A HISTORY OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS
IN CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI,
FROM 1833 TO 1837

A Dissertation
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This dissertation, by Max H Parkin, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Church History and Doctrine in the College of Religious Instruction of Brigham Young University as satisfying the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

During the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints advanced theological and social views that often produced frenzied conflict. While converts generally appreciated the spiritual insights and expectations of the new religion, some non-Mormon neighbors sometimes felt frustration sufficient to persecute the Latter-day Saints. This conflict as it erupted in New York, Ohio, Missouri (both in Jackson and in the upper counties), and in Illinois has received considerable attention from scholars. An extensive study of the Mormons in Clay County, Missouri, however, has been neglected. The apparent peaceful experience in Clay County and a lean production of historical sources about the Latter-day Saints in that area are the reasons this exiled people has not attracted a more serious investigation by scholars. This present inquiry is an attempt to correct that deficiency.

But this study is more than an investigation about an isolated colony of Mormons trying to endure
the rigors of frontier life; it is also a consideration of their general importance to the Church, for in their displaced condition, these impoverished squatters caused the Church leaders--headquartered in Kirtland, Ohio--to form a sizable military unit which journeyed to Clay County in their behalf, the result of which had an enduring impact upon Mormonism. Also, there was much correspondence between them and the Church in Kirtland. Moreover, the behavior of the Saints and their local leaders in Clay County laid the foundation for certain unfortunate developments that later engulfed the Church in the other counties of upper Missouri. This study relates one link in the chain of events that more fully explains the history of the Mormons in Missouri.

CONSIDERATION OF TERMS

Joseph Smith, Jr. and five others organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Fayette, New York, April 6, 1830. At that time, however, it was named simply the "Church of Christ." Then in 1834 officials adopted the name Church of the Latter-day Saints; the Church bore this latter name officially during the Clay County years. However, in 1838 the organization obtained its longer well-known title. Members of the above named institution have been known as Latter-day Saints, Saints, and Mormons. In this study, the term "Church" is used to designate
the Church of the Latter-day Saints. The letters "LDS" are employed to refer to the Church's members.

The title "Prophet" is used to identify the Church president and spiritual leader Joseph Smith, Jr., who, in the view of the Latter-day Saints, received divine revelations for the organization and its members. The term "Gentile" identifies those outside the Church.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the activities of the Latter-day Saints in Clay County, Missouri, from the time they left Jackson County in the fall of 1833 until their departure from Clay County in the summer and fall of 1836. This investigation contains a brief review of the Mormon activity in Jackson County; their purpose for being in the West; and a consideration of the nature of the prior settlers of Clay County which may contribute to an understanding of the encounter between the two people. Also, it will examine the Mormon land policy and purchases (so as to better understand the LDS attitude about land sales which contributed to Latter-day Saint difficulty in Jackson County) and other causes of failure of the Mormons to acquire redress for their problems after they moved north of the Missouri River. It will consider their survival and growth in that new district, their religious activities, land purchases, and the
general character of the Mormon people there. It will also identify the locations of some of the events that happened to them.

This study makes no attempt to contain a general analysis of Mormonism, its origin, and rise; nevertheless, since some beliefs affected the Church members in Missouri and in some cases greatly influenced their relationship with their neighbors, this treatise will review certain relevant doctrines and practices embraced by the Latter-day Saints of that day.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE AND SOURCES USED

During the summer of 1973 while researching in Missouri, the writer gathered historical sources for this study. With the assistance of the Church Genealogical Society in Salt Lake City, Utah, and the Missouri State Archives in Jefferson City, he contacted officials of Jackson, Clay, Ray, Caldwell, Davies, and Carroll counties in northwestern Missouri where Mormons had resided in the 1830's. The writer did this to gain assistance in identifying materials for Mormon-Missouri research and for genealogical purposes.

After those initial contacts, the writer, representing the Genealogical Society, and Mr. Ralph Shroeder of the Missouri State Archives met with county officials, prepared an inventory of documents for historical and genealogical purposes, and forwarded it
to the Genealogical Society microfilmmers. At this writing the microfilmmers have completed part of their photographic work and have sent a copy of each microfilm roll to the Missouri State Archives while retaining a copy for the Genealogical Society. This entire effort brought the researcher into contact with local authorities in the office of county clerk, recorder, courts, and other offices, who in addition to allowing the photographing privileges, conveyed information, reminiscences, and attitudes about the Mormon past in their area.

In addition to these contacts, the writer searched other public and private institutions in Missouri for useful information. These facilities included the University of Missouri in Columbia and in Kansas City, the state Historical Society of Missouri in Columbia, the Kansas City Public Library, the Jackson County Historical Society, the library of the Reorganized LDS Church at their headquarters in Independence, the Clay County Historical Society, and the William Jewell College (Baptist) in Liberty. Also, a variety of smaller organizations and other individuals contributed information.

Since some of the members of the Church who resided in Clay County traveled to Utah with the Church in 1847 and later, Mormon-Missouri literature or the means to produce it went west with them. Several
institutions possess literature about the Mormons in Clay County. The Church Historical Department (where the writer searched hundreds of journals, reminiscences, and documents by former Missouri residents) proved helpful in locating useful historical material, as did the Special Collections Library at Brigham Young University. The writer also searched the resources of the libraries of the Utah State Historical Society, the Genealogical Society, and the University of Utah. From the numerous institutions contacted both in Missouri and in Utah, this researcher gathered many fragments of information and an occasional generous source to provide insights into the Latter-day Saint experience in Clay County.

Several published histories about Clay County and Missouri and many newspapers and periodical journals by the public press in Missouri and by the Church were examined. For example, a brief sample would include the Far West (Liberty), the Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate, and the Missouri Intelligencer and the Boone's Lick Advertiser.

All of these sources assisted the writer, enabling him to present a topical analysis of the Mormon activities while treating events chronologically within the chapters. Notwithstanding the writer being a member of the LDS Church and accepting trust in its precepts, an evaluation of the many sources assisted
him to understand the former citizens of Clay County as well as to better assess the character of the exiled Mormons. The writer endeavored to render an objective evaluation of the events under consideration in this work.
CHAPTER II

THE MORMONS LOSE THEIR LAND OF PROMISE

Missouri was a land of promise. Its abundant wild game, its fertile soil, and its large tracts of unoccupied spaces beckoned settlers. Even before it became a part of the United States, the land west of the Mississippi River tempted the frontiersman. In 1803 President Jefferson purchased the land and Americans legally began to settle the new territory. At first the wilderness west of St. Charles, Missouri, on the Missouri River, appealed only to the more intrepid settlers. These pioneers slowly began to move into central Missouri before the War of 1812. Then immigrants "came like an avalanche," wrote John Mason Peck, who in 1818 visited the aging Daniel Boone in the state's interior where so many place names honor the pioneer hero and his sons. "It seemed as though Kentucky and Tennessee were breaking up and moving to the 'Far West,'" Peck continued. "Caravan after caravan passed over the prairies of Illinois, crossing the 'great river' at St. Louis, all bound to the Boone's Lick."¹

But Missouri's treasures also appealed to the European. Gottfried Duden, who visited the state in 1823, reported his discoveries in letters to friends back in Germany. His colorful reports charmed thousands of his countrymen influencing them to immigrate to the state in the next two decades. Duden and many others who advertised Missouri to be a place of considerable promise emphasized the value of its land. Though they also extolled the mechanical and industrial virtues, the benefits of the soil were pre-eminent.

If the state of Missouri were thought to be a promised land, the area on its western extremity, where the waters of the Missouri River enter the state, comprised the most sought-after region. The Indians had relinquished claim on much of the area south of the Missouri River in 1808, but they retained custody of the land immediately west of Fort Osage. "This land was the Garden of Missouri," wrote George Sibley, factor of the fort, when he requested the government to quiet the Indian title to it in 1824. Because of western Missouri's "rich and exuberant soils," Sibley

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said, it "would surpass that of any other part of the state or union." The Indians acquiesced to government demands in 1825, and two years later the state ordered the choice area to be formed into Jackson County. Interest in the border areas on both sides of the Missouri River continued because it was an accepted belief of the day (even by soil connoisseurs) that the lands in Missouri increased in fertility as one traveled from St. Charles until he reached the western boundary of the state. Residents of Jackson County said that it was a land that "flowed with milk and honey," and visitors likewise proclaimed it to be an astonishing place of beauty and productivity. "The soil is like that of a garden," wrote Washington Irving from Independence in 1832, and the "beauty of the forest exceed anything that I have seen." Albert-Alexandre Pourtales, a Swiss nobleman traveling with Irving, said that a naturalist companion, Charles Latrobe, had gathered more flowers in western Missouri "in a week than in the rest


4 Alphonso Wetmore, Gazetteer of the State of Missouri (St. Louis: Keemle, 1837), p. 8.


of America in five months." 7 Another of the party pro-
claimed that "Adam's paradise" in Eden, indeed, had
been there in the western prairie country. 8

JACKSON COUNTY, MORMONISM'S TREASURE

Jackson County, Missouri, was a land of promise
also to the Latter-day Saints. In addition to being
impressed with its potential for agricultural abundance,
the Mormons had another reason for favoring it. Jackson
County was for them a place to construct a city—a city
of peace, a place of refuge—the City of Zion. It was
a place about which the Mormons had a dream of a
religious utopia; and this dream, if realized, would
exceed in importance all other utopias! 9

7George F. Spaulding (ed.), On the Western Tour
with Washington Irving: The Journal and Letters of
Count de Pourtale (Norman: University of Oklahoma
Press, 1968), p. 34.

8Henry L. Ellsworth, Washington Irving on the
Prairie or A Narrative of a Tour of the Southwest In
the Year 1832 (ed.) Stanly T. Williams and Barbara D.
Western Missouri was a mix of timber and prairie land
as was Jackson County in its primitive state. A good
general treatment of how both Mormons and non-Mormons
reacted to Jackson County was presented by Richard
Lloyd Anderson, "Jackson County in Early Mormon
Description," Missouri Historical Review, LXV (April,

9Mormon literature abounds in references to the
City of Zion, its nature and importance. See Book of
Mormon, III Nephi 21:1,23. The Doctrine and Covenants
(Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-
day Saints, 1952), 38:18; 45:64-75. Hereafter cited as
D. & C.
The first contacts the Mormons had with Missouri and the Missourians occurred when five missionaries arrived there in the winter of 1831 to preach to the Indians west of the Missouri state line. Finding that they had not acquired the proper credentials to preach on Indian land and learning that they would be imprisoned if they did not withdraw, Parley P. Pratt, one of the missionaries, returned East to report the developments. After Joseph Smith learned of Pratt's experiences in June, he appointed twenty-eight other missionaries and members of the Colesville Branch to travel to Missouri. In mid-July, 1831, following the migration, Joseph Smith identified the environs of Independence, a frontier village on the border of the state, as the location for a temple and for the Mormon holy city. In August, Sidney Rigdon dedicated the land for the gathering of the Mormon people, and Joseph Smith consecrated the temple site situated on a sixty-four acre tract of land located one-half mile west of the Jackson County courthouse, located in the center of the village.¹⁰

Acting upon Joseph Smith's authorization and after his return to Kirtland, four men directed affairs in the Mormon community in western Missouri. Edward Partridge, the Church's bishop, administered the personal

property consecrations of the Church members, directed Church land purchases, and assigned individual stewardships over parcels of newly acquired lands. This activity was to develop the Mormon communitarian economics known as the Law of Consecration and Stewardship. 11 Algernon Sidney Gilbert presided over the Church store, the Gilbert and Whitney Company, and used the profits to buy more land for arriving Mormons. Finally, William W. Phelps, a New York journalist, and Oliver Cowdery, his assistant, managed the printing establishment. Phelps, the Church editor, published The Evening and the Morning Star, the Church's religious organ and the first news journal in the county, and Upper Missouri Advertiser, a weekly newspaper. He also commenced to print the Book of Commandments, containing Joseph Smith's revelations, the first published book in the vast region between "St. Louis and the Pacific Coast." 12


Church leaders encouraged Latter-day Saints to gather to Jackson County to build the "garden of the Lord." If the disciples failed, they were to suffer the consequence of their indifference, slothfulness, or failure to fully follow instructions. Revelations consisted of strong appeals to the Church members to sell their lands in the East and to travel to Zion. Phelps filled virtually every issue of the Star with the revelations and articles about Enoch's Zion, the last days, or the second advent of Christ. For some members, the impulse to gather seemed irresistible.\(^{13}\) Church leaders, however, cautioned members to travel to Missouri only after proper ecclesiastical officers had scrutinized them for their financial capabilities and moral worthiness and provided them with a written recommendation to the bishop in Missouri.\(^{14}\) Unfortunately, the spiritual attraction to gather evoked a stronger inducement than the practical call to prepare, and the members often arrived ill-equipped to build their kingdom. Their disobedience brought threats of "much retribution" and "scourge and judgment" from the Prophet in the East.\(^{15}\) By the summer of 1833, matters became desperate. At that time, the editors of the Star announced that many

\(^{13}\)Most notably see The Evening and Morning Star, August, 1832, pp. 2-5. Hereafter cited as Star.

\(^{14}\)Star, July, 1832, p. 5.

\(^{15}\)D. & C. 58:3; 84:58.
of the Mormons arriving in Jackson County were "desti-
tute of means," for they neither had food to eat, sufficient clothing to wear, seeds to plant nor the money with which to provide them.16

Yet the Mormon pilgrims enjoyed a measure of happiness and prosperity in their "pleasant places and goodly possessions." Elias Higbee moved to Missouri in March, 1833, and reported that his fellow Mormons were a happy people. "They saw their society increasing in numbers; their farms teemed with plenty; and they fondly looked forward to a future, big with hope."17 Parley P. Pratt, who had spent much time with the Saints and ministered widely in their several branches wrote with almost an exaggerated tone regarding their felicity:

On Sundays, the people assembled to preach, pray, sing, and receive the ordinances of God. Other days all seemed busy in the various pursuits of industry. In short, there has seldom, if ever, been a happier people upon the earth than the Church of the Saints now were.18


17 U.S. Congress, Memorialists, Elias Higbee and Robert B. Thompson, 26th Congress, 1st Ses., Executive Document 22, p. 2. The writer will occasionally take the liberty to correct the spelling or improve the punctuation where it would otherwise hamper the reading of certain quotations.

18 Parley P. Pratt, Life and Travels of Parley Parker Pratt (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938), p. 93. This statement, however, neglected taking into account those Mormons who had no land stewardship and
EARLIER ANTI-MORMON ACTIVITY

Troublesome anti-Mormon animosity began in 1832 and continued with increasing intensity until the Gentile citizens drove the Mormons from the county. This open opposition first appeared in the spring when a lawless element of the county began "stoning or brick-batting some of the houses, and breaking . . . windows." 19 This disorderly group shouted abusive language at the women, burned the hay stacks near Bishop Partridge's home, and shot indiscriminately into the Saints' houses. At first, though they tried, the citizens were unsuccessful in effectively organizing themselves (on a wide scale) against the Mormons, but in mid-July, 1833, the mob--then united--issued a memorandum which declared its intent of discharging the Mormons from the county; "peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must," declared the framers of the secret manifesto. 20 This document contained the old settlers' grievances against the Mormons: grievances against their beliefs in revelation, miracles, speaking in

who supported their families by day labor and sustained themselves on water porridge and bread. See Warren A. Jennings, "Zion is Fled: The Expulsion of the Mormons from Jackson County, Missouri" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, University of Florida, 1962), pp. 106-111.

19 Star, December, 1833, p. 2.
20 Ibid.
tongues, and healing the sick; against their impoverished state; against their interfering with the slaves; against their inordinate zeal for the land of Jackson County; and (implicit in this document and expressed in a later statement) against their eventual control of the political offices of the county organizations. 21

Later in July, the ill-intentioned settlers issued a stormy ultimatum to the Mormons and punctuated their threats with aggressive hostility. On Saturday the 20th, between four and five hundred settlers from Jackson County, who were unfriendly to the Latter-day Saints, met on the courthouse square, drew up resolutions, appointed a committee, and demanded that the Mormons sell their lands and move from the county. Further, they requested that no other Church member move to the county, that the Star cease operation, and that the priesthood leaders use their influence to assist all others to comply with the demands. To convince the Church leaders of the seriousness of their intent, the mob demolished the Church printing establishment, scattered its printed matter into the street, and tarred and feathered Bishop Partridge and

21 Missouri Intelligencer and Boone's Lick Advertiser [Columbia], August 10, 1833. Hereafter cited as Missouri Intelligencer. See also Star, December, 1833, p. 2.
Charles Allen. On July 23, after further hostile actions, some ecclesiastical leaders agreed to leave the county and to effect the removal of half of the Mormons by the year's end and the other half by the end of March, 1834.

The Mormons chose to resist the mandate because the demands of the citizens were considered illegal, because the mob continued to harass them violently, and because the governor recommended that the Latter-day Saints seek redress in the courts. Consequently, the Church leaders employed four attorneys from Clay County to present their case to the judiciary. By late October, 1833, however, this defensive course infuriated the former residents; and, consequently, violence again erupted. After several days of atrocities against the Mormons chiefly in the Blue River and Whitmer settlements in the form of threatenings, beatings, and house

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22 To the credit of a few young Mormons a quantity of the unfinished Book of Commandments was saved. Mary and Caroline Rollins [as did John Taylor (not the future Church president)] intrepidly fled into the corn field with arms full of unbound sheets. Emily D. Partridge Young, "Autobiography," Woman's Exponent, XIII (December 15, 1884), p. 106. "John Taylor Affidavit," Church Historical Department.

demolishings, on November 4 the two factions fought an armed conflict known as the Battle of the Big Blue. This exchange of fire resulted in three fatalities, several injuries, distorted reports, and an infuriated citizenry.

The next day a final confrontation occurred just west of Independence near the temple lot. At the time Lt. Col. Thomas Pitcher was the acting commander of the state militia in Jackson County. After the Saints in town had been dispossessed of their homes by a mob, Col. Pitcher held them under guard when a large armed body of Mormons under Lyman Wight arrived from the branches in Kaw Township. Pitcher required Wight's band to release its arms to the militia and depart from the county. Since the leaders in Independence had previously agreed to leave the county, the others felt no need for further resistance. Confident that the mob would also be disarmed, the Mormons turned their guns over to the militia and returned to their homes to prepare for an orderly departure. But the unsuspecting religionists became the victims of mob attacks.

John Corrill gave his impressions of the situation:

We plainly saw that the militia of the county with Col. Pitcher at their head, had taken from us our arms when we were using them only in self defense against an outrageous mob. And instead of quelling the mob, he left them in full power to come upon us when they pleased, and promised us no protection against them, only while we were fleeing from our houses and homes with our
women and children, to seek a shelter in the
open air the best way we could.24

Whatever additional criticisms the earlier fron-
tiersmen held against the newer settlers, the Mormons
believed that the Missourians hated them because of
their unique religion. Some of the members of this new
society stated that the mob would have allowed them to
remain if they would deny their faith in Joseph Smith's
religion. David Pettigrew said that the persecution
was on account of their religion. Nathan Tanner Porter
said that the mob entered into an agreement to drive out
"all that were believers in Jo Smith, as they called
him" or who "would not renounce Mormonism."25 Some
scoffers smarted under this accusation, and Reverend
Isaac McCoy wrote to the Missouri press that "an
impression seems to prevail abroad that the Mormons are
here persecuted on account of their peculiar notions of
religion. This, I think, is entirely a mistake," he
said.26 Nevertheless, Reverend Benton Pixley, after

24 Star, January, 1834, p. 5. Corrill, here an
eyewitness, represents the Mormon view in their offi-
cial paper. The view of the non-Mormons is represented
by Isaac McCoy in Missouri Intelligencer, December 21,
1833; B. Pixley, Missouri Intelligencer, April 13, 1834;
and Lilburn W. Boggs, Missouri Intelligencer,
December 14, 1834. Their objections to the Mormons and,
here, their justification for their hostile actions
mirrored the views of the July mob manifesto.

25 "Nathan Tanner Porter Journal," Church
Historical Department.

26 Missouri Intelligencer, December 21, 1833.
commenting on the "squallid poverty" of some of the Mormons, noted some of their religious beliefs and practices with disgust and suggested that his objections were centered in the Mormon religion. Alexander Majors, who spent his youth in Jackson County, never doubted that the mob's real objections concerned religious matters. In reviewing the problem years later, he wrote,

The cause of all this trouble was solely from the claim that they had a new revelation direct from the Almighty, making them the chosen instruments to go forward, let it please or displease whoever it might, to build the New Jerusalem on the spot above referred to, Temple Lot.28

MORMON SETTLEMENTS IN JACKSON COUNTY

Mormon Lands

When the Prophet Joseph Smith made his first trip to Missouri in the summer of 1831, he instructed the Saints in Independence by revelation that they should, if possible, purchase "the whole region of country."29

27 *Missouri Intelligencer*, April 13, 1833.

28 Majors, *Seventy Years on the Frontier*, p. 53. John Corrill, who wrote after he became disaffected from the Mormons, insisted that the lawlessness against the Mormons "originated in hatred toward the Mormon religion." *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints* (St. Louis, 1839), p. 20.

29 D. & C. 58:52.
On July 26, 1831, a week before the revelation to purchase land was recorded, Bishop Partridge had purchased two fractional quarter sections of land from the federal land office in Lexington. This land was situated on the western extremity of the county and nation in Section 30 and 31, congressional Township 49 in the political district known as Kaw Township. The bishop soon purchased several other equally sizable tracts in the vicinity of Brush Creek; one tract was located about three miles east of the county border where Joseph Knight later constructed a grist mill. A half mile southwest of the creek lay the beginning of the seemingly boundless prairie. The bishop also bought four hundred and sixty acres in Section 16 and 21 located two miles above Brush Creek where the Mormons later constructed their first school house (which is presently

30 The location of land can be ascertained upon understanding that a government surveyor subdivided a six-mile square plot of land—a congressional township—into thirty-six one-mile sections and numbering them in consecutive order. He began with number one in the upper right hand corner and progressed to the left to number six, then dropped down (southward) one sectional square to number seven and proceeded to the right five more sections to number twelve; then he progressed in a continuous "S" manner until the last section, number thirty-six was reached in the lower right hand corner, five miles (sections) below the starting number. Hence, with the congressional township, range, and section given, one can find the location of a piece of land. (Besides the congressional division of land Jackson County in 1833 had three political townships—Fort Osage, Blue, and Kaw—naming them from east to west in the northern part of the county and two townships—Harmony and Boone—in the southern part.)
memorialized by a monument in Troost Park in Kansas City). He bought two thirds of a section in two separate purchases near the Big Blue River four miles southwest of Independence, and later he purchased approximately eighty acres a mile south of that site.

In the Blue Township, where Independence was located, the Church leader purchased approximately one hundred and eight acres in two parcels of land in Section 3, Range 32, starting about one half mile west of the village. Of these two tracts, the one lying closer to the village consisting of 63 and 43/166 acres was where the Prophet Joseph Smith had dedicated a three-acre lot for the temple. Bishop Partridge bought this large, somewhat triangularly-shaped piece from Jones H. Flournoy on December 19, 1831, for $130.00.\textsuperscript{31} (See Figure 1.) The bishop also purchased a sixty-one acre tract in Section 5 a mile and a half northwest of the temple lot. All this land in both townships was what Bishop Partridge had recorded in his name.\textsuperscript{32} In

\textsuperscript{31} Jackson County Deed Record Book B, p. 1. The original deed books A and B, at the time the writer inspected them, were in the recorder's office in Kansas City, Missouri; the highly important page 1, Book B was worn and unattached. The later volumes are in the recorder's office in Independence.

\textsuperscript{32} See Appendix A for land descriptions and sources and Figure 1 for a visual reference to the Mormon lands in Jackson County. This list cannot be thought of as exhaustive or as accurate in every detail (for there are a number of complexities and peculiarities in researching and interpreting the Mormon land
a bill of expenses and losses addressed against the state of Missouri, Bishop Partridge stated that in addition to his two lots in the city of Independence, he held title in Jackson County to a total of 2,136 and 2/3 acres of land.\textsuperscript{33}

In addition to these tracts of property in the county owned by the Church and Partridge's two city lots, some members owned land under their own names. Robert Rathbun owned one lot in Independence, Phelps owned four, and Gilbert and Whitney owned six lots there.\textsuperscript{34}

titles in Jackson County), but the writer does claim general accuracy and a useful completeness in providing students of Mormon history with a base from which to study. Others, too, have analyzed the Mormon lands there. See Rollin J. Britton, "Mormon Land Titles," Annals of Kansas City, I (December, 1922), pp. 145-153. Mr. Britton stated that Bishop Partridge owned 1,985.07 acres, including his two lots in the village. Hands Survey Company, Kansas City, on October 10, 1933, compiled "Notes" concerning Mormon lands in Jackson County. The "Notes" do not give a specific total figure of land owned by the bishop, and it differs in some details from Britton's list. Alan Fletcher, Lawrence, Kansas, 1973 "Notes" gives the total at a high figure of 3,106 acres. The present writer can identify 2,260 acres owned by Bishop Partridge, which is only slightly above the bishop's own stated figure of 2,136 2/3 acres. One reason for the writer's figure being slightly higher than the bishop's may be that in a few cases the writer used the full 160 acre figure for a quarter section for land purchased from the government, but an actual survey may prove the land area to be smaller. Lands of original entry were not always recorded by the county clerk.

\textsuperscript{33}Edward Partridge document on file in the Church Historical Department.

\textsuperscript{34}Jackson County deed record books contain the following references for city lots owned by the Mormons: Edward Partridge's lots: 75 and 76 (where the Star
Also, William E. M'Lellan owned a seven acre lot near the temple property. John S. Higbee and William Milan each owned twenty acres in Section 24, Range 33, in Kaw Township. Gilbert and Whitney were buying a 154 acre plot on the Missouri River bottoms adjacent to the Blue Mills Landing. 35

Joseph Smith expected the individual Mormon to own the land and to be responsible for his treatment of it. The reason that most of the property was listed in Bishop Partridge's name was the result of a misapplication in administering the Law of Consecration and Stewardship. The bishop felt that he should retain final ownership of the property to enable him to prevent possible abuses.

In Jackson County, this Mormon communitarian program was in the process of being developed and refined. After Bishop Partridge purchased lands from the federal government, the state, and private owners, the Church surveyor divided much of it into twenty-acre farmsteads. The bishop then gave the Mormon occupant an ecclesiastical deed of stewardship over the land, but

office was located), Book A, p. 111, 114. W. W. Phelps' lots: 95, 98, 99, 102, Book B, p. 135. Gilbert and Whitney's lots: 59 (this was a large lot of several acres on which the original log courthouse was built and remained there until 1916), Book B, p. 32; lots: 51, 104, 105, 108, 109, Book C, pp. 25, 26. Robert Rathbun's lot: 43, Book B, p. 326.

he retained legal title to it for the Church. The devotee who had consecrated his personal property and money (if he possessed any) to the Church received from the bishop a "lease and loan" title to the land. The steward agreed to pay the taxes on the property, to enjoy the benefits of the land, and to turn over to the bishop any surplus he should accumulate more than he needed for the "support and comfort" of his family.\textsuperscript{36}

To retain a functioning title to the property, the steward had to remain in the Church and, in case of his death, have a dependent wife or minor children survive him; otherwise, the land again became the property of the Church.

This tentative ownership was subject to criticism not only by some of the Saints in Missouri and the Prophet Joseph in Kirtland, but also by the non-Mormon community which criticized it for being a form of common stock.\textsuperscript{37} Some Mormons refused to consecrate their property to the Church and at least one disgruntled Church member who did, and then wanted to get it back, took the matter to court and won the case against the

\textsuperscript{36}See George W. Pitkin's deed of Consecration and Stewardship, Church Historical Department. Also consult D. & C. 42:32; 51:3-5.

bishop. 38 Nathan Porter said that this internal conflict over the Church land program was a "source of much trial" to Bishop Partridge. Porter said that it was especially bothersome because "some of those who would not consecrate stood in the highest ranks of the priesthood." 39 By the summer of 1833, the bishop began to solve one of the problems by issuing "warrantee deeds in fee simple" to a few Church members. 40 To the prior settlers, however, for whom land was so important, the small size of the Mormon farms continued as objects of ridicule. When funds in the Church proved inadequate to grant stewardships of land to all of the newly arrived members, some men had to earn their living by laboring for their non-Mormon neighbors and to send their wives out to them as laundresses. This intensified the criticism because the people said the Church could not meet the needs of their people.

Mormon Settlements

By 1833, the Church leaders had organized five ecclesiastical branches of the Church in Jackson County for the worship and service of the Latter-day Saints. The Independence Branch served the members which resided

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38 Star, July, 1833, p. 5.
39 "Nathan Tanner Porter Journal."
on the property surrounding the temple lot and the members that resided in the village itself. The bishopric, Edward Partridge, John Corrill, and Isaac Morley, and other Church leaders including Gilbert and Phelps lived there, as did about two hundred other members. The Blue River Branch, the largest branch, consisted of approximately two hundred and thirty members and was situated on the large tract of land near the Big Blue River which separated Blue and Kaw townships. At the crossing of that river Orrin Porter Rockwell operated a ferry. Approximately three miles west of the river the Whitmer families and others resided in a settlement known as the Whitmer Branch. Then, two miles south of it near Brush Creek, the Colesville Branch members lived. Here the Knights, Pratts, and others resided. West of the Colesville settlement near the prairie and on the border of the Lamanites, the members of the Prairie Branch made their homes; Lyman Wight and more than two hundred and twenty others lived there.41

Since the Church lands were scattered and the Church immigration had increased, the Church leaders held a council September 11, 1833, and decided to

41 Using the total of 883 known Mormons in Jackson County, Church Historian George A. Smith determined the numerical breakdown among the five ecclesiastical branches in Jackson County as: Independence (206), Blue River (233), Whitmer (144), Colesville (79), and Prairie (221). See Infra. p. 32 for the explanation of the source and value of these figures.
increase the number of branches to ten with a high priest to preside over each.\textsuperscript{42} Possibly this reorganization was implemented in the fall of 1833, but if so, it occurred so close to the withdrawal of the Mormons from the county that in later years they continued to refer to their membership in the earlier five branches. Also, due to the expansion of the Church, the Prophet had authorized Bishop Partridge to enlarge the leadership in Zion by appointing two more bishoprics. Partridge's counselors, Corrill and Morley, were both to be made bishops with counselors, and Partridge was to select Pratt and Titus Billings as his new counselors.\textsuperscript{43}

The Mormon Population

The idea of gathering, buying, and developing lands in Jackson County was central to Mormon theology and practice; consequently, Latter-day Saint growth was moderate but steady over the two years they settled in

\textsuperscript{42}"Far West Record (Typescript)," p. 42. This record of minutes of meetings and other Missouri-Mormon data contains the following names of the settlement in which each president resided: Branch 1, Newel Knight (Colesville); Branch 2, Daniel Stanton (Prairie); Branch 3, David Whitmer (Whitmer); Branch 4, John Corrill (Independence); Branch 5, Thomas B. Marsh (Blue River); Branch 6, Peter Dustin (Blue River); Branch 7, Lyman Wight (Prairie); Branch 8, Parley P. Pratt (Colesville); Branch 9, Simeon Carter (Blue River); and Branch 10, Calvin Beebe (Independence). The geographical location of these numerical branches is not known. See also Times and Seasons, VI (April 1, 1845), p. 850.

\textsuperscript{43}Times and Seasons, VI (February 15, 1845), p. 800.
Missouri. Reaction to the gathering varied among Church writers. John Corrill said that "the Church got crazy to go up to Zion," and Pratt later noted that immigration continued in "great numbers;" however, Phelps, just before the hostilities began in the summer of 1833, reported that "the gathering has continued slowly."\(^{44}\)

Fortunately, the editor of the Star had progressively printed some detailed figures of Church membership in Jackson County. In the November, 1832 issue, Phelps reported that there were 465 baptized persons and 345 children and non-members that had come to Missouri, bringing the total population to 810. (John Whitmer appropriately listed a slightly higher figure of 538 Church members about the time immigration ended in 1832.)\(^{45}\) In the July, 1833, Star, Phelps recorded that the numbers had grown to "nearly 700 disciples;" it is possible that Phelps did not include the unbaptized children in this figure. At the time the Mormons emigrated from Jackson County in the fall


of 1833, Pratt said they numbered one thousand; Corrill placed the figure at twelve hundred.\textsuperscript{46}

Although historians have generally quoted the larger number, the lesser figure (one thousand) was probably closer to the correct Mormon population. In 1864 LDS Church Historian George A. Smith, with the assistance of his staff and five select assistants, identified by name the Church members in Missouri according to their ecclesiastical branch.\textsuperscript{47} Though the enumeration was not exhaustive, the probability that it is nearly complete is favorable, for the list included not only the faithful members of the Church who had settled in Utah, but also those who had apostatized from the Mormon faith or from its Utah Branch and those who had died in Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, California, and other states. This list shows a total of 883 persons, with a breakdown of 212 men, 166 women, and

\textsuperscript{46}Parley P. Pratt, Autobiography, p. 93. However, in an earlier publication Pratt also gave the twelve hundred figure as the population of the Mormons. History of the Late Persecutions (Detroit: Dawson and Bates, 1839), p. 25. Corrill, A Brief History, p. 20.

\textsuperscript{47}The historian's committee besides Thomas Bullock and Brigham Young consisted of the following members who lived in Jackson County: (The ecclesiastical branch to which each belonged is noted after his name.) Nathan Tanner Porter (Prairie), Levi Jackman (Whitmer), John S. Higbee (Blue River), Ira J. Willis (Colesville), and Chapman Duncan (Independence). The collection of names begins with the title "A Partial List." "Manuscript History of Missouri," Church Historical Department.
505 children. Presuming that the historian's list was nearly complete (and that several members were not included in this list), there were probably no more than one thousand Mormons (including the unbaptized children) who fled from Jackson County in the fall of 1833.

THE MORMONS DRIVEN FROM JACKSON COUNTY

Shortly after the confrontation near Independence on November 5, 1833, the hostile populace drove the Mormons from Jackson County. Many contentious frontiersmen organized into bands and smeared their faces with black or red soil or paint. Then they proceeded to horrify the Mormons and to expel them from the county.

Since the Mormons had no arms to protect themselves, the belligerent gangs went throughout the settlements of the Saints, invaded their homes, warned them to leave, plundered their property, whipped their men, and threatened them with death if they did not depart from the county. Abigail Leonard said that the party which attacked her husband, "stripped all his clothes from him excepting his pantaloons," then five

48Levi Jackman, one of the five committee men, believed that there were no more than eight hundred Mormons in Jackson County. Ibid.
or six mobsters attacked him with "whips and gun sticks, and whipped him till he could not stand, and he fell to the ground." The mob activity particularly terrified the children. Concerning this, Francis Bishop wrote,

During this distressing time, some little children had wandered away from their parents, and when found, were so wild [with fear] that they were with some difficulty recovered, as they had been so frightened and alarmed by the mob, that they were afraid of the sight of men.  

Emily Partridge, who was only nine years old at the time, recalled that the "children had heard so much about the mob that the very word was a perfect terror to them."  

The mob especially hunted for the local Church leaders. Pratt recalled that after returning from a trip to Lexington: "I arrived home about the middle of the night; spent a few hours with my family, and arose again before day, and fled to the wilderness."  

Another branch leader, Lyman Wight, wrote,

I was chased by about sixty of these ruffians five miles. I fled to the south and my wife was driven north to Clay County, and for three

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50Francis G. Bishop, A Brief History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Salem: Blum and Son, 1839), p. 6.


52Parley P. Pratt, Persecutions, p. 20.
weeks I knew not whether my family were dead or alive, neither did they know what was my fate. 53

Although many of the families moved north toward the Missouri River in the direction of Clay County, others floundered southward. A gang of armed neighbors rode into the Blue River settlement, ordered the families away, and drove about 130 of them toward Van Buren County without furniture, food, or even cooking equipment. Edward Larkey, one of the Latter-day Saints who was forced to migrate, said,

The Captain [of the mob], Moses Wilson, appointed two men to search us for arms, and finding none, he told us they would give us till the sun was half an hour high to leave and after that they would kill us. They attempted to catch us afterward, but we ran and secreted ourselves in a thicket, and thus eluded them. On returning to our homes we found our families gone. Father David Dutton had taken our families, with his own, in his wagon, in a southerly direction to [the] head waters of [the] Little Blue [River]. 54

In some respects, this group of Saints was a pathetic band of wanderers. The feet of shoeless children bled from the sharp stubble of burned prairie grass. 55 Some of the men and women traveled in the


55Two wanderers who reported having seen the trail of blood were John Brush, Autumn Leaves, IV (January, 1891), p. 23, and Lyman Wight, Millennial Star XXI (July 30, 1859), p. 506.
rain without coverings on their wagons and camped in the snow without tents over their sleeping quarters. After traveling several days, the forlorn group despaired and prayed for assistance. "About an hour afterwards," one observed, a Mr. Butterfield visited them and offered these refugees potatoes and beef if they would dig them for a share and split fence rails for him. 56 Eventually, some of these wanderers went back to their farms to acquire provisions for the winter. Upon returning to Van Buren County, they either built log houses for winter shelter or lived with hospitable residents. At length, however, "the contaminating influence of the Jackson County mob," wrote David Pettigrew, infiltrated into that area when hostile riders from Jackson County forced the Mormons from their new homes in Van Buren County. 57

Others of the Church traveled along the road to Lexington, seat of Lafayette County. James B. Bracken, one of these Saints, said that the "principal part of the brethren crossed the Missouri River into Clay County, [but] our company went east and settled in Lafayette County." 58 Another member of this company,  

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56 John Brush, Ibid.

57 "David Pettigrew Affidavit," History of the Church, IV, p. 71.

58 James B. Bracken, "Vital Statement," p. 9, Church Historical Department.
Thomas B. Marsh, after arriving there, acquired a position teaching school for the winter. In the spring he, too, crossed the river to join the settlers in Clay County. Others crossed from Lafayette County into Ray County and settled there.

MORMONS IN CLAY COUNTY

Before the November attacks began, Mormon authorities considered leading some of the Saints south into Van Buren County to develop colonies there. At the same time the mob told the Mormons to leave their homes, again the Saints considered going south to Van Buren County. Whether it was due to the cost in crossing the river, the barrier the river presented in returning to Jackson County, or some other reason, the Church leaders preferred to go south. A dozen of the leading men of Jackson County approved, but a contentious element objected to the Mormons' moving in that direction. 59

The River Crossing

Since Church leaders could not direct a general migration southward, the majority of the exiled people collected on the river bottoms near the ferry crossings

59 Star, December, 1833, p. 7, and January, 1834, p. 5.
and prepared to go over the Missouri River into Clay County. Parley P. Pratt described one scene:

Thursday, November 7th, the shore began to be lined on both sides of the ferry, with men, women, children, goods, waggons, boxes, chests, provisions, etc., while the ferrymen were very busily employed in crossing them over; and when night again closed upon us, the wilderness had much the appearance of a camp meeting. Hundreds of people were seen in every direction. Some in tents and some in the open air, around their fires, while the rain descended in torrents. Husbands were enquiring for wives, and women for their husbands; parents for children and children for parents. Some had had the good fortune to escape with their family, household goods, and some provisions; while others knew not the fate of their friends, and had lost all their goods. The scene was indescribable. 50

Approximately a dozen ferries operated the river crossings between Jackson and Clay counties. The Mormons principally used Everett ferry near Independence Landing and Hancock ferry west of where the Big Blue River empties into the Missouri. 61 A number of the exiled may have used the Blue Mills ferry near the Gilbert and Whitney property northeast of Independence; this was Jackson County's port of entry and accommodated a major part of the Santa Fe traders, who after leaving the river took their supplies to Independence and outfitted there for their journey to Mexico.

60 Parley P. Pratt, Persecutions, p. 22.

61 Star, December, 1833, p. 7. Everett owned land and probably operated his ferry from the Southwest quarter of Section 14, Range 32, Township 50, in Jackson County. After Everett's death, his land was used to build Wayne City, and after 1849 Independence Landing became known as Wayne City Landing.
Ferrymen operated from the Clay County side as well and availed themselves of the Mormon trade during this emergency. Benjamin Hancock operated his ferry from the Clay County side near Calisse Montargee's Landing, located about two miles west of the present day town of Randolph. This crossing was one of the closest to Mormon lands in Kaw Township.\(^{62}\) Meanwhile, Allen's Landing and ferry were located three miles north of Independence Landing as the Missouri River goosenecked northward towards Clay County. Shubael Allen's establishment was known as the Upper Liberty Landing.\(^{63}\) It was the principal docking facility for most of the western commerce at this time. This commerce included that which the army used at Ft. Leavenworth, that which the Rocky Mountain fur trade used, and that which other western travelers and settlers used.\(^{64}\) Continuing down the river, about a

\(^{62}\) This ferry and Montargee's Landing were located on the approximate site of present day Chouteau Bridge that joins Kansas City on both sides of the Missouri River.

