1966

The Life and Contributions of Newel Kimball Whitney

Larry Neil Poulsen
Brigham Young University - Provo

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THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF NEWEL KIMBALL WHITNEY

A Thesis
Submitted to
Graduate Department of Religious Instruction
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Larry N. Poulsen
April 1966
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Completion of this work was made possible due to the help and encouragement of several people. Because of their assistance the writer was never defeated by discouragement.

Dr. Russell R. Rich, my graduate committee chairman, made careful examination of this work and with his profound knowledge of L. D. S. Church History suggested many changes which make the writing more accurate. His friendliness and kindly nature gave me encouragement during months of research.

I am grateful to Dr. Dean Christiansen, committee member, for his interest and cooperation.

Special thanks goes to the library staff of Brigham Young University who were most helpful during long hours of research. The cheerfulness and cooperation shown by these people were greatly appreciated.

Sincere appreciation also goes to the staff of the Church Historian's Library in Salt Lake City for directing the research of the many documents and materials in that library which contributed to the fulfillment of this project.

Members of the Whitney family and particularly, J. Fred Whitney of Salt Lake City, were very helpful in offering their assistance and
encouragement, as well as making available for this work materials in their possession.

This acknowledgment would not be complete without expressing appreciation to Sondra Grisard for her cooperation in the final typing of this manuscript.

I also wish to express appreciation to my mother-in-law, Thelma B. Waddoups, for her valuable assistance in typing reference material and for her constant encouragement during the months spent on this project.

And finally, my appreciation to my lovely wife, Mignon, who gave birth to a child just at the time when this work was being completed. Her many hours of assistance in typing has been a valuable service. Mignon's faith that I would complete this work, however, and her constant gentle urging for me to continue on with this writing has been the most helpful assistance rendered to me.
To my father, Edgar Peulsen, who recently passed away
and who always taught me to follow the example of leaders such
as Newel K. Whitney.
Newel Kimball Whitney
1795-1850
Second Presiding
Bishop of the Church
1844-1850
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frontispiece</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Illustrations</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification of the Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas of Interest Considered in This Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Work on the Subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of Procedure and Sources of Data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Newel Kimball Whitney, A Young Man With A Purpose</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthplace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honored Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyhood and Youth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Trader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilbert and Whitney</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage to Elizabeth Ann</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Affiliations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Campbellites and Sidney Rigdon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs and Doctrines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteemed Pastor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Conversion of Parley P. Pratt and Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigdon's First Contact With the Elders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spread of Mormonism Among the Campbellites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidney Rigdon Joins With the New Faith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Conversion of the Whitney's</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Fulfillment of Promise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Condition of the Church During This Period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

v
III. THE BISHOP OF THE KIRTLAND SAINTS....

The Prophet's Arrival in Kirtland
Discontinuance of 'Common Law'
The Appointment of Bishop Partridge Zion
Importance of the Gilbert and Whitney Store
Appointment of Newel K. Whitney as Bishop
Duties of Bishop Whitney
The Kingdom of God Restored
Whitney's Reaction to the Calling
Qualifications of Bishop Whitney
Area of Responsibility
The United Order
Journey to Missouri
The Gilbert and Whitney Store
Eventful Journey from Missouri to Kirtland
Further Responsibilities
A Journey and Warning
School of the Prophets
A Warning to Church Leaders
Relief of the Saints
Discontinuance of the United Order
Naming of the Church
A Special Blessing
Newel's Parents

IV. THE NAUVOO PERIOD......................

Temporary Home
Wards Organized
Branch at Zarahemla
Civic and Municipal Organizations
Nauvoo Charter
The Smith Store
Female Relief Society
Nauvoo Temple
Bishop Whitney's Responsibilities
Presiding Bishop
Plural Marriage
Marriage of Joseph to Sarah Ann Whitney
Documents on Plural Marriage
Trustee-in-Trust
Dissention Among Church Leadership
Sidney Rigdon Cut Off
Finishing the Temple
Laying of Capstone
Dedication of Attic Story
Ordinance Work
Care of Lucy Smith

V. THE LAST DAYS IN AN EVENTFUL LIFE...... 95

Leaving Nauvoo
Conditions of Camp
Excommunication of Bishop Miller
Winter Quarters
Migration of Saints to Utah
Brigham Young Sustained as President
Arrival at Salt Lake City
State of Deseret
Currency Issued
City of Ogden
Other Activities of Whitney
Whitney's Life Closes

SUMMARY

APPENDIX

A. THE FAMILY OF NEWEL K. WHITNEY....... 105

B. LINES ON THE DEATH OF BISHOP NEWEL
   K. WHITNEY.............................. 115

C. ALGERNON SYDNEY GILBERT.............. 116

D. REPRODUCTIONS OF BISHOP WHITNEY AND
   TWO WIVLS............................... 118

E. FACSIMILES OF BILLS ISSUED BY KIRTLAND
   SAFETY SOCIETY AND THE ORIGINAL WHIT-
   NEY STORE ............................ 119

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.......................... 120

vii
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Newel hi.[...]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Newel hi.[...]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Facsimiles of Bills Issued by Firstland Safety Society Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The 'Whitney Store'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this writing is to present a biography of Newel Kimball Whitney with emphasis on his personal life and his contributions to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Justification of the Study

The history of any people to be complete will include much on the history of the lives and contributions of its leaders. So it is with Newel K. Whitney and the Church he served so faithfully and well.

Even though Whitney was one of the early converts to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and was the second ordained bishop and later the Presiding Bishop of the Church, little has been written concerning him.

Furthermore, he had an intimate acquaintance with Joseph Smith, the first president of the Church, becoming a close friend and associate to him. Joseph held Bishop Whitney in high esteem and on many occasions demonstrated his confidence in him. He has recorded the great love and respect he had for this stalwart of the Church as will be seen in later chapters. It seemed worthwhile to the writer to investigate and make record of the life of a man held in such high regard by President Joseph Smith.
From November 1833 until his death in Utah in 1853, Whitney devoted his life to the cause of the Church. Moreover, evidence indicates that Newell used his place of business, particularly during the Nauvoo period of Church history, and his business talents to support the economy of the Church membership.

The last six years of the life of Whitney, was part of Trustee-in-Trust for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, during which period he was also a residing Bishop.

There are other accomplishments in his career which prove of the interest of the writer to attempt this project.

Areas of Interest Considered in this Writing

1. The connection of Newell K. Whitney with the year of 1842.

2. His experiences as a successful businessman in Nauvoo, Illinois and vicinity.

3. His intimate acquaintance with Sidney Rigdon, the prominent Campbellite preacher in Ohio and later a leader in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

4. His role in the financial affairs and internal aspects of the Church in Ohio.

5. His connection with the Nauvoo temple and the ordinance work therein.

6. His connection with the practice of plural marriage of the Church and the preservation of the 132nd section of the Doctrine and
Covenants.

7. His activities in the Kirtland Safety Society, University of Nauvoo, the City of Nauvoo, and the proposed Territory of Deseret.

Previous Work on the Subject

No extensive work has been done on the life of Newel K. Whitney. Short sketches of his life have been written by Andrew Jenson and Orion F. Whitney, the grandson of Newel K. Whitney. These sketches have been referred to in this writing.

Definition of Terms

Several terms used in this writing are peculiar to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These terms are as follows:

The term Church shall refer to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The term of the Twelve refers to the twelve apostles or Council of Twelve of the Church.

The term stake refers to an ecclesiastical division of the Church.

The term ward refers to an ecclesiastical division of a stake.

The term Presiding Bishop shall refer to the Presiding Bishop over all the Church.

The term Elder refers to one who holds the office of Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood of the Church.

The term Bishop refers to one who is the presiding authority.
The term "joints" refers to the membership of the Church.

Method of Procedure and Sources of Data

The historical approach was used in this study which describes the sequence of events in a chronological order.

The primary sources used were the *Journal History* of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and *History of the Church* by Joseph Smith, Jr., which was taken from the private journal of the Prophet, reedited here. Other family sources were the following: *Church History*, *The Deseret News*, *Times and Seasons*, and the *Improvement Era*. In addition to these sources, family files were searched, as well as genealogies, letters, documents, histories, and pictures. In the Church historian's office in Salt Lake City, a special file of material on Whitney was carefully examined.

Personal interviews with J. Fred Whitney and Martha Inch of Salt Lake City, as well as other friends and relatives of the family, were made.

Secondary sources included numerous history books, biographies, pamphlets, and articles. Research materials were examined at Brigham Young University, Utah State University, Church historian's library, and the *Utah State Historical Society*. 
CHAPTER II

NEWEL KIMBALL WHITNEY, A YOUNG MAN WITH A PURPOSE

Birthplace

In a study of the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints it is of interest that the beautiful state of Vermont has been the birthplace of many of the Church leaders who rose to prominence in the early days of the restored gospel. Some of the little towns and villages where these men spent their formative years are practically non-existent today but they are remembered because they are inseparably connected with the lives of these great leaders.

One such town is Marlborough, Windham County. It was here where Samuel and Susannah Kimball 1 Whitney resided when their first son and second child was born to them on February 5, 1795. He was given the name Newel Kimball Whitney. Seven other brothers and sisters followed 2 but it was Newel who was destined to make the Whitney name famous in the annals of the restored Church.

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1 In tracing the Whitney line J. Fred Whitney of Salt Lake City, a descendant of Newel K. Whitney, has been unable to find any connection between Susannah Kimball Whitney, mother of Newel, and Heber C. Kimball. Heber C. Kimball married a daughter of Newel becoming his son-in-law.

The early years of Newel K. Whitney's life were spent in Marlborough, located on a prominent hill from which could be seen many miles of green countryside and wooded mountains.

The Vermont landscape has a distinctive character, hilly farms and patches of woodland against a background of misty green mountains. In almost every corner of the state are antique buildings, quaint old-fashioned general stores, and white steepled churches rich in the history and tradition of old Vermont. 1

**Honored Name**

Newel K. Whitney came from a sturdy line of New Englanders dating back seven generations to John Whitney who embarked at the port of London in the spring of 1635 and in June of that year settled in Watertown, Massachusetts. 2

The Whitney name is one of the oldest and most distinguished in Western England, dating back to A.D. 1066, the time of the Norman Conquest. Whitney means "white water" and derives its origin from the River Wye--famed as the most beautiful river in England--flowing near the border of Wales. The name also signifies "The Island of the Wise

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Men." The history of this area would reveal the prominence of many of the Whitney Family,¹ which would seem to lend credence in the meaning of the Whitney name.

In the Whitney line we find Lords, members of Parliament, and valiant fighters in the crusades and other great battles. Several of the Whitneys were knighted by the queens of England, including Thomas Whitney father of John, who was the first American progenitor of Newel K. Whitney.²

"The Whitneys intermarried with great families. By that means their blood became mixed with the blood of Saxon, Norman and Plantagenet kings of England, and with that of the royal houses of Scotland, France and Spain."³

Of interest is the fact that Eli Whitney, the famous inventor of the cotton gin, and several other prominent Americans were all a part of this distinguished family. Among them were: Josiah Dwight Whitney, geologist and professor at Harvard; William Dwight Whitney, philologist, Sanscrit scholar and editor of the Century Dictionary; and William C. Whitney, Secretary of the Navy under President Grover Cleveland.⁴

¹Whitney, Memory's Halls, p. 11.
²Ibid.
³Ibid., p. 10
⁴Ibid.
Boyhood and Youth

Newel spent his boyhood and youth in the peaceful and quiet town of Marlborough, Vermont, 1 which lies a few miles south of Sharon, the birthplace of the Prophet Joseph Smith who was later to become one of the close personal friends of Whitney.

The early life of the young Newel was typical of the average New England boy—farm work all summer, school during the winter months and the usual chores the year round. 2

At an apparently early age Newel left his family and familiar surroundings and set out to find his way in the world. He had but few personal possessions and no money to help him along the way; but endowed with a natural business talent and an enterprising spirit, as well as a keen sense of honesty, he was soon able to satisfy his quest for employment. 3

At the age of nineteen Newel had made his way to the historic village of Plattsburg, New York, located on the western shore of Lake Champlain, and was busily engaged as sutler or merchant. 4 While so occupied, according to Reverend S. F. Whitney, 5 this energetic young

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1 Whitney, Contributor, VI, 123.

2 Whitney, Memory's Stalls, p. 11.

3 Whitney, Contributor, VI, 123.

4 Ibid.

5 The Reverend S. F. Whitney was the youngest brother of Newel. He was a Methodist minister living in Kirtland in the early days of the Church.
man participated in one of the most consequential battles of the War of 1812. Because of Newel's participation in this battle it seems worthwhile to give a brief synopsis of the Battle of Plattsburg, fought in September of 1814.

The battle to save Plattsburg from the British forces was a desperate one with the American forces outnumbered three to one. The British strategy was to destroy the U.S. Navy in the waters of Lake Champlain and simultaneously defeat the land forces along its southern shores which would lead to severing the New England states from the rest of the country. At a strategic point of high ground on the shores of Lake Champlain lay the little village of Plattsburg where the Americans chose to make their defense against the British ground forces. The situation for the Americans was extremely dangerous. They converted Plattsburg into a citadel of redoubts, trenches and strong points to offset the inequality in numbers. The American army consisted of several hundred volunteers who were to fight alongside the regulars. These men faced 14,000 British regulars in battle. It seems logical to assume that Newel was numbered among the courageous volunteers who fought so valiantly with the American regulars.

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1 Whitney, Memory's Halls, p. 11

Fortunately for the land forces the British fleet was severely beaten by the American Navy. This unexpected turn of events in the hard-fought naval battle so dispirited the British land troops in the heat of battle that Plattsburg was saved. Two hundred British regulars were killed while the American losses were about one fourth that number.¹

**Indian Trader**

Probably losing most or all of his possessions during this battle, Newel next established himself at Green Bay, Lake Michigan as an Indian trader. His early mercantile experiences, which made him acquainted with the traders and trappers of this area apparently made this possible.²

It was during his experience as an Indian trader that an incident occurred--never to be forgotten--which nearly cost Newel his life. An enraged savage whom Whitney had refused liquor obtained it elsewhere and in a drunken rage, with a knife or tomahawk in hand, climbed through a window of Whitney's establishment to put an end to him. As the outraged Indian emerged through the open window an Indian girl by the name of Maudalina seized him and held fast until the intended victim had escaped.³

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¹Ibid., p. 303.
²Whitney, Contributor, VI, 123.
³Whitney, Memory's Halls, p. 11.
Newel Whitney never forgot the girl who performed this heroic deed as later in his life he named one of his own daughters Maudalina in memory of the Indian maiden who saved him from death. 1

As an Indian trader at Green Bay Newel appears to have traveled considerably on horseback and at times journeyed as far west as Kirtland, Ohio. It is suggested by Orson F. Whitney that during these trips he became acquainted with Elizabeth Ann Smith2 who resided in Kirtland and later became his wife. It was probably this acquaintance that induced him to move from Lake Michigan to Ohio. 3 It is well to remember that Ohio in the early 1800's was located on the far western frontier of civilization and any journey to this state was a journey through endless miles of sparsely settled wilderness.

Gilbert and Whitney

Newel K. Whitney's first residence in Ohio was at Painsville, located a few miles north of Kirtland on the shores of Lake Erie. Here he became acquainted with Algernon Sydney Gilbert who subsequently became his long-standing business associate. 4

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1 The Utah Genealogical and Historical Quarterly, (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1937), XXVIII, 64-68. Isabel Maudalina Whitney was born to Newel K. and Emeline Belos Woodward six weeks after the mother reached Salt Lake Valley on September 28, 1848.

2 Whitney, Memory's Halls, p. 12.


4 Whitney, Memory's Halls, p. 12.
About 1817 Gilbert, recognizing the business talents of Newel, took him into his business as a clerk and taught him the fundamentals of bookkeeping. ¹ A few years hence a prosperous mercantile firm of Gilbert and Whitney emerged with headquarters in Kirtland.

Marriage to Elizabeth Ann

During this period of time the courtship between Newel and Elizabeth Ann Smith reached fulfillment through their marriage on October 20, 1822. Newel was twenty-seven years of age and Elizabeth Ann twenty-two. ²

A little background of the companion of Newel K. Whitney is appropriate at this point as she played not only a significant role in his life but also in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints which they later joined.

Elizabeth Ann, ³ who became know as 'Mother Whitney' tells her own story:

I was born the day after Christmas in the first year of the present century, in the quiet, old-fashioned country town of Derby, New Haven County, Conn. My parents' names were Gibson and Polly Smith. The Smiths were among the earliest settlers there, and were widely known. I was the oldest child, and grew up in an atmosphere of love and tenderness. My parents were not professors of religion, and according to puritanical ideas were grossly in fault to have me taught dancing; but my father had his own peculiar notions upon the

¹Ibid.


³Additional information on Elizabeth Ann may be found in Appendix A.
subject, and wished me to possess and enjoy, in connection with a sound education and strict morals, such accomplishments as would fit me to fill, with credit to myself and my training, an honorable position in society. He had no sympathy whatever with any of the priests of that day, and was utterly at variance with their teachings and ministry, notwithstanding he was strenuous on all points of honor, honesty, morality and uprightness.

There is nothing in my early life I remember with more intense satisfaction than the agreeable companionship of my father. My mother's health was delicate, and with her household affairs, and two younger children, she gave herself up to domestic life, allowing it to absorb her entire interest, and consequently I was more particularly under my father's jurisdiction and influence; our tastes were most congenial, and this geniality and happiness surrounded me with its beneficial influence until I reached my nineteenth year. Nothing in particular occurred to mar the smoothness of my life's current and prosperity, and love beamed upon our home.

About this time a new epoch in my life created a turning point which unconsciously to us, who were the actors in the drama, caused all my future to be entirely separate and distinct from those with whom I had been reared and nurtured. My father's sister, a spinster, who had money at her own disposal, and who was one of those strong-minded women of whom so much is said in this our day, concluded to emigrate to the great West, -- at that time Ohio seemed a fabulous distance from civilization and enlightenment, and going to Ohio then was as great an undertaking as going to China or Japan is at the present day. She entreated my parents to allow me to accompany her, and promised to be as faithful and devoted to me as possible, until they should join us, and that they expected very shortly to do; their confidence in aunt Sarah's ability and self-reliance was unbounded, and so after much persuasion, they consented to part with me for a short interval of time; but circumstances, over which we mortals have no control, were so overruled that I never saw my beloved mother again. Our journey was a pleasant one; the beautiful scenery through which our route lay had charms indescribable for me, who had never been farther from home than New Haven, in which city I had passed a part of my time, and to me it was nearer a paradise than any other place on earth. The magnificent lakes, rivers, mountains, and romantic forests were all delineations of nature which delighted my imagination.

We settled a few miles inland from the picturesque Lake Erie, and in after years, where the saints of God gathered and the everlasting gospel proclaimed. My beloved aunt Sarah was a true friend and instructor to me, and had much influence in maturing my womanly
...continued development of her education. She felt the print of the day, and, believing the soul as one, and appointed, her religion was that of the hour and the situation in teaching, or else

Mr. Allen, who had spent some years in the Wesleys, with a young man from Vermont, New York Slates, the like of which, as I

saw, in the beginning was not for himself. He had been engaged in trading with the settlers and understood that in this, and, of course, most of them, to the

central markets. In his travels and in New York he understood the

evening and the evening; and, when, of course, it was

published to settle and the experiment he or himself in this
country, as a teacher of the craft and delicate, and being thoroughly convinced that we were united as that, other, we

were taught by the Wesleyan method of that place, the next

...sidered, in all our efforts to achieve wealth,

...gave. In 1801, it was found that nothing or nothing was lost on the line, and, in fact, to the

regular, and the Wesleyan, and the like, as the

sidered, that neither one of the first principles of religion, not contrary to every education I was naturally religious, and

experienced to understand, that we should unite ourselves to one of the Wesleyan, after examining into their principles and deciding on ourselves, in the same united our lives with the Wesleyan

bellies, and were then taking a long content, and more principle

secured, in accordance with the experience, as continued in

the hour, and to us as the nearest pattern to our convictions,

time, until laterly, and another elder preached the ever-
ting bellies.
of both men and they, in turn, were a great influence in the life of this rather remarkable woman.

