Maps of NAUVOO *OS*-16635

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Last Changed: 6 Sep 2006

Notes

These are the property maps of Nauvoo, Illinois in the 1839-1846 time period. Refer to the BYU Studies article, which defines the difficulty in determining exactly where people lived in Nauvoo.

The names for the land owners have been taken from the books: STUDY OF PROPERTY OWNERSHIP -- NAUVOO, by Rowena Miller

Legend of Land Developers:

In 1824 Captain James White's purchase of land in Illinois was recorded. Captain James White is generally acknowledged as being the first permanent white settler. Other families joined the Whites: Isaac Campbell, Isaac Waggoner, Joseph B. Teas, Davidson Hibbard, Luther Whitney and Wesley Williams were among them.

White's neighbor a half-mile to the northeast, George Y. Cutler, became the postmaster of the first post office in Hancock County. The date was 13 March 1830. At that time the tiny settlement on the bend of the river officially received the poetic name "Venus." A few years later the name was changed to the more business-like "Commerce." Later other developers joined the small community among them Hiram Kimball and Daniel Wells.

Joseph Smith's purchase:

The land purchased by Joseph Smith, Jr. makes up most of the Nauvoo area we call the Historic District today. He re-surveyed the land so the blocks followed North, South, East, and West. Each block was to be divided into 4 acre lots with each family owning 1 acre giving them sufficient land to support a family's needs.

Ethan Kimball purchase: In the first purchase he had "Blocks" 1-6. These were then divided into lots. Sometimes in property references the lots are also referred to as blocks. Ethan lived in Vermont and was a land broker. He was a brother to Hiram Kimball and a distant cousin to Heber C. Kimball.

Ethan Kimball had 3 land purchases. The 1st was the largest followed by the 2nd and 3rd.

Other land developers were:

John T. BARNETT  
Daniel H. WELLS  
Davidson HIBBARD: 1 and 2  
   Davidson Hibbard received his land patent from serving in the War of 1812.  
George W. ROBINSON  
Edward Thompson>HERR--SHAW THOMPSON
Another Development towards the end of the Mormon Nauvoo Period was the Munson Lands. This had been the parade ground for the Nauvoo Legion, but with so many people crowding into Nauvoo small shacks were put up to try to provide some protection for the people who had to live there. The Munson Lands were very swampy and wet. This section usually appears as a blank area on the Nauvoo Maps as it was not platted.

There were also lands purchased on the Iowa side of the river. This is noted on the Hancock County Map as the Zarahemla Stake, or the Half Breed Tract.
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Mapping Historic Nauvoo

Melinda Evans Jeffress

Nauvoo, the city beautiful could also be termed, by those trying to trace maps of the city’s homes and buildings, as Nauvoo, the city enigma. The early plating map of 1839, which plots Commerce and the main area of Nauvoo, and the 1842 plating map by Gustavus Hills, which shows the town’s intended development, dividing the city into farm areas, blocks, lots, and streets, are a beginning aid to those working with historic Nauvoo. However, there appear to be no maps contemporaneous to the period from 1839 to 1846 that cite the placement and ownership of homes and businesses and trace divergences from the city’s early plans. This loss has been felt again and again by historians, archaeologists, and restorationists as they have worked to re-create the unique atmosphere and grasp the historic context of Nauvoo.

In the last thirty years as Nauvoo Restoration Inc. has restored, reconstructed, and refurbished many of the city’s streets, buildings, and homes, modern maps reflecting this work have been included in recent publications. Those maps have enhanced the mental imagery of Nauvoo the city and of the events which took place in its early years. However, in many of the recent maps, some place-names differ from map to map, coastlines move up and down, and of course the city seems to grow as sites are discovered and identified. In addition, Nauvoo presents a challenge to those tracking the multiple sites of businesses and homes.

The cartography of early Nauvoo also falls into difficulty when the nature of an American frontier town of the nineteenth century is taken into consideration. Americans moving west hoping for inexpensive land or income opportunities would cause surges of population in newly formed towns. Cities burgeoned with people long before the streets and sidewalks were constructed and land use

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designated. This population pattern often meant the actual city differed from its intended design.

