A Historical Study of the Mormon Temple at Nauvoo, Illinois

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A HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE MORMON TEMPLE
AT NAUVOO, ILLINOIS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Department of History and Philosophy of Religion
Brigham Young University

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

by
Don F. Colvin
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Figure 1. The Nauvoo Temple  
Photograph of a painting by C. C. A. Christensen
CHAPTER I

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The story of the Mormon Temple at Nauvoo has never been fully told. Numerous isolated references have been made to it by various writers, but the subject has been consistently dealt with in broad general terms or isolated specifics. A thorough account of this dramatic story has remained to be told.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study is to bring to light available data pertaining to the historical background of the site, construction, purposes, uses and disposition of the Mormon Temple at Nauvoo, Illinois.

Importance of the study. A detailed study of the building's history is of special significance. It sheds light on the controversy which has existed for nearly a century, over whether or not the structure was ever completed. It reveals the dedicated struggle of a group of pioneer Americans, as they, in the face of great obstacles, sacrificed for the fulfillment of their ideals and convictions. It furnishes valuable insight into the historical development and practice of temple ordinance work as practiced by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It brings together, in more complete form than ever
before, the pertinent information relating to the temple's construction, its varied uses and eventual fate.

II. LIMITATIONS

Such a study as here undertaken is limited in its scope. Volumes have been written on the Mormon movement and considerable treatment given to the Nauvoo period of that history. This study is limited only to those parts of that history which have direct bearing on the story of the temple. It does not attempt a treatment of problems between the Mormons and their neighbors, nor does it deal with other areas of interest which developed over the period of construction. For sake of clarity and efficient organization, only the material pertinent to a judicious covering of the topic under consideration can be treated.

III. REVIEW OF SOURCE MATERIALS

To the degree possible this study has concerned itself with material from original sources such as private journals, newspapers, historical writings, and other written matter originating in the period when the temple was being built. The most valuable collections of these materials have been found in the Church Historian's Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the Brigham Young University Library. Another helpful source has been the Bancroft Library at the University of California.

Valuable material has been obtained from numerous printed sources commenting on the period when the temple was built. Probably the best
source of commentary has been Andrew Jenson's The Historical Record.\(^1\) His section on the Nauvoo Temple is a worthy contribution to the subject and the most comprehensive printed study available. His treatment of a number of matters pertaining to the temple has, because of a need for brevity, dealt only in a general way with most of the material. His study has no doubt been a major source of reference for other writers. Another source worthy of special mention is that of the History of the Church, often referred to as the Documentary History of the Church. This work of seven volumes is principally taken from the private journal of Joseph Smith. It contains considerable original material on the period. The material is not organized under a topic heading, with all data on the temple available in one package, but contains a day-by-day report of events covering the period of Nauvoo. This source has been invaluable.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The materials available in research lend themselves to logical organization. The introduction treats the historical setting in which the temple was built. The main portion of the study considers the actual construction, the means and materials used, and descriptions of the various parts of the structure. This is followed by a treatment of the building's purposes, and the functions for which it was used, with

\(^1\)Andrew Jenson (ed.), "The Nauvoo Temple," The Historical Record, VIII, 857-872.

\(^2\)Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Introduction and Notes by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1949), Vols. III, IV, V, VI, VII.
special emphasis on temple ordinance work. This main section of the study is completed by considering the problem of whether the structure was, or was not completed; and the fate of the building after desertion by its builders. The final part of the thesis is a summation of the main points of the study and the conclusions reached.
CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE TEMPLE AT NAUVOO

From out of the west they came, streaming across the mighty Mississippi, from Missouri into Illinois. These people numbering nearly 15,000\(^1\) were exiles, forced to flee from their homes by religious persecution and a general order of extermination issued by the Governor of Missouri. These were the Mormons, arriving in Illinois in the winter of 1838-39. Destitute or with meager means, they were destined to leave their imprint upon the history of the state. They were to build a city which in its time would be the largest in Illinois, a city whose image would be reflected and symbolized by its central structure, the Mormon Temple at Nauvoo.

I. WHO WERE THE MORMONS?

The group of people commonly called Mormons were members of a Christian religious body--The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Their nickname, Mormon, stemmed from belief in The Book of Mormon which was accepted by them as a scriptural record of God's dealings with the ancient inhabitants of America. They were at this date former residents of New England, the eastern states, and southern Canada.

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The church movement had its formal beginning in Fayette, New York, on April 6, 1830. It is characterized by belief of its members in an inspired leadership, with acceptance of their President as a Latter-day Prophet of God, equal in stature with any of the biblical prophets. Joseph Smith, their first leader and commonly called the "Prophet Joseph," claimed to have personally seen and talked with God and Jesus Christ. Smith produced many revelations, the greater part of which were preserved, printed, and accepted by church members as inspired scripture.

From New York the movement spread, and moved west to establish settlements in northern Ohio and western Missouri. Kirtland, Ohio, was the main center of church activity in the early 1830's, and it was here that the Mormons were to build their first temple. Due to internal strife, apostasy, and persecution, the Ohio members were forced to leave and join with the other main center of the church in Missouri.

The Saints had come to Missouri as early as 1831. Here it was that the Prophet, by revelation, designated the area in and around Independence as the place of gathering for latter-day Israel. It was here that the concept of temple building, which has been a prominent feature of Mormon history, was first revealed to the church. At Independence and the

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3Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1952), Joseph Smith 2:1-20.

4Ibid.; and The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1952).

5Doctrine and Covenants 57:1-16. 6Ibid.
surrounding area of Jackson County the church, in response to revelation, attempted establishment of a new social-religious order called "Zion." This concept of a "Utopian society" was to involve the whole life of man. It proposed a far-reaching design of city planning and a community of all sharing in common, with neither rich nor poor. It differed considerably from the communistic philosophy, upholding ownership of private property and the principle of free agency. The Mormon dream of Zion was only partly successful. Being uprooted by mob violence, the Saints were forced to leave Jackson County in 1833. They finally settled across the Missouri River to the north, principally in Caldwell County where they established the city of Far West.

To Far West, the new focal point of church government, came the Ohio Mormons in 1838. They were joined that summer by large groups from Canada and the eastern United States. Their arrival in large numbers touched off new persecution. Motivated by political and religious reasons, armed mobs plundered the Mormon homes and settlements. As the Saints marshalled their forces for defense, a near state of war existed in western Missouri. State officials siding with the mob element issued an order on October 27, 1838. Signed by the governor, in part it read:


9Ibid., p. 425.
The Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the state if necessary for the public peace—their outrages are beyond all description.  

As the order of extermination was put into effect church leaders were imprisoned and for a time held under threat of the penalty of death. The church members were forced to leave their comfortable homes, their spacious lands, and flee from the state. Knowing not where to go, they were a people without a home. Their dream of Zion had at least for the present been crushed.

The winter of 1838-39 was spent by many as guests of the city of Quincy, Illinois, whose citizens had been moved to sympathy for the fleeing Mormons. Some wintered in wagons or dug-outs along the river bank, while others went north to similar refuge in Iowa.

Spring saw them still leaderless and waiting. Most knew not where to go. They were advised by letter from the Prophet on March 25, 1839, to settle somewhere between Far West, Missouri, and their old location at Kirtland, Ohio. They were to find places of refuge and safety between these two spots until new opportunities for consideration were opened to their leaders.

On April 16th after six months incarceration Joseph Smith and others with him escaped their prison in Liberty, Missouri, to join with the Saints at Quincy.

10 Ibid., p. 479.


12 Ibid., II, 336.
Where to go and build anew now occupied the attention of all. The Prophet had before him a proposal of lands for settlement in Iowa and at Commerce, Illinois.\(^\text{13}\) Upon investigation of the sites he made purchases of land at Commerce. The first purchases were made May 1, 1839. They consisted of two large farms, one owned by Hugh White and the other by Dr. Isaac Galland. Later purchases were made from Dr. Galland, Daniel H. Wells, Hiram Kimball, Davidson Hibbard, Horace Hotchkiss and others.\(^\text{14}\) The terms of the purchases were generous, allowing for long-term payment. This made it possible for the poverty-stricken group to acquire the land for settlement. On May 10th the Prophet and his family, along with others, began their residence at the newly purchased location.\(^\text{15}\) Largely uninhabited and uninviting to settlement, Commerce became the new home of the exiles.

II. THE CITY OF NAUVOO

Commerce, according to Gregg, was a "paper town" ushered into existence by eastern speculators.\(^\text{16}\) Jenson names them as Horace Hotchkiss and John Gillett, two speculators from Connecticut who in 1837 established

\(^\text{13}\)Ibid., III, 336.

\(^\text{14}\)Joseph Fielding Smith, Church History and Modern Revelation (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company), II, 244-247.

\(^\text{15}\)Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. III, 349.

on paper what was to be the city of Commerce. Previous to this, the town of Commerce had been laid out in 1834, by Joseph Teas and Alexander White. The intentions of these early founders were apparently never realized and the land waited the development of its new owners, the Mormons. Joseph Smith describes the appearance of the settlement as he arrived there to take up residence:

When I made the purchase of White and Galland, there were one stone house, three frame houses, and two block houses, which constituted the whole city of Commerce. Between Commerce and Mr. Davidson Hibbard's, there was one stone house and three log houses, including the one that I live in, and these were all the houses in this vicinity, and the place was literally a wilderness. The land was mostly covered with trees and bushes, and much of it so wet that it was with the utmost difficulty a footman could get through, and totally impossible for teams. Commerce was so unhealthful very few could live there; but believing that it might become a healthful place by the blessing of heaven to the Saints, and no more eligible place presenting itself, I considered it wisdom to make an attempt to build up a city.

Throughout the summer of 1839 the Saints continued to gather on the lands purchased by the church authorities. Presenting a general appearance of great destitution, they occupied the lower ground along the bank of the river. Extending a considerable distance above the camps was a succession of ponds filled with stagnant water and decaying vegetation.

Men were put to work cutting ditches to the river for the purpose

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17Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 745.

18Ibid.


20James A. Little, From Kirtland to Salt Lake City (Salt Lake City, Utah: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1890), p. 36.
of draining the swampy land. This project was completed during the sum-
mer of 1840.\textsuperscript{21} Before the project was completed the Saints in their
weakened condition fell prey to sickness, mostly in the form of malaria
fever carried by mosquitoes bred in the swampy land upon which they were
settling. In the summer of 1839, the condition of sickness was almost
general among the people, and some deaths resulted. After the land had
been drained, conditions were greatly improved; the swampy land was re-
claimed for habitation and cultivation.

In September of 1839 the streets and lots were laid out in a new
town bordering on Commerce.\textsuperscript{22} The first written statement of this new
town's name is also recorded at this time. It was called Nauvoo.\textsuperscript{23}
According to Joseph Smith, Nauvoo was of Hebrew extraction, meaning
"a beautiful situation or place, carrying with it, also, the idea of
rest."\textsuperscript{24} The town was given official status when, on April 21, 1840, the
United States Post Office Department changed the name of the local post
office at Commerce to Nauvoo, and appointed George W. Robinson as post-
master.\textsuperscript{25}

Plans to incorporate Nauvoo as a city were put into effect on
December 16, 1840, when the Illinois governor signed into law the act
chartering the City of Nauvoo, the Nauvoo Legion, and the University of

\textsuperscript{21}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{22}\textit{Gregg and Scofield, op. cit., p. 246; and Joseph Smith, \textit{History
of the Church}, Period I, Vol. IV, 7.}

\textsuperscript{23}\textit{Joseph Smith, \textit{History of the Church}, Period I, Vol. IV, 8.}

\textsuperscript{24}\textit{Ibid., IV, 268.}

\textsuperscript{25}\textit{Ibid., IV, 121.}
the city of Nauvoo. The city charter had been largely designed by
Joseph Smith, who stated:

I concocted it for the salvation of the church, and on principles
so broad, that every honest man might dwell secure under its protec-
tive influence without distinction of sect or party.

The charter made Nauvoo a virtual city state with a charter more
liberal than that of any city in America. It had its own militia, the
Nauvoo Legion, which in time grew to an army of 5,000 men. The charter
was designed to provide the Saints protection against a repetition of the
Missouri persecutions and afford the Saints the protection of the law.

Nauvoo as a city included in its boundaries the old town and city
of Commerce. It was laid out with broad streets and followed the plan
designed for the cities of Zion. It was well planned and evidenced
many features now common in zoning and in far-sighted city planning.

The city's location was lovely. It was situated one hundred and
ninety miles north of St. Louis at the head of the Des Moines rapids,
on a horseshoe bend of the Mississippi River. The city was bounded on
the north, south and west by the waters of the river; and from the river
bank sloped away to the east and the rolling prairies beyond. Across
the river was Iowa and the village of Montrose, another Mormon settlement.

The city grew both in population and improvements at a phenomenal
rate. By January of 1840 the population was estimated by church leaders
at more than 3,000 inhabitants.

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26Ibid., IV, 239-249.  
27Ibid.  
29Berrett, op. cit., p. 212.
By the summer of 1841 it was reported to be between 8,000 and
9,000 citizens, and from this time on was considered to be the largest
city in the state.\textsuperscript{31}

Governor Ford declared that in 1844 the Mormons were 16,000 strong
in Hancock County and there were several thousand more scattered in other
counties.\textsuperscript{32} Roberts quotes Ford as saying that in 1846 the city itself
numbered 15,000 inhabitants scattered over a six square mile area.
Roberts further states that the population was variously estimated from
12,000 to 20,000.\textsuperscript{33}

The Saints from near and far were urged to gather to Nauvoo and
build up the city.\textsuperscript{34} A steady flow of new citizens swelled the popula-
tion. The nucleus had come from the Missouri exiles, but they were
added to by converts from the eastern United States, Canada, and the
British Isles. The gathering of church members from England began as
early as June of 1840.\textsuperscript{35} By April of 1841, 1,020 had immigrated to
Nauvoo.\textsuperscript{36} Thirty-two companies traveled to Nauvoo between 1840 and

\textsuperscript{31}Roberts, Comprehensive History, II, 84-85.

\textsuperscript{32}Thomas Ford, A History of Illinois 1818-1847 (Chicago,

\textsuperscript{33}Roberts, Comprehensive History, III, 23.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., II, 84.

\textsuperscript{35}Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 134.

\textsuperscript{36}Richard L. Evans, A Century of Mormonism in Great Britain
1846, bringing a total of 5,000 to America, the greater part of which located at Nauvoo.

The effect of these new citizens upon the culture, beauty and industry of the city was considerable. They brought with them their seeds which in turn sprang up into productive gardens, while flowers from the old and new world added to the beauty of the rising city. They brought their skills to contribute to the growth of industry and building. In addition, they contributed their talents in cultural activities of the city.

By June 1, 1840, two hundred and fifty houses had been erected and many others were under construction. Heber C. Kimball, a year later in July of 1841, reported that twelve hundred buildings could be found in the city, and hundreds of others were in progress and near completion. Creer reported that, in 1841, more than two thousand houses had been erected, plus schools and other buildings. Van Dusen described the city in 1846 as:

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37Larson, op. cit., p. 50.

38Ibid., p. 167, note 22; and Evans, op. cit., p. 245.


40Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 133.

41Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 757.

42Leland Hargrave Creer, The Founding of an Empire (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1947), p. 205.
... promiscuously built up, with a variety of houses, sufficient in number to contain about fifteen thousand inhabitants. The buildings vary from a small log and mud hut, from ten to fourteen feet square, one story, to between one and two hundred feet square, four stories including basement, of brick and stone... 43

Nauvoo in the short space of six years rose to attract the interest and attention of people from far and near. It was visited by a number of notable travelers of the time, with favorable comment. It was fast becoming an industrial and shipping center, and gave promise of becoming a cultural center as well. It stood in its time as the largest city in Illinois, powerful in political influence because of its numbers, and in many ways presented itself as a powerful city, a force to be reckoned with.

III. THE EXODUS OF THE MORMONS FROM ILLINOIS

As already explained, when the Saints fled from Missouri, they were received in Illinois with a general attitude of sympathy and good will.

As Nauvoo grew in power and influence, the attitude of many of its neighbors changed, and some developed a bitter opposition to the cause of Mormonism.

Most of the feelings grew out of political motivation. Added to this was continued harassment and agitation against church leaders and members by their old enemies in Missouri. Another source of the growing difficulty came from apostates within the ranks who, after their expulsion by the Saints, showed their bitterness by striking back in acts of revenge against the church and its leaders. Still another influence was that of

43Increase McGee Van Dusen and Marie Van Dusen, The Sublime and Ridiculous Blended, Called the Endowment (New York, New York: Published by the Authors, 1848), p. 5.
envy and jealousy on the part of some citizens in neighboring towns who looked upon the rising wealth and industry of Nauvoo as diminishing the economy and expansion of its neighbors. To others the presence of the Nauvoo Legion excited fears and suspicions of religious oppression by the enthusiastic Mormons.

A combination of these and other influences united in an ever growing storm of opposition and persecution. Work on the temple and other enterprises was retarded as a result of the growing pressures and the actions of a mob element. The situation gradually worsened until it was climaxed in June of 1844 by mob violence which resulted in the murder of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother, Hyrum.  

The Smiths were being held under protective custody awaiting a hearing on charges of treason against the State of Illinois. Under promise of protection by forces at the command of the Governor Thomas Ford, they had come with other church leaders to the Hancock county seat at Carthage. This was also a center of opposition to the cause of Mormonism.

While the governor was visiting Nauvoo, an armed mob with painted faces and numbering about two hundred men stormed the jail at Carthage leaving Joseph and Hyrum Smith dead, and John Taylor severely wounded. In a few minutes the mob had struck what to many appeared to be a death blow to Mormonism.


Ibid., VI, 561-562.  
Ibid.  
Ibid., VI, 617-618.
A mournful silence settled over Nauvoo and the church membership, stunned by the tragic events, waited for direction. The void of leadership was filled after the return of the Twelve Apostles from their missions in the eastern states. The Twelve, with Brigham Young as their President, were sustained by the church membership as the new presiding authorities of the church.\textsuperscript{48} Under this new leadership every effort was bent toward completion of the temple and the continued expansion of the church. It was soon apparent that the movement had taken on a new vitality and gave evidence that Mormonism was far from being dead.

Mob action continued and outlying Mormon settlements were forced to flee to Nauvoo for refuge. The Nauvoo Charter was repealed and the city left without protection of city law. Mob forces, checked only in part by the state militia, threatened destruction of the city unless the Mormons would leave. Agreements were made in the fall of 1845 between the church and its enemies for removal of the Saints the following spring.\textsuperscript{49} The agreement was not honored by the mob element. They continued aggressive acts and harassment, forcing a premature departure in the late winter.

The first of the Saints left their homes and were ferried across the river to Iowa, February 4, 1846, where they gathered at Sugar Creek.\textsuperscript{50} At this point of assembly, they organized for the journey across the


\textsuperscript{49}\textit{Tbid.}, II, 504-506.

\textsuperscript{50}William E. Berrett and Alma P. Burton, \textit{Readings in L.D.S. Church History} (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1955), II, 122-123.
plains. Groups continued to cross the river on the ice and by ferry, as weather conditions dictated, in almost a steady stream. The poor, the sick and the aged remained behind, awaiting a time when they could be picked up by the pioneer group. Even the exodus of the main group and its leaders failed to appease certain of the mob element. In September this group marshalled into a mob militia and after overcoming a brief defense, drove the last of the Saints from their homes and away from their city into the exposure of the open prairie.

Once again the people were exiles. This time their journey was to lead eventually to the Great Basin of the Great Salt Lake, where the industry that made Nauvoo would be put to work in making the desert blossom. There they would contribute a vital part in taming the wilderness of the west.

Nauvoo was left behind; the city and its central structure, the temple, were to remain a silent symbol of the industry, the faith, the sacrifice, ideals and dreams of its builders. As stated by Roberts, Nauvoo had enjoyed an adventurous career: "... the most prosperous, but the briefest, and the saddest career of all American cities in modern times." 51

51 Roberts, Comprehensive History, II, 60.
CHAPTER III
THE STORY OF CONSTRUCTION

It is only logical that the Saints who had built a temple in Kirtland, Ohio, and contemplated erection of two others in Missouri would early turn their interest toward constructing such an edifice in their newly rising city of Nauvoo. A consideration of the temple's development in thought and actual physical construction is of major significance in a study of its history.

I. PRELIMINARY PLANS ARE MADE

The first printed mention of a temple to be erected in Nauvoo was made as early as August 1, 1840, in an address of the First Presidency. Sent to the "Saints scattered abroad," it declared:

... the time has now come, when it is necessary to erect a house of prayer, a house of order, a house for the worship of our God, where the ordinances can be attended to agreeably to His divine will, in this region of country—to accomplish which, considerable exertion must be made, and means will be required. ... ¹

The contemplation of such a building was carried into action at the October General Conference of the church. Minutes of the meeting held October 3, 1840, record the following:

The President then spoke of the necessity of building a "House of the Lord" in this place. Whereupon it was Resolved: That the Saints build a house for the worship of God, and that Reynolds

¹Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 186.
Cahoon, Elias Higbee, and Alpheus Cutler be appointed a committee to build the same.²

Jenson reports that several plans for the building were submitted by various individuals, only one of which was satisfactory to the Prophet, this being the drawing of William Weeks.³ Weeks became the official architect and supervised the work during most of the construction period.

A site was selected about this same time on the property known as the Wells addition which had been purchased by the church.⁴ It was on the east bench, the highest elevation of the city, a striking location.

II. THE WORK BEGINS

Quarries from which stone would be obtained to erect the structure were opened within ten days after approval of the project at the October Conference of 1840.⁵

In a proclamation "To the Saints Scattered Abroad" the First Presidency declared on January 14, 1841, that:

. . . The temple of the Lord is in progress of erection here, . . . and will be so constructed as to enable all the functions of the priesthood to be duly exercised, and where instructions from the Most High will be received and from this place go forth to distant lands.⁶

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² Ibid., p. 205.

³ Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 858.

⁴ Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 229.


⁶ The Times and Seasons (Nauvoo, Illinois), January 14, 1841.
Construction of the building was given divine sanction and the steps thus far taken were approved in a revelation issued by the Prophet on January 19, 1841. A more detailed account of the design and functions of the proposed structure was now made clear. It was to contain a baptis- mal font for performing baptisms in behalf of the dead. In it would be revealed ordinances reserved for the latter-days. The Prophet was to be shown all things pertaining to the building, and it was to be erected on the spot which had previously been selected. From this date on, the church was under commandment from God to build the temple and hasten its completion.

III. CONSTRUCTION IN 1841

From the beginning Albert P. Rockwood assisted by Charles Drury was in charge of the crews working in the quarries. Work was slow at first with only one day in ten being spent on the project. As spring arrived in 1841 the work picked up momentum. Employment of regular hands to labor on the project gave a new consistency to the effort.

7 Doctrines and Covenants 12:26-44.
8 Ibid.
9 "Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (unpublished MS., Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1830 to date), December 31, 1844, p. 12. Note: Hereafter referred to as "Journal History."
10 "Manuscript History of Nauvoo" (unpublished MS., Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah), I, December 15, 1840, p. 4.
11 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 860.
This was aided later on by the division of the city into ten Bishop's Wards, with each Ward crew working once every ten days.\textsuperscript{12}

The foundation was laid out by the Temple Committee in February, 1841. Digging of the cellar was commenced on February 18th with corners for the foundation being excavated first.\textsuperscript{13} By March 8th the cellar walls were commenced, as workers began laying the foundation stones.\textsuperscript{14} By April 5th the walls were five feet high and in readiness for the ceremony of laying the cornerstones of the building.\textsuperscript{15}

The Saints had been expectantly awaiting the day of April 6, 1841. Not only was it the eleventh anniversary of the church, but also the beginning of its annual conference. The conference was to begin with the ceremony of laying the cornerstones of the temple. For days prior to the event, members had been gathering at Nauvoo to witness this important occasion. As the day arrived it is estimated that ten thousand people were present to witness the festivities.\textsuperscript{16}

The day was commenced at 7:30 a.m. by sixteen companies of the Nauvoo Legion parading in a general review. Following the review, a procession was organized and moved forward to the temple block, arriving there at twelve noon.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{12}Huntington, loc. cit.; and Andrew Jenson (comp.), Church Chronology (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1899), p. 22.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 857.

\textsuperscript{14}Huntington, loc. cit.  

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{16}Times and Seasons, April 15, 1841.

\textsuperscript{17}Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 326-331.
Upon arrival at the temple site, the Generals, their staffs, and distinguished visitors took up positions inside of the foundation in the center. The ladies were seated next, just inside of the foundation walls. Immediately behind the walls were the gentlemen present, behind them the infantry, and in the rear, the cavalry. The superior officers, speakers, architects, etc., were conducted to the stand located at the southeast or principal cornerstone. With the site fully enclosed by the assembly, the services were ready to begin.\textsuperscript{18}

The chorus began the meeting by rendition of a hymn from the new hymn book. They were led by B. S. Wilber. This was followed by an address to the assembly by President Sidney Rigdon. His oration lasted more than one hour and was followed by another hymn by the choir.\textsuperscript{19}

Next was the laying of the principal or southeast cornerstone. By order of the First Presidency, the architects lowered the stone to its place and Joseph Smith pronounced the following benediction:

This principal corner stone in representation of the First Presidency, is now duly laid in honor of the Great God; and may it there remain until the whole fabric is completed; and may the same be accomplished speedily; that the Saints may have a place to worship God, and the Son of Man have where to lay His head.\textsuperscript{20}

President Rigdon then stated:

May the persons employed in the erection of this house be preserved from all harm while engaged in its construction, till the whole is completed, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Even so, Amen.\textsuperscript{21}

Following this the services were adjourned for one hour. Upon

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{19}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{20}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{21}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
reassembly they proceeded to lay the remaining cornerstones, each with appropriate ceremony. The second one was the southwest corner, under direction of the President of the High Priesthood and his council. President William Marks pronounced the benediction. Third to be laid was the northwest corner, superintended by the High Council, and a benediction by Elias Higbee. The fourth or northeast cornerstone was laid under direction of the Bishops, with Bishop Whitney pronouncing the prayer.\textsuperscript{22}

The services were declared to be closed and the crowd dispersed to their homes and lodgings. Music in addition to the choir had been provided by a military band directed by Captain Duzette of the Nauvoo Legion.\textsuperscript{23}

Work on the temple picked up momentum during the remainder of the year. By July plans had been made by the committee to erect a baptismal font in the basement story of the building.\textsuperscript{24} William Clayton reports it was located in the east end of the building and was to be made out of wood. William Weeks, the architect, drew a sketch of the proposed font which was accepted by Joseph Smith. On August 8th Weeks commenced laboring on the project with his own hands. On August 11th he commenced carving the twelve oxen which were to support the font. After a few days he turned the work over to the carpenters and Elijah Fordham took over as the principal carver. The work was finished in a little over two months,

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{23}Times and Seasons, April 15, 1841.

\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., July 1, 1841.
and on November 8, 1841, the font was dedicated and put to use.  

In September the temple committee participated in the purchase of lumber mills in Wisconsin for the purpose of providing lumber for the building.  This action in time proved to be a great boon to the construction of the temple as well as other buildings in Nauvoo.

On September 25th a deposit was made in the southeast cornerstone.  No mention is made as to the contents of the deposit. Mention of this item does indicate, however, that the work of the summer had been spent on other places of the basement story rather than on the walls of the building.

As winter started, a progress report in the Times and Seasons printed November 15, 1841, tells that the foundation was laid and the walls of the basement story were nearly completed. The greater portion of the work in the basement story had now been accomplished.  Jenson states that the wall on the south side was up to the water table and that a part of it had been laid. In this condition, the structure remained until the spring of 1842.

To stimulate the project, by provision of means and labor, all stakes of the church were disorganized except those in the vicinity of


26 Times and Seasons, September 15, 1841.

27 "Journal History," November 8, 1841.

28 Times and Seasons, November 15, 1841.

29 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 860.
Nauvoo. Church members were asked to gather in to the area around the
city and assist in the work of building the temple.\textsuperscript{30} Further stimulus
was given in the form of a revelation which declared that no general con-
ferences of the church would be held until they could be held in the
temple.\textsuperscript{31}

In December some two or three hundred elders of the church who had
offered to go on missions were called to accept a mission to labor on the
temple.\textsuperscript{32} This was the first of many labor missionaries who served with-
out pay in assisting to erect the building.

Publicity was given to the project in most all church meetings.
It was a work that was occupying the first attention and energies of
the citizens of Nauvoo.

IV. CONSTRUCTION IN 1842

During the winter of 1841-1842 as many as one hundred men were en-
gaged in quarrying rock for the temple walls. They were assisted by
numerous other workmen who hauled the stone to the building site.\textsuperscript{33}

On February 21st the Prophet dictated a letter to the "brethren
in Nauvoo." He observed that there was need for a more equal distribu-
tion of labor on the part of the tithing hands.

\ldots a superabundance of hands one week, and none the next,
tends to retard the progress of the work; therefore every brother is

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30}"Journal History," May 24, 1841.
\item \textsuperscript{31}Joseph Smith, \textit{History of the Church}, Period I, Vol. IV, \textit{I}-\textit{IV}.
\item \textsuperscript{32}"Journal History," December 13, 1841.
\item \textsuperscript{33}\textit{Times and Seasons}, May 2, 1842.
\end{itemize}
requested to be particular to labor on the day set apart for the same, in his ward;

... The captains of the respective wards are particularly requested to be at the place of labor on their respective days, and keep an accurate account of each man's work, and be ready to exhibit a list of the same when called for. 34

A report published in The Wasp of April 23, 1842, cites the progress being made:

We passed the temple, and was delighted at the prospect that here presented itself. A scene of lively industry and animation was there. The sound of the polishers chisel—converting the rude stone of the quarry into an artful shape—sent forth its busy hum; all were busily employed—the work was fast progressing. ... 35

An overoptimistic article in the Times and Seasons of May 2, 1842, declared the work was progressing with great rapidity with strenuous exertions being made by the workers. The report was so enthusiastic as to predict that by the next fall the building would either be enclosed or the top stone raised upon it. 36

Work on the walls did not get under way until late in the spring. The work done was meager until the arrival of William W. Player in June. Having come from England with the intent of working on the temple, he commenced his labors June 8th. He was an expert in his trade and was to serve as the principal stone setter from this time till the last stone was laid. 37

34"Journal History," February 21, 1842.
35The Wasp (Nauvoo, Illinois), April 23, 1842.
36Times and Seasons, May 2, 1842.
37"Journal History," October 11, 1842.
William Clayton records that Player spent some time regulating the stone work which had already been done. Then on June 11th he set the first plinth on the southwest corner.\textsuperscript{38}

\ldots During the summer he lost two weeks work having to wait for plinths, which were cutting. The work progressed but slowly during this season, having but one crane, but the delay arose through the stone not being cut fast enough. By the fall, however, he got all the stones laid round as high as the window sills, and all the window sills, as well as the large sill on the east venetian window. He had also two courses of pilaster stones on the plinths all around.\textsuperscript{39}

On August 4th the first raft of lumber arrived from the pineries in Wisconsin.\textsuperscript{40} Another arrived in October and, as was the practice upon such occasions, men and teams were assigned to the task of hauling it to the temple.\textsuperscript{41} That portion of the lumber needing additional finishing was prepared in two extensive steam saw mills which were in operation in the city.\textsuperscript{42}

The work of framing the floor joists for the main floor was completed in October.\textsuperscript{43} On October 23rd the Temple Committee under instructions from the Prophet Joseph proposed to the Saints that a temporary floor be laid so that they could meet in the temple to worship, instead of in the grove.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{38}\textit{Ibid.} \hfill \textsuperscript{39}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{40}\textit{The Wasp}, August 4, 1842.
\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Times and Seasons}, October 15, 1842.
\textsuperscript{42}John C. Bennett, \textit{The History of the Saints} (Boston: Leland and Whiting, 1842), p. 191.
\textsuperscript{43}William F. Cahoon, "Time Book C. for the Temple in the City of Joseph" (Account Book 16, Historian's Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1842-1846), p. 10.
\textsuperscript{44}"Journal History," October 23, 1842.
Work on the temporary floor was commenced the following day. By Friday, October 28th, the floor was laid and seats fixed ready for meeting. The first meeting in the uncompleted building was held on Sunday, October 30, 1842.\(^{15}\)

Work on the temple had been steady all year. It was slowed some in late summer due to lack of funds, but this was only temporary. By the time winter arrived the walls were four feet high above the basement, and in this condition it remained till spring.\(^ {16}\)

During the winter, work did continue in the quarries, as the stonecutters prepared a goodly number of stones for use in the spring.\(^ {17}\)

V. CONSTRUCTION IN 1843

Information on the work done in 1843 is fragmentary and incomplete. An annual conference of the church was convened on the floor of the temple on April 6, 1843. It was attended by a large assembly many of whom, coming from Iowa to attend, had crossed the Mississippi on the ice. On this occasion the temple walls are described as being from four to twelve feet above the floor.\(^ {18}\)

Work during the spring was considerably delayed due to the illness of Brother Player, and from the necessity of fixing runways for the crane. Work on the walls was started by Brother Player on April 21st.

