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The Last Months of Mormonism in Missouri: The Albert Perry Rockwood Journal

Edited by Dean C. Jessee and David J. Whittaker

Few events in the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have had the impact of the last months in Missouri. Names such as Lilburn Boggs and Alexander Doniphan and events such as the Haun’s Mill Massacre and the Extermination Order still evoke strong feelings in the group memory of the Latter-day Saints. The events of a few weeks in 1838 seem to symbolize for Mormons their treatment by the larger society throughout the nineteenth century. The defensiveness of their histories from 1839 on can, in large measure, be attributed to their experiences there. The Missouri experience casts a long shadow down through the years of Mormon history.

One of the best contemporary Mormon records of the last weeks in Missouri is that of Albert Perry Rockwood. He was born 9 June 1805 to Luther and Ruth Perry Rockwood in Holliston, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. His father remarried shortly after Albert’s mother died in August 1805; thus he grew up mostly with stepbrothers and stepsisters until he married Nancy Haven, also from Holliston, in 1827.

Brigham Young and Willard Richards had earlier come as missionaries of the LDS church to Holliston, and Albert, after investigating their message, journeyed to Kirtland, Ohio, where on 25 July 1837 he was baptized by Brigham Young. The Rockwoods moved to Ohio, but Albert was back in Massachusetts between May and July 1838 when Wilford Woodruff records visiting him in jail, where he had been incarcerated on false charges relating to a debt. He traveled to Missouri in July and shortly thereafter wrote the letters that follow. Rockwood made his way up the Grand River from DeWitt to Far West in Caldwell County, where he remained until 10 January 1839 when he moved his family east to

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Albert Perry Rockwood, c. 1870s
Printed with permission of the Utah State Historical Society
Rockwood Journal

Quincy, Illinois, as part of the larger exodus of Mormons from the state of Missouri.

With other faithful members of the Church, Rockwood gathered his family to Nauvoo, where they assisted in the building of a new city. When the Nauvoo Legion was first organized in 1841, he was elected captain of one of the companies in addition to being drill officer. In 1843 he was assigned to be commander of Joseph Smith's life guard, in which capacity he assisted in the rescue of the Prophet when he was "kidnapped" in Dixon, Illinois, in June.4 Rockwood would later achieve the rank of general in the Legion.

In December 1845 he was set apart as one of the first Presidents of the First Quorum of Seventies, thus making him one of the General Authorities of the Church. As a cousin of Brigham Young as well as a father-in-law (President Young married his daughter Ellen A. Rockwood in January 1846), Rockwood remained close to him all of his life. He traveled west with President Young in 1847, even sharing the same illness that struck in July 1847 just before they entered the Salt Lake Valley.5 Rockwood returned to Winter Quarters with Brigham Young and in July 1849 brought his three wives, Nancy Haven, Angeline Hodgkins, and Elvira Teeple to the Salt Lake Valley. He later married two additional wives, Juliana Sophia Olson and Susana Cornwall. He fathered twenty-two children.

In September 1851 Rockwood was elected to the first session of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah. He remained a member until his death in 1879. He held other civic responsibilities also. In 1862 he was elected to the office of warden of the penitentiary; he was a director and organizer of the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society; he served as watermaster of the Salt Lake City Thirteenth Ward; in 1870 he was appointed as a road commissioner in Salt Lake County; and following his role in 1871 as co-owner of a fish company, he was appointed by Brigham Young as the first fish commissioner for Utah Territory.6

MORMONS IN MISSOURI: A SUMMARY

A short history of the Mormon experience in Missouri should prove helpful to the reader of Rockwood's letters, even though they were written at the very end of that experience. Basically the history of Mormons in Missouri can be divided into three periods, each of which can be focused (allowing for some overlapping) in specific counties: Jackson County from 1831 to 1833; Clay and Ray counties from 1833 to 1836; and Caldwell, Daviess, and Carroll counties from 1837 to 1839.

The millennial fervor that is so apparent in the Rockwood letters found an early focus in Jackson County where Joseph Smith, during a
A map of northwestern Missouri in the late 1830s

Courtesy of Ivan J. Barrett
personal visit in 1831, declared Independence to be the “center place of Zion,” the area where the pure in heart were to be gathered in the last days prior to the second coming of Christ. By 1833 about twelve hundred Latter-day Saints had gathered there. But local vigilante activity, moved by fears of the economic and political consequences of the growing Mormon presence, combined to force the LDS population from the county by November of that year.7

Finding refuge primarily in Clay County just north across the Missouri River, Mormons sought redress through legal channels in addition to the anticipated paramilitary support of Zion’s Camp. Neither proved effective.8 Thus by 1836 it was clear that no redress for their Jackson County losses would be forthcoming. Fearing another possible civil disturbance, the Missouri legislature moved in 1836 to organize Caldwell County as a place for Mormon settlement. It was understood that Mormons would concentrate themselves in Caldwell. In the summer of 1836, John Whitmer and William W. Phelps chose the site for Far West, and it quickly became the most important Mormon settlement in the area. Within two years, about five thousand Mormons were living in the area of Far West, which itself had all the basic businesses and services for even further growth.9

By early 1838 Mormons were settling in Daviess County, just north of Caldwell. In May Joseph Smith officially approved Adam-ondi-Ahman (also known as Di-Ahman) as a place of Mormon settlement.10 By the summer of 1838, about fifteen hundred members of the Church were settling there. Down the Grand River from Di-Ahman, at the strategic place where the Grand enters the Missouri River, George M. Hinkle and John Murdock established DeWitt in Carroll County as a Mormon outpost in July 1838.11

From 1831 to 1838, Joseph Smith had retained the headquarters of the Church in Kirtland, Ohio. But with the growing problems there following the failure of the economy, Joseph requested the faithful to gather with him to Missouri. He arrived in Far West on 14 March 1838 to a warm greeting from his followers, who now looked forward to peace and prosperity. But the problems associated with dissenters that had plagued the Prophet in Ohio followed him to Missouri. Even before his arrival, William W. Phelps, David Whitmer, and John Whitmer had been disciplined by Church courts. In April Oliver Cowdery was excommunicated from the Church as dissent continued to trouble the settlements in Missouri. On 17 June 1838, Sidney Rigdon preached his “Salt Sermon” (see Matt. 5:13), a discourse that was widely interpreted as a clear warning to other dissenters to get out. Many did.12

By July Mormons were fanning out in their search for places to settle. That they were feeling more secure is revealed in Sidney Rigdon’s Fourth of July oration. In it he declared that Mormons would no longer
be silent when mobs came against them. He went so far in his rhetoric as to warn of a “war of extermination” against any mob that came against the Saints.\textsuperscript{13} It is clear that the resentments of the older Missouri settlers still festered and that Ridgon’s sermon only added fuel to the simmering fire. The first serious clash came at Gallatin, Daviess County, on 6 August 1838, when non-Mormons tried to prevent Mormons from voting in a local election.\textsuperscript{14} The impact was far-reaching for both sides. On 7 August the Mormon militia from Far West rode north to protect fellow Church members. Reports of this Mormon “invasion” quickly moved through the adjacent counties, providing further justification for anti-Mormon feelings and actions. By 20 August armed Missourians were threatening Mormons in DeWitt, and various citizen groups were discussing possible solutions to the “Mormon problem.” By 11 October, the Mormons were forced out of DeWitt.

During October things went from bad to worse. Opinion on both sides was intransigent to the point that no real communication was possible. Various clashes between the two groups, increased militia activity on both sides, and finally the shedding of blood led to a state of civil war by 18 October. On 24 October, Captain Samuel Bogart mobilized his Ray County militia, arguing that it was necessary to prevent further destruction by Mormons. The same day, Bogart’s group captured two individuals they considered to be Mormon spies. Reacting to this situation, Captain David W. Patten led a group of armed Mormons to rescue the captives. The resulting clash is remembered as the Battle of Crooked River wherein three Mormons (including Patten) and one Missourian were killed.\textsuperscript{15} Rumors and false reports of the skirmish spread across the state, and this time the state militia was called out to stop the Mormons. On 27 October, Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs issued his executive order that Mormons must be “exterminated or driven from the state.”

Three days later, on 30 October, Missouri militia descended on Haun’s Mill, a Mormon outpost east of Far West, where they killed eighteen people and wounded another fifteen in the most brutal act of the conflict.\textsuperscript{16} On the same day, Missouri troops under the leadership of General Samuel D. Lucas arrived near Far West. Mormon representatives met with him on 31 October, and only the surrendering of key Mormon leaders prevented a potential bloodbath. The next day, 1 November, Joseph Smith asked his followers at Far West and Adam-ondi-Ahman to surrender. They did. On the same day, Lucas court-martialed seven Mormon leaders and sentenced them to death. Only the intercession of General Alexander Doniphan prevented the sentence from being carried out.\textsuperscript{17}

The days that followed saw the arrival of General John B. Clark (on 4 November) who announced on 5 November in the public square
at Far West his intention of carrying out the surrender agreement of General Lucas. Meanwhile Mormon leaders were taken first to Jackson County and then to Richmond in Ray County, where Judge Austin A. King presided over a Court of Inquiry from 12 to 29 November. The court concluded that there was enough evidence to hold some of the Mormon prisoners until a trial could begin the next spring. Some of those detained were imprisoned at Richmond. A few, including Joseph Smith, were transferred to Liberty in Clay County, where they remained in jail for the next five months. Most Mormons moved out of the state between December 1838 and April 1839, when Joseph Smith and his associates escaped their guards while being transferred to another jail. They then joined other members of the Church who had already fled east to Illinois.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ROCKWOOD LETTERS: THE DANITES IN MORMON HISTORY

The serious student of Mormon history discovers that there are very few primary sources available or extant that deal with the last months of 1838 in Missouri. Because the vast majority of texts relating to these critical months were written after December 1838, the importance of the Rockwood letters becomes apparent. They are significant contemporary records of the inner history of the LDS community at Far West during this period and for that reason alone are worthy of publication.

But besides their detail for the events during the final months of 1838, revealing, as it were, a closeness that puts the reader in the eye of the storm, these letters also offer a new solution to the old debate over the existence and function of Danites in Mormon society. The existence of groups of armed Mormons called "Danites" during 1838 in Missouri has both plagued faithful Mormons and seemingly provided almost unlimited historical license to their critics ever since. The presence of the word Danites in early sources dealing with the so-called "Mormon War" in Missouri and the fact that some in the LDS community, apparently reacting to the clamor about Danites, crossed out or attempted to delete references to Danites, including the Rockwood material in the Church archives, have unfortunately further suggested the worst interpretation to critics of the Church as well as to well-meaning defenders of the faith.

Historiographically, the further removed from 1838 the source is, and the more critical the author was of the Church, the greater the detail the account contains of illegal activity by the Danites. Thus, accounts written by apostates or other enemies of the Church appearing by 1840 tend to suggest that the Danites were a secretive, militaristic, extralegal organization. And generally, accounts by faithful Mormons after 1840 tend to be very defensive. The main difficulty with most of the critical evidence is that it comes from individuals who were clearly prejudiced
against Joseph Smith. In fact, the most negative accounts can be traced to two main sources: the highly questionable testimony of Sampson Avard at the November 1838 court of inquiry, or individuals who had or did come to question the whole concept of the kingdom of God in early Mormon thought.

