In case you are interested –
the story from our point of view –

EVENTS INCIDENT TO THE MARTYRDOM AND BURIAL OF JOEL FRANKLIN LeBARON

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At about 5:00 a.m., Monday, August 21, 1972, I was awakened by a loud knock at my kitchen door. I asked who it was. Irene’s voice answered me. Her tone told me that which her words had not. I knew that something serious had happened. My first thought was that it was one of her children. “Open up, something terrible has happened”, she cried.

I opened the door as she said, “Dan shot and killed Joel. He’s dead”. My first reaction was “No, no it can’t be. That’s impossible. Surely, there is some mistake.” She entered from the darkness outside. Behind her were Fernando Castro Jr. and Raul Perez. Raul, the delegated law officer in Colonia Los Molinos, carried a rifle.

They assured me that the report was true, but I couldn’t believe it. Surely, somehow it just couldn’t be. What feelings and thoughts raced through my mind. In an instant, so much flashed before me — not Joel — our beloved Joel, shot and killed; not he, the kindest man I ever knew.

Before me passed a remembrance of the years I had known Joel—all he had taught us. What had he said about his mission? Had he not said Father LeBaron had promised him that no power would destroy him until his mission was accomplished and that he would not fail? But, again, here they were telling me more of the details. Joel was dead! He had been shot and killed the day before, around noon. Yes, it was true, Kimball Stubbs was here in the colony. He had seen the body himself in a funeral home in Ensenada.

I thought of Joel’s sickness with diphtheria at my home in the mountains some years before. How close he had come to death and how valiently he had struggled to live.

At that time when Joel was at the worst, it was Dan who paced back and forth outside the house where Joel lay so critically ill. Dan had offered to go to Colonia LeBaron immediately. He would get Brother Tucker, and surely somehow his faith would have effect. Now, here they were reiterating that it was Dan who had killed Joel. No, Dan hadn’t been caught, but there was ample proof.

One by one my children began awakening. Hearing the excitement, they came to the kitchen. Each one, in turn, heard the story and wept, “Not Uncle Joel. How could they do it? It was Uncle Ervil’s fault. He said he’d kill Uncle Joel and Daddy, too”.

One of them sobbed, “Somebody ought to just go get Uncle Ervil and kill him for what he’s done”, “No, children,” I replied, “Judgment remains with God. Let’s remember what Christ said as He hung on the cross, ‘Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.’” I assured them that this was the only course Joel would want us to take.

My mind was in most terrible turmoil. What, oh, what would happen to God’s kingdom? What of the gospel that was to go forth to every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and what of the establishment of the millenial reign of peace? Everyone else was weeping, but for the first time in my life, tears would not come.

But, I reasoned, Joel, this man we had known so well, this man whose whole life had been dedicated to God’s service, was not a liar! Any other person upon the earth could be, perhaps, but not Joel. He had taught us things we could not deny. If he had lied about these things, his whole claim could only be a farce. But regardless of all else, Joel was not a liar. He was the most honest man I ever knew and completely without guile. Let any other mortal be guilty, but Joel was not! Somehow, Joel had not done all his work in vain. Somehow God’s kingdom would roll on. But without Joel, how, how, how?

Irene, Raul and Fernando left after a short time. Daylight had now dawned. I went out to the trailer where my sons, Mark and Pierre were sleeping. I awoke them and related the tragic event — that event which I knew would never let their lives be the same again.

I walked over toward the center of the colony. I met Ruben Sanchez, Floren’s friend, who had two weeks before, in church, expressed his desire to be baptized. He assured me that he would do everything in his power to protect the lives of the women and children, should we be in danger and that he would give his life before he let harm come to us.

I went on towards Alma’s house. On the way, I met Raul Perez and Benjamin Zara-te. As I approached Alma’s home, he came out. I had seen him only the day before, but how he had aged! As I came up, he put out his arm and embraced me. For a moment our hearts were too full for words. Then he said, “Sister, the worst thing that could possibly happen, has happened. It is the last thing I thought could ever happen”. We talked a few minutes. His grief was so profound yet there was a stoic solemnity about it. How sad, indeed, as he spoke of
the love he bore for his departed brother.

As I left Alma, I met Jose Leon Perez on the corner of the street. He could scarcely talk. We shook hands. I told him that my experience proved Joel was not a liar; that somehow the work would go on; I knew Joel had not deceived us. He made little comment and I knew he felt like I did those first few minutes.

What would be done? What about a funeral? Verlan had already gone to Chihuahua for a conference that would be held there on the weekend. (Only a short time before, Ervil's men had said, braggishly, for us to wait and see; at conference time they had a surprise for us).

I had planned to leave Colonía Los Molinos Wednesday morning with some passengers and to meet my son, Verlan M. Jr. in San Diego and from there leave for Chihuahua.

In the confusion I felt I should leave for Ensenada; still prepared to go to Chihuahua if necessary. What feelings entered my heart. It was impossible to take all my children. At what moment might the assassins descend upon us? Yet, I needed to go and take those who wanted to bid Joel farewell, in case the funeral should be held in Chihuahua. In these moments of decision, Keith Bateman came with a letter from Verlan M. in San Diego. His father had called from Chihuahua saying I was to go there as that is where the funeral would be held. We were to get to San Diego as soon as possible. I knew I must go. I must leave my loved ones behind in the hands of the Lord.

Hastily, we prepared our things for the trip and left the colony. What thoughts filled our minds. Was it possible we were going to see Joel's slain body? This could not be a reality and yet we were doing it. When we would see Joel's body, then perhaps we could really believe it.

Upon arriving in Ensenada, we went immediately to the funeral home. Our concern was that the body would be shipped to Chihuahua before we could arrive.

As we entered the funeral home, a dread filled my heart. I didn't want to see Joel's murdered body. Yet, somehow, I must. I spoke to the man in attendance as we entered and asked permission to view the body. He never spoke, but merely indicated the adjoining room.

We entered to the rear of a chapel. To our surprise, a funeral service was in session. Quietly we entered and took our places. The room was decorated in purple and pink, the carpets, benches, etc., all being done in these colors. At the front in the center of the room was the coffin.

Joel's widows and children were seated in the front benches to my right as I faced the front. Eugene Flaker, who conducted, was speaking. The opening prayer, I learned later, had been given by Samuel LeBaron. As the service continued, more people kept arriving. Quietly, they took their places. Men left and stood at the back and to the sides of the room making seats available for the women and children who came in.

