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Panorama Paintings in the 1840s of the Mormon Temple in Nauvoo

Joseph Earl Arrington

The national movement of panorama painting in mid-nineteenth century America yielded a number of important paintings of the Mormon city of Nauvoo and its temple. There were four major artists who created Mississippi River panoramas before 1850: John Rowson Smith, Samuel B. Stockwell, Leon de Pomarede, and Henry Lewis. Each of these men painted the upper river where Nauvoo is located, including scenes of the city and of the Mormon temple in their panoramas. These were literally moving panoramas: the painted canvas was unrolled from one cylinder and rerolled onto another across a stage. These panoramas were produced and taken to the people by traveling exhibitors for public entertainment, mass education, and group artistic enjoyment. Each of these panoramas received extensive patronage in America, and two of them were taken abroad. These pictorial displays of the Mississippi River were seen by hundreds of thousands of people in America and probably millions on both continents.

JOHN ROWSON SMITH

One of the first Mississippi River panoramists was John Rowson Smith, who was born in Boston in 1810, the son of engraver John Reuben Smith, and the grandson of the famous English engraver, John Raphael Smith (1740–1811). Growing up in this artistic tradition, young John lived in Boston until his fifth year, where his father's engraving business was located. Then the family moved to Brooklyn, where his father was engaged for ten years painting portraits, engraving, and conducting a drawing school. The son entered a private school and then studied art in his father's academy. The

Joseph Earl Arrington has written extensively about the Nauvoo Temple. This article is adapted from a chapter of his book *The Architecture of the Great Mormon Temple of Nauvoo*. The chapter has been adapted for this article by Mr. Arrington's nephew, Leonard J. Arrington, director of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute of Church History, Brigham Young University.

family then moved to Philadelphia to continue the father's engraving career and later returned to New York, where John, Sr., died in 1849.¹

John Rowson Smith began his own career as a scenic artist in the National Theater of Philadelphia in the 1830s. He also painted theatrical scenery in New Orleans, St. Louis, New York, and Boston. He later became interested in painting western scenery and claimed to be the originator of the Mississippi panorama. His own panorama was exhibited in Boston, and on its 200-foot length were views from the Lower Mississippi and the Ohio rivers. He had sketched at intervals the whole river and, with the help of some assistants, finished his masterpiece in August 1848. It was divided into three sections: "Corn Region," from the head of the Mississippi to the mouth of the Ohio; "Cotton Region," from the Ohio to the Natchez; and "Sugar Region," from Natchez to the Gulf of Mexico. The Smith panorama was described as a "Leviathan panorama of the Mississippi River: Painted by John R. Smith, Esq., Extending from the Falls of St. Anthony to the Gulf of Mexico, a course of 2,000 miles, running through nine States of the Union." The scenery along the "Father of Waters" covered an area of 20,000 square feet of canvas and was advertised as "a four-mile panorama in single linear footage."² Exhibited before fashionable and wealthy audiences in America, Smith's panorama had a good start in Saratoga, New York, in August 1848, taking in \$20,000 in six weeks.

The great Mormon temple of Nauvoo was included with a few other scenes that local editors felt were worth the price of admission. The itinerary moved across the state to Troy, New York, where crowded audiences were said to have had two hours of "unbroken delight," viewing river cities like Nauvoo "all before you in life-like and natural aspect."³ The panorama was taken to Philadelphia later in 1848, before the artist went abroad for a tour of Europe from 1849 to 1852. It was "exhibited with distinguished success" in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, Paris, Brussels, Rouen, Berlin, Antwerp, Vienna, Christiania (Oslo), and other places.⁴ While in England, the artist won the favor of the Royal Family and, by invitation of Queen Victoria, showed the panorama at Balmoral for her pleasure.

¹Mantle Fielding, *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers* (Philadelphia: Printed for the Subscribers, 1926), p. 339; John Francis McDermott, *The Lost Panoramas of the Mississippi* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 47-67.

²John Rowson Smith, *A Descriptive Pamphlet of Smith's Leviathan Panorama of the Mississippi River Now Exhibiting at Mason Hall, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1848), pp. 3-4.

³Ibid., pp. 30-31.

⁴John Rowson Smith, *Descriptive Book of a Tour of Europe* (New York: Pettiner & Gray, 1855).

Thereafter, it was seen by “huge audiences” in England and on the continent. While he was in Europe, John Rowson Smith completed a panorama of Europe which he began showing to American audiences upon his return in 1853. He then returned to his former craft of theatrical scene painting and died in Philadelphia in 1864.⁵

Nauvoo, one of the larger river towns represented in the Smith panorama, was described in the exhibition guide as

A Mormon city and settlement now deserted. It is one of the finest locations for a town upon the river. . . . The great Mormon Temple stands out conspicuous. It is the finest Building in the west, and if paid for, would have cost over half a million dollars. It is built of a white stone, resembling marble, 80 feet front by 150 deep; and 200 feet to the top of the spire. The caps of the pilasters represent the sun; the base of them, the half moon with Joe Smith’s profile. The windows between the pilasters represent stars. A large female figure with a bible in one hand is the vane. An inscription on the front, in large gilt letters, reads as follows:—“The House of the Lord built by the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints. Commenced April 6, 1841. Holiness to the Lord.” There is in the basement of the temple a large stone basin, supported by twelve oxen of colossal size, about fifteen feet high altogether, all of white stone and respectably carved. A stair case leads up to the top of the basin. It is the fount where all the Mormons were baptized. It is seen in the Panorama standing aside the Temple, *but in the basement is its real situation*. The first view is Nauvoo and the temple in the distance. The next, a large architectural elevation of the Temple, showing all its details.⁶

In showings after 9 October 1848, the lecturer included the fact that “this splendid edifice was entirely destroyed by fire.”⁷

Nauvoo received more space in Rowson’s panoramas than did some of the other river towns because of the wide publicity the famous city had received. The public was anxious to see the great temple, and it was featured twice on the canvas. The scale on which it was painted is suggested by the fact that a common Mississippi riverboat that was only twelve feet long in real life was sixteen feet long on the canvas.⁸

Although the exact number of people who saw Smith’s “Leviathan Panorama” is not known, statistics are available concerning other panoramas which were exhibited at about the same time as that of Smith’s. For example, a panorama produced by John Banvard

⁵*Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Dumas Malone, 10 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner’s, 1935), 9:306.

⁶Smith, *Descriptive Pamphlet*, p. 11.

⁷McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, pp. 59–69. (Italics in the original.)

⁸Daniel C. Haskell under the direction of I. N. Phelps Stokes, *American Historical Prints* (New York: The New York Public Library, 1927), p. 120.

was seen by 400,000 people in Boston and New York alone, and by 600,000 in London.⁹ Most likely Smith's production enjoyed more popularity than did Banvard's, since Smith's was larger and more pretentious and showed scenes from the entire length of the river, whereas Banvard's contained scenes from only the lower part of the river. Those who have studied these early panoramas agree that the total viewers "must have numbered high in the hundreds of thousands."¹⁰

Smith's panorama is lost, but his painting of the Nauvoo Temple has been preserved by an engraving found in *Graham's American Monthly Magazine* for April 1849, just a few months after the temple was destroyed (see page 197). The editor explained that "by permission of Mr. J. R. Smith, we have caused a view of the Mormon Temple at Nauvoo to be engraved from his splendid Panorama of the Mississippi, and we give the engraving in this number. As the building has been recently destroyed by fire, our engraving, the first ever published, acquires additional value."¹¹

The Smith painting shows the temple from the customary front and side views, with the side disproportionately longer than the actual structure. The relatively low walls may have been an adjustment to the canvas space. The building is generalized in many of its parts. There are no moonstone bases for the pilasters, or stars on the triglyphs. The basement story is unusually high, and the roof balustrade pedestals are so high as to cover much of the chimney's height above the roof.

