

WILLIAM G. HARTLEY

1839

*The Saints' Forced
Exodus from Missouri*

*L*ucked between popular Church history chapters about Liberty Jail and Nauvoo is a little-known but vitally important chapter dealing with the Latter-day Saints' seven-month struggle to survive the winter of 1838–39 in Missouri and to leave there by spring 1839. Triggered by Missouri governor Lilburn Boggs's October 1838 extermination order against them, some ten thousand Saints engaged in a mass exodus, many going to Quincy, Illinois. It was difficult, dramatic, sometimes harrowing, and only partly organized. Their tough experiences produced definite impacts—both short- and long-term—on Missouri and Illinois, on the course of the Church, and on individual members.¹

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The Saints' exodus from Missouri took place mostly during winter and involved four main arenas: Far West, Missouri; Quincy, Illinois; a road network between the two cities; and the west shore mudflats across the Mississippi River from Quincy. Because Joseph Smith was in prison during the exodus, attention focuses here on Joseph Smith's parents, his wife Emma, Elders Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, and four selected families: the John and Caroline Butler family, the Newel and Lydia Knight family, the Daniel and Martha Thomas family, and the Levi and Clarissa Hancock family.

Ordered to Leave

On October 27, 1838, three days after Missouri and Mormon militias engaged in the Battle of Crooked River, Governor Boggs issued his infamous extermination order. To his military leaders, it decreed, "The Mormons must be treated as enemies and must be exterminated or driven from the state, if necessary for the public good."² Four days later, that order reached Church leaders and members in northwest Missouri. At the time, perhaps ten thousand Mormons were concentrated in two particular counties. Their chief settlement was Far West in Caldwell County. Far West had a population by then of about five thousand Saints, and another five thousand lived in at least nineteen other Latter-day Saint communities in Caldwell County. In Daviess County on Caldwell County's north side, Saints had begun building about 150 log houses at Adam-ondi-Ahman, and as many as 1,500 Saints in total lived in Daviess County.³

By October 1838, Newel and Lydia Knight and their three children were among the Saints living in and near Far West, the Church's headquarters city. They belonged to a large extended family headed by Joseph Knight Sr., who converted

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

to Mormonism in New York state in 1830, the year the Church was organized. They numbered twelve families with more than sixty souls, having surnames of Knight, DeMille, Peck, Slade, Culver, and Stringham. Joseph Knight's son Newel was Joseph Smith's close friend—the Prophet had performed his and Lydia's wedding in Kirtland and had no followers more loyal than Newel and Lydia.⁴

November 1 brought heartbreak for all Saints in Far West. Newel and all men in the city had to surrender their arms. The next day, Missouri troops brought Joseph and Hyrum Smith and five other prisoners into town in wagons to pick up personal effects and say good-bye. Then three hundred militiamen escorted them away to face trial and prison. That same day Latter-day Saint men assembled at the town square at bayonet point and, one by one, signed deeds that gave their land to the state of Missouri to pay the costs of the “Mormon War.” On November 6, soldiers took more prisoners and then ordered all Saints out of Missouri by spring.⁵ Meanwhile, a militia force headed to Adam-ondi-Ahman, made the Mormons there surrender, and on November 10 gave them ten days to relocate to Far West or elsewhere in Caldwell County.⁶

Mormon Militiamen Escape First

In the exodus, Mormon militiamen were the first to leave—or rather escape. John Lowe Butler, age thirty, and wife Caroline, twenty-six, who had converted in Kentucky three years earlier, lived in Mirabile just south of Far West with their four children. John, tall and strong, had fought off Missourians trying to block Mormons from voting. He rode with the Mormon militia who fought in the Battle of Crooked River. Because the Missouri militia wanted to arrest him, he fled from home on November 2, leaving Caroline and the children to fend as best they could.

Slipping through “the guard,” he had to cross a creek by taking off his clothes and wading across the “bitter cold” water. Then he had to be very careful for days to avoid capture. At times he hid in members’ homes as he headed east. John was one of dozens of Mormon militiamen who fled from Missouri in November. They formed the first wave of the exodus.⁷

The shortest way out of state was to go north sixty to eighty miles into unsettled regions of present-day Iowa. Church leaders told fugitive Charles C. Rich to “flee north into the wilderness and take all that I Could find of the Brethren that was in the Crooked river Battle.” So he and others left Far West at midnight on November 1. At Adam-ondi-Ahman they obtained provisions from fellow Saints. They organized into a company with Rich as captain. Learning that Missouri militia were looking for them, they “set out for Iowa through the wilderness,” enduring snow and cold with “little to eat.” Among the twenty-eight men in this group were Samuel Smith and Phineas and Lorenzo Young. Samuel said they traveled “the most secluded route” they could find. They ran out of provisions and became so weak they couldn’t continue, so they held a council and prayed to know where to hunt. Taking a direction shown him by the Spirit, Samuel and two others found a wigwam where an Indian woman baked cakes for all the company.⁸ After eleven days’ travel, they reached “white Settlements on the Desmoine River” in Iowa. Lorenzo said that his pants were so shredded by bushes that he refused to face the Iowans until someone brought him better pants.⁹ The men split into two groups to avoid attention.¹⁰ They crossed the icy Mississippi River, some at Quincy, where Charles C. Rich said, “We found friends and was kindly received.”¹¹

Another half dozen Mormon militiamen led by Dimick Huntington left separately. At least one man escaped west to

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

Fort Leavenworth. Some sneaked southward to the Missouri River and took boat passage to St. Louis.¹² John Butler's escape route apparently was across northern Missouri. On horseback, he, fellow Kentuckian David Lewis, and Elias Higbee endured December snows, cold, and meager food to reach Quincy, Illinois. By primitive Missouri roads, the distance from Far West to Quincy was about 180 miles. At Quincy, where some Church members lived, John taught school for a short period. An old man who was sympathetic to the needy Saints hired John to teach his children and grandchildren and neighbors' children. John marked time until his family and his mother and brothers could join him in Quincy.¹³

Hard Winter of Waiting

During November 1838, Latter-day Saint settlements in Caldwell and Daviess counties endured a military occupation. "We were not permitted to leave Far West," Anson Call said, "only to get our firewood. We had not the privilege of hunting our cattle and horses."¹⁴ Newel Knight noted that because the Saints were unarmed, they became prey for small parties of armed men "insulting our women, driving off our stock, and plundering." To him "it seemed as though all hell was aroused to do us injury."¹⁵ Newel's cousin Reed Peck said that "some horses, wagons and much other property were stolen from the Mormons by some of the militia who were villains enough to plunder."¹⁶ By late November, most crops around Far West were unharvested, and potatoes still in the ground were "froze solid." Soldiers "rifled" through homes, Albert Rockwood said, and "our sheep & hogs, & horses [are] drove off before our eyes by the Missourians who come in small companies well armed."¹⁷

In neighboring Daviess County, Missouri militia ordered all the Saints out and gave William Huntington and eleven other Mormons four weeks to round up the Latter-day Saints' livestock, wagons, and personal property. Huntington estimated that in Daviess County the Saints lost nearly thirty thousand bushels of corn because of the militia takeover.¹⁸

Far West was ill equipped to become a refugee center for Saints displaced by Missouri militia. Food was scarce and housing inadequate. Those coming from outside Far West suffered because as John Greene wrote, "we have been robbed of our corn, wheat, horses, cattle, cows, hogs, wearing apparel, houses and homes, and indeed, of all that renders life tolerable."¹⁹ On November 9 the *Missouri Republican Daily* reported that the Saints' situation was "a case of great difficulty" because "they are generally poor" and facing starvation. "And where shall they be sent?" the newspaper asked. "Their numbers exceed 5,000 people—without any means and literally beggars—to be thrust upon the charities of Illinois, Iowa, or Wisconsin." Joseph Holbrook, thirty-two, said his wife Nancy "had verry poor health" that fall and winter because of being exposed to "inclement weather by having to remove from place to place as our house had been burned and we were yet left to seek a home whenever our friends could accommodate us and for my safety." Saints "in flourishing condition but a few months before," he said, "were now destitute. I could have commanded some two thousand dollars but now I had only 1 yoke of old oxen and 2 cows left."²⁰

