourne described David's condition,
"He was insane for two years prior to his coming to us, is now quite
childish and simple in manner, his very little mind, is quite well
contented, goes out to walk alone and never gives any trouble. . . .
We do not think there is any chance of his recovery, he has been insane
for so long."28

David's wife and child remained in Iowa during these years.
Elbert grew with the rapidity of most children, and during his youth
Clara attempted to raise him in the church in spite of their isolation
from organized branches. Elbert remembered a particularly poignant
moment. He had undoubtedly taken much pride in the knowledge that his
uncle was the president and prophet of the church, and waited for
the day when he could see him, for he had no childhood memory of him.
When Joseph traveled to their area for a conference, Elbert waited
with some anxiety. "I stood in one of the aisles at the rear of the
big tent. Brother Joseph came down the aisle from the speaker's stand,
shaking hands right and left with the people, all of whom called him
'Brother Joseph.' . . . He was very erect and of commanding presence
and bearing, a man to whom people gave confidence and love. As he
approached me I put out my hand and he shook it. I expected him to recognize me, but he did not. . . . I was just another boy standing in the aisle. . . . So he passed on, and quite without reason, I felt bad." Joseph was very cordial to the youth when he discovered who he was.

David occasionally had periods of lucidity and the family took him from the asylum, but he was never able to stay away. In 1884 George Blakeslee, a longtime friend and associate of the Smith family offered to take David on a trial basis. Joseph wrote to Kilbourne at the asylum giving his approval for the experiment. "Mr. Blakeslee's home is a pleasant one his family and home quiet and orderly; his wife a woman of tact and judgement; Br. Blakeslee himself a wise and judicious man." Though the suggestion was made in May, it was not until the last of July that Blakeslee indicated, "We brought Bro. D. H. Smith here from Elgin July 17. He is none the worse for the change." The experiment did not last and David returned to the institution. Five years passed before the attempt was made again. David himself wrote to Joseph in 1889, "Sometime ago I wrote you a letter. Well, under the light I looked at affairs I thought best to return to Plano, but as I now regard matters, I think I had best not return." The letter was quite clear; Joseph wrote across the bottom of it, "This seems to be more like David. Let Bro. Blair see it." Joseph enclosed the letter to Kilbourne with the comment, "Of course it pains me to think of keeping him there when no necessity for it exists as we would gladly have him in our midst when no danger to himself or others would occur. Please write me what you think of it." In remembering the period
Joseph commented that David was never released from the care of the institution except for a few intervals when he made short visits accompanied by an attendant. Charles Jensen and Henry A. Stebbins both accompanied David, but were unsuccessful in accommodating him well enough to keep him home.  

David's mental illness caused a lingering problem in the administrative circles of the Reorganized Church. Ironically, Joseph had called David to be a counselor in the first presidency while David was still in Utah, after the onslaught of the brain fever that was to destroy his mind. Joseph was stung by charges that he was a "Dumb Prophet" because he had not given any revelations guiding the people or the church for several years prior to 1873. People whispered that "the whole church is sick because the head is sick." Joseph announced that the Lord had approved the calling of both David and William W. Blair. By 1885 David had spent eight years in the Asylum and the church had operated under the sometimes embarrassing position of having one of its presiding officers insane. By the April conference of 1885 in Independence, Missouri, the question was asked whether any communication had been received from the Lord concerning David's position as second counselor. As president and prophet of the church, Joseph replied, "The voice of the Spirit is that David H. Smith be released. He is in mine hand." For those who knew David and the conditions surrounding him, the decision of the church councils was very satisfactory and his family found much comfort in the simple statement attributed to God that David was in His hand.

But some over-enthusiastic members of the Utah church could not
let matters rest, nor did they make the effort to validate their source of information in their zeal to ridicule the Reorganized church. Ten years after the 1885 conference which released David from the presidency, Joseph received a revelation in Lamoni, Iowa, on April 15, 1894. While David had been released from his office nine years earlier, the position of second counselor had not been filled in the interim. The instruction Joseph received was, "It is not yet expedient in me that the Quorum of the Presidency, and the Quorum of the Twelve apostles shall be filled, for reasons which will be seen and known to you in due time. My servant David H. Smith is yet in my hand and I will do my will in the time for its accomplishment. Be not troubled or fearful in the matter for it shall be well for my work in the end."

An editorial in the April 10, 1895 *Deseret News* in Salt Lake commented, hopefully, that "Serious difficulties seem to have broken out among the members of the Reorganized church. . . . disruption of that church may be imminent. A house divided against itself must fall." The editorial pointed out, correctly, that a year earlier a revelation was given concerning David Smith, but quoted the revelation incorrectly, stating that it read, "My servant David H. Smith is in my hand; and his bishopric shall be continued for a season; if he fully recover, he will enter again the work." The writer of the editorial concluded, "A great many of the members of the church openly claim that the Almighty would never have expressed such ignorance as to the probable future of the afflicted counselor as the 'if' indicates. Is it possible, they ask, that God does not know whether David H. Smith will recover from his sickness?" The writer then discussed at length
the problems this dilemma posed for the church and concluded such dis-
sension as developed over it could have one possible good, and that
would be to lead members of the Reorganized church to the conclusion
that the Utah church was correct.

The Herald reprinted the editorial in full, along with an
accompanying letter to the Deseret News editors that noted that the
position supposedly taken by the RLDS church "is that insanity and con-
fine ment in an asylum for an indefinite time does not disqualify a
member of the first presidency from retaining his office," and arguing
that if insanity was acceptable to the Reorganized church, then
"continuous and confirmed mental aberration would not be a bar to
eligibility for selection for and election to a similar position." The
writer further argued that if that applied to one member of the presi-
dency it applied to all three, and if it applied to all three, it
applied to every office in the organization. The argument was absurd
in its insinuation that because of David's condition the entire leader-
ship of the Reorganized church could be drawn from the mentally
unbalanced. In reply, the Herald reprinted accurately the statement
releasing David and pointed out that no "if" existed in the statement.
"Since that time no question concerning him has been raised in the
church." Further, the Herald pointed out that the clause in the 1894
revelation containing the "if" did indeed exist as it was quoted in the
Deseret News editorial, but it referred by name to a member of the
Council of Twelve named Thomas W. Smith, and had no connection to
David. This sally into an attack on the Reorganized church using
David as the medium was indicative of lengths to which animosity between
the churches had gone. 39

After spending years isolated on the farm Clara moved to Lamoni with Elbert in 1892. David’s child was now a man of twenty-one. They rented a small house while Elbert built a home for his mother. Elbert found work in the Herald Office bookbindery at fifty cents a day for ten hours work. He became foreman of the bindery and worked there about eight years. Elbert met and fell in love with the young woman who worked in the front office, and on September 4, 1895, Joseph married Elbert to Clara Cochran in Lamoni. The couple made their home in Lamoni and there three sons were born to them. 40

On January 24, 1893 Joseph received a telegram that David was dead. He immediately traveled to Elgin and found that David was alive and in good health. 41 The authorities had made a mistake. Charles Derry noted in his diary, "The melancholy tidings of Bro. David H. Smith's death reached us today, which caused a pang of deep regret to our souls. But it was a relief to our minds to know that his spirit, which had long been manacled by chains of darkness was now set free and had fled as we believe to the paradise of God. May God comfort his wife and son." 42 Clara and Elbert immediately received the news, and Charles Derry wrote to Clara upon his finding out. On February 7, Clara answered Derry’s letter, knowing by this time that her husband still lived. She expressed her appreciation for the "tender letter and kindness of heart which prompted it," then continued, "You know 'ere this that David's body still lives. What a terrible week we have passed. I did not realize that I had so much hope until I heard he was
gone then it seemed that I could think of nothing but blasted hopes. Since my twenty-third year I have carried this heavy burden and every year and day it seems harder to bear until if it were not for my Boy I could wish this battle over." Clara wrote quite frankly to Derry about her life in the twenty years since David's first attack in Salt Lake City. "In your letter is the sentence, 'May God forever keep back the demon of darkness from your soul.' I wonder if you know how much I need your prayers in that regard." Clara noted that about two hours before the family was ready to leave for Elgin they received a telegram from Joseph saying David was not dead, but not indicating that it was a mistaken identity. They assumed that he was unconscious and began a wild hope that when he awoke his mind would be normal. Then came Joseph's letter with the complete story. "We were again where we have been for so many years. I think Elbert went to the train that day expecting to meet his father sound in mind and the disappointment unmanned him completely." Clara explained that only recently had she been able to pray for David "with any degree of faith until now." Clara said that she sometimes felt David's presence with her, "sometimes for hours and then the feeling leaves me and I am again despondent." Clara's true courage then became evident in one brief sentence. "Let the future be what it may I am still glad we met and were happy for a brief season."43

After Joseph returned to Plano he wrote in the Herald that his unexpected visit found David in good health physically, but unchanged mentally. He used the occasion to remind the readers that David had been administered to, prayed for, and loved, and still nothing had
prevented his mental disturbance.

Joseph continued, "Bro. David H. Smith is forty-eight years of age, is getting gray, and is quite corpulent, a large fleshy man. He is well treated ... and seems not to be disturbed in his surroundings. What the secret movings of his mind may be no one knows; the key is lost, and will not be found unless restored by [God]. ... Over anxiety and undue zeal lead some to make predictions which may do great harm ... There let the Saints leave the issue, praying for the patience to endure, severe as the tests of our faith may be."

Clara read Joseph's words and said, "That gives me no encouragement regarding David."