What a group we presented. Very few were dressed for a funeral. Most of us had on traveling clothes.

How awed I was by the realization that this was actually Joel's funeral. The coffin before us held his murdered body.

Regaining my composure somewhat, I looked in my purse for an envelope or a paper on which to take notes. I found a notebook. I had forgotten I had hurriedly put it there with the idea of perhaps recording events for my journal.

I took the following notes of the meeting. They are not complete but I tried to preserve the words and ideas of the speakers as much as possible. Brother Castro's speech was in Spanish. I translated it as I took notes.

SAMUEL LEBARON. Opening prayer.

EUGENE FLAKER. Conducting. He spoke briefly on what Joel's life had been and how we all feel at this time.

PAUL TAYLOR (In Spanish). He spoke of Joel's love and charity and what he had done for humanity. He spoke of Joel's work in planting trees and also all that he had done for others.

(In English). Though we are here, it is a shock. It seems an unreality — far from our expectations. Our faith was for Joel to bring in the millennium. We have depended too much on Joel. It is not too late for the work to go on. We have to become dependable, a people that will stand on their own feet as prophesied. Joel will go down in history as a married servant. The Lord is much more clever than the devil. There will be those who will leave. There will be those who will stay and be strengthened by their own works and faith. Now that we do not have Joel to lean on, we need to go forth doing our duty. Joel will take a position in the pages of history, take his place
as a martyr. Most of his wishes and desires have been realized by what he did for others.

Moctezuma taught his people that, as a group, many sticks have strength. We have to work together or fall by the wayside.

Joel has shown nothing but love and understanding. He has not had the honors of men, but he has been accepted and approved by God.

I am sure there are many who will remem ber the times we have known. We will remember the good and the bad. I know there is no one who can honestly say anything of consequence against Joel.

Joel will not rest until he sees the ushering in of the millennium. He will do his part on the other side of the veil. I hope that this will make us do our part and make us open up the books. We must stand firm and continue in the faith.

There is much to be said about Joel. Books will be written about him.

SAMUEL LEBARON. Dear Brothers and Sisters and Friends. For my uncle, I would like to say we have seen his works of justice and the road he took. If we, as members and friends, take the course and follow the road he took, the same road that Jesus Christ took, we will be able to go where he is. What has happened here is the same thing that happened to Jesus Christ.

We have been in this church and how many times our prophet has given us the example and found we would not follow. It is as Jesus said when he went on the Mount, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thee as a hen gathers her chicks." It is the same with us. We have lacked humility and faith. If we want to go on and do something, we have to go forward.

Men who are for justice have to fall. This has always happened. They are the ones who raise up and have to fall. Let's not just leave things, but go on in justice and righteousness. Great weighty things will come. If we want to have contact with these great men, we must take our part with them with more strength and determination. God has promised to uphold us if we go forward. I pray that we might do this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

FERNANDO CASTRO SR. I hope you can hear me. I will try to be heard. I calculate that the hearts of all here present are broken by the acts of those who have become traitors.

For us, Joel was more than a brother. He was as a father who could lead his children in the paths of happiness. He taught us to love one another and he taught us the true principles of charity. He said that we should cover all weakness with a cloak of charity, and that we should go down to the grave with a glad heart and not with bitterness. He has now manifested this doctrine on his face, upon which there is no manifestation of rancor or bitterness against the men who have taken his mortal life.

God is a merciful God. He knows why this has happened. This brother with children had to go ahead, though the circumstances confound our minds.

Before nations and the isles of the sea, it has been proven that this man is a servant of God. The greatest testimony of all is his blood that was spilt upon this earth. This is the blood of liberty of God's children.

Mexico is a free nation and opens her arms for God's people to be protected by this republic. These were the feelings of Joseph Smith and Benjamin F. Johnson. These were the feelings that caused Dayer LeBaron to take the work forward in this nation.

Let us not allow grief to overcome our spirits. This is the same battle that Satan has waged since the beginning of the world. In the times of Adam, a brother shed the blood of his brother. We should not take this as a strange thing. Let us not give up. The work will go forward. Do not think this is the only blood that has been spilt. There are others who have put their lives on the altar.

This work has just begun the teaching of laws of justice and righteousness. We must go forward with greater determination in our efforts to spread the truth. These truths will, as a torrent, fill the earth.

Let us remember Joel and keep his teachings in our hearts, remembering his love and his goodness. I want to give you the spirit of light and the spark of the gospel. Be ready to give your blood and life if necessary.

The doctrine Joel taught is beautiful. It is like honey to our palates and produces joy. Let us go forward and raise up these children in the church. Let us give them this love and teach them these principles. Let us never forget his love or cease to proclaim this work. May God bless each of you to be able to stand on your feet and continue
to pass the tests that will come. Stand firm to the testimony of this man. If you don’t have it; look for it. God bless each one of you.

ALMA D. LEBARON JR. It is with great sadness that I stand before you. I now feel to regret I didn’t give Joel better support and help and that I wasn’t more willing to sacrifice. It was so easy to complain against him and his weaknesses. Had I but known this would happen, how much more willing would I have been to help and support him.

Now the Lord will bless us with a new leader, with more weaknesses and faults and we will see if we are still going to complain.

Before us lay the remains of one of the great prophets of the earth. Let us take account of present weaknesses and uphold the new prophet that God will raise up. Who It might be do not know for sure. I expected Joel to lead us right into the millennium. He said that he had the promise from Almighty God that he would not fail and would live till his mission was fulfilled.

God knows what He has done. This martyrdom will prove as in all ages past, that it will be a greater benefit to the people for his having gone to the other side. It will cause the righteous in heart to look more deeply in history and the works of righteousness. The enemy will take a back step.

When Joseph Smith was martyred, the enemy thought it would be the end of Mormonism. They thought Mormonism would be scattered to the four winds of the earth. The enemy thought if Brother Joel was killed that this people would be stopped and that those who are jealous would gain a following. Those who are sincere and honest will see that those who have been instrumental in taking the life of our prophet have been traitors and hypocrites.

I pray the blessings of God upon Joel’s widows and his children, that they will have special help to grow up to be men like their father and women like their mothers. I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

KEITH BATEMAN (Closing Prayer). We bow our heads on this solemn occasion. This beloved man has been removed from our midst. We are most grateful to have known him and loved him and to have associated with him. We shall mourn him, not because of where he goes, but for loss of his love and association and strength.