\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 2.  \(^{16}\)Ibid., October 30, 1842.  
\(^{17}\)Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 864. 
\(^{18}\)"Journal History," April 6, 1843.
The work then went steadily till the start of an early winter. When work closed for the winter the walls were up as high as the arches of the first tier of windows all around the building.49

Additional problems arose which retarded the project. A misunderstanding occurred in April between the Temple Committee and the architect over construction of the building. It was solved by the Prophet, who records:

... I gave a certificate to William Weeks to carry out my designs and the architecture of the temple in Nauvoo, and that no person or persons shall interfere with him or his plans in the building of the temple.50

On June 8, 1843, Elias Higbee, a member of the temple committee, died in Nauvoo after a short illness.51 It was not until October that the vacancy was filled. Hyrum Smith was appointed to the position and served in it until his death in 1844.52

Work was retarded in the fall due to a lack of teams and provisions. A call was issued by the committee for greater exertions on the part of the members, declaring that if these embarrassments were removed the walls could be completed the next year.53

49Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 864.
50"Journal History," April 12, 1843.
52"Journal History," October 10, 1843.
53Times and Seasons, October 9, 1843.
VI. CONSTRUCTION IN 1844

A progress report on the building was published in the Times and Seasons New Year's day of 1844. It read:

Considering the many improvements that have been made, and the difficulties in many instances under which the committee have had to labor, the temple has made great progress; and strenuous efforts are now being made in quarrying, hauling, and hewing stone, to place it in a situation that the walls can go up and the building be enclosed by next fall.54

A new emphasis was given the project on March 4th when a council decided to ease work on the Nauvoo House in favor of expending more effort on the temple.55

In early spring, construction of a second crane was commenced. It was rigged during the month of March and on April 11th Brother Player again started work on the walls.56

Payment of tithing slacked off considerably in the spring of 1844 and some workmen went for weeks without pay.57 Lambert reports that when he began work at this time, many of the most skillful workmen had left to find employment elsewhere, that it looked for a time as if the work would have to cease unless more funds could be collected.58 A call for more

54 Ibid., January 1, 1844.
55 Jenson, Church Chronology, p. 24.
56 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 866.
funds was made by the Prophet, and the response enabled the work to go on. It is reported in June that seventy-five to one hundred stonecutters were laboring in the workshop beside the structure, either engaged in hewing or laying stones for the temple.59

June and July were months of grave crisis for the church. Persecution had been building up in Illinois, causing the church and its leaders considerable difficulty. In June, mob action and violence struck what was considered by some to be a fatal blow. On June 27, 1844, Joseph Smith and his brother, Hyrum Smith, were murdered by a mob at Carthage, Illinois. They were being held in protective custody pending a hearing on charges of treason against the State of Illinois.60

Work on the temple was suspended June 20th as workmen ceased their labor and stood guard over their handiwork to protect it from threatened violence.61

Not only did work on the temple cease, but also the donations toward erecting the building. The people, disturbed by the death of their leaders, were uncertain as to what their future course might be. On Sunday, July 7th, the church voted unanimously to resume work on the building and finish it as speedily as possible. The following day the work began. At this time there was absolutely no food with which to feed the workers, yet in spite of this condition the men pitched in and put their trust in God.62

59"Journal History," June 12, 1844.
60Joseph Smith, History of the Church, VI, 561-562, 602-622.
61Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 866.
62Ibid., and Adams, loc. cit.
As the Twelve Apostles assumed their role of church leadership, their President Brigham Young became the leader and chief stimulus to push the temple to completion. Calls for provisions went out; the members opened up their hearts and poured in the means to sustain the project. A renewed spirit of dedication took hold of the workers and church members, and the work pushed forward.

Two large rafts of lumber had recently arrived in Nauvoo and men were liberal with their teams in hauling it to the temple where it was secured in a few days.

About the middle of July the female members of the LeHarpe and Macedonia branches of the church offered to collect funds for building an additional crane. They were anxious to see the building progress more rapidly. By July 29th they had raised $194.00, more than enough to do the job. The committee put the carpenters to work, and on August 3rd the new crane was put into operation on the north side of the structure.63

Work now moved with great rapidity and on September 23, 1844, the first capital stone weighing about two tons was placed into position on the walls of the temple.64

Due to threats of arson, President Young appointed four watchmen to keep watch over the temple at night. This practice, beginning September 26, 1844, was continued till the saints left the city.65

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63 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 866.

64 "Journal History," September 23, 1844.

65 Ibid., September 26, 1844.
While attempting to raise one of the capitals on September 25th a near fatal mishap occurred. Clayton reports that they had started to raise the stone when the crane fell over in a tremendous crash. Someone had failed to fasten the guy wires. The crane was damaged considerably and barely missed some of the workmen as it fell. It was repaired and back in use in a few days. 66

They continued to set the capitals, hoping to complete the task before winter set in. The capital stones numbered thirty in all and the last one was set in place on December 6, 1844. It was the heaviest stone of the lot, and after being raised half way, a block shive in the tackle broke, making it impossible to either raise or lower it. The workmen after some difficulty were able to make repairs and the stone was placed on the wall at 12:40 p.m. Clayton reported that it seemed as if the Lord had held up the winter till this important work could be accomplished. Two hours after the stone had been set, a brisk snowstorm commenced, and by nightfall four inches of snow covered the ground at Nauvoo. 67

Early in December it was decided to employ carpenters during the winter. They were to prepare timbers so that upon completion of the stonework they would be available for immediate use. Fifteen persons were selected by the architect for this type of steady employment. The south side of the lower story was weatherboarded around and a shop made ready. On December 16, 1844, they commenced their activities. 68

66Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 867.
68"Journal History," December 16, 1844.
On Christmas Day, December 25, 1844, a letter from W. W. Phelps was printed in the *Times and Seasons*. It stated that the temple was up as high as the caps of the pilasters, and that the inside work was going forward as fast as possible.69

VII. CONSTRUCTION IN 1845

The Twelve Apostles published an epistle in the *Times and Seasons* of January 15, 1845, reporting on the progress of the temple. They stated that the temporary wooden font had now been removed and would be replaced by one made of stone. Work on the new font would begin as soon as the stonemasons had finished cutting the last stone for the walls of the building. It was further reported that they anticipated all the stones would be cut by the opening of spring, and that great numbers of carpenters, masons and other workmen were daily engaged in the building's erection. The design was to rush the work forward, to enclose the building and prepare for commencing the endowment ordinances in the fall.70

Another boost was given to the project at the end of January when Brigham Young proposed to the high priest's quorum that instead of erecting a hall for their meetings, the effort should be expended in finishing off the upper story of the temple, so that they could receive their washings, anointings and endowments. His proposal received the unanimous vote of the group.71 The desire to complete the temple as early as

69 *Times and Seasons*, December 25, 1844.

70 Ibid., January 15, 1845.

possible occupied the attention of all Nauvoo.

On Wednesday, March 12, 1845, work was again started on the walls by Brother Player. By the close of the month he had put up the last trumpet stone.\textsuperscript{72}

A council of church authorities, meeting March 15, 1845, decided to put all their help on the temple, to build a drain for the new font; to build a wall on the south side of the temple block and to keep the cranes going.\textsuperscript{73}

President Young issued a renewed call for work on the temple March 16, 1845. He expressed some displeasure on the progress and called for greater effort. He reported that the stonecutters and joiners were at work and that the joiners had far exceeded their expectations during the winter. The lumber was reported to be holding out and there was no lack of provisions. Men were asked to rededicate themselves to the task at hand, and a call for four hundred additional men was issued.\textsuperscript{74} On the following day one hundred and five extra workmen and thirty teams commenced work in response to the request of their leader.\textsuperscript{75}

The \textit{Times and Seasons} reported on the first of April that a trench about six feet wide and six feet deep was being excavated around the temple block. It was to enclose an area of six to eight acres. The trench would be filled with stone and an iron fence placed upon it, for

\textsuperscript{72}Jenson, \textit{The Historical Record}, VIII, 868-869.

\textsuperscript{73}"Journal History," March 15, 1845.

\textsuperscript{74}Ibid., March 16, 1845.  \textsuperscript{75}Ibid., March 17, 1845.
the security of the temple and tabernacle. This work was being done by
the public hands or tithing workers. 76

This same issue of the Times and Seasons reported:

The work on the temple goes on as fast as possible, and, in fact, the anxiety is so great to labor upon this great house of the Lord, that the committee frequently have to set men at other work. . . .

There never was so great unison in the city before. . . . 77

A regular guard was still in service at the temple to protect it from enemies of the church. On the night of April 2nd a man had entered the structure and had been caught by the police. In the process of capture he was severely beaten. The Temple Committee and others were quite upset by the action and protested to Hosea Stout, who was in charge of the guard. After explanation of the circumstances and the orders under which the guard was operating, the feelings on the issue were allayed. President Young approved of the police action and requested that the guard be continued. 78 The church was working to complete the building while all the time its enemies were massing in an effort to drive all Mormons from the state. Continued threats of violence and mobbing of outlying Mormon settlements was to culminate in less than a year's time in a mass exodus of the church to the wilderness of the west. The use of a guard for the protection of church property had become a necessity.

76 Times and Seasons, April 1, 1845; and Roberts, History of the Church, Period II, Vol. VII, 399, 407.

77 Ibid.

A conference of the church was commenced at Nauvoo on April 6, 1845, and lasted four days. It was attended by about twenty-five thousand people. One action of the conference was a vote to change the name of Nauvoo to the "City of Joseph" in honor of their fallen leader.79

Monday, April 21, 1845, Brother Player put up the first star on the southeast corner of the temple. The top of this stone was fifty-five feet from the ground.80 These stones added significantly to the beauty of the structure. Work continued steadily until May 23rd when the walls were all complete. All was now in readiness for laying the final stone on the temple.81

The Twelve Apostles had for weeks been harassed by constables seeking to serve writs, on charges preferred by enemies of the church. To escape continual legal entanglement they had gone into hiding and operated the church from their places of seclusion.

On May 24, 1845, a large number of Saints assembled at the temple to witness the laying of the capstone on the southeast corner of the building. The hour was purposely very early so that the church leaders could attend unmolested from the marshals. The time appointed for the gathering was 5:45 a.m. In attendance among the church leaders were: Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Willard Richards, Amasa M. Lyman, George A. Smith, John E. Page, Orson Hyde, and Orson Pratt, all

79Jenson, Church Chronology, p. 27.

80"Journal History," April 21, 1845; and Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 868-869.

81Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 869-870.
members of the Twelve Apostles; Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, the
Presiding Bishops and trustees in trust; Alpheus Cutler and Reynolds
Cahoon, Temple Committee; William Clayton, temple recorder; John Smith,
patriarch; and several members of the Nauvoo Stake High Council.82

A brass band under direction of William Pitt arranged themselves
in a circle a little ways back from the corner. They commenced the pro-
gram by playing the "Nightingale."83

At eight minutes past six, William Player commenced spreading the
mortar and the stone was lowered into place. President Young stepped
onto the stone, and by beating on it with a large beetle fitted it pre-
cisely into position. The stone was pronounced set at 6:22 a.m. The
band then played the "Capstone March," composed especially for the
occasion by Brother Pitt.84 President Young then remarked:

The last stone is now laid upon the temple and I pray the
Almighty in the name of Jesus to defend us in this place and sustain
us until the temple is finished and we have all got our endowments.85

This was followed by the entire congregation shouting three times
in unison, "Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna, to God and The Lamb, Amen, Amen,
and Amen." President Young concluded by saying: "So let it be, Lord
Almighty." He then dismissed the workmen for the day, admonishing the
people to hallow the day and spend it giving thanks to God.86

The congregation, now dismissed, returned to their homes and the
church leaders to their place of retreat. As they began to leave, the

82 "Journal History," May 24, 1845; and Roberts, History of the

83 Ibid. 84 Ibid. 85 Ibid. 86 Ibid.
band continued to play and John Kay stood on the stone singing "The Capstone Song," composed by William W. Phelps. The morning had been very cold, but the people had been warmed by the services and realization that the walls were now complete. 87

Raising of the timbers for the attic story of the building was commenced by the carpenters on May 28th. 88 By the middle of June the roof was nearly on, and on June 26th they laid the first stones for the new baptismal font. 89 On June 27, 1845, President Young wrote a letter to the editor of the Millennial Star in England. In it he reports progress on the structure as it then stood:

... the frame work of the roof is on the building, and the next week the brethren expect to put on the shingles; the frame work around the foundation of the tower is all up, and the first timbers for the tower itself were raised this day. The new stone font is mostly cut, and the first stone was laid today about four o'clock. We expect in about five or six weeks the attic story of the temple and the font will be all finished and ready for dedication; and just as soon as they are ready we shall dedicate them. We have all the timbers for the temple on the ground and above one hundred thousand shingles for the roof. The lead for the eaves and tin for the dome of the tower are also bought. ... We are building a stone wall round the temple-block, eight feet high and about five feet thick at the base, the wall on the north side is nearly built, the most of the woodwork for the temple is finished, all the window-frames and sashes are made, and the glaziers are ready to set the glass, which we expect here in a few days, the frame and ornamental-work of the tower is all ready to be put up, and the whole is far on the way to completion. 90

87 Ibid. 88 "Journal History," May 26, 1845.

89 Ibid., June 26, 1845.

90 The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star (Liverpool, England), September 1, 1845.
As July closed, the Nauvoo Neighbor reported that, when completed, the building would measure one hundred fifty-eight and one-half feet from the ground to the top of the steeple and that of this one hundred thirty feet was now raised. On August 13th the paper reported:

... The Neighbor has been delayed a few hours, in order to say that the last shingle has been laid upon the roof of the temple. The roof is now completed, and the sash and window frames having been made ready, the house of the Lord may be considered enclosed. ...

President Young under the date of August 21, 1845, writing to Wilford Woodruff in England, stated: "The temple is up, the shingles all on, the tower raised, and ready to put the dome up. The joiners are now at work finishing off the inside." Another letter of Brigham Young, this one to Samuel Brannan, written September 15th, declared that as of this date the attic story and steeple were nearly complete.

On Sunday, October 5, 1845, the church held its first General Conference in three years. It was to be the only General Conference ever held in the temple. The structure now enclosed, with temporary floors laid, windows in, seats prepared and pulpits erected, was now ready

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91Nauvoo Neighbor, August 13, 1845.
92Ibid., August 13, 1845.
93Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 871.
94Jenson, Church Chronology, p. 27; and Cahoon, op. cit., p. 33.
95New York Messenger, October 11, 1845.
to receive the nearly five thousand members who attended this first session of the conference.

The services were opened by President Young offering a prayer of dedication:

... presenting the temple, thus far completed, as a monument of the Saints' liberality, fidelity and faith, concluding: "Lord we dedicate this house and ourselves to thee." 96

While the temple was being rushed to completion by the united energies of the Saints, their zeal was matched in part by the bitterness of their enemies who sought removal of all Mormons from the state. Because of threats and repeated mob violence, the fall of 1845 became not only a time of feverish activity to complete the temple, but also a time to stock provisions, prepare wagons, sell property, and make preparations to leave their homes. The decision had been made to leave in the spring for the wilderness of the west. 97

Since the General Conference, regular Sunday meetings had been held in the temple. This procedure was interrupted on Sunday, November 9, 1845, due to the floor having been taken up to put in new timbers. The original sleepers put in at the commencement of the structure had become rotten. 98 Until other rooms could be prepared and the new floor put in, the meetings were held outside of the temple.

By November 22nd the plasterers had finished their work in the


98Ibid., VII, 519.
attic story. They were followed by the painters, who put on the last coat of paint by November 26th. Two stoves were put in the main room of the attic story for heating; and on the 29th, workers were laying carpets on the main floor of the attic story, and in several of the rooms on the side. Preparations were rapidly being made to complete this portion of the building for giving the endowment ceremonies to the church members.

On November 30, 1845, the attic story was ready for use, and in services held that morning by several church authorities, this portion of the building was dedicated by the prayer of President Young. The next few days were spent in arranging the rooms for the endowment ordinances which were commenced on December 10, 1845. This completed portion of the structure remained in almost constant use as long as the church remained in Nauvoo.

The year of 1845 had been the most productive of any in the period of temple construction. It had been a year of great accomplishment. It closed with work continuing at a rapid pace. The floor of the main hall on the lower story was being prepared and the pulpits arranged for installation. The temple had been put to use in one of the primary functions for which it had been erected, and by December 29th over 1,000 persons had received their endowment ceremonies.

99 Ibid., VII, 531.

100 The Woman's Exponent (Salt Lake City, Utah), February 1, 1883, XII, No. 2, 10-12.


102 "Journal History," December 10, 1845.


104 Ibid., p. 556.
VIII. CONSTRUCTION IN 1846

New Year's day of 1846 proved to be no holiday for the temple workmen. Brigham Young and William Clayton recorded the events of the day as one of continued activity:

The plasterers have commenced this morning to plaster the arched ceiling of the lower hall of the temple; the floor is laid, the frame work of the pulpits and surrounding seats for the choir and band are put up, and the work of fitting the room for dedication and holding meetings therein progresses very fast.105

On January 7, 1846, a new altar measuring about two and one-half feet high, covered on the sides by white linen and scarlet damask cushions on its top, was put into use for the first time. It was located in the attic story and used in the temple ordinance work.106

An interesting progress report on the temple was published January 15, 1846, in the Times and Seasons. It reports:

January, thus far, has been mild, which, in the midst of our preparations for an exodus next spring, has given an excellent time to finish the temple. Nothing has appeared so much like a "finish" of that holy edifice as the present. The attic story was finished in December, and if the Lord continues to favor us, the first story above the basement, will be completed ready for meeting, in the month of February. The Font, standing upon twelve stone oxen, is about ready, and the floor of the second story is laid, so that all speculation about the Temple of God at Nauvoo, must cease.107

On January 18th a council met to consider plans and preparations of the impending exodus. At this meeting Almond W. Babbit, Joseph L. Heywood, John S. Fullmer, Henry W. Miller, and John M. Bernhisel were

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105The Women's Exponent, XII, No. 7 (July 1, 1883), 50; and "Journal History," January 1, 1846.


107Times and Seasons, January 15, 1846.
selected as a committee to dispose of the property of the church and its members. They were to be given letters of attorney and were also assigned to complete the first story of the temple.\textsuperscript{108} Six days later Babbit, Heywood and Fullmer were appointed as trustees for the temple and assigned to complete the building. Their appointment was sustained by a unanimous vote of the church leaders present.\textsuperscript{109}

A weather vane was put into place on the tower of the temple at 9:00 a.m. on January 30th.\textsuperscript{110} The topmost point of the temple was now on.

On February 4, 1846, the Mormons could be seen driving down to the river in their wagons and crossing by ferry to the plains of Iowa. The Exodus from Nauvoo had begun. A second interesting scene was that taking place early in the morning at the temple. Here could be seen a number of persons busily engaged removing articles of furniture, stoves, carpets, pictures and other furnishings. The items were to be taken west with the exiles.\textsuperscript{111}

Repairs to the temple were necessitated by a fire occurring at 3:30 p.m. on February 9th. It burned for nearly half an hour and was visible from across the river in the camp of the exiles. Cause of the blaze was an overheated stovepipe, which ignited clothing drying in the attic story. It was put out by a bucket brigade. Damage was to the roof, and not extensive. The area covered by the fire was in the west end of the building.

\textsuperscript{108}"Journal History," January 18, 1846.
\textsuperscript{109}\textit{Ibid.}, January 24, 1846. \textsuperscript{110}\textit{Ibid.}, January 30, 1846.
\textsuperscript{111}\textit{Ibid.}, February 3, 1846; and The Woman's Exponent, XII, No. 11 (November 1, 1883), 81.
... It burned from the west stovepipe from the ridge to the railing, about sixteen feet north and south, and about ten feet east and west on the north side. The shingles on the north were broken in several places.\textsuperscript{112}

Considerable excitement occurred at the temple during the process of a meeting on February 22, 1846. Brigham Young had crossed back over the river from Iowa and a large crowd had gathered for the services. The great weight of the group caused the new truss floor to settle nearly to its proper position. President Young reported the incident as follows:

... While settling, an inch-board or some light timber underneath was caught and cracked, the sound of which created great alarm in the congregation and some jumped out of the windows, smashing the glass and all before them ... others ran out of the doors and many of those who remained jumped up and down with all their might crying Oh! Oh! Oh!! as though they could not settle the floor fast enough, but at the same time so agitated that they knew not what they did.

I attempted to call the assembly in order to explain the cause of the settling of the floor, but failing to get their attention I adjourned the meeting to the grove. I went below, examined the floor and found it had hardly settled to its designated position.\textsuperscript{113}

It was reported in the \textit{Warsaw Signal} that damage to the building was between five hundred to a thousand dollars.\textsuperscript{114}

Though many church members were daily leaving the city, the crew at the temple continued their work. They were intent on fulfilling their pledge to complete the building. The joiner work was completed on April 22, 1846, and on the following day the building was swept out. At the end of the day after the workers had refreshed themselves in a social,


\textsuperscript{113}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 591.

\textsuperscript{114}\textit{The Warsaw [Illinois] Signal}, March 5, 1846.
the work of painting the lower story was commenced in order to prepare it for dedication.\footnote{115}{Samuel Whitney Richards, "Diary of Samuel Whitney Richards" (unpublished MSS. copied by Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah, 1946), 1824-1909, I, 16-18.}

Workmen continued at their jobs day and night and the painting was completed on Thursday, April 29th. The next day workers were busy sweeping out rooms and making final preparations for the dedication, which was to take place privately that night and publicly on May 1st, the day following.\footnote{116}{Ibid., pp. 18-20.}

The temple now being dedicated, the period of construction had ended. The workmen settled for their final wages and either withdrew to the west in pursuit of their friends, or departed on missions to spread the message of Mormonism.

The major portion of the construction had been under direction of the Temple Committee and the architect, William Weeks. Brother Weeks departed from Nauvoo early in 1846, and Truman O. Angell had been placed in charge. He supervised the final completion of the lower story according to the design of Weeks, and remained to see it dedicated.\footnote{117}{Kate B. Carter, Heartthrobs of the West (Salt Lake City, Utah: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1941), III, 67, citing the "Journal of Truman O. Angell, Sr."; and Wendell J. Ashton, Theirs Is the Kingdom (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1945), pp. 77-78.}

The struggle of building a house to God had now drawn to a close. Undertaken by a people in destitute circumstances, it had risen stone upon stone as a symbol of sacrifice and toil, a symbol of the faith and devotion of its builders.
CHAPTER IV

MEANS AND MATERIALS USED IN CONSTRUCTION

A consideration of the means and materials employed in erecting the temple is worthy of study. Compilation of available information has long been absent. An examination and report of available information on five areas relating to this subject will be given. Other materials than those cited here were used in the construction. These are treated because of their significant nature.

I. METHODS OF FINANCE

The call to build so large a structure as the temple, along with other buildings and their own homes, taxed the resources and energies of a destitute people.

Final amount to be expended on the building was to exceed $1,000,000.00. The funds would come largely from the tithes and offerings of church members.

The "Law of Tithing" instituted in the church by way of revelation on July 8, 1838, was employed in connection with the temple from the very beginning. In the historic conference of October 6, 1840, in addition to voting approval of the temple project, the Saints consented to a

\footnote{Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 872.}

\footnote{Doctrine and Covenants 119:1-7.}
tithe of their labor. They were to contribute one day in ten toward constructing the building.3

In the revelation of January 19, 1841, an official call from the Lord was issued to build the temple. The church members were called upon to contribute their "gold," "silver" and other "precious things of the earth" for its erection.4

At first no general tithing record had been opened. Money and property were turned over to the Temple Committee, who issued receipts to the contributors. The tithing receipts were generally written by Elias Higbee.5

The call for contributions was renewed at the April Conference of 1841. On this occasion the cornerstones of the building were laid and calls made upon the members to give of their labor or their means as their circumstances allowed. A group of eight men were called to travel for the purpose of collecting funds for building the temple.6

On December 13, 1841, Willard Richards was appointed by the Prophet to serve as recorder for the temple. He opened his office in the counting room of Joseph's new brick store, located on Water Street. From this date a regular record was kept of the tithing contributions in what was called the "Book of the Law of the Lord." One John Sanders, a convert from

3Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 205.

4Doctrine and Covenants 12:26-27.

5Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 860

Scotland, was the first recorded contributor—for a sum of $5.00. The Temple Committee was instructed to receive no further tithing and to leave the entire work to Brother Richards.

As church leaders, particularly members of the Twelve Apostles, visited various conference gatherings of the church, a plea was made for the members to contribute their tithes. At these conferences a vote was usually taken and the members pledged themselves to contribute of their time and means. A plea in the form of an epistle was sent to all church members by the Twelve Apostles on December 13, 1841. Among other things it urged participation and furnished an explanation of the tithing expected. Members living even thousands of miles away were told.

... you will find your names, tithings, and consecrations written in the Book of the Law of the Lord, to be kept in the Temple as a witness in your favour, showing you are a proprietor in that building, and are entitled to your share of the privileges thereunto belonging.

... the temple is to be built by tithing and consecration, and every one is at liberty to consecrate all they find in their hearts to do; but the tithing required is one tenth of all any possessed at the commencement of the building, and one tenth part of all increase from that time to the completion of the same, whether it be money or whatever he may be pleased with.

Many church members having no financial resources gave one day in ten as labor on the temple. This was accepted in lieu of cash donation. This type of donation was encouraged to swell the working force, especially in the case of skilled craftsmen.

As the flow of contributions increased, Brother Richard's time

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7 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 861.

became crowded. To avoid neglect of his other duties, he found it necessary to devote all day Saturday of each week to receive and record the tithing as it came in. As business continued to increase he could not keep pace with the work. At this juncture William Clayton was called to assist him, which he did beginning February 14, 1842.\(^9\)

The spring of 1842 saw a great amount contributed toward the temple. Even strangers from outside the church membership were liberal to donate. It was a time of great exertion and sacrifice. An editorial in the *Times and Seasons* of May 2, 1842, declared that "Never since the Church began has such a great willingness to participate been manifest."\(^10\)

Gratitude was expressed for the help given as the people responded to the call of their leaders. It was a time of optimism in Nauvoo, a time to push ahead and forget the past. A bright new future, full of promise, loomed heavily on the horizon.

On June 11, 1842, the record-keeping staff was again increased by the addition of James Whitehead. The money continued to come in in a steadily increasing flow.\(^11\)

False reports concerning delays in the building became circulated abroad. They had a tendency in late summer to retard the contributions. A statement calculated to dispell such rumors was printed in the *Times and Seasons* of September 1, 1842, over the signatures of the members of the Temple Committee. It stated that the work was progressing well and

\(^9\)Ibid., February 14, 1842, p. 3.

\(^10\)Times and Seasons, May 2, 1842.

\(^11\)Jenson, *The Historical Record*, VIII, 864.
renewed the call for tithes and offerings. Members were urged to send in from "far and near" that the work might not be retarded.\textsuperscript{12}

A council held October 1, 1842, at the Prophet's home agreed that the press of business in the Recorder's Office justified the need for better accommodations. A small brick office was built near the temple to facilitate better handling of the business. On November 2, 1842, the recorder moved in with his books and records. The work was conducted at this location during the next two years.\textsuperscript{13}

Since those in outlying areas and in the missions could not come to Nauvoo to contribute, they donated to local authorities, to visiting church leaders, and others who pledged to take it to Nauvoo. Some agents had been sent on special missions to raise funds. These were sent with letters of introduction and their names published by mission authorities. A number of regular missionaries were authorized to act in this capacity.\textsuperscript{11}

It became apparent that not all the money was being properly re- ceipted, and in some cases not reaching its destination. Some was being diverted to other causes. At a special conference in the uncompleted temple October 6, 1843, the Prophet brought the matter before the people. He proposed that all agents sent out to collect funds for the temple should be placed under bond. He explained that proper returns had not been made on some donations. On his proposal a unanimous vote was taken

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Times and Seasons}, September 1, 1842.

\textsuperscript{13}"Journal History," October 23, 1842, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, April 9, 1841.
to put all agents under $2,000.00 bond each. The Twelve Apostles, scheduled shortly to go east on a fund-raising mission, were the first to comply with the new ruling.  

... the wisdom of this order was soon manifest; for, although it was well understood and universally believed that the twelve would invariably make correct returns, there were others who might not be so careful or scrupulous. And, inasmuch as members of this first quorum were required to give bonds, no other man could justly complain if he were brought under the same rule.

In the fall of 1843 a slack period is noted in the flow of contributions and provisions. The Temple Committee had indicated that work on the temple was being retarded as a result. It is reported that a call for a renewed effort was made upon the members in the special October Conference.

One of the leanest periods for the gathering of temple funds occurred in the spring and summer of 1844. So little tithing had been coming in that some workmen went for weeks without pay. A call for more funds was issued by the Prophet and the work continued.

At the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith work on the temple lapsed for about six weeks, as did also the contributions. It was for many a time of uncertainty. As the Twelve Apostles assumed their role of leadership, Elders were again sent out to collect funds. An epistle by the Apostles was published in the periodicals of the church. It urged

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15 Jenson, *The Historical Record*, VIII, 865.
16 Ibid.
17 *Times and Seasons*, October 9, 1843.
a renewed effort, announcing that work on the temple would be pushed to completion.19

December 1, 1844, a communication published in the Times and Seasons noted a change in the location of the tithing office. The new location was one block north of the west end of the temple in the new store of Parley P. Pratt. The Presiding Bishops (now "Trustees in Trust" of the temple) issued the instruction. It stated that the office would be open from morning till evening to receive donations for the temple on every day but Sundays. This was the only office of deposit in Nauvoo at the time. Church members were further counseled against donating to any but authorized agents of the church.

... we would also once more offer a word of caution to all saints for their benefit, inasmuch as there are those who are going round amongst the branches of the church to collect funds for the temple without authority, and who all the while practising impositions upon the brethren. They generally use the property for their own individual benefit and make no return of it to us. ... we have published notices repeatedly, warning the saints not to credit any man's testimony as to his being an agent unless he can shew written authority from us or the quorum of the twelve.

... there have been instances not a few, wherein men who are not Latter-day Saints, but on the contrary our most bitter enemies, have gone around gulling the churches and professing to be mormons and agents to collect funds. ... we once more repeat the caution be wise and careful.20

Regular payment of tithes continued. Though slack at times, eventually enough was turned in to facilitate completion of the building.