Two families moved in with Newel Knight's family. "Many could not get into houses," Newel said, "and had to take shelter in wagons, tents, and under bedclothes and while in this situation we had a severe snow storm, which rendered their suffering intense." An acre of land in front of Lucy Mack

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

Smith's home became "completely covered with beds, lying in the open sun, where families were compelled to sleep, exposed to all kinds of weather." Houses in Far West were so full, Mother Smith said, that people could not find shelter. "It was enough to make the heart ache to see the children, sick with colds, and crying around their mothers for food, whilst their parents were destitute of the means of making them comfortable."²¹

Northwest Missouri winters can be harsh. During November and December, Joseph C. Kingsbury and Caroline, his wife of two years, lived in a little cabin with meager provisions. Caroline suffered from dropsy, or painful swellings, and the cold intensified her pain.²² Aroet Lucius Hale, age ten, recalled that while his father was helping others, "My dear mother was lying sick in a wagon box in a tent."²³ James Carroll said that his family had to "remain in an open frame in the Cold weather when the Snow fell in torrents and would Blow upon us in the Night and we with our Little ones would have to Crawl out of our Beds while the[y] were Coverd frequently with Snow that would blow in to the frame from the north and we had to endure it."²⁴ William F. Cahoon said, "Both me and my family Suffred much on account of Could & hunger because we was not permitted to go out Side of the guard to obtain wood and provision."²⁵

After her husband John left, Caroline Butler faced three difficult tasks. She worried if John had escaped Missouri or been caught. She had to provide for the family after being deprived of the corn they had grown on their farm, which vigilantes had prevented them from harvesting. John later filed claim for the loss of 240 acres of land, three yoke of oxen, a corn crop, and hogs. Caroline's third task was to find some way to move the family and belongings from Missouri before spring. Caroline said that at one point that winter, Joseph Smith got word to

Emma to send him quilts or bed clothes. “Sister Emma cried and said that they [thieves] had taken all of her bed clothes, except one quilt and blanket, and what could she do?” So Caroline and other sisters told Emma to send hers to Joseph, which she did, and they gave her replacement bedding for her family.²⁶

Negotiations to Halt the Exodus Fail

Some opinions downstate held that Mormons would not have to leave at all. *The Missouri Argus’s* editor argued incorrectly on December 20, 1838, that “they cannot be driven beyond the limits of the state—that is certain. To do so, would be to act with extreme cruelty. . . . If they choose to remain, we must be content. The day has gone by when masses of men can be outlawed, and driven from society to the wilderness, unprotected. . . . The refinement, the charity of our age, will not brook it. . . . Mercy should be the watchword—not blood, not extermination, not misery.”

In December 1838 and early January 1839, the Missouri state legislature, by a close vote, refused to overturn Governor Boggs’s extermination order.²⁷ That left the Saints no choice but to leave Missouri as soon as possible.

Committee for Removal

Hundreds still lacked the means to leave. “Many were stripped of clothing and bedding,” John P. Greene reported, and “many without cattle, horses, or waggons, had no means of conveyance.”²⁸ To provide them help required leadership. On January 16, the imprisoned First Presidency sent instructions to Heber C. Kimball and Brigham Young that said, “Inasmuch as we are in prison, . . . the management of the affairs of the Church devolves on you, that is the Twelve . . . appoint the

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

oldest of those of the Twelve, who were first appointed, to be the president of your quorum.”

Brigham Young was the senior Apostle, hence the presiding Church officer on the ground. Far West Saints met in a public meeting on January 26 to consider measures to expedite the move out of state, given the “seeming impossibility” of moving “in consequence of the extreme poverty of many.”²⁹ A seven-man committee was appointed to find out how many needed help and how much help members could give to those in need.³⁰ A second meeting on January 29 heard a partial report from the committee, after which Brigham Young proposed that Saints covenant “to stand by and assist each other to the utmost of our abilities in removing from the state, and that we will never desert the poor who are worthy” until they are safely out of state. Nearly three hundred made that covenant and signed pledges.³¹

William Huntington headed up a Committee of Removal. Its seven members, soon expanded to eleven, agreed to move first the families of the Presidency and of the other prisoners.³² The committee surveyed the needs and weighed requests for help. They collected donations of furniture, farm implements, and money from farm sales.³³ They sent agents eastward to deposit corn for Saints to use along the way, to contract for ferries, and to ensure security for the travelers.³⁴ Saints used existing roads as much as possible, although some took detours to avoid problems with local residents or to avoid being recognized. An upper route ran directly east from Far West; a lower route ran southeast from Far West and then east through the towns of Keytesville and Huntsville. Both routes merged southwest of the town of Palymra, twenty miles south of Quincy. From there, refugees had to cross the South and North Fabius rivers and mudflats to reach the Mississippi opposite Quincy.³⁵

On February 11 the committee accepted applications for assistance, and the next day they appointed Theodore Turley to “superintend the management of the teams provided for removing the poor.” The plan was for some wagons to go east, unload passengers and belongings at the Mississippi, and then return empty to help others move out. On February 19 the committee sent Charles Bird to visit Caldwell County and William Huntington Far West to determine how many families still needed assistance to move and to solicit means to help them.³⁶ With Joseph Smith’s approval, leaders in Far West decided to sell Church properties in Jackson County to help raise money for the exodus. Also, three men were sent to locate possible settlement sites up the Mississippi River in Illinois.³⁷

Elders Young and Kimball kept in constant contact with the imprisoned First Presidency by correspondence, messenger, and visits. On February 7 and 8, both men visited Liberty Jail, then returned to Far West. Elder Young, when his life seemed in danger, left Far West for Illinois on February 14, but Elder Kimball stayed behind to help with the removals.³⁸

Getting Out of Missouri

Saints had until late March to vacate Missouri, but they started leaving in earnest during January. Five reasons best explain why Saints moved during winter conditions: (1) by January, armed patrols were showing up and threatening the Saints, so in the January 26 public meeting the people agreed to begin moving immediately; (2) the Saints had been told that Joseph Smith would not be released from prison until they all had left Missouri, and the sooner that happened, the better;³⁹ (3) individuals were running out of food and supplies; (4) in February, Far West experienced some stretches of weather that seemed favorable for traveling; and (5) wagons going to Illinois

and then returning to take others needed four to six weeks to make the two trips before the late March deadline.

The exodus had no large, organized wagon trains. Refugees moved as individuals, by families, or in small clusters of wagons whenever they were ready. As one said, those who moved during the winter traveled “in colde weather thinly clad and porly furnished with provisions.”⁴⁰ Women without their husbands had harder times of it than those with husbands.