When the man who has been called is known, we will know of him. May you give him the strength he will need. We pray the work Joel has established will not die. May we round up our shoulders and go forward and be lights to the world and show the world that this is the true work. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The congregation stood and those toward the front began filing past the coffin. Most of those in the group were Mexicans. I was amazed that so many of Joel’s friends were included in the group. The family comprised the smaller portion of the crowd. Included were Magdalena’s family. The families of two of her brothers and two uncles were present. Though not members of the church, each one of them expressed what a great personal loss this was to him. They all told of how Joel had always helped them and showed nothing but kindness to them.

An example of these sentiments was what Miguel Soto’s wife, Martha, weeping told me. A few days before, Joel had stopped at their home in Chapultepec. He dashed in, and asked how everyone was, saying that he was in a real hurry, but that he still wanted to say “hello”. How typical of Joel!

The crowd passed the coffin and out an exit to the left and front of the room. The widows and immediate family lingered toward the front.

When I reached the coffin, the dread, horror and fear that had been in my heart left me as I saw Joel’s face. How peaceful and beautiful he looked. Seeing his expression gave me the assurance that God’s hand should be recognized in all this. How utterly peaceful he looked! His hands were clasped in such a natural position. What works had been accomplished by those hands — such arduous physical labor! How many times they had given callings, appointments and blessings to the people. When would a servant of God again parallel the works done by this man?

I passed into the main entrance of the funeral home. Everyone there seemed too moved to talk. Reverence and sorrow were registered on the faces of all present.

Outside, I was surprised to see that the crowd had not dispersed. The sidewalks were filled. People were in small groups talking.

I saw Doña Lola Velasco’s two sons, Chon and Pimeño, who had known Joel for years in the mountains of Chihuahua.
How they had admired and loved Joel. They expressed their disbelief that anyone could murder a man so kind, charitable and wonderful as Joel. Chon related to me that the day before he had been working at his job at a garage in Ensenada. He heard a lot of excitement across the street outside and saw that a crowd had gathered. He went over to see what had happened. He was told that an American had been killed by another American. He said he went into the room where the killing had taken place. Blood was still fresh beside the bullet holes that went into the floor. A comb and a paper or two from a pocket were strewn close by. A piece of a broken chair lay to one side.

Chon went on to tell me that he returned to his work, shocked and horrified at what he had seen. It was not until the next morning, that he learned that it was Joel's blood he had seen and Joel's belongings strewn on the floor. His voice faltered and his eyes filled as he related this to me.

I went back into the funeral home. Several of our young men and boys were standing at a military stance to the right of the coffin. They formed two lines. Standing beside the coffin for several minutes in this manner is a custom observed in Mexico as a token of respect to a deceased dignitary.

Some of the members of Ervil's group came into the funeral home about this time. One of Ervil's wives came up to me and said that it had been a long time since we had seen each other. This I reaffirmed. I had no desire to speak to her or any of them. With Joel's body there before me, though, I felt I must exercise some of that charity he had shown so well.

Ervil's people went to the front and embraced the widows which I felt was akin to Judas' kiss. They stood by the coffin and talked.

Again Ervil's wife came back to where I was standing. "Isn't it something the things that have to happen in this life?" she said. She said it as a matter of being a necessity and completely without any compassion or feeling. I turned from her, unable to say anything.

I went outside to bid farewell to those who were going back to Los Molinos and we left to San Diego.

Meanwhile, preparations were being made for flying Joel's body to Chihuahua for burial there. Joel Jr. related these details to me. He said that he felt no matter what the expense or what problems were involved, that he would have his father laid to rest in Chihuahua.

Arrangements were made by Joel Jr. to hire a plane to take the body and five passengers to Casas Grandes, Chihuahua. The plane was to leave the next morning — Tuesday, at 6:00.

After Joel Jr. had arranged for the plane, he received word that Ossmen Jones had already sent a pilot friend of his with a plane from Chihuahua City to Ensenada. Joel Jr. sent word to have the plane sent back as he already had one hired.

Ossmen's friend was then in flight from Chihuahua, but Ossmen was able to radio him. He accepted the change of instructions graciously and returned to Chihuahua.

Joel Jr. had planned for Joel's widows, Gaye and Isabel, to accompany him on the plane with the body. Fernando Castro was also to go with them. Brother Castro decided to return to Los Molinos first that he might better prepare for the trip the next morning.

Shortly after Brother Castro left Ensenada however, Joel Jr. received word that the plane he had hired would be unable to leave the next morning. It could, however, leave immediately.

Hurriedly, Joel Jr. obtained necessary papers from the Ministerio Publico. Joel Jr. then left word that he could not wait for Brother Castro and others, but that he must leave immediately.

Joel's body was taken to the Ensenada airport in a hearse. Magdalena's brothers and their families, the Velasco boys, Rodolfo and Mundo Gaytan and others followed the hearse to the airport.

Joel Jr. went shortly after with Isabel. As he arrived at the airport, the hearse was backing up to the plane. It was necessary to lift the coffin up and twist it slightly to get it in the plane.

The plane was a Cessna 410 with twin engines. To the left of the plane at the front sat the pilot. On his right was a copilot. Joel Jr. sat directly behind the pilot. Isabel was seated back of Joel Jr. The door of the plane opened behind where Isabel sat. A double seat was at the rear of the plane. Quinardo Soto and his nephew, Rene, rode there.

The coffin was placed directly behind the co-pilot. It filled most of the remaining space in the plane.
Just before dark at about 6:20 p.m. the plane left Ensenada. By the time it crossed over the Gulf of California, it was dark.

From Cananea the plane took a wrong route and went south farther than it should have. A town was seen below some time later. The pilot was not sure if this were Casas Grandes or not. The co-pilot had been to Casas a month before but he wasn’t sure either. The pilot circled the town several times.

Below, people saw that the plane wanted to land. Hurriedly, they took pick-ups and cars out and lit up the field to enable the plane to land.

Joel Jr. looked for someone he knew but could recognize no one. The pilot asked where he was and was told he was in Madera.

The pilot felt it would be better if he looked over the runway before taking off. He was driven around the runway in a truck.

The pilot returned and as the plane was preparing to leave, an army captain came to inspect the plane and check papers. He found everything was in order.