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20 Times and Seasons, December 1, 1844.
Of particular interest is an account of the items received as tithing. Many had little or no cash and therefore donated as their conditions permitted. Daniel Tyler reports that in the early days of Nauvoo the Saints were generally poor. Corn sold for twenty-five cents and wheat at thirty to fifty cents a bushel. Those who had these provisions not only faced low prices but the lack of a market. There also existed a shortage of available jobs for workmen.\textsuperscript{21} Such conditions explain in large part the forms of contribution resorted to. A great many donated every tenth day in labor since they had nothing else to give. Louisa Decker records that her mother sold her best china dishes and a fine bed quilt to contribute her part.\textsuperscript{22} Many contributed horses, wagons, cows, or grain, beef, pork and other provisions for use by the temple workmen and their families. The workmen's wages were in large part paid from such resources.

Women unable to donate money or work on the building donated blankets, clothes, and other items, or spent their time in knitting socks, mittens, and making other clothing for the workmen. Some farmers contributed the use of teams and wagons. Others sold part of their land and donated the money to the temple. On a number of occasions a call went forth for bench and moulding planes to be contributed as tithing.\textsuperscript{23} These and other tools were contributed. So many watches and guns were

\textsuperscript{21}Daniel Tyler, "Temples," \textit{Juvenile Instructor,} XV, No. 11 (June, 1880), 121.

\textsuperscript{22}The \textit{Women's Exponent,} XXXVII, No. 6 (March, 1909), 44.

\textsuperscript{23}The \textit{Wasp,} July 9, 1842.
contributed that a request was made by Hyrum Smith that no further old guns and watches be turned in, but rather other items which could be more easily used.\textsuperscript{24}

The work of the temple recorders was one of interest and challenge, as items came in and had to be exchanged for money or usable materials. Insight into part of their problems is furnished by an ad in the \textit{Nauvoo Neighbor} of July 26, 1843, which advertised for two cows that had strayed from the temple and were lost. Anyone who could furnish information regarding their whereabouts was asked to report to the Temple Committee or the temple recorder.\textsuperscript{25}

Another interesting problem they had to deal with was the collection of debts. Response had been given by many to a request of the Twelve Apostles that all old notes, deeds and obligations which the members held against each other be turned over as a donation toward building the temple.\textsuperscript{26}

An interesting explanation of the method of record keeping is furnished by William Clayton:

... All tithings, consecrations, donations, and sacrifices presented for the building of the temple are recorded in a book kept for that purpose in the form of a history, wherein is recorded the names of the donors, the kind of property donated, and the price of the same, or if in money, the amount, all under the respective dates when the same is deposited in the hands of the Trustee in Trust. ...

Receipts were issued upon turning in money or property, but were

\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Times and Seasons}, August 1, 1844.

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Nauvoo Neighbor}, July 26, 1843.

\textsuperscript{26}"Journal History," April 12, 1842.
not properly made a matter of record unless the person would bring in the receipt and have it duly recorded.  

The women's "Relief Society" was called upon in the April Conference of 1844 by Hyrum Smith to participate in a special fund for purchasing nails and glass. The sisters were given the privilege of donating a cent a week, or fifty cents a year. The call was to raise at least $1,000.00 by this method.  

A special record of these contributions was kept by Hyrum Smith, assisted by Mercy R. Thompson. Mary Smith, wife of Hyrum, assisted in the record keeping after the martyrdom. By December of 1844 an amount of nearly six hundred dollars had been collected. One thousand dollars had been received by March 15, 1845, at which time the women were invited to continue till the temple was finished. 

A great many went beyond their expected tithe. Workmen in many cases donated freely of their labor, some for considerable periods of time. Others gave of their means far above that required. 

One outstanding illustration of unselfish sacrifice was the donation of Joseph Toronto. A native of Sicily and a recent convert to the church, he had come to Nauvoo during the late spring of 1845. Upon his arrival he heard the strong appeals of Brigham Young and others for additional funds to build the temple. He responded by giving his life's

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27 *Nauvoo Neighbor*, October 16, 1844.
28 *Times and Seasons*, August 1, 1844.
29 "Journal History," December 5, 1844.
30 *Times and Seasons*, March 15, 1845.
savings, which amounted to $2,500.00 in gold.31

Brigham Young later commented on the occasion of the Toronto contribution as follows:

... A few months after the martyrdom of Joseph the Prophet, in the autumn and winter of 1844, we did much hard labor on the Nauvoo temple, during which time it was difficult to get bread and other provisions for the workmen to eat. I counseled the committee who had charge of the temple funds to deal out all the flour they had, and God would give them more; and they did so; and it was but a short time before Brother Toronto came and brought me twenty-five hundred dollars in gold. The bishop and the committee met, and I met with them; and they said, that the law was to lay the gold at the apostles' feet. Yes, I said and I will lay it at the bishop's feet; so I opened the mouth of the bag and took hold at the bottom end, and gave it a jerk towards the bishop, and strewed the gold across the room and said, now go and buy flour for the workmen on the temple and do not distrust the Lord any more; for we will have what we need.32

True, there were periods when funds to carry on were hard to come by and workmen went without pay, but in general the requests were met. Thus the funds were furnished by tithes and sacrifice, and the Mormons at Nauvoo built a house to their God.

II. THE LABOR FORCE

Erection of the temple was almost entirely accomplished by a working force recruited from the church membership. Recruiting the men for such a massive structure was no small task. Not only was there need for workmen on the building itself, but additional forces were required to


obtain some of the principal building materials and prepare them for use.

At first the working force consisted almost entirely of workmen donating one day's labor in ten as their payment of a tithe. As the tempo of the work picked up, need for an effective organization of this labor became apparent. A workable plan was devised by the Temple Committee and announced February 22, 1841. 33

At the suggestions of Joseph Smith the city was divided into four wards. 34 This was later increased by November, 1842, to ten wards. 35 Each ward was assigned a definite day on which its workmen were to report for work with their tools, wagons and teams. If one could not make it on the appointed day, he was expected to be there the next, or as soon after as possible. The workmen were urged to keep their appointments and labor on the day set apart for his ward. 36 The Prophet Joseph issued the following notice respecting the work as it then functioned:

... the captains of the respective wards are particularly requested to be at the place of labor on their respective days, and keep an accurate account of each man's work, and be ready to exhibit a list of the same when called for. 37

This type of organization pushed the work along rapidly, and on April 6, 1841, the walls had reached a level where it was possible to lay the cornerstones of the temple. Prior to this time nearly all the work had been done by donated labor. Since donations were now coming in, in

33 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 858.
34 Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 305.
35 Times and Seasons, November 15, 1842.
36 "Journal History," February 21, 1842. 37 Ibid.
the form of money and provisions, it enabled the committee to employ several stonecutters on a regular basis. About eighteen were so employed to dress the rock at the time the cornerstones were laid.\textsuperscript{38}

Alpheus Cutler and Reynolds Cahoon, members of the Temple Committee, hired the workmen as the work progressed.\textsuperscript{39} As sufficient means came in, the number of skilled workmen regularly employed was increased. The flow of donated labor was also kept at a high level by the influx of new converts arriving at Nauvoo from England.

On the occasions of lumber arriving from the pinery and when special efforts were required, the regular schedule of work was stepped up and calls made to assist in the activity needing attention. A comment printed in the \textit{Times and Seasons} of November 15, 1842, is typical of such an effort:

\ldots Last Sabbath the committee for building of the temple stated before the congregation, that a large raft of pine lumber had lately arrived and was now laying in the river at this place. They requested all the brethren who had teams to turn out and with their teams, assist in hauling the lumber to the temple. The first, second, third, fourth and fifth wards of the city were requested to be on the ground on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday; and the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.\textsuperscript{40}

A further request was made for carpenters to prepare timbers for the first floor, that all who could should come on Friday and Saturday to lay a temporary floor and prepare seats so that the Saints could meet within the walls of the temple. It is reported that these requests were filled as desired.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{38}Jenson, \textit{The Historical Record}, VIII, 850. \textsuperscript{39}\textit{Ibid.} \textsuperscript{40}\textit{Times and Seasons}, November 15, 1842. \textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}
Since on a number of occasions funds were unavailable to pay the wages of skilled workmen, there were many difficulties in maintaining a consistent work force. Men struggling to maintain a living for their families were naturally forced to seek employment elsewhere.

The size of the work force fluctuated considerably according to need at various periods of construction and the availability of workmen. Some glimpses as to size of the crews are available. It is recorded that at one time approximately 1,000 men were donating every tenth day in work on the temple.\textsuperscript{42} At least 150 men were at one time working in the pineries of Wisconsin getting out lumber for the temple.\textsuperscript{43} The Times and Seasons reported in May, 1842, as many as 100 men were quarrying stone in the quarry and multitudes were engaged in hauling the stone to the temple and performing other kinds of labor.\textsuperscript{44} June of 1844 saw 75 to 100 stone-cutters at work at the temple, preparing stones for the walls.\textsuperscript{45} In December of 1844 it was agreed upon that the architect should select for hiring 15 steady carpenters.\textsuperscript{46} It is further reported that some 25 carpenters were regularly working in the joiner shops at the temple.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{42}Journal History," March 13, 1937.

\textsuperscript{43}George Miller, Correspondence of Bishop George Miller with the Northern Islander (Saint James, Michigan, June 1855), p. 10. (Pamphlet.) Note: Hereafter referred to as Miller Correspondence.

\textsuperscript{44}Times and Seasons, May 2, 1842.

\textsuperscript{45}Journal History," December 16, 1844.

\textsuperscript{46}Roberts, History of the Church, Period II, Vol. VII, 326.

\textsuperscript{47}The Warsaw Signal, December 22, 1844.
New York Sun reported 350 men zealously at work on the building in August of 1845.48

A "Time Book" kept for the temple hands from June 13, 1842, to June 6, 1846, furnishes interesting information on the employed section of the work force. It records a total of 885 persons having completed at least one full month's labor during this period of construction. Some individuals worked all five years on the structure. It records 46 registered in 1842 with some working as much as seven months and an average of 2.2 months each. In 1843, 40 are registered, each averaging 2.2 months and some working all twelve months. The number increased to 123 registered in 1844, some working as much as ten months and the average again 2.2.

The year 1845 saw 602 registered workers working an average of 3.3 months each. In 1846, 410 were registered, each averaging 1.2 months work. A total of 1,221 registrations are entered in the book over the five-year period it records.49 Though this record is only for the hired labor force and probably does not include it in its entirety, it does shed valuable light on the project.

William Clayton's journal furnishes the best available list of persons employed on the temple. He records their names and type of work, plus indicating the length of time that many were employed on the structure.50

48"Journal History," August 6, 1845.

49Cahoon, op. cit., pp. 1-56.

50"Journal History," December 31, 1844, pp. 12-15. (For complete text of this information see Appendix A.)
No record was found as to the length of the working day prior to October 9, 1845. It is recorded that from this date on, time would be calculated at nine hours per day.\textsuperscript{51} This was extended on January 13, 1846, to nine and one-half hours constituting the length of the working day.\textsuperscript{52}

Wages paid to those employed on the work were set by the Prophet and the committee. The trustee in trust, the temple recorder and members of the committee had wages set at $2.00 per day.\textsuperscript{53} Information available on the rate of pay for the various trades is sketchy. It is reported that the stoncutters met in August of 1844, at which time it was agreed to pay the windlass men $1.50 per day.\textsuperscript{54} While some were paid at the rate of a daily wage, others were paid by the scale on quantity of work produced. Stonecutters, as an example, were paid $200.00 for each capital stone completed.\textsuperscript{55}

Wages were paid from the tithing contributions of the members. Since a great deal of this was received in the form of provisions, it resulted in most wages being paid in the form of food, clothing, and other provisions. Some workmen were given lumber as wages, which enabled them to build their homes; others were given donated room and board. Anything of value which had been contributed was exchanged where possible

\textsuperscript{51}Cahoon, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 44.

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 50.

\textsuperscript{53}Jenson, \textit{The Historical Record}, p. 863.

\textsuperscript{54}"Journal History," August 10, 1844.

\textsuperscript{55}\textit{Ibid.}, August 15, 1844.
for labor. In 1844 the stonecutters met and agreed that one-sixth of their wages should be in cash, one-third in store goods, and the balance in other property and provisions they might need.56

On some occasions there were not sufficient means to pay the temple hands. This resulted in a number being forced to seek other employment. Others continued with no pay for certain periods, existing as best they could. In the early part of 1844 work was nearly at a standstill due to this condition. Most of the skilled hands had to leave for other employment.57

Working conditions were typical of most frontier construction of that period. The work continued during each of the winters, being forced to cease entirely on occasion by bitter cold and snow, but generally some phase or other was in production. Conditions were aggravated by the lack of available tools and by a heterogeneous work force, which was in a constant state of flux.

Days off from the regular routine of work took place on holidays or special events. Members who belonged to the Nauvoo Legion, which included most all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years, were required to parade on these occasions.58 The work on other days proceeded generally without interruption. Some special breaks were allowed, however, as evidenced by a report that on the day the capstone was laid the entire working force was given the rest of the day off.59 Also,

56Ibid.  
57Lambert, op. cit., p. 172.  
58Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 300.  
59Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 870.
on July 23, 1845, the entire crew was released to enjoy a watermelon feast for the workmen then on the job.60

Labor disputes also became part of the scene during the construction period. From the records available, the workers employed on the temple organized when it was deemed necessary and protested what they considered unfair practices. An example of such a dispute arose in October, 1842, as recorded by Joseph Smith:

... I had previously sent for the temple committee to balance their accounts and ascertain how the temple business was going on. Some reports had been circulated that the committee was not making a righteous disposition of the property consecrated for the building of the temple and there appeared to be some dissatisfaction amongst the laborers.61

The complaint had come from the stonecutters, who charged Cahoon and Higbee of the Temple Committee with "oppressive and unchristianlike conduct." They contended that there had been an unequal distribution of tools, provisions, etc., and that favors had been shown to the sons of committee members. The trial of the committee lasted ten hours and was in favor of the actions of the committee, who were upheld in their course. The decision was accepted in good faith by all.62

Though disagreements arose on occasion, they were not a retarding factor in the building's construction. The workers in the main were dedicated, and sacrificed considerably in wages and energy.

A meeting of stonecutters in August of 1844 had met to consider

60Cahoon, op. cit., p. 33.
62Jenson, The Historical Record, p. 864.
a request for an increase in their pay. Even the church authorities encouraged such an increase. The workmen decided on a different course of action. They resolved that they would reduce their wages, and that in the future, pay would be estimated and priced according to the reduced scale.63 Such was the spirit and dedication of those engaged in building the temple.

The building was erected with relatively few accidents among the working force. One man was killed in the stone quarry64 and another in the pineries of Wisconsin.65 Another death was miraculously averted May 19, 1845, when Stephen Goddard was hurt. He was working on the temple wall when struck on the head by a pole from a scaffold he was helping to dismantle. He was knocked off the wall, his fall being broken by two floor joists which prevented his falling to the basement 62 feet below. He was cut and bruised but back on the job two days later.66 Few other accidents are made note of.

In the latter stages of construction, when persecution was on the rise against the Mormons, a new type of employee could be found at the temple. Due to threats of defacing the temple and burning the lumber, it was felt necessary to establish a regular force of watchmen or guards

63 "Journal History," August 15, 1844.

64 Reta Latimer Halford, "Nauvoo--The City Beautiful" (unpublished Master's thesis, the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, 1945), p. 189.

65 Joseph Holbrook, "The Life of Joseph Holbrook" (MS. No. 346, Historian's Office Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah), I, 32-33.

66 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 869.
to watch the temple at night. The entire working force had participated in such action for two weeks prior to the martyrdom of the Smiths. The practice became common as persecution continued and increased.

Another type of workman worthy of special mention was that of men called to serve on work missions for the church. Many Elders were asked to stay at home and serve their mission by working on the temple instead of going abroad to preach the gospel. Some were to labor six months, some one year, and others two years. They were to be furnished board and room by church members in Nauvoo, many of whom had offered to board laborers on the temple.

Some members worked on the temple as payment for debts they had contracted. Notes against them had been turned over to the Temple Committee as tithing. That they were sometimes collected in labor is indicated by the following ad which appeared many times in newspapers at Nauvoo:

Notes Due the Trustee for labor on the temple, are left with the temple committee for collection: Brethren, remember that your contracts with your God are sacred; the labor is wanted immediately.

W. Richards,
Temple Recorder

Stories of great sacrifice on the part of individual workmen could fill many pages. A few have been preserved in private journals, of which the following are but typical.

67"Journal History," September 26, 1844.
68Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 866.
70The Wasp, June 25, 1842.
Charles Lambert, a master workman and contractor in England, arrived in Nauvoo as a convert to Mormonism in the early part of 1844. Showing his credentials, he applied for work at the temple. He was informed that plenty of work was available, but no pay was available for the present time. Though many skilled workmen had left for other employment, due to lack of tithes to pay the wages, not so with Charles Lambert.

Having no working clothes, since he had not worked as a tradesman for some time, he appeared in what he had worn while a contractor in England. He reported to the workshop in a good suit and a high silk hat, put on an apron, and commenced work. 71

Brigham Young commented in later years that there were those who worked on the temple without shoes for their feet or a shirt to cover their arms. 72

The story of William W. Player, who was the principal setter of stones on the temple and labored on its walls from June, 1842, till they were completed, is another of interest and sacrifice. He had come from England with the full intention of working on the temple. During his work on the walls in the fall and early winter of 1842, he continued at his post in spite of sickness and cold weather. Before the work on the walls stopped due to the winter weather he nearly lost the use of his hands and feet, and fell several times on his way home due to fatigue and weakness. 73

71Lambert, op. cit., p. 172.
72The Deseret News, October 14, 1863.
73"Journal History," October 11, 1842.
The labor force was unique in many aspects, but succeeded in building a monument which, if not later destroyed by fire and wind, may yet have stood to testify to their zeal and sacrifice.

III. THE PINERY EXPEDITION

Acquisition of lumber in sufficient quantity and quality for the extensive building program of the church at Nauvoo gave rise to investigation of a reasonable and reliable source of supply.

The Temple Committee organized October 5, 1840,74 and the Nauvoo House Building Committee organized January 19, 1841,75 concluded to purchase a mill for the purpose. Selection was made of a mill situated in the pineries of Wisconsin on the Black River, a tributary of the Mississippi. Purchase was from the firm of Crane and Kirtz for the sum of fifteen hundred dollars.76

On September 15, 1841, the Times and Seasons reported the purchase as follows:

... we are informed that the committees of those two buildings have purchased extensive mills, and water privileges in the pineries of Wisconsin, and a company of several men, in their employ, will leave here in a few days for that country.77

September 25, 1841, was departure day for the company assigned to

74"Journal History," October 5, 1840.
75Ibid., January 19, 1841.
76Miller Correspondence, p. 8.
77Times and Seasons, September 15, 1841.
work in the pine country. Their initial task was to establish a settlement and prepare for the work of the ensuing summer. The group was led by Alpheus Cutler of the Temple Committee and Peter Haws of the Nauvoo House Committee. They took with them Tarlton Lewis, Jabez Durfey, Hardin Wilson, William L. Cutler, Horace Owens, Octavius Pauket, Blakely W. Anderson, James M. Flake, Nathaniel Childs, Brother Childs' wife and daughter, and Peter M. Conover. 78

They traveled up river some five or six hundred miles north of Nauvoo, making most of the journey by water. 79 Their camp was located on the river fifteen miles below the Black River Falls at the present site of the village of Melrose. 80 Here the winter was spent cutting timber and remodeling the mill. The group suffered from the cold winter climate and inadequate provisioning, but in general they fared well. 81

On May 2, 1842, the Times and Seasons reported a second company had journeyed north from Nauvoo during the previous week. This group was sent to relieve the first and continue operation of the mills. 82 Additional reinforcements are reported to have left the morning of July 6, 1842:

Two keel boats, slooped rigged, and laden with provisions and apparatus necessary for the occasion, and manned with fifty of the

78 "Journal History," February 14, 1842.
79 Ibid., September 22, 1841.
80 F. W. Draper, "Timber for the Nauvoo Temple," The Improvement Era, XLIII (February, 1843), 76.
81 The Deseret News, December 14, 1935.
82 Times and Seasons, May 2, 1842.
brethren, started this morning on an expedition to the upper Mississippi, among the pineries, where they can join those already there, and erect mills, saw boards and plank, make shingles, hew timber, and return next spring with rafts, for the Temple of God, ... 83

The first tangible results of the pinery expedition reached Nauvoo on August 4, 1842, as reported in The Wasp under that date:

Our big raft for the Temple and Nauvoo House, is just in; it covers but little less than an acre of surface, and contains 100,000 feet sawed lumber, and 16,000 cubic or 192,000 square feet hewn timber.84

On October 13, 1842, another raft arrived from Wisconsin with about 90,000 feet of boards and 24,000 cubic feet of timber.85 As these and future rafts tied up at the water front in Nauvoo they were met by teams and wagons. The rafts were dismantled and the lumber hauled to the temple for use in the building.

In the beginning of October, 1842, the Temple Committee ascertained that the lumbering operations to that date had run them into debt some $3,000.00. George Miller reported that results so far had been negligible and the operations nearly abortive.86

Haws and Cutler with twelve men had returned with the raft on October 13th. They had remodeled or almost made the mill new, but as yet little lumber had been produced. It was decided by the committees that Bishop George Miller should be sent to the pineries to extricate the establishment from debt, and produce greater quantities of lumber.87

84The Wasp, August 4, 1842.
85"Journal History," October 13, 1842.
86Miller Correspondence, p. 10. 87Ibid., p. 11.
Sometime during October of 1842 Miller headed north, taking with him his ailing wife, his children, and a hired girl. At Prairie Du Chéin he met Jacob Spaulding, owner of some mills located at Black River Falls, fifteen miles up river from those then owned by the church. Spaulding, a millwright by profession, had come from Illinois to Wisconsin in 1838. He had made the first permanent settlement at Black River Falls; it was the white man's outpost on Black River at this time. Miller reports he had a claim against Spaulding on a suit pending between him and the church. Arrangements were made to get possession of Spaulding's mills in lieu of turning over the church mills to him, which, according to Miller, were of little or no value anyway.

The remainder of Miller's party, due to a tardy start from Nauvoo, failed to arrive at Prairie Du Chein until November 12th. As they traveled the remaining one hundred and ninety miles to the pineries the cold weather had set in, turning the river to slush ice and greatly slowing their progress. On November 17th, still one hundred and seven miles from their destination, passage became so difficult they were forced to secure their boat in the ice bound river for the winter. Storing their freight at the trading post, where they had secured the boat, they set out on foot. Snow was now two and one-half feet deep on the level. Teams were brought down from the mills and the families brought up. It was December 31st when the group finally became established at the Black River Falls site of the new lumbering operations.

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86 Ibid., p. 10. 89 Draper, op. cit., p. 77.
90 Miller Correspondence, p. 10. 91 Ibid., p. 11.
The new mill site is described by Holbrook as having the best of water privileges, the country being broken and somewhat mountainous. Some land suitable to cultivation could be found in the fertile valleys, and the streams were abundant with fish. Wright described it further as "a dreary cold region, and to a great extent cranberry marshes, pine barrens, and swamps with a small amount of good land, scarce of game and only valuable in mill privileges and facilities for lumbering purposes." 

The winter of 1842 was one of hardship and near starvation for both the company and their animals. A major part of the provisions had been left down river. Time was spent in preparing the mills for operation, and transporting up river, mainly by back pack, the essential supplies to sustain life.

Matters were further complicated by bands of Winnebago Indians, scattered up and down the river on their winter hunt. The Federal Government had been attempting to move the Menominee, Chippewa and Winnebago tribes from their dwellings around Green Bay to a reservation in the interior of Wisconsin, one which included the Mormon lumber operations. This placed the pinery expedition unwittingly as trespassers on Indian ground. The Indians had agreed to the move providing all whites were swept off the new reservation. This the Superintendent of Indian Affairs apparently decided to let the Indians do by themselves.

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92 Holbrook, op. cit., I, 32-33.
93 Draper, op. cit., p. 127.
94 Miller Correspondence, p. 10.
95 Deseret News, December 14, 1935. 96 Ibid.
During the winter the Indians, stirred up by white traders and whiskey sellers, appeared at the Mormon camp. The group was partly drunk and very loud. No interpreter being present, George Miller accompanied them to a trading post where one was available. Miller was informed that they were cutting and sawing pine that belonged to the Indians, that the Indian children were perishing from hunger and that the white men had told them they ought to make the Mormons pay or else burn the mills.97

Flour and pork were purchased from the traders by Miller and given to the Indians for their children. Miller's words and actions on this occasion created friendly relations with the Indians, and no further trouble was forthcoming that winter or spring.98

With the coming of spring, Miller and four young men departed down river to bring up the boat and provisions. Leaving April 6th, they traveled to their boat in three days. A man left during the winter to care for things had all safe, but he had not been able to free the boat from the ice. After freeing the boat, they undertook the journey upstream on April 10th. On April 19th, after a strenuous journey, they reached the mill. Provisions were stored away and work began in earnest.99

The spring of 1843 saw vigorous activity at the mills, daily turning out over 12,000 feet of lumber.100 Timber was cut that spring and summer on what came to be known in later years as the "Mormon Clearings." These clearings are found in what is now Clark County, Wisconsin. They

97Miller Correspondence, p. 12.  
98Ibid.  
99Ibid., p. 13.  
100Ibid.
worked on an area some ten miles north of the Black River Falls. At this point two miles of rapids, confined in high canyon walls and known today as the "Mormon Riffles," emerge from the southern boundary of the Wisconsin Forest tract. Here and above, the timber was cut. Clearings were made that season seven or eight miles north along the main river from the mouth of O. Neill Creek, along the East Fork, Wedges Creek, the Cunningham, and probably some on O. Neill Creek. After being cut, the logs were floated down the river to the mills for processing, then rafted down to Nauvoo.101

The first raft of the season arrived in Nauvoo at sunrise Friday, May 12, 1843. Brought down by Bishop Miller and others, it contained 50,000 feet of pine lumber.102 A second raft arriving July 12, 1843,103 brought the total to over 200,000 feet of sawed lumber suitable for use on the temple, along with a large amount of shingles and barn boards. August saw the arrival of two large rafts containing over 400,000 feet of prime lumber.104 The journey from the falls to Nauvoo covered two weeks of travel time.105

It was reported by Miller that two saws were then employed in production of lumber, that each was producing over 5,000 feet per day, and could do so year round. He further reported that he had bought all claims on the mills for $12,000, payable in lumber at the mills in three

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101 Draper, op. cit., pp. 76-77, 125.
102 "Journal History," May 12, 1843.
103 Nauvoo Neighbor, July 12, 1843.
104 Miller Correspondence, p. 11.
105 Draper, op. cit., p. 127.
years and that one-third of this amount was already paid for.\textsuperscript{106}

Several groups went north that summer to relieve supply and increase the numbers working at the mills. The largest group left on the "Maid of Iowa" July 21, 1843. It consisted of several families, widows and children. It was headed by Apostle Lyman Wight and Bishop George Miller. Cattle and milk cows were driven to the mills, and fifty acres of ground cleared and planted with wheat. Permanent style houses were built for the convenience of the families. The Prophet Joseph had now considered making the mills a permanent establishment.\textsuperscript{107}

The work was now up to schedule. The summer had seen all requests for lumber and shingles filled in full. When Miller arrived on the last two rafts in the fall, he became greatly distressed over events in Nauvoo. A great deal of the lumber he and others had labored so hard to provide for the temple and Nauvoo House had been used for other purposes. A large part of it had been used to build houses for the men working on the temple. The Temple Committee decided that, since the mills had proven to be so productive, some could be used in this manner to pay the wages of the workmen. Miller was quieted by the Prophet, who said that he would see to it that all would be made right.\textsuperscript{108}

During the winter of 1843 one hundred and fifty men, plus a number of women and children, were established in the pineries. A branch of the church was organized among them, with Lyman Wight presiding.\textsuperscript{109} The

\textsuperscript{106}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{107}Miller Correspondence, p. 14.

\textsuperscript{108}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{109}Deseret News, December 14, 1935.
expedition was now firmly established and well housed.

The extensive lumbering operations of the Mormons aroused jealousies among other lumbermen operating on the river. Some of these stirred up the Indians to make new demands. In January of 1844, a group of Indians, led by Chief Oskosh, informed the Mormons they were trespassing on tribal ground and that an order had been issued by the Federal Indian Agent for the removal of all trespassing lumbermen. Miller accompanied the Chief cross country, a distance of forty miles in snow eighteen inches deep, to the Wisconsin River Agency. It was hoped arrangements could be made to continue operation of the mills. As the talks progressed the Indians proved friendly to the church and reasonable. The agent, however, was hostile in attitude. He finally agreed to confirm any agreement the Indians made on logs already cut, but refused further cutting until he could consult with authorities in Washington. 110

Bennion states that agreement was made for the Mormons to keep the lumber already cut, without making payment, and that they might have what more they needed at a low rate. 111 It appears that some sort of an arrangement was made, as the work continued at a quickened pace. Lyman Wight reported by letter on February 15, 1844, that by the last of July they should be able to send one million feet of lumber down the river, which would be a great deal more than needed to build the temple and Nauvoo House. 112

110Draper, op. cit., p. 77.


112Draper, op. cit., p. 127.
As a result of friendly contacts between the Mormons and Indians, a mission was established to teach the Indians the gospel. On February 30, 1844, Mitchel and Steven Curtis arrived in Nauvoo. They had been sent by Wight to inform the church leaders that the Menomonie and Chippewa Indians had asked for missionaries to preach to them. Wight desired instructions. Word was sent back that he should use his own discretion and that the authorities in Nauvoo would back his decision.\footnote{113}

As winter turned to spring, rafts of lumber again floated south to Nauvoo. Bishop Miller and Lyman Wight arrived in Nauvoo May 1, 1844. Soon after their arrival, Wight was sent to Maryland and Miller to Kentucky. They were called on special missions to electioneer in Joseph Smith's candidacy for President of the United States.\footnote{114}

July saw the arrival of two large rafts, and sufficient lumber was supplied this year to complete the needs for the temple, plus additional for other uses.\footnote{115} These appear to be the last big rafts to arrive at Nauvoo from the pineries.

Following the death of Joseph Smith in June, 1844, the work in the pineries met with new problems. There evidently was a void in leadership created by the extended absence of Wight and Miller. This was further confused by the death of the church leaders and the uncertainty that followed on the part of some church members. Lyman Wight became disaffected with his brethren of the Twelve Apostles, and Miller

\footnote{113}{Ibid.} \footnote{114}{Ibid.} \footnote{115}{Times and Seasons, January 1, 1844.}
sometime during the summer went on a mission through the Southern States.\textsuperscript{116}

Miller upon his return found that the expedition had been abandoned and the mills sold. He reports:

\ldots The man left in charge of the mills in the pinery, sold out possession of the whole concern (the mills being an Indian land possession was the best title), for a few hundred thousand feet of pine lumber. Those mills and appurtenances, worth at least $20,000, thus passed out of our hands for a mere trifle, by the act of an indiscreet man.

He brought part of the lumber to Nauvoo and all the company that had been engaged in the pineries.\textsuperscript{117}

The last entry in the account books for the pinery expedition was made December 15, 1845. Whether any activities continued beyond this date is not known.\textsuperscript{118} Some Mormons apparently did not return to Nauvoo with the main body. Mormon settlers were found at the Falls and north along the river at Hatfield as late as the early 1850's.\textsuperscript{119}

So ends an interesting chapter in the dramatic struggle to furnish lumber to erect a temple at Nauvoo. It was a story of struggle and sacrifice. Through it all only one major accident was recorded, that being the death of a Brother Cunningham who drowned while rafting logs in the summer of 1843.\textsuperscript{120} The venture succeeded in its main

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{116}Draper, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 77.

