Among the Books

Harvard of 1838, published by C. Morse in Canandaigua in 1838. The second Michigan item is M. N. Halley’s A Complete Tableau of Interest at Seven Per Centum, published in 1850 by the Ingalls Power Press Print of Adrian; one copy is located at the Library of Congress.

Under Journals, the textbooks in mathematics used at the University of Michigan in 1840 and those used in the state are listed, as reported by the State Superintendents of Public Instruction John D. Pierce, Sawyer, Ira Mayhew, and Francis W. Shearman. Superintendent Ira Mayhew had a particular interest in mathematics. He was the author of a highly successful work on bookkeeping and in 1847 a full-page advertisement in the Northwestern Educator of the Jeremiah Day and J. B. Thomson series of arithmetics was accompanied by a letter of praise written by Mayhew.

The volume contains reproductions of some 50 title pages. There are some 250 pages of text material, largely of the early Spanish American and colonial textbooks. The volume is dedicated to the American libraries. Prof. Karpinski is a teacher of mathematics at the University of Michigan.


The first satisfactory history of this remarkable people. Specially interesting to Michigan for its story of the Hurons. Most of Chapter VIII, “The Upper Canada and Michigan Tribes”, deals with Michigan. The book is well written, contains an extensive bibliography, three important appendices. The documentation is careful and thorough. The author is Assistant Professor of History in Western Reserve University.
Jackson is interested in Sen. Chandler because he was one of the prime movers in the "Under the Oaks" convention in Jackson at the birth of the Republican party, and he was a leader and a force in that party until the day of his death.

Soon after the first convention in Jackson, Zach Chandler went to Washington as one of Michigan's senators. He was a friend of Lincoln and a zealous opponent of slavery, and once said, "Without a little blood-letting this country will not, in my estimation, be worth a rush." And a rush in those days was something cheaper than a candle, for which it was used as a substitute.

He served three terms in the Senate, then was in President Grant's cabinet as secretary of the interior and was serving his fourth term in the Senate when he died in 1879.

Senator Vandenberg was instrumental in obtaining for Michigan from Senator Hale a fine marble bust of Senator Chandler which has been placed in the State Historical Museum at Lansing.

Bob Church, writing in the Pontiac Daily Press, tells a story not commonly known about the Mormons in Pontiac, the founder of the city being an uncle of Joseph Smith. Bob writes:

If the "Long Knives" of George Rogers Clark had not intercepted a bale of 934 human scalps and if the great chief of the Ottawas, Pontiac, had not failed in his conspiracy, the present City of Pontiac might today be a Mormon settlement similar to Salt Lake City, Utah.

As it was, Pontiac furnished two leaders of high rank who shared the trials and suffering of the people of that faith.

When rich, handsome, adventurous Col. Stephen Mack founded Pontiac he also set the stage for the advent of the Mormons making Pontiac the earliest citadel in this part of the West.

Mack was a trader, a builder, a frontier buster, all the things that a man of action and business should be, but he was something more. In his veins ran the blood of the seer, the mystic, the prophet. He was the uncle of Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon church.

Smith as a youth lived near the little village of Palmyra in upstate New York. Being of a religious nature he attended the meetings of various sects and to his consternation and pain found them bitterly opposed to one another. Pondering on these things he is said to have had a vision in which he was directed to find certain golden plates on which were inscribed the works of the ancient prophet Moroni. He found the plates and translated them into English out of the original Egyptian and Arabic. The result was the Book of Mormon which considered apart from all religious issues was destined to have a profound effect on the future of the United States.

An important part of the Book of Mormon had to do with the Lamanites or Indians. In it the American aborigines were described as being descended from a very ancient race who had fallen into evil ways, thus accounting for their present plight. It therefore became an article of faith that every true Mormon or Latter Day Saint must exert himself to the utmost to convert the redmen. This explains the Mormon migration from the peace of the East to the wild west where they often suffered death and torture for their convictions and way of life.

As a stepping stone to the west a mission was established at Kirtland, O. From the first phenomenal success attended their efforts. But wishing to come nearer the Indian the elders decided on proceeding to Missouri. However Lucy Smith, mother of Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, and sister of Col. Mack, was desirous of founding a church in Pontiac, where fortune had favored her brother and where she had reason to believe there were Indians aplenty who were in sore need of religious teaching, if she could accept the tales which had emanated from this region for 10 years.