The engines of the plane were hot and were slow in starting. The truck and car lights again lighted the runway as the plane ascended.

In about three minutes, lights could be seen below. At first the pilot thought they were from Casas Grandes. He finally realized though they were from small towns. Below were seen Nicolas Bravo, Gomez Farias, Zaragoza, El Valle and Lagunitas. Then Casas Grandes was seen to the north.

The lights at the airport below lit up as the plane approached. During the landing, Joel Jr. saw Ossmen’s truck and began to recognize people in the crowd below.

Joel Jr. had expected to be met by his mother, Verlan, Ossmen and members of the immediate family. Instead, he found a huge throng of people there waiting. As the immediate family had prepared to go from Colonia LeBaron to the airport in Casas Grandes, more people kept arriving. Each one wanted to accompany them in meeting the plane that would bear the body of their beloved friend.

Word had spread from Colonia LeBaron to the surrounding towns. Yes, it was true Joel had been killed. The body was being flown from Ensenada and would arrive at the airport about 10:00 p.m. that evening.

Friends, loved ones and church members gathered at Magdalena’s house. All wanted to go and meet the plane. What had been a small group now had become a large crowd. They went to Casas Grandes ahead of the scheduled hour of arrival to wait at the airport.

The runway lights were tested ahead of time and were in good working order. As the scheduled time neared for the arrival of the plane, a search light circled the sky.

In the darkness of the night, numerous people looked into the starry sky. Each in his heart bore the burden of the fact that shortly would arrive the body of a beloved friend, brother, husband, or father who had been murdered in cold blood.

Into the night the crowd peered. Nothing was seen except the silent stars. Minutes passed that seemed an eternity. Suddenly to the south, someone saw a light moving. It came closer.

Huge lights flooded the runway. Overhead the plane circled and then landed.

The crowd pressed in around the plane as the door opened. Joel Jr. saw his weeping mother and younger brothers and sisters in the crowd with Verlan, Siegfried Widmar, Ossmen Jones and Priscilla.

What a scene of sorrow was witnessed there on that starry night. The crowd, after a short time, cleared back. Ossmen Jones’ pick-up was backed up to the door of the plane. The coffin was slowly raised in the plane. It was again turned at an angle and then removed.

Verlan, Siegfried and Ossmen rode in the pick-up with the body. Joel Jr. rode to the colony in Rhonita Jensen’s car with his mother and others of the family.

As the procession of cars entered Colonia LeBaron, a throng of people waited at Magdalena’s house. To the weeping mother, widows, children, friends, brothers and sisters, what a sorrowful night it was.

Wednesday, August 23, 1972 as the sun rose over Colonia LeBaron a quiet hush seemed to prevail. Even the singing of the birds in the trees was subdued. It was as if Nature herself stood in awe and were paying her respects. Lying in state in this colony was the man upon whom all the hopes and aspirations of God’s kingdom had centered. That man who had after so long a silence of the Heavens brought forth the mighty word of God, was dead. “Thus saith the Lord” had again prefaced a glorious revelation from heaven, and a servant, “one mighty and strong”, had come forth to set in order God’s house.
Yet, this morning as the sun rose we were faced with the dreadful reality that this man had fallen at the hands of an assassin. Today we were to lay Brother Joel’s mortal remains in the earth.

His body was lying in state in a middle room of the unfinished adobe addition to the house he had made years before for his wife, Magdalena. The room in which the body lay had a rough cement floor and the walls had a first rough coat of cement plaster. The room adjoining it to the east was bare and empty and that to the west had cement, plumbing materials and various building supplies that were being used in the construction of the house. A long newly tiled hall connected the new addition of the house with the rest.

The room where the body lay was divided by walls but the ceiling opened into the other adjoining rooms, showing the open beams. Metal frames cased the windows of the new addition, but no glass had been put in.

Joel’s body was placed in the center of the room. Benches were put against the walls encircling the room. At the head of the coffin and at the side next to the head were very small tables on which were placed flowers.

The coffin was metal, a dull gold color and had a bronze-colored metal design resembling a torch on each corner, also two on each side of the coffin. The inside was quilted in a delicate velvet-like white material bordered with lace. A glass inner lid covered the coffin. The outer lid of the coffin was divided into two sections. Only the top one was opened, but still Joel’s hands were plainly visible those hands which had for so many years struggled and toiled.

There were deep creases in them. The nails were worn down and still held a reminder of the earth he had tilled, the wells he had dug and the trees he had planted.

He was dressed in a black suit, one better than perhaps any he had worn during his mortal lifetime. We who knew him knew he would have wanted something less. He had on a white shirt and a dark tie. The collar of the shirt was stiff, clean and beautiful. His attire was what we who loved and knew him wanted it to be, but how unlike it was to the usual work pants and plaid shirt he wore as he labored in so many places and ways.

On Joel’s face was an expression of peace, almost satisfaction, of which even his brutal and violent martyrdom had not robbed him. His chin and neck appeared fuller than in life. Even in death Joel was the victor. He who to us, was the personification of charity, he who had taught us what forgiveness means, had at the final moment of departure been tranquil and without malice.

I could not but exclaim to myself, “Even in dying have you not shown us what all your life you taught?”

Though peace and tranquility showed on his face, when I looked closer and longer there were evidences of that vile and heinous deed. Make-up had been carefully used to hide that atrocious act of violence. Under the make-up, an observing eye could still detect bruises, especially on the brow. On the head in the scalp were evidences of abuse and blows. Most criminal of all on the left side of his head stitches concealed the bullet wound that had laid his skull open.

Fortunately for his loved and dear ones, the coffin lid, connected on the left side and raised as it was, made it difficult to see these things. Also, sitting at an angle from the coffin, I noticed a dip in the bridge of his nose. Though it was scarcely noticeable when one stood above the coffin looking down, I am sure his nose had been broken.

The glass covering of the coffin was not opened to the public. However, about 1:00 a.m. of this same day, Joel’s seven widows met around the casket. Verlan opened the glass lid for them and they were able to touch the body. Verlan kissed and felt the hands and face of the brother he loved so dearly.

He said it was one of the most beautiful, yet heart-rending scenes in which he had ever participated. The wives spoke their last tender words of endearment. Each in turn offered a prayer. Upon each other’s shoulders they wept and begged forgiveness and lamented the fact that it had taken Joel’s death to unite them fully.

