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## The Visual Image of Joseph Smith

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1967

THE VISUAL IMAGE OF JOSEPH SMITH

A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Department of (Art)  
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science

by

William B. McCarl

August 1962

## PREFACE

The writer was converted to Mormonism in 1953. At that time the greatest puzzlement about the new religion seemed to be the personality of Joseph Smith. It was hard to believe all that was told about him. Study during ensuing years had convinced the writer of the truthfulness of most of the stories told about Joseph Smith, so a recent desire had been to unfold the true physical image of the man. This work was undertaken in hopes of realizing that ambition.

As a Latter-day Saint the author naturally possessed a biased opinion during the research, but precautions were taken to present the opinions and descriptions of people both Mormon and Anti-Mormon who knew Joseph Smith. An attempt has been made to present objectively the true feelings of a witness when words were removed from context.

Acknowledgment is gratefully extended Dr. J. Roman Andrus, Brigham Young University Art Department, Advisory Committee Member; Mr. Jerry Rogers of Brigham Young University Photo Studio; and Brothers A. William Lund, Preston G. Nibley, and Lauritz Petersen of the Historian's Office, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for their assistance in the completion of this work.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Of the nine men who have held the office of President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Joseph Smith is especially respected since it was through him that Jesus Christ elected to establish His church again upon the earth. It was Joseph Smith who wrote the Book of Mormon translated from the ancient scriptures furnished him by a messenger of the Lord.

Joseph Smith is unique among the Latter-day Saint presidents in not having had his likeness preserved through the exactness of the modern duplicating medium, photography, although evidence exists that a photograph of him was taken.<sup>1</sup> Few paintings and engravings of Joseph Smith were made during his lifetime, and little is known of the abilities of the artists who created them; therefore, doubt arises as to whether what exists as the image of the Prophet is a reasonable likeness. It was for the purpose of assembling and studying the written and visual evidence of the image of Joseph Smith that this study was undertaken.

#### Statement of the Problem

To study the personality and physical image of the Prophet Joseph Smith symbolized in writings, paintings, and engravings for the

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<sup>1</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, March 20, 1910, p. 13.

purpose of establishing an accurate account of his personality, physical characteristics, and facial likeness.

These Questions Were to be Answered

1. What has been written by persons who knew Joseph Smith which has contributed evidence about his characteristics and physical features?
2. Of the artists who painted him which ones really knew Joseph Smith?
3. What common sources did painters use who have painted Joseph Smith's likeness since his death?
4. Since photography existed during his lifetime, did Joseph Smith ever pose for a photograph?
5. From among the many pictures of the Prophet which seems to be the most accurate likeness?

Procedure Employed in an Effort to Answer the Questions

1. A thorough searching of the library and archives in the Church Historian's office of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah, which included interviews with A. William Lund and Preston G. Nibley, Assistant Church Historians, who have spent much of their lives in accumulating visual and written material about Joseph Smith.
2. Interviews with Charles A. Davies, General Church Historian of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Independence, Missouri, and G. Everett Berndt, Chief Engineer of the Auditorium and Curator of the Museum maintained by the Reorganized Church.
3. Contacts with many persons concerned about the true image

of Joseph Smith, including interviews with: John Bond, Mesa, Arizona; correspondence with Everett Thorpe, Logan Utah; and telephone conversations with Dr. Mark Brockbank, Petaluma, California.

4. Examination of original paintings and prints for the purpose of cataloguing their originators, the dates and places of their origin, as well as determining their contribution toward the solution of the problem.

Brief Statements about other Chapters in this Work

Chapter II, Verbal Descriptions.--Answers question number one:

"What has been written by persons who knew Joseph Smith which has contributed evidence about his characteristics and physical features?"

This chapter presents quotations by people who knew Joseph Smith.

Chapter III, The Maudsley Print.--Presents the history behind

one of two portraits which can be verified as being drawn from life.

This chapter partially answers question two: "Of the artists who painted him which ones really knew Joseph Smith?"

Chapter IV, Other Art and Artists Who Have Contributed to the

Image.--Enumerates works of artists who have never seen Joseph Smith,

yet have contributed to his image by creating acceptable paintings of

him. This chapter with chapters three and six answer the second ques-

tion: "Of the artists who painted him which ones really knew Joseph

Smith?" The chapter also answers question three: "What common sources

did painters use who have painted Joseph Smith's likeness since his

death?"

Chapter V, The Daguerreotype.--Endeavors to answer question

four: "Since photography existed during his lifetime, did Joseph Smith

ever pose for a photograph?"

Chapter VI, The Major - Rogers Controversy.--Attempts to complete the answer to question two: "Of the artists who painted him which ones really knew Joseph Smith?" This chapter completes an answer to question three: "What common sources did painters use who have painted Joseph Smith's likeness since his death?"

Chapter VII, Summary and Conclusions.--A Summary will be made in this chapter of the findings and their contribution toward a clearer image of the first president of the Church, Joseph Smith, Jr. In this chapter an answer to question number five, "From among the many pictures of the Prophet which seems to be the most accurate likeness?" will be given along with other conclusions.

#### Definition of Terms

Brother Joseph--an affectionate term used by many of Joseph Smith's intimate acquaintances.

caricaturist--one who makes line drawings of personalities, usually with pen and ink, which emphasize or exaggerate expressions of the person's character or features.

Church--the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

daguerreotype--an early form of photography named after its inventor, L. J. M. Daguerre of France, in which the photo was recorded on copper coated with silver and mercury polished to a glossy finish.

General Smith--a name commonly used in Nauvoo when referring to Joseph Smith. He was General of the Nauvoo Legion, a state militia of over 3,000 men.

half-tone photography--two pieces of plate glass with opaque parallel lines on them are glued together so that the lines on one piece of glass are perpendicular to the lines on the other, thus forming a screen through which light can pass. In a camera built especially for such work the glass screen is placed just ahead of a sensitized piece of glass which acts as negative. When a

photo is taken the picture on the glass negative is transformed into square dots of light and dark. The negative is then projected onto a sheet of copper which has been coated with a solution sensitive to light. Where the negative is opaque light fails to penetrate and the surface of the copper is preserved. Where the negative is transparent acid eats into the copper in the form of square dots. When inked, the smooth areas print black while the corroded area prints white on paper, reproducing the original image in black and white dots.

Historian's Office--Historian's Office, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

image--a composite of what writings and paintings record as the physical features of Joseph Smith.

Joseph Smith--as it is used in the text refers to Joseph Smith, Jr., the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and not his father who was the first Joseph in the Smith family.

Joseph Smith, III--son of the organizer of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and first president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

M'Gahey or McGahey--is referred to by the Millennial Star as M'Gahey, but the explanation at the bottom of the artist's lithograph of Joseph Smith preaching to the Indians spells his name McGahey. Both have been used in this work.

Mormons--a nickname for Latter-day Saints. The name developed from gentile reference to the Book of Mormon, a book accepted by Latter-day Saints as scripture.

negative--a photograph in which the lights and shades are the opposites of those in nature.

plate--a term applied by printers and engravers to an engraving plate.

positive--a photograph in which the lights and shades are rendered as they are in nature.

prints--etchings, engravings, lithographs, or woodcuts which have been printed in some text or on some map or chart.

Prophet--Joseph Smith, Jr., first president of the Church of  
Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Reorganized Church--The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of  
Latter-day Saints.

stretcher bars--tongue and grooved or jointed strips of wood  
which when fastened together form a support  
against which the canvas can be stretched and  
fastened in preparation for painting. When  
the canvas is painted it remains on this sup-  
port which is secured inside a decorative frame  
for display.

## CHAPTER II

### VERBAL DESCRIPTIONS

This chapter answers the question: "What has been written by persons who knew Joseph Smith which has contributed evidence about his characteristics and physical likeness?"

Words sometimes express the image of a man so exactly that a stranger to the person can recognize him unmistakably. With few examples of portraits from life available, and a variety of interpretation, it was deemed prudent to weigh the words of writers who viewed Joseph Smith, associated with him, and illustrated him to others. Duplicate descriptions in words and pictures have been the means of educating the true image of Joseph Smith.

Joseph Smith was a man possessing "a tall, well-built form," said Lydia Bailey, an early convert to the Church, in describing the man. He had "the carriage of an Apollo, brown hair, handsome blue eyes, which seemed to dive down to the innermost thoughts with their sharp penetrating gaze, a striking countenance, and with manners at once majestic yet gentle, dignified yet exceedingly pleasant."<sup>1</sup>

"He was a fine-looking man, tall and well-proportioned, strong and active, light complexion, blue eyes, and light hair, and very little

---

<sup>1</sup>Journal History, October 29, 1833.

beard," stated Wandle Mace in his journal.<sup>1</sup>

The Weekly Gazette, of St. Louis, Missouri, published a rather detailed description of Joseph Smith, in May, 1844. His chest and shoulders were said to be "broad and muscular", while his hands were "small for his proportions". His feet, however, were large. Continued the Gazette:

The shape of his head is a very oblong oval, the coronal region high, denoting a resolved will, the basal and occipital full, indicating powerful impulses, and the frontal retreating, although the region devoted by phrenologists to the organization of the perceptive powers is unusually prominent.<sup>2</sup> His forehead is white, without a furrow, and notwithstanding the small facial angle, somewhat symmetrical. His hair is quite light and fine, complexion pale, cheeks full, temperament evidently sanguine, lips thin, rather than thick.

But the Prophet's most remarkable feature is his eye. Not that it is very large, or very bright, very thoughtful or very restless, or even very deep in its expression or location; for it is usually neither of them. The hue is light hazel, and it is shaded, and, at times, almost veiled by the longest, thickest light lashes you ever saw belonging to a man. The brows are also light and thick indeed, precisely of that description called beetle-brow.

The Prophet's wife is reported to have said of him, 'No painting of him could catch his expression, for his countenance was always changing to match his thoughts and feelings'.<sup>3</sup>

Parley P. Pratt recorded a word picture considered by some as being the best description of the character and physical appearance of the Prophet. He wrote of the martyred President Smith:

President Joseph Smith was in person tall and well built, strong and active; of light complexion, light hair, blue eyes, very little beard, and of an expression peculiar to himself, on which the eye naturally rested with interest, and was never weary of beholding.

<sup>1</sup>"Journal of Wandle Mace, 1809-1890." Typewritten copy, Brigham Young University Library, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup>Encyclopaedia Britannica, (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1960), XVII, p. 851 states, "Phrenology enjoyed popular appeal but was discredited by later scientific research."

<sup>3</sup>Edwin F. Parry, Stories About Joseph Smith the Prophet (Salt Lake City: 1934), pp. 158-160.)



His countenance was ever mild, affable, beaming with intelligence and benevolence; mingled with a look of interest and an unconscious smile, or cheerfulness, and entirely free from all restraint or affectation of gravity; and there was something connected with the serene and steady penetrating glance of his eye, as if he would penetrate the deepest abyss of the human heart, gaze into eternity, penetrate the heaven and comprehend all worlds.

He possessed a noble boldness and independence of character; his manner was easy and familiar; his rebuke terrible as the lion; his benevolence unbounded as the ocean; his intelligence universal, and his language abounding in original eloquence peculiar to himself--not polished--not studied--not smoothed and softened by education and refined by art; but flowing forth in its own native simplicity, and profusely abounding in variety of subject and manner. He interested and edified, while, at the same time, he amused and entertained his audience; and none listened to him who were ever weary with his discourse. I have even known him to retain a congregation of willing and anxious listeners for many hours together, in the midst of cold or sunshine, rain or wind, while they were laughing at one moment and weeping the next. Even his bitter enemies were generally overcome, if he could once get their ears. . . .

In short, in him the character of a Daniel and a Cyrus were wonderfully blended. The gifts, wisdom and devotion of a Daniel were united with the boldness, courage, temperance, perseverance and generosity of a Cyrus. And had he been spared a martyr's fate till mature manhood and age, he was certainly endowed with powers and abilities to have revolutionized the world in many respects, and to have transmitted to posterity a name associated with more brilliant and glorious acts than has yet fallen to the lot of mortal.<sup>1</sup>

In a letter to the Salt Lake Tribune Joseph Smith, III, son of the Prophet, had this to say about his father, ". . . The only ring he ever wore was worn on his left hand. . . . My father's hair was not curly. It was quite light in color. . . ."2

In his book discrediting Joseph Smith in particular and his family in general<sup>3</sup> Dr. W. Wyl used the first initial in the surname of

<sup>1</sup>Parley P. Pratt, The Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt (Fifth edition; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1938), pp. 45-46.

<sup>2</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, March 20, 1910, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. W. Wyl, Mormon Prophets, (2 volumes; Salt Lake City: Tribune Printing and Publishing Company, 1886), I, pp. 15-226.

witnesses as his only means of identity. His reason was that the witnesses who wished to tell the truth about the Smiths feared retaliation from the fanatics among their Mormon associates. Wyl repeatedly quotes Mrs. P., who was personally acquainted with the Smith family. The following excerpts from Mrs. P.'s testimony aided in verifying descriptions of those more emotionally involved with the Prophet:

Joseph's father, the first (if not President) Patriarch of the Mormon "Church," was very tall; his nose was very prominent; he was a real peasant without education. Joseph looked very much like him<sup>1</sup>. . . Joseph had great magnetic influence over his audience, more than Brigham<sup>2</sup> ever had. He had uncommon gifts in this line; he was what spiritualists call a strong medium. His eyes had nothing in particular. When excited in speaking, he used to get very pale<sup>3</sup>. . . He was always well dressed, generally in black with a white necktie. He looked like a Reverend. On the little finger of his left hand he wore a heavy gold ring; people were always giving him things.<sup>4</sup>

Charlotte Haven, an Englishwoman whose sister was a convert to Mormonism saw Joseph Smith in Nauvoo and in letters written January 22 and February 13, 1843, had this to say about him:

Joseph Smith is a large, stout man, youthful in his appearance, with light complexion and hair, and blue eyes set far back in the head, and expressing great shrewdness, or I should say cunning. He has a large head and phrenologists would unhesitatingly pronounce it a bad one, for the organs in the back part are decidedly most prominent. He is also very round shouldered.<sup>5</sup>

P. H. Burnett, a lawyer in Nauvoo, Illinois, at the time Joseph Smith resided there writes on page sixty-six of his book Recollections

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 16

<sup>2</sup>Brigham Young, who succeeded Joseph Smith as president of the Church.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. Wyl, p. 28

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 25 - 26

<sup>5</sup>Charlotte Haven, "A Girl's Letters From Nauvoo," Overland Monthly, (December 1890), as reported in I. Woodbridge Riley, The Founder of Mormonism, (New York; Dodd, Mead and Company, 1902), pp. 5 - 6.

of an Old Pioneer published in 1880: "Joseph Smith, Jr., was at least six feet high, well formed, and weighed about 180 pounds. His appearance was not prepossessing. . ."<sup>1</sup>

The person who described Joseph Smith whose word would be most respected by scholars would be Josiah Quincy, son of a Harvard president and one-time Mayor of Boston. He visited Joseph Smith in Nauvoo during May of 1844. As his carriage approached the front of Joseph Smith's Tavern, the hotel in Nauvoo, he saw a group of men in the doorway:

Pre-eminent among the stragglers in the door stood a man of commanding appearance, clad in the costume of a journeyman carpenter when about his work. He was a hearty, athletic fellow, with blue eyes standing prominently out upon his light complexion, a long nose, and a retreating forehead. He wore striped pantaloons, a linen jacket, which had not lately seen the washtub, and a beard of some three day's growth. This was the founder of the religion which had been preached in every quarter of the earth.<sup>2</sup>

Later in that day Quincy explained that Smith changed to a broad-cloth suit before showing Quincy and a party of Nauvoo visitors about the city.