In many ways Nauvoo followed the same pattern. Joseph Smith and city planners used their plat maps in an effort to develop the perfect, beautiful city; however, as Donald Enders pointed out in his article "Platting the City Beautiful: A Historical and Archaeological Glimpse of Nauvoo Streets," "the actual laying out of streets never could keep pace with the city's expansion." Although the city was well designed, much of it remained only a "papertown" and changes in the original widths of lots, streets, and sidewalks occurred without documentation beyond city council minutes and petitions. The 1846 plat map shows extensions of the city which were planned but never built and lots which were planned to hold one home or business now accommodating several buildings as the city attempted to meet the needs of the many new converts who poured into the area from Great Britain. Many of the early residents purchased several lots of land and became landlords to those who were incoming. Unless there is additional documentation, one cannot know on which piece of property the owner resided. Thus the population explosion between 1839 and 1844 changed much of the look and expectations of what Nauvoo was to become.

The burgeoning population of early Nauvoo holds several ramifications for today's attempts to map the city. The changes in lot distribution from sole ownership to subleasing or to sales of parcels within the lots often indicate simultaneous possibilities and further eliminate the use of plat maps as a source for an accurate portrayal of the property's distribution.

Along with the questions about property ownership and usage, one must consider the many immigrants as well as returning missionaries who rented property while waiting to build their own homes. Outside of letters and mentions in diaries, very little information is available concerning the renter in Nauvoo; this gap, also, complicates the full documentation of a city where there was so much activity and movement in a few short years.

Whether renting, building, or simply upgrading their life-style, many of Nauvoo's residents moved regularly. This activity can be seen when one traces the homes of many of the early settlers. Heber C. Kimball owned three homes; Brigham Young and John Taylor both owned two. Depending on the year under consideration—1839, 1841, or 1845—the location of these homes would be different, resulting in maps which are perfectly correct but appear inaccurate
because of their dating. Businesses also moved within the city; the Times and Seasons offices moved to three different locations and has been mapped in each of the different places, sometimes without mention of alternate sites.9

Traditions have also made accurate reporting of place-names difficult. After the exodus in 1846, Nauvoo was almost deserted. Those who returned to visit the area would look down streets, remembering their lives in the former busy town, and comment on how things had changed, on where they had lived, and on whom they had known.10 These exchanges between the original settlers and the next generation of Nauvoo residents became accepted knowledge throughout the area regarding who lived in various homes, what businesses filled the falling-down remains of buildings, and what the conditions in Nauvoo were like during its earliest years.

However, memories, even though sincerely recalled, may still be in error. Traditions resulted which occasionally were wrong. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and T. Jeffery Cottle in Old Mormon Nauvoo and Southeastern Iowa affirm this fact as they describe the difficulty in relying on early photos of Nauvoo taken and labeled by B. H. Roberts: “Much of Roberts’s site identification came from the town mayor, M. M. Morrill, a town resident of 1885. Some of his photographs are mislabeled because Roberts relied on local traditions concerning these sites instead of searching to verify the accuracy of the traditions.”10 The inaccuracy of some of these reports has haunted many historians and restorationists as they have tried to unravel fact from fiction.

Sometimes the very nature of mapping impedes a complete, definitive mapping record from becoming available. Maps are made for a purpose defined by the needs of those requesting them. Some of the maps of historic Nauvoo found in current publications show Nauvoo as it is today, complete with RLDS and LDS visitors centers and the local park.11 Sites yet unnamed, placement of plaques, and even the fast-food drive-through may be part of the mapped record of Nauvoo in its restored setting. Other maps show only the various plats which were the basis for the town in 1842 plus its planned extensions in 1846 with no individual homes or buildings marked.12 Some combine both past and present conditions, reviving early elevations that affect coastlines and placing the homes and buildings where they now sit in their restored condition.13

The map presented in this issue of BYU Studies was also created with a specific purpose. Our map of Nauvoo is intended to acquaint
our readers with the locations of the specific sites mentioned throughout the articles in this issue. Thus we have added both the Joseph Smith stable and the Pendleton Cabin. We have used the 1844–46 time period in determining placement. For example, we list the 1845 location of John Taylor’s home and the Times and Seasons offices. These buildings were both purchased by Elder Taylor in 1844, and when the sale was final, he moved immediately into the home next to the printing office. These four locations have not appeared on many previously published maps.