The conceptual framework of Stephen LeSueur’s recent book, The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri, is based on the assumption that Joseph Smith knew about and even led marauding Danite bands on their offensive raids on non-Mormon Missouri farms and villages in 1838. LeSueur consistently maintains an interpretation of the Danites that places the major blame on Mormon leaders for their problems in northern Missouri. Thus he concludes that the court of inquiry in November 1838 correctly bound Joseph Smith over for trial based on the evidence presented against him, particularly by Avard. On this matter, LeSueur follows directly an old interpretation.19

The only other major interpretation was advanced by Leland Gentry, first in his 1965 dissertation and later in an article in BYU Studies.20 Basically Gentry argues that the Danites were real but that they went through three stages of development: (1) in June at Far West and in July at Adam-ondi-Ahman, groups were organized to specifically aid in the expulsion of dissenters from the Mormon communities; (2) from June to mid-October 1838, Danites provided protection for Mormons against mob violence, primarily a defensive movement; and (3) during October 1838, during the “Mormon War,” the Danites began to steal from non-Mormons, a stage and activity justified and led by Sampson Avard. The value of Gentry’s thesis has been that it admits that Danites existed and even that Joseph Smith could have known about the first two stages, but it disassociates the Prophet from the most militant and illegal manifestations. The irony, argues Gentry, is that Avard, in providing the testimony against Joseph Smith in November 1838 as a witness for the state, successfully shifted all blame for his own activity onto the Prophet. While Gentry’s work is cited by LeSueur, at no time does he address Gentry’s arguments. While Gentry apparently did not know of the Rockwood texts, LeSueur cites them but misunderstands what Rockwood is saying.21

Rockwood’s own narrative suggests that both Mormons and non-Mormons have fundamentally failed to grasp what the Danites were, and this misunderstanding is perpetuated in the continued use of the term only for meanings critics of the Church early attached to it. While space limitations prevent a detailed analysis here, several points are revealing.22

Rockwood’s record for 22 October 1838 suggests several important points for our understanding of the Danites. First, the origin of the “Armies of Israel” predates 1838; in fact, it goes back to Zion’s Camp in
1834 (see D&C 105:30–32). Here militia operations in or by the Church were tied to divine injunctions to redeem Zion, a central part in Joseph Smith’s mission of establishing the latter-day kingdom of God in Missouri (see D&C 107:72–73). And it has been clearly established that “Zion’s Camp” was a defensive operation, depending solely on the promises of the governor of Missouri.23

Second, Rockwood’s account of the organization of Danites involves the whole Mormon community, and he describes its structure in the biblical terms of companies of tens, fifties, and hundreds (see Ex. 18:13–26). He clearly says the various groupings provided all kinds of community service, not just bearing arms. Some groups of Danites were to build houses; others were to gather food or care for the sick, while still others were to help gather the scattered Saints into the community. There can be no doubt that Rockwood is describing the total activities of a covenant community that viewed itself in the same terms as ancient Israel. Working in groups, these Danites served the interests of the whole. The consecration of labor and property involved the whole community. It was hardly a secret organization working under the cover of darkness; in fact, Rockwood is more explicit about Danite activity in the letters he sends than in the accounts he copies into his own journal. This would hardly be a proper course to take if the whole thing were to be kept in absolute secrecy. Rockwood thus presents a view fundamentally different from Avard’s, a view that allows for an interpretation of these developments in a much broader perspective, both historically and doctrinally.

Finally, Rockwood reveals that the name Dan came not from the warrior tribe of Dan (Gen. 49:16–17; Deut. 33:22; 1 Chr. 12:35) or from the militant references to the “Daughters of Zion” (Isa. 3:16), as critical sources alleged or misunderstood, but rather, and more consistently, from the book of Daniel, “because the Prophet Daniel has Said the Saints Shall take the Kingdom and possess it for ever” (Dan. 2:44). To the student of Mormon history, this brings the whole notion into clear focus. Early Mormons consistently used the book of Daniel in their own self-understanding of the mission of the Church (see especially D&C 65:2). The “stone cut out without hands” was to fill the whole earth. It was, in their minds, the kingdom of God, and it was a direct outgrowth of their millennial expectations. It was not to be established by bloodshed or lawbreaking (see D&C 58:19–22; 98:4–7; 105:5). The righteous were to be gathered out of the world, and, as Rockwood notes, it was the growing concentration of Mormons that really bothered their Missouri neighbors. General Clark’s counsel to those who remained at Far West was to not gather again.

Throughout Rockwood’s letters, Mormon millennial expectations are obvious, but nowhere is there the cutthroat secrecy that Avard later
persuaded Judge Austin King and other non-Mormons there was. The illegal activities Avard testified to are also missing in the other known contemporary Mormon references to Danites. John Smith’s diary speaks of the Danite activity in Adam-ondi-Ahman in very matter-of-fact terms; and the reference in the “Scriptory Book” of Joseph Smith kept by George Robinson also confirms the essentials suggested by Rockwood:

Some time past the bretheren or Saints have come up day after day to consecrate, and to bring their offerings into the store house of the lord, to prove him now herewith and se[el] if he will not pour us out a blessings that there will not be room enough to contain it. They have come up hither Thus far, according to the order <Rev?> of the Danites, we have a company of Danites in these times, to put right physically that which is not right. and to cleanse the Church of verry great evils which hath hitherto existed among us inasmuch as they cannot be put to right by teachings & persuasions. This company or a part of them exhibited on the fourth day of July [illegible word] They come up to consecrate by companies of tens, commanded by their captain over ten.24

All of this is not to suggest that the Mormon militia obeyed all the laws or that a segment of them were not misled by Avard. But as Richard L. Anderson has recently shown, even the burning of Gallatin and the raid on Millport were defensive in nature and came only after years of patient suffering.25 Therefore, to argue that these were simply the more public side of the very dark Danite activities is not historically accurate. It might be suggested that either Sidney Rigdon’s speeches or private counsel could have encouraged Avard’s activities, but it is unfair to continue to use the term Danite to cover only an aberration.

Rockwood’s record would lead us to conclude that the original intention of the Danites was to more fully organize modern Israel into an integrated community with each person contributing to the benefit of the whole. It is unfortunate that the term has only been used to identify the activities of the more radical fringe, probably those led in that direction by Avard.

Avard’s testimony seems to have laid the foundation for all subsequent interpretations. Even General Clark admitted Avard was the key to his investigation of the Mormons.26 Surely the accounts of such individuals as Reed Peck, John Corrill, John Whitmer, William Swartzell, John Hunt, Ebenezer Robinson, and even John D. Lee were framed less by what was happening in the Mormon community than by the interpretative framework Avard managed to provide for anyone who needed a rationale for rejecting either the leadership of Joseph Smith or the centralizing tendencies of a covenant community intent on establishing Zion.27

Students of Mormon history must also consider the various contemporary histories by individuals who remained faithful to the
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Church. Their lack of references to Danites not only suggest that perhaps they equated the community with the title, but that it had become a negative label, hence they denied knowing the term in the context of Avard’s use of it. In the 1880s John Taylor recalled, “I have heard a good deal about Danites, but I have never heard of them among the Latter-day Saints. If there was such an organization, I never was made acquainted with it.”

Other sources, usually autobiographical recollections such as those of Mosiah Hancock, William Huntington, or Luman Shurtliff, are best understood in the context of Rockwood’s use of the term Danite.

If what we argue here has merit, and we think the Rockwood letters suggest this, then the Danites in early Mormon history must be reevaluated. When Parley P. Pratt wrote to his family just at the end of the court of inquiry, he could, in honesty, tell them that “they accuse us of things that never entered into our hearts.” And Joseph Smith, writing from Liberty Jail in December 1838, added:

We have learned also since we have been in prison that many false and pernicious things which were calculated to lead the saints far astray and to do great injury have been taught by Dr. Avard as coming from the Presidency . . . which the presidency never knew of being taught in the church by any body untill after they were made prisoners . . . the presidency were ignorant as well as innocent of these things.

We might even consider the impact the Missouri organization had, not only on the host of dime-novels of nineteenth-century America, but on the organization Brigham Young gave to the “Camp of Israel” at Winter Quarters in 1847 (D&C 136:2–11) and his continued stress on consecration and community building in the Great Basin.

SOURCE DESCRIPTION

One explanation for the lack of contemporary historical sources dealing with Mormonism in Missouri in the period 1838–39 is that in times of crisis the struggle for survival interrupts the record-keeping process. Rockwood was one of those who did write during those difficult months. The Rockwood journal published here, covering the period between 6 October 1838 and 30 January 1839, is a series of journal entries sent in installments as letters to family members and friends in the area of Holliston, Massachusetts, where Rockwood had lived before he left for Missouri.

The text below is taken from three manuscripts: two housed in the LDS Church Archives in Salt Lake City and the third at the Yale University Library at New Haven, Connecticut. The Yale manuscript, written in Rockwood’s own hand, appears to be a copy recorded by him in a handmade notebook retained for his personal record. The
manuscripts at the LDS Church Archives are a parallel version of Rockwood’s journal-letters copied by Phineas Richards in Holliston, Massachusetts, from material he had evidently received from Rockwood and desired to pass on to his wife at West Stockbridge, Massachusetts. While the Yale and LDS manuscripts essentially cover the same time period, each contains textual differences not found in the other. In some instances, the text Rockwood sent to Richards is more explicit than the one he copied in his own notebook. But in two instances long additions are made in the notebook that do not appear in the Richards manuscripts.

That the journal material sent by Rockwood was received and read in Massachusetts is seen in correspondence from that locality involving the Richards family. This correspondence also reveals the context in which the Richards copy was made and substantiates his having copied it. In a letter postmarked St. Louis, Missouri, on 1 January 1839, Franklin D. Richards, the seventeen-year-old son of Phineas Richards, reviewed his own experience in western Missouri for his parents in West Stockbridge. Among other things, Franklin told his parents details of the massacre at Haun’s Mill, where his brother George had been killed. But for further information about events at Far West he referred them to the Church in Holliston, where, he said, Albert Rockwood “says he kept a daily journal of the whole transaction and sent it to them.”

Other references to the Rockwood journals are found in letters of Phineas Richards at Holliston to his wife, Wealthy, in West Stockbridge. After writing about the Haun’s Mill Massacre and quoting Rockwood in a letter of 7 January 1839, Phineas adds, “I can not now write many of the particulars respecting the war, Brother Rockwood has kept a journal of all this transaction, and as soon as possible I shall transcribe the same and send or fetch it to Richmond for your benefit.” Writing to his wife again on 21 January, Phineas introduces an extensive summary of news about “the troubles at the west” by giving his source:

Brother Rockwood keeps a journal of the proceedings there and when he gets a sheet filled he sends it out of the reach of their enemies to mail them and so they come regular. [T]hrough their hardest conflict letters did not pass and repass in mail, evil minded men detained them. Now he says they are more regular in going and coming.

The differences between the Rockwood manuscript at Yale and the Phineas Richards manuscripts at the LDS Church Archives indicate that Rockwood tailored different versions of his journal to different audiences. His method is seen from instructions he gave his father: “I have kept a Journal of what has been in this vicinity & sent it to Sister Bose [Vose] of Boston up to this date and requested her to let you have the reading of it which you have probably had before this. I shall now continue to you the Journal & request you to let her have the reading of it.”
THE MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscript 1, located in the LDS Church Archives, contains entries from 6 October to 19 November 1838. It is written by Phineas Richards on unlined white paper, folded and sewed to make a twenty-four page booklet 16.5 cm. x 20 cm. The first seven pages and four lines are written in a dark bluish-green ink; the remainder is in dark brown ink.

Manuscript 2, also housed in the LDS Church Archives, contains entries from 19 November to 2 December 1838, followed by a copy of a letter and poem written by Parley P. Pratt from Richmond, Missouri, dated 9 December 1838. It is written by Phineas Richards on white lined paper, folded and sewed to make a sixteen-page booklet 16.5 cm. x 20 cm. The writing is in brown ink, but the Pratt letter and poem are in a lighter shade. The last 5 3/4 pages of the booklet are blank. Someone other than the writer has numbered the pages, continuing the second manuscript in sequence after the first.

Manuscript 3 is located in the Albert P. Rockwood Papers, Coe Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. This manuscript, in the handwriting of Albert P. Rockwood, is written on off-white, unlined paper in dark brown ink, folded and sewed to make thirty-six pages measuring 24.5 cm. x 19.5 cm. The pages have mostly become unsewn. This manuscript covers the entire period of the other two, but with substantial differences in the text, including word changes, additions, and omissions. Where Manuscript 2 ends with the Parley P. Pratt letter and poem following the entry of 2 December 1838, Manuscript 3 continues with material dated in January 1839. The Yale manuscript is written on twenty-one unnumbered pages; the remainder of the notebook is blank. 34

EDITORIAL METHOD

The featured text in this publication is Manuscripts 1 and 2, with substantive departures from Manuscript 3 given in the notes. However, two segments of Manuscript 3 become the featured text where that manuscript contains extensive new material. These lengthy insertions are enclosed in braces { }. The narrative is transcribed as written and punctuated in the manuscripts, so far as possible within the limits of modern printing. An exception: dates of the entries are made uniform and have been set apart from the rest of the text. Redundant repetitions of a few words are not preserved. Additions to the text for clarification are enclosed in brackets [ ]. Insertions in the text appear in angle brackets <> at the point of insertion.
What follows is an important primary source for Mormon history in Missouri. It is one of the few contemporary accounts of the last months of the Church in that state in 1838–39. In general it reveals the thoughts and commitments of a recent convert as well as the observations of a recently arrived emigrant in northern Missouri. It is clear that along with recording what he personally witnessed, Rockwood reported rumor and gossip that filtered into Far West during the fast-paced weeks of October and November 1838. His love for his people, his loyalty to his religion, and his indignation over the contemporary events that caused his people to suffer remain alive in his letters.