\(^{63}\) Based on personal correspondence between William E. Eldridge, Clay County Recorder of Deeds, and the writer and probate papers of Shubael Allen, Clay County Courthouse. Also see History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri (St. Louis: National Historical Company, 1885), pp. 101, 119, 121. Allen owned land in Section 31 and Turnham in Section 29 on the river front of Range 31, Township 51.

\(^{64}\) The History of Jackson County, Missouri (Indexed ed.; Cape Girardeau: Ramfre Press, 1966), pp. 302, 388, 391.
mile below Allen's Landing, Joel Turnham managed a river boat landing; Turnham's station was the Lower Liberty Landing. After 1844 when the river channel changed because of the great flood that year, Allen's Landing became inoperable, and Turnham's facility became the main entry into Clay County and the well-known Liberty Landing of Civil War times.

Other ferries were located farther down the river. As the river moves southward and eastward from its goosenecked meandering, John Thornton operated a ferry approximately north from the Blue Mills Landing in Jackson County. Again, as the Missouri River flowed northeast, about five miles from Thornton's ferry, where Rose Branch Creek flows into the Missouri River from the north (just west of present day Missouri City), Shrewsbury Williams operated a landing and ferry. A number of the Mormons may have used it for some of them later settled in that part of Clay County. Likewise, the exiled undoubtedly used Jack's ferry at Lexington when they moved across the river from Lafayette County.

Since the crossing was slow and tedious, and the Mormons were anxious to make the crossing, they probably resorted to a number of the other ferries operated by farmers elsewhere along the river. Furthermore, some of the Saints used their own transportation where it was available. Such was the case with John Higbee, who lived in the Blue Settlement. Possessing a
skiff; he rowed his family and others down the Big Blue River and then crossed over the turbulent Missouri River.  

Ferry movement was slow and expensive. Operators at this time propelled ferries with oars or sweeps; mechanized propulsion by horse power and tread mill came later to this area. Operators and their assistants spent at least half a day in making a single round trip across the swiftly moving Missouri. Rates were high for the penniless Mormons. Fares authorized in 1825 by the Clay County court for one operator were:

Loaded wagon and team . . . . $2.00
Empty wagon and team . . . . 1.50
Loaded cart and team . . . . 1.00
Dearborn and horse . . . . . .62 1/2
Man and horse . . . . . . 37 1/2
Single pedestrian . . . . . .18 3/4
Horse . . . . . . . . . . . . .18 3/4
Sheep, hogs, and cattle . . . .0366

Mary Rollins Lightner described her anxiety in waiting to be carried across the river. She was concerned about the ferry charges, yet was firm in her belief that a

65Orange L. Wight, "Recollections of Orange L. Wight," Special Collections Library, Brigham Young University.

66History of Clay and Platte Counties, p. 113. Ferry rates varied slightly depending upon the circumstance of the ferry site. In 1836 Williams received new ferry rates which were very similar to those of Joseph Boggs quoted above. See Evelyn Petty, "Old Clay is Some Punktins" (19th Installment), Liberty Tribune, April 13, 1972. Boggs operated his ferry from near Wyatt Adkin's house in Section 15 south of Randolph.
providential hand assisted the Latter-day Saints in that undertaking. She wrote:

While we were camped on the banks of the Missouri River waiting to be ferried over, they found there was not money enough to take all over. One or two families must be left behind, and the fear was that if left, they would be killed. So, some of the brethren by the name of Higbee thought they would try and catch some fish, perhaps the ferryman would take them, they put out their lines in the evening; it rained all night and most of the next day, when they took in their lines they found two or three small fish, and a catfish that weighed 14 pounds. On opening it, what was their astonishment to find three bright silver half dollars, just the amount needed to pay for taking their team over the river. This was considered a miracle, and caused great rejoicing among us.67

They made the journey across safely and apparently no Mormon was molested along the Jackson County river bank.

After the departure from their homes that second week in November, the Mormon exiles on both sides of the River attended to their housekeeping chores. "The bank of the Missouri was now being lined with the campfires of the little suffering multitude," wrote Porter.68 Bishop Partridge and his family crossed the river into Clay County from near Independence Landing after spending an uncomfortably cold night on the bank in the rain. Once he had crossed

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68 "Nathan Tanner Porter Journal."
over, the bishop stacked logs "cob fashion" six feet high and covered the frame with a tent material for his family's use.69 Others on the Jackson County side waiting to cross, cut down cottonwood trees and constructed shelters forming a temporary "village of wigwams." Up the river across the mouth of the Big Blue randomly rested other little colonies of refugees.

Four or five families clustered together indiscriminately, here and there. One group from the Blue River Branch huddled together under a makeshift shanty of sticks supporting a quilt or two while a mother, the wife of Lyman Wight, gave birth to a son. (This occurred while Wight was pursued southward.)70 Members of the Colesville Branch, still together, crossed the river and used tents or built temporary quarters on the Missouri River bottoms below Randolph Bluffs south of present day Moscow. Emily Austin described her experience in that neighborhood:

69 Although Bishop Partridge did not state which ferry he used, his young daughter, Emily, wrote years later, "We crossed the Missouri River at a ferry not far from Liberty Landing." This would lead one to believe that the bishop used the ferry from Allen's Landing; however, another older daughter wrote, "We traveled three miles [from their house] and encamped on the bank of the Missouri river under a high bluff." Since Everett's Ferry at Independence Landing was just three miles from the Partridge home (Liberty Landing was approximately six miles away) and the bluff situation better described the area immediately around Everett's ferry, this writer assumes that the bishop and his family crossed on Everett's ferry.

70 Orson L. Wight, "Recollections," p. 2.
We lived in tents until winter set in, and
did our cooking out in the wind and storms.
Log heaps were our parlor stoves, and the cold,
and the cold, wet ground our velvet carpets, and the crying
of little children our piano forte; while the
shivering, sick people hovered over the burning
log piles here and there, some begging for cold
water and others for hot coffee or tea. We found
it convenient to have near neighbors; if we wished
to borrow we had not far to go after it; and the
hottest log heap was hunted out by whose chill
was just coming on. The snow covered our sleeping
tents, and the scene reminded one of the gathering
of the house of Israel. Every tent was covered
with snow six or eight inches deep. It now looked
more like a city than before the snow fall.71

The Falling of the Stars

After the first few days on the north bank of
the river and while others were still waiting to cross
over, a remarkable phenomenon occurred which gave spirit
to the sufferers. From "one or two o'clock until day-
light on the morning of the 13th [of] November," wrote
Bishop Partridge camped on the north bank of the river
to Joseph Smith in Kirtland, "there appeared an extra-
ordinary sight."72 Innumerable meteors cascaded
through the earth's atmosphere. "We were aroused from
our slumber," said Parley, "by the cry of 'Arise, and
behold the sign in the Heavens.'"73 Eliza Partridge

71 Emily M. Austin, Mormonism: or Life Among
the Mormons (Madison: M. J. Cantwell Book Printer,
1882), pp. 72-73.

72 Letter of Bishop Edward Partridge to Joseph
Smith, November, 1833. Copy located in the James L.
Bradley Missouri History Collection; Logan LDS
Institute, Logan, Utah.

73 Parley P. Pratt, Persecutions, p. 22.
wrote, "They came down almost as thick as snow flakes," and another chronicled, "an unmeasurable shower of stars were dancing about in every direction, with the velocity of lightning."  

Seemingly, for some Mormons, the extravaganza was the most memorable event of their Missouri experience, and they wanted to be remembered as having witnessed this spectacle. Late in life, Matilda Hindmarsh wrote a note to the Church Historian stating that she had seen this extraordinary sight while camped on the Missouri River bottoms. Ira Ames, whose diary contains little else of the Jackson County encounter, wrote with delight, "I witnessed the beautiful scene of the falling of the stars and went from house to house waking up the people to have them see it."  

The viewing of this meteoritic display was neither confined to the Mormons nor to the spectators along the Missouri River country. The wanderers in Van Buren County saw it as did the Mormons in Kirtland; John Riggs observed, "I was in Kirtland when the Saints were driven from Jackson County on the night the stars fell."  


75"Matilda Hindmarsh Statement," and "Ira Ames Journal," both in the Church Historical Department.

76"John Riggs Journal," Church Historical Department.
In Missouri both western farmers and members of the Negro community expressed alarm over it. Historian Walter Williams gathered several accounts of how it aroused the apprehension of many people and put the slaves in a state of near hysteria. One Missourian housewife told her husband, "Get up quick the day of judgment has come." 77

There were Mormons and non-Mormons who viewed the spectacular event as an omen of the end of the world or as God's displeasure with the persecution of the Mormon people. Nathan Porter believed that the falling of the meteors prevented a mob from attacking the remaining campers along the bank of the river. He journalized that the Saints were "rescued from this awful butchery by the power of God." 78 Some of Porter's fellow religionists felt that the shower was a sign of their future deliverance from mobocracy. After mentioning the occurrence of the falling of the stars, Bishop Partridge attached a prophecy made by


78 "Nathan Tanner Porter Journal." Porter did not believe that the falling objects were meteors, but rather they were actual stars that fell which enhanced the experience's significance to him. For a good treatment as to how the Mormons viewed the meteoritic shower with groundless optimism by one critical of the Mormons see Judge Joseph Thorp's statement, Liberty Tribune, October 12, 1883, p. 1.
Parley Pratt about their prompt and certain return to Jackson County. 79

Early Survival in Clay County

The excitement caused by the stellar display had to bow to more mundane matters. Acquiring food was an essential occupation. Camped in their emergency quarters, the evicted people had to share or gather food to sustain themselves. While some brought limited provisions with them, others possessed neither food nor the means to barter for it. Again Eliza Partridge reported on conditions:

A great amount if not all of our provisions that we had laid up for the winter must be lost and our houses left with many of our things in them, our lands and orchards and improvements of every kind left to the benefit [of] those who have driven us away. 80

Although it was dangerous to return to their farms in Jackson County, some did. "At the risk of my life," lamented one, regarding his return to his farm to obtain provisions. 81 Another one said that "almost in a state of starvation" one of their company returned to his house near the Big Blue, got a gun, manufactured his own round slugs, and killed eleven deer that

79 "Partridge Letter to Joseph Smith, November, 1833."
80 "Eliza Partridge Journal."
81 Parley P. Pratt, Persecutions, p. 23.
winter. Returning to their property was sometimes hazardous. Some of those who did return for provisions suffered from the brutality of the rougher Jackson County element. An example of this was an attack on young Ira Willis, who went back for a stray cow; the mob caught him and beat him savagely. A few risked a return to their abandoned farms to glean corn from their fields to prevent excessive hunger from overcoming them. Some gathered honey for food and for the fact that it was also a possible source of revenue at 37¢ a pound. Still others acquired credit for corn and other staples during the winter from a merchant-farmer-mill owner, Michael Arthur, who lived two miles northwest of Allen's Landing.

The terrifying atmosphere this condition created was observed by Samuel Allis, a Presbyterian missionary to the Indians, and his traveling companion. As they passed through Jackson County in 1834, a frontier settler interrogated them at length to determine their identity. After allowing them to continue their journey, the frontier farmer and his sons again stopped to question the missionaries and to threaten them with death if they proved to be Mormons. Allis later wrote

82 "Orange L. Sight Reminiscences," p. 2. Also see "John H. Higbee Journal."

83 Star, May, 1834, p. 7.
his report to the eastern mission board, "I have no
doubt (had we not convinced them) they would [have]
shot us on the spot." 84

Because some Mormons returned to Jackson County
for supplies and others had refused altogether to leave
the county, the mob initiated another driving of the
Mormons from the county on November 24, 1833. After
local residents pillaged the houses, killed the hogs
and cattle, and harvested some of the corn, these
unrelenting frontiersmen burned approximately two
hundred vacated houses and sheds, fired wheat stacks,
destroyed any remaining equipment, tore down their
fences and plundered that of value not formerly removed
or destroyed. 85

Since the weather became more severe after the
expatriates spent a few weeks in Clay County, many
searched for more permanent shelter. Some remained
that winter in their hovels built on public land near
the bluffs of the river valley, but others sought better
facilities away from the broad moist river bottoms.
Those that moved away located and occupied every vacant

84 Samuel Allis, "Letter to Reverend Greene,"
May 12, 1835, Collection of Kansas State Historical
Society, XIV (Kansas State Printing Plant: 1918), p.
694.

85 John Brush, Autumn Leaves, p. 65. The Star
referred to this burning incident by placing it in the
latter part of April, 1834. Star, May 1, 1834, p. 8.
cabin, shanty, or usable farm shed in the south part of Clay County. Bishop Partridge, one of those who sought higher ground, after assisting his ecclesiastical flock in their crossing and settling in temporary quarters, found a more permanent log shanty two miles away from the river and moved his family into it. His teen-age daughter, Eliza, remembered the move with convincing dismay:

He found a miserable old house that he could have with one fire place in it which he and a Brother by the name of John Corrill moved their families into. I think my mother as also Sister Corrill must have had their patience tried very much during this winter, the house open and cold and their cooking and children and husbands and selves all around one fire place for stoves were not in use then.86

The bleak circumstances offered little promise to the ostracized society. "The situation of the Saints, as scattered, is dubious, and affords a gloomy prospect," lamented Phelps to Joseph Smith and others on December 15, 1833. Writing from the river bank, he continued:

But brethren, if the Lord will, I should like to know what the honest in heart shall do? Our clothes are worn out--we want the necessaries of life, and shall we leave, buy, or otherwise obtain land where we are, to till [so] that we may raise enough to eat? Such is the common language of the honest, for they want to do the will of God. I am sensible that we shall not be

86"Eliza Partridge Journal."
able to live again in Zion, till God, or the president rules out the mob.87

The Mormons had lost their land of promise; the probability of their building their utopia in Jackson County had evaporated. At least, it had for a time. But Phelps' lamentation seemed more intense when he acknowledged to Joseph, "I know it was right that we should be driven out of the Land of Zion, then the rebellious might be sent away." Could the expulsion have been prevented if the brethren had been more prudent, more obedient? Had they lost their Eden because of their own transgressions? And might they possess it again? Because the obedient and disobedient had suffered from the persecution of their ill-disposed neighbors, the people of the New Jerusalem needed help. They needed council superior to their own, and they sought it from their Prophet in Kirtland.

87Star, January, 1834, p. 8.
CHAPTER III

CLAY COUNTY IN ITS HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SETTING

The area that became Clay County, Missouri, enjoyed the same natural treasures as did Jackson County; in fact its fruits were tasted by permanent American settlers before those of the county south of the river. French and Spanish travelers passed through this part of the Missouri Valley when it was in its primitive condition. Then about 1800 a few French trappers and their families settled in the area below Randolph Bluffs near the Missouri River, but they were not permanent settlers. Lewis and Clark camped near the mouth of Rush Creek as they moved up the river in 1804.¹ Soon other travelers, trappers, and hunters followed.

The area that became Clay County was first settled by Anglo-Saxon Americans in 1819. It had been cleared of Indian title in 1815 with the rest of upper Missouri and surveyed in 1817. The government survey


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crew consisted partly of the "backwoods boys" of Franklin in the Boone's Lick Bottom in Howard County.  After these frontier farmers returned home, some of their neighbors, John Owens, Samuel McGee, Cornelius Gillium, and others established the first permanent homes in Clay County in 1819. The following year John Thornton, Shubael Allen, John Bartleson, and scores of others commenced a vigorous immigration into the new area because of its reputation of being another "Canaan," a land which "flowed with milk and honey," wrote an early settler.  In 1822, one year after Missouri achieved statehood, the legislature formed the entire northwestern region of the state into Clay County. Since most of the inhabitants were from Kentucky, the legislature named the county after that brilliant orator and statesman, Henry Clay.

The urge to move to the western settlements in Missouri was so compelling that large tracts of land in the eastern counties remained unsettled. "The immigration of Americans from the eastern states into Missouri is at the present very large," wrote Nicholas Hesse, in

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3 Joseph Thorp, Early Days in the West (Liberty: Liberty Tribune, 1924), p. 35. Thorp's memoirs were first printed in Liberty Tribune, from June to November, 1883.
1835, "and is chiefly directed toward the extreme western border, to Jackson and Clay counties." At first, the settlers sought the best land along the river bottoms and in the preferred areas of the forest. D. C. Allen, an early settler, described the county's topography:

The south-western and southern portions of the county are quite hilly near the streams; but in the northern, central and eastern portions, the slopes rise very gently from the bottom to the uplands, which swell with beautiful indulations. The bluffs along the Missouri River vary from 50 to 200 feet in height. The southern half of the county is nearly all heavily-wooded land, extending back from the Missouri River 12 miles.¹

These undulations in the north were principally prairie lands and were at first unsettled. "The prairies, although generally fertile, are so very extensive, that they must for a great length of time, and perhaps forever, remain wild and uncultivated," wrote Dr. Beck of upper Clay County in 1823.² The lack of streams and timber for construction and for protection from the "ferocious heat" delayed the settling of the prairies. Prejudice against the prairie lands

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²Campbell's Gazetteer, p. 157. By 1833 the county was reduced to its present size.

increasingly diminished until settlers occupied most of the county by 1834. In 1837 Wetmore wrote:

It is now one of the best settled tracts of country in Missouri or elsewhere. The high cultivation of the numerous and large farms, the substantial buildings, and the tasteful arrangements about the domiciles of the old settlers, would lead the visitor to the belief, if he were governed by appearances, that he was in the heart of the best settlements of one of the older states. The pioneers who explored this region of country found the land so rich, and the face of the country so attractive, that swarms of good citizens from Kentucky and elsewhere poured in, and the county was speedily settled and densely populated.  

THE FRONTIER CHARACTER

The American farmer, mechanic, and businessman who settled the West possessed views about rugged individualism, independence, and democracy that significantly shaped American history. The American frontiersman's aggressive qualities, and marked determination coupled with the availability of an abundance of relatively free land built America and made it great. This view was the concept of Frederick Jackson Turner, an innovative historian, who in 1893 presented a new approach to the understanding of American history. He rejected the prior belief that America was just an extension of European institutions

7Alphonso Wetmore, Gazetteer of the State of Missouri (St. Louis: C. Keemle, 1837), p. 57.
and values. Turner believed that the frontier line from Massachusetts Bay until its vanishing point in the West by 1890 was the phenomenon which molded the American nation.  

Classes of Missouri Settlers

Turner, in his well-known lecture, quoted at length John Mason Peck, a Missouri Baptist preacher and missionary. Peck, who had lived among the Missouri frontiersmen for many years, had classified the western man into three types who came like waves of the sea, one after another, upon the frontier. In his New Guide to the West, Peck identified the classes as follows:

Generally, in all the western settlements, three classes, like the waves of the ocean, have rolled one after the other. First, comes the pioneer, who depends for the subsistence of his family chiefly upon the natural growth of vegetation, called the "range," and the proceeds of hunting. His implements of agriculture are rude, chiefly of his own make, and his efforts directed mainly to a crop of corn, and a "truck patch." . . . It is quite immaterial whether he ever becomes the owner of the soil. He is the occupant for the time being, pays no rent, and feels as independent as the "lord of the manor." With a horse, cow, and one or two breeders of swine, he strikes into the woods with his family, and becomes the founder of a new county, or perhaps State. . . .

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The next class of emigrants purchased the lands, add field to field, clear out the roads, throw rough bridges over the stream, put up hewn log houses, with glass windows, and brick or stone chimneys, occasionally plant orchards, build mills, school-houses, court-houses, &c., and exhibit the picture and forms of plain, frugal, civilized life.

Another wave rolls on. The men of capital and enterprise come. The "settler" is ready to sell out, and take the advantage of the rise of property,—push farther into the interior, and become himself, a man of capital and enterprise in turn.9

The first wave, the squatter class, was an uneducated, uncouth, half heathen society. Peck visited with a number of them in various parts of Missouri where he found the children poorly disciplined in family government and the parents, particularly the men, indifferent to any of life's refinements. He observed their "almost countless" children with "tangled and matted locks, dingy faces, and squalid dress" as he passed their wilderness huts.10 He occasionally spent the night with some of them and seldom wrote well of them except for their reserved hospitality. He wrote of them as "the ignorant, filthy, wretched squatters."11


11Ibid., p. 150.
These earliest settlers lived simple and unprogressive lives. The household furnishings within their unattractive and poorly built homes were often inadequate to serve normal domestic needs. They often did not possess a kitchen table, chairs, or bed. Their food was usually improperly prepared, half cooked, and occasionally in a state of spoilage. Their "men and women were dressed in skins that once the wild deer claimed, but [now were] covered and saturated with grease, blood, and dirt," Peck said.\textsuperscript{12} Their men particularly cared little for religion or schools. Some had never heard prayer offered by a human. One woman, though she could not read, desired a hymn book from Peck, but the rest of the family did not want to be bothered with "books or 'any such trash.'"\textsuperscript{13} Their chief impulse was to survive in a fertile virgin country, and to move away when the settlers came too close to them or when the land upon which they squatted

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 145. Levi Hancock, a Mormon missionary in Missouri, had a similar view about some of the frontiersmen. He wrote, "The people we met were good livers if they were a mind to be but the way they managed was more like beasts than like humans. They had dogs, horses, cows and pigs and chickens in abundance around the house and in the house and mixed together; in the cold weather doors were open night and day. Snow flying and wind blowing through the cracks were not chinked. They used rags for beds, ground for floors. The children were ragged and dirty." "Levi Hancock Journal," p. 48, located in the Church Historical Department.

\textsuperscript{13}Peck, \textit{Forty Years of Pioneer Life}, p. 101.
was open for sale. By 1833, the frontier in Clay County had developed generally beyond this original state of civilization, but elements of it were still present among some farmers.  

The purchaser of land and the builder of civilization, the second wave of immigrants Peck described, were well established in Clay County when the Mormons arrived. After the formation of the county government, the administering judges organized new townships (there were five political townships when the Mormons arrived in 1833); built roads (there were forty-two road districts by 1836); licensed ferries, landings, stores, and mills; collected taxes; paid bounties on predatory animals; passed ordinances against crime; punished offenders; and tried to maintain order in their frontier community.

By 1833 the third wave of Peck's settlers had already significantly affected Clay County. Actually, this group of capitalists and builders were often part of the second wave, for many of the pioneers of the second group became the businessmen, politicians, and industrialists of the enterprising and leadership class, [14]

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later joined by others. Some members of all three classes were in the county when the Mormons arrived.

Liberty enjoyed a brisk early growth. The first settler in what became Liberty was John Owen who arrived in 1820. By 1822, his neighborhood attracted a clustering of several log houses, six small dry goods and grocery stores, and a tavern. Owens and Charles McGee donated land to the county for public use. Because of this donation, the good health of the area, the well-drained land and adequate springs, the county judges in 1829 established Liberty as the county seat. By the time the Mormons arrived, the county had just completed a two-story brick courthouse, and the village featured over a dozen stores while a score more existed elsewhere in the county. In 1834, the town's first newspaper, the Upper Missouri Enquirer, proudly advertised the following conditions about the area:

Clay [County] has rich and fertile soil, productive of almost every vegetable congenial with the health, or pleasing to the palate, abounding with good springs, salubrious climate, a first rate home market, inhabitants from Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia; most neighborhoods have good schools. Clay ranks among the first counties in the state for wealth, intelligence, population. Right now Liberty has 500 inhabitants, 9 dry goods stores, several groceries, 1 tanyard, a cotton carding and spinning factory, mechanic shops of almost every description and in its vicinity, 1 stream grist and saw mill, and about three miles from the Missouri River,
we are one of the finest tracts of country upon
earth.\textsuperscript{15}

The community continued to grow and to prosper. One
resident of the county, who regarded Liberty as the
"very paradise of western towns," said that in compari-
son the neighboring villages of "Richmond, Lexington,
and Independence scarcely deserved the name of towns."\textsuperscript{16}

However, Charles Augustus Murray, while on an expedi-
tion to the Rocky Mountains, visited the village in
1834 and was only impressed to write that Liberty was
"the last western village in the United States."\textsuperscript{17}

Clay County Population

The population of Clay County in 1830 was
5,342.\textsuperscript{18} The majority of these people had been born in
Kentucky as was the case with the majority of the
Missourians at large. The other residents were natives
of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee in ranking
order. (Tennessee natives placed second in the state,

\textsuperscript{15}Upper Missouri Enquirer, cited in the Missouri
Intelligencer, October 4, 1834. Alexander Doniphan
remembered there being no more than 300 inhabitants
upon his arrival in the village in 1833. "Address by
Col. Alexander W. Doniphan, Liberty, Missouri, June 5,

\textsuperscript{16}Statement of a pioneer of 1829, cited in
History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri
(St. Louis: National Historical Company, 1885), p. 121.

\textsuperscript{17}Charles August Murray, Travels in North

\textsuperscript{18}U.S. Census, Clay County, Missouri.
but they were a low forth in Clay County.)\textsuperscript{19} A sprinkling of others born in northern states and in foreign countries also resided there, but the overwhelming majority was born in the South, predominantly in Kentucky.\textsuperscript{20} The 1830 census included 992 Negro slaves and 13 free Negro citizens, 8 of whom were children under ten. Slaves represented 19 per cent of the county's population, while in the state as a whole 18 per cent of the population were Negro slaves. By the year 1836, the population of Clay County had increased to 8,533.\textsuperscript{21} Of the fifty counties in Missouri during the years the Mormons were in Clay County, there were only seven counties more populous than Clay, and all of these had been counties during the territorial years.

Many of the settlers of Clay County were poorly educated, but some of the residents, principally the town dwellers, were men of above average education and intelligence, some of whom achieved state-wide and national prominence. Malinda Estes, one of the earliest residents of the county, seemed impressed by a


\textsuperscript{20}"Old Men of Clay County," Liberty Tribune, July 29, 1870, shows 49 percent born in Kentucky, 20 percent born in Virginia, 15 percent born in North Carolina, and 12 percent born in Tennessee.

\textsuperscript{21}Wetmore, Gazatteer, p. iii.
belief in the intellectual superiority of some of the local residents. "I doubt if there was any other town in the United States," she later said, that had so "many brilliant men and women as Liberty." Likewise, Alexander Doniphan believed that no other country town possessed so many men "intellectually, so far above the common average" as Liberty. Doniphan also spoke well of the rural residents:

It is a common error in the older states that the first emigrants to the West were wanting in education and the higher order of intellect. No greater mistake was ever made. The drones never emigrated, but live and die near the old homestead; the thinking, energetic, self-reliant, alone dare to encounter and overcome the hardships of frontier life.

Several of the prominent men of Clay County were attorneys and businessmen. David R. Atchison, a Liberty attorney, served the state as soldier, legislator, judge, and member of the U.S. Senate in Washington. He was sixteen times elected president of the national Senate. By virtue of this position he served for a year as vice president of the United States after the death of Vice President William R. King, and as president of the United States for a day.

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22Liberty Advance, January 3, 1901.


24"Vignettes of Famous Missourians," Missouri Historical Review, LII (April, 1958), p. 248. This political anomaly occurred because Zachary Taylor would not be inaugurated on a Sunday, March 4, 1849.
Alexander Doniphan, who arrived in Clay County in 1833, became a criminal lawyer of local prominence and gained fame in the Mexican War. Peter H. Burnett, a Liberty newspaper editor and merchant, became California's first governor. William T. Wood was elected to local political positions, excelled in law, and became a circuit judge. Amos Rees practiced law in Liberty and later in Kansas, where he acquired distinction in the legal profession. Major John Dougherty, who spoke French and seven Indian dialects, functioned as a principled and greatly respected Indian agent. Col. Shubael Allen filled several local political and military offices and was a greatly respected businessman; as were Michael Arthur, a local slave dealer, mill owner, and grocer, and Joel Turnham, a political leader and businessman. Col. John Thornton was a prominent politician in the statehouse in Jefferson City, where he served as speaker of the Lower House twice. All of these men resided in Clay County when the Mormons lived there.

The Economy

There were two economical classes in Clay County: both had ties to the soil. One depended exclusively upon the land and home industry. A farmer that had a productive plot could care for himself and his family without much concern for the economy except
for infrequently purchasing an item from the store, having an occasional job performed at the mechanic shop, or having his corn ground at the mill. After the farmer cleared the forest, a shallow turning of the soil often produced an abundant harvest. The stock was also easy to provide for. In some cases the hogs would care for themselves in the woods all summer and return to the homestead in the fall, fat and ready for slaughter. The farmer frequently supplemented his domestic harvest with the animals and fruits of the forest. For many, life in Clay County was easy and sometimes lazy and indolent, but usually generous and productive.

The other economic class provided greatly for the commercial traffic of the stores, mechanic shops, distilleries, tanneries, and mills of the county. Furthermore, the river boat commerce provided a market down the river at St. Louis or up the river at Ft. Leavenworth. These and other markets were available for a farmer to export the surpluses he could produce in corn, hay, hogs, cattle, hemp, flax and mules. The economy was brisk and active. One visitor in Liberty in 1834 wrote that there were seven stores in Liberty which averaged about "$120,000 in

goods annually" and receive a "profit of at least 75 cts on cost." He reported that there existed a lucrative market for money to loan for "12 1/2 to 50 percent" and that business was good. Even the local Methodist circuit rider in 1835 came to town and purchased a suit of clothing for $32.00. Although there was much homespun cloth used, calico, which sold for forty cents a yard, was increasing in popularity and the settlers no longer wore suits of buckskin.

The Missouri farmer felt keenly the desire for land and the comforts it provided for the husbandman. Although good farm land offered the settler a relatively easy life and an abundance of products, at first the farmer had to clear his new purchase from timber, grub out the undergrowth, fence the fields, and protect the crops against the destructive gray squirrel. Nicholas Hess, a German settler, complained about the more favorable views of other writers who told about the ease of life in Missouri. He wrote of the difficulty required in clearing the forest:

Logs for buildings have to be hewn in shape and moved to the clearing, trees have to be split for fence rails, stones for chimneys must be quarried and hauled, and clapboards prepared for the roof. Where fields and gardens are to


be established, the trees must be cut and killed, and the smaller ones, as well as the bushes and shrubs, must be destroyed. The latter is an especially difficult task. 32

Hess felt that only a few German immigrants were able to stand the "vexatious and hard labors" connected with the clearing of the forest. Because of this "extremely difficult labor," he felt that a good piece of land that originally cost $1.25 from the government or up to $2.50 from speculators or other original landowners was worth $10.00 an acre cleared of its native growth. To help them to perform this hard work, the farmers acquired labor from their slaves, their family members, or from hired field laborers at $.50 a day. 33

There were two types of Missouri land owners. One type sought prosperity by farming the land, the other by clearing the land, selling it and moving on. The American West is a "nation of nomads," wrote Hess, about the second type of farmer; "the farm of nearly every American is for sale, for everyone is a trader in his way and affected by the moving madness," he said. 34

Hess wrote of farmers that had sold their farms ten times and moved to a new place. Peck also observed


this tendency of many farmers who sold their property and moved on to the "real el dorado" somewhere farther west. 35 Hess complained that most Missourians sought chiefly to make money, for "this is the god, who, up till now, said he, "reigns as overlord in North America." 36 But many residents of Clay County had arrived in western Missouri in a state of poverty. Joseph Thorp believed that land was the last hope for prosperity for many Clay County residents. He wrote, "Most of them had been able to get forty, eighty or 160 acres, giving them a home, which many of them had never had before." 37

The Social Order

Residents of Clay County demonstrated the democratic ideal of the frontier in dissolving class distinction. In 1834 John Chauncey, a resident of Liberty, who wrote to a friend in Baltimore concerning the western manners and customs, informed his acquaintance that he could not expect to find his "pleasant society" of class distinction in Liberty. "The shoemaker in most of these new countries, ranks equal with the lawyer, doctor, or merchant," he wrote.

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37 Thorp, Early Days in the West, p. 59.
"You will find them at parties of pleasure, mingling together without distinction in the true spirit of democracy," he continued. A visitor in Missouri from England at this time wrote,

The poorest here conceive themselves entitled to as much courtesy and polite attention as any other portion of the community. . . . The lowest grades here, you will sometimes meet with a politeness and propriety of demeanor, and a delicacy of observation, which is not found in Europe, only among the more polished circles of the middling and higher classes of society.

Another distinction of the Missourian from the easterner was his speech. The strange dialect of many Missourians attracted the attention of the easterner.

"The people were different in their customs and manners of speaking," wrote Eliza Partridge. She also said,

It was, "I reckon," and "a right smart chance," and instead of carrying things in their hands they would "toat" them on their heads. Large bundles and baskets, churns, tubs and piggins of water or milk, all "toated" on their heads. Little children were "toated" straddle of one hip. In warm weather women went barefoot, and little boys from two to ten years old were running the streets with nothing on but a tow shirt.

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40 "Emily D. Partridge Young Autobiography," Woman's Exponent, XIII (December 1, 1884), p. 103.
These Missourians loved to stretch out on the porch of the town store, on the muster ground, at a logrolling, house raising, or at a shucking, and tell about their experiences back in "Ol' Kaintuck," "back thar in Carling," or in "Ol' Virginny." When Samuel Parker visited Liberty in 1835, he wrote concerning the characteristic dialect of the residents in that place:

It is amusing to observe the provincialisms which are common in this part of the country. If a person intends to commence a journey some time in the month, for instance, in May; he says, "I am going in all the month of May." For a large assembly of people, they said, "a smart sprinkling of people." The word "balance" comes into almost every transaction--"will you not have a dessert for the balance of your dinner?"--"to make out the balance of his night's rest, he slept until eight in the morning." If your baggage is to be carried; it will be asked, "shall I tote your plunder?" This use of the word plunder, is said to have originated in the early predatory habits of the borderers. They also speak of a "mighty pleasant day"--"a mighty beautiful flower"--"a mighty weak [person]."

These mannerisms marked a distinct difference between the older residents and the Mormons. Insignificant as they seem, they aroused resentment and ignited conflict. In 1836, Jacob Gates, a Mormon settler west of Liberty said, "the manners and customs

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41 Thomas D. Clark, "Manners and Humor of the American Frontier," Missouri Historical Review, XXXV (October, 1940), p. 13.

of the Mormons and even their dialect was so very
different that it was impossible for them and the
western people to live together."

Despite these differences, the frontiersman
displayed a highly generous nature. His hospitality
was genuine and often boundless when his circumstance
allowed it to be. Even the low class squatter afforded
the traveler with "all the hospitality the old people
had the ability or knew how to exercise," wrote Peck.44
Charles Latrobe, who was accustomed to finer treatment,
appreciated the "hearty hospitality" of the western
farmer. He found the abundance of the farm available
to him in the form of banquet-sized dinners and the
best sleeping accommodations.45 Doniphan, who for
thirty years traveled in Clay, Ray, and Lexington
counties as an itinerant lawyer, was hosted numerous
times in the "humble homes of the frontiersmen." He
never remembered having been asked to pay a board or
lodging bill.46

43"Jacob Gates Journal," located in the Church
Historical Department.


45Charles Joseph Latrobe, The Rambler in North
America (London: R. B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1836),
p. 121.

46"Address of Col. Alexander W. Doniphan,"
p. 5.
The Indian Heritage

The settlers in Clay County possessed an anti-Indian background that continued to agitate some of them. Daniel Boone's first trip to Kentucky in 1769 began immigration into that area. James Harrod established the first settlement in Kentucky in 1774, and Boone established Boonesboro the following year under the authority of the Transylvania Land Company. Indians soon informed the members of the land firm that the area of the Kentucky River was not available for settlement because it was the established hunting ground for several Indian tribes. Since Indian economy depended upon that land, the natives threatened that Kentucky would become a "dark and bloody ground" if the white settlers persisted.\(^47\) The white man did persist and for decades Kentucky was a bloody field of conflict. Before the War of 1812, many of these Kentucky settlers moved to Missouri, built forts and plowed fields in the choice Booné's Lick region. Two of these forts developed into Franklin and Boonville, Missouri. Then in Missouri from 1811 to 1815, these pioneers suffered many Indian depredations and afflictions in their new home.

When some of these Kentuckians and their children settled Clay County, they still retained a bitterness for the Indians. Joseph Thorp spoke of the "merciless savages," the Sioux, Foxes, and Iowas, and the somewhat friendly Osages of the Boone's Lick country. Writing of the troublesome times in Missouri, Thorp said that the settlers would kill all the Indians, even the Osages, "if we could."\(^{48}\) Another of the pioneers, David McLain, ministerial colleague of Thorp's father Rev. William Thorp, lost his son to the savages in Howard County. McLain refused to support Indian missionary efforts when John Mason Peck, agent for the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, invited him to do so. McLain vindictively answered Peck, "I will give as much as any man, according to my means, to buy powder and lead to kill them all, but I would not give one dollar for all the attempts to Christianize them."\(^{49}\) In 1868, Lyman Copeland Draper, a prominent collector and historian at the University of Wisconsin, visited Missouri and interviewed many of the old trans-Alleghany pioneers who had experienced or knew of the earlier Indian wars in Kentucky and in Howard County, Missouri. Draper's investigation revealed that many of the


Missouri pioneers retained a memory of several terrifying experiences with the Indians. Some of these pioneers settled Clay County.

Although the Clay County settlers constructed four block houses to protect themselves from the Indians on their frontier, Indian attacks were rare. Only one minor offense occurred after the organization of the county and only two or three before. Frightful as these confrontations were to the few participants, some settlers, who had not retained fear of the Indians from Missouri's Boone's Lick area or Kentucky, expressed their feeling of complete solitude on the Clay County frontier.

CLAY COUNTY FRONTIER INSTITUTIONS

Law and Order

During the formative years in Missouri, lawlessness and violence often characterized the frontier society. Likewise, the settlers of Clay County

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50 Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.), Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, II (Madison: Published by the Society, 1903), p. 238. See also Lyman C. Draper, "Notes of His Interviews," Draper Ms. 24 S, Missouri Historical Society.

51 See Malinda Estes' statement, Liberty Advance, May 3, 1901.

52 For a development of this subject see Hattie M. Anderson, "The Evolution of a Frontier Society in Missouri, 1815-1828," Missouri Historical Review, XXXII (October, 1937), p. 304.
produced social disorganization in the form of stealing, excessive drinking, gambling, fighting, cheating, and just plain cussed behavior. Yet during the first two decades of Clay County history, it passed through a period of relative order with only a moderate manifestation of severe lawlessness.

Punishment for law breaking consisted of fines, public whippings, or confinement in the stocks. Public whippings for stealing and other offenses brought crowds to watch the embarrassed and bleeding offender stagger away. For stealing, twenty-five lashes was a frequent penalty.\(^{53}\) By 1836, citizens and county officials alike objected to this brutal form of punishment and they discontinued it, except for the slaves. As the county's distilleries and numerous saloons fostered considerable drinking, confinement in the stocks was used for drunkenness and for boistrous or vulgar language.

Gambling appealed to many, even to the more respected members of Clay County. Names such as David R. Atchison, John Thornton, A. W. Doniphan and others frequently appeared on grand jury lists of offenders for playing "seven-up" and "bragg." Atchison and Doniphan and others carried their flair for betting into other counties where judges also fined

\(^{53}\) Thorp, *Early Days in the West*, p. 34.
them. Since the county did not construct its jail until 1833, the authorities sent offenders accused of rape, arson, stabbings, and other more serious crimes to other counties to be confined. The first official hanging in the county did not occur until 1828 when a Negro slave was hanged for killing her children to release them from a life of slavery.

Quarrelsomeness was one of the most frequent expressions of disorder in Clay County. Although by 1830 much violence in the state had lessened, "Missourians were still emotional, quick-tempered, quarrelsome, and ruthless, but they were becoming less disorderly," wrote Hattie Anderson, who made a study of the Missouri culture of this period. Quarrelsomeness was characteristic of all classes in Missouri. Rugged individualism and ill-temper were problems whenever the men met together at muster for the militia, for work on the public roads, at political gatherings, and on other occasions. Peter Burnett reminisced about his observations of one phase of this activity during his life in Clay County:

In those primitive times fisticuff fights were very common, especially at our militia trainings. After the military exercises (which

54 Circuit Court Records, "Book A," Clay and Davies counties.
were not remarkable for accuracy) were over, some bully would mount a stump, imitate the clapping and crowing of a cock, and declare aloud that he could whip any man in that crowd except his friends. Those who were not his professed friends were thus challenged to fight.....