The options and purposes for mapping are only as limited as the research and availability of the sites to be studied. Historic Nauvoo is still being re-created. The methodology and approach of the maps produced so far partake of the nature of beginning studies—they are meant more to familiarize readers with the city’s known relationships and events rather than serve as a directory of historic Nauvoo. Time and further research into the development of the city will enable a more complete approach to the accurate portrayal of the many homes, buildings, and city structures that once existed between 1839 and 1846.

NOTES

1 Gustavus Hills, Map of the City of Nauvoo, 1842 (Nauvoo Restoration Inc., recopied 1965), copy located in Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

2 Dean R. Zimmerman, “Historic Sites,” a map from LDS Church History Atlas (Salt Lake City: Church Educational System, 1975), 171; and Dean C. Jessee, ed., The Papers of Joseph Smith, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 2:516. The two maps are a good comparison study of how additions in site identification and continued restoration change the mapping of Nauvoo.


5 Enders, “Platting the City Beautiful,” 411–12.

6 The Nauvoo Restoration Inc. computerized index of land titles shows that many land owners of early Nauvoo held title to more than one lot. These records do not always confirm whether the owner subleased a home, had a business, or lived on the property.

7 Nauvoo Restoration Inc. computerized index of land titles.

Mapping Historic Nauvoo

9 E. Cecil McGavin, Nauvoo the Beautiful (Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallis, 1946), 300-308.
10 Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and T. Jeffery Cottle, Old Mormon Nauvoo and Southeastern Iowa (Santa Ana: Fieldbrook Productions, 1990), 23. See also their article in this issue.
13 Jessee, The Papers of Joseph Smith, 516.
14 Holzapfel and Cottle, Old Mormon Nauvoo, 119.
15 I would like to thank several people who have helped with our Nauvoo map. Jeffery Cottle shared his research and time, Mary Isom of Nauvoo Restoration Inc. kindly did some extra research in Nauvoo, and Jeffrey Bird of the BYU Geography Department lent his expertise and computers to draft our final copy.
City of Nauvoo:
1844–46 Sites of Historical Buildings and Streets

1-Hiram Kimball Store
2-Hiram Kimball Home
3-Edward Hunter Site
4-Charles C. Rich Home
   (Knight and Robison Street)
5-Nauvoo Temple
6-Nauvoo Expositor Bldg.
7-Masonic Hall/Cultural Hall
8-Scovill Bakery and Confectionery Shop
9-Orson Hyde Home
10-William Clayton Site
11-Lyon Home and Drug and Variety Store
12-John D. Lee Site
13-Heber C. Kimball Home
14-Wilford Woodruff Home
15-Lorin Farr Home
16-Winslow Farr Home
17-Stoddard Home and Tinsmith Shop
18-Jonathan Browning Home
   and Gunsmith Shop
19-John Taylor Home
20-Times and Seasons and
   Nauvoo Neighbor Print Bldg.
21-Pendleton Cabin
22-Joseph Young Home
23-Brigham Young Home
24-Joseph Noble/Lucy M. Smith Home
25-Chauncey Webb Home
26-Seventies Hall
27-Blacksmith Shop
28-Daniel Butler Cobbler Shop
   /General Store
29-Snow/Ashby Home
30-Joseph Coolidge Home
31-Wilson Law Home
32-Masonic Hotel
33-Arron Johnson Home
34-William Marks Home
35-Sidney Rigdon Home and Post Office
36-Mansion House
37-Hiram Clark Home
38-Theodore Turley Cabin
39-Red Brick Store
40-Joseph Smith Homestead
41-Joseph Smith Stable
42-Nauvoo Brick Brewery
43-Nauvoo House
HISTORY OF EARLY TITLE

The real estate herein abstracted is a part of a tract of land commonly known as the “Half Breed Tract,” situated in the southeastern part of Lee County, Iowa, lying between the Mississippi and Des Moines Rivers, and embracing about One Hundred and Nineteen Thousand (119,000) acres of land and lots and blocks in the City of Keokuk, Iowa.