An excellent, but brief sketch of Newel K. Whitney, written by his wife Elizabeth Ann, is as follows:

He was a young man who had come out west to seek his fortune. He had thrift and energy and accumulated property faster than most of his associates. Indeed, he became proverbial as being lucky in all his undertakings. He had been trading at Green Bay, buying furs and skins from the Indians and trappers for the eastern market, and exchanging them for goods suitable to the wants of the people in that locality. In his travels to and from New York he passed through the country where we resided; we met and became attached to each other, and my aunt granting her full approval, we were married. Ours was strictly a marriage of affection. Our tastes and feelings were congenial, and we were a happy couple with bright prospects in store. . . .

Religious Affiliations

At the time of the marriage of Newel and Elizabeth Ann neither of them had committed themselves to a religious sect. He seemed to be conscious of the hypocrisy of the sectarian world and a rule of his life was never to do anything that would later have to be undone, and so avoided close association with any church. He did, however, always maintain an unfaltering faith in a future state of existence and believed that an honest straightforward course would help him attain it. However, by nature he was business-like and his mind ran more to the temporal than to the spiritual.  

On the other hand Elizabeth Ann had a deeply spiritual nature.

1Jenson, Biog. Encyc., I, 223.  
2Whitney, Contributor, VI, 125.
and possibly encouraged Newel to join a religious movement with her. After serious consideration they united with the "Disciples" or "Campbellites," as they were commonly called, in the vicinity of Ohio. This was an extremely popular sect in this area with Sidney Rigdon as one of its most prominent leaders in Kirtland and the neighboring towns.  

The Campbellites and Sidney Rigdon

Inasmuch as Sidney Rigdon and Newel K. Whitney, as well as other future leaders of the Church, were associated together in the Kirtland vicinity and were converted by the L.D.S. missionaries at about the same time, it seems worthwhile to present a short sketch of their background in the Campbellite church and how it had prepared them for the reception of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Sidney Rigdon's early life was spent on a farm near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Later, he moved into the town of Pittsburgh, where he became a very popular preacher in the Baptist Church. After a short time he became dissatisfied with the doctrines of this Church and resigned his pastorate. Two years later he re-entered the ministry preaching the doctrines of the Campbellite church in Ohio. This church was founded by Alexander Campbell, one of Rigdon's parishioners at Pittsburgh, who had come to Ohio and found many people in sympathy with his message. Pastor Rigdon's success in the new Campbellite movement was remarkable. The fame of his eloquent speech and reasoning power spread everywhere. In a few months time he converted

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1 Carter Eldredge Grant, The Kingdom of God Restored (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1955, p. 120.)
and baptized multitudes and organized flourishing congregations in and around Mentor, Bainbridge, and Kirtland, as well as other towns in northern Ohio.  

Beliefs and Doctrines

The doctrines Rigdon considered necessary to a Christian life were: faith in God, repentance, baptism by immersion, and holiness of life. In these communities the members of Rigdon's church had all things in common; living in a cooperative society they believed to be patterned after the order of the early Christian Church. Sidney championed this restoration of early Christian communism and encouraged its practice within his congregations. Moreover, he placed great emphasis on the second coming of Christ as well as a restoration of all of the ancient orders of the Christian Church including the bestowal of the Holy Ghost. Joseph Smith later said of Sidney Rigdon that he was like John of Old preaching repentance and baptism and preparing people for the reception of the Holy Ghost.

1Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon and Sons Co., 1892), I, 73.


4Journal of History (Lamoni, Iowa: Board of Publication of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1910), III, 12.
Esteemed Pastor

The rich, the poor, the humble and the great flocked to join his followers until he became a welcomed visitor throughout the whole region. So beloved were the Rigdons, with their family of six children that the people organized and purchased a beautiful site and began building a comfortable home and out-buildings to meet the needs of their pastor and his family. The future was indeed bright with fortune and fame at every turn. Under these pleasant circumstances the elders from the newly founded Latter-day Church entered the scene, and soon he saw his prospects shattered and his family reduced to near poverty. ¹

The Conversion of Parley P. Pratt and Others

Caught in the tide of the Campbellite movement were many notable men and women who in a short time would become the most influential leaders in the Latter-day Saints Church. In this group were Edward Partridge, Frederick G. Williams, Parley P. Pratt, and Newel K. Whitney. It is interesting to note that the popular pastor and preacher, Sidney Rigdon, would baptize many of his own flock into the new Church. ²

To account for the conversion of Sidney Rigdon and so many of his followers it is necessary to bring into the story one of Rigdon's

²Grant, op. cit., p. 123.
most able assistants, Parley P. Pratt. Pratt's enthusiasm for the
Campbellite Church caused him much anxiety for the salvation of many
of his former friends and associates in the East; so in company with
his wife, in the summer of 1830, he left Ohio and began a journey dur-
ing which he hoped to spread his message to all who would listen. 
Pratt's own writings suggest that he received a peculiar impression to
go on a preaching tour of the East. 

It isn't necessary here to tell the entire story of the conversion
of Parley P. Pratt to the restored Church while passing through the
state of New York. It is sufficient to say that he readily accepted the
doctrines of the Church and the opportunity which soon came to him to
go West with a small group of missionaries to preach the gospel to the
Lamanites. The westward journey of this small group of inspired and
zealous missionaries brought them to the scene of the Campbellite move-
ment in Ohio. 

Migdon's First Contact With the Elders

Parley P. Pratt, with his fellow missionaries—among whom
was Oliver Cowdery—went immediately to the home of Sidney Migdon
and told him of his recent experiences and presented him with a copy

1Whitney, History of Utah, I. 73.


3Grant, op. cit. p. 116.
of the Book of Mormon. At first Rigdon was thoroughly perturbed at
Pratt because of his conversion to the new Church and his message
concerning the Book of Mormon. However, after having been persuaded
to make an earnest and careful investigation of the doctrines of the
Church the truthfulness of it was manifested unto him. 1 Fully aware
of the loss of prestige and the financial sacrifice he would have to under-
go he consented to baptism at the hands of Oliver Cowdery on November
14, 1830, just two week after the Book of Mormon was placed in his
hands. 2 Anxious that his wife would not overlook the economic conse-
quences of a change in religion he is reported to have said to her, "My
dear, you have followed me once into poverty, are you again willing to
do the same?" She answered, "I have counted the cost and I am per-
fectly willing to follow you; it is my desire to do the will of God, come
life or come death. 3

The Spread of Mormonism among the Campbellites

In the meantime the message of the Latter-day Saint Church was
spread rapidly among the Campbellites by the missionaries. Even be-
fore his baptism Pastor Rigdon consented to let the Elders use his church
facilities in order that they might have a public meeting place. A service
was held and was well attended by a curious and interested assembly.

1Ibid., p. 121.

2Chase, op. cit., p. 60.

3Ibid., p. 59.
At the conclusion of the service Sidney Rigdon bore his testimony and exorted the congregation to take heed in the following manner:

The information they had that evening obtained was of extraordinary character and certainly demanded their serious attention: And as the Apostle advised his brethren to 'prove all things and hold fast to that which is good' so he exhorted his brethren to do likewise, and give the matter a careful investigation; and not to turn against it without being fully convinced of its being an imposition lest they should possibly resist the truth. 1

Sidney Rigdon Joins With the New Faith

Rigdon must have felt sensitive about leaving the Campbellite religion after having been treated so well by his followers as he once again called them together to announce the change he was about to make.

The circumstances of this event are most impressive:

He called together a large congregation of his friends, neighbors, and brethren, and then addressed them effectively for nearly two hours, during most of which time, both himself and nearly all of the congregation were melted into tears. He asked forgiveness of everybody who might have had occasion to be offended with any part of his former life; he forgave all that had persecuted or injured him in any manner, and the next morning, himself and wife were baptized by Oliver Cowdery. "I was present," says Parley P. Pratt. "It was a solemn scene, most of the people were greatly affected, they came out of the water overwhelmed in tears." 2

It is impossible at this writing to say whether Newel K. Whitney was a witness to these events; but it is probable that if he was not present he soon received word of them as he, along with hundreds of others,

1 Ibid.

...and followed Elnathan Rigdon into the water of baptism.

Fratt describes the conditions in northern Ohio upon the conversion of Elnathan Rigdon:

The interest and excitement became general in that land and in all the region round about. The people thronged day and night, insisting that we had no time for rest and retirement. Meetings were convened in different neighborhoods, and multitudes came together on different occasions, while thousands flocked about us daily, some to obey the Gospel and some to dispute or resist it. In two or three weeks from our arrival in the neighborhood with the news, we had baptized one hundred and twenty-seven souls, and the number continued to increase to thousands. The fields were filled with joy and gladness; while some and lying were abundantly manifested of their return.

The Conversion of the Thitey:

While the details of the conversion of Nevel F. Thitey and his wife are not available to us, the above material describes the circumstances under which their change of religion was made. It is probable that the conversion of their pastor, Elnathan Rigdon, as well as that of Nevel F. Fratt, greatly influenced them as they were baptized within two weeks following Rigdon's baptism. There is one significant incident connected with their conversion which is of particular interest.

The campbellite preached a common-sense religion, insisting that salvation was not a supernatural thing, but a normal process which every man might go through. Elnathan Rigdon and the other campbellite preachers had taught their converts frankly that it was doubtful that

Fratt, op. cit., p. 50.
the true gospel of Christ with its gifts and authorities was on the earth. They taught their people to study the scriptures, hold fast to the word of God, and pray constantly to obtain the Holy Ghost. 1

In compliance with these teachings Newel and Elizabeth Ann spent much time in prayer desiring to know how they could obtain the Holy Ghost. Mother Whitney tells their story this way:

It was midnight--my husband and I were in our house at Kirtland, praying to the Father to be shown the way when the Spirit rested upon us and a cloud over-shadowed the house. It was as though we were out of doors. The house passed away from our vision. We were not conscious of anything but the presence of the Spirit and the cloud that was over us. We were wrapped in a cloud. A solemn awe pervaded us. We saw the cloud and felt the Spirit of the Lord. Then we heard a voice out of the cloud saying "Prepare to receive the word of the Lord, for it is coming." At this we marveled greatly, but from that moment we knew that the word of the Lord was coming to Kirtland. 2

**Partial Fulfillment of Promise**

This promise to Newel and his wife was apparently fulfilled upon the arrival of the Lamanite missionaries of the newly-formed Latter-day Saints Church in the latter part of 1830.

Shortly after Pastor Rigdon was baptized and ordained an Elder he was appointed President of the Kirtland Branch of the Latter-day Saints Church. Fired with enthusiasm, after having received the Holy Ghost, Rigdon began converting and baptizing his Campbellite followers. It is of interest to note that upon hearing the word of God Mother Whitney

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2Tullidge, op. cit., pp. 41-43.
joined through the waters of baptism and Newel followed a few days later after a period of thorough investigations. The following account is given of the baptism of Newel and Elizabeth Ann: "To hear, with Sister Whitney, was to believe, and to believe, to be baptized. Her husband, with characteristic caution, took time to investigate, but entered the Fold himself a few days afterwards. This was in November, 1830. These baptisms were performed by Sidney Rigdon.

The Condition of the Church During This Period

The condition of the Church at the time of Newel K. Whitney's conversion is noteworthy. It had been in existence about seven months and consisted of about seventy souls centered around Palmyra, New York. In December, 1830, a commandment was given for the Church to move to Ohio (D. & C. 37). At a conference in Fayette on January 2, 1831, the commandment was repeated and appears in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 38 as follows:

28. And again, I say unto you that the enemy in the secret chambers seeketh your lives.
32. Wherefore, for this cause I gave unto you the commandment that ye should go to the Ohio; and there I will give unto you my law; and there you shall be endowed with power from on high;
33. And from thence, whosoever I will shall go forth among all the nations, and it shall be told them what they shall do; for I have a great work laid up in store, for Israel shall be saved, and I will lead them whithersoever I will, and no power shall stay my hand.

1Whitney, Contributor, VI, 125.
2Roberts, op. cit., I, 240-41.
34. And now, I give unto the church in these parts a command-
ment, that certain men among them shall be appointed, and they shall
be appointed by the voice of the church;
35. And they shall look to the poor and the needy, and administer
to their relief that they shall not suffer; and send them forth to the
place which I have commanded them;
36. And this shall be their work, to govern the affairs of the
property of this church.¹

Significant about this revelation is the fact that as soon as the
Church was moved to Ohio as "commanded" by the Lord, certain men
were chosen to look after the needy and administer relief to those who
had cause to suffer in any way.

Eleven months after the above revelation was given Newel K.
Whitney was the principal figure in this responsibility; and with a constant
flow of Saints from the East it proved to be a major task.

Newel dedicated his life to the cause; and few, if any, leaders of
the early Church period proved more devoted and faithful than this man
as the succeeding chapters will show.

¹Doctrinal and Covenants, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 38:28, 32-36. Hereafter cited as
D. & C.
CHAPTER III

THE BISHOP OF THE KIRTLAND SAINTS

The Prophet's Arrival in Kirtland

About six miles in a straight line from the shore of Lake Erie—and some twenty miles from Cleveland in the County or Lake—lies a village known in Church History as Kirtland. By the first months of 1831 this town had already become important to the new and thriving Latter-day Saints Church. Sidney Rigdon was the leader of a multitude of new converts which included many prominent people of Kirtland and vicinity. Among these was Newel K. Whitney who was soon to gain prominence in the new movement.

The Saints in Kirtland looked forward to the time when they could have the Prophet of the New Dispensation in their midst. They hadn't long to wait as about the first of February 1831 Joseph arrived in Kirtland in company with his wife, Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge. The circumstances of this event are related by Newel's grandson, Orson F. Whitney:

I have heard my grandmother and my father relate that when the Prophet came to Kirtland he drove in a sleigh and halted in front of

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1 Andrew Jenson, Historical Record (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson, 1889), V. 62.
2 Grant, op. cit., p. 123.
the mercantile store of Gilbert and Whitney, and out, and into the store, walked up to the junior partner, and said: 'I am Joseph, the Prophet. You have prayed for me here. Now, what do you want of me?'

By what power did this remarkable man, Joseph Smith, recognize one whom he had never before seen in the flesh? He did not know him. 'Whitney recognize him.' It was because Joseph Smith had a choice, a choice which he had actually seen in Newel K. Whitney upon his knee, hundreds of miles away, praying for his coming to Kirtland. It was Newel K. Whitney, while the Prophet was in the midst of the trial, that the Prophet's arrival in Kirtland:

"Jove Newel K. Whitney! Thou art the man!" he exclaimed, extending his hand cordially, to an old and familiar acquaintance.

"You have the advantage of me," replied the one addressed, as he mechanically took the offered hand—"half-ambushed, half-mystified, overpowered, this countenance, I could not tell you by name, if you have me."

"I am Joseph, the prophet, and the trumpeter, him. You've caught me here; now what do you want of me?"

Mr. Whitney, astonished, but no less delighted, as soon as his surprise would permit, conducted the party—who were no other than Joseph Smith, his wife Emma, and two servants, just arrived from Fayette, the birth-place of the infant Church—across the street to his house on the corner, and introduced them to his wife. She shared his surprise and ecstasy. Joseph says of this episode: "We were kindly received and welcomed into the house of brother K. W. Whitney. I and my wife lived in the family of Brother Whitney several weeks, and received every kindness and attention that could be expected, and especially from Sister Whitney." He adds: "I remarked to my husband that this was the fulfillment of the vision he had seen of a cloud, as of glory, resting upon our house. To bring it to its fulness, literally, during the time the prophet was in the house, under their roof, and before the revelation were given, which are now recorded in the book of Doctrine and Covenants."

--- Continuance of "Common Land"

The events which immediately followed the Prophet's move to Kirtland were significant to the members of the Church. The first act took to the continuance of the law of all things in common which was still being practiced in Kirtland and a carry-over from their Campbellite faith. With a little caution and exercise of vision, the prophet ended them to abandon this plan and their difficulties were removed.1

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1 Joseph Smith record that he lived with the Whitney until September 12, 1831.

2 Whitney, Contributor, VI, 185.
The Appointment of Bishop Partridge

Hundreds of Saints from the East and particularly New York followed the Prophet to Ohio. With this influx it became necessary for the Church to be further organized. On February 4, 1831 Edward Partridge was chosen as the first bishop of the Church in this dispensation. His calling and responsibilities are essential to this account as just a few months hence this calling and the duties pertaining to it were also given to Newel K. Whitney.

It was a magnificent tribute that the Lord paid to Edward Partridge in this revelation of February 4, 1831. He was called to be a bishop of the Church, and to be "ordained a bishop unto the Church, and to leave his merchandize and to spend all his time in the labors of the Church." He was "to see to all things as it shall be appointed unto him in my laws in the day that I shall give them." ... In subsequent revelations these duties were explained and the knowledge imparted that men called to this office were to be engaged in the temporal affairs of the Church particularly. There is such an inference in the fact that the Lord directed Edward Partridge to discontinue his merchandising and devote all of his time to the Church. Immediately following his appointment, he was assigned to actual duties according to the calling of a bishop and was engaged in caring for the members of the Church in relation to their lands, inheritances, and other temporal matters which were vital to the members concerned. 1

Zion

In a series of revelations the Lord speaks of a Zion to be built up by the Saints and gives them much advice and council pertaining to it. 2

1 Joseph Fielding Smith, Church History and Modern Revelation (The Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), 1, 190-181. Hereafter cited as Joseph Fielding Smith, C.H. & Mod. Rev.

2 See D. & C. 28, 38, 42, 45, 48, 52, 54, 55.
The Lord did not reveal to them the exact location where Zion was to be built but they were told it was to be known as the New Jerusalem and that it would be in the West on "the borders by the Lamanites." ¹

During the summer of 1831, while Newel K. Whitney remained in Kirtland, the Prophet visited Missouri in company with several brethren. It was then that the Lord revealed to the Church the exact location of Zion. This revelation is found in Section 57 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

1. Hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land, which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints.

2. Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion.

3. And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the court-house. ²

Importance of the Gilbert and Whitney Store

While in Missouri Joseph received the first of several revelations which had a direct bearing on Newel K. Whitney. He was commanded by the Lord to retain his store in Kirtland "yet for a little season," but to send all the money he could spare to the land of Zion. Further he was to be an agent to the brethren in Kirtland, and assisted by Oliver Cowdery, to visit various branches of the Church and gather all the money he could

²D. & C. 57:1-3
and send it also to Zion. This was all to be done "in his own wisdom." The Lord further states that "those who send up of their money and treasure to the land of Zion are to receive an inheritance in this world; their works shall follow them, and a reward shall accrue to them in the world to come." The significance of this responsibility and the necessity of the Saints response to it is emphasized by the following:

It is the Lord's will that His disciples and other people open their hearts so as to purchase the whole region or country round about independence as soon as time would permit. There is wisdom in the Lord's words, so He explains. They are to do this lest they receive no inheritance, except by the shedding of blood (i.e., by the use of force. Cf. 63:27-31.) In no other way could they get this promised land in their possession.2

A short time later another revelation was given by the Lord, part of which concerned Newel:

26. And it is not meet that my servants, Newel K. Whitney and Sidney Gilbert, should sell their store and their possessions here; for this is not wisdom until the residue of the church, which remaineth in this place, shall go up unto the land of Zion.

27. Behold, it is said in my laws, or forbidden, to get in debt to thine enemies;

23. But behold, it is not said at any time that the Lord should not take when he please, and pay as seemeth him good.

29. Wherefore, as ye are agents, ye are on the Lord's errand; and whatever ye do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord's business.

30. And he hath set you to provide for his saints in these last days, that they may obtain an inheritance in the land of Zion.

1Ibid., 63:42-48

2Sperry, op. cit., p. 242.
31. And behold, I, the Lord declare unto you, and my words are sure and shall not fail, that they shall obtain it.