6 October 1838, Saturday.
Sister Vose

Agreeable to my engagement to you I now proceed to give you a short journal of what is passing in this vicinity. When I was at St. Louis (sept 6) on my way to this place I learned by the public papers, that a mob was gathering to drive the Mormons out of Davies County, and seeing the excitement that prevailed it seemed not wisdom to be publicly known as a Mormon as I had on all my journey. I passed up the river without being publicly known and land-ed at De Witt which is 60 miles from Far West. while there a man came along notifying the Missourians to go to Davis County to drive the Mormons out of Adam-ondi-aman[,] [1] I saw some of them making preperations &c.

About this time the Sherriff of Caldwell County took 40 stands of armes that were on the road to arm the mob. The Missourians gathered from all the upper Counties to join the mob to the number of several hundreds, they continued to incamp in various places for several miles round Adam-ondi-aman for about 2 weeks, taking some prisoners, robing and insulting in various ways many of the Brethren, and driving many from their homes that were scattered about the county, but thos[e] at the City of Adam-on-diaman were not molested only threatened[.] they were constantly under arms and on the watch[,] the Brethren went from this plase by hundreds to their relief. Far West was in a state of constant alarm for several days[,] the common was almost constantly covered with armed men, who were determined to maintain t[he]ir rights even at the expence of life. [p. 1]

The armies of Isreal[37] are already acknowledged to be terible by the Missourians[38] Three or four hundred of the Missourians malitia were called out to disperse the Mob which was done by the help of the brethren without coming to an engagement the Mob have now retired from Davis County with shame and disgrace. Great verry great fear rests on the Missourians in Davis county[,] they
are now selling their property very low to the Brethren. In many cases they sell their real estate with their houses and crops on the ground for less than the crop is worth. Davis County is now considered in the possession of the Brethren. The real estate of the Brethren has risen while that of the Missourians has fallen 3/4 in three months, thus the Lord is preparing the way for his Children.

One of the causes of the above was the Missourians refusing some of the Brethren the right of suffrage at an Election. The Missourians commenced beating the Brethren when they manfully defended themselves and sent an express to far west and in 12 hours the armies of Israel were at the place of contention demanding peace which was restored for a few days only when the Mob began to gather.

Brother Joseph Smith Jr & Lyman White at the head of the army of Israel that went up to the relief of the Brethren in Davies County. This army that went up were without authority [p. 2] by the laws of the land, and are therefore considered as breakers of the peace, Brother Joseph & B. White have been bound over for the sum of $500 each for their appearance at the higher Court but it is thought nothing more will be done with them but that remains yet to be proved.

Far West, is 25 miles from Adam-on-diahman. During the campaign there was a station every few miles of men and horses between the two Cities to convey the news. This City was guarded at every entrance. It was no uncommon thing to hear the trump of the Lord sound to call the armies of Israel to arms. You would have laughed to have seen the fear that rested on the Missourians, on one occasion the malitia that were raised by the authority of the state in Clay County had occasion to pass through Far West, on their journey to suppress the mob at Adam-on-diahman. They sent their wise men to ask if they could be permitted to ride through our streets, the answer to them was that any peaceable citizen could freely pass, On the strength of this answer they mustered courage enough to pass through their number was 93 most of them looked rather sower. I suppose it was because the law of the state obliges them to turn out and to suppress a mob against the Mormons. During the campaign an express came from the commander of the Malitia that he feared that most of his men would desert him and join the mob, but the mob was dispersed with out an [p. 3] engagement, so they had not the chance to desert that many wish for.

During the campaign at Adam-on-diahman the Missourians sent Petitions & Depositions to the Governor representing that the Mormons were the worst of people that among other things they were murdering Robing &c.

And the honourable governor believed that the Mormons were all in the fault and the Missourians right nor did he satisfactorily learn to the contrary until he had actually raised 3000 troops and march with them to within 60 miles of the F. West when to his astonishment he learned that the Mormons were not the aggressors, but the defenders on the Laws of Missouri, but the very people that had been sending there depositians & petitions were the Murderers and Robbers & the all manner of evil people people that they had been representing the Mormons to be. He then left us to continue about our own busines and returned home, instead of searching out and bringing to justice the vilinous Mobacrats. The Governour arrived a few days after the[y] was dispersed. I
suppose that the time and other expences of this campaign has cost the City of Far West more than $3,000[.] the Brethren in Davies County have suffered much more loss than in Caldwell County.

Among other things the Brethren have been represented to be enemies to our Country\textsuperscript{44} and the Laws of Missouri but [p. 4] the test of this is come bringing shame on our accusers. For about this time the Governor issued his Proclamation for a large amount of Malitia to be raised and held in readiness to march against the Indians at a moments warning. Caldwell County was called upon to furnish 63 men. the Malitia were all warned to meet at Far West to bee for volunteers and a deficiency was to be filled by draft, they acordingly assembled and one beet was made when, a b[o]ut twice the required sum was immediately raised by volunteers. Proving to the state that we are ready to suppress foreign invasion as well as internal Mobs. It was with difficulty some of the Mob Counties could raise men to an[s]wer the Pr[o]clamation.

Permanent arrangements are now making for constant imployement for both Male & Female by the operation of Church firms which are about being extensively established[.] the members leas[e] all their real Estate (save their City lots) to the firm to which they belong for a term of years, from 10 to 99 without any consideration or interest.\textsuperscript{45} Personal Estate is put in on nearly the same condition[.] Evry member that join[s] is to put in all he has over & above his needs and wants for his present stewardship, in all cases each person is morally bound to pay his honest debts before leaving. The calculation is for the Brethren to dwell in the City & cultivate the [p. 5] land in the vicinity in fields many miles in extent or from city to City. The Brethren own most of Caldwell County. most of it is or probably will be leased to the firms.

City Lots are owned by the Bishop of the Church\textsuperscript{46} until sold for private stewardship. All kinds of necessary articles will soon be manufactured by these firms. that we be under no necesity of purchasing of our Enemies. The firms furnish Constant imploy for all who join them and pay $1.00 per day for a mans work.

Any surpluss that may remain after paying the demands of the firm is to be divided according to the needs and wants (Not according to the property invested) to each family, Annually or ofteren if needed. The firms have put in very large lots of wheat this fall but the season for sowing is nearly over, and the Brethren, will soon go to building up the City[,] many houses will be built this fall. The operations of these firms enables a man to get a comfortable house in a very few days\textsuperscript{47} when he gets about it. 1st by his working for the firm 70 or 80 days then the firm turn out stone cutters, Teams, Carpenters Maysons &c. to complete the House and nearly evry thing (save the land,) is paid for by the a mans own labor day for day.

Arrangements will soon be made that a person can get [p. 6] every necessary to Eat, Drink, Live in or & to wear, at the store house of the firms, and the best part of it all is that they want no better pay than labor. Arrangements are making that no person shall have the excuse for not laboring, nothing to do, nor shall the idler eat the bread of industry. It is a time of union & peace in the Church. But Rob, Mob, & Plunder [are] in the vicinity.

Crops are very good, it is said there is corn enough in Caldwell Co. to last the inhabitance and the Emigration 2 years but preperations are making for
10 fold larger crops next year. This is truly a delightful County[,] the air & warter is very good.48

I will now give you a plan of the City. The publick square in the center contains 10 acres, the 4 main streets are each 8 rods wide, the others are 6 rods wide. The squares contain 4 acres each, and are calculated for 4 Buildings,59 (streets [are] mark[ed] 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th North st also East, south, and West)

The City is situated on a high roling Praary the timber is on Shoal & Goos crick which are from 2 to 4 miles and nearly surrounds the City.

This plan is the first square mile of the City[,] it is continued out on the same plan. The House of the Lord is to stand in the center of the Public square[,] the corner stone was laid [p. 7] on the 4th of July last. Most of the lots in the first square mile are sold. City lots can be bought 2d handed but it is thought not advisable to purchase only of the Bishop. Plenty of lots [are] yet for sale in [the] 2d mile which brings the highest lots 1/2 mile to the square. Those that wish to purchase lots in F[ar], W[est], would do well to purchase soon for if the war which is now blackning on all sides should abate the lots would sell very fast.50 Lotts cost 30 to 60 Doll[lars] (work on the Lords House pay[s] for lots,) this is the pay the Bishop desires of those that can-not pay the money.51

14 October 1838, Sunday.

soon after the Mob was dispersed in Davis county they began to assemble at De Witt in Carriltn Co. an express came from that Place here a week last Thursday52 night [r]questing assistance & Council[,] Friday morn Capt. Brunson53 started with 42 men all mounted and well armed, he was hailed by the Mob that were encamped near De Witt but they passed on and arrived in safety at De Witt[,] On Friday afternoon another company started under Brother Joseph.

The attack54 was made on De Witt by taking Elder Humphreys55 family and burning his house[,] he lived about 1 1/2 mile[s] from the landing which is head quarters, several scattering shots were made at the Brethren during 3 or 4 of the first days, no damage save making holes in their Clothing. [p. 8] One heavy charge was receivd from the Mob when the brethren returned the fire and killed 4 Missorians, The Campaign lasted about a week when a treaty <of peace> was made with the Mob and the Brethren have left the place. De Witt was not an appointed stake of Zion, but was designed as a Port of Landing on [the] Missouri river[,] it contained about 10 or 12 families of the Brethren when I Passed through on my way to this place.

The engagement at Davis has probably cost them more in time and damage than $2000.56 It is getting very unsafe for the Mormon[s] to traven [travel] in small companies in Carriltn Ray & Selene Countise[,] A camp that are on their way to this place have been stoped near Grand River by a Mob nearly a week. The Missourian women partake of the same spirit of the Mobacrats, their husbands[,] they have been seen & heard by the sisters of the Church to threaten their lives by brandishing their knives and hatchets &c.

Emigration to the stakes of Zion is very great[,] almost every day witnesseth from 1 to 30 teams with furniture & families[,] Teniment room is very scarce in this place, many families have to live in their tents & waggons. The houses are mostly made of logs and generally contain as many families as rooms and in many cases more[,] The houses are mere shanties[,] they cost from
30 to 80 days work [of] 1 man besides from ten to fifty Dollars in Cash[,] not more than 20 or 30 houses have been built since the first of Sept. the Brethren have been more than 1/2 of the time in dispersing Mobs which are almost continually about us, They have [p. 9] not yet dared to come on us at Far West but actak [attack] the weaker parts

During the campaign at De Witt the Brethren called upon the Governour for protection but instead of turning out with his 3,000 Troops as he did when he suposed the Mormons were in fault only a few days before, He says to them settle your own difficulties

The Governour was one of the leading characters in driving the Brethren from Jackson Co in 1838 [1833]58

Some of the officers of malitia did harm to themselves in trying to get the malitia to disperse the Mob but they found <them> Mob at heart and <they> were ordered home.59

15 October 1838, Monday.

The Brethren have all returned from De Witt[,] the Mob is now assembling again in Davies Co[,] they have sworn in their wrath that evry Mormon shall leave the County. Adam-ondi-ahman & Seth are 1 stake of Zion and will not be so easily surrendered. Seth is 12 miles from this place.60 A meeting was called this day to make arrangements for the defence of the Brethren in Davies Co. Oaur lives Honours & Fortunes are pledged to defend the constitution of the U.S.A. and our individual rights and our Holy Religion. the strong bands of union appear to be wretched around the heart of evry man & woman, come life or come death come what will[,] here we stand or here we die is the will of the Lord. [p. 10] Here the Hoary headed sire and the stripling youth gird on their armour and for the field prepare. Death appears to have lost its terrou among the armies of Isreal.