At the public viewing of the body, one could not comprehend the magnitude of the grief felt. The natives had come from all the surrounding places. Again and again the expression was made, “There was no man like him”; “He was the best man I ever knew!”; “He helped me so many times”; “He gave us anything he had without even thinking”; and “How could anyone do this to a man who never even could become angry with anyone?”

In the crowds of humble people, those Joel had loved, a silent grief prevailed. Most touching of all was their attempt to console and comfort those of us who have been so close to him. When was a man ever so fully loved, accepted and esteemed by a people other than his own, as was
this man? . . . this man, who in his lifetime, had preferred a humble meal with these people to a banquet among the elite.

The funeral service took place in the church building in Colonia LeBaron. It is a structure made of adobe and plastered with cement. The ceiling was unfinished with the open rafters showing. When the building was constructed, it had been made as a home, so changes and additions had been made. The congregation sat in what had been a long hall. Three pillars of metal pipe, painted white, supported the roof where a wall had been torn out to join the other part of the building. This opening did not run the full length of the other hall, but cut back, past mid-center of the room, so that the whole building did not form a complete rectangle. In this opening was a large platform on which was the pulpit. Behind the pulpit against the wall was a bench. During services, Abel LeBaron, Rafael Treviño, Lane Stubbs, Siegfried Widmar, Ossmen Jones and Thomas Liddiard sat on this bench. To the right were two pianos. One was against the east wall of the adjoining section of the room. On this piano was a flower arrangement of rose branches, zinnias and pink variegated roses. The other piano was placed at an angle with the back toward the congregation. Behind this piano against the wall was a bench on which sat Sisters Joann Reber, Rhonita Jensen, Lawreve Jensen and Judith Widmar.

On the wall behind the platform to the left was a door opening which was closed. This space held an arrangement of rose branches with flowers scattered on it. Also on this back wall was a large window in which were placed flowers. Two pitchers of water and a glass were there also.

In front of the pulpit, a row of cinder-blocks were stacked on the floor to the height of about two feet. A plank rested on top of them and was covered with a white table cloth. From a side angle the cinder blocks and plank were visible. Placed on top of this were four plastic buckets of flowers. Some of the buckets were covered with aluminum foil. The bucket on the left held beautiful orange-red gladiolas. The other three buckets held zinnias and scattered marigolds. All the buckets had green hedge cuttings. To the right of these buckets on the same plank was a large fired-clay Mexican pot. Zinnias were in it.

On the floor to the right of these flowers set slightly back was a potted bucket of petunias. The chipped, white enamel showed below the covering of aluminum foil. To the extreme left of the display of flowers was placed a piano bench. It had a plastic bucket on it and was filled with hedge branches and centered with yellow and orange gladiolas.

Directly in front of the flowers were placed two identical light colored varnished tables. A large white table cloth covered them. These tables were small children’s tables from Rhonita Jensen’s school. These held the coffin.

On top of the casket at the head was a wreath of hedge branches. There were also two other wreaths. One was given by Reynaldo Rascon and family and the other by Miguel and Quinardo Soto. One was lavender and white orchids. The other was white carnations. Both were made of plastic.

Rows of benches were placed facing the pulpit and forming a half circle. Six benches were in each row. On the front bench of the row directly facing the coffin were seated Joel’s widows in order of marriage—Magdalena, Jeannine, Gaye, Isabel, Kathy, Claudine and Priscilla. In seating the widows, the bench was not wide enough and a chair was placed on right hand side for Priscilla. Also to the left of the bench another chair was placed for Mother LeBaron. Kathy passed a tiny daughter to her sister. Gaye passed her 6 day old baby back for her daughter, Marzelle, to hold. The benches behind the widows were reserved for Joel’s family. Doña Magdalena, some of her daughters and sons-in-law and relatives also sat there.

On the front bench to the right of the center were seated Joel Jr., Ramon Sanchez, Sacramento Gutierrez, Luis Carlos LeBaron, and Larry Jones. The second bench held Verlan M. Jr., Ritchie Stubbs, Floren, Verlan and Esther LeBaron Spencer. All seating or directions mentioned are from left to right seen as one faced the pulpit.

Along the back of the room running from the entrance door to the corner and then extending along the east wall benches were placed. These and all other benches were filled and some persons remained standing.

Tape recording was done at the pulpit by Abel LeBaron. To facilitate translation, the natives who did not understand English were seated on the extreme left of the building (west side). A microphone was set up. Translators, Jay Ray and Verlan M. Jr., stood by the door at the back of the hall and translated as the speakers spoke.
There was no pause by the speakers.

Outside, plank benches had been placed on both sides of the sidewalk to the entrance of the church. Sides of the street to the west of the church had been marked off with white lines made of lime and designated “Special Parking”.

Everywhere before the service, young men and boys were seen busily engaged in various activities of preparing the church, the seating arrangements, roads, etc. It was remarkable to see the organization. At such a time of grief and sorrow, one would expect confusion and disorder. But a calm purposefulness prevailed. Each seemed to know exactly what he was doing and was quietly and efficiently accomplishing his task. Brother Ossmen Jones had organized all these details pertaining to the funeral as well as directing it. Programs for the funeral service were made. Front page lettering was done free-hand on stencil by Siegfried Widmar and copies were mimeo-graphed by Elizabeth and Rhonita Jensen. This was done in the morning and finished just in time to be passed out for the funeral.

The church building was filled. Silently and solemnly people took their places. There was a nod, quiet handshake and here and there a subdued word or two was heard.

The audience stood as the coffin was brought in. Joel Jr. followed by Ramon Sanchez, Luis Carlos and Larry Jones were on the left. To the right were Siegfried, Verlan M. J., Lane and Ritchie Stubs. Slowly, solemnly they entered and placed their sacred cargo before the congregation.

The grief and sorrow registered on their faces I cannot describe — such anguish on Joel Jr.’s face. Not yet twenty years old and what a mighty burden he carried. How old he looked!

OSSMEN JONES (In Spanish). It is an honor to be and speak here. I hope that we will try to recognize the hand of God in all things. The sermons will be translated.


AURELIO RIOS (In Spanish). Asked for door to be closed. Offered prayer.

OSSMEN JONES (In Spanish). The LeBaron family wants two women remembered who are here. These women were among the first friends to the LeBaron family in this place. Their names are Cristina Madrid Romero and Carmen Nuñez.

