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1840

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1840

January 20, 1840

Chester County, Pennsylvania

Writings—Joseph Smith wrote a letter to his wife, Emma, expressing his anxiety to see his family again and his hope of their petition going before Congress in a few days. ♦ *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 489–92

January 22, 1840

Brandywine, Pennsylvania

Writings—In response to false rumors, Joseph Smith wrote a letter to the editor of the Chester County Register and Examiner relating the Church's beliefs concerning civil governments. ♦ *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 493–96

About February 22, 1840

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Writings—Joseph Smith wrote his autograph in the family album of the Wilkinsons, nonmembers in Philadelphia who later joined the Church. ♦ *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 497–98

Early March 1840

Between Washington, D.C.,
and Nauvoo, Illinois

Travels—On his way home from a fruitless visit to Washington, D.C., to seek redress for injustices the Saints suffered in Missouri, Joseph Smith proclaimed the iniquity and insolence of Martin Van Buren, the president of the United States, with whom he had visited. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:89

Feb. 29, 1840

John Philip Holland, Irish engineer who developed the first submarine formally commissioned by the U.S. Navy, was born.

March 6, 1840

Montrose, Iowa

Ecclesiastical Duties—Joseph Smith attended a meeting of the high council in Iowa and addressed the issue of the law of consecration. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:93–94

March 11, 1840

Commerce, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith dictated a letter to Robert D. Foster, who had spent four months with the Prophet on his journey to the nation’s capital. Foster and Joseph Smith had returned to Illinois together, after having left Sidney Rigdon in Philadelphia, Elias Higbee in Washington, D.C., and Orrin Porter Rockwell in Dayton, Ohio. ♦ *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 499–500

About April 7, 1840

Commerce, Illinois

Ecclesiastical Duties—Talitha Garlik Avery Cheney recorded that the Prophet baptized her in the Mississippi River the evening after the Tuesday session of the Church’s conference. ♦ McConkie, *Remembering Joseph*, supplemental CD-ROM

About April 8, 1840

Commerce, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith and his clerk Robert B. Thompson prepared credentials for Orson Hyde, recommending him as a worthy representative of the Church to the Jews in foreign lands. Hyde’s ultimate destination was Jerusalem, Palestine. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:112–13

April 21, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Legal Events—Pursuant to Joseph Smith’s direction, the postmaster general officially changed the name of Commerce to Nauvoo. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:121

June 18, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith dictated a letter to the Nauvoo high council, petitioning for a release from attending to temporal concerns. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:137; *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 501–3

June 29, 1840

Nauvoo Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith later received a letter written by William W. Phelps on this date, wherein Phelps admitted the wrongs he had committed against Joseph and asked for his forgiveness. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:141–42

May 1, 1840

Britain issued the Penny Black, the world’s first adhesive postage stamp.

May 7, 1840

Pyotr Ilych Tchaikovsky, Russian composer, was born.

June 2, 1840

Thomas Hardy, English writer, was born.

1840

Christian Friedrich
Schönbein,
German chemist,
discovered ozone.

July 11, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Ecclesiastical Duties—Joseph Smith gave instructions to the high council about how to conduct disciplinary councils. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:154

July 14, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith wrote to the Saints at the Crooked Creek Branch in Illinois (later Ramus, Hancock County), approving the organization of a stake there. The stake was later discontinued by Hyrum Smith at a conference on December 4–5, 1841. ♦ *Times and Seasons* 2:222

About July 19, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Visions and Revelations—While giving a discourse, Joseph Smith prophesied that the “time would come when the nations of the whole earth, even this nation [the United States], will be on the very verge of crumbling to pieces,” and the United States Constitution would hang by a thread. ♦ Ehat and Cook, eds., *Words of Joseph Smith*, 415–16; Jessee, *BYU Studies* 19.3: 390–94

July 22, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—After William W. Phelps requested forgiveness, Joseph Smith dictated a letter granting that forgiveness and inviting him to return to the Church. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:162–64; *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 508–10

About July 26, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith dictated a letter to Oliver Granger, the agent assigned to settle Church debts at Kirtland, Ohio. ♦ *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 511–14

August 9, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith wrote a letter to a friend of the Church, John C. Bennett, of Wayne County, Illinois, inviting him to come visit Nauvoo. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:177–79

August 15, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Visions and Revelations—While preaching a funeral sermon for Colonel Seymour Brunson, Joseph Smith first announced the doctrine of baptism for the dead. ♦ Ehat and Cook, eds., *Words of Joseph Smith*, 49; *History of the Church*, 4:179

September 1, 1840

Independence, Missouri

Legal Events—The successor to Lilburn W. Boggs, Missouri Governor Thomas Reynolds, initiated extradition proceedings against Joseph Smith and others by sending a requisition to Illinois Governor Thomas Carlin. ♦ LDS Church Archives, Joseph Smith Legal Papers series

September 14, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Personal Life—Joseph Smith's father, Joseph Smith Sr., died. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:189

About September 15, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Legal Events—The funeral for Joseph Smith Sr. was held. An editorial printed in the Church newspaper *Times and Seasons* on this date reported that Lilburn W. Boggs, former governor of Missouri, had demanded the extradition of Joseph Smith Jr. as a fugitive from justice. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:191, 198–99; *Times and Seasons* 1:170

October 3–5, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Ecclesiastical Duties—Joseph Smith presided at a three-day general conference of the Church. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:204–14



The Joseph Smith homestead in Nauvoo.

Sept. 11, 1840

Jean-Gabriel Perboyre, a French Catholic missionary, was martyred in China.

1840

The afternoon tea ritual was introduced in Britain by the Duchess of Bedford.

Nov. 12, 1840

Auguste Rodin,
French sculptor,
was born.

Nov. 14, 1840

Claude Monet,
French painter,
was born.

1840

Elizabeth Cady
Stanton omitted
the word *obey* from
her marriage vows.

October 19, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum wrote a letter to the Saints in Kirtland reproving them for neglect of their brethren and sisters during the Missouri persecutions. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:225–26

December 12, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith wrote a letter to Newel K. Whitney requesting some dry wood to burn in his stove. ♦ *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 504–5

December 15, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith dictated a letter to the Twelve Apostles on missions in Great Britain. Joseph expressed his pleasure at the spread of truth throughout England and agreed with their request to return in the spring. ♦ *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 515–22

December 16, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Legal Events—The city of Nauvoo was granted its charter from the state of Illinois, making it an official city with various government rights and protections. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:239–49

December 30, 1840

Nauvoo, Illinois

Writings—Joseph Smith's history included an extensive list of books, pamphlets, and letters published for and against the Latter-day Saints during the past year. ♦ *History of the Church*, 4:253–56, 487–89