\textsuperscript{117}Miller \textit{Correspondence}, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{118}"Pinery Expedition" (Account Book No. 3, Historian's Library, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, April 6, 1842, to December 15, 1845), p. 15.

\textsuperscript{119}Draper, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 76.

\textsuperscript{120}Holbrook, \textit{op. cit.}, I, 32-33.
\end{footnotes}
objectives. Not only was material provided for the temple, but other buildings as well.

IV. STONE FOR THE TEMPLE

The main building material used in construction of the temple was a native greyish-white limestone, which underlaid the entire area around Nauvoo. It was reported to have resembled marble in appearance and hardness, and was of a most excellent quality.121

Following the decision to build a temple, the brethren opened quarries from which to obtain stone for the building. Work began on October 12, 1840,122 with Elisha Everett striking the first blow on the project.123

Huntington reports that stone was cut and then hauled to the temple site where on March 8, 1841, they commenced laying the foundation. On April 5, 1841, enough stone had been cut and hauled that the temple walls were five feet high and ready for laying the cornerstones.124

Work in the quarries was without letup during the greater part of the construction period. Work even continued in the winter when weather permitted, as stones were prepared for use during the other seasons of the year.125 The Times and Seasons for May 2, 1842, reported that

121 The Valley Tan (Salt Lake City, Utah), February 15, 1860; "Journal History," March 7, 1876; Halford, loc. cit.; and The Prophet (New York City, New York), November 30, 1841.

122 Huntington, op. cit., XVI, 12.

123 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 858.

124 Huntington, loc. cit.

125 Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 864.
frequently during the past winter as many as one hundred men were engaged in quarrying rock, while multitudes were engaged in hauling and other kinds of labor." So successful were they this winter that at the General Conference held April 7, 1842, Hyrum Smith informed the Saints, "The quarry is blockaded, it is filled with rock, the stone-cutters are wanting work; come on with your teams as soon as conference is over." Regularly employed men became part of the scene in the quarries as early as the spring of 1841. Albert P. Rockwood became the overseer or captain of the work, assisted by Charles Drury. These men supervised the project from the beginning and continued till all the stone was cut for the temple.

The stones taken from the quarries varied in size, depending on their use. Some are reported to have weighed as much as two tons.

The Prophet's son, Joseph (who in later years became President of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints), as a young boy witnessed the hauling of the stones from the quarries to the temple. He describes them as being hauled "... on great carts drawn by oxen, with the stones swinging under the axle of the great high, broad-tired wheels, usually two yoke of cattle drawing them." Only the rough

126 Times and Seasons, May 2, 1842.
127 Ibid., April 15, 1842.
129 Jenson, The Historical Record, p. 866.
130 The Saints' Herald (Independence, Missouri), September 26, 1949.
work was done in the quarry. The stones were dressed and polished for their particular use at the temple site.\textsuperscript{131}

The work at the quarry had only one serious accident, which occurred on March 14, 1845. A man was reported killed by a stone falling on his head while they were blasting rocks.\textsuperscript{132} Rockwood reported the accident as follows:

For three and one-half years that I have been in charge of the Temple Quarry, with from twenty to one hundred and fifty hands, Brother Moses Horn has been the first man that met accident in blasting. During this time, according to my best judgment, about one hundred casks of powder have been used. Mr. Horn died from a skull fracture.\textsuperscript{133}

Stone was taken from the quarries for use on the temple as late as the spring of 1845, when on May 24th the final stone was placed on the structure.\textsuperscript{134} Whether stone was quarried for the new font after this date is unknown.

Location of the quarry has been a subject of disagreement among writers and observers. Two separate locations are referred to. Gregg, in referring to the temple, states: "Its walls were built of beautiful dressed limestone, from extensive quarries on the Mississippi Bluff, two miles below the city."\textsuperscript{135} This location is upheld by Halford in her thesis on Nauvoo.\textsuperscript{136} At variance with this view is S. A. Burgess,

\textsuperscript{131}The Wasp, April 23, 1842.
\textsuperscript{132}"Journal History," March 14, 1845. \textsuperscript{133}Halford, loc. cit.
\textsuperscript{134}Roberts, Comprehensive History, II, 472-473.
\textsuperscript{135}Gregg and Scofield, op. cit., II, 838.
\textsuperscript{136}Halford, loc. cit.
Historian of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He refers to the quarry being located on the north side of the city in a river bed.\(^{137}\) This view is supported by Charles Lanman who visited Nauvoo in 1846 and describes the quarry as being located ". . . within the limits of the city, in the bed of a dry stream. . . ."\(^{138}\) John C. Bennett, an early resident of Nauvoo, declares that stone for the temple was secured from a quarry within the bounds of the city.\(^{139}\) A visitor to Nauvoo in 1844 is quoted in The Prophet as saying that materials for the temple were ". . . quarried on their own grounds within a convenient distance."\(^{140}\)

If one were to visit Nauvoo today and ask where the temple quarry was located he would be directed to a spot on the north side of the old city, northwest from the intersection of Main and Young Streets. Here he would see the remains of an old quarry, extensive in size.

The Prophet's son, Joseph, clears up the matter by stating ". . . the stones came from a quarry in the north side of the city along the river bank, and some of them from down the river."\(^{141}\)

It is evident that quarries were located at both of the places mentioned, the main quarry in all probability being that located on the


\(^{139}\) Bennett, op. cit., p. 190.

\(^{140}\) The Prophet, November 30, 1844.

\(^{141}\) The Saints Herald, September 26, 1949.
north side of the city.

The limestone taken from the quarries was mainly used in building the walls of the temple proper. Stone left over was used in building a wall around the temple block.\textsuperscript{112} Another use for the stone was that of a permanent baptismal font to replace the original, made of wood.\textsuperscript{113}

V. THE TEMPLE BELL

In an effort to let British members contribute something tangible to the erection of the temple, it was concluded they could contribute its bell. On July 15, 1845, a "Letter to the Editor" appeared in the \textit{Millennial Star}, reporting progress on the temple and making a request:

\begin{quote}
  ... we have thought it might be very agreeable to the feelings of the English saints to furnish a bell for the Temple, if this is your pleasure, you can forward it at the first conveyance, and we will have it hung as the building is going up. We are but little acquainted with the weight of bells; we have thought of 2,000 lbs. weight, but we leave this to your judgment. We want one that can be heard night or day.

  Brigham Young, President
  Willard Richards, Clerk\textsuperscript{114}
\end{quote}

An editorial comment in the \textit{Millennial Star} of August 15, 1845, stated that all further donations of the British Saints would be used to obtain the bell and also a clock for the temple. The members were urged to respond to this call for funds.\textsuperscript{115}

Little information is available beyond this point, but from what can be ascertained the request was met and the bell shipped to Nauvoo.

\textsuperscript{112}"Journal History," June 27, 1845. \textsuperscript{113}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{114}\textit{Millennial Star}, July 15, 1845.
\textsuperscript{115}\textit{Ibid.}, August 15, 1845.
A visitor to Nauvoo in November of 1845 is quoted in the Burlington Hawkeye as stating that the Saints "... are finishing the temple, putting in the carpets, & c., and intend to hang a bell..."\(^{116}\)

When the bell was installed in the temple is not known. Records are not available regarding this event in the temple's construction. If it was hung in the building, it did not remain in its position long, since it was removed from the city in the fall of 1846.

A bell and bass drum are reported to have been in the temple tower when armed mobs attacked the Mormons in Nauvoo, in mid-September of 1846. These were used by a lookout to warn the Saints of any mob forces approaching the city.\(^{117}\) It is doubtful, however, that this was the original bell.

Thomas Bullock records another use of this same bell following the surrender of Nauvoo to the mob element. He records on September 18, 1846, that "...The mob went through the temple and up to the dome of the tower, ringing the bell, shouting and hallowing..."\(^{118}\)

The bell under discussion could not have been the original bell, since it was smaller in size and was located in the observatory section of the tower, not in the belfry. This conclusion is strengthened by the report of Colonel Thomas L. Kane, who visited Nauvoo just a few days after the final exodus of the Mormons. He found the temple in the

\(^{116}\)The Burlington Hawkeye, November 20, 1845.

\(^{117}\)McGavin, op. cit., p. 241.

\(^{118}\)The Deseret News, June 17, 1939.
possession of mob forces. Permitted to view the interior of the building he climbed to the observatory section of the tower and viewed the city. Here he found "... fragments of food, cruises of liquor, and broken drinking vessels, with a bass drum and a steam boat signal bell... ."\textsuperscript{149}

From this description it would appear that the original bell was gone and had been replaced by the smaller bell.

The original temple bell, weighing some 1,500 pounds, was reported to have been smuggled out of Nauvoo and brought across the plains to Utah in the early days of the Mormon migration.\textsuperscript{150}

That the bell was brought out of Nauvoo in the fall of 1846 is shown by a letter of Brigham Young dated September 27, 1846. Having just recently been informed of the forced exodus of the poor and sick remnants of the Mormons from Nauvoo, he wrote to the trustees of the remaining church property in the city:

\textit{... As you will have no further use of the Temple Bell, we wish you to forward it to us by the first possible chance, for we have much need of it at this place. ...}\textsuperscript{151}

This request was complied with, and the next recorded mention of the bell is in April of 1847. The original pioneer group of Mormons had just started their historic trek across the plains and mountains to


\textsuperscript{150}The Deseret News, June 17, 1939.

\textsuperscript{151}"Journal History," September 27, 1846; and Preston Nibley, Exodus to Greatness (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1949), p. 245.
Utah. The Twelve, instructing those who followed the pioneer group, issued the following statement:

The first company will carry the Temple bell, with fixtures for hanging at a moment's notice, which will be rung at daylight, or at a proper time, and call all who are able to arise to pray, after which the ringing of bell and breakfast, or the ringing of bell and departure in 15 minutes, to secure the cool of the day. . . . The bell may be needed, particularly in the night, if the Indians hover around, to let them know that you are at your duty.152

Following its arrival in Salt Lake City, it was used in various functions. The bell was cracked as a result of a severe frost during the winter of 1849-50. It was then recast and enlarged.153

The Nauvoo Temple bell can be seen today in the museum on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, where it is on display. Its melodic tones have been recorded and can be heard each day over radio station K.S.L. in Salt Lake City.

152"Journal History," April 16, 1847; and Nibley, op. cit., p. 368.

153The Deseret News, September 14, 1850.
Figure 2. An artist's sketch of Nauvoo, taken from the Iowa side of the Mississippi River. Note the ruins of the temple on the bluff overlooking the city. Photo by courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.
CHAPTER V

DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

Probably no building in early America could be compared with the Nauvoo Temple as a prototype from which it had been copied. It stood as a unique departure from the conventional buildings of its day. Decorated with symbolic artistry, it was one of the great buildings of the West during its brief history. Since only isolated descriptions have been published, and those largely dealing with isolated parts of the structure, it is fitting that a detailed description be compiled.

I. THE EXTERIOR

Location. Travelers on the upper Mississippi in the mid 1840's could hardly escape viewing the prominent features of the temple as they approached Nauvoo. The city located as it was on a horseshoe bend of the river made the spire of its principal structure visible from a distance of twenty or thirty miles.¹

The building stood on the summit of a gently sloping bluff overlooking the lower town and the river. It was one of the choicest lots in the city. The temple block was bounded by Woodruff Street on the east, Mulholland Street on the south, Wells Street on the west, and

¹The Hancock Eagle (Nauvoo, Illinois), April 21, 1846.
Knight Street on the north.\(^2\)

The temple itself was located on the frontage of Wells Street somewhere near the center of the block (see Figure 10). The building faced to the west, with its tower and main entrances being on the west end of the structure.\(^3\)

It became a popular pastime with the citizens of Nauvoo and its visitors to climb the numerous winding stairways and behold the view afforded from the lofty tower of the temple. The view furnished from this vantage point was described with numerous adjectives by its many patrons. The following example is typical:

... The view from the top of the temple is majestic and highly picturesque. One can see the large rolling prairies to the east interspersed with growth of trees. One can look down upon the rising city of Nauvoo across the mighty Mississippi to the west. Beyond the river spreads the woodlands of Iowa, sprinkled here and there with farm houses and cultivated fields. The small village of Montrose setting upon the opposite bank of the river. In all, one could see for miles in all directions.\(^4\)

The grounds. The level terrain of the temple block posed few problems in construction and landscaping. The grounds were intended for beautification and as a site for additional church structures.

No mention is made of landscaping in the available records, but the ground was cleared around the temple in June of 1845.\(^5\) Owing to

\(^2\)Roberts, Comprehensive History, II, map p. 200; see also Figure 3, location number 19, on the following page, 91.

\(^3\)"Journal History," June 12, 1844, citing the St. Louis Gazette; May 27, 1850, citing the Nauvoo Patriot of that date; December 8, 1856; and The Deseret News, February 20, 1837. See Figure 10, p. 188.

\(^4\)The New York Messenger, August 30, 1845.

Figure 3. A plat of the City of Nauvoo. Note the temple block at location 19 on the map. Photo by courtesy of the Church Historian's Office.
the tendency of the Saints to beautify their residences with flowers and shrubs, it may be safely concluded that some efforts were made to enrich the beauty of their temple grounds. It is questionable that extensive work was undertaken, however, else it would have been recorded; and though possibly intended, it was either modified or set aside because of the exodus to the west.

Of particular interest is a project commenced in the spring of 1845. It was part of a planned improvement of the grounds and was announced in the *Times and Seasons*:

... a trench is being excavated about six feet wide and six feet deep, around a square of about six or eight acres which will be filled with stone, and upon which will be placed an iron fence for the security of the Temple and Tabernacle.6

The project as reported by Brigham Young in late June of 1845 was to be an iron picket fence eight feet high, with a five foot thick foundation at the base. He stated that the wall on the north side was nearly complete at that time.7

In a letter of Brigham Young published July 15, 1845, by the *Millennial Star* it is stated that the fence would also enclose the block west of the temple.8

This massive project would also have been completed and made its contribution to the beauty of the grounds if the Saints had been permitted to stay and enjoy their city and temple.

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6*Times and Seasons*, April 1, 1845.


8*Millennial Star*, July 15, 1845.
It was early recognized that the temple would accommodate only a small portion of the growing church congregation. An effort was made to provide additional meeting space. Joseph Smith counseled, prior to his death, to erect a tabernacle on the temple block. Pursuant to this counsel Brigham Young appointed Orson Hyde to chairman the project, raise the funds required, and make purchase of the materials. This action was taken in June of 1845. The structure was to be made out of canvas and would cost between one and two thousand dollars. Hyde went east to purchase the 4,000 yards of cloth and an Elder Egan went to St. Louis to purchase $125.00 worth of hemp for making rope.9

Record of the structure being erected is unavailable. If the purchase was consummated the canvas was probably used to furnish wagon covers for the church members when they left for the western wilderness.

Architecture. To say that the temple was unique in its style would be an understatement. It was a product of Joseph Smith. He planned its architecture in line with his concept of the building's purposes, and supervised the project during much of its erection.10 The actual drawings were done by William Weeks, who drafted them under dictation of the Prophet.11 An interesting account of their relationship was recorded by Joseph Smith:

10The Prophet, April 5, 1845.
11Gunnison, op. cit., p. 116; and Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 858.
In the afternoon, Elder William Weeks (whom I had employed as architect of the temple,) came in for instruction. I instructed him in relation to the circular windows designed to light the offices in the dead work of the arch between stories. He said that round windows in the broad side of a building were a violation of all the known rules of architecture, and contended that they should be semicircular—that the building was too low for round windows. I told him I would have the circles, if he had to make the temple ten feet higher than it was originally calculated; that one light at the centre of each circular window would be sufficient to light the whole room; that when the whole building was thus illuminated, the effect would be remarkably grand. "I wish you to carry out my designs. I have seen in vision the splendid appearance of that building illuminated, and will have it built to the pattern shown me."12

A close examination of the early architectural sketches of the temple along with other available evidence leads one to conclude that a number of changes were instituted in the planning of the temple.13

The building, a complexity of architectural designs, was described as being different from anything in ancient or modern history.14 It was said to be "... in style of architecture which no Greek, nor Goth, nor Frank ever dreamed ... the style of architecture is exclusively the Prophet's own, and must be known as the Mormon Order. ..."15

As is borne out in its description, the temple followed no set form in its design. Rather it contained some originality of style plus a borrowing from the various styles of architecture then in existence. Perhaps Charles Lanman's description of its style comes closest. He


13Compare Figure 1, p. ix, with Figures 4 and 5, p. 95.

14The Hancock Eagle, April 24, 1846; and "Journal History," June 15, 1843.

15"Journal History," June 12, 1844.
Figure 4. The earliest available architectural sketch of the Nauvoo Temple, bearing the architect's signature.

Figure 5. Another early sketch by the architect and bearing his signature. (Photos by courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.)
declared it to be "... principally after the Roman style of architec-
ture, somewhat intermixed with Grecian and Egyptian..."  

**Size.** The building, facing directly to the west, measured eighty-
eight feet wide by one hundred and twenty-eight feet long. It was com-
posed of a basement story, first story or ground floor, a second story, 
and another half-story on the west end of the building, on top of which 
was a tower. The structure achieved an overall height of one hundred 
fifty-eight and one-half feet.

The walls. The walls of the building were imposing and a work 
worthy of admiration. The stones of the walls were composed of a high 
quality greyish white limestone which resembled marble. They had 
been finished with great skill. They are described by the Hancock 
Eagle as being ",... worked down to a perfect surface ...", and 
by a correspondent of the Springfield Republican who states ",... the 
workmanship throughout is as well done as anything in the United States. 
I speak with confidence for I have seen and examined all the best

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16 Lanman, op. cit., p. 31.

17 Times and Seasons, December 25, 1844; The New York Sun, August 6, 1845; and the New York Messenger, August 30, 1845.

18 The Nauvoo Neighbor, July 30, 1845, and the New York Messenger, August 30, 1845.

19 The Deseret News, March 7, 1876, citing an article from the Cincinnati Times, no date.

20 The Hancock Eagle, April 24, 1846.
specimens of stone cutting and masonry in this country..."21

Thickness of the walls is variously described. Charles Lanman, a visitor to Nauvoo in 1846, estimated them as four to six feet thick.22 Probably more accurate is a description in The Nauvoo Neighbor of May 1, 1844, in which they are reported as about three feet thick in the basement by the baptismal font.23 They are described by The Hancock Eagle as being at least two feet thick near the top.24 In either case, they represented a monumental task in building.

Size of the stones varied, depending on their function. Most were uniform in size and shape, but others reached a reported weight of over four thousand pounds.25

Rising from beneath the surface of the earth, the walls at the square of the building attained an overall height of some sixty feet above the level of the ground.26 This was to the top of the eaves of the second story, and was as high as the stonework went.

A notable feature of the stonework was the thirty pilasters which formed a prominent part of the wall structure. Jutting out from the

21The Prophet, April 5, 1845, citing an article in the Springfield /Massachusetts/ Republican, no date.

22Lanman, op. cit., p. 32.

23The Nauvoo Neighbor, May 1, 1844.

24The Hancock Eagle, April 24, 1846.


26Times and Seasons, December 25, 1844; and The Nauvoo Neighbor, July 30, 1845.
wall surface they were placed with nine on each side, and six on each end of the building. Their design was a remarkable feature of the temple and symbolized the philosophy embodied in the sacred purposes for which the building was erected. Commencing at the ground level they ascended nearly to the eaves, at the top of the wall. They were readily distinguished by the moon stone, located at the foundation level, and the sun stone which formed part of the capital or top of each pilaster.

The moon stones were located at the top of the foundation or commencement of the first story. They were part of the base design of each pilaster and were a relief representation of a half moon with the crescent facing downwards. They were each carved from solid stone.

The sun stones were part of the capitals which formed the top of each pilaster. These capitals are well described by Brigham Young on the occasion of laying the last capstone, December 6, 1844. He states:

There are thirty capitals around the temple, each one composed of five stones, viz., one base stone, one large stone representing the sun rising just above the clouds, the lower part obscured; the third stone represents two hands each holding a trumpet, and the last two stones form a cap over the trumpet stone, and all these form the capital, the average cost of which is about four hundred and fifty dollars each. These stones are very beautifully cut, especially the face and trumpet stones and are an evidence of great skill in the architect and ingenuity on the part of the stone cutters. They present a very pleasing and noble appearance, and seem very appropriate in their places.

The total cost of the entire pilaster was estimated at three

27 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.
28 Ibid., August 30, 1845.
Figure 6. A sun stone or capital, originally a part of the Nauvoo Temple. Photo by courtesy of the Church Historian's Office.

Figure 7. Two moon stones that were part of the Nauvoo Temple. Photo by courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.
thousand dollars each.\textsuperscript{30}

A good representation of the pilasters, their design and appearance is furnished in Figure 1 on page ix. The sun stone and moon stone can be examined by viewing Figures 6 and 7 on page 99.

A short distance above the capitals, or tops of each pilaster and directly in line with them, was another symbolic decoration. This decoration was composed of large stars with five spangles or rays, and they were placed just below a large beautiful cornice which ran around the eaves of the building.\textsuperscript{31} These are also visible in Figure 1 on page ix.

The walls were completed by the cornice and the eaves. The eave troughs were reported to have been lined or sheeted with sixty-five hundred pounds of lead and to be capable of holding thirty barrels of water.\textsuperscript{32}

The tower. Above the stone walls, on the west end, rose the half-story, often referred to as the attic story. It measured eighty feet long from north to south, and forty feet across.\textsuperscript{33} It was an addition of sixteen and one-half feet above the eaves on the main wall.\textsuperscript{34}

From the center of the half-story rose the tower. Its base measured twelve and one-half feet in height; then the belfry ascended

\textsuperscript{30}The Saints Herald, September 26, 1949; and Josiah Quincy, Figures of the Past (Boston, Massachusetts: Roberts Brothers, 1883), p. 389.

\textsuperscript{31}New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.

\textsuperscript{32}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.; and The Nauvoo Neighbor, July 30, 1845.
another twenty feet. On top of this was the observatory, another sixteen feet high. Above this was the dome, measuring thirteen and one-half feet high, and then the balls and rod rising ten feet higher.

The tower, as can be seen in Figure 1 on page 88, was of a rounding octagonal shape. Its sections were reduced in size as it went higher, giving it a telescoped effect. The dome of the tower was covered with tin.

Plans were made to have the ball and rod at the summit of the tower, ornamented by the statue of an angel holding a trumpet and lying in a horizontal position to the ground. According to the sketches of the architect, it was to be about five feet long. Some question has existed over whether it was included in the final plan, and no specific record of its installation is available. If included with the ball and rod, then it was installed on September 10, 1845. At the apex of the spire, a weather vane was attached on January 30, 1846, and the angel may have been installed with it at this time.

Evidence that an angel was installed is plentiful. A person visiting the temple in 1846 describes a glittering angel with a trumpet in his hand, near the top of the spire. This report is substantiated

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38 The Nauvoo Neighbor, September 10, 1845.


40 The Deseret News, March 7, 1876, citing an article from the Cincinnati Times, no date.
Figure 8. Daguerreotype of the Nauvoo Temple. This is the only known authentic photograph of the building. It has been enlarged and retouched. Photo by courtesy of the Church Historian's Office.
by the testimony of Thomas L. Kane, who likewise visited the building in 1846. He stated that the Saints had remained in Nauvoo and succeeded, in spite of opposition, in completing the temple, "... even the gilding of the angel and trumpet on the summit of its lofty spire..."11

Another witness of its existence was the Prophet's young son, Joseph Smith III. He records that he watched the building rise from its foundation to "... the gilded angel with his brave trumpet in his hand, that swung at the top of the spire..."12

Rising a total of eighty-two feet above the level of the half-story, the tower gave an imposing appearance to the building.

**Windows.** The building was well illuminated in the day-time by the sunlight streaming in through its numerous windows. The basement story was lighted by twenty-two windows in the form of a half circle. It had eight on each side and six on the east end.13 The first story was lighted by large windows, rounding at the top in a half circle or oval form.14 The identical style and size of window was used to illuminate the second story. There were a total of forty-seven of these large main windows in the building.15 Dimensions are not available on

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11Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
13*New York Messenger*, September 20, 1845.
14*Times and Seasons*, December 25, 1844.
15*New York Messenger*, September 20, 1845.
the width of these large windows, but they were eleven feet three inches high in the center.\textsuperscript{46}

Between the two rows of main windows was a row of round windows. These lighted two long rooms between the first and second story. There were eight of these windows on each side of the building and some on each end.\textsuperscript{47}

Above the capitals and between each of the stars ran another row of smaller circular windows. These furnished light to the rooms around the outer edges of the main attic.\textsuperscript{48} These round windows had painted glass in them, colored red, white, and blue.\textsuperscript{49}

The half-story on the west end, as will be seen in Figure 1 on page ix, was lighted by long rectangular windows, while the various sections of the tower had long narrow windows rounding at the top. Additional windows of considerable size are described as having been located at the east end of the main attic.\textsuperscript{50}

The roof. The attic is referred to by various writers as being the half-story on the west end of the building, and also the main attic section, which ran east from the half-story to the east end of the building. This main portion of the attic was enclosed by a pitched roof,

\textsuperscript{46} Weeks, loc. cit.

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{New York Messenger}, September 20, 1845. \textsuperscript{48} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{49} Emily A. Austin, \textit{Mormonism, Or Life among the Mormons} (Madison, Wisconsin: M. J. Cantwell Printer, 1882), pp. 201-202.

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{New York Messenger}, September 20, 1845.
which at its apex appeared to be near the same height as the half-story. The roof was made of planks, covered with over one hundred thousand matched white pine shingles, laid out in a neat manner. Near the bottom of the roof on each side were what is described as "... two elegant ornamental chimneys and square sky lights, for lighting the small rooms below."

Part of the roof had been covered by sheet lead as an experiment. It was intended to eventually cover all the shingles with lead, zinc, copper, or porcelain.

The front. Directly under the tower and on the front side of the attic story was an inscription in gilt gold letters. It read: "The House of the Lord, Built by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Commenced April 6, 1841. Holiness to the Lord." This same inscription was also found on the front vestibule over the doors of entrance.

Ingress to the temple was gained through the three main entrances,

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51 See Figure 5, page 102.

52 Times and Seasons, August 1, 1845; and "Journal History," January 30, 1846.

53 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.

54 Times and Seasons, August 1, 1845.

55 Lanman, op. cit., p. 31.

56 The Pioneer (Salt Lake City, Utah), February, 1953, V, 6, citing: Papers in Illinois History and Transactions, 1937, written by J. H. Buckingham, a reporter from the Boston Courier; his description of the temple as it appeared in July, 1847.
all on the west front of the building.57 These were three large open archways, described as being nine feet seven inches wide and twenty-one feet high.58 They entered into what might be called the outer court or vestibule, which measured forty-three feet long from north to south and seventeen feet wide.59

The outer court was reached by climbing a flight of eight steps, which ascended to a level five feet four inches above the ground. Inside of the arched entrances were two additional steps which brought one to the level of the first story.60 On each end of the court were two large doors.61 Passing through these, a person would then be in the first story of the building.

II. THE INTERIOR

The basement story. The basement story was divided off into a total of thirteen rooms.62 It had small rooms around the outside and one large room running through the center.63 The large room in the center was one hundred feet in length from east to west, and fifty feet

57 "Journal History," June 12, 1844; and New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.

58 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.

59 Ibid.

60 Weeks, loc. cit.

61 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845; see also Figure 6, p. 112.

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid.; and Van Dusen and Van Dusen, op. cit., p. 6.
In the center of this room was the baptismal font, and on the east end of the basement was a well thirty feet deep, to provide water for the font. The floor was reported by Lanman as being paved with brick, and by The Hancock Eagle as being paved with tile.

The font. There were two baptismal fonts used in the temple. One was temporary, and was later replaced by a permanent one. Both were located in the center of the basement story.

The temporary font is described in detail by Joseph Smith who journalizes as follows:

... The baptismal font is situated in the centre of the basement room, under the main hall of the Temple; it is constructed of pine timber, and put together of staves tongue and grooved, oval shaped, sixteen feet long east and west, and twelve feet wide, seven feet high from the foundation, the basin four feet deep, the moulding of the cap and base are formed of beautiful carved work in antique style. The sides are finished with panel work. A flight of stairs in the north and south sides leading up and down into the basin, guarded by side railing.

The font stands upon twelve oxen, four on each side, and two at each end, their heads, shoulders and fore legs projecting out from under the font; they are carved out of pine plank glued together, and copied after the most beautiful five year old steer that could be found in the country, and they are excellent striking likeness of the original; the horns were geometrically formed after the most perfect horn that could be procured.

... the font was enclosed by a temporary frame building sided up with split oak clapboards, with a roof of the same material, and was so low that the timbers of the first story were laid above it. ...

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61 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.
63 Lanman, op. cit., p. 31. 67 The Hancock Eagle, May 8, 1846.
Henry Caswell adds to the description by pointing out that the oxen were possessed of legs but destitute of feet. He adds that the oxen and the font were all painted white.\textsuperscript{69}

The permanent font was in the same location and built of white limestone. The large laver is described as being "... in the shape of an egg divided in the middle from end to end. ..."\textsuperscript{70} Its dimensions are recorded with some variance of opinion. Gregg describes its measurements as being eighteen feet long, eight feet wide, four feet deep, and eight feet high from the top rim to the floor.\textsuperscript{71} L. O. Littlefield describes its dimensions as being fifteen feet by eleven and a half feet on the outside.\textsuperscript{72} An epistle of The Twelve in January, 1845, describes the then contemplated font as being twelve feet long and eight feet wide.\textsuperscript{73} The latter dimensions are likely the more accurate, since they represent an official statement of church leaders on the subject.

The laver was resting on the backs and shoulders of twelve large stone oxen of life size. There were four on each side and two on each end.\textsuperscript{74} They were sunk up to their knees in Roman cement,\textsuperscript{75} and only


\textsuperscript{70}\textit{New York Messenger}, September 20, 1845.


\textsuperscript{72}\textit{New York Messenger}, September 20, 1845.

\textsuperscript{73}\textit{Times and Seasons}, January 15, 1845.

\textsuperscript{74}Gregg, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{75}\textit{New York Messenger}, September 20, 1845.
their horns, heads, necks, and shoulders were exposed to view. 76 They were described as being "... perfectly executed, so that the veins in the ears and nose were plainly seen. The horns were perfectly natural, with small wrinkles at the bottom. ...." 77 The horns and ears were made of tin, but otherwise the oxen were entirely of solid stone. 78

Two stairways, made of stone steps, with an iron railing, provided access to the font. 79 They were placed with one stairway at each end and built in the form of an arch. 80

The first story. Commencing at the top of the foundation level, the first story was entered by the main entrance on the west end, through the large doors coming off from the outer court.

It was intended to divide this story into fifteen rooms. A large room in the center, to serve as an auditorium, measured one hundred feet long from east to west, and fifty feet wide, with smaller rooms at each side. 81 Two of these rooms on the north side near the entrance were prepared for use as offices. 82 With the exception of the main hall, no further description of the rooms is available.