(In English). Each one of us could express the happy and joyous associations we have had with Brother Joel. Joel F. LeBaron was born July 9, 1923 in LaVerkin, Utah. His father and family left and went to Colonia Juarez when Joel was 9 months old. He lived there 20 years and was a valiant member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in that area.

Joel attended grade school 8 years and then the Juarez Stake Academy and was graduated at the age of 18.

He, with his father, planted and took care of an orchard, exerting hard physical labor. Later it was considered one of the best in the nation. Rainfall was little at that time. Wagon and team was used to water the trees. He went to the river and filled the drums with water and watered the trees in this manner.

The LeBaron family attended to their religious duties, though there was a religious difference between their father and church. Joel was called to the Mexican Mission at age of 19.

Joel’s father by revelation told of a colony that would be established for a time of great peril that would come upon the United States.

I remember discussions he had with my father, and his telling my father he had work to do. There was much talk, and progress was slow. My father criticized him somewhat.

Joel’s father looked in Sonora and Sinaloa and this state. He left Colonia Juarez and passed by this land. By revelation, it was made known to him that this was the place in which the colony would be established. Joel’s father had many revelations. He prophesied of the highway that passes by here, that it would go up between the pass where now it is. He said trails would be beaten here from the four corners of the earth because of the work that would be done. He said the gospel of the kingdom would go forth from this place, and go to all the world before the destruction of the wicked and the ushering in of the millennium.

This work rests upon those who are left to carry on, as difficult as it will be, without Brother Joel.

We know God will not leave us without guidance. The gospel will go forth to all the earth. We shall return to Jackson County. It will be the center during the millennium for those who love truth and respect the rights of God’s children here upon the earth.
Song: The congregation was led by Juna Wakeham and sang “Israel, Israel God is Calling”. Osseen was very moved and unable to sing. Nephi LeBaron took pictures of congregation.

OSSMEN JONES. We are indeed a privileged group of people. We wish to recognize the wife of Alma Dayer LeBaron, the mother of Joel, one of the most noble women that the earth has produced. Our prayers are for the Alma Dayer LeBaron family, Sister Maud, and the family of Brother Joel, especially for his younger children who will not have the privilege of the love, kindness, sweet consideration of a loving father. We will now hear from Brother Bruce Wakeham, a member of the First Presidency.

BRUCE WAKEHAM. I am sure you can appreciate the difficulty facing me to express the feelings in my heart and in hearts of every one of you who have been intimately associated with Brother Joel. No description of the life and sufferings or the greatness of his character as a human being would be adequate. I knew Joel nearly 14 years—living with him, eating, sleeping, traveling, preaching, studying with him and knowing him as a man knows his brother. Without exception, I never met a better man in my life—a man who had more personal dignity, more honor, more of the true nobility of Heaven than the Prophet Joel. He was a humble man. This was his most outstanding quality—the humble life, the manner in which he denied himself the honors of men which he so richly deserved. The great core of his teaching, his friends and associates will remember, was that he taught that men should not consider themselves to be better than their neighbors. He had great resolve and determination. The world has practically been devoid of men with this determination. He always considered the interest of others. In my experience, more than any other man I have known, did he consider my interest.

Among the Mexican people, he portrayed depths of feeling for those who suffered poverty. His desire, as it has been the desire of many noble patriots, was to obtain social and economic freedom for this people, and for all the world. Rarely could you find a man who could aspire to the greatness he aspired to and yet retain in his heart the humility that he portrayed in his relations with his fellowmen. He taught that the road to economic liberty was economic independence, to have land and water with which to produce. There is no principle more important to peace and happiness. It is the one he taught most and worked more for in his adult life.

There will be those who will mock what he did. One day all mockery and all persecution will stop. The work he started in this place will go forward. God did not go to all the trouble to put him and his family and associates through all they have suffered without making provision for continuation of His work, any more than He let the Prophet Joseph Smith and Hyrum die in vain over a century ago. I would like to testify, having sat in councils with Joel, that he made every preparation necessary for this work to go forward and bring peace in the world and bring in the millennial reign.

May the memory of his life and works remain in our hearts. No power can stop the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. (Kathy's baby was passed to her at this time to be nursed.)

Ossmen then called on Ramon Sanchez, a brother-in-law to Magdalena, to speak. He wore a black suit, a light green dress shirt with no tie. He spoke in Spanish. It was with difficulty that he spoke. He hesitated before beginning.

RAMON SANCHEZ. I ask that you observe with me a minute of silence in memory of this man Joel F. LeBaron. He timed the minute with his head bowed. The audience observed complete silence. "Here is where eternity begins and vanity ends." (He then began directing his remarks toward the coffin in front of him.)

Joel, you are gone on a journey you will not return from. You have done much to benefit humanity. You were always desirous to do works to benefit a needy mankind. You leave your ancient mother in most profound grief. You leave a young wife with children, your first wife, the mother of 12 children, Joel, Luis Carlos, Nora, Miguel, Nancy, Adrian, Ricardo, Magdalena, Mario, Evelyn, Leonel and Brenda. I also understand that you have left a great number of children by the different wives permitted you by your religion.

We are present to bid you farewell in your journey without return. We are here present to show our gratitude for that which you accomplished and cultivated in your short life. What I speak is based on my thoughts and what I have seen of your life. I do not say "Good-bye", but "Until we meet again".
Ossmen then announced that the next speaker would be a man Joel had loved, who had worked with Joel in establishing the principles of justice.

SIEGFRIED WIDMAR. (He read Revelations 12:6,11).

Dear Sister LeBaron, LeBaron family and friends, I feel it a great privilege to stand before you in the presence of the remains of our great brother Joel. It was said from this pulpit last Sunday that he was the greatest man we ever knew. He was a man who knew what he was about. He was the godliest teacher we ever had contact with among men on this earth. He was the most perfect man, according to the measure given us by Jesus Christ, that we ever had the privilege of knowing. His life was full. His mission was completed at the time his life was taken.

He testified, and we heard his testimony, that to a great extent his mission was to prepare a few men who would be able to carry on his mission. The casket of Brother Joel was, and is, the heaviest thing this church will have to carry. The message to us, is that we have to round up our shoulders and, without his being here, carry the work.

(St. John 12:1,11 was read.)