These contests were governed by certain rules, according to which they were generally conducted. They arose, not from hatred or animosity as a general rule, but from pride and love of fame. It was simply a very severe trial of manhood, perseverance, and skill. I have known men on such occasions to lose part of the ear or nose, and sometimes an eye. In most cases both parties were severely bruised, bitten, and gouged, and would be weeks in recovering. It was a brutal, but not fatal mode of combat. I never knew one to terminate fatally. The custom of stabbing and shooting came into use after this. 56

The people of Clay County were generally "very hospitable and free-hearted, but of fiery hot blood and quick to resent insult," said Edward Stevenson, a Mormon resident of Clay County. They believed it "cowardly to take the lie and were ready, dirk in hand, for a fight." He said, "It was almost universal to carry those dirk knives" wherever they went. 57 Although some early settlers took issue with the reputation that the Kentucky born Missourian was "quarrelsome or cruel," Peck noted that the reputation of the Kentuckian in Missouri was one of "fighting, dirking, and gouging." 58

Some of the more orderly residents of western Missouri desired that the rougher elements move on to

56 Burnett, Recollections and Opinions, p. 18.
57 "Stevenson Family Reminiscences," I, p. 35, located in the Church Historical Department.
other areas. In 1837, the government annexed to Missouri and opened it for settlement, that area known as the Platte Purchase which laid between the western boundary of Clay County and the Missouri River as it winds northward. This new country siphoned off some of the rougher and more adventurous elements of the western counties. "There is another 'Land of Promise' flowing with milk and honey called the Platte country to which all creation is just now wending," wrote a resident of Independence to a friend in the East in 1838. "It has been as a sewer to this county. Many of the worthless part of the population have joined the crowd, and their places occupied by a more respectable class."\(^{59}\)

Much typical frontier lawlessness remained in Clay County. Law-breaking in the county in the form of hangings by "lynch law" (although it had never transpired previously) occurred three times after the departure of the Mormons from Clay County until the outbreak of the Civil War. At the time of the first of these hangings in 1850, James Green Smith, a Liberty resident, disclosed that when the citizenry felt that the law would not administer justice, the settlers, including the "most respectable citizens of Clay

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County," participated in the hanging. Smith, a student at William Jewell College and one who had received some ill-treatment from people in Liberty, wrote to his sister, "I know there are persons mean enough in Liberty for anything." In another letter he confessed to her,

    I do indeed meet with many temptations more than you think, for Liberty is ten times as wicked a place as Fulton [Missouri] ever was, but I am resolved God being my helper, that I shall serve him.  

Education

Educational opportunities in Missouri were meager during the time the Mormons were there. Only parents with means or sufficient interest provided an education for their children. Liberty received its first log school house in 1822, and other parts of the county had schools very early, but these were subscription schools. Peck was critical of the Missouri schools and felt that one third did more harm than they did good. But a touch of educational refinement


61 Ibid., p. 21.


63 John Mason Peck, Forty Years of Pioneer Life, p. 123.
existed in Liberty in the form of a private high school for girls. Peter Burnett, whose family was one of the earliest settlers in Clay County, described his limited educational experience there:

The means of education did not then exist, except to a very limited extent; and we had too much hard work to admit of attending school, except at intervals during the summer. At school I learned to spell, read, write, and cipher so far as the rule of supposition, and studied English grammar so as to be able to parse and punctuate with tolerable accuracy. This was the sum total of my school education.64

Illiteracy in the state in 1840 was 5 percent of the population as compared to 3.2 percent of the entire nation. Missouri's illiteracy was lower than its two neighboring states, Illinois with 5.7 percent illiteracy and Arkansas with 6.7 percent.65 Although many of the Missourians were deprived of an extensive education, many early Missouri commentators felt that the people had a native intelligence that surpassed many of their eastern cousins in understanding life and handling well the demands it placed upon them.

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64 Peter H. Burnett, Recollections and Opinions, p. 20.

65 Hattie M. Anderson, "The Evolution of a Frontier Society in Missouri," Missouri Historical Review XXXIII (October, 1938), p. 23. An early historian of Ray County had a different view of the literacy of the people of western Missouri: "In general the people in this part of Missouri were illiterate, wild and wayward, but were good people," cited in Liberty Tribune, December 16, 1971.
Politics

The two political forces in America during much of the 1820's and 1830's appealed to the Missourians. These two attractions were Henry Clay's American System to use federal powers to improve internal conditions in the country and Andrew Jackson's brand of democracy to promote the rise of the common man. The views of both Whigs and Democrats appealed to the residents of Clay County. In the 1824 election, Henry Clay carried the state, and he won heavily in Clay County. In the next two presidential elections the state went for Andrew Jackson. Although Clay County remained strongly Whig during these years, some Jacksonian candidates were very popular with the voters. In 1830, Cornelius Gillium, speaking from the stump, briefly stated,

Fellow citizens, I am a Jackson man up to the hub. I have killed more wolves and broke down more nettles than any man in Clay County. I am a candidate for sheriff, and want your vote.66

He received them, as did other Democrats.

In Clay County John Thornton and David R. Atchison were leading Democrats, and Alexander Doniphan and William T. Wood were leading Whigs. Mormons had both Whig and Democrat friends. The fact that Mormons were principally Democrat did not disturb the Clay County residents, but the fact that they would vote as

a body bothered some of them and this augmented agitation.67

Religion

A low Christian membership of about 7 percent in the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century demonstrated a need for a renewed interest in religion.68 This condition of irreligion had persisted for several decades. "At the end of the colonial period there were undoubtedly more unchurched people in North America, in proportion to the population," wrote William Warren Sweet, "than were to be found in any other land in Christendom."69 But the situation was to undergo a change.

The first four decades of the nineteenth century was a period of church organization and expansion. It was a period when Christian churches renewed religious activity by building Christian morals and institutional values. At this time, Christian institutions fostered this awakening by new techniques of congregational meetings, Bible and tract societies, Sunday schools, the


temperance movement, and by dispatching ministers to the American West in the form of circuit riders, farmer preachers, and missionaries. Speaking of these frontier clergymen, Sweet said, "On every frontier from the Alleghenies to the Pacific, these were the people who fought the battle for decency and order, and to a large degree saved the west from semi-barbarism." Franklin Hamlin Littell wrote that this conversion of Americans to Christianity was so great that it became the most "important single fact in American church history." This religious crusade arrived in Clay County with the early settlers. A Methodist circuit rider visited Clay County in 1820 and held the first known religions service in the county. The circuit riders met at camp grounds for periodic camp meetings and revivals, appointed class leaders over groups of converts, and preached a religion of Pauline theology, law and order, and conversion ethics to the people in his circuit.

70 Sweet, Ibid., p. 21.

71 Franklin Hamlin Littel, From State Church to Pluralism: A Protestant Interpretation of Religion in American History (Garden City: Doubleday, 1962), p. 33. The effort to convert Americans to Christianity was slow and rigorous, but its success in part is measured by church affiliation. It increased to 36 percent by 1900 and to 60 percent by 1960. See Backman, American Religions, p. 422.

72 William Warren Sweet (ed.), The Rise of Methodism in the West: Being the Journal of the Western Conference, 1800-1811 (Nashville: Smith and Lamar,
The religious receptivity of the Clay County settlers varied. During the years the Mormons lived in that county, Reverend Jacob Lanius was the Methodist circuit rider tracing the Richmond circuit. In 1835 he wrote, "the frontier citizens have been very destitute of God, and seem very anxious to procure [religion]."

While distributing Bibles in Liberty on one occasion, Lanius had a few recipients. On other occasions the indifference of the people discouraged Lanius. "None professed religion, none joined the church--indeed the door was not opened," said he, "the people seemed to be given over to hardness of heart." While in Liberty in 1835 he reported his impressions of the irreligion of the village:

Wickedness abounds in this village yet and gambling is becoming very fashionable and popular. Our class is small and unfortunately . . . we have no house save the Court House to preach in or meet the class. And but little good I am persuaded will ever result from preaching in a

1920), p. 20. The first Methodist class, and thereby the first church organization in Clay County, was established in 1822. It developed into the Pleasant Grove Church near Holt. But probably the first regular church organized in Clay County was Big Shoal Baptist Church in Gallatin Township by William T. Thorp. Ethel Massie Withers (ed.), Clay County, Missouri Centennial Souvenir 1822-1922 (The Liberty Tribune, 1922), p. 116.


74 Ibid., May 10, 1835.
court room the walls of which are stained with blasphemy [and] other horrid crimes.75

Lanius continued as a force for Christian values on the frontier. He chastized the people for drunken behavior, Sabbath breaking, swearing, and general irreligious conduct.

The Presbyterians also had a moderate influence among the Clay County residents. One minister of the regular Presbyterian Church, Rev. John Yantis, served a meager county-wide membership of about thirty participants, some of whom joined him in the county courthouse for Sunday services. Samuel Allis, a missionary traveling to the Indian tribes beyond Ft. Leavenworth, visited Rev. Yantis in Liberty in 1834. He wrote, "there is nothing wanting here but religion."76 John Dunbar, Allis' fellow traveler likewise observed conditions in Liberty, "A strong prejudice prevails in this part of the country against missionaries," he wrote, "and if it is known, that a man is a missionary a sufficient reason is at once furnished for not going to hear him preach."77


77 "John Dunbar Report," Ibid., p. 582.
Cumberland Presbyterian Church had a small congregation in Barry, the Indian trading post on the county line. They had little more success than the regular Presbyterian church.

Sometimes the clergy caused discord. At one time at the circuit court in Liberty, Judge Ryland chastized the citizens for their gambling. This angered members of the bar who in return spoke contemptuously of the ministers for their interference with the frontier habits.78 Also feuds occasionally surfaced among the frontier churches. Nicholas Hess wrote that "when Presbyterians of Methodist predominate, we find intolerance against other faiths."79 Reverend Lanius was an outspoken critic of some of the other religious bodies. "The Baptist influence here [in Clay County] is very great and their lives very irreligious," he complained about one of their official members who was engaged in selling liquor to the Indians.80 He also condemned the Cumberland Presbyterians for their abusing the doctrines of grace, thereby giving license


for the people to engage in "almost every species of vice." 81

The Baptist Church was the largest and most influential religious denomination in Clay County at the time the Mormons lived there. The best known Baptist pioneer preacher was Elder William Thorp. Thorp was born in Virginia, raised by an aunt in Kentucky, and traveled to the Boone's Lick Bottoms in Howard County in 1810. There, he suffered much under the Indian troubles but continued his preaching tours among the forts of that area, except during the period of the most savage Indian troubles. Although Thorp could neither read nor write when he began his ministry, it may have been he who preached the first Christian sermon north of the Missouri River in that state. Some spoke of Elder Thorp as the "Great Apostle of the West." 82

Elder Thorp's organizational ability as well as his travels and his preaching earned him that title. In 1818 he assisted in establishing the Mount Pleasant Baptist Association in Howard County where five participating churches elected him association moderator. Under his leadership the Mount Pleasant Association issued its statement of Christian belief:


ARTICLES OF FAITH

Article 1. We believe in one only living and true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

Article 2. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the written word of God, and the only rule of life and practice.

Article 3. We believe in the fall of man and his utter inability to recover himself from that lost estate.

Article 4. We believe the doctrine of particular election, especial calling, believers' baptism and the final perseverance of the saints, through grace.

Article 5. We believe in baptism by immersion, and the Lord's Supper, and that true believers are the only proper subjects of the same.

Article 6. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and a general judgment.

Article 7. We believe the joys of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked will be eternal.

Article 8. We believe in the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Article 9. We believe it to be our duty to support the gospel, and defray the expenses of the church.83

Thorpe traveled into western Missouri in 1821, preached and established Baptist churches in Clay County. In 1823 while visiting the county, he organized churches at Big Shoal Creek, Fishing River, Little Shoal Creek and at Rush Creek. After moving his family there in 1824, he associated with the Little Shoal Creek Church. In that year, church leaders organized the Fishing River Association for the Clay County Baptist congregations. Later Thorpe served as moderator

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83Ibid., p. 150. For a variation of this creed, see also S. Y. Pitts, The Mt. Pleasant Association (Salisbury, Missouri: Press-Spectator Steam Print, 1895), p. 4.
of that association. In 1828 the First Baptist Church of Liberty was organized, and two years later the Mount Pleasant Church (where Zion's Camp members lodged June 19, 1834) near Little Fishing River was organized. Approximately a dozen Baptist congregations met in Clay County at the time of the Mormon sojourn there.

Elder Thorp was an "extreme Calvinist" and the churches over which he had influence became known as the "old school," "primitive," or "hardshell" (Thorp preferred the term "regular") Baptist branch.\(^{84}\) This minister refused to cooperate with much of the institutions of the expanding crusade; he rejected missionaries, Sunday schools, and tract and Bible society efforts. Thorp was most avowed in his anti-mission sentiments.\(^{85}\) His narrow view of man and the role of the Christian institutions influenced the Baptist farmers that later participated in activities unfriendly to the Mormons.

The social mold of Clay County was one that would not in some respects tolerate a considerably

\(^{84}\)Peck, *Forty Years of Pioneer Life*, p. xlix.

different type of society among them. The hospitality rendered the Mormons for a time was characteristic of the older settlers there, but the quickly aroused temperament of these early residents made conflict easy to foretell when so many potential and real differences existed between the two groups.
CHAPTER IV

NEITHER REDRESS NOR COMPROMISE

As early as 1833, the year of their expulsion from Jackson County, the exiled Mormons sought justice for the wrongs they experienced in that county. In October, before the Latter-day Saints left the county, Governor Daniel Dunklin of Missouri advised the Mormon leaders to apply for judicial relief for the wrongs they suffered in Independence the previous July and thereby test "the efficacy of the law." He wrote Edward Partridge and others, "Take then, this course, and the experiment will be tested whether the laws can be peaceably executed or not."¹

EFFORTS AT REDRESS

Likewise, Joseph Smith advised the Church leaders in Missouri to take a legal course of action. After Orson Hyde and John Gould, two Mormon emissaries from Jackson County, arrived in Kirtland to report conditions of the Church in Missouri, Joseph Smith instructed Bishop Partridge on December 5, in his first

¹Letter of October 19, 1833, cited in Star, December, 1833, p. 3.

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letter to the exiled Saints, to prosecute their Jackson County enemies "to the extent of the law." Again, five days later the Mormon president wrote to the Missouri brethren to pursue "every lawful means to seek redress." Concerning this he said,

When the judge fails you, appeal unto the executive, and when the executive fails you; appeal unto the President; and when the President fails you, and all laws fail you, and the humanity of the people fails you, and all things else fail you but God alone, and you continue to weary him with your importunings, as the poor woman did the unjust judge, he will not fail to execute judgment.\(^2\)

A hint of tacit skepticism seems to be present in both Governor Dunklin's and Joseph Smith's statements.

The Government Policy on the Mormon Problem

Initial efforts to assist the Mormons seemed promising. In October four prominent Clay County attorneys (Atchison, Doniphan, Wood, and Reese) contracted to help the Mormons. Then in November John F. Ryland, judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit, and

\(^2\)"History of Joseph Smith," Times and Seasons, VI (June 1, 1834), p. 914. This historical series hereafter cited as Times and Seasons, VI.

\(^3\)Times and Seasons, VI, p. 929. On December 16, 1834, the day after Joseph Smith dictated this letter, he recorded a revelation informing him to "importune for redress." The revelation added that if the authorities did not effect justice, "then will the Lord arise and come forth out of his hiding place, and in his fury vex the nation." D. & C. 101:89.
Robert W. Wells, state Attorney General (and later counsel for the Mormons), manifested willingness to help the Latter-day Saints. First to act was Robert Wells, after discussing the Mormon problem with the governor. On November 21, 1833, he advised the Mormon attorneys that if they desired their clients to return to their lands in Jackson County, they should apply to the governor so that "an adequate [military] force will be sent forthwith to effect that object." Wells also informed the lawyers that the Mormons could be organized into "a regular company of militia . . . and be supplied with public arms," if they requisitioned it. Three days later Judge Ryland of Lexington wrote Amos Reese, Circuit Attorney and counsel for the Mormons, that the "outrageous acts" of the Jackson County mob "is a disgrace to the state." Upon receiving details of the persecutions, the judge also said that he would authorize a "military force" to be sent to Jackson County "to aid the execution of any order" he would

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4Ibid., p. 912. The four attorneys charged fees of $250.00 each, admitting to a high figure on the grounds of the considerable nature of the legal work involved. Times and Seasons, VI, p. 980. Later Phelps and Gilbert gave Wells a note for $400.00 for his services as counsel. The note fell due, March 1835. Since the Mormons "in consequence of the hardship of their case" were unable to pay it on the due date, Wells offered to settle the debt for a payment of $50.00 if they could pay it by March, 1836. Robert W. Wells to W. W. Phelps, letter dated January 4, 1836, located in the Church Historical Department.
make on the case.⁵ He also offered to hold a court of inquiry into the matter in Independence.

But the Mormons were not ready for a court of inquiry. Inasmuch as their people were scattered in Clay, Van Buren, Ray, and other counties and since hostilities in Jackson County were still active, A. S. Gilbert on November 29, 1833, requested the governor to postpone calling an investigative court at that time. "Some of our principal witnesses would be women and children," Gilbert wrote the governor, "and while the rage of the mob continues, it would be impossible to gather them in safety at Independence."⁶ Amos Reese endorsed their request for a temporary postponement.

In two weeks, however, Phelps, Partridge, Gilbert, and other leaders felt the time had arrived to commence proceedings on a court of inquiry. On December 6, 1833, they petitioned Governor Dunklin to restore them to their lands and to start an investigation of the Jackson County problem. In part the petition said:

Therefore, in behalf of our society, which is so scattered and suffering, we, your petitioners, ask aid and assistance of your Excellency, that we may be restored to our lands, houses and property, and protected in them by the militia of the state, if legal, or by a detachment of the United States Rangers, which might be located

⁵Times and Seasons, VI, p. 912.
⁶Ibid., p. 913.
at Independence, instead of Cantonment Leavenworth, till peace is restored. . . . Also we ask that our men may be organized into companies of Jackson Guards, and be furnished with arms by the state, to assist in maintaining their rights against the unhallowed power of the mob of Jackson County.

And then, when arrangements are made to protect us in our persons and property (which cannot be done without an armed force, nor would it be prudent to risk our lives there, without guards, till we receive strength from our friends, to protect ourselves,) we wish a court of enquiry [sic] instituted, to investigate the whole matter of the mob against the Mormons. 7

Phelps emphasized in a communication accompanying the petition that the need for an army to protect the Saints after their return was paramount. "We do not wish to go till we know that our lives are not in danger of a lawless mob," he wrote. "It will require time to restore us, and troops to protect us after we are there."

The first direct communication Governor Dunklin made with the Mormons after their expulsion from Jackson County was on February 4, 1834. In this letter Dunklin wrote:

I am very sensible indeed, of the injuries your people complained of, and should consider

7Ibid., p. 915. Governor Dunklin later informed the Mormons about the possibility of the United States government placing an armory in western Missouri, the governor was to select the location. "This will afford you the best means of military protection," he said. Times and Seasons, VI, p. 1059. The armory was built in 1836 just above the bluffs from Turnham's Liberty Landing too late to do the Mormons any good. On April 20, 1861, one day before Ft. Sumpter was fired upon, rebel forces captured this arsenal. Liberty Tribune, October 23, 1930.
myself very remiss in the discharge of my duties, were I not to do every thing in my power consistent with the legal exercise of them, to afford your society the redress to which they seem entitled.8

Although the Governor acknowledged that his powers were limited, he believed that the laws were "sufficient to afford a remedy for every injury of this kind." The Governor's letter contained the following considerations:

1. The Mormons should "be put in possession of their homes" in Jackson County.

2. They should receive their guns back, if it is found they "were wrongfully dispossed of their arms by Col. Pitcher."

3. They have permission by law to organize into a militia company and "apply for public arms."

4. A court of inquiry should be held and a "military guard will be necessary to protect the state witnesses and officers of the court."

5. The government cannot maintain a military force in Jackson County to protect the Mormons from injury, for it "would transcend the power with which the Executive of this state is clothed."

6. Civil injuries had to be handled in the courts for "such questions rest with them exclusively."9

8Times and Seasons, VI, p. 977.
9Ibid.
Furthermore, Dunklin believed that although the president of the United States had power to call the militia to assist the state executive in cases of invasion, insurrection, war, public danger, or "other emergency," he expressed the opinion that the present problem did not fall within these conditions. "The words, 'or other emergency' in our militia law seems quite broad," wrote the governor, "but the emergency to come within the object of that provision, shall be of a public nature." "Your case is certainly a very emergent one," the governor continued, "and the consequences as important to your society, as if the war had been waged against the whole state, yet, the public has no other interest in it, than the laws be faithfully executed." The governor seemed to maintain the views expressed in this correspondence throughout his administration.

Redress by Criminal Prosecution

Governor Dunklin soon authorized a court of inquiry. Judge Ryland forwarded the governor's order of February 19, 1834, to Captain Atchison, commander of

\footnote{Ibid., B. H. Roberts, Mormon apologist and historian, believed that the phrases in Missouri law "or other emergency" and the governor shall "take care that the laws are faithfully executed" were sufficient to empower Governor Dunklin to decisive action in behalf of the Mormons. *History of the Church*, II, pp. 477, 482.}
the Liberty Blues to "assist the civil authorities in apprehending and bringing to trial the persons offending the law."\textsuperscript{11} This action was to transpire at the February 1834 term of the Fifth Judicial Circuit in Independence. This order authorized Captain Atchison to escort the Mormon witnesses to Independence to testify before a grand jury. It also directed the captain to guard Mormon families who desired to return to their lands in Jackson County with the authority to "protect them in such possession during the trial of these cases." But the order did not allow the militia to remain after the court proceedings ended.

Because of the unpleasant prospect of remaining in Jackson County without protection, the Mormons were unwilling to return to their farms. In fact, in a letter to the governor on January 9, Gilbert complained that the fear of mobocracy would prevent most Mormons, particularly the women and children, from crossing the river to testify in court.\textsuperscript{12} This apprehension resulted from periodic hostile eruptions in Jackson County. Approximately 150 members of the Prairie Branch, who felt they were safe because of their greater distance from Independence, were driven out of

\textsuperscript{11}Upper Missouri Enquirer, quoted in Missouri Intelligencer, March 8, 1834.

\textsuperscript{12}Times and Seasons, VI, p. 962.
the county on November 24, 1833. Some of these went to Van Buren County, but most crossed over into Clay County.\textsuperscript{13} Four families near Independence, who had not departed because of "penury and infirmities," suffered a mob attack two days before Christmas.\textsuperscript{14} In February, other beatings and drivings occurred.\textsuperscript{15} These atrocities helped persuade the Mormons to refrain from returning to their homes until they had assurance from the governor that an adequate guard would be provided to protect them after they returned. They also hindered others from testifying before the court of inquiry.

Nevertheless, when the February term of the Circuit Court approached, the Mormon leaders were anxious to testify against their enemies. Partridge, Phelps, Corrill and eight or nine other Mormons

\textsuperscript{13}Star, "Extra," February, 1834, p. 1. This issue contains the earliest published details of the Jackson County persecutions, probably printed by the Upper Missouri Enquirer in December. See Peter Crawley, "Two Rare Mormon Documents," Brigham Young University Studies, XIV (Summer, 1974), p. 514.

\textsuperscript{14}In part this group consisted of a Mr. Miller and a Mr. Jones. In George A. Smith's list of the names of the residents of the Church branches, Supra. p. 32, there are no Joneses listed and the entry for Miller reads: "Miller (an old man died in Jackson County)."

\textsuperscript{15}Star, March, 1834, p. 3. The victims at this time were Josiah Sumner, Barnet Cole, and Lyman Leonard. Leonard had returned from Van Buren County to acquire supplies from his property.
responded to subpoenas to serve as state witnesses at a
grand jury investigation in Independence concerning
their persecutions. On the river bank across from
Everett's ferry on Sunday, February 23, the Mormons met
their military escort, Captain Atchison and about fifty
members of the militia armed with U.S. muskets and
fixed bayonets. After the river crossing, Atchison's
Liberty Blues and the Mormon witnesses spent the night
two miles from Independence. As an advance party in
Independence, the Quarter Master sensed a precarious
situation and sent word to the captain to acquire rein-
forcements. Atchison dispatched word to Col. Shubael
Allen in Clay County for two hundred additional
militiamen and for more ammunition.

On Monday, the carefully guarded witnesses
arrived in Independence. After breakfast in Flournoy's
abandoned log tavern, the witnesses waited for instruc-
tions. At mid-morning, Attorney General Wells and
Circuit Attorney Reese visited the Mormons to discuss
the case. Because of danger to the Mormons while
meeting in Jackson County and because of the futility
of the investigation before a jury composed of Jackson
County mob members or sympathizers, these officers
decided not to pursue the case. The Mormon witnesses
reported that they were "ready and willing to go and
testify" despite the danger. But Phelps, who wrote to the eastern brethren concerning the meeting with Wells and Reese, said, "From them we learned that all hopes of criminal prosecution was at an end."

Robert N. Kelly and William H. Davis, proprietors of the Upper Missouri Enquirer, editorialized about the incident as follows:

On its [the militia's] arrival at Independence, it was ascertained by the attorney general that the grand jury were composed exclusively of such as had been concerned in the recent outrages! and that consequently it would be useless to prefer bills before such a jury. . . . It thus appears that justice can not be administered through the judicial tribunals of Jackson County.

Later that day Judge Ryland ordered Captain Atchison to dismiss the militia. He informed Atchison that Wells and Reese in their official capacities had met with the Mormon leaders and these officers "upon a full consultation with the persons aggrieved, as well as other individuals, have declined preferring bills of indictment to the grand jury." Upon receiving the order to return the militia to Liberty and dismiss it, the captain marched the troops and witnesses out of town to

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16 *Times and Seasons*, I, (February, 1840), p. 49.

17 *Star*, March, 1834, p. 3.

18 Upper Missouri Enquirer, cited in Missouri Intelligencer, March 8, 1834. Italics in the original.

19 Missouri Intelligencer, March 8, 1834.
the tune of Yankee Doodle in quick time. Phelps reported to the eastern branch of the Church, "Thus ends all hopes of redress" through criminal prosecution.²⁰

That fall Governor Dunklin requested the General Assembly to enact laws to prevent similar injustices from occurring, but neither he nor the Mormons could get the legislature to act on matters relevant to this case or beneficial to this persecuted society. On November 18, 1834, Governor Dunklin addressed the Eighth General Assembly concerning the problems in western Missouri: "It is for you to determine what amendments the laws may require so as to guard against such acts of violence for the future."²¹ By that time

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²⁰*Star*, March, 1834, p. 3.

²¹Buel Leonard and Floyd C. Shoemaker (eds.), *The Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of the State of Missouri*, I (Columbia: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1822-1930), p. 246. The Missouri Constitution contained the following relevant provisions upon which the General Assembly could build further legislation:

Sec. 4. "That all men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences; . . . that no person can ever be hurt, molested, or restrained in his religious worship."

David Atchison was in the House of Representatives and James T. V. Thompson from Clay County represented the northwestern counties in the Senate. The Mormons requested these legislators to represent their interests in their respective bodies. However, the Jackson County anti-Mormon element also was strongly represented in the General Assembly. Smallwood V. Noland and Richard Fristoe were in the lower house and Abraham McClelland was in the Senate, representing Jackson and Lafayette counties. These three men were known Mormon fighters from Jackson County. No legislative action aided the exiled Mormons.

Redress Through the Civil Courts

Concurrent with their seeking criminal prosecution against their enemies, the Mormons also sought civil judgment against them. In the circuit clerk's office in Jackson County, on December 22, 1833, attorneys for Phelps and Partridge filed separate civil complaints against approximately fifty defendants. Bishop Partridge filed a charge of trespass against Richard Simpson, Jones H. Flournoy, Samuel D. Lucas, Russell Hicks, Moses Wilson, Henry Chiles, Samuel C. Owens, Robert Johnson, and many others for their attack
upon him the previous July 20. The complaint in part stated,

The accused had . . . assaulted Edward Partridge with great force and violence, cast and threw him down to the ground, violently kicked him, struck him a great many other blows and strokes, put a large quantity of pitch and tar completely covered his body therewith, dolled him with feathers completely to cover his body.23

Sheriff Jacob Gregg served the summons on Richard Simpson on January 10, 1834, and others on subsequent dates. In the February term of the Circuit Court, the first defendants, Jonathan Shepherd and Leonidas Oldham and others, pleaded "not guilty of the said supposed trespass."

The defendants claimed innocence with the view that they had acted in self defense against Partridge and with the confidence that their peers would not convict them. Jonathan Shepherd's innocent plea contained the following argument:

Edward Partridge just before the said time when &c. in the said declaration mentioned to wit at the County of Jackson aforesaid, with force and arms made an assault upon the said Jonathan Shepherd, and would then and there have beat, bruised, ill-treated him the said Jonathan Shepherd, if he had not immediately defended himself against Edward Partridge. Wherefore he the said Jonathan Shepherd, did then and there defend himself against the said Edward Partridge as he lawfully might for the cause aforesaid.

23Trial Records, Circuit Court, Fifth Judicial Circuit, hereafter cited as Trial Records, located in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, xerox copies in the Church Historical Department.
And in so doing did necessarily and unavoidably a little beat, bruise, wound and ill-treat the said Edward Partridge, and rend, tear, damage and spoil the wearing apparel, and unavoidably did besmear the said Edward Partridge with a little pitch, tar and feathers, as in the said declaration mentioned, doing no unnecessary damage to the said Edward Partridge...

Chiles, Hicks, Wilson, Reynolds, Burden, Young, Birch attorneys for the defendants.24

The case continued during the February and October 1834 terms, the February 1835 term, and certain special assemblages of the Circuit Court in Independence, without any convictions in Jackson County.

Phelps, too, issued a complaint against certain men including Samuel D. Lucas, James Campbell, Samuel Weston, Benjamin Majors, and others for trespass for the destruction of his printing office and dwelling house. Phelps maintained that the attack which occurred on July 20 was at a time when he was in lawful "possession and occupancy as of his own property."25

For this trespass, Phelps claimed damages of $3,000 for destroying his house and printing office; $2,000 for

24Trial Records, "Jonathan Shepherd and Leonidas Oldham Implicated with Others." For the complete text of Robert Johnson's not guilty plea, see Appendix B.

25Phelps' printing office and house was on lot 76. This lot had been purchased by Edward Partridge from James Gray, August 8, 1831, for $50.00 for Church use. It had on it a two story brick house which Phelps used as his home and printing office. Jackson County Land Deed Record, Book A, p. 117. A typical price paid for city lots the size of lot 76 in Independence without structures on them was $10.00. See "Book of Original Sale, Old Town, Independence, Missouri." Copy in possession of the author.
the loss of 5,000 pounds of type and for the furniture and office apparatus; and $400 for the loss of the press.26 The complaint also charged the defendants with removing the press, type, and furniture and appropriating them to their own use. For total damages, Phelps asked $50,000.

The sheriff and his deputies commenced action in the Phelps case by issuing summons to the defendants during May and June of 1834. Again, the accused pleaded "not guilty" to the charges, after which each one was tried separately over the next terms of the Circuit Court. The defendants took the offensive position that the printing office and house in which Phelps worked and resided were "chose, house, soil, and freehold" not of Phelps or Partridge but of another member of the community (usually a member of the mob). According to the defendants, the alleged owner had contracted with another party to remodel the printing office and house. This intermediary in turn had hired the defendant to enter the dwelling and printing office and tear it down to the foundation for the purpose of remodeling it. The innocent plea of the accused stated that he tore down the building "for the purpose of repairing the said printing office and dwelling houses,

26 Trial Records, "Amended Declaration in the Circuit Court of Jackson County of February Term Eighteen Hundred and thirty [four]."
and placing new superstructures upon the said foundation." The defendant therefore removed the encumbrances from the existing facility. This was the reason he carried away the printing press, type, furniture and apparatus belonging to the printing office.27 The trials were complex, lengthy, and served by a jury that was sympathetic toward the accused; therefore, no convictions were handed down in Jackson County.

In addition to these cases there were two others that began with the February 1834 term. These were also for trespass. One of which was by Charles Allen who had suffered with Edward Partridge on July 20 in Independence and the other by Phelps and Oliver Cowdery.28

Since the Mormon plaintiffs felt that the courts in Jackson County would not render them justice, they petitioned Judge Ryland for a change of venue to Ray County. The Judge granted this request on May 26, 1835.29 But developments in Richmond proved disappointing to the Church leaders. The following

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27 Trial Records, "Robert Johnson 'Special Plea,'" February Term, 1834. See Appendix C for the complete rhetoric of Johnson's plea.

28 Circuit Court, Jackson County, Record B, pp. 282-285.

29 Trial Records, "Petition before William T. Wood, J. P., April 9, 1835."
historical note in the *Times and Seasons* summarized the 
disappointment of the Mormons concerning the develop-
ments in the courts in Ray County:

The suits which had been commenced against 
the Jackson County people, for damages, pro-
gressed so slow, and were attended with such 
an amount of costs, that they were all dropped 
but two; which were considered sufficient to 
try the experiment. . . . At last, in the summer 
of 1836, the time drew near, when it was supposed 
that the trials must come on; which was very 
gratifying to those who planted the suits. 
When the court came, their lawyers, instead of 
going to trial, as they should have done, made 
a sort of compromise, with the mobbers, by 
dropping one suit, without even having the 
cost paid, and that too without the knowledge 
or consent of their employers. On the other 
suit the defendants agreed to pay a few hundred 
dollars; though not as much as the lawyer's 
fees had been. Thus the lawyers, after getting 
their pay, managed the cases; had they been true 
to the brethren, as they were bound to be by 
oath, and brought their suits to a trial, instead 
of making a compromise, and laboured faithfully 
for them, as they ought to have done; and 
laboured as though they meant to earn their 
thousand dollar fee; there is no doubt but 
that, on the two suits, they would have obtained 
as many thousands of dollars, as they did hundreds 
by the compromise.30

50. This account states that the attorneys received 
payment for their services to the Mormons. Some of 
the lawyers provided legal counsel for the Mormons in 
later cases. To pay them for this, some of the land in 
Jackson County was sold. After the Saints were driven 
out of Missouri in 1839, Edward Partridge and Lydia, 
his wife, executed deeds to Doniphan and Reese in 
settlement of their fees as legal advisers to the 
Church. The payment may have been as high as $5,000 
for which conveyance was made to the said lawyers of 
1,080 and 58/100 acres of Jackson County land. David 
W. Rogers acted as the Mormon agent in these trans-
292, 314, 321.
Importuning the President

Since Governor Dunklin expressed his legal inability to leave a military force in Jackson County to protect the Latter-day Saints on their lands after government troops escorted them there, the Church leaders decided to ask the president of the United States to intercede in their behalf. On April 10, 1834, Gilbert, Phelps, and Partridge petitioned President Andrew Jackson to protect them after they returned to their former homes. In a letter accompanying the petition, the Church leaders epitomized their suffering to the president as "the most unparalleled persecution, and flagrant outrage of law that has disgraced the country, since the Declaration of Independence." The petitioners wrote, "The powers rested in the Executive of this state appear to be inadequate for relieving the distress" of the Mormon people. The Church leaders appealed to the president for assistance because they believed persecution would again erupt if they returned to Jackson County without sustained protection. They informed the president,

This step would be laying the foundation for a more fatal tragedy than the first, as our numbers, at present are too small to contend single handed, with the mob of said county, and as the federal Constitution has given to Congress the power to provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the laws of the Union,

31 *Times and Seasons*, VI, p. 1057.
suppress insurrections, or repel invasions, -- and for these purposes the President of the United States is authorized to make the call upon the Executives of the respective States. Therefore, we your petitioners, in behalf of our society, which is so scattered and suffering, most humbly pray that we may be restored to our land, houses and property in Jackson county, and protected in them by an armed force, till peace can be restored.\(^{32}\)

The Mormons hinted to the president concerning the possibility of his sending dragoons from nearby Ft. Leavenworth to provide this protection. The Mormon leaders canvassed their members for signatures; of whom one hundred and fourteen persons signed the petition to the president. The Church leaders also sent President Jackson a copy of Governor Dunklin's February 4 letter and a printed circular describing the persecutions they suffered in Jackson County.\(^{33}\)

On the same date as their petition to the national commander-in-chief, the Mormons requested

\(^{32}\)Ibid. The Mormons hoped for assistance under the following constitutional provisions:

**Article IV, Section 4** "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and upon Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic violence."

**Bill of Rights:** Article V "No person shall be . . . deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law. . . ."

\(^{33}\)For the complete text of this circular see Peter Crowley, "Two Rare Missouri Documents," Ibid., pp. 502-516.
Governor Dunklin to lend the support of his office in making the appeal to the president. But on April 20, Dunklin declined their request; he wrote Phelps and others,

I could no more ask the President, however willing I am to see your society restored and protected in their rights, to do that which I may believe he has no power to do, than I could do such an act myself.\textsuperscript{34}

Dunklin requested the Church leaders to send him a copy of their petition so he could determine if their request were within the province of the president's office. The Governor did not seem optimistic, for he concluded with, "The laws, both civil and military seem deficient in affording your society proper protection."

James Roger Sharp in a monograph about Dunklin's political philosophy saw the governor as a "strict constructionist" and an affirmative states right Jacksonian Democrat, who feared the "encroachment of federal power upon the rights of the individual states."\textsuperscript{35} This view seems supported by the governor's statements to the Mormons and in his correspondence to others. The Governor preferred to remain within the strict limitations of his executive power rather than venture into areas where the laws were not clearly

\textsuperscript{34}Times and Seasons, VI, p. 1059.

defined. In regard to his dedication to duty, concerning the Mormons, he wrote a friend that his personal interests were "all secondary considerations when my duties are brought in question." 36

President Jackson forwarded the Mormon correspondence to Lewis Cass, the Secretary of War. Cass informed the Mormons that since the laws that had been violated were those of Missouri and not of the national government, the president was unable to assist the Mormons, at least not without the Missouri governor's request. Secretary Cass wrote,

When an insurrection in any State exists, against the government thereof, the President is required on the application of such State, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) to call forth such a number of the Militia, as he may judge sufficient to suppress such insurrection.

But this state of things does not exist in Missouri or if it does, the fact is not shown in the mode pointed out by law. The President cannot call out a military force to aid in the execution of the State Laws, until the proper requisition is made upon him by the constituted authorities. 37


37 Times and Seasons, VI, p. 1073. At present it is presumptuous to believe that Isaac McCoy, who was a long term and influential associate of Lewis Cass and an active anti-Mormon mobocrat as viewed by the Mormons, visiting with Secretary Cass in Washington at the time of the petition, exerted any influence upon the Secretary of War in formulating his letter to the Mormons. See George A. Schultz, An Indian Canaan,
The Mormons appealed also to Congress for help through Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri. Among other considerations, they hoped to interest Benton through their active support of the Democratic party. In Kirtland, the Mormons had prepared to publish a Jacksonian newspaper called the "Democrat." But Benton was not sufficiently impressed to assist them.

The Mormon Pursuit for Arms

Because of frequent threats and occasional attacks against them and because of an expectation to return to Jackson County, the Mormons felt insecure without guns for self-protection. They had three recourses to pursue in acquiring guns: they could organize into a company of the state militia in Clay County and become armed with state weapons; they could receive back their own guns from Lt. Col. Thomas Pitcher, who had taken their arms from them the previous November 5; or they could acquire new arms on their own. In their letter to Governor Dunklin of December 6, Phelps and others inquired concerning arms from the first two sources. They requested to "be organized into


38 Times and Seasons, VI, p. 1058. For further consideration of Mormon-Democrat political interests for this period see Max H. Parkin, "Mormon Political Involvement in Ohio," BYU Studies, IX (Summer 1969), pp. 484-502.
companies of Jackson Guards, and be furnished with arms by the state." Governor Dunklin informed them of the justice in receiving public weapons, for he "could not distinguish between their right to have them, and the right of every other description of people similarly situated." Although the Mormons occasionally revived this request, they preferred not to organize into a militia for the fear it would receive too much adverse publicity and turn public sentiment against them. Concerning this, on April 24 Partridge and others wrote to Dunklin:

As suggested in your communication of the 4th of February we have concluded to organize according to law, and apply for public arms, but we feared that such a step, which must be attended with public ceremonies, might produce some excitement, and we have thus far delayed any movement of that nature, hoping to regain our arms from Jackson, that we might independently equip ourselves and be prepared to assist in the maintenance of our constitutional rights and liberties as guaranteed to us by our country. . . .

