1838

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January 1838

Visions and Revelations—Joseph Smith prophesied to a council of brethren that he would live at least another five years. • Lucy Smith, History of Joseph Smith, ch. 46.

January 12, 1838

Personal Life—Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon fled Kirtland to escape mob violence. • History of the Church, 3:1

About January 16, 1838

Travels—Fleeing mob violence in Ohio, Joseph Smith traveled to Dublin, Indiana, where he tarried nine days. He was then given $300 from the sale of Brother Nathan Tomlinson’s farm, which allowed him to continue his journey. • History of the Church, 3:2–3

About March 1838

Legal Events—Lory Holmes & Charles Holmes v. Joseph Smith Jr. & Reynolds Cahoon. Court of Common Pleas, Geauga County. The plaintiffs sued on two promissory notes of $5,000 each. A default judgment rendered was for $10,071. Satisfied in full. • LDS Church Archives, Joseph Smith Legal Papers series

March 13, 1838

Writings—Joseph Smith dictated a journal entry that was included with his “Scriptory Book,” which described his various activities. • Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, 393–94

Jan. 4, 1838

General Tom Thumb, American circus performer and entertainer, was born.
March 14, 1838  
Far West, Missouri  

**Travels**—Joseph Smith arrived in Far West at the conclusion of a difficult journey from Kirtland, Ohio, and was “immediately received under the hospitable roof of Brother George W. Harris, who treated us with all possible kindness.” • *History of the Church*, 3:8–9

March 16, 1838  
Far West, Missouri  

**Writings**—At about this time, Joseph Smith composed what later became known as “The Political Motto of the Church of Latter-day Saints,” proclaiming a love of “peace and good order in society.” • *History of the Church*, 3:9

March 1838  
Far West, Missouri  

**Visions and Revelations**—Joseph Smith received Doctrine and Covenants 113, a revelation identifying the “stem of Jesse” and the “rod” and “root of Jesse” in Isaiah 11. • *History of the Church*, 3:9–11; D&C 113

March 29, 1838  
Far West, Missouri  

**Writings**—Joseph Smith dictated a letter to the Presidency of the Church in Kirtland, giving them news about the Church in Far West. • *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 395–97

April 17, 1838  
Far West, Missouri  

**Visions and Revelations**—Joseph Smith received Doctrine and Covenants 114, a revelation instructing David W. Patten to prepare for a mission the coming spring. • *History of the Church*, 3:23; D&C 114

April 26, 1838  
Far West, Missouri  

**Visions and Revelations**—Joseph Smith received Doctrine and Covenants 115, a revelation commanding the Church to build a house unto the Lord in Far West. This revelation also established the name of the Church as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. • *History of the Church*, 3:23–25; D&C 115

April 27, 1838  
Far West, Missouri  

**Writings**—Joseph Smith spent the day working on a history of the Church from its beginnings, which would eventually be published as *History of the Church*. • *History of the Church*, 3:25; Jessee, *BYU Studies* 11.4: 462

Apr. 8, 1838  
Regular Atlantic steamship service began with the SS Great Western.

Apr. 21, 1838  
John Muir, American ecologist who founded the Sierra Club, was born.
April 28, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

**Ecclesiastical Duties**—Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon attended the high council by invitation and filled in as councilors in an appeals case. *History of the Church*, 3:25–26

May 5, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

**Ecclesiastical Duties**—Joseph Smith learned from Brother Bailey that 200 families and wagons would arrive in three weeks from Canada. *History of the Church*, 3:27

May 9, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

**Ecclesiastical Duties**—Joseph Smith preached at the funeral of James G. Marsh, son of Thomas B. Marsh. *History of the Church*, 3:30

May 11, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

**Ecclesiastical Duties**—Joseph Smith attended the trial of William E. McLellin and Dr. McCord before the bishop’s court. Both were excommunicated. *History of the Church*, 3:31

May 12, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

**Personal Life**—Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were suffering financially and did not have enough money to provide for their families. *History of the Church*, 3:31–32

May 14, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

**Personal Life**—Joseph Smith plowed his garden. *History of the Church*, 3:33

May 19, 1838  
Spring Hill, Missouri

**Visions and Revelations**—Joseph Smith received Doctrine and Covenants 116, a revelation that identified Spring Hill as the site of Adam-oni-Ahman and the place where Adam would again come to meet with his people. *History of the Church*, 3:35; D&C 116