32. But all things must come to pass in their time.

33. Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great. ¹

The store operated by Gilbert and Whitney was seemingly very important to the welfare of the Saints in Ohio and apparently became increasingly so in the subsequent months. The following statement helps to clarify the importance of this establishment to the Saints:

The Almighty now directs His attention to His servants, Elder Newel K. Whitney and Sidney Gilbert. It is not desirable for them to sell their store and their possessions in Kirtland. Such an action is not wisdom until the remainder of the members of the branch in Kirtland go to the land of Zion. The Lord in His law forbids His servants to get in debt to His enemies. But it is not said at any time that the Lord should not take when He pleases and pay as it seems good to Him. For that reason, inasmuch as these brethren are the Lord's agents, they are on His errand, and whatever they do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord's business. The Lord has given these brethren a command to provide for His Saints in order that they might obtain an inheritance in the land of Zion. ²

It appears that at this time there was to have been a general exodus of the Church from Kirtland to Missouri and that the Gilbert and Whitney store was to assist the Saints in the preparation for this removal. The plan, however, was later abandoned when Joseph Smith returned to Kirtland. ³

¹Sperry, op. cit., pp. 272-273

Appointment of Newel K. Whitney as Bishop

During these months the new converts in Kirtland witnessed a slow but certain development of the Kingdom of God in their midst. Unusual would have been the experience of having one's name mentioned in the revelations which came to Joseph Smith; particularly if through them responsibilities and duties were increased suggesting the trust the Lord had in the one so named. Such was the case with Newel K. Whitney. In November of 1831 in a revelation the Lord said "there remain hereafter in the due time of the Lord, other Bishops to be set apart unto the Church, to minister even according to the first." The fulfillment of this promise of the Lord seems to have come, in part, one month after it was given, in the appointment of the second bishop of the Church and is recorded in Section 72 of the Doctrine and Covenants. The full context of this revelation is here given as it not only calls Bishop Whitney but outlines in some detail his extensive responsibilities:

1. Hearken, and listen to the voice of the Lord, O ye who have assembled yourselves together, who are the high priests of my church, to whom the kingdom and power have been given.

2. For verily thus saith the Lord, it is expedient in me for a bishop to be appointed unto you, or of you, unto the church in this part of the Lord's vineyard.

3. And verily in this thing ye have done wisely, for it is required of the Lord, at the hand of every steward, to render an account of his stewardship, both in time and in eternity.

4. For he who is faithful and wise in time is accounted worthy to inherit the mansions prepared for him of my Father.

\[1\text{D. & C. 68:14.}\]
5. Verily I say unto you, the elders of the church in this part of my vineyard shall render an account of their stewardship unto the bishop, who shall be appointed of me in this part of my vineyard.

6. These things shall be had on record, to be handed over unto the bishop in Zion.

7. And the duty of the bishop shall be made known by the commandments which have been given, and the voice of the conference.

8. And now, verily I say unto you, my servant Nephi I. Whitney is the man who shall be appointed and ordained unto the power. This is the will of the Lord your God, your Redeemer. Even so. Amen.

9. The word of the Lord, in addition to the law which has been given, making known the duty of the bishop who has been ordained unto the church in this part of the vineyard, which is verily this--

10. To keep the Lord's storehouse; to receive the funds of the church in this part of the vineyard;

11. To take an account of the elders as before has been commanded; and to administer to their wants, who shall pay for that which they receive, inasmuch as they have wherewith to pay;

12. That this also may be consecrated to the good of the church, to the poor and needy.

13. And he who hath not wherewith to pay, an account shall be taken and handed over to the bishop of Zion, who shall pay the debt out of that which the Lord shall put into his hands.

14. And the labors of the faithful who labor in spiritual things, in administering the gospel and the things of the kingdom unto the church, and unto the world, shall answer the debt unto the bishop in Zion;

15. Thus it cometh out of the church, for according to the law every man that cometh up to Zion must lay all things before the bishop in Zion.

16. And now, verily I say unto you, that as every elder in this part of the vineyard must give an account of his stewardship unto the bishop in this part of the vineyard--

17. A certificate from the judge or bishop in this part of the vineyard, unto the bishop in Zion, rendereth every man acceptable, and answereth all things, for an inheritance, and to be received as a wise steward and as a faithful laborer;
16. Otherwise he shall not be accepted of the bishop of Zion.

19. And now, verily I say unto you, let every elder who shall give an account unto the bishop of the church in this part of the vineyard be recommended by the church or churches, in which he labors, that he may render himself and his accounts approved in all things.

20. And again, let my servants who are appointed as stewards over the literary concerns of my church have claim for assistance upon the bishop or bishops in all things.—

21. That the revelations may be published, and go forth unto the ends of the earth; that they also may obtain funds which shall benefit the church in all things;

22. That they also may render themselves approved in all things, and be accounted as wise stewards.

23. And now, behold, this shall be an example for all the extensive branches of my church, in whatsoever land they shall be established. And now I make an end of my sayings. Amen.

24. A few words in addition to the laws of the kingdom, respecting the members of the church—they that are appointed by the Holy Spirit to go up unto Zion, and they who are privileged to go up unto Zion—

25. Let them carry up unto the bishop a certificate from three elders of the church, or a certificate from the bishop;

26. Otherwise he who shall go up unto the land of Zion shall not be accounted as a wise steward. This is also an example. Amen.¹

In July, 1831 instruction was given that Bishop Partridge was to assume his duties as Presiding Bishop in the land of Zion.² Therefore, the designation of another bishop did not come as a surprise to the elder in Ohio as it was extremely difficult to keep in close touch with Bishop Partridge because of distance and the slowness of mail service.³

¹Ibid., p. 72.
²Sperry, op. cit., p. 322.
³Ibid., p. 58.
Duties of Bishop Whitney

Not only was the new bishop to assume the same duties as Bishop Partridge but in addition the revelation states: "the brethren in the Kirtland area are to render an account of their stewardships to Bishop Whitney; these accounts will then be a matter of record and are eventually to be handed over to Bishop Partridge in Missouri who was the Presiding Bishop of the Church." ¹

In the next part of the revelation (vss. 9-19), the Lord specifies duties of the new Bishop in addition to those before given. He is to keep the Lord's storehouse for the Kirtland area and receive the Church funds. He is also to administer to the needs of the elders whose stewardship accounts he keeps; the brethren are to pay for what they receive if they have the money, so that this, too, may be consecrated to the good of the poor and needy of the Church. If a brother is unable to pay for what he gets, the Bishop is to make an account of the matter and transmit it to the Bishop (Partridge) in Zion, who will in turn pay the debt out of the surplus put in his charge by the Lord.

Faithful brethren whose stewardships consist in laboring in purely spiritual matters of the Church are just as much entitled to remuneration as those who labor in temporal matters (vs. 14); the Bishop in Zion will pay their debts. Their remuneration comes from the Church, but such accounts have to come up, finally, to the Presiding Bishop as the law of the Church requires. Every man, even if his labors are completely spiritual, has to give an account of his stewardships to the Presiding Bishop. (See 42:30) In view of the fact that every Elder in the Kirtland area has to give an account of his stewardship to the new Bishop, Elder Newel K. Whitney, it is essential that brother Whitney issue a certificate to each man witnessing to the Bishop in Zion that he is an acceptable and wise steward and faithful laborer and thus worthy of an inheritance. Without this certificate an elder is not to be accepted by the Bishop of Zion (Elder Partridge). Every elder in the Kirtland area who gives an account of his stewardship to Bishop Whitney is to be recommended by the respective branch or branches of the Church in which he labors (vs. 19), in order that he and his accounts may be duly approved in all respects.²

¹See D. & C. 72:7 and also page 29 of this paper.

²Sperry, op. cit., p. 323.
In addition to the duties of Bishop Whitney as outlined in the revelation President Joseph F. Smith gives a detailed description of the spiritual duties of bishops which were encompassed in this new calling:

It is also the duties of these presiding officers (Bishopric) in the Church to look after the spiritual welfare of the people, to see that they are living more pure upright lives, that they are faithful in the discharge of their duties as L.D.S., that they are honest in their dealings with one another, and with all the world. It is their business to see that spiritual light exists in all their hearts and that the people under their presidency and direction are living the lives of Saints, as far as it is possible for men and women in the mortal body, beset by weakness and imperfections of mankind, can be Saints. 1

Further light is shed on the responsibilities of a Bishop in Grant's The Kingdom of God Restored:

"... a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince." (Titus 1:7-9)

To Joseph, God revealed that a bishop is "... to be a judge in Israel, to do the business of the church, to sit in judgment upon transgressors... by the assistance of his counselors, whom he has chosen. ... Thus shall he be a judge, even a common judge among the inhabitants of Zion. ... A bishop must be chosen from the High Priesthood, unless he is a literal descendant of Aaron. ... a literal descendant of Aaron has a legal right to. ... act in the office of bishop independently, without counselors." In the Church today, there is no bishop holding the office by "literal descent of Aaron." Both the bishop and his counselors are high priests, having authority to preside over the affairs of their wards and the priesthood as well. 2


2 Grant, op. cit., p. 135, quoting Titus 1:7-9 and D & C 107:72-74; 69; 76.
Whitney's Reaction to the Calling

It is possible that Bishop Whitney did not realize the full scope of his new responsibility due to the newness of the office and his limited experience in the Church. Nevertheless, he was "staggered" by the weight of the task as indicated in the following account given by Orson F. Whitney:

Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter--he it was if I remember right--once related to me an anedote about his predecessor, my grandfather, Newel K. Whitney, the second man called to the bishopric in this dispensation. It was at Kirtland, Ohio, in December, 1831. The law of consecration had been revealed and was about to be put into operation. The properties of the Saints had to be consecrated for the building up of Zion, and Bishops were needed to handle these properties and administer the temporalities of the Church. Edward Partridge was the first Bishop called, but he had been sent down into Missouri, where the foundations of Zion were laid, and another Bishop was needed for Kirtland,--a Stake of Zion. The Lord said: "My servant Newel K. Whitney is the man whom shall be appointed and ordained unto this power." Newel K. Whitney staggered under the weight of the responsibility that was about to be placed upon him, said to the Prophet: "Brother Joseph, I can't see a Bishop in myself."

No; but God could see it in him. He was a natural Bishop--a first class man of affairs. Probably no other incumbent of that important office, the Presiding Bishopric, to which he eventually attained, has been better qualified for it than Newel K. Whitney. But he could not see it, and he shrank from the responsibility. The Prophet answered: "Go and ask the Lord about it." and Newel did ask the Lord, and he heard a voice from heaven say: "Thy strength is in me." That was enough. He accepted the office, and served in it faithfully to the end of his days--a period of eighteen years.1

Qualifications of Bishop Whitney

The choice of Newel as a bishop of the Church appears to have been a most fortunate one. He was a thorough business-man by instinct

1Doxey, op. cit., II, 434.
and training and because his duties dealt chiefly in temporal affairs—supervising the material interests of the Church—he apparently was an excellent choice for the position.¹

The following comment regarding the appointment of Bishop Whitney brings to light the trust that Joseph Smith had in him as a bishop and as a friend.

The appointment of Newel K. Whitney as Bishop of Kirtland and the eastern branches of the Church, was the next important event in his history. Joseph, who had seen him in vision, praying for his coming to Kirtland, recognized with inspirational eye the part he was destined to play in the great drama of the latter days. He was one whom he trusted implicitly, not only in monetary matters, in which he often went to him for counsel, but with many of his most secret thoughts, those keen-edged swords, which, blinding by their far-flashing brilliance, he could unsheathe but to few. But, though Joseph loved him as a bosom friend, he did not fail to correct him whenever occasion required, and the candor of his rebuke, and the outspoken nature of their friendship, served only to knit their souls more closely together.²

**Area of Responsibility**

As one considers the calling given to Bishop Whitney it is realized that he was more than a ward bishop and yet he certainly was not the Presiding Bishop of the Church. His responsibilities, as indicated above, encompassed not only the Ohio Saints but also the Eastern branches of the Church. Consider the following:

In December 1834 the Lord saw proper again to give another Bishop; his name was Newel K. Whitney. Was he merely a Bishop of a ward whose jurisdiction was limited to a little spot of ground that might be termed a place for the residence of a Ward Bishop? No; he was another general Bishop. Bishop Partridge had general jurisdiction in Jackson

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²Whitney, *Contributor*, VI, 126.
County and in regions round about, while the duties of Newel K. Whitney extended to the state of Ohio and the states of Pennsylvania and New York, and throughout all of the Eastern counties wherever the Church of God was organized.  

He was first appointed bishop of Kirtland and the Eastern branches of the Church. Like Bishop Partridge Bishop Whitney also was "called of God as was Aaron" in a revelation given December 4, 1831. While he was not formally designated as a presiding Bishop until after the Prophet's death, he served in that capacity following the death of Bishop Partridge and in 1844 was sustained by the vote of the Church. He served without regularly appointed counselors, President Brigham Young and his counselor Heber C. Kimball serving in that capacity.

"Thy strength is in me," the answer to Whitney's plea to God, was probably a constant source of strength in the ensuing years as he carried out the numerous responsibilities connected with his calling.

A further explanation of some of the duties of Bishop Whitney is found in Section 72:24-26 as discussed by Sidney B. Sperry as follows:

The directions given the brethren for their activities are now to be an example for all the extensive branches of the Church (vs. 2), in whatsoever land they may be located. That is to say, Bishops or suitable presiding officers are to be provided in all parts of the Church in order that brethren may conveniently give accounts of their stewardships as the revelation sets forth. At this point the Lord says that He makes an end of His sayings and adds "Amen." Perhaps the reason for this is that the most important and weighty part of His directions has been given.

Nevertheless, the Almighty adds a few words to the "laws of the kingdom" in ending the revelation, by advising members of the Church who are inspired of the Spirit to go to Zion and those who are privileged for some other good reasons to go to that land (vss. 24-26), to take with them a certificate of recommendation signed by three Elders of the branch of the Church to which they belong. In lieu of


2Improvement Era, April 1935, XXXVIII, 217.
that, they may obtain a certificate from the Bishop in the general region in which they live—Bishop Whitney, for example. In any event, whatever certificate is obtained is to be presented to the Bishop in Zion without a proper certificate is not to be accounted as a wise steward. This instruction is given as another example of what the Lord wants His people to heed.  

The United Order

In March of 1832 another revelation was given to the Church, which was directed to the members of the Priesthood who were assembled, giving instructions regarding the "United Order" or "Order of Enoch" on which Zion must be built:

During the early part of the year 1832, the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon continued the work of the revision of the Scriptures. At the time the Prophet was still residing in the house of Father John Johnson, at Hiram. It was during this time (March) that this important revelation (Section 78) was given to the members of the Priesthood who were assembled imparting instructions in relation to the plan of the 'united order" or "order of Enoch," on which the promised Zion should be built. The Lord had revealed that it was only through obedience to his divine will, the celestial law, that Zion could be built. (Sec. 63:47-49; 64:34; 105:3-5) The members of the Church rejoiced when the Lord revealed to them the site on which the New Jerusalem, or City of Zion, should be built. (Sec. 57:1-3) Their enthusiasm, however, was not sufficient to carry them through to a conclusion in strict obedience to the divine will. (CHMR 2:73-74, 1948.)

1. The Lord spake unto Enoch (Joseph Smith, Jun.) saying: Hearken unto me, saith the Lord your God, who are ordained unto the high priesthood of my church, who have assembled yourselves together;

2. And listen to the counsel of him who has ordained you from on high, who shall speak in your ears the words of wisdom, that salvation may be unto you in that thing which you have presented before me, saith the Lord God.

3. For verily I say unto you, the time has come, and is now at hand; and behold, and lo, it must needs be that there be an organiza-

1Sperry, op. cit., pp. 324-325.
tion of my people, in regulating and establishing the affairs of the storehouse for the poor of my people, both in this place and in the land of Zion-- (Sec. 78:1-3) ¹

The following paragraph clarifies the meaning in these verses and the material which follows the quote is in fulfillment of verse nine:

The Lord tells the brethren who are joined together in this new order (vss. 8-16), the details of which are not given, that it is expedient that all things be done by them unto His glory. In other words, Newel K. Whitney, Joseph Smith, and Sidney Rigdon are to sit in council with the Saints who are in Zion. Otherwise Satan will seek to turn their hearts from the truth, that they become blinded and understand not the things which are prepared for them. The Lord commands the brethren to prepare and organize themselves by a bond or everlasting covenant that cannot be broken. (This was later to be called the United Order. 92:1-2.) Whosoever breaks it is to lose his office and standing in the Church and be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption. (Cf. 82: 21; 104:9-10; 132:26.) In this way the Lord will prepare the brethren, lay the foundation, and give the example whereby they may accomplish the commandments which are given them. Obviously the Lord is very serious in the requests which He makes of the brethren respecting the establishment of the new order. ²

Journey to Missouri

A few days after this revelation was given to the Church the tragic incident of the tarring and feathering of the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon occurred on the 24th of March 1832. A few days later one of the adopted twins of the Prophet died following exposure to the cold the night Joseph was dragged from his home by the mob. ³

¹Doxey, op. cit., III, 19.

²Sperry, op. cit., p. 373.

³Roberts, op. cit., I, 261-265.
With this tragedy on his mind the Prophet, in company with Newel K. Whitney and several other brethren in Kirtland, began a journey to Missouri on April 1, in fulfillment of verse 9, Section 78 of the Doctrine and Covenants as stated above.

Wishing to avoid the mobs these brethren proceeded on a course which took them to Wheeling, Virginia, where they purchased paper and other supplies for the press in Zion. Shortly after leaving Hiram, Ohio, the Prophet wrote a letter to his wife and suggested that she leave Hiram and go to the home of Bishop Whitney in Kirtland and remain until the mobs quieted down. ¹

From Wheeling they took passage on the steamer "Trenton." While still in dock the following incident occurred: "... during the night the boat was twice on fire burning the whole width of the boat through into the cabin but with so little damage that the boat went on in the morning: Some of the mob which had followed us, left us and we arrived in Louisville the same night. Captain Brittle offered us protection on board of his boat and gave us supper and breakfast gratuitously. ..."²

Further Instructions

While in Missouri on April 26, 1832 another revelation was given to the Church, part of which directly concerned Bishop Whitney (Sec. 82: 11-24).

¹Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2d ed. revised (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1948), I, 265-266.

²Ibid.
11. Therefore, verily I say unto you, that it is expedient for my servants Alam and Washashah (Newel K. Whitney), Mahalaleel and Selagoram (Sidney Rigdon) and my servant Gazelam (Joseph Smith), and Horah and Olijah (Oliver Cowdery), and Shalamanasseh and Mahemson (Martin Harris), 1 to be bound together by a bond and covenant that cannot be broken by transgression, except judgement shall immediately follow, in your several stewardships--

12. To manage the affairs of the poor, and all things pertaining to the bishopric both in the land of Zion and in the land of Shinehah (Kirtland);

13. For I have consecrated the land of Shinehah (Kirtland) in mine own due time for the benefit of the saints of the Most High, and for a stake to Zion.

14. For Zion must increase in beauty, and in holiness; her borders must be enlarged; her stakes must be strengthened; yea, verily I say unto you, Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments.

15. Therefore, I give unto you this commandment, that ye bind yourselves by this covenant, and it shall be done according to the laws of the Lord.

16. Behold, here is wisdom also in me for your good.

17. And you are to be equal, or in other words, you are to have equal claims on the properties, for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships, every man according to his wants and his needs, inasmuch as his wants are just--

18. And all this for the benefit of the church of the living God, that every man may improve upon his talent, that every man may gain other talents, yea, even an hundred fold, to be cast into the Lord's storehouse, to become the common property of the whole church--

19. Every man seeking the interest of his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God.

1Joseph Smith explained that it was not always desirable that the individuals whom the Lord addressed in revelations should at the time be known by the world, and hence in this and in some subsequent revelations the brethren were addressed by other than their own names. The temporary necessity having passed for keeping the names of the individuals addressed unknown, their real names were subsequently given in brackets. (Joseph Smith, D.H.C., I, 255.
20. This order I have appointed to be an everlasting order unto you, and unto your successors, inasmuch as you sin not.