Accordingly she, in company with four missionaries, Lyman Wright, John Corrill, John Murdock and Hyrum Smith, came
to Pontiac during the winter of 1830. Col. Mack had died but his widow Temperance, and two daughters, soon became converts to the new faith. In fact the missionaries found Pontiac very ready to receive the new faith and soon had baptized 70 persons and constructed a frame church, which in those days was a badge of prosperity. A history of the Mormons reveals this was the first real church in Pontiac, although Methodist circuit riders and Baptist ministers had held meeting here for several years, according to this record. They in turn had been preceded by the Moravian missionaries by a quarter of a century and by the Jesuits more than a century.

Here, as in Kirtland, the Mormons found the settlers possessed of strong religious convictions. Most of them were of New England puritan stock and the burning zeal of the Latter Day Saints gave form and expression to their feelings. It was not long before the church in Pontiac became overcrowded and a second was erected near Highland, of logs.

Less zealous missionaries would have been content with these things. They, however, considered that the real mission of the church was not being fulfilled. The Indians were scarce and those whom they confronted were mostly incorrigible, caring for nothing but rum and whiskey, a mere remnant of a proud people whose power had been weakened when the conspiracy of their chief Pontiac, had failed and had been utterly shattered by the long knives of Clark during the American Revolution when these redoubtable Kentucky riflemen had captured a bale of 934 human scalps which the red warriors had taken from the frontier. The incident had been made by Franklin to espouse the cause of the Americans at the court of France. It had aroused the colonists against the Indians as never before and had resulted in something very close to annihilation for them. Thus in the year 1830, though this locality had been known for years as the firebrand of the Northwest, the savages who were not dead, had gone into the wilderness. The Mormon missionaries found their field of operations curtailed and concluded they would abandon this country for the far West where Lamanites of an unspoiled nature might be found.

When they left they were followed by entire Pontiac families who sold their holdings and deposited the proceedings in a common treasury. With them went Col. Mack's widow and her two daughters and thus faded whatever dreams Lucy Smith may have had for the founding in Pontiac of a great central colony for those of her faith.

To the credit of Pontiac there are no records which would point to any deed of intolerance on the part of any citizen in those days. Today the Church of the Latter Day Saints is located on Front Street, a portion of the old Mack estate.

George W. Stark of the Detroit News tells in a recent issue how "Uncle Chase" (Chase S. Osborn) puts the quill to the "Michigander" misnomer. George writes:

The name of the organization, up to now, was the Three Score and Ten Michiganders. Today and from this on it will be the Three Score and Ten of Michigan. This is on account of the Hon. Chase S. Osborn, the Sage of the Sault Country, who is more than Three Score and Ten by a considerable margin and who knows his words above all other citizens of this commonwealth. Just ask any dictionary.

Hon. Chase, basking in the Georgia sunshine of Pulaski County heard about this business of the Three Score and Ten Michiganders and it made him hotter than even the Georgia sunshine made him. So he took his pen in hand and began writing letters, and when Hon. Chase takes his pen in hand, you may be sure that something pretty fluid and confusing is going to emerge.

Member that time he called all the saloonkeepers of Detroit social saprophytes and they were so confounded they couldn't answer, because nary a one of them had ever met a saprophyte face to face, and neither had they ever heard of one. They thought it must be something Hon. Chase encountered on one of his big game expeditions.
The Saints Come to Michigan

John and Audrey Cumming

The "psychic highway" across New York State did not stop at the borders of that state but extended into Michigan during the 1830's. In this decade Oakland County was the scene of much Mormon activity in which many converts were made. These converts left Oakland County to follow the "Prophet" Joseph Smith to Missouri, then to Nauvoo, Illinois; and ultimately they continued to Salt Lake Valley under Brigham Young.

There was a particular reason why Oakland County in the territory of Michigan became a center for enlisting new members for this church. Stephen Mack, the founder of Pontiac, was an uncle of the Mormon prophet. Although Stephen Mack had died in 1826, he left a large family behind, including his wife and twelve children, sufficient excuse for the Smith family to visit Pontiac.2

On March 26, 1830, the Wayne Sentinel, the newspaper in Palmyra, New York, carried a notice that the Book of Mormon was on sale. With the publication of this book, was launched the most successful of the religious spawned along the "psychic highway." This book purported to be a translation of a sacred record kept by the descendants of a colony of Israelites who had left Jerusalem, found their way across Asia, and had sailed across the Pacific to what is now America about six hundred years before Christ. In the fourth century A.D., one of the descendants of these colonists, a prophet named Mormon, transcribed an abridgement of the total history of the people onto golden plates. It was these plates that Joseph Smith with the guidance of the Angel Moroni dug up on

1Across the entire breadth of York State, undeviating, a hilly strip scarcely twenty-five miles wide invites the world's wonder. It is a broad psychic highway, a thoroughfare of the occult whose great stations number the mystic seven." Thus Carl Carmer has named that narrow area where so many religions originated in the nineteenth century: Carl Carmer, Listen for Lonesome Drum, A York State Chronicle, 145 (New York, 1936).
2History of Oakland County, Michigan, 70 (Philadelphia, 1877).