January Removals

Albert Rockwood and his family left Far West with another family on January 10. Their difficult trip to the Mississippi River took twelve days: “We had snow and rain every day but 2. We had heavy loads, were obliged to walk from 2 to 8 miles a day thro mud and water, camped out on the wet ground 3 nights before we arrived at the River. . . . The river froze over & we were obliged to camp close to the river 3 days and nights before we could cross in the boat, 6 waggons were with us at the time.”⁴¹

By mid-January, Saints were leaving Far West daily.⁴² Joseph Holbrook and two other men, to escape “those that would like to do us harm,” moved out the night of January 20. Holbrook left behind his wife Nancy, who a week later gave birth to their fourth child, and three small children ages seven, five, and two. He and his friends traveled on foot. They reached Quincy on January 29 “and found ourselves in a land of Freedom once more by the help of God and his blessings.” Holbrook observed that “brethren were continually coming to Quincy from the Missouri as I had done.”⁴³ In late January, Ebenezer Robinson and three other men walked from Far West to Quincy “through the snow.”⁴⁴

In January some Missourians gave Levi Hancock, one of the seven presidents of the Seventy, three days to leave. So Levi

“rigged up a foot lathe and soon had two hubs turned out” and built a cart. The family filled the cart with corn. Levi’s nearly five-year-old son Mosiah recalled, “The snow was deep enough to take me to the middle of the thigh, and I was bare footed and in my shirt tail.” They hitched their horse “old Tom” to the cart, Mosiah said, “and father drove the horse and carried the rifle on his shoulder. Mother followed the cart carrying my little brother, Francis Marion in her arms.” Barefooted Mosiah “tried to follow in her tracks.” A little girl, Amy, rode in the cart and felt bad that the others had to “tramp through the snow.”⁴⁵ At the Mississippi River they camped, and “Oh! What a cold night that was!” Mosiah recalled:

The next morning the river was frozen over with ice—great blocks of frozen ice all over the river, and it was slick and clear. That morning we crossed over to Quincy, Illinois. I being barefooted and the ice so rough, I staggered all over. We finally got across, and we were so glad, for before we reached the other side, the river had started to swell and break up. Father said, “Run, Mosiah,” and I did run! We all just made it on the opposite bank when the ice started to snap and pile up in great heaps, and the water broke thru!⁴⁶

February Accounts

The Murdock family. During February the migration became more intense. The John Murdock family left on February 4 without “any team or animal or carriage of any kind.” They put Mrs. Murdock and the household furniture in a Brother Humphrey’s wagon. John and his son Orrice walked. Three days later they reached De Witt, where they sold a property deed and bought a yoke of steers for \$25 and a wagon for \$30. They restarted on February 14 and reached the Mississippi two

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

weeks later, on March 1, where they camped and waited for more than a week.⁴⁷

The Smith family. Joseph Smith's parents tried to leave early in February, but Lucy said, "Just as we got our goods into the waggon, a man came to us and said, that Sidney Rigdon's family were ready to start, and must have the waggon immediately. Accordingly, our goods were taken out." They waited until another team came for them. "We put our goods into the wagon a second time, but the wagon was wanted for Emma and her family, so our goods were again taken out."⁴⁸ Stephen Markham, a member of the Committee of Removal, helped Emma Smith leave on February 7. They reached the bank of the Mississippi in eight days and found the river frozen over. Emma crossed the ice carefully, walking apart from the wagon. She carried two children while two others hung on to her skirt. Tied to her waist were heavy bags containing Joseph's papers.⁴⁹ Brother Markham then drove the wagon back to Far West to bring others out.

Anson Call. In mid-February, Anson Call headed east. "The weather was cold and severe, with snow to the depth of 1 foot. The first night, our wagon tipped over into the creek. The second day we had to cross a long prairie, and were not able to reach the settlement. Twas a very cold and blustering night." They put clothes over the wagon tongue to make a tent and put their beds underneath. As they moved on they found "camp fires and tent poles already struck nearly all the way after this," apparently provided by the Committee of Removal.⁵⁰

The Young and Kimball families. Brigham Young, in danger from anti-Mormons, joined the exodus on February 14. He helped shepherd Saints across Missouri by "advancing with one part of the camp as rapidly and as far as possible" and then returning with the teams to move others out.⁵¹ Elder Heber C.

Kimball sent his family with the Youngs. "I fitted up a small wagon, procured a span of ponies, and sent my Wife and three children, in company with Bro. Brigham Young and his family, with several others," Kimball said. "Every thing my family took with them out of Missouri, could have been packed on the backs of two horses; the mob took all the rest."⁵²

The Knight family. Newel Knight had a wagon but no team. So, he said, "Sold my cook stove and the only cow the mob had not killed." With that money he hired a man with a team to drive him, Lydia, and their three children east. They pulled out of Far West on February 18, leaving behind a house and farm. At times, deep snows rubbed their wagon hubs during the journey. In intense cold, Lydia recalled, they sometimes scraped away snow beside the wagon so they could put down their beds at night. At Huntsville, the driver said his horses could not go on, so the Knights unhitched the wagon and camped. Newel prayed for help, for "I knew not how to extricate myself but as I had never been forsaken by my Heavenly Father I committed myself and family into his care." For a week they were stranded, but finally a man asked his son to drive the Knights the rest of the way. Brigham Young's family was also stranded at Huntsville, having too many goods for their wagon to haul. Newel said, "Bro. Young put on board some of his goods" into the wagon carrying the Knights, and both families resumed their journeys. A few days later, the horses ran away. The oxen they had left could not pull all the load, so Newel unloaded part of his and Brigham Young's goods and left them in the care of a friendly resident. Constant delays meant that the Knights did not reach the Mississippi River until early May.

Joseph Smith's parents. On February 19 or 20, Joseph Smith's parents, Joseph Sr. and Lucy, finally joined the exodus. "After a long time," Mother Smith said, "We succeeded . . . in getting

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

one single wagon to convey beds, clothing, and provisions for our family,” and luggage. Her son Don Carlos, “with his family and the remainder of his baggage, was crowded into a buggy, and went in the same company with us.” They encountered continuous rains and had to travel through mud. “When we came to within six miles of the Mississippi river, the weather grew colder, and, in the place of rain we had snow and hail.” They walked six miles across low and swampy ground, sinking to their ankles in mud. Reaching the river, they joined other Saints waiting to cross who had no shelter. Snow was six inches deep. “The next morning our beds were covered with snow,” Lucy said, and they were unable to light a fire. Her fugitive son Samuel came from Quincy and arranged for a ferryman to take the Smith party across. “About sunset we landed in Quincy,” Lucy said. “Here Samuel had hired a house and we moved into it, with four other families.”⁵³

The Thomas family. A later First Presidency report about the exodus noted that “women and children marked their footsteps on the frozen ground with blood, it being the dead of winter.”⁵⁴ Was this an exaggeration? Not for Daniel Stillwell and Martha Payne Jones Thomas and their family. They left Far West on February 14. “We loaded up our little effects into a wagon and with one small pair of steers we started out with five children [ages twelve, nine, seven, four, and two] in our family and only one pair of shoes amongst them,” Daniel wrote. Their first twenty miles was through snow six inches deep. Martha, about eight months pregnant, said, “To hear them [children] crying at night with their feet cracked and bleeding” was hardly bearable. When the family arrived opposite Quincy, they became “ice bound for two weeks.” While they waited, a Brother Brunson came from Quincy and asked campers to donate their outfits to go back and assist in removing the poor.

The Thomases complied. "Out went everything by the log," Martha said, "the looking glass by a stump." That night Martha, soon to give birth, became ill, so Daniel rigged up a bed frame made of forked sticks and rope strands, and then drove in the frozen ground four six-foot poles topped by cross poles, hung quilts all around, and left openings at the bottom "so the heat of the log fire would shine in" to keep them warm. After one severe storm, Daniel said, "Our corn bread was frozen so hard I had to take the ax and break it and give it to the children to gnaw at, the bread looking like chunks of ice." As many as one hundred families were camped along the banks, he said.

When the river opened, the Thomases used two boats to move their effects across, while Daniel and son Morgan, twelve, stayed behind to ferry the cow across later.⁵⁵ Martha and the children reached the Quincy side and waited, sitting at night on their bed, wrapped in bed clothes and shivering in the cold wind until Daniel arrived. They moved into a Brother Wiswanger's crowded home. A few days later, Martha gave birth to a son she named after the Prophet.⁵⁶

The Hammer family. Another story about bleeding feet involves Nancy Hammer, whose husband Austin was murdered in the Haun's Mill Massacre a few months earlier. With other refugees, she and six children ages two through nine accompanied their small wagon, pulled by a blind horse. They took what "scanty provisions we could muster." They walked and slept under the sky. There was "scarcely a day while we were on the road that it did not either snow or rain," son John said. At night they would build fires if they could find firewood. Only his mother and sisters had shoes, but these wore out and became almost useless before they reached Illinois. All but the youngest two "had to walk every step of the entire distance." They "were almost barefooted and some had to wrap their feet in clothes in

order to keep them from freezing and protect them from the sharp points of the frozen ground." Son John, nine, later said that "often the blood from our feet marked the frozen earth."⁵⁷

The Butler and Smoot families. Caroline Butler, whose husband had fled Missouri in November, couldn't care for her four young children, ages seven years to two months, and drive her wagon at the same time. So she made a deal with Abraham O. Smoot and Martha, his bride of three months. The Smoots lacked a team, so their wagon was useless. Abraham agreed to drive the Butlers' wagon and two-horse team for Caroline, and Caroline let the Smoots put their baggage in the Butler wagon. The group then included one man, two women, and children ages seven, four, three, and one. They started in February, "but it was bitter cold," and they suffered fearfully, Caroline said. Soon after starting, her eyes became infected, so Martha Smoot walked beside her and led her along for five or six days. Baggage filled the wagon, so Martha and Caroline sometimes took turns riding next to Abraham, the driver, while the other walked with and carried children. They averaged ten miles per day.