The Clay County Mormons never organized militarily.

Shortly after Governor Dunklin learned that Col. Pitcher confiscated the guns from the Mormons in Independence on November 5, he ordered an investigation

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39 *Times and Seasons*, VI, p. 915.
40 Ibid., p. 977.
41 Ibid., p. 1072.
into the matter to be held in Liberty in December and ordered Pitcher tried at a court martial in Richmond in January. In his February 4 letter, the governor informed Church leaders that their weapons would be returned to them if the court martial proved that Col. Pitcher had wrongfully acquired arms belonging to Latter-day Saints. Delays in the trial prompted the Mormons to inquire of the governor on April 24 concerning any action taken in the trial. Gilbert, Partridge and others wrote the governor,

We had hoped that the testimony would have been transmitted to your Excellency that an order might be issued for the return of our arms, of which we have been wrongfully dispossessed.  

On May 2, the governor informed the Mormon leaders that Col. Pitcher had acted unlawfully and that he was "not authorized to call out his troops on the 5th of November." The governor said, "It was then unnecessary to require the Mormons to give up their arms."  

On the same day Dunklin ordered Col. Samuel D. Lucas, commandant of the 33rd Regiment in Jackson County to deliver to Phelps, Partridge, and others the fifty-two guns and one pistol confiscated by Lt. Col. Pitcher. On May 24, Col. Lucas resigned his command and informed the governor that he had moved to

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42 Ibid., VI, pp. 961, 977, 1072.
43 Ibid., pp. 1073, 1088.
Lexington. Phelps and others requested the governor to authorize Col. Shubael Allen or Captain Atchison to act as an agent for the state in receiving the guns for the Mormons, but Dunklin preferred to let Lt. Col. Pitcher, Lucas' successor as regimental commander, deliver them directly to the Mormons.

On June 9 the governor sent his order (this time through the Mormon leaders) to have the arms collected. The command said to Col. Pitcher: "Collect the arms if they are not already in your possession, and deliver them" to the Mormons!\(^44\) The Church leaders did not act on the matter immediately, for it was not until July 10 that John Corrill sent the governor's order to Pitcher for return of the guns. But Pitcher never fulfilled the order. The Mormons reported that the guns, which had been kept in the jail, were distributed among the Jackson County citizens by the middle of June.\(^45\) When Col. Pitcher did not fulfill the governor's order, Phelps wrote the state commander-in-chief, "Your excellency will have to appoint an agent with authority to get them for us."\(^46\) The governor had earlier refused to appoint Col. John


\(^{45}\) *Star*, June, 1834, p. 8.

\(^{46}\) W. W. Phelps, "Letter to Governor Dunklin, August 1, 1834." Unpublished letter, copy in the Church Historical Department.
Thornton to collect the guns as the Mormons requested. The governor expected the military to obey his order directly.

Col. Pitcher was never punished for his insubordination. In an interview years later, he boasted that his "trial before the court of inquiry and court martial occupied six or seven months, and cost the state over $30,000," but he was never convicted. The developments concerning Col. Pitcher distressed Governor Dunklin, and he complained to the legislature in an address on November 18:

One of the defects in our laws on this subject [of the Governor giving orders], is, that the superior officers cannot be compelled to discharge the duties devolved upon them. By May, Mormon-Gentile relations had greatly worsened in western Missouri. "The crisis has come," wrote Phelps on the first day of the month. In the spring, after word had arrived in Jackson County concerning reinforcements from Kirtland, the Jackson County citizens militated against the Mormons to discourage them from crossing the river. On May 7, Gilbert and Phelps informed the governor that "the "

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47The Kansas City Journal, June 19, 1881.


49Star, May, 1834, p. 8.
mob of Jackson County has burned our dwellings; as near as we can ascertain, between one hundred and one hundred and fifty were consumed by fire in about one week." To prevent the Mormons from returning to Jackson County, as rumor wrongfully stated they were about to do, the Gentiles guarded the ferry crossings and positioned cannons at some of the landings. Alexander Majors wrote of the condition:

In the spring they [the Mormons] were determined to return to their homes, although they were so badly destroyed, and claimed again as before that God would vindicate them and put to flight their enemies. The people of Jackson County, however, watched for their return, and gathered, at the appointed time, in a large body, on the opposite side of the river to where the Mormons were expected to congregate and cross back into the county. Their spies came to the river, and seeing camps of the citizens, who had gathered to the number of four or five hundred strong (I being one of the number) to prevent their crossing, then changed their purpose.51

Corrill said that the rumors about the Saints returning at that time, though untrue, caused the Mormons trouble. The settlers believed the Mormons were coming "mob like to kill their women and children," Corrill stated.52 Some Jackson County citizens went into Clay County to incite the people there to hostile

50 Times and Seasons, VI, p. 1074.

51 Majors, Seventy Years on the Frontier, p. 52.

52 Star, June, 1834, p. 8.
action against the Saints. "Samuel Campbell," wrote John Whitmer, "succeeded in embittering the minds of some."\(^{53}\) Campbell canvassed part of the county with a petition seeking anti-Mormon sympathy. His petition recorded twenty signatures.

The Mormons equipped themselves with implements of self defense by the spring of 1834, by purchasing and manufacturing "swords, dirks, pistols, stocking rifles, and repairing arms in general for their own defense against mob violence."\(^{54}\) But their boldest expression of strength came from the East. In January, Church leaders in Clay County sent Lyman Wight and Parley Pratt to inform Joseph Smith of developments in Clay County. Upon the arrival of the messengers, the Mormon leader organized a quasi-military body known as Zion's Camp to march to the distressed Mormons in Missouri. The *Upper Missouri Enquirer* in June contained the following report about the Mormon defensive efforts:

> For the last six or eight weeks, the Mormons have been actively engaged in making preparations to return to Jackson county, 'the land of promise,' by providing themselves with implements of war, such as guns, pistols, swords, &c. &c. They expect a reinforcement from the State of Ohio, and we are informed that small parties are arriving almost every day. So soon as they all arrive, they intend to call upon the Governor to reinstate them upon their lands.

\(^{53}\)John Whitmer's *History* (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm), p. 16.

\(^{54}\) *Times and Seasons*, VI, p. 1075.
in Jackson, and then, if molested, they are
determined to protect themselves, sword in
hand. We are told they will be able to muster
700 strong.55

The report was no fabrication. Church historian John
Whitmer in Clay County affirmed,

The Saints here are preparing with all
possible speed to arm themselves and otherwise
prepare to go to Jackson County, when the camp
arrives; for we have had some hints from Joseph
the Seer, that this will be our privilege; so
we were in hopes that the long wished-for day
will soon arrive, and Zion be redeemed to the
joy and satisfaction of the poor suffering
Saints.56

The Mormons awaited the day of the Camp's arrival, but
in the meantime attempted to produce a peaceful solu-
tion.

EFFORTS AT COMPROMISE

About the last of May, Col. John Thornton, one
of the most prominent citizens of Clay County and a
former speaker of the House of Representatives, with
the endorsement of the Mormon attorneys, proposed to
Dunklin that the governor supervise a compromise
between the Mormons and the Jackson County citizens.
But in a letter to Thornton on June 7, Governor Dunklin
refused on the grounds that "I should travel out of the

55Upper Missouri Enquirer, cited in Missouri
Intelligencer, June 21, 1834.

56"John Whitmer's History," p. 16.
line of my strict duty." However, the governor appointed Thornton to act as his agent in effecting a compromise if he could. "In this situation," wrote Dunklin to Thornton, "you can give your propositions all the influence they would have, were they to emanate from the Executive." Judge Ryland took the initiative to get matters started. On June 10 he wrote from Richmond to Algernon Sidney Gilbert to gather his leading brethren to Liberty on Monday, June 16, to hold a meeting with a delegation from Jackson County authorized to negotiate an agreement with the Mormons. Ryland expressed his hope "as a man as well as a Christian" to help resolve the existing conflict.  

Although Church leaders approved the June 16 meeting, they sent a letter to Judge Ryland, by way of their attorneys, reiterating their determination that they would not sell their Jackson County land. To do so "would be like selling our children into slavery," they informed their legal counselors. The Prophet Joseph Smith had made this point clear to the Church leaders in his correspondence the previous December. In his first letter he had declared, "You will

57 Missouri Intelligencer, July 5, 1834. See also Times and Seasons, VI, p. 1077.  
58 Times and Seasons, VI, p. 1088.  
59 Ibid., p. 1089.
recollect that the Lord has said that Zion should not be removed out of her place; therefore, the land should not be sold."^60 And in his second letter, the Mormon Prophet emphasized, "It is better in the eyes of God that you should die, than that you should give up the land of Zion."^61

The Propositions

The meeting convened in the courthouse at Liberty on Monday, June 16, 1834. Joel Turnham, a former county administrative judge, moderated the meeting and attempted to control the crowd of over nine hundred spectators. The moderator issued the policy that no inflammatory address would be allowed. The first to speak was Judge Ryland who addressed the audience "in an impressive and forcible manner," observed Liberty's news editor. Liberty's Upper Missouri Enquirer reported the following concerning Ryland's message:

As a man who felt deeply interested for his own country and its laws, and the happiness and well being of his fellow man, he advised them [the contending parties] to ponder well what they were about to do; and after enjoining them upon the necessity of regarding the laws of the land,—he addressed the Mormons warning them against the danger of suffering themselves

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^60 Joseph Smith's Letter, December 5, 1833, Ibid., p. 915.

to be led by pretenders to the high prerogatives of the Prophets of God, to certain destruction. With all the candour of a man who felt the importance of the crisis, he informed them of the real state of feeling that now prevades the greater part of the upper country: he supposed that the Mormons might cross the river and defeat the citizens of Jackson in battle—that it would only be the means of involving them in greater difficulties—that hundreds would rush from the adjoining counties to revenge the blood of their neighbors, and that they must be expelled in turn—that the arm of the civil law could do nothing amid the din of arms and the rage of war—and he hoped they would reflect seriously, before our rich soil should be deluged with the blood of our countrymen.  

Attempts at arbitration began. The Jackson County committee headed by Samuel C. Owens, proposed payment to the Mormons of the value of their lands and improvements on them before they were damaged. This value would be determined by three disinterested arbitrators accompanied by twelve Mormons to identify the land and its greatest stage of improvements. The committee offered to purchase all Mormon property within thirty days at double the stipulated value. If this were agreed to, the Mormons were "not to make any effort, ever after, to settle, either collectively or individually, within the limits of Jackson County."  

The alternate proposal allowed the Mormons to purchase

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62 Upper Missouri Enquirer, cited in Missouri Intelligencer, June 28, 1834.

63 Missouri Intelligencer, June 28, 1834.
all of the land owned by non-Mormons in Jackson County on reciprocal terms.

Following the presentation of the proposition, vigorous emotional expressions caused the meeting to disintegrate. Samuel Owens, "being the chief speaker" of the Jackson County delegation, "spoke with force and energy," wrote Judge Joseph Thorp, "and in a way to arouse the passion rather than allay it." 64 Benjamin W. Riley, a Baptist Minister from the Mt. Gilead congregation in north central Clay County, stated that "the Mormons had lived long enough in Clay County; and they must either clear out, or be cleared out." 65 Joseph Smith's history records the reaction of more level headed men:

Judge Turnham, the moderator of the meeting, answered in a firm manner, saying, "Let us be republicans; let us honour our country, and not disgrace it like Jackson County. For God's sake don't disfranchise or drive away the Mormons. They are better citizens than many of the old inhabitants." General [Col.] Doniphan shouted, "That's a fact, and as the Mormons have armed themselves, if they don't fight they are cowards. I love to hear that they have brethren coming to their assistance.

64Joseph Thorp, *Early Days in the West*, p. 79.

65*Times and Seasons*, VI, p. 1090. Benjamin W. Riley participated in organizing the Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church February 13, 1830, nine miles north of Liberty in Platte Township of that day. See Withers, *Centennial Souvenir of Clay*, p. 123, which gives his name as Benjamin W. Riley, as does the Clay County marriage records as an officiating minister, but the 1830 census records gives it as Benjamin M. Riley.
Greater love can no man have, than to lay down his life for his brethren."66

Thorp said that Doniphan "advocated the right of citizen and individual liberty, with individual responsi-
sibility, and was opposed to Judge Lynch and mob violence."67 Tension continued to mount. Edward Stevenson, who lived in the County, later recalled a development at this juncture:

At this critical moment, the cocking of pistols, and preparations for desperation could be heard. One cried out, "Adjourn;" another, "go on." In the midst of this confu-
sion, another man shouted into the door, "A man stabbed!" The man instantly rushed out to the spot, in hopes, as some said, "that one damned Mormon had got killed." But it was a Missourian had dirked another.68

Later that day, the Mormons advised the Jackson County delegation that they would report their decision after they held a general meeting with their Church members during the week. Then on June 21, Phelps and

66 Some statements about events in Clay County are inaccurately attributed to Joseph Smith, who was not present. Willard Richards, who wrote the manuscript of the "History of Joseph Smith," did not annotate his sources this early. He wrote this part of the history as printed in the Times and Seasons, Volume VI before or during 1843. See Dean C. Jessee, "The Writing of Joseph Smith's History," B.Y.U. Studies (Summer 1971), p. 441.

67 Thorp, Early Days in the West, p. 80.

others informed the Jackson County committee that the Church leaders could not accept the proposal.

The proposition was unacceptable to the Latter-day Saints because the Mormon leaders felt that under no condition could they part with their lands. Also, the "thirty to one" ratio of the Gentile to Mormon land ownership in Jackson County precluded acceptance because the Mormons could not afford to buy the Gentiles out. Perhaps, the Jackson County committee anticipated Mormon inability to purchase the land. At least, John Whitmer thought so. "The mob of Jackson County proposed to sell us, or buy our possessions in a manner," said he, "that they knew that we could not comply with if we were ever so willing." 69

69 *Missouri Intelligencer*, October 11, 1834. See also *Star*, August, 1834, p. 7. This estimate approximates the land that was under cultivation in Jackson County. There were over 600 sections of land (640 acres each) in Jackson County, and the Mormons owned less than four sections. Most of the land in the southern two thirds of the county, however, was still retained by the government and was not sold until the following decade or later. Likewise, much of the land east of Independence was in government hands. The earliest extensive land sales was for land in Kaw and the western part of Blue townships, with some sections in private hands in the eastern and central areas of the county when the Mormons lived in the county. See Jackson County "Record of Original Land Sales." The belief existed that at one time the eastern branches of the Church could raise sufficient funds to buy all the land in Jackson County. See D. & C. 101:71-72.

70 "John Whitmer's History," p. 16.
The Mormons presented a counter proposal. Since they could not purchase all of the land owned in Jackson County, Phelps, Partridge, and others wrote to Owens' Jackson County committee on June 23 to offer to purchase the land of all those "who can not consent to live with us."\(^{71}\) The Mormons promised payment within one year and assured the committee that no member of their society would move to Jackson County until they made full payment.

If this feature would have been agreeable to the Jackson County residents, the next one would not. The cost of the damages sustained by the Mormons were to be deducted from the payment.\(^{72}\) On June 26, in a letter to Amos Reese, Owens rejected the counter proposal and recommended that the Mormons move north to Clinton County. On that same date, Gilbert and others wrote Governor Dunklin that if they failed in this current attempt at arbitration, they intended to "make another effort and go [to] all lengths" to find a mutually agreeable plan, because "our right to our soil

\(^{71}\) *Times and Seasons*, VI, pp. 1106, 1108. This proposal originated with Joseph Smith and others of Zion's Camp the day before when camp members met with Sheriff Gillium.

\(^{72}\) *Upper Missouri Enquirer*, cited in *Missouri Intelligencer*, July 12, 1834.
in Jackson county," they told the governor, "we shall forever claim."\(^{73}\)

Despite the fact that some of their homes in Clay County had been burglarized of guns and other weapons, they supposed by Jackson County men, the Mormons were still hopeful of arriving at an accord with the Owens' committee. In their letter on June 26 to Governor Dunklin, the Mormon leaders informed him that they would defer their petition for a military escort into Jackson County as long as "there exists a hope of a compromise."\(^{74}\)

**Sinking of the Ferry**

According to Alexander Majors, one factor that further deteriorated Mormon-Gentile relations was the sinking of a ferry on the day of the Liberty meeting. Majors said that the ferry disaster which took the life of some of the Jackson County citizens who were returning home from the meeting put "the quietus on any further attempt to try to settle for the damages done the Mormons."\(^{75}\) At nine o'clock on the evening of June 16, six of the ten Jackson committee members with

\(^{73}\) *Times and Seasons*, VI, p. 1107.

\(^{74}\) Ibid.

\(^{75}\) Majors, *Seventy Years on the Frontier*, p. 54.
others, boarded Everett's ferry to return home. After the boat had traveled about half way across the river, it filled with water and began to sink. James Campbell and four experienced river ferrymen aboard were reportedly good swimmers, but Owens and some of the others were not. Campbell instructed the poorer swimmers to hold on to their horse's tail, thereby they might be carried to safety. But Campbell and some of the other better swimmers may not have taken that precaution; they found the current so turbulent that they lost control and drowned. Even three of the ferrymen drowned, including Everett, a long experienced ferry boat operator who arrived within a few feet of the opposite bank.

76 Some histories state they crossed on Ducker's ferry. William Ducker operated a ferry on the Clay County side across from Independence Landing, in Township 30, Range 31, Section 18, on land he later bought in 1839. William Everett may have used Ducker's ferry moorings when on the other side of the river.

77 The day following the accident Owens, S. V. Noland, and Harrington wrote to the Enquirer and informed the editors of the vital data concerning the event: "The names of the persons lost are--James Campbell, William Everett, David Linch, Jefferson Cary, and a Mr. Bradbury--the two last were the ferrymen. Those escaping--Smallwood Noland, Richard Fristoe, Smallwood V. Noland, Samuel C. Owens, Thomas Harrington, and a Mr. Frost--the last being the third ferryman." Upper Missouri Enquirer, cited in Missouri Intelligencer, June 28, 1834. This declaration by participants corrects the statement in the History of the Church, II, p. 100, "that seven out of twelve that attempted to cross, were drowned."
Although five men lost their lives, the only member of the Jackson County committee who drowned was James Campbell. The history of Joseph Smith says that Campbell, upon returning from Liberty after attending the meeting on June 16, boastfully remarked as he adjusted his pistols in his holsters, "The eagles and turkey buzzards shall eat my flesh if I do not fix Joe Smith and his army so that their skins will not hold shucks, before two days are passed."\textsuperscript{78} Joseph Smith's history reported that after the drowning, Campbell floated down stream four or five miles where his body lodged on a pile of drift wood and when his remains were found the scavenger birds had partially devoured the flesh of his bones. The Mormon view suggested that the 'angel of God saw fit to sink the boat.'\textsuperscript{79}

Owens had a different view of the cause of the tragedy. The day following the accident, he and two other survivors wrote to Kelly and Davis of the \textit{Enquirer} to report the details of the incident. They said,

Upon our embarking, the boat appeared to be in as good order as we ever saw it—the false floor was tight and good. After our

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Times and Seasons}, VI, p. 1091. See also \textit{History of the Church}, II, p. 99.

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid. See also Thorp, \textit{Early Days in the West}, p. 81.
having left the shore some two hundred yards, in an instant, as it were, the boat was filled with water. We are confident the boat struck nothing. Our impressions at that time were, and still are, that something had been done to the boat to sink her, as it was known that the committee from this county would cross at this point last night.  

The editors of the Missouri Intelligencer said that the survivors "insinuate [the sinking] was the work of the Mormons." Majors reported that the rumor that the Mormons had sunk the boat "caused in the whole population the most intense feeling against" the Latter-day Saints. This feeling existed because of the belief of some of the Jackson County residents that the Mormons had bribed George Bradbury, one of the ferrymen, to "bore auger-holes through the gunwales of his flat-boat just at the water's edge" to enable the boat to sink when it filled with water. Concerning this, Majors wrote,

When Bradbury jumped off the boat he swam for the shore, but was afterward found dead, with one of his hands grasping the root of a cottonwood tree, so there was no opportunity for trying him for the crime, or finding out how it was brought about.

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80 Upper Missouri Enquirer, cited in Missouri Intelligencer, June 28, 1834.
81 Missouri Intelligencer, June 28, 1834.
82 Majors, Seventy Years on the Frontier, p. 54.
83 Ibid., pp. 53, 54.
At least one Mormon agreed with the rumor that the Latter-day Saints were responsible. Emily Austin, who lived not far from the ferry landing, believed that her people had bored the holes. Judge Thorp, however, attributed the accident to an overloaded ferry.

An Appeal to the Public

By the latter part of June the chances of agreeing upon a compromise seemed improbable. By that time the popular feeling against the Mormons not only in Jackson County but also in the neighboring counties was so inflamed against them that the western Missouri citizens generally felt that the Jackson County residents were in the right. A resident of Lexington wrote that "self preservation urged us" to help the Jackson County citizens militate against their enemies. The Liberty Enquirer editorialized that if the two committees could not come to an agreeable compromise, it believed the Jackson County residents "would dispute

84 Austin, Life Among the Mormons, p. 12.
85 Thorp, Early Days in the West, p. 80. The History of Jackson County, Missouri, op. cit., p. 263, reported, "The most reasonable idea was that the boat did not generally carry such heavy loads, hence the timbers had become dry and the corking loose, and when the water pressed against it gave away and the boat filled [with water and sank]." William T. Wood believed that the Mormons sank the ferry. See Liberty Tribune, April 9, 1886.
86 Unsigned letter from Lexington, June 28, 1834, The Connecticut Courant, August 4, 1834.
every inch of ground, burn every blade of grass, and
suffer their bones to bleach on their hills, rather
than the Mormons should return to Jackson County. 87
On June 18, the editors of the Upper Missouri Enquirer
wrote,

It is a lamentable fact, that this matter
is about to involve the whole upper country in
civil war and bloodshed. We cannot . . . tell
how long it will be before we shall have the
painful task of recording the awful realities
of an exterminating war.

This unfortunate condition grew not only from the
former disdain the Jackson County citizens had for the
Mormons, but also from the aggression rumors about
Zion's Camp and from the Mormons in Clay County arming
themselves.

Since the Mormon leaders realized that they
would not receive help from local agencies, they
decided to appeal to the public in general. Governor
Dunklin hinted at such a course for the Saints in his
April 20 letter:

The laws, both civil and military seem
deficient in offording your society protection,
evertheless public sentiments is a powerful
corrector of error, and you should make it your
policy to continue to deserve it. 88

The Church leaders in July issued "AN APPEAL" to people
everywhere. Oliver Cowdery, the Kirtland editor of the

87 Cited in Missouri Intelligencer, July 28,
1834.

88 Times and Seasons, VI, p. 1059.
Star, stated that whenever a person or society has been ill-treated its "last appeal has been made to the world or nation at large."\(^\text{89}\) In the appeal, the Mormons reviewed the reasons they were unwilling to sell their Jackson County lands, the troubles they experienced in Missouri, and their attempts at acquiring redress. Also, they tried to correct the many "slanderous reports and ridiculous" rumors in circulation about them. They reviewed their desire to avoid bloodshed and to act consistent with constitutional laws. "We appeal for peace," the lengthy document reported, "and ask the protection of all people." Through this means the Mormons presented their case to the American people.

\(^{89}\)"An Appeal," Star, August, 1834, p. 7.
CHAPTER V

ZION'S CAMP IN CLAY COUNTY

At a meeting of the elders in Clay County early in January, 1834, local Church leaders believed that the president of the Church should be informed of the conditions in western Missouri. On January 12, Lyman Wight and Parley P. Pratt, after being gratuitously equipped by their helpful neighbors, started on their lengthy journey to Kirtland. Arriving there February 22, the two travelers informed Joseph Smith of the conditions of their fellow sufferers in Missouri. "Oh my brethren! my brethren, would that I had been with you to have shared your fate," Joseph's mother reported her son exclaiming. He continued, "Oh my God, what shall I do in such a trial as this?" ¹

WESTWARD MOVEMENT OF ZION'S CAMP

Two days after the two men arrived, Joseph the Prophet dictated a revelation concerning the procedure of managing the Missouri problem. "Behold, I say unto you," reported the revelation, "the redemption of Zion

¹Lucy Mack Smith, Joseph Smith and His Progenitors (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1956), p. 225.

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must needs come by power."² The revelation instructed Joseph Smith to organize an army to travel to Missouri to protect the exiled Latter-day Saints upon their return to Jackson County. "Let no man be afraid to lay down his life for my sake," the divine message continued. Joseph was to raise from 100 to 500 men, armed and equipped with provisions for their dispossessed friends.

That same day, a newly formed Church directorate known as the Kirtland High Council met. After hearing Pratt and Wight's report, the High Council voted to support Joseph Smith as commander-in-chief of the army, to be known as Zion's Camp, which was to assist in the redemption of Zion. Pratt, Wight, and others canvassed the Church branches for recruits of young and middle-aged men to participate in the venture.

The Journey to Clay County

On May 6, 1834, members of the Camp rendezvoused at New Portage, Ohio, about 50 miles south of Kirtland. They organized themselves into companies of tens, fifties, and hundreds with captains placed over each group. They consolidated their funds into a common treasury, and equipped themselves with twenty baggage

²D. & C. 103:15.
wagons of clothing and provisions for their journey and for the distressed Mormons in Clay County. Wilford Woodruff said that the company consisted of 150 men who "were armed with dirks, pistols, swords, and rifles for self defense." Wilford also gave the Prophet his own sword for his personal use. Zion's Camp departed from New Portage on May 8.

Their journey was arduous, eventful, and frustrating. Perhaps the most disconcerting factor was internal disorder. George A. Smith, the Prophet's young armor bearer, reported,

The Prophet took a full share of the fatigues of the entire journey. In addition to the care of providing for the Camp and presiding over it, he walked most of the time and had a full proportion of blistered, bloody, and sore feet, which was the natural result of walking from twenty-five to forty miles a day in the hot season of the year.

But during the entire trip he never uttered a murmur; while most of the men in the Camp complained to him of sore toes, blistered feet, long drives, scanty provisions, poor quality of bread, bad corn dodger, frowzy butter, strong honey, maggoty bacon and cheese, etc. Even a dog could not bark at some men without their murmuring at Joseph. If they had to camp with bad water, it would nearly cause a rebellion. Yet we were the Camp of Zion, and many of us were prayerless, thoughtless, careless, heedless, foolish, or devilish, and we did not know it. Joseph had to bear with us and tutor us like children. There were many, however, in the


\[4\] "Wilford Woodruff Journal," May 8, 1834, entry, located in the Church Historical Department.
Camp who never murmured and who were always ready and willing to do as our leader desired.\textsuperscript{5}

On June 3, after the camp members had uncovered some Indian bones from a burial mound near the Illinois River in Pike County, Heber C. Kimball said that Joseph Smith predicted, "that there would be a scourge come upon the camp."\textsuperscript{6} George A. Smith said that this curse resulted from "our murmuring and fault-finding and want of humility."\textsuperscript{7} George reported that the Prophet continued,

\begin{quote}
I cannot stop it; it must come; but by repentance and humility and the prayer of faith, the chastisement may be alleviated but cannot be entirely turned away, for as the Lord lives this Camp must suffer a severe scourge for their wickedness and rebellion. I say it in the name of the Lord.
\end{quote}

Shortly after crossing the Mississippi River, the camp arrived at James Allred's branch of the Church on the Salt River in Monroe County, Missouri, on June 7. A day later Lyman Wight and Hyrum Smith arrived with additional men from Michigan, making a total of 205 men and several women, who were wives of


\textsuperscript{6}"Extracts from Heber C. Kimball's Journal," Times and Seasons, VI (February 1, 1845), p. 788, hereafter cited as "Extracts." Joseph Smith said the bones belonged to an ancient warrior named Zelphe.

\textsuperscript{7}Smith, "My Journal," p. 184.
some of the Camp members. During the encampment on the Salt River, Joseph Smith appointed Wight as the commanding general and sent Orson Hyde and Parley Pratt to Jefferson City. The purpose of the conference with Governor Dunklin was to learn if he were still willing to reinstate the Mormons on "their lands in Jackson County, and leave them there to defend themselves."  

On June 14 and 15, three groups of Mormons visited Joseph in camp. Luke Johnson, who had been sent out to survey anti-Mormon activities in the western counties, returned to announce his findings. He reported that the mob intended to attack Zion's army as it crossed the Chariton River if the army showed signs of entering Jackson County. Johnson's report induced the Camp to remain north of the Missouri River. Second, Bishop Partridge and others arrived on the 15th to inform Joseph "concerning the hostile feelings and prejudice that existed against the Mormons." On the same day, Hyde and Pratt returned from their visit with Governor Dunklin in Jefferson City.

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8 History of the Church, II, p. 89. Milo Andrus stated that before crossing the Mississippi River, his company went into the forest and prayed for a safe return. "Milo Andrus Journal," located in the Church Historical Department.


Dunklin's position regarding the Saints was critical to the Mormon objective. The fact that the governor could not protect the Saints after they returned to their farms and the belief of the Mormons that God would help them defeat their enemies in Jackson County were the reasons for organizing Zion's Camp. But the Mormons needed the strength of the militia ordered by Governor Dunklin to escort them across the river. Parley reported that at the interview Dunklin did not feel disposed to assist the Saints in returning to their lands. Pratt wrote:

We had an interview with the Governor, who readily acknowledges justice of the demand, but frankly told us he dare not attempt the execution of the laws in that respect, for fear of deluging the whole country in civil war and bloodshed. He advised us to relinquish our rights, for the sake of peace, and to sell our lands from which we had been driven. To this we replied with firmness that we would hold no terms with land pirates and murderers. If we could not be permitted to live on lands which we had purchased of the United States, and be protected in our persons and rights, our lands would, at least, make a good burying ground on which to lay our bones; and, like Abraham's possession in Canaan, we should hold

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11 This belief of Divine intervention originated from a revelation Joseph Smith received December 16, 1833, which in part says: "And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard for it is mine; I have bought it with money. Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen." D. & C. 101: 56-57. For further consideration as to the circumstances that fostered Zion's Camp see Peter Crawley and Richard L. Anderson, "The Political and Social Realities of Zion's Camp," BYU Studies, XIV (Summer 1974), pp. 406-420.
on to our possessions in the County of Jackson, for this purpose at least. He replied that he did not blame us in the least, but trembled for the country and dare not carry out the plain, acknowledged, and imperative duties of his office. We retired, saying to ourselves: "That poor coward ought, in duty, to resign; he owes this, morally at least, in justice to his oath of office."12

Hyde said that Governor Dunklin advised them to resolve their complaints in the courts. "He knew better," said Hyde. "He well knew that to refer us to the courts for justice, was like referring us to a band of thieves to sue for the recovery of stolen property."13

Possibly Governor Dunklin's statements to Pratt and Hyde reflected views the governor had expressed in a letter to John Thornton several days earlier. In this letter dated June 6, Dunklin stated to Thornton that his first recommendation to solve the problem between the Mormons and the Jackson County citizens would be to advise the Mormons to sell their lands and go where they could live in peace. If the Mormons refused, he would appeal to the Jackson County settlers to "rescind their illegal resolves" against the Mormons.


13Deseret News, May 12, 1858.
If this failed, he would advise the opposing groups to select separate areas in Jackson County in which to settle and refrain from bothering each other. The governor then wrote,

If all these failed then the simple question of legal right would have to settle it. It is this last that I am afraid I shall have to conform my action to in the end, and hence the necessity of keeping myself in the best situation to do my duty impartially.14

Whatever Dunklin said to Pratt and Hyde, they interpreted it as a refusal to fulfill his promise to escort the Mormons back to Jackson County. Whether the governor's statement to them was a change of government policy toward the Mormons or a temporary postponement of policy in order to avert a war crisis is not clear from Pratt's statement. Clearly, however, Hyde and Pratt questioned the governor's integrity. They seemed disappointed with the governor's desire to avert the impending calamity by some means of consilation. After they returned to Zion's Camp, Lyman Wight briefly recorded in his journal their report, "They brought the intelligence that the Governor would execute the law, whatever it might be," Wight wrote.15

14*Times and Seasons*, VI (January 1, 1846), p. 1078.

Arrival of Zion's Camp in Clay County

If the Governor feared a bloody civil conflict, he was justified in his concern. By the time the Mormon army arrived in Clay County on June 19, war parties had gathered from the surrounding counties to attack the Mormon reinforcements. While the Mormons prepared their nightly encampment on June 19 three miles past the Clay County line, five armed gunmen entered the encampment and threatened the Camp members. The Mormon army "should see hell before morning," George A. Smith reported one saying.16 The Mormons had learned, when passing through Richmond earlier that day, that a large force of armed citizens were preparing to attack them. George A. Smith listed the number of the armed local citizens militating against the Mormons at 60 from Ray County, 40 from Lafayette County, 70 from Clay County and 200 from Jackson County.17

Although the Latter-day Saints had preferred to keep their expedition a secret, eastern correspondents had informed citizens of western Missouri of the

George A. Smith later wrote, "Governor Daniel Dunklin refused to fulfill his promise of reinstating the brethren on their lands in Jackson County." "My Journal," p. 213.

17Ibid., pp. 215-216.
advance of Zion's Camp. As early as April 29, the postmaster of Chagrin, Ohio, informed the postmaster of Independence of the recruitment of the Mormon militia. Other letters and news articles kept the Jackson County citizens informed. One reported, "A company of Mormons, 250 or 300 strong, recently passed through Springfield, Ill., bound westward," it said. "They were generally able bodied and efficient men, well armed."

Jackson County citizens were ready to act against what they considered to be a Mormon invasion. Judge Ryland, at the courthouse in Liberty on June 16, correctly assessed the sentiments of the western citizens when he stated "that hundreds would rush from the adjoining counties to revenge the blood of their neighbors" if the Mormons took aggressive action in Missouri. In a letter written by a resident of Lexington to his father in Mason County, Kentucky, on June 20, 1834, the young male writer reflected the feelings of many western Missourians:

Next Monday [June 23] is supposed to be the day they [the Mormons] intend crossing the river, to take Jackson County. The whole county is in an uproar. Volunteers are preparing to

18 *Missouri Intelligencer*, June 7, 1834.
19 *The Western Examiner* [St. Louis], June 15, 1834.
20 *Missouri Intelligencer*, June 28, 1834.
go to the scene of action. Should they cross the river, there will be a battle, and probably much blood shed. Among others, I shall start on Saturday next, at 8 o'clock.21

The following week, after the threat of war passed, the same correspondent again reflected the intense community feeling against the Mormons:

We went up to Jackson County, armed with guns, knives, &c., in full expectation of meeting an enemy determined on victory or death. Nothing less could have been anticipated; for Smith, their prophet, had promised to raise all of them that should be slain in fighting the Lord's battles. . . . .

The arrival of such a body of armed troops, whose object was to butcher a portion of our citizens, aroused the whole country against them. . . . .

Last Monday was, no doubt, the time they intended to cross, and would most probably have done so, had it not been for the numbers who went from this county to oppose them. Jackson County could raise about 900 men, and 400 went from Lafayette; about 300 more would have marched in a day or two, if they had been required. I know we had neither law nor gospel on our side, but self-preservation urged us to pursue that course, for we knew that our county would be the next to suffer from their presence. If they had crossed the river I very much question if one would have been left to tell the tale. No quarter would have been given. We could have killed most of them before they got across the river.22

21Connecticut Courant [Hartford], August 4, 1834.

22Ibid. See Appendix D for the complete text of the letters. Italics are in the original.
ZION'S CAMP AT FISHING RIVER

The Camp Site

On June 19, the first night's encampment in Clay County was in a protected area in Fishing River Township. John Murdock said that the day's travel took the members of the Camp "across Little Fishing River near the Big Fishing River on our front in the fork between the two. We were camped on a hill by a meeting house." 23 Levi Hancock said they camped on a "high ridge" between the two Fishing rivers and Nathan Bennett Baldwin described it as "an eminence" between the two rivers. 24 At the point of their encampment, the two rivers were about one and one-half miles apart, the camp being about equal distance between the two streams. At that time, the water in the streams was low. Heber C. Kimball said that it was about ankle deep at the ford, and George A. Smith said it was below


his boot tops at the place he observed it. While reflecting upon the gathering mob, Joseph Holbrook described the area of the encamped personnel:

The day we passed Richmond we camped between the forks of Fishing River, one fork which we crossed this evening about up to our axletrees of our wagons. We camped about one mile west of said fork near a meeting house where we were met by many of our enemies as we had been for some days past, who swore they would send us all to hell before morning and if any were left we should not be spared in the event to tell the story alive. And thus we were threatened on every side with mobs enough to make any man quail who had not the spirit of God with him, but brother Joseph the Prophet said, "Stand still and see the salvation of God."26

The Baptists had constructed a log meeting house near the place the Mormons camped. Some of the Mormons used this facility for shelter during the evening's retirement. (See Figure 2) On September 18, 1830, the Baptists of the Fishing River Association organized the Mount Pleasant Church. William Slaughter and his wife Elizabeth, two of the church's original members, sold two acres of land to the church's

25Kimball, "Extracts," p. 803; and Smith, "My Journal," p. 215. Other journals described the location of this camp site, the later rise of water, the location of the log church, and other matters. See Journals of Reuben S. McBride and Charles C. Rich, located in the Church Historical Department. Also see History of the Church, II, pp. 103-105.

26"Joseph Holbrook Journal," p. 19, transcript located in the Church Historical Department.
Fig. 2. The Location of Some Sites of Mormon Activity in Clay County, 1834
trustees for $1.00 on which to construct a "meeting house." The hewn log church was constructed at

27 Clay County Recorder's Office, Book C, p. 152. The land description of the Mt. Pleasant church site is "Township 52, Range 30, Section 15, east side of west half of north east 1/4." At this site today, approximately 200 feet south of Highway 10, original foundation stones are still intact. On May 9, 1930, Miss Rebecca E. Northern of Baltimore, Maryland, formerly of Excelsior Springs, Missouri, visited the Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City and, in conversation with Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian, said, "I was born near Fishing River in the vicinity of the point where Zion's Camp crossed Little Fishing River or the East Fork of said river June 19, 1834. Our residence stood about 40 feet east of the site of the Baptist Church where Joseph Smith and his company took refuge during the terrible storm narrated in the history of Zion's Camp. The site of this church is in the southeast quarter of section 16 [15] of township 32 [52] north of range 30 west (now called Fishing River Township). The foundation of the old Baptist Church is still traceable. The old church was taken down before I was born, but the new church was erected about 10 feet west of the foundation of the old church. This latter edifice is the church I remember in my childhood days, but about five years ago this church was removed to Moore Station on the Interurban car line, half a mile east of the old location or 'Mormon Camp.' The site of the Mormon Camp is known as Mount Pleasant. The site of the old meeting house is about half a mile east of Prathersville, 2 1/2 miles southwest of Excelsior Springs, and 14 miles northeast of Liberty." "Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," May 9, 1930. This history is a manuscript history, hereafter cited as "Journal History."

Miss Northern's general description is correct, but her land designation is incorrect as the Clay County Land Deed Record attests. Also, the 1914 "Clay County Land Atlas" shows F. M. Northern's property on Highway 10 adjacent to the Baptist Church in section 15.

In 1878, the Mt. Pleasant congregation constructed a frame meeting house which was moved to Moore Station near Crescent Lake in about 1925. Today, this meeting house is still in use and bears the statement, "Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church 1830" on a sign on its front gable.
approximately that same time. There were nine original members of the Mount Pleasant Church, three of whom were slaves. 28

The Storm

Because of the threats and the movement of large bodies of armed local citizens, members of Zion's Camp expected an attack on the night of June 19. John Murdock said that there was a mob of two hundred before them and another equally large group behind them. Levi Hancock reported that there were "three hundred men who were armed, and equipped to fall on us that night and cut us off." Some of the Mormons desired to fight. Jenkins Salisbury was one, but Joseph said to him, "No! The Lord will give us a branch to keep off the dogs this night." 29

The "branch" that protected them was a severe spring storm of the intensity of a tornado. After the wind began to blow near sunset, some of the men entered their tents and fell asleep from exhaustion, while others could not sleep because of the disturbance of the storm. At first, the heavy wind struck the camp, disrupting some of the tents. This was followed by heavy rain, lightning, and thunder. Charles C. Rich recorded,

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28 History of Clay County and Platte County, Missouri, op. cit., p. 172; and R. S. Duncan, A History of the Baptists in Missouri, op. cit., p. 274.