21. And the soul that sins against this covenant, and hardeneth his heart against it, shall be dealt with according to the laws of my church, and shall be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption.

22. And now, verily I say unto you, and this is wisdom, make unto yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and they will not destroy you.

23. Leave judgment alone with me, for it is mine and I will repay. Peace be with you; my blessings continue with you.

24. For even yet the kingdom is yours, and shall be forever, if you fall not from your steadfastness. Even so. Amen.¹

A commentary to explain the preceding verses is as follow:

The brethren, one more, are bound by a covenant. This is, in fact, a renewal of the covenant given in earlier revelations. The Lord frequently repeats instructions and commandments that we may be more deeply impressed. These covenants were of the nature that they could not be broken, without losing the reward.

The nature of this covenant in large measure was to bind them to manage the affairs of the Lord's storehouse for the poor, and to look after their needs in all things. The bishops in Kirtland as well as in Zion had the responsibility on their shoulders to see to the carrying out of the provisions of this divine law. The land of Shinehah (Kirtland) was to be consecrated for this work, as well as the land of Zion. In a former revelation the Lord indicated that he intended to maintain a hold on Kirtland for five years. (Sec. 64:21.) Now he asks that a stake of Zion be organized in Kirtland. Earlier (Sec. 68:26), the Lord intimated that stakes would be organized. (CHMR 2:87-88, 1948.)²

The Gilbert and Whitney Stores

A few days after this revelation was received the Church leaders in Missouri held a council. The Prophet recorded that: "..."

¹D&C 82:11-24.
²Doxey, op. cit., III, 51.
arrangements were also made for supplying the Saints with stores in Missouri and Ohio, which action, with a few exceptions, was hailed with joy by the brethren. . ."¹

At this point it seems appropriate to give a more complete explanation of the position of Bishop Whitney and his store in Kirtland with regard to taking care of the poor and the covenant he entered into with the brethren mentioned in verse 11 of Section 82.

It seems that these brethren were bound by a covenant referred to in two revelations² to manage the affairs of the Lord's storehouse for the poor, and to look after their needs in all things.³

Bishops in Kirtland and Zion had this responsibility and were bound by covenant to carry it out. This covenant was of the nature that could not be broken without losing the reward.⁴

It will be remembered that in earlier revelations⁵ Newel is told by the Lord to retain his store in Kirtland for use by the membership of the Church so that they could avoid going in debt to their enemies and also to raise money for the building of Zion in Missouri.

¹Joseph Smith, op. cit., II, 270.
²See D. & C. 78, 82.
³Doxey, op. cit., III, 51.
⁴Ibid.
⁵See D. & C. 63, 64.
On May 1, 1832 the action was taken to have stores both in Kirtland and Missouri to assist the Saints with needed supplies. B. H. Roberts gives the following account concerning the business of Gilbert and Whitney:

The arrangements here referred to for the establishment of stores in Missouri and Ohio, as disclosed by the minutes of these council meetings of the 26th, 27th, 30th of April, and the 1st of May, were that the brethren in mercantile pursuits in Kirtland and Zion should be united in one firm; and the establishments in Kirtland and Zion respectively were regarded merely as branches of the one firm. Still it was resolved that each of these branches should have a separate company name. The name of the branch in Zion was to be "Gilbert, Whitney & Company." and the one in Kirtland "Newel K. Whitney & Company." W. W. Phelps and A. S. Gilbert were appointed to draft the bond for the united firm. A. S. Gilbert and Newel K. Whitney were appointed to be the agents of the new firm. It was also resolved that whenever any special business should arise it would be the duty of the united firm by its branches at Jackson County, Missouri, and Geauga County, Ohio, to regulate the same by special agency. It was also resolved that the united firm negotiate a loan of fifteen thousand dollars at six per centum. The firm of Newel K. Whitney & Co. was appointed to transact the business.1

The following is also an appropriate commentary on this point:

When the church left Kirtland for Missouri in June of 1831, there is no indication that they had any intention ever to return again except to complete liquidation of their holdings and to bring their families to Zion. . . Although plans for building Zion were continued, the Prophet returned to Kirtland in the fall of 1831 and issued orders that stopped the liquidation of Kirtland holdings. The Morley farm and some of Newel K. Whitney's property were already gone. Fortunately, Whitney's store had not been sold when the new decision was made. This property was appropriated to the church through the Law of Consecration.

It was around the nucleus of Whitney's store and the Law of Consecration that the economic strength of Kirtland was husbanded. The

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1Joseph Smith, op. cit., I, 270. (Footnote by B. H. Roberts.)
Law of Consecration was given by the church by Joseph Smith in a series of revelations beginning early in 1831. According to the law, a person upon becoming a member of the Mormon Church was to deed all of his property to the organization in fee simple. He would then receive from the church a conditional grant called an inheritance. ... Although this was the law, it was not formally followed in Kirtland. Evidently members merely pledged their property to the church with an "oath and covenant" and retained title in their own name. They received the advice and counsel of the Mormon bishop or his agent concerning the use of their property and were expected to make an accounting to him at the end of the year as to the results of their operation. It was expected that all amounts over and above what was necessary to provide for their "wants and needs" would be donated to the church. ..

It has been said that the operation of the Law of Consecration was informal in Kirtland. The single exception to that statement is perhaps the most noteworthy economic development during the early years of the church. The properties of Newel K. Whitney were formally appropriated to church use in March, 1832, through an organization called the United Firm or the United Order. The organization was known in county records as Newel K. Whitney and Company. It was created, according to the church account, to care for the poor, to manage the storehouse, and to regulate affairs of the church both in Zion and in Kirtland. Effectively it was the governing body of the church, and its members included the highest church leaders. It was also the only visible means of support for these leaders. There was an air of secrecy and mystery about it as its members were known by unique Book of Mormon (italics) sounding code names. Originally it consisted [sic] of Newel K. Whitney, Sidney Rigdon, and Joseph Smith. In April, 1832, the United Order was expanded to include Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris. The only economic asset at first was Whitney's store, but as consecrations and donations flowed in, new business enterprises were commenced and additional purchases of property were made. From time to time, as need arose, the group expanded to include some new figure vital to an emerging plan. Such an addition was made in 1833 when Smith saw that his Missouri Zion was not likely to be realized soon and expressed the need to build and grow by transferring projects originally intended for Zion to the Ohio city. The church needed property upon which to lay the foundations for a city and a house of worship. Accordingly, Frederick G. Williams was admitted to the United Firm and with him came his farm of 142 acres situated on the heights overlooking the valley of the East Chagrin River and the old village of Kirtland. 1

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With this information it seems apparent that Bishop Whitney, with his business, was closely associated with the economy of the Saints in Kirtland, as well as with the care of the poor whom the leaders of the Church were bound by covenant to look after as previously noted.

It appears possible that the storehouse used by the Church in Kirtland might have been Bishop Whitney's own private store. Consider the following paragraph from a letter written by F. G. Williams to the Saints in Zion on October 10, 1833:

Bishop Whitney, also started for New York at the same time, to replenish his store in Kirtland, with money enough to pay all the debts of both establishments, and expects to bring a larger supply of goods than at any former time. Thus you see the goodness and mercy of God in providing for His Saints. Not one week before Bishop Whitney started, the way seemed hedged up, and ten or twelve hundred dollars was the most that he had, and knew not where to obtain the amount he wanted; but by a remarkable interposition of Divine Providence, he was furnished with all he wanted, for which let us raise our hearts in gratitude to God, and praise His holy name, that He is a present help in every time of need.¹

Eventful Journey from Missouri to Kirtland

The next events which concern Newel were significant in building the bond of love and friendship between him and the Prophet Joseph Smith. Joseph records that on May 6, 1832 in company with Bishop Whitney and Sidney Rigdon, he began a journey from Missouri back to Kirtland. Their journey was mostly by stage through St. Louis to Vincennes, Indiana and New Albany. An account of the incidents of this journey are given here:

¹Joseph Smith, op. cit., I, 418.
... near the falls of Ohio, the horses of the coach on which they were traveling, took fright and ran away. While going at full speed, Bishop Whitney and the Prophet leaped from the vehicle. The latter cleared the wheels and landed in safety, but his companion, having his coat fast, caught his foot in the wheel and was thrown to the ground with violence, breaking his leg and foot in several places. This accident delayed them for four weeks at a public house in Greenville. Dr. Porter, the landlord's brother, who set the broken limb, remarked, little thinking who the travelers were, that it was a pity they did not have some "Mormons" there, as they could set broken bones and do anything else. Joseph administered to his friend, and he recovered rapidly. They had fallen, it seems, into suspicious if not dangerous hands. In walking through the woods adjacent to the tavern, the prophet's attention had been attracted by several newly made graves. His suspicion, though not thoroughly aroused was brooding over this circumstance when an incident occurred to emphasize it. After dinner, one day, he was seized with a violent attack of vomiting, accompanied by profuse hemorrhage. His jaw became dislocated through the violence of his contortions, but he replaced it with his own hands, and making way to the bedside of Bishop Whitney, was administered to by him, and instantly healed. The effect of the poison which had been mixed with his food, was so powerful as to loosen much of the hair on his head. It was evident that they could remain there no longer in safety. The Bishop had not set foot upon the floor for nearly a month, and, though much improved, was far from being in a fit condition to travel. But Joseph promised him that if he would agree to leave the house next morning, they would start for Kirtland, and would have a prosperous journey home. The sick man consented, and they accordingly took leave next day of the place where they believed their murder had been planned. They experienced the fulfilment of the Prophet's words most remarkably, and after a pleasant and prosperous journey, reached Kirtland some time in June. ¹

The Prophet further describes the incident:

... We put up at Mr. Porter's public house, in Greenville, for four weeks, while Elder Rigdon went directly forward to Kirtland, During all this time, Brother Whitney lost not a meal of victuals or a night's sleep. ... I tarried with Brother Whitney and administered to him till he was able to be moved. ... and one day when I rose from the dinner table, I walked directly to the door and commenced vomiting most profusely. I raised large quantities of blood and poisonous matter. ... Thanks be to my Heavenly Father for His interference in my behalf at this critical moment, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen. ²

Immediately after replacing his own jaw Joseph records that he hurried to the bedside of Bishop Whitney "who laid his hands on him and administered to him" and Joseph was healed in an instant.  

Following is a letter written by Joseph Smith to his wife, Emma, at the time he and Bishop Whitney were detained in Greenville because of the latter's broken leg. The writer has not attempted to make any corrections in the contents of this letter but presents it as it was originally written.

June 6th Greenville Floid (Indiana) Co 1832

Dear Wife

I would inform you that Brother Martin has arrived here and brought the pleasing news that our Familys were well when he left there which greatly cheered our hearts and renewed our Spirits. We thank our Heavenly Father for this goodness unto us and all of you. Martin arrived on Satterday the Same week he left Chagrin, having a prosperous time. We are all in good health. Brother Whitneys leg is gaining and he thinks he shall be able to perform his journey so as to get hom about the 20th. My situation is a very unpleasent one although I will endeavor to be contented the Lord assisting me. I have visited a grove which is just back of the town almost every day where I can be secluded from the eyes of any mortal and there give vent to all the feeling of my heart in mediation and pray's. I have called to mind all the past moments of my life and am left to mourn and shed tears of sorrow for my folly in suffering the adversary of my soul to have so much power over me as he has had in times past. but God is merciful and has forgiven my Sins and I rejoice that he sendeth forth the Comfterer unto as many as believe and humbleth themselves before him. I was grieved to hear that Hiram had lost his little child. I think we can in some degree sympathise with him but we all must be reconciled to our lots and say the will of the Lord be done. Sister Whitney wrote a letter to her husband which was very chearing and being unwell at that time and filled with much anxiety it would have been very consoling to me to have received a few lines from you. But as you did not take the trouble I will try to be contented with my lot knowing that God is my friend. In him I shall find comfort. I have given my life into his hands. I am prepared to go at his call. I desire to be with Christ. I count not my life dear to me only to do his will. I am not pleased to hear that William McLelin has come back and disobeyed the voice of him who

1Ibid.
is altogether lovely for a woman. I am astonished at sister Emaline yet I cannot believe she is not a worthy sister. I hope she will find him true and kind to her but have no reason to suspect. His conduct meet the disapprobation of every true follower of Christ. but this is a painful subject. I hope you will excuse my warmth of feeling in mentioning this subject and also my inability in conveying my ideas in everything. I am happy to find that you are still in the faith of Christ and at Father Smiths. I hope you will Comfort Father and Mother in their trials and Hiram and Samuel and Jerusha and the rest of the Family. tell Sophronia I remember her and Kalvin in my prayers. my respects to the rest. I should like see little Julia and once more take her on my knee and converse with you on all the subjects which concerns us. things I cannot is not prudent for me to write. I omit all the important things which could I see you I could make you acquainted with. tell Brother William that I and Brother Whitney will arrange the business of that farm when we come. Give my respects to all the Brothern. Br Whitney Family & tell them he is cheerfull and patient and a true Brother to me. I subscribe myself your Husband the Lord bless you. peace be with so Farewell untill I return.

Joseph Smith Jr. ¹

The seership shown by the Prophet Joseph as related in the preceding story would have been a further manifestation of this gift which was first made known to Newel on the occasion when these two men first met. ²

Further Responsibilities

On September 22, 1832 the revelation contained in Section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants was given to the Prophet in Kirtland, Ohio

¹The original letter is preserved by the Illinois Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois. The copy used is in possession of the writer.

²See pages 27 & 28 of this paper.
in the presence of six Elders of the Church unnamed by Joseph Smith the Prophet. ¹

Only a few verses of this section directly concern Bishop Whitney but they add to his responsibilities as bishop. They are as follows:

112. And the bishop, Newel K. Whitney, also should travel round about and among all the churches, searching after the poor to administer to their wants by humbling the rich and the proud.

113. He should also employ an agent to take charge and to do his secular business as he shall direct.

114. Nevertheless, let the bishop go unto the city of New York, also to the city of Albany, and also to the city of Boston, and warn the people of those cities with the sound of the gospel, with a loud voice, of the desolation and utter abolition which await them if they do reject these things.

115. For if they do reject these things the hour of their judgment is nigh, and their house shall be left unto them desolate.

116. Let him trust in me and he shall not be confounded; and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed.

117. And verily I say unto you, the rest of my servants, go ye forth as your circumstances shall permit, in your several callings, unto the great and notable cities and villages, reproving the world in righteousness of all their unrighteous and ungodly deeds, setting forth clearly and understandingly the desolation of abomination in the last days.

¹Elder Parley P. Pratt, in his Autobiography, referring to this revelation, for indeed he was present when it was given. . . takes occasion to relate how this and other revelations were given through the Prophet. "Each sentence," says he, "was uttered slowly and very distinctly, and with a pause between each, sufficiently long for it to be recorded by an ordinary writer in long hand. This was the manner in which all his written revelations were dictated and written. There was never any hesitation, reviewing, or reading back, in order to keep the run of the subject; neither did any of these communications undergo revisions, interlinings or corrections. As he dictated them so they stood, so far as I have witnessed; and I was present to witness the dictation of several communications of several pages each." (Footnote by B. H. Roberts), Joseph Smith, op. cit., I., 173.
118. For, with you saith the Lord Almighty, I will rend their kingdoms; I will not only shake the earth, but the starry heavens shall tremble.

119. For I, the Lord, have put forth my hand to exert the powers of heaven; ye cannot see it now, yet a little while and ye shall see it, and know that I am, and that I will come and reign with my people. ¹

A Journey and Warning

The Prophet records that he continued the translation of the Bible and ministering to the Church through the fall excepting a hurried journey to Albany, New York, and Boston, in company with Bishop Whitney "from which I returned on the 6th of November. . . "²

It is here noted what Elizabeth Ann said of these verses and her husband's trip to the East:

My husband traveled with Joseph the Prophet through many of the eastern cities, bearing their testimony and collecting means to build a temple in Kirtland, and also to purchase lands in Missouri. During this journey they prophesied of the destruction that would come upon the cities of the eastern states, and especially New York; that in that city there would not be left a vestige of its grandeur; that wars would soon commence in our own land, which last has since transpired. He said to my husband, "if they reject us they shall have our testimony, for we will write it and leave it upon their door-steps and window-sills." He prophesied of desolation by fire, storms, pestilence and earthquakes.³

At the time this warning was given by the Lord to the inhabitants of these notable cities the following article appeared in the Millenial Star:

¹D. & C. 84:112-119.

²Joseph Smith, op. cit., I, 295.

³Whitney, Contributor, VI, 127.
A PROPHECY:

OR AN EXTRACT FROM THE WORD OF THE LORD CONCERNING NEW YORK, ALBANY, AND BOSTON, GIVEN ON THE 23rd DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1832.

"Let the bishop" [Newel K. Whitney] "go into the city of New York, and also to the city of Albany, and also to the city of Boston, and warn the people of those cities with the sound of the gospel, with a loud voice, of the desolation and utter abolition which awaits them if they do reject these things; for if they do reject these things the hour of their judgment is nigh, and their house shall be left unto them desolate."

ALBANY VISITED BY A DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.

"We scarcely know how to describe the fearful calamity that has be-fallen our doomed city. It is beyond adequate description—beyond, at the time we write, intelligible detail. Soon after a fire was checked that broke out in Quackenbush street, just before noon, the alarm was again sounded, and fire broke out in a small (sic) stable adjoining the Albion-house, between Broadway and the pier, in Herkimer-street, and occupied by John G. White. Of its origin we know nothing; but it burst forth at a most unlucky moment. The fire department was weary, scattered and disorganized. Some of the machines were disabled, and, in consequence of a shameful fight, one of them—No. 9, we believe—was lodged in City Hall yard, and unmanned in the moment of danger.

The heat was intense, the mercury ranging at 91 in the shade, the city as dry as tinder in consequence of the drought, and a gale of wind blowing from the south. Everything conspired against us, and the destroying element immediately getting the upper hand raged awfully and un-checked for hours, sweeping away full 600 buildings, many of them new and of great value, destroying about 2,000,000 dollars worth of property, and rendering hundreds of families houseless and homeless. At one time it seemed as if the destruction of our fair city was inevitable. The wind blew fiercely, the flames spread on all sides, the devouring element advanced from block to block and from street to street, buildings were taking fire in several parts of the city—all was terror, confusion, and dismay, and the efforts of man seemed utterly powerless. At this fearful moment the wind lulled, heavy clouds arose in the north-west, and a deluge of rain—grateful, needed, God-sent rain—poured from the surcharged clouds, and checked and progress of the conflagration. The fury and spread of flames exceeded anything ever seen. The fire ran, leaped, flew from building to building with the spread of the hurricanes that bore it on its course of destruction. And as it advanced, and grew more and more threatening, the bells resounded the alarm, and the people looked on with terror and almost with despair. There were
many narrow escapes from death, and some serious personal injuries sustained. Albany has never before, in her 200 years history, suffered so dreadful a local calamity as this. The loss of household goods of all kinds is immense. Great quantities that were strewed in the streets were ruined by rain. Carts, wagons [sic], drays—everything on wheels—were in constant requisition, but could not accomplish a tenth part of the work required. Five, ten and twenty dollars were offered for carrying a single load. Numbers of persons were rendered powerless by heat, fatigue, and cold water. A number of buildings were blown up under the direction of the authorities. It is impossible at the time we write, to get at any correct estimate of the loss sustained, or the condition of the insurance companies. It will be a long time before Albany will recover from this awful calamity. Seventeen whole blocks, the pier, the Columbia-street market, two bridges, and near 100 boats are destroyed. Most of the boats were heavily laden. Some 8000 or 10,000 barrels of flour were burnt on the pier. The loss of property is roughly estimated at 2,000,000 dollars. Several lives were lost. Hundreds of our business men are utterly ruined. We fear our local insurance companies are overwhelmed. The property on the pier was insured abroad. The Swiftshure and Eckford tow boat lines loose [sic] tremendously. At midnight, the fire was burning in forty places, but is now completely under control. There is no wind, but the rain has ceased, "—Extracted from the Albany Express of August 17. 1

It is possible that these incidents are not an entire fulfilment of the Lord's words regarding these cities. However, they did take place shortly after the warnings were given and the people of the Church were aware of them.