One day while Martha was sitting in the front of the wagon with three-year-old Keziah Butler on her lap, one of the horses began to kick. It struck Martha on the knees and little Keziah above the eyes. Both screamed loudly, and Caroline ran back to aid them. She found them both bleeding badly. A woman living in a nearby house ran to find out what was wrong. Seeing the injuries, she rushed back to her house and brought back camphor, brown paper, and a pan of warm water. She said she was sorry to see the Mormons suffer so much and be driven from their homes. Caroline went ahead and brought back some elders from a camp ahead to give Martha and Keziah blessings. "They got some better," Caroline said.⁵⁸

The Butlers and Smoots reached the Mississippi on March 10 or 11. Fugitive John Butler, in Quincy, learned of their arrival, and he rowed across the river in a canoe, dodging ice. He had been separated from the family for three months or more. He could find no way to bring the Butlers' wagon across the river, so he spent the night with his family. When morning came, he and Abraham Smoot crossed to Quincy, leaving their families with the wagon. A day or two later, a ferry finally dodged through the ice and brought the women and children across.⁵⁹

At Far West on February 22, Eliza R. Snow reported that a man who had just arrived from Illinois had counted 220 wagons between Far West and the Mississippi.⁶⁰ If that figure is accurate, and if wagons helped transport an average of four people each, then the man had passed about a thousand Saints on the road.

March Accounts

On March 5, Bishop Edward Partridge reported in Quincy that ice had been running for three days so that no one could cross the Mississippi. Quincy, he said, was full of members—even though Saints were scattering out from there almost constantly.⁶¹ That same day, Eliza R. Snow and relatives, who had wintered seven miles from Far West, started for Illinois.⁶² “After a night of rain, which changed to snow and covered the ground in the morning,” she said, “we thawed our tent which was stiffly frozen, by holding and turning it alternately before a blazing fire, until it could be folded for packing, and, while we all shivered and shook with cold, we started.” Sun melted the snow, increasing the depth of the mud and rendering travel almost impossible. She said, “The teams were puffing and the

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

wagons dragging so heavily that we were all on foot, tugging along as best we could.”⁶³

During Zera Pulsipher's exodus that March, he and his son-in-law lost horses. Along the way, he said he “had to stop among strangers with my daughter who had given birth to a child on the prairie.”⁶⁴ Elisha Whiting said his family was “driven in the month of March through cold storms of snow and rain, having to make our beds on the cold wet ground which when we arose in the morning we often found drenched with water and then obliged to load our wet bedding into the waggon and move slowly forward.”⁶⁵

About March 18, Wilford Woodruff, in Quincy and newly back from a mission, went to the river and looked across “and saw a great many of the Saints, old and young, lying in the mud and water, in a rainstorm, without tent or covering. . . . The sight filled my eyes with tears, while my heart was made glad at the cheerfulness of the Saints in the midst of their affliction.”⁶⁶ He visited Saints on his side of the river who were camped “in a sufering Condition with Cold, rain & mud & some want of food.”⁶⁷

Fugitive Joseph Holbrook, two months after leaving his expectant wife and three children on January 20, learned of their arrival at the Mississippi River late in March. He crossed the river “and found some hundred of the brethren waiting for the new ferry boat to be completed, which was done the next day. I found my family in good health though in the mud and snow half a leg deep in the camp. I now saw my little daughter, Nancy Jane, for the first time about two months old. . . . My family . . . had not heard anything from me during this time, neither dare I write to [them].”⁶⁸

At a March 17 meeting, Saints in Quincy heard a letter read from the Committee of Removal in Far West asking for “teams

& money for the removing of fifty families of poor Saints from far west to Quincy.”⁶⁹ On March 29 the committee in Quincy wrote to their counterparts in Far West sympathizing with their “extreme labor and travail” to move out the last poor Saints. “We are sensible, brethren, that you have done all that you could do in removing the poor Saints,” they said, adding that “nor have we, brethren, been backward in exerting our energies” for that purpose. After “deliberating on the best means” to finish the job, “we have thought that considering the bad state of the roads, the expense of ferrage in consequence of high water, that the teams are all nearly worn out, and the brethren here very poor and very much scattered” that the best solution was to “forward the remainder of the poor brethren by water.” By contracting with a steam boat, “the poor brethren might all be removed at once” and the Far West committee would be free to get out of the state.⁷⁰

Kind Hearts in Quincy

Saints chose to go to Quincy for several reasons. To reach safety in Illinois, the closest state, they had to cross the broad Mississippi River, and Quincy had ferryboat facilities. Quincy was the closest Illinois city to Far West. Scores of Church members were living there, including Mary Jane York, William Hickman, John P. Greene, and Wandle Mace. Greene, a Quincy innkeeper and cousin by marriage to Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, encouraged the Apostles and other Saints to come there. Another attraction was that unsettled lands were available in the vicinity.⁷¹

Quincy is on the east bank of the Mississippi on a limestone bluff 125 feet above the river.⁷² It is about 130 miles upriver

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

from St. Louis and 45 miles directly south of where Nauvoo now is. It is the county seat for Adams County. Adams County, organized in 1825, was named after John Quincy Adams, who that year became America's sixth president, and the town of Quincy received his middle name. By 1838 Quincy had a strong population base of sixteen hundred residents, mostly Germans and New Englanders, and several industries and businesses, including "its share of coopers and cabinet-makers, saddlers and leather-makers, and a pork packing and meat processing center." Quincy was on its way to prosperity.⁷³

Assistance by Mormons Living in Quincy

Church members living in Quincy and nearby tried to help the refugees when they crossed the river. John P. Greene reported that during the months of February and March, "the Mormons who were already in Quincy, formed a committee among themselves, to aid to the best of their power the committee of Far West in giving assistance to their suffering brethren. They received them as they came, sent forward all who had means and strength into the interior, provided the poor and sick with lodgings, fuel, food and clothing."⁷⁴ Wandle Mace opened his house to the refugees. "Many of the Saints were glad to find shelter in my house from the storms," he said. "Many nights the floors, upstairs and down, were covered with beds so closely it was impossible to set a foot anywhere without stepping on someone else's bed."⁷⁵

Emma Smith and the children arrived on February 15.⁷⁶ They moved in with Judge John Cleveland and his Latter-day Saint wife, Sarah, four miles east of Quincy. Sarah later became Emma's first counselor in the Nauvoo Relief Society.⁷⁷

Quincy's Compassion

On February 23, the *Quincy Whig* reported that Saints were “coming in from all quarters” and that “for several days they have been crossing at this place, bringing with them the wreck of what they could save from their ruthless oppressors. . . . They appear, so far as we have seen, to be a mild, inoffensive people, who could not have given cause for the persecution they have met with.” City leaders and residents suddenly had to deal with a humanitarian crisis thrust upon them. Their hospitality stemmed more from pity than anything else. While locals let the suffering Saints crowd into farms, sheds, huts, and tents, they judged the refugees to be “generally of the poorer and more illiterate classes.”⁷⁸ On February 25, Quincy leaders met and adopted measures to provide relief. They asked a committee of Latter-day Saints to provide them facts about the needy. The response, signed by Elias Higbee and John P. Greene, stated that “if we should say what our present wants are, it would be beyond all calculation; as we have been robbed of our corn, wheat, horses, cattle, cows, hogs, wearing apparel, houses and homes.” Twenty widows were entirely destitute. Innumerable able-bodied men needed jobs. “Give us employment,” the Saints pleaded, “rent us farms, and allow us the protection and privileges of other citizens.”