19 October 1838, Friday.

About 300 of the Brethren are gone to Davies Co. to the relief of the Brethren[.] No Battle as yet, the Brethren are gathering into the Cities in haste. Brother Joseph says things here are all right

A meeting was called this day[,] the Brethren here consecrated Beef, Corn, Wood, & finally they do freely impart to those that have need. Finally here is a time and place that tries men['] souls. the wicked have no place in Zion. Much property has been consecrated in the last 2 months.61 The Mob have cannon in Davies Co. which the Brethren have are determined to take. They have taken ab[o]ut 40 stands of armes.

N.B. I was bitten by a Dog 2 weeks ago Last Thursday and have not walked much since.

21 October 1838, Sunday.

Proclamation was made this day that Orson Hyde effect had apostatised[,] he left the place last night and left a letter for one of the Brethren which let out the secret.62
22 October 1838, Monday

Beloved parent Far West is the head quarters of the Mormon war. the armies of Isreal that were established by revelation from God are seen from my door evry day with their Captains of 10. s 50. s & 100. A portion of each Day is set apart for drill. after which [p. 11] they go to their several stations (VIZ.) 2 Companies of 10.s are to provide the families with meal[,] 2 provide wood[,] 2 or 3 Build cabbins[,] 1 Company of 10.s collect & prepare armes, 1 company provide me[al], 1 Company are spies, one Company are for express. 1 for guard[,] 2 Companies are to gather in the families that are scattered over the counties in the vicinity[,] 1 company is to see to & provide for the sick, and the families of those that are off on duty[,] Others are employed in gathering provisions into the city &c &c.

Those companies are called Danites because the Prophet Daniel has said they shall take the kingdom and possess it for-ever.

23 October 1838, Tuesday.

Last night about 7 o'clock the cavallery that went from this place to Adam-ondi-ahman came in under the tune of Yanke Doudle, their number was about 130[,] these are the horsemen of Isreal, President Rigdon gave them a short address suited to the occasion when all the people said Amen.

The Mob have been dispersed by the Brethren nor have they had any assistance from the Malitia neither do we desire any (at least not without it is better than what we have had)

The Missourians have nearly all[l] left Davies Co[,] fear rest[s] down upon them and they flee when no man pursueth. [p. 12]

News came in this morning that the Brethren had taken the cannon, they found it buried in the ground[,] the Brethren are fast returning from the Northern Campaign with hearts overflowing with joy[,] not a drop of blood has been spilt nor a gun fired as I have heard of, the Mobdispersed by 100ds on the approach of the Danites.

The word of the Lord was [received] several months since for the saints to gather into the cities but they have been slow to obey untill the judgments were upon them71 and now they are gathering by flight and haste, leaving all and are glad to get off at that[,] the City of Far West is literally crowded and the Brethren are gathering from all quarters. This day while Jessee72 & Elisabeth73 were in school the trustees came to them and requested them to give up the house for families[,] it was no sooner done, than 6 families drove up with their goods and took possession. Here is no place for Idlers[,] evry man is at work. women take turns in cooking for the soldiers. when a soldiers duty is done for the day on parade he retires to the corn-field4 or wherever his duty may be. The main cloud is not quite so black now as it was sunday & Monday.

24 October 1838, Wednesday.

Last night the Mail came and brought papers but not a single letter to any person[,] it is supposed they were stoped by some evil minded person or persons, it is nothing unexpected to us that it is stoped, hereafter letters from you to us may be verry irregular. [p. 13] But from us to you they may be more regular as we can send them out of the City before we mail them. I wish you all to be verry
particular in acknowledging letters that are sent that we may know what you have receiv'd.

Provisions are low, here Corn is 20 Cts per bushel, Beans 1.00 Wheat 87 1/2 Cts [blank] .31 Apples .75 Butter 12 1/2 per lb Honey .7 Beef 2 to 4 Cts Wood $2.00 per cord Pork 3 to 4 Cts per lb. soap is the hardest necessary to be got, Bar soap is worth 18 3.4 per lb. soft soap is from 7 to 10 Cts per lb which is about $1.00 per gallon, salt is 12 1/2 Cts per qt. salutatus 25 per lb Milk nothing but is getting rather skirse.76 Pumpkins are very plentiful by going a few miles, good squashes are plenty of the 1st quality. very little of domestic fruit is raised within 20 miles.

Medical herbs are rather scarce bring on Lobelias, Babary Rasbury, slipery Elm, Composition, bitters, & Hot drops, Peneroyal77 is plentiful, Bring a good stock of Rasbury.

Clothing is twice as high hear as at the East,78 shoes also. 3 Months since 1 per cent would insure goods from St. Louis to this place but now thought is thought worth 25 per cent. Indeed perilous times have verily come, and it is at the Risk of our lives that we go to the landing for our goods.

The word of the Lord is now for the saints to gather to Zion in haste,79 it has been not to flee in haste or by flight but to have all things prepared before them. And now we <all> say to you and all of the Chirch to make speed and haste to Zion (see) doctrin & Covenant Page 128 Section 1580 [p. 14]

25 October 1838, Thursday.

Last night about 12 OClock the drumms beat to armes. it was caused by the arival of the news, that the Mob had taken 2 of our spies[.]81 70 horsmen started for the encampment of the Mob, about 8 miles, arived at 3 OClock within 2 miles. left their horses, went on foot. they were fired upon by the Mob[.].82 one man was wounded the first fire, about 70 of the Mob fired the second time from behind the river bank, 4 of the brethren [were] wounded at this shot, (among was David Patting83 1 of 12) a rush was now made by the Brethren on the Mob[.] a short but terrible conflict ensued, in 2 minutes the Mob were making their way up the oposit bank, several of the Mob were left dead between the banks, [we] took 1 prisnor84 the rest escaped to the woods leaving about 70 horses with saddles & bridles, some Armes Blankets Tents Waggons &c. which were taken as the spoil of our enemies. Several of the Brethren of the were slightly wounded and 5 dangerously, 3 of which if saved, must be by a miracle.85

Last night the Mob burnt a number of houses in a bout 4 miles of here.86 The spies were found in the camp of [the] Mob as prisners and set at liberty, one slightly wounded in [the] shoulder,87 the other was Elder Greens son.88

27 October 1838, Saturday.

This is a solemn day to us 2 of the wounded Brethren Buried David Patten & a young man of 18.[.]89 Brother Gideon Carter90 has been missing since the battle. Untill last Night when he was found near the battle ground shot through the head. The Mob have stoped a No. of familys 27 miles from here among them is Brother Joseph Youngs91 and many others, in fact it is a common thing, by Mob, [p. 15]
28 October 1838, Sunday.

I will now give a discription of the battle on the 25[.]. The number of the Brethren engaged in the Battle [was] 55[.]. one division of 15 [was] not in the engagement. The Mob No. [was] about 80. a Methodist Minister and about 10 men fled, which left about 70 in the engagement. The Mob had advantage by the lay of [the] land and rivers bank. The Brethren were wounded as follows, (VIZ.) 3 in the Bowels, 1 in the neck, 1 in the shoulder, 1 Through the hips, 1 through both thighs, 1 in the arm, all by musket shot.

Before the Brethren jumped down the bank, 1 Br. had his arm broke by a cut of sword down the bank. Brother Gideon Carter was shot in the head and died on the spot. the best information obtain'd is between 20 and 30 of the Mob died on the ground.

A more severe battle perhaps never was fought when we consider the smallness of the number, and the shortness of the time which was about 1 1/2 minutes.

Now Father, come to Zion and fight for the religion of Jesus[.] many a hoary head is engaged here, the Prophet goes out to the battle as in days of old. he has the sword that Nephi took from Laban. is not this marvellous? well when you come to Zion you will see many marvellous things, which will strengthen your faith, and which is for the edification of all the saints. The Prophet has unsheathed his sword and in the name of Jesus declares that it shall not be sheathed again until he can go unto any County or state in safety and in peace.

29 October 1838, Monday.

The war cloud is blackning around us. [p. 16]

30 October 1838, Tuesday.

This P.M. 3. O.Clocak an express came in stating that an army more than a mile in length was approaching, which soon made its appearance. They marched over goes river & formed a line of battle within 1 mile of us. The armies of Isreal were soon in battle array to receive them. Seeing we were ready to give them battle they withdrew & incamped in the woods near by for the night. a flag of truce came in saying they pitied our deplorable condition and requested 2 families to be delivered to them &c.— That was all the favor they asked of us, immediate destruction is threatened us. the families that were asked for chose rather to share the fate of the Saints in the City. About 40 fires can be seen in our enemies Camp. the family went up to see them this evening.

31 October 1838, Wednesday.

A strong gard was posted around the City last night & a fortification built on the south side, the men were nearly all employed in guarding & fortifying the City[.] little or no sleep in City last night. Women were employed in looking & picking the most valuable articles supposing a terrible battle would take place in the morning and perhaps every house fired. About 8 O Clock our enemy salied forth in line of Battle, but seeing our fortifications and probably knowing that we had been reinforced by about 100 men during the night again retreated (we have
at this time about 500 men.) (And our enemies about 1700) during the day our enemies received a reinforcement of about 1500 men. Our spies come in evry few hours and bring news of the depredations of the Mob in evry [p. 17] quarter for many miles round. About 4, O.Clock this P.M. our enemies again salied forth for battle they came within gun shot, then withdrew, then sallied forth again, the work of death appeared to be before us. An armey of 2200 horse & more than a 1000 foot was now brought before our City which had less than 600 men to defend it, we knew their determination was to exterminate us, & all made up our minds to defend our City until the last man should fall to the ground, Our determination was known to our Enemies, as there were some that turned traitors. Our Enemies <feard> the distraction that was nigh at hand & sent a flag of truce to this effect. That they would delay for the Night. if we would surrender Joseph Smith Jr. Sidney Rigdon. P.P. Pratt & George W. Robinson as hostages until to morrow morning at 8 O Clock. when they are all to be returned. You may now imagine to yourself the solemnity that now rests upon us, we have the promis that but little blood will be shed at this time, but God only knows how we are to be delivered, this promis was made last Tuesday The Governor has long since refused us any aid, but he has now come out openly against us, and given leave for all to go against the Mormons that wish, the Mob take great liberty from this.

1 November 1838, Thursday.

Last night a treaty in part was made, we have all given up our armes & surrend[ered] ourselves as pris[on]ors, our enemies now guard our City that no man pass in or out. 400 <men> remained for this purpose [p. 18]

2 November 1838, Friday.

several of the leading members of this Church have been taken to Jackson Co gaol [jail].

News came in that a Mob had fallen on the Brethren at Hauns Mill about 18 miles from <here> they killed 15 on the ground 3 more have died of their wounds & several more are severely wounded, there was about 30 of the Brethren at this place[.] those of the Brethren that were not killed or wounded have made their escape as they could be hunted by the Missourians like wild beasts[.] Among the killed was Brother Phinehas Richards son that was about 15 years of age, Br. Joseph Young was at the place with his family, he made his escape amidst a shower of Bullets and arived in this City the day the Massacree took place (Tuesday P.M.) none of the Mob were kill[ed] as we can learn. the Mob consisted of about 300[.] the Br were taken on surprise

3 November 1838, Saturday.

It is truly a solemn time in Caldwell & Davis Countys, more than 50 of the Brethren have been prisners in our enemies camp[.] where they are now we know not, save a few of them, one man was bruised and brought into the City and has since died of the wound. 2 have been killed & the last we knew of them they were un buried nor would the Mob suffer them to be buried, a few have been set at liberty, but the most of them are yet among the missing. the Lord only
4 November 1838, Sunday.

Gen Clark has this day arrived with 1600 men as malitia 600 more are within eight miles.

More than 6000 men have been in Far West in one week. [On] Orders from the govenour to exterminate the Mormons, the Brethren are hunted as wild game and shot down, several have been shot in site of the City, womin are ravished and their houses rifled, one woman has been killed within less than 2 miles of this City, we are here as captives strictly guarded by the Malitia[.] no person is allowed to go out of the City.