This responsibility given to Bishop Whitney is noteworthy as it is the only time that he was called by God to fill a mission of calling people to repentance outside of the Church so far as available records reveal.

School of the Prophets

During the winter of 1832-1833 Whitney was busy administering the tasks assigned him as a Bishop of the Church. Besides these responsi-

1 The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star, X, 286.
ilities he found time to participate in the School of the Prophets. The Prophet, in his history, names several leaders of the Church, including Newel, as participants in this organization.

Bishop Whitney was not only interested in the School of the Prophets because of his active participation in it but also because they met in a house which belonged to him as is brought out in the following quotation:

When the school of the prophets was inaugurated one of the first revelations given by the Lord to his servant Joseph Smith was the Word of Wisdom. . . . I think I am as well acquainted with the circumstances which led to the giving of the Word of Wisdom as any man in the Church, although I was not present at the time to witness them. The first school of the prophets was held in a small room situated over the Prophet Joseph's kitchen, in a house which belonged to Bishop Whitney, and which was attached to his store, which store probably might be about fifteen feet square. In the rear of this building was a kitchen, probably ten by fourteen feet, containing rooms and pantries. Over this kitchen was situated the room in which the Prophet received revelations and in which he instructed his brethren. The brethren came to that place for hundreds of miles to attend school in a little room probably no larger than eleven by fourteen. When they assembled together in this room after breakfast the first (thing) they did was to light their pipes, and while smoking, talk about the great things of the kingdom, and spit all over the room, and as soon as the pipe was out of their mouths a large chew of tobacco would then be taken. Often when the Prophet entered the room to give the school instructions he would find himself in a cloud of tobacco smoke. This, and the complaints of his wife at having to clean so filthy a floor, made the Prophet think upon the matter, and he inquired of the Lord relating to the conduct of the Elders in using tobacco, and the revelation known as the Word of Wisdom was the result of his inquiry. You know what it is, and can read it at your leisure.

So we see that almost the very first teachings the first Elders of this Church received were as to what to eat, what to drink, and how to order their natural lives, that they might be united temporally
as well as spiritually. This is the great purpose which God has in
view in sending to the world, by His servants, the gospel of life and
salvation. 1

Those participating in this school were required to keep fully the
commandments given to them. Each member was received into fellowship
only after participation in prayer, the sacrament, and in the ordinance of
the washing of feet. Joseph Smith washed the feet of all the elders at an
important conference held on January 23, 1833 and "pronounced them all
clean from the blood of this generation." He then warned all that if they
sinned willfully after receiving this ordinance and after being sealed up
unto eternal life, "they should be given over to the buffetings of Satan
until the day of redemption." 2

The School of the Prophets holds the distinction of being one of the
first organized adult schools in America. 3

A Warning to Church Leaders

As is the case with many dedicated to the building of Zion it is
often possible to be neglectful of responsibility to the family. It seems
that not only Bishop Whitney but also the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon and
others had to be reminded of their duties to their families. In the Doc-
trine and Covenants 90:41-50 we read:

41. But verily I say unto you, my servant Frederick G. Williams,
you have continued under this condemnation:

1Journal of Discourses (Liverpool: Albert Carrington, 1869),
XII, 157-158.

2Roberts, op. cit., L 305.

3Grant, op. cit., p. 167.
42. You have not taught your children light and truth, according to the commandments; and that wicked one hath power, as yet, over you, and this is the cause of your affliction.

43. And now a commandment I give unto you—if you will be delivered you shall set in order your own house, for there are many things that are not right in your house.

44. Verily I say unto my servant Sidney Rigdon, that in some things he hath not kept the commandments concerning his children; therefore, first set in order thy house.

45. Verily, I say unto my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., or in other words, I will call you friends, for you are my friends, and ye shall have an inheritance with me—

46. I called you servants for the world’s sake, and ye are their servants for my sake—

47. And now, verily I say unto Joseph Smith, Jun.—You have not kept the commandments, and must needs stand rebuked before the Lord;

48. Your family must needs repent and forsake some things, and give more earnest heed unto your sayings, or be removed out of their place.

49. What I say unto one I say unto all; pray always lest that wicked one have power in you, and remove you out of your place.

50. My servant Newel K. Whitney also, a bishop of my church, hath need to be chastened, and set in order his family, and see that they are more diligent and concerned at home, and pray always, or they shall be removed out of their place. 1

The following comment is made regarding the preceding verses.

Every human being, not only those in the ranks but the leaders of ancient Israel and the leaders of modern-day Israel—even the Prophet Joseph Smith himself and his associates—were admonished by our Heavenly Father, and attention was called to the fact that it was necessary for them to set their houses in order; they were warned that unless they did that, unless their families gave heed to the teachings of the Gospel, they would lose their opportunity. That brings it right close to home, does it not—right into our own day? 2

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1D. & C., 90:41-50.

2Doxey, op. cit., III, 309.
In March of 1833 the Saints in Kirtland undertook a project of purchasing lands in Kirtland upon which they could build a Stake of Zion. Several purchases were made including a plot on which the temple would be built. In Section 96 of the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord has this to say about the land:

1. Behold, I say unto you, here is wisdom, whereby ye may know how to act concerning this matter, for it is expedient in me that this stake that I have set for the strength of Zion should be made strong.

2. Therefore, let my servant Ahashdah [Newel K. Whitney] take charge of the place which is named among you, upon which I design to build mine holy house.

3. And again, let it be divided into lots, according to wisdom, for the benefit of those who seek inheritances, as it shall be determined in council among you.

4. Therefore, take heed that ye see to this matter, and that portion that is necessary to benefit mine order, for the purpose of bringing forth my word to the children of men.

5. For behold, verily I say unto you, this is the most expedient in me, that my word should go forth unto the children of men, for the purpose of subduing the hearts of the children of men for your good. Even so. Amen.

Very shortly after the commandment was given the brethren met in council to carry out the provisions of this commandment. A strong Stake was desired in which the poor would be cared for in every regard.

"Bishop Whitney was to take charge of the matter of assigning lots and preparing them for the building of a city and a temple to the name of the Lord." 

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1 Joseph Smith, op. cit., I, 335.

2 D. & C. 96:1-5.

Beginning at this point the Prophet records that even though the Church was very poor financially they began making extensive preparations for a temple which task would add greatly to the burdens of all and certainly to those of the Bishop in Kirtland.

It seems that little is known of the activities of Bishop Whitney during the last months of 1833 and the first part of 1834 except to say that from September through December Newel was in part responsible for the acquiring and establishing of a press at Kirtland with which they republished all fourteen copies of the Evening and Morning Star, which had been the official Church publication in Missouri.

**Relief of the Saints**

It was during this time that the Saints were driven from Jackson County with much suffering and hardship. In Kirtland, a few months later, the leaders of the Church prepared for and completed the Zion's Camp march in relief of the Saints in Missouri.

Bishop Whitney did not participate in Zion's Camp but remained in Kirtland struggling with the financial problems of the Church. It is recorded on April 7, 1834 that several of the leaders of the Church including Newel bowed their heads in "servant prayer" for the relief of the United Firm in financial matters. Again on April 23 Bishop Whitney and others joined in

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1Joseph Smith, *op. cit.*, I, 349.

2Ibid., pp. 409, 448.

3Ibid., II, 47.
prayer to obtain money for the relief of the Church.\(^1\)

During these months the United Firm or United Order, under the name of Newel K. Whitney and Company, admitted F. G. Williams\(^2\) and also John Johnson,\(^3\) both of whom brought relief to this struggling organization.

**Discontinuance of the United Order**

Due to the many problems involved in the operation of the United Order it was discontinued in the early months of 1834. The following is an explanation of the matter:

The United Firm acquired some additional property, mostly for purposes connected with the needs of temple building during 1833; but early in 1834 it was decided to terminate the organization. According to the Law of Consecration, all of these properties belonged to the church and the only thing that could properly be done was to assign definite stewardships to each member of the firm. Since this was not done, the fiction of a Law of Consecration becomes evident. For an indicated value received, titles to each of the properties evidently owned by the firm were made over to the private ownership of the individual partners. Sidney Rigdon received his place of residence and a tannery; Martin Harris was given the right to operate the French farm providing he allowed Joseph Smith to direct the use of the proceeds; John Johnson received his place of residence and the right to subdivide the farm which had been purchased with his money, though for the present the title was retained by Newell K. Whitney and Company; title to the Williams farm passed to Joseph Smith, Jr., and its operation was left to the Smith Family; Williams received the property on which he was living and shared the printing establishment with Oliver Cowdery; Newell K. Whitney got his store back and an ashery as well. By 1834, then, the church owned no property in Kirtland. Legally, even the temple, whose walls were now rearing upward, was located on property purchased by Johnson and was owned by the Newell K. Whitney Company.\(^4\)

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\(^1\)Ibid., p. 54.  
\(^2\)D. & C. 92.  
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 96.  
A further explanation is given by Joseph Fielding Smith and quoted by Roy W. Doxey:

He commanded that there should be a separation of the United Order in Zion from the Order in Kirtland. Each was to act henceforth independently of the other. Distance was too great between these places for unity of purpose in all things. Each order was to be organized in the names of the brethren residing in each place, and to do business in their own names. This separation and dissolving of the former order came about also because of transgression and covetousness on the part of some. They were to understand that all the properties were the Lord's, otherwise their faith was vain, and therefore they were stewards before the Lord. All of this was to be done for the purpose of building up the Church and Kingdom of God on the earth, and to prepare the people for the time when the Lord should come to dwell upon the earth. (Sec. 104:59.) CHMR 3:25, 1949.)

**Naming of the Church**

It is noted that until May of 1834 the Church did not have an official name. Until that time the Church was called by various names by its members. In a council on May 4, 1834 in Kirtland—composed of the leaders of the Church in Kirtland—Sidney Rigdon made the motion that the Church be called "The Church of the Latter-day Saints." Bishop Whitney seconded this motion and for a period of four years this remained the official name of the Church. Then in April of 1838 the Church was officially named as indicated in the 115th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

1. Verily thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and also my servant Sidney Rigdon, and also my servant Hyrum Smith, and your counselors who are and shall be appointed hereafter;

2. And also unto you, my servant Edward Partridge, and his counselors;

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1Doxey, op. cit., III. 449.  
3. And also unto my faithful servants who are of the high council of my church in Zion, for thus it shall be called, and unto all the elders and people of my Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, scattered abroad in all the world;

4. For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.  

A Special Blessing

Another notable event in the life of Bishop Whitney was recorded by Joseph Smith when Newel and Hyrum Smith went to Buffalo, New York to replenish the goods in the committee’s storehouse: "May God grant, in the name of Jesus, that their lives may be spared, and they have a safe journey, and no accident or sickness of the least kind befall them, that they may return in health and in safety to the bosom of their families."  

Apparently just before these two men left, Joseph Smith, Jun. gave Bishop Whitney a blessing received by the Urim and Thummim and recorded by F. G. Williams:

The following blessing was given by President Joseph Smith, Jun., through the Urim and Thummim, according to the spirit of prophecy and revelation, on Wednesday, the 7th of October, 1835, and written by President F. G. Williams, who acted as clerk:

Blessed of the Lord is Brother Whitney, even the Bishop of the Church of the Latter-day Saints; for the Bishopric shall never be taken away from him while he liveth. And the time cometh that he shall overcome all the narrow-mindedness of his heart, and all his covetous desires that so easily beset him; and he shall deal with a liberal hand to the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted, the widow and the orphan, and marvelously and miraculously shall the Lord his God provide for him, even that he shall be blessed with all the fulness of the good things of this earth, and his seed


2Joseph Smith, op. cit., II, 288.
after him from generation to generation. And it shall come to pass that according to the measure that he meteth out with a liberal hand unto the poor, so shall it be measured to him again, by the hand of his God, even an hundred fold.

Angels shall guard his house, and shall guard the lives of his posterity, and they shall become very great and very numerous on the earth. Whomsoever he blesseth, they shall be blessed; and whomsoever he curseth, they shall be cursed; and when his enemies seek him unto his hurt and destruction, let him rise up and curse, and the hand of God shall be upon his enemies in judgment; they shall be utterly confounded and brought to desolation.

Therefore he shall be preserved unto the uttermost, and his life shall be precious in the sight of the Lord. He shall rise up and shake himself, as a lion riseth out of his nest and roareth until he shaketh the hills; and as a lion goeth forth of him be whom the Lord hath appointed to exalt the poor, and to humble the rich, therefore his name shall be on high, and his rest among the sanctified.  

A thorough reading of this blessing reveals many promises to Newel and his posterity if he will perform his duty well, particularly in reference to taking care of the poor.

Newel's Parents

In fulfillment of part of the patriarchal blessing 2 given to Bishop Whitney, his parents arrived from the East and were soon fellowshipped by the Church. Soon after they arrived they went to Joseph to make inquiry concerning the Book of Mormon. He told them about the visits of Moroni and taught them the fundamentals of the Gospel. 3 A few days

1 Whitney, Contributor, VI, 129.

2 See Appendix B for the full context of this blessing.

3 Joseph Smith, op. cit., II. 294.
later much to the joy of Newel and his family the Prophet baptized Samuel and Susanna Kimball Whitney. A daughter was also baptized at this time.

**Feast at the Whitney’s**

Amid the many problems the Saints faced in Kirtland during the time they found occasion to join together in joyous festivity. Such was the case on January 9, 1836 when a “sumptuous feast” for all the poor Saints in Kirtland and vicinity was sponsored by Bishop Whitney and his family. Both Joseph and Mother Whitney describe this unusual occasion:

We now quote from the Prophet's history: "Thursday, January 7, 1836: Attended a sumptuous feast at Bishop N. K. Whitney's. This feast was after the order of the Son of God--the lame, the halt and blind were invited, according to the instruction of the Savior. Our meeting was opened by singing, and prayer by Father Smith; after which Bishop Whitney's father and mother, and a number of others, were blessed with a patriarchal blessing. We then received a bountiful refreshment, furnished by the liberality of the Bishop. The company was large, and before we partook we had some of the songs of Zion sung, and our hearts were made glad while partaking of an antepast of those joys that will be poured upon the heads of the Saints when they are gathered together on Mount Zion, to enjoy each other's society forevermore, when there will be none to molest or make us afraid." This Feast for the Poor, says Mother Whitney, "lasted three days during which all in the vicinity of Kirtland who would come, were invited and entertained. The Prophet Joseph and his counselors were present each day, talking, blessing and comforting the poor by words of encouragement and their most welcome presence. He often referred to it afterwards and testified of the great blessing he felt in associating with the meek and humble whom the Lord 'delights to own and bless.'

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1Samuel Whitney was born in Marlborough, Vermont and after joining the Church he received a patriarchal blessing. He died March 17, 1846 at Kirtland.

2Susanna Kimball Whitney was born in Mindon, Massachusetts and died April 3, 1859 and was buried in the Kirtland Temple cemetery.

3The daughter baptized at this time was probably Caroline, the youngest sister of Newel, born March 10, 1816.
He said it was preferable and far superior to the elegant and select parties he afterwards attended, and afforded him much more satisfaction. 1

On the third day of the feast the Prophet received a special invitation from Newel which he apparently couldn't resist as he dismissed school in order to attend. 2 The invitation read as follows:

Thus saith the voice of the Spirit to me--If thy brother Joseph Smith, Jun., will attend the feast at thy house, this day (at twelve o'clock), the poor and the lame will rejoice in his presence, and also think themselves honored.

Yours in friendship and love,
NEWEL K. WHITNEY 3

Temple Dedication

The activities of Newel K. Whitney during the succeeding months are not known in any detail. He did, however, participate in the ordinances in the Kirtland temple upon its completion 4 and also witnessed with others the manifestations and experiences associated with its dedication. 5

Instructions Concerning the Poor

One thing is certain of the responsibilities of Bishop Whitney during his last years in Kirtland; that they steadily increased with a constant

1 Whitney, Contributor, VI, 129-130.
2 Joseph Smith, op. cit., II, 363.
3 Ibid.
5 Ibid., pp. 411, 429, 430.
influx of Saints from the East, most of whom were poor and needed the immediate help of the Church. So burdensome did they become that in a conference session of the Church authorities on December 22, 1836 the following motions were made:

First—that it has been the case that a very improper and unchristianlike course of conduct has been pursued by the Elders of this Church, and the churches abroad, in sending their poor from them to this place, without the necessary means of subsistence. Whereas the Church in this place being poor from the beginning, having had to pay an extraordinary price for their lands, provisions, etc; and having a serious burthen imposed upon them by comers and goers, from most parts of the world, and in assisting traveling Elder and theirs the families, while they themselves have been laboring in the vineyard of the Lord, to preach the Gospel; and also having suffered great loss in endeavoring to benefit Zion, it (the thing complained of) has become a serious matter which ought to be considered by us.

Therefore, after deliberate discussion upon the subject, it was moved, seconded, and unanimously carried, that we have borne our part of this burden, and that it becomes the duty, henceforth, of all the churches abroad to provide for those who are objects of charity, that are not able to provide for themselves; and not send them from their midst, to burden the Church in this place, unless they come and prepare a place for them, and provide means for their support.

Second—that there be a stop put to churches or families gathering or moving to this place, without their first coming or sending their wise men to prepare a place for them, as our houses are all full, and our lands mostly occupied, except those houses that do not belong to the Church, which cannot be obtained without great sacrifice, especially when brethren with their families are crowding in upon us, and are compelled to purchase at any rate, and consequently are thrown into the hands of speculators, extortioners, with which course the Lord is not well pleased.¹

The Final Phase of the Kirtland Period

Little need be said here about the rise and fall of the Kirtland Safety Society and its impact on the Church. It is, however, worthwhile

¹Ibid., pp. 468-469.
to note that Bishop Whitney must have been deeply involved as his signature appears on the $3.00 bill issued by the bank. Furthermore, when the Rounds filed suit against the Kirtland Safety Society for illegal banking separate suits were filed against Sidney Rigdon, Warren Parrish and Newel K. Whitney on the same charge. 1

Following the failure of this institution apostasy began to break the ranks of the Church. By the last months of 1837 over half of the Kirtland membership either left the Church or were excommunicated from it. 2

Many leaders of the Church were caught in the apostasy while others including Newel K. Whitney remained true to the faith and loyal to the Prophet. 3

In September 1837 the leaders of the Church met in Kirtland to consider the situation of the Church. It was decided that new stakes were needed for a place for the Saints to gather. This responsibility was given to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. 4

In the same session 109 Elders were divided into eight companies and organized to travel in various directions on an errand of rescue of

1 Fielding, Utah Historical Quarterly, XXVII, 354.


3 Ibid., p. 182.

4 Joseph Smith, op. cit., II, 514.
the finances of the Church. These brethren were all under the personal direction of Bishop Whitney. 1

Also in this conference a letter was written by Bishop Whitney to all the Saints abroad which essentially was a plea for all to pay a full tithe and any other financial obligations to the Church so as to relieve the Church in Kirtland of its financial burden. 2

Whatever the results of this effort they were apparently not sufficient to bring any real relief. In the following months Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon and Brigham Young fled Kirtland to save their lives and upon arrival in Missouri organized the new stakes for the gathering of Saints.

It appears that William Marks, representing Joseph Smith, and Bishop Whitney remained in Ohio long enough to finish up any business of the Church. 3 Most or all of the faithful Saints had left to gather at Far West as they were instructed by the Lord.

On July 8 at Far West the Prophet received the following from the Lord pertaining to Bishop Whitney:

1. Verily thus saith the Lord unto my servant William Marks, and also unto my servant Newel K. Whitney, let them settle up this business speedily and journey from the land of Kirtland, before I, the Lord, send again the snows upon the earth.

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1 Fielding, Utah Historical Quarterly, p. 356.

2 Joseph Smith, op. cit., II, 514-518.

3 D. & C., 117.
2. Let them awake, and arise, and come forth, and not tarry, for I, the Lord, command it.

3. Therefore, if they tarry it shall not be well with them.

4. Let them repent of all their sins, and of all their covetous desires, before me, saith the Lord; for what is property unto me? saith the Lord.