The Half Breed Tract was formerly a portion of the Louisiana Purchase, and was a reservation of land made for the use of the Half Breeds of the Sax and Fox tribe of Indians, in a treaty concluded between the said Indians and United States, August 24, 1824. These tribes by this treaty relinquished to the United States all their right, title, interest and claim to lands which they had, or claimed to have within the limits of the State of Missouri, which were situated lying and being between the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and a line running from the Missouri, at the entrance of the Kansas River, North One Hundred (100) miles to the Northwest corner of the State of Missouri, from thence East to the Mississippi, it being understood that a small tract of land lying between the Rivers Des Moines and Mississippi, was intended for the use of the Half Breeds belonging to the Sax and Fox nations; they holding it, however, by the same title and in the same manner that other Indian titles are held. Seventh U.S. Statutes at Large, 229.

By another treaty at Fort Armstrong on September 21, 1832, the Sax and Fox Indians ceded to the United States their lands in Iowa, releasing to the United States their interest in said lands. Seventh U.S. Statutes at Large, 374.

By act of Congress approved June 30, 1834, this qualified interest of the Half Breeds in this tract of land in Iowa, was converted into an absolute estate in fee. This act relinquished and vested in said Half Breeds “all right, title and interest which might accrue or revert to the United States to the reservation of land,” describing it as reserved by Treaty of 1824, and the act vests said Half Breeds “with full power and authority to transfer their portion by sale, devise or descent according to the laws of Missouri,” Fourth U.S. Statutes at Large, 471.

On April 14, 1840, Josiah Spalding and others filed a petition in the District Court of Lee County, Iowa, at Fort Madison, against Euphrosine Antaya and others for a partition of the Half Breed Tract in Lee County, Iowa, describing in the petition the situation and boundaries of the tract and alleging that it contained One Hundred and Nineteen Thousand (119,000) acres more or less, and the particular claim or share of each petitioner and the name of the person or persons from whom derived. Notice of suit was given by publication and all of the defendants appeared and answered, except Euphrosine Antaya, and in their answers set forth their respective titles. The Court by consent tried the cause and entered judgment of partition on the 8th day of May, 1841, wherein it was ordered and adjudged that the claims and rights of said parties respective to the undivided portion of lands mentioned and described in said petition amounted in the whole to One Hundred and One (101) equal portions. The judgment sets forth the undivided portion to which each petitioner and each defendant was respectively entitled. Samuel B. Ayers, Harmon Booth and Joseph Webster were appointed as commissioners to make the partition into One Hundred and One (101) shares of equal value and report the same to the court for confirmation. Said commissioners filed their report, in which was embodied a plat or map of the City of Keokuk, designating particular property, consisting of lands, and lots and blocks in the City of Keokuk, under each share as numbered and divided by them, to the different persons found to be the owners of shares in said Half Breed Tract, and on the 7th day of October, 1841, said District Court ratified and confirmed the report of said commissioners. District Court Record Book 3, page 103.

This judgment of partition forms the source of title of all lands and lots in the Half Breed Tract, and has been sustained in the following cases by the Supreme Court of Iowa, and by the United States Supreme Court:

Telford vs. Barney, 1 G.Greene, 575. Wright vs. Marsh, Lee & Delavan, 2 G.Greene, Barney vs. Chittenden, 2 G.Greene, 163. Wright vs. Millard, 3 G.Greene, 86. (And others not legible)
Lands Purchased from Isaac Galland
By Mormon Land Agents in 1839

Situated in
The Sac and Fox Indian Reservation
(The Half-Breed Tract)
Lee County, Iowa

by Lyndon W. Cook