5 November 1838, Monday.

The captives sons of Zion were paraded this day and the names of 51 that were present were called and they ordered to the front as prisners to receive their trial for some thing they know not what, they are kept under close guard this night, not permited to go to their houses without a gard of 3 soldiers. The Governor and all our enemies are determined that we shall not gather togerther, but shall be scattered or exterminated (at least from the state.)

6 November 1838, Tuesday.

The Brethren that were ordered out yesterday, take up their march for Richmond, vary few know what they are acused of. we are completely in the hands of our enemies. they are our Judges, Jurors, & Executioners. God only can deliver and we that are firm have only to wait and see the salvation of God. These troubles make a sifting in the Church[.] many have denied the faith, but they are those that were week before [p. 20] in most cases[.] some however have denied that have long been in good standing. Among those is Thomas B. Marsh he is one of the 12 and Jared Carter is on the main.

The Brethren at Adam-ondi-ahman are in like condition with us[.] the Malitia guard them to keep off the Mob. They have agreed to guard them 10 day[s] in which time they all cal[c]ulate to leave the Co. they are scattering very fast. mostly to Caldwell Co. Davis Co. contains about 300 famalies of the Brethren.

10 November 1838, Saturday.

The armey that approached our City on the 30 were all Mob under colour of Malitia voluntarily collected from the upper Counties, and placed themselves under Malitia officers. this armey murdered, plundered, & distroyed.

A few of this armey was rais[ed] by draft and officered like respectable men and it was probab[ly] through their means that every body & evry thing pertaining to the Mormons were not distroyed[.] The other Malitia that have visited us have a more respectable apperance. General Clark came last Sunday with about 3000 men but has now reired.

10,500 men have been called into the field by the governour, with orders to exterminate the Mormons. but the Officers [k]new the order to exterminate was unlawful therefore they have taken the responsibility to make treaties.

The Governor has also ordered 19,500 men to stand ready at a moment against a little hand ful of Mormons. [p. 21]
Br. Joseph and the rest of the prisioners that were taken to Jackson Co were treated with great politeness & Hospitality[.]
Instead of being killed & buried on the Temple Lot (as their enemies said they should) they Preached on the Temple lot which is the fulfillment of a prophesy spoken several months since.

11 November 1838, Sunday.

The Brethren have returned from Jackson Co. by order of Gen. Clark as it was not lawful to take them to that Co. for trial. they are now at Richmond 40 miles from Far West, about 60 of the Brethren are at Richmond waiting their trial, we are not able to learn what they are accused of, some of them are in Irons.

Some thing like 30 of the Brethren have been killed and about 100 are missing but we are in hopes that they are not killed. We had a heavy fall of snow on the 17 & 18 of Octr also on the 7 & 8 of Novr. also several small fluries of since. It has been very cold for a month past the ground is and has been frozen, several inches for a number of weeks. It has been colder for a month past than the winter months will average at the East. My family are well. I have not done a days work for 44 days, we have enough for comfort, we must learn to bear affliction for it is of the Lord, as a people of our afflictions are great[.] those that remain firm have no desire to return to Babylon.

19 November 1838, Monday.

Brother Joseph Smith is indited for high treason and 7 others with him. [p. 22] among the number is P. P. Pratt[.] they are confined in chains[,] the court has been in session one week and as yet have found nothing to condemn the Prophet. Christ told his deciple[s] they should be brought before rulers for his name sake, and if the Prophet should be condemned to die it would be no more than was done to Christ & his Apostles.

MANUSCRIPT 2

19 November 1838, Monday.
Brother Nurse, & Church in Holliston.

I last Saturday closed a sheet containing a Journal of what is passing in this vicinity & directed it to Father Haven if there has ben no interrupion in the Mail that has reached you before this will, this is a continuation of the journal & I wish you to shew or read it to the Brethren.

I direct my journal to different individuals hoping that each will make it their business to let others of the Brethren know what is going on.

Yesterday was a pleasant day yet it did not thaw enough to cause the icicles to drop from the south eaves of [our] house. Our crops are mostly in the field, Potatoes not dug are frose solid, very little work has been done here for 8 weeks we have all been mostly employed in keeping the Mobs from burning our houses.

As our religion is different from all others, we recieve different treatment from the world and this very thing confirms us in the faith once delivered to the saints and now delivered to us. Notwithstanding our great trials & tribulations, God is working all things to his honour & glory. Therefore be not shaken at what I wrote in my last, but do even as we. Lift up your heads & rejoice knowing these
things will precede the coming of our Saviour, [p. 24] Brethren pray for us for we have to wrestle not only against [page torn]ad but against principalities, & powers, against the [rulers o]f the darkness of this world, against gross wickedness in high places.\textsuperscript{120}

We are captives we have sold ourselves for nought yet we pray to be redeemed without money. (Isaiah 52–3) we hasten that we <may> be loosed and that we should not die in the pit, and that our bread should not fail (Isaiah 51–14)\textsuperscript{121} The Br[ethren] have nearly all left Davies Co. Our Enemies have ordered us to leave Caldwell Co. immediately but we are slow to obey and look unto God for deliverance.

We came by order of the Lord & shall go from here at his command[,] it is our gathering that excites the indignation of our enemies & they are determined to prevent it but it is of the Lord and who can hinder? Yet we may be scattered and driven, but God is able to redeem us even from Babylon (Micah 4–10)

We are captives in a defenceless condition, suffering the insult, of our Enemies daily, by their coming among us & taking what or who they please & that too without any precept, or authority[,] our only defence is the helmet of salvation & the sword of the spirit, for whi[ch] we are ambasinders [ambassadors] in bonds

Brethren we are not in darkness that these tribulations should overtake us as a thief in the night, but we are the Children of light & of the day, Therefore let us not sleep as do others but let us wa<cc>th [watch] and pray. [p. 25]\textsuperscript{122}

25 November 1838, Sunday.

We are here nearly secluded from what is passing in the world around us[,] our mail comes to us now and we should be very glad to have you send some of your eastern papers after you have read them. I have seen a Boston paper in which was a slip like this, (the citizens [of] Davis Co called on the citizen[s] of Ray, for arms to defend themselves against the Mormons. it was answered by their turning out 40 guns[,] while these were on the way the Mormons took them and brought them to Far West,)\textsuperscript{123} But the fact was the Mob in Ray Co. went to the U.S. armory and took the 40 guns which they easily had access to as they were left so they could be stolen, probably by design. and while in the act of conveying them to the Mob in Davis Co. the Sherriff of Caldwell Co. took them and brought them to Far West, & after a court of enquiry returned them to the armoury from whence they were taken.\textsuperscript{124} 

I have seen & heard of other slips but I have seldom seen or heard of one but what was so colloured so as to give a wrong impression. Our houses are rifled & our sheep & hogs, & horses and [are] drove of[f] before our eyes by the Missourians who come in in small companies well armed. here is no law for poor Mormons.

At Hauns Mill the battle that I spoke of in my last, is a massacre instead of a battle as the Bretheren were in[p. 26] mostly in an unarmed condition, pages of history do not record such scenes of cruelty among civilized people save among Pirats, their cruelty has been renewed by driving the defenceless women & Children from their homes, on the vast wild prairie where they wandered through the snow for 2 days many of the Children were bear foot nor had they any food during this time. More than 100 famalies have been stope near the
Missourie River by the Mob. They are determined to stop the gathering. My pen fails to describe the persecutions and afflictions that the unbelieving Missourians are permitted to inflict upon us.—

The half can not be told[,] the blood of innocence cries from the ground. Perhaps I have written more than some of you can bear. So let me turn from the scene and ask the little Church[125] in whose tribulations I have shared while with you and is still twined around my heart, are you prepared for such scenes as we have to pass[?] 

Are you willing to leave your splendid houses and take the Log Hut or the less convenient Tent[?] Are you willing to leave the present luxuries, & take our coarse but healthy fare of Corn bread & Beef? will you divide the last loaf with a Brother that is needy. Can you be willing to be driven from Co[unty]. to Co. with not where to lay your head? Are you ready literally to spend & be spent in the cause of Christ. Are you ready to lay down your [p. 27] lives as many <of the Brethren> have done within these last few weeks

Finally are you ready to be made perfect through suffering even as Christ[?] If you are ready for all this you are fit subjects of Zion. You need not think to come here & be wafted into the Celestial Kingdom on flowery beds of ease. But remember that after much tribulation cometh the blessing[.] You know but little about the refiners fire in Zion, therefore prepare for the worst & hope for the best. Our troubles are blowing the chaff of the Church to the four winds. And our prayer is she may be made clean evry whit. News came in this morning[126] that 22 of the Prisoners at Richmond were set at liberty, no cause of action to require a defence by them. The Brethren that are & have been confined have been charged with evry crime from high treason down to petty Larceny.

(A few of the Brethren & Sisters met to day for prayers. A part of a Revelation was read which was given a year a go last July and sent to the Elders in England. concerning the judgments which were to be poured out upon the Nations like a whirlwind commencing at the house of the Lord, after that upon those who profess to know his name, but know it not[127]

The Pestilence was in our midst last summer, & now the sword, and if the men should be employed for months to come as they have been for 2 months past famine will stare us in the face.128 [Dear Sister, I must write a few lines to you in this for in imagination I am often with you in conversation & the rest of the little band of persecuted Saints in Holiston, we are seperated far apart but I feel it will be but for a short time before I shall greet my Friends in Zion, You will learn from this & other letters which we have sent to Mass. of the trials & afflictions which we have passed thro in this place they are grevous Dear Sister to the Flesh, but in our spirits we do rejoice, amidst tribulation, knowing assuredly that if we are faithful, it will be for our salvation.— The scenes which we have passed thro of late is a bright evidence that the work in which we have enlisted is of the Lord, for these things must all be before the comeing of Christ, Pestilence, Sword, Blood, Famine, & Fire commenced at the Lords House among the Saints, & will shortly be upon those who profess to know & love him & love him & know him not.— Yes like a whirlwind from Heaven, then gather to Zion, do not be slow to hear his voice.— The saints will soon have to come at the peril of their lives[.] We all feel anxious for the Church at Holiston, that they should dispose of their property & assist each other to Zion without delay,
as soon as the roads are passable in the Spring.— Yesterday was appointed by Father Smith as a day of Fasting & Prayer.— I attended meeting it was a verry interesting & solemn day to us, we felt it was a day to humble ourselves in the dust before God, Our prophet & Presidency are taken from us. Many of our Brethren are taken from their Wives & children & are in bondage, while many wives & children mourn over the Departure of Husbands & Fathers that have sealed their testimony for Jesus with their blood.— In meeting 1 Lady sung in Tongues & another arose & interpreted.— The Patriarch whished us to be humble and united at a throne of Grace[,] he also remarked that the sword was unsheathed & could not be sheathed again until sin was swept from the face of the Earth & Christ come to reign with his saints, Our Prophet & Brethren are now brought before the Govenor & Rulers of this state & no doubt they will soon be brought before Kings & Nobles for their Testimony of Jesus, many of the Brethren could not endure the trials which we have had to pass thro, they have turned aside & will probably walk no more with us in Zion The stakes of Zion is the shore for the net which is cast forth into the world, & gather of every kind & these trials will purge the Church & cast much of the bad away but not all for Christ says that the Tares shall grow with the wheat until the harvest.— Be faithful to warn sinners, while you remain in New England for the time is short for them to hear the Gospel sound.— The warning voice has gone forth and after the testimony of my servants saith the Lord Cometh the Testimony of thunderings, Lightnings, Earthquakes, Wars, Bloodshed & Famine, the testimony of Judgements have now commenced & like a whirlpool will sweep our inhabitants off the U. States.— The Patriarch observed last fast day that the time would soon come when a man should be considered of more value than a talent of gold for God would assuredly make the earth empty & waste by Judgements & but very few would be left.— We often speak of the anxiety that we have that the Saints in Holiston should make all possible exertion to come to Missouria & assist those who cannot assist themselves.— Do not delay to make speed, we all sometimes want to pluck you out of Babylon.— Do not let the Scourges of Zion weaken your faith[,] these things will all work out for the purifying of the church from dross & the ultimate Glory of God, do not think to think to wait till Zion is built up before you come, but come & help build it, for verily thus saith the Lord it is my will it should be built up by the gathering of my saints — If we hope to reign with Christ on earth with Abraham, Isac, & Jacob, Jeremiah, Daniel & others, who have come up out of much tribulation we must also be willing to come up thro tribulation that our garments may be washed in the blood of the Lamb.)