Josiah Quincy saw a resemblance between Joseph Smith and Elisha R. Potter, Congressman from Rhode Island, whom he had met in Washington in 1826. It was not their physical appearances which were similar. It was the similarity of impression they made on Mr. Quincy:

Both were of commanding appearance, men whom it seemed natural to obey. Wide as were the differences between the lives and characters of these Americans, there emanated from each of them a certain peculiar moral stress and compulsion which I have never felt in the presence of

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<sup>1</sup>I. Woodbridge Riley, The Founder of Mormonism, (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1902), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Josiah Quincy, Figures of the Past, (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1888), p. 380.

others of their countrymen<sup>1</sup>. . . .The likeness was not such as would be recognized in a picture, but rather one that would be felt in a grave emergency. Of all men I have met, these two seemed best endowed with that kingly faculty which directs, as by intrinsic right, the feeble or confused souls who are looking for guidance.<sup>2</sup>

A profile view of the death mask of Joseph Smith<sup>3</sup>(see Figure 14) corroborates the Weekly Gazette reporter's statement that Joseph Smith's head was oblong shaped with a "frontal retreating" brow.

The prominent nose was obviously a family trait. The word descriptions of eye witnesses are supported by the death masks of Joseph and his brother, Hyrum, along with a profile painting of Lucy Mack Smith, their mother, executed by an anonymous artist.<sup>4</sup>

The eyes certainly must have been impressive to all who interviewed Joseph Smith for few failed to mention the impression received at observing his eyes, or perhaps, considering their descriptions, it would be better stated: having the eyes of the Prophet view them. From definitions we can assume his eyes were a hue of blue, perchance the type which seems to change color in different surroundings. The death mask indicates that his eyes were framed by heavy lashes which at least one account tells us were light

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 278 - 279.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 381.

<sup>3</sup>A century ago it was not uncommon to preserve the facial features of a corpse by greasing the face so that Plaster of Paris and burlap used to create a mold would not adhere to the face when dry. By using that mold, other models of the dead person's face, then, could be cast. At least several death masks were made of Joseph Smith after his martyrdom. One account of a death mask's manufacture was related by Wilford C. Wood to the Deseret News (Salt Lake City), December 23, 1936, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith, (Edited by Preston Nibley; Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), frontispiece.

in color<sup>1</sup>(see Figures 13 and 14).

By scrutinizing the paintings and drawings of President Smith which appear subsequently in this text the reader will be able to see that the artists were definitely impressed by Joseph's eyes. In all the artwork the eyes have been made to appear prominent either by proportion or value in relation to the rest of the face.

From the words of those who knew him it is learned that President Joseph Smith, prophet and organizer of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was in appearance of light complexion with very little beard, tall, well-proportioned, with light brown hair, a prominent forehead, and blue eyes of compelling attraction complemented by heavy brows and long lashes. This image of the man must be kept in mind as one contemplates the results of artists who have portrayed him.

A summary of Joseph Smith's characteristics and features:

Head and Face

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. brown hair   | 10. eye shaded, and at times, almost veiled by the longest, thickest light lashes you ever saw belonging to a man |
| 2. hair not curly   |   |
| 3. light hair   | 11. eyes had nothing in particular  |
| 4. hair quite fine  | 12. handsome blue eyes which seemed to penetrate one's innermost thoughts   |
| 5. shape of head very oblong oval                                       | 13. eyes standing prominently out on his light complexion   |
| 6. large head   | 14. eye light hazel   |
| 7. white forehead without a furrow                                      |   |
| 8. retreating forehead  | 15. eyes set far back in the head and expressing great shrewdness, or cunning                                     |
| 9. brows light and thick, precisely that description called beetle-brow |   |

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<sup>1</sup>Parry, p. 160.

16. prominent nose
17. long nose
18. light complexion
19. complexion pale

20. cheeks full
21. lips thin, not thick
22. very little beard

#### Physique

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. tall</li> <li>2. well-built form</li> <li>3. well-proportioned</li> <li>4. strong and active</li> <li>5. broad and muscular chest and shoulders</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. very round shouldered</li> <li>7. hands small for his proportions</li> <li>8. large feet</li> <li>9. hearty, athletic fellow</li> <li>10. <u>a large stout man</u></li> </ol> |
|--|---|

#### General Appearance

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. carriage of an Apollo</li> <li>2. manners majestic yet dignified</li> <li>3. dignified, yet exceedingly pleasant</li> <li>4. fine looking</li> <li>5. countenance ever changing to match his thoughts</li> <li>6. expression peculiar to himself which never ceased to interest its beholder</li> <li>7. unconscious smile</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. noble boldness and independence of character</li> <li>9. on the little finger of the left hand he wore a heavy gold ring</li> <li>10. only wore a ring on his left hand</li> <li>11. youthful in his appearance</li> <li>12. always well dressed, generally in black with white necktie. He looked like a Reverend.</li> <li>13. magnetic influence over his audience</li> <li>14. commanding appearance</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

## CHAPTER III

### THE MAUDSLEY PRINT

This chapter offers a portion of the answer to question two of the study: "Of the artists who painted him which ones really knew Joseph Smith?"

"June 25, 1842

Transacted business with Brother Hunter, and Mr. Babbitt, and sat for a drawing of my profile to be placed on a lithograph of the map of the city of Nauvoo," wrote Joseph Smith in his journal.<sup>1</sup> It is one of two times he mentions posing for a reproduction of his likeness.<sup>2</sup> Either President Smith used lithograph erroneously in reference to any kind of printed picture as some people use the word painting in referring to any type of artwork, or the process of engraving was substituted in place of lithography at time of printing. It is known that a period of almost six months elapsed between the date of his journal remark and the date in his journal where he speaks of the maps being sent for copyright.<sup>3</sup> Eighteen months after the map was sent for copyright this

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<sup>1</sup>History of the Church, Period I, V, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup>The other entries in his journal in September of 1842 concern his sitting for a portrait of himself being painted by "Brother Rogers". These references will be discussed at length in Chapter VI of this study.

<sup>3</sup>History of the Church, Period I, V, pp. 206 - 207.

announcement appeared in the Nauvoo Neighbor of Wednesday, May 1, 1844:

"MAP OF NAUVOO

Just received from New York the long looked for Maps of the City of Nauvoo--They can be had at my house on the Corner of Kimball and Granger Streets,--Price, mounted & varnished, \$1.25--not mounted, 50 cents.

April 30th, 1844

B. Young"

Though the map did not reach the office of the district clerk of Illinois until Saturday, December 17, 1842,<sup>1</sup> an apostate from the Church, John C. Bennett, wrote a book entitled History of the Saints, published in Boston in 1842, on page 57 of which a portrait of General Joseph Smith appeared. It was Maudsley's drawing for the Nauvoo map (see Figure 1) but it was engraved by another engraver, a Mr. G. Pelton.<sup>2</sup> Evidently Bennett, absconded with another copy of the drawing for the Map.

The engraving which was used to produce the Map of Nauvoo is now preserved in the Library of Brigham Young University.<sup>3</sup> The profile

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>John C. Bennett, History of the Saints (Boston: Leland and Whiting, 1842), p. 57.

<sup>3</sup>The Nauvoo Map engraving was discovered by Harrison R. Merrill, Professor of Journalism at Brigham Young University, on a farm near Orem, Utah, about 1930. The plate was being used as a scraper to remove mud from shoes of persons entering the living quarters. Having been carried across the plains by pioneers, it had fallen into the hands of those who failed to realize its historical significance, thus Mr. Merrill was able to acquire it, and in his possession it remained until his death on December 8, 1938. Upon Merrill's death Frank R. Haymore, manager of the University Press gained its tenure and awarded the engraving to the Brigham Young University Library.

While Harrison Merrill had it in his possession, he employed a carpenter to mount the engraving on a wooden block. The holes drilled in the engraving for the purpose of securing the plate to the block with wood screws badly damaged it for future printing. The carpenter's lack of understanding coupled with the plate's abuse as a foot-scraper rendered printing from it exceedingly difficult; nevertheless, Frank Haymore about 1952 or 1953 printed from thirty-five to thirty-eight copies which



in the engraving is that of a pudgy little man in a soldier suit. The proportion of the head to the rest of the body leaves the viewer with the impression the figure portrayed is stubby and overweight, yet it is known that Joseph Smith was a tall man.<sup>1</sup> One account assigns the Prophet a height of six feet high in pumps and a weight of two hundred twelve pounds at the age of thirty-six<sup>2</sup>--which age he would have been at the time he posed for the Nauvoo Map.

The reason for the incongruity between word description and the map drawing may be explained by President Smith's record of the event in his journal of June 25, 1842, ". . . Sat for a drawing of my profile. . ." It is unlikely that a man who commanded the language as did he<sup>3</sup> would write in a journal he faithfully kept as a record of his activities that he sat for a drawing if he dressed in his military uniform and stood for the drawing.

Accepting that he did sit for a profile, it is not difficult to imagine what transpired. The artist, Maudsley designed the profile of the head while Joseph Smith sat as model. Later, without Smith present,

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were something less than excellent in quality. Some of those prints are on display in the Brigham Young University Library. Printing with the engraving since that time has not been tried because of the possibility of further damaging the plate.

This information was obtained through interviews with N. I. Butt, Associate Professor of Library Science, Brigham Young University, and Frank R. Haymore, manager of the University Press, Brigham Young University, June 28, 1962.

<sup>1</sup>Journal History, October 29, 1833; "Journal of Wandle Mace 1809-1890", p. 38; Parry, pp. 158 - 160; and Pratt, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>New York Herald, February 19, 1842. Reprinted in Millennial Star, Volume III (May, 1842), p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Parley P. Pratt, p. 45.

the artist copied the profile he had previously drawn of the head in proportions that would match the smaller-scale body he had drawn for the corner of the Map. Enough time elapsed between Joseph's mention of his posing and actual time of printing of the Map to allow for different designs to have been drawn and submitted for approval, because Joseph states in his journal that the Map was sent to "the clerk's office of the District of Illinois" for copyright on December 17, 1842.<sup>1</sup>

Three opportunities for deviation from an accurate portrait of the Prophet may have existed:

- 1) One existed at the time of the original sketch by Maudsley. His ability was a determinant in the accuracy of the original sketch.
- 2) A second would have occurred if Maudsley copied his first drawing to proper scale for its position on the map.
- 3) A third could have been when the engraver transcribed Maudsley's drawing to the engraving plate.<sup>2</sup>

With three chances for change in the portrait from what was a true picture of Joseph Smith to what became the approximation on the Nauvoo Map, (see Figure 1) one must accept with reservation what exists in the print as being a true image; even though the artist drew the original from life. It was felt after comparison of the Map drawing

<sup>1</sup>History of the Church, pp. 206 - 207.

<sup>2</sup>It was the practice in that period of history for an artist to draw a picture and submit it to an engraver, an artist experienced at drawing on metal, who transferred the picture to a resist coated over a metal sheet upon which he etched or scratched through the resist to the metal surface below. The resist was impervious to acid and protected all the metal except the exposed area when the plate was immersed in acid, so the acid eating into the etched lines made a permanent duplicate of the picture drawn by the engraver.

with other examples and the word descriptions that this was not a close resemblance to Joseph's physical characteristics.

Though the Nauvoo Map profile is the only drawing mentioned by Joseph Smith which can be attributed to Sutcliffe Maudsley, other Maudsley profiles exist. One is a full-length profile in watercolor of Joseph and Hyrum with Hyrum standing behind Joseph as both face toward the right leaning on canes. At the bottom of the painting appears a duplicate of the Maudsley signature which is signed at the bottom of the profile appearing on the Nauvoo Map. There are distinctive features in depiction of the hands and feet which identify both pictures as being drawn by the same person.<sup>1</sup>

Other Maudsley drawings will be discussed in Chapter VI.

#### A Summary of the Findings

1. Joseph Smith posed for a drawing of his profile to be placed on a Map of Nauvoo.
2. Doubt exists as to whether Joseph Smith posed for the actual view portrayed on the Nauvoo Map.
3. The profile of the Map seems to be a poor representation of Joseph Smith's physical features when compared with the verbal descriptions of people who knew and wrote about him.
4. The original engraving plate from which the Map of Nauvoo was printed is preserved in the Library of Brigham Young University.

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<sup>1</sup>Wilford C. Wood, Joseph Smith Begins His Work (Salt Lake City: Wilford C. Wood, 1958), frontispiece.

5. The Smith profile was executed by Sutcliffe Maudsley, and served as a basis for Joseph Smith's portrait in one of the earliest books about him.

## CHAPTER IV

### OTHER ART AND ARTISTS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE IMAGE

The chapter attempts to answer two questions: "Of the artists who painted him, which ones really knew Joseph Smith?" and "What common sources did painters use who painted his likeness since his death?"

From its inception the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints made interesting news copy, and literature on Mormonism and its founder was easily obtainable in the United States and Europe.<sup>1</sup> The missionaries were making excellent progress in Europe and converting many to Mormonism.<sup>2</sup> Many who became converted after the Mormons settled in Utah left their homes to journey to the Great Salt Lake.<sup>3</sup> The exodus of Europeans to reside in Utah caused concern. Mormonism was of interest to readers, and writers were supplying the demand.<sup>4</sup>

Some writers chose to present an unbiased report, others sympathized with Mormonism, while a third group chose to write derogatorily about these alien people with outlandish ideas. Regardless of their

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<sup>1</sup>This was deduced from the many texts and pamphlets perused in compilation of this work.

<sup>2</sup>Samuel Bowles, Across the Continent (Springfield, Mass.: Samuel Bowles and Company, 1865), p. 398.

<sup>3</sup>William Alexander Linn, The Story of the Mormons (New York: Macmillan Company, 1923), pp. 415 - 416; Millennial Star (April 23, 1853), pp. 264 - 265.

<sup>4</sup>Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley, A Journey to Great Salt Lake (2 volumes; London: W. Jeffs, 1861), preface.

attitude toward the Mormons, the Mormon Prophet was of interest to all writers for he was the originator, or as unfriendly authors chose to identify him, the perpetrator of the entire plan.<sup>1</sup> Whether an author referred to the Prophet as Joseph Smith, Jr., or Joe Smith his picture was considered a necessity in most publications.

Two or three portraits<sup>2</sup> were available to aid European artists in their assignments. It is known that the portrait on the Nauvoo Map was available at this time,<sup>3</sup> and rumors persist which have not been substantiated that a Daguerreotype of Joseph Smith existed.

An Englishman, John McGahey, produced a lithograph of Joseph preaching to the Indians. (see Figure 5) Thomas Ward, an English convert to the Church, who served continuously as editor or co-editor of the Millennial Star, published in England, for the period from June, 1842 until October 1, 1846, with no indication that he had ever seen Joseph Smith or seen many of his portraits had this to say concerning McGahey's drawing:

We refer to this engraving with much pleasure, we have had the privilege of inspecting the drawing upon the stone, and pronounce it a very fine and artistic production, which reflects great credit,

<sup>1</sup>Dr. W. Wyl, Mormon Prophets (2 volumes; Salt Lake City: Tribune Printing and Publishing Company, 1886), I, pp. 15 - 226.

<sup>2</sup>Frederick Piercy, illustrator and co-author with James Lindforth of a book entitled Route From Liverpool to Great Sale Lake Valley (London: Franklin D. Richards, 1855), credits as the source of his portrait of Joseph Smith, (see Figure 2) "from a lithograph in New York". The lithograph produced by Sarony & Major, 117 Easton Street, New York, entitled "The Two Martyrs," and entered in the Library of Congress by W. H. Miles in the year 1847, (see Figure 3) so closely resembles the Piercy drawing it can be reasonably assumed it was Piercy's source. In London, in 1847, Moses Martin published prints of a lithograph of Joseph and Hyrum. (see Figure 4)

<sup>3</sup>Nauvoo Neighbor, May 1, 1844, p. 3; John C. Bennett, p. 57.