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76 Gregg, loc. cit. 77 Austin, loc. cit.
78 The Pioneer, February, 1953.
79 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845; and Lanman, op. cit., p. 31.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid.
82 Joseph Smith and Heman C. Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints /Reorganized/ (Lamoni, Iowa: Board of Publications Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1911), II, 464-465. (Hereafter referred to as Journal of History.)
The main hall was intended for a regular meeting place of the congregation. Its floor was filled with seats, the design of which was described by Buckingham: "... They are arranged with backs, which are fitted like the backs to seats in a modern railroad car, so as to allow the spectator to sit and look in either direction, east or west."\(^8\)

The ceiling was of an arched design. Both it and the walls were plastered and painted.\(^5\)

At each end of the large hall were elaborate pulpits, each graded into four tiers of seats. They were placed with one at each end and were designed to accommodate the Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthoods.\(^6\)

In addition to the pulpits, there was a space provided and seats erected to accommodate a large choir and also a place for the band.\(^7\)

Over the Melchizedek pulpit on the east end was the inscription, "The Lord has beheld our sacrifice: Come after us."\(^8\)

Between the first and second story, in the recesses on each side of the arched ceiling of the first floor, there was sufficient space for additional rooms. They were mentioned as being designed for some function in relation to the endowment ceremony,\(^9\) and also described as two

\(^{83}\)The Hancock Eagle, April 21, 1846.

\(^{84}\)The Pioneer, February, 1953.

\(^{85}\)"Journal History," January 1, 1846.

\(^{86}\)Times and Seasons, December 25, 1844.

\(^{87}\)"Journal History," January 1, 1846.

\(^{88}\)Lanman, op. cit., p. 32.

\(^{89}\)Ibid.; and Times and Seasons, January 15, 1845.
long rooms, one on each side of the building designated for use by the
Patriarchs.90

The second story. The second story was designed to be an exact
duplicate of the first.91 It was seventeen feet longer than the first
story, in consequence of running out over the outer court or vestibule.
This additional space was marked by a stone arch spanning forty-one feet
across which served as the support for the tower.92 An excellent view
of this arch can be seen by examination of Figure 6 on page 112.

No mention is found of any seats being erected in this hall. In
fact, very little information is available on this particular portion
of the building.

Stairways. There were several stairways in the structure and
three are worthy of special notice. On each side of the vestibule at
the front corners of the building was a set of circular or winding
stairs which rose from the ground level to the attic story. From here,
access to the tower was attained by climbing another winding circular
stairway to the observatory above.93

90 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845; and Lanman, op. cit.,
p. 32.

91 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.

92 The Valley Tan, February 15, 1860; Lanman, op. cit., p. 32;

93 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.
Figure 9. Sketch of the temple ruins by Frederick Piercy. Photo by courtesy of the Church Historian's Office.
The attic story. References to the attic story are often confusing, since the attic was divided into two sections.

The half-story or west section of the attic consisted of one large room measuring eighty feet across from north to south, and forty feet wide.94 It was divided into sections by cotton factory cloth and no doubt used for the endowment ceremonies.95 Its ceiling was flat, except for six skylights which furnished light to the room below, and the ceiling is described as being perfectly watertight.96

The main section of the attic was under the large pitched roof of the temple. It consisted of one large room measuring eighty-eight feet two inches long from east to west, and twenty-eight feet eight inches wide. It was arched over and divided into six spaces by the cross beams which supported the roof. In between the cross beams on each side were six rooms, each about fourteen feet square.97 All twelve of these small rooms are reported to have had doors with a massive lock on each one.98 These rooms were said to not be sufficiently high at the eaves for a person of six feet in height to stand erect.99

The room used for the sealing ordinances and marriages was the

95 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.
96 "Journal History," December 10, 1845.
97 Van Dusen and Van Dusen, loc. cit.; and Lanman, op. cit., p. 32.
98 New York Messenger, September 20, 1845.
99 "Journal History," February 8, 1846.
altar room, located in the southeast corner, one of the small rooms in
the attic.\textsuperscript{100}

The entire attic was plastered and painted,\textsuperscript{101} and the floors
were covered with carpets.\textsuperscript{102}

Furnishings and ornamentation. In addition to the carpets, inscrip-
tions, and seating, other decorations were added in the building.
There are reports of stoves, sofas, and other furniture, as well as
pictures being used in the structure.\textsuperscript{103} Ornamentation was also cut in
wood and stone.\textsuperscript{104} These decorations were described as both "chaste
and rich."\textsuperscript{105}

The hall of the first story was described as:

\ldots worthy of the attention of all architects who delight in
originality and taste. It has been thronged with visitors from
abroad since its completion, and excites the surprise and admira-
tion of every beholder.\textsuperscript{106}

Conclusion. It can easily be seen that the Nauvoo Temple was a
building of considerable proportions and intricate design. Had it sur-
vived, it would have stood for many years as a testimony to the skill
of its builders.

\textsuperscript{100}\textsuperscript{100}Ibid., November 22, 1845, and November 26, 1845.
\textsuperscript{101}\textsuperscript{101}Ibid., November 29, 1845.
\textsuperscript{102}\textsuperscript{102}The Woman's Exponent, XII, No. 2 (February, 1883), 10; XII,
No. 7 (July, 1883), 50; and XII, No. 11 (November, 1883), 81.
\textsuperscript{103}\textsuperscript{103}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104}\textsuperscript{104}The Deseret News, March 7, 1876.
\textsuperscript{105}\textsuperscript{105}The Hancock Eagle, April 24, 1846.
\textsuperscript{106}\textsuperscript{106}Ibid.
CHAPTER VI

PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE STRUCTURE

The Nauvoo Temple was unique among religious buildings of its day. Its purposes and functions were singular to the Latter-day Saints, and the uses of the building, though varied, were in the main of deep religious import. To fully appreciate the drama of its construction, the sacrifices and toil of its builders, it is basic that the reasons for its erection be understood.

I. TEMPLE ORDINANCES, THEIR NATURE AND EXTENT OF PRACTICE IN NAUVOO

Temple ordinance work as practiced by the Latter-day Saints had much of its development and early practice in connection with the Nauvoo Temple. It is therefore of value, in understanding the purposes for which the temple was constructed, that consideration be given to the various ordinances, their nature and extent of practice in Nauvoo.

Baptism for the dead. The Latter-day Saint concept of vicarious baptism by a living person in behalf of a dead ancestor is based upon biblical scriptures, and the belief that such an ordinance was practiced by the early Christians.¹

The first intimation of vicarious work for the dead among the Mormons was given on the night of September 21, 1823. On this occasion the Angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith. Among the items revealed was a reference made by the Angel to the future visitation of Elijah the Prophet. It was Elijah who would restore the essential keys of authority necessary to launch forth the work for the dead. Moroni stated that this would be in fulfillment of the promised coming of Elijah, referred to by Malachi in the Holy Bible.²

Though work for the dead was forecast in 1823, the doctrine was not understood nor practiced till some years later. Joseph Smith reported that it was on April 3, 1836, when Elijah appeared to him at Kirtland, Ohio, and conferred upon him the keys of authority for this essential work.³

The concept, though revealed earlier, was not taught publicly to the church as doctrine until August 10, 1840, at Nauvoo, Illinois. It is quite likely that though Joseph Smith may have understood some of the practice, it became impossible due to persecution to initiate it before this time. In a letter to the members of the Twelve Apostles in England, dated October, 1840, Joseph Smith explained it as follows:

I assume that the Doctrine of Baptism for the dead has ere this reached your ears, and may have raised some inquiry in your mind respecting the same. I cannot in this letter give you all the information you may desire on the subject. . . .

I first mentioned the Doctrine in public when preaching the funeral sermon of Brother Seymour Brunson (August 10, 1840) and have

²Malachi 4:5-6; see also Doctrine and Covenants 2:1-3.
³Ibid., 100.
since given general instructions on the subject. The Saints have the privilege of being baptized for those of their relatives who are dead, whom they believe would have embraced the Gospel if they had been privileged with hearing it, and who have received it through the instrumentality of those who have been commissioned to preach to them while in prison.

On Sunday, October 4, 1840, the Prophet delivered a discourse on the subject in a conference of the church. During the fall of 1840 the work of vicarious ordinances in behalf of the dead was performed temporarily in the Mississippi River at Nauvoo, Illinois. "The Salt Lake Temple Archives record fifteen Mississippi baptisms for and in behalf of the dead in 1840." 

There were many more baptisms performed at Nauvoo and other places in 1840 and 1841, but for the most part proper records were not kept of the names, those officiating, etc. These irregularities can be attributed to the overzealousness and impatience of church members, and also to the fact that a perfect knowledge of proper procedures to follow had not as yet been developed.

John Taylor, in commenting on the development of the practice, said of Joseph Smith:

At first these things were only partially made known to him, and as they were partially developed he called upon the twelve that were then living ... to commence and be baptized for the dead, and they were baptized in the Mississippi River. Immediately after these baptisms, the Prophet had a revelation which more clearly developed

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5Ibid., IV, 206.

6Albert M. Zobell, Jr., "If the Dead Rise Not at All," The Improvement Era, XLIII (August, 1940), 531.
the order in relation to such baptisms. . . .  

The foundation of all ordinance work for the dead was clearly set forth on January 19, 1841, in a revelation to Joseph Smith, at Nauvoo, Illinois. In addition to enumeration of the vicarious ordinances for the dead, a temple was commanded to be built. This structure was to be a place wherein these sacred ordinances could be revealed in their fulness and performed within its walls.  

During the summer and early fall of 1841, baptisms for the dead continued in the river at Nauvoo and at other places nearby. The method was different from its modern practice in some respects, and in some cases records were not kept on the work performed. Wilford Woodruff once stated that when baptism for the dead was first announced a man would be baptized for both male and female. Afterwards more light was obtained and it was taught that men should attend to the ordinances for the males and females for females. Additional reference to these conditions was made by Brigham Young.  

During September of 1841 two further revelations were given regarding the subject of work for the dead. These outlined the necessity of accurate records being kept of the work done, and the need of

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8Doctrine and Covenants 124:25-45.

9Genealogical Society, "Introduction of Baptism for the Dead," The Improvement Era, XL, No. 11 (April, 1939), 251.

10Journal of Discourses, XVI, 165.
witnesses being present. Additional clarifications of the doctrine are also given. This addition of scripture actually came from letters written by Joseph Smith. They have been accepted as inspired documents relating to this work.11

Baptisms in the river were discontinued by revelation on Sunday, October 3, 1841:

President Joseph Smith then announced: There shall be no more baptisms for the dead, until the ordinance can be attended to in the Lord’s House; and the church shall not hold another General Conference, until they can meet in said house For thus saith the Lord!12

During the summer and fall of 1841 measures had been taken by the church leaders to build a baptismal font in the cellar floor of the temple. This temporary font was dedicated by Brigham Young on Monday, November 8, 1841, at 5:00 p.m. A thorough description of this temporary font and its purposes was recorded by Joseph Smith in his journal.13 Ordinance work began in the font on Sunday, November 21, 1841, when forty baptisms in behalf of the dead were performed.14 The temporary font was later replaced by a permanent one made of stone.

Erastus Snow reports that the Prophet gave instructions to the effect that none should be allowed to participate in the privileges of the temple unless they could produce a certificate from the General Church Recorder certifying that they had paid up their tithing.15

13Ibid., IV, 446-447. 14Ibid., IV, 454.
15Journal of Discourses, XIX, 337.
It is reported that a total of 15,626 recorded baptisms for the dead were performed in and about the vicinity of the Nauvoo Temple while the Saints were in Nauvoo.16

The endowment. The revelation of January 19, 1841, calling for erection of the Nauvoo Temple clearly stated:

And verily I say unto you, let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people.

Among the ordinances mentioned were anointings, washings, baptisms for the dead, and the endowment. The Prophet was to be shown all things pertaining to the building and the priesthood thereof.17

Explanation of the endowment ceremony as practiced by the Latter-day Saints is furnished by Talmage:

The Temple Endowment, as administered in modern temples, comprises instruction relating to the significance and sequence of past dispensations, and the importance of the present as the greatest and grandest era in human history. This course of instruction includes a recital of the most prominent events of the creative period, the condition of our first parents in the Garden of Eden, their disobedience and consequent expulsion from that blissful abode, their condition in the lone and dreary world when doomed to live by labor and sweat, the plan of redemption by which the great transgression may be atoned, the period of the great apostasy, the restoration of the Gospel with all its ancient powers and privileges, the absolute and indispensable condition of personal purity and devotion to the right in present life, and a strict compliance with Gospel requirements.

The ordinances of the endowment embody certain obligations on the part of the individual, such as covenant and promise to observe the law of strict virtue and chastity, to be charitable, benevolent, tolerant and pure; to devote both talent and material means to the spread of truth and the uplifting of the race; to maintain devotion to the cause of truth; and to seek in every way to contribute to the

16The Deseret News, November 26, 1932.

17Doctrine and Covenants 124:39-42.
great preparation that the earth may be made ready to receive her King,—the Lord Jesus Christ. With the taking of each covenant and the assuming of each obligation a promised blessing is pronounced, contingent upon the faithful observance of the conditions.

No jot, iota or tittle of the temple rites is otherwise than uplifting and sanctifying. In every detail the endowment ceremony contributes to covenants of morality of life, consecration of person to high ideals, devotion to truth, patriotism to nation, and allegiance to God. 18

The concept of an endowment ceremony originated in the church with Joseph Smith as early as June 22, 1834, at Kirtland, Ohio. In a revelation of that date the endowment was significantly related with a temple, one which the Saints had been commanded to build in Kirtland. The revelation declared:

... Verily I say unto you, it is expedient in me that the first Elders of my church should receive their endowment from on high in my house, which I have commanded to be built unto my name in the land of Kirtland. 19

The ceremony was first practiced in an incomplete form January 20, 1836, at a council meeting held in the Kirtland Temple. 20

Brigham Young in 1853 commented on the endowment as introduced in Kirtland, stating that those who assisted with erection of the temple "... received a portion of their endowments, or we might say more clearly, some of the first, or introductory or initiatory ordinances preparatory to an endowment." 21

19Doctrine and Covenants 105:33.
20Joseph Fielding Smith, Church History and Modern Revelation (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company), II, 304; and Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. II, 308-310.
On April 6, 1836, the ancient Prophet Elijah is reported to have appeared to Joseph Smith, restoring to him certain sealing powers of the priesthood. It is mentioned in the revelation given on the occasion of Elijah's visitation that thousands would rejoice in consequence of the endowments which had been given in the Kirtland Temple.\(^{22}\) Joseph Smith and other church leaders connected the visitation of Elijah directly to the authority and nature of temple ordinances.

Records of additional endowment ceremonies in Kirtland are not available, if such were ever conducted. Further development of the practice waited until the church was established at Nauvoo.

The basic temple endowment ceremony later common to Mormon temple ritual was first performed by Joseph Smith May 4, 1842, in the upper room of his brick store in Nauvoo. He records:

I spent the day in the upper part of the store, that is in my private office . . . in council with General James Adams of Springfield, Patriarch Hyrum Smith, Bishops Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, and President Brigham Young, and Elders Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards instructing them in the principles and order of the priesthood, attending to washings and anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days, and all those plans and principles by which anyone is enabled to secure the fulness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the First Born, and come up and abide in the presence of Eloheim in the eternal worlds. In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days.\(^{23}\)

John C. Bennett, who published his History of the Saints in 1842, furnishes ample evidence of the endowment ceremony being practiced at

\(^{22}\)Doctrine and Covenants 110:9, 13-16.

this early date. He refers to the practice as a "Holy Order" and unfolds a garbled account of the ceremony as then practiced under the leadership of Joseph Smith. He declares the work was being conducted in consequence of a pretended special revelation to Smith respecting the practice. A description of the room and its symbolic decoration is also furnished. 24

Ebenezer Robinson, one time editor of the Times and Seasons who left the church at the close of the Nauvoo period, wrote in 1890 that Joseph Smith established a secret order as early as 1843. It included members of both sexes. They held their meetings in the large room of the second story in Joseph's brick store. He describes being a personal witness to the ceremony's existence in June of 1844. 25

Prior to his death the Prophet Joseph was very concerned with the progress of the temple. As a stimulus to greater effort, he stated in March, 1844, that all members who were worthy would receive their endowments, and that those recorded as assisting with completion of the temple would have first claim on the ordinances. 26

The following month at the conference of church members he commented that as soon as the temple was sufficiently complete, the ordinance work would be started and the endowment given. He further declared the ordinances essential to exaltation in the "Celestial Degree of Glory." 27

24 Bennett, op. cit., p. 275.
25 The Return (Davis City, Iowa), Vol. II, No. 4 (April, 1890), 252.
Orson Hyde records that in April of 1844 he and the other Apostles were given their endowments and instructed in the ordinance by Joseph Smith:

He conducted us through every ordinance of the holy priesthood, and when he had gone through with all the ordinances he rejoiced very much, and said, now if they kill me you have got all the keys, and all the ordinances, and you can confer them upon others, and the hosts of Satan will not be able to tear down the kingdom as fast as you will be able to build it up.28

Following the death of the Prophet the temple was pushed toward completion. It became the most important single project of the church membership. In a letter of the Twelve Apostles addressed to Lyman Wight, April 17, 1845, progress was reported on the temple and the intention was stated of having the building far enough along by the coming fall so as to "... commence administering the ordinances of endowment according to the commandment." Wight was also strongly urged to not depart for the west before having received his endowments.29

As the month of November drew to a close, the temple had been enclosed and the outside work completed. Strenuous exertions were now being made to finish the interior. Priority was given to the attic story. It was partitioned, plastered, painted, carpeted and ready for use as the month closed. On November 30th at 12:00 noon the attic story was dedicated by Brigham Young in the company of the Apostles and other church leaders.30 Finishing touches were added, and on December

28Times and Seasons, October 2, 1844, and Millennial Star, V, 104.
30"Journal History," November 30, 1844.
10th at 4:25 p.m. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball commenced administering the ordinances of the endowment. They continued officiating in the ordinances until 3:30 a.m. of the following morning. After a brief rest, they had breakfast and returned to the temple.

Those receiving their endowments on this occasion were:

Willard Richards; Heber C. Kimball and his wife, Vilate; George A. Smith and Bathsheba W.; Orson Hyde and Nancy Marinda; John Smith and Clarissa; Newel K. Whitney and Elizabeth Ann; Brigham Young and Mary Ann; William W. Phelps and Sally; Parley P. Pratt and Mary Ann; Amasa Lyman and Mariah Louisa; George Miller and Mary Catharine; John Taylor and Lenora; Lucien Woodworth and Phebe; John E. Page and Mary; Joseph C. Kingsburg; Mary Smith, widow of Hyrum; Agnes Smith, widow of Don Carlos.

Significant among those receiving the ordinances on December 11th were the Temple Committee, their wives, and mother, Lucy Smith.

John D. Lee reported that as soon as circumstances allowed, Brigham Young organized the work, established rules for the preservation of order, and placed help in the different departments to accommodate the large numbers who would come for their ordinances. Lee himself was set apart as a clerk to keep a record of the work as it was done.

Typical of those called to assist was Erastus Snow, who records that he and his wife received their endowments on December 12th, following which they were assigned to assist others in the work. He continued

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31 Ibid., December 10, 1845.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
to assist both day and night for about six weeks and his wife continued in the female department about a month.36

Recognition of the ordinance work being conducted at this time is found in The Warsaw Signal of December 24, 1845, as it mentions that "... the endowment is now being received."37 A description of the ceremony is furnished by Increase and Marie Van Dusen who, following their apostasy from the church, wrote of their temple experiences. Though the report is critical in nature and in part disqualified on that basis, it nevertheless furnishes some light on how the ceremony was conducted in the temple.38

The endowment work continued from its commencement, both night and day, with little interruption. As time went on experienced workers were able to do the work more rapidly, thereby accommodating increasingly larger numbers. William Huntington reports that by December 21st some 560 had received their endowments.39 By the end of the month over 1,000 had partaken of the ceremony.40 The work continued until February 7, 1846, when it was closed due to the migration out of Nauvoo into the western wilderness. By this time Roberts reports that 5,669 had received their endowment ordinances.41


37The Warsaw Signal, December 24, 1845.

38Van Dusen and Van Dusen, op. cit., pp. 6-18.

39Huntington, op. cit., p. 43.

40"Journal History," December 27, 1845.

In spite of threats and violence by their enemies, church members exhibited great faith and determination to have as many partake of the temple ordinances as possible. The church historian recorded on January 20, 1846:

Public prejudice being so strong against the Saints and the excitement becoming alarming, the brethren determined to continue the administrations of the ordinances of the endowment night and day.\(^{42}\)

Not only were the church leaders under great strain in preparing their people for a premature departure from their homes in Nauvoo, but their energies were taxed considerably in taking care of the requests for ordinance work. This is aptly illustrated by record of the following account:

Such had been the anxiety manifested by the Saints to receive the ordinances, and such the anxiety on the part of the brethren to administer to them, that President Young had given himself up entirely to the work of the Lord in the temple night and day, not taking more than four hours sleep, upon an average per day, and going home but once a week. Elder Heber C. Kimball and the others of the Twelve Apostles were also in constant attendance, but in consequence of close application some of them had to leave the temple to rest and recuperate their health.\(^{43}\)

On February 3, 1846, preparatory to the exodus from Nauvoo which began the following day, Brigham Young announced that the ordinance work would be closed. Members assembled at the temple were informed that the church would build more temples and have future opportunities to receive the blessings of temple work. He declared that he was going to prepare his wagons and leave. A short time later he returned to the

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\(^{42}\) "Journal History," January 20, 1846.

\(^{43}\) Ibid., January 12, 1846.
temple only to find the crowd had not dispersed but had filled the temple to overflowing. Moved by the anxiety of the members, he and the others continued the temple ordinance work.\textsuperscript{44} On February 6th, 512 received ordinances in the temple.\textsuperscript{45} The following day saw the ordinance work officially closed, with upwards of 600 persons receiving ordinances.\textsuperscript{46}

To the church members the main purpose of erecting the building had now been achieved, and thousands of them had been blessed by the performance of the promised ordinances.

**Celestial marriage.** Another ordinance practiced in the Nauvoo Temple was that of "celestial marriage." To the Latter-day Saints, marriage and the resulting family unit should be an eternal union, not dissolved by death, but existing beyond the grave. Such a union or covenant, entered into rightly, sealed by proper authority, and confirmed by continued faithfulness, is recognized as binding in the heavens as well as on earth in an eternal marriage and family relationship.\textsuperscript{47}

Eternity of the marriage covenant had its application in marriage of a man to one wife, and also to plural marriage wherein a man was sealed in marriage to more than one wife.\textsuperscript{48}

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\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., February 3, 1846. \textsuperscript{45}Ibid., February 6, 1846.
\textsuperscript{46}Ibid., February 7, 1846.
\textsuperscript{47}Talmage, The Articles of Faith, pp. 457-458.
\textsuperscript{48}Doctrine and Covenants 132.
The revelation authorizing such marriages was reportedly given by Joseph Smith, who is said to have received the concept as early as 1831.\(^4^9\) It was introduced by him to the Twelve Apostles on April 5, 1841.\(^5^0\) The revelation is reported to have been committed to writing on July 12, 1843, when the Prophet dictated it to William Clayton.\(^5^1\) On or about August 12, 1843, it was read by Hyrum Smith to members of the High Council in Nauvoo.\(^5^2\) Joseph Smith is reported to have practiced plural marriage himself as early as 1842.\(^5^3\) The controversial doctrine was first made public in 1852.\(^5^4\)

Three affidavits appearing in *The Nauvoo Expositor* of June 7, 1844, over the signatures of William Law, Jane Law, and Austin Cowles, furnish evidence that the revelation was secretly being taught at this date by Hyrum Smith.\(^5^5\)

Celestial marriages (marriages for eternity) were performed in the Nauvoo Temple after the beginning of ordinance work in the attic story, during the winter of 1845.

\(^{49}\)Roberts, *Comprehensive History*, II, 95.

\(^{50}\)Ibid., II, 102. \(^{51}\)Ibid., II, 106.


\(^{53}\)Roberts, *Comprehensive History*, II, 102.

\(^{54}\)Ibid., IV, 55-57.

Heber C. Kimball records that four individuals and their wives were sealed to each other in eternal marriage on January 7, 1846.\textsuperscript{56} His daughter reports that twenty women were sealed to her father in the Nauvoo Temple.\textsuperscript{57} Erastus Snow records the experience of being sealed to two wives on the same day, January 23, 1846.\textsuperscript{58}

Samuel Whitney Richards records in his Journal for January of 1846:

\textit{Friday 23rd.} By my interposition Father John Parker's family received their endowments, his daughter, Mary, being my intended wife, after which I obtained permission of President Joseph for her to have the privilege of spending her time in the temple also, where she commenced her labours on the morning of the 27th and in the evening of the 29th we were sealed upon the altar, Husband and Wife, for time and all eternity, by Amasa Lyman, at 25 minutes to nine witnessed by Phineas Richards and C. W. Wandall and recorded by F. D. Richards. \ldots \textsuperscript{59}

The number of eternal marriages performed in the temple is not available, though evidence is abundant that a considerable number of these ordinances were performed. Some were monogamous in nature while others involved a plurality of wives.

\textbf{Baptism for healing}. Another interesting practice connected with the temple was that of baptism of church members for the purposes of healing. An epistle of the Twelve Apostles published in the \textit{Times and Seasons} of January 15, 1845, describes the temple and comments on

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{56}The Woman's Exponent, XII, No. 10 (October 15, 1883), 74.
  \item \textsuperscript{57}Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{58}Snow, \textit{loc. cit.}
  \item \textsuperscript{59}Samuel Whitney Richards, "Journal Book of Samuel Whitney Richards" (unpublished \textit{MSS}, copied by Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah, 1946), Book No. 2, pp. 1-2.
\end{itemize}
the temporary font that had recently been removed for replacement by the permanent one. It states: ". . . There was a font erected in the basement of the temple, for the baptism of the dead, the healing of the sick, and other purposes." 60

According to William Clayton, the practice commenced on the day the temporary font was dedicated. He writes:

Brother Samuel Rolfe, who was seriously afflicted with a felon upon one of his hands, was present. President Smith instructed him to wash in the font and told him that the hand would be healed. The doctors had told him that he could not recover before spring, and had advised him to have his hand cut. He dipped his hand in the font, and within a week he was perfectly healed.

After this time baptisms were continued in the font, and many Saints realized great blessings—both spiritually and bodily. 61

The conference minutes of April 6, 1842, record: " . . . Baptisms for the dead, and for the healing of the body must be in the font. . . ." 62

Additional reference to the practice is fragmentary, and it is therefore difficult to define the extent to which it was used or the procedure followed. That such an ordinance was performed in the temple is a certainty.

II. CHURCH MEETINGS AND ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Among the multipurpose functions of the temple must be listed the use of the structure as a place of worship for numerous and varied

60 Times and Seasons, January 15, 1845.
61Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 862.
62 Times and Seasons, April 6, 1842.
church meetings. In addition, the building was designed to serve as the administrative office building for the church.

**Meetings.** During the time the Saints resided in Nauvoo there were few suitable locations available for conducting religious meetings, and none of these were of sufficient size to accommodate large groups. As a result, most church gatherings of any size were held in the open air, subject to the capricious nature of the elements. The temple was designed to meet some of these needs and was so used for such purposes before its abandonment.

The first meeting was held on the temporary floor of the first story October 30, 1842.\(^63\) At this time the building was not enclosed and the group was exposed to the elements. Temporary seats had been set up to accommodate the attenders.\(^64\) Meetings were held there with some regularity on Sundays when the weather permitted, and another general church meeting was there convened at the conference of April 6, 1843.\(^65\) During the afternoon of Sunday, May 21, 1843, the ordinance of partaking of bread and water, or the sacrament, was administered to the Saints for the first time in the temple.\(^66\) It is evident that meetings continued at this spot for some time until construction problems again caused the church gatherings to be held outside. Meetings were then held in the grove near the west end of the temple.\(^67\)

\(^63\)"Journal History," October 30, 1842.
\(^64\)Ibid., October 23, 1842.  \(^65\)Ibid., April 6, 1843.
\(^66\)Jenson, The Historical Record, VIII, 864.
On Sunday morning, October 5, 1845, the temple was opened for the first assembly ever convened in the enclosed structure. The event was an important milestone in the temple construction, and marked the opening of the first general conference of the church in three years. It was estimated that about five thousand people attended the services.68

Meetings continued in the temple each Sunday as church members assembled there for worship. This regular use of the structure for public meetings was interrupted during the first week in November, 1845, when the first floor of the temple was taken up for the purpose of laying down the permanent flooring.69 Other meetings were held in the other parts of the structure for the purpose of conducting church business, and worship services were also conducted on a limited scale in the attic story. Illustrative of this practice is the report of a sacrament meeting being conducted there at 10:30 a.m., November 28, 1845. About two hundred were in attendance.70 The temple was again opened for public worship on Sunday, February 1, 1846, when they met in the second story.71 The new floor was ready on the first story by February 22, 1846, and accommodated a large congregation.72 The main hall of this story is described in 1847 as having sufficient seating in it to accommodate thirty-five hundred people.73

68Ibid., VII, 456. 69Ibid., VII, 519.
70Ibid., VII, 555. 71Ibid., VII, 578.
72Ibid., VII, 594.
Besides general worship meetings, daily prayer meetings became a practice in 1846, as various sized groups of priesthood members met in the temple for this purpose. The practice continued even after dedication of the building.74

Administrative functions. The temple was designed to furnish office space for the various officials and offices of church government. Leaders of the Seventies and High Priests were allowed offices in the attic story, as were also the members of the High Council.75 This was also true of the Twelve Apostles, Stake Presidency, Presiding Bishops, Patriarch and others. Numerous meetings and matters of church business are recorded as being conducted by these officials in the temple. Plans for the exodus from Nauvoo were finalized here, and the organization for carrying these plans into operation was likewise affected in the temple.

III. SUNDRY OTHER USES OF THE STRUCTURE

The building was put to additional uses besides those already named. It is doubtful that some of these uses were intended in the beginning, but circumstances relating to the forced exodus in the spring of 1846 made some seem practical and others a necessity.


75Ibid., VII, 79, 542, 549, 555, 565.
Residence. The temple became a temporary residence for some of the church leaders in January and February of 1846. The anxiety on the part of both members and leaders alike to allow as many as possible to receive the temple ordinances resulted in an almost round-the-clock activity at the temple. Members of the Twelve and other temple workers gave themselves entirely to the work, taking no more than four hours sleep per day, and going home only once per week. To accommodate those who stayed day and night in the building, a dining room was set up in the temple where they might take their meals.

Recreational functions. Need of a suitable building for recreational purposes was met in part by the temple. The practice was commenced on December 29, 1845. The labors of the day had been brought to a close at 8:30 p.m. and it was decided to enjoy a "season of recreation." A Brother Hansen played the violin, joined by Elisha Averett on the flute. Following a few lively musical numbers, the group joined together in dancing for about an hour. This was followed by several of the group joining together in some songs. The activities were closed with prayer and the group departed.

The practice of dancing and musical entertainment was repeated during the following month on various occasions by select groups of members. Brigham Young on such an occasion held January 2, 1846, led the group in the dance. Following the dancing he made a short address

76 Ibid., VII, 567.  
77 Ibid., VII, 577.  
78 Ibid., VII, 557.
to the group. He talked on the privilege the Saints then had of meeting in the temple and stated that they could worship God in the dance as well as in other ways. He went on to state:

... the way for us to grow and thrive is for us to serve the Lord in all we do. ... No man is to be filled with lightness. We will praise the Lord as we please. Now as to dancing in this house--there are thousands of brethren and sisters that have labored to build these walls and put on this roof, and they are shut out from any opportunity of enjoying any amusement among the wicked or in this world, shall they have any recreation? Yes! and this is the very place where they can have liberty. 79

The practice evidently came into question and on January 9, 1846, Brigham Young issued the following instructions:

I observed to the brethren that it was my wish that all dancing and merriment should cease, lest the brethren and sisters be carried away by vanity; and that the name of the Diety should be held in reverence, with all the due deference that belongeth to an infinite being of his character. 80

Following the closing of temple ordinance work and the start of the exodus from Nauvoo, the practice of using the temple for recreational functions was renewed. Samuel W. Richards reports that on February 9, 1846, a select company, including several of the Twelve, met in the temple for a dance. Music was provided by the brass band. The social was opened with a prayer offered by Orson Hyde. 81

The building was used for additional social functions in the ensuing weeks by the workmen who were laboring to complete the structure. Richards furnishes interesting accounts of these activities. On

79 The Woman's Exponent, XII, No. 8 (September 15, 1883), 57-58; and Roberts, History of the Church, Period II, VII, 561-562.