A. P. Rockwood [p. 28]

2 December 1838, Sunday.

To the Church. I Albert P. again resume my pen to continue this journal. Last Tuesday 6 of the Brethren were set at liberty & on Wednesday 6 more no cause of action being found. The Brethren that were chained found favor and had their irons taken off last Sunday & were permitted to board at the Tavern, instead of having the gaol fare.

The other Brethren are feebly guarded, & frequently they have no guard at all (these other Br. have not been in the gaol for want of room but have been
kept in the Court House under a strong guard)\textsuperscript{33} We conclude they have not found them as guilty as they were in hopes for, And would be glad to have them run away to get clear of them, But the Brethren know their innocence and will not leave until they are discharged.

All the Mormons in Caldwell & Davies Co. have been taken captive unless we would deny the faith. Those that deny the faith have gone clear.

More than 100 of [the] Br have been taken into close custarday[.] all but 24 have been discharged without making a defence. These 24 have been called upon to defend themselves against the charges alleged. But none of them saw fit to make any defence at all, they were therefore recommitted or bound over for their appearance at the higher Court. There they will defend themselves if necessary.

The Br. supposed it would <be> of little use to make a defence at this Court & knew it would jeopardize the lives of the witnesses.\textsuperscript{134} [p. 29]

Most of the Brethren that were let to Bail have obtained it and returned to their families. Joseph Smith Jn Hiram Smith Sidney Rigdon P.P. Pratt Lyman Wight and a few others were not let to Bail and are now in gaol to wait their trial at the higher Court in March next.\textsuperscript{135}

I observed in my last that something like an 100 of the Br. were among the missing, probably some of them are killed, but it is hoped that most of them are in the field lifting up their voices in the Congregations of the wicked,\textsuperscript{136} we know not where\textsuperscript{137} they are among the Gentiles or Lamanites, But very few of them have been heard of.\textsuperscript{138}

PARLEY P. PRATT'S LETTER\textsuperscript{139}

Richmond, Ray County Decr 9

Dear Sister

You will doubtless have read much of the troubles long ere this reaches you. Respecting the things where of you wrote unto me be assured that such things are not named among us here[,] Brother Joseph is in full fellowship & the Church has more confidence in him if possible than ever before — Our troubles are sufficient to unite us <firmer> in the bonds of union. The whole state of Missouri has risen up to destroy us from the face of the Earth or drive [p. 30] us from the State by orders from the Gov. From 30 to an 100 saints have been slain & about a dozen of us are now in chains (VIZ) Joseph Smith Hyrum Smith Lyman White [Wight] S Rigdon myself and others We have all been sentenced to be shot without Judge or Jewry [jury] & the day set But God did not suffer it. We have been confined about 6 weeks, they design to hang or imprison us if they can. But what will be our fate God only Knows. The apostates have sworn to murder & Treason & almost every thing against us which never entered our hearts to say or do but we are in the hands of God.

Much property has been plundered, provision destroyed Chastity of women violated houses burned, woman & Children fired <up>on & some slain. About 14 thousand men have been in motion against us. The dissenters are the worst to plunder & rob Murder & swear falsely. I give a list of some noted
apostates (VIZ.) Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, John Corrill, George M. Hynke, W. A. Cowdary & famaly Doct. Avard and a vast many others have gone to rise no more. Iniquity abound & the love of many wax cold - But he that indureth to the end the same shall be saved, for my part, I feel more firm than ever in the faith of Jesus I fear not what man can do, I only fear him who is able to deal with soul & body. If I live I am determined to live unto Christ, and to die is to leave a world of sorrow & go to rest in the paradise of God, with a shure and a certain hope of standing in the flesh upon the Earth with my redeemer in the latter day. My dear sister if such news as this will strengthneth you, you will be strong but all the prosperity which Earth can afford will never sanctify a Church of Saints, neither would any thing but suffering prepare them for fit companions for those who wandered in sheepskins & Goat Skins being destitute, afflicted, tornamented, or of those who had trials of cruel mocking, scourges, stripes & imprisonments, or of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, or, who were slain for the witness & testimony of Jesus who loved not their lives unto death. If judgment has begun at the house of God, what will the world do: for peace in is now taken from the Earth. and the saints hardly escape. How long before the Lord will avenge the Blood of his saints on them that dwell on the Earth I know not. But he said to the souls under the Alter that they should rest for a little season till their fellow servants who were to be slain as they were should be fulfilled: If this is all that vengence is waiting for it need wait no longer for the Blood of Latter Day Saints is now mingled with the Blood of Former Day Saints. in cries to heaven for vengence upon an Ungodly World — As it respects the glories of the Kingdom of God in things whereof you write unto me it is not wisdom for me to write it [at] present, suffice to say that all things which are written by the Prophets must be fulfilled. they that have ears to hear let them hear

P. P. Pratt

1

As down a lone Dungeon with darkness orellased
In silence and sorrow I made my lone bead [bed]
Far far from the scenes of confusion retired
While hope from this bosom had almost expired.

2

From all that is lovely constrained for to part
From the friends of my bosom so dear to my heart
While Jesus exulting, and friends far away
In half broken slumbers all pensive I lay. [p. 33]

3

A light as from Heaven on suden appeared.
And a voice as of Angels stole soft on my ear
A theme full of Glory, inspired their tongue
Of Zion’s Redemption most sweetly they sung. [p. 34]
MANUSCRIPT 3

{Quincy, Illinois 1839}147
Dear Beloved Father

while Babylons bells are tolling & people flocking to hear what they think is the gospel I will inform you of our situation.— We left Far West Jany 10th in company with another Family & arrived at the Missippa River after a Journey of 12 days the distance of 200 miles[. ] we had snow & rain every day but 2[,] we had heavy loads, were obliged to walk from 2 to 8 miles a day thro mud & water, camped out on the wet ground 3 nights before we arrived at the River, A few days before we got to the river it grew cold[,] the river froze over & we were obliged to camp close to the river 3 days & nights before we could cross in the boat, 6 waggons were with us at the time.— The Saints are leaving Far West daily[,] A Carrage left here this morning for the Prophets Family, most of the Church cross the River & come to this place, The People here recvieve us Quite Friendly & think us an abused people.148 We have meetings among the Brethren but last night we heard that the Prophets advise for the Brethren to scatter, hold no meetings in this place & be wise servants that the wrath of the enemy be not kindled against us, we are a poor, afflicted & persecuted people, driven to & fro, & when you come, you will have to share with us in our afflications, I advise you to fetch considerable tin ware, such as the tin plates & dishes[,] The Saints have yet no continual abiding place but like the saints of old must wander about seeking shelter where we can find it.

30 January 1839, Wednesday.

We are commanded to bridle our tongues & be wise in these last days especially in this region of excitement,— It is thought by some we shall not gather again in large bodies at present, still we do not know[,] our leader is gone, we have none to tell us what to do by direct Revelation, We want our Prophet & we feel we shall have him before long but our enemies triumph over us believing we have lost our Prophet unto death.— Peraphs [Perhaps] it would be interesting to you & the Church at Holiston to read a copy of the speech of Genrl Clark to the Brethren in Far West after they were taken Prisoners.149 He called them upon the public square surrounded them by a company of his armed men & holding in his hands a paper which contained the names of those whom he intended to prison, he proudly delivered the following message — ["""]Gentlemen you whose names are not attached to this list of names you now have the privilege of going to your fields to obtain Corn & wood for your Families, those that are taken, will be taken from hence to prison, be tried, & receive the due demerits of their crimes, but you are now at liberty, all such as charges will hereafter be prefered against — It now devolves on you to fulfill the treaty that you have entered into the leading items of which I will now lay before you, first of these you have already complied with, which is this that you deliver up your leading men to be tried according to Law, the second is you deliver up your Arms, this has been complied with[,] third is you sign over your property to defray the cost of the war[,] this you have also done150 — Another thing remains to be complied with, that is you leave the state forthwith, and whatever your feelings concerning this are,—
whatever your innocence it is nothing to me,— Genrl Lucas who is in eaqual rank with myself has made this treaty with you, & I am determined to see it executed. The order of the Govonor to me was, that you should be exterminated & not allowed to stay in the State. had not your Leaders been given up & the treaty complied with, before this you & Your Families would have been destroyed & your houses in ashes, There is a descriminating power resting in my hands which I shall try to exercise in season.[1] I do not say you shall go now but you need not think of staying another season or putting in another Crop, for the moment you do this the citizens will be upon you, I am determined to see the Govonors orders fulfilled, I shall come upon you immediatly, do not think I shall act as I have done any more, but if I have to come again because the treaty which you have made is not fulfilled you need not expect any mercy but extermination for I am determined the Govonors message shall be executed — As for your leaders, do not for a moment think, do not imagine, let it not enter your minds, that you will ever see their faces again.— Their doom is fixed, their dye is cast, their fate is certain.— I am sorry Gentlemen so many apparently intelligent men [are] in a situation in which you are placed.— Oh! that I could invoke the spirit of the unknown God to enlighten your minds & deliver you from those bonds of superstition & liberte you from the chains of fanaticism with which you are bound, that you may no longer worship a man, you have always been the agressors, & brought upon yourselves these troubles by disaffection & not being subject to rule, I advise you to scatter and become as other Citizens lest by recurrences of difficulties youbring upon yourselves inevitable ruin”—

NOTES


2Wilford Woodruff, Journal, 9 May to 9 July 1838, MS, Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter referred to as LDS Church Archives).

3Rhoda Richards, in a letter to her brother Willard, then a missionary in England, wrote: “A company from Holliston, Middlesex Co., Mass left the same day that sister left Kirtland. They arrived eight days later at the Richmond [Ray County, Missouri] landing on the north side of the Missouri river” (Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 15 July 1838, MS, LDS Church Archives).

4Rockwood’s own account is presented as part of the larger story in Joseph Smith, Jr., History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964), 5:454–56. The LDS Church Archives originally possessed what was divided into four diaries of Rockwood. They cover 7 April–25 July 1847; 1 June 1848–18 June 1849; 21 April–10 May 1852; and October–November 1857. All but the 1857 record remain in the LDS Church Archives, and its whereabouts is unknown. The record cited in the History of the Church is also missing.

5See the details in Woodruff, Journal, July 1847.

6It is possible to follow many of these activities through the entries in the Journal History just by using the extensive index to this multivolume scrapbook of Church history. Additionally, the LDS Church Archives has a variety of manuscripts, many written by Rockwood, relating to the various activities of his life: “Report . . . and Concise History of the Penitentiary” (1878); “Report of the Agricultural Society” (1872); and “Zion’s Cooperative Fish Association” (1876). A synopsis of Rockwood’s address before the National Prison Reform Congress in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1873 appears in Deseret Evening News, 21 February 1873, 56.


The details are given in Stephen C. LeSueur, The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987), 23–27. A more detailed study, with important differences in interpretation, is Leland H. Gentry, "A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri from 1836 to 1839" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1965). Jedediah Grant’s contemporary description of Far West is in Journal History, 12 November 1838.

A useful overview is provided in Robert J. Matthews, "Adam-ondi-Ahman," BYU Studies 13 (Autumn 1972): 27–35. Lyman Wight was an LDS leader in this area.


The talk was printed and widely distributed. A convenient reprinting is in Peter Crawley, "Two Rare Missouri Documents," BYU Studies 14 (Summer 1974): 517–27.


Details are in LeSueur, Mormon War, 137–42.