(At this point Siegfried's voice sounded dry. Joann Reber put a glass of water on the stand. He continued speaking though, without taking any water.)

What did Joel teach? He prepared men in the law that is as old as mankind is on the earth. It was bred into our inward parts.

Brother Joel taught us this law from God, and to live it; this one way which will finally fulfill the words of the angels, “Peace on earth”. Peace is based on the respect of the rights of others. Joel has gone farther than the founders of the constitution of the land. He has gone farther because he taught it like it was given on Mount Horeb.

Joel taught us in detail what the respect of the rights of our neighbors means. It is a message for all men, for Jew and Gentile, Christians and Hindu and everybody else who will hear it. All honorable men will take this message and defend it.

(He read D&C 123:1-4, 7-11).

The Saviour said that the days prior to His coming would be like the days of Noah. We know that the gospel has to go out as in the days of Noah — an ark established, a refuge to gather to. This is the mission Brother Joel sealed with his own blood. It is on our shoulders.

We bear testimony that he was the Lord's anointed; his mission did not end a minute too early; that it was fulfilled, that he had prepared the way for the work to roll on.

Let it be recorded this day as a witness to all men and to heaven that Brother Joel's death and martyrdom was not over religious controversy, but that he gave his life on the altar as his final and ultimate testimony for the establishment of peace among men. Let it here be recorded that the controversy in this church was not a religious controversy, but it was on the basis that men in priesthood tried to rearrange laws on the minimum standard; that they wanted to change the condition that will bring about the millennium of peace. They wanted to change that which God had written with His own finger and spoken with His own voice on Mount Horeb.

We loved him and we hope to stand by him and to go with him when he would go. He stands with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He stands with Abel who was murdered by his brother Cain. He stands with John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, with Joseph and Hyrum.

Let us pledge this day in front of his remains, that we will never stop doing everything in our power to fulfill his mission. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

OSSMEN JONES. Monuments are never built to live men. They are built to dead men after we realize their greatness.

Next, some members holding Aaronic and Melchisedek Priesthood came forward from their seats and stood on the stand. There were 42 in all. They sang "Praise To The Man". The power and might of their voices being raised in honor to Joel was glorious. Honor, reverence, respect, force and determination were manifested by the whole group.

On the extreme left were six native brethren. The group sang well and controlled their emotions remarkably. Verlan's face registered such grief, but his voice carried on. Harvard Stubs was unable to sing for part of the song. I saw their faces, Bruce, Siegfried, Ossmen, Lane, Keith Bate- man, Tom, Joel Jr., my own two sons, Joel's boys, his nephews—these, some of the men whom Joel had taught and loved. Grief-stricken, awed, overwhelmed, and yet singing a song of honor and praise to their departed brother. The last verse they ended with "Millions shall know Brother Joel again". They quietly returned to their places.
Strange, that amid such grief, such a solemn peace was felt. The day was gloriously beautiful. The sky was a clear blue and in no part there were there not found white, delicate clouds, none very big but all exquisitely beautiful. The colony below was green and beautiful as I never before had seen it. Surrounding hills and mountains were arrayed in their greenest apparel and everywhere was silence. Only the motor of the car could be heard.

A flagman was seen ahead and I recognized Ernesto Paisano as we moved at the rate of 30 m.p.h. up to the pass. The highway was as a black ribbon running up through the velvety green of the hills. To the left of the highway I saw the line of telephone poles. A red pick-up met us and passed on. In one small area I counted six types of wild flowers, amid an occasional cactus. Small yellow butterflies were seen. One of Joel’s children in the back seat broke the silence with a light sob.

We ascended the pass. Bordered on each side were white rocks. The blue mountains to the west became visible as we came over the pass and Angostura was seen below, green and beautiful. Cattle were lying and standing to the right of the highway. A hawk circled above in front of us. From the scattered houses to the right, people came out to watch us go by. I saw a Chile pitch, a rock corral, wagons by cottonwood trees, a small adobe store with a Pepsi sign on each side of the door. Two cows grazed on each side of the road in the mesquites.

I thought of the natives who were included in this procession. Many of them had aged so much since I had seen them some years before.

Wrinkled skin, prematurely grey heads, features which revealed the effects of poverty and suffering were visible to me. Who had understood their condition, helped and loved them as Joel had?

Two white Volkswagons met and passed us. To the right was a large caterpillar tractor. Large piles of sand and a road roller were off to the left of highway. No one was working there. Again the eternal silence. It was as if even work had been halted on this day.

At this point, Terry Leany passed along the left side of the procession and made his way on ahead. A red pick-up not part of the procession followed him leaving us behind. A gasoline tank truck met us and passed on by and silence again returned. There were two lone cottonwood trees to the right. A short soft call of a bird came from the branches.

To the right and some distance from the highway was seen the red hill. In this area, Joel had prophesied, would be a site for a future temple. Clouds above the hill left shadows upon it.

We passed a stream of water to the right. A pick-up approached. Behind it was a tank truck and trailer. From the car ahead of us a child leaned out of the window—one of Magdalena’s and Joel’s little boys. A slight breeze was felt as we entered Galeana.

Off to the right against the hill suddenly I noticed something white. It almost appeared to be steam and then I made out a white pick-up and realized it was dust that Terry had left when he went ahead. Momentarily, I was reminded of that ever present danger others of our men face. What a contrast in feeling to that solemn peace.

In the fields to the right, a man on a horse was driving a cow with a young calf. We began moving a little faster, 35 m.p.h. now. A large truck of hay met us and passed on as we turned the curve of the road into Galeana. To the left stood a young boy in a faded plaid shirt and crumpled hat. Here and there people came out of houses to watch us. A chicken came up onto the left of the highway and wandered off again. A subdued voice or two of those watching was heard, as the pick-up carrying the coffin was seen descending from the highway to the right. It passed slowly over a small cement ditch with water in it.