In November 1893, Edward Stevenson visited David while on a trip to the east from Utah. Stevenson had known David earlier in Salt Lake, although probably not well. Stevenson traveled a mile out from Elgin to a gateway and guard house that surrounded the institution and made arrangement to visit thirty minutes with David. He met him in a reception room unattended by a guard. Stevenson, who had known David as a slim youth, was surprised to find David weighing "no less than 240 lbs." David told him he felt well and was comfortable. The men reminisced about the Smith family members in Salt Lake whom David remembered. Stevenson described his speech as "at times attended with a little absent mindedness, but he was mild and inoffensive as a lamb." David lived "on probation, that is to say a division who are only slightly affected and who are granted privileges to walk out occasionally without a guide." An attendant said that David enjoyed music. Stevenson came away convinced that David would "come out of his present condition and honor his father's name," after he had talked with him.
But David's quiet demeanor did not indicate a restoration of his faculties.

Two years passed. Stevenson again visited David at Elgin in 1895, accompanied by his wife. They waited for David in the reception room as before; David entered "gracefully" gave Stevenson a cordial welcome, but was embarrassed at the presence of Mrs. Stevenson. Inmates at the asylum were undoubtedly quite restricted by sex and David, after so many years, was uncomfortable around women. The keeper allowed them a forty-five minute visit. David told them, "I enjoy good health; I read and play on the organ; well, I play Old Hundred—and some other familiar tunes, and I very much enjoy this amusement; we have our walks twice a day and I attend the flower beds and work them some." The Stevensons proposed a walk, but when they attempted to leave, the doors were locked. The doctor in charge gave them an additional thirty minutes, and David went to his room for his hat. They walked through flower beds that David said he helped care for. He picked flowers for Mrs. Stevenson while her husband took some pictures. When he asked David to be in one, David said, "Oh, no, take the building without me," and walked away rapidly to get out of range. Stevenson again described him as walking quite erect, well dressed, "a fine specimen of a man—tall, over six feet, will weigh 240 lbs. He is quite well proportioned." They walked over a small stream on a bridge that David had helped construct, then the Stevensons were obliged to leave. They had found David enjoying a great deal of liberty and in good health. Stevenson showed considerable insight when he commented, "There is such a thing as a person being comfortably sick... We believe all is well
with David, for God rules in his own way, His purposes to fulfill." Then unable to contain his feelings of effrontery at the sons of Joseph enthusiastically serving a church beside the one in Utah, Stevenson added, "The case of the younger is, to my mind far preferable to the older ones who the Lord will hold more responsible." His advice to those who anguished over David was not to disturb him "for he is comfortable and sins not."47

Stevenson published his letter describing his visit with David in the Deseret News and it was picked up and reprinted by the Herald. In defense the Herald mentioned the old charge that "the elder sons had him placed under restraint because that he favored the Utah side of the controversy after his visit to that Territory, etc." In refuting the charge, they reminded the Utah church that they were welcome to believe that David's condition was better than that of Joseph and Alexander, but that it would be the Utah church members who would answer to God. They thanked Stevenson nonetheless for his sympathies to the sons of the prophet and for stating that David was comfortable and well cared for.48

David lived his life comfortably free from the sorrows that come to others. His step-father, the only father he had known, died in 1851. He had married Nancy Abercrombie a year after Emma's death. Five years after his death, David wrote a letter addressed simply to Mr. and Mrs. Bidamon, apparently Joseph had spared him the knowledge of Bidamons' passing. The letter does not indicate whether David knew that the current Mrs. Bidamon was not his mother, but the mother of Charles Edwin, who had lived as David's little brother from 1868. The letter was clear and gracefully written,49 but the rambling confusion of thought that
characterized his letters was still apparent. "A very kindly graceful and agreeable Salutation," David began. "I have been thinking of late of Nauvoo and the old home, and of yourselves and thought I would write once more to say that I am well, in very good health, and in good comfort, in very good circumstances and general improvement, also to very carefully and benevolently in regard to your health, mutually or inclusively, also how you get along with the old place. the garden the orchard the meadow." David said that he had written a year earlier giving a description of the institution, and he did so again, describing the stream and the bridge he had helped to construct. His sentences were lantalizingly clear, and at the same time frustratingly out of rhythm and normal patterns. For example, "We have a tolerable good Organ in the Hall and I have a good opportunity to write music, to read, to read, you know to read music. Thus read music every day, and have done so for a long time. Write if you have the health one or two letters, one or two will be enough, if you can, I will be pleased to hear from you again." David described the blooming calla lily in the hall, then commented, "I am alone at present have no companion of any kind present with me, since I left plano some ten year ten years ago." He repeated the last sentence again almost exactly. In 1896 it was almost thirty years since David left Planc, he had lost track of time. "Am I coming to Nauvoo? No I suppose not, not that I know of Are you, that is am I well off or comfortable? yes." After David signed the letter he asked anxiously, "Have I written, did I write too often? When I began to write this time I had forgotten it, directly I re-member having written, or that I did write some little time ago if it
is too often, if it is too often, and you do not feel able, do not answer immediately but wait a little space and then answer, perhaps something important may happen that will afford interest enough to stimulate to write." Then David, with some obvious joy, listed his Christmas presents, an overcoat, underwear, slippers, a cap, a handkerchief, a necktie. He did not indicate where they came from. His last sentence was, "Crows, I see a great many, or a large number of them flying about the horizon a body wonders often where they come from and how they live, how they keep warm yet there they are flying everywhere abrod though every thing is frozen down and buried under the snow."

David's correspondence and apparently his conversations never approached the subject of the people whom he had loved. He kept a distance between himself and other human contact through these years, neither mentioning the names of Clara and Elbert, or Joseph, nor his mother. It seemed as if the names of those once dear to him who loved him in return was too painful to approach. It was far easier to wonder if the crows ate than to wonder who fed the lonely and faithful Clara.

In 1898 Joseph and Alexander were requested to provide some funds for David's care. The superintendent of the asylum had written to say that "there is no possible hope for his recovery. That he is not a proper person to have in a private family or a home for the aged and indigent." It was a bleak, but not unexpected forecast. Hoping that the asylum could continue its caretaking arrangement with David, even if the diagnosis gave no hope of cure, Joseph assured the superintendent that neither he nor Alexander, nor Elbert, nor Clara could assume the expense involved for private care for David.
Apparently arrangements were made to keep David at Elgin.

Though Elbert and his wife Clara, along with David's wife, Clara, could not afford to pay for his care, Elbert and his wife began a rapprochement with David. David received a letter from Elbert telling him that he intended to go to California and that he would come to Elgin to see him. On May 14, 1900, David's response was very clear. "Dear son Elbert," he wrote, "Your well written and very interesting letter of May 11th arrived safely with us today, the 13th or 14th. It was I am sure very wellcome, containing so large and surprising a proposition as a trip to California. I have formerly sojourned, or visited in that pleasant region of land several times." David commented, "I do not know of anything thing to prevent your going. I will watch over you to the best of my ability. It seems a long way for you to go from your native town yet I hope and pray that all will be well with you and that you will have a good time in California. I am glad you are coming to see me before going away. I shall look for you next week."53

On May 14, Elbert and his wife Clara traveled to Elgin. This probably was the first visit the twenty-nine-year-old Elbert had made to his father. David was fifty-five. Elbert's diary entry is very brief—probably indicating an inability to express his emotions at this visit. It read, "In afternoon we visited my Father we had a good visit—While there he played and sang some pieces from a Hymnal which we had given him."54 Clara described the visit in more detail. Writing in the same journal as her husband, Clara continued the narrative of their trip to Elgin. "After dinner we went to the Assylum to
visit father Smith. Our visit was very satisfactory considering the circumstances. During the conversation Elbert said to him, 'I suppose I have changed a great deal since you saw me last.' He said, 'yes, I suppose you have.'" During the conversation Elbert asked his father if he had any word to send to his mother. "He replied that he did not know as he had. Said that he and his family had been seperated a great many years and he had not been consulted in the matter. Did not seem to understand why it had been so. He did not care to renew the ties."

Perhaps David's sense of abandonment explains why he avoided mentioning his family's names in his correspondence. David went on to explain the pain experienced by those who entered the asylum. "He said he had noticed a great many when they first came there, they prayed, plead, & struggled that they might return to their families but he had noticed that very few if any ever returned. He for one intended to make the best of it." Elbert and Clara went with David to his ward. He slept in a room with nine beds in addition to his own. As they passed an organ in the hall, David played and sang three hymns out of the book Elbert had brought him. As Elbert and Clara prepared to leave, David said he had enjoyed their visit very much. Clara quoted him saying, "that it had seemed like an angels visit and he hoped we had enjoyed it as much as he."

Elbert and Clara returned to their hosts for the night, but came again the following day to Elgin. They stopped on their way to buy a necktie "for father Smith with money which Mother Smith gave us for that purpose." David was out on the lawn. "At first he could not be found but soon he was seen quite a distance from those of his ward
wandering around all by himself. He was called. He seemed to pay no attention to the guard who called him but soon as he saw us he came to us at once. Said he was so glad we had come again, he did not look for us so soon." They visited together out on the lawn, after arranging two settees in an attractive spot under some trees. David placed the chairs so they faced each other, then commented, "Isn't that nice?" David and his son sat in one chair, Clara took the other. Clara commented that he talked with them "more freely" than he had the day before. They discussed cameras and photography and Elbert bemoaned the fact that they could not bring a camera on the grounds. David commented about their going to California and expressed a desire to go with them. They decided to go indoors where David could play and sing for them, passing beds of flowers where David picked small bouquets of pansies. Once in the house, David the sweet singer, accompanied himself on the organ while he sang hymns to his son, probably hymns that he himself had written. Clara wrote, "Would that I could express my feeling as I sat in the large arm chair and listened to him playing & singing & saw his son standing by his side enjoying the presence of one so near & dear to him, and thinking of the years they had been seperated again, not knowing how long. Perhaps never to meet again in this life. I could not restrain the tears."55

Early in 1901 David wrote to Elbert to thank him for Christmas gifts. One has the sense that the letter was very carefully and deliberately crafted, but that the mind behind it was very close to normal. David wrote to Elbert, "This is sent to you in acknowledgement for the receipt of your very elegant and beautiful Christmas gift
which arrived with us the day preceding the 25th of December. Also to express my grateful thanks for the same." David thanked Elbert for the photographs sent to him from California and then, again for a moment the proud father, David thanked Elbert for "your own goodlooking likeness, which is so very finely, and elegantly well taken." David assured Elbert that he was in good health and wished him the same. "We spent the Holidays very happily," he wrote, "a nice Ball or Dance in the new Hall, or dance room on Christmas Eve, with Sacred Mass in the morning a very fine Dinner of Turky and accompaniment, at noon. Another Dance on New Years Eve with Oyster Soup and Fruit and Potatoe cream on New Years day for Dinner. The winter has been very mild, and all circumstances well as usual."  