June 2, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

**Personal Life**—Joseph and Emma Smith’s son Alexander Hale Smith was born. *History of the Church*, 3:37
June 28, 1838  
Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri

Ecclesiastical Duties—Joseph Smith held a conference where he organized the high council and a stake of Zion, with his uncle John Smith as president.  *History of the Church, 3:38*

July 4, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

Ecclesiastical Duties—Joseph Smith participated in laying the cornerstones for the Far West Temple.  *History of the Church, 3:41–42*

July 8, 1838  
Far West, Missouri

Visions and Revelations—Joseph Smith received four revelations: Doctrine and Covenants 119 and 120 on tithing; Doctrine and Covenants 117 concerning the duties of William Marks, Newel K. Whitney, and Oliver Granger; and Doctrine and Covenants 118 on the will of the Lord concerning the Twelve Apostles.  *History of the Church, 3:44–46; D&C 117–20*

About July 10, 1838  
Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri

Travels—Joseph Smith visited Adam-ondi-Ahman with other members of the First Presidency, which consisted of Sidney Rigdon, Joseph’s brother Hyrum, and clerk George W. Robinson.  *History of the Church, 3:47*
July 26, 1838  Far West, Missouri

Ecclesiastical Duties—The First Presidency, high council, and bishop’s court were assembled to determine what to do with surplus property and how the First Presidency was to be supported. *History of the Church, 3:47–48*

July 28, 1838  En route to Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri

Travels—Joseph Smith left Far West for Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri, to transact business and to help some of the Canadian brethren who were settling there. *History of the Church, 3:48*

July 31, 1838  Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith attended court and received a visit from Judge Austin A. King. *History of the Church, 3:48–49*

August 6, 1838  Far West, Missouri

Writings—Joseph Smith met with the citizens of Far West in the schoolhouse, where his suggestion that they start a weekly newspaper was welcomed. *History of the Church, 3:56*

August 7, 1838  Gallatin, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith went with a group of about fifteen brethren to Colonel Lyman Wight’s house in Gallatin, Missouri, and met with the Saints who had been beaten while trying to vote. *History of the Church, 3:58–59*

August 8, 1838  Daviess County, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith met with Justice of the Peace Adam Black, who gave a written agreement to the Saints to uphold the law. *History of the Church, 3:59–60*

August 9, 1838  Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith and other Saints met in Adam-ondi-Ahman with a citizens committee from Millport and entered into a covenant of peace with them. Joseph then rode to Far West. *History of the Church, 3:60*

August 11, 1838  En route to Grand River, Missouri

Travels—Joseph Smith traveled with members of the high council to visit the Canadian brethren who had settled on the Grand River at Three Forks, Gentry County, Missouri, contrary to the Church’s counsel. *History of the Church, 3:62*
August 13, 1838
Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith was chased by “evil designing men” on his journey back to Far West from the Grand River and upon arrival was informed of a writ for his arrest. • History of the Church, 3:63

August 16, 1838
Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith told Sheriff William Morgan of Daviess County that he wished to be tried in Caldwell County according to the law. • History of the Church, 3:63

August 20, 1838
Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith met with various inhabitants of Caldwell County who formed themselves into “Agricultural Companies.” • History of the Church, 3:63–64

August 30, 1838
Far West, Missouri

Ecclesiastical Duties—Joseph Smith spent the day in an interview with Brother John Corrill, whose “conduct for some time had been very unbecoming.” • History of the Church, 3:65–66

September 1, 1838
Far West, Missouri

Travels—Joseph Smith traveled with the First Presidency to the half-way house of Waldo Littlefield in the Daviess County, Marrowbone

Sept. 1, 1838
William Clark, American explorer of the West, died.
Settlement, for the purpose of appointing another city of Zion as a place of refuge for the Saints. ● History of the Church, 3:67

September 2, 1838 Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith visited with a man from Livingston County, who gave him reports of a growing mob in Daviess County. ● History of the Church, 3:68–69

September 4, 1838 Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith engaged Generals David R. Atchison and Alexander W. Doniphan as his lawyers. ● History of the Church, 3:69; Anderson, BYU Studies 26.3: 3–47

September 6, 1838 Daviess County, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith’s hearing at the home of Waldo Littlefield before Judge Austin A. King could not proceed because of the absence of the plaintiff. ● History of the Church, 3:72

September 7, 1838 Daviess County, Missouri

Legal Events—In a hearing at John Raglin’s home, Adam Black claimed his life had been threatened by Church members, and Joseph Smith was required to post a $500 security bond despite the lack of evidence against him. ● History of the Church, 3:72–73