In comparison with photographs of the temple, the steeple has a revealed base, a shortened clock section, a lengthened observatory, and a low dome. The angel over the dome faces the side rather than the front. Smith places the baptistry outside for visibility, and shows one stairway and some of the oxen on either side.

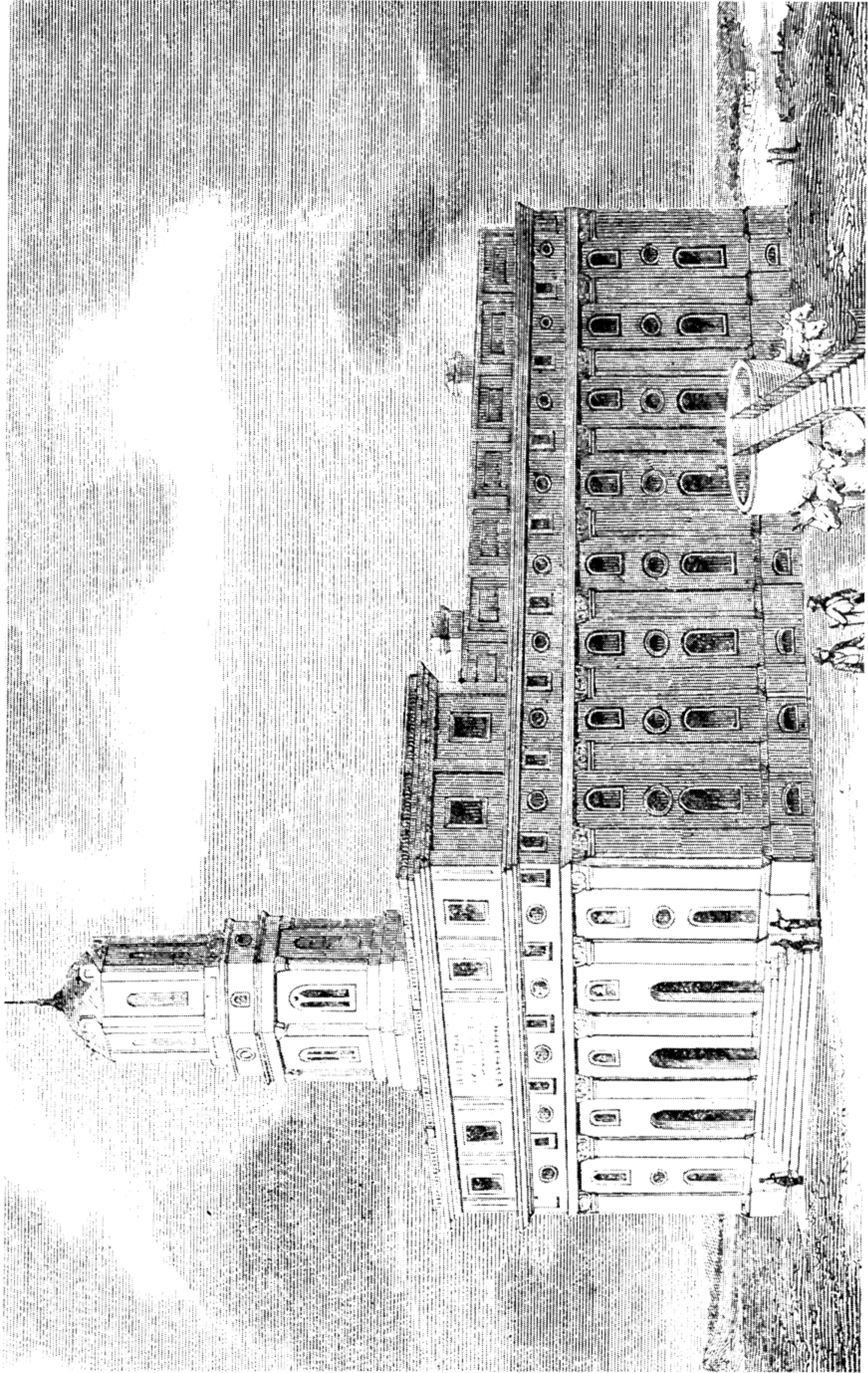
SAMUEL B. STOCKWELL

The second Mississippi panoramist who painted Nauvoo and its temple was Samuel B. Stockwell. He was born in Boston in 1813, the son of Samuel Stockwell, an actor in the New York theaters. Before his twentieth year, young Samuel became a scene painter at the old

⁹Bertha L. Heilbron, *The Making of a Motion Picture in 1848* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1936), p. 4; also Joseph Earl Arrington, "John Banvard's Moving Panorama of the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio Rivers," *The Filson Club Historical Quarterly* 32 (July 1958): 207-40.

¹⁰John F. McDermott to Joseph Earl Arrington, St. Louis, Missouri, 11 June 1950.

¹¹*Graham's American Monthly Magazine* 34 (April 1849): 256-57. This engraving was reproduced in McDermott's *Lost Panoramas of the Mississippi* in 1958, p. 59, and in the *Improvement Era* in July 1962, pp. 513-17.



Nauvoo Temple and Baptistry
Painted by John Rowson Smith for His Mississippi River Panorama c1846

Tremont Theater in Boston, where many celebrities—Edwin Forst, J. B. Booth, Jenny Lind, John Howard Payne, Daniel Webster, and Charles Dickens—were to appear as actors, singers, and orators.¹² Stockwell was acknowledged as “a most gifted and accomplished artist” who “executed many fine scenic pieces in the palmy days of the ‘old Tremont.’ ”¹³ He remained with the theater during the 1830 decade and then was called into the service of other theaters of the South and West. He was scenic artist for the Ludlow and Smith theaters in New Orleans, Mobile, and St. Louis from 1843 to 1846 and acquired the reputation of being “one of the cleverest scenic artists in the country.”¹⁴

Before leaving his native Boston in 1841, Stockwell already had ideas about painting the Mississippi River, and his theatrical work helped to prepare him for that project, which he undertook in 1847 and 1848. Stockwell lived in a skiff on the river for some eight months taking sketches and was occupied over eighteen months in designing and painting. The lower river was finished from March to July of 1848, and the upper river from August to October of the same year. Although he did all the sketching alone, Stockwell had the help of John R. Johnston, the landscape painter from Cincinnati, in painting it. While it was in progress, veteran captains and river pilots visited Stockwell’s studio in St. Louis and gave “high and enthusiastic opinions of the merits of his work.”¹⁵

The completed canvas measured 625 yards in length and twelve feet high. It was cut into four sections and wound around as many rollers. The rollers corresponded to the different parts of the 3,500 miles of river scenery. According to the *Boston Transcript*, the first section portrayed about 1,000 miles on the lower river and “commences with a view of the Gulf of Mexico, . . . passes by Gen. Stonewall Jackson’s battle ground to the City of New Orleans, then by Lafayette, Natchez, Gen. Taylor’s plantation, Vicksburg, Memphis, to Cairo and Ohio City. The second section shows the west bank of the upper Mississippi, the mouth of the Missouri, a view at sunset of Rock Island, Davenport, and Rock Island Town, &c. The third and fourth sections contain views of Fort Snelling, Lake Pepin, the Falls of St. Anthony, Galena, at sunset, the Mormon City of

¹²George C. Groce and David H. Wallace, *The New York Historical Society’s Dictionary of Artists in America* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 606.