David had one more joyful opportunity to acknowledge his son. On October 25, 1902, David wrote to Elbert thanking him for "precious and important news" that came in a letter "regarding the advent or arrival of so beloved a member of your family that your dear little Son constitutes. I hereby send my hearty congratulations and warm sympathy with yourself and lady on that happy event--occasion. also wishing you the happy enjoyment of his society in a long and prosperous life." David remarked on a visit made to him by a friend of Elberts, then for the first time in many, many years, David wrote, "I hasten to write you a letter, will you please allow Brother Joseph Smith to read the same."

David continued, "Our institution gets along in steadily thriving manner, with a goodly degree of lifes bounteous blessings and pleasures. Many thanks for your beautiful Autumn Leaves Magazine,
they were so very good indeed and added so much to my store of amusement. Much obliged for the same and many thanks. Give my careful respects to your wife, and the enquiring friends and relatives." Then David realized the joy of being a grandfather. "Oh! I like the name you have selected so very much, Ronald Gibson Smith will truly always be a pleasant name indeed." And finally, after so many years of waiting, Elbert read the closing signature. "Your Loving Father, David Hyrum Smith." 58

In the fall of this same year, David wrote a letter to his wife of so many years. He wrote not as clearly as he had written to Elbert, but David had a very difficult matter to discuss with Clara. "Dear wife," he began, "If God be willing, that is if the Power that governs our destination or continued existence, will permit the continuation of that mode or state of condition. If not, we or I myself knew it not exactly, as they had said nothing to me about it definitely, as to whether we were continued together in marriage or not. Why did I think of that? Because we have of late been so very long separated that it became a question in my mind as to what was intended thereby? Were we finally and lately separated? Was that a divorcement? if so then the will of God be done. I would not wish to continue if that was a divorce. If, however, our marriage was continued, and we may be permitted and able to come together again as man and wife, then God's will be done, or that of the Presiding power thus ruling and guiding our lives. We have been separated now you know some ten or twelve years." David had not been able to reckon time accurately. He was now fifty-eight years old, and he and Clara had not lived together
for a quarter of a century. David continued his letter to his wife, "We might then meet again some future day let us hope, in happy and cheering circumstances." David thanked her for her letters. "They are so full of your overflowing kindness to me under all times and circumstances. May you be truly adequately rewarded and benefited. You have now written two answers to my letter, permit me to extend the kindest of gentle and tender sympathy towards you for the same, and prayers of hope and sympathy over the three little children." David here undoubtedly referred to Elbert, Clara, and their young son. David continued the letter to his wife. "You know that our going away from Nauvoo was not known to or moved by myself, and my coming here and my staying here so long was surprising—surprising and unknown to me and I suppose to you; hense, or therefore we must have been under the presiding or guiding controll not according to our own will. Also, our future is, I suppose, not known to us or under our own guidance, and will be therefore equally unknown and surprising. Perhaps, however, it is all for the best, and it may be that prosperity will continue to be ours and perhaps a better and brighter degree may dawn with a steadier light, with good health, and renewed courage." Weary then with the effort of expressing himself, David turned to the weather and the changing colors of the autumn countryside. The trees were changing, the flower beds had been touched with frost, "Our row is a stately row of temple like buil[1]dings three in number number of very neat and elaborate construction, with several beautiful cottages in addition. The River wanders through the neighboring town and past our location easterly of us forms a pleasing feature to the landscape of this neighborhood."
David took pride in the institution in which he lived. In this same letter he described the "beautiful cottages and homes of all sorts. . . . tall churches and school houses" that made up "a beautiful town called Elgin." He explained that a piano had replaced the organ, and signed his letter, "From your husband."\(^{59}\)

But on the very brink of reuniting himself emotionally with Clara, David retreated. He brooded about Elbert and his wife and Clara going to California without him, and became bitter and antagonistic toward Clara to such a degree that Joseph who visited him and mentioned Clara's name saw in David's reaction that he was still not free of the insanity.\(^{60}\)

David improved considerably in 1903 and 1904. While the family had prayed for his recovery for many years, Joseph believed it finally had come. Writing of this period, Joseph commented, "That this earnestly desired emancipation came at last . . . I firmly believe, from evidences contained in letters he wrote us. . . . It is my conviction that the bonds which had imprisoned him were broken asunder, his own gentle spirit was reestablished in its proper habitation, and the spiritual struggle for the possession and master of that fleshly tabernacle was finally won by the angel of his [David's own] presence."\(^{61}\)

For the most part David assured everyone that his health was good, but in October 1902, he admitted to Elbert, "My health is only tolerable at present."\(^{62}\) Late in the summer, on August 29, 1904, at half past two in the afternoon, David Hyrum Smith died at Elgin. The diagnosis of the immediate cause of death was diabetes Mellitus, with a contributory cause of complication being chronic mania.\(^{63}\) David was
three months from his sixtieth birthday.

Joseph wrote to Clara after David's death noting, "It was singular that the Hospital authorities did not inform us of David's sickness, but it was not a surprise to me. I had so long known by an aching consciousness that the end would come to me suddenly that I was on the edge of expectation at all hours." Joseph spoke to Clara of her life with his brother.

I saw that your long and patient waiting had received a sad reward. . . . Sister Clara, you have nobly stood by the memory of David as your husband, nobly kept the vow you made that if he was ever made [whole] he would find you as he left you, his wife if he needed or wanted you. And I realize that you note, that your courage was gone. The bitterness of your grief is enhanced by the thought that he may have neither needed nor wanted you, his heart turned from you. No wonder your courage failed. It was worse than death. The latter may be bourne, but the other,--who can bear. It was the mention of you that caused him to show to Bro Israel Rogers and me that he was still in thrall when I last saw him. What mysterious forces were, or had been at work in his brain to alienate his affections, you nor I will never know this side of the grave. The secret has gone with him. I am as much to be blamed for his not going to California with you as you are. It would have been an experiment, more or less dangerous. How I wish he had made the causes of his distress of mind known to us. But that is past.

Cherish no regrets. You did not fail in allegiance to him and have no just cause to reproach yourself. Do not embitter your life more by useless self accusations. There was no opportunity for us to do more than we did. Let us accept the word, 'He is in my hand' as the final kind word of the Father and be content. You are chastened, but it will sanctify your life in great degree.64

David's body was brought to Lamoni, and he was buried there on September 1. David's obituary read in part, "This ends the somewhat checkered and troubled life of one of earths fairest and noblest sons."65

Forty years earlier in youthful enthusiasm, David had written a few lines that form his most fitting epitaph.
Our thought and actions have their qualities
   As well as all things that our eyes behold.

Or will we wake and find it all a dream,
   We have not lived, we only called it so?
We wrought no good, we only made it seem
   As good. No ill, it was a name you know.
And thus the universe will all its laws
   Dissolve to nothing, like an empty sound.
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ABBREVIATIONS IN NOTES

The following abbreviations refer to the frequently used names and sources in the notes.

BYU Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

BYU Studies Brigham Young University Studies.

CHC Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 vols. (Deseret News Press, 1930).

DHS David Hyrum Smith, youngest son of Joseph Smith, Jr., and Emma Hale Smith Bidamon.


ESB Emma Hale Smith Bidamon.


Huntington Library Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California.

JS III Joseph Smith III, eldest son of Joseph Smith, Jr., and Emma Hale Smith Bidamon.


LDS Archives History archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

LDS D&C The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City, 1958).

Lee Library Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Marriott Library Marriott Library, Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.
RLDS Library-Archives  Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

Saints' Herald  The True Latter Day Saints' Herald, an early Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints periodical now referred to as The Saints' Herald.

USHS  Utah State Historical Society.
NOTES

Minimal punctuation has been added to the quotations used in
the dissertation. The original spelling has been retained without the
repetitive use of sic to denote such spelling and italics are also as
found in the original manuscripts unless acknowledged by the author.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Extensive research into the background of the Smith family
has been done by historians of both churches that trace their origins
to Joseph Smith. Mary Audentia Smith Anderson's Ancestry and Posterior
of Joseph Smith and Emma Hale appeared in 1929 and is still a most
valuable genealogical book for the Smith and Hale families. Richard
Lloyd Anderson (no relation) brought out Joseph Smith's New England
Heritage in 1971. Earliest of the books dealing with this period is by
Lucy Mack Smith, the Mormon prophet's mother, who dictated her memoirs
to Martha Coray in Nauvoo sometime in 1844 and 1845. Jan Shipp's
Indana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, has researched the
provenance of this manuscript, and accounts for Lucy Mack Smith's
motivations in the writing of it in her forthcoming book, Mormonism:
A New Religious Tradition, in press, University of Illinois Press. Out
of print for many years, the Arno Press series Religion in America 1969,
has reprinted the 1853 edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Biographical
Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and his Progenitors for many
Generations. Brigham H. Roberts compiled a six-volume Comprehensive
History of the Church which appeared in 1930. Volume one deals exten-
sively with this period. Two major biographies of Joseph Smith address
these early years: Fawn M. Brodie, No Man Knows My History, the Life of
Joseph the Mormon Prophet, and Donna Hill, Joseph Smith, the First
disagree on the authenticity of Smith's visions, but provide excellent
insights into his life.