The Quincy citizens’ committee passed a resolution which said that the Saints “are entitled to our sympathy and kindest regard.” Any Saints who because of sickness or destitution found themselves homeless, the committee decided, should appeal directly for assistance. Further, the committee agreed to find employment for those willing and able to labor.⁷⁹ In its March 2 issue, the *Quincy Whig* termed the Saints crossing the Mississippi River “objects of charity.” Because they had been “thrown upon our shores destitute, through the oppressive

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

people of Missouri, common humanity must oblige us to aid and relieve them all in our power.”⁸⁰

On March 5, Bishop Partridge reported from Quincy to Joseph Smith, “The people here receive us kindly” and “are willing that we should enjoy the privileges guaranteed to all civil people without molestation.”⁸¹

Joseph Smith Sr. and wife Lucy rented a house or part of it on the northeast corner of Sixth and Hampshire streets.⁸² Lucy said ladies in Quincy sent them “every delicacy which the city afforded.”⁸³ Residents proffered employment. Aroet Hale said a Mr. Stilson employed his father.⁸⁴ William Cahoon noted that a family named Travis offered him employment;⁸⁵ Mr. Travis also hired refugee Truman Angell to frame a barn.⁸⁶

As soon as John Butler’s family arrived, they “had no place to go and it was bitter cold,” John said. The old man for whom John taught school treated them generously. He operated a large butcher shop by the river and a wholesale store by the boat landing. He also owned and rented out ten or twelve small houses he had built. When the man saw the Saints’ plight, he told his tenants to go elsewhere, “for the Mormons were coming and they had no place to go and he was going to let his apartments to them.” He invited John to bring his family up to one of his houses where they could live for a while. He never charged them rent. He told the Butlers to go to his butcher shop and take meat when they wanted some. Three or four Latter-day Saint families lived in his houses adjoining the Butlers’, and the man treated them all with kindness, which “seemed a new thing to us,” John confessed. John said that Quincy residents “generally were kind” to the Saints “all over the place.” The Butlers stayed in Quincy for three or four weeks. Then, because it was planting season, they moved about ten miles out and rented a farm.⁸⁷

It is not known how many Saints temporarily took refuge in Quincy. Many found refuge not only in Quincy but throughout Adams County and all over western Illinois. Quincy's compassion, noted historian Richard E. Bennett, "saved the saints as a people and may even have saved the Church as an institution."⁸⁸

Completing the Exodus

Assigned by the Committee of Removal, David Rogers visited Jackson County on March 15, sold Church properties, raised some \$2,700, and brought the funds to Far West by mid-April.⁸⁹ "In consequence of the sale of Lands in Jackson County," William Huntington, head of the Committee of Removal, said, "We ware able to remove All the poor who had a desire To leave the state" by April 13, the day he left Far West. Isaac Laney said the committee had moved all but thirty or forty families when armed men from Daviess County ordered him and others to be "out of the County by the next Friday night which was giving us Six dayes for to do that that Requird a month." So the committee urgently hired teams and sent families to Tenney's Grove, twenty miles away, with a minimum of personal belongings. A number of teams arrived from Illinois to help move the last families.⁹⁰

By mid-April, the mobs lost patience with the Saints still in Caldwell County. Elder Kimball said he stayed behind to assist members of the Committee of Removal and to "wait upon those in prison." In Far West he had to hide out in the woods during daytime.⁹¹ On April 18, when a group of anti-Mormons found him at the public square, they threatened to blow his brains out and tried to ride over him with their horses. He went to the room where the Committee of Removal was meeting and told them to wind up affairs and "be off" to save their lives.

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

Shortly, twelve mobbers with rifles entered the tithing office and broke windows, tables, chairs, and “seventeen clocks into matchwood.” One threw iron pots at Theodore Turley, hitting him in the shoulder. Mobbers shot cows while girls were milking them. They threatened to send the committee “to hell jumping” and “put daylight through them.” The men gathered up what they could and hastily fled from Far West within the hour. After they left, the mob plundered thousands of dollars’ worth of property donated to help the poor move. One mobber shot a cow and, while it was still alive, skinned off a strip of hide from its nose to its tail, and tied his horse to a stump with it. During the vandalism spree, “a great portion of the records of the committee, accounts, history, etc. were destroyed or lost.”⁹²

A year earlier, Joseph Smith had received a commandment for the Twelve to leave for missions “over the great waters” from the Far West temple site on April 26, 1839 (Doctrine and Covenants 118). Anti-Mormons had vowed to keep that ceremony from happening. Some members of the Twelve left Quincy on April 18, 1839, to travel secretly to Far West to fulfill their instruction. That party came to include Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, and John Taylor. Also there were Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith, who were soon to be ordained as Apostles. They passed Saints heading east, including Elder John E. Page, who turned around and joined them. On March 21 Wilford Woodruff said the apostolic company passed through Huntsville and found “the roads were full of Saints that were fleeing Missouri.”⁹³ On April 24 they met three members of the Committee of Removal who had just been driven from Far West, who also joined them. The Apostles’ group arrived at Far West soon after midnight on April 26. They held a short conference in one of the homes and excommunicated thirty-one

“unworthies.” In addition to the Apostles, six members of the committee and about a dozen other members were present. A stone weighing about a ton was rolled to the southeast corner of the site. Alpheus Cutler placed it in position. The five Apostles who were present—Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, John E. Page, and John Taylor—ordained Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith as Apostles and two men who had just been liberated from the Richmond prison, Darwin Chase and Norman Shearer, as Seventies. The Twelve then offered kneeling prayer at the southeast cornerstone, sang “Adam-ondi-Ahman,” and dismissed so they could leave there for their missions to England. They had fulfilled the commandment.⁹⁴

In the dark the group reached Tenney’s Grove and there added to their group the “last company of the poor” needing help to reach Quincy.⁹⁵ At that point, Brigham Young felt that the covenant to move the poor Saints had been fulfilled: “We had entered into a covenant to see the poor Saints all moved out of Missouri to Illinois, that they might be delivered out of the hands of such vile persecutors, and we spared no pains to accomplish this object until the Lord gave us the desires of our heart. We had the last company of the poor with us that could be removed.”⁹⁶

But the exodus was not quite complete because five prisoners were still in Liberty Jail and six in Richmond’s jail, including King Follett, who had just been arrested that month while trying to leave Missouri.⁹⁷ During a change of venue from Daviess to Boone County, Joseph Smith and the four others who had been in Liberty Jail were allowed to escape on April 16, and they found their way to Illinois safely.⁹⁸ That summer the prisoners who had been at Richmond escaped confinement, except King Follett. By October 1839, King Follett had his trial, and because

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

the charges of robbery were unsubstantiated, he was set free.⁹⁹ At that point the Saints' exodus from Missouri was finished, and Governor Boggs's extermination order had succeeded in removing Saints from northwest Missouri. However, a significant number had taken refuge in St. Louis, a Missouri city that became "an oasis of tolerance" for Mormons.¹⁰⁰

Joseph Smith's Return

In the morning of April 22, Dimick Huntington, at Emma Smith's request, went down to the river's edge to inquire about news from the West and spotted the Prophet. "My God is it you Bro. Joseph. He raised his hand and stopped me saying Hush, Hush." Huntington said that Joseph had come by ferryboat about 8:00 a.m. and "was drest in an old pair of boots full of holes, pants torn, tucked inside of boots, blue cloak with collar turned up, wide brim black hat, rim sloped down, not been shaved for some time, looked pale & haggard." Dimick asked if he wished to see his father and mother, but Joseph wanted to see Emma and the children first. When he reached the Clevelands', Emma recognized him as he dismounted from his horse and met him half way to the gate."¹⁰¹