80 Ibid., VII, 566. 81 Richards, loc. cit.
April 28th:

... about noon they ceased and all hands with their wives re-paired to the temple for the feast, a large company were gathered, a plenty of cakes with cheese, and raisens was furnished by the brethren and sisters for the occasion. ... 82

On April 29th:

... In the afternoon met in the attic story of the temple with the members who formed the prayer circle in No. 1 and a part of No. 2 with our wives and had a feast of cakes, pies, wine, & C. where we enjoyed ourselves with prayer, preaching, administering for healing, blessing children, and music and dancing until nearly midnight. The other hands completed the painting of the lower room. 83

A similar social was held the next two days when the temple was dedicated. Mention is also made of a dancing school being conducted in the temple in May of 1846. 84

After the temple had been deserted in the journey of the Saints into the west, the building is reported to have been used for public balls, public meetings, etc., by the local citizens. 85 It is also reported that a few of twenty-five cents was being collected from those desiring a tour of the building in 1847. 86

With the exception of the baptismal font, the building was put into effective use by its builders for the short period of only six to nine months. Though used such a short time, it was considered by the church as worthy of the sacrifice. Most church members felt as did their leader, Brigham Young, who declared, "... This church has obtained already all they have labored for in building this temple." 87

82Ibid., p. 17. 83Ibid., p. 18. 84Ibid., p. 22.
85The Valley Tan, February 15, 1860.
86The Pioneer, loc. cit. 87The Woman's Exponent, loc. cit.
CHAPTER VII

DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

Upon completion of each section of the Nauvoo Temple it became the practice of the Saints to dedicate it to their God, then to press it into service. Such a procedure became justified under the peculiar circumstances of the time. There existed in Nauvoo a great need for the facilities offered by the temple. The Saints also were anxious to perform their temple ordinance work at the earliest opportunity. Added to these needs was the relentless and ever growing pressure by their enemies to drive the Mormons out of Illinois. Had they waited until the building was completed before dedicating or using any portion of it, it is very doubtful that it would have ever served its builders.

No compilation of these various dedications, or detailed treatment of them, is available. It is therefore of value that such a study be made.

I. DEDICATION OF SEPARATE SECTIONS OF THE BUILDING

Pushed to completion during the first year of construction, the temporary baptismal font was the first portion of the building to be used. It was dedicated in appropriate ceremonies at 5:00 p.m. on November 8, 1841, by Brigham Young.¹

¹Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Period I, Vol. IV, 446.
On the occasion of the first and only official general conference of the church ever held in the building, another dedication took place. The date was October 5, 1845. The building was then enclosed and the outside work largely completed.

President Brigham Young "... opened the services of the day by a dedicatory prayer, presenting the temple, thus far completed, as a monument of the Saints liberality, fidelity, and faith, concluding: 'Lord we dedicate this house and ourselves unto thee.'"²

On Sunday, November 30, 1845, the newly completed attic story was dedicated. The services were attended by a number of church leaders. After an opening song, Brigham Young offered a prayer of dedication. He prayed that God would sustain and deliver his servants from their enemies until they could accomplish his will in the temple. Additional prayers and songs were also a part of the meeting.³

A new altar, located in the southeast corner room of the main attic, was dedicated on January 7, 1846. It was used for the sealing of marriages and family groups in an eternal family relationship. The dedication took place in the afternoon, attended by the Twelve, the Presiding Bishops, and their wives.⁴

On the occasion of the Mormon exodus from Nauvoo, another dedication of the then uncompleted structure is recorded.

Brigham Young writes on February 8, 1846:

³Ibid., pp. 534-535. ⁴Ibid., p. 566.
I met with the Council of Twelve in the southeast corner room of the attic of the Temple. We knelt around the altar, and dedicated the building to the Most High. We asked his blessing upon our intended move to the west; also asked him to enable us some day to finish the Temple, and dedicate it to him, and we would leave it in his hands to do as he pleased; and to preserve the building as a monument to Joseph Smith. We asked the Lord to accept the labors of his servants in this land. We then left the Temple.⁵

Other dedications of individual rooms may have taken place, but record of this is not available.

II. DEDICATION OF ENTIRE TEMPLE

Final dedication of the temple took place after the bulk of the Saints had left the city for the west. A special crew of workmen had remained behind to complete the structure. Orson Hyde, a member of the Twelve, had been instructed to stay at Nauvoo, representing the church leaders. He was to oversee the successful conclusion of the project, and dedicate the building if the Twelve did not return.⁶

It had been hoped that the dedication could take place April 6, 1846, on the sixteenth anniversary of the church's origin. Brother Hyde, however, had to report by letter to Brigham Young that:
"... the Temple will not be finished to dedicate on the sixth of April."⁷

Work continued at a steady pace and the committee issued an announcement of the intended dedication. The announcement was published

⁵Ibid., p. 580.

⁶"Journal History," March 9, 1846.

⁷Ibid., March 27, 1846.
in three successive issues of the Hancock Eagle on April 10, 17, and 24, 1846. It read:

Dedication of the Temple of God
in The City of Nauvoo

This splendid edifice is now completed, and will be dedicated to the Most High God on Friday, the 1st day of May, 1846. The services of the dedication will continue for three days in succession, commencing on each day at 11:00 o'clock a.m. Tickets may be had at the watch house near the door of the Temple, and also at the office of the Trustees in Trust at $1.00 each.

One object of the above is, to raise funds to enable the workmen who have built the Temple to remove to the west with their families, and all who are disposed to see the Mormons remove in peace and in quietness so soon as circumstances will allow, (which is the earnest wish of every Latter-day Saint) are respectfully invited to attend. We expect some able speakers from abroad to favor us.

Done by order of the Trustees Trust.
James Whitehead, clerk.

As the long awaited day approached, the temple was a scene of feverish activity. Information on these preparations, and an eye witness account of the private dedication of April 30, 1846, are furnished by Samuel W. Richards:

... Thursday 30th spent most of the day at the Temple, sweeping out the rooms and making preparation for the Dedication of the House, which had been published to take place on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd days of May. The 1st day being set apart for those who would pay one dollar for admittance which money should go on payment to the T. hands. This day finished my work on the temple and took a certificate [sic] of the same. ... met at sundown in the Temple for prayers as usual, after which (with our clothing) we repaired to the lower room for the purpose of dedicating the same. 30 men selected for that purpose were present. Orson Hyde, W. Woodruff, Joseph Young, & W. W. Phelps were in the company. After some conversation and singing a prayer circle was formed immediately in front of the Melchizedek stand. O. Hyde was President, and Joseph Young, Mouth after which those present were seated in the stands to represent the order of the priesthood, myself being seated in the Teachers stand, and a Dedication

8Hancock Eagle, April 10, 1846.
prayer was offered by O. Hyde, to which all responded "amen." After
the prayer was ended all shouted with loud voices, "Hosannah,
Hosannah, Hosannah to God and the Lamb, Amen, Amen, and Amen," which
was three times repeated.9

Wilford Woodruff records his impressions of this important occa-
sion as follows:

In the evening of this day, I repaired to the Temple with Elder
Orson Hyde and about twenty other elders of Israel. There we all
dressed in our priestly robes and dedicated the Temple of the Lord,
erected in his most holy name by the Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints. Notwithstanding the predictions of false prophets
and the threat of the mobs that the building should never be com-
pleted or dedicated, their words had fallen to the ground. The
Temple was now finished and dedicated to him. After the dedication,
we raised our voices in a united shout of 'Hosanna to God and the
Lamb.'10

Brigham Young sheds additional light on the matter by recording
that Joseph Young offered the dedicatory prayer:

... dedicating the Temple and all that pertained thereto to the
the Lord, as an offering to him as an evidence of the willingness of
his people to fulfill his commandments, and build his Holy House,
even at the risk of their lives, and the sacrifice of all their
labor and earthly goods. ... 11

Following the dedication prayers, remarks were made by Orson Hyde.
After the services were concluded the entire party assembled in the
attic story, at the invitation of Brother Hyde, and partook of some re-
freshments.12 McGavin concludes that this private dedication was held
at night for fear that the church's enemies might disrupt the public

9Samuel W. Richards, op. cit., II, 18-19.
10Matthias Cowley, Wilford Woodruff (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret
11"Journal History," April 30, 1846.
12Richards, loc. cit.
services.\textsuperscript{13} Due to the conditions existing at the time, his conclusion
seems justified.

The public dedication was held the following day, May 1, 1846. Richards records an interesting account of the occasion:

\textit{Friday, May 1st.} The Temple was dedicated in the presence of strangers and all who would pay one dollar for admittance, attended with my wife. I was one of three who was appointed to seat the congregation, in the house, and stood part of the time at the door to receive tickets. The cervises [sic] closed between one and two...\textsuperscript{14}

The prayer of dedication was offered by Orson Hyde, who presided over the meeting.\textsuperscript{15}

No report is available on the number of people attending the dedication services of May 1, 1846. It is quite likely that there was a large number present. This conclusion is upheld by a report published in the \textit{Hancock Eagle} that on the third day, Sunday, May 3, 1846, at least five thousand people were in attendance.\textsuperscript{16}

On the final day of dedication services, May 3, 1846, the meetings were mainly attended by members of the Mormon faith. During the services a resolution was passed which called for the sale of the temple, with the funds to be used in removing the poor to the main body of the Saints in the west. The resolution was adopted by a unanimous vote.\textsuperscript{17}

Their temple now having been dedicated in impressive ceremonies,

\textsuperscript{13}McGavin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 33.
\textsuperscript{14}Richards, \textit{loc. cit.}
\textsuperscript{15}"Journal History," May 1, 1846.
\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Hancock Eagle}, May 8, 1846. \textsuperscript{17}Ibid.
it left the remaining church members free to join their companions in the trek westward. In less than six months from its dedication, its builders had all departed, leaving their beloved building as a symbol of their faith and sacrifice.
WAS THE TEMPLE COMPLETED?

Since the builders of the Nauvoo Temple journeyed west, a controversy has arisen over whether the building was or was not completed. Because the conflict on this issue has been waged for over a century, it is of basic importance to this study to consider the problem on completion in some detail.

I. NATURE OF THE CONTROVERSY

The contention that the Nauvoo Temple was never completed has been voiced by leaders of the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" ever since it was organized in 1860. The subject has taken on theological significance because of their interpretation of Joseph Smith's revelation calling for erection of the temple. The part of the revelation bearing on this issue reads:

But I command you, all ye my saints, to build a house unto me; and I grant unto you a sufficient time to build a house unto me; and during this time your baptisms shall be acceptable unto me.

But behold, at the end of this appointment your baptisms for your dead shall not be acceptable unto me; and if you do not these things, at the end of the appointment ye shall be rejected as a church, with your dead, saith the Lord your God.¹

The Reorganized Church believes that the Nauvoo Temple was never

¹Doctrine and Covenants 121:31-32; and Doctrine and Covenants [Reorganized Church edition] 107:10-11.
finished and that the failure to complete the structure was responsible in large measure for the rejection of the Church. Such an interpretation (in their view) places the Mormons in Utah, as a group, devoid of authority and rejected by God for failure to complete the temple.

Representative of this view is an article on the Nauvoo Temple published in the Saints Herald:

The Great Rejection
In the revelation of 1841, the people were given a sufficient time to finish the Temple. In 1844 at the death of Joseph Smith it was still incomplete, and the people came under the condemnation of which they were warned, "ye shall be rejected as a church with your dead." (Doctrine and Covenants 107:11 [Reorganized Church edition].)

This one point in the revelation puts great importance on the fact that the Temple at Nauvoo was never finished. . . .2

No precise date has been agreed upon as to when this rejection of the Church took place, though various dates have been suggested by writers of the Reorganized Church. They vary from October 3, 1841, 3 to June 27, 1844, 4 and to October, 1853. 5

An editorial of the Saints Herald of February 17, 1904, stated the following on the subject of Church rejection:

We are not aware that specific date or time or any one specific act has been fixed upon as the time and event when and why the Church was rejected. . . .6

The above statement qualifies the issue of rejection, so that it does not rest entirely on whether the temple was or was not completed,

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2Saints Herald, September 26, 1949.
3Ibid., June 20, 1906.
4Ibid., September 26, 1949; and February 17, 1904.
5Ibid., February 17, 1904. 6Ibid.
but it is still considered a prime cause in the minds of most Reorganized Church members.

The Utah Mormon point of view is well represented by the written statements of Joseph Fielding Smith. He cites the following:

... it made no difference whether the Temple was finished or not. The revelation of January 19, 1841, provided:

That when I (the Lord) give a commandment to any of the sons of men, to do a work unto my name, and those sons of men go with all their might, and with all they have, to perform that work, and cease not their diligence, and their enemies come upon them, and hinder them from performing that work; behold, it behooveth me to require that work no more at the hands of those sons of men, but to accept of their offerings."

In his treatise on the subject he goes on to demonstrate that the builders of the temple were diligent in their efforts. In summary he declares:

I have now shown that the Temple was completed; that the Saints were diligent in their labors, and they were also hindered by their enemies. I now reaffirm what has previously been said; that it made no difference, so far as the Church and its authority is concerned, even if the Temple had not been completed, or finished, in the technical sense of that word. Some of the embellishments, the ornamentations and fixtures, may not have been placed in the building according to the original intention, and in that technical sense the building may not have been "finished completely." But if so, what difference would it make? The Lord, thank heaven, is not as technical and peevish as men are, or woe be unto all of us. The revelation does not say that the Church would be rejected with its dead if every identical board and plank or fixture was not in the building according to the original design. The thing the revelation does require is that a place be prepared, or built, where the Lord could reveal the Priesthood and its ordinances which had been taken away or that had not been restored. And, too, if the temporary floors had not been

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7Joseph Fielding Smith, Origin of the Reorganized Church and the Question of Succession (Independence, Missouri: Zions Printing and Publishing Company, 1945), p. 29; see also Doctrine and Covenants 12:49.
replaced by the permanent floors, the Lord could and would have revealed Himself to the Saints and would have accepted of their offering. 8

Though most Utah Mormons have generally believed that the temple was completed, they have not laid great stress upon the subject. The Reorganized Church, in contrast, has felt it to be a matter of great significance.

II. CONSIDERATION OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

Claims against completion. The claims against the temple's having been completed have in the main been based on the testimonies of Joseph Smith III and his brother, Alexander H. Smith. They were both sons of the Prophet Joseph Smith and lived in Nauvoo from 1839 until 1866, with the exception of a short period from September 12, 1846, to February 19, 1847. 9 At the death of their father in 1844, Joseph III was twelve years of age and Alexander was six years old. 10

Alexander Smith leaves us the following witness (July 2, 1897):

When a boy I was privileged to wander all over the building, and sometimes when the man in charge did not feel like climbing up the many flights of stairs, which led into the cupola to show visitors the wonderful building and beautiful view to be had from the dome, he requested me to show them. . . .

The offices in the corner to the left of the main entrance on the ground floor were finished, but not furnished. The auditorium or


9*Journal of History*, II, 563.

10Joseph Smith III, pp. 11 and 15.
main meeting room was temporarily finished; the seats and pulpit were only temporary.

The upper auditorium; the plastering was not done, the floor was only the rough boards intended only for the lining, was laid, and from this floor upward the stairs, except in the tower or circular stairs, were also temporary; the upper floor which was to have been divided into numerous rooms was laid, and partitioned off with cotton factory cloth and used for some purposes before the Saints were driven away.

To my knowledge the Temple never was finished, and those who have been led to believe it was, have been deceived. . . .

In the latter part of the year 1871 Joseph Smith III published a series of articles entitled "The Situation." In one of them he commented on the Nauvoo Temple:

It has been said by those whose duty it was to know, that the Temple at Nauvoo was finished, completed as Joseph designed, this statement is not true. In no sense can it be said truthfully, that any part of the Temple at Nauvoo was completed, with the possible exception of the main assembly room into which the front doors opened. The basement, in which was the font, was incomplete; the stairway to the left of the font was not relieved of the rough boards laid on the risings, on which the workmen went up and down; the upper assembly room was not accessible, the floor not being laid, neither the doors hung nor the walls plastered. Besides this, the inside ornamentation was by no means finished even in those parts called completed. There are plenty of persons now living who were frequent visitors to the Temple after the people who built it left Nauvoo, who will testify that the building was not completed; among them, David LeBaron, who had charge of it for some time; Major L. C. Bidamon, for years proprietor of the Mansion House; Dr. Weld of Nauvoo; Amos Davis, living near the Big Mound, on the Nauvoo and LaHarpe road; George Edmunds, of Sonora, and the writer, with a host of others.12

Joseph III made additional statements later in his life which add to his testimony on the subject. He stated on June 26, 1897, that the basement was fitted for occupation and the font ready for use,


12Ibid., III, 667.
that the auditorium on the first floor was completed sufficiently for assembly purposes. He also declared the stairway on the south side was completed for use. All other sections of the building except those just mentioned he considered uncompleted. He stated that he knew from actual personal observation that the temple was not finished.\(^{13}\)

On another occasion he records that only two rooms in the building could be considered as having approached completion.

\[...\] One was the lower auditorium, on the first floor above the basement, where the floor was laid, the pews were in place, the pulpits built, and the windows in and their frames ornamented. Being in sufficiently good condition for occupancy it might be said to be finished, but I have reasons for believing it was not finished according to design. The upper auditorium was also partially finished, having benches and temporary pulpits which could be used in case of necessity. The apartments in the upper story were divided by plain partitions and were likewise in condition for temporary use as needed.\[...\] the basement aside from the font itself, was unfinished.

\[...\] The stairway in the northwest corner was not finished. Rough inch boards were laid over the risers so that the workmen could pass up and down. As I have stated, the main floor of the second story auditorium was finished in the same rough manner, as also the rooms in the attic which were not finished at all, nor furnished: they were not usable except in a most crude and temporary manner.\(^{14}\)

C. J. Hunt, writing in the Saints Herald, refers to a James Gifford who reportedly worked on the temple as a carpenter. Having been questioned regarding whether or not the temple was finished in 1846, he is reported to have said:

\[...\] No, it was not finished in 1846, nor was it ever finished\[...\] the interior of the building was not complete.\[...\]\(^{15}\)

\(^{13}\text{Ibid.}, \text{II}, 563-564.}\quad ^{14}\text{Joseph Smith III, pp. 103-104.}\quad ^{15}\text{Saints Herald, May 29, 1943.}\]
Thomas Gregg, the Illinois Historian and an eye witness to the scenes in Nauvoo, stated: "... the temple was a magnificent structure, though never completed."\(^\text{16}\) This assertion is corroborated by J. H. Buckingham, who visited the temple in July, 1847. He stated: "... the temple is quite unfinished."\(^\text{17}\)

Brigham Young in 1877, at the temple in St. George, Utah, commented on the Nauvoo Temple:

... I could pick out several before me now that were there when it was built, and know just how much was finished and what was done. It is true we left brethren there with instructions to finish it, and they got it nearly completed before it was burned, but the Saints did not enjoy it...\(^\text{18}\)

The above statements are a selection of the best available sources regarding the temple's not being completed.

\textbf{Statements to the effect that it was completed.} At the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, the temple walls were nearly raised but no portion of the building could at that time be considered as completed. As the Twelve Apostles assumed the position of church leadership, the work on the temple was accelerated.

In spite of continual persecution, threats, and pressure to leave the state of Illinois, the Mormons worked on. A report published by their enemies comments on their determination: "... So far as the

\(^{16}\)Gregg and Scofield, op. cit., II, 838.


\(^{18}\)Journal of Discourses, XVIII, 303-304.
temple is concerned it appears to be part of their policy not to go and leave it unfinished...."19 The Times and Seasons of January 20, 1846, declared:

January has thus far been mild, which, in the midst of our preparations for an exodus next spring, has given us an excellent time to finish the Temple. Nothing has appeared so much like a finish of that holy edifice as the present.20

Mob forces forced a premature exodus of the Saints in February of 1846. In spite of this, a group of trustees and a crew of workers remained in the city to complete the temple.21

As Brigham Young left the city of Nauvoo he held a final meeting in the temple. Kneeling around the altar with the Council of the Twelve, he offered a dedicatory prayer, asking God to allow them to some day finish the temple and dedicate it to him.22

An interesting Hymn of Dedication was written by W. W. Phelps and published in the Times and Seasons. Since it reflects the attitude and anticipation of the church members at that time, a part of it is quoted below:

Ho ho, for the Temple's completed--
The Lord hath a place for his head,
And the priesthood, in power, now lightens
The way of the living and dead!

See, see, mid the world's dreadful splendor /sic/
Christianity, follow and sword,

19Warsaw Signal, October 22, 1845.
20Times and Seasons, January 20, 1846.
22Ibid., February 8, 1846.
The Mormons, the diligent Mormons,  
Have rear'd up this house to the Lord!  

By the spirit and wisdom of Joseph,—  
(Whose blood stains the honor of State,)  
By tithing and sacrifice daily,  
The poor learn the way to be great.  

Mark, mark, for the Gentiles are fearful,  
Where the work of the Lord is begun;  
Already this monument finished,  
Is counted—one miracle done!23

No mention is made of the hymn being used in the official dedication of May 1, 1846.

Samuel W. Richards, who worked on the temple right up to the day of its dedication, left his evaluation of the project. As he departed from the city he cast his eyes back at the temple upon which he had labored so long. He records: "... I felt the Saints had done a great work in a short time, and that it was accepted of the Lord..."24

Brigham Young stated in 1863, while speaking of the temple:

We performed the work and performed it within the time which the Lord gave us to do it in. Apostates said that we never could perform that work, but through the blessing of God it was completed, and accepted of him. ...25

Wilford Woodruff also considered the building completed, as evidenced by his statement concerning the temple dedication:

... Notwithstanding the predictions of false prophets and the threat of the mobs that the building should never be completed or dedicated, their words had fallen to the ground. The Temple was now finished and dedicated to him. ...26

23Times and Seasons, February 15, 1846.
24Samuel W. Richards, op. cit., May 19, 1846, p. 22.
The account of Thomas L. Kane leaves no doubt but that he considered the building as finished, when he visited it in September of 1846.27

Another visitor to the temple in 1846 reported:

"... our guide told us ... after the arrangements were made for their leaving the State they turned to work as one man and completed the Temple. ... When finished it was profusely ornamented on the inside, and dedicated by the most solemn services; these over, it was despoiled of its ornaments and abandoned.28

The foregoing accounts agree with the article which appeared in the Hancock Eagle on April 10, 17 and 24, 1846, which declared:"

"... This splendid edifice is now completed and will be dedicated. ..."29

Another article in the Hancock Eagle of May 8, 1846, reporting on the then recent temple dedication, comments as follows:

"... For two or three months past a strong force has been at work upon the interior night and day, and the greatest exertions have been made by the Mormons to complete it within a given time, that it might be dedicated before the period assigned for their removal.

The Temple is now considered as finished, we were surprised, on inspecting it a few days ago, to perceive how much has been accomplished in a month. ..."30

27Kane, op. cit., p. 20.
28Deseret News, March 7, 1876, copied from an article from the Cincinnati Times, entitled "The Mormons and Their Temple at Nauvoo;"
29Hancock Eagle, April 10, 17 and 24, 1846.
30Ibid., May 8, 1846.
III. EVALUATION OF THE EVIDENCE

It is readily apparent that the various statements on the subject of completion are very contradictory. It is therefore a difficult task to determine the true condition of the building in 1846, as to whether it was or was not complete.

The testimonies of Joseph III and his brother Alexander H. Smith cannot be accepted at full value. They are disqualified in part because they viewed the building in early youth and apparently did not record their statements until at least twenty-three years after the temple was destroyed. In addition to this, they contradict themselves on some important items and conflict with other reliable evidence. However, due to the fact that they were personal witnesses and their statements do substantially agree in some areas, their testimonies cannot be entirely discredited. Their assertions that the building was not completed are also upheld by additional witnesses.

A careful analysis of those portions of the building which have been brought into question will best reveal the true condition or extent of completion.

No question has been raised regarding the external features of the building; it is concluded to have been fully completed. The main floor or first story of the building can easily be demonstrated to have been completed, and though some question has been raised, all witnesses seem to agree that it was finished. This is also true of the tower. Controversy does exist over other sections of the building.
The basement story. There is complete agreement that the permanent baptismal font was finished, and most witnesses agree that there were small rooms on both sides of the large room running through the center. Joseph Smith III on two occasions stated that the basement was incomplete\(^3\) and on another occasion stated that it was fitted for occupation.\(^4\) The only point then that could give rise to a feeling that the basement was unfinished would be the floor. But this too is reported as complete. Charles Lanman describes it as having been paved with brick;\(^5\) and the Hancock Eagle of May 8, 1846, declares:

... The appearance of the basement hall, in the midst of which stands the baptismal font, has been entirely changed by a laborious use of the trowel, and the "animals" now show to great advantage in contrast to the tiled floor. ...\(^6\)

It must be concluded that, in most respects, the basement story had been completed.

The stairways. The winding stairway on the north side of the west entrance to the temple is said to have only been roughed-in and not given a final finish like that of the south stairway.\(^7\) There is no evidence to dispute this contention, and it is agreed upon by all the statements of Joseph Smith III and Alexander Smith. It must be concluded that


\(^{32}\)Journal of History, II, 563-564.

\(^{33}\)Lanman, op. cit., p. 31.

\(^{34}\)Hancock Eagle, May 8, 1846.

\(^{35}\)Journal of History, II, 563-564; and Joseph Smith III, pp. 103-104.
this stairway was only completed in the rough form which they describe.

The second story. Less information is available on this section of the building than on any other major part of the structure. It is claimed that it was incomplete, lacking doors, plaster, and that the floor had not been laid. However, the same witness on another occasion describes it as having a rough floor, with temporary seating and pulpits, and considered it to be one of two sections which could be called nearly complete. No record is made by the builders regarding any of these items, except the floor which was laid January 15, 1846. The room is described by Lanman as being in every particular precisely like that of the first story. The hall was used for meetings, and was reportedly used for dances and other functions following the exodus of the Mormons. From the evidence available, it can be concluded that the second story was completed sufficiently to serve some functional purposes. On the other hand, it is likely that this was one section of the building which had largely been completed only in the rough.

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37 Joseph Smith III, pp. 103-104.
38 Times and Seasons, January 15, 1846.
39 Lanman, op. cit., p. 32.
41 The Valley Tan, February 15, 1860.
The attic story. Considerable controversy has existed over this section. It has been claimed by both Alexander Smith and Joseph Smith III that this story was only roughed in, not plastered, with only temporary partitions, no furnishings and with only rough floors.\(^2\) Evidence is available to discount most of these allegations. The attic was plastered and painted in November of 1845.\(^3\) The floors, both in the main room and the small rooms on the side were covered by carpets, which were removed when the Saints went west.\(^4\) The rooms at the side of the main attic (twelve in all) were partitioned off and each had a door with a massive lock on it,\(^5\) all of which indicates that these partitions were more permanent than temporary. The rooms were also furnished with couches and other furniture which was removed during the exodus.\(^6\) The temporary partitions referred to were probably the cloth partitions used in the temple ordinance work. After the carpets had been removed, the description of the floors having only the rough lining would no doubt be accurate. There can be no doubt that the builders considered the

\(^2\)Joseph Smith III, pp. 103-104.

\(^3\)Roberts, History of the Church, Period II, Vol. VII, 519; The Woman's Exponent, XII, No. 2 (February, 1883), 10-12; and "Journal History," November 22, 1845, and November 26, 1845.

\(^4\)"Journal History," November 29, 1845; and Deseret News, October 7, 1888.

\(^5\)Van Dusen and Van Dusen, op. cit., p. 6; and Lanman, op. cit., p. 31.

\(^6\)The Woman's Exponent, XII, No. 2 (February, 1883), 10; XII, No. 7 (July, 1883), 50; XII, No. 11 (November, 1883), 81; and XII, No. 6 (June, 1883), 42.
attic story as completed in November of 1845.\textsuperscript{17} From the information available, the conclusion must be upheld that it was basically completed, and it was used extensively.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is most obvious that a difference of opinion has existed among writers and witnesses regarding completion of the temple. Even though this is the case, there does not appear to be any wilful attempt at dishonesty or purposeful misrepresentation. The statements of all concerned can be accepted at face value as being the honest judgment of the individual, relating the facts as he understood them.

Since the term "completion" has been given divergent interpretations by those using it in connection with the temple, it must be conceded that application of the term is relative to the point of view held by the person who uses it. A difference exists between a building being recognized as completed, according to all of its architectural designs, and a building being recognized as completed to fulfill the functional requirements for which it was erected. The difference, though one of degree, seems to be the distinction that is raised by the varying points of view regarding completion of the Nauvoo Temple.

The building was not completed from an architectural point of view. There can be no doubt that if the Mormons had remained in Nauvoo, they would have further embellished the structure and given it a more perfect

\textsuperscript{17}"Journal History," November 29, 1845; and \textit{Times and Seasons}, January 20, 1846.
finish. While the foregoing must be accepted, it is also true that, from a functional point of view, the temple was completed. All sections of the structure were given a rough finish, and many areas had received a final finish. The various portions of the building were both accessible and usable.

To the Utah Mormons who built it, the temple was recognized as capable of fulfilling the purposes for which it was intended. John Taylor had stated their aims in this regard as early as October of 1844:

... Why are we taking so much pains to build that Temple? That we may fulfill certain ordinances, and receive certain endowments and secure to ourselves an inheritance in the eternal world. ... 48

After these ordinances had been given, Brigham Young declared:
"... This church has obtained already all they have labored for in building this Temple. ... " 49

The builders of the temple were satisfied that they had fulfilled their obligation, and that the structure was acceptable. Feeling content with their efforts, they dedicated the building to their God and journeyed out of Nauvoo to join their companions on the plains of Iowa.

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49 The Woman's Exponent, XII, No. 7 (July, 1883), 58.
CHAPTER IX

FATE OF THE TEMPLE

The Nauvo Temple, though built to endure for many years, has completely vanished. The story of its destruction, and other interesting events relating to its fate, combine to make a story worthy of study. No detailed account has ever been compiled to tell the story of what happened to the structure after the Saints left Nauvoo. It is the purpose of this chapter to focus on those points of history about the temple's fate.

I. THE TEMPLE ABANDONED TO THE MOBS

The battle of Nauvo. Following the temple dedication of May, 1846, most of the Mormons who were still in Nauvoo departed to join their friends on the prairies of Iowa. They departed in great numbers, leaving behind only a small portion of their original population. Those left behind reportedly numbered around 640 persons, consisting mainly of the poor, the sick and the aged.¹ Having no means by which to purchase equipment for transportation across the plains, they had remained in the city attempting to sell their property and awaiting the arrival of relief wagons from the west. The church leaders had promised to send help in

¹Kane, op. cit., p. 8.
removing the poor and the sick as soon as circumstances would permit.  

Since the vast majority of Mormons had left the state, it was felt that the remaining few would be safe from further provocation. Instead of relenting, the mob element became increasingly bolder in their threats and persecution. Major Warren, an officer in the State Militia who was in charge of the Governor's troops in Hancock County, had been an effective deterrent to the mobs. When he was released from his command, the troops left to protect Nauvoo were reduced in number, and neither Major Parker nor Major Clifford proved effective; the city of Nauvoo was at the mercy of the mobs. As the summer of 1846 progressed, the situation grew worse. The Saints were warned to remove from the state or face extermination.  