Figure 1  
The Nauvoo Map Profile  
by  
Sutcliffe Maudsley



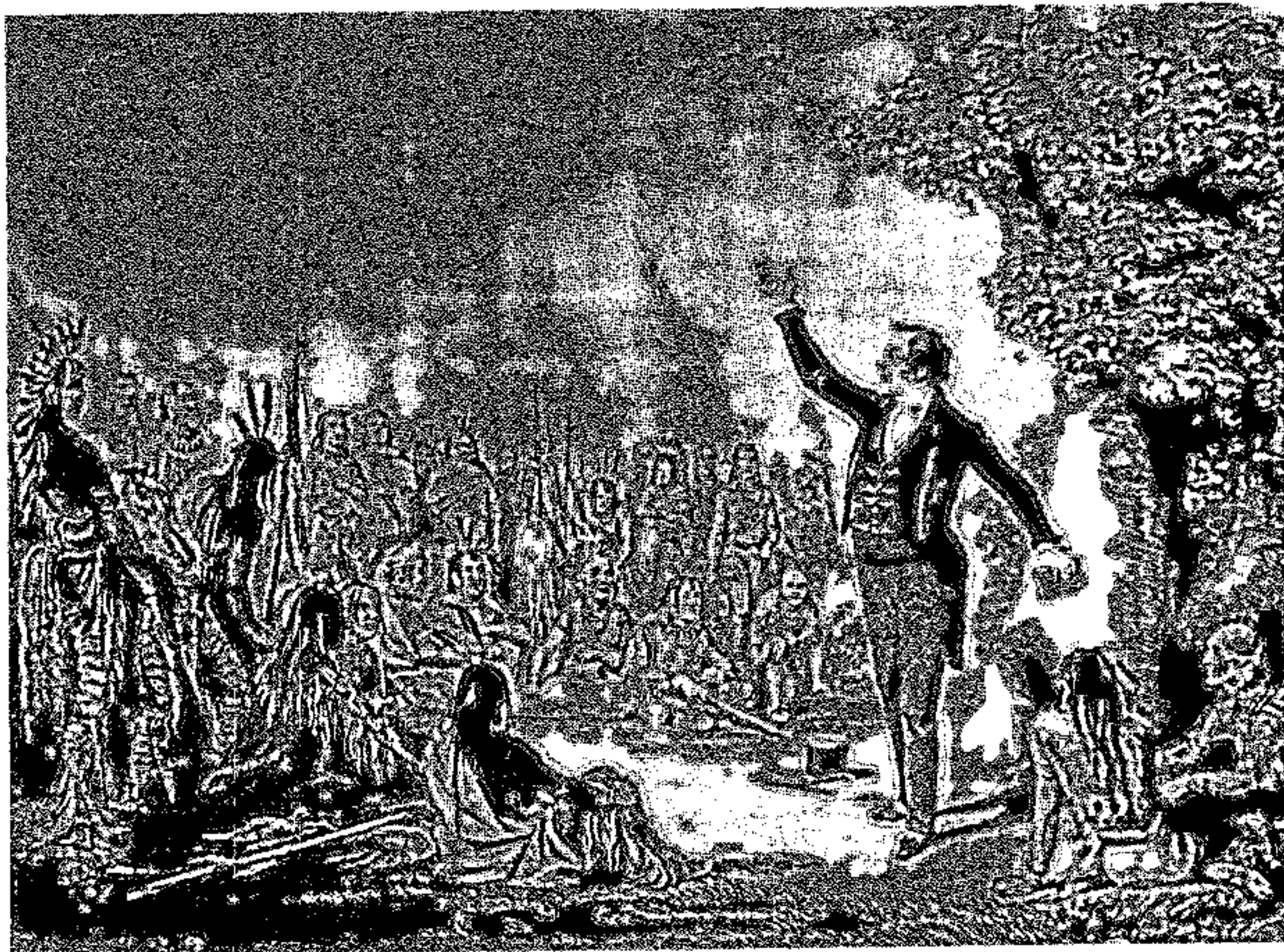
Figure 2  
Piercy's Profile  
by  
Frederick Piercy



Figure 3  
"The Two Martyrs" lithographed  
by Sarony & Major, New York



Figure 4  
Hyrum and Joseph Standing  
published by Moses Martin



Joseph Smith Addressing His Indian Visitors at Nauvoo by John McGahey

Joseph Smith Preaching  
In the Wilderness

engraved by  
N. Orr  
New York





indeed, upon the gentleman, Mr. M'Gahey, who has executed it. We feel persuaded that all who can, will avail themselves of a copy, and put themselves in possession of the most correct and animated likeness of our beloved and martyred prophet that has yet been made.

Engravings copied from the McGahey lithograph were used in later texts (see Figure 6).

Other artists, also, had their work copied in still other texts which seldom gave any credit for the source of the illustration. There were many examples of such larceny. Here are illustrated a few: 1) a Frenchman, M. Didier, was copied in many anti-Mormon texts published in the United States during the 1850's<sup>1</sup>; (see Figure 7) 2) an unknown artist who drew a profile of Joseph Smith which was popular in anti-Mormon literature of 1920;<sup>2</sup> (see Figure 8) 3) perhaps the most copied of all artists were two Englishmen, Sutcliffe Maudsley, who immigrated to the United States after his conversion, and Frederick Piercy, an English convert who visited here, but did not stay.<sup>3</sup>

Two of the earliest prints of the Prophet which came forth after his death appeared in an English newspaper, The Illustrated London News, August 31, 1844,<sup>4</sup> and The Prophet, Saturday Morning, January 4, 1845, published in New York by the Latter-day Saints residing there. The English paper's portrait is a profile face on a three-quarter turned body with General Smith in uniform. It seems strongly influenced by the

<sup>1</sup>Benjamin G. Ferris, Utah and the Mormons (New York; Harper and Brothers, 1856), frontispiece.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Sheridan Jones, The Truth About the Mormons (London: W. Rider and Son, Limited, 1920), p. 16; and Stuart Martin, The Mystery of Mormonism (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1920), p. 46.

<sup>3</sup>Piercy and Linforth, preface.

<sup>4</sup>Charles L. Woodward, The First Half Century of Mormonism, (New York: Charles L. Woodward, 1880).

Nauvoo Map profile executed by Sutcliffe Maudsley. The inspiration for the woodcut appearing in the New York paper (see Figure 9) seems to be a profile portrait hanging at present in the Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City. (see Figure 23) The artist is unknown.<sup>1</sup>

A Utah artist of the last half of the eighteenth century added his contribution to the image that is Joseph Smith. In the earlier period of his life, before he had formal schooling in Europe,<sup>2</sup> John Hafen completed a series of paintings dealing with Joseph Smith and the portion of Smith's life connected with the Nauvoo Legion. His painting of Joseph directing the Legion (see Figure 11) has been chosen for discussion here because it is a means of introducing the difficulties encountered in sifting the material concerning the true identity of the Prophet.

In the course of investigation, it was learned that Mrs. Lucy Fisher, 2891 S. 20th East, Salt Lake City, Utah, had a pin containing a photograph of General Smith on his favorite horse. The pin supposedly was worn on his uniform in 1843. (see Figure 10) The widowed lady's husband had been a collector of rare items and had been approached in the Hotel Utah, Salt Lake City, by two men who were anxious to do business with some person wishing to purchase a real photograph of Joseph Smith. Mrs. Fisher's husband was interested. The men convinced him in their story which accompanied the pin that it displayed a genuine photograph. Fisher made the purchase and the pin remained in the family's possession from that day forward. The date of purchase can only be established in

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<sup>1</sup>Chapter VI will discuss material brought to light through this study which seems to identify the artist of the painting mentioned.

<sup>2</sup>Bent F. Larsen, "The Meaning of Religion in the Life of John Hafen," The Improvement Era, January, 1936, pp. 5 - 7.



Figure 7  
The Didier Profile  
by  
M. Didier



Figure 8  
Joseph Smith by  
Unknown Artist



Figure 9  
The Prophet by  
David Rogers (?)



Figure 10  
General Joseph Smith  
(a pin)

general terms as sometime after the turn of the century.<sup>1</sup>

To the naked eye the pin appeared to be a photograph, but examination under a magnifying glass revealed the half-tone process had been used in printing a copy of the John Hafen painting of Joseph on horseback. It was not hard, then, to understand the reason for the "photograph's" disappearance for many years only to reappear in the hands of Eastern confidence men. John Hafen never saw the Prophet and did not paint his portrait until 1887.<sup>2</sup> The half-tone process was not in evidence during Smith's lifetime; becoming popular around 1890.<sup>3</sup> Therefore; neither the painting nor its half-tone duplicate can be seriously considered in determining the identity of Joseph Smith.

Lewis A. Ramsay, an accomplished artist of Salt Lake City, produced canvases of Joseph and the visit of the Angel Moroni, Joseph receiving the Plates of Mormon, Joseph and Oliver Cowdery receiving the Aaronic Priesthood, a portrait of Hyrum Smith, plus others,<sup>4</sup> but it remained for a portrait he composed of Joseph (see Figure 12) to arouse the interest of Joseph Smith III, President of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Independence, Missouri. Smith's

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mrs. Lucy Fisher, 2891 S. 20th East, Salt Lake City, Utah, August 21, 1961.

<sup>2</sup>The date appears on his painting of General Smith on Horseback.

<sup>3</sup>Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1960), XVII, p. 794. Half-tone is mentioned as early as 1857 in a French patent by an inventor named Berchtold, but became popular as a means of photoengraving about 1890 after the invention in 1888 by the Levy brothers of Philadelphia of the process which is used universally today.

<sup>4</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, March 5, 1910, p. 4; Deseret News (Salt Lake City) May 13, 1941, p. 11.

letter was addressed to the Salt Lake Tribune which had printed a half-tone reproduction of the Ramsay portrait upon its completion. The letter as it appeared in the March 20, 1910 Tribune commenced:

Independence, Mo., March 10, 1910

Publishers  
Salt Lake Tribune  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Gentlemen:

I notice in your issue of Saturday morning, March 5, 1910, a copy of which was handed me by a neighbor, a cut purporting to represent a lifesized portrait of my father, Joseph Smith, painted by a Utah artist. I do not regret to see the picture, but I do regret to know that all the reverence said to be held by the people of Utah toward Joseph Smith, the first president of the church, they know so little about the appearance of the man. I regret the statement made, that there is no authentic picture of my father in existence, for this is a mistake. If your artist, Mr. Ramsay, should ever visit the capitol of Iowa, he will find a duplicate oil painting of Joseph Smith in one of the halls, placed there by myself and my son, at the request of Mr. Charles Aldredge, then curator of the historical society.

There is an authentic oil painting now in the possession of my son, Frederick M. Smith, at Independence, Mo., painted by the same artist that painted one of my uncle, Hyrum Smith, which has formed a basis of pictures of him since his family went to Utah. It fortunately happens to us that this portrait, painted in 1843, is sustained in its characteristic likeness to my father by the daguerreotype in our possession, taken the same year, I think, by an artist by the name of Lucian Foster.

The picture in the Tribune looks like it had been made up of a composite of superimposed photograph, creating an ideal face. It represents him as wearing a ring on his right hand. The only ring he ever wore was worn on his left hand. The picture represents a curly-headed man, but my father's hair was not curly. It was quite light in color and altogether the picture fails to essentially represent the man.

That Mr. Ramsay has done well from the material he had to work with I can believe, but the expression about the lower part of the face, taken from the death mask, which I saw reproduced in Ogden, executed by one Brown, several years ago, gives too full prominence to the lips and chin.

It is a pleasure to think, however, that the remark made by you under the cut, that the artist has given human touch to the picture may be true. The recollection of the man so far as Utah is concerned has been kept alive by flat side views, by pictures originally executed by

Sutcliffe Maudsley, an English designer, and a good many are but caricatures. I am inclosing a photograph taken from the oil painting referred to.

Yours truly,

Joseph Smith<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the feelings of the Prophet's son toward Ramsay's painting, the original was placed in the Salt Lake Temple and a duplicate painted in 1916 hangs in the Bureau of Information on the temple grounds where many thousands view it each year.

The painting has appeared in books<sup>2</sup> and magazines<sup>3</sup> and served as model for Edward Grigware's painting of Joseph Smith which is displayed in the foyer of the Los Angeles Temple of the Church in Santa Monica, California.

Lewis Ramsay chose as his primary source for his painting the death mask of Joseph Smith, (see Figures 13 and 14) using all other available material to assist him as he progressed.<sup>4</sup>

The death mask was if skillfully executed but an indication of Joseph's facial features, because the death mask was made after the martyr had been dead for a period of twenty-four hours or longer.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tribune, March 20, 1910, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Hyrum L. Andrus, Joseph Smith the Man and the Seer (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1960), frontispiece.

<sup>3</sup>Improvement Era, December 1947, Cover.

<sup>4</sup>Tribune, March 5, 1910, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Deseret News (Salt Lake City), December 23, 1936, p. 6.

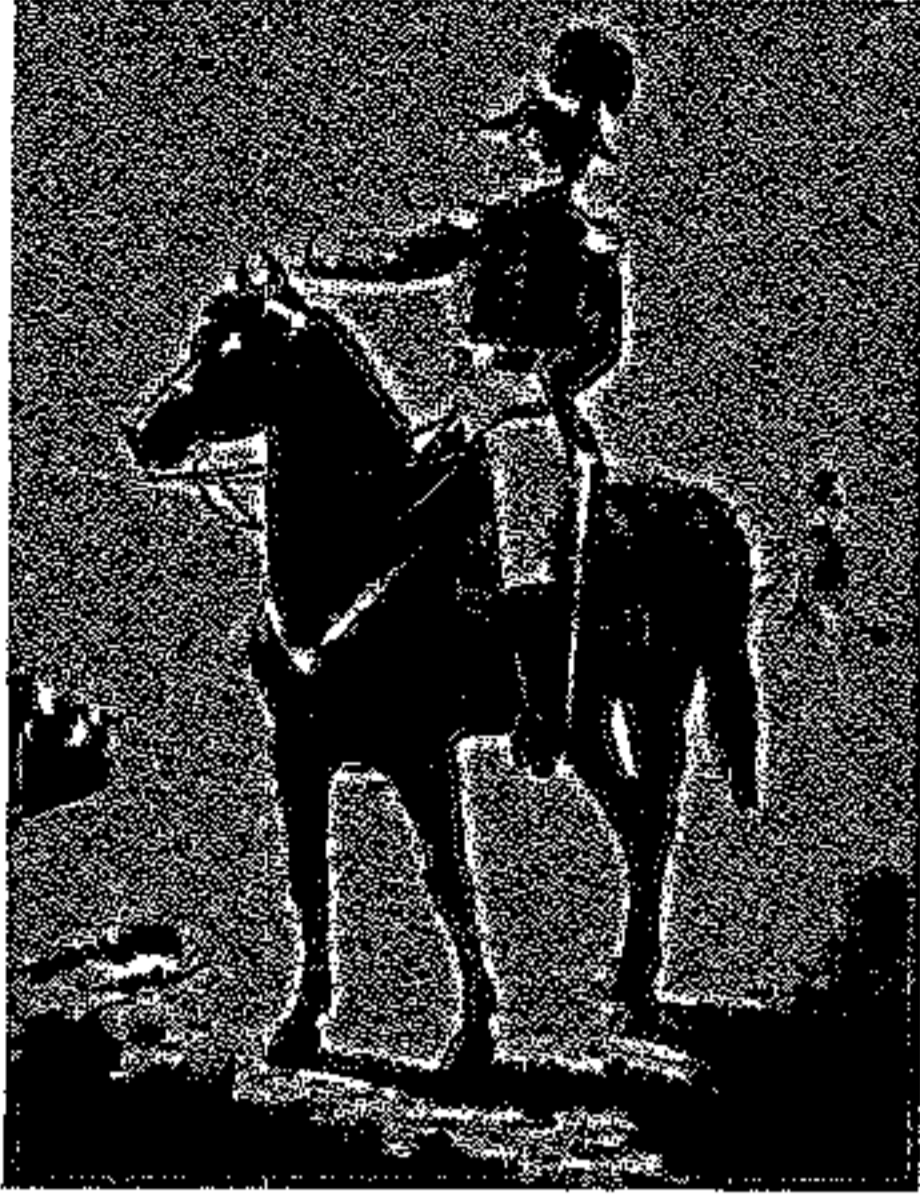


Figure 11  
Joseph Smith on Horseback  
by  
John Hafen



Figure 12  
The Prophet Joseph Smith  
by  
Lewis Ramsay



Figure 13  
Death Mask  
(Front view)