2. Joseph Smith Letter Books, pp. 1-2. LDS Archives, as quoted
in Donna Hill, Joseph Smith, p. 47. Controversy over this account and
the authenticity of the vision described therein has existed from the
time Joseph Smith first described it. An entire issue of BYU Studies
addressed the question in the Spring, 1969, through the scholarship of
Truman G. Madsen, James B. Allen, Leonard Arrington, Dean C. Jesse,
Milton V. Backman, Jr., Larry C. Porter, T. Edgar Lyon, Marvin S. Hill,
and Richard L. Anderson. A summation of the issue appears in Marvin S.
Hill, "Controversy Over First Vision Accounts: A Summary and a

3. HC 1:10-14. The idea of a new third dispensation was not
unique with Smith. It has survived as a minor sub-heresy since the 2nd century due to the misinterpretation of Revelations 14:6 which describes an angel descending, carrying a book of "The everlasting Gospel to preach to those on earth, to every nation, tribe, language and people." The issue of an expected new gospel was brought to a head at the hearings of a Commission held at Anagi in 1254 to investigate the Liber Introductorium written by the Franciscan Gerard of Borgo San Donnino. Gerard had taught at the University of Paris and had proclaimed in the Liber Introductorium that an Eternal Evangel (new Gospel) would soon be given to mankind. After lengthy discussion, testimony, and examination, the Commission made these recommendations to Pope Alexander IV who condemned the interpretation in October, 1255. The heresy is occasionally flirted with afterward, but not until Joseph Smith is there as exact a pronouncement as that earlier by Gerard. See Archiv für Literatur- und Kirchen-Geschichte des Mittelalters, H. Denfi (ed.), "Das Evanjelium Alturnum und die Commission Zu Amazi," Paris, 1885, pp. 49-142.

4. Richard Van Wagoner and Steve Walker, "Joseph Smith: the Gift of Seeing," Dialogue 15:2 (Summer, 1982): 49-68, discusses the methods by which Joseph and others described the physical process of translating, the use of seer stones, and the "Urim and Thummim." They conclude, "Though all events surrounding the coming forth of the Book of Mormon are not yet fully known. . . . Whatever the actual device used, the Prophet in 1842 provided the most important insight about his Book of Mormon translation: 'Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God,'" p. 63.

5. The name of the organization evolved from the Church of Christ through several changes until the church presently headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah titled itself the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (LDS), and the church headquartered in Independence, Mo., titled itself the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS), a hyphen and an upper case 'D' being the only, but important differences. Both churches were very comfortable being informally referred to as Mormon churches, but this designation presently is not popular among the RLDS.

6. Donna Hill, Joseph Smith, p. 130.

Missouri," by Peter Crawley deals with aspects of this period. See also HC 1 and 2, Roberts, CHI, and Hill, Joseph Smith, pp. 117-217, 335-361.

8. Four works are the main sources for the establishment of plural marriage as early as 1831 in Kirtland. See note number 17.


11. HC 3:175.

12. On April, 1841, the name of the post office was changed from Commerce to Nauvoo.

13. Much study of Mormon history has been concentrated in the time period that the Mormons were in Nauvoo. Robert Bruce Fland's Nauvoo, Kingdom on the Mississippi is a fine political and economic study of the Mormon city; James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, The Story of the Latter-day Saints and Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, The Mormon Experience both deal sensitively with the period. HC 3:7, and CH 1-3, and Inez Smith Davis, The Story of the Church. David E. Miller and Della S. Miller have written a fine social history in Nauvoo: the City of Joseph. Periodicals such as the Journal of Mormon History, Dialogue, Sunstone, BYU Studies, Utah Historical Quarterly, Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society have carried numerous articles concerning Nauvoo. In addition, biographies of Emma Smith, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Joseph Smith, and others view events in the city from particular perspectives.


15. Sources for this are numerous. They include: Joseph B. Noble, Address, 11 June 1883, at Stake Conference in Centerville, Utah; "Journal History," LDS Archives; Joseph Bates Noble, deposition, Circuit Court Testimony, 1892; Andrew Jensen, Historical Record (Salt Lake City: published by the author, 1887) 6:232; Journal of Franklin D. Richards, January 1869 (loose sheet), Franklin D. Richards papers, LDS Archives; Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 22 January 1869, microfilm of original, LDS Archives; Joseph F. Smith, "40 Affidavits on Celestial Marriage," Book 1, p. 38, as cited in Andrew Ehat, "An Overview of the Introduction of Eternal Marriage in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," unpublished paper, pp. 7-9, used with author's permission. Also see Fawn M. Brodie, No Man Knows My History, p. 465, for composite accounts
of the Noble-Beaman story. LDS accounts of this marriage usually refer to it as the first plural marriage performed in Nauvoo. Evidence links Joseph to at least three previous ones in the city: Precindia Huntington Buell, Nancy Marinda Johnson Hyde, and Clarissa Hancock.


17. Introduction of plural marriage brought a controversy to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and subsequently to the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints that still remains volatile. Because plural marriage was secretly practiced in Nauvoo, those people not fully aware of its extent could convince themselves that, rumor to the contrary, it had not occurred. Extensive documentation exists to establish its presence in Nauvoo, however, and this documentation is summarized in Lawrence Foster, Religion and Sexuality, Charles A. Shook, The True Origins of Mormon Polygamy, Danel Bachman, "A Study of the Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage Before the Death of Joseph Smith," Master's thesis, Purdue University, 1976. Biographies of Joseph Smith, such as, No Man Knows My History and Joseph Smith the First Mormon also deal extensively with the issue. For an account of plural marriage as it affected Emma and Joseph Smith and altered their relationship, as well as accounts of the women Emma Smith knew who married her husband, see Valeen T. Avery and Linda King Newell, Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith.


21. George A. Smith to Joseph Smith III, 9 October 1869, RLDS Library-Archives.


23. Emily D. P. Young, "Incidents of Early Life," typescript, p. 5, Marriott Library.

24. LDS Doctrine and Covenants: 132.


26. "A blessing given to Joseph Smith, 3rd, by his father, Joseph Smith, Junr. on Jan. 17, 1844," manuscript at RLDS Library-Archives, photocopy in LDS Archives. For a complete discussion of the surfacing of this document, see D. Michael Quinn, "Joseph Smith III's

27. Emily D. P. Young, "Incidents of Early Life," December 1876, typescript, p. 5, Marriott Library, tense changed to facilitate dialogue.

28. Jane M. James, "The Life Sketch of Jane Elizabeth Manning James," p. 20, Wilford Woodruff Papers, 1893, LDS Archives. Jane arrived in Nauvoo in October, 1843, was offered a position in the Smith home, and soon after learned that the Partridge and Lawrence sisters were Joseph's plural wives.


31. Ebenezer Robinson owned the southeast corner of lot 149; William Law owned the southwest corner of lot 148. The two properties faced each other across Granger Street. For the Robinson account, see Journal of Joseph Lee Robinson, p. 27, LDS Archives; Joseph III's description of Jane Law is in Joseph III to E. C. Brant, 26 January 1894, Joseph III Letterbook No. 4, RLDS Library-Archives.

32. The Prospectus for the paper was reprinted in the first issue of the Nauvoo Expositor, 7 June 1844, p. 4.

33. Ibid., pp. 1-2.

34. HC 7: 229-30.


36. Jacob Scott to Mary Scott Warnock, 5 January 1844, RLDS Library-Archives.
CHAPTER TWO

1. HC 6:621-622.

2. Governor Ford to the Warsaw Committee, 3 July 1844, HC 7:160-162. The Mormon's position is clearly indicated in documents reproduced in HC 7:160-200.

3. HC 7:193.


11. Sources for Eliza Snow's marriage to Joseph Smith are: Eliza R. Snow, "Sketch of My Life," original at Bancroft Library, University of California, Microfilm at LDS Archives; Eliza R. Snow Smith, Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow, p. 68, LDS Archives; Eliza's brother stated that in April 1843 Joseph Smith "further said that my sister Eliza R. Snow had been sealed to him as his wife for time and eternity," Historical Record, p. 222, RLDS Library-Archives; Eliza R. Snow's letter to Daniel Munn, 30 May 1877, reads in part, "I trust that my word may be sufficient. I was married to Joseph Smith the Prophet, more than two years previous to his death;" Eliza R. Snow to Joseph F. Smith, n.d., LDS Archives, "At the time the sister of the Relief Society Society signed our article I was married to the Prophet." Eliza R. Snow was married to Joseph Smith as a plural wife in Nauvoo on 29 June 1842, without the knowledge of Emma Smith. A confrontacion
between the two women in which Emma Smith is reported to have pushed Eliza down some steps upon finding her embracing Joseph is discussed extensively in Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Linda King Newell, and Valeen Tippett's Avery, "Emma, Eliza, and the Stairs: An Investigation," BYU Studies 22:1, (Autumn, 1982): 86-96, and in Chapter 10 of the forthcoming Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith, in press at Doubleday & Co. Inc. These accounts also deal with Eliza's possible miscarriage of Smith's child. Emily Partridge's marriage to Joseph Smith is recounted in Emily D. P. Young, "Autobiography of Emily D. P. Young," Woman's Exponent 14, "Incidents in the Early Life of Emily Dow Partridge," December 1876, typescript at both Marriott Library and LDS Archives, and Eliza M. Partridge Smith Lyman, "Life and Journal," photocopy in Mormon Collection, Huntington Library.

12. "Lines, Written on the Birth of an Infant Son of Mrs. Emma, Widow of the late General Joseph Smith," Times and Seasons 5 (1 December 1844): 735. Eliza's awkward use of "you" instead of "thou" in the last line probably did nothing to decrease the sentiments the people felt upon the birth of this child.

13. Emily D. P. Young, "Incidents," December, 1876, p. 6, Marriott Library.

14. HC 7:288.

15. Oliver Huntington Journal, LDS Archives, p. 56.

16. Ibid., pp. 49-52.

17. Ibid., p. 53.

18. Wilhelm Wyl [Wylmetal], Joseph Smith, the Prophet, His Family and His Friends (Salt Lake City: Tribune Printing and Publishing, 1886), p. 77, as cited in Marian Y. Merrill, "A Parting of the Roads: A Study of Emma Hale Smith During the Years 1844-1845." Mss. in author's possession.