A Quincy newspaper reporter publicized the arrival of Joseph Smith and his prison companions, concluding with a favorable description of the Church President and Prophet: "We had supposed from the stories and statements we had read of 'Jo Smith' (as he is termed in the papers) to find him a very illiterate, uncouth sort of man; but from a long conversation, we acknowledge an agreeable disappointment. In conversation, he appears intelligent and candid, and divested of all malicious thought and feeling towards his relentless persecutors."¹⁰²

Joseph Smith quickly finalized plans for a new gathering place for the homeless Saints upriver at Commerce, soon to be

renamed Nauvoo. When the Twelve returned from Far West in early May, they rejoiced to see him a free man in Illinois. Saints gathered for a general conference on May 4–6 held in a Presbyterian campground two miles north of Quincy. Joseph Smith presided. “Much business of consequence was accomplished during the day,” Elder Woodruff noted, adding, “It truly gave us great Joy to once more sit in conference with Br. Joseph.”¹⁰³ Perrigrine Sessions said that Joseph being there “gave us much joy to see his face among the Saints and here the voice of inspiration that flowed from his lips this caused our drooping spirits to revive as we were like sheap with out a shepherd that had been scatered in a cloudy and dark day.”¹⁰⁴ After Joseph heard the congregation enthusiastically sing the hymn “Zion, City of Our God,” Wandle Mace observed that Joseph rose to speak but had difficulty controlling his emotions: “To look upon the Saints who had been driven from their homes, and scattered as they were, among strangers, without homes, robbed of everything, and to see them under all these trying circumstances assemble to this General Conference from all the region around, and sing of Zion, the city of our God, with so much spirit, showing their love and confidence in the gospel, and the pleasure he felt in meeting with them. He could scarcely refrain from weeping.”¹⁰⁵

Petitions for Redress

Once safely in Illinois, the Saints still had some unfinished business related to their expulsion from Missouri. While in Liberty Jail, Joseph Smith had instructed them to compile statements and affidavits about their losses and sufferings “with the design of securing redress from the federal government for the losses they suffered in Missouri” (Doctrine and Covenants 123:1–13). In response, when Saints reached safety they began

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

filling out petitions for redress and having them notarized by justices of the peace and court clerks in two counties in Iowa and ten in Illinois.¹⁰⁶ Fortunately, 678 petitions survive. In total, these petitioners' losses totaled \$2,275,789—an average of \$3,761 per petitioner.¹⁰⁷ In 2007 dollars, that equals \$52,325,000 total, or \$87,000 per petitioner.¹⁰⁸ The extended Knight family's losses were at least \$14,562, or about \$335,000 in today's currency. Joseph Knight Jr., for one, claimed \$200 for a mill burned down, \$50 for a house burned, \$50 for 3 acres of land and 50 peach trees, \$25 for hay and corn, \$475 for losses of land and town properties, and \$150 for expenses for moving twice. Leaders compiled these petitions and affidavits and presented them three times, possibly four, to U.S. president Martin Van Buren and to Congress, but the federal government refused to act on them.¹⁰⁹

Nauvoo Becomes the New Gathering Center

After inspections, the Church agreed to buy twenty thousand acres of land at Commerce, Illinois, and across the river in Lee County, Iowa. On May 10, Joseph Smith and his family moved into a small, two-story log house at Commerce, fifty miles north of Quincy, "hoping that I and my friends may here find a resting place for a little season at least."¹¹⁰ Church headquarters moved there, as did large numbers of the exiled Saints. These souls, by and large, were poor, bedraggled, and sickly. Many of them started from scratch and built up religious communities in Illinois and Iowa.

Short- and Long-Term Consequences

This forced expulsion of Saints from Missouri produced short- and long-term consequences, as enumerated here for various of the parties involved.

Mormon regard for Quincy. In April 1839, Eliza R. Snow wrote a poem titled “To the Citizens of Quincy” to thank “Ye noble, gen’rous hearted Citizens.”¹¹¹ It was published on page 1 of the *Quincy Whig* on May 11, 1839. The poem praised those “who have put forth your liberal hand to meet / The urgent wants of the oppress’d and poor!” In 1841 Joseph and Hyrum Smith and Sidney Rigdon, the First Presidency, issued a proclamation of appreciation, saying, “It would be impossible to enumerate all those who in our time of deep distress, nobly came forward to our relief and like the good Samaritan poured oil into our wounds and contributed liberally to our necessities as the citizens of Quincy en masse and the people of Illinois generally seemed to emulate each other in the labor of love.”¹¹²

In Quincy’s Washington Park stands a simple historical marker erected in 1976 to memorialize the Saints’ exodus. It notes, “Many of them crossed into Illinois at Quincy and were made welcome by the people here.” In recent years, several related commemoration events have taken place in Quincy.¹¹³

A test passed by the faithful. Being forced from Missouri posed a test of faith that most Saints passed, but some failed, as the extended Knight family illustrates. When those families reached Illinois early in 1839, they were poor, worn out, and ragged looking. No one could have recognized them as the prosperous Yankees they had once been in New York before embracing Mormonism. First in Ohio and then three times in Missouri, they had practiced starting over. To begin again in Illinois was heartbreaking. But only three of the two dozen adults in Knight family network faltered. About sixty individuals in that network restructured their everyday lives in or near Nauvoo and continued to follow Joseph Smith.¹¹⁴ John Lowe Butler became a trusted workhorse for Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, serving as one of Joseph’s official, ordained

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

bodyguards and later as a bishop in Spanish Fork, Utah. The Thomas family stayed strong in the faith and emigrated to Utah in 1849. Levi Ward Hancock continued as a President of the Seventy, marched to California in the Mormon Battalion, was a pioneer in Manti and southern Utah, and served as a patriarch. Abraham O. Smoot became mayor of Salt Lake City and later Provo, president of the Utah Stake, and a promoter of Brigham Young Academy.

A decision to continue to gather. President Sidney Rigdon, Bishop Edward Partridge, and a few others felt the Saints could avoid problems like the ones they had in Missouri by spreading out rather than gathering together into Latter-day Saint communities. However, President Young advised the Saints to gather in order to help each other better. Joseph Smith, when asked, advised leaders to obtain properties where the Saints could collect rather than scatter, and he developed Nauvoo to be the next gathering place.¹¹⁵

Health problems and deaths. Winter exposure and food shortages in Caldwell County and during exodus caused health problems for many and a host of deaths during 1839. During the exodus, Truman Angell's wife Elizabeth, already ill, took a "cold upon cold" and was expected to die. Her health "partially returned, but she has never been able to work much since," her husband wrote in 1845.¹¹⁶ A plague of sickness that befell Nauvoo residents in the summer of 1839 was due in large measure to physical debility caused by sufferings during the previous year.¹¹⁷ Benjamin F. Johnson observed that during the rest of 1839 in the Nauvoo area, "the people had flocked in from the terrible exposures of the past and Nearly every one was Sick with intemitant or other fevers of which many died—In this time of great Sickness poverty & death."¹¹⁸ Henry Jackson claimed the March's "Stormy blasts of Snow & rain" so

affected his sight that he was “not able to work.”¹¹⁹ The exodus caused “considerable sickness” for the Levi Hancock family.¹²⁰ Mosiah Hancock, the boy who had crossed the Mississippi ice barefoot, was an emaciated lad for many months. “My mother called my legs pipe stems, and my arms straws!” he said.¹²¹ James Golligher claimed he was “exposed to the weather in which sickness followed & the loss of one of my Children.”¹²² Innumerable such examples can be cited.