2 Evans, Joseph Smith, 52-53.
3 Lucinda Smith, Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors for Many Generations, 181 (Lamoni, Iowa, 1912).
4 Brigham H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 241 (Salt Lake City, 1930).
advantage of every opportunity to advance the cause of Mormonism. In Pontiac, Lucy Mack Smith was introduced to the Rev. Isaac W. Ruggles of the newly-formed Congregational church. He greeted her with some uncomplimentary remarks about her son Joseph:

"And you," said Mr. Ruggles, upon shaking hands with me, "are the mother of that poor, foolish, silly boy, Joe Smith, who pretends to translate the Book of Mormon." 7

This offended Aunt Lucy, and an exchange of words took place between her and the minister. She warned him that within three years the Mormons would have more than a third of his church, including the deacon. The minister laughed at her, exclaiming that the members of the church had too much intelligence to be led astray by such nonsense.8

Lucy remained in Pontiac for four weeks, claiming that she had won the hearts of many, including David Dort and his wife. She promised that upon her return to Kirtland she would use her influence to persuade her son Joseph to send a missionary to Pontiac to work among the people.9 In response to this request, Joseph dispatched Jared Carter and Joseph Wood to Pontiac.

Lucy's 1831 visit to Pontiac occurred at an opportune time. In this year, there had been a schism in the Presbyterian church in which a number of members had broken away to form the Congregational church. This unsettled state of affairs in the religious climate of the community provided a fertile ground for proselytizing.10

11 Smith, Biographical Sketches, 226-27.
12 Smith, Biographical Sketches, 231.
13 Smith, Biographical Sketches, 231.
14 Smith, Biographical Sketches, 232.
15 Isaac W. Ruggles settled in Pontiac in 1824 and became the minister of the Presbyterian church founded in that year. Serving under the Plan of Union adopted by the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, Ruggles, of Congregational background, served the Pontiac church until 1828, when the American Home Missionary Society sent the Rev. George Hornell to Pontiac. Ruggles was unwilling to yield his place to Hornell and was accused of attempting to influence the church to become Congregational. These charges were borne out in 1831 when Ruggles was chosen moderator at the organizational meeting held on February 6 at the home of Samuel Bent. "Historical Sketch of the First Presbyterian Church of Pontiac," 3, mimeographed paper, Presbyterian Church, Pontiac, undated. See also the church records of the First Presbyterian Church of Pontiac in the Michigan Historical Collections of the University of Michigan.

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17 Added to this factor was the common origin of most of the settlers of the Pontiac area. Most of these settlers came from New York State, that area known as the "burned-over district." For generations this area in western New York had been swept by wave after wave of religious enthusiasm generated by revivalists. Early in the nineteenth century Lorenzo Dow, one of the most famous revivalists, had made several circuits of the area, converting as many as a hundred sinners in a single meeting. He was followed by a long list of revival preachers who whipped up a religious fervor seldom equaled in history. These people through their entire lives had been concerned with sin and salvation.18

A non-Mormon resident of Oakland County recalled in later years the enthusiastic reception of this religion in 1832:

My father became possessed of a copy of the Book of Mormon, and was deeply interested in it. Two Mormon missionaries came into the neighborhood to expound the doctrines. The spread of the new faith seemed to be a contagion; neighborhood meetings were held every day, and new converts announced. Some of the converts claimed to have received a new inspiration and to speak in unknown tongues. My father became an early convert and was received into the church. My mother, either from a feeling of sympathy with my father's action, or yielding to the importunity of the preachers who visited us, was also baptised.19

This early resident recalled that more than fifty persons in and around Pontiac abandoned their homes and moved off to join the Mormons. Some of the names he recalled were Thaddeus Alvord, Ezekiel Kellogg, Seville Harris, Jeremiah Curtis, Nahum Curtis, Joseph Bent, Edward Stevenson, and Temperance and Almira Mack.20