Sampson Avard provided detailed testimony against Joseph Smith during the court of inquiry in November 1838. His lengthy testimony alleging secret oaths and illegal activities can be found in Documents Containing the Correspondence, Orders, etc. in Relation to the Disturbances with the Mormons: And Evidence Given before The Hon. Austin A. King (Fayette, Mo.: Office of the Boom’s Lick Democrat, 1841), 97–108. Of the others who gave testimony against the Mormons, no one added anything of significance to Avard’s testimony. It is beyond our purposes here to trace the negative Danite scenario through the subsequent literature, but even a superficial look at the more influential histories will show how great the dependence was on Avard’s testimony. See John C. Bennett, History of the Saints, or an Expose of Joe Smith and the Mormons (Boston: Leland and Whiting, 1842), 265–72; Henry Caswall, The Prophet of the Nineteenth Century; or, The Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Mormons, or Latter-day Saints: to which is appended an analysis of the Book of Mormon (London: Printed for J. G. F. and J. Rivington, 1843), 155–73; John Hyde, Jr., Mormonism, Its Leaders and Designs (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1857), 104–5; [Charles MacKay], History of the Mormons, or, Latter-day Saints (London: Office of National Illustrated Library, [1851]), 89–91; T. B. H. Stenhouse, The Rocky Mountain Saints: A Full and Complete History of the Mormons, from the First Vision of Joseph Smith to the Last Courtship of Brigham Young (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1873), 91–94; William A. Linn, The Story of the Mormons, from the Date of Their Origin to the Year 1901 (New York: Macmillan Co., 1902), 189–93; M. R. Werner, Brigham Young (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1925), 102–3; Fawn M. Brodie. No Man Knows My History, The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), 214–16, 219, 228, 244, 314–15; and Jared Tanner and Sandra Tanner, Mormonism, Shadow or Reality, enl. ed. (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm, 1972), 428–50. Compare LeSueur, Mormon War, 37–47, 195–204, 207–11.


Except for a footnote (Mormon War, 125 n. 35), LeSueur does not even hint in the text that Rockwood might be saying something different from Avard when he talks about Danites.
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22For a lengthy discussion of this whole matter, the reader is referred to David J. Whittaker, "The Book of Daniel in Early Mormon Thought" (Address at Mormon History Association, 7 May 1988, Logan, Utah).
23See Crawley and Anderson, "The Political and Social Realities of Zion’s Camp."
24"Scriptory Book of Joseph Smith" kept by George W. Robinson, MS, LDS Church Archives, 27 July 1838, 61. Some of the material in this citation has been cross out in pencil in the original by a latter hand. A number of other sources are treated in Whittaker, "The Book of Daniel in Early Mormon Thought."
26For General Clark’s comments see Documents, 90. Compare LeSuer, Mormon War, 189.
27Again, while we do not develop them here, two additional items are relevant. First, internal dissent in Missouri must be seen in the context of developments in Kirtland before 1838. As Marvin Hill and Ronald Esplin have shown, rejection of Joseph Smith’s vision of the kingdom of God began there, and we would suggest that the treatment of dissenters in Far West was the last straw in a longer process within Mormonism (see Marvin S. Hill, "Cultural Crisis in the Mormon Kingdom: A Reconsideration of the Causes of Kirtland Dissent," Church History 49 [September 1980]: 286-97); and chaps. 5-7 of Ronald K. Esplin, “The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve to Mormon Leadership, 1830-1844” [Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1981]). Second, a close reading of the relevant sections of the Doctrine and Covenants (52; 57-62; 65-69; 101-5; 114-23) reveals another view of the kingdom of God in early Mormon thought. Even Sidney Rigdon’s Missouri speeches can be viewed as Mormon jeremiads based on a consistent view of these revelations. For example, his “Salt Sermon” ought to be more correctly interpreted in terms of D&C 101:39-40 and 103:10, not just Matt. 5:13.
28John Taylor, The Mormon Question: Being a Speech by Vice President Schuyler Colfax at Salt Lake City and a Reply thereto by John Taylor (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1870), 8. See also the answer of Brigham Young to Horace Greeley’s question regarding Danites belonging to the Church: “I know of no such band, no such organization. I hear of them only in the slanders of our enemies” (Horace Greeley, An Overland Journey . . . [New York: Tribune Association, 1860], 182).
29Journal History, 1 December 1838. In the letter Rockwood copied into his record, Pratt says, “The apostates have sworn to murder and treason and almost everything against us which never entered our hearts to say or do.” For Joseph Smith’s comments, contained in a letter to the Church dated 16 December 1838, see Dean C. Jessee, ed., The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1984), 380.
30See Rebecca Foster Cornwall and Leonard J. Arrington, “Perpetuation of a Myth: Mormon Danites in Five Western Novels, 1840-90,” BYU Studies 23 (Spring 1983): 147-65. Cornwall and Arrington indicate (149) that by 1900 at least fifty-six novels had been printed in English that used the Danite myth as part of their story line.
31Franklin Richards to Phineas Richards, 1 January 1839, Yale University. We are indebted to Richard L. Anderson for this reference.
32Phineas Richards to Wealthy Richards, 7 January 1839, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo (hereafter cited as Lee Library).
33Phineas Richards to Wealthy Richards, 21 January 1839, Lee Library.
34In addition to the material published here, the Rockwood Papers at Yale include a copy of the long letter of 20 March 1839 sent to the Church by Napoleon, Illinois, by Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Lyman Wight, Caleb Baldwin, and Alexander McRae, from Liberty Jail, where they were awaiting trial on charges growing out of the conflict of the previous year. This letter contains material currently published as sections 121, 122, and 123 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Also included is the text of a nineteen-page sermon based on Matt. 23:1-2 and a fifteen-page sermon based on Zech. 9:12. It is not known if the texts for the sermons were for Rockwood or his notes of someone else’s discourses.
35The first part of Manuscript 1, with the entries of 6-21 October 1838, represent journal entries Rockwood sent to Sister Vose. The recipient could be Ruth D. Vose (b. 26 February 1808); Polly Vose (b. 14 June 1870); or Mary Vose. Samuel Harrison Smith baptized Mary in Boston in 1832. Manuscript 3 is addressed, “Dear Sister.”
36Manuscript 3 adds the following sentence at this point: “I presume you have seen the letters I have written to Holliston [Massachusetts], I directed them to Father & requested him to let you have the reading of them.”
37Manuscript 3 reads “our people” in the place of “the armies of Israel.”
38Manuscript 3 substitutes “mob” for “Missourians.”
39This was the election at Gallatin, Daviess County, on 6 August 1838.
40Lyman Wight (1796-1858), a native of Fairfield, Herkimer County, New York, was a veteran of the War of 1812. He joined the Latter-day Saints in 1830 and in 1841 became a member of the Quorum of Twelve. He participated in the organization and march of Zion’s Camp in 1834. After the formation of Caldwell County, Missouri, Wight was elected colonel in the militia and received his commission signed by Governor Boggs (Jenson, LDS Biographical Encyclopedia 1:93-96).
41See LeSuer, Mormon War, 65-69.
42Manuscript 3 substitutes “smiled” for “laughed.”
43LeSuer, Mormon War, 65-69.
44Manuscript 3 substitutes “smiling” for “laughed.”
45See LeSuer, Mormon War, 65-69.
46Manuscript 3 substitutes “smiling” for “laughed.”
"Manuscript 3 reads "beloved Country."


The bishop in Missouri at this time was Edward Partridge.

Manuscript 3 contains "short time" in the place of "few days."

This paragraph does not appear in Manuscript 3.

The remainder of this paragraph is not in Manuscript 3.


This paragraph does not appear in Manuscript 3.

October 1838.

Seymour Brunson (1799–1840), was a veteran of the War of 1812. He was converted to Mormonism in Portage County, Ohio, by 1831 (Lyndon W. Cook, The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith: A Historical and Biographical Commentary of the Doctrine and Covenants [Provo: Seventies Book Store, 1981], 153).

The siege of DeWitt began on 1 October 1838. For details see LeSueur, Mormon War, 101–11; and Gentry, "History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 194–211.

Smith Humphrey and other Mormons living at DeWitt petitioned Governor Boggs on 22 September 1838 to "put a stop to all lawless proceeding" after a hundred and fifty armed men on 20 September had threatened to drive them from their homes (Joseph Smith, History of the Church 3:82–83).

This sentence does not appear in Manuscript 3.

The previous material in this paragraph, beginning with the word "Teniment," does not appear in Manuscript 3.

Boggs denied this many times, but his hatred of the Mormons was obvious in his speeches as governor. Boggs was a merchant in Jackson County when the Mormons first settled there, and it is possible his business suffered with the growing Mormon economic presence.

Two such officers were David R. Aitchison and Alexander W. Doniphan (see Anderson, "Aitchison’s Letters"; and Duchateau, "Missouri Colossus").

This sentence is not in Manuscript 3.

The remainder of this entry is not in Manuscript 3.

Orson Hyde (1805–78), was born in Oxford, New Haven County, Connecticut. He was a Campbellite pastor in Ohio in 1831 when he joined the Latter-day Saints. At the time of his defection he was a member of the Quorum of Twelve. His testimony, along with that of Thomas B. Marsh, was used against his fellow Church men at the Richmond hearing in November 1838. John Taylor later noted that Hyde had been sick with a "violent fever" and had not fully recovered at the time of his departure. In June 1839 he returned to the Church and was restored to his former position (Smith, History of the Church 3:167–68; Jenson, Biographical Encyclopedia 1:80–82). The 21 October entry does not appear in Manuscript 3.

This entry is dated 29 October in Manuscript 3. Rockwood addressed the journal material from this date to 19 November 1838 to his father, Luther Rockwood, in Holliston, Massachusetts. His mother, Ruth Perry, had died in 1805 shortly after his birth.

Manuscript 3 contains the following addition inserted into the text at this point: "I have kept a Journal of what has been in this vicinity & sent it to Sister Bose [Vose] of Boston up to this date and requested her to let you have the reading of it which you have probably had before this. I shall now continue to you the Journal & request you to let her have the reading of it."

Rockwood possibly refers to D&C 105:26; 31–32.

"Dan" is written instead of "Danites" in Manuscript 3.

Dan, 7:18.

Sidney Rigdon (1793–1876) was born at St. Clair, Alleghany County, Pennsylvania. He had been a Baptist minister and was instrumental in the founding of the Disciples of Christ before he was converted to Mormonism in 1830. At the time of the events in Missouri, Rigdon was a member of the First Presidency of the Church (Cook, Revelations, 52–53).

This sentence is not in Manuscript 3.

After the word "Danites," Manuscript 3 adds "Brethren" in parentheses.

"Untill the judgments were upon them" is not part of Manuscript 3.

This is probably A. P. Rockwood’s twenty-four-year-old brother-in-law, Jesse Haven (1814–1905).

Probably Elizabeth Haven (1811–92), elder sister of Jesse Haven.

Manuscript 3 reads "camp field" instead of "corn field."

Manuscript 3 reads "war cloud" instead of "main cloud."

In Manuscript 3, the remainder of this paragraph reads, "Pumpkins & Squashes are quite low."

Bayberry and Pennyroyal are not included in Manuscript 3.

The remainder of this paragraph is omitted in Manuscript 3.

The remainder of this paragraph reads as follows in Manuscript 3: "& we say to all the Church make haste for Zion [must] be willing to make great sacrifices & assist each other for the perplexities of the nations has commenced[,] the quicker you can come the better[,] even now the Brethren have been threatened on their way to this place with instant death[,] some have been stopped on the road & the Mob have sunk 1 ferry boat to prevent the Saints from crossing[,] see Doc & covenants page 128 Sec 15."
This encounter took place at the ford on Crooked River, about ten miles south of Far West in Ray County, Missouri.

David Wyman Patten was born in Vermont in 1799. He joined the Latter-day Saints in Indiana in 1832. He was a member of the Quorum of Twelve at the time of his death. After being shot, he died at the home of Stephen Winchester, three miles from Far West (Cook, Revelations, 226).

The prisoner was Wyatt Cravens, who was released as the Mormon troops returned to Far West. Soon after his release he was mysteriously shot and wounded (LeSueur, Mormon War, 141).

Three Mormons were killed at Crooked River: David Patten, Gideon Carter, and Patrick O’Banion, a young man of eighteen.

Manuscript 3 indicates the burning took place two miles from Far West “in another direction.”

William Seeley was the wounded man. Manuscript 3 says he was “badly wounded” in the shoulder.