¹³*Boston Daily Evening Transcript*, 27 August and 3 October 1849.

¹⁴*Boston Transcript*, 20 August 1849; see also McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, pp. 69–70; and *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, 16 December 1843.

¹⁵*St. Louis Reveille*, 29 October 1848; see also Joseph Earl Arrington, “The Story of Stockwell’s Panorama,” *Minnesota History* 33 (Autumn 1953): 284–90; and McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, p. 192.

Nauvoo, and fifty other picturesque and memorable points” along the upper river.¹⁶ Nauvoo and its temple were thus near the end of the panorama that covered the east bank of the Mississippi.

Although parts of Stockwell’s panorama were previewed in July, the whole of it was not presented until October 1848. The St. Louis citizens were interested in both the lower river, since it was their commercial outlet to the sea, and the upper river, dominated by St. Louis shipping, which attracted many fashionable sightseeing tours. The painting was taken downriver, arriving at New Orleans early in December 1848 and remaining until February 1849. The newspapers called public attention to the river towns depicted, including “the Mormon City of Nauvoo, with the Temple, etc.,” on the upper river.¹⁷ Viewers felt they had “rarely seen anything more beautiful and interesting than it is from the mouth of the Ohio to the Falls of St. Anthony.”¹⁸ In February 1849 the exhibition moved to Mobile, Alabama, where it was shown for two weeks and had increased patronage.¹⁹ Then in March it was booked for passage up the Alabama River on the boat *Emperor* to Montgomery, the capital, where it was displayed for a week. It then went by railroad and stagecoach to Macon and Savannah, Georgia, in April. It was in Charleston, South Carolina, in May, and in Baltimore in July. The high point came in Boston with a four-month run from August to December 1849, where a reporter wrote that its immense size “excites our wonder.”²⁰ It was taken to Cuba in 1850, but that adventure was financially unsuccessful. The plans to take it to Europe were not carried out, probably because other Mississippi panoramists were already on the Continent. Then in 1853 this panorama “was sold for a small sum,” at a substantial loss. Stockwell had returned to his theatrical work in St. Louis in 1852, and in 1854 he died of yellow fever in Savannah. He was eulogized as “an untiring student of his profession, who left no superior and few equals behind him.”²¹

No illustration of Stockwell’s painting of the Nauvoo Temple has come to light, nor any clues as to the present existence or the past destruction of his famous painting. Although it is hazardous to speculate on the specific forms Stockwell depicts of the Nauvoo Temple, there are clues. The press listing of “Nauvoo with the temple” suggests views of both city and temple in a summer setting. And

¹⁶*Boston Transcript*, 27 August 1849.

¹⁷*New Orleans Picayune*, 7 December 1848.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 16 February 1849.

¹⁹*Mobile Press Register*, 21 February–7 March 1849.

²⁰*Boston Chronotype*, 31 October 1849.

²¹McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, pp. 68–80.

from the artist's method of using striking effects of light on his scenes, we may assume that they were painted in some picturesque form of sunlight or moonlight. It is probable that his sketches were made in 1848 while the temple was still standing.

LEON DE POMAREDE

Leon de Pomarede was the third major artist who painted Nauvoo and the temple as part of a Mississippi River panorama. Pomarede was born in Tarbes, France, about 1807, studied "in the best schools in Paris, Germany and Italy" for an artistic career and emigrated to America, arriving in New Orleans in 1830.²² Two years later he went to St. Louis, where he painted an early view of that city and in 1834 decorated the St. Louis Cathedral. Then he opened a studio in New Orleans, and by 1841 he had decorated the new St. Patrick Cathedral and married the daughter of a prominent artist, Antonio Mondelli. He opened a permanent studio in St. Louis in 1843, beginning a lifetime of service to that community. In 1850 artistic works by this "Parisian Knight of the easel" adorned many public and private edifices of the Far West.²³

Pomarede also wanted to produce a work of art "representing the scenery upon one of the mightiest rivers in the world."²⁴ While he was on a journey to the Upper Mississippi in 1844, "the picturesque grandeur of the scenery upon its borders and its other peculiarities struck him as a subject worthy of his pencil." Two years later he made definite plans for the project, which he carried out from June 1848 to September 1849. "After a long time spent upon the deck of a flat boat, ascending and descending this 'Father of Rivers,' and taking the necessary sketches, he commenced the work of transferring them to canvas at St. Louis, and after four years of incessant labor, he finished it."²⁵ He had tried to cooperate with Henry Lewis in this undertaking, but when that collaboration failed, he enlisted the services of Charles Courtenay, his studio associate, and Charles Wimar, a young and promising protégé.

Pomarede painted only the Upper Mississippi, including both banks of the river. The completed work was on a canvas 625 yards in length, similar to Stockwell's, and represented the continuous river,

²²*New Orleans Picayune*, 8 December 1849.

²³*Bulletin of the City Art Museum of St. Louis*, Winter 1949, pp. 9-12; *Newark (New Jersey) Advertiser*, 19 November 1850; Joseph Earl Arrington, "Leon D. Pomarede's Original Panorama of the Mississippi River," *Missouri Historical Society Bulletin*, April 1953, pp. 261-73.

²⁴*New Orleans Picayune*, 8 December 1849.

²⁵*Newark Advertiser*, 19 November 1850.

prairie, and other scenery from the mouth of the upper river at Cairo to the Falls of St. Anthony, a distance of 1500 miles.²⁶ The double route, up the west bank and down the east bank, increased the coverage to 3,000 miles. Pomarede's guidebook lists four sections, or rolls, of scenery: "Section Fourth: Bad Axe River; Rock and Battle; Cassville; Mouth of Fever River; Galena; Water Power Mills on the Upper Rapids; New Boston, Illinois; Nauvoo, the Mormon City; Warsaw, Illinois; Quincy, Illinois; Hamburg, Illinois; Mouth of Illinois River; Grafton; Bluffs above Alton; Alton; Bloody Island; and Conflagration of St. Louis."²⁷ The *New York Herald* notes additional scenes and details: a "Grand buffalo hunt, by Indians," "the Mormon Temple," "Upper Ferry by Sunset," and "Grand Dissolving View of the City of St. Louis on fire . . . which happened on the 17th of May, 1849, and destroyed 23 steamboats, and 400 houses."²⁸

A brief preview of some parts of Pomarede's panoramic painting was shown in St. Louis in August, and the entire canvas was exhibited there in September 1849, for a six-week run. It is estimated that three-fourths of the city's population of 50,000 people saw it.²⁹ The intinerary then moved along the southern route toward the east, similar to the route Stockwell had followed earlier. It arrived in New Orleans on 26 November 1849 and remained there until 5 January 1850. The panorama received "unparalleled success and patronage," because of its "handsome villages and towering cities" and "new beauties upon every yard of canvas."³⁰ The route then included Mobile and Montgomery, Alabama; Columbus and Savannah, Georgia; Charleston, South Carolina; Wilmington, Fayette, and Raleigh, North Carolina; and Petersburg and Richmond, Virginia. It arrived in New York City in September 1850, where the people turned out in full assemblies to see the new, little-known views of the Upper Mississippi River.³¹ The artist opened his exhibition in Newark, New Jersey, on 14 October for a six-week run to crowded houses. Then on 19 November 1850, the hall and panorama were consumed by fire. Leon de Pomarede returned to his home in St. Louis determined to reproduce the famous painting, but he never did. He resumed his long studio and theater career which came to an

²⁶*The Western Journal* (St. Louis, Mo.), October 1849, p. 70; *Newark Advertiser*, 19 November 1850.