As Lucy Mack Smith had warned the Rev. Mr. Ruggles, Elders Jared Carter and Joseph Wood, missionaries, spent much time in the Pontiac area. They arrived on January 7, 1833, at Auburn: then they went on to Pontiac to hold meetings in the courthouse. In a letter from Pontiac, dated February 16, 1833, Samuel Bent

22 Stephen B. McCracken, "Fifty Years Ago and Now," in the Michigan Historical Collections, 14:616 (Lansing, 1890).
23 McCracken, "Fifty Years Ago," in the Michigan Historical Collections, 14:618.
wrote to the editors of the *Evening and Morning Star* to tell them about the successes of Jared Carter. Bent had been the deacon of the Congregational church. He wrote:

Brother Carter has been laboring in the ministry for about five weeks past, in this county, and his labors have been blessed by God, to a greatly degree, he has baptized 22 persons and received them into the Church of Christ, myself and wife, are two of the above named members, for which I desire to bless the Lord. . .

The ex-deacon of the Congregational church had been traveling with Carter for the past two weeks and was impressed with his work. They met with some difficulty, however, for Bent recorded:

There is great opposition to this cause in this section of the country, but I hope and trust that the Lord will overrule and glorify his name, and subdue the hearts of his people, and make them obedient to his will.

A year later, the Prophet himself visited Pontiac in company with his father; his brother Hyrum; the three witnesses of the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris; and two elders, Frederick G Williams, and Robert Orton. This was indeed a top-level visit. Cowdery had been Joseph Smith's secretary who transcribed the Book of Mormon as Joseph dictated from behind a screen; Whitmer was one of the earliest promoters of the religion and a witness of the

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plates; Harris was the financial backer who put up the funds which made possible the publication of the Book in 1830.

A report of this trip to Pontiac was sent to the *Messenger and Advocate* by Oliver Cowdery. After leaving Kirtland on October 16, 1834, they embarked by boat from Fairport, Ohio. Cowdery described the trip, the stop at Cleveland, the passage through the islands near where Perry's victory had been won, and the sail up the Detroit River.

The party arrived at Detroit at 4 a.m. and took the eight o'clock stage to Pontiac:

A stage runs daily from Detroit to this place, though the mail once a week. At 8 a.m. we took passage. The face of the country for several miles is low and wet, and the timber not the largest; and were one to judge as in other places, he would be led to conclude it an unhealthy part of our land.

As you pass farther, the ground is more elevated, though by no means high.

The timber on the up land is principally oak, while the low ground and marshes afford a few small Pine with a mixture of other timber. I am informed, that larger Pine is quite abundant a distance from this.

Edward Stevenson, a young man at this time, recalled in later years the Prophet's visit. Joseph Smith, he said, spoke to large congregations there and others in the party gave testimony that "they, in open day, stood in the presence of the God who administered unto the Prophet." It was an event that made a deep and lasting impression upon Stevenson:

We felt that we were blessed above kings, rulers and potentates of the earth and truly we were a happy branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Our souls were full of joyous thanksgiving, and our songs of gladness rejoiced the heart by day, dispelled the gloom by night and welcomed the coming morn. Those only can realize our happiness and delight who sing with the soul and understanding the beautiful song of Zion:

We thank Thee, O God for a Prophet,
To guide us in these latter days;
We thank Thee for sending the Gospel
To lighten our minds with its rays.

Martin Harris's sister was a resident of the Pontiac area. She was Sophia Kellogg Stevenson, Life of Edward Stevenson.

*The Messenger and Advocate*, 1:1 (October, 1834).

*Edward Stevenson, Reminiscences of Joseph the Prophet*, 5 (Salt Lake City, 1893).
Stevenson remembered with pride that the Prophet had accepted an invitation to come under his roof and partake of his family's hospitality. The young man selected his choicest apples to give to the Prophet "in exchange for the golden nuggets of celestial truth." It had been a proud moment for young Stevenson to entertain one "who had conversed with the Father and the Son, and been under the tuition of an angel from Heaven." The memory of Joseph's visit to Pontiac was not to be forgotten by Stevenson:

The Prophet Joseph Smith was a plain but noble looking man of large frame and about six feet high. ... A great stir was made in this settlement at so distinguished visitors. The meetings held were crowded to see and hear the testimonies given, which were very powerful ... The Prophet stood at a table, for the pulpit, where he began relating his vision, and before he got through, he was in the midst of the congregation with uplifted hand. I do believe that there was not one person present who was not convinced of the truth of his vision of an angel coming to him. His countenance seemed to me to assume a heavenly whiteness and his voice was so piercing and forcible—for my part, it so impressed me as to become indelibly imprinted on my mind.