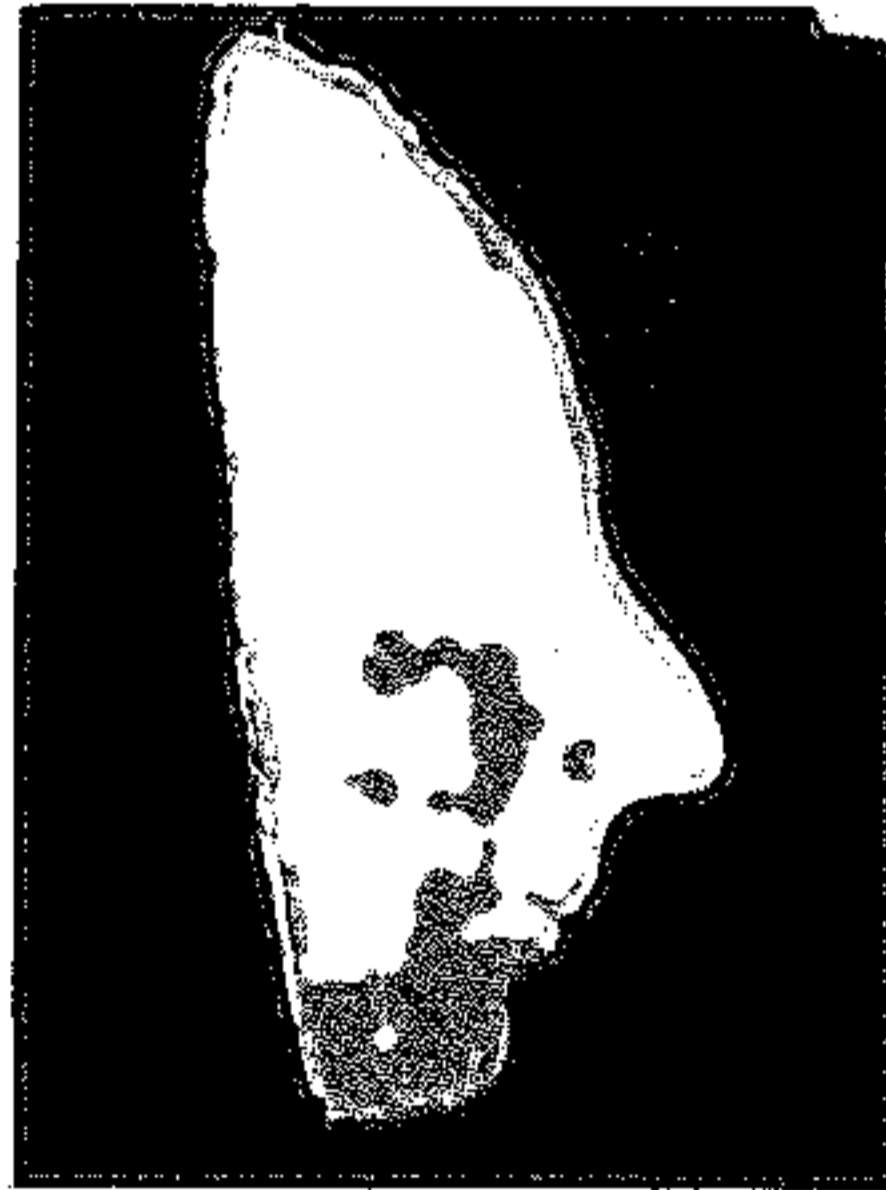


Figure 14  
Death Mask  
(Profile)

In that length of time, the punishment received in the fall from the two-story building could have resulted in swelling or distortion of portions of the face.<sup>1</sup>

With the source material he had at hand, even an accomplished artist as was Mr. Ramsay could give the world only an indication of the true identity of Joseph Smith. Nevertheless, his influence toward the image which exists at the present time has been greater than any other artist of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> Though many artists have produced a portrait of the Prophet in this century their source material has been essentially the same.<sup>3</sup>

Lewis A. Ramsay was a member of the Church and had a reverence for Joseph Smith which would not exist in an artist commissioned from the gentiles. The portrait of Joseph Smith which adorns the wall of the Joseph Smith Building at Brigham Young University was painted by Eric Bransby, a mural artist who is not a member of the Latter-day Saint church (see Figure 20). He was asked to express his feelings toward his mural painting. In a letter postmarked October 15, 1962, Mr. Bransby related his opinion:

In the final analysis I attempted to develop the portrait as objectively as possible as that of an historical identity living

<sup>1</sup>Interview with Elmer L. Heap, M.D., Mesa, Arizona, July 21, 1962, and interview with Mark Brockbank, M.D., Petaluma, California, July 4, 1962.

<sup>2</sup>This is an assumption which has its basis in the numerous recurrences of the portrait in texts and magazines since its creation in 1910.

<sup>3</sup>This was concluded after receiving a questionnaire from one who is living, and studying accounts in the newspapers written at the completion of work by others who are deceased or did not answer their questionnaires. The sources most used were the death mask and the front view owned by the Reorganized Church.



within a specified segment of historical time, and acting upon the mores and general historical development of his specified segment of time.

I have found that subjective values in portraiture will usually automatically come through if one's mind is saturated sufficiently in background material. Subjectively the portrait is realized in the mind's eye before the brush is taken in hand.

The portrait in this instance was painted twice. The first attempt produced an almost completely idealized portrait--subjective values overly dominant. A re-examination of documentary material produced the second portrait superimposed on the first and containing elements of the first, but with a balance, I feel, of subjective and objective values; structurally sounder and historically more accurate.

Though neither Ramsay or Bransby ever saw the Prophet many similarities in characteristics exist in their portraits of him. This bears evidence that both men seriously attempted to create an accurate account of the Prophet from the information available to them.

A recent portrait of Brother Joseph painted by Alvin Gittens, Chairman of the Art Department, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, at the behest of the Church in 1957 has made its influence and impression due to widespread distribution of a print appearing in a 1958 issue of the Improvement Era and its further appearance on the cover of a text by Hyrum L. Andrus entitled Joseph Smith The Man and The Seer published in 1960 (see Figure 15).

The painting is an excellent portrait and skillfully designed, but does it look like the Prophet? In Gittens' painting the brow is thick, the lashes long, the eye light in hue, the forehead white, the shape of the head oblong with the frontal retreating, the hair light, and the frame that of an athletic man. All are features expressed in the description of the Weekly Gazette reporter from St. Louis, who visited

Joseph in Nauvoo before writing his article.<sup>1</sup> Still this beautiful portrait leaves one hoping for something of more assuredness.

One more artist must be discussed; not for his important contribution to the Joseph Smith image, because few have seen his portrait. He must be recognized for the unique way in which the painting of his portrait of Joseph Smith transpired.

John Bond, a man who has had several unusual miracles happen to him during his ninety-odd years has seen every president of the Church with the exception of Joseph Smith. He had often expressed the wish that he might know what Joseph Smith really looked like.

He testifies that one night in a dream he witnessed the first president of the Church preaching from an opened Book of Mormon. Brother Bond recalls the sermon Joseph preached and upon awakening recounted the dream and text of the sermon to his wife. The next morning he began to paint the portrait which took two weeks to complete. He states that during that period of time he never looked at other paintings of the Prophet and never during the two weeks did he lose the vision of the man he had seen in his dream<sup>2</sup> (see Figure 16).

John Bond sent a photograph of his painting to the Smith family in Independence, Missouri. Their reply was that it looked very much like other paintings of their father.<sup>3</sup> This, indeed, is true. It looks very much like the Sarony and Major lithograph made in New York City in 1847. Mr. Bond is a person of considerable talent but little training

<sup>1</sup>Parry, pp. 158 - 160.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with John Bond, Mesa, Arizona, June 10, 1962.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

who feels he drew his portrait from a reliable source--inspiration. The Sarony and Major lithograph was produced by an artist with talent who very likely had proper training to accompany his talent, but the source for his lithograph is undetermined--in 1847 it was certainly not Joseph Smith since the prophet was not living at that time.<sup>1</sup>

That John Bond had a dream and saw a vision of Joseph Smith is not refuted, but it is believed the vision he saw was a composite of portraits of the Prophet he had witnessed during his lifetime rather than a heavenly vision revealed to him in order to restore some verity which would otherwise be lost from the earth.

In summarizing this chapter, it can be said that nothing introduced here has shown conclusive evidence of the true physical identity of Joseph Smith. The findings were these:

1. Very few portraits of Joseph Smith existed until after his death.
2. Most portraits of the Prophet have been painted by artists who never knew him.
3. Many artists copied from another who had drawn a portrait of Joseph Smith.
4. Most portraits were created as illustrations for books and periodicals written about the Prophet.
5. Early artists who drew Joseph Smith's likeness were:
  - a. Sutcliffe Maudsley, a profile engraving of General Smith
  - b. John McGahey, a profile lithograph of Joseph Smith addressing his Indian visitors at Nauvoo

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Smith was murdered June 27, 1844.

- c. Frederick Piercy, an engraving of Joseph's profile which he copied from a lithograph in New York
  - d. Unknown artist, a lithograph of Joseph and Hyrum Smith standing in profile view
  - e. Unknown artist, a lithograph of Joseph and his brother, Hyrum, standing one behind the other in front of the Nauvoo Temple
  - f. Unknown artist, a woodcut profile appearing in a Church published newspaper in New York
  - g. John Hafen, General Smith on his favorite horse, a painting
6. Some of the later artists who produced Joseph Smith's portrait and have been considered contributors to his present image are:
- a. Lewis Ramsay, a three-quarter view painting
  - b. Alvin Gittens, a three-quarter view painting
  - c. Eric Bransby, a mural painting
7. John Bond claimed he painted a profile portrait of Joseph Smith by inspiration

## CHAPTER V

### THE DAGUERRETYPE

This chapter will endeavor to answer the question: Since photography existed during his lifetime, did Joseph Smith ever pose for a photograph?

The art of photography, introduced in France by an inventor named L. J. M. Daguerre was rapidly improved by Daguerre and others in France, England, and elsewhere until portraits could be made in fractions of a second in the out of doors by the year 1843.<sup>1</sup> It was popular in large cities and some important towns of the United States by 1844 and universally located by 1850.<sup>2</sup> What made daguerreotyping popular was that it recorded exactly what was seen. Previous to the invention of photography, one had to rely on the eyes of the artist who painted what he saw within the limits of his brush and talents and according to his taste or interpretation. Photography imprinted nearly exact detail in black and white and was soon universally accepted as the way of accurately preserving the likeness of the features of a human being.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>N. P. Lerebours, A Treatise on Photography, translated by J. Egerton (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1843), p. 70.

<sup>2</sup>Beaumont Newhall, The History of Photography (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1949), p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1960), XVII, p. 804.

Because of photography's acceptance as a bearer of the truth, it was an aim in the design of this study to produce a daguerreotype if such existed as unquestionable proof of the physical identity of Joseph Smith.

Reliable people spoke of a daguerreotype of Joseph Smith.<sup>1</sup> None have been found or authenticated. As in the case of the pin containing a photograph<sup>2</sup> some felt what they possessed was a genuine daguerreotype.

LaMar Williams, Audio-visual Director of the Church is interested in finding the best portrait of Joseph Smith. In an effort toward producing the best portrait, he gathered available pictures of Joseph Smith and presented them to a retouch artist for the Hal Rumel Photo Studio in Salt Lake City. Mr. Williams asked the artist to produce from the available pictures a front view of the Prophet as she believed he would have looked. Her result (see Figure 17) was displayed in Mr. Williams' office on a day when Dr. Mark Brockbank, Petaluma, California, was passing through the hall. The doctor was attracted to the portrait and wanted to know its origin. When Williams had explained the story of its existence, Brockbank stated that the portrait was the closest thing he had yet seen resembling a daguerreotype in the possession of a woman in Sebastapol, California.<sup>3</sup>

While in the home of the Sebastapol woman, Dr. Brockbank was

<sup>1</sup>Young Woman's Journal, April, 1920, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup>Chapter IV of this text, pp. 23, 25.

<sup>3</sup>Interviews with LaMar Williams, Audio-visual Director, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, on June 29, and July 2, 1962.



Figure 15  
The Gittens Portrait  
by  
Alvin Gittens



Figure 16  
Joseph Preaching A Sermon  
by  
John Bond



Figure 17  
The Composite  
by  
Rumel Studio  
Salt Lake City



Figure 18  
The Contributor Etching  
by  
Dan Weggeland

shown the portrait implanted on the surface of a metal plate which he feels certain is a true daguerreotype. In the woman's photograph, Joseph's hair was light in color, neither his forehead nor his chin receded, and the aquiline nose was not prominent as in the profile views seen of him. Brockbank asked her if he might copy the daguerreotype, and the woman agreed providing her original did not have to be removed from her residence. At some expense, Dr. Brockbank engaged a photographer from San Francisco who brought his equipment to the lady's home only to have the woman deny having such a photo or ever having possessed it.

The woman, who has no living relatives, was later committed to a sanitarium for the mentally ill and her property is in trust with the Bank of America. Though nothing can be done until the woman is cured and released or dies the doctor intends to stay informed of the disposition of her property in hopes he may still come into possession of the daguerreotype of the Prophet. He intends to present it to the Church Historian where it can be of greatest benefit to all who are interested in the physical image of Joseph Smith.<sup>1</sup>

Charles W. Carter, one of Salt Lake City's early photographers and a daguerreotypist himself, copyrighted two photographs of Joseph Smith in the year 1885. His first copyrighted picture was entered as copyrighted September 25, 1885. Beneath the photograph appeared the caption: "Copied from the Original Daguerreotype taken at the City of Nauvoo 1843. Copyright secured. Entered according to Act of Congress

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Mark Brockbank, M.D., Petaluma, California, July 4, 1962.



in the year 1885, by Charles W. Carter." (see Figure 19) Later that same year, December 26, he copyrighted a second version of the same photograph, only he chose to omit the caption and considerably more retouching is noticeable in his second photograph.<sup>1</sup>

He did not stand alone in copyrighting what was entered as being a photograph of an original daguerreotype. "A third portrait, obviously based on the same original as the other two, shows extensive touching up on hair and clothes. This was deposited for copyright July 25, 1879, by W. B. Carson, Peoria, Illinois."<sup>2</sup> The photograph was copyrighted in the name of Joseph Smith, son of the Prophet.<sup>3</sup>

It is known that the Daguerre process produced a positive picture which did not allow a provision for duplicates.<sup>4</sup> It is also recorded that both Carson and Carter claimed to have photographed the original.<sup>5</sup> Since distance separated the two photographers as well as similar aspirations it is unlikely that the original daguerreotype was shared between them.