²⁷McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, p. 156.

²⁸*New York Herald*, 7 September 1850.

²⁹*Newark Advertiser*, 19 November 1850; J. Calvin Smith, *Harper's Statistical Gazetteer of the World* (New York: 1855), p. 1528.

³⁰*New Orleans Picayune*, 8 December 1849.

³¹*New York Herald*, 7 September 1850.

end in 1892, after sixty years devoted to art. The Mississippi panorama was his masterpiece.³²

Pomarede painted Nauvoo and its temple as being situated between New Boston and Warsaw, Illinois. The guidebook captioned it, "Nauvoo, the Mormon's City, 191 miles above St. Louis." Pomarede took most of his information about Nauvoo from Charles Lanman's *Summer in the Wilderness* in 1846.³³ The guidebook mentions the growth of Nauvoo to 20,000 inhabitants and its later decline to 500 souls. The city was in decay, yet in the midst of this scene of ruins stood the temple, "one of the finest buildings in America." After a description of the temple, its style, its baptistry, and its cost, he stated that "in the fall of 1848, this object of architectural beauty and monument of fanaticism, was destroyed by fire."³⁴

It is doubtful that the picture of the Nauvoo Temple by Leon de Pomarede is extant; most of the panorama was destroyed and no remnant has come to light. Nor has any engraving of it been reported. Although the time of the Nauvoo drawing is indefinite, the artist worked on the whole panorama from 1844 to 1849. Thus the temple could have been shown under construction, as it was in 1844 to 1845; or fully completed, as it stood from 1846 to 1848; or in ruins, as it was in 1848 and 1849. Since the guidebook deals with Nauvoo after the Mormon exodus, it is probable that the full temple structure was shown in an abandoned Nauvoo. It is also probable that Nauvoo and its temple were painted with special lighting effects, in keeping with Pomarede's other panoramic scenes. His program seems to have followed the regular daily sequence of light as the boat advanced up and down the river. The Nauvoo Temple was painted in the last section of the panorama, which was made on the return voyage southward from the head of the river. Section Three ends with a night scene of a prairie on fire and Section Four shows a sunset some distance below Nauvoo.³⁵ Nauvoo could have been painted in a moonlight scene, showing the temple in ruins, or in a full daylight scene depicting the great edifice in abandonment.

HENRY LEWIS

The fourth panorama artist who sketched and painted the Nauvoo Temple was Henry Lewis. Born in Scarborough, England, on

³²*Bulletin of the City Art Museum of St. Louis*, Winter 1949, pp. 8, 14-18, 110.

³³Charles Lanman, *Summer in the Wilderness: Embracing a Canoe Voyage up the Mississippi and around Lake Superior* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1847).

³⁴*Pomarede's Original Panorama of the Mississippi River, from the North of the Ohio River to the Falls of St. Anthony* (New York: Minnesota Historical Society, 1849).

³⁵*New York Herald*, 7 September 1850.

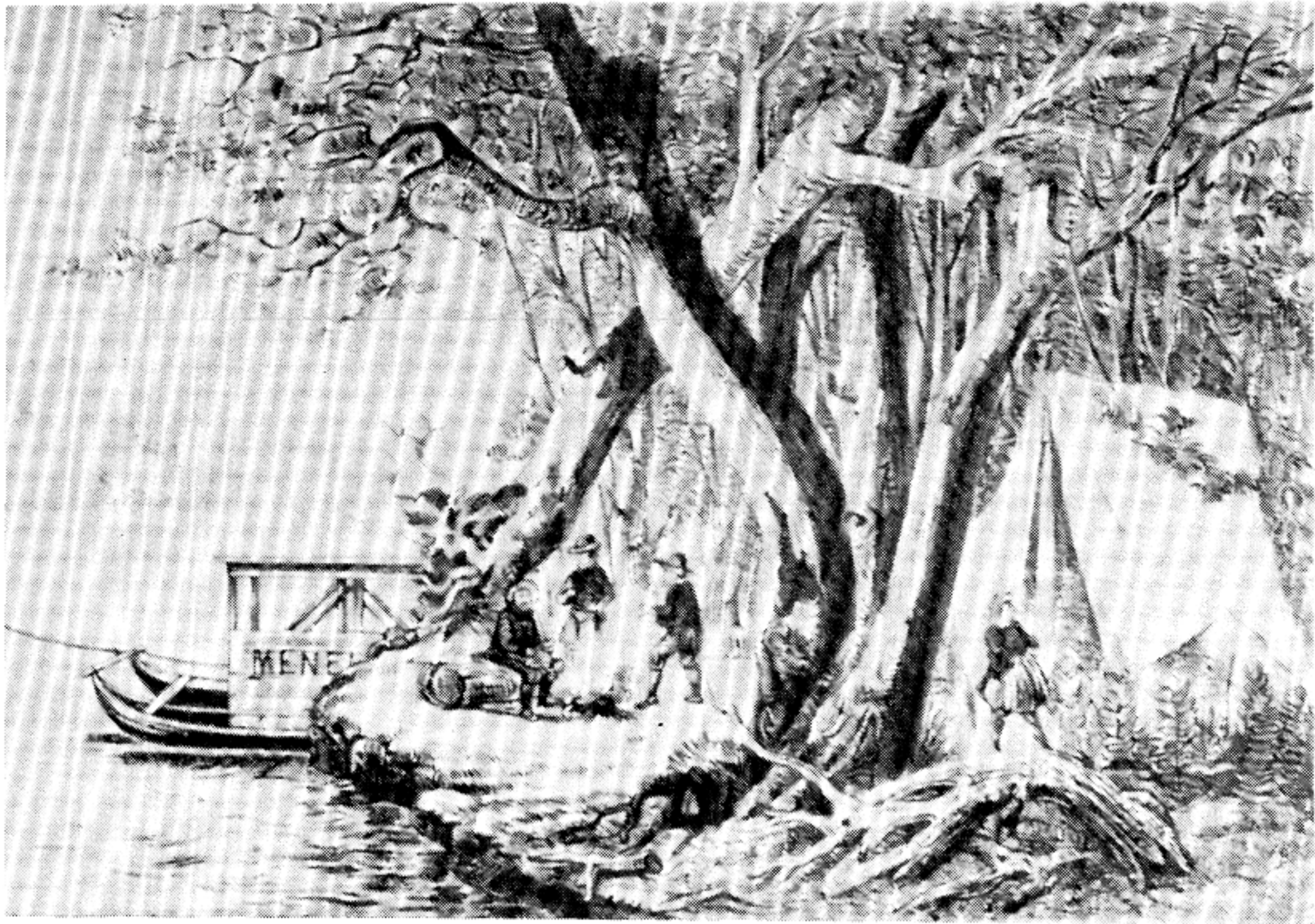
12 January 1819, the son of Thomas G. Lewis, Henry came to America at the age of ten with his father and two brothers. He lived in Boston from 1829 to 1836, the last two years as an apprentice to a carpenter. Then he went to St. Louis with the family and gained employment as a stage carpenter at the Opera House. It was there he came in contact with theatrical artists, whose scenic paintings fascinated him. By 1844 he had decided to become an artist himself. By 1845, as a self-taught painter, Henry had made such progress and gained such proficiency that he opened his own studio, sharing it with another artist, James F. Wilkins. He began painting local landscapes, including a panoramic view of St. Louis. Receiving much encouragement for his productions, he soon began fruitful associations with a small cluster of scenic painters. This small group developed into a western school of panoramists, gaining national importance for their Mississippi River subjects.³⁶