20. The process of making this decision is dealt with in detail in Miller, City of Joseph, pp. 186-196.


22. Saints' Herald 26:14, p. 216. Mark Forscutt delivered this speech at Emma's funeral in 1879.

23. Brigham Young married eight of Joseph's plural wives,
Heber C. Kimball married at least five, and others wed various church leaders. A family member reported, "A certain red-headed elder came to Emma to plead with her to take her family and go west ... he proposed marriage and finally even used threats and said Emma would come to the time when she would kneel to him and she said, 'Well, if I do it will be the first red-headed Brighamite I ever bowed to.'" Vesta Crawford papers, Marriott Library.

24. Johnathan C. Wright reported this conversation to Brigham Young, 11 February 1848. See the Journal History for that date. The Journal History is a large collection of documents in the LDS Archives arranged by date, from which several general church histories have been written. The date of the document, the names involved, and the notation "Journal History" is sufficient citation information.

25. John M. Bernhisel to Brigham Young, 3 August 1846, LDS Archives.


27. Lewis Bidamon to ESB, 11 January 1847, RLDS Library-Archives. Emma's response is written on the back. By coincidence, the Royce Oatman Family also spent the winter of 1846-1847 in Fulton before they made their ill-fated journey to California in 1850. The Oatman family joined a splinter sect of Mormons called the Brewsterites. Oatman left the main group because of internal bickering and the family was attacked by the Yavapai Indians in present-day Arizona. Olive Oatman and her brother survived the attack and she became well known as the tattooed Indian captive.


30. JS III, Memoirs, p. 39. No intimation is meant that the Mormons operated a flawless social structure. They struggled with great problems of dissension and upheaval within their group; liquor establishments existed in Nauvoo—Joseph Smith tried to monopolize the selling of liquor by operating a bar in the Mansion House and prohibiting others from having licenses, and the underground scandals and gossip about polygamy pervaded the atmosphere. But the Mormons still had good law enforcement, a strong sense of community, and a prevailing set of norms, all of which were absent by spring, 1847.

31. In July or August, 1847, J. H. Buckingham visited Emma. As found in Harry E. Pratt, ed., "Papers in Illinois History and Transaction for the year 1847, Illinois State Historical Society, p. 169, typescript in Joseph Smith Historic Center, Nauvoo, Illinois, indicates the original is in the Nauvoo Public Library.

33. Marriage license and certification of marriage, Hancock County Courthouse.

34. Sarah M. Kimball to Marinda Hyde, 2 January 1848, LDS Archives. This letter describes the wedding in some detail, but the tone is mocking and malicious. Both the writer and receiver of the letter had been close friends of the Smith family but have now become quite opposite.

35. DHS to ESB, 19 August 1873, Lynn Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.


38. John M. Bernhisel to Brigham Young, 10 September 1849, LDS Archives.

39. The originals are in the RLDS Library Archives. These letters are humorous, detailed accounts of his travels and are personal messages to "hir that I love."

40. ESB to Lewis Bidamon, 7 January 1850, RLDS Archives.

41. Robert E. Lee came to the Des Moines rapids on the Mississippi River between Warsaw on the south to Nauvoo on the north in 1837 with governmental order to survey the rapids and widen the passage to make the river navigable year around. Lee purchased a small steamboat and other equipment and blasted rock out of the river during the summers of 1838 and 1839. He finished in the fall, 1839, after the Mormons came to Nauvoo. Lee sold his equipment at a government auction in Quincy, 10 September 1840, to a Mormon businessman named Peter Haws, but government regulation required additional signers as surety. Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum and two men named Miller co-signed the note. Haws paid with a $4,866.38 promissory note signed by the five men. Deposited in the Bank of Missouri, the note would become due the following year on 10 May 1841. The captain headed north with the boat, rechristened the Nauvoo, but wrecked it within a month or two of its purchase. The other investors left the area; by the time of Joseph Smith's death, the judgment against the boat was $7,870.23, which became a liability of Joseph Smith's estate. See Oakes and Bentley, "Steamboat Nauvoo," *BYU Law Review*, pp. 735-772.
42. In essence, Joseph Smith's intestate death left many people scrambling for his assets, including Brigham Young and other church members, but no one but Emma and her children shouldered the responsibility for his considerable debts. The family was hounded by them until 1856, and the poverty of Nauvoo made land worthless. The common picture that Emma and the children inherited Joseph Smith's riches is not accurate, in the speculative Nauvoo economy there were no riches. This is discussed in detail in Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith.


44. JS III to Emma Knight, 14 April 1855, Utah State Historical Society.

45. Frederick Piercy, Illustrator, James Linforth, ed., Liverpool to Great Salt Lake, 1855, pp. 64-65, 71.

46. George A. Smith, Address Book and Journals & etc., 1856-57, entry dated 30 October-1 November 1856, LDS Archives.

47. JS III, Memoirs, p. 31, George A. Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 17 July (no year), LDS Archives, JS III to L. O. Littlefield, 14 August 1883, JS III Letterbook #4, RLDS Library-Archives.


49. This name was not formally adopted at this time, but to continually refer to "a loosely knit group of members of the Mormon Church in Wisconsin waiting for a prophet" is too awkward. For brevity's sake this group will be called the RLDS.


51. DHS, undated note, Kalk-Boes Collection, LDS Archives.

52. Audentia Anderson Smith notebook, interview with Elbert A. Smith, in possession of H. G. Fredrick, Jr., as quoted in Buddy Younggreen, Reflections, p. 129.


55. JS III to William Marks, as reprinted in Edward Tullidge,

56. Tullidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet, p. 774.

57. The Amboy [Ill.] Times, 12 April 1860, reported the full text of Joseph's speech.


59. Samuel H. B. Smith to George A. Smith, 10 July 1860; Joseph Fielding Smith to Levira Smith, 28 June 1860, both letters in LDS Archives. In spite of their silence, the issue was not dead in Utah. The Saints' Herald in May 1861, reported that Brigham Young had commented that David would lead the Utah church, but that issue may not have been of great concern in 1861 when David was only seventeen. He would meet the issue head on when he went to Utah later.

60. DHS, Poems, Accounts, and Diary, 15 July 1853-4 June 1864, pp. 19-20. No traditional diary entries are in this notebook, but rather miscellaneous sketches and poems, RLDS Archives.

61. Saints' Herald 2:6, p. 166. Baptism in the RLDS church was by immersion.

62. DHS, Poems, accounts, and Diary, p. 64.

63. Ibid., pp. 23-24.

64. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

65. Ibid., pp. 35-36.


68. E. Cecil McGregor, "Brief Life Sketches," Mss. p. 8-9, BYU; also Saints' Herald, April 1863.

69. JS III to Charles Derry, 24 April 1863, RLDS Library-Archives.


72. Saints' Herald 4:8 (15 October 1863) p. 123. Certificate of Ordination, 6 October 1863, Lynn Smith Collection, Independence, Mo. Photocopy in possession of author. These offices permitted men to act by the authority of God and the church in conducting their activities. Eventually the priesthood in the RLDS church would be divided between those who were lay members and a paid, professional clergy, but for the time, the Elders served the church without remuneration.

CHAPTER THREE

1. JS III, Memoirs, p. 90.

2. Ebenezer Robinson's Return, 1891, documented many aspects of plural marriage in Nauvoo before David's birth.

3. JS III, Memoirs, pp. 97-98.

4. Journal of W. W. Blair, as reprinted in Saints' Herald, 15 February 1864. This journal entry is also found in Lynn Smith, Brother Elbert, the Life of Elbert A. Smith, 1871-1951, p. 34

5. Youngreen, Reflections, p. 93.


7. JS III, Memoirs, pp. 97-98.


13. Saints' Herald 3:12 (June 1863, supplement) pp. 11, 16.


18. *Saints' Herald* 6:3 (1 August 1864) p. 47.


20. *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith* by Valeen T. Avery and Linda King Newell deals extensively with the birth of Charles Edwin Bidamon in 1864, as a result of this union.


28. Ibid., p. 130.

29. Joseph kept a shorthand diary from 17 January to 11 April 1865. He did it mostly to practice his shorthand, but the diary describes his activities during these few months. "Shall I ever learn to write so confounded a shorthand?" he asked, but eventually became quite fluent at it. Joseph Smith Shorthand Diary, 1865, transcription by Howard S. Harder, typescript and original, 12 March 1865, RLDS Library-Archives.

30. "Tuesday, April 11, 1865. I went into the office this morning for the first time to do anything; so that I am now installed in the position of editor." Joseph Smith Shorthand Diary Entry, RLDS Library-Archives.


33. DHS to *JS III*, 18 February 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

35. Council of Twelve Minutes, Nauvoo, 12 April 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

36. ESB to JS III, 11 October 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

37. ESB to JS III, 2 February, and 3 February 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.


40. Saints' Herald (15 December 1866).


42. Statement of Jesse N. Smith to Parowan, Utah, Stake "School of the Prophets," 22 July 1871, LDS Archives.


45. ESB to JS III, 11 October 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

46. ESB to JS III, 19 August 1866, RLDS Library-Archives.

47. Inez Smith Davis, Story of the Church, p. 515.


49. Saints' Herald 11:1 (1 January 1867) pp. 15-16; Saints' Herald 11:5 (1 March 1867) p. 80, David signed this and the following poem "Abel."

50. Saints' Herald 11:6 (15 March 1867 pp. 87-88; Saints'

52. DHS, Hesperis, pp. 30-31.
53. Ibid., pp. 7-9.
55. Saints' Herald 14:6 (15 September 1868) p. 92.
57. Saints' Herald 15:12 (15 December 1869) p. 189.
60. Saints' Herald 97:1 (2 January 1950) p. 19, as reprinted from J. E. Hopper's letter in the Herald 15:3 (1 February 1869).
61. Saints' Herald 15:3 (1 February 1869) p. 89.
62. DHS, Hesperis, pp. 61-63.
63. Ibid., pp. 66-67.
64. Ibid., pp. 165-172.
66. DHS to JS III, 16 January 1868, RLDS Library-Archives.
67. DHS to JS III, 11 September 1868, RLDS Library-Archives.