It passed between a willow tree to left and cottonwood tree to right. There was a puddle to the right. The bumpy dirt road circled and curved. To the right were adobe walls and corrals. A woman and her children stood on a porch to our left. One of the children called “Adios” and the mother promptly said “Sh”. To the right was a fence with horses behind it. On our left was an open field and a hill. Light, soft dust drifted into the car. The mountains in the distance to the right jutted out looking as if they had been chopped off. We passed a dry, flat section of land. There were occasional puddles near the road. Joel’s son, Don, asked from the back seat if we were almost there. The vegetation became thicker. Dust sifted in as we crept along at 7 m.p.h. A man stepped out into the road up ahead of the pick-up. My heart started momentarily. Cars ahead all waited, but the leading pick-up turned to the right and slowly went on. Cars in the procession moved up closer together. I could see the faces of Joel’s children in the car
ahead of us. I now realized that Terry Leany, in a royal blue shirt, was the person who had caused that moment of anxiety shortly before. Terry had a red handkerchief rolled around a stick in his hand. He directed us on into the opening by the cemetery. Shaun Stubbs and Eldon Spencer were seen assisting. The lead pick-up was backed up near the entrance of graveyard. The cars ahead of us were already directed into their places, each backing into place forming a line along the fence by the cemetery.

We left the car and went towards the crowd. In it I saw Miguel, Joel's son, Verlan M. Jr. and André LeBaron. Mother LeBaron was being comforted by Nadine. Isabel and Sister Lupe Castro stood close to Julia Piasanco. Magdalena stood with her relatives and others of the widows. Rhonita comforted Jeannine. Velma Jones and Rho-da Stubbs stood beside Luz LeBaron, Maria Zambrano and Juana Treviso. A native lady ahead of me opened a green umbrella to protect herself from the sun. The crowd passed through the narrow entrance to the cemetery. An old unpainted gate, hooked to the post by barbed wire was thrown to one side of the entrance. It looked as if it had remained in that same position for years. As I passed on through the gate, I counted 14 cars and pick-ups lined against the fence. Three more were on the other side. The procession was still stretched out across the flat into Galeana, back almost a mile distant. We entered the cemetery on the west side and walked among the graves to the east. In approximately the middle of the cemetery, a crowd had gathered around the newly dug grave. Through the people, I caught a glimpse of a huge mound of dirt which was to the south of the grave. Four shovels had been placed in the mound and were standing upright.

I made my way through the crowd. Ten to fifteen feet to the east of the grave the two small tables were placed covered with a new white sheet. The coffin had been placed on them with the wreath of hedge cutting at the head and the other two wreaths on it as before. To the north of the grave was a neat stack of boards. Upon it was a coil of heavy rope.

Ossmen Jones requested that room be made for pictures to be taken. Ruth Widmar Jensen took a picture of Gaye standing by the coffin with her infant son in her arms, the son who was scarcely 3 days old when his father fell; the tiny son Joel never had the privilege of seeing in this life.

Other pictures were also taken of the widows and children standing around the coffin; also one of Joel's older sons. As the picture was being taken of the widows, Gaye passed her infant to someone in the crowd. Genevieve Stubbs said to leave baby there, that it would add to the picture. Her request was not followed, perhaps not heard.

Verlan stood to the west of the grave. Solemnly he raised his right hand to the square. How weary, sorrowful and grieved he appeared. He had on a dark suit and tie with white dress shirt. Sweat covered his brow and upper face. To the north of the grave in the crowd were Brother Rios, his wife and young son. Verlan then dedicated the ground, praying that it would be blessed and consecrated till Joel should come forth in the resurrection. He asked that a special charge would be kept there, that it might be a safe and peaceful place, that it might be hallowed spot, where many might visit, that the precepts and examples of this man would spread throughout the earth. He prayed blessings upon Joel's family that they might honor him by their works. He prayed for all who could, to understand the works and the truths that Joel had brought forth.

He asked that God's work would go forth more speedily. He asked a special blessing of comfort to the people and that God would guide them. He prayed that God would vindicate the name of this prophet and asked that we would be blessed with all other blessings we needed that were not mentioned at that time. Again he repeated the request that this ground be blessed as the resting place for Joel's remains and asked it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jeannine removed the wreaths from the casket. Bruce Wakeham unwound the rope and the coffin was gently lifted. The rope was looped back and forth to each side beneath the casket, leaving three pieces of rope on each side. To the south Verlan, Floren, Joel Jr., Tom, Brother Parson and Abel LeBaron lifted the ropes. On the north were Siegfried, Lane, Nephi, Bruce Wakeham and Delfino Piasanco. Floren and Abel changed sides and Rafael Treviso hurried forward to help steady the coffin. With some difficulty, it was lowered into the grave. The sobbing and groans of the widows, children and crowd were heard on every side. Ahead of me, Mother LeBaron staggered. I stepped forward to support her. Her long hair slipped loose from its bun at the back of her head.

The agony and grief of those present is impossible for me to describe. The wi-
dows turned from the grave and wept upon each other's shoulders. Joel Jr.'s agony and Verlan's profound sorrow rent my heart.

The grave was dug in soil with a lot of gravel. Clay was in small, hard lumps and resembled pieces of dried cement. Inside the grave was made an outer box of heavy boards. Bruce was lowered into the grave. He removed some pieces of gravel and dirt from the top of the coffin. Then planks were passed down to him which he placed over the wooden box. When it was all covered, more planks were passed down and the cracks in the first layer were all covered. Joel Jr., Tom, Luis Alonzo and Abel carefully handed shovels of dirt down for Bruce to cover the boards. When they were well covered, Bruce was helped out of the grave. Different ones took turns with the shovels, Verlan M. Jr., the Stubbs boys, Magdalena's brothers-in-law, Verlan, etc. When the grave was about half filled, Antonio Gutierrez went down in and packed the dirt more towards the sides and packed it in tighter. Two large boards (2 x 2) were placed upright in the grave, the one to the west being a foot or so higher than that at foot of grave. They were planed smooth and the corners were rounded off. The sun went behind the clouds at this time, giving relief from the heat.

As the mound of the grave rose higher, the crowd dispersed. Many walked around the cemetery to other graves. Father LeBaron, Floyd Spencer and infant Rebecca LeBaron were all buried in adjoining graves.

Everywhere in the cemetery, down toward the cars and beside the grave people quietly moved from one group to another, comforting and consoling each other and weeping together.

I saw Beulah McNeil leaving and walked down the path to tell her good-bye. We walked on through the gate and to the cars. As I turned and walked back towards the cemetery, I saw Joel Jr. carrying a young girl in a blue dress, fainted and limp, in his arms. As they came closer I could see it was his sister, Fawn. Her grandmother Genevieve, rushed forward with a jug of water. How heartrending are these scenes.

Our beloved brother, with what sorrow, anguish, and loneliness we bid you farewell from this mortal life.