Mental and emotional scars. The Saints’ persecution in several states and then expulsion by order of a state governor helps explain why they obtained a charter for a self-defensive city-state in Nauvoo with the Nauvoo Legion; why some Saints justified retaliation against persecutors; why many gladly exited the United States and headed toward Mexican territory in 1846; and why many Saints, if not the Church, expressed distaste for judges, courts, deputies, the federal army during the Utah War, and antipolygamy laws. Some participants in the Missouri exodus vented powerful feelings of anger, horror, outrage, and persecution. John Lowe Butler, for one, wanted his written record to stand as a witness against Missourians who were cruel to his suffering family during the exodus and earlier.¹²³

Ghost towns and farms. When the Saints pulled out of Far West, their houses, barns, fences, stores, schools, farms, farm equipment, household goods, livestock, and stored grain fell into non-Mormons’ hands. In time, most of the houses were torn down for firewood or hauled away. The streets and city square became corn fields. The temple site has since been salvaged and given modern landscaping, but no houses remain. The city cemetery’s tombstones marking where some two hundred Saints are buried are long gone, and the site has become farmland. At Adam-ondi-Ahman, Saints in October

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

1838 were building about 150 log houses, but most of them were not finished by the time the Saints left. In 1888 Lyman Wight's cabin was the only building standing in "Ahman," and by 1970 it was totally gone.¹²⁴

Economic impact on Illinois and Iowa. The large body of displaced Saints became an economic force and political presence in Illinois and Iowa Territory. They developed communities, farms, roads, livestock herds, commerce, and trade in parts of Adam and Hancock counties, Illinois, and in Lee County, Iowa.

A storehouse of historical documents and records. The exodus from Missouri generated a rich store of documents and records. These include the petitions for redress, prison letters, other correspondence, diaries, autobiographies and memoirs, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and a mass of official Missouri government records.

Extermination order not rescinded for 137 years. Governor Bogg's infamous extermination order remained a stain on Missouri's character for 137 years until June 25, 1976, when Missouri governor Christopher S. Bond signed an executive order rescinding it.¹²⁵ Animosity toward Missourians by Mormons and by Missourians toward Mormons lasted for generations.

Training experience for 1846 exodus. Finally, in some respects, the exodus from Missouri was a training exercise for the Saints' exodus from Nauvoo seven years later. That larger move was led by Brigham Young and other Apostles whose first tutorial about moving a mass of people came during the Missouri exodus. Brigham Young, remembering the covenant he had asked the Saints in Far West to make to help move those in need, had members similarly covenant when preparing to leave Nauvoo for the West. That covenant became the foundation

for the Church's emigration programs from then until 1869, producing the Perpetual Emigrating Fund in 1849, the handcart program from 1856 to 1860, and the 1860s team trains going "down and back" from Utah to provide transportation to Utah for emigrants in need.¹²⁶

Notes

1. William G. Hartley, "'Almost Too Intolerable a Burthen': The Winter Exodus from Missouri, 1838–1839," *Journal of Mormon History* 18 (Fall 1992): 6–40.

2. Leland H. Gentry, "A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri, from 1836 to 1839" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1965), 273–85; Stephen C. LeSueur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987), 150–53.

3. LaMar C. Berrett and others, eds., *Sacred Places*, vol. 4: *Missouri* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2004), 288–89, 361, 402.

4. William G. Hartley, *"Stand by My Servant Joseph": The Story of the Joseph Knight Family and the Restoration* (Salt Lake City: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History at Brigham Young University and Deseret Book, 2003); and William G. Hartley, "Newel and Lydia Bailey Knight's Kirtland Love Story and Historic Wedding," *BYU Studies* 39, no. 4 (2000): 6–22.

5. Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 325–27; Alexander L. Baugh, "A Call to Arms: The 1838 Mormon Defense of Northern Missouri" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1996), 340–47.

6. Baugh, "A Call to Arms," 326–29.

7. William G. Hartley, *My Best for the Kingdom: The History and Autobiography of John Lowe Butler, a Mormon Frontiersman* (Salt Lake City: Aspen Books, 1993), 81–84; Baugh, "Call to Arms," 392–96.

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

8. Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy's Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001), 691–92.

9. Leonard J. Arrington, *Charles C. Rich* (Provo, UT: BYU Press, 1974), 60; Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861* (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press and the Utah State Historical Society, 1964), xvi; Lorenzo Dow Young, “Recollections,” *Four Faith Promoting Classics* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968), 52–54.

10. Arrington, *Charles C. Rich*, 60–61.

11. Charles C. Rich, “A Sketch that I was an eye witness to in the state of Missouri,” holograph, Charles C. Rich Papers, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

12. Baugh, “Call to Arms,” 328–29.

13. Hartley, *My Best for the Kingdom*, 82–84.

14. “Autobiography of Anson Call,” typescript, 13, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

15. Hartley, *Stand by My Servant Joseph*, 291; Reed Peck, *Reed Peck Manuscript* (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilms reprint, n.d.), 29.

16. Baugh, “Call to Arms,” 395; *Reed Peck Manuscript*, 29.

17. Dean C. Jesse and David J. Whittaker, “The Last Months of Mormonism in Missouri: The Albert Perry Rockwood Journal,” *BYU Studies* 28 (Winter 1988): 27–29.

18. “Diaries of William Huntington,” typescript, in *Miscellaneous Mormon Diaries*, vol. 16, Lee Library, 6–7; Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976 reprint), 3:210.

19. John P. Greene, *Facts Relative to the Expulsion of the Mormons or Latter-day Saints from the State of Missouri, Under the “Exterminating Order”* (Cincinnati: R. P. Brooks, 1839), 8.

JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET AND SEER

20. "The Life of Joseph Holbrook, 1806–1871," typescript, 46, Perry Special Collections.
21. Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 676.
22. William Huntington Diary, 7; Lyndon W. Cook, *Joseph C. Kingsbury: A Biography* (Provo, UT: Grandin Book, 1985), 61.
23. Heber Quincy Hale, *Bishop Jonathan H. Hale of Nauvoo: His Life and Ministry* (Salt Lake City: The Author, 1938), 64.
24. James Carroll Petition in Clark V. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833–1838 Missouri Conflict* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1992), 155; see biographical sketch in Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 252.
25. William F. Cahoon Petition in Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 152–53.
26. Hartley, *My Best for the Kingdom*, 85–86.
27. Gentry, "Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri," 414–19.
28. Greene, *Expulsion of the Saints from Missouri*, 8.
29. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:249.
30. The committee was composed of John Taylor, Alanson Ripley, Brigham Young, Theodore Turley, Heber C. Kimball, John Smith (the Prophet's uncle), and Don Carlos Smith (the Prophet's brother).
31. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:250–54.
32. Committee of Removal members were William Huntington, Charles Bird, Alanson Ripley, Theodore Turley, Daniel Shearer, Shadrach Roundy, and Jonathan H. Hale. The additions were Elias Smith, Erastus Bingham, Stephen Markham, and James Newberry (Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:249–54, includes 214 names of those who pledged).
33. William Huntington Diary, 8.
34. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:255.
35. A Missouri map published in 1840 by L. Augustus Mitchell, on file in the National Archives Branch in College Park, Maryland,

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

shows roads that provided two possible routes, an upper and a lower one.

36. Brigham H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century I* (reprint, Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1965), 1:510–511, and Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:261–63.

37. David Rogers Report, 1839, in Leo Ritchie Rogers, *Willis Rogers and Elizabeth (Bessie) Ritchie with Their Ancestors and Descendants* (Salt Lake City: Leo R. Rogers, 1981), 230.

38. Larry C. Porter, “Brigham Young and the Twelve in Quincy: A Return to the Eye of the Missouri Storm, 26 April 1839,” in *A City of Refuge: Quincy, Illinois*, ed. Susan Easton Black and Richard E. Bennett (Salt Lake City: Millennial Press, 2000), 134.

39. Joseph Holbrook said that Saints understood that “if the Church would make haste and move as fast as possible it would [do] much to the relieve our brethren who were now in jail as our enemies were determined to hold them as hostages until the church left the state so that every exertion was made in the dead of the winter to remove as fast as possible” (“Life of Joseph Holbrook,” 46).