29 "Murdock Journal;" "Hancock Journal."
"Our enemies calculated to attack us that night but were prevented by a thunder, lightning, and rain storm that exceeded in severity any storm I have ever witnessed." Reuben McBride said the storm "was terrible in the extreme." George A. Smith reported that the "thunder and lightning exceeded all description that I am capable of giving." Moses Martin said that the storm was "one of the most shocking storms ever known." He said it commenced about eight o'clock in the evening and continued until two o'clock in the morning. "During this time," Martin continued, "the whole canopy of the wide heavens was in one complete blaze, with terrifying claps of thunder."

Non-Mormon travelers also made reference to the severe storm. John Dunbar and Samuel Allis, Presbyterian missionaries visiting in Liberty, were impressed with the occurrence of the storm. They arrived in Liberty on June 15, and that week Dunbar recorded in his journal, "During our stop in Liberty, I heard more

30 Rich Journal." The storm also affected the mobs. Some Jackson County citizens crossed at Williams' ferry. Upon the return of the first scow load, a squall met the boat and some reportedly drowned. History of the Church II, p. 103.

31 Smith, "My Journal," p. 216. Reuben McBride said that those who slept in their tents woke up in the night with water "half way up our sides." "McBride Journal."

32 Moses Martin Journal," located in the Church Historical Department.
thunder and saw more lightning than I have witnessed in Massachusetts for whole years."33 Similarly, his missionary partner remarked on the storm a year later in a report to his supervisors:

There are frequent and heavy showers of rain, accompanied with thunder and lightning, it seems to me that I herd more thunder while here than I herd in Newyork [sic] in a whole year.34

Some Mormons expressed the view that the storm was an act of divine intervention. Although the severity of the storm forced some of the men to seek shelter away from their flooded tents and wet wagon boxes into the nearby Baptist meeting house, they felt the storm was a blessing. As Joseph entered the church, Wilford Woodruff reported that he exclaimed, "Boys, there is some meaning to this, God is in this storm."35 George A. Smith said,

33 Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, 1915-1918, XIV (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1918), p. 582.

34 Ibid., p. 692. Philo Dibble said he saw the cloud coming from the west. He reported, "I saw the cloud coming up in the west when I was ten miles from Fishing River in the middle of the afternoon. As it moved on eastwardly it increased in size and in blackness. When it got over the camp it stopped. . . ." Philo Dibble Narrative, Early Scenes in Church History, Eighth Book of Faith-Promoting Series (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor, 1882), p. 85. According to Prince Maximilian, the storm had spent some of its energy at Ft. Leavenworth on June 18 and 19. Early Western Travels, XXIV, p. 116.

35 History of The Church, II, p. 104, fn.
I have ever felt thankful to my Heavenly Father that He, by this storm and sudden rise of the streams, prevented our having a bloody conflict with our enemies, who were thereby prevented from attacking us.\textsuperscript{36}

Levi Hancock was so impressed with the occasion of the storm that he said it was a "greater miracle" than some Moses performed.\textsuperscript{37}

The benefit of the storm to the Mormons continued the next day. The streams on either side of the encampment had continued to rise during the night so that any outside force could not easily reach them. Charles C. Rich reported, "The Big Fishing River raised some forty feet and the Little Fishing River thirty feet during the night which made it impossible for the mob to get to us."\textsuperscript{38} Kimball reported that Joseph Smith and others went to the river the next day and saw that it was "overflowing its banks and we have seen the river since and proved that it was fully forty feet deep from the top of the banks to the bottom of the

\textsuperscript{36}Smith, "My Journal," p. 216.

\textsuperscript{37}"Hancock Journal."

\textsuperscript{38}"Rich Journal." Although thirty and forty feet were commonly stated in journals, some quoted lesser figures. Parley P. Pratt said the river raised from twenty to forty feet, Autobiography, p. 116. John Murdock said it raised "some 20 or 30 feet." "Murdock Journal." Philo Dibble said it reportedly raised ten feet higher than it had been known to raise before. \textit{Narrative}, p. 86.
river." Concerning the storm and the abundance of water, Joseph Holbrook wrote:

About sundown it began to rain like torrents with thundering and lightning and [it was] dark enough to prevent any one from being able to find their way. . . . To our great surprise we found that the two forks of Fishing River were swollen so as to be utterly impossible to pass, being, it was said, 40 feet deep on each side of us about one and one-half miles.

In this part of the county, these rivers generally flow in a southeasterly direction, and the Little Fishing River, which nearly parallels the larger stream for about two miles, enters Fishing River from the north. Between the two rivers rests a low flat valley which is approximately one and one-half miles wide at its greatest point. Two miles north of where these rivers converge, a number of elongated hills rise above the valley. Upon one of these hills (the one with the broadest summit and gentlest slopes and approximately one-half mile southwest of the

39Kimball, "Extracts," p. 803. Also see History of the Church, II, p. 105. The waters of the Little Fishing River near the Baptist Church flow through a narrow gorge. Kimball may have been referring to that bank. Also, John Murdock may have been speaking of this location when he said, "Fishing River, in its deep narrow pass, it is generally said, rose to the enormous height of thirty feet and they [the mob] could not cross.

Baptist meeting house) is the probable location of the Mormon army's encampment of June 19. 41

A visual and topographical analysis of the area below the hill reveals that the valley floor would have been flooded if the water in the rivers raised thirty feet. At the top of the banks of the Fishing River in the area between the two rivers, the elevation is 740 feet above mean sea level. The river bed is approximately five to ten feet below that elevation. According to the figures preserved in the journals, after rain waters filled the river channels, it rose at least another twenty feet. If the water rose that high it would have covered the entire valley floor and extended northward to the base of the hills below the Mormon encampment. (See the topographical contour lines in Figure 3 at the 760 feet level and the corresponding areas on the aerial photograph, Figure 4.) 42 If the

41 Parley R. Neeley, a land engineer and surveyor, recommended this hill to the writer as the probable one of the camp site, not only because it conforms to the distance and location descriptions in the journals of the members of Zion's Camp, but also because its topographical features could better accommodate the camping requirements for a body of men as large as Zion's Camp.

42 The topographic map is from the United States Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, Kearnoy and Excelsior Springs Quadrangles, 7.5 minute series. The contour lines have an interval of 20 feet.

The aerial photographs in this study are from the United States Department of Agriculture, flown 9-24-70. The scale is 1 inch to 1,667 feet, or approximately 3 inches to 1 mile.
Fig. 3. The Fishing River Area, Showing the Vicinity of the Encampment of Zion's Camp the Night of the Storm
Fig. 4. Aerial View of the Fishing River Area in the Vicinity of the Encampment Site of Zion's Camp on the Night of the Storm
flood water had raised another ten feet to a total of 40 feet above the floor of the stream bed, as some say it did, the lower portion of the hills would have been covered.

The hail, wind, and lightning imposed their fury upon the countryside. Some Camp members reported that the hail, however, did not fall upon the camp site. If it had fallen on that site, which was in a heavily forested area, it would "have killed many of us," wrote George A. Smith. The destructive hail fell "all around the camp but not in it," said John Murdock. Nearby the hail broke branches from trees, destroyed the farmers' grain and vegetables, and bent over fields of corn. Members of the camp reported that the hailstones they saw the following day were lumps of ice the size of "hen's eggs and larger," as "big as a tumbler," and weighed "half a pound."45


44 "Murdock Journal." Joseph Holbrook said, "While the hail flew in some degree upon the camp, but a mile to the north of our camping ground limbs were broken off of the trees, the ground covered with leaves and the herbage destroyed, which made the country desolate and prevented any harm from befalling our camp that night." "Holbrook Journal," p. 19.

The Fishing River Revelation

On June 20, the day after the storm, the army moved four miles northeast to the farm of a Mormon squatter named John Cooper. By this time Phelps, Corrill and others had joined them from Liberty. While members of the army camped near Cooper's house for the next three days, two other groups of visitors arrived.46 On June 21, three leading men from Ray County visited Joseph Smith and the others. Col. John Sconce, their spokesman, informed the Mormons that he had led an armed company toward the Mormon camp the previous evening, determined to fight them, but the storm had interfered. Col. Sconce said, "I see that there is an Almighty power that protects this people."47 Col. Sconce desired to know the intent of the Camp. The Mormon prophet, without revealing his identity, informed the visitors that the purpose of

46"Rich Journal" contains the statement, "We . . . camped at John Cooper's." See also Andrew Jenson (ed.) "Amasa M. Lyman," Historical Record (Salt Lake City: Jenson, 1889), p. 123. At the time the Mormons visited Cooper, he had not as yet purchased any land. However, he was soon to do so. On November 14, 1835, he purchased eighty acres. On June 8, 1836, he purchased three forty-acre lots. All of Cooper's tracts of land were in the vicinity of the June 20 camp site. (See Appendix G and Figure 5 for details.) It is probable that Cooper's later land purchases included land on which he was then dwelling, and negotiations to purchase it may have been underway.

Zion's Camp was "to assist our brethren, to bring clothing, etc., and to reinstate them upon their land." Sconce was impressed with all he learned. He departed, promising to assist the Mormon cause.\(^{48}\)

The next day, June 22, Sheriff Cornelius Gillium of Clay County, who had been ordered by Judge Ryland to contact the Mormon army, visited the Mormon camp to consult with their leaders. Understanding that Joseph Smith was with the Camp, Sheriff Gillium asked about him. At this point the Mormon prophet identified himself for the first time to a stranger to the Camp. Previously, so as to be protected against possible danger, the Mormon Prophet had only been known as "Squire Cook." Joseph informed Gillium of the purpose of the Camp, and the sheriff informed Joseph Smith of the many fears the western citizens had concerning the arriving Mormons. Gillium also informed the Mormons as to the manners and customs of the western people and the course the Camp might pursue to secure the "favor and protection" of the other settlers.\(^{49}\) Joseph Bates Noble reported the following about the interview:

We told them they well knew that our people had been driven from Jackson County and from their lands. . . . We had come to see the law

\(^{48}\) Reuben McBride said that some of the visitors "shed tears" when Joseph related the sufferings of the Mormons. "McBride Journal."

\(^{49}\) *History of the Church*, II, p. 108.
put in force against those who had broken it, and see our people reinstated on their land. They acknowledged it was right. . . . These then pledged themselves to use all their influence to bring about this thing, they told us the hole [sic] county were very much excited. They had heard that we were two thousand strong, well armed with several pieces of artillery that we intended to kill all both great and small.50

On this Sabbath day, June 22, the Mormon leaders made their decision not to move Zion's Camp into Jackson County. During the interview with Sheriff Gillium and others, Joseph and other Mormon leaders formulated the "Proposition of the Mormons," which the sheriff ordered published in the Upper Missouri Enquirer June 26. The "Proposition" repudiated the false rumors about the Camp "falling upon women and children and slaying them" and other misrepresentations. It also contained the Mormon-Jackson County land purchase proposal which Phelps and other elders presented to the Owens' committee on June 23.51 This decision to negotiate a compromise was a decision to postpone the forcible use of Zion's Camp. By now, Joseph must have been aware that if Governor Dunklin escorted them into Jackson County, the Latter-day Saints needed a larger body than they possessed to protect their people against mob attacks. The show of

50"Joseph Bates Noble Journal," p. 8, located in the Church Historical Department.

51Missouri Intelligencer, July 12, 1834. See Supra., p. 127.
force by the Jackson County citizens and their neighbors who rallied to their support must have caused the Mormon Prophet to reflect deeply upon the hazard in returning under guard to Jackson County. Joseph Smith endeavored to solve the problem without the risk of embroiling the area in a civil war. Moses Martin scribbled the following note in his diary for the day:

On this day the sheriff with heads of the county came to our camp and pledged their word and [h]onor that if we would not march into jackson that the law should be put into force and gustus be don. Thus made the heads of Clay Co[unty] and Ray [County] and the governor on [w]hose considerations we concluded to tary a while and see.52

Later that Sunday afternoon while camped at John Cooper's, the Prophet Joseph Smith communicated the Fishing River Revelation. See Figure 5. The exposition contained the following points:

1. The church has "not learned to be obedient."

2. Zion can only be built "by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom."

52"Martin Journal." Corrill, who was present at this time, wrote, "Meanwhile the Mormons in Clay County made preparations to join them [Zion's camp], when they should get there, and they generally thought that the Governor, on a petition to that effect, would reinstate those that had been driven out from their lands (for they had not sold them), and then their brethren that came up in the camp would enable them to keep possession of their lands. But after arriving in Clay County a council was held, in which it was concluded to give up the expedition at that time." A Brief History, p. 21.
Fig. 5. Aerial View of the Vicinity of the Encampment Site of Zion's Camp Above the Fishing River After the Storm
3. "Mine elders shall wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion."

4. "Be prepared" and "be taught more perfectly."

5. "I do not require at their hands to fight the battles of Zion."

6. Zion's Camp experience was for a "trial of their faith."

7. The Saints in Clay County were to "talk not of judgments neither boast of faith nor of mighty works."

8. The Saints are to eventually purchase all available lands in Jackson County "and in the adjoining counties round about."

9. They will eventually have a "very great" army and have "power after many days."

10. "The first elders of my church should receive their endowment from on high."

After Joseph received the revelation, he informed the men that it would not be necessary to fight in Missouri. God had accepted their offering "like unto

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53D. & C. 105:3, 5, 9, 10, 14, 16, 19, 24, 28, 33, 37. The History of the Reorganized Church states, "while in this camp, which was on the land belonging to a member of the church by the name of John Cooper, the revelation known as the Fishing River revelation was given." I, p. 475.
Abraham," wrote Nathan Tanner, "that we war [sic] not required [sic] to go any further." 54

Joseph's announcement that the camp members would not fight in Jackson County angered some of the men. William F. Cahoon reported concerning this problem,

The Word of the Lord came to the Prophet Joseph saying the time had not come to take the sword in hand to redeem Zion. Many in the camp murmured because we were not permitted at this time to restore our brethren and sisters to their homes and defend them there at all hazards. 55

Some of the men, to give vent to their disappointment, took their swords and attacked the paupau bushes and "moed [sic] them down like grass," said Nathan Tanner. Smith said that "several of the brethren apostatized because they were not going to have the privilege of

54Nathan Tanner, "Biographical History, 1831-1846," located in the Church Historical Department. Warren Parrish, who traveled in the Camp with his wife, Betsey, added to this, "God had accepted our sacrifice as he did that of Abraham, ours being equal to his when he offered up his Son." Parrish also stated that "we were sealed up unto eternal life in the name of Jesus Christ as a reward for our sufferings and obedience." Painesville Republican (Ohio), February 15, 1838. Reuben McBride also stated that they were sealed up to eternal life, but that it occurred in Ohio.

55"William F. Cahoon Journal," located in the Church Historical Department. Nathan Bennett Baldwin was pleased with this report. He wrote, "This intelligence was the most acceptable to me of anything I had ever heard before, the gospel being the exception. But some of the camp was not pleased with it; and I think apostatized over it." "Baldwin Journal."
fighting." Once more, because of their complaining spirits, Joseph Smith spoke of the scourge that would strike the men; he said some would die like sheep with the rot.  

THE CHOLERA EPIDEMIC

On Tuesday, June 24, the Camp left Cooper's and traveled northwestwardly in a "circuitous course" above the tributaries of Fishing River to avoid the high water. Approximately six miles from Liberty they met Captain Atchison who advised them not to enter Liberty because of the bad feelings of the people toward them, so they traveled southward east of Liberty. That night the Camp settled near the home of Algernon Sidney Gilbert in a field of George Burket on the "bottom of


58 There is disagreement as to the day they traveled from Cooper's to Rush Creek. History of the Church, II, p. 112, says June 23, but the journals of George A. Smith, Moses Martin, Charles C. Rich, and John Murdock affirm that it was June 24. Also, a letter written by church leaders at Rush Creek, dated June 25, states that they arrived yesterday from "their encampment beyond Fishing River." History of the Church, II, p. 114.
Rush Creek.\textsuperscript{59} This was located about two miles east of Liberty.

**The Cholera Attack**

On the evening of the 24th, Charles C. Rich, who was the officer of the guard, said that the brethren felt they would be attacked by their enemies that night. That attack did not transpire, but "some of the brethren on guard," said Rich, "were seized with the cholera and dropped as if they had been shot."\textsuperscript{60} Joseph Holbrook stated that the cholera prevented the expected attack from the citizens, for the people were so frightened that "they did not dare come near us."\textsuperscript{61} Kimball journalized:

This night the cholera came upon us, as we had been warned by the servant of God. About 12 o'clock at night we began to hear the cries of those who were seized with the cholera, and they fell before the destroyer. Even those on guard fell with their guns in their hands to the ground, and we had to exert ourselves considerably to attend to the sick, for they fell on every hand.\textsuperscript{62}

The following two days conditions continued to deteriorate. John Murdock said the symptoms of cholera

\textsuperscript{59}Kimball, "Extracts," p. 838. Burket said they came to his house to camp. George Burket, Jr. statement located in the Church Historical Department.

\textsuperscript{60}"Rich Journal."

\textsuperscript{61}"Holbrook Journal," p. 20.

\textsuperscript{62}Kimball, "Extracts," p. 838. Actually, cholera struck a few of the Mormons when they were camped near the Baptist meeting house and at John Cooper's.
"increased and raged" on Wednesday, but there were as yet no deaths. Some of the sick men were treated in both Burket's and Gilbert's homes. On Thursday afternoon, June 26, the sickness worsened the condition of some, and by early evening John S. Carter, Seth Hitchcock, and Erastus Rudd died. Heber C. Kimball continued his description of the developments.

I was left at the camp in company with three or four of my brethren in care of those who were sick. We staid with, and prayed for them, hoping they would recover, but all hope was lost, for about 6 o'clock p.m. John S. Carter expired, he being the first that died in the camp.

When the cholera first broke out in the camp brother John S. Carter was the first who went forward to rebuke it, but himself was immediately seized by it, and as before stated, was the first who was slain. In about 30 minutes after his death, Seth Hitchcock followed him; and it appeared as though we must sink under the destroyer with them.

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63 "Murdock Journal." Moses Martin's Journal entry for June 25 said the cholera victims "have not died as yet." The symptoms were vomiting, cramps, and diarrhea.


65 Kimball, "Extracts," p. 839. Heber C. Kimball is not specific concerning the dates of the events, but George A. Smith and Moses Martin are. Martin said, "On Thursday the 26th ... in the afternoon Erastus Rudd, John Carter, Seth Hitchcock, and Eber Wilcox were all called from time to eternity." "Martin Diary." The History of the Church, II, p. 115, places the deaths on June 25, but several journals of witnesses state it was June 26, 1834. See the Journals of Moses Martin, George A. Smith, and Charles C. Rich.
The burial of these deceased victims took place about dark that night. Kimball described that event:

We were not able to obtain boards to make them coffins, but were under the necessity of rolling them up in their blankets, and burying them in that manner. So we placed them on a sled, which was drawn by a horse about half a mile, where we buried them in a little bluff by the side of a small stream that emptied into Rush Creek. This we accomplished by dark, and returned.66

About seventy Latter-day Saints were stricken with the disease which continued most severely until about the first of July. Joseph Smith was one who was stricken. He tried to heal an afflicted fellow Church member, but the disease struck Joseph "like the talons of a hawk."67 The Prophet stated that if they had not withdrawn from giving the member the blessing, the disease would have taken his own life. Of the number afflicted, at least fourteen adults died of the disease. One of the sufferers who died was A. S. Gilbert. After Gilbert's death, word came to John Murdock on June 30 that his daughter, Phebe, who resided with the Gilberts, was also ill. Murdock journalized the following:

I immediately went and took care of her till July 6th, when the spirit left the body just at the break of day. She was 6 years, 3 months, and 29 days old. Two young brothers, viz, Reed Peck and Henry Rollins, assisted me

67 History of the Church, I, p. 114.
and we buried her by [a] little after sunrise in the morning. She was decently laid out and they dug a grave and we layed two split shakes in the bottom and one on each side. We layed in some straw and layed the corpse on it. They layed two stiks [sic] across and two shakes on them and that was her coffin and we covered it over. 68

Cholera was not an uncommon disease in either Missouri or the United States in the nineteenth century. In that century, cholera had four periods of epidemic infestations in Missouri. The first severe outbreak was underway when Zion's Camp arrived. The disease first attacked citizens in some Missouri river towns in 1832. In 1833, St. Charles and Palmyra suffered sixty and over one hundred deaths respectively. Although the disease was inactive during the winter months and was generally abating in Missouri by 1834, the warm weather fostered new outbreaks.

Missouri physicians differed as to its cause and treatment. The Missouri Intelligencer contained

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68"Murdock Journal." The History of the Reorganized Church, I, p. 481, lists thirteen others who died: John S. Carter, Eber Wilcox, Seth Hitchcock, Erastus Rudd, Algernon Sidney Gilbert, Alfred Frisk, Edward Ives, Noah Johnson, Jesse B. Lawson, Robert McCord, Eliel Strong, Jesse Smith, and Betsey Parrish. Wilford Woodruff said also Warren Ingles died. "Woodruff Journal." Some of the men took their wives with them on the Zion's Camp journey; Deseret News Weekly, October 19, 1864, itemized 205 men and stated that the wives of J. Chidester, Chandler Holbrook, Joseph Holbrook, and Oron Houghton accompanied their husbands on the tour. Also, Jacob Gates stated that he had his wife with him. "Jacob Gates Journal." Betsey Parrish was the wife of Warren Parrish, a Camp member.
a letter of Dr. Lewis F. Linn in 1833 discussing the
disease. He believed anger, fear, unripe fruit and
vegetables, and night air contributed to its develop-
ment and progress while bleedings, calomel, and
warming fires aided its recovery.69 Dr. John
Sappington, who had a high rate of success with his
patients who were suffering from the disease, condemned
bleeding, vomiting, and cold drinks as recovery methods
and favored hot toddies and warming treatments.70
Heber C. Kimball said the elders gained relief by
stripping off their clothes and plunging into the cold
water of the streams or by pouring the cold water over
themselves.71

At the time the disease was flourishing among
the elders, Joseph (on June 26) dispersed the members
of the Camp among the Saints. Several days later, at a
gathering of the members of the Camp at Lyman Wight's
quarters on the property of Col. Michael Arthur, south
of Liberty, Joseph authorized Lyman Wight to issue

69Missouri Intelligencer, June 29, 1833.

70James T. Barrett, "Cholera In Missouri,"
Missouri Historical Review, LV (October, 1960), p. 344.

71Kimball, "Extracts," p. 840. In 1883
Dr. Robert Koch identified the bacterium that caused
the disease. This microbe could grow only in heavily
polluted water or the intestines of man. The disease
could be eliminated with proper sanitation. Before
this discovery many believed that cholera was God's
infliction for "past sins," said James T. Barrett,
discharge certificates to all faithful members of Zion's Camp. Wilford Woodruff's certificate read as follows:

This certifies that Wilford Woodruff has faithfully discharged every duty required of him in the camp of the Saints in journeying [sic] from Kirtland to this place. Has been very faithful in the discharge of his duty since his arrival here both Spiritual and Temporal. Is strong in the faith of the Latter Day Saints and worthy of his calling. He is recommended by the church in this place to any branch where providence may call him. Lyman Wight72

The same day he discharged the camp members, Joseph Smith organized a council of high priests to assist Bishop Partridge in governing the members of the church in Missouri.

The Cholera Victims Burial Site

Early in June, 1958, Boyd W. Parks, a cattle rancher in Eastern Clay County, found a human skeleton moved about by his feeder cattle. Mr. Parks tossed the skull into a feed rack for safekeeping. Later, he notified Sheriff Curtis F. Hay of Clay County, who sent two deputies to dig for other bones. On June 17, 1958, the deputies, while digging into the bank near the corral where the feeder cattle had been, uncovered two

72"Woodruff Journal." The date on Woodruff's certificate was January 13, 1835, which was just prior to his departure from Clay County.
more skulls and other bones. 73 This excavation was located on the bank of a small stream flowing west which empties into nearby Rush Creek. It is located immediately behind Mr. Parks' house and farm buildings. Speculation as to the origin of the skeletons ranged from their being those of Indian chiefs (because of their good teeth) to Negroes or murder victims. J. Mett Shippee, a field archaeologist for the University of Missouri at Columbia, was present and suggested sending the bones for testing to the University of Missouri.

On June 16, 1968, F. G. Spiers, a member of the Archaeology Department of the University of Missouri at Columbia, reported his findings to Sheriff Hay. Spiers disclosed that there were two complete skeletons and a skull of a third, that the three persons had been dead over one hundred years, and that one of the skeletons was that of a female. The Kansas City Times briefly reviewed the report:

73Kansas City Times, June 17, 1958. Boyd W. Parks' land consisted of 111 acres since 1943 in S E 1/4 of Sec. 9, Township 51, Range 31. The east half of this land was patented to Littlebury Estes in 1821. He conveyed it to Peter Estes, who immediately secured a patent to the west half of the quarter section. Peter Estes owned this land when Zion's Camp encamped there in 1834. Algernon Sydney Gilbert's probate court record, Clay County, July 14, 1838, contains no land titles, as possibly he and George Burket rented from Estes.
The largest of the skeletons analyzed—designated by the report as No. 1—had a bad tooth at the time of his death. He probably was about 55 years old. And he was left handed. He was a Caucasian, but some of his ancestors may have been Indians.

No. 1 was also stooped and bowlegged. He may have suffered rickets in childhood, or simply worked hard all his life.

No. 2 was a woman, probably between 25 and 35, the report states. She also was Caucasian. A sentence in the report hints a note of sadness in her life: "The individual has a long middle and lower face and would have been called horse-faced by uncharitable contemporaries." 74

Since the searchers found no burial markers, Mr. Shippee speculated that the remains were probably those of a pioneer family, possibly of a poor family that had been hired hands. 75

In the fall of 1962, while pursuing research concerning incidents associated with Mormon history in Clay County, Vivian W. Graybill, a minister for the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at Richmond, Missouri, learned of the skeletons and sufficient other related information to believe that the newly found bones were those of three of the cholera victims.

In January, 1971, the Times made the news public. The article headline read: "Clay County

74 Kansas City Times, January 17, 1959. For Spiers' full report, see Appendix E.

75 Ibid.
Skeletons were of the Mormon army." The article continued:

A pathologist's report stated the remains (partial skeletons of two persons and the skull of another) were of two men and one woman, dead more than 100 years. . . . Shippee said the bones appeared authentic. "The bones are all good and one of them being a woman it looks pretty authentic." Shippee said, "It's quite likely those were the people (i.e. the skeletons were of the cholera victims) because everything balances out."76

Later in 1971, Graybill wrote to Bishop Walter Johnson at the Reorganized Church Auditorium:

The Kansas City Archaeological Organization have exhausted every source of research and can come up with no other claims, and are strong in their belief that these are definitely the cholera burials.77

To identify the bank of the feed yard on Mr. Parks' land as the location of the cholera victims' grave requires reviewing the journals of the members of Zion's Camp. Rush Creek flows southward seventy-five yards west of Boyd Parks' house, while the little stream flows west entering into Rush Creek about one hundred yards south of Parks' house. This area is about two miles southeast of the courthouse square in Liberty. (See Figure 6.) George A. Smith reported the camp site of Zion's Camp east of Liberty as being

76Ibid., January 11, 1971.

77Vivian W. Graybill to Bishop Walter Johnson, June 8, 1971, copy in the possession of the writer.
Fig. 6. Aerial View of the Vicinity of the Encampment Site of Zion's Camp and the Cholera Burial Ground Near Rush Creek
"on Rush Creek about 2 1/2 miles from Liberty in a field occupied by Brother Burket." At the time of the cholera epidemic, George A. Smith was living with A. S. Gilbert, whose house was located near Rush Creek not far from George Burket's house. Historian Smith recorded his impressions of the location of the first deaths. He said,

Thursday, June 26. This morning Brother Erastus Rudd came into the yard of A. S. Gilbert's and said he was very thirsty; went to a cold spring of limestone water and drank plentifully; he fell down in the yard in all the spasm of Asiatic cholera. We carried him into the house and began to work upon him, administering warm medicines, rubbing him and doing everything in our power for five hours, when he seemed easier. A message came from Brother Burket's that Elder John S. Carter was dead. I was dispatched about half a mile to procure his measure. I cut a hazel stick seven feet long and went to the room and found that Brother Seth Hitchcock was also dead; they appeared as if they had been dead a week. I got their measures and returned as fast as I could to Brother Gilbert's and found Elder Rudd also dead.

The burials followed that evening. George A. Smith mentioned that he, with others, buried Erastus Rudd, who died at Gilbert's house near the limestone spring, and he mentioned nothing about transporting Rudd away. According to Heber C. Kimball, after Carter and Hitchcock died at Burket's, he and others removed them

78Smith, "My Journal," p. 217. Wilford Woodruff said the distance to Liberty was "about two miles," Wilford Woodruff Journal.

about one-half mile (from Burket's house) to where they "buried them in a little bluff, by the side of a small stream that emptied into Rush Creek."\textsuperscript{80} Apparently Kimball and others moved Carter and Hitchcock from Burket's one-half mile away to the bank of the small stream that empties into Rush Creek (near the residence of A. S. Gilbert). (See Figure 9 for a view of the burial site.) Kimball verifies this location by stating that, after burying Carter, Hitchcock, and Eber Wilcox, he was stricken by cholera and went to the woods behind Brother Gilbert's to pray.\textsuperscript{81}

Little is recorded about the death and burial of Betsey Parrish. Smith says that she was stricken while camped on Rush Creek, but nothing is stated about where she was buried. Since a female's bones were found on the bank of the little tributary to Rush Creek, some believed they belonged to Betsey Parrish, wife of Warren Parrish. Since Carter first became afflicted as a result of attempting to bless Betsey,

\textsuperscript{80}Kimball, "Extracts," p. 839. Wilford Woodruff indicated that Carter and others were placed in Mr. Burket's house to assist them in their recovery. Matthias F. Cowley (ed.), Wilford Woodruff (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), pp. 42-43.

\textsuperscript{81}Kimball, "Extracts," p. 839. Boyd Parks showed the writer in 1973 the site of the skeleton discovery and Allen J. Fletcher pointed out the location of the probable limestone spring, both of which were near Parks' farm buildings. See Figure 9 for a view of the bank where the skeletons were uncovered. Parley R. Neeley is seen with Boyd W. Parks.
she probably was staying with the Camp at Burkett's and was removed like the others to the bank of Rush Creek's little tributary and buried near them. 82

On March 25, 1976, the bones of three of the cholera victims were reinterred in a cemetery in Independence, Missouri. Vivian Graybill arranged and directed the reburial service at the Mound Grove Cemetery. Several dignitaries of the Reorganized Church were present and participated. Wayne J. Lewis of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints dedicated the grave. 83

REVIEW AND SUMMARY

Although the factors that persuaded the Mormon prophet to disband Zion's Camp without fulfilling its objective are not fully recorded, available sources indicate that a major reason was to avoid bloodshed.

82 Smith, "My Journal," p. 217. Kimball says that they buried five victims at the time they buried Carter, Hitchcock, and Wilcox. Possibly, the other two were Erastus Rudd and Betsey Parrish.

83 Vivian Graybill invited the writer to participate at the services and represent the Historical Department of the Church (according to an earlier appointment to the writer by Historian Leonard J. Arrington of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), but it was not possible for him to be present. Therefore, the writer asked Wayne J. Lewis, of Kearney, Missouri, to represent him. In turn Wayne Lewis was asked to dedicate the grave. Later, a memorial may be placed in the cemetery in commemoration of Zion's Camp.
Whether the decision was that of the governor or the Mormons or both is not clear. At the commencement of correspondence between the Mormons and state officers, the Mormons understood that the government officials would assist them on their return to their former homes. "An adequate force will be sent forthwith to effect that objective," wrote Attorney General Wells on November 21, 1833. 84 Then, on December 6, the Mormons petitioned Governor Dunklin for the "armed force." 85 At the time of this request, John Corrill wrote to Oliver Cowdery in Kirtland.

The Governor has manifested a willingness to restore us back, and will if we request it; but this will be of little use unless he would leave a force there to help protect us. 86 Since the governor was unwilling to do so, the Mormons in Kirtland organized Zion's Camp to help provide that much-needed protection. The governor's long-awaited letter of February 4, 1834, informed the Church leaders in Clay County that the chief executive would guard the Mormons back to Jackson County. 87 The Mormons in Clay County informed Governor Dunklin on

84 *Times and Seasons*, VI (June 1, 1845), p. 912.

85 Ibid., p. 915.

86 *Star*, January, 1834, p. 6. For details on these developments, see Chapter IV.

87 *Times and Seasons*, VI (January 1, 1846), p. 1076.
April 24 that the strength of Zion's Camp was made necessary because the "executive of this state cannot keep up a military force 'to protect our people in that country."\textsuperscript{88}

The Mormons in Kirtland possessed considerable optimism in the strength of their own army and in the governor's assurance of an escorted return to Jackson County. In a broadsheet printed in Kirtland, May 10, 1834, and circulated among the eastern branches of the Church, Sidney Rigdon and Oliver Cowdery reported to the Saints:

The Governor is bound to call out the militia and take them [the Jackson County Saints] back, and has informed our brethren of his readiness so to do, previous to this time. When orders arrive from the Governor to the military command- ing officers in that vicinity to guard our brethren back, then it is expected that all will march over, the former residents as well as those now on the way.\textsuperscript{89}

By June, the Clay County Saints continued to expect Governor Dunklin to provide a militia to escort them back to their Jackson County lands. On June 5, as Zion's Camp approached Clay County, Gilbert, Phelps, and Partridge asked Dunklin to prepare to authorize a "military guard" to escort the Saints back to their

\textsuperscript{88}Ibid., p. 1072.

\textsuperscript{89}This rare document, which is in the Church Historical Department, is cited by Peter Crawley and Richard L. Anderson, "The Political and Social Realities of Zion's Camp," \textit{BYU Studies}, XIV (Summer 1974), pp. 413-414.
lands. "We do not know the precise day," they wrote, but the Mormons desired to possess the military order which they could implement at their discretion.\textsuperscript{90} No action on this request is recorded, but a day later Governor Dunklin informed John Thornton that the Mormons possessed an "indisputable right" to return to Jackson County and if they insisted upon that right, "my course," said Dunklin, "as the chief executive officer of the state is a plain one," possibly suggesting his obligation to his former promise to escort the Mormons to their land.\textsuperscript{91} By this time, though, the Governor was fearful that there would be a war between the two factions and this, Dunklin incorrectly believed, might include the use of artillery by both groups. Fearing that the Mormons might "march to Jackson County in arms" without governmental supervision, the governor informed Thornton that the Mormons could not return unless by order or permission of the Commander-in-Chief [for] men must not 'levy war' in taking possession of their rights, any more than others should in opposing them in taking possession.\textsuperscript{92}

When Hyde and Pratt visited Dunklin in Jefferson City, Pratt construed the Governor's appeal to solve the domestic conflict in western Missouri by

\textsuperscript{90}\textit{Times and Seasons}, VI (January 1, 1846), p. 1076.

\textsuperscript{91}Ibid., p. 1077.

\textsuperscript{92}Ibid.
non-militant measures as a retreat from his former promise. No other Mormon, at the time, however, accused the governor of dishonoring his earlier pledge; for example, Newel Knight wrote, "Governor Dunklin was a gentleman and seemed disposed to do what was right. If Dunklin informed Pratt and Hyde that he would not escort the Saints back to their farms, later developments suggest that the governor's position was not thought by some Mormons to be absolute and final.

Little is known about the details of the discussions the Mormon leaders had with Col. Sconce on June 21 and Sheriff Gillium on July 22. "Negotiations at the camp are now going on," wrote Phelps and others to the Jackson County committee on June 21. At those interviews, Joseph learned much concerning the intensity of the feelings of the Jackson County people. He must have learned that a show of force at that time would have embroiled western Missouri in considerable warfare. In the "Proposition" formulated at that time, the Mormon leaders stated that they had not come

\[93\] Knight, Scraps of Biography, p. 85. John Corrill never complained that the governor broke his pledge. Corrill, A Brief History, p. 21. John Whitmer seems to place the authority of their failure to go into Jackson County upon the Fishing River Revelation. John Whitmer's History, p. 17.

\[94\] Times and Seasons, VI (January 15, 1846), p. 1092.
west to make war. "For to take possession by conquest or the shedding of blood," wrote Joseph and others in the "Proposition," is "entirely foreign to our feelings." Nevertheless, in this public declaration the Mormon leaders still retained plans of an escorted return "by order of the Executive of the State, if possible," if attempts at arbitration and compromise proved unproductive.96

On June 22 (the same day the Mormons reported their non-violent intentions), the Fishing River Revelation informed Church leaders that Zion's Camp would not redeem Zion at that time. "Therefore, in consequence of the transgressions of my people," it announced, "it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion."97 The revelation seemed to hold the Saints, not the governor, responsible for the failure to redeem Zion. On June 26, Joseph dispersed the decimated Zion's Camp and soon discharged its members. On the day Joseph dispersed the Camp, Gilbert, Phelps, and Corrill informed the governor, "We think it wisdom to

95 Missouri Intelligencer, July 12, 1834. Mormon leaders expressed the same sentiments to the governor in a letter on June 26. See History of the Church, II, pp. 117, 122.
96 Ibid.
defer petitioning for a guard, while there exists a hope of a compromise."

Clearly, the elders in Clay County, invoked the governor for a guard, feeling that an escorted return to Jackson County still seemed allowable. In a letter to Governor Dunklin on August 1, 1834, W. W. Phelps gave his opinion why the Mormon army had not entered Jackson County. He wrote:

It has been some time since we addressed you, and one great reason is the high excitement, in the upper country, against our people. We had calculated to have returned to our own lands and property in Jackson County, in season to harvest our many wheat fields there, but the rage and strength of the mob of Jackson County and the fuss and excitement of many in the adjoining counties have caused a different issue. When our emigrating [sic] brethren arrived from the east, the prospect of blood shed or civil war, was so apparent in Jackson County, that our people resolved to cease from the idea for a while, of returning to their land and possessions, notwithstanding your Excellency was ready, (agreeably [sic] to your communication to us) to guard us into Jackson, whenever we said we were prepared to go."

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98 Times and Seasons, VI (February 1, 1846), p. 1107. This letter to Governor Dunklin, dated June 26, 1834, was the last official act performed by Gilbert prior to his death by cholera. It included: "Our right to our soil in Jackson County we shall forever claim, but to obtain peaceful possession we are willing to make great sacrifices. To allay excitement to await the final end of all negotiations that can be made with the said county of Jackson."

99 W. W. Phelps to Daniel Dunklin, Letter of August 1, 1834. A manuscript copy of this letter is in the Historical Department of the Church. The back sheet contains the penciled note, "This letter is not used in Church History. A[ndrew] J[enson]." See Appendix F for the complete letter.
Two weeks later, Dunklin wrote his friend J. H. Haden. In this letter he seemed to acknowledge his own resolve to do whatever duty demanded for the Mormons—if the Mormons pressed it. The governor believed that at least for the present the problem had quieted down. He wrote Haden,

"Upon the subject of the poor deluded Mormons & the infuriated Jacksonites, it is unnecessary now to say anything, & I hope it will continue so. There can be no difficulty in ascertaining the correct course for me if I am compelled to act. I have no regard for the Mormons, as a separate people; & I have an utter contempt for them as a religious sect; while upon the other hand I have much regard for the people of Jackson County, both personally and politically; they are, many of them, my personal friends and nearly all of them are very staunch Democrats: but these are all secondary considerations when my duties are brought in question."

Meanwhile on July 1, Joseph Smith quietly crossed the river to Jackson County for a short visit, but the Mormons chose not to return to the county at that time in order to avoid an inevitable civil conflict.

Although Governor Dunklin’s correspondence, the content of the Fishing River Revelation, and statements by the Mormon residents in Clay County did not credit Governor Dunklin as being responsible for the Mormons not returning to Jackson County, Pratt (and, perhaps,

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Hyde) firmly held that the governor was accountable for the failure of Zion's Camp to perform its expected task.