Like the other panorama artists, Lewis devised ambitious plans for producing “a gigantic and continuous painting of the Mississippi River,” from the Falls of St. Anthony to the Gulf of Mexico. He made preliminary sketching trips on the Upper Mississippi in 1846 and 1847, returning with a number of painted scenes. He had tried to cooperate with both Stockwell and Pomarede in the project, but clashing temperaments and plans soon dissolved each of those partnerships. Finally, he and Charles Rogers teamed up in 1848 for the systematic sketching of the whole river. Early in that year, Rogers worked on the lower river and both sketched the upper river during the summer while floating down the river on a specially designed boat, the *Menehabah*. Having the sketches in hand, Lewis decided to produce the panorama in Cincinnati, where another group of panorama artists was in residence and available. They were John L. Leslie and John R. Johnston, scene painters at the local National Theater; Edwin F. Durang, who had worked in the New York theaters; and James B. Laidlaw, the talented artist from Drury Lane in London. They each worked in their specialties, with Johnston doing figures, boats, and cities. The upper river was painted from September 1848 to May 1849 and the lower river was painted later, mostly from June to August 1849. Charles Rogers joined the staff at this point, and Laidlaw is credited with adding the burning of St. Louis to the end of the lower section.³⁷

It was planned to have the panorama painted on 100,000 square feet of canvas by including both the Mississippi and Ohio rivers.

³⁶McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, pp. 81–84; see also Heilbron, *Making of a Motion Picture*, introduction.

³⁷McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, pp. 85–86, 88, 192 n.70.



ARTIST'S EN CAMPMENT.

DES KÜNSTLERS FELDLAGER.



H. Lewis



JOHN R. JOHNSTON

Upper—Sketching boat *Mene-ha-hah* on the Upper Mississippi. From Lewis' *Das Mississippithal*. (Courtesy of New York Public Library). Lower—Artists who painted the Mississippi panorama. Portrait on the left from *Minnesota History*. (Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society); right from *New York Cosmopolitan Art Journal*. (Courtesy of New York Public Library).

Since the latter river did not become a part of the painting, the size of the completed canvas was reduced to only 75,000 square feet. The lower river painting was 30,000 square feet or an actual length of 2,500 feet and height of twelve feet, while the upper river painting was 3,750 feet in length and 45,000 square feet altogether. The total length of both parts was more than a mile—several times longer than any of the other Mississippi panoramas.³⁸ Lewis's panorama covered 3,500 miles of scenery along the banks of the whole length of the river. It was divided into six and sometimes seven sections or rolls, each spanning a convenient length of the river—three for the lower and four for the upper river. The subject matter included the geographical regions along the banks, the cities and towns, river crafts and traffic, agriculture, business and industries, Indian life, and picturesque landscapes—all in “the colors of nature.”³⁹

The Upper Mississippi panorama was exhibited first in Cincinnati, in April and May 1849, where crowds gathered to view it with a pleasure mixed with fear at being in a large group during a cholera epidemic.⁴⁰ In June it was taken to Louisville, Kentucky, where the artist received \$429 for twelve performances. The painting returned to Cincinnati for the summer. Then “the splendid Lower Mississippi” was exhibited on 18 August for the first time, after which it remained in the background until December, when it became a regular part of dual exhibitions. Other Mississippi panoramas were taken up the Ohio and down the Mississippi rivers; but Lewis, in order to avoid these routes and maximize patronage, decided on the northern itinerary. He opened at St. Louis on 27 August and closed on 26 September, the river scenes affording much pride to his fellow citizens there. Then he went up the Illinois River to Peoria and on to Chicago, where the mayor welcomed the pictorial river for a ten-day run. An editor reported, specifically, that “the architectural view of the Nauvoo Temple is a magnificent work.”⁴¹

The exhibition moved eastward along the Great Lakes route, stopping at Milwaukee, Detroit, and arriving in Buffalo in December 1849. Here in the area of Mormon origins, the temple attracted special attention. As the viewers watched the giant canvas pass by,

³⁸*Western Journal*, October 1849; Henry Lewis, “Guidebook of the Lower Mississippi River Panorama,” MS in Edgar and Emile Stehle Collection, Upper Montclair, New Jersey; see also McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, p. 85.

³⁹Playbill of Warren, Lewis & Co. of the Upper and Lower Mississippi River, at Worcester, Mass., dated Worcester, 7–10 September 1850. Specimen in American Antiquarian Society, Boston. See p. 206.

⁴⁰McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, p. 130.

⁴¹*Buffalo* (New York) *Express*, 21 December 1849; see also McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, pp. 130–31, 136.

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NEARLY FOUR MILES LONG!
 And decidedly the **LARGEST PICTURE** IN EUROPE OR AMERICA, and faithfully
 represents a view of country
3500 MILES IN LENGTH,
 EXTENDING FROM THE
GULF OF MEXICO
 Through Ten States of the Union, and embraces over **FIFTEEN DEGREES OF LATITUDE** in its progress to the
FALLS OF SAINT ANTHONY.

The **DRAWINGS ARE ENTIRELY ORIGINAL**, and were made by distinguished Artists, from actual observation, and are truthful copies of some of the
Most Magnificent Scenery in the World!