LaMar Williams believes he has an answer for the appearance of so many original daguerreotypes of the same pose. Assuming that a daguerreotype was made of Joseph Smith, it is easy to suppose that the

<sup>1</sup>Letter from Virginia Daiker, Reference Librarian, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D. C., dated July 3, 1962.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Letter from Richard S. MacCarteney, Chief, Reference Division, Office of the Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D. C., dated August 2, 1962.

<sup>4</sup>Lerebours, p. 142.

<sup>5</sup>Letter from Virginia Daiker, July 3, 1962.



Figure 19

demand was great for possession of the Prophet's likeness. To satisfy the demand an engraving was manufactured--one of outstanding quality and exactness. The print was sixteen inches by twenty inches in size and a number of the prints were distributed. Some of those prints LaMar Williams believes are still in existence.<sup>1</sup>

An investigation was made at the Library of Congress concerning the copyrighted photographs of Joseph Smith. W. B. Carson's copyrighting his photograph of Joseph Smith in the name of Joseph Smith, Plano, Illinois, the Prophet's son, would lead one to believe that Carson had access to the daguerreotype or a photograph of a daguerreotype--which ever it was--that Joseph Smith, III, possessed in 1879. Where Charles W. Carter made his photographic copy is unknown, but it is known that a similar source served as basis for the photographs of both Carson and Carter.<sup>2</sup> Beaumont Newhall, Director of the George Eastman House, Rochester, New York, stated that there was no way of telling that a heavily retouched photo as is Carter's copyright entry was taken from a daguerreotype. He added, "I can only say there is no reason for believing that the picture is not copied from the Original Daguerreotype."<sup>3</sup>

Carter's photograph must have been received approvingly for it has remained in circulation until this date. The editor of the Young Woman's Journal of April, 1920 expressed these words concerning it:

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<sup>1</sup>Williams.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Virginia Daiker, July 3, 1962.

<sup>3</sup>Letter from Beaumont Newhall, Director, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York, dated August 6, 1962.

The frontispiece is the only full face portrait of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was taken by C. W. Carter, pioneer photographer, from an old daguerreotype found at Nauvoo. It was considered by Mrs. Lucy Walker Smith (Kimball), his wife, not many years departed, as the nearest likeness we have. It shows the refinement and gentleness of character that were such marked attributes of this great and well-beloved man.<sup>1</sup> (see Figure 19)

Though a daguerreotype can not be found in 1962, there are four concrete reasons for believing a daguerreotype of Joseph was taken and has served as a basis for more than the two copyrighted photographs discussed in this text.<sup>2</sup>

First, Carson and Carter must have known that the existence of a daguerreotype was of knowledge to some at that period of time or they would have had little hope for success in reproducing copies for sale. Their clientele would have been mostly Mormons, many of whom could recall the happenings of Nauvoo which had then been history for less than a quarter-century. Assuredly, some would have spoken against such deception if it had no foundation of truth, yet nothing can be found in Church history or publications of the time which would lead one to believe anyone was offended by the sale of Carter's photograph.

Secondly, the letter written by Joseph Smith III, son of the Prophet, to the Salt Lake Tribune declares that a daguerreotype, believed to be the work of Lucian R. Foster, was in the family's possession in 1910.<sup>3</sup>

It can be shown from Church records that Lucian R. Foster was a

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<sup>1</sup>Young Woman's Journal, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup>Junius F. Wells, "Portrait's of the Prophet Joseph Smith," Juvenile Instructor (February, 1930), pp. 79 - 80.

<sup>3</sup>Tribune, March 20, 1910, p. 13.

member of the Church in Nauvoo before the Prophet's death<sup>1</sup>, but his first ad mentioning his daguerreotype studio's being open for business does not appear until August 14, 1844.<sup>2</sup> Another daguerreotypist who did live in Nauvoo was Marsena Cannon. He was one of the original members of the Seventh Quorum of Seventy which was organized in Nauvoo, Illinois, on October 8, 1844. This is shown in the records of that quorum. Whether he had resided in Nauvoo for some time cannot be determined. Upon opening his studio in Salt Lake City, he had this to say in his initial ad appearing in the Deseret News.<sup>3</sup>

M. Cannon

Daguerreotyping

I am now ready to execute Daguerreotype likenesses in the most approved style of the Art. . . Having had nine years practice in the Art, principally in the city of Boston Mass., I fancy I can suit the most discriminating taste.

Dec. 10, 1850

M. Cannon

When he spoke of his experience being "principally in the city of Boston, Mass." was he stating a fact about his whereabouts for the previous nine years or was he using the name of a cosmopolitan city to impress people on the frontier of his capacity to suit "the most discriminating taste?" Records do not reveal the answer to the question.

The last evidence that a daguerreotype did exist is the painting possessed by the Reorganized Church which now hangs on display in their museum at the Auditorium in Independence, Missouri. (see Figure 21)

<sup>1</sup>Journal History, April 29, May 24, 1844, and February 1, 1845.

<sup>2</sup>Nauvoo Neighbor, August 14, 1844, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Deseret News (Salt Lake City), December 14, 1850, p. 174.

This is the portrait to which Joseph Smith, III referred in his letter of March 10, 1910, addressed to the Salt Lake Tribune.<sup>1</sup> He condemned Ramsay's portrait of Joseph Smith which shows the Prophet wearing a ring on his right hand, saying his father wore only one ring on his left hand. Since he was eleven and one-half years of age at his father's death,<sup>2</sup> he should have been able to remember the ring his father wore and on which hand it was displayed if rings were of interest to him, but his failure to notice that his own portrait of his father shows the ring worn on the right hand (see Figure 21) makes one wonder if his observation was keen enough to notice such detail about the ring hand at eleven years when he had not noticed the discrepancy in the family's portrait in the intervening sixty-seven years. After he had grown to adulthood, a comment by his mother would have been sufficient to imprint in his memory that his father wore only one ring and that was worn on his left hand. Memory of such a comment may have prompted his statement. It can be seen that several logical explanations exist for Joseph Smith, III's comment about the ring hand, but none of them explain why the portrait shows the ring being on his father's right hand.

It seems conclusive that a daguerreotype in which juxtaposition of sides applied<sup>3</sup> served as the basis for the front view painting of Joseph Smith now in the possession of the Reorganized Church for these

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<sup>1</sup>Tribune, March 20, 1910, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith (Edited by Preston Nibley; Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), p. 353.

<sup>3</sup>Lerebours, p. 142.



Figure 20  
Eric Bransby's  
Mural



Figure 21  
The Front View Portrait  
by  
Major (?)

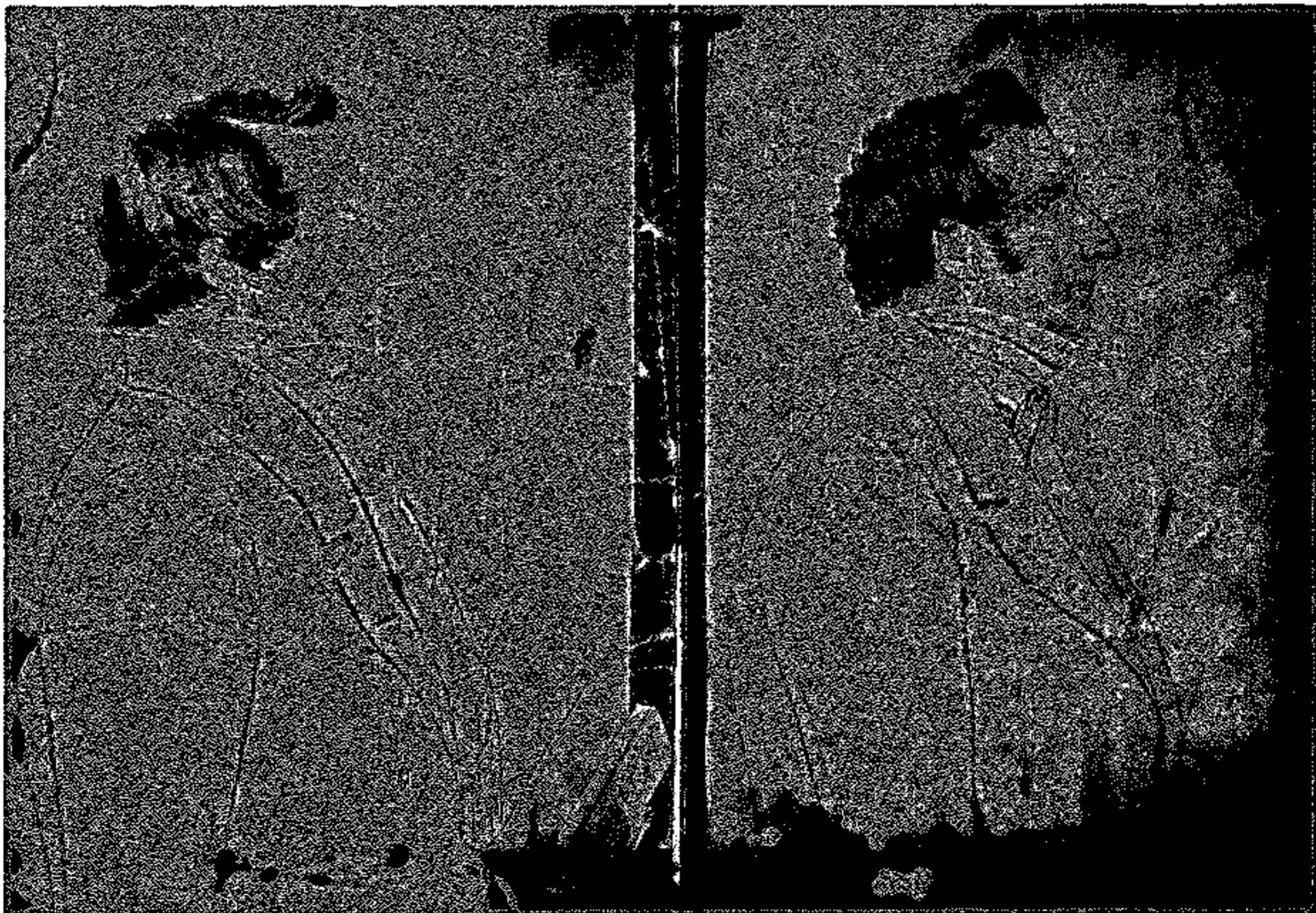


Figure 22  
Profiles of 1844 by Sutcliffe Maudsley

reasons: 1) The testimony of Joseph Smith III concerning the existence of a daguerreotype in his family's possession,<sup>1</sup> 2) the statement that his father wore a ring only on his left hand,<sup>2</sup> 3) the fact that the portrait resembling the daguerreotype shows the opposite of Joseph Smith III's statement about the ring hand (see Figure 21).

#### Summary of Findings

It is known that:

1. Photography existed during Joseph Smith's lifetime.
2. People state that they have seen a Daguerreotype--an early photograph--of Joseph Smith.
3. Two different early day photographers copyrighted photographs of Joseph Smith reported as being copied from an original daguerreotype taken in Nauvoo.
4. One photographer, W. B. Carson copyrighted his photograph in the name of Joseph Smith, III.
5. In 1910 Joseph Smith, III, wrote in a letter that his family possessed a daguerreotype which looked very much like a front view painting of his father which his family also possessed.
6. The front view oil painting poses the figure in a position duplicating in detail the photograph by C. W. Carter.
7. Joseph Smith, III, claimed his father wore a ring on his left hand only, yet the oil painting shows a ring worn

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<sup>1</sup>Tribune.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



on the right hand.

8. The daguerreotype reversed positions so the left portion of the body appeared on the right in the photo.

These facts which would help in corroborating the truthfulness of the foregoing statements could not be proven:

1. That a daguerreotypist was present in Nauvoo, Illinois, before Joseph Smith's death.
2. That Joseph Smith, III, had only a photograph of a daguerreotype or that he had an original daguerreotype.
3. That Carter or Carson copied their photographs from an original daguerreotype.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE MAJOR - ROGERS CONTROVERSY

This chapter includes answers to questions two and three of the problem: "Of the artists who painted him which ones really knew Joseph Smith?" and "What common sources did painters use who painted Joseph Smith's likeness since his death?"

Two artists are attributed credit for the same painting. This chapter will present what could be found to prove or disprove the credit given either artist.

The painting in doubt is the only front view oil painting of Joseph Smith found to be in existence. It is owned by the Reorganized Church and is on display at the Auditorium in Independence, Missouri. Some people have believed that the portrait was painted by David Rogers, a member of the Church in New York and an active participant in Church affairs.<sup>1</sup> He painted a portrait of Joseph Smith. Of that much there is no doubt. The question is: which of the unidentified paintings did he paint, or is his painting even in existence at the present time? Rogers is identified with a painting by several reliable sources.

Though Joseph referred to his posing for a drawing of his profile to be placed on the Nauvoo Map, he spoke only of the artist, Brother

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<sup>1</sup>Journal History, October 19, 1842; September 4, 1844; and December 1, 1845, p. 3.

Rogers by name. He mentioned the arrival of Rogers from New York accompanied by Brother Adams in his journal entry of Wednesday, September 7, 1842. Again on Monday, the twelfth, he records, "I was at home all day in company with Brothers Adams and Rogers."

"Friday, 16th--

At home with Brother Rogers, who was painting my likeness.

Saturday, 17th--

I was home with Brother Rogers, who continued painting my portrait.

Monday, 19th and Tuesday, 20th--

With Brother Rogers painting at my house."<sup>1</sup>

After Tuesday, the twentieth, he never again referred in his journal to the painting or the painter. He does not classify the painting as being a front view or a profile as he did when posing for the Nauvoo Map.<sup>2</sup> Had he done so, much of the controversy about which portrait is the Rogers painting would have been eliminated.

States the Liahona in 1909:

The portrait of the Prophet Joseph Smith which appears on the front page of the Liahona, The Elders Journal (see Figure 18) is taken from an engraving which appeared in the Contributor for Oct., 1885. The picture usually presented of the Prophet is the profile position, this front view not being so commonly represented. This portrait is a drawing made from a daguerreotype, purported to be taken from an oil painting of the Prophet painted during his lifetime by a Mr. Rogers from New York, preserved by Emma Smith, and now in the possession of her son Joseph Smith of Independence, Mo.

It will be seen that no claims are made that the portrait is an exact one. The Contributor thus speaks of it: "The engraving

<sup>1</sup>History of the Church, Period I, V, pp. 162, 164 - 65.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

was originally taken from the painting and while that was not a good likeness of the Prophet, it nevertheless was the only front view of him that was taken in his lifetime. Many of those who knew the Prophet say that there is much in this little engraving which reminds them of him."<sup>1</sup>

Dan Weggeland, a Salt Lake City artist, drew the sketch for the engraving (see Figure 18) which appeared in the Contributor in 1885.<sup>2</sup>

In referring to the engraving on the frontispiece the Contributor's editor, Junius F. Wells had this to say:

The conspicuous feature of the engraving is the portrait of Joseph Smith the Prophet.<sup>3</sup> This purports to be from a daguerreotype taken from life; but so far as we have been able to discover by diligent inquiry, no such portrait was ever taken, and we have fully satisfied ourselves that the original of the daguerreotype is the same as that of Mr. Tullidge's steel engraving.<sup>4</sup> The latter purports to be taken from the oil painting of Joseph which his wife Emma always kept in her room and refused during her lifetime to have copied. The painting from which it was made has a history. At the time it was being made, Joseph was very much harrassed by his enemies and was full of anxiety and care. His expression was correspondingly sad, and the artist, Mr. Rogers from New York, almost despaired of getting a portrait that would be satisfactory. He was considerable of an actor, however, and also something of a wit, and he resorted to his drollery to cheer up his subject and get a happier expression on his face. This succeeded, and Joseph was frequently thrown into convulsions of laughter while sitting for the portrait. His endeavor to restrain mirth that he was thus made to feel supplies the most striking expression of the painting. He looks as though he were just going to laugh (see Figure 21).