Zion's Camp failed in its principle military objective. But the rich heritage-building experiences rather than the military achievement of Zion's Camp must be regarded in determining if it were a successful experience. The misfortune must be weighed against its impact upon later developments in Mormonism. The failure can be attributed to deficiencies of some of the members, the deteriorated faith of others, as well as by its aborted military objective.
CHAPTER VI

THE SURVIVAL AND GROWTH OF THE MORMONS IN CLAY COUNTY

Life in Clay County was difficult for the Mormons, particularly the first winter. But through hard work, frugality, and perseverance, the Saints profited from their labor. They soon acquired houses, farms, and a reputation for industry. At first when their supplies were low, hunger induced some of them to return to their farms in Jackson County to gather supplies from their stores. Others drew from benevolent Clay County merchants, or borrowed from those who had something to share. Joseph Knight, Jr., who operated the mill for the Mormons in Jackson County, continued milling there until December and delivered a quantity of flour to the needy Saints across the river.

The winter was cold and disagreeable particularly for those who were not properly sheltered. Even Bishop Partridge, who had moved into his permanent Clay County residence in its dilapidated condition, suffered from the inclement weather. His daughter Emily described their living quarters:

The Saints found homes as best they could, searching out and making habitable all the old shanties and hovels that could be found,
endeavoring to keep as near together as possible. Father and Elder John Corrill procured an old log cabin that had been used for a stable and cleaned it up as best they could and moved their families in. There was one large room, and a leanto, but that was not of much use, as the floor was nearly all torn up, and the rats and rattlesnakes were too thick for comfort. There was a large fireplace in the one habitable room, and blankets were hung up a few feet back from the fire and the two families, fifteen or sixteen in number, were gathered inside of those blankets to keep from freezing, for the weather was extremely cold, so cold that the ink would freeze in the pen as father sat writing close to the fire.1

The difficult winter passed and some of the Saints moved into improved accommodations. Some constructed their own log houses, others improved the facility in which they spent the winter by cleaning the rooms, repairing the chimney, or placing glass in the windows which was absent in most country homes.2 Still others rented houses on farms or moved into the village of Liberty. Joseph Thorp said, "Their condition was truly distressing, and most of the citizens of Clay County sympathized with them and gave them all the accommodations they could."3

3Thorp, Early Days in the West, p. 76.
EMPLOYMENT OF THE SAINTS

Most of the Mormons in Clay County supported themselves by the use of day labor as the poorer ones had done in Jackson County. "Thus, like men of servitude," wrote Lyman Wight, "we went to work to obtain a scanty living among the inhabitants of Clay County." Parley P. Pratt, after his dismissal from Zion's Camp wrote similarly, "Having no means of support except by the labor of my hands, I now commenced again to exert myself at hard labor." In Clay County there was an abundance of work in the form of day labor for fifty cents a day. Cutting wood for fires, quarrying stone for buildings, slaughtering hogs for market, constructing homes for landowners, and working in the fields and mills of the more prosperous occupied the time of many of the Mormon laborers. The women also worked for wages by spinning, laundering, and performing other domestic services for the people.

John Whitmer's briefly written "Day Book" discloses his activities immediately following his removal from Jackson County. After renting a house for two dollars a month from Michael Arthur on November 16, 1833, he immediately went to work to care for his

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4History of the Church, III, p. 440.
5Pratt, Autobiography, p. 117.
family's needs. In addition to other activities, he recorded his work schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity Details</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>Worked four and a half days on a job with Porley &amp; Johnson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Worked for Arthur at Post for stillhouse</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Raised a stillhouse for Mr. Arthur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Pulled corn for Allen and Walker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5</td>
<td>Worked on a job for Porley &amp; Co.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Butchered for Arthur</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Pulled corn for Mr. Stevens</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>At home &amp; made 3 ax halves [handles]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Cut 2 1/2 chord of wood for Mr. Chancey</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2</td>
<td>At home sold an ax handle to J. Walker</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Butchered for Michael Arthur</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Chop[p]ed chordwood for Mr. Chancey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Chop[p]ed chordwood for Mr. Allen</td>
<td>.78 1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 13</td>
<td>Bought 2 bushes of corn of Linsey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Worked for Jabez Durfee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>Shot ducks at the Lake at S. Allens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Made garden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>Bought a cow⁶</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁶John Whitmer, "Day and Account Book," located in the Church Historical Department.
During the one and one-half years that John Whitmer kept his brief labor notations, he chopped prodigious quantities of cordwood for Shubael Allen, James Lewis, and a Mr. Chancey, and lesser amounts for William Wood and others, some of whom were Mormons.

Other Mormons acquired employment from Col. Michael Arthur, who in 1834 constructed a grist mill and a large house southwest of Liberty. Arthur hired the Mormons to work "in and about" the mill said Joseph Holbrook, and he contracted Lyman Wight to make 100,000 bricks and to construct the house during the summer of 1834. Several other men labored with Wight, including Wilford Woodruff, Milton Holmes, Heman Hyde, and Stephen and Benjamin Winchester. At the time Wight formed the bricks and constructed the house, Wilford Woodruff resided with him in a nearby log cabin. Some of the members of Zion's Camp visited Wight on Arthur's property and camped there until they dispersed among the people or returned to their homes in the East. Joseph Holbrook said that the members of Zion's Camp who remained in Clay County had difficulty locating living quarters because the Latter-day Saints "occupied all the houses in the county." So Holbrook moved into a corn crib and his brother moved into a stable.

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If life became too strained for the young Mormons between the ages of twenty and thirty-five, the army provided another means of livelihood. In 1834, Lt. James W. Shaumburch operated an induction center in Liberty for enlistments into the U.S. dragoons at Fort Leavenworth. "All necessary expenses, such as clothing, food, horses, forage, and medical attendance will be furnished by the Government," stated the advertisement. The salary of a private was $8.00 a month and that of a first sergeant was $15.00 a month.8 No known Mormon diary identified any Latter-day Saint who yielded to the attraction, but Mormons did seek employment at or near the cantonment during the 1830's.

Furthermore, the bill for the subsistence of nearby Fort Leavenworth was a substantial economic benefit to Clay County and a labor resource for the Mormons in the county. In 1833 the fort's Quartermaster ordered 270 barrels of pork; 560 barrels of superfine flour; 245 bushels of new white field beans; 14,000 bushels of corn; 3,960 pounds of soap; 1,800 pounds of hard tallow candles, and many other supplies to be filled by local producers.9 Either to help supply military or other markets, the Mormons labored

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8Upper Missouri Enquirer, January 11, 1834.
industriously. Concerning this, Emily Partridge wrote:

I think it was the first fall of our stay in Clay Co. that a slaughter yard was established on the banks of the river not far from where we lived; thousands of hogs were killed and packed for the market, giving employment to the Saints in that vicinity. The men killing and cutting them up, and the women and children cutting up and trying out the lard, having a share of all they did, and in this way the people were provided with meat and lard, which was a great blessing at that time. I remember of going with mother, and doing what I could to help her, day after day.10

A number of the Mormons with other skills provided for themselves through their craft. Robert Rathbun operated a blacksmith shop in Liberty; a young man, Edward Stevenson, provided for his widowed mother, and learned the tinner's trade there. Chapman Duncan worked at the hatting business in the village in 1834.11 Joseph Knight built a grist mill southwest of Liberty for the Mormons.12

The most frequently mentioned craft in Mormon reminiscences is that of school teaching. After Zion's

12"Joseph Knight's Incidents of History from 1827 to 1844," located in the Church Historical Department.
Camp arrived in the county, Chapman Duncan left the hatting business and established a school east of the ford on the Fishing River. John Whitmer taught school in Liberty village from March 18 to June 16, 1834. The only thing he recorded for the eventful June 16 (the date of the Liberty meeting) was "last day of school."  

In October, Whitmer moved from his home on one of Col. Arthur's farms to reside with his brother Peter in Liberty, possibly to serve himself better there as a teacher. On November 17, he said he attempted "to get up a school," but he was unsuccessful in his effort, so he spent much of the winter cutting cordwood.  

According to Thorp, the education of the Mormon men was inferior to that of the women. He spoke well of the women, describing them as "generally well educated and as a rule were quite intelligent." But he believed the Mormon men were less intelligent and poorly educated because they were removed from school too soon to work on the farm when they were children.  

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13 "Day Book," June 16, 1834.

14 Ibid., November 17, 1834.

15 Thorp, Early Days in the West, pp. 76-77. A note in the Church Historical Department contains the following interview between Alexander W. Doniphan and Elder John Morgan concerning the character of the Mormon leaders in Clay County. It is reported to have occurred in 1884. Doniphan said, "Mr. Morgan, the experiences of my life have brought me in contact with the leading men of our nation. I have come in contact with leaders in Congress in both the House and the
Some Mormon women also were hired as school teachers. "I commenced teaching a few children in spelling, reading, and writing," said Mary Lightner.

I did not understand much about grammar. I had commenced its study with Sabrina Phelps, Oliver Cowdery, John Whitmer, and two or three others, in Jackson County, until stopped by the mob, but I was well versed in geography. In addition to teaching in their own neighborhoods, some Mormon teachers found employment in distant areas from their homes. Seventeen-year-old Eliza Partridge traveled about thirty miles away to teach the Gentile children.

It was no uncommon thing in those times for our Mormon girls to go out among the Missourians and teach their children for a small remuneration. I received but thirteen dollars and my board for the three months that I was gone.

Although wages in Clay County at this time were generally low, the cost of living was correspondingly low. Peter Burnett returned to Clay County in 1832 and

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Senate, with the cabinets of several presidents, together with military men, ministers and business men, but I have never met a group of men who had native intelligence and understanding and force of character that have ever quite equalled the group of men--leaders gathered about Joseph Smith and constituted the leadership of the Mormon Church."

16 "Mary E. Lightner's Life History," op. cit., p. 197.

17 "Journal of Eliza Partridge Lyman." Eliza felt saddened over her low wages because an established teacher at this time received $35.00 a month. Liberty Tribune, April 6, 1972.
commented on the slight cost of maintaining his young family. He wrote:

I at once removed with my family to Liberty, rented a log-house for twenty-five dollars a year, and set to work manfully. Expenses were then light in Liberty. Pork was one dollar and fifty cents per hundred pounds, wood one dollar a cord, flour very cheap, corn meal twenty-five cents a bushel, potatoes twenty cents per bushel, chickens seventy-five cents per dozen, and eggs fifteen cents a dozen.\textsuperscript{18}

When Phelps wrote from Liberty in October, 1834, he said that corn was twenty cents a bushel, wheat was forty cents and a laborer could receive half of the wheat he cut and thrashed.\textsuperscript{19} On December 2, 1833, Whitmer bought pork at $2.50 per hundred weight and on November 3, 1834, purchased 75 pounds of flour for $1.75.\textsuperscript{20}

The poverty of the Mormons, however, forced them to economize and survive with strict frugality. By 1834 western land owners on the Missouri frontier generally possessed a plentitude of food products from their own labors and from the forest. Abundance and low prices often gave rise to wastefulness among the established residents.\textsuperscript{21} But the Mormons developed a

\textsuperscript{18}Burnett, Recollections, p. 49.

\textsuperscript{19}Messenger and Advocate, I, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{20}Whitmer, "Day Book."

\textsuperscript{21}Liberty Tribune, February 23, 1883.
reputation for retrenchment and thrift. Concerning this, Joseph Thorp said:

The Mormons, in the main, were industrious, good workers, and gave general satisfaction to their employers, and could live on less than any people I ever knew. Their women could fix up a good palatable meal out of that which a Gentile's wife woul'd not know how to commence to get half a din'- or breakfast. They had the knack of economizing in the larder, which was a great help to the men, as they had mostly to earn their bread and butter by day's work.22

Emily Partridge reflected upon the poverty of the Mormons from a child's perspective, as follows:

Some of the old citizens of Clay Co. sent their children to our school and of course were better dressed than the Mormons children which caused them to sometimes sneer and make fun of our shabby clothes, but generally we got along very well. The Saints were very poor, and I sometimes wonder how they provided for their families the necessaries of life.23

MORMON LAND PURCHASES

Survival economics did not satisfy the Latter-day Saints of Clay County. If they were unable to return to Jackson County, the Saints could at least select a suitable area as a temporary gathering place, until the Lord could "gather up the strength" of the Church, their revelations informed them, and return

22Thorp, Early Days in the West, p. 76.
them to the Promised Land. 24 On December 15, 1833, Phelps wrote to the leaders in Kirtland concerning the prospects of purchasing land in Clay County. Said Phelps, "Shall we lease, buy, or otherwise obtain land where we are, to till that we may raise enough to eat?" 25 The Mormon Prophet anticipated the question and on December 5 wrote Partridge, "If you can purchase a tract of land, in Clay County, for present emergencies, it is right you should do so." 26 Moreover, the revelation Joseph Smith recorded at Fishing River informed the members of the Church to purchase land "in the adjoining counties" around Jackson County. 27

The Latter-day Saints soon discovered that the agricultural benefits of western Missouri were not confined to Jackson County. They observed that Clay County, too, was greatly endowed with a deep, rich soil which produced crops in abundance. Moses Martin journalized concerning the quality of the soil and the flourishing crops as he approached Clay County with Zion's Camp. "This was the most fertile of any place that I had yet seen," he wrote. "The soil was about

24 D. & C. 105:27.
26 Times and Seasons, VI (June 1, 1845), p. 915.
six feet deep and very black." 28 Phelps noted that the soil in Ray and Clay counties was similar in quality and very close, if not equal to, that of Jackson County. 29 If Clay County were not the Promised Land, word spread among the Mormons that it was a place very close to Eden both in its location and in its agricultural promise.

As spring 1834 appeared, the Saints searched for places they could raise crops for their supplies for another year. Upon finding a satisfactory site, some grouped together to rent land, from which they cleared the forest, built homes, and planted their crops. John Brush, who had arrived from Van Buren County, and others rented land in the southeastern part of the county near Williams' Landing. 30 Similarly, members of the Colesville Branch rented land in the southwestern part of the county, two miles from the river. 31 Thomas B. Marsh and Edward Larkey rented land approximately two miles north of Williams' Landing from Dick Weldon. 32 Others rented land wherever it could

28 "Martin Journal."
29 Messenger and Advocate, I (November, 1834), p. 22.
30 Autumn Leaves, IV (February, 1891), p. 66.
31 Austin, Mormonism, 182.
32 The Saints' Herald, XXVI (June 1, 1879), p. 166.
be acquired throughout much of the southern part of the county.

It was not unlawful to cultivate land on the public domain in 1834. In fact, Congress had recently passed land laws to accommodate a highly mobile western community. A land office had been located in St. Louis, and general land sales began in Missouri in 1818. In 1820, Congress passed a law allowing land to be sold for $1.25 an acre in half-quarter sections of eighty-acre tracts. Then in 1830, Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri sponsored the Pre-emption Act which permitted squatters to be the first to stake claim on federally owned land upon which they had settled. Also, Benton's Pre-emption Act modified the earlier law by providing for the disposal of public lands in forty acre lots.33

Some Latter-day Saints took possession of unoccupied land on the public domain. After John S. Higbee left his temporary winter quarters, he moved near the mouth of Shoal Creek and cleared a "few acres of land," and called it "Congress land."34 On upper Shoal Creek near Liberty, Joseph Holbrook acted


34"Higbee Journal."
similarly. During the summer of 1834, he constructed a house on an "eighty acre piece of Congress land on School [Shoal] Creek," said he, "and me and my brother moved into it."\(^{35}\) After residing on the land, a Mormon could buy a forty acre tract for fifty dollars from the land office in Lexington and invite fellow Church members to join him to till the soil. Some Mormons bought land on contract from former owners, parcelled it, and in turn sold the smaller farmsteads to Church members.

The desire of some Mormons to own land prevailed, and a number of them acquired title to some tracts of land. The first to do so was Newel Knight, who bought a forty-acre lot from the land office on March 29, 1834.\(^{36}\) See Figure 7 for the location of Mormon-owned land in Clay County and Appendix G for the land descriptions. Newel's brother Joseph commenced to build another mill on the newly acquired land, but never completed it before the Mormons again were asked to leave their homes. On July 21, Andrew Moore

\(^{35}\)"Holbrook Journal."

\(^{36}\)Katherine Gentry Bushman (comp.), Index of the First Plat Book of Clay County, Missouri, 1819-1875, Clay County, Original Land Grants (Liberty: Katherine Gentry Bushman, 1967), p. 64. See also "Joseph Knight's Incidents of History." A careful perusal of the Clay County Deed Record Books and Indexes disclosed the names in Appendix G, but not all who were Mormons are known.
Fig. 7. Lands Owned by Mormons in Clay County, 1834-1837
purchased eighty acres of land with its appurtenances seven miles east of Liberty in Fishing River Township. Moore paid $250.00 for this property.\textsuperscript{37} In November, Carlos Granger purchased forty acres from Harvey McWilliams for $150.00 four miles below Barry, the Indian trading post.\textsuperscript{38} About this time Philo Dibble purchased forty acres from the Lexington federal land office. Heman Bassett purchased two lots in Gallatin Township in 1834 and resold them the first week in January, 1835.\textsuperscript{39} Alvah Hancock, a Church member, purchased one of Bassett's tracts of forty acres for about the government price.\textsuperscript{40} This is all the land purchased by the Mormons the first year. The lack of money and the anticipation of the immediate return to Jackson County may have persuaded others not to purchase land. Bishop Partridge received funds from Kirtland, but he chose not to purchase land to distribute in the form of stewardships, although some Saints did consecrate their modest belongings to the Bishop.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{37} Clay County Deed Record Book E, p. 21.  
\textsuperscript{38} Deed Record Book D, p. 77.  
\textsuperscript{39} Deed Record Book F, p. 28. The deed books do not contain a record of his purchase indenture, but he sold his land December 10, 1836.  
\textsuperscript{40} Deed Record Book D, p. 24.  
\textsuperscript{41} "Woodruff Journal," December 31, 1834.
An indenture, recorded September 28, 1835, showed that Lyman Wight purchased 130 acres with appurtenances from John Wells for $450.00. This land was located near the junction of the road from the Fishing River ford and Liberty and the road to Bluffton, Ray County's pioneer seat of government. Thomas B. Marsh and Edward Larkey lived nearby. They rented land from Benedict Weldon, whose tract was adjacent to Wight's purchase. Two miles below Wight's large tract, David Dutton owned forty acres of land near William's Landing. 42

The number of members of the Church who bought land the next two years decreased. On November 14, 1835, James Allred, from the Salt River Branch in Monroe County, purchased 160 acres in Section 25 in Washington Township. This property was near where John Cooper had been living and where Zion's Camp spent three days after the storm. Allred paid $800.00 to Lewis Hardwick for the property. 43

On the same day as Allred's acquisition, John Cooper purchased the west half of the northwest quarter of Section 36 from Abijah and Elizabeth Lewis for $260.00. This half of a quarter section runs north and


43 Deed Record Book D, p. 225.
south and a quarter of a mile west and parallel to the
Little Fishing River (which today is a dry stream bed).
This tract of land is four miles north of the encamp-
ment of Zion's Camp on the night of the storm, June 19,
1834. This land is located on a ridge between the
Little Fishing River on the east and another small
tributary of the Fishing River on the west. Charles C.
Rich perhaps referred to this site in his journal on
June 20 when, following the storm, he wrote: "We moved
up the divide between the two streams about four miles
and camped at Bro. John Cooper's." When the Camp
arrived there, Cooper did not have title to the land.
Perhaps he was renting the land from Lewis, or perhaps
he was tilling government land nearby. The year
after purchasing the tract from Lewis, Cooper acquired
three forty-acre parcels of land at the government
office on June 8, 1836. The boundary of each of these
tracts commenced about one-fourth mile from the original
eighty acres, two parcels to the west and one to the
east. The latter one encompassed the source waters of
the Little Fishing River.

In 1836, John Lowry, a Church member who had
gone through the Jackson County persecutions, purchased

44Deed Record Book D, p. 197. Since this was
Cooper's first purchase of land, the writer assumes
that it was the location of his home in 1834 and the
location of Zion's Camp encampment from June 20 to 23,
as well as the place Joseph Smith received the Fishing
River Revelation.
three separate forty-acre tracts in Section 2, Township 50, Range 32 four miles Southwest of Liberty. Later Bishop Partridge acquired one of the lots from Lowry. Possibly this is the area where Partridge lodged his family for the approximately three years he spent in Clay County, but he did not acquire title to the land until August 18, 1838. Also Lyman Leonard purchased forty acres of land in Gallatin Township about four miles west of the Lowry tracts. In each case, these tracts sold for $150.00 for a forty-acre lot.\footnote{Deed Record Book E, pp. 42, 43, 46, and 399. See also "Edward Partridge's Bill Against Missouri," a manuscript copy is located in the Church Historical Department, and "Emily Partridge Lyman Journal."} According to the known Mormon acreage recorded in the county deed records, the Mormons owned 990 acres of land in Clay County all of which was located in the southern and eastern part of the county.\footnote{William T. Wood later said that the Mormons owned a few tracts of cheap land in Clay County. This is probably true with their purchases of original entry, for by 1834 the better land in the southern part of the county had been taken. \textit{(Liberty Tribune, April 9, 1886.)}}

Some of the Mormons who attempted to purchase lands under installment contracts with the owners did not complete the payments because of their departure.
from the county. 47 Joseph Holbrook recorded in his journal that he purchased eighty acres north of Shoal Creek upon which he built a house and buried dead family members, but the writer could find no titles recorded for Holbrook in the county deed record books. Also, Jacob Gates said he purchased a small plot in the western part of the county, but there is no available record of the purchase. There may have been others who purchased land for whom purchases were not recorded.

Establishing a new life in Clay County on the frontier in an impoverished condition was sometimes difficult even for land owners. After twenty-three-year-old Jacob Gates and his wife arrived in Clay County with Zion's Camp, they acquired some land and began to care for their needs. Jacob recorded the enjoyment and difficulty of his pioneer effort:

I located myself in the western part of the County Called Clay on a peace of land which I purchased of one of the Brethren. I commenced building me a House which we moved in to as Soon as the logs were rolled up. We covered one Side of the Roof the first Day while my Wife's Brother layed a small portion of the flore on which we made our beds for the Night. After refreshing our Selves on mush and milk we lye down in our new lodgings of rejoicing in the Lord that our sercumstances were so favourable. In the midst of a butiful forest which waved her rich foliage to the Breaze while the moon Shed forth her brightest Rays to light up the

47 William E. Eldridge, long-time Clay County Recorder, informed the writer that over the years he has seen a number of contracts for land purchases by the Mormons who never acquired the titles.
wiles of nature & make the earth agreeable to the Saints who then Slumbered among Strangers & in a strange land. The Spirit whisperd peace to our Souls & we fell a Sleep. After a pleasant Night of repose we awoke with light & joyous harts to prosecute the building of my House which moved slow in consequence of the extreame of the Summer heat & the weakness of our bodies brought on by a long journey & a change of Clymate. Necessity compelled us, however, to labour all that we possibly could in order to get means to live upon. We continued under these circumstances until about the mide of August when we were all taken Sick with the Aqve & feavour & no one to assist us our House being yet unfinished having no Chimney. The Sides being open we Suffered not only from Sickness but from cold. [At this point he describes a lengthy illness.]

About the first of December I recovered my health. I commensed labouring to procure the comforts of life for we had be come very poor as to the comforts of life. We cled & fenced four Acres of Land on My little farm, builded a log farm Corn Crib &c. In the Spring of 1835 I hired some Land which I Cultivated about one Mile from home. I raised that Summer between 7 & 800 bushels of Corn, 80 bushels of potatoes, Cut Wheat on Shares until I Earned 40 bushels. At the Same time my Wife Spun toe for her Nabours to get means to live upon. Thus the Summer passed away & in the fall we were able to procure meny of the Comforts of life. I purchased a Waggon & youk of oxen which with my Horse made me a good team.

In January 1836 being Soliseted by Caleb Baldwin to accompany him on a mission I accordingly aranged my affaires but [put] my team in to the hands of brother Abbot agread with Mariah Evins to remain with my Wife in my absence. Then every thing being aranged I left my Wife bathed in tears to go forth for the first time to preach the gospel.48

48"Jacob Gates Journal," located in the Church Historical Department. The text is unchanged except for punctuation.
AMUSEMENTS AND DIVERSIONS OF THE SAINTS

While working hard to provide their physical needs, some Mormons enjoyed diversions and amusements. Several activities were available to them. "We have a kind of Sport heire, that we call bee hunting," wrote Caleb Wilson, a non-Mormon resident in 1836.

Whitch is verey profitable when we have good luck. By going 80 or 100 miles north of us, 4 hands in 5 or 6 days can get as mutch honey as a 4 hoarse team can hall home on a level road in the jernuey.49

Game hunting also was of interest to the Clay County residents. In his letter to his brother and sister in North Carolina, Wilson said, "I have great need of hunting for when i go to plow in the morning the turkeys gather round the field so that i hardly can contain myself at work."50 By the time the Mormons lived in Clay County the panther, elk, and bear were nearly gone, but the deer, turkey, duck, goose, and grey wolf were plentiful. Also, some citizens found considerable sport in hunting the grey squirrels which were troublesome to the farmers. Some settlers


50 Ibid., p. 503. Wilson also said, "It is just as easey when we want fresh meats to go out and kill a deer as it is to fatten a hog to get it, and when we want fowel it is as easey to kill a turkey as to feed a chicken till it is big enough to kill.," p. 502.
reported in 1834, that one hunting excursion yielded two thousand grey squirrels.51

Life in Clay County contained much enjoyment as reported in a diary by Alonzo Shelton who lived there shortly after the Mormons left. One of the pleasures he mentioned was looking for and gathering the wild fruits of the forest. "Wild strawberries grew in . . . abundance," and "geese were so numerous they were a nuisance," he reported. He said that large, sweet grapes, berries, cherries, and many varieties of nuts grew freely among the timber.52 Resourceful Mormons enriched their supplies with these bounties of the forest. Naturally grown nuts, berries, and fruits were often enjoyable to gather. Almira Mack, niece of Lucy Mack Smith, wrote a letter from Clay County in 1835 to her sister in Michigan, concerning these activities. She reported,

I think you would be pleased with this country: it is pleasant and it is a good place to get a living--there are plenty of grain of all kinds, plenty of meat, milk and butter. We have plenty of strawberries, huckleberries, gooseberries, blue grapes, little wine grapes, frost grapes, persimmons, black and red haws, papaws, raspberries and wild plums, hickory nuts, walnuts, apples and sweet potatoes. But I must say the society of the Missourians is not as agreeable as I have seen (When I speak of the Missourians I mean the old inhabitants which are

51Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.), Early Western Travels, XXIV, op. cit., p. 119.
52The Kansas City Star, February 27, 1972.
mostly southern people.) Their living is mostly bacon and corn dodgers. Perhaps you may be ignorant about dodgers as I was. They are a sort of jonny cake made of corn meal. This they eat in preference to wheat, that the eastern people eat.\(^{53}\)

Likewise, the beauty of the wild flowers which blossomed profusely, the red bud, and other blossoming trees, brought delight to the residents of Clay County.\(^{54}\)

Perhaps the children enjoyed life in Clay County the most. Emily Partridge recorded the following:

I spent many happy hours with the school children in that beautiful grove at hours of intermission, swinging on the long wild grapevine that hung from the tall trees, or tearing down some of the long and slender ones to jump-the-rope with. We built houses of the branches of the paupau tree, the wood being very brittle we had no difficulty in breaking as many as we wanted. The fruit of the paupau is about as long as the banana, and about four or five times as large around, with a smooth skin. The inside, when ripe, is a yellow, thick, creamy pulp, with large flat seeds, and to the taste is very sweet; but oh! such a sweet! one taste will generally suffice, nobody wants to taste it twice.\(^{55}\)


\(^{54}\)Liberty Tribune, February 23, 1883. Dinah Trigg Allen's memoirs described the wild fruits and animals of the forest.

\(^{55}\)Emily D. Partridge Young, Autobiography, p. 138.
The Mormons also enjoyed the occasional visits of travelers to their area. Reverend Samuel Parker, on a journey to Oregon in 1834, said, "We engaged a man to take us in a wagon to Liberty, and towards evening went out into a small neighborhood of Mormons, where we lodged."\(^{56}\) In May, 1835, George C. Bingham, the first portrait artist to visit Clay County, arrived and visited the leading people of Liberty and the rural areas of the county. Bingham painted the portrait of Col. and Mrs. Shubael Allen, Senator and Mrs. James T. V. Thompson, and Col. John Thornton.\(^{57}\)

The river boats had recently begun to journey up the Missouri River and created considerable excitement when they docked at Liberty Landing. One Clay County resident said:

The arrival of a boat was announced by the firing of a cannon four or five miles below, and by the time it reached Col. Allen's [Liberty Landing] all the merchants would be there, as well as half the town and neighborhood.\(^{58}\)

In June, 1834, when Prince Maximilian returned from his expedition to the Rocky Mountains, he brought with him grizzly bears to display in Europe. When the boats arrived at William's Landing, the local citizens also

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\(^{56}\) Parker, *Journal of an Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains*, op. cit., p. 31.

\(^{57}\) *Liberty Tribune*, April 13, 1972.

\(^{58}\) Ibid., December 16, 1846. The first steamboat arrived at Liberty Landing in 1826.
desired to see the prince's prize. "The people here were more eager to see the much-dreaded grizzly bear than even in Europe," he wrote. "Among our inquisitive visitors there were several men belonging to a religious sect known by the name of Mormons," said the prince.  

Marriage and family rearing continued among the Saints in the upper country. Philo Dibble wrote, "In Clay County I enjoyed some rest from persecution, and had two children born of me, Emma and Philo, Jun." The Clay County marriage record from 1834 to 1837 contains at least twenty-two Mormon marriages performed by A. S. Gilbert, David Whitmer, Edward Partridge, Lyman Wight, and others. Some marriages were not recorded in the county record books, however. An example of this was of Mary Rollins' marriage with Adam Lightner, a non-Mormon on August 1, 1835. The weddings were

59 Early Western Travels, XXIV, p. 119.
60 Philo Dibble, Early Scenes in Church History, Eighth Book of the Faith-Promoting Series (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1882), p. 75.
62 "Mary E. Lightner Life History," op. cit., p. 197. Documents in the "Mary Rollins Lightner Papers" record that her marriage to Lightner was August 11, 1836. Special Collections Library, Brigham Young University. Eldridge, the Clay County Recorder, informed the writer that some marriages were never recorded. The Clay County marriage records do not contain a listing for Mary Rollins and Adam Lightner.
usually performed under trees in the yards of the Saints. W. W. Phelps' daughter Sobrina, was married under a "great tree" during a weekly church meeting. Malinda Estes describes a wedding in Clay County, as being out of doors where the tables could be placed, because the cabins were too small to accommodate them. The hostess served the guests wild turkey and venison for the main course and pumpkin pie and baked custard for dessert.63

At the time the Mormons lived in Clay County, the displaying of colorful bonnets was very popular. The center of this activity took place at the Big Shoal Baptist meeting house. Ethel Maisie Withers, a Clay County historian, wrote that this social occurrence at the meeting house was the "great event of the year" for many of the residents of Clay County. Young women would parade under their bonnets which arrived from Philadelphia and St. Louis, and the young men would come from long distances in the county to view the procession. Probate records listed two decorative bonnets for the A. S. Gilbert estate.64

Probate records of the time also recorded musical instruments owned by the Clay County citizens. Guitars, banjos, flutes, violins, dulcimers, and

63Liberty Advance, May 3, 1901.

64A. S. Gilbert's Probate Court Records, Clay County Probate Court, July 14, 1838.
trumpets were listed in the estates of the deceased residents. The piano was a rare musical instrument for that time and place. The prominent families did not acquire their pianos until after the Mormons left the county. Some of the popular songs in the county during the 1830's were "Rory O'More," "The Meeting of the Waters," and "Barbara Allen." 65 Perhaps, the Latter-day Saints had a number of musical instruments and sang some of these popular songs as well as their religious hymns. If so, this and other diversions helped enable them to enjoy their life and labor in Clay County.

The local citizens held fashionable parties and balls in Liberty. Even the soldiers from Fort Leavenworth participated at these affairs. "After the establishment of Fort Leavenworth," Dinah Trigg Allen, writing about the parties and balls, said, "the officers of the Fort and their ladies always attended them in full force." 66 The Thorntons, the Allens, and many other prominent citizens attended the social affairs of the county.

Possibly some of the Latter-day Saints participated in some of the social activities or at least

65 Liberty Tribune, April 6, 1972.

desired to be a part of the social expressions of the day. At any rate, many diversions were available to enhance a Latter-day Saint's enjoyment of life in Clay County.
CHAPTER VII

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES OF THE MORMONS IN CLAY COUNTY

The Latter-day Saints engaged in religious activities in Clay County while they struggled for economic well-being. Although they did not record a great deal about their religious meetings, worship facilities, and meeting house locations, they did preserve sufficient records to acquaint us with some of their spiritual activities. For example, the types of meeting places varied. Some Mormons met in facilities they constructed for worship, others congregated in private dwellings, and still others worshipped as single families in their own houses.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LOCAL CHURCHES

The Local Branches

There were at least twelve ecclesiastical branches or neighborhood congregations of the Church in Clay County.1 The Colesville Branch retained its group identity after its arrival across the river. Of this, Newel Knight reported, "The Colesville branch, as usual,

1Star, September, 1834, p. 7.
kept together and founded a small settlement on the Missouri River bottoms, building themselves temporary houses.\textsuperscript{2} When spring arrived, Newel and Joseph Knight of that branch purchased land away from the river bottoms just north of the Hancock ferry. It was probably nearby that members of this branch constructed a small meeting house for its members. Emily Austin described the structure:

Our church, or rather the building in which we worshipped was built very large and commodious, suitable to accommodate eight families; and on the Sabbath and one evening in every week the church assembled for worship in the building. There were two large fire-places, the chimneys of which were built of sticks and mortar; built very particular and straight. The logs of this building were hewed, and the entire building elegantly whitewashed outwardly, and papered inside; all of which was very creditably done. It was, in fact, a parsonage, as no other than the elders of the church lived in that building. It was called the White House, from the fact that there was no other cabin whitewashed, except this, in our settlement. Some of our Gentile neighbors would attend meeting on the Sabbath, probably through curiosity, as it is my opinion they never entered a place of worship in all their life before. The voice of prayer and singing averted their attention from the hunting ground of the dense forest, and they seemed to enjoy sitting with us in meeting.\textsuperscript{3}

Across the county in the southeastern corner, not far from Williams' Landing, reposed the Morley settlement. Members of this congregation, who resided on rented farm land, were presided over by Thomas E.

\textsuperscript{2}Knight, \textit{Scrap of Biography}, p. 85.

\textsuperscript{3}Austin, \textit{Life Among the Mormons}, p. 80.
Morley, the father of Isaac Morley who was a member of the bishopric. The officers in this congregation were "active and faithful," said John Brush, "while gifts and blessings were manifested here the same as at Father Chase's," he said.⁴ Old Father Chase, the senior member of a nearby congregation, took the lead there in spiritual matters. He supervised the Sacrament meetings and directed the teachers to visit the houses of the members regularly.⁵

Other settlements of Mormons gathered for worship. One met in Brother Newberry's house near the banks of lower Shoal Creek, not far from Allen's Landing. John Higbee stated that John Burk was president of this branch. "We met once a week for near a year," wrote Higbee. "I was chosen and ordained a clerk for the [Deacon's] Quorum, June the 3, 1835."⁶ W. W. Phelps attended religious services there. His brief diary for the Clay County period occasionally mentions his Sunday activities. For January 18, 1835, he recorded, "went to Sacrament meeting [at Brother] Burk's," and on April 12 he recorded, "Sacrament at

⁴Autumn Leaves, op. cit., p. 66.
⁵Ibid., p. 65. See also Pearl Wilcox, The Latter Day Saints on the Missouri Frontier, op. cit., p. 109.
⁶"Higbee Journal."
B. Burk."7 After Samuel Kendall Gifford crossed the Missouri River, November 14, 1833, he said that his group "went about two miles from the river" where they organized a branch of the Church and appointed John Lowry president.8 Another group met in Joseph Holbrook's house located a mile north of Shoal Creek. Holbrook said, "I continued to have meetings at my house about once or twice a week, I continued to settle difficulties in the Church, preach, etc."9 The Saints who resided around the Little Fishing River area, gathered in a congregation for worship purposes there.10 Besides the Colesville Branch, the only Mormon ecclesiastical branch named in the "Far West Record" (a manuscript record of the High Council minutes in Missouri) was the Hulet Branch. The record does not contain any information as to the branch's location.

7"William W. Phelps Diary," located in the Church Historical Department. See also "Stevenson's Reminiscences," p. 30, who said that this branch was located two and one half miles southwest of Liberty.

8"Samuel Kendall Gifford Journal," located in the Church Historical Department. Bishop Partridge bought his farm from John Lowry indicating the probable site of the Lowry Branch.


John Whitmer's "Day and Account Book" reveals that he frequently attended councils and conferences, but that he spent his Sabbaths at home. Nearly every Sunday, during the time he lived in Clay County, he briefly noted, "Sabbath at home." Infrequently he visited with Phelps or Partridge or some other associate or family member on Sunday, but he never recorded attending a religious service.

**The Leadership of Bishop Partridge**

At first, Bishop Partridge was the ecclesiastical leader in Missouri. The "Far West Record" stated that he was "acknowledged to be at the head of the Church of Zion."\(^{11}\) During the harrowing second week in November, 1833, he aided and comforted the Church members with considerable energy, often attending to their needs before he cared for his own. His daughter, later writing of him concerning the Clay County experience, said,

> When I look back and remember the great responsibility that rested upon my father as first Bishop--his poverty and privations, and the hardships that he had to endure, the accusations of false brethren, the fault-finding of the poor, and the persecutions of our enemies--I do not wonder at his early death.\(^ {12}\)

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\(^{11}\)"Far West Record," September 11, 1833, located in the Church Historical Department.

Bishop Partridge counseled the Church members in Clay County on several spiritual and domestic matters. He instructed them on avoiding fornication, on embracing domestic cleanliness as a Christian virtue, on matters concerning the end of the world, on the proper training of children, and on other subjects. On one occasion, he informed the Church members in Clay County concerning their "lack of parental government of Latter-day Saint families." In a circular letter, he wrote:

It is not wisdom for either husband or wife, to interfere with the other, at the time he or she is correcting a child, but if either party discover an error in the other, with regard to his or her government, be careful not to tell your partner of it before the children; but rather when you are alone by yourselves, point out the fault of your partner in the spirit of meekness. I consider that for either party to interfere with the other, and to take the child's part, at the time of its being corrected, is one of the surest means that could be taken, to make the child headstrong and ingovernable.

It is wrong to whip a child, when it accidently lets a plate or tumbler fall and it breaks it; a word of admonition, instructing them to be more careful for the future is sufficient. But when a child gets into a passion, and throws a plate or tumbler upon the floor, whether it breaks it or not, it is certainly an error to let that child go unpunished. It is also an error, to suffer ourselves to be in a passion when we punish a child.

I have known instances, of a child, while in a passion, throwing a teacup or saucer upon the floor and break it; the mother would, in haste strike the child, perhaps, two or three times; the child would bawl out as though it was half killed; the mother would bear with its crying for a long time; perhaps she would threaten to whip it if it did not stop, the child would still continue to cry, because it was in a passion; the mother would at last become tired of the noise, and instead of punishing the child in a
proper manner for the fault, she would give it a piece of sugar, to stop it from crying; this is a very great error.

Parents run into another great error, by promising their children this, that, or the other thing, and then not performing those promises. It is a common thing for Parents to speak to their children, and to tell them to do thus and so; the child frequently pays but little attention to what is told it by its parents; the parent speaks again, saying, you must do what you was bidden to do, or I will whip you; the parent perhaps threatens the child in this way, a number of times; the child does not heed the command but goes and does the very reverse from what it was bidden to do; the parent neglects to fulfil its promise to the child; the child soon learns that its parents word is not to be depended upon, therefore, he heeds it not. No doubt many do not consider that such treatment is actually lying to their children; but in reality it is, and is a practice, that ought to be done away with.\textsuperscript{13}

Bishop Partridge also instructed the Saints on less conventional subjects. To many Mormon converts, an attraction to the Church had been its teachings on escatological concerns--Zion, the end of the world, and the millennium. In Jackson County, the Saints had been instructed that the end of the world was forthcoming. The beginning of the seventh millennium was only nine years away, one Church leader had taught.\textsuperscript{14} In Clay County, Bishop Partridge instructed the people that he expected the end of man to come in "the present

\textsuperscript{13}Cited in "Diary of Emily Dow Partridge Smith Young," pp. 66-69, located in the Special Collections Library, Brigham Young University.