Patrick O’Banion.

Gideon Carter was born at Killingworth, Connecticut, in 1798. He was baptized by Joseph Smith at Orange, Ohio, in 1831 (Cook, Revelations, 154).

Joseph Young (1797–1881) was born in Hopkinton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. A brother of Brigham Young, he was President of the Seventies. During the Missouri difficulties he was a witness of the Haun’s Mill massacre on 30 October 1838 (Cook, Revelations, 281).

For a recent reconstructed account of the battle at Crooked River, see LeSueur, Mormon War, 137–42.

Samuel Bogart, a Methodist minister, was the leader of the Ray County militia company that confronted the Mormons at Crooked River.

At this point Manuscript 3 adds: “at the approach of the Brethren.”

Manuscript 3 prefaces this sentence with, “after the Brethren were down the bank,” and following the sentence adds the contradiction, “this was before the Brethren jumped down the bank.”

According to LeSueur, the Missourians had only one man killed and six wounded (LeSueur, Mormon War, 143).

Between this point and the word “Laban,” Manuscript 3 reads: “seen with their armour about them bold to defend their Masters cause.— You may ask if the Prophet goes out with the saints to Battle? I answer he is a Prop[hi]et to go before the people as in times of old & if you wish to know what sword he carries, just turn to the book of Mormon & see the sword that Nephi took from Laban when he slew him[,] you there will see what he has got.”

1 Ne. 4:9; 2 Ne. 5:14; Jacob 1:10; W of M 13; and Mosiah 1:16 contain references to the sword of Laban.

This force was led by Samuel D. Lucas, major-general in command of the fourth division of Missouri militia, with headquarters at Independence, Jackson County. An account of the confrontation at Far West and its outcome is in LeSueur, Mormon War, 157–94.

Manuscript 3 reads “my family” for “the family.”

At this point Manuscript 3 contains this addition: “We came to this determination in honor to our beloved Country, & in consideration of the Constitution of the U.S. which gives unto every man the rightful possession of his own property, which we had been deprived of 3 times previous, & now being under the extermination usurpation of the Governer, who was one of the Characters in driving us out of Jackson Co in 1833.”

For the early LDS position on going “out unto battle” see D&C 98:23–48.

The attack of appears here in Manuscript 3.

Parley P. Pratt (1807–57) was born at Burlington, Otsego County, New York. He participated in the march of Zion’s Camp in 1834 and was named to the Quorum of Twelve the following year. He had been present in the battle at Crooked River on 25 October (Cook, Revelations, 45–47).

George W. Robinson (1814–78) was born at Pawlet, Rutherford County, Vermont. He married Athalia, the eldest daughter of Sidney Rigdon. He had been appointed general Church recorder in April 1838 (Jenson, Biographical Encyclopedia 1:252–53).

There is a discrepancy regarding the surrender of the Mormon leaders at Far West and the question of George Hinkle’s treachery (see LeSueur, Mormon War, 168–77; Gentry, “History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri,” 342–45). Five days after his surrender, Joseph Smith wrote his wife: “Colonel Hinkle proved to be a traitor to the Church. He is worse than a Hall, who betrayed the army at Detroit. He decoyed us unwares” (Joseph Smith to Emma Smith, 4 November 1838, RLDS Church Archives, Independence, Mo.). Lyman Wight later wrote, “there were several propos[iff]ions made by the different sides” on 31 October 1838. He added, “a little before sunset Hinkle had managed for the pitiful sum of $600 to sell the following named persons into the enemy’s camp Joseph Smith; Sidney Rigdon; George, W; Robinson; and myself” (Wight to Wilford Woodruff, 24 August 1857). In a letter to W. W. Phelps in 1844, Hinkle strongly denied that he “betrayed ‘the heads of the church’ into the hands of the military authorities of Missouri, and that, too, for a large sum of money” (Hinkle to Phelps, Journal History, 14 August 1844).

Under the date of 27 October 1838, Governor Lilburn Boggs had issued his now famous order to General John B. Clark, the commander of the state militia at Far West, which contains the statement, “The Mormons must be treated as enemies, must be exterminated or driven from the State if necessary for the public peace—their outrages are beyond all description” (see Documents, 61).
10Following the surrender at Far West, Joseph Smith and other Church leaders were taken to General Lucas’s Jackson County militia headquarters at Independence.

11George S. Richards, born 8 January 1823 in Richmond, Berkshire County, Massachusetts.

12In Manuscript 3 Rockwood says Joseph Young arrived in Far West from Haun’s Mill “today,” that is, 2 November.

13John B. Clark was born in Kentucky in 1802. He moved to Howard County, Missouri, in 1818. In 1832 he fought in the Black Hawk war. In 1849 he was elected to the Missouri state legislature, and in 1854 began three terms in the U.S. Congress. He was a Confederate brigadier-general during the Civil War (National Historical Co., comp., History of Howard and Chariton Counties, Missouri [St. Louis: National Historical Co., 1883], 252–53).

14Manuscript 3 inserts “the faith” at this point.

15Thomas B. Marsh (1799–1866) was born in Acton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. After his baptism by David Whitmer in 1830, he became president of the Quorum of Twelve in 1835. He left the Church in 1838 but later returned in 1857 (Cook, Revelations, 42–43).

16Jared Carter (1801–50) was born in Benson, Rutland County, Vermont. He was residing in Chenango, Broome County, New York, when baptized by Hyrum Smith in 1831 (Cook, Revelations, 73–74).

17At this point, Manuscript 3 inserts “warning to come against us making in all 30,000 Men to come.”

18Shortly after arriving in Independence, Joseph Smith wrote to his wife that they “arrived here in the midst of a splendid parade a little after noon. Instead of going to jail we have a good house provided for us and the kindest treatment” (Joseph Smith to Emma Smith, 4 November 1838, RLDS Church Archives).

19Technically they had not been charged with anything yet. The court of inquiry or preliminary hearing took place in Richmond between 12 and 29 November. At the conclusion, Joseph Smith, Lyman Wight, Hyrum Smith, Alexander McRae, Caleb Baldwin, and Sidney Rigdon were charged with “overt acts of treason” in Daviess and Caldwell counties, and Parley P. Pratt and four others with murder in Ray County. The treason charge came in consequence of the Mormon militia operating against other state militia units in upper Missouri; the murder charge grew out of the killing of Moses Rowland in the Crooked River fight (Le Sueur, Mormon War, 196–218).

20This paragraph is not included in Manuscript 3.

21Possibly Newel Nurse, born in 1792 in Framingham, Middlesex County, Massachusetts.

22Rockwood’s father-in-law, John Haven (1774–1853).

23A corner at the top of page 25 in this manuscript is torn away. The bracketed words in this paragraph are a reconstruction of the missing portion using the text of Manuscript 3, where possible.

24The previous part of this paragraph is not included in Manuscript 3.

25This paragraph is not included in Manuscript 3.

26The remainder of this paragraph is not in Manuscript 3.

27See the account in Le Sueur, Mormon War, 83–89.

28The Church at Holliston, Massachusetts.

29This would be after 29 November 1838, the day the Richmond court of inquiry ended.


31Rockwood here, and elsewhere, views the Missouri experience in millennial terms. William W. Phelps hinted strongly that the Second Coming of Christ would soon occur. See, for example, The Evening and the Morning Star 1 (September 1832): [6]; and 1 (January 1833): [4]. Rockwood’s understanding of what his people are experiencing is colored by his own millennial expectations. Rockwood’s concern for the Church at Holliston is, in part, the outgrowth of the special blessing given him by Brigham Young on 6 August 1837, at the same time he ordained him an elder (see Journal History, 6 August 1837).


33The material in braces is a lengthy insertion at this point in Manuscript 3.

34December has been changed to 2 December, which corresponds with Sunday in December of 1838.

3527 November 1838.

36The parenthetical statement is not in Manuscript 3.

37Le Sueur rightly points out that the proceedings in Richmond did not constitute a trial, but rather a court of inquiry. Most writers on this subject have not made the distinction (see Le Sueur, Mormon War, 195–218).

38Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Lyman Wight, Alexander McRae, and Caleb Baldwin were imprisoned at the jail in Liberty, Clay County, Missouri, and Parley P. Pratt and others were confined at Richmond, Ray County, to await trial the following March (see Arrington, “Church Leaders in Liberty Jail”; Jesse, “Walls, Grates and Screwing Iron Doors”)

39Manuscript 3 reads “people” in the place of “wicked.”

40Manuscript 3 reads “whether” instead of “where.”

41In Manuscript 3 Rockwood adds the following at this point: “Br Wase & Wife have been some shaken in the faith but have now an understanding of the things of the Kingdom clearly, that this has come upon us in fulfillment of Prophecy, therefore have been confirmed and begin to learn for themselves, that tribulation is the lot of the Saints & must of necessity be so, else we shall not be made perfect through sufferings — Bro Jesse [Haven] remains firm and desirous to return East for the sole purpose of helping his Friends up to Zion, knowing the Judgements will soon be abroad in the States & it will be through great tribulation that the Saints can get up, & many will perish by the way.”
The letter by Parley P. Pratt fits chronologically into Rockwood’s narrative. It is probable that Rockwood simply copied it and the accompanying poem from a Pratt family member, Parley’s wife, Mary Ann, and their children lived in Far West at this time. The content of this letter is similar to another written on the same day to Aaron and Susan Frost, Parley’s wife’s parents who lived in Bethel, Maine.

Oliver Cowdery (1806–50) was born at Wells, Rutland County, Vermont. He was a witness of foundation events of Mormonism, including the Book of Mormon and priesthood restoration. Although he left the Church in 1838, he returned in 1848 (Cook, Revelations, 14; chaps. 3 and 4 of Richard L. Anderson, Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980]).

David Whitmer (1805–88) was born near Harrisburg, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. He was one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon and became president of the Church in Missouri in 1834. Whitmer left the Church in 1838 and never returned (Cook, Revelations, 24–25; chaps. 5 and 6 of Anderson, Investigating).

John Corrill was born in Worcester County, Massachusetts, in 1794. He was a counselor to Bishop Edward Partridge from 1831–37. In 1838 he was elected to the Missouri legislature from Caldwell County and appointed to “write and keep the Church history.” Corrill published an account of Church history in A Brief History of the Church...; with the reasons of the author for leaving the Church (St. Louis: Privately printed, 1839). See Jenson, Biographical Encyclopedia 1:241–42.

George M. Hinkle (1802–61) was born in Kentucky. At the time of the surrender at Far West, Hinkle was the commanding officer of the Mormon forces there (S. J. Hinkle, “A Biographical Sketch of G. M. Hinkle,” Journal of History 8 (October 1920): 444–53.

Warren A. Cowdery (1788–1851), an elder brother of Oliver Cowdery, was born in Poulney, Vermont (Cook, Revelations, 214–15).

Samson Avar was born in 1800 at St. Peter’s, Isle of Guernsey, England. Avar’s testimony at the November 1838 Richmond hearing played an important role in the charges that imprisoned Joseph Smith to await trial (Documents, 90, 97–108). Avar was, prior to his conversion to Mormonism in 1835, a Campbellite preacher (see letter of Orson Pratt, 18 November 1835, in LDS Messenger and Advocate 2 (November 1835): 223–24; see also Orson Pratt, Journal, November 1835, MS, in LDS Church Archives).

Manuscript 3 reads “foes are” instead of “Jesus.”

The remaining text (within braces) is from Manuscript 3.


The following speech was delivered by General John B. Clark to members of the Church assembled on the public square at Far West, Missouri, on 5 November 1838. The speech was copied into Eliza R. Snow’s 22 February 1839 letter as published in BYU Studies 13 (Summer 1973): 548–49. See also Carol Y. Williams, ed., “Conditions Prior to the Missouri Exodus: A Letter by Eliza R. Snow,” The Carpenter: Reflections on Mormon Life 1 (Spring 1970): 41–50. The speech was first published by the Mormons in John Taylor, A Short Account of the Murders, Robberies, Burnings, Thefts, and Other Outrages Committed by the Mob and Militia of the State of Missouri, upon the Latter Day Saints (Springfield, Ill.: N.p., 1839).

This part of the settlement was later ruled illegal.