CHAPTER FOUR

2. Edward Stevenson to Deseret Evening News, 29 November 1893.
Journal of History, Vol. 4, 1911, p. 9


9. DHS to ESB, 21 June 1869, Lynn Smith Collection.


13. This interview with Brigham Young is described in several documents and has been reconstructed from them. All quotations are from Vida Smith, "Biography of Alexander," Journal of History, Vol. 5, 1912, pp. 259-265; Vesta Crawford Papers, Marriott Library; Autumn Leaves 25:11, pp. 502-505.

14. This issue is dealt with in detail in Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith.


16. This account of the meeting between David and Alexander and Brigham Young is taken from largely RLDS sources which were written during a period when each church attempted to shore up its position. The account is probably one sided, but the papers of church presidents in the LDS Archives are restricted.

17. ESB to JS III, 1 August 1869, RLDS Library-Archives.


19. DHS to the Herald, Saints' Herald 16:7, p. 204.


21. Ibid., pp. 264-265.
22. This reporter only presented part of the problem with Section 132 of the LDS Doctrine and Covenants, probably because he received his information from listening to David and Alexander preach. Neither of them were in a position to know that Joseph Smith, the church founder, had involved himself with women in either plural marriage or irregular liaisons as early as 1831, and had mentioned that he had received a revelation about it that early. Thus, Joseph said he received the revelation in 1831, he practiced polygamy surreptitiously for twelve years until the revelation was written down in 1843, and then it was not made public until 1852, twenty-one years after the first indication of its existence.

23. The denials of plural marriage in Nauvoo were couched in code words to hide its existence to the outside world, but at the same time affirm its place in the church. To the outside world, adultery, spiritual marriage, fornication, etc. all referred to polygamy, but the Mormons denied that they were practicing plural marriage "in the Asiatic sense" and referred to their principle as "the higher order," the "privileges," "the higher order of marriage." Those who read Hyrum and Joseph's denial, including David and Alexander, were not aware that the Mormon leaders supported plural marriage by the subtle use of certain phrases and words at the same time as they denied the forms of moral laxity also recognized by the outer world. Affidavit of William Clayton, Woman's Exponent, Vol. 15, p. 10.

24. No one in Nauvoo but Joseph Smith was allowed to promulgate plural marriage, nor was it allowed to be preached as a tenet of the religion. Hyrum's speech again used the code words, but he was strongly urging people to keep silent about the controversial doctrine.


26. Events in the last few days of Joseph and Hyrum Smith's life were not as Joseph F. Smith represented them. Recent research in the forthcoming Emma Smith biography by Avery and Newell reveals that Emma had no part in coercing Joseph to come back across the river. Hiram Kimball and several other land speculators in Nauvoo knew their incomes would be lost if the Mormons quit the city, and they wrote the letter calling the men cowards. See Wandle Mace's Journal, LDS Archives. Hyrum also wanted to come back because his daughter was getting married that night and he wanted to perform the wedding. But after the Mormons went west, Kimball and others had Brigham's ear, and Emma was made the scapegoat in the issue.


30. DHS to the Herald, Saints' Herald 16:7 (October 1869 p. 203.


32. DHS to the Herald, Saints' Herald 16:7, pp. 204-205.


35. William to Brother John, from Salt Lake City, 12 September 1869, RLDS Library-Archives. The date on the typescript reads 1861. Contents of the letter indicate that the 1 should be a 9. No other identification of the men is indicated in the archives.

36. DHS to ESB, 8 December 1869, copy in possession of Lynn Smith.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. DHS to ESB, 8 December 1869, copy in possession of Lynn Smith.


7. DHS to ESB, 8 December 1869, Lynn Smith Collection.


9. Ibid.
10. JS III to Lewis Bidamon, 3 March 1870, Wilford C. Wood Collection, microfilm at LDS Archives. This letter serves as an indication of the relationship between Emma Smith, Joseph Smith III, and Lewis Bidamon. Joseph wrote to Lewis to thank him for the letter he sent to Plano urging Emma not to worry about things in Nauvoo. About his mother Joseph wrote to Lewis, "She had been half inclined to cry several times because she was necessitated to remain away. I tried to tell her not to worry but she feels better now that you have told her so...Hope to be able to visit you in the summer." Clearly this is not a family riven with strife over Lewis Bidamon's position in it. Joseph was thirty-eight--fully adult enough to sense injustice to his mother had Lewis Bidamon not been kind. Emma here seems to be deeply in love with her husband, and lonely for him.


12. Too long to reproduce in its entirety here, this pamphlet gives no indication that David was having mental problems during its composition. While one may argue with the use he made of Biblical verses, either for or against the plural marriage system, he argued reasonably and with restraint and judgement. One copy of the pamphlet is in the RLDS Library-Archives, another in the Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California. The quotations are taken from its fifteen pages.

13. The exuberance of this letter from David--"Oh! Mother Mother I have a new hat" is partially explained by his excitement at the coming marriage. As the youngest in the family, and sensitive, undoubtedly to the unique position he held in his mother's affections, he was considerate in announcing his plans to establish his own family. DHS to ESB, 21 June 1869, Lynn Smith Collection.


17. Ibid., p. 269.

18. Lynn E. Smith, Brother Elbert, p. 17, includes a photograph.

19. DHS to Clara Hartshorn, 6 February 1870, Lynn E. Smith Collection. This letter has not been available to the author.


21. Alexander Smith to DHS, 11 August 1870, Lynn E. Smith
Collection.


23. DHS to JS III, 26 May 1870, RLDS Library-Archives.


25. Mark Forscutt to J. W. Shaffer, Governor of Utah Territory, 6 July 1870, Forscutt-Stebbins Letterbook, p. 17, RLDS Library-Archives.

26. DHS to the Herald 17:24 (15 December 1870) pp. 742-743.

27. DHS to JS III, 12-14 November 1870, RLDS Library-Archives.

28. DHS, Hesperis, pp. 32-33.

29. Ibid., p. 16.


31. DHS to ESB, 5 December 1870, Kalk-Boes Collection, LDS Archives.

32. DHS to JS III, 4 March 1871, RLDS Library-Archives.

33. As an adult Elbert A. Smith confessed about his middle name, "I have always heartily disliked it. ... I kept the name a dark secret until my cousin Audentia published her book of family genealogy in which with the meticulous care of the natural born genealogical sleuth she nuced it out and published it." Lynn Smith, Brother Elbert, p. 13.

34. Ibid., p. 12.


36. Letter from Harriet S. Cadwell. Ibid.

37. Letter from "A Careful Looker-on and Honest Mormon." Ibid.

CHAPTER SIX

1. DHS to JS III, 4 March 1871, RLDS Library-Archives.

2. The house still stands, and is in use as a summer dormitory over a hundred and ten years after the Major completed it in 1871.

3. DHS to JS III, 4 March 1871, RLDS Library-Archives.


5. DHS to JS III, 3 May 1871, RLDS Library-Archives.

6. Ibid.

7. The portrait hangs in the home of Lynn E. Smith in Independence, Missouri.

8. DHS to L. C. Bidamon, 24 June 1871, Huntington Library and Archives.

9. DHS to JS III, 3 May 1871, RLDS Library-Archives.


11. DHS to JS III, 4 March 1871, RLDS Library-Archives.


13. DHS to JS III, 19 November 1871, RLDS Library-Archives.

14. DHS to JS III, Saints' Herald 19:3 (1 February 1872) p. 87.

15. This was a common expression used by members of both Mormon churches to express a sentiment that they had been divinely guided or prompted to a course of action. I find no evidence at this period that David was hearing voices in the context that would indicate mental imbalance.

16. DHS to JS III, 19 November 1871, RLDS Library-Archives.


18. 'Certificate of Removal,' 7 November 1871, for David H. Smith, RLDS Library-Archives.

19. DHS to JS III, 15 November 1871, printed in Saints' Herald 19:3 (1 February 1872) p. 87.


27. DHS to ESB, 23 January 1872, Vogel Collection, LDS Archives.

28. DHS to JS III, no date, from Manti, Fremont Co., Iowa, probably written about March 1, 1872.

29. DHS to JS III, 14 March 1872, RLDS Library-Archives.


31. DHS to Myron, April 30 (probably 1872), Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri, (last pages are missing).

32. JS III to C. W. Wandell, 14 May 1872, RLDS Library-Archives.

33. DHS to ESB, 5 June 1872, Lynn Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Paul Edwards, "Sweet Singer of Israel," BYU Studies, 12:2, p. 174, states Alexander went with David. Alexander was probably called to a mission at the same time, but Josiah Ells accompanied David to Utah. Alexander was not present. See Shipley thesis, pp. 73-76.


4. Journal of David Smith, p. 28. Poem is undated but written about the time of Frederick's death. RLDS Library-Archives.


8. Saints' Herald 2:3 (May 1861) p. 93, "News from Utah."


15. Ibid.

16. George A. Smith to JS III, 13 March, 1849, RLDS Library-Archives. The extended Smith Family, those in Salt Lake descended from Hyrum, and those in Illinois descended from Joseph, corresponded frequently with each other and their letters were quite friendly, but they both kept up a public front of antagonism as far as their respective church affiliations went. See Samuel H. B. Smith to Joseph Smith, 9 January 1867; John Smith to Joseph Smith, 3 April 1860. Vesta
Crawford file, Marriott Library.

17. George A. Smith and John L. Smith to Joseph Smith, 24 June 1854, Vesta Crawford papers, Marriott Library.

18. John Smith to Joseph Smith, 3 April 1860, Vesta Crawford papers, Marriott Library.

19. DHS to Bro. Sherman, 27 July 1872, from Salt Lake City, RLDS Library-Archives. This letter will be analyzed further in the text.