In early September of 1846, a mob force estimated at around fifteen hundred men approached the city, armed with rifle and cannon. The Mormons, aided by the "new citizens" who had recently purchased property in the city, marshalled themselves in defense. An armed battle ensued with rifles and cannons being fired by both forces. The conflict raged off and on for three days, with casualties on both sides. During this conflict the temple was used as a point of observation. A lookout was posted in the tower to watch for the approach of any enemy forces.

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2 *Millennial Star*, January 15, 1848 (letter from Thomas Bullock to Franklin D. Richards).


When they approached he would call the defenders to their posts by beating on a bass drum and ringing the alarm bell. 5

A truce was arranged, and on September 17, 1846, the mob forces marched into the city. Most of the Saints had fled previous to the occupation. Others, defenseless women and children, the sick and the aged, were driven to the water's edge and across the river into Iowa.

Many were actually pushed into the water. An example of the mob's action in this regard is the case of Charles Lambert, a faithful worker on the construction of the temple. It is reported:

They seized Charles Lambert, led him to the river, and in the midst of cursing and swearing, one man said: 'By the holy saints I baptize you by order of the Commanders of the Temple' (plunged him backward) and then said: 'the commandments must be fulfilled and G__d__n you, you must have another dip,' then threw him in on his face, then sent him on the flat boat across the river, with the promise that if he returned to Nauvoo they would shoot him. 6

The exiles established themselves some two miles north of Montrose, Iowa, on the banks of the Mississippi. Their camp came to be known as "The Camp of the Poor." The suffering experienced by these people over the period of nearly a month that they were camped there has been reported to have been considerable. Many died as a result of exposure and lack of provisions. They were finally rescued by a relief column from Winter Quarters on October 9, 1846. 7


6Millennial Star, January 15, 1848.

7Ibid., and Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Utah 1540-1886 (San Francisco, California: The History Company, Publishers, 1889), XXVI, 233.
The extent of desecration. The keys of the temple were given up by Henry I. Young to the chairman of the Quincy Committee and the mob forces took possession of the temple, making it their headquarters.\(^8\) The temple remained in their hands until October 20, 1846, when the keys were returned to the trustees.\(^9\)

An agreement in the form of a pledge had been entered into in June of 1846, by a unanimous vote of five hundred men in the camp of the anti-Mormons. They pledged that they would not injure the temple, and would use their influence to protect it, looking upon it as a work of art which should be preserved.\(^10\)

Prior to and during the exodus, the Saints removed most all of the furnishings and some ornamentation from the temple. This was especially true of those items considered to be of a sacred nature.\(^11\) This being the case, only the permanent fixtures and the bare walls remained in the rooms of the building.

As the anti-Mormon forces occupied the temple it is reported that some of their number ran to the top of the tower, beat on the drum, rang the bell and shouted. A preacher in their number proclaimed in a loud

\(^8\)"Journal History," September 17, 1846.

\(^9\)Tbid., November 4, 1846.

\(^{10}\)The Quincy \(/\text{Illinois}\) Whig, June 24, 1846, taken from newspaper clippings, "Mormons in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa," Brigham Young University Library Collection, VIII, 135. Note: Hereafter referred to as "News Clippings."

\(^{11}\)Kane, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 21; Deseret News, March 7, 1876; and Liahona The Elders Journal (Salt Lake City, Utah), January 20, 1914.
voice from the tower: "Peace! Peace! Peace! to the inhabitants of the earth, now the Mormons are driven!"  

The Burlington Hawkeye published an interesting account regarding the temple and its occupation by the mob forces:

Nauvoo, the day after it was evacuated:

. . . On entering the vestibule of this renowned edifice, a singular spectacle presented itself. The seats of the 'High Priests' of the Twelve and of the 'Seventy' were occupied by a grim visaged soldiery. Some lay sleeping on their arms, and others lay rolled up in their blankets. On every hand lay scattered about in beautiful confusion, muskets, swords, cannon balls and terrible missiles of death. Verily, thought I, how are the holy places desecrated! . . .

I am penning this scrawl to you in the upper seat of the Sanctuary. Over my head there is an inscription in large gold letters, 'The Lord is our Sacrifice,' on my right lie three soldiers asleep, resting on their arms . . . my feet are resting on a pile of chain shot . . . and a keg of powder, just discovered, lies at my elbow. . . .

The Warsaw Signal recorded, in addition to the above scene, that: 

". . . In front of the building in battle array, with their mouths pointed towards the setting sun, had been placed several cannon, heavily charged. . . ."  

The temple also became the scene of a mock court, or as Bancroft calls it, an "Inquisition," where numerous Mormons and new citizens were intimidated and abused, being given various sentences and threats.

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12 Jenson, The Historical Record, VII, 856; and "Journal History," September 18, 1846.


14 Warsaw Signal, October 19, 1848.

15 Bancroft, op. cit., p. 231.
The temple was further defiled by the mob's indulgence in a drunken orgy of boisterous behavior, vulgar song and loud oaths. 16

Though it is plain that from a spiritual sense the temple was defiled by the behavior of its new tenants, it becomes difficult to ascertain just how much physical abuse the building suffered. Rumors were circulated among the Saints encamped on the plains, telling that the building had been defaced to a great extent, both inside and out. 17

An interesting account of the probable desecration alluded to in the rumors is that of Christiana D. Pyper. As a young lady she had been driven out of Nauvoo in the fall of 1846. After a period of exile she and her family returned to the city. She describes her visit to the temple, following its occupation by the anti-Mormons:

... we went up to the temple. From basement to tower, that sacred edifice was defaced with the most vile and wicked writing that could be imagined. ... 18

Though some physical damage and abuse was sustained by the structure, it was not extensive. This conclusion is upheld by the report of Wilford Woodruff who visited the building in 1848. He states:

... I went over it, however, and found it in a much better state of preservation than I expected. Two horns, one ear off the oxen was all the damage I saw. ... 19

From this account it would appear that the mob forces, though

16Kane, op. cit., p. 20.
17The Womens Exponent, XIII, No. 17 (February, 1885), 131.
19"Journal History," August 22, 1848.
severe in their treatment of the Mormons, and abusive by their actions in the temple, had nevertheless kept their earlier pledge. They had inflicted some physical damage to the temple, but had not destroyed it.

Following the occupation of the temple by the anti-Mormons, another act of defacing the temple became common with visitors who toured the famed structure. Quoting from some visitors who went through the building, the Warsaw Signal reports:

... We found ourselves standing upon the highest accessible point, where thousands stood before us. ... We placed our names within the upper-most dome, along with the hundreds of others from all parts of the habitable globe. ... 20

II. ATTEMPTS TO SELL THE TEMPLE

As the Saints prepared to leave Nauvoo, it was deemed advisable by their leaders to sell their property as best they could. Included in the property put up for sale was the temple. As early as September 16, 1845, agents were appointed to confer with the leading Catholic priests, offering to sell them the property of the Saints. 21

Almon W. Babbitt took a mission to St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Chicago for the purpose of selling the church property. On December 1, 1845, he reported on his mission, stating that the Catholics were making considerable exertions to have their members purchase the property. They were anxious to lease the temple but not willing at that time to buy it. 22

20 Warsaw Signal, October 19, 1848.

21 "Journal History," September 16, 1845.

On December 9, 1845, a Father Tucker from Quincy, and a Father Hamilton from Springfield, came to Nauvoo under the direction of the Catholic Bishop in Chicago. They were to inquire into the sale of property at Nauvoo. Their reactions were favorable, as evidenced by the following report:

Messrs Tucker and Hamilton, Catholics were admitted into the Temple to an audience with the Quorum of the Twelve and a few other brethren.

The propositions for sale of the lands of the Saints were handed by Brother Orson Hyde to Father Tucker, who perused them and handed them to Father Hamilton, his colleague. President Brigham Young gave them an explanation of the design of the rooms in the Temple, with which they seemed well satisfied.

Father Tucker said he thought it would be wisdom to publish the propositions of the Saints in all the Catholic papers and lay the matter plainly before their people. He should also think it advisable for the Catholic Bishop to send a competent committee to ascertain the value of the property, etc. At the same time they would use all their influence to effect a sale as speedily as possible.

Father Tucker thought they had men in St. Louis, New York and other cities who could soon raise the amount the Saints wanted, but the time was so very short that he did not know whether it could be done so soon.

President Brigham Young said he would like to add another proposal before they are presented for publication, to this effect, that if a party agreed to them, the Saints would lease them the Temple for a period of from five to thirty-five years, at a reasonable price, the rent to be paid in finishing the unfinished parts of the Temple, the wall around the Temple block and the block west of the Temple, and keeping the Temple in repair.

On January 18, 1846, at a meeting in the temple of the captains of the emigrating companies, the selection was made of trustees who should remain in Nauvoo to effect the sale of church property. Those

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23Ibid., VII, 539-540. 24Ibid.
selected were Almon W. Babbitt, Joseph L. Heywood, John S. Fullmer, Henry W. Miller, and John M. Bernhisel. They were given the power of attorney by letters authorizing them to act legally in behalf of the church.  

In April of 1846 a letter from Orson Hyde to President Brigham Young reported that a bid or offer of $200,000 had been made by a Catholic minister for purchase of the temple. The letter also declared that there was likely to be a judgment against the temple, and if it was not sold quickly the church might lose it. 

The above offer fell through, and on April 10, 1846, an advertisement concerning the temple was printed in the Hancock Eagle. Signed by the trustees, it offered the temple for lease on favorable terms, for a term of twenty years, to be used for religious or literary purposes. 

No mention is made on this occasion of an intent to sell the building. 

In a council of church leaders on April 27, 1846, it was decided to let the trustees sell the temple and use the money in helping the poor move to the west. The council concluded that since the Saints could not live in Nauvoo, the temple would be of no benefit to them. 

In response to the decision of this council, the trustees published the following advertisement which was reported in the Hancock Eagle over the period of several months. It read:

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27Hancock Eagle, April 10, 1846.
28"Journal History," April 27, 1846.
Temple For Sale.
The undersigned trustees of the Latter Day Saints propose to sell the Temple on very low terms, if an early application is made. The Temple is admirably designed for Literary and Religious Purposes.

Address the Undersigned Trustees
Almon W. Babbitt
Joseph L. Heywood
John S. Fullmer

Nauvoo, May 15, 1846

Word was sent to the trustees in August of 1846 that the church leaders had agreed that the temple should not be sold for less than two hundred thousand dollars.

This policy was abruptly changed due to the mobs driving the poor Saints out of Nauvoo. Following this forced exodus, the trustees were advised to sell as opportunities presented themselves and to use their own best judgment on the price of the property. They were told to use the money so derived to pay for the labor on the temple and relieve the suffering of the poor.

Due to the uncertain situation existing in Nauvoo, with the mobs in possession of the temple during part of the fall of 1846, no sale of the temple was effected. As a new year began, further complications arose. Dr. Isaac Galland swore out an attachment on all church property in Nauvoo for the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars.

29 Hancock Eagle, May 15, 1846, and December 12, 1846.
32 "Journal History," January 20, 1847.
Almon Babbitt wrote to Brigham Young on April 5, 1847, reporting the work of the trustees. He reports:

... I got home from the east about two weeks since. I was in every city in the eastern land, but could effect no sale of the property here, or at least for any price that we could entertain. The most that I could get offered for the whole property, including the Temple and Kimball's and Wells' property was, one hundred thousand dollars; that price we can get here I think, if we will take it. ... there have been some forty suits of different kinds commenced against the trustees. ... Galland has commenced a suit in Chancery, as well as at common lay. All these are an impediment against a sale of the property. ... 33

An announcement was printed in the Daily Missouri Republican in June, 1847, declaring that the temple had been sold to a committee of the Catholic Church for $75,000. They had purchased it for educational purposes connected with their church. The article stated that the contract required only the sanction of the Bishop to become final. 34 It was published in July, 1847, that the sale to the Catholics had failed, due to a defect in the title. 35

In November, 1847, Brigham Young wrote the trustees recommending that they leave the keys of the temple in the care of Judge Owens and the building in the hands of the Lord. 36

This counsel was either rescinded or not followed, since the trustees remained in Nauvoo continuing their attempts to sell the building.

33 Ibid., April 5, 1847.
34 Daily Missouri Republican (St. Louis, Missouri), June 16, 1847, "News Clippings," VIII, 513.
36 Journal History," November 5, 1847.
Additional legal entanglements complicated conditions in 1848.

Emma Smith, widow of the Prophet, remarried to a man named Lewis Bidamon. John S. Fullmer, one of the trustees, reports that shortly after this marriage they took action to acquire the church property in Nauvoo. In a letter to Brigham Young he writes:

Now they . . . concocted a grand scheme by which they could effectually block our wheels and enrich themselves. They hit upon the idea that the Church could hold only ten acres of land, according to a limited construction of one of our State laws, and that consequently, the deed from Emma and Joseph Smith to Joseph as "Trustee" was illegal. They have therefore, now jointly conveyed all the lots that were ever in her name which she had not previously conveyed to others. This, you will see at a glance, places the Trustees in the extremest difficulty, as to title, while it destroys the confidence of every one, and prevents those who would have purchased, from doing so. . . . it requires a judicial decision to restore confidence.\(^\text{37}\)

On October 2, 1848, arrangements were finally made for transfer of the temple property. Almon W. Babbitt, one of the trustees, rented the building to the Home Mission Society of New York for a period of fifteen years. No terms were mentioned in the report of this transaction.\(^\text{38}\)

Before the final arrangements became official, the temple was destroyed by fire. Joseph Smith III comments on the matter as follows:

A company from New York had just leased the property for the purpose of establishing a school there, thinking—rightly, no doubt—that such an enterprise would receive considerable support and patronage in the community. On the very day of its destruction word had been received that a committee would start next day for Nauvoo, to perfect the arrangements. This school would have been a benefit and a blessing to a great many people; but destiny seemed to have decreed matters otherwise, and it was necessary to send a

\(^{37}\text{Ibid.}, \text{January 27, 1848.}\)

\(^{38}\text{Ibid.}, \text{October 2, 1848.}\)
message back to the committee in New York telling them of the sad disaster.\textsuperscript{39}

The trustees had been faithful in trying to arrange for the sale or rental of the temple. They were prevented from being successful in their attempts because of the threatened destruction of the building and by various legal entanglements which threw the title of the property into question.

The French Icarians came to Nauvoo in 1849 and purchased the ruins of the temple. No record is available as to from whom they purchased the property.\textsuperscript{40}

III. DESTRUCTION BY FIRE

During its brief history the temple had been the target of numerous threats and dangers. Prior to the Mormon exodus and even during nearly two years of the construction period, an armed guard kept a constant watch at the temple to insure its protection. As well as threats being made to burn the building, there were threats of intent to blow it up.

A report of such a plan was published in June of 1846; it read:

A gentleman from Fort Madison informs us that numbers had crossed the river to augment the force opposite that place, and they make no hesitation in saying the Temple must be destroyed. One of them boasted that he could put his hand upon the powder that was intended

\textsuperscript{39}Joseph Smith III, p. 100.

to be used for this purpose. If foiled in that, they threaten to burn the town...\textsuperscript{41}

Not only was the edifice threatened by man, but it twice just narrowly escaped destruction from natural causes. The first such event took place in February of 1846, when stoves in the attic story became overheated, resulting in a fire that burned a large hole in the roof before it was extinguished.\textsuperscript{42} Then in September of 1846 the temple tower was reportedly struck by lightning. Though the building did not catch fire, a large scar was left to mark the event.\textsuperscript{43}

On Monday morning, October 9, 1846, at 3:00 a.m. in the morning, the citizens of Nauvoo were awakened to witness the great Mormon temple enveloped in flames. It had purposely been set on fire, apparently as an act to forever discourage the Mormons from returning to this city.\textsuperscript{44}

A description of this fire which resulted in the destruction of the famed edifice was published in the Nauvoo Patriot. It read:

\begin{quote}
Destruction of the Mormon Temple.

On Monday (October 9th) our citizens were awakened by the alarm of fire, which, when first discovered, was bursting out through the spire of the temple, near the small door that opened from the East side to the roof, on the main building. The fire was seen first about three o'clock in the morning, and not until it had taken such hold of the timbers and roof as to make useless any effect to extinguish it. The materials of the inside were so dry, and the fire spread so rapidly, that a few minutes were sufficient to wrap this
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{41}McGavin, op. cit., p. 279, citing an article in the Daily Missouri Republican, June 15, 1846.


\textsuperscript{44}"Journal History," October 9, 1846, citing an article in the Nauvoo /Illinois/ Patriot, of the same date.
famed edifice in a sheet of flame.

It was a sight too full of mournful sublimity. The mass of material which had been gathered there by the labor of many years afforded a rare opportunity for this element to play off some of its wildest sports. Although the morning was tolerably dark, still when the flames shot upwards, the spire, the streets and the houses for nearly a mile distant were lighted up, so as to render even the smallest object discernible. The glare of the vast torch, pointing skyward indescribably contrasted with the universal gloom and darkness around it. . . .45

This account is added to by the descriptive report of J. W. and R. B. Ogden as published in the Keokuk Register:

The fire presented a most sublime spectacle. It commenced in the cupola, and as the flames shot up to the sky, they threw a lurid glare into the surrounding darkness. Great volumes of smoke and flame burst from the windows, and the crash of falling timbers was distinctly heard on the opposite side of the river. The interior of the building was like a furnace; the walls of solid masonry were heated throughout and cracked by the intense heat. The melted zinc and lead was dropping from its huge block during the day. On Tuesday morning the walls were too hot to be touched. The naked walls still stand, and if not demolished by the hand of man, for centuries may stand, a monument of the enthusiasm of its misguided worshippers. . . .46

The structure was entirely consumed by the flames and only the bare walls were left standing. These were reported to have been "cracked calcined and rendered useless." The oxen and the font in the basement also shared the same fate.47

The reaction of the citizens of Nauvoo and the surrounding country was one of shock and dismay. Even the Warsaw Signal, long a bitter enemy to the Mormons, spoke out in disapproval:

. . . no doubt the work of some nefarious incendiary. This edifice was the wonder of Illinois. . . . As a work of art and a

45 Ibid.
46 Keokuk Register, October 12, 1848, taken from "News Clippings," V, 131.
47 Warsaw Signal, October 19, 1848.
memorial of Mormon delusion, it should have stood for ages. . . . None but the most depraved heart could have applied the torch to effect its destruction. . . .

The Nauvoo Patriot announced that the act of burning the temple was evidently the work of an incendiary. They were puzzled as to who it was and what could have been his motives:

... to destroy a work of art, at once the most elegant and most renowned in its celebrity of any in the whole west, would we should think, require a mind of more than ordinary depravity; and we feel assured that no one in this community could have been so lost to every sense of justice, and every consideration of interest, as to become the author of the deed.49

Lewis A. Bidamon, who had married the widow of Joseph Smith, was a witness to the destruction. He reported in 1856 that the burning of the temple had the effect of diminishing the importance of Nauvoo. He was proprietor of the Mansion House, using it as a hotel. He declared that after the temple fire, his business was only one-fourth of what it had been prior to the conflagration.50

Rumors and speculation ran their usual course as people tried to determine who had done the fateful deed. It was announced in the Warsaw Signal that the citizens of Nauvoo were offering a reward for the capture of the incendiary.51

There were several suspects considered as possible perpetrators.

48 Ibid.
49 "Journal History," October 9, 1848, citing an article in the Nauvoo Patriot of the same date.
50 "Journal History," October 9, 1848.
51 Warsaw Signal, December 30, 1848.
of the deed. One mentioned with some prominence was John W. Palmer, a
former major in the anti-Mormon forces that expelled the last of the
Mormons from Nauvoo. His name was later cleared of the charge.52

The most prominently mentioned suspect was Joseph B. Agnew. Major
Bidamon is reported to have heard a death bed confession of a Mrs. Walker
who boarded at the Agnew home when the temple was burned. He reports
that she strongly implicated Agnew in the act.53

Major Bidamon reported to George A. Smith and Erastus Snow in
November, 1856, as follows:

... the inhabitants of Warsaw, Carthage, Pontusuc and surround-
ing settlements, in consequence of jealousy that Nauvoo would still
retain its superior importance as a town and might induce the Mormons
to return, contributed a purse of five hundred dollars which they
gave to Joseph Agnew in consideration of his burning the temple and
that said Agnew was the person who set the building on fire.54

Joseph Smith III, who lived as a stepson in the Bidamon household,
was also convinced that Joseph Agnew was the guilty party. He claimed
that Agnew was: "... a river rat and drunken lout who confessed to the
deed quite some time after, and stated he had been hired to do it."55

In 1885 B. H. Roberts was informed by M. M. Morrill, the Mayor of
Nauvoo at that date, "... that one Joseph Agnew confessed to being the
incendiary." Morrill had assisted in repelling the mobs during the
battle of Nauvoo.56

52Arrington, op. cit., p. 10. 53Ibid., p. 9.
54"Journal History," October 9, 1848.
55Joseph Smith III, p. 100.
56Roberts, Rise and Fall of Nauvoo, p. 369.
In addition to the reports just cited, what purports to be a reliable statement came to light many years after the temple's destruction. It was a lengthy account of the reported confession of Joseph Agnew. The statement was issued by George H. Rudisill of Bowling Green, Florida, who as a boy had lived in Fort Madison, Iowa, a short distance from Nauvoo. He reported that Agnew, who died in the fall of 1870 at the age of fifty-eight years, came to him just prior to his death. In the course of their conversation Agnew told Rudisill the complete story of the temple's burning. He then pledged Rudisill to secrecy, asking that the story not be told until after the death of all parties concerned in the deed, since those who had been in on the act had pledged themselves to secrecy.

Following Agnew's death the story was released and published in many newspapers. The earliest date available on the printing of this confession is April, 1872, when it appeared in the Peoria Transcript.

57 The Rudisill narrative is found in its complete form in identical wording in the following sources: "Newspaper Clipping," no date, on file in the Utah Historical Society Library. The article is written by Robert Aveson under the heading, "Burning of the Nauvoo Temple." He produced the article from his scrapbook, the original appearing in the Fort Madison /Iowa/ Democrat (no date given); McGavin, op. cit., pp. 284-287, quoting a newspaper account, but not documented; mimeographed copy taken from a newspaper account by Walt Whipple, now in the possession of Russell Rich--this account was addressed: "Special Correspondence to the Democrat (probably the Lee County Democrat of Fort Madison, Iowa)," no date given; a condensed version appeared in the Salt Lake Tribune, April 18, 1872, citing the Peoria /Illinois/ Transcript; and "Journal History," April 30, 1872, p. 8, citing the Chicago Post of the same date. For the complete narrative see Appendix B of this work.

Note: Hereafter referred to as the "Rudisill Narrative."
This article was then quoted by other newspapers.58

The following account is condensed from the Ridisill narration. Joseph Agnew, a Judge Sharp of Carthage, and a Squire McCauly of Apanoose59 had met together and determined to destroy the building. The reason behind their act was that they feared a return of the Mormons. They concluded that so long as the temple stood, a symbol of the Mormon faith, it was possible that the Saints might return to occupy it. Its destruction would insure against the possibility of any such return. The trio concluded a plan of action and next proceeded to carry it to a successful ending.

On the appointed day, the group met five miles south of Apanoose and rode by horseback to Nauvoo. Stopping about one mile outside the city, they secluded their horses and walked in on foot.

Agnew had prepared combustibles which he had brought along in his saddle bags. He had cut arm holes in an old corn sack, so he could wear it under his coat undetected. The sack he stuffed with tarred rags and sticks. They then proceeded toward the temple.

They arranged with the steward in charge of the building to conduct them on a tour of the edifice, pretending to be strangers traveling

58Salt Lake Tribune, April 18, 1872, citing the Peoria Transcript.

59The individuals referred to in the "Rudisill Narrative" are undoubtedly the same Joseph Agnew who had served as a Captain in the mob forces which expelled the Mormons from Illinois in September of 1846. Squire McCauly was no doubt Major M'Calla, a Major in the mob forces against the Mormons. Judge Sharp of Carthage was Thomas C. Sharp, a bitter anti-Mormon who had been indicted for the murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and had long agitated for the expulsion of the Saints. He had been the editor of the Warsaw Signal, using it as a tool against the Mormons. See Roberts, Comprehensive History, II, 219, 322; and III, i-5.
through the city. The guide had some difficulty with the lock, and as the trio entered the temple they went on ahead without their guide. The guide, hurrying to catch up to his group, inadvertently left the key in the door. Agnew, noticing this, quickly stepped into a side room so as to be undetected as the steward ran by to catch the others. Agnew then went back to the door and put the key in his pocket. When he finally joined the group he offered a simple excuse to the guide who, though he was apparently upset by this behavior, accepted the excuse and proceeded on. The tour was hurriedly taken and the group ushered out of the building.

Later that night Agnew returned to the temple, ascended nearly to its top, and finding a likely spot set fire to the structure. In his haste he lost his way and cut off his only means of escape. As a result he had to plunge headlong into the flames. In consequence of this action he injured a leg and an arm, received several burns, and was choked by inhalation from the smoke. He ran out of the building gasping for air and joined his companions. He obtained a drink from a well about one hundred yards from the temple and threw the temple key into the well.

The group then split up, each going his separate way as planned. However, Agnew, because of his injuries, was forced to alter his plans, and he made his way to Squire McCauly's cabin. Here he was cared for by McCauly and his wife, and he hid out for over a week, till sufficiently healed to remove any suspicion.  

There is a discrepancy between the reported confession of Agnew

60 "Rudisill Narrative."
and the report of the Nauvoo Patriot regarding the time the fire took place. The Agnew account places the beginning of the event in the evening easily before midnight.\textsuperscript{61} In contrast to this, the newspaper account gives the time when the fire was first noticed as 3:00 a.m.\textsuperscript{62} This latter account is corroborated by the report of Christiana D. Pyper who witnessed the conflagration. She remembers the event taking place between two and three o'clock in the morning.\textsuperscript{63} This places some suspicion on the Rudisill narrative. But since the story was told to Rudisill some twenty years after the event occurred, this discrepancy in time can possibly be accounted for.

It would appear from the evidence available that Joseph Agnew was indeed the person who destroyed the temple. He was suspected early, and the account of his confession seems to be reliable.

In the Agnew confession, no mention is made of his having been paid for the task, though this accusation had been made by Major Bidamon and Joseph Smith III. It would appear that this charge could easily have been hearsay, and that the parties involved might easily have burned the temple on their own motivation and prejudice.

To many Mormons the loss of their sacred structure was a crushing, demoralizing blow. However, their real feelings on the matter were summarized by Brigham Young when he stated: "... I would rather it should be destroyed, than remain in the hands of the wicked. ..."\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{61}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{62}"Journal History," October 9, 1848, citing an article in the Nauvoo Patriot, same date.

\textsuperscript{63}Pyper, op. cit., p. 247.

\textsuperscript{64}Deseret News, October 14, 1863.
IV. DESTRUCTION OF THE WALLS

Following the great fire of 1848, the bare walls of the temple stood as a silent witness of the former grandeur of the building. It was in this condition when Nauvoo was inhabited by a new group of colonizers in the spring of 1849.

The Icarian attempt to rebuild the temple. The new settlers who occupied Nauvoo in March of 1849 were French Icarians. They were a communistic society that had left France under the leadership of Etienne Cabet. The group first organized in 1847 had prior to living in Nauvoo located in northeastern Texas, where their attempt at colonization and the realization of their ideal society had met with failure.

Upon arriving in Nauvoo they purchased the temple ruins. Griffith reports that they paid $1,000 for the site and the American Guide Series puts the amount at $500. No information is available as to from whom they purchased it.

Though the Icarians had purchased the property, no immediate attempt was made to renovate the burned-out structure. This is evidenced by a report of Dr. John M. Bernhisel who wrote to Brigham Young on September 10, 1849. Concerning his recent visit to Nauvoo,

65 "Journal History," May 27, 1850, citing the Daily Missouri Republican, same date.


he writes:

. . . Though the walls of the Temple are standing, yet they are much cracked, especially the east one; and not a vestige of the once beautiful font remains. There has been nothing done to rebuild it, except clearing away some rubbish, and it is highly probable there will never be anything more done. The Temple is enclosed with a rude fence, and is used as a sheepfold and cow pen. . . .69

Some time between September, 1849, and May, 1850, the Icarians started working in the gutted ruins of the temple, hoping to reclaim it for their own uses. In the midst of these preparations the building was struck by the full force of a tornado, making any future attempts at renovation impractical. An account of the Icarian preparations and the damage inflicted by the storm of May 27, 1850, was reported by the Daily Missouri Republican as follows:

On arriving at Nauvoo, in March, 1849, the Icarian Community bought the walls of the Temple with a view to refit it for schools, etc. Much preparation had been made for re-establishing the roof and floors; a steam mill was purchased to fit up a saw mill; the saw mill was nearly finished; a vast shed was raising near the Temple, to shelter the carpenters, the masons were laying in the interior the bases of the pillars when this frightful hurricane, the most terrible experienced in the country in many years, burst suddenly on the hill of Nauvoo, where lightnings, thunder, wind, hail and rain, seemed united to assail the building.

The storm burst forth so quickly and with such violence the masons overtaken unawares in the Temple, had not time to flee before the northern wall, sixty feet high, beat down over their heads, threatening to crush and bury them up.

. . . eight men were in the Temple working, the rocks landed at their feet but did not strike them. Fearing the east and south walls would also fall, they fled from the structure. . . .70


70Ibid., May 27, 1850, citing the Daily Missouri Republican, of the same date.
Another account of the destruction was preserved by the Nauvoo Patriot, which reports:

The dreadful tornado on May 27th which invaded the city of Nauvoo and neighboring places, has been for us, Icarians . . . a spectacle of frightful sublimity, and also a source of mortal anguish, on account of the disasters and catastrophes which have resulted from it, to the inhabitants of this county, and to us.

Here are some particulars of what has happened to us during that storm; in its first blow which has been the most fatal to us, and everyone will certainly think so when they know, that part of the Temple walls was immediately blown to the ground. The Temple which we were preparing so actively and resolutely to rebuild; the Temple which we hoped to cover this year; and in which we were to settle our refectories, our halls of reunion, and our schools; that it is the Temple that gigantic monument, which has become the first victim of the tornado.71

The next morning a general assembly of the Icarian Community decided to tear down the east and south walls of the temple. They were so badly damaged that they were a hazard to safety. This was accomplished and all that remained of the famous edifice was the west face of the temple, "united by its sides to another wall in the interior part and surmounted by an arch. . . ."72 An excellent view of these ruins is furnished by an examination of Figure 9, page 112 of this work.

Final destruction of the walls. The ruins of the west end were still standing in December of 1856.73 Joseph Smith III records that the walls kept falling from time to time, "bit by bit," until only the southwest corner remained. It was then deemed advisable by the City Council of Nauvoo to raze the remaining portion, and the temple

71Ibid., May 27, 1850, citing the Nauvoo Patriot, same date.

72Ibid.    73Ibid., December 8, 1856.
destruction became complete. 

The building site was described in 1870 as not possessing one stone upon another, and that where the Saints once practiced their sacred temple ordinances, was now a vineyard.

An interesting account of the fate of the temple stones is furnished by Joseph Smith III. He states:

During the years which followed there was a gradual spoiliation of the ruins of the Temple, to which I was a witness. The place became a veritable quarry and provided the materials with which many homes, wine cellars, and saloons in the town were built. At last the time came when the last stone was upturned from its resting place and taken away, and little remained to indicate the spot where once the magnificent and stately edifice had reared its proud head. Of all the stones placed in position by human hands during its erection the only ones left are those lining the well which was dug in the basement to supply water for the baptismal font and other needs of occupation. . . .