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THE NEW TERRITORY OF MINNESOTA.
 The immense Mineral Regions of Lead, Iron and Copper, with the Bluffs, Mountains, Indian Villages, Trading Posts, Military Stations, and in short, every point of Romance or Interest to the tourist, the land speculator, or man of business.
 Both sides of the River are represented above St. Louis, thus presenting over **TWO THOUSAND MILES** of country bordering on the Mississippi, which has **NEVER BEEN EXHIBITED BEFORE.** The vast Agricultural resources of the "MIGHTY WEST," the Noble Prairies of Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, &c., are vividly depicted. All the Cities, Towns, Villages and Landings, with over 1500 different Steamboats, Flat Boats, Sloops and Canoes, together with a variety of INDIAN GROUPS IN FULL COSTUME, INDIAN ENCAMPMENTS, and every varied phase of life as seen on a trip from the BALISE, or Mouth of the Mississippi, to the very head of navigation—THE FALLS OF SAINT ANTHONY. The Picture is represented with the changes from **SUNRISE TO SUNSET, WITH MOONLIGHTS, FOGS, &c.**, that every striking feature of the great **FATHER OF WATERS** may be fully illustrated in this magnificent Painting.
 The Panorama was exhibited in ST. LOUIS and NEW ORLEANS last fall and winter, over Four Months, and passed **TRUMPHANTLY** through a severe ordeal, where nearly every person is familiar with the Scenery represented, and have pronounced it an Embodiment of Truthful and Wonderful pictorial representations of the various navigable Mississippi Rivers.

During the changes of the different sections, there will be
 Singing, by Mrs. Warren, accompanied by Miss Hardy, Pianist.
 Also, Comic Songs, by Master F. C. Reynolds.

ADMISSION 25 CENTS. - - - CHILDREN 15 CENTS.
 LIBERAL ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE WITH SCHOOLS.
 Doors open at 3 and 7 P. M. Panoramans will move precisely at 5 and 7 1/2 o'clock
 N. B.—The Panorama commences moving punctually at the hour advertised.
 Care: Hamilton, Patten, Patten & Co., 11 and 13 Central Exchange, Worcester.

PROGRAMME
 OF THE
PANORAMA!

FIRST SECTION.—The Panorama commences with a view of the
GULF OF MEXICO

And different Passes to the Mississippi, with ships in offing at anchor, &c. (The EAST BANK is represented.) Pilot Boats going out by the S. W. Pass. Tow Boat Mississippi. "PILOT STATION," Ships signalling for a Pilot. Fisherman's Caves. The different Passes. Tow Boat with two ships—Mary Ann of Boston and "Monopole" of Philadelphia. "GUYARD FRASER," Tow Boat with two ships. Jersey Point. "Mansions, McCall's Point. United States "Huntington's Frigate," bound for Vera Cruz. Tow Boat coming up S. E. Pass. The "English Turn" in the foreground. Tow Boat, with the ship Union of New York.

GENERAL JACKSON'S BATTLE GROUND IN 1815.
 City Point: Sugar Cane. Gen. Jackson's Head Quarters. S. Barracks. U. S. SLOOP OF WAR at Anchor. Algiers Dry Dock in foreground. Steam Boats at anchor.

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS,
 With all its endless variety of SHIPPING, STEAM BOATS, &c. occupying ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY FEET (in length) OF CANVAS.

CITY OF LAFAYETTE
 CARROLLTON AND THE RACE COURSE. S. R. Automobiles are displayed with her great freight of 5000 Hales of Cotton. Mad Church. S. B. Salina. Baptist Church. Protest's Paragon. S. B. Salina. Church of St. Gabriel and Plantations, at sunset. BATON ROUGE by moonlight. U. S. Barracks. Red River. Ellis Cliffs, morning.

CITY OF NATCHEZ.
 SUNRISE AT THE
MOUTH OF THE OHIO.
CITY OF CAIRO AND OHIO CITY,

This giving at one view, prominent points of three different States, viz: KENTUCKY, ILLINOIS & MISSOURI with the steamers Paris, Jewess and Declaration. End of the First Section.

SECOND SECTION.—(East Bank continued.) Commences at the
CITY OF ALTON.
MORMON CITY OF NAUVOO.

Cape and Prairie, New Boston, Boston Bay. (The River in a Fog.) Rock Island, Davenport, Hampton, (Fort Byron, Cordova, New Albany, Fulton City, Savannah and Huntsville) by moonlight.
INTRODUCTION.
 (A view of the Mississippi River on Fever River, six miles from the Mississippi, of the celebrated mineral region and city of GALENA, at sunrise.)
 After viewing Galena we return to the Mississippi. Mouth of Fever River, Bluffs, Castville, Wisconsin River, Prairie De Chien, "Fort Genard," Wisconsin, and Axon Mountains (celebrated in the history of the Black Hawk War.) Prairie de Camp, Mouth of the Black River, Solitaires Peak, Nally's Peak, La Montagne que trompe a France, or "The Smoking Mountain," Nelson's Landing, Mouth of the Chippewa River, & Bogus Creek, (the former resort of trappers &c.)

LAKE PEPIN.
TERRITORY OF MINNESOTA
TOWN OF ST. PAUL, BY MOONLIGHT.
 This ends the second section.

SECTION THIRD.—Commences with a sunrise view of the
FALLS OF ST. ANTHONY.
FORT SNELLING.

The highest point of Steamboat navigation on the Mississippi River, two thousand and fifty miles from the Battique or Gulf of Mexico, (the point where the picture commences.) This is the Indian Nation.
The Beautiful Valley of St. Peters.
 This ends the third Section.

The FOURTH SECTION commences with a most beautiful Dioramic picture of
ROCK ISLAND TOWN

Rock Island, with Fort Armstrong, where the treaty was made between Gen. Scott and Black Hawk, and the town of Davenport, (by sunrise) with the various steamboats, flat boats, rafts, &c. Buffalo, Fairport, Salem, Wyoming, Bloomington, Fort Louisa, Burlington, Fort Madison, Montross, (at the head of the lower rapids). A Dioramic view of KEOKUK, at the foot of the rapids, showing the point where the river sweeps round the town. Des Moines River, the dividing line between Iowa and Missouri—Churchville—Tully—Canton—La Grange—Marion City—Hannibal—Towns of Louisiana and Clarkville by moonlight—Wood Yard—Growth of Cotton Wood Trees—Steamboat Wading, &c.—The Mouth of the

GREAT MISSOURI RIVER.
 Above this point the water is clear; below, the Mississippi takes the character of the Missouri, from the volume of mud which it empties out. We now arrive at the **EMPIRE CITY OF THE WEST,**
SAINT LOUIS.
 This picture alone occupies over One Hundred feet of Canvas, in length, introducing the innumerable Steam Boats, Ferry Boats, Barges, Wood Boats, Flat Boats, Rafts, &c., together with a correct picture of the "GEN. PIKE," the first steamboat that ever came to Saint Louis. She arrived in 1817, and is introduced to show the improvement in boat building since that period, and to contrast her with the splendid mammoth steamboat
MISSOURI.