September 8, 1838 Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith received news that a mob planned to attack Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri. ● History of the Church, 3:74

September 9, 1838 Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—A mob was frustrated in its attempts to attack Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri, but the mobbers continued to send taunting reports of tortured prisoners to Joseph Smith and the Saints, trying to provoke them to commit the first act of violence. ● History of the Church, 3:74–75

September 12, 1838 Far West, Missouri

Ecclesiastical Duties—Joseph Smith received a report that citizens from Daviess County, Missouri, sent a letter to the governor, Lilburn W. Boggs, filled with lies and falsehoods about the Saints in Missouri. ● History of the Church, 3:76
**September 18, 1838**  
**Far West, Missouri**  
*Legal Events*—Joseph Smith was at home with an illness when Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs issued orders to General David R. Atchison of the state militia to march into Daviess and Caldwell Counties in Missouri and assist in the apprehension of certain Church leaders. *History of the Church, 3:81*

**September 26, 1838**  
**Far West, Missouri**  
*Legal Events*—A committee of the Church related to Joseph Smith that it had entered into an agreement with a mob to purchase the lands of all non-Mormon citizens wishing to leave Daviess County. *History of the Church, 3:84–85*

**October 5, 1838**  
**Caldwell County, Missouri**  
*Travels*—Joseph Smith was interrupted on his journey to lower Caldwell County, Missouri, when some brethren from De Witt, Missouri, told him that the Saints in De Witt were in danger. *History of the Church, 3:152–53*

**October 6, 1838**  
**De Witt, Missouri**  
*Legal Events*—Joseph Smith arrived in De Witt and found the Saints surrounded by an armed mob. *History of the Church, 3:153*

**October 9, 1838**  
**De Witt, Missouri**  
*Legal Events*—An armed mob held the Saints in De Witt under siege for a period of days, during which time Joseph Smith saw several brethren die from starvation. *History of the Church, 3:157–60*

**October 12, 1838**  
**Caldwell County, Missouri**  
*Travels*—Joseph Smith arrived in Caldwell County after having buried some of the Saints who died of fatigue and privation during the evacuation from DeWitt, Missouri. *History of the Church, 3:160*

**October 14, 1838**  
**Caldwell County, Missouri**  
*Ecclesiastical Duties*—Joseph Smith preached about the scripture “Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his brethren,” and requested the support of all who would stand by him to meet on the public square the next day. *History of the Church, 3:162*

Oct. 1, 1838  
Charles Tennant, Scottish chemist and industrialist who discovered bleaching powder, died.

1838  
Proteins were discovered by Jöns Jakob Berzelius.
October 15, 1838 Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith traveled to Adam-ondi-Ahman with a militia company of about 100 men under the command of Colonel George M. Hinckle to protect the Saints from the Daviess County mob. *History of the Church, 3:162*

October 25, 1838 Log Creek near Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—At the Battle of Crooked River, David W. Patten received a fatal gunshot wound. Joseph Smith attended to him as he was dying. *History of the Church, 3:171–72*

About October 27, 1838 Jefferson City, Missouri

Legal Events—Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs issued an extermination order concerning the Saints: “The Mormons must be treated as enemies and must be exterminated or driven from the state.” *History of the Church, 3:175; Anderson, BYU Studies 26.3: 3–47*

October 30, 1838 Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—About 3,500 mob members and Missouri militia approached Far West, acting on orders from Governor Lilburn W. Boggs. *History of the Church, 3:182; Stevenson, Reminiscences of Joseph the Prophet, 36–37*

About October 31, 1838 Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Colonel George M. Hinkle, on the pretense that the hostile militia surrounding Far West desired a truce, escorted Joseph Smith and other Church leaders to a supposed parley with militia officers. Instead, they were taken prisoner and marched to the enemy camp on Goose Creek. *History of the Church, 3:188–90*

November 1, 1838 Goose Creek Camp, Caldwell County Missouri

Legal Events—Officers of the Missouri militia held a court martial and sentenced Joseph Smith, his brother Hyrum, and others to be shot at 9:00 A.M. General Alexander W. Doniphan refused to carry out the sentence. *History of the Church, 3:190–92*

November 2, 1838 Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Joseph Smith’s wife and children wept as the guards thrust them away with their swords and took the Prophet under heavy guard toward Independence, Missouri. *History of the Church, 3:192–95*
November 3, 1838    Crooked River, Ray County, Missouri