The stones used in the temple were used in many of the later buildings in Nauvoo, and some were carried off to other parts of the country. The largest amount of these stones used in any one building is the building now located on the southwest corner of the temple block. It was built by the Icarians and used as their dining hall. It had been modernized and had served as a sanitarium and residence. It was later purchased by the Catholic Church and used as a parochial school.

In 1883 nothing remained to the casual observer that would give evidence that the temple had once stood in Nauvoo. Richard C. Young

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75 "Journal History," December 7, 1870.
76 Joseph Smith III, p. 102.
77 Deseret News, January 21, 1919.
furnishes the following interesting account of his experience at that
time. He reports:

... our first conjecture was farther strengthened as to the
site by the presence in that neighborhood of a drug store and several
other buildings constructed of finely wrought white stone, which we
assumed to have come from the walls of the Temple. And so it proved,
for after a short walk down a street in that neighborhood we met a
man who turned out to be the owner of the Temple lot. ...

... our guide, Mr. Bahman, present proprietor of the lot and a
store opposite, lead us up the street to the middle of a certain
block and turned into a gate, which opened through an ordinary fence.
We saw nothing within to betray the former site of a costly edifice;
along the front fence there were two rows of currant bushes with a
path between, on the left or north of the lot and towards its front
was located a one-story dwelling, the front part of which was then
used as a grocery store; in the rear of the dwelling and at the back
of the lot was situated a two-story lumber barn, trees and fences
bordered the property, and various kinds of plants, bushes and trees
were scattered here and there over the enclosure. If we had not re-
ceived the renewed assurance of our guide, that this was the place
we sought, we should have discredited him. Here was a house and yard,
not even on the corner of a block; with all the usual surroundings
of a semi-rural home, distinguished from its neighbors in no special
manner, perfectly level, with fruit trees and flowers - and this we
were thrice assured, was where the Nauvoo Temple used to stand. The
precise limits of the structure were pointed out. ... a large
sized peach tree was growing a little to the rear of the center of
the building site, and a well, which was described as the only rem-
nant of the Temple on the lot, except a few scattering pieces of
rock from the walls which had been thrown near the fences in clear-
ing the ground for cultivation.

... hate further decreed the scattering of the dressed stone
to the four winds; the filling of the basements; and the transfor-
tation of the Temple lot into a garden, thus causing the noble edifice
and its site to live only in the memory. 78

78 Richard C. Young, "In the Wake of the Church," The Contributor,
IV, No. 4 (January, 1883); 150-151.
V. RE-PURCHASE OF THE TEMPLE BLOCK

In recent years the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has undertaken a program of reacquiring many places of historical significance to the Church. Among the areas which attracted the attention of the Church was the old temple block at Nauvoo.

The first official interest was shown in 1936 as noted by the Nauvoo Independent, which reported:

Dignitaries of Mormon Church visit Nauvoo.

Four distinguished Mormons from Salt Lake City, Utah visited Nauvoo Tuesday. They were George Albert Smith, Apostle of the Church . . . Andrew Jensen, 86, Journalist and Historian . . . Wilford C. Wood, official photographer and John D. Giles, secretary-treasurer of the Utah Pioneer Trails and Landmarks Association. Mr. Smith is president of the association. . . .79

The above-mentioned visit proved to be preliminary to the first purchase of the temple block. This was made by Wilford C. Wood on February 20, 1937, acting in behalf of the Church. The Deseret News related the event as follows:

Historic Illinois Site Acquired this morning.

The First Presidency today announced that the Church had purchased the Nauvoo Temple lot at Nauvoo, Ill.

Together with the lot, the purchase brought to the Church possession of the old well which fed the font to the Temple, when that building was used before the departure of the Saints for the west.

At the present time two old buildings stand on the Temple lot, but it is understood that these will be torn down.

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79"Journal History," September 24, 1936, citing the Nauvoo Independent, of September 22, 1936.
Figure 10. The Nauvoo (Illinois) Temple Block Plat (Block 20) as of Sept. 1, 1939. Size = 356 feet square exclusive of the four streets and contains nearly 3 acres. Printed by C. J. Hunt. (Mimeographed.) Copied by permission of the Utah State Historical Society.

Note: With the acquisition of the "Reorganized" Church property (now in negotiation) the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will own all of the property on the temple block.
The purchase was effected at a public sale held in Nauvoo this morning. Wilford C. Wood represented the church in the negotiations. 80

The Carthage Gazette reported that this first purchase of property cost the Church $900. 81

On April 19, 1937, Wilford C. Wood, acting on his own volition, purchased a large parcel of land on the northeast corner amounting to nearly one-quarter of the temple block. This was known as the "Opera House" property and sold for $1,100. 82 This second purchase of the temple block was turned over to the Church some six months later as it was purchased from Mr. Wood. 83

Other purchases of the block were reportedly transacted by Mr. Wood acting in behalf of the Church. No dates are available but the Church came into possession of the southeast quarter of the block. The small lot on the southeast corner is reported to have been purchased for $350. 84

The property on the northwest corner of the block did not come into possession of the Church until June of 1951. Mr. Wood also represented the Church in this purchase. This piece of land contained

80Deseret News, February 20, 1937.
81"Journal History," February 26, 1937, citing an article from the Carthage [Illinois] Gazette, this date.
82Richard L. Evans, "Nauvoo Opera House Acquired," The Improvement Era, XL (April, 1937), 356; and "Journal History," May 7, 1937, citing an article in the Carthage Gazette, this date.
84Ibid., p. 6.
a large spacious home, which was immediately converted into a Bureau of Information for the Church. 85

Another purchase was made by Richard C. Stratford acting as an agent for the Church. This was the acquisition of the narrow strip of telephone company property which was completed on February 22, 1959. 86

In 1961, the Church purchased and acquired the title to all of the property on the block formerly owned by the Catholic Church. This brought the Mormons in possession of the southwest quarter of the temple block. 87

At the time of this writing (July, 1962), negotiations are in progress between the "Reorganized" Church and the Utah "Mormon" Church. The property on the temple block owned by the "Reorganized" Church is being traded for three parcels of land in Independence, Missouri, owned by the "Utah Mormons." The Reorganized Church will pay the difference between the costs of these properties in cash. 88 When these negotiations are completed the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will once again possess the entire temple block at Nauvoo.

A clearer understanding of these various purchases and the actual location of where the temple once stood can be obtained by examination of Figure 10 on page 188 of this work.

85 Ibid., p. 7.


87 Personal interview between the writer and Mr. A. Hamer Reiser, secretary-treasurer of Nauvoo Restoration Incorporated, and secretary to the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

88 Ibid.
After the initial purchases, a crew from the Chicago Stake of the Church spent a full day's labor in July of 1937 in an effort to beautify the property. They numbered twenty-two persons in all and were led by Dr. Ariel L. Williams and Wilford C. Wood. They cleared the property then owned by the Church, and succeeded in salvaging forty-six tons of cut face stones which were originally a part of the temple. These stones reportedly weighed from 200 to 3,000 pounds each. The work was accomplished with the use of bulldozer and tractors. The stones were piled together and the land leveled off for planting and beautification.89

There has been a considerable amount of speculation as to what the Church's purposes were in acquiring the property. The Carthage Gazette even reported that rumor had it that the Church was going to re-build the temple as a shrine.90

Other than using part of the property for a Bureau of Information, the land has remained barren and unused. However, plans are now under way to change all this and the Church has recently set into motion actions which will result in a restoration and improvement of the historic sections of Nauvoo.

An article appearing in the Deseret News in May, 1962, records the visit to Nauvoo by two members of the "Mormon" Church, First Presidency: Henry D. Moyle and Hugh B. Brown. They visited an excavation at the old temple site. Upon entering it they examined some of the stones once used in the temple.

89Deseret News, July 2, 1937.

90"Journal History," October 29, 1937, p. 5, citing an article in the Carthage Gazette, this date.
The article reports that a Salt Lake archeologist, Dee Green, is serving as crew chief of the excavation work which is scheduled to begin in June, 1962, and last for about five months.

Discussion was had between the Church leaders and the local citizens in a meeting sponsored by the Nauvoo Chamber of Commerce. The residents expressed themselves as willing to cooperate with the Church in any restoration projects that might be planned. Harold Wirth, the National Parks Director, was present and said that his agency would give all the technical advice possible.

Harold Fabian, Chairman of the Advisory Board of National Parks, is reported to have stated that the project might be done in four phases. The first phase would be the temple site. "... It could be left bare after the excavation project is completed, or a structure could be built on the site..."

In June, 1962, another article appeared in the Deseret News detailing the creation of an organization to proceed on the work of restoring the old "Mormon" city. It reported:

Church Forms Corporation to Restore Historic Nauvoo.

Creation of a non-profit corporation to direct the restoration of historic Nauvoo, Ill., took place Thursday morning in the office of The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Officiating at the organization meeting were President David O. McKay and his counselors, President Henry D. Moyle and President Hugh B. Brown.

Heading the new unit, Nauvoo Restoration Incorporated, as president is Dr. J. LeRoy Kimball, Salt Lake physician, who has taken

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an active leadership in purchasing property in Nauvoo during the past several years. Harold P. Fabian, of Salt Lake City recently elected chairman of the Citizens Advisory Board of National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments of the U. S. Department of Interior, is vice-president and trustee. A. Hamer Reiser, who recently succeeded Mr. Fabian as chairman of the Utah Park and Recreation Commission and who is a secretary of the First Presidency, is secretary-treasurer and trustee. J. Willard Marriott, Washington, D.C., owner of the Hot Shoppes Restaurants and Marriott Motels, and David M. Kennedy, Chicago banker, are trustees.

President McKay explained Thursday morning that the new corporation is formed for the purpose of restoring the residences in historic Nauvoo as they were left when the Mormons evacuated the city in 1846. The purpose of restoring Nauvoo, he added, is to "perpetuate in history the part played by the Mormon Pioneers in the building of the West..."92

An article appearing in the Deseret News of July 11, 1962, reported that preliminary excavation work at the temple site in December, 1961, uncovered four large piers which had supported some of the pilasters on the south wall of the temple. Among those uncovered was the one at the southeast corner. The article goes on to report that within the last week, excavation work had revealed larger sub-piers beneath those discovered earlier. When uncovered they attained a depth of nine feet below the present surface of the ground. Near one of these piers, discovery was made of a broken stone fragment of the hind leg of one of the stone oxen which had supported the permanent baptismal font. This aroused speculation that additional remnants of the font might be uncovered as the work continued.93


93Ibid., July 11, 1962. Excavation work at the temple site is being conducted under the direction of Dr. Melvin Fowler of Southern Illinois University. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has supplied a financial grant to the university to cover the expense of the project. Dee F. Green, a member of the church, is serving as Field Director of the work.
Present plans of the Nauvoo Restoration Incorporated are to expose the foundations of the Nauvoo Temple, to landscape and beautify the temple block, and possibly to build a reception center on the block.\textsuperscript{94}

Over a century after their fateful exodus and amid favorable reactions, the Mormons have officially returned to Nauvoo. The history of the temple site continues to unfold; and though the temple has been destroyed, it still remains a shrine in the hearts of the church membership.

\textsuperscript{94}Statement by A. Hamer Reiser, personal interview.
CHAPTER X

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Nauvoo Temple was one of the unique structures of Nineteenth Century America. The chief structure of the city of Nauvoo, it symbolized the Mormon faith of the 1840's. It was in connection with the temple that the early Mormon Church achieved its greatest achievement in both its theology and architecture. Its erection became the primary concern of the entire Church during the Nauvoo period of its history. Built at great cost and sacrifice, the building has forever left its imprint on the history of Mormonism and Illinois.

This study of the temple's history has reviewed the early setting in which the building was constructed, as well as the theology which led to its erection. It reveals the struggle of its construction from when it was first contemplated until its dedication. It brings into focus the faith and dedication of its builders, who worked in the face of continual threats and harassment by the persecutors of the Mormon people.

The study furnishes insight into the sacrifices attendant with supplying the man power, means, and materials essential to the temple's construction. It reveals the depth of sacrifice, where, in fact, many gave all of their earthly possessions toward its erection. It relates in some detail the interesting story of the "Pinery Expedition," a part of early church history which has nearly escaped mention. It solves the problem of the location of the temple quarries, clearly showing that two main quarries were in operation.
There is unfolded in the study the development and early practice of the temple ordinances, and the great desire of the Saints to obtain these sacred blessings. An insight into the nature and significance of these ordinances is also furnished.

A description of the external and internal features of the building is also provided. Helpful illustrations are also made available so as to enable one to visualize the intricate design and symbolism of the temple and its architecture.

The problem of the temple's completion is treated in some detail, attempting to analyze and interpret the conflicting statements on the subject. The study concludes that, from the point of view of architectural design, the temple was not finished; that if the builders had remained in the city, the building would have been further embellished and a finer finish given to some areas of the structure. It is also concluded that, from a functional point of view, the building was completed, containing all of its designed sections and all of them accessible for use. Some of these sections were only roughed-in, but most of them were put to some effective use while the building stood. The conclusion, then, is not one of discarding one claim or the other, but rather one of harmonizing the conflicting statements.

It is also concluded that the tower of the temple was graced by the golden statue of an angel placed at or near the apex of the tower and lying in a horizontal position to the ground.

The destruction of the temple by fire, the eventual demolishing of the walls, and the disposition of the temple site are traced to the present time. It is concluded that Joseph Agnew was probably the
person responsible for burning the building.

The problem remains for further study as to whether the temple bell was ever actually hung in its intended place in the tower. No record is available to confirm or deny this part of the construction. The record is also absent on whether or not a clock was installed in the tower.

The temple not only proved a spiritual blessing to the Mormon people, but it became a symbol for unifying the people in a common goal. Its benefits in an economic way cannot be discounted, as it provided jobs for numerous individuals, especially those coming to Nauvoo as converts from England. In this manner it was a real boon to the economy of the city.

The writer is aware of other collections of information, but these were not available for research. As additional evidence comes to light, it will no doubt furnish new and valuable insights into the history of this interesting structure.

The study has been a rewarding and interesting experience for the writer. It is felt that this work will contribute significantly to the preservation of the dramatic story unfolded in the erection of this great edifice.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX A

WORKERS ON THE NAUVOO TEMPLE
APPENDIX A

The following list of workers on the Nauvoo Temple was recorded by William Clayton:

I will now give a list of the names of the officers and laborers on and connected with the temple... .

In the office are the trustees, viz:
Newel K. Whitney and George Miller.
James Whitehead, Clerk.
John P. McEwen, Assistant Clerk.
Joseph C. Kingsburry, Disbursing Agent for Trustees.

The temple committee are:
Alpheus Cutler, Reynolds Cahoon, Elias Higbee (recently died).
William Weeks, architect and draughtsman.

The following are the workmen on the walls of the temple.
William W. Player, principal setter.
Edward Miller, his assistant.

The names of the constant hands who attended Brother Players Crane are Tarlton Lewis, Archibald Hill, John Hill, Hans C. Hanson and Charles W. Patten.

Elisha Averett was the principal backer up, or, in other words, he set the stone on the inside walls and also the inside courses of the main wall. He was assisted by his brothers, Elijah and John Averett, and Truman Leonard.

The hands who worked on the second crane, being E. Averetts Crane were John Harvey, Thomas M. Pearson, George M. Potter and William L. Cutler.

Brother Joshua Armstrong set the greater portion of the upper part of the north wall. He commenced when the third crane was put up. He was assisted by Charles R. Dana. The hands who tended the crane were William W. Dryer, William Austin, Thomas Jaap and William L. Cutler.

For the most part of the time there was only one team to draw the stone to the cranes. Brother Ephrium J. Pearson attended the most of the time. After he left Alma N. Shennan took his place. When
the second team was put to work Brother William H. Dame was appointed to attend to it. Old Thomas Travis, a faithful brother from England, was the man who mixed the mortar. This was his business from the beginning of the works; he was sometimes assisted by the tithing hands. He was one of the first who commenced to dig the foundation of the temple.

The following is a list of the stone cutters who cut the stone for the Temple, to-wit:

Alvin Winegar, James Standing, Harvey Stanley, Daniel S. Cahoon, Andrew Cahoon, Stephen Hales, Jr., William Jones (he cut the first plinth), John Keown, Rufus Allen, Samuel Hodge, Bun Anderson and George Ritchey. These persons were among the first who commenced cutting stone for the Temple and have continued to the close. Pulaski S. Cahoon, John Dresdale and Aaron Johnson also commenced to cut stone at the beginning, but did not continue long.

The following persons have cut stone much of the time but not from the beginning to-wit:


Brother Charles Lambert cut the capstone, which was set on the south east or Joseph's corner on Saturday last. He cut the stone and bought it, and when finished he gave the stone and the labor free of all charges. He has proved himself a liberal-hearted, faithful, good man from first to last.

During last winter, 1843, towards the latter part of it, the Twelve decided to take down the old wood Font and put up a new one of cut stone. The men selected to cut the stone for the Font are William W. Player, Benjamin T. Mitchell, Charles Lambert, William Cottier, Andrew Cahoon, Daniel S. Cahoon, Jerome Kimpton, Augustus Stafford, Bun Anderson, Alvin Winegar, William Jones and Stephen Halles, Jr.

Brother Albert P. Rockwood has been the overseer or captain of
the stone quarry from the commencement. He has been assisted by Charles Drury.

The following is a list of the steady carpenters, hired to work on the Temple: Truman O. Angell, foreman over regular joiners, William Felshaw, foreman over tithing donations, Wandle Mace, foreman over the framers, William T. Cahoon, foreman over the raisers and also time-keeper for carpenter shop.

Miles Romney, foreman over the Star builders. He also carved all the capitals for the tower. Elijah Fordham, principal carver.


The following are employed to frame the timber and raise it on the building: Levi Jackman, William Anderson, Stephen H. Goddard, Easton Kelsey, Daniel McCole, Clark L. Whitney (now in carpenters shop) Stephen M. Farnsworth and Frances A. Brown.

Jesse P. Harmon is door-keeper to the carpenter shop. His duty is also to keep the shop in order, turn grindstone, and wait on strangers who come to see the works of the temple.

The names of the sawyers are James Bennett, Joseph Busby and Moses Thurston.

Whitney Markham is teamster for the carpenters and sawyers.

The following persons are the painters already hired to paint the works of the Temple, to-wit: William Pitt, Edward Martin, Alfred Brown and John F. Hutchinson.1

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APPENDIX B

HOW THE NAUVOO TEMPLE WAS DESTROYED
APPENDIX B

HOW THE FAMOUS MORMON TEMPLE AT NAUVOO WAS DESTROYED

GEO. H. RUDISILL, OF BOWLING GREEN, FLORIDA, GRAPHICALLY TELLS HOW IT WAS DONE

IN ALL PROBABILITY THE FIRST AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT OF THE BURNING OF THE TEMPLE - THE MEN WHO DID IT

Special correspondence to the Democrat.

George H. Rudisill, now of Bowling Green, Florida, but once a Fort Madison boy, tells of the destruction of the Nauvoo Temple which occurred fifty years ago, in the following words:

Judge Sharp, of Carthage, Squire McCauly of Appanoose, and J. B. Agnew, of Pontoosuc, Illinois, were the men that planned and carried out the destruction of the temple. These parties were well and favorably known in Hancock county, Illinois, and also in Lee county, Iowa, but have all long since passed to that temple above not made by hands but eternal in the heavens. This temple was the heaven of Jos. Smith and the saints of Nauvoo, and had these sainted rascals chosen to have been good law abiding citizens, instead of thieves and cut throats, today Nauvoo would have been the largest city west of the Alleghanies. Both their depredations of theft and murder were not to be tolerated by the law abiding citizens of Hancock county, Illinois, and Lee county, Iowa.

The Mormons resisted being arrested by civil authorities for their misdemeanors, so a call was made to the governor of Illinois to arrest the Smiths, which he did on the 27th of June, 1844, and they were landed in the old jail, yet standing, at Carthage, and on the afternoon of the same day a mob of 150 men with blackened faces surrounded the jail and shot the Prophet Joseph and his brother Hiram. And soon after, the citizens of Illinois and Iowa drove the Mormons out of Nauvoo and they emigrated to Salt Lake, under the Leadership of Brigham Young.

A French colony came in possession of Nauvoo, but the temple remained the property of the Mormons and was left in charge of one of the Mormon stewards. The temple was dedicated prior to their departure. At the time of the Smith arrest the prophet was having the Nauvoo mansion erected down on the flat near the river. The house was of large proportions and was of brick and it was near the completion of the second story. Many years after the Mormons had gone, the writer was inspecting the
ruins of this mansion and he accidently discovered an opening in the wall
and upon investigation found it to be the end of a tunnel arch and after
clearing a way I succeeded in gaining an entrance. I followed the tunnel
for at least a half mile in the direction of the temple. The arch was
made of brick laid with cement, it was high enough and wide enough for
two persons to walk side by side, and I am satisfied that the arch led
to the basement of the temple, and no doubt that the arch is still intact
today. I have been informed that Col. Bideman, the husband of Jos.
Smith's widow, had a part of the mansion finished up into a residence
after my visit there in 1865.

Well to return to the burning of the temple, I will give it in Mr.
J. B. Agnew's own words as near as I can recollect, which was just before
his death in the fall of 1870. After telling me his story he asked me as
a friend not to let it be known until after the death of all parties con-
cerned, as they had pledged themselves to secrecy in the matter. This I
told him I would do. And now that these parties are all dead it will do
no harm to let it be known and it will satisfy many an old settler's
curiosity.

Mr. Agnew was in failing health at the time he came to me. He told
me that he was going to die soon, which I thought was true. I asked him
if he had repented of his wrong doings and he smiled and said: "Yes all
but one thing". I asked what that one was, and he said it was the burning
of the Nauvoo temple. Says I, "Did you do that"? and he said, "Yes I did
it with my own hands. Sit down and I will tell you all about it"; which
is as follows, as near as I can give it in his own words:

"The reason for our burning it was that there was continual reports
in circulation that the Mormons were coming back to Nauvoo and we were
afraid that they might take it into their heads to do so and as we had had
all the trouble with them we wanted, Judge Sharp, of Carthage, Squire
McGauly, of Appanoose, and myself, of Pontoosuc, determined the destruc-
tion of their temple and by so doing they would not be able to ever again
try to come back. So on the afternoon of the night it was burned, in
order to make arrangements we three met on the prairie about 5 miles south
of Fort Madison, in Illinois, the judge coming from Carthage, the squire
from Appanoose, and I from Pontoosuc, and we met about where the Mormon
Church then stood, 5 miles south of Appanoose, and there we pledged our-
stars to destroy the temple if it cost our lives. So we journeyed
towards Nauvoo on horse back and on the way tried to perfect some plan to
work on. After a while we decided to get the steward to show us through
the temple and then watch our chance to get in our work. So we hid our
horses in a secluded place a mile from town and walked in. We looked about
town until 4 o'clock in the evening. I, in the meantime, had prepared a
bundle of tinder by taking a corn sack and cutting arm holes in the top so
I could put it on under my coat like a coat. I then stuck in as many
tarred rags and sticks as I could carry without being noticed. I then put
it on and secured some matches from a store to light my pipe, and we were
ready.
"We had but little trouble finding the steward and after laboring with him for some time he at last consented to show us through, we claiming to be strangers in the country and were going away that night, and it would be our last chance, perhaps, of ever having an opportunity to visit the temple. So on these conditions he would oblige us, provided we would hurry, which we agreed to do as it was getting late and would be dark before we got through. So after a good deal of delay the key was at last inserted, it not seeming to fit, when the door swung open. We went in with a rush and kept a going, the man was left behind working with the door. He called out for us to stop, but we kept on and I noticed that he left the door with the key in it. I stepped in a side room and the other two kept on; the man ran on after them, and after he had passed me I went back to the door and unlocked it and put the key in my pocket and then ran after them. By this time the man had discovered that I was missing, but when I came up to them I explained to them that I had stopped to look at the crucifixion, but he looked suspicious at me and from that time on he kept right by my side and would not allow us to stop but walked us right around and out.

"It was getting dusk and we had had no chance for me to light my fire and I say that it was telling on my companions, that they were bitterly disappointed and we were compelled to walk out. I told them to come on in haste, that we were late and would miss our boat that we were going away on, so they came along and we stopped behind a house where I told them what I had done, which made them two of the happiest fellows I ever saw. We had to watch but a few minutes until we saw the steward start away on a run, and we knew that he was going for a key or someone and that this was our chance. So leaving the judge and squire on guard I ran back to the temple. I started for the top which I soon gained and found a good place to start my fire where it would get a good start before it would shed any light to be seen from the outside. After seeing it start to a success I began to retrace my steps with joy and a light heart for I was sure that the temple was as good as burned but I now saw that there was a good chance for me to burn with it, for I had lost my way and did not know which way to turn to get out, although I had been through the temple a number of times before.

"I thought if I would succeed at last in getting out that I would be sure to be caught by the steward for he would soon be back and in all probability would have help with him, for I was certain that he would lay the missing key to us. You can imagine my feelings, being lost in a burning temple and in case that I did escape the fire I was sure of an arrest and if arrested some Mormon would be sure to kill me, so I became desperate. I ran first one way and then another in hopes of gaining some passage that I would know so as to find my way out but all to no purpose. I was getting worse lost all the time and I couldn't tell one direction from another and it was as dark as an Egyptian night.

"At last I came to a stairway going up and I took it with the hope that it would lead me back whence I started the fire and I could then
take a new start. After going up two pairs of stairs and through many halls I came to a square turn and a light shone a way down a passage in the opposite direction from what I wanted to go, but I thought best to go and see what it was or who it was, and I soon discovered that it was my fire, which was burning at a fearful rate, sending its fiery tongues clear across the hall. I drew near as I could and I happened to see "Squire McCauly's" handkerchief lying on the floor a short distance from the fire on the opposite side from me. So I knew that my way led through the fire as that room was the end of our trip. Now what was I to do? I knew no other way out but through that fire. I became horror stricken. Was I to be burned up by my own hand? Oh, God! what shall I do? Not knowing as it were what I did I threw my coat over my head and made a dive through that hell of fire, striking my full length on the floor and I rolled over and over until I got out of the reach of the fire. When I got to my feet I took off my coat and extinguished the fire that had caught in the lining, after which I put it on again with difficulty as I tried to run for I had seriously hurt my arm and one of my legs from my fall on the floor, but I was so excited at the time I did not realize the pain until afterwards.

"With the assistance of a few matches I had, that I now thought of, I kept striking them along my way and at last I reached the door that I had gone in and found it standing open. The Squire had come and thrown it open in hopes I might be able to see a star from without. They were satisfied that something had happened on account of my delay. You can imagine our feelings when I stepped through the door. I pulled the door to and locked it and ran away in an easterly direction, the judge and squire following. I was sore, lame and burned and almost choked, not being able to speak, and when I came to a well about 100 yards away I drank and threw the key in the well. I then told the boys to scatter and go to the horses which they did. They got there long before I did for I was almost beyond going at all. After reaching the horses I told them the job was done and for them to go in different directions and get home as soon as possible and avoid meeting anyone. They objected to leaving me as they were afraid that I was hurt internally, which I was fearful was the case. I had inhaled the fire and thought my time had come. I told them to go; that I would pull through. So the 'squire took the river route up the Mississippi to Appanoose, 10 miles; the judge going in a southerly direction to Carthage, which was about 16 miles, and I going the prairie route in the direction of Pontookuc, 12 miles distance. After going about one-half mile I looked toward Nauvoo and I saw a flickering light and the next minute the flames bursted through the roof and lit up all the country around for miles as light as day. I put my horse into a dead run in the direction of the Mississippi timber which I gained in time without being seen, as the people on the road were all in bed, but I had no sooner jumped my horse over a fence into a field and secreted myself behind some bushes when along came seven horsemen on their way to the fire, which had by this time been discovered for twenty miles around. After they had passed I again tried to mount my horse, but found it impossible, and found
that my leg had swollen so that I could not walk. I was in a fix sure enough. What to do I did not know, but I had to do something, so I got down on my hands and knees and began to crawl towards a clump of trees, leading my horse. When I arrived at the timber I fortunately found a large tree which had been cut down leaving a high stump. I got up on the tree; then on the stump, and from there onto my horse, I then went back, jumped my horse over the fence.

"I was suffering so internally that I could but just hold to my saddle. I turned my horse in the direction of 'Squire McCauly's cabin, where I arrived just before day. I found that the 'squire had got home nearly two hours before. He was surprised to be called out by me, but after giving him to understand my condition he cried like a child. He took me in and hid me away for a week, where he and his wife cared for me as they would for one of their own until I was able to go about without suspicion. The judge got home the next night following the night the temple burned, having to ride in the woods on Rock Creek all day, which was in the south side of Rock Creek township."

So after more than fifty years the true history of the burning of the great Mormon temple is made known. The narrator of this story, as told by Mr. Agnew, was a small boy at the time of the burning of the temple, living with his mother just west of Ft. Madison, Iowa, and he recollects seeing the light from the burning building on that memorable night. Over twenty years after the destruction of the temple I became intimately acquainted with all the parties connected with this narrative. They were all men of good standing and wide and favorably known, and they have many relatives and friends in Hancock County that will read this with surprise.

GEO. H. RUDISILL,

BOWLING GREEN, FLORIDA

1For the sources of this article the reader is referred to note 57 of Chapter IX, p. 178 of this work.
A HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE MORMON TEMPLE

AT NAUVOO, ILLINOIS

An Abstract
of a Thesis Presented to
the Department of History and Philosophy of Religion
Brigham Young University

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

by
Don F. Colvin
August 1962
ABSTRACT

The Nauvoo Temple was a unique structure, one which symbolized "Mormonism" in the early period of its history. In its time, the temple stood as the chief structure of the city of Nauvoo. It rivaled all buildings in Illinois and the West during its brief history.

This study reviews the entire history of the temple, from when it was first contemplated until its fateful destruction, and beyond. It sheds light on the setting in which the great edifice was built. Consideration is given to the struggles and sacrifices on the part of workmen and church members who freely gave to erect it. There is unfolded to the reader a year-by-year report on the progress of its erection, from the foundation to the top of its lofty tower. A description of both its external and internal features is provided, along with photographic illustrations and analysis of its architecture. It reveals the quest for, and the effort involved in, supplying the means and material needed. It discusses the theological concepts and practices associated with the building's erection and use, together with a consideration of the various purposes and functions which the temple served. The story is told of the temple's destruction by fire, and the eventual demolition of its walls, considering the disposition of the site down to the present time.

The major contributions of source materials came from the collections in the Historian's Office of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in Salt Lake City, and from the special collections of the Brigham Young University Library at Provo, Utah. The other sources of
significant value were the collection at the Utah State Historical Society Library and the Mormon Collection in the Bancroft Library at the University of California in Berkeley. Helpful materials were also obtained from the Historian of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Independence, Missouri. The sources at the University of Utah, the Genealogical Association Library, and the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers' Museum and Library were not as productive.

A thorough search for, and study of, the newspapers, periodicals, journals, and diaries of the Nauvoo period proved to be of great value in supplying information.

The study brings into focus a number of areas wherein there has been conflict and misunderstanding over the years. The conclusions and findings of the study are summarized in the concluding chapter. They deal with the problem of the temple's completion, location of the stone quarries, whether the temple had the statue of an angel on its tower, and how and by whom the building was destroyed.

The Mormon Temple at Nauvoo furnishes a history which reveals the struggles and faith of the Mormon people. The building played a significant role in their history and destiny. This study has collected the many isolated references to the temple, providing a clearer picture of its dramatic history, and the impact of the building on the people of its time.

ABSTRACT APPROVED:

[Signatures]

Chairman, Advisory Committee

[Signatures]

Member, Advisory Committee

Chairman, Major Department