Playbill of Warren, Lewis & Co.
 of the Upper and Lower Mississippi River
 at Worcester, Mass., dated Worcester, 7-10 September 1850

“the magnificent building seems to be placed directly before the eye. Its white marble walls glitter with beauty, and its enormous dimensions stand out almost like a city itself.”⁴² In Buffalo the lower river section was now ready and added as a second exhibition. Then the dual shows crossed New York, with stops at Rochester, Oswego, Syracuse, and Utica. John Rowson Smith had been in this area more than a year before, so the exhibition was taken next to Washington, D.C., in April and May 1850, where it was “viewed by President Zachary Taylor, Senators, and other officials” of the government.⁴³

After a two-week trip to Richmond, Virginia, the panorama passed through New England, probably bypassing Boston where patronage had been captured already by three of the other panoramists. It was shown in Worcester and Salem, Massachusetts, in the summer and then in Portland, Maine, in September and October 1850. Editors pointed out the “surprising prairie view and Mormon Temple” that occupied the whole frame on the stage, as being “well worthy of the attention of the lovers of the beautiful.”⁴⁴ It was not a barnstorming tour, however, because this was the fourth Mississippi River painting to cross the continent. The itinerary moved across Canada during the winter of 1850–1851, with stops at Halifax, Toronto, Kingston, Quebec, and Montreal. In October 1851 the whole exhibition was placed aboard a boat at Montreal and shipped to Liverpool for openings there and elsewhere in England. The panorama of the great river was shown to the people in the Netherlands and Germany in 1852 and 1853 to conclude the European itinerary. Henry Lewis decided to get more training in art in Dusseldorf, Germany, a place so congenial that he lived there the rest of his long life, which ended in 1904. His famous panorama was sold and taken to the Orient, where it became lost to history. Much of his painting was preserved in book form and published in Germany as *Das Mississippithal*, which was reprinted in America and is still influential today.

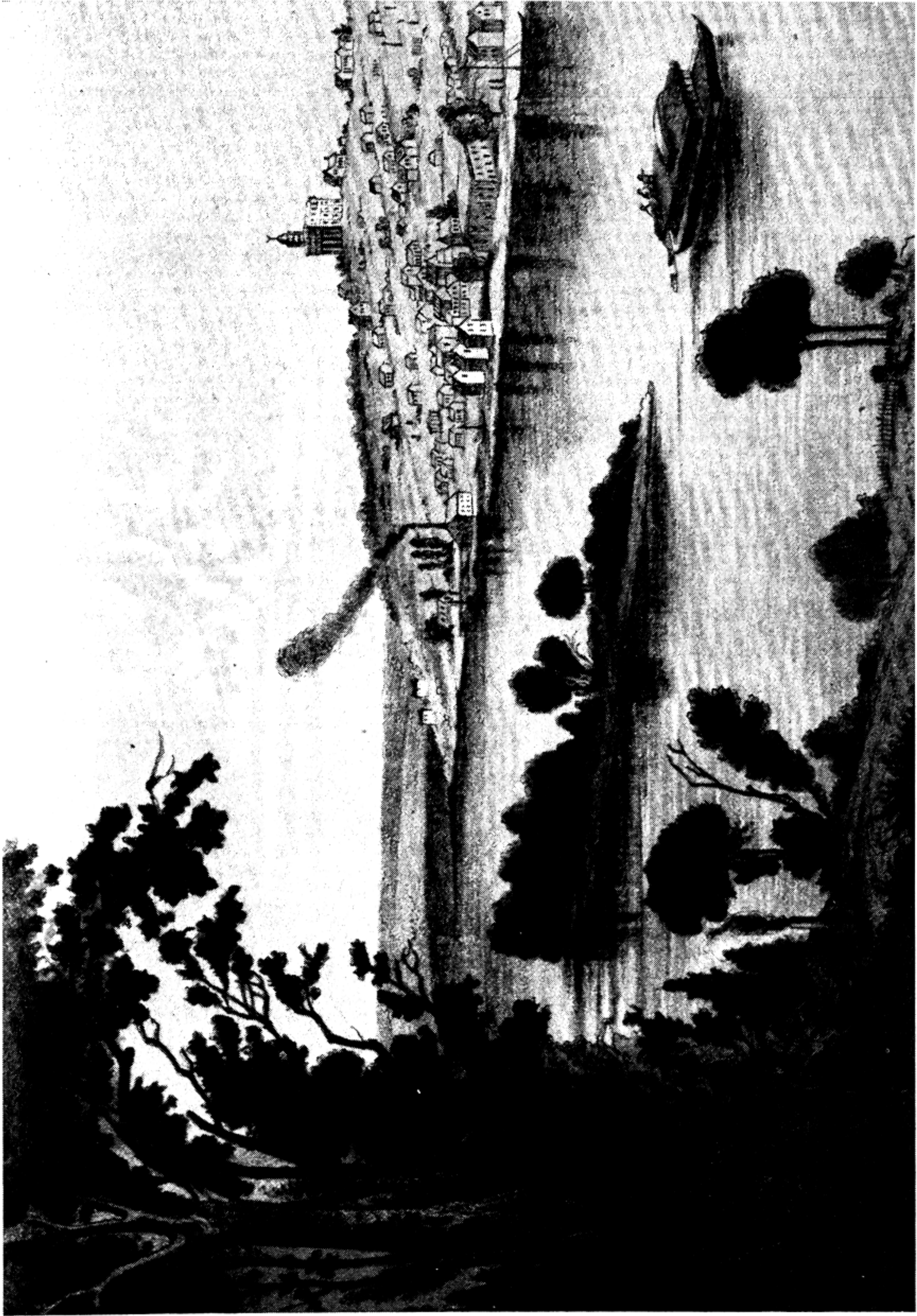
Some of the sketchbooks of Henry Lewis are at the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis, and six sketches of Nauvoo and its temple are among them: two each of the building, the baptistry, and the city.⁴⁵ It is fortunate that his exhibition pamphlets contain lithographs of the river scenes, including a view of the Nauvoo Temple at a distance separately, in its finished form. They

⁴²*Buffalo Express*, 20 and 21 December 1849.

⁴³*Missouri Historical Review* 29 (April 1935): 248–49.

⁴⁴*Portland (Maine) Advertiser*, 7 and 13 September 1850.

⁴⁵Letters of Marjory Douglas, 23 November, 15 and 21 December 1949, Missouri Historical Society.



View of Nauvoo and the Temple
Painted by Henry Lewis c1846

reflect the views found in the panorama.⁴⁶ His views of Nauvoo and the temple have been reproduced.⁴⁷

The diary of Henry Lewis, which gives an account of his sketching journey down the river, has also been preserved. The artist passed Nauvoo 16 June 1848 on his way up the river and stopped only briefly. He wrote,

[I] came in sight of Nauvoo, just as the sun was an hour up. The scene was beautiful in the extreme, as the history of this unfortunate city is a melancholy one. We staid a short time, but not long enough to get a sketch of the place.

The sketches of Nauvoo were made 28 to 30 July on the return voyage. He wrote:

We came to the celebrated city of Nauvoo, where, as the sun was just setting, we encamped and I immediately hurried up to take a look at the temple and see it by sunset. The next morning, July 30th, we started from our encampment and floated down to the lower end of Nauvoo city. We stopped to take a look at the town and finish our examination of the temple by exploring the interior.⁴⁸

He recorded his response to the temple:

Taking into consideration the circumstances under which it was built it is a wonderful building and considering too that it is of no particular style it does [does] not in the least offend the eye by its uniqueness like all most all innovation from old establish'd standards do. . . . It bears a nearer remseblance to the Bysantium of [or] Roman Grecian style than any other altho' the capitals and bases are entirely unique still the cornices are Grecian in part.⁴⁹

Lewis's notebook sketch of the whole temple is fragmentary, but it contains some of the essential elements of the building and its ornament as an architect would record them. It shows the main body of the walls, with the cornice and attic front, without the steeple or roof balustrades. It has a high basement, requiring eight front steps to reach the portals. Only some of the pilasters, windows, and triglyphs are drawn to indicate the ornamentation for the whole wall. Ten side pilasters are suggested, one more than the actual number. The cornice is shown, with its great projection, and a detail of its composition

⁴⁶Letter of Stewart Leonard, 7 February 1950, City Art Museum of St. Louis.