More meetings were held, and the Prophet was joined by the three witnesses, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, who all gave their testimonies. It was indeed an impressive experience for Stevenson to see them stand up and face the congregation to say "that they had in open daylight been seen and heard the voice of the angel." The young listener remarked, "I knew their testimony was true."

Pontiac through these early years was visited by the entire Smith family, the father, mother, Joseph, and Hyrum; the three witnesses; and the leading missionaries. Those who accepted the faith were stimulated to deep religious experiences.

Falling stars, sacred dreams, and strange sounds all took on deep meaning. In the schoolhouse near Silver Lake where the Mormons held their meetings, one Mary Curtis, a young girl of twelve years, rose to testify of her feelings about God. Suddenly her voice became unintelligible and she was "speaking in tongues." A similar experience happened to Mary Bent in the same schoolhouse. At

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another meeting, Elijah Fordham rose to give testimony. He started to speak in unknown tongues. Nobody in the congregation understood what he was saying; but two Frenchmen who were passing by came to the window of the schoolhouse and listened. They revealed that Elijah Fordham was preaching to them in French. "Brother Fordham did not understand any more about French than he did about Greek, for it was a spiritual gift he was then exercising." These were wondrous days in Pontiac.

At about this time, the Pontiac converts were making preparations to "gather" at Zion, the Mormon settlement in Missouri. Before Joseph Smith left New York in 1831, he had been directed by revelation that a new "Zion" would be set up on the borders of the Lamanites. The Book of Mormon had also declared that the new gospel should be preached among the Lamanites; thus Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Parley Pratt were sent on a mission that would bring them to Missouri. Added to these beliefs was the realization on the part of the Prophet that if the saints were to "gather," they must settle in a place where there would be room to grow. Missouri seemed to afford such an opportunity.

Joseph Smith laid out plans for a city, and the move to Missouri got under way before the year 1831 had passed. By 1833, according to Sidney Rigdon, between twelve and fifteen hundred Mormons were settled in Jackson County, Missouri.

The urge to "gather" was strong among the Mormons. This urge was motivated to a large degree by the conviction among them of the impending second coming of Christ. They felt the necessity of being together in one locale for that great event which might happen at any moment. This belief in the immediacy of the Second Advent was not restricted to the Mormons during this period, but it also extended into other religious sects. Indeed, the leader of one sect in New York State, William Miller, computed the exact day of the second coming and convinced his followers of it. By the time that day arrived, there were thousands who had sold all

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"Stevenson, Life of Edward Stevenson, 18.
"Lamanites", American Indians. The name is from the Book of Mormon character, Laman, eldest son of Lehi, which Lehi led the colony from Jerusalem to the western hemisphere about 600 B.C." Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church, 220.
"Evans, Joseph Smith, 83."
their property, clothed themselves in white, and climbed to the tops of hills to await the coming of the Lord.  

In 1835, Almira Mack, now Mrs. William Scoaby, was in Missouri. Three years later her mother, Temperance Mack, would join her there.

"I feel as though I had a duty to do," Almira Mack Scoaby wrote from Missouri on March 10, 1835, that to warn you to prepare for death, judgment and Eternity: perhaps we may not be permitted to meet again this side of Eternity, but if not, it is my prayer that we may be prepared to meet in the Celestial kingdom of God.  

She assured them that she had not left Pontiac because she had no love for them. She knew that they did not approve of her leaving; but, she added, "If time does not show the reason I came away, Eternity will..."

"Perhaps some may think me deluded," she wrote to her sister Harriet Mack Whittemore, and feel pity for me, but will soon know the truth of these things, for great things await this generation, and it is for this reason that I feel so anxious for you and the rest of my friends, for behold the coming of our Saviour is nigh at hand and this generation will not pass away until he will appear in his glory and we ought to be prepared for it whether in life or in death. . . ."

Because of this belief in the second coming of Christ, the early Mormons "gathered." Almira at every opportunity urged Harriet to think about these matters so that she might be prepared for death, judgment, and eternity.