20. JS III to Emma Knight, 24 May 1855, RLDS Library-Archives.

21. Charles Derry Journal, reprinted in the RLDS Journal of History 2:3 (9 July 1909) pp. 302-303. Derry visited Nauvoo in December in 1862. The argument that Joseph could not have participated in plural marriage because he did not acknowledge children by his plural wives has been used as a reason for denial by the RLDS church since 1860, and was repeated again to me in January, 1983, by current members of the church. It is without foundation, for cursory research establishes that Joseph did father children, that Emma Smith knew it, that the pregnancies of the wives were hidden by their remaining secreted in private homes until the woman of the house presented the plural wife's child as being her own. See Larry Foster, Religion and Sexuality, and also the forthcoming Emma Smith biography for a discussion of this issue.

22. Wm. E. McLellin to JS III, 10 January 1861, RLDS Library-Archives.

23. JS III to William Smith, 12 January 1878. The tone of this letter indicates that Joseph feared that William might prove to be a disrupting influence and he wanted to intimidate William into supporting him. Joseph wrote him in the same letter: "Any attempt to divide, or to antagonize would either prove altogether fruitless, or at most would only result in distrust, bitterness and failure; as it would take a longer time in disproving the position I have assured than you have to spare."


25. JS III to William Smith, 26 October 1893, RLDS Library-Archives.


27. George A. Smith to JS III, 9 October 1869, RLDS Library-Archives.

29. Statement of Judge D. H. Morris to St. George, Utah, given in the office of Samuel O. Bennion, 12 June 1930. Morris boarded with Lucy Walker in the fall, 1879, six years after David's visit to Salt Lake City and two years after his commitment. It was at this time that the conversation took place about David Smith. Lucy Walker left an undated life sketch, "A Brief Biographical Sketch of the Life and Labor of Lucy Walker Kimball Smith." Her marriage to Joseph is described on pp. 200-203.

30. DHS to ESB, 23 January 1872, Marcia Vogel Collection, LDS Archives.

31. DHS to Brn. Sherman, 27 July 1872, RLDS Library-Archives. The identity of Sherman remains a mystery. Ronald W. Walker, in his PhD dissertation, "The Godbeite Protest in the Making of Modern Utah," Marriott Library, 1977, pp. 133-135, asserts that David wrote to William Shearman, leader and associate of Amasa Lyman in the Godbeite movement in Utah. The contents of the letter, as well as a mention that David made in an 1868 letter to Joseph written from Hopkins, Michigan (11 September 1868, RLDS Library-Archives), "Could you extend my mission / to old Ohio state / Sherman with your permission / Might go with me for mate," all indicate that Sherman was a member of the RLDS church whom David would have chosen for a missionary companion four years earlier. However, a search of church membership records in the RLDS archives listed no Sherman on the records, nor any in the Michigan area. David's 1872 letter to Sherman begins, "I am here in this old city--so I do wish it was in Pontiak." I believe Sherman was another friend in whom David confided, but the possibility still exists that William B. Shearman could have been the recipient.


33. Wm. E. McLellin to JS III, 10 January 1861; July (no day) 1872, RLDS Library-Archives. Two letters from McLellin are extant; both are detailed accounts of Joseph Smith's activities during the period when McLellin knew him--from 1831 to 1836. These letters discuss doctrinal matters as well as plural marriage and some events of a derogatory nature.

34. ESB to JS III, 2 February 1866. The content of the letter reveals that the date should have been 1867; Emma forgot what year it was.


36. Ibid.
37. DHS to Herald, 1 September 1872, Saints' Herald 19:19, pp. 598-599.


39. DHS to Herald, 2 September 1872; Saints' Herald 19:19, pp. 598-599.


41. DHS to Charles Jensen, no date, from Malad City, Idaho, Lynn Smith Collection.


43. DHS to Charles Jensen, no date, from Malad City, Idaho, Lynn Smith Collection.

44. DHS to JS III, 12 November 1870, RLDS Library-Archives.

45. Enoch B. Tripp Journal, 25 November 1855, as reproduced in the Vesta Crawford Notes, Marriott Library. Tripp visited Emma and Lucy Mack Smith on this visit.

46. JS III to Emma Knight, 4 December 1855, Utah Historical Society.


49. Diaries of Amasa Lyman, July 7, 8, 14, 21, 1872, LDS
Archives.

50. Diaries of Amasa M. Lyman, 12 October 1872, LDS Archives.
51. DHS to JS III, 22 October 1872, RLDS Library-Archives.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. The Morrisites to whom David referred followed the teachings of Joseph Morris in Utah. Morris's group totaled about five hundred and established a communal order near the mouth of Weber Canyon. Morris unlawfully detained dissident members of his group at Kington Fort while the state authorities attempted to free the men. In 1863 a posse of several hundred men attempted to storm the fort. Morris and several people, including four women, were killed in a two-day gun battle.

2. James J. Strang led a group of Mormons to Beaver Island, Wisconsin, after the death of Joseph Smith. He instituted polygamy as a principle, and eventually had himself crowned king. Strang was killed by his own followers in June, 1856, and his people dispersed for the most part.

3. At this point a sentence in the letter appears in significantly different handwriting, without explanation as to whether it was added at the time David wrote it by someone looking on, or whether it was added after Joseph received the letter. The sentence reads, "BY OUR REASONING FACULTIES, AND MAY WE NOT JUSTLY ASK IS ANY MAN GOOD ENOUGH AND CULTIVATED ENOUGH TO REVEAL OUR SALVATION." The sentiments could well be David's but the handwriting is not.

4. DHS to JS III. This letter is unsigned and undated, but the contents and handwriting clearly indicate that David was the author. RLDS Library-Archives.

5. DHS to Sherman, 27 July 1872, RLDS Library-Archives. Italics added.

7. DHS to JS III, 19 November 1872, RLDS Library-Archives.
8. Diaries of Amasa Lyman, 4 November 1872, LDS Archives, states he received a letter from JS of Plano, Illinois.

10. DHS to JS III, 22 October 1872, RLDS Library-Archives.
11. Ibid.

12. DHS to JS III, 19 November 1872, RLDS Library-Archives.

13. DHS to ESB, 2 November 1872, Kalk-Boes Collection, LDS Archives.


15. This letter apparently came to light after David's illness was known. The heading of the letter reads, "Copy of letter purporting to have been written by David H. Smith to a gentleman in Worth, Mo., named Petty, forwarded to M. H. Forcett by Bro. Wm. Purcell of Sweet Home, Mo." David Smith to Dear Sir, 14 February 1872, RLDS Library-Archives. The original of the letter is not available to determine if it is a holograph, but the letter is punctuated typically as David's letter were, and this was also typical of his type of problem at the beginning. For a period of time David was just enough off balance to make people uncomfortable, but not enough to be openly insane.

16. DHS to JS III, 22 October 1872, RLDS Library-Archives.

17. DHS to ESB, 2 November 1872, LDS Archives.

18. Diaries of Amasa M. Lyman, 29 October 1872, 1 November 1872, LDS Archives.

19. Ibid., 2 November 1872.

20. DHS to JS III, 23 July 1872, RLDS Library-Archives.


22. Ibid., 14 November 1872.

23. Ibid., 20 November 1872.

24. Ibid., 27 November 1872.

25. Ibid., 30 November 1872.


27. Ibid., pp. 70-71.


29. Amasa Lyman mentioned receiving a letter from David on December 6; a listing of documents in the Lynn Smith Collection names letters written to Charles Jensen on December 1, and December 2. The Lyman letter is not extant and the Jensen letters are not available.
at the present time.

30. Tribune, 5 February 1873.
31. Ibid., 12 February 1873.
32. Ibid., 15 February 1873.
33. Amasa Lyman Diaries, 12 January, 1 February 1873, LDS Archives.
34. Ibid., 15 March, 16 March 1873.
35. Salt Lake Daily Tribune, 22 February 1873.
36. Joseph Smith claimed he translated the golden plates into the Book of Mormon by the use of a breastplate and spectacle apparatus which he called the Urim and Thummim. Disposition of this object has long been a subject of controversy. Here it is assumed by the newspaper that they are in Utah.
37. Tribune, 6 March 1873.
38. Isaiah Coombs Diary, 8 March 1873, LDS Archives. A letter filed in the LDS Archives, in typescript copy only, from Joseph Baily Smith Sr., to his son Joseph Baily Smith, Jr., 5 January 1923, also deals with the issue. But since no known historian has seen the original of the letter, and the original is in private hands, it is difficult to authenticate. The letter, however, reads in part, "My son the part you ask about David H. Smith, your Grand Father Samuel H. B. Smith converted him to the church and in Salt Lake City, Utah. He PLEADED with him not to go back, but father would move him to Utah. He had friends in Utah, and no harm would come to him and to stay. THEY would do something to him." This letter was written after David's commitment to the asylum when charges that he came back to the Reorganized church converted to Mormonism and was committed to keep him out of the way were made in Utah.
39. The "revelation" continues, "Look upon my servants and sons of Br. Lambert with favor and make use of them also in building my church, and behold they are eloquent and if humble and virtuous and willing shall shine brilliantly in the temple if only they are humble. And now there is one of power in council and faith in works also even Elder Banta and many others are presented to you for consideration let them be chosen and sent with power let them seek and obtain witness and preach in power.
"Behold also John H. Lake a man of God let him be named before me, let good be done and a blessing will descend from the church on high.
"Let it not be said that there is no longer one quorum of my
church full, but that all are lame. 

"Let forgiveness be had for the faults of the past even as I forgave man and organized anew my Church among them again, and let them be called up higher.

"Pray earnestly for this conference and in it be diligent to build up and concentrate and not tear down.

"Behold I am pleased with the labors of the order of Enoch and there are schools and powers and orders ahead of you that shall descend upon you if you will be faithful and labor."
The remainder of the revelation appears in the text.