<sup>1</sup>The Liahona, the Elders Journal, December 18, 1909. p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>The Contributor, (October, 1885), frontispiece.

<sup>3</sup>The Smith portrait appeared in the middle of the frontispiece with sketches of historical landmarks around Nauvoo drawn above and below it.

<sup>4</sup>Edward Wheelock Tullidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet (Plano, Illinois: Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1880), frontispiece. (Examination of the engraving will reveal it is not identical to the photograph Carter supposedly copied from the original daguerreotype.)

When it was finished his opinion was asked of it and he said, "It is a pretty good likeness of a silly boy, but not much like the Prophet of the Lord . . ." <sup>1</sup>

At the age of seventy, writing in the Juvenile Instructor, the same Junius Wells again referred to the portrait owned by the Reorganized Church (see Figure 21), "The first and only full face portrait is an oil painting made by an artist named Rogers who came from New York and called upon the Prophet, who was at the time in hiding from his enemies . . ." He then related the entries from Joseph's journal of September 7, 10, 12, 16, 17, 19, and 20, 1842. <sup>2</sup> Succeeding that information was this commentary:

This concludes the record relating to the painting, which being finished hung first in the Mansion House and afterward in the Nauvoo House in possession of the Prophet's widow, Emma Smith. Upon visiting her, in the winter of 1875-76, she entertained me very hospitably and showed me the painting, then hanging in her bedroom in the Nauvoo House. I asked her if it were a good likeness of the Prophet. She replied, "No. He could not have a good portrait--his countenance was changing all the time." I then asked her what he thought of it and she replied: "I can tell you that, for I asked him and he said: 'Emma, that is a nice painting of a silly boy, but it don't look much like a Prophet of the Lord!'" <sup>3</sup>

*So could anyone produce this?*

It will be interesting to note that Junius Wells does not say in his article appearing in the Contributor <sup>4</sup> or the one written for the Juvenile Instructor <sup>5</sup> that Emma Smith told him the Portrait (see Figure 21) was painted by Brother Rogers although his intriguing history behind the

<sup>1</sup>Contributor, pp. 34 - 35.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Church, pp. 160, 162, 164 - 65.

<sup>3</sup>Junius F. Wells, "Portraits of Joseph Smith the Prophet," The Juvenile Instructor, (February, 1930), pp. 79 - 80.

<sup>4</sup>Contributor, pp. 34 - 35.

<sup>5</sup>Wells.

painting described in the Contributor article of 1885 would lead one to believe he was told the story of Rogers painting the portrait by Emma while visiting in Nauvoo. Emma was present when Rogers painted Joseph's portrait<sup>1</sup> and could have told the facts, but others who were her friends when they resided in Nauvoo before joining the Latter-day Saints who moved to Utah reported that her manner toward them on return visits was an attitude of polite by reticent cordiality.<sup>2</sup> If she would not communicate with her former friends, a young missionary from Utah<sup>3</sup> whom she had never seen before would probably not receive different treatment from that of her former associates. Wells may have heard the story he told about Rogers painting the Prophet at some time other than the time of his visit to Nauvoo. After seeing the portrait in Nauvoo, he may have begun associating the incident concerning Rogers the painter with the front view portrait he had seen in Nauvoo (see Figure 21).

So far all evidence has supported the belief that Brother Rogers of New York painted the front view portrait of Joseph Smith. If there were no evidence to the contrary a controversy could not exist. Let us examine all the evidence.

The Deseret News offered the following to its readers of Tuesday, November 29, 1855 appearing under the headline, "Returned Missionaries"

<sup>1</sup>History of the Church, Period I, V, pp. 162, 164.

<sup>2</sup>Journal History, November 11, 1854; November 6, 1856, p. 2; December 8, 1856, p. 2; December 19, 1869, p. 6; and December 25, 1869, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., October 21, 1875.

Party in the Social Hall":

. . . The hall was beautifully lighted by two large chandeliers hung from the ceiling. On the west walls were suspended two profile likenesses, life size, executed in oil, of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. They were painted in Nauvoo by David Rogers of New York in the year 1842, are the property of President B. Young, and are the truest delineations of the features of those distinguished individuals in existence.

Brigham Young identified the artist of his profiles as David Rogers of New York. History records that it was that man who traveled to Nauvoo in 1842,<sup>1</sup> for the New York mission records him not present at their conference in October of that year. It cannot be ascertained how long Rogers stayed in Nauvoo, but it is known that Hyrum Smith was absent four days before Rogers' arrival in Nauvoo<sup>2</sup> and did not return from a mission to the Eastern states until November 4, 1842.<sup>3</sup> If Rogers painted Hyrum from life he had to remain in Nauvoo through the first full week of November, at least.

Evidence would seem to show that Hyrum had no portraits available from which Rogers could have copied since the earliest dated portrait of Hyrum's profile was done by Sutcliffe Maudsley in 1844<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 22).

If Junius Wells had received his story from Emma, who entertained the artist for at least two months, it would seem he would have asked

<sup>1</sup>Journal History, October 19, 1842.

<sup>2</sup>History of the Church, Period I, V, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 183.

<sup>4</sup>George Washington Johnson, "Autobiography and Poems of George Washington Johnson" (an unpublished manuscript in the Brigham Young University Library). The inside back leaf of the cover has two prints of the Smiths cut from something larger. At the bottom of each picture, accompanying the signature, is the date 1844.

the artist's given name. Had he done so, Emma could have told him, yet Wells refers to him in both the Contributor<sup>1</sup> and the Juvenile Instructor<sup>2</sup> only as "Brother" Rogers. From reading History of the Church, which he quoted in his Juvenile Instructor<sup>3</sup> article, Wells could have learned that "Brother" Rogers painted Joseph's portrait. Whether that was his source for the artist's name is conjecture.

Two writers who arrived in Salt Lake City for an extended stay in 1855 were Jules Remy, a clergyman from France, and Julius Brenchley, his English associate.<sup>4</sup> In 1861, after their return to Europe, they published a two volume work describing the Western United States and Mormonism. In the frontispiece of the second volume<sup>5</sup> appears an engraving of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. The engraver, W. Edwards, has derisively placed haloes around the martyrs' heads (see Figure 23). Nevertheless, the likenesses are remarkably like two paintings of Joseph and Hyrum, unidentified as to artist, hanging in the Church Historian's library (see Figures 24 and 25). Beneath the engraving in the Remy and Brenchley book is the inscription, "David Rogers, painter, Nauvoo, 1842. Taken from the original picture hanging in the palace of Brigham Young."

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<sup>1</sup>Contributor.

<sup>2</sup>Wells.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley, A Journey to Great Salt Lake (2 volumes; London: W. Jeffs, 1861), I, preface.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., II, frontispiece.



Though the Remy and Brenchley volumes ridicule the religious doctrines of Mormonism, it seems unreasonable to believe they would have credited someone other than the artist attributed by Brigham Young as having done the portrait. Changing the artist's name on the picture could serve them no purpose in ridiculing the Mormons. If one accepts their caption beneath the engraving as being the truth it is interesting to compare the print with the unidentified paintings in the Church Historian's library (see Figures 24 and 25), as one keeps in mind that Brigham Young stated his profile likenesses of Hyrum and Joseph were lifesize paintings in oil:

1. The unidentified portraits in the Church Historian's library are lifesize oil paintings facing toward the right.

2. The artist copying Brigham's portraits of the martyrs would have chosen to draw them in the same position as they were represented in order that he might have the ultimate advantage in producing the most reasonable likenesses. When such a drawing was engraved by Mr. Edwards<sup>1</sup> it would be reversed in the position the figures were facing. In the Edwards engraving of Brigham Young's portraits the figures face left-- opposite those in the Church Historian's library. (Compare Figures 23, 24, and 25).

3. Comparison of position of the figures in the Remy and Brenchley portraits with the Church Historian's portraits indicate:

a) The outlines of the heads are almost identical (see Plates I and II).

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.



Figure 23

THE REMY AND BRENCHLEY ENGRAVING

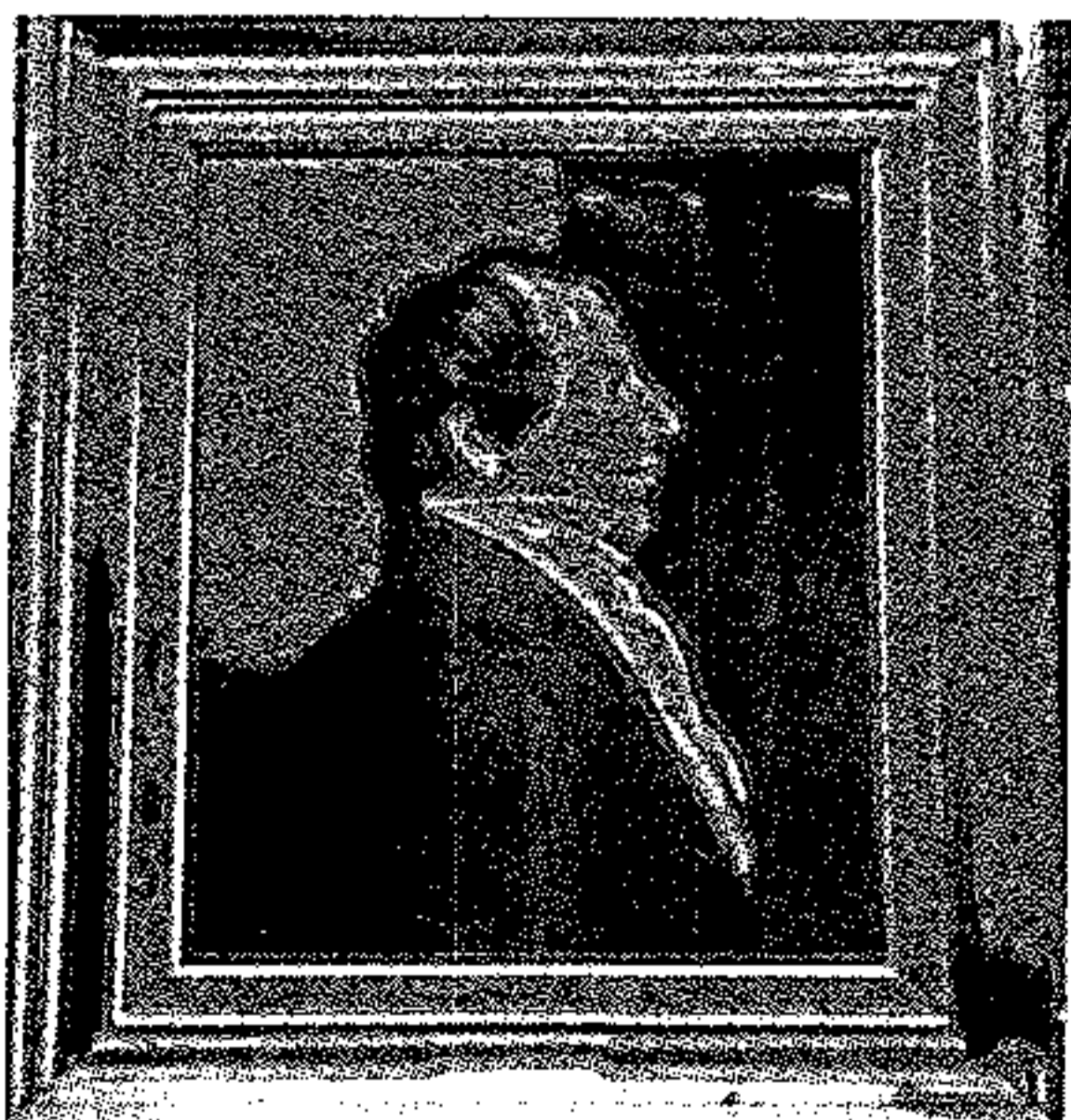


Figure 24  
Joseph Smith by David Rogers  
1842



Figure 25  
Hyrum Smith by David Rogers  
1842

b) The arrangement of the hair on the heads as well as the waves and curls are the same in position and number (see Plates I and II).

c) Shading beneath the chins and about the eyes along with treatment of the distribution of light are too similar to be coincidental (Compare Figure 22 with Figures 23 and 24).

d) The positions of the shoulders, the placing of the collars against the chins, plus agreement in length of ties and positions of the knots in the ties are too much alike to be accidental (see Plates I and II).

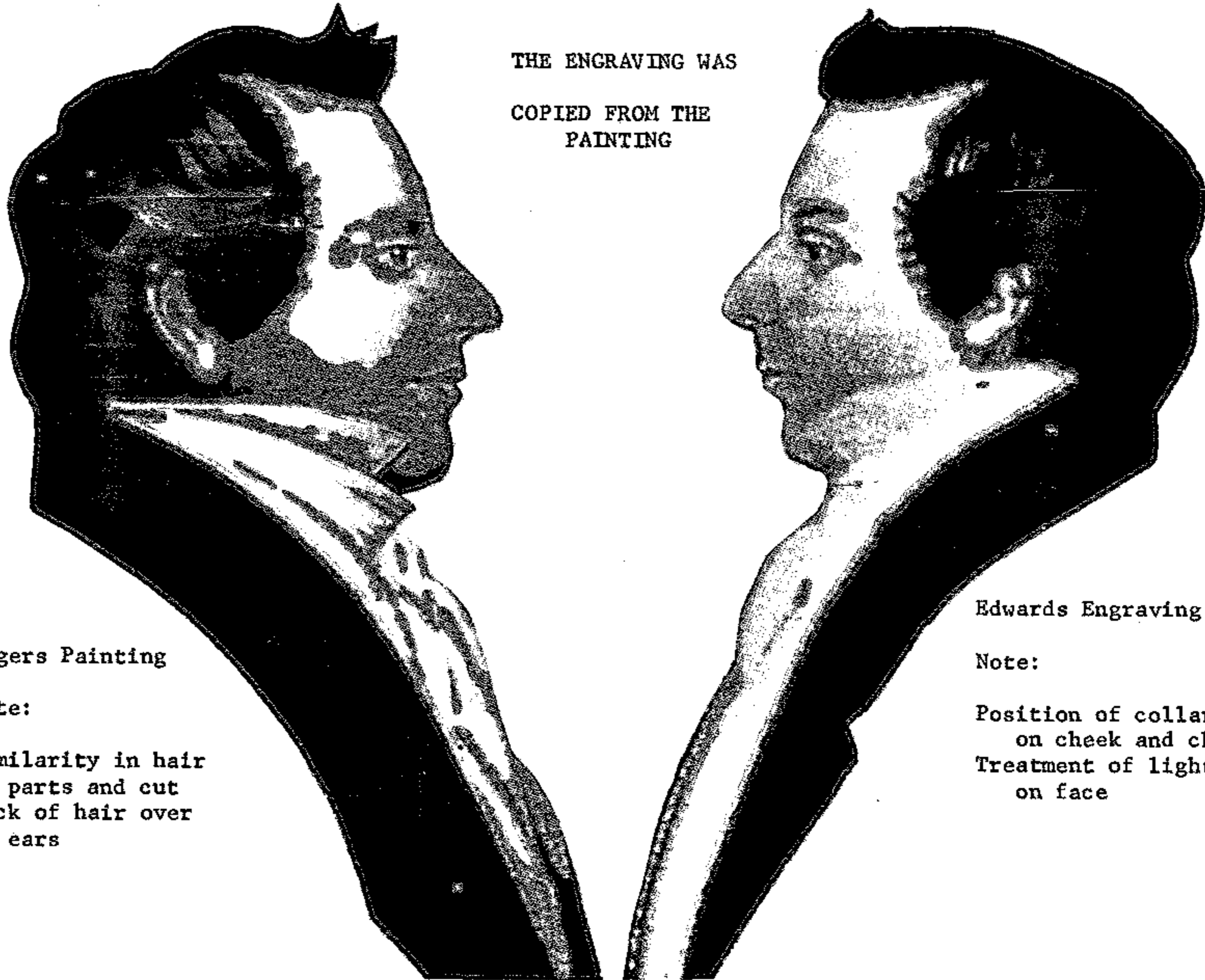
The findings just enumerated show convincing evidence that the portraits Brigham Young possessed in 1855<sup>1</sup> painted by David Rogers of New York in 1842 now are displayed in the library of the Church Historian's offices of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah.