The letters of Temperance Mack illustrate effectively the pro-

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found belief in their mission that these Mormons felt. Temperance
was nearly seventy years old when she left Pontiac to join her
daughter and the other Saints in Missouri. She traveled first to
Kirtland, Ohio, and then, accompanied by David Dort of Pontiac,
she set out for Missouri. Arriving in Missouri just in time to ex-
perience the violence and mob action which drove these people from
their homes, deprived them of their personal property, and killed
not a few of them. Temperance was not at all frightened,
as a letter to her daughter Harriet demonstrates:

The church have agreed to leave here in the spring but where to go
they know not. We don't know but we must flee from the haunts
of men to the caves and dens in the rocks like the saints of old but none of
these things move me. Neither do I regret that I have left the eastern
states for where the Lord says go I must obey. Altho my heart is with
my children and they are near and dear unto me, yet I am no better
than the old martyrs. They had to suffer the loss of all things to win
an incorruptible crown and so must I and I do it cheerfully knowing that
I shall reap in due time if I faint not."

Temperance Mack was not a poor woman. Her husband had
left an estate that would have permitted her to live in moderate
comfort throughout her remaining years, and her sons and daugh-
ters in the Pontiac area prospered enough to insure her comfort.
Still she underwent the hardships of travel to distant points, en-
dured the scorn and persecution of the mobs, and braved danger—
all because she was convinced that the reward that awaited her was
"an incorruptible celestial crown of glory." She was driven from
Missouri, enjoyed a few years of peace in Nauvoo, Illinois, and
then was driven out again, and joined the long, hard trek across
the plains and mountains to Salt Lake Valley. Such a life required
faith, and Temperance Mack had it.  

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Almira Mack Scoby to Harriet Mack Whittemore, at Pontiac, Michigan,
March 10, 1835, in the Whittemore Papers at the Michigan Historical
Collections of the University of Michigan. Almira Mack had married William
Scoaby at Kirtland, Ohio, in 1831. Scoaby was from Fayette, Seneca County,
New York, where the original Mormon church got its start. He moved to
Pontiac with Almira following the marriage. There he died of consumption
in December, 1833. Almira moved to Liberty, Missouri, a year later to be
with her religious brethren. There she married Benjamin Covel. Whittemore
papers and obituary of Scoaby in Evening and Morning Star, 2:277 (March,
1834).

21

Almira Mack Scoby to Harriet Mack Whittemore, March 10, 1835, in the
Whittemore Papers.

22 Almira Mack Scoby to Harriet Mack Whittemore, June 9, 1835, in the
Whittemore Papers.
The Mormon proselyting in Oakland County during this period was extensive, judging by the number of converts who left their homes and relatives to move to Missouri, and later to Nauvoo. The visits of the top-level officials of the church and the meetings at which they preached must have created quite a stir in this small community; yet an examination of existing newspaper files of the period fails to disclose any references to Mormon activity in this area.

Among the orthodox in religion this new movement was by no means a popular one. By 1839 the missionaries had made converts and had established branches in other counties in the state in the face of strong opposition. Stephen Post reported to Times and Seasons on his activities in Wayne, Oakland, and Lapeer counties. Although he had met with some success, he conceded:

And many have disbelieved the gospel altogether; some few in Plymouth, Wayne Co., go so far as to disturb public worship, with drums, fifes, horns, bells, ridiculous gestures and horrid yells, and some of them too, professing Godliness, and others whose parents profess to bring up their sons in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and have them initiated in their infancy. In Lapeer village some went so far as to fill a house in time of worship with tobacco smoke and also that to Michigan in 1807, to engage in trade. His activities were interrupted by the War of 1812, but he returned as soon as it was possible. He left his family behind in Tunbridge, Vermont, but was joined by his daughter Lovisa in 1818, when she came to Michigan to keep house for him. Soon the rest of the family joined Stephen Mack in their new home in Pontiac. Fanay, the eldest of the children of Stephen and Temperance Mack, married David Dott. She died in 1827; but it was David Dott who later accompanied Temperance Mack to Kirkland, Missouri, and Nauvoo. Asela, next in line, married Richard Whitemore, brother of Gideon O. Whitemore. She died in 1835. Her husband then married Harriet Buckland, niece of his late wife. Stephen Mack Jr. was next. He engaged in the fur trade at Rockford, Illinois, where he married the daughter of a Winnebago Indian chief. He died there in 1830.