⁴⁷Seymour Dunbar, *A History of Travel in America*, 4 vols. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1915), 4:1239; "Papers in Illinois History and Transportation" for 1937, p. 170, Illinois State Historical Society; David E. and Della S. Miller, *Nauvoo: The City of Joseph* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1974), p. 82; *Improvement Era* (July 1962): 512-17.

⁴⁸Henry Lewis Diary, 16 June, 28-30 July 1848, quoted in Heilbron, *Making a Motion Picture*, p. 20, 51.

⁴⁹Henry Lewis Diary, pp. 51-52, quoted in McDermott, *Lost Panoramas*, p. 114.

is set in. The attic front shows only its pilasters, with the balustrade pedestals suggested above.

The artist probably made other sketches of the temple, as this one is incomplete. There were some changes from this preliminary sketch to the final lithograph. At first the steps were only in front of the entrance, whereas later they mounted from each side of the portals, as well as in front of them. The number of side pilasters was changed to nine. Some details of the sketch, like the arched window transoms and the four keystones of the frieze windows, are not found in the generalized forms of the complete drawing.

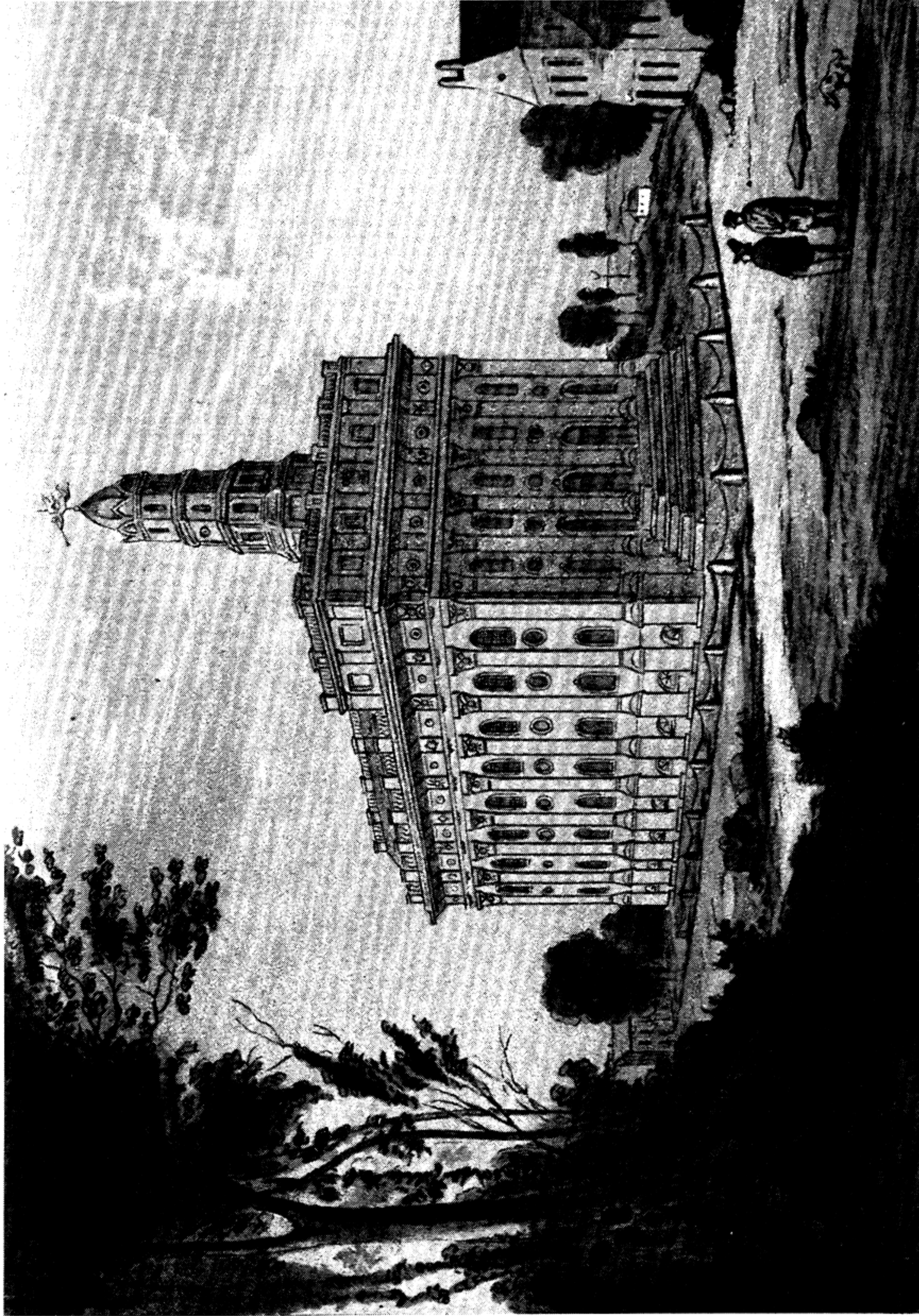
The Lewis sketchbooks, first publicly displayed in the St. Louis Art Museum in 1949, furnish new materials on the Nauvoo Temple not previously seen by the public. The guidebook to Lewis's panorama, also displayed simultaneously, contains some contemporary information about Nauvoo and its temple, none of which is new.⁵⁰ The finished painting of the temple shows a pretentious building that in several respects differs from the constructed building. It is rather high and narrow, and the length also falls short proportionately. The basement foundation seems unusually high. The three large circular windows, immediately over the front portals, and the central rectangular window in the inscription space of the pediment are not found in the temple photograph. The steeple has vertical panels on the sides of the base section. The clock section is of equal height when compared to the other steeple sections. The high cupola has rather tall pediments around its base.

The well-ornamented temple is given a luxuriant environment. There are large trees overhanging on the left front, with small trees to the right and in the rear. A large home is on the right front, with smaller ones on the side and in the rear. A fence of posts, connected with chains, surrounds the temple on the front and side. Two spectators and a dog are seen in the front yard. The temple stands on a prominent site and is yellowish in color. The colors of its surroundings are naturalistic—the green and brownish foliage of late summer, blue sky and white clouds above⁵¹ (see page 211).

As the panorama movement spread, other artists selected the Nauvoo Temple as a subject for their paintings. Unquestionably, it was regarded as one of the great sights along the Mississippi River.

⁵⁰Letter of Charles van Revenswaay, 2 February 1965, Old Sturbridge (Mass.) Village; Letters of Marjory Douglas, 15 and 21 December 1949, Missouri Historical Society; Charles Gaylor [Gayler], *Lewis' Panorama: A Description of Lewis' Mammoth Panorama of the Mississippi River . . .* (Cincinnati: Printed at the Dispatch Office, 1849), pp. 12–13.

⁵¹Henry Lewis and George Douglas, *Das Illustrierte Mississippithal* (Dusseldorf: Institut von Arnz and Company, 1857), p. 230.



Nauvoo Temple
Painted by Henry Lewis in 1848 for His Mississippi River Panorama