5. Let the properties of Kirtland be turned out for debts, saith the Lord. Let them go, saith the Lord, and whatsoever remaineth, let it remain in your hands, saith the Lord.

6. For have I not the fowls of heaven, and also the fish of the sea, and the beasts of the mountains? Have I not made the earth? Do I not hold the destinies of all the armies of the nations of the earth?

7. Therefore, will I not make solitary places to bud and to blossom, and to bring forth in abundance? saith the Lord.

8. Is there not room enough on the mountains of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and on the plains of Olaha Shingah, or the land where Adam dwelt, that you should covet that which is but the drop, and neglect the more weighty matters?

9. Therefore, come up hither unto the land of my people, even Zion.

10. Let my servant William Marks be faithful over a few things, and he shall be a ruler over many. Let him preside in the midst of my people in the city of Far West, and let him be blessed with the blessings of my people.

11. Let my servant Newel K. Whitney be ashamed of the Nicolaitane band and of all their secret abominations, and of all his littleness of soul before me, saith the Lord, and come up to the land of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and be a bishop unto my people, saith the Lord, not in name but in deed, saith the Lord.

12. And again, I say unto you, I remember my servant Oliver Granger; behold, verily I say unto him that his name shall be had in sacred remembrance from generation to generation, forever and ever, saith the Lord.

13. Therefore, let him contend earnestly for the redemption of the First Presidency of my Church, saith the Lord; and when he falls he
shall rise again, for his sacrifice shall be more sacred unto me than his increase, saith the Lord.

14. Therefore, let him come up hither speedily, unto the land of Zion; and in the due time he shall be made a merchant unto my name, saith the Lord, for the benefit of my people.

15. Therefore let no man despise my servant Oliver Granger, but let the blessings of my people be on him forever and ever.

16. And again, verily I say unto you, let all my servants in the land of Kirtland remember the Lord their God, and mine house also, to keep and preserve it holy, and to overthrow the money-changers in mine own due time, saith the Lord. Even so, Amen. 1

This then, is a command to these brethren to leave before winter and in the meantime dispose of all property for the debts of the Church.

Reference is also made to the "Nicolaitans Band" and Newel's connection with it. The following is helpful in this matter:

... The Nicolaitans in New Testament times seem to have taught, following the doctrine of Balaam, that Christians were free to eat things offered to idols and to commit the excesses of heathenism, including fornication (Rev. 2:6, 14) and other "freedoms" of the flesh. Evidently the band of which the Lord commanded Brother Whitney to be ashamed were a group of worldly people, who were guilty of excesses that should be foreign to Latter-day Saints. Just what persons were members of this group we are not told. 2

In keeping with the revelation Bishop Whitney left Kirtland in the fall of 1838. His destination was Adam-ondi-Ahman. 3

Before he could reach this place troubles in Missouri arose which finally resulted in 12,000 to 15,000 Saints being driven from Missouri.

1 Ibid.
2 Sperry, op. cit., p. 628.
3 Sperry, op. cit., p. 628.
Bishop Whitney continued with his family to St. Louis where earlier reports of the mob activity were confirmed. He then went on a northward route to Carrollton, Greene County, Illinois and settled his family temporarily in this place. 1

He returned then to Kirtland to take care of some unfinished business of the Church. 2 From here his story is told as follows:

Bishop Whitney returned to Carrollton in the spring of 1839, and was just in time to join his family in their flight across the Mississippi, and anti- "Mormon" mob, headed by a man named Bellows, who had known them in Kirtland, having formed against them for hostile purposes. Aided by kind friends, they made their escape in the night time, and having the broad, rolling bosom of the Father of Waters between them and their persecutors, they felt measurably safe from pursuit. "I shall never forget," says Mother Whitney, "my husband taking off his hat, wiping the perspiration from his brow, and thanking God for our deliverance." We next hear of them at Quincy, in the same State, at which place and in its vicinity, the main portion of the scattered Saints had congregated. Here, the Prophet Joseph, Bishop Partridge and others rejoined their families after being released from prison. 3

1 Whitney, Contributor, VI, 130.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

THE NAUVOO PERIOD

Temporary Home

Quincy, Illinois is located on the east bank of the Mississippi River rising 125 feet above low-water mark. Quincy bay is an arm of the river and forms a natural harbor for river craft. Quincy was laid out into a town in the year 1834 and became incorporated as a city in the year 1839.¹ In this same year thousands of Mormon refugees from Missouri found their way to Illinois, many settling temporarily in Quincy. Bishop Newel K. Whitney and family also settled here.

Meetings were immediately held by Church leaders to determine a place for the exiles to settle. In compliance with an appointment made at a conference held in Quincy on May 6, 1839, Bishop Whitney prepared to make a short journey north to a place called Commerce, later Nauvoo, to help settle the Saints there.² This being his responsibility, it seems likely the Whitneys were among the first to settle in the new home of the Saints. Concerning the situation of the Saints in the spring of 1839 Joseph Smith recorded:

The place was literally a wilderness. The land was mostly covered with trees and bushes, and much of it was so wet that it was

¹Roberts, op. cit., II, 3.

²Whitney, Contributor, VI, 130.
with the utmost difficulty that a footman could get through, and totally impossible for teams. Commerce was unhealthy, very few could live there; but believing that it might become a healthy place by the blessing of heaven to the saints, and no more eligible place presenting itself. I considered it wisdom to make an attempt to build up a city.  

These were difficult times for the Mormon people having just lost most or all their possessions to the Missouri mobs. As soon as possible, however, Commerce became the gathering place for the persecuted people. To add to their difficulties and trials many of the saints became prey to the dreadful malaria fever. The Whitney family were among those struck down with this disease:

In Nauvoo the beautiful home of the weary Saints who had fled from the mobs of Missouri, there was much suffering from chills and fever, it was what is termed an ague country, and the people were not prepared to battle with it. The family of Bishop Whitney were afflicted with this terrible disease, all succumbed one after the other until there was not one left to wait upon the others; but kind and loving friends ministered to them and on more than one occasion the Prophet Joseph himself prepared tea and took to them, offering it himself for their nourishment. Sister Whitney was very delicate and had been accustomed to servants to wait upon her, now she was ill and a family of children sick looking to her and no servant to help her, but few luxuries and poor accommodations, still no complaint ever escaped her, no repining for the home she had left. She cheered and encouraged her husband through all the trials they experienced, and was a helpmeet to him in very deed.  

The kindness of the Prophet Joseph to Bishop Whitney and his family appears to have been a fulfillment of prophecy uttered by him to the Whitneys in Kirtland some years before:

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1Roberts, op. cit., II, 9.  
2Whitney, Contributor, VI, 130.
A prophecy of Joseph’s in relation to the Whitney family, uttered in Kirtland, nine years before, was fulfilled soon after they moved up from Quincy, in the spring of 1840. They at first resided in a very unhealthy neighborhood, and all fell sick with ague, chills and fever, a disease at that time very prevalent there. Joseph, on visiting them and witnessing their condition, was touched with compassion. He remembered how kindly they once received him and his family, when they were without a home, and at once urged them to come and occupy a comfortable cottage on his own premises, in a much healthier locality. His kind and generous offer was gladly accepted and the change soon restored them to wonted health. Joseph had said to Sister Whitney, on his arrival at Kirtland in February, 1831, that even as she had opened her house to him when he was homeless and in need, he would do a similar act in her behalf and that of her family in a day when their circumstances would require it.  

Not only the Whitneys but many others were recipients of the helping hand and the healing power seemingly possessed by the Prophet during these troublesome times.  

Wards Organized

As soon as was possible the Saints were settled and wards were organized to administer to the spiritual and temporal needs of the Saints. On October 5, 1839, in a conference of the Church, a stake was organized consisting of three wards. William Marks was appointed president of the new stake, with Edward Partridge bishop of the Upper Ward, Bishop Whitney over the Middle Ward, and Vinson Knight bishop of the Lower Ward.  

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1 Jenson, Biog. Encyc., I, 130-131.


3 On May 27, 1840 Bishop Edward Partridge died, leaving the Church without a Presiding Bishop. Ibid., II, 40.

4 Jenson, Historical Record, V, 750.
Branch at Zarahemla

During this period of time Bishop Whitney and others accompanied Joseph to the Iowa side of the river to inspect a large tract of land purchased by the Church on which the town of Zarahemla was to be built. In the October conference mentioned above a branch of the Church was also organized at Zarahemla. 1

Civic and Municipal Organizations

Not only was Bishop Whitney to play a prominent role in the Church activities in Nauvoo and vicinity, but also in civic and municipal organizations as well. On the first February, 1841, the first election for members of the Nauvoo City Council was held. John C. Bennett was elected Mayor; William Marks, Samuel Smith, Dnaiel H. Wells, and Newel K. Whitney were elected aldermen; Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Charles C. Rich, John T. Barnett, Wilson Law, Don C. Smith, John P. Greene and Vinson Knight were elected counselors. 2 All of the members of the City Council were sworn in with the following oath:

We, Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Don C. Smith, and Charles C. Rich, do solemnly swear in the presence of Almighty God that we will support the Constitution of the United States, and of the State of Illinois, and what we will well and truly perform the duties of councilors of the

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., V, 755.
City of Nauvoo, according to law, and the best of our abilities.

JOSEPH SMITH,  
HYRUM SMITH,  
DON C. SMITH,  
CHARLES C. RICH. 1

The Nauvoo City Council made opening prayer a standing rule for each of their regular council meetings. 2

Nauvoo Charter

As an expression of gratitude for the Charter granted the city by the State of Illinois the first act of this Council was the following resolution:

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Nauvoo, that the unfeigned thanks of the Community be respectfully tendered to the governor, council of revision, and legislature of the State of Illinois, as a feeble testimony of their respect and esteem for noble, high minded and patriotic statesmen and as an evidence of gratitude for the signal powers recently conferred; and that the citizens of Quincy be held in everlasting remembrance of their unparallelled liberality and marked kindness to our people, when in their greatest state of suffering and want. 3

The next act of this Council was to pass ordinances relative to the University of Nauvoo and the Nauvoo Legion. The ordinance respecting the University originated with Joseph Smith and read as follows:

Sec. 1. Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Nauvoo, that the "University of the City of Nauvoo," be, and the same is hereby organized by the appointment of the following Board of Trustees, to-wit--John C. Bennett, chancellor; William Law, registrar; and

1 Joseph Smith, op. cit., IV, 295.

2 Ibid., p. 297.

3 Jenson, Historical Record, V, 755.

Sec. 2. The board named in the first section of this ordinance, shall hold its first meeting at the office of Joseph Smith, on Tuesday, the 9th day of February, 1841, at 2 o'clock p.m.

Passed February 3, 1841.

JOHN C. BENNETT, Mayor.
JAMES SLOAN, Recorder.¹

As a member of the Board of Trustees, Bishop Whitney helped choose a site for the University and prepare the plans for its structure.² While the buildings of the school were never built, classes were conducted in which were taught such subjects as French, German, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, mathematics, chemistry, geology, literature and history. With John C. Bennett as the first chancellor and James Kelley as president, the University went into operation in 1841 with three instructors. Tuition was $5.00 per quarter for each student registering.³

In a proclamation of the First Presidency of the Church to all Saints Joseph Smith had this to say regarding the University and the powers of those associated with it:

¹ Joseph Smith, op. cit., IV, 293.

² Jenson, Historical Record, V, 755.

³ Kate B. Carter (comp.), Heart Throbs of the West (Salt Lake City: D. U. P., 1950), II, 95-96.
The "University of the City of Nauvoo" will enable us to teach our children wisdom, to instruct them in all the knowledge and learning, in the arts, sciences, and learned professions. We hope to make this institution one of the great lights of the world, and by and through it to diffuse that kind of knowledge which will be of practicable utility, and for the public good, and also for private and individual happiness. The Regents of the University will take the general supervision of all matters appertaining to education, from common schools up to the highest branches of a most liberal collegiate course. They will establish a regular system of education, and hand over the pupil from teacher to professor, until the regular gradation is consummated and the education finished. 1

Among the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees of the University was the conferring of an M. A. degree on Orson Pratt, while installing him as professor of mathematics, 2 and conferring upon James Arlington Bennett an honorary L. L. D. degree on April 22, 1842. 3

The Smith Store

It is well known by historians of the L. D. S. Church that during the Nauvoo period of Church History the Prophet Joseph operated a small store. A few brief statements from his journal suggest that Bishop Whitney was closely associated with the store and the operation of it. For example, consider the following:

I received a letter from N. K. Whitney, stating that he had purchased $5,000 worth of goods for me; and that he should visit Kirtland before his return home. 4

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1 Joseph Smith, op. cit., IV, 269.
2 Ibid., p. 414.
3 Ibid., p. 600.
4 Ibid., p. 447.
I commenced placing goods on the shelves of my new store, assisted by Bishop Newel K. Whitney and others; and in the evening attended city council.

Bishop Newel K. Whitney returned from Nauvoo this evening, with five teams loaded with provisions and grain, as a present to me, which afforded me very seasonable relief. I pray the Lord to bless those who gave it abundantly; and may it be returned upon their heads an hundred fold!  

**Female Relief Society**

Another connection of the Whitney family and the store is that on March 17, 1842 in a room above the store the Female Relief Society was organised by the Prophet with Emma as president and Elizabeth Ann Whitney as a counselor, in which capacity she served for many years.

When the Relief Society was organised in Nauvoo she was chosen and ordained First Counselor to the President, Emma Smith, and being possessed of the greatest genuine sympathy and benevolence she was well adapted to the position, and filled it with honor and credit, gaining the love and gratitude of all to whom she was called through circumstances to minister, even bestowing favors and blessings in the most unostentatious manner. Sister Whitney has always been possessed of great, yes, mighty faith in administering to the sick and afflicted.

This responsibility of seeking relief for the poor and needy of the Church placed Elizabeth in close association with one of her husband's principle duties as a Bishop in the Church.

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Nauvoo Temple

A significant occasion to the fast-growing Church centered at Nauvoo was the commencement of the construction of the Nauvoo Temple. In April of 1841, with the walls erected to a height of about five feet above the ground, the ceremony of laying the cornerstones took place. It was a solemn occasion with an estimated 10,000 people in attendance. The Nauvoo Legion paraded and special processions were organized to participate in the festivities. Hymns were sung and Sidney Rigdon preached for more than an hour.\(^1\) The principal, or southeast cornerstone was laid first by direction of the First Presidency, followed by the southwest stone, under direction of the High Priesthood. The High Council then directed the laying of the northwest stone, followed by the northeast cornerstone superintended by the bishops. Bishop Whitney, as representative, pronounced the following words on this cornerstone:

The fourth and last cornerstone, expressive of the Lesser Priesthood, is now duly laid, and may the blessings before pronounced, with all others desirable, rest upon the same forever. Amen.\(^2\)

This was the beginning of a long and difficult struggle of building the temple for the endowments of the Saints of which Bishop Whitney played a significant role. More will be said concerning the temple and Bishop Whitney's connection with it as we further study the Nauvoo period.

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\(^2\)Joseph Smith, *op. cit.*, IV, 330.
Bishop Whitney's Responsibilities

In light of the fact that Bishop Edward Partridge, Presiding Bishop of the Church, died, as mentioned earlier, Bishop Whitney's responsibilities were increased accordingly.

It has been mentioned that as early as October, 1839, three wards were established in the City of Nauvoo with Bishop Whitney presiding over the Middle Ward.

In January of 1841 a fourth ward was organized in Nauvoo and in August, 1842 an additional six wards were organized, making a total of ten wards to accommodate the expanding population. At the October conference, shortly after Joseph Smith's death in 1844, Heber C. Kimball made the motion that Bishop Newel K. Whitney stand as the first bishop of the Church, which motion carried unanimously.1

Presiding Bishop

Bishop Whitney served in this capacity until 1847 when he was ordained as the second Presiding Bishop of the Church which indicates that the Church was without this office from the death of Bishop Partridge in 1840 until this time. However, studies seem to indicate that Bishop Whitney acted in the capacity of Presiding Bishop for some time before his ordination to this office.

Plural Marriage

In the early 1840's the practice of the doctrine of plural marriage

1Whitney, Contributor, VI, 404-405.
began to be practiced unfold among the leadership of the Church, which brought a considerable amount of persecution, particularly to Joseph Smith, who found it necessary to go into hiding to escape his persecutors. During this time Bishop Whitney was constantly looking after the Prophet's welfare and helping in various ways to escape Joseph's old enemies.  

One account is given as follows:

A letter was received from Brother Hollister to the effect that the Missourians were again on the move, and that two requisitions were issued, one on the governor of this state, and the other on the governor of Iowa. Their movements were represented as being very secret and resolute. Soon after 12 o'clock, Pitman, the deputy sheriff, and two other men came into the house. It appears that they had come up the riverside, and hitched their horses below the Nauvoo House, and then proceeded on foot undiscovered, until they got into the house. When they arrived, President Joseph Smith was in another apartment of the house, eating dinner with his family. John Boynton happened to be the first person discovered by the sheriffs, and they began to ask him where Mr. Smith was. He answered that he saw him early in the morning; but did not say that he had seen him since.

While this conversation was going on, President Joseph Smith passed out of the back door, and through the corn in his garden to Brother Newel K. Whitney's. He went upstairs undiscovered. Meantime Sister Emma went and conversed with the sheriffs. Pitman said he wanted to search the house for Mr. Smith. In answer to a question by Sister Emma, he said he had no warrant authorizing him to search, but insisted upon searching the house. She did not refuse, and accordingly they searched through, but to no effect.

It was during this difficult time that the Prophet Joseph recorded several expressions of gratitude to those who had been faithful and loyal to him. Among these expressions we find the following written regarding Bishop Whitney:

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1Joseph Smith, *op. cit.*, V, 89-97.

2Ibid., p. 145.
Said I to myself, Here is Brother Newel K. Whitney also. How many scenes of sorrows have strewed our paths together; and yet we meet once more to share again. Thou art a faithful friend in whom the afflicted sons of men can confide, with the most perfect safety. Let the blessings of the Eternal also be crowned upon his head. How warm that heart! how anxious that soul! for the welfare of one who has been cast out, and hated of almost all men. Brother Whitney, thou knowest not how strong those ties are that bind my soul and heart to thee.¹

Marriage of Joseph to Sarah Ann Whitney

As mentioned previously the friendship and intimacy between the Prophet and Bishop Whitney continued to grow and appeared to become strengthened and intensified in the marriage of Sarah Ann Whitney, daughter of Newel, to Joseph as a plural wife. Sarah Ann was only seventeen years old at the time of her marriage to the Prophet. She probably was the first woman in this dispensation to be given in plural marriage with the consent of both parents. In fact Bishop Whitney officiated in the ceremony.²

It is recorded that Joseph received a revelation directed to Bishop Whitney commanding and consecrating this marriage. The revelation bears the date of July 27, 1842 and is still in existence. The writer has seen and read it several times in the Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City. The Whitneys probably gave their full consent to this marriage because several years before in Kirtland Joseph had taught Bishop Whitney of this principle and told him the Church would yet have

¹Ibid., p. 108.

²Whitney, Contributor, VI, 131.
to receive it and practice it. ¹ In addition, he also taught the principle to Elizabeth Ann and it is recorded that she received personal revelation from God in answer to prayer of the divinity of the doctrine. ²

An additional sidelight of this marriage is the fact that about a year after it was performed, apparently to conceal it from the enemies of Joseph, the following took place:

And on 29 April, 1843, I according to President Joseph Smith and Council and others, I agreed to stand by Sarah Ann Whitney as though I was supposed to be her husband and a pretended marriage for the purpose of shielding them from the enemy (she was the wife of the Prophet) (mock ceremony of marriage before the enemy) and for the purpose of bringing about the purposes of God in the last days. . . .³

Documents on Plural Marriage

There are some incidents in the life of Bishop Whitney connected with the first writing of section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants. They are as follows:

The revelation was read to several of the authorities during the day. Towards evening Bishop Newel K. Whitney asked Joseph if he had any objections to his taking a copy of the revelation; Joseph replied that he had not, and handed it to him. It was carefully copied

¹Ibid.