In the Remy and Brenchley portraits (see Figure 23) a greater portion of the bodies appear than in the portraits now hanging in the Church Historian's library (see Figures 24 and 25). This may be explained by comparison of the Remy and Brenchley engraving<sup>2</sup> with the Maudsley prints of 1844<sup>3</sup> (see Figure 22). The position of arms and hands are alike, and the books the two martyrs hold in their hands and the positions in which they hold them are identical in both prints. If Remy's and Brenchley's print is a copy of Rogers' portraits painted in 1842 then Maudsley also copied the oil portraits in making his drawing.

<sup>1</sup>Deseret News (Salt Lake City), November 29, 1855, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Remy and Brenchley, II, frontispiece.

<sup>3</sup>Johnson



THE ENGRAVING WAS  
COPIED FROM THE  
PAINTING

Rogers Painting

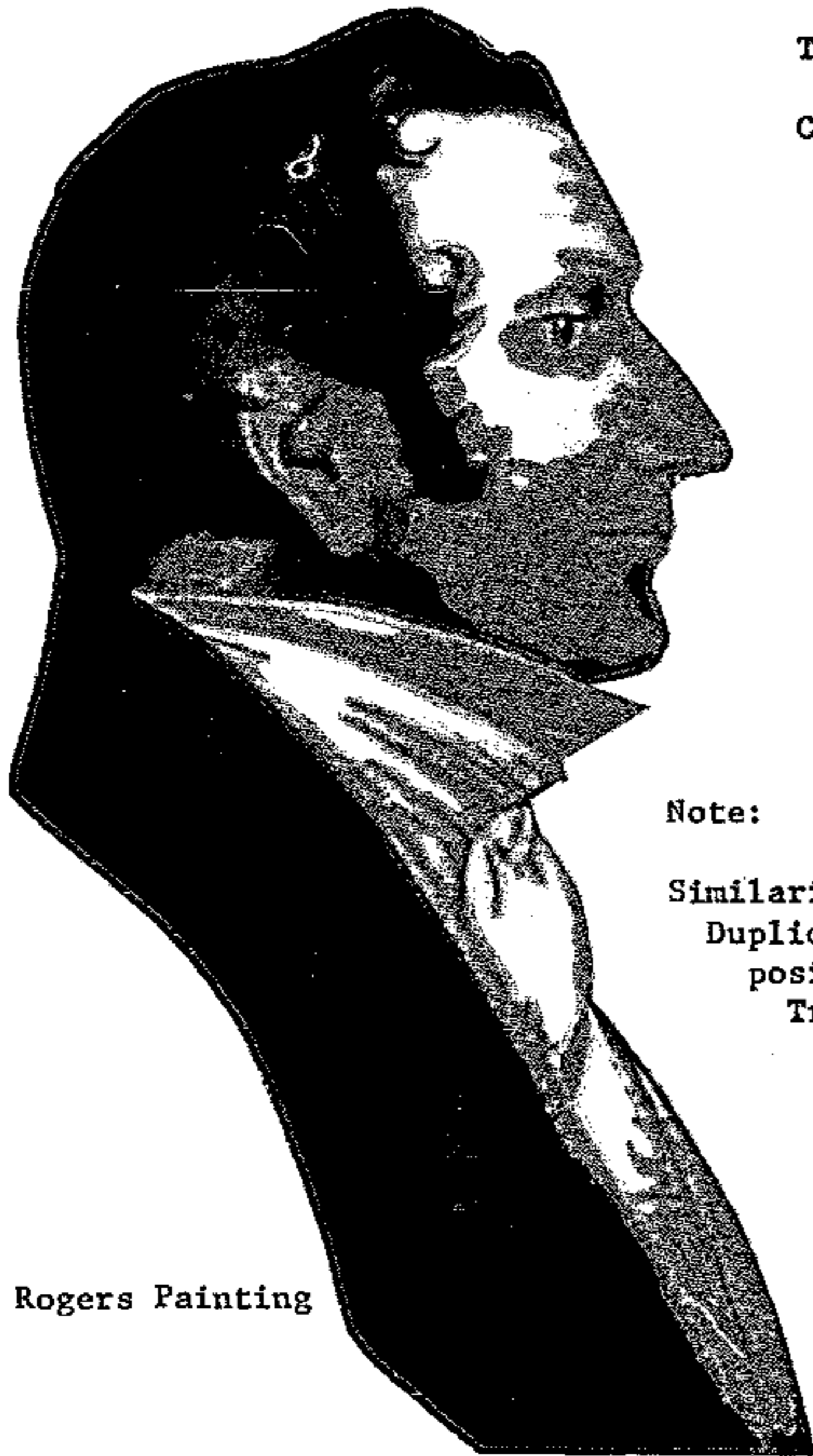
Note:

Similarity in hair  
parts and cut  
Lock of hair over  
ears

Edwards Engraving

Note:

Position of collar  
on cheek and chin  
Treatment of lighting  
on face

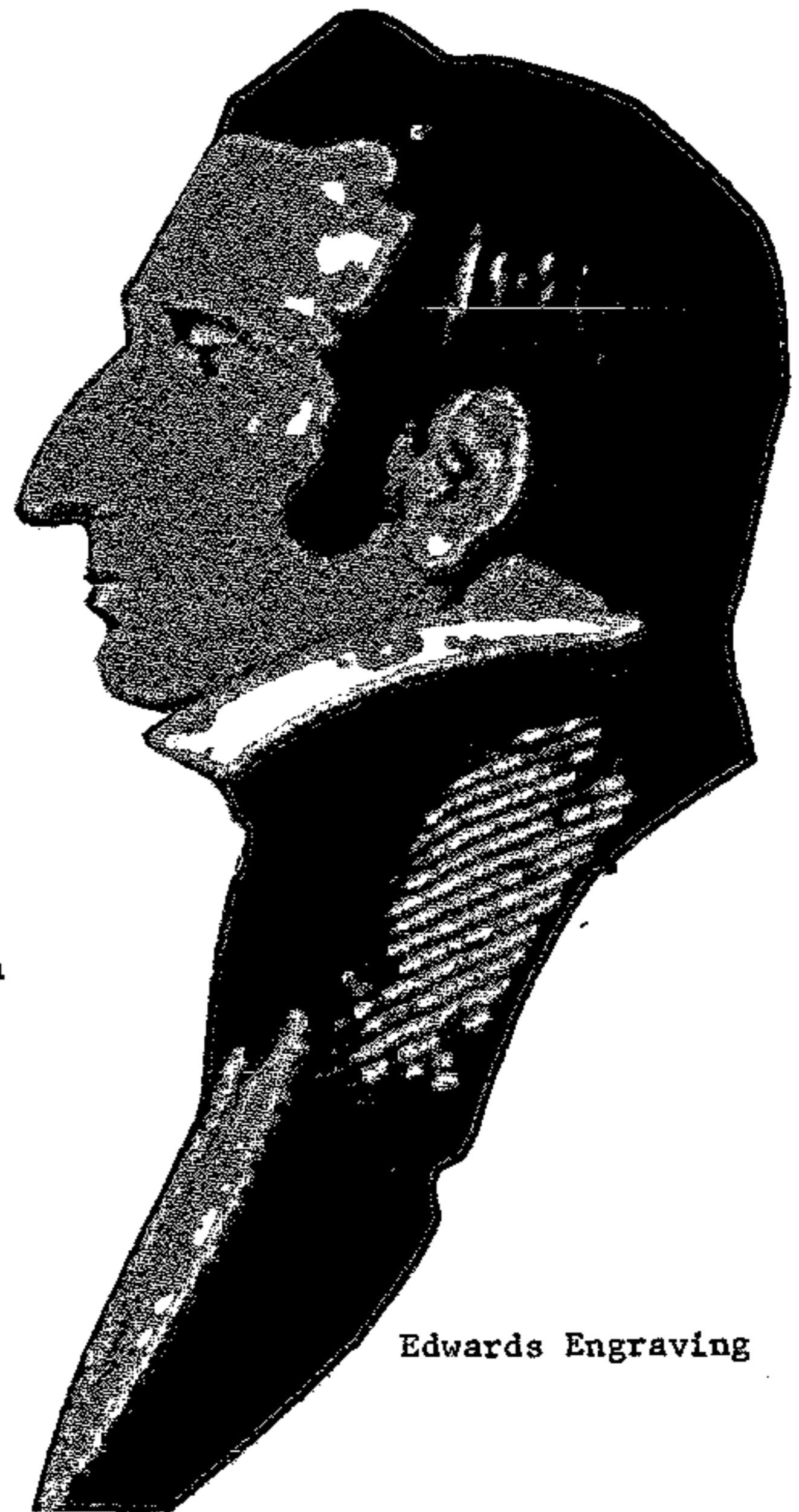


Rogers Painting

THE ENGRAVING WAS  
COPIED FROM THE  
PAINTING

Note:

Similarity in hair cut  
Duplication of curls in  
position and number  
Treatment of  
lighting on  
face  
Length and  
position of  
Knot on tie  
Similarity in  
curvature of  
collar  
Reversed sides  
in parting of  
hair



Edwards Engraving

Scrutinization of the portraits in the Church Historian's library (see Figures 24 and 25) disclosed that the portions of the canvases on the sides of the stretcher bars are painted as uniformly as the front parts of the canvases; furthermore, the under sides of the corners which are securely tacked to the stretcher bars have also received a coat of paint equal in every respect to the front portions of the canvases. This indicates that the canvases must have been removed from their original moorings, reduced in size, and restretched on other stretcher bars at a later date. The date must have followed Remy's and Brenchley's visit in the 1850's.<sup>1</sup> What purpose was served by reduction of the size of the canvases can only be surmised. Perhaps one portrait was damaged on an outer portion and both were reduced to a uniform size which would eliminate the damaged portion, or perhaps a change of location in the place they were displayed necessitated the cropping. Whatever the reason, it is a certainty that the canvases are not now stretched over their original moorings.

It would seem the profiles of Joseph and Hyrum Smith hanging in the Church Historian's library (see Figures 24 and 25) have served as primary source for many of the profile prints of the two martyrs which have appeared in books and periodicals. It already has been explained how the Remy and Brenchley portraits (see Figure 23) were copies of these profiles. It was stated further that Sutcliffe Maudsley's 1844 drawings (see Figure 21) seem to be copies of the portraits. Indications are that Maudsley used the same sources for his portraits appearing

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<sup>1</sup>Remy and Brenchley, I, preface.

in Wilford Wood's book.<sup>1</sup>

Moses Martin, a seventy in the Latter-day Saints Church whose residence was in Nauvoo<sup>2</sup> must have obtained a copy of the watercolor painting by Sutcliffe Maudsley<sup>3</sup> and used it as model for a lithograph he had published in London in 1847 while on a mission to the British Isles<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 4 and Plate II, Silhouette of Watercolor by Maudsley, 1844).

"The Two Martyrs" lithographed by Sarony and Majors of New York City (see Figure 3) was entered in the Library of Congress by W. H. Miles in 1847, according to the caption accompanying the portraits. What part Miles played in producing the portraits is unknown. He was an elder in the Church at New York in 1844.<sup>5</sup> The Sarony and Major lithograph was used to illustrate an article by Junius F. Wells in 1930.<sup>6</sup> A reader of Wells's story, Miss Rula Kemp, Ogden, Utah, in a letter addressed to Wells had this to say concerning the illustration:

In your article in the Juvenile Instructor, entitled "Portraits of Joseph Smith the Prophet," you stated that you did not know who the draughtsman was (see Figure 3).

I can give you some information on that point. My Great Grand Father, Mr. Sutcliffe Maudsley drew the original profile of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The original picture was handed down to my Grand Father and after his death my Grand Mother gave it to the church and it was

<sup>1</sup>Wood.

<sup>2</sup>Journal History, October 19, 1843, p. 1, 4.

<sup>3</sup>Wood.

<sup>4</sup>Journal History, July 17, 1848, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., Sept. 4, 1844.

<sup>6</sup>Wells.

kept in the St. George Temple for a long time. I have heard since that it was sent to the Salt Lake Temple.

If you would like any further information, my Grand Mother could give you all the details, I think. You can write to her at St. George, Utah, Mrs. Mary S. Maudsley.<sup>1</sup>

Wells left the letter on file with the Church Historian but what he did concerning Miss Kemp's suggestion is not known. From experience gained through this study an opinion has been formulated that the lithograph is not Maudsley's work. There is always the possibility that Maudsley draughted a sketch which was improved upon by the lithographer when it was transferred to the stone. A more likely explanation seems to be, since most of the story is supposition, that W. H. Miles, a resident of New York and at least a casual acquaintance of David Rogers since they attended the same church functions,<sup>2</sup> acquired a drawing of Joseph Smith and Hyrum which Rogers drew as a preliminary sketch for his 1842 portraits or as a memento of the Prophets' likenesses. This sketch Miles had produced for distribution among the members of the Church after the martyrs had been killed, for Rogers possessed one of the few life sketches of the Prophet.

It is also believed that David Rogers had something to do with the woodcut of Joseph Smith bearing a resemblance to his oil portrait which appeared in the New York church members' own newspaper<sup>3</sup> six months after the death of Joseph Smith. (Compare Figures 9 and 24 especially noting the shading about the faces and the lock of hair which

<sup>1</sup>Letter addressed to Junius F. Wells from Miss Rula Kemp, Ogden, Utah, March 11, 1930, on file in the Church Historian's Office.

<sup>2</sup>Journal History, September 4, 1844.

<sup>3</sup>The Prophet (New York, January 4, 1845), p. 1.



projects from the part onto the forehead in both illustrations).

A comparison of the lithograph by Sarony and Major of New York (see Figure 3) with the Frederick Piercy engraving (see Figure 2) which he stated he copied "from a lithograph in New York"<sup>1</sup> will show a similar position of the heads, marked similarity in the folds of the vest, coats falling open alike, and the arms in like positions. The Sarony and Major lithograph published in New York could very well have been the lithograph to which Piercy referred.

It has been proven that Rogers painted a profile view of the Prophet and his brother, Hyrum, but that does not eliminate him from having painted the front view portrait. Examination would make evident to the person of casual acquaintance with oil painting that the profiles and front view portrait were not produced by the same artist. The profiles were painted with a minimum of oil as a vehicle so they appear flat today. The front view remains glossy and vibrant with color. The brush strokes of the profiles have been worked and reworked until all indications of individual brush strokes have been obliterated. The front view, on the other hand, shows some obvious brush strokes used in a textural effect. In the front view the form of the figure seems three-dimensional through the artists play of light and shadow while the profiles seem two-dimensional in various portions and their composition is noticeably inferior to the front view. (Weakness of composition with the profiles may be caused partially by the fact that the original composition was effected by the cropping of the canvases). The background of the front view portrait and its companion piece, a portrait of Emma

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<sup>1</sup>Linforth and Piercy, p. 74.

Smith, obviously painted by the same artist show variety and play of color upon color while the profile paintings of Joseph and Hyrum are drab with the background color applied in a manner resembling house painting.