\textsuperscript{14}Star, August, 1832, p. 5.
generation." On October 22, 1834, in a letter from Clay County to his non-Mormon parents, Partridge acquainted them with his belief in the imminence of the second advent of Christ. He stated to them that the era of the seventh millennium would begin within seven years and that God would "destroy the wicked, and perfect his saints on the morn of the 7000th year." He appealed to his family to accept Mormonism in order that they might be recipients of the "Celestial Kingdom of God or the third heaven." He informed them that destruction was soon to come and suggested that the great cholera epidemic of recent years was the fulfillment of the "revelation given March, 1831." These views and many others in the letter were probably also conveyed to the Saints to keep them from misconduct and to enhance their zeal for Zion.

Partridge also received instruction from the Prophet Joseph to invoke the Law of Consecration and


16 "Edward Partridge to his parents, brothers, and sister; William and wife, Oliver and wife, Emily, Mercy and husband," October 22, 1834, manuscript copy located in the Church Historical Department. Phelps also taught that "the hour" is near when the Lord would come. *Messenger and Advocate*, I (December, 1834), p. 34, and articles following.

17 This revelation refers to "an overflowing scourge" and "a desolating sickness" which would cover the land. D. & C. 45:31.
Stewardship in Clay County. Joseph wrote to the bishop concerning this subject:

The consecrated property, is considered the residue kept for the Lord's store house, and it is given for this consideration, for to purchase inheritances for the poor, this any man has a right to do, agreeable to all laws of our country, to donate, give or consecrate all that he feels disposed to give, and it is your duty, to see that whatsoever is given, is given legally.\(^{18}\)

The Saints did not extensively implement this program in Clay County. However, a few made modest efforts to demonstrate their desire to keep the consecration principle. One participant was Wilford Woodruff, who recorded the following:

Clay Co. Missouri, Dec 31st 1834. Be it known that I, Wilford Woodruff, freely covenant with my God that I freely consecrate and dedicate myself, together with all my properties and effects unto the Lord, for the purpose of assisting in building up his kingdom even Zion on the earth that I may keep his law, and I lay all things before the bishop of his Church that I may be a lawful heir to the Kingdom of God even the Celestial Kingdom.

The following is an inventory of my Property:

- One Due Bill payable in one year 20.00
- One trunk and its contents principally 18.00

Books
- Hat, Boots and clothing 23.00
- One valise 2.50
- One english watch 8.00
- One rifle and equipment 9.00
- One sword 5.00
- One pistol 1.50
- Also sundry articles 3.00

\(^{18}\) Joseph Smith to Edward Partridge, May 2, 1835, the original is in the Church Historical Department.
And webs which are doubtful and uncertain
Total

Although some engaged in these token gestures, Bishop Partridge left no indication that he intended to resume the economic experiments of the Mormons in Jackson County.

THE HIGH COUNCIL

The Organization

Joseph Smith organized the leading high priests in Clay County into an ecclesiastical court and a high governing council of twelve high priests with a presidency to administer over certain ecclesiastical matters of the Church in Missouri. On June 30 or early in July, 1834, Joseph Smith and some of the leading Mormon priesthood holders met at the log house of Lyman Wight to effect the organization. Joseph Smith's history said that the organizational assemblage gathered "in the yard of Col. Arthur's where Lyman Wight lived, in Clay County." Joseph's history continued, "I proceeded to organize a High Council, agreeable to the revelation and pattern given at Kirtland." At the time, Wight


20History of the Church, II, p. 122. The date of the organization is unclear. Woodruff wrote in his journal that it occurred on July 1, then he marked it
worked for Col. Michael Arthur manufacturing bricks and constructing a two-story house for the prosperous Liberty merchant. Wilford Woodruff stated that this place (the yard of Arthur's house and Lyman Wight's log dwelling) "was the place appointed for the meeting of the high councils, also the Elders council and courts to transact all their business." (See Figure 8.)

out and wrote July 3. Dean Jessee, handwriting authority in the Church Historical Department, informed the writer that Woodruff made this change after 1854. Joseph's history states that the date he organized the High Council was the date that he discharged the members of Zion's Camp. Nathan Baldwin recorded his discharge document in his journal, which reads, "Clay County, Missouri, July 1, 1834. This may certify that Nathan B. Baldwin, the bearer of this, is honorably discharged from the army of Zion and may return to his native land."

21Years later Wilford Woodruff wrote to Wight about their living conditions. He said, "I remember old times, we have spent many a good day together, and I wish we could spend many more. Mormonism is as good to me today as it was when I was with you in the old log cabin in Clay County, and milking the cows for Sister Wight and making brick for Col. Arthur's house." Letter of Woodruff to Wight, July 1, 1857. In answer to Woodruff's letter, Wight wrote, "With all the things [of history] you are perfectly familiar, as also with my labors in the church mission. You will recollect after all the jobs on the house where [were] finished that in the fall of 1834 you left my house on a mission to Arkansas." Wight to Woodruff, August 24, 1857, located in the Church Historical Department. The Arthur house was razed in about 1968 according to William E. Eldridge.

22"Woodruff Journal." At about this time Woodruff, who had brought to Clay County the thigh bone of the warrior Zelph, wrote, "I desired to bury it in the Temple Block in Jackson County; but not having this privilege, I buried it in Clay County, Missouri, near the house owned by Col. Arthur and occupied by Lyman Wight." North across the road from the house Wight
Fig. 8. The House of Michael Arthur that Lyman Wight Built Near the Place Where the High Council was Organized

Fig. 9. Boyd W. Parks Designating the Location of the Skeleton Discovery Near Rush Creek
The purpose of the High Council, as stated by Joseph, was for "settling important business that . . . could not be settled by the Bishop and his council." Participating members of the organizational meeting elected David Whitmer president, and W. W. Phelps and John Whitmer as assistant presidents, and twelve men to be the counselors. According to Joseph's history, the meeting reconvened Monday, July 7, at "the house of Lyman Wight." Joseph said that he ordained the presidency and the twelve high councilors on that date. On this occasion he gave the newly appointed leaders much instruction. Joseph recorded the following:

After singing and prayer, I gave the Council such instructions in relation to their high calling, as would enable them to proceed to minister in their office agreeable to the pattern heretofore given; read the revelation on the subject; and told them that if I should now be taken away, I had accomplished the great work the Lord had laid before me, and that which I had desired of the Lord; and that I had done my duty in organizing the High Council, through which council the will of the Lord might be known on all important occasions, in the building up of Zion, and establishing truth in the earth.

Built for Arthur is the remnant of a pioneer cemetery (presently in a pig corral) which may be the burial site. See also Cowley, Wilford Woodruff, p. 41.


24 History of the Church, II, p. 124. See Figure 10 for the general vicinity where the High Council met.
Fig. 10. Aerial View of the Vicinity Where Joseph Smith Organized the High Council
The next day Joseph Smith ordained David Whitmer to be his successor and appointed him to be the "prophet to this church." This act was done presumably because

Far West Record," March 15, 1838, p. 104, states, "President Joseph Smith, Jr., gave a history of the ordination of David Whitmer, which took place in July 1834, to be a leader, or a prophet to this church, which [ordination] was on condition that he [Joseph Smith, Jr.] did not live to God himself." See also History of the Church, III, p. 32. Concerning that event, John Whitmer recorded, "Smith called a conference at the house of Lyman Wight, three miles west of Liberty, in which conference the most of the official members belonging to Zion were present, where Smith organized the High Council of Zion, as I said in a former chapter, in which David Whitmer was ordained President of Zion, and John Whitmer and W. W. Phelps his counselors. Here at the same time, he ordained David Whitmer Prophet, Seer and Revelator and Translator." John Whitmer's History, p. 24. David Whitmer also affirmed this view. See David Whitmer, An Address to All Believers in Christ (Richmond, Missouri, 1887), p. 55.

There seems to be some confusion as to the date of this ordination meeting as there is with the organization of the High Council. Joseph stated that he ordained the presidency and High Council on July 7. History of the Church, II, p. 124. Roberts stated that Joseph ordained David Whitmer as the succeeding prophet on July 8. History of the Church, III, p. 32. John Whitmer's "Day and Account Book" placed the date of the High Council business that he attended on July 8. He briefly recorded his activities for each day. The following are his entries for the week of present concern:

June 29  Sabbath at home
30  Attended council

July 1  [blank]
2  went to bro Gilberts
3  wrote
4  went to fathers
5  At home got 3 lb of ham of br Lyman
6  Sabbath at home two copies of Command-
ments for L. Wight per Seth Johnson
7  At home
8  At home attended to the organization of high counsel
Joseph felt that the High Council and its presidency could care for the affairs of the Church in Zion in the event he, Joseph Smith, was destroyed by the mob in Missouri or should die some other way.

The Function of the High Council

The Missouri High Council, consisting of the presidency and the twelve high priests, functioned as an administrative and judicial body. The High Council administered the spiritual affairs of the Church in Missouri while the bishop and his council administered temporal matters. The Council was divided for purposes of discussing both sides of administrative issues and disciplinary cases. The first recorded decision of the High Council determined whether Phelps, who had been called to Kirtland to assist in the Church printing establishment, should take his family with him. Two counselors represented his interest in the discussion and two represented the interest of the Church. The decision was in favor of departing without his family.

On July 12, 1834, the High Council felt that the scattered Saints in Clay County needed instruction.

26 "Journal History," June 1, 1835.

It selected Partridge, Orson Pratt, Isaac Morley, and Zebedee Coultrin to visit and teach the Saints and, when necessary, to set the congregations in order. The Council also decided that the local congregations should not hold public meetings at that time. Pratt and Partridge, who traveled together, held eight meetings in different parts of the county, and the others held four.  

On July 31, Partridge and Pratt reported on their assignment. They recommended that the scattered congregations be allowed to hold public meetings and that the High Council appoint a select number of elders to visit and preach to the scattered branches in Clay County as occasion warranted it. David Whitmer, president of the High Council, agreed with the recommendations and suggested that whoever was selected should understand the rules and regulations of the Church of the Latter-day Saints and be able to teach its precepts in simplicity. He wanted the elders to instruct the Church members to avoid making enemies of their Clay County neighbors, to retain friendship with those neighbors who felt friendly toward them, and to live modest Christian lives. A practice the leaders taught the members not to engage in was the gift of tongues,

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28Elden J. Watson (comp.), The Orson Pratt Journals (Salt Lake City: Watson, 1975), p. 42. Also see Star, September, 1834, p. 7.
for it had been the cause of difficulty in Jackson County. The High Council appointed Corrill, Simeon Carter, and Parley and Orson Pratt to serve as these teaching officers. A circular letter from the High Council to the congregations indicated some additional subjects in which the Church should be instructed. They included the Word of Wisdom (the Church health code), industry, prayer, and faithfulness.

In addition to the four named high priests sent out to teach the branches, the High Council later sent out others. One of these was Samuel Brown, a high priest. While visiting with the Hulet Branch, he learned that Sally Crandall possessed the gift of tongues. Crandall informed Brown that he, too, could speak in tongues if he desired. He did, and Crandall interpreted. Bishop Partridge and others learned of this development, and it created a considerable conflict in the Church.

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29 *Missouri Intelligencer*, April 13, 1833. Rev. Pixley had made vivid reference to their spiritual gifts: "They all pretend to the gift of miracles, of tongues, of healing their sick, visions, &c."

30 History of the Church, II, p. 138. Drusilla Hendricks testified as to the benefit she acquired from discontinuing the use of snuff as a result of the principles contained in the Word of Wisdom. "Historical Sketch of James Hendricks and Drusilla Dorris Hendricks," located in the Church Historical Department.

31 "Far West Record," p. 55.
practice of speaking in tongues while he was on his teaching tour and since he had secretly ordained Sylvester Hulet (branch leader of the Hulet Branch), a high priest, Samuel Brown was tried in a High Council court. Judgment was rendered against him and he forfeited his priesthood license.  

Other problems over speaking in tongues and outlandish claims of individual revelation existed among some members of the Hulet Branch. These, too, were at length reviewed by the High Council. President Whitmer, rendering judgment at one hearing, said:

As for the gift of tongues in the manner that they used it in the Hulet Branch the Devil deceived them and they obtained not the word of the Lord as they supposed they did, but were deceived; and as for the gift of seeing as held by the Hulet Branch, it is of the Devil saith the Lord God. The Church administrators seemed desirous of avoiding improper expressions of conventional Mormon beliefs and practices which could be viewed by the Gentile citizens as a stark perversion of normal Christian values. They also desired to avoid practices that produced disunion in their own ranks.

The High Council administered missionary assignments for their members in Missouri. In July

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32 Ibid., p. 57.

33 Ibid., p. 61. The seeing phenomenon was the belief that some could view the hearts of others as to "eyes" and "books" in their hearts.
1834, the Council called for volunteers among their priesthood bearers (known as official members) to attend to the proselyting duties of the Church. Twenty-one men accepted the invitation to go on a preaching tour. On August 7, 1834, those of that number who were approved were assigned companions, instructed, and some were ordained to higher priesthood offices. W. W. Phelps addressed the prospective ministers. He said it was necessary for them to employ much "wisdom and observe manners among the people." He continued, "And be virtuous, discrete, meek and lowly of heart, to be clean, mannerly and sociable, to be careful about ordaining, etc."34 Throughout that summer and fall, the High Council continued to appoint missionaries.

The missionaries reported a variety of experiences. They recorded their successes and failures, their ill health and happy times, and much preaching and a great quantity of traveling. Elder David Patten stated, "I traveled on East into Ray Co. the distance of twenty four miles and gave out an appointment to preach the gospel." He continued, "I preached to an attentive congregation and they were conscious to have more."35 Elisha Groves, one of the first twenty-one

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34 "The Far West Record," p. 63.
35 "David W. Patten Journal," located in the Church Historical Department.
volunteers, wrote,

I left Clay Co., Mo., Sept. 11, 1834, in company with elder M[orris] Phelps, on a mission to publish glad tidings of great joy to the inhabitants of the earth; we journeyed and preached for the space of four months and four days. 36

While traveling on his mission approximately one hundred miles from Liberty, Joseph Holbrook became ill and spent four weeks in the bed of a charitable host. Finally, his illness necessitated that his wife retrieve him with a bed in a wagon. Bishop Partridge, while preaching in Lafayette County, said, "We tried for a meeting but found that they did not wish to hear." 37

Hence, the High Council in Clay County administered the affairs of the Church in Missouri. It issued recommends, ordained priesthood officers, rendered instructions, issued licenses to preach, disciplined members, and regulated the Church.

THE ENDOWMENT IN KIRTLAND

The Fishing River Revelation informed the Missouri Saints that the Lord requested "the first elders of my Church should receive their endowment from

36 Messenger and Advocate, II (January, 1836), p. 255.

37 "Edward Partridge Journal," located in the Church Historical Department.
on high in my house." The day after the revelation, June 23, a council of high priests met in order to select some of the first elders to receive the heavenly enrichments. Among those who were selected at that time were the bishopric, the soon-to-be presidency of the High Council, certain future members of the High Council, and others.

On August 7, 1834, the High Council granted the presidency their recommends to travel to Kirtland to receive their blessings. But their departure from Clay County waited for several months. The Church in Kirtland was constructing a temple in which the endowing ordinance would take place. Some of the Saints in Clay County traveled east to assist in the construction of the edifice. Concerning this, Levi Jackman wrote:

A temple was now being built in Kirtland, Ohio and many of the first Elders were instructed to go to that place to help with the work and to preach by the way and I was one of the number. I made my arrangements for going and on the forth day of May, 1835, I took an affectionate farewell of my family and started in company

38 D. & C. 105:33.

39 Besides David Whitmer, Phelps, John Whitmer, Partridge, Corrill, Morley, the other "first elders" that were selected to go to Kirtland to receive their endowments were A. S. Gilbert, Peter Whitmer, Jr., Simeon Carter, Newel Knight, Thoma B. Marsh, Lyman Wight, Parley P. Pratt, Christian Whitmer, and Solomon Hancock. Times & Seasons, VI (February 1, 1846), pp. 1105-1106.
with Brother Caleb Baldwin, on foot and without money.40

In January, 1836, when the temple was nearing completion, Church leaders from Clay County and Kirtland attended several meetings in the building. Many reported rich endowing experiences. The men received ordinances of washings and anointings (to symbolize their commitment to a pure life), and some reviewed heavenly manifestations. Joseph Smith dedicated the temple March 27, 1836. Newel Knight, a member of the Missouri High Council, noted,

I remained in Kirtland until the temple was finished and dedicated. I then received my anointings and was also a witness to the great manifestations of God's power in that sacred edifice.41

George Burket arrived in Kirtland a few days after Joseph Smith dedicated the temple. Then, on April 12, he recorded his impressions of the symbolic cleansing ceremonies:

On this day at candle light I received the washing the first time with soap and water, and the 13th received the washing with salt water and whiskey and with perfume, and on the 14th I attended the feast of bread and wine and at candle light I received the anointing with oil in the name of the Lord. In this the order of God is to be seen in its beauty. In performing these duties just opens the Scriptures to the understanding of the mind. On the 15th we made preparations to hold a Pentacostal feast

40"Levi Jackman Journal," p. 8, located in the Church Historical Department.

41Knight, Scraps of Biography, p. 94.
in the House of the Lord to be held on the 16th and administered in like manner as the first, and on the 16th we attended to the washing of feet in the forenoon. And the balance of the day we spent in fasting and prayer.\footnote{George Burket, "Diary of Mission," located in the Church Historical Department.}

The days of spiritual refreshment came to the Latter-day Saints, and some of the members of the Church in Clay County enjoyed its spiritual richness.
CHAPTER VIII

CONTROVERSY AND STRIFE

During the course of their experience in Clay County, the Latter-day Saints enjoyed some friends among the citizens, but other neighbors emerged as being unfriendly. These less friendly Gentiles fostered distrust and hostility between the Mormons and other residents of Clay County. Despite this conflict, the Latter-day Saints converted several of their neighbors to their religion and enjoyed a friendly relationship with some of the community leaders. To some extent, Arthur, Allen, Atchison, Doniphan, Thornton, Thompson, Turnham, and others showed friendship toward the Latter-day Saints.

Some Jackson County residents disapproved of the cordiality shown by the friendly disposed Clay County citizens and labeled them "Jack Mormons."¹ A Gentile resident of Clay County wrote, "The Jackson County people were indignant at the reception given the Mormons by the citizens of Clay, and stigmatized some

of our people as 'Jack Mormons.' " Some Jackson County citizens in the spring of 1834 manifested animosity to one of these friends of the Mormons when he sent his Negro servant into Jackson County with a wagon load of whisky, flour, and bacon. Lawless persons attacked and destroyed the shipment and threatened to take the life of Arthur's slave if he were again seen in Jackson County. 3

CONFLICT ERUPTS

Some Mormon Attitudes

The Mormon people felt that justice had been deeply wounded by the persecutions in Jackson County and by the deficiency of the American courts to grant an adequate hearing to them for their suffering. Some Mormons in Clay County expressed to travelers this feeling of injustice. Reverend Samuel Parker noted this characteristic during a short visit he had with the Mormons in Liberty. He said,

They had fled from Jackson County, which they call their promised land, and to which they say they shall return. They are a poor, deluded people, and when they speak of their persecutions, they do not imitate the spirit of our Savior,

2History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri, op. cit., p. 133.

3Star, May, 1834, p. 7. See also Times and Seasons 1 (February, 1840), p. 49.
who, when he was reviled, reviled not again and when he suffered, threatened not.\textsuperscript{4} Prince Maximilian returning from the Rocky Mountains visited with some Mormons at William's Landing and observed a similar attitude. He reported that the Saints "complained bitterly of the unjust treatment which they had lately experienced." Reacting to the persecutions of the Mormons in Jackson County, Maximilian wrote,

So much, however, is certain, that, if these people spoke the truth, it would be a great disgrace to the administration of justice in this country, which calls itself the only free country in the world.\textsuperscript{5}

Joseph Smith and others wrote to John M. Burk, president of one of the Church branches in Clay County, concerning the bad spirit that existed with some Church members toward fellow members and Gentiles alike.

"Cease to find fault and learn to do well," the letter said. "Pray for your enemies in the Church and curse not your foes without; for vengeance belongs to God."\textsuperscript{6} Some Latter-day Saints struggled to control their bad feelings concerning the injustice they received.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[5] Early Western Travels, XXIV, p. 119.
\item[6] "Journal History," June 1, 1835. Since the revelation to organize Zion's Camp instructed the Saints in Missouri to curse their enemies, it may have contributed to the attitude. D. & C. 103:24-25.
\end{footnotes}
After developing an attraction for Clay County, some Latter-day Saints promoted immigration to that area. Phelps, in a letter to Dunklin August 1, 1834, informed the governor that the Mormons would claim their rights granted by "the Magna Charta of the United States" to "emigrate from state to state by single families, or in larger bodies." In 1834 and 1835, a series of letters that Phelps wrote to Cowdery in Kirtland fostering emigration appeared in the Messenger and Advocate. Among other things Phelps wrote about the agricultural attractions of Clay County. "Grain is raised so easy, that a man may live as well on three day's work in a week, here, as on six in some other distant places." Also, Phelps stated that the soil-rich lands of the contemplated Platte Purchase northwest of Clay County was about to be opened for settlement. To remove the fear of any Indian hostilities on the frontier, Phelps described the adequacy of the army at Fort Leavenworth to protect the Missouri settlers against Indian attacks.

Although many Latter-day Saints cherished the prospect of settling in Jackson County, many in the East commenced to gather to Clay County to wait for the

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7The series began in November, 1834, and continued to April, 1835.

8Messenger and Advocate, I (November, 1834), p. 23.
day when they could travel to their preferred home across the river. The zeal for the New Jerusalem never seemed to diminish. Although Latter-day Saint interest in settling in Clay County was not central to their greater hope, some Missourians reported that the Mormons transferred some of their enthusiasm for Zion to their temporary home in Clay County. Concerning this, Joseph Thorp, who employed Mormons to work for him, said:

The poor, deluded mortals, with all their experience in Jackson, began to tell the citizens of Clay the same old tale; that this country was theirs by gift of the Lord, and it was folly for them to improve their lands, they would not enjoy the fruits of their labor; that it would finally fall into the hands of the saints. One asked me if I didn't believe that they would finally possess the land and yet build the temple at Independence; if it was the Lord's work, and they were the chosen people of God to build the New Jerusalem? I told him all they had to do was to convince the people that what they said was true, and we would all turn Mormons, stay at home on our own land and enjoy the benefits of our labors.

This kind of talk, with their insolence and impudent behavior, so enraged the citizens that they began to consult about the best course to take to rid themselves of a set of religious fanatics, for they found that their faith was so strong that not only the land was theirs, but the goods and chattels of the ungodly Gentiles was theirs, to be held and used as a common stock.⁹

Church leaders in Kirtland also encouraged immigration to Clay County. After the Prophet Joseph Smith returned to Kirtland from the Zion's Camp experience, he wrote to Wight, Partridge, and others on

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⁹Thorp, *Early Days in the West*, p. 79.
August 16, 1834, informing them to,

    Prevail on the churches [abroad] to gather to those regions and locate themselves to be in readiness to move into Jackson County in two years from the eleventh of September next, which is the appointed time for the redemption of Zion. 10

A year later on September 24, 1835, the Kirtland High Council met at Joseph's house to formulate plans to subscribe eight hundred to one thousand Latter-day Saints to emigrate to Clay and surrounding counties. This action was all part of the effort to organize the Mormons so that they could martial their numbers in and around Clay County in preparation for their return to Jackson County. And according to Joseph Smith when the Mormons were ready to cross the river in 1836, they would petition Governor Dunklin to assist them. This time "to live or die" on their lands in Jackson County, announced the Mormon prophet. 11

Mobocracy in Clay County

   While immigration of the Latter-day Saints into Clay County continued, during the spring and summer of 1836, some non-Mormon residents began to object to the increased number of Mormons gathering there. County road crews particularly engaged in much anti-Mormon

10 History of the Church, II, p. 145. Concerning this plan, Joseph told the Saints in Clay County, "Let every heart be silent, and every mouth be shut."

11 Ibid., pp. 281-282.
conversation. The county law required every able-bodied male over eighteen to contribute time each year to work on the county roads. After an area was surveyed, workmen would cut through the densely forested areas to provide access to lands in the county or to improve existing roads. After a road crew was organized, they camped along the road and worked five and a half days a week. John Wilson, a pioneer of the county, stated that the heavy work and the forced labor on the roads irritated the men and often made them quarrelsome and ill-tempered. On Saturday afternoon the members of a road crew would fight or engage in other activities to settle conflicts that arose during the week.12 In a letter to his brother and sister in North Caroline, Anderson Wilson, one road crew worker, described the frustrations that members of his crew felt concerning Mormon immigration into the county. Wilson wrote:

We thought of petitioning the governor but he was Sworn. We thought of fleeing. There was no place to flee to. We thought of fitting. This was Cruel to fight a people who had not Broke the law & in this way we became excited. I never Saw as much excitement in my life. On 24 of June we worked the road and nothing else was talked of. They [the Mormons] passed us in Considerable numbers & we got very hot before night to think that we had to work a road for the invaders of our County to travel & at last go and leave them our farms & Seek a new abode

for ourselves & our Children. So down we Set to talk it all over.¹³

Anderson Wilson was a central figure in the conspiracy to rid the county of the Latter-day Saints, and he admitted being one of the first that "stood forth to oppose" the Mormons. But his anti-Mormon attitude was similar to that held by a large number of the residents in the area where he lived. He informed his relatives in North Carolina that he participated in raising a mob against the Mormons in Clay County. He stated that if his family learned of any other explanation of the current trouble in western Missouri than that which he related to them to rest assured it was "false for I have told you the truth," he said.¹⁴ One of Wilson's chief objections to the Mormons was their immigration into the county. Concerning this, he informed his relatives:

The reason I have taken up my pen at this time is to address you on the Subject of Mormon[ism], as this Subject has been the order of the day for some time and has been gaining ground on both Sides. They have been flocking


¹⁴Ibid., p. 508.
in here faster than ever and making great talk what they would do. A letter from Ohio Shows plainly that they intend to Emigrate here til they outnumber us. They would rule the Contry at pleasure.\footnote{Ibid., p. 504.}

Wilson listed four objections that he had concerning the Mormons. They consisted of the Mormons taking over the land in Clay County, his fear of their eventual control of politics, their union with the Indians, and the religious fanaticism of the Latter-day Saints. But land take-over seemed to be his central concern. Wilson objected to the Mormons borrowing money to acquire land in Clay County and to their purchasing other tracts on contract. He also felt they offered excessively high prices for the land to induce the people to sell. He objected to what seemed to him to be an inordinate fervor for the land. The Mormons have "a revelation from Smith," he wrote,

\begin{quote}
that they Shal[1] have the Missouri By money or Blood and God has Commanded them (they say) to Sell their flocks and Hovels and proceed to the Mo. and Buy land that they may rest.\footnote{Ibid.}
\end{quote}

Drusilla Hendricks, who arrived in Clay County a few months before Wilson wrote letters, described the tense atmosphere. "Our wagons, some five or six in number, had stirred up the mob spirit for fear the Mormons would come and take away their place and nation.\footnote{Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," p. 10.}
Drusilla related an incident that arose over a Mormon land acquisition. She said that her husband purchased a plot of land from a Latter-day Saint land holder, who had contracted to purchase a large tract of land (of which the Hendricks plot was part) from a Baptist minister. After the contract was secured with a down payment, the Baptist congregation learned of the transaction of their pastor and persuaded him to withdraw from the agreement. Since the Mormon purchaser had already parcelled the land out to immigrating Mormons, he refused and a conflict arose over the matter.

Wilson feared that the Mormons would eventually control the political powers of Clay County as he heard they had done in Kirtland. Concerning his apprehension over this, Wilson wrote, "This state of things is alarming." He continued:

You may depend all our officers are elected by us the people & we might as well allow one man to give 100 Votes as to allow 100 mormons to Vote at all. A letter from Tennessee Shows that 10 Churches are to remove from there this fall & next and a letter from them Shows that they have taken Kirtland & will elect all their own officers from among the Brethren & even remove the postmaster by petition and are to Send 1500 from that town to Mo and now you may See just where we are to Submit to a mormon government or trample under foot the laws of our Contry.  

18 "Wilson Letters," p. 505. The transcription of the word Kirtland was not possible for Mr. Stokes. But after examining a copy of the original, the writer renders the poorly penned word as Kirtland.
Nathan Tanner Porter agreed that politics was an issue in formulating anti-Mormon sentiment in Clay County. Concerning this matter, he journalized:

After which they [the Clay County non-Mormon citizens] began to be stired up to jealousy by the rapid increase of the Saints. This was arroused by Political aspirents, who told the people that if they let the Mormons alone, they would [have] the popular vote in their Elections. And thus they would soon be under th[e]ir rule.  

The Latter-day Saints evidently had no aspiration at that time to control the politics in Clay County. In 1834 the Mormon leaders had instructed their people not to vote in the forthcoming public elections possibly so as to avoid strife over politics.  

Anderson Wilson claimed that another justification for driving the Mormons from the county was their association with the Indians. "Another thing that excited the people," wrote Wilson, was that they "spread their doctrines among the Savage Indians and acknowledged them as Brethren" who were to possess the

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20"Far West Record," July 12, 1834, p. 50.
land with the Saints. Recently there had been dissatisfaction among the Indians in the West and rumors circulated that if problems persisted the natives would attack frontier communities.

The Latter-day Saints did claim a kinship with the American Indian. Since Mormon theology taught that the Saints and the Indians were common descendants of Abraham and that the two people would be mutual partakers of God's ancient promises to the great Hebrew patriarch, some Mormons fostered an interest in the Indians. After visiting some of these people while on a trip to Fort Leavenworth in 1834, Phelps wrote letters to the Kirtland Saints about the Indians. And he possibly preached sermons in Clay County concerning their future ascendancy. But the elders in Missouri informed friendly Clay County Gentiles that they denied holding any "communication with the Indians." Edward Stevenson further stated that the Saints intended to hold themselves as ready to defend their country against barbarous Indian attacks "as any other people."


22Messenger and Advocate, I, pp. 33-34.

Wilson also took issue with the Mormon religious beliefs and practices. "They are Still going on in their usual way of lying, raising the dead, Casting out devils, Healing the sick, etc.," said he. "In this way they have Still been an[n]oying us from day to day."  

The Nature of the Persecution

Late in June, 1836, Wilson's road crew decided to take action against the Latter-day Saint residents and immigrants. When members of the road crew met at a schoolhouse in the eastern part of the county on June 28, other interested participants from Clay and other counties joined them. Wilson described the composition of the gathering:

We were gathered together as one man. The Preachers of the Gospel were there, the Elders of the Churches was there, the gray headed fathers were there the Beardless Buoys were there & the Memorable Spirit of 76 was there. We then appointed a Committe of 7 persons to draw up a preamble and resolutions declaring the intention of our meting & what Coarse we intended to pursue which was in effect to drive them away if they would not go without, and ordered the same to be published in the far west.  

The participants of the meeting appointed ten delegates each from Fishing River and Washington townships to join with delegates from the three other townships of

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25 Ibid., p. 506.
the county to attend a meeting in Liberty. The purpose of the meeting was to offer the Mormons terms and to organize their removal from the county.

On the evening of June 28, some of the Clay County citizens, possibly rankled upon learning of a large caravan of approximately three hundred Mormons approaching Clay County, attacked some Saints in one of the settlements. Concerning this, Wilson wrote:

I am sorry to say that there were several outrages committed on the night of the 28. Six of our party went to a Mormon town. Several Mormons cocked their guns & swore they would shoot them. After some scrimaging two white men took a Mormon out of company & gave him 100 lashes & it is thought he will die of this Beating.26

Drusilla Hendricks said that four of the six men who beat the Latter-day Saint came to her place after that encounter. They remained in the background with their broken horse whips while others came forward to order the Mormons to give up their contracts on their mortgaged land. Lyman Wight and others who were present, frightened them away. If the brethren had "known what they had been doing," said Drusilla concerning the four men, "they would not have left a grease spot of them, as they had caught one of the

brethren alone and whipped him nearly to death." This whipping, she concluded, broke "their horse whips." 27

By ten A. M. the following day, approximately one hundred armed settlers gathered at the home of Winfrey Ebenezer Price, one mile east of the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. The participants appointed Jesse Clark commander-in-chief of the force and Price second in command. 28 After traveling eastward five miles, this company met some of the immigrating Mormons near the eastern boundary of Clay County. The settlers informed the Mormons that they must turn back because if they continued, their lives would be endangered after encountering this group. Wilson said that the Mormons did not hesitate; but they turned their wagons around and departed "like they thought old nick was after them." 29 Clark's force pursued the Mormons until these men received word that Lyman Wight was following with a band of about 250 Mormons. The mob voted to encounter Wight's army, but the two parties did not meet.

27 Hendricks, "Historical Sketch," p. 10. Lyman Wight said, "They commenced, catching the Saints in the streets, whipping some of them until their bowels gushed out, and leaving others for dead in the street." History of the Church, III, p. 440.

28 Liberty Tribune, April 9, 1886. William T. Wood later stated that Price was the captain of the anti-Mormon force.

Anderson Wilson was determined to rid the county of the Mormons. That day while "the Conspiracy was Strong," said Wilson, he, his two brothers (Caleb and Josiah), and six other men resolved that they would stay together to "fight by each other's side and die like Ishmael" if necessary in their effort to expel the Mormons from the county. Most of these nine men owned farms west of John Cooper's land in the sections next to the line dividing Fishing River and Washington townships. 30

The Citizen's Appeal

When the relationship between the Mormons and some of the Clay County settlers deteriorated to a state of civil conflict, some leading citizens of the county called a mass meeting in Liberty to consider what action should be taken. On June 29, 1836, the citizens met at the courthouse and appointed ten men to draft a report to recommend a course of action. The committee consisted of John Thornton (chairman), William T. Wood, Alexander Doniphan, David R. Atchison, James T. Thompson, and other prominent residents.

The committee listed the objections that many of the Clay County people held against the Mormons as follows:

1. Their rapid emigration, their large purchases, and offers to purchase lands, the remarks of the ignorant and imprudent portion of them, that this country is destined by heaven to be theirs are received and looked upon, by a large portion of this community, as strong and convincing proofs that they intend to make this county their permanent home, the centre and general rendezvous of their people. . . .

2. They are eastern men, whose manners, habits, customs, and even dialect, are essentially different from our own.

3. They are non-slave holders and opposed to slavery.

4. They are charged, as they have hitherto been, with keeping up a constant communication with our Indian tribes on our frontier, with declaring even from the pulpit, that the Indians are a part of God's chosen people.

5. The religious tenets of this people are so different from the present churches of the age, that they always have, and always will, excite deep prejudices against them.31

The committee stated that, whether the complaints were true or not, their effect had been the same in exciting the citizens of the county. After assessing the inflammatory mood of the people, the committee believed that, if the Mormons remained, their presence would ignite the county "into all the horrors and desolations of a civil war, the worst evil that can befall any country."32 It admitted that "under the Constitution and laws of the country" it could not expel the

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32 Ibid., p. 450.
Mormons. But, for the safety of the Latter-day Saints and for the welfare of other innocent people, the committee, believing it took the course of the lesser of "the two evils," asked the Mormons to depart the county.

This committee prepared other propositions. It requested that Mormon immigration into Clay County cease immediately in order to allay the current excitement. Moreover, it suggested that the Mormons remain in the county until they harvested their crops and until the land owners could profitably dispose of their possessions. Then it stated:

We, therefore, in a spirit of frank and friendly kindness, do advise them to seek a home where they may obtain large and separate bodies of land, and have a community of their own. We further say to them, if they regard their own safety and welfare, if they regard the welfare of their families, their wives and children, they will ponder with deep and solemn reflection on this friendly admonition.

If they have one spark of gratitude, they will not willingly plunge a people into civil war, who held out to them the friendly hand of assistance in that hour of dark distress, when there was few to say God save them. 33

Another committee consisting of Wood, Thompson, Arthur, and others carried the report to the Mormons.

33Ibid., p. 451. The citizens' committee said that the Mormons had been allowed to enter Clay County only as a "temporary asylum" and had promised they would leave when a "respectable portion" of Clay County residents asked them to.
On July 1, 1836, two days after the citizens' meeting, a large congregation of elders of the Church with delegates from the Mormon settlements assembled in Clay County, answered the criticisms against them, and decided to depart from the county as the Clay County committee requested. "For the sake of friendship and to be in a covenant of peace," stated the Mormon resolve, they agreed to stop immigration and to find a new place in which to settle. On July 25, the Prophet Joseph Smith ratified their decision in a letter to the Church leaders. He said,

Be wise, let prudence dictate all your counsels; preserve peace with all men, if possible; stand by the Constitution of your country; observe its principles; and above all, show yourselves men of God.

On the same day he wrote a letter to John Thornton to inform the Committee that the Saints would leave the county.

Both the report of the Mormons in Clay County and the letter which Joseph Smith and his counselors in Kirtland wrote to Thornton contained repudiations of some of the charges against the Saints. Concerning the charge of the Mormons taking possession of Clay County as a part of their new Zion, Joseph Smith stated, "We do not, neither did we ever, insinuate a thing of this

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34 Ibid., p. 453.
35 Ibid., p. 455.
kind. 36 This answer is to be viewed as the Church's official position rather than to reflect the attitude and possible enthusiastic statements of some of the Clay County Mormons. In his letter, Joseph Smith also repudiated any alliance with the Indians on the frontier, and said that the Saints there were just as apprehensive about the rumors of Indian attacks as were the other settlers. 37 Both Mormon groups rejected the view that the Church was identified with the abolition movement. In the April, 1836, issue of the Messenger and Advocate, elders in Kirtland had written three anti-abolition articles defending Negro servitude. In the first article, Joseph Smith spoke against those Latter-day Saints who felt the Church should withdraw its fellowship from Mormons who possessed slaves in the South. He said, "I do not believe that the people of the North have any more right to say that the South shall not hold slaves, than the South have to say the North shall." 38

Some Mormons in Clay County may have had a different view about slavery than that held by many members living in Kirtland. Edward Stevenson observed a number of scenes regarding slave and master

36 Ibid., p. 457.
37 Ibid., pp. 453, 458.
38 Messenger and Advocate, II, p. 289.
relationships during his residence in Clay County. One incident had to do with John Baxter, one of the prominent citizens appointed to confer with the Mormons over the Gentile-Mormon problem. Stevenson said,

Baxter ... once whipped a negro with a cow hide. ... The poor negro begged as the blood flew from every stroke, leaving a mark each time the lash came on the bare back.

Stevenson continued, "My heart ached as I herded the poor negro cry out at each stroke, 'O Massa John.' I shall never forget the scene." Whether these kinds of events passed without incident by the Mormons is not recorded. 39 Some of the Church members in Clay County might have spoken in such a manner as to arouse their non-Mormon neighbors. While discussing the reasons for the destruction of a disobedient civilization recorded in the Book of Mormon, Edward Stevenson said that his people had much to learn from the mistakes of that former civilization. He stated that of the Mormons in Clay County, "many were unwise." 40

Another Appeal to the Governor

The Mormons had in recent months once again petitioned Governor Dunklin to ask the president to send aid to the Saints in Missouri. (This time the petition came from Kirtland.) In their petition to

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39 Stevenson, "Reminiscences," p. 16.

40 Ibid.
Dunklin January 22, 1836, the Mormon leaders reasoned that since President Jackson had recently quelled a mob in New York, he might be prevailed upon to perform similarly for the Mormons. In answer, Dunklin, however, argued that the Saints actually wanted the president to send an army to "restore justice" rather than to quell a mob. So the governor refused to act on the petition. Also, the governor said that recent efforts to encourage the Missouri General Assembly to enact laws to help the Mormons had failed. Its failure was "for want of a constitutional power to pass any law that could offer" assistance to the Mormons, the governor said.41

Then on July 7, 1836, after hostilities commenced in Clay County, the Mormon leaders informed Governor Dunklin of recent developments there. Phelps, Partridge, and others wrote the governor that once again they were required to leave their homes because of mobocracy. In defense of their conduct, the leading elders reported that "not one solitary instance of crime against any of our people has been recorded in either [Jackson or Clay] county." "Law or government," they observed, "seems to have but little or no remedy for us." As the mobs had martialed against them in Clay County, they said to Governor Dunklin:

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41History of the Church, II, p. 178.
Now as we can not occupy and improve our land in Jackson and Clay, in peace, and we fear lest the inhabitants will rise up to mob us in other places, or in other counties, therefore we ask the aid of the Governor to quell these mobs.42

The governor refused to act upon the Mormon request for protection and to quell the mob, although this time he seemingly had a case to refer to the president of the United States. When Dunklin sent his answer to the Mormon leaders on July 18, 1836, he said that the problem was still a matter for the courts. The governor acknowledged however that there were cases sometimes of "individual outrage which may be so popular" as to render the courts inoperative. "Public sentiment may become paramount law," he continued, "and when one man or society of men become so obnoxious to that sentiment as to determine the people to be rid of him or them, it is useless to run counter to it. Dunklin further suggested that the burden of convincing the populace that the adverse reputation of the Mormons was unwarranted was that of the Mormons themselves. "If you cannot do this," he said, "all I can say to you is that in this Republic the vox populi is the vox Dei."43

In telling the Mormons that the voice of the people was the voice of God, it seems Governor Dunklin abdicated his former promise to the Mormons that he would perform

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42Letter of Partridge and others to Dunklin, "Journal History," July 7, 1836.