²Wells, op. cit., XXXIV, 154.

the following day by Joseph C. Kingsbury. Two or three days after
the revelation was written Joseph related to me (William Clayton)
and several others that Emma had so teased, and urgently entreated
him for the privilege of destroying it, that he became so weary of
her teasing, and to get rid of her annoyance, he told her she might
destroy it and she had done so, but he had consented to her wish in
this matter to pacify her, realizing that he knew the revelation per-
fectly, and could rewrite it at any time if necessary.

The copy made by Joseph C. Kingsbury is a true and correct copy
of the original in every respect. The copy was carefully preserved
by Bishop Whitney, and but few knew of its existence until the tempo-
rary location of the Camps of Israel at Winter Quarters, on the Missouri
River, in 1846.1

From a testimony of Joseph C. Kingsbury the following is taken re-
garding the early writing and preservation of the plural marriage revelation:

In reference to the affidavit of Elder William Clayton, on the sub-
ject of the celestial order of patriarchal marriage, published in the
Deseret Evening News of May 20th, 1886, and particularly to the state-
ment made therein concerning myself, as having copied the original
revelation written by Brother Clayton at the dictation of the Prophet
Joseph, I will say that Bishop Newel K. Whitney handed me the revela-
tion above referred to on either the day it was written or the day follow-
ing, and stating that it was asked me to take a copy of it. I did so, and
then read my copy to Bishop Whitney, who compared it with the
original which he held in his hand while I read to him. When I had
finished reading, Bishop Whitney pronounced the copy correct, and
Hyrum Smith coming into the room at the time to fetch the original,
Bishop Whitney handed it to him. I will also state that this copy, as
also the original, are identically the same as that published in the pre-
sent edition of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

I will add that I also knew that the Prophet Joseph Smith had mar-
rried other women besides his first wife--Emma; I was well aware of
the fact of his having married Sarah Ann Whitney, the eldest daughter
of Bishop Newel K. Whitney and Elizabeth Ann Whitney, his wife.
And the Prophet Joseph told me personally that he had married other
women, in accordance with the revealed will of God, and spoke con-
cerning the principle as being a command of God for holy purposes.

(Signed) JOSEPH C. KINGSBURY.2

1Jenson, Historical Record, V, 225-226.  2Ibid., p. 226.
Trustee-in-Trust

In August of 1844 Bishop Whitney and George Miller were given the responsibility of trustee-in-trust to settle the affairs of the martyr Prophet, Joseph Smith, and to assume the duties of this office for the Church. An incite into the activities of this office is found in a letter written by Joseph Smith to the Hancock County Recorded as follows:

DEAR SIR:--At a meeting of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, at this place on Saturday, the 30th day of January, A. D. 1841, I was elected sole Trustee for said Church, to hold my office during life (my successors to be the First Presidency of said Church) and vested with plenary powers, as sole Trustee in Trust for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to receive, acquire, manage or convey property, real, personal, or mixed, for the sole use and benefit of said Church, agreeably to the provisions of an act entitled, "An Act Concerning Religious Societies," approved February 6, 1835.

JOSEPH SMITH, (L. S.)

Bishop Whitney acted in this office for the Church until his death in 1850.

Dissention Among Church Leadership

During the months just preceding the Prophet's death in June of 1844 and the months following a considerable amount of difficulty arose among the leadership of the Church to the extent that the Church found it necessary to cut off several prominent leaders. In one council, of which Bishop Whitney was a part, William Law, a member of the First

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1 Joseph Smith, op. cit., VII, 247.
2 Ibid., IV, 287.
3 Whitney, Contributor, VI, 132.
Presidency of the Church and his wife, Jane, were excommunicated. In this same council Robert D. Foster, and Wilson Law who was an officer of the Nauvoo Legion, were cut off. ¹

**Sidney Rigdon Cut Off**

Sidney Rigdon, a member of the First Presidency of the Church and once close friend and associate of Bishop Whitney, became estranged and left the Church. Upon the death of Joseph, Rigdon appeared in Nauvoo with claim that the Lord had appointed him as "guardian" of the Church. A few days later, however, the Church rejected Sidney Rigdon and accepted the leadership of Brigham Young and the Quorum of Twelve. Greatly disappointed by the action, Rigdon began a series of secret activities, holding secret meetings and ordaining men to various offices in the Church contrary to accepted Church procedure. The Church leaders, hearing of Rigdon's activities, called a council over which Bishop Whitney presided and demanded his license. Rigdon refused to give it up. The Church leadership then placed him on trial for his membership and he refused to attend the trial to defend his actions. ²

At the trial of Sidney Rigdon eight of the twelve apostles were present. Also in attendance was a special High Council with Bishop Whitney at the head. Several members of the Twelve spoke their feelings re-

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¹Joseph Smith, op. cit., VI, 341.

Elder Rigdon several times had rebuked him for speaking in the name of the Lord, what was not so. He was always in the bottom of the cellar or up in the garret window. At the time his license was taken in Kirtland he was more sanguine than he is now. The people were excited very much at that time. Brother Joseph was away, and when he returned and found out what Sidney had been doing, he took him into council, told him to give up his license to the Bishop, and divorced himself of all of the authority he could, for, said he, the less authority you have the better it will be for you. It has been repeatedly the case when he has been speaking to the Church that Joseph has rebuked him for it. I feel that Brother Rigdon came here with a bad spirit and has delivered a revelation. If such things as are contained in his revelation have been revealed to him, it is from a source with which we want nothing to do. When he first came here I thought he was deceived but since last Tues. evening, I have been convinced that he is dishonest. He made many evasive replies to the interrogatories of the twelve, and I think his calculation is to scatter this people, because his theory comes in opposition to Pres. Joseph Smith's revelations. It has been proved that he prophesied that we would not build this temple. I believe he is an evil and designing man. He is dishonest, and he has lied to carry out his theory. He preached one thing one day and the contrary another. He did not reconcile his preaching to me. I asked him to reconcile it but he did not do it. I feel to sustain the twelve in withdrawing their fellowship, and I think the High Council and the Church ought to sustain the decision of the twelve.

It was then proposed that Rigdon be cut off the Church and all were in agreement.

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1Ibid.

2Times and Seasons (Nauvoo, Illinois), V, 686.

3Ibid.
Finishing of the Temple

During the last months of the Church in Nauvoo, Illinois, finishing the temple became a major project. Much of the money needed for this construction was taken from the tithes of the Church which were collected and handled by the bishops of the Church. In a letter to all the Church membership a plea was made by the Trustees in Trust, for the Saints to be loyal in the payment of tithes. Instructions were outlined for the collection and donation of money to avoid fraud and deceit. A paragraph of this lengthy letter gives some incite into the situation of the Saints and their work in Nauvoo at this time:

Peace smiles upon our beloved city. And the great God looks down upon this people with sympathy and compassion from day to day, dispensing his heavenly blessings upon all the families of his saints according to his infinite wisdom and their willingness to receive them. The hearts of the saints are united firmer than ever, notwithstanding the vigorous efforts made by satan and dissenters to sow amongst us discord, strife, and confusion, and every evil work, scattering not excepted. Many houses are in progress of erection, which on account of the lateness of the season will have to stand unfinished until next spring. Every effort is being made to establish and put in operation various branches of manufacture for the employment of the saints, and the prospects are good, but not unattended with difficulty, toil and anxiety. But diligence, economy, and steady perseverance in a good cause, never fails to bring its reward, and very often the sweetest roses are surrounded by the sharpest thorns, and the greatest treasures deposited in places the most difficult of access, where we have to dig, and dig long and deep in order to obtain them.¹

Laying of Capstone

On May 24, 1845 with a large congregation assembled Bishop Whitney participated in the laying of the capstone of the temple. A brief report

¹Joseph Smith, op. cit., VII, 321.
of these ceremonies is as follows:

On the morning of Saturday, May 24th, 1845, we repaired to the temple with great secrecy, for the purpose of laying the (cap) stone. There were but few that knew about it, (but) the band playing on the walls, and the people hearing it, hurried up. About six o'clock a.m., the brethren being assembled, we proceeded to lay the stone; at a quarter past six the stone was laid; after which Brother Young prayed, his voice being heard distinctly, by the congregation below; and the congregation shouted "Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna to God and the Lamb, Amen and Amen!" Brother Kay sung a song, composed for the occasion by W. W. Phelps, called "The Capstone." Although there were several officers watching for us to take us, yet we escaped without their knowledge; when the singing commenced we left unnoticed, and they had not an opportunity of seeing us. ¹

Dedication of Attic Story

Also in November of 1845 Bishop Whitney attended the dedication ceremony of the attic story of the temple. A brief report of this ceremony follows:

At ten a.m. I (Brigham Young) went to the attic story of the Temple with Elders Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, Parley P. Pratt, John Taylor, Orson Hyde, George A. Smith, and Amasa Lyman, of the Quorum of the Twelve; also Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, Presiding Bishops. . . .

I requested Wm. Clayton to keep minutes. I then offered up prayer and dedicated the attic story of the Temple and ourselves to God, and prayed that God would sustain and deliver us his servants from the hands of our enemies, until we have accomplished his will in this house. Elder Taylor then sang "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief", after which Elder Heber C. Kimball prayed, that the Lord would hear and answer the prayers of his servant Brigham, and break off the yoke of our enemies and inasmuch as they lay traps for the feet of his servants that they may fall into them themselves and be destroyed. . . . ²

¹Roberts, op. cit., II. 473.

²Joseph Smith, op. cit., VII, 534.
Ordinance Work

During this period Bishop Whitney and his wife spent much time in the Nauvoo temple assisting in the ordinance work which proceeded as different sections of the temple were completed. As early as May of 1842 Bishop Whitney had received his endowments at the hands of Joseph Smith. As the temple neared completion thousands thronged to receive their endowments knowing they would have to leave Nauvoo in a short time. This, of course, placed great pressures on those officiating to the extent that they worked late into the night and then slept in the temple. An account of some of the experiences of the Whitneys in the temple is here given:

The labors of the day having been brought to a close at so early an hour, viz.: eight-thirty, it was thought proper to have a little season of recreation, accordingly Brother Hanson was invited to produce his violin, which he did, and played several lively airs accompanied by Elisha Averett on his flute, among others some very good lively dancing tunes. This was too much for the gravity of Brother Joseph Young who indulged in dancing a hornpipe, and was soon joined by several others, and before the dance was over several French fours were indulged in. The first was opened by myself with Sister Whitney and Elder Heber C. Kimball and partner. The spirit of dancing increased until the whole floor was covered with dancers, and while we danced before the Lord, we shook the dust from off our feet as a testimony against this nation.

After the dancing had continued about an hour, several excellent songs were sung, in which several of the brethren and sisters joined. The "Upper California" was sung by Erastus Snow, after which I called upon Sister Whitney who stood up and invoking the gift of tongues, sang a beautiful song of Zion in tongues. The interpretation was given by her husband, Bishop Whitney, and me, it related to our efforts to build this house to the privilege we now have of meeting in it, our departure shortly to the country of the Lamanites, their rejoicing when they hear the gospel and of the ingathering of Israel.

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¹ ibid., II, 1842.
² Ibid., VII, 555.
³ Ibid., VII, 557-558.
Care of Lucy Smith

Following the Prophet's death the leaders of the Church administered to the needs of Lucy Smith, the widowed mother of Joseph. Frequent visits to her home by the leaders were made. On July 9, 1845 Bishops Whitney and Miller hosted a public dinner at the Nauvoo Mansion in behalf of the Church for the Smith family. Seven widows and about fifty of the family were present, the two Bishops and other Church leaders waited on the tables; the band and a few friends were in attendance. Lucy addressed the group in a "feeling and pathetic manner."

In the afternoon Bishop Whitney and others rode out in a church carriage to some property owned by Emma Smith which she had agreed to sell to the Church. Later upon invitation from the Church Lucy chose a block from this property and then desired that the Church build her a home on it. She also requested the use of a horse and carriage which was granted for the rest of her life. It was in this manner that the Church took care of Lucy Smith, mother of Joseph. ¹

Preparing for Exodus

It is a matter of history that the last months of 1845 were spent by the Saints busily preparing for their exodus from Illinois. The writer has found nothing of the activities of Bishop Whitney during this time but it seems probable that as the Presiding Bishop he played a major role along with the other Church leaders in assisting the Saints in this undertaking.

¹Ibid., VII, 433-434.
CHAPTER V

The Last Days in an Eventful Life

Leaving Nauvoo

In the early months of 1846 the Church membership began to leave the beautiful city of Nauvoo under pressure of mobs. President Brigham Young and other members of the Quorum of Twelve were among the first to leave. President Young requested that Bishop Whitney go with the Twelve. The same request was made of Bishop Miller. 1 This made it necessary to appoint other Trustees-in-Trust for the members still in Illinois. This was done after the departure of Miller and Whitney. 2

In addition to the responsibility of removing his family from Nauvoo, Bishop Whitney was also responsible for much of the Church property needed in the camp. 3

The fact that Whitney's family suffered along with the other thousands of exiles is evident in the following:

In February, 1846, when the Saints were exiled from their homes, while the Mississippi was frozen over, Sister Whitney left her comfortable home, and crossing the river on the ice with her little child-

1 Joseph Smith, op. cit., VIII, 573.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 585.

95
ren, who were feeble and sickly, she bade adieu to all, without ever repining, and endured all the hardships incident to traveling through a new and unbroken country. In consequence of exposure, and sleeping upon the cold ground, she contracted rheumatism, from which she never entirely recovered; she suffered very greatly, and at one time almost entirely lost the use of her right arm; through faith and anointing it was restored, though never entirely free from pain.

**Conditions of Camp**

A description of the camp which left Nauvoo February 22, 1846, of which the Whitney family was a part, is given as follows:

In our camp were hundreds of women and children with no other shelter than a wagon cover or cloth tent, and the weather was extremely cold. On the second day of March we broke camp. I started with my little company of 10 wagons, with the camp numbering some 400 wagons. About the same time the weather moderated, and it rained until the mud made traveling almost impossible. Sometimes it required five or six yoke of oxen to move one wagon. With much difficulty it perhaps would be taken a mile, then the team of several pair of oxen would return and bring up another, and another, perform a severe days labor and possibly travel 4 or 5 miles from the encampment of the previous night, with the women and children sitting cramped up in the wagons for it was so very wet and muddy they could not walk.

The following summer Bishop Whitney, in company with Jonathan C. Wright, went to St. Louis, Missouri from Iowa to purchase badly needed articles for the Saints. He indicated that he preferred to spend his time in the hay fields but inasmuch as the Saints had asked him to make the journey he desired their prayers in his behalf. The following entry was made on August 17 in the record books:

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1 Wells, *op. cit.*, XXXIV, 154.

2 *Utah Historical Quarterly* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1946), XIV, 74, Feb. 1846.

3 *Journal History*, August 16, 1846, Part II, p. 3.
Voted that Newel K. Whitney go to St. Louis and purchase articles wanted with the Battalion funds, and that Johnathan C. Wright accompany him and stand by him in every situation; also, that John Van Cott (as he is going to St. Louis) be counselled to go with the Bishop, and that they render each other mutual assistance, as far as possible.¹

During this period Bishop Whitney not only had the care of his own family but was also Trustee-in-Trust for the Church and officiated as the Presiding Bishop. Because of the latter responsibility the Saints relied on Bishop Whitney to help take care of their needs as suggested in the preceding notation.

Elder Newel K. Whitney reported, by letter, his arrival near Montrose, where he met with many of the brethren and sisters who had been driven from Nauvoo, who were in very destitute circumstances. He had procured some flour at Bonaparte for their present relief, and administered to them such counsel as was beneficial and necessary.²

Excommunication of Bishop Miller

During this troublesome period Bishop George Miller who was also Trustee in Trust of the Church in connection with Bishop Whitney, lost faith in the cause of the Saints and was excommunicated from the Church.³ As he was not replaced in his responsibilities it would seem the burden of Bishop Whitney was doubled in this respect.

Winter Quarters

During the difficult winter of 1847 and 1848 at Winter Quarters the following is recorded:

¹Ibid., August 17, 1846, p. 1.
²Ibid., October 6, 1846, p. 1.
³Joseph Smith, op. cit., VII, 618.
Police meeting this evening to decide how much we ought to have for fixing the guns which was arranged as follows: For those who worked by the day in taking to pieces and putting together guns 1.00 dollar per day. For cleaning one doz. bayonets 1.00.

C. C. Pendleton the gun smith who superintended the whole 1 dollar 50 cents and allowed me for my trouble 15 dollars. Bishop Whitney was to give us credit for it on our tithing.  

Migration of Saints to Utah

As plans were made for migration west during the winter months of 1849 the leaders of the Church appointed Newel K. Whitney and Isaac Morley to superintend the migration of the Saints to Utah.

The leaders of the Church appointed Newel K. Whitney to be the Superintendent in association with Isaac Morley, of the migration to Utah.  

In this capacity the following statement, signed by Heber C. Kimball and Newel K. Whitney, was read by Whitney to the Saints at Winter Quarters which gives some incite into the problems faced by Bishop Whitney.

It is well known to many of you, the circumstances under which the great body of the Church located here; the many inconveniences and privations we have suffered thru being huddled together in such large numbers, having the great majority of the poor, and the destitute thrown in our hands--the many families of our brethren to take care of (who for the temporal salvation of this people enlisted in the battalion and went to Calif.) the public burdens consequent upon our peculiar situation. Also the large amount of able bodies and expert men drawn from this camp to be pioneers, in search of a home for all of the Saints, and who raised no crops at this point--likewise the large Spring company of emigrants who were fitted out from here and which embraced about all who had any means in their

1 "Hosea Stout Journal" (unpublished, March 1849), III, 222.

2 Whitney, History of Utah, IV, 303.
possession; and the many losses we have sustained through Indian depredations, and destruction of our cattle; all these things have contributed largely to the impoverishment of this camp, and to render us in a measureably dependent and helpless condition, insomuch that at the present time, one of our Bishops has 301 individuals dependent on him for their daily bread. . . taking all of these things into consideration--and having a public burden on our shoulders of about $800 which we are unable to discharge. . . we deem it necessary to deputize a committee. . . to visit your branches. . . and receive such donations as the Brethren may be disposed to give, either in teams, wagons, horses, cows, clothing of all kinds, for men, women and children, and produce of all kinds. . . 1

With the pioneer company leaving Winter Quarters in the spring of 1848 the Whitneys remained behind with the main body of the Saints for another year.

Arrival at Salt Lake City

The following month the Whitneys, in connection with hundreds of Saints, prepared to make the journey to Salt Lake. Bishop Whitney was put in charge of a company of the Saints whom he led, arriving at their

1"Hosea Stout Journal," January 1848, III, 204.
destination in October, 1848. 1 This difficult period, as well as their
months at Winter Quarters, is summarized in the following account:

In Winter Quarters, Sister Whitney passed through some of the
most trying ordeals which woman could suffer and live, yet her faith
remained unshaken, and she seemed to draw still nearer to the throne
of heaven, laying all upon the altar for the Gospel's sake. She had
the joy and satisfaction of having her two eldest sons, Horace and
Orson, among the pioneers who came to this valley in 1847. In May,
1848, she, with her husband and family started enroute for the valley
in the company of Heber C. Kimball. The toils of that wearisome
journey, to that frail, delicate mother, with her large family and
helpless babe, no tongue can tell, nor pen portray. Only the angels,
who possess infinite power, can make a fitting record of such devotion
and heroism. Arriving in the valley in October, worn and weary with
fatigue and hardship, Sister Whitney still preserved the same sweet
and equanimity of soul. She had always a word of consolation for
those who had not the same unbounded faith, and her charity for the
weak and tried ones was most sublime. 2

State of Deseret

The activities of Newel K. Whitney during the last two years of
his life were many and varied. In the spring of 1849 a constitution for
the newly formed State of Deseret was drawn up. On March 12 the Saints
voted to accept the constitution and on the same occasion elected officers
for the new State. President Brigham Young was elected Governor with
Willard Richards as secretary and Heber C. Kimball as Chief Justice.
Newel K. Whitney was elected as an Associate Justice and also as Treas-
urer of the newly formed state. 3

Just prior to this event, in February of 1849, Bishop Whitney

1 Whitney, Contributor, VI, 132.

2 Wells, op. cit., XXXIV, 154.

3 Roberts, op. cit., III 477.
was placed on a committee to lay off the City of Salt Lake into wards. This completed, Newel was called to serve as Bishop of the 13th Ward.¹

Currency Issued

As Treasurer of the State, Whitney's name was attached to the first currency issued by the State for the purpose of exchange due to the lack of coins. The first issue consisted of one dollar bills.²

City of Ogden

During the last months of Bishop Whitney's life he assisted President Young and the leaders in the locating and planning of the City of Ogden. Furthermore, in September of 1850 his name was submitted to President Fillmore by John M. Bernhisel as Associate Justice of the State of Deseret.³

Other Activities of Whitney

During this time he also served as an officer in the Perpetual Emigration Fund, which assisted so many in their migration to the Rocky Mountains.⁴

In December of 1849 in the Bowery, during a celebration of the Saints, the following incident occurred in the life of Newel K. Whitney.