*Visions and Revelations*—While traveling under heavy guard toward Independence, Missouri, Joseph Smith prophesied to his fellow prisoners that none of their lives would be taken. *History of the Church, 3:200; Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, 210*

November 4, 1838    Ray to Clay County, Missouri

*Ecclesiastical Duties*—While en route to Independence with other prisoners, Joseph Smith preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to a woman who inquired whether he “professed to be the Lord and Savior.” *History of the Church, 3:200–201*

November 4, 1838    Independence, Missouri

*Writings*—From a house in Independence where the prisoners stayed before being moved to Richmond, Joseph Smith wrote a letter to his wife Emma at Far West. “I have great anxiety about you, and my lovely children, my heart morns & bleeds for the brotheren, and sisters, and for the slain of the people of God,” he wrote. *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, 398–404*

November 5, 1838    Independence, Missouri

*Ecclesiastical Duties*—Joseph Smith and other prisoners were able to explain their doctrines to many people, thus removing “mountains of prejudice, and enlist[ing] the populace in our favor.” *History of the Church, 3:202*

November 6, 1838    Geauga County, Ohio

*Legal Events*—Joseph Smith, Jr. for the Use of Julius Granger v. John Coltrin & Cyrus Smalling. In the Court of Common Pleas, Geauga County, Joseph Smith filed an action on a promissory note for $500. The defendants counterclaimed against Joseph Smith for $2,000 allegedly owed for “various goods and merchandise” as well as $1,500 for Kirtland Safety Society notes, an “unauthorized bank paper.” A jury trial was held. The defendants recovered their costs of $23.24. The plaintiffs gave notice of intent to appeal. *LDS Church Archives, Joseph Smith Legal Papers series*

November 9, 1838    Richmond, Missouri

*Legal Events*—Colonel Sterling Price chained Joseph Smith and the other prisoners together in an old vacant house. *History of the Church, 3:205–6*
November 11, 1838
Richmond, Missouri

Personal Life—After listening most of the night to the guards elaborate and boast about the atrocities they had committed against the Saints, Joseph Smith stood and rebuked them, in the name of Jesus Christ, to be still or die. • History of the Church, 3:208; Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, 210–11

November 12, 1838
Richmond, Missouri

Writings—Joseph Smith wrote a letter to his wife, Emma. “Oh God grant that I may have the privilege of seeing once more my lovely Family . . . tell the children that I am alive and trust I shall come and see them before long,” he assured. • Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, 405–9

Legal Events—On the first day of Joseph Smith’s hearing before Judge Austin A. King, a group of armed men was sent out, without any civil proceedings, to obtain witnesses. • History of the Church, 3:209; Madsen, BYU Studies 43.4: 92–137

November 13, 1838
Richmond, Missouri

Legal Events—Over forty witnesses appeared at court and bore false witness against the Prophet. • History of the Church, 3:209–10

November 18, 1838
Richmond, Missouri

Legal Events—All of the witnesses Joseph Smith and his brethren requested for their trial (between forty and fifty persons) were arrested, thrown in prison, and prohibited from testifying. • History of the Church, 3:210–11

November 29, 1838
Richmond, Missouri

Legal Events—After being abused and enduring an unjust preliminary hearing, Joseph Smith and five of the other brethren were committed to Liberty Jail in Liberty, Missouri, by Judge Austin A. King. • History of the Church, 3:212–15

About November 30, 1838
Liberty, Missouri

Travels—Joseph Smith and five other brethren were en route as prisoners to Liberty Jail. • History of the Church, 3:215

About December 1, 1838
Far West, Missouri

Legal Events—Heber C. Kimball and Alanson Ripley were appointed by the brethren in Far West, Missouri, to visit Joseph
Smith and the others in Liberty Jail “as often as circumstances would permit.” • History of the Church, 3:244

December 1, 1838
Liberty, Missouri

Writings—Joseph Smith wrote a letter to Emma announcing that he and his fellow prisoners were admitted to Liberty Jail. • Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, 410–14; Arrington, BYU Studies 13.1: 20–35

December 16, 1838
Liberty, Missouri

Writings—Joseph Smith dictated a letter of comfort to the Saints from Liberty Jail. • History of the Church, 3:226–33; Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, 415–22

December 20, 1838
Liberty, Missouri

Personal Life—Emma Smith visited Joseph in Liberty Jail. • Newell and Avery, Mormon Enigma, 77

1838
Ralph Cudworth, English theologian and philosopher, published A Treatise on Freewill.