43History of the Church, II, pp. 461-462.
his duty in their behalf. Governor Dunklin left the Latter-day Saints to the mercy of popular opinion.

In the two letters written to the Mormons the governor seemingly stated that he felt that the laws in Missouri were neither sufficiently developed nor respected to enable justice to prevail in behalf of an unpopular minority. America, of that time, was more a land of majority rule than of minority rights, if the exercise of those rights were offensive to the majority of the people. According to one scholar, the eruption of violence against the Mormons in Missouri was caused by "social tensions compounded by the Jacksonian proclivity to see certain types of minority groups as a subversive threat to the existing Jacksonian social structure."44 Another writer suggested that Mormonism and certain other minorities were the "antithesis of American ideals."45 Those ideals had to do with


_David Brion Davis, "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLVII (September, 1960), pp. 205-244. One early resident of Clay County stated that he taught the first Sunday School in the county in the courthouse. This local businessman was warned that he would lose his business if he persisted because of the local aersion against uniting "church and state." The merchant resigned and the minister could not procure another teacher. History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri, p. 120._
separation of church and state, individualism instead of collectivism, and avoidance of certain forms of secretism or separatism. The mobocrats seemed to justify their anti-Mormon activity on the grounds that there was something greater than American law (including the Constitution), and that was a preservation of certain aspects of their way of life.\(^{46}\)

**Another Home**

The need for the Mormons to move from Clay County was anticipated by the Mormon leaders. Before the dedication of the temple, Joseph Smith held a council in Kirtland on March 11, 1836, to appoint Partridge, Corrill, Morley, and Phelps as "wise men" to return to Missouri with money to purchase land on which the Saints could settle away from the interference of other citizens.\(^{47}\) After their return to Clay County in early May, Bishop Partridge and Phelps journeyed northward in search of a new gathering place. They traveled to "Yankee" Smith's mill on the South Fork of the Platte River in Platte Township and northward to Plattsburg, seat of Clinton County. Since they believed that the timber and mill possibilities there were unsatisfactory for a large population, they traveled eastward

\(^{46}\)See the "Wilson Letter" and letter of the Lexington Correspondent. Appendix D.

\(^{47}\)"John Whitmer's History," p. 21.
to the waters of the Grand River in the area north of Ray County. Phelps was unimpressed with this area, too, because of the extensive prairie land which he identified as the "land of desolation." However, Phelps did acknowledge that they located some "tolerable mill sites."

Bishop Partridge seemed more attracted to the area. He said, "We found a mill seat on Shoal Creek, about 35 miles N. E. of Liberty, that suited us very well." This attraction prevailed. Partridge and Phelps again journeyed to the Shoal Creek area with Morley and Corrill accompanying them. Following this visit, Corrill entered seven eighty-acre tracts of land and shortly after that, Corrill, in company with Phelps, entered thirteen more half-quarter sections.

48 History of the Church, II, p. 445. Phelps expressed his wonderment as to the wisdom of Providence in creating such vast prairies.

49 "Edward Partridge Journal, 1818-1836," located in the Church Historical Department. Shoal Creek in upper Ray County is not to be confused with Shoal Creek in Clay County.

50 Ibid. See also Times and Seasons, I (February, 1840), p. 51. This amounts to a total of 1600 acres which Corrill entered in the name of Hyrum Smith, probably using the money they carried with them from Kirtland. "Original Entries of Land, Caldwell County," Kingston, Missouri. See Leland H. Gentry, "A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri from 1836 to 1839" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1965), p. 49. Gentry states that prior to the Saints from Clay County settling on Shoal Creek, some members of the Church after they were driven from Jackson County had settled there founding a
After the Mormons consented to depart the county, two Gentile guides directed them to possible sites for settlement in upper Missouri. The members of the expedition traveled into the area attached to Ray County and "finally concluded that the place previously selected" was the best place for the Mormons to settle because it was adequate for a sizeable population and because the former settlers there were willing to sell their property to the Mormons.\(^{51}\)

\(^{51}\) *Times and Seasons*, I (February, 1840), p. 51. One of these guides was Judge Elisha Cameron (the judge spelled his name Camron) after whom Cameron, Missouri, was named. *Liberty Tribune*, April 9, 1886. Concerning the Mormons selecting their new location William T. Wood wrote, "When the peace of the county was thus threatened some of us, opposed to violence, consulted as to what could be done to maintain peace. Those who thus conferred & consulted, I think were Atchison, Doniphan, Rees, Judge Cameron & myself. We decided to invite the leading Mormons, five or six in number, to meet us, in private conference in the woods on a tract of land I owned & then lived on, adjoining & south of town. They consented to attend us in conference & we, accordingly, met in the woods, as we suggested. It was there agreed & unanimously, that it was best, if it could be effected, that the Mormons should live in a county to themselves. Judge Cameron assured us he could find such a locality—where Caldwell County was afterwards established & organized; said there were only a very few settlers there; he knew them all, & was satisfied they would be glad to sell & leave. The Mormons were delighted with the proposition, & Cameron was appointed to go with them, that they might examine the locality in person and, if pleased, have his assistance in buying out settlers." *Liberty Tribune*, April 9, 1886.
The emigrating Saints, as well as those who were then in Clay County, needed a place to settle. The most recently arriving Church members from the East had been congregating near the Crooked River in northern Ray County. John Murdock said there were from one hundred to two hundred families encamped in one neighborhood near the river. "Some by the wayside, some in the woods, and some in buildings of different descriptions." "Some of them," Murdock continued, "nearly moneyless and many of them sick."\(^{52}\)

In the summer of 1836 Ray County citizens considered the question, should they permit the Latter-day Saints to settle in the area above Ray County? On July 23, the citizens of that county held a meeting in Richmond to consider the problem of Mormon settlement in their county and there was general opposition to the Mormons settling among them. John Corrill, speaking for the Mormons, stated that the Saints desired to find a "resting place" from persecution.\(^{53}\) The meeting adjourned after a committee was appointed to formulate some resolutions. During the intervening days Murdock wrote:

According to previous agreement in company with John Corrill [we] met the Ray Co. committee

\(^{52}\)Murdock, "Journal."

\(^{53}\)The Far West [Liberty], August 25, 1836. This issue contained a report of the July 23 meeting.
and layed our complaint before them. We desired of them that if we could not have a home with them that they would grant us the privilege of settling on Shocal Creek in the territorial part of the state. After calling a meeting of the Co. they agreed to the latter, but would not let us live with them.\textsuperscript{54}

The meeting Murdock described was held in Richmond on August 3. The citizens' committee reported at the meeting that neither the Mormons who had moved there from Jackson County nor those who recently immigrated there could remain in the county in peace.\textsuperscript{55} They resolved that the Mormons who owned land in the county should remain to sell it "without sacrifice" but all others had to "leave the county immediately."

Community leaders organized a vigilance committee (three members from each of the county's six townships) to see that the Mormons moved from the county.\textsuperscript{56} The Ray County committee required that the Mormons provide a six to eight mile buffer between the northern boundary of Ray County and their settlements. They also required them to buy out any that objected to living among the Mormons in the area of their new homes.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{54}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{55}The Far West, August 25, 1836. This issue contained a report of the August 3 meeting.

\textsuperscript{56}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{57}George A. Smith, Journal of Discourses, XVII, pp. 91-92. Smith said there were seven men who resided
According to Murdock, on July 27, 1836, Phelps, John Whitmer, and the bishopric decided to move their people into the new lands on Shoal Creek. Murdock waited until the Ray County problem was solved, however, before he started for his new home, where he arrived August 5. On July 25, at a meeting in Clay County, Thomas B. Marsh and Elisha H. Groves had been selected to travel to the Churches in Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee to collect funds to buy more land for "Poor Bleeding Zion." They succeeded in borrowing $1400 at 10 percent interest from Mormon families.58

The Mormons desired that an area approximately twenty-five miles by fifty miles would be organized into a new county above Ray County. Alexander Doniphan, on November 29, 1836, presented before the House of Representatives the proposal to organize the new county. Doniphan received considerable opposition from Smallwood Noland, representative from Jackson County and a member of the Doniphan committee. The

in the area north of Ray County all of which sold to the Mormons. William T. Wood said all except a Mr. Maguire sold to the Mormons. Maguire said he could live with the Mormons. Liberty Tribune, April 9, 1886.

58 Thomas B. Marsh, "History of Thomas Baldwin Marsh," Deseret News, March 24, 1856. Marsh stated that Atchison wept at one meeting where the Mormons, preparing to move out of Clay County, discussed their persecutions in Jackson County.
legislators reduced the dimensions of the proposed county by approximately half, and organized another county out of the northern portion that was trimmed off. Hence two counties were organized—Caldwell and Davies—of which some expected the Mormons to settle in Caldwell County exclusively. On December 29, 1836, the state's new governor, Lilburn W. Boggs, signed the bill into law. 59 Hence, the Latter-day Saints departed Clay County and settled in Caldwell County and neighboring areas where many of them resided for approximately two years until further hostilities erupted and forced them from the state.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

When the Mormons arrived on the Missouri frontier, they attempted to establish an earthly society in anticipation of a heavenly one. Their expectation of a superior spiritual community crumbled in the reality of a disorderly non-heavenly republic. The Mormon encounter with the frontiersman in western Missouri produced conflict because of the value differences between the two groups. The values of the frontiersman consisted in his admiration of personal independence and rugged individualism, his desire for land and

59 For details concerning the struggle to enact the law, see Gentry, op. cit., pp. 60-65.
prosperity, his feeling for competitive economics, and his suspicion of institutionalized religion or unusual religious practices that seemed to encroach upon his own measure of things of worth. In turn, the values of the Latter-day Saints consisted of their reverence for religious freedom which included the right to freely express their religious views as well as believe them, their sense of obligation to proselyte others concerning their beliefs, their confidence in America as an open society in which being different was a viable way of life, and their deep respect for America as a constitutional republic with laws to protect the rights of minorities.

In 1893, Alexander Majors reflected upon the Mormon experience in Jackson County, by stating that if the Mormons were then in the county doing what they had done in 1833, "they would be laughed at instead of mobbed." The citizens in Jackson and Clay counties of the 1830's possessed a disposition that was hostile to views or institutions greatly different from their own. The Mormons in Clay County, as they had formerly experienced in Jackson County, encountered people who possessed manners, customs, and values markedly different from their own.

Latter-day Saints, who migrated to Jackson County to build a city of refuge and peace, were comforted in their belief that they would be protected
when God's judgments came, while their less fortunate neighbors would suffer the displeasure of Providence. Some Mormons felt that the time of the final destruction of the earth was imminent, so they tried to convert or at least warn the godless Gentiles. Some Mormons agitated instead of inspired. Some apprised their non-member neighbors of their short tenure on the land since all would soon make way for a heavenly kingdom to be established. Notwithstanding, the Jackson County frontiersman was not despaired of his optimism of the future. And the Mormons seemed to intrude upon that optimism.

The lands the Saints purchased, the location of their settlements, and the location and population of their religious communities in Jackson County received attention in this study. Also, a brief review of the drivings of the Mormons from those communities was undertaken. Likewise, land purchases and approximate Latter-day Saint communities in Clay County was investigated. The location of ferries, property, or facilities used by the Mormons or owned by citizens friendly to the Latter-day Saints also received notation.

Furthermore, this treatise identified the locations of historical sites relating to Mormon history in Clay County. Participants' journals and court records identified the encampment area of Zion's
Camp, the Baptist Church, the area where Joseph Smith received the Fishing River Revelation, the site of the cholera epidemic, and the site of the organization of the Missouri High Council. These sites are identified on maps created for this purpose or acquired from government sources.

The way of life of the Latter-day Saints in their exiled condition was investigated in this work. A study of the survival of the Mormons, their manner of living, and their sources of income provided an insight into their welfare and trials while residing in Clay County. The participation of the Mormons in their religious functions such as marriages, Church meetings, and missionary service was investigated. Also a glimpse into their Church councils, disciplinary courts, and sermons provided an insight into the Latter-day Saint experience in Clay County.

While the Saints resided in Clay County, their leaders spent much time and energy attempting to correct the problems that arose in Jackson County. Much correspondence, hours in council meetings, time attending the Circuit Court, and anxiety and disappointment attended the lives of the leading Mormons. They attempted to acquire assistance to redress their wrongs through President Andrew Jackson and Governor Daniel Dunklin, but failed in both. They also endeavored to secure criminal judgment against the mob
members, but the attending legal authorities sensed that justice would not be provided the Mormons through the courts in Jackson County. Efforts at civil complaints in Jackson County against the mob members also proved generally unbenevolent. But the Mormons did gain limited satisfaction in Ray County after receiving a change of venue.

Governor Dunklin assured the Mormons that he would provide their dispossessed people with a military escort back to their lands in Jackson County. However, since the governor said he could not protect them after their return, the Prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland organized Zion's Camp, a military support group, to help the Saints re-acquire their land in Jackson County and protect them after they returned. Inasmuch as news of the Mormon army preceded the arrival of Zion's Camp in Missouri, citizens in the western part of the state mobilized to meet the Mormon force.

Since a war spirit existed in western Missouri when Zion's Camp arrived, Governor Dunklin advised the Mormons to acquire a more peaceful solution to the crisis rather than to risk a confrontation with their enemies. After the Mormons arrived in Clay County, a storm on the night of June 19, 1834, prevented a clash of arms between the two groups. Then in a few days with the assurance from leaders of Ray and Clay counties that they would assist in fostering better understanding
of the Mormons by the western settlers, the Mormons agreed to lend their efforts to effect a possible compromise with the Jackson County citizens to avoid a civil war. The Mormons trusted that the law might be put into effect in their behalf. However, neither an acceptable compromise nor advantageous judicial action for the Mormons transpired.

After Zion's Camp arrived two miles east of Liberty, an epidemic of cholera attacked the Mormon troops. About fourteen of the Camp members and a few local Mormons succumbed to the illness. Some Mormons believed that the cholera scourge was a result of disobedience of Camp members to Joseph Smith's instructions concerning their personal conduct. Following the outbreak of cholera, Zion's Camp dispersed and later disbanded at the dwelling of Lyman Wight's on the property of Michael Arthur, a friendly Clay County planter.

Two years later, preparations for a united return to Jackson County ignited hostilities by the Gentile residents. Heavy immigration of Mormons from the East brought that matter to a peak of annoyance to some non-Mormon citizens in the summer of 1836. Bands of Gentiles organized to drive the Mormons from the county if they would not leave peaceably. At this time, Governor Dunklin surrendered the support of his office to the will of the majority. To prevent what appeared
to be an inevitable civil conflict, a committee of leading Clay County citizens drew up resolutions concerning their objections to the Mormons and proposed a course of action.

By this time, however, the Mormons had already begun to develop plans to settle in an area in northern Ray County. After acquiring consent from the leading citizens of that county, Mormons began to immigrate to the Shoal Creek area. Later, the Missouri legislature enacted a law to establish two new counties out of the north part of Ray County, one of which was intended for the Mormons.

Nevertheless, the experience of the Latter-day Saints in Clay County was generally one of peace. After the mob in Jackson County drove the Saints from that county, the citizens of Clay County hospitably received many of the impoverished exiles enabling them generally to enjoy their lives for a short time north of the Missouri River. But after a period of approximately two and one half years, bad feelings between the Mormons and a large portion of the Gentile population erupted into hostility. Thus, public opinion eventually forced the LDS people to move into another part of the state. The Mormon experience in Clay County, therefore, served as a buffer period between the more hostile encounters with mobocracy in Jackson and later in Caldwell County.
The various citizens' groups that militated against the Mormons in Jackson and Clay counties felt justified. The Jackson County anti-Mormon citizens' manifesto had defended their attacks on the grounds of self-preservation. Some of those who participated in the settlers' army against Zion's Camp acknowledged that they did not have the law to sustain their action. But since some of them interpreted the arrival of Zion's Camp as an army of invasion rather than one that was attempting to achieve Constitutional rights for the Saints, they felt justified in bearing arms against the Mormons. Likewise, others rallied around the "call of liberty and freedom" as they prepared to fight the Mormons in 1836. Although many western Missouri settlers respected the law, some believed an existing society possessed a right to take action even by breaking the law against those whom they believed were changing the values of their view of the American way.

The Mormons, in turn, believed that they were victims of unjust prejudice, false rumor, and illegal conduct. Rumor, which fostered distrust and hatred for the Latter-day Saints, often misrepresented their views or exaggerated their behavior when the Saints resided in Jackson and Clay counties. The Mormon people were victims of a prevailing attitude that often possessed little tolerance for those who did not conform to the views and conduct of the majority of the populace.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIXES
## APPENDIX A

### MORMON LANDS IN JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI, 1831-1833

I. Land titles held by Edward Partridge for the Church:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Section No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Rec. of O.E.</th>
<th>Hands Survey</th>
<th>Deed Book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Township 49, Range 33:</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>NW 1/4 &amp; NE 1/4</td>
<td>288.25</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 27</td>
<td>F 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Part of SE 1/4</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 18</td>
<td>F 227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>E 1/2 of NW 1/4 &amp; W 1/2 of NE 1/4</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 18</td>
<td>F 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>W 1/2 of SW 1/4</td>
<td>77.30</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 27</td>
<td>F 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>NE 1/4 &amp; E 1/2 of NW 1/4</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 26</td>
<td>F 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>N end of W 1/2 of SW 1/4</td>
<td>25.83</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 26</td>
<td>F 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>W 1/2 of NE 1/4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 8</td>
<td>F 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>SE 1/4</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 8</td>
<td>F 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>N end of W 1/2 of SW 1/4</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 10</td>
<td>F 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>SW 1/4</td>
<td>111.30</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 26</td>
<td>F 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>E 1/2 of NE 1/4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 26</td>
<td>F 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>NW 1/4</td>
<td>105.23</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. 26</td>
<td>F 292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>E 1/2 of NW 1/4 &amp; W 1/2 of NE 1/4</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
I. Land titles held by Edward Partridge for the Church (continued):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Section No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Rec. of O.E.</th>
<th>Hands Survey</th>
<th>Deed Book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Township 49</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>NW 1/4</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>E 1/2 of NE 1/4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 12</td>
<td>B 154</td>
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<tr>
<td>Range 32:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Part of SW 1/4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Part of SE 1/4</td>
<td>63.43</td>
<td></td>
<td>B 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Part of N 1/2 of NE 1/4</td>
<td>61.20</td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 27</td>
<td>F 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>SW 1/4</td>
<td>155.20</td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 20, 21</td>
<td>F 294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>W 1/2 of SW 1/4</td>
<td>77.30</td>
<td>ROE</td>
<td>p. .20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total owned by Bishop Partridge 2,260.04

1"Record of Original Entries to Land in Jackson County, Missouri," Recorder's Office, Jackson County, Missouri.

2Hands Land Survey Company, Kansas City, Missouri.

3Deed Books, Recorder's Office, Jackson County, Missouri.
II. Land titles held by individual members of the Church:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Section No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Rec. of O.E.¹</th>
<th>Hands Survey²</th>
<th>Deed Book³</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Township 49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>On line between SE 1/4 &amp; SW 1/4</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>p. 3</td>
<td>B 328⁴</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range 32:</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township 49</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Part of SE 1/4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>p. 27</td>
<td>F 314⁵</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range 33:</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Part of SE 1/4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>p. 27</td>
<td>F 314⁶</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township 50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>SW 1/4</td>
<td>154.68</td>
<td>p. 15</td>
<td>K 200⁷</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range 31:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁴Title held by William E. M'Lellin.
⁵Title held by John S. Higbee.
⁶Title held by William Milan.
⁷Land under purchase contract to Gilbert and Whitney by Solomon G. Flournoy.
APPENDIX B

ROBERT JOHNSON WITH OTHERS IMPEADED NOT GUILTY ON CHARGE OF TRESPASS AGAINST EDWARD PARTRIDGE

Impleaded with others

Robert Johnson
ADS Trespass.

Edward Partridge and the said Robt. Johnson comes and defends the force and injury, when &c., and says: as to the assaulting and taking and carrying the said Edward Partridge into a public place, in the town of Independence, and before a large concourse of people, indignantly and abusively treating him the said plaintiff, and as to the shaking, pulling about and throwing him upon the ground, and as to the kicking and striking the said plaintiff a great many violent blows, & as to the putting on the body of the said plaintiff a large quantity of pitch & tar, rolling in & covering his body with feathers, then turning him loose among a large concourse of people, and as to the renting, tearing, and damaging the clothes of the said plaintiff, as is stated and set forth in the declaration, the said plaintiff ought not to have or maintain his aforesaid action thereof against him, because he says: that the said plaintiff just before the said time, when &c. in the said declaration mentioned, at the county of Jackson aforesaid, with force and arms &c. made an assault upon him the said defendant, and would then and there have beat, bruised, and ill treated him the said defendant, if he had not immediately defended himself against the said plaintiff, wherefore, he the said defendant did then and there defend himself against the said plaintiff, as he lawfully might, for the cause aforesaid, and in so doing did necessarily and unavoidably, a little, pull and hawl about before a large concourse of people, and thereby, then and there in self defence, did indignantly treat the said plaintiff, by shaking, kicking, striking, throwing him upon the ground and did then and there for the cause aforesaid, a little, rend, tare and damage the clothes of the said plaintiff, and there being then and there upon the ground, where the said defendant was so compelled, in self defence as aforesaid, to throw down the body of the defendant as aforesaid, a large quantity of tar, pitch and feathers, by means whereof, the said plaintiff
became a little covered and besmeared with tar, pitch and feathers, as stated in the said declaration mentioned, doing no unnecessary damage to the said plaintiff on the occasion as aforesaid, and so the said defendant says, that if any hurt or damage then and there happened to the said plaintiff, or his wearing apparel, the same was occasioned by the assault so made by the said plaintiff upon the said defendant, in the necessary defence of him the said defendant, against the said plaintiff, which are the said supposed trespasses in the introductory part of this plea mentioned, and whereof, the said plaintiff hath complained against him the said defendant, and this he is ready to verify; therefore, he prays judgment, if the said plaintiff ought to have or maintain his aforesaid action thereof against him, &c.

Reynolds, Birch, Burden, Young
Hicks, Chiles and Wilson,
Attorneys for defendant

IMPLEADED WITH OTHERS.

Robert Johnson
ADS Trespass.

Edward Partridge and the said Robert Johnson comes and defenses the force and injury, when &c., and says he is not guilty of the said supposed trespasses above laid to his charge, or any part thereof, in manner and form, as the said plaintiff has complained against him, and of this he puts himself upon the country &c.

Reynolds, Birch, Burden, Young,
Hicks, Chiles and Wilson,
Attorneys for defendant

Filed in Open Court October 29, 1834
APPENDIX C

ROBERT JOHNSON WITH OTHERS IMPEADED NOT GUILTY ON
CHARGE OF TRESPASS AGAINST W. W. PHELPS

Special Plea
Implaeded with others

Robert Johnson
Ads Trespass
William W. Phelps

And the said Robert Johnson comes and defends
the force and injured when &c and for further plea in
this behalf, as to the breaking and entering the
printing office and dwelling houses, in the said
declaration maintained, and as to the making a great
noise and disturbance therein, and as to the seizing,
tearing down, carrying away and converting to the use
of the defendant, the printing press, set up and in use
in the said printing office in said declaration men-
tioned says the said plaintiff ought or maintain his
aforesaid action thereof, against him the said
defendant, because he says, that one of the said print-
ing offices and dwelling houses in the first court of
the said declaration mentioned in which &c now is, and
at the said time when &c was the chose house soil and
freehold of one Richard McCarty lying and being in the
printing office and dwelling house mentioned in the
second court in the said declaration and in which &c
now is and at the said time when &c was the chose,
house, soil and freehold of one John Smith lying and
being in the County of Jackson and town of Independence
aforesaid whereof, the said defendant as the servant of
the said Richard McCarty and by his command in the
first court mentioned and also, as the servant of the
said John Smith and by his command in the said second
court mentioned, at the said several times when &c in
the said declaration mentioned broke and entered the
said several printing offices and dwelling house, in
which &c in the said declaration mentioned, and made a
great noise and disturbance, herein, and forced open,
tore down and demolished the doors thereof, forced and
tore off the roofs, and forced and tore away the walls
and forcibly and violently tore down and destroyed
every part of the said printing offices and dwelling
houses in the said first and second courts mentioned, for the purpose and repairing the said printing offices and dwelling houses, and placing new super-structures upon the said foundations and because the said printing press, type furniture and apparatus belonging to the said printing office, in the said first court and also the printing press type furniture and apparatus belonging to the said printing office, in the second court in the said plaintiffs declaration mentioned, and been wrongfully put and placed, and were at the several times, when &c remaining in the said printing offices and dwelling houses as aforesaid incumbering the same and doing damage therein, he the said defendant at the said several times, when &c, as servant and by the command of the said Richard McCarty as aforesaid, in order to remove the said incumbrances. seized, tore down, took and carried away, the printing press type, furniture and apparatus belonging to and appertaining to the said printing office in the said first court, and also, as the servant and by the command of the said, John Smith as aforesaid seized, tore down, took and carried away the printing press type furniture and apparatus belonging to and appertaining to the said printing office in the said second court of the said declaration mentioned, from and out of the said printing office and dwelling, in the first court, and, also, from and out of the printing office and dwelling house in the second court in the said declaration mentioned and removed there to a convenient distance and place and there left therein for the use of the plaintiff, as he lawfully might, for the cause aforesaid doing no unnecessary damage to the plaintiff, which are the same supposed trespasses in the introductory part of this plea mentioned whereof, the said plaintiff has above complained against him the said defendant and this he is ready to verify. Whereof he prays judgement, if the said plaintiff ought to have or maintain his aforesaid action thereof against him &c.

Reynolds, Birch, Burden, Young Chiles, Hicks, and Wilson Attorneys for defendants

Robert Johnson Ads Trespass Not Guilty William W. Phelps Impleaded with others

And the said Robert Johnson comes and defends the force and injury. When &c and says he is not guilty of the said supposed trespasses above laid to his
charge, or any part whereof in manner and form, as the said plaintiff has complained against him, &c.

Reynolds, Birch, Burden, Young, Chiles, Hicks, and Wilson
Attorneys for defendants

And the Plaintiff doth the like.
Rees & others [Wells, Atchison, Doniphan, Wood]
Attorneys for Plaintiff

[February Term, 1835]
APPENDIX D

LETTERS FROM A LEXINGTON MOB MEMBER

THE MORMON CONTROVERSY

"The Report which reached us some time ago, in the shape of a private letter published in an Ohio paper, of a battle between the Mormons and the inhabitants of Jackson County, in Missouri, turns out to be untrue. How near they have been to a Battle, and a very bloody one, will appear from the following information (which, as to facts, may be relied upon), copied from a Kentucky paper.—Nat. Intelligencer. From the Maysville, (Ky.) Eagle.

"The following extracts of letters, from a young gentleman of Missouri to his father, in Mason county, have been politely furnished us for publication. They contain the latest and most authentic intelligence from the seat of the Mormon operations: Lexington, Mo., June 20, 1834.

"In a former letter I wrote at some length about the Mormons, and promised to write again on the subject. They have just received a large re-inforcement from the East, which makes their numbers amount to 800 or 1000 men—all well armed, with guns, tomahawks, knives, and from two to four braces of pistols each. They went through the county on the North of the river, yesterday. We understood that the people of that county intended to stop them, and for the purpose of assisting them, we raised about forty men, but could not overtake them (the Mormons), as they raised a dog trot, and kept it up most of the day.

"Next Monday is supposed to be the day they intend crossing the river, to take Jackson county. The whole country is in an uproar. Volunteers are preparing to go to the scene of action. Should they cross the river, there will be a battle, and probably much blood shed. Among others, I shall start on Saturday next, at 8 o'clock."
"Lexington, June 28.

"From my last letter, you may possibly be expecting to hear of a severe battle between the Mormons and Jacksonians—but you will not. We went up to Jackson county, armed with guns, knives, &c., in full expectation of meeting an enemy determined on victory or death. Nothing less could have been anticipated; for Smith, their prophet, had promised to raise all of them that should be slain in fighting the Lord's battles.

"You may recollect that, some months ago, the people of Jackson drove all the Mormons out of the county, on account, as they alleged, of improper conduct such as stirring up a seditious feeling in the slaves and indians, stealing hogs, cattle, &c., and, worst of all, threatening to take possession of the whole of this upper country, either (according to Smith's revelation) by purchase or by blood. Some of them had even predicted the Independence, the county seat of Jackson, would flow with blood—the men should be slain, and the women become their slaves. In addition to this, they are of odious fame in several particulars. When driven from Jackson, they took refuge in the adjoining counties, principally in Clay county, where they remained in peace and inaction. Some time in May there was a great bustle among them—selling off their little patches of corn for guns, buying gun locks, powder and lead, manufacturing pistols and swords, and collecting themselves into a body in Clay county, from which place they threatened to cross over and attack their old neighbors, to recover the New Jerusalem from the infidels.

"About the same time, letters were written from the State of Ohio, informing the people of Jackson of the party that were starting from that place to join their brethren in Missouri. At first we thought it was all a hoax, not believing it possible that so many knaves and fools could be mustered in that State; nor could we believe it, until they had actually arrived. The arrival of such a body of armed troops, whose object was to butcher a portion of our citizens, aroused the whole county against them.

"The Jackson people offered them twice the valuation of all their possessions, which was refused. They had collected in Clay county, and built a number of boats, to cross their forces over. Last Monday was, no doubt, the time they intended to cross, and would most probably have done so, had it not been for the
numbers who went from this county to oppose them. Jackson county could raise about 900 men, and 400 went from Lafayette; about 300 more would have marched in a day or two, if they had been required. I know we had neither law nor gospel on our side, but self-preservation urged us to pursue that course, for we knew that our county would be the next to suffer from their presence. If they had crossed the river I very much question if one would have been left to tell the tale. No quarter would have been given. We could have killed most of them before they got across the river.

"Smith now tells them (the Mormons), that it does not matter about building the temple yet—that they may wait 50 or 100 years longer. Meanwhile, they will locate somewhere else. I am told there are a goodly number about to leave the country."

The Connecticut Courant [Hartford], August 4, 1834.
APPENDIX E

November 7th 1968

Supt. of Sociology and Anthropology
University of Missouri At Columbia.

REPORT ON SKELETAL MATERIALS EXCAVATED
BY CHIEF DEPUTY SHERIFF McDOWELL OF
CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI

(Submitted through Mr. J. Mett Shippee)

These skeletal remains comprise parts of three individuals, two represented by substantially complete and one by a fragmentary skull (only the frontal parietals, and occipital). The state of preservation of all three individuals was exceptionally good. The two more complete individuals were evidently buried in much the same environment, while the third specimen (the fragmentary skull) had apparently been exposed to the elements for some time. In light of the fragmentary nature of the remains of the third person, no attempt at analysis was made; any statement made would be too conjectural to have significance.

In cleaning, preparatory to analysis, no cultural materials of any sort (no buttons, beads, flint chips, pottery fragments, etc.) were recovered from the surrounding dirt or from the inside the skulls. This means that analysis proceeded solely on the physical characteristics of the two skeletons with no hint as to their racial affiliations provided by other evidence.

If the circumstances surrounding the recovery of these skeletons are correctly understood, there exist three probable racial affiliations: American WHITE, American Negroid, and American INDIAN. The possibility of course exists that some more exotic persons found their way to Missouri at an unknown date in the past, but it must be dismissed as too remote for consideration here.

The skeletal materials were received with the remains of all three individuals lumped together; it
was impossible to tell on the basis of packing which
post-cranial skeleton belonged with which skull.
Therefore it was necessary to sort the bones in order
to associate them with the skull, while this can be
done with some assurance, on the basis of size, condi-
tion, prominence of muscular attachments, and similar
criteria, it may have introduced some errors into the
analysis.

ANALYSIS OF NUMBER ONE

One of the skeletons, arbitrarily designated as
number one, was characterized by a substantial develop-
ment of the supraorbital ridges; these were unusual in
that the portion over the nasal region was sufficiently
developed to join the lateral portions into a substan-
tially continuous torus. The vertex of this skull was
placed well forward, in the vicinity of bregma if not
in front of it, and the level was maintained for a
considerable distance to the rear along the sagittal
suture. A lateral view of this feature presents a
flat-topped appearance, though it may not have been
apparent under the hair of the living individual.

The temporal cresting and the mastoid processes
are well marked. Somewhat surprisingly, the nuchal
crest is not as prominent as might be expected in a
well-muscled individual.

The long bones which are believed to belong to
Number One are heavy and have prominent ridges of
muscular attachment. The articulations, both the ends
of the bones and the articular facet are large and
are notable for their marked curvature in the dorsal-
ventral plane; it is possible that the individual in
life walked with bent knees. This curvature itself
might be the product either of gait or rickets, though
the probability of the latter is diminished by the
absence of other rachitic deformation.

Number One's dental condition is fair to poor.
The teeth are heavily, though not extremely worn and
there is evidence of a long history of dental decay. A
number of teeth were lost in the years before death and
one was in an advanced state of decay at the time of
death.
CONCLUSIONS ON NUMBER ONE

On the basis of dental wear and the closure of the cranial suture, Number One is believed to have been between fifty and sixty years old at death. The general ruggedness of skull and post-cranial skeleton, together with the substantial supraorbital development and general conformation of the face and cranial vault suggest strongly that this individual was male. The pelvis which is deemed associated, tends to confirm such a judgment. Skeletal asymmetry favors the possibility of lefthandedness.

Some of the foregoing characteristics would suggest a Caucasoid racial affiliation. To this estimate the relatively high nasal structure lends credence. It is possible, however, that the individual was a white Indian hybrid, though there are no strong traces of American Mongoloid (Indian) affiliation. In the absence of clear indications to the contrary, it is concluded that Number One was Caucasoid (White).

Reconstruction of the living stature of individuals is fraught with possible error. All tables and formulae which purport to aid the investigator on the score are designed to give average stature figures for groups of individuals. The application of such calculations to single individuals may lead to errors as great as four inches.

Stature reconstruction for individual Number One yields the following results: by Manouvrier's table (with two centimeter correction) an average of four determinations gave 66.3 inches (1684.7 mm); by Pearson's humerus and radius) was 67.1 inches (1705.1 mm). The probable stature in life was 66.5 - 67.0 inches (1690 - 1700 mm).

ANALYSIS OF NUMBER TWO

The other relatively complete skeleton was designated Number Two. The skull is rather gracile, with a smooth, rounded forehead lacking supraorbital ridges. Its only noticeable feature is a surprisingly (in light of the general gracile character) heavy development of nuchal crest. This may, however, be a product of the weight of the face. The individual has a long middle and lower face and would have been called "Horse-Face" by uncharitable contemporaries.
The long bones believed associated with this skull are light and slender, with small articulations. The pelvis is too incomplete to be used for any substantial analysis.

The dental condition is fair to good, with no losses, but one tooth badly decayed. The teeth display only mild wear.

CONCLUSIONS ON NUMBER TWO

On the basis of dental wear and closures of the cranial sutures, this individual is believed to have been between twenty-five and thirty-five years old at death. No estimation of age could be made from the remains of the pelvis, though conclusions reached on this latter basis would be preferred to those established on the teeth and sutures alone.

The smoothness of skull and post-cranial skeleton are congruent with assignment of this individual as female. What little could be determined from the pelvic fragments deemed associated confirmed this opinion.

Racial affiliations are less marked in female skeletons than in male, so that racial attribution of this individual are less certain than they are of Number One. It would, however, appear most likely that Number Two was Caucasoid. There was no marked feature contradictory to this point of view.

Stature reconstruction for Number Two gives the following results: by Manouvrier's table for WHITE Females (with correction), an average of six determinations was 62.8 inches (1596.6mm.); by Pearson's formulae, an average of four determinations (formulae based on femur, humerus, and radius) 65.4 inches, (1660.5mm.), and an average of three determinations (formulae bases on femur, humerus, and Tibia) 64.7 inches (1642.7mm.). The probable stature in life was 64 - 65 inches (1625-1650 mm.).

By Robert F. G. Spier
Asst. Professor of Anthropology.
APPENDIX F

LETTER OF W. W. PHELPS TO GOVERNOR DANIEL DUNKLIN,
AUGUST 1, 1834

Liberty, August 1, 1834

Dear Sir,

It has been some time since we addressed you, and one great reason is, the high excitement in the upper country, against our people. We had calculated to have returned to our own lands and property, in Jackson County in season to harvest our many wheat fields there, but the rage and strength of the mob and the fuss and excitement of many in the adjoining country have caused a different issue. When our emigrating brethren arrived from the east, the prospect of bloodshed or civil war, was so apparent in Jackson county, that our people resolved to cease from the idea for a while, of returning to their land, and possessions, notwithstanding your Excellency was ready (agreeably to your communication to us) to guard us into Jackson, whenever we said we were prepared to go.

Your Excellency is aware from what has transpired in relation to the unparalleled tragedy in Jackson County, that our people, as a society, do not mean to do any thing contrary to the law of the land or the known will of God; and, therefore, we tarry as we can, while every laudable, honorable, and legal means are used, through the aid of public opinion. Executive influence, and personal energy to obtain our rights and the great damage we have sustained in Jackson County while we do so and bear and forbear. We wish to be distinctly understood as not yielding any right or claim as citizens of this republic, nor shall we for any consideration: According to the Magna Charta of the United States we only ask to enjoy the privilege of our God, our country, and our rights, like other men, and whether we emigrate from state to state by single families, or in larger bodies, armed for militia duty and settle so matters not, so that we break no law and are protected by authority from mobs, as all honest citizens should be.

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We acquaint your excellency with the fact, thus, since as supposed, hostilities had ceased in Jackson, about the middle of July last, one of our men went to the extreme west part of Jackson county to collect a debt due him, &c. and was immediately run down by a party of the mob on horseback, and smitten down with a hand spike, and cruelly whipped. After he came to he was told by _____ men and is ready to make an affidavit if required, that this mob had bound themselves by an oath to kill every Mormon that came into Jackson County. This man escaped death as it were by a miracle.

Such scenes connected with the fact, that the mob have several cannon to guard the ferries and fight the Mormons, have any other appearance than peace, and without the strong arm of higher authority to turn their use, will yet be deplored when power goes beyond lenity. Your second order for our guns can not be accomplished by us, the excitement being great, and the appearance that the mob do not mean to give them up, leads us to believe that your excellency will have to appoint an agent with authority to get them for us.

We shall continue to address you on our affairs, and shall expect answers as usual.

While we remain your Excellency's friends,

W. W. Phelps

His Excellency
Daniel Dunklin
Jefferson City, Mo.
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¹Deed Books, Clay County Courthouse

²Katherine Gentry Bushman (comp.), *Index to Clay County Original Land Grants*, pp. 21, 64.
A HISTORY OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS
IN CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI,
FROM 1833 TO 1837

Max H Parkin
Department of Church History and Doctrine
Ph.D. Degree, August 1976

ABSTRACT

Since the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the 1830's believed that Jackson County, Missouri, was to be the location of the millennial headquarters of the Church, many Mormons moved to the county from 1831 to 1833. In November, 1833, a Jackson County mob drove many members of the Church across the Missouri River into Clay County.

This treatise is a study of the life, manners, and customs of the Mormon people while they lived in Clay County. Also, it examines Mormon attempts to redress the wrongs committed in Jackson County, the Mormon lands and communities in Jackson and Clay counties, and the geographic locations of certain historical events, including the activities of Zion's Camp in Clay County. Then, it considers the activities of the Clay County settlers who in the summer of 1836 armed themselves against the Latter-day Saints and persuaded many members of that faith to depart from the county and relocate in a sparsely settled part of upper Ray County, Missouri.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

Milton V. Backman, Jr., Committee Chairman
LaMar C. Berrett, Committee Member
Richard L. Anderson, Committee Member
Larry C. Porter, Department Chairman