Rhoda and Ruth were next, the first of three sets of twins. Rhoda married Asher Buckland in Vermont in 1812, coming to Michigan in 1825, when Asher Buckland, a miller, took charge of his father-in-law's mill. Don Carlos Buckland was their son. Ruth married Benjamin Clemens Stanley. Mary followed, but no information has been found about her. Lovina and Lovisa were the second set of twins, Lovina died in 1823, and is said to have been the first white adult to have died in Pontiac. Her twin Lovisa married David Cooper, prominent Detroit merchant. John M. Mack became a merchant in Hamtramack Township. Harriet first married Rufus Hatch, lighthouse keeper and merchant at Fort Gratiot. Following his death, she married Gideon O. Whitemore, attorney, University of Michigan regent, secretary of state, and founder of Tawas City. The other twins were Almon and Almira. Almon became a Rochester merchant and served in the State Legislature. From notes by W. Frank Whitemore in the Whitemore Papers.

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of powder by firing fire crackers in the house, also saluting the house outwardly with a gun; there were two magistrates and one constable present, officers sworn to keep the peace who looked quietly on, and said nothing to the rabble, and I learned that at least one if not both of the magistrates assisted in disturbing the public and the harmony of the worship of God."

In the fall of 1839, following the Mormon exodus from Missouri, Parley and Orson Pratt, two of their famous preachers, visited Michigan. Parley reported to Times and Seasons that he found Detroit a sickly place, "many taverns shut, six bakeries closed." He had preached in the Detroit City Hall; and Orson had also preached to crowded houses. Twenty-two dollars had been contributed to Orson for his missionary journey. Parley stated that there were some fifty members of the church within a one day's journey from Detroit and that Elder Mephiboseth Serrine from New York was living among them.

While in Detroit, Parley Pratt visited his aged parents and his brother Anson, who were then living in the city. He stayed long enough to see through the printers an eighty-four page pamphlet entitled History of the Late Persecution by the State of Missouri upon the Mormons. He recorded in his letter: "It came out of the Press Thursday last."

The Elder Serrine to whom Parley Pratt referred was just beginning his active role as a leader of the church in the southeastern Michigan area. By this time, branches had been raised in many towns outside the bounds of Oakland County. Serrine had started his missionary labors in Lenawee County in August, 1838, when he organized a church of eleven members. Still continuing his missionary work in other parts of the state, he moved to Washitawen County in 1839. It was at this period that the visit of Orson Pratt helped him in winning converts. Pratt stayed with Serrine two weeks and preached fourteen sermons.

Elder Serrine engaged in debates with the ministers of other faiths

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19 Times and Seasons, 1:39 (January, 1840).
20 Times and Seasons, 1:43 (January, 1840).
21 Parley Parker Pratt, Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt, One of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 327 (Chicago, 1888).
22 Millennial Star, 3:50 (July, 1840).
23 Times and Seasons, 1:73 (March, 1840).
at every opportunity. At one debate in Royal Oak, Serrine claimed that between four and five hundred people assembled to hear the arguments on the divine origin of the Book of Mormon. “Great excitement prevailed among the people,” he wrote.48

Rufus Beach, writing in September, 1840, from Livonia, said:

The cause of truth is slowly, but steadily progressing in this section of the country, prejudice is giving way to the force of truth, and some are obeying the gospel; last Sabbath two were baptized. . . .

Beach went on to complain that there were only three in that section of the country who preached “the gospel of the kingdom” even though a wide field was opened for the spread of the gospel.49

In the following March, Beach wrote to Joseph Smith to inform him:

The saints in this section of the country are making the necessary arrangements to move up to the west this coming summer if possible, but the times are hard, and those that sell their effects will have to do it at a considerable sacrifice, but the most of them, I think, see the necessity of doing so . . . .

Elder Serrine was a busy man, preaching from five to six times a week, engaging in debates, and presiding over conferences of the various branches. He submitted conference reports to Times and Seasons regularly, recording the activities of the church in southeastern Michigan through the early 1840's until he finally moved to Nauvoo, Illinois. The history and growth of the movement in the area may be followed through his reports.

The early 1840's saw branches of the Mormon church established in Oakland, Lapeer, Wayne, Livingston, Washtenaw, and Lenawee counties. In the western part of the state, the seeds of the Mormon gospel sown by Jared Carter ten years earlier when he made converts at Florence43 in St. Joseph County, had grown and spread to most of the counties in the western part of Michigan. From the number of towns represented at the conferences held throughout the state, it is quite apparent that the Mormon religion had become a movement.

