

ST. LOUIS DAILY AMERICAN. St. Louis, Tuesday, May 5, 1846.

ORIGIN OF MORMONISM.. -- The Albany Evening Journal gives the following account of Joe Smith's early operations:

Joe Smith, previous to his becoming a Prophet, was a 'Loafer.' He resided near the village of Palmyra, spent most of his time in bar-rooms, and seemed only [anxious] to live along 'from hand to mouth,' without work. He was then remarkable for nothing in particular, but indolence and scheming on a small scale. In 1824 or 1825, he went a vagabonding off into western Pennsylvania, nobody knows how, where he got possession of the manuscript of a half-deranged clergyman, with which he returned to Palmyra, where he pretended that he was directed in a dream to a particular spot in the woods, to possess himself of an oracular slate or as he called it, a 'Golden Bible.' From this inspired slate, which he used to place in his hat, he read to the gaping 'few' new and strange revelations: and finally, he produced the 'Book of Mormon,' as the creed and faith of a people of whom he was designed by Providence to be the Prophet and Ruler. The Book of Mormon is a copy of the manuscript which Smith obtained near Pittsburgh.

A wealthy farmer, by the name of Harris was his first believing convert. Harris mortgaged his farm to raise the money required for the temporal support of the Prophet, and printing of the Book of Mormon. The Prophet and his convert (Smith and Harris) came to Rochester, and offered us the honor of being their printer. But, as we were only in the newspaper line, we contented ourselves with reading a chapter of what seemed such wretched and incoherent stupidity, that we wondered how 'Joe,' had contrived to make the first fool with it. But he went on, making not only fools, but knaves, in America and Europe, for more than twenty years.

Note 1 by Dale R. Braodhurst: At the time this article was reprinted, the editor of the *Albany Evening Journal* was the famous Whig journalist and politician, Thurlow Weed. Mr. Weed had been publishing the *Anti-Masonic Enquirer* in Rochester, NY, when Joseph Smith Jr., and Martin Harris approached him, soliciting his publication of the Book of Mormon. Mr. Weed printed essentially the same information again in the *Albany Evening Journal* ten years later. See reports in Dan Vogel's *Early Mormon Documents* for more on Weed and his reminiscences of Mormon origins.

MARINE INTELLIGENCE.

PORT OF HONOLULU.

ARRIVED.

June 20th -- American ship Brooklyn, Richardson, 136 days from New York.

Joseph Smith, jr., Founder of "Church of Latter-Day Saints," (or Mormons) -- Origin -- Book of Mormon -- History -- Creed -- present condition and prospective plans of the Sect -- California, &c.; &c.

The arrival of the "Brooklyn," has brought to our shores a large company of emigrants, on their passage from New York to California. Rumors are afloat and numerous inquiries are made respecting the origin and sentiments of these people, and the desire has been expressed that we should furnish for the readers of the Friend, some information upon this subject. It cannot be expected that an extended account would appear in our columns, but we offer the following summary of information gathered from various sources: --

Joseph Smith Jr. -- This individual is regarded as the founder of this sect, which has styled itself "Church of Latter-Day Saints." He was a native of Vermont, U. S., and in early life removed with his father to Manchester, N. Y. In the year 1823, when he was about 17 years old, "while engaged in meditation, watching and prayer," an angel appeared to him, who announced that the Lord had chosen him as translator of the *Book of Mormon*, 24 gold plates deposited in a stone box, in Manchester, upon a hill called Cumorah, about three miles from his father's house, and that there they had been deposited about 1400 years. He did not at first obey the command to go and look for the golden plates, but went to his labor as usual. Again the angel appeared, and in obedience to his call he went and by his followers, is believed to have found the plates in a stone box, lying near the surface of the ground. The plates are described as being thin plates of gold six or eight inches square, fastened together by three rings passing through each plate. Our limits will not allow us to state every thing that is reported respecting the plates, but suffice it to remark, Smith allowed them to remain for four years until 1827, when an angel or the Lord delivered the plates over to him, and with them the "Urim and