² Ibid., January 1, 1849, p. 3.
³ Ibid., August 20, 1850, Part XVI, p. 2.
⁴ Ibid.
At a particular time many of the brethren proposed toasts of various kinds.

Bishop Whitney joined in and proposed the following toast:

The translator of the Book of Mormon: May his posterity be innumerable, his name and true character perpetual, when time shall cease to be measured unto man.¹

Whitney's Life Closes

On Saturday, September 21, 1850, Newel K. Whitney returned home from temple block where the labors of the Bishopric occupied much of his time, complaining of a severe pain in his left side which proved to be bilious pleurisy. Monday morning found his condition becoming worse. Groups of people gathered in and around his home on city creek struggling to control their feelings. Among them were President Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, as well as other leaders of the Church. Bishop Whitney passed quietly away at 11 a.m.²

Thus, in full strength, and in mature years, has one of the oldest and most exemplary and useful members of the Church fallen suddenly; leaving a large family to mourn the loss of an affectionate husband, and a kind and generous father.

In him the Church suffers the loss of a wise and able Counsellor of a thorough, straight-forward, business man. It was ever more gratifying to him to pay a debt than to contract one; and when all his debts were paid, he was a happy man, though he had nothing left but his own moral and muscular energy.

He has long held the office of Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to receive from the rich and to distribute to the poor, of the goods of this world. He has gone down

¹Millenial Star, December 1, 1849, XI, 358.

²Whitney, Contributor, VI, 132.
to the grave, leaving a spotless name behind him, and thousands to
mourn their loss of such a valuable man.¹

In a quiet, peaceful spot just north of Temple Square the body of
Newel Kimball Whitney was interred in what is known as the Heber C.
Kimball burial plot. Also at this spot Elizabeth Ann Whitney was buried
many years later. On his tombstone the following words appear:

¹In memory of Newel K. Whitney, Presiding Bishop over the Church
of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, born Feb. 5, 1795, in Marlborough,
Windham Co., Vermont; died Sept. 23, 1850, at G. S. L. City, Deseret;
having been a member of the Church 20 years; and faithfully officiating
in his office eighteen. ²

¹Deseret News, September 23, 1850
²Whitney, Contributor VIII 123
SUMMARY

From the day of his conversion Newel K. Whitney was a loyal and dedicated servant in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which was organized only seven months prior to that time. About thirteen months later he was called to be a bishop of the Ohio Saints, as well as all Saints in the Eastern United States, which position he held until he was given the responsibilities of Presiding Bishop of the Church. He served in this capacity until his death in 1850.

As an early leader of the Church his role was different in many respects from that of other leaders. He never participated in the Zion's Camp march. His responsibilities in Kirtland kept him from participating in the activities of the Church in Missouri. Even though missionary work was one of the most important programs of the Church his only experience as a missionary was a brief trip to some of the Eastern cities with Joseph Smith.

Bishop Whitney's efficiency in financial matters and his compassion and love for others contributed substantially to the salvation of the early Church and the welfare of its people.

Very few men had a longer and more intimate association with the Prophet Joseph Smith than did Bishop Whitney. In the revelations contributed to the Church by Joseph Smith probably no name appears more frequently than does the name of Newel K. Whitney. He lived a noble life and today his name and his deeds are revered by thousands of Latter-day Saints and by a numerous posterity.
APPENDIX A

THE FAMILY OF NEWEL K. WHITNEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wives</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah Ann</td>
<td>22 March 1825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Franklin K.</td>
<td>25 February 1827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Elizabeth</td>
<td>26 September 1828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orson K.</td>
<td>20 January 1830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John K.</td>
<td>13 September 1832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joshua K.</td>
<td>13 February 1835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anna Maria</td>
<td>1 October 1836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Carlos</td>
<td>14 February 1841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Jane</td>
<td>17 February 1844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newel Melchizedek</td>
<td>6 February 1847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emmeline Belos Woodward (1828-1921) Married 24 February 1845</td>
<td>Isabel Modalena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Melvina Caroline Blanch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Olive Maria Bishop (1803- ) Married 7 January 1846</td>
<td>Jethro Houston</td>
<td>6 May 1848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Anna Houston (1821-1848)     Married 7 January 1846</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Elizabeth Mahala More (1826- ) Married 7 January 1846</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Elizabeth Almira Pond (1827- ) Married 7 January 1846</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Abigail Augusta Pond (1828-1846) Married 7 January 1846</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Henrietta Keys (1821-1901)    Married 26 January 1846</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE WHITNEY FAMILY

(Richard L. Cary)

From a little English hamlet,
    From Whitney-on-the Wye,
Where the hawthorns bud and blossom
    Underneath an English sky,
Came a stalwart, sturdy Whitney
    Three long centuries ago,
Like the hawthorn spread and blossomed
    In the sunshine and the snow.

All about him grew the forests,
    Trees of maple and of oak,
And the pine trees bent to listen
    To the words the river spoke;
While the warwhoop of the red men
    Rent the silence far and near
In the wilds of Massachusetts:--
    But the settler knew no fear.

Grew a family up around him
    As the swift years drifted by,
While about his old log cabin
    Fell God's blessings from the sky;
And the family name took root there,
   Spread its branches far and wide,
Till they reached from York to Frisco--
      Sunrise gate to evening tide.

Some there were that for the Union
    Wore the tattered army blue;
Some the grey, and then forgot it
    When the old became the new;
One the cotton gin invented,
    'Twas his own peculiar plan;
And where'er you find a Whitney
    You will find an honest man.
EMMELINE BELOS WOODWARD

Emmeline was born in Massachusetts on February 29, 1826 and as a child was given all of the finest educational advantages available. While still in her early teens she taught school, during which time her mother was converted to Mormonism. Emmeline also accepted the Gospel and was baptized March 1, 1842.

When just fifteen years of age she was married to James Harris, son of the president of the local branch of the Church. Shortly thereafter they moved to Nauvoo where she had the unforgettable experience of meeting and shaking hands with Joseph Smith, the Prophet. From this experience she gained a testimony of him and his work to the point that she dedicated her life to the Gospel.

Soon after the death of Joseph Smith, her husband's parents left the Church, following which Emmeline's husband left her never to return. Just prior to this time she gave birth to a son. The baby did not live and the young mother was herself close to death. Through administration at the hands of President Brigham Young Emmeline regained her health and lived to make her place in the annals of history.

She was exiled with the Saints in 1846 and joined the exodus West. At Winter Quarters she taught school for many months. In 1848 she arrived at Salt Lake as a plural wife of Bishop Newel K. Whitney. Shortly afterwards she gave birth to Isabel Maudalina, named for the young Indian maiden who at one time saved Newel's life. Another daughter, Melvina
Caroline also blessed the marriage.

After Bishop Whitney's death in 1850 Emmeline taught school as a means of support for herself and two small children. She later married Daniel A. Wells and in the following years gave birth to three more daughters.

During the succeeding years Emmeline wrote extensively and took great interest in public affairs. She became editor of the *Woman's Exponent* and gave valuable assistance in the organization and operation of the Relief Society in Utah.

She was extremely active in the women's suffrage movement of America. She traveled extensively for this cause and was nationally recognized. Through this movement she became intimately acquainted with Susan B. Anthony. Emmeline also represented the women of Utah on a number of occasions in Washington, D. C. over the plural marriage question.

In 1912 the administrators of Brigham Young University bestowed upon her an honorary doctor of literature degree. Another great honor came to her when she was selected to unveil the famous sea gull monument on Temple Square.

In 1910 she was chosen as the president of the General Board of the Relief Society of the Church, in which capacity she served for many years.

The end of her eventful life came in 1921. In 1928 the women of Utah placed a marble bust of Emmeline in the rotunda of the state Capital building in recognition of her service to women.
ELIZABETH ANN SMITH WHITNEY

Elizabeth Ann Smith was born December 26, 1800 in Derby, New Haven County, Connecticut. She was the eldest child of Gibson and Polly Bradley Smith. Her early life was free of care and sorrow and she grew to young womanhood in an atmosphere of love and tenderness. In her youth she received an excellent education according to the times. In addition she studied dancing under the best masters. She was also trained well in the art of homemaking and became adept in spinning flax and doing fine ornamental needle work.

At the early age of eighteen years Elizabeth Ann went with a maiden aunt, Sarah Smith, whom she dearly loved, to Ohio. Upon leaving home she did not know that she would never again return nor that she had seen her beloved mother for the last time.

While staying in Kirtland she made the acquaintance of a prosperous young merchant, Newel Kimball Whitney. They were married October 20, 1822 and settled in Kirtland.

Subsequently she, with her husband, joined the Campbellite Church. However, after hearing Parley P. Pratt and others preach the Everlasting Gospel they accepted this new faith and Elizabeth Ann was baptized in November 1830.

Because of her unusual musical talent she was called the 'sweet songstress of Zion' by Joseph Smith, who would sit and listen intently to the rich melody of her voice and seemed to draw comfort for it. She was among the first in the Church to receive the gift of tongues in this dispen-
sation and used it frequently while singing in the pure Adamic language. Joseph promised her that if she would use wisdom in the use of this gift that she would never lose it and it remained with her throughout her life. On her eighty-first birthday she used this unusual gift at the home of Emmeline B. Wells.

Her voice has been described as being 'birdlike and full of symphony.' Her husband often sang with her in his fine tenor voice and it has been said that the music was almost sublime.

Sister Whitney was a delicate person and had been accustomed to having servants to wait upon her. During the trials and persecutions which followed the Saints in those early days she had none of the luxuries and comforts of her former life, yet never a complaint passed her lips. With her sweet smile and gentle sympathetic nature she cheered and strengthened her husband and the many others who made their way to her door for help and encouragement.

Elizabeth Ann was one of the first women of the Church to receive her endowments in the House of the Lord and thereafter to officiate as a Priestess in the temple. She served in this capacity until her death, during which time she blessed thousands of the daughters of Zion in this holy place.

Sister Whitney was a charter member of the Relief Society, serving as a counselor to Emma Smith, the first president of this organization for the female members of the Church.

After being exiled from her home in February, 1846, with her
little children, who were feeble and sickly, Sister Whitney endured untold hardships. As a result of exposure and sleeping upon the cold ground she contracted rheumatism. At one time she almost lost the use of her right arm but through her undaunted faith it was restored. However, she was to suffer from this infirmity throughout the remainder of her life.

While encamped at Winter Quarters, Sister Whitney gave birth to her eleventh child, a small and feeble son. When to all others he appeared to be dead, Elizabeth Ann refused to give up and with great faith and courage clung to her infant son, crying unto the Lord to spare him and his life was restored to him.

Her two eldest sons, Horace and Orson, were among the original pioneers reaching Salt Lake in 1847. She and Bishop Whitney arrived in the fall of 1848 with their large family. This frail mother was worn and weary from the hardships and perils of this wearisome journey across unbroken country, but her faith never wavered and her testimony in the Everlasting Gospel remained strong and true.

In September, 1850, Bishop Whitney, who had been a devoted husband, died suddenly leaving Sister Whitney to care for their nine living children. She endured the shock with characteristic faith and although she continued to face many hardships she continued to live a full and active life in the Gospel.

Elizabeth Ann was known in the Church for many years as 'Mother Whitney.' She had an amiable gift of meekness, humility and patience.
Her ministrations among the sick and afflicted endeared her to those with whom she associated and made her truly a mother in Israel. She died in Salt Lake City in 1882 due to causes incident to old age.
Whitney 'Firsts'

According to a family history in the possession of Winnie Whitney Leatham, Rexburg, Idaho, a direct descendant of Newel K. Whitney, "John Kimball Whitney was born to Elizabeth Ann in Kirtland, Ohio, in a little adobe house back of the Kirtland temple. He was the first male child born of Mormon parentage in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He was blessed and given a name to be known among men by the Prophet Joseph Smith, September 22, 1832. He was baptized by the Prophet in the year 1840 and also confirmed."

From an article on Elizabeth Ann Whitney in the Woman's Exponent, XXXIV, we learn: "In January 1844, Sister Whitney became the honored mother of the first child born in the new and everlasting covenant of marriage, a daughter whom the Prophet blessed when a babe and named Mary."

As has been previously stated in the context of this work, Sarah Ann Whitney, daughter of Newel and Elizabeth Ann, was the first woman in this dispensation to be given in plural marriage with the consent of both parents. She was given as a plural wife to Joseph Smith. After his death, Sarah Ann was married to Heber C. Kimball.

Names

In the ceremony uniting the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sarah Ann in celestial marriage, the ceremony having been given to the Prophet by revelation, Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, is mentioned as one of
Bishop Whitney's ancestors. Furthermore, in Bishop Whitney's patriarchal blessing he is told that he is a descendant of Melchizedek.

Orson Whitney, in THROUGH MEMORY'S HALLS, suggests that these two documents, still in existence, explain why one of Newel's sons was named Jethro and another, Newel Melchizedak. The latter was the infant son born to Elizabeth Ann at Winter Quarters. He was feeble from birth and died at an early age. Jethro, son of Newel's plural wife Anna Houston, matured to manhood.

As mentioned earlier Isabel Maudalina (sometimes written Modalena), daughter of Emmeline and Newel, was named for an Indian maiden by that name.
APPENDIX B

LINES ON THE DEATH OF BISHOP NEWEL K. WHITNEY

A mighty man, a man of worth,
A father and a friend,
Has left the narrow sphere of earth,
His upward course to wound.

Firm as the hills--he was a stay,
A bulwark, and a shield:
Like a strong pillar, mov'd away
To Zion's broader field.

From understanding's deepest wells,
Unmeasur'd draughts he drew;
The light that with Jehovah dwells,
Inspir'd his judgment too,

With dignity he fill'd the sphere
Allotted him below;
His presence seem'd an impulse here
To wisdom's genial flow.

But now his noble form must lie
And slumber in the dust,
While he with honor joins the high
Assemblies of the just.

With fondly cherish'd memory
His name will be belov'd
While virtue and integrity
Are by the Saints approv'd.

The stroke is with a heavy rod;
But while our hearts deplore
His loss, we'll own the hand of God,
That God whom we adore.

--Eliza R. Snow

G. S. L. City, 1850.
ALGERNON SYDNEY GILBERT

Business Associate of Newel K. Whitney

Algernon Sydney Gilbert was a successful merchant in Painsville, Ohio for several years and subsequently, with Newel K. Whitney, he founded the successful firm of Gilbert and Whitney in Kirtland.

Few men in the early Church were more dedicated and devoted to its interests than Sydney Gilbert. He was a man of rare good sense and sound judgment. He also had a keen intellect, which can be seen in the many communications drawn up by him in Missouri in behalf of the Church to the governmental officials of that state.

There was some ill feeling between he and the early members of the Church because of his refusal to serve on a mission for the Church.

His words were: "I would rather die than go forth to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles." Some said the Lord took him at his word as he passed away soon after making this statement. This declaration was not made due to a lack of faith or confidence in the Lord's work, but rather due to his own lack of confidence to preach the Gospel to an indifferent people.

A call from the leaders of the Church sent Gilbert to Missouri where he was appointed keeper of the Lord's storhouse there. At this time he was also given the responsibility of purchasing land for the Saints in Jackson County. As persecution arose he, along with others, offered
his life as a ransom for the lives of others. During this period he lost all his possessions as did hundreds of others.

Algernon Sydney Gilbert died a faithful member of the Church giving all to its cause.
Newel Kimball Whitney. Around the nucleus of his store and the law of Consecration the economic strength of Kirtland was husbanded.

(Left) Elizabeth Ann (Smith) Whitney. First Counselor to Emma Smith in the first Relief Society organized in 1842.

APPENDIX E

Facsimiles of Bills Issued by the Kirtland Safety Society Bank. Note the signature of Newel K. Whitney on the Center Bill.

The original Whitney store in Kirtland. Today it stands 100 ft. back of its former location and is used for storage.
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THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS
of
NEWEL KIMBALL WHITNEY

An Abstract of the Thesis of
Larry N. Poulsen
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
Master of Arts
in
The Department of Graduate Studies
in Religious Instruction
Brigham Young University

Brigham Young University
April 1966
ABSTRACT

Newel Kimball Whitney, who became the second Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was born February 5, 1795 at Marlborough, Vermont. In this peaceful, quiet town Newel spent his early life, attending school in the winter and doing farm work in the summer. Leaving home at an early age he made his way to Plattsburg, New York where he became engaged as a merchant. After losing all his possessions in the battle of Plattsburg during the War of 1812 Whitney moved to Kirtland, Ohio where he became a partner to Algernon Sidney Gilbert in a prosperous mercantile firm.

On October 20, 1822 Newel married Elizabeth Ann Smith. A short time after their marriage they joined a religious group known as the Disciples or Campbellites. Pastor Sidney Rigdon was the local head of the Church. In 1830 missionaries from the newly formed Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints arrived in Kirtland from New York and many of the Campbellites united with this new Church. The Whitneys joined in November, 1830.

In December of 1831 Newel K. Whitney was appointed Bishop of the Ohio Saints as well as the Saints in several branches of the Eastern United States. Because of the growth of the Church in Ohio one of the major responsibilities of Bishop Whitney was the temporal welfare of the Saints. His competency in matters of finance proved to be very beneficial in this regard and the prosperous mercantile firm of Gilbert and Whitney
played an important role in the economics of the Church.

In his position Bishop Whitney became deeply involved in the Kirtland Safety Society and his name appears on the notes issued by that institution. When the financial crises of 1837 struck the United States the Kirtland Bank closed its doors which contributed to much dissention and apostasy in the new Church. In the months that followed, the Saints, receiving instruction from Joseph Smith, left for northern Missouri, which became a gathering place for the Church membership. Because of his responsibilities Whitney was unable to leave Kirtland for Illinois until the fall of 1838.

Not only did Whitney continue his duties as Bishop of the Church in Illinois, but he also played a prominent role in the city government of Nauvoo and was on the Board of Regents of the University of Nauvoo. He also became closely associated with a business firm which helped supply the Saints with many of their needs.

Upon the death of Joseph Smith, Bishop Whitney became one of two Trustees-in-Trust for the Church, which responsibility he held until the time of his death.

Leaving Nauvoo with the Saints in the spring of 1846 Bishop Whitney settled at Winter Quarters, Nebraska. While here he was sustained as the second Presiding Bishop of the Church in April of 1847. Bishop Whitney also assisted in the migration of the Saints to the West until the spring of 1846, at which time he was given the responsibility of leading a company of Saints across the plains to the Great Salt Lake
They arrived there in the fall of that year. In Salt Lake Bishop Whitney became an officer in the Perpetual Emigration Company and took an active part in the early government of Utah.

At the early age of 56 Newel Kimball Whitney died in Salt Lake City on September 23, 1850 and was buried in the family plot of Heber C. Kimball.

Few, if any, leaders of the Church have shown more loyalty and dedication to the Church and its cause than did this man. In the revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants the name of Newel P. Whitney probably appears more frequently than any other name. He was one of the few early leaders who never wavered during the many trials and tribulations of the early Church.