In 1843, at a conference held at Lapeer on January 20, representa-

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tives attended from branches in Attica, Lapeer, Redford, Livonia, Brownstown, Cedar, Superior, and Royal Oak. Delegates listed 206 members in their congregations.44 At a conference in Brighton, Livingston County, in July, 1843, Van Buren in Wayne County, Pleasant Valley in Livingston County, and Franklin in Oakland County were added as branches.45 In December of the same year, at Comstock in Kalamazoo County, a conference was held with representatives attending from Kalamazoo, Mottville, Albion, Quincy, and Paw Paw.46

Other communities responded to the roll call at subsequent conferences. In the eastern conference, branches added by 1845 included Southfield, Waterford, Avon, Washington, Otterville, Pine Run, Leroy, and Williscroft.47 A tabulation of the membership as reported from conference to conference would fail to indicate the growth of the Mormon church; for as soon as arrangements could be made, a true believer would depart for Nauvoo to “gather” with his brethren. At the conference at Brownstown, Wayne County, on January 12, 1844, Elder Serrine reported: “Since our conference in July, upwards of one hundred members have left this state for Nauvoo.48 The Bethel Church in Branch County reported that fourteen had left since the last conference.49 The Albion branch adopted a set of resolutions in which it was resolved: “That we will make all possible efforts to tithe ourselves one tenth of our possessions, as soon as possible, and go up to Nauvoo.”50

The movement seemed to reach a high point in June, 1844, with the visit of William Woodruff and George A. Smith, members of the Quorum of Twelve. They were accompanied by three members of the high council, Samuel Bent, Charles C. Rich, and David Fulmer. Their first stop was the Kalamazoo conference in Comstock, on June 1. There were thirty-five elders gathered to hear instructions from the high officials from Nauvoo.51

Woodruff and his party crossed the state to open the conference.

48Times and Seasons, 3:838 (July 1, 1842).
49Times and Seasons, 1:181 (October, 1840).
50Times and Seasons, 2:366 (April 1, 1841).
51Evening and Morning Star, 1:216 (July, 1833).
52Times and Seasons, 4:111 (February 15, 1843).
53Times and Seasons, 4:299 (August 15, 1843).
54Times and Seasons, 5:397 (January 1, 1844).
55Times and Seasons, 6:873 (April 15, 1845).
56Times and Seasons, 6:945 (February 15, 1844).
57Times and Seasons, 6:980 (August 1, 1845).
58Times and Seasons, 6:979 (August 1, 1845).
59Times and Seasons, 5:579 (July 15, 1844).
at Pleasant Valley, Livingston County, a week later. Here three
new branches were represented: Napoleon, Jackson, and Monroe.53

From Pleasant Valley, the Nauvoo delegation traveled to Franklin
in Oakland County, where they opened the conference on June 15.
Elder Mephiboseth Serrine was ordained a high priest under the
hands of Elders George A. Smith, William Woodruff, and Charles
C. Rich. It was further resolved that Elder Serrine "be the presiding
high priest over all the branches of the church in Eastern Michi-
gan."54

Nearly two weeks later before the excitement of the visit of the
Nauvoo dignitaries had had time to wear off, the horrible news
reached Michigan that on June 27, Joseph and Hyrum Smith had
been massacred by a mob that broke into the jail at Carthage, Illinois,
where they were being held.

The eastern Michigan conference met at Southfield on August 9,
following the news of the death of the Prophet. Several elders rose
to offer "appropriate remarks on the death of the prophet and patri-
arch." "A deep solemnity rested upon the congregation."55

In Nauvoo, the authority of the church remained with the
Quorum of Twelve of which Brigham Young was president; but
there were groups that sought to wrest the leadership from the
Twelve so that they might assume the mantle taken from Joseph
Smith by the assassins' bullets. Small groups moved away from
the body of the church taking with them a portion of the population of
Nauvoo.

In Michigan, fourteen branches met at Livonia on November 1
to adopt a resolution affirming their support of the Twelve. On
December 8, 1844, Elder David Savage called the conference to
order at Comstock, where the elders voted "to sustain the 'Twelve'
and all the authorities of the church ..."56

At a conference held at Florence in July, 1844, one James J.
Strang appeared before the elders there to announce to them that
he had been called as prophet to succeed Joseph Smith and that he
had been named by Joseph to that role. This announcement was
not received with enthusiasm by the conference. Elders Crandall

54"Times and Seasons," 5:580 (July 15, 1844).
55"Times and Seasons," 5:628 (September 2, 1844).
56"Times and Seasons," 5:726 (December 1, 1844).