A 1926 issue of the Improvement Era acclaimed Mr. W. Majors as the artist who painted the front view portrait. The Era was referring to a new portrait of Joseph Smith:

In order to present a truthful portrait of the Prophet, Mr. W. Crawford Anderson has had a reproduction made in plain photo and hand colored in oil, of the painting made by Mr. W. Majors, in Nauvoo, during the lifetime of the Prophet.

The artwork, both in plain and colored pictures, was done by John B. De Haan, a leading Salt Lake artist, and is very creditable.

Mr. B. Morris Young, son of Brigham Young, saw this picture in the Mansion House in Nauvoo, when Emma Smith, the Prophet's wife, was an old lady.<sup>1</sup>

If Mr. W. Majors was a member of the Church his name was William Warner Major, not Majors, and he did not paint his portrait from life since his obituary explained this about the English convert who spent nine years in the United States before returning to his homeland to die:

#### DEATH OF ELDER WILLIAM WARNER MAJOR

Born: January 27, 1804

Died: October 2, 1854

. . . He continued to labor in the ministry with considerable success until the winter of 1844, when he migrated to Nauvoo, where he arrived about the month of August in that year. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The obituary continues, explaining that he returned to England in the latter part of 1853, and contracted an illness from which he never recovered.

Since Joseph Smith was martyred on June 27, 1844, and Major did not arrive in Nauvoo until August of that year it was impossible for him

<sup>1</sup>The Improvement Era, (August 1926), p. 913 - 14.

<sup>2</sup>Millennial Star, November 4, 1854, p. 700.

to paint a portrait of the living Joseph Smith. Had it been possible, the man was capable. Proof of his ability as an artist can be seen in a print of "Great Salt Lake Valley" by William W. Major. The print hangs in the office of the Church Historian.

William Warner Major's talents were recognized by those who lived with him in Nauvoo. Brigham Young in his manuscripts wrote on April 4, 1845, "Brother William W. Major exhibited a painting of the assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith by the mob at Carthage."<sup>1</sup> The exhibition had been during April Conference of the Church in that year.<sup>2</sup> On June 4, 1845, the Nauvoo Neighbor commented in its fine arts section:

We have two portrait painters in the city, Mr. Major and Mr. Van Sickle. They are both good workmen, and as saints generally are 'men greatly wondered at,' it will be no more than justice to increase the wonderment by excellent likenesses.

Major could have painted a portrait from a daguerreotype. That someone seems to have done so looks evident when one compares the identical positions of the figures in the front view portrait (see Figure 21) and the Carter photograph (see Figure 19) supposedly taken from a daguerreotype. Joseph Smith, III, iterated that the front view portrait which his family owned was "sustained in its characteristic likeness" to his father by a daguerreotype owned by his family.<sup>3</sup>

From the material presented in this chapter the following conclusions have been drawn:

<sup>1</sup>History of the Church, Period I, VII, April 4, 1845.

<sup>2</sup>Nauvoo Neighbor, April 16, 1845, p. 2 - 3.

<sup>3</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, March 20, 1910, p. 13.

1. David Rogers of New York painted profile views of Joseph and Hyrum Smith at Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1842.

2. Rogers' profile portraits (see Figures 24 and 25) have served as basis for most of the profile drawings of the two men:

- a) The Benchley and Remy engravings (see Figure 23)
- b) Several Maudsley drawings (see Figure 22 and Plate III)
- c) Others which seem to be copies (see Figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 22, and 23)

3. The unidentified oil profiles in the Church Historian's library (see Figures 24 and 25) seem to be the Rogers portraits when compared with the print in a volume by Remy and Brenchley (see Figure 23) and a Maudsley drawing of 1844 (see Figure 22).

4. The artist of the front view portrait owned by the Reorganized Church (see Figure 21) cannot be determined although the possibility exists William Warner Major could have painted it from a daguerreotype.

5. The front view oil painting (see Figure 21) appears identical in position to the photograph by Charles W. Carter who recorded he took his photo from the original daguerreotype (see Figure 19).

6. Joseph Smith, III, son of the Prophet, reported the front view painting was a good likeness of his father; that fact being supported by a daguerreotype in the family's possession.

7. It appears the front view oil painting was copied from a daguerreotype.

In summarization of this chapter these points seem important:

1. David Rogers painted portraits of Joseph Smith and his

brother Hyrum at Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1842.

2. Brigham Young became possessor of the paintings when he left Nauvoo, and brought them to Utah where they were exhibited in his home.

3. Brigham Young allowed the portraits to be copied for an engraving which appeared in a book by Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley entitled A Journey to Great Salt Lake.

4. Sutcliffe Maudsley copied the Rogers' profiles in 1844, and his drawings prove remarkably similar to the Remy and Brenchley engraving.

5. When details of the heads in the drawings by Maudsley and the Remy and Brenchley engraving are compared with two oil paintings by an unidentified artist which are displayed in the Church Historian's library it seems evident that the artist of the paintings was David Rogers of New York.

6. Other drawings seemed to have originated using the Rogers' profiles as their source:

- a) A watercolor drawing by Sutcliffe Maudsley
- b) A lithograph done in New York in 1847 and copyrighted by W. H. Miles
- c) A woodcut which appeared in a New York newspaper in 1845.

7. The front view oil painting owned by the Reorganized Church seems to represent the nearest likeness to Joseph Smith of the many paintings and engravings because of its close approximation to a photograph purportedly taken from a daguerreotype of Joseph Smith and the quality of craftsmanship exhibited in the painting.



## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Material developed will be summarized as answers to the questions which constituted a break-down of the problem: To study the personality and physical image of the Prophet Joseph Smith as recorded in writings, paintings, and engravings for the purpose of establishing an accurate account of his character and facial likeness.

#### Question one

What has been written by persons who knew Joseph Smith which has contributed evidence about his characteristics and physical features?

#### Findings:

1. Lydia Bailey said he was tall, well-built, gentile, and had handsome blue eyes that could penetrate one's innermost thoughts (page 7).
2. Wandle Mace stated he was fine-looking, had light hair and complexion with very little beard (page 7).
3. The Saint Louis Weekly Gazette reported his chest and shoulders broad and muscular, his hands small for his size, and his feet oversized. He had thin lips, an oblong shaped head with an unfurrowed white brow to which were attached a heavy set of light-colored eyebrows. His eyes were hazel and often veiled by long thick lashes which were light in color. His most remarkable feature was his eye.

The Prophet's wife was reported to have said, "No painting of him could catch his expression, for his countenance was always changing to match his thoughts and feelings," (page 8).

4. President Joseph Smith was strong and active with an expression peculiar to himself upon which the eye naturally rested and never grew weary of beholding, was the way Parley P. Pratt described him. Pratt further iterated that Joseph's countenance was mild, friendly, kindly, and intelligent mingled with a look of interest and an unconscious smile (page 8).

5. The death mask and his mother's profile portrait seem to corroborate the paintings which show his nose a prominent part of his face (page 12).

**Conclusion:**

Word descriptions seem to prove these things:

- a) He was tall and well-proportioned
- b) He was of light-complexion with little beard
- c) His hair, brow, and eye lashes were light in color, and his eyes were some hue of blue
- d) The eyes were the most unusual and magnetic of his physical features.

**Question Two**

Of the artists who painted him which ones really knew him?

**Findings:**

1. Joseph told of posing for a profile portrait to be placed on a map of Nauvoo and the artist's name which appears at the bottom of the portrait is Sutcliffe Maudsley (page 15).



2. In Joseph's journal of 1842 he recorded posing for a portrait by Brother Rogers of New York (page 50).

**Conclusion:**

Only Sutcliffe Maudsley and David Rogers seem to have painted Joseph Smith from life (pages 15 and 50 - 66).

Question Three

What common sources did painters use who painted his likeness since his death?

**Findings:**

1. Rogers' profile of Joseph was copied frequently and those which were not copied directly from the Rogers profile have used as model others which were (pages 60 - 65, and 63).

2. Sutcliffe Maudsley, who drew several sketches of the Prophet using the Rogers profile as model for most of his work was copied by other artists (pages 16 and 63).

3. Artists who drew portraits of the Prophet for books and magazines published shortly after his death had their portraits copied by later texts (pages 16 and 25 - 26).

4. Twentieth century artists who have painted Joseph Smith have not relied heavily on any one painting from the past, but have generally used several sources for their inspiration (pages 30 - 32 and 33).

**Conclusion:**

The sources for painting the Prophet immediately following the martyrdom were not many and were not commonly available. Any portrait which could be found served as source for another. As photoengraving

developed and prints were more easily obtainable artists became more selective. At present artists who paint the Prophet are trying to produce something which they hope will be better than what exists, so they no longer copy previous portraits, but use them only as reference in approaching a new conception.

#### Question Four

Since photography existed during his lifetime, did Joseph Smith ever pose for a photograph?

#### Findings:

1. Charles W. Carter of Salt Lake City and W. B. Carson of Peoria, Illinois, copyrighted photographs of the same portrait stating the photographs were "taken from the original Daguerreotype taken in Nauvoo in 1843." Carson's copyright was as early as 1879 and Carter's followed in 1885 (pages 40 - 41).

2. Joseph Smith, III, son of Joseph the Prophet, stated his son, Frederick M. Smith, possessed a daguerreotype portrait of the Prophet in 1910 (page 29).

3. Joseph Smith, III, reflected that Lucian R. Foster was a daguerreotypist in Nauvoo (pages 29 and 44 - 45).

4. Marsena Cannon was a daguerreotypist in Nauvoo at least by October, 1844 (page 45).

#### Conclusion:

Though no daguerreotype was actually produced, enough evidence of one having existed supports the belief that Joseph Smith had his portrait taken by a daguerreotypist sometime near the end of his life and that daguerreotype or a photograph of it may still be found at some

future date.

Question Five

From among the many pictures of the Prophet which seems to be the most accurate likeness?

Conclusion:

Present data points to the front view portrait of Joseph Smith owned by the Reorganized Church and found on display at the Auditorium in Independence, Missouri, as being the most accurate example of the likeness of Joseph Smith. This is based on these facts:

1. The painting appears to have been copied from a daguerreotype which was an accurate early form of photography (pages 46 and 48).

2. The painting technique displayed in the front view portrait and its companion portrait of Emma Smith testify that the skill of the artist was superior to that of David Rogers (pages 65 and 66).

3. Joseph Smith, III, attested of its similarity to a daguerreotype in his family's possession in 1910 (page 29).

4. The Carter photograph, copyrighted as having been taken from an original daguerreotype, shows remarkable affinity to the front view oil portrait (see Figures 19 and 20, pages 42 and 44).

Conclusions

The purpose intended at the outset of this work was to establish the physical image of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The original purpose has not been achieved. Vague stories have been fortified or disproved by fact. A portrait of Joseph Smith has been identified with its creator, David Rogers. More than one story has been introduced which entices further study. It has been shown a daguerreotype of the Prophet was taken before

his death and its whereabouts was last known to the Prophet's family in 1910. Regretably, the family's daguerreotype has been lost or misplaced. Its whereabouts is unknown today.

New information may still be obtained concerning the daguerreotype's present location. The Library of Congress has not been exhausted of its light on the subject. Time spent there filling out forms and traversing from one department to another might pay dividends worth the effort expended.

Research among the people of the Reorganized Church could possibly lead to the "original Daguerreotype taken in the City of Nauvoo in the year 1843" which Charles W. Carter and others suggested exists. It may only have been relegated to a forgotten nook awaiting its discovery by a persistent researcher.

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THE VISUAL IMAGE OF JOSEPH SMITH

An Abstract of  
A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Department of (Art)  
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science

by

William B. McCarl

August 1962

## ABSTRACT

For most of the period since his death in 1844, at the hands of a maniacal mob in Carthage, Illinois, there has been doubt about which portrait of Joseph Smith, first president and founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, best represented his physical features. This work has attempted to accumulate as much information about his features as was available for the purpose of establishing the true image of the man. The discoveries made by this study are listed in the following discussion.

Word descriptions by people who knew Joseph Smith and wrote about his physical likeness seem to corroborate the following description:

He was tall and well-proportioned with a light complexion and little beard. His hair, brow, and eye lashes were light in color, and his eyes were some hue of blue. Some said his eyes were hazel, others light blue, but all who described him agreed that his eyes were the most distinguishing feature of his face. They seemed to possess a magnetic attraction to all who met him.

Of the artists who painted him, only Sutcliffe Maudsley and David Rogers seem to have painted him from life. Others who have made portraits of him have copied David Rogers' profile or the front view portrait of him by an unidentified artist. As pictures of him increased and obtaining the prints of other artists' work became easier, those who chose to draw

still another portrait were able to use copies of engravings rather than the original oil paintings themselves. The practice allowed a variety of portrait figures to be created--all bearing the name of Joseph Smith. This practice of copying from something other than the original probably did more to create a doubtful image than anything else.

Though no daguerreotype was actually produced enough evidence of one having existed supported the assumption that Joseph Smith had his portrait taken by a daguerreotypier sometime near the end of his life and that the daguerreotype or a photograph of it may still be found at some future date.

Present data points to the front view portrait of Joseph Smith owned by the Reorganized Church and on display at the Auditorium in Independence, Missouri, as being the most accurate example of the likeness of Joseph Smith preserved in painting or print. This is based on the following facts:

1. The painting appears to have been copied from a daguerreotype which was an accurate early form of photography.

2. The painting technique displayed in the front view portrait and its companion portrait of Emma Smith testify that the skill of the artist was superior to the skill of David Rogers, the only artist history records as producing an oil painting of Joseph Smith from life.

3. Joseph Smith's son attested to the similarity between the front view portrait and a daguerreotype owned by the Smith family in 1910.

4. Charles W. Carter of Salt Lake City, copyrighted in 1885 a photo which he claimed was copied from the original daguerreotype of Joseph Smith taken in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1843. The photograph shows

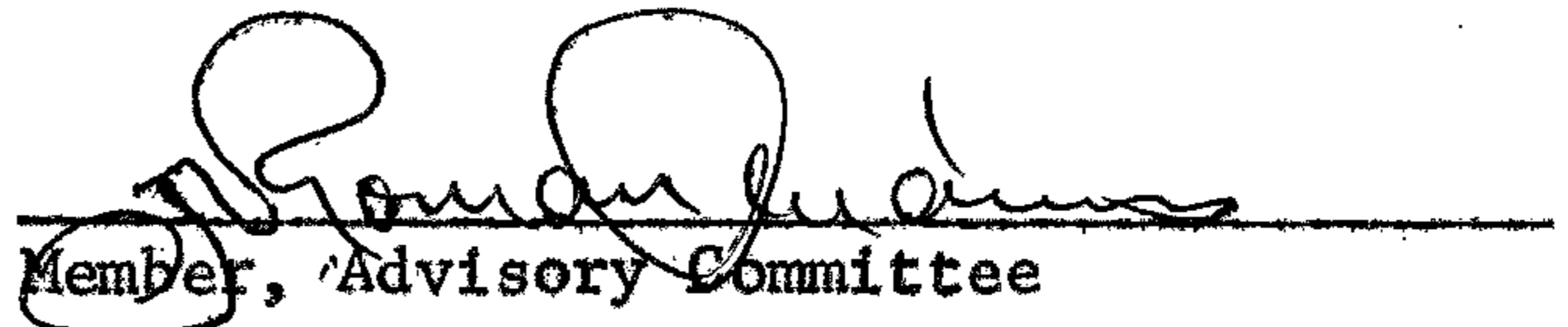
remarkable affinity to the front view oil portrait owned by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, so it has been considered the painting which most nearly reveals the true physical likeness of Joseph Smith.

This abstract, by William B. McCarl, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Fine Arts, Brigham Young University as satisfying the abstract requirement for the degree of Master of Science.

APPROVED



Chairman, Advisory Committee



Member, Advisory Committee



Chairman, Art Department