40. DHS to JS III, 15 March 1873, RLDS Library-Archives.

41. Other letters David will write are similar to this one, and will be dealt with in the following chapter.

42. Richard P. Howard, "On the Background of Section 117," Saints' Herald 124:2, pp. 111-147, February 1977. Howard wrote this article to illustrate that inspiration can come to two people almost simultaneously, and illustrates that David's letter did not prompt Joseph to name him as a counselor. But Howard was unaware of David's mental condition when he wrote the letter.

43. RLDS Doctrine and Covenants 117:2-3.

44. Edward Stevenson letter, 18 November 1893, printed in Deseret Evening News, 29 November 1893.

45. Judge D. H. Morris affidavit, quoting Lucy Walker Kimball, 12 June 1930, LDS Archives; a letter from JS III to C. W. Wadall, 21 May 1873, RLDS Library-Archives, notes, "Bro. Blair unites in the opinion of Br. David and myself," indicating that David was probably at Plano by then.

CHAPTER NINE


5. DHS to James Browning, 1 July 1873, RLDS Library-Archives.

7. DHS to Emma J. Smith, 11 July 1873, Lynn Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

8. DHS to ESB, 19 August 1873, Lynn Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

9. DHS to ESB, no date, Kalk-Boes Collection, LDS Archives.

10. DHS to ESB, 19 August 1873, Lynn Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.


12. DHS to ESB, 4 January, 1874, Vogel Collection, LDS Archives.

13. DHS to JS III, no date, 1874, from Plano, Illinois, RLDS Library-Archives.


15. JS III to Charles Jensen, 18 February 1874, RLDS Library-Archives.

16. DHS to Charles Jensen, 18 May 1874, (original in possession of Lynn Smith), as printed in Brother Elbert, p. 29.

17. JS III to Charles Jensen, 11 June 1874, RLDS Library-Archives. Joseph's gentle wit shows in this letter. Writing of a mutual acquaintance in the postscript of this letter, Joseph noted, "I see that Bro. Kinnehein had taken about a hundred and thirty pounds of comfort to his heart. Bless them both."

18. DHS to Charles Jensen, 14 February 1874, Lynn Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

19. Copies of Hesperis are available in the RLDS Library-Archives, or in private possession.

20. JS III to Dr. E. A. Kilbourne, 4 January 1877, RLDS Library-Archives.

21. Telephone Interview, Lynn Smith, 5 August 1981, reading from David's journal, in his possession.

22. JS III to Charles Jensen, 1 August 1874, RLDS Library-
Archives.

23. JS III to Charles Jensen, 17 August 1874.


25. John Davis, letter to J. W. A. Bailey, 10 April 1937, reported Clapp's comments about David. The statements were made to Davis in 1885 in the State of Washington. J. W. A. Bailey received another letter from John Davis dated 17 April 1937 in which he asserted that a woman told him that "Joseph and David visited Utah, and the Smith families had a banquet and Joseph and David were invited to it. They put two women on either side of David and one party said, 'David, you must mind your best behavior tonight.' He said, 'I think I will have to, as I have a mother on each side of me.' There was a glass of wine for each person and David was slow in taking his, and someone said, 'Drink your wine David.' As soon as he drank the wine he put both hands to his head, and said, 'Oh, that wine!' Sr. Ward said that David was never right after that. It was the impression that the wine had poisoned him."

David and Joseph Smith were never in Salt Lake City at the same time, therefore the incident as described could not have happened. Alexander and David may have had this experience in 1869, but the purpose of these statements seem to be to substantiate when David became insane. No other documentation is extant.

26. Saints' Herald (1 March 1874), as quoted in Brother Elbert, p. 46.

27. Saints' Herald 21:369, as quoted in Brother Elbert, p. 46.


29. Samuel H. B. Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 13 August 1874, LDS Archives.


31. S. H. B. Smith to Joseph F. Smith, 18 December 1874, LDS Archives.


33. JS III to Charles Jensen, 4 November 1874, RLDS Library-Archives.

34. JS III to Charles Jensen, 28 April 1875, RLDS Library-Archives.
35. JS III to Charles Jensen, 21 October 1875, RLDS Library-Archives.

36. JS III to ESB, 13 November 1875, Marcia Vogel Collection, LDS Archives.

37. JS III to Charles Jensen, 22 November 1875, RLDS Library-Archives.


40. It is not clear where David had been in March, 1876.

41. ESB to Mrs. Pilgrim, 27 March 1876, RLDS Library-Archives.

42. Junius F. Wells Diary, 13 March 1876, LDS Archives.

43. JS III to Charles Jensen, 26 April 1876, RLDS Library-Archives.

44. DHS to ESB, undated, Buddy Youngreen Collection.

45. Saints' Herald 8:3 (1 August 1865) p. 46.


47. JS III, Memoirs, p. 173.


49. JS III to Charles Jensen, 22 January 1877, 9 January 1877, RLDS Library-Archives.


51. Ibid.

52. JS III to E. A. Kilbourne, 20 June 1880, RLDS Library-Archives.

53. Julia Middleton and ESB to JS III, 5 January 1877, Lynn Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

54. JS III to Charles Jensen, 9 January 1877, RLDS Library-Archives.
55. JS III to E. A. Kilbourne, 4 January 1877, RLDS Library-Archives.

56. JS III to E. A. Kilbourne, 11 January 1877, RLDS Library-Archives.

57. The RLDS Library-Archives has a folder of thirteen pages of photocopied legal documents pertaining to David's commitment to the asylum. Included are filing papers, affidavits, requests from the clerk of the court, summary of the jury findings, and orders for the arrest of David in order to have him conveyed to the asylum. Details of his commitment are drawn from these sources. The papers kept on David's progress and care during his twenty-seven year residency were destroyed by fire, therefore no official records about his confinement are extant.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. JS III, Memoirs, p. 174.

61. Hesperis, p. 163.

CHAPTER TEN

1. DHS to JS III, 28 January 1877, RLDS Library-Archives.

2. JS III to C. J. Jensen, 22 January 1877, RLDS Library-Archives.

3. JS III to Charles Derry, 24 January 1877, RLDS Library-Archives.


5. JS III to ESB, 15 May 1878, RLDS Library-Archives.


11. C. J. Jensen to JS III, no day, 1878, RLDS Library-Archives.
12. Ibid.
13. JS III to C. J. Jensen, 23 February 1878, RLDS Library-Archives.
15. JS III to C. J. Jensen, 23 February 1878, RLDS Library-Archives.
16. JS III, Memoirs, p. 175.
17. Lynn E. Smith, Brother Elbert, p. 46.
18. JS III, Memoirs, p. 175.
19. DHS to JS III, 4 October 1878, RLDS Library-Archives.
20. JS III to E. A. Kilbourne, 18 December 1878, RLDS Library-Archives.
21. DHS to ESB, 22 January 1879, RLDS Library-Archives.
23. JS III to DHS, 6 May 1879, RLDS Library-Archives.
24. JS III to E. A. Kilbourne, 6 May 1879, RLDS Library-Archives.
25. JS III to Dr. E. A. Kilbourne, 4 June 1880, RLDS Library-Archives.
26. JS III to E. A. Kilbourne, 11 March 1879, RLDS Library-Archives, see also DHS to his niece, Emma J., 11 July 1873, Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.
27. JS III to P. Wilhelm Paulson, M.D., 20 June 1880, RLDS Library-Archives.
29. Lynn E. Smith, Brother Elbert, pp. 92-93.
30. JS III to Dr. E. A. Kilbourne, 12 May 1884, RLDS Library-Archives.


32. DHS to JS III, undated, RLDS Library-Archives.

33. JS III to Dr. E. A. Kilbourne, 21 May 1889, RLDS Library-Archives.

34. JS III, Memoirs, p. 174.

35. Lynn E. Smith, Brother Elbert, p. 41.


37. RLDS Doctrine and Covenants (122:4a, b, p. 204.

38. Saints' Herald 42:19 (8 May 1895) pp. 289-290. An apology certainly was owed to the RLDS Church and a retraction should have been made by the Deseret News. I do not know whether this was done.

39. The RLDS Church had testified against the Utah Church in Congress over the polygamy issue. When the Edmunds-Tucker Act crippled the Utah Church until they issued the manifesto prohibiting plural marriage in 1890, the Utah Church was angry and resentful. This attack five years later may have been an extension of the bitterness.

40. Laurence David died in infancy. Lynn Elbert lives today in Independence, Mo., and to him I am indebted for allowing me to see some items pertaining to his grandfather, David. See Brother Elbert, pp. 103-111. The other son was named Ronald Gibson.


43. Clara C. Smith to Charles Derry, 7 February 1893, copied into Charles Derry's Diary, February 1893, RLDS Library-Archives.

44. Saints' Herald 40:6 (11 February 1893) p. 82.


49. So clear and gracefully written as to make modern readers who see it out of context wonder whether David was indeed insane.


51. DHS to Mr. and Mrs. Bidamon, 7 February 1896, photocopy in possession of author.

52. JS III to John B. Hamilton, M.D., 30 July 1898 (filed with David's commitment papers), RLDS Library-Archives.

53. DHS to Elbert A. Smith, 14 May 1900, Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

54. Elbert A. Smith, Diary, 14 May 1900, Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

55. Ibid., 15, 16 May 1900.

56. DHS to Elbert A. Smith, 3 January (?) 1901, Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

57. Autumn Leaves was a publication of the RLDS Church.

58. DHS to Elbert A. Smith, 25 October 1902, Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

59. DHS to Clara C. H. Smith, 26 September 1902, Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri, punctuation added.

60. JS III to Clara C. H. Smith, 21 September 1904, Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.


64. JS III to Clara C. H. Smith, 21 September 1904, Lynn E. Smith Collection, Independence, Missouri.

66. DHS, "An Offering, Chapter V," Saints' Herald 8:3 (1 August 1865) p. 45.