40. “[Auto]Biographical Sketch of George Washington Gill Averett,” typescript, 8, in *Miscellaneous Mormon Diaries*, vol. 11. A painting by C. C. A. Christensen, *Exodus of the Saints from Missouri*, is the only depiction the author has seen of the winter exodus experience.

41. Jesse and Whittaker, Albert Perry Rockwood Journal, 34.

42. Jesse and Whittaker, Albert Perry Rockwood Journal, 34.

43. “Life of Joseph Holbrook,” 47.

44. Ebenezer Robinson, “Items of Personal History of the Editor, Including Some items of Church History Not Generally Known. Taken from “The Return,”” typescript, 243, Perry Special Collections.

45. *The Mosiah Hancock Journal* (Salt Lake City: reprint by Pioneer Press, n.d.), 11.

JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET AND SEER

46. *Mosiah Hancock Journal*, 12.
47. Dated entries in “An Abridged Record of the Life of John Murdock, Taken from His Journal by Himself,” typescript, n.p., n.d., Perry Special Collections.
48. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 680.
49. Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 79.
50. “Autobiography of Anson Call,” 17.
51. Ronald K. Esplin, “The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve in Mormon Leadership, 1830–1841” (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1981), 370; *Times and Seasons*, September 1840, 165.
52. Heber C. Kimball Journals, 1838–1839, in Porter, “Brigham Young and the Twelve,” 134.
53. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 680–87.
54. “The Saint’s Petition to Congress,” November 1839, in Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:24–38; the mention of bloody footsteps is on p. 36.
55. The shoes belonged to the oldest boy, Morgan. Thomas’s version is in E. Kay Kirkham, *Daniel Stillwell Thomas, Utah Pioneer of 1849*, bound typescript, 26; wife Martha Pane Jones Thomas’s version in Kate Woodhouse Kirkham, ed., *Daniel Stillwell Thomas Family History*, bound typescript, n.d., n.p., 25; copies in author’s possession.
56. *Daniel Stillwell Thomas Family History*, 27–29.
57. Quoted in Lyman O. Littlefield, *Reminiscences of Latter-day Saints* (Logan, UT: Journal Company Printers, 1888), 72–73.
58. Hartley, *My Best for the Kingdom*, 87–90.
59. Hartley, *My Best for the Kingdom*, 90.
60. Eliza R. Snow to Esqr. [Isaac] Streator, Feb. 22, 1839, in “Eliza R. Snow Letter from Missouri,” *BYU Studies* 13 (Summer 1973): 549.
61. *Journal History*, March 5, 1839.

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

62. Eliza Roxey (Snow) Smith, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1884), 45.
63. *Eliza R. Snow, an Immortal: Selected Works by Eliza R. Snow*, ed. Nicholas G. Morgan Sr. (Salt Lake City: Nicholas G. Morgan Sr., 1957), 10–11.
64. History of Zera Pulsipher As Written by Himself, typescript, 15–16, Perry Special Collections.
65. Elisha Whiting Petition, in Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 374.
66. Journal History, March 16, 1839.
67. *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898, Typescript*, ed. Scott G. Kenney (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1983–85), 1:322.
68. “Life of Joseph Holbrook,” 48.
69. *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 1:322.
70. John Taylor, Brigham Young, Isaac Higbee, Israel Barlow, John P. Greene to Dear Brethren, March 29, 1839, at Quincy, reprinted in Kate B. Carter, comp., *Our Pioneer Heritage* (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1960), 3:122.
71. In 1837 the population was 1,653 according to Pat. H. Redmond, *History of Quincy and Its Men of Mark* (Quincy, IL: Heirs and Russell, 1863), 15; Richard E. Bennett, “Quincy—the Home of Our Adoption”: A Study of the Mormons in Quincy, Illinois, 1838–1839,” 87–88, and Susan Easton Black, “Quincy—A City of Refuge,” 69, in *A City of Refuge*.
72. Roberts, *Comprehensive History*, 2:3.
73. Bennett, “Quincy—the Home of Our Adoption,” 86.
74. Greene, *Expulsion of the Saints from Missouri*, 40.
75. Wandle Mace Autobiography, typescript, 31–32, Perry Special Collections.
76. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:262.
77. *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 1:329–30.
78. *Quincy Whig*, February 23, 1839.

JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET AND SEER

79. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:270.
80. “The Mormons,” *Quincy Whig*, March 2, 1839.
81. *Journal History*, March 5, 1839.
82. Bennett, “Quincy—the Home of Our Adoption,” 92.
83. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 695.
84. Aroet Hale, *Autobiography*, typescript, 6, Perry Special Collections.
85. William Cahoon, *Autobiography*, in Susan Easton Black, “Quincy—A City of Refuge,” 73, n. 34.
86. Truman O. Angell *Journal*, reprinted in Kate B. Carter, comp., *Our Pioneer Heritage* (Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1967), 10:199.
87. Hartley, *My Best for the Kingdom*, 91–92.
88. Bennett, “Quincy—the Home of Our Adoption,” 101.
89. Rogers, *Willis Rogers and Elizabeth (Bessie) Ritchie*, 230–31.
90. Diaries of William Huntington, 8; Isaac Leany Petition in Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 485.
91. Porter, “Brigham Young and the Twelve,” 137.
92. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:322–23.
93. *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, 1:325.
94. Porter, “Brigham Young and the Twelve,” 141–49.
95. *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, 1:329.
96. *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, Church History Library, 28.
97. The Liberty Jail prisoners were Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Lyman Wight, Alexander McRae, and Caleb Baldwin. Sidney Rigdon had been released in January. In jail in Richmond were Parley P. Pratt, Norman Shearer, Darwin Chase, Luman Gibbs, Morris Phelps, and King Follett.
98. Alex Baugh, “‘We Took a Change of Venue for the State of Illinois’: The Gallatin Hearing and the Escape of Joseph Smith and the

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

Mormon Prisoners from Missouri, April 1839,” in *A City of Refuge*, 31–66.

99. Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:17.

100. Stanley B. Kimball, “The Saints and St. Louis, 1831–1857: An Oasis of Tolerance and Security,” *BYU Studies* 13 (Summer 1973): 489–519.

101. Cited in Baugh, “We Took Our Change of Venue,” 52.

102. See *Missouri Republican* (St. Louis), May 3, 1839.

103. *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 1:330, entry for May 4, 1839.

104. Donna Toland Smart, *Exemplary Elder: The Life and Missionary Diaries of Perrigrine Sessions, 1814–1893* (Provo, UT: BYU Studies and Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History, 2002), 43.

105. Mace Autobiography, 31–32.

106. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, xix.

107. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, xix–xxvii.

108. According to calculations found in Samuel H. Williamson, “Six Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a U.S. Dollar Amount, 1774 to Present,” a dollar in the year 2007 was 22.99 times what a dollar in 1839 was worth based on consumer price indexes (Measuring Worth, 2009, <http://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/uscompare>).

109. Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, xix–xxvii. This book contains copies of the individual and group petitions and provides excellent explanations about each of the petition drives and how the petitions were used by the Church to seek redress for its members.

110. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:349.

111. Starting with this poem, Eliza R. Snow published a total of eighteen poems in the *Quincy Whig* during the 1839–41 period.

112. “A Proclamation to the Saints Scattered Abroad—Greeting,” *Times and Seasons*, January 15, 1841, 6.

113. On February 10, 1989, Mayor Vern Hagstrom gave the key to the city of Quincy to Elder Loren C. Dunn of the First Quorum of

JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET AND SEER

Seventy and declared February 15 the city's Latter-day Saints Day to honor Emma Smith's crossing for the frozen Mississippi River and entering Quincy. In May that year the Mormon History Association held their annual meetings there. A Quincy Heritage Celebration was held July 24, 1999. More than 1,400 descendants of 1839 exiled Mormons came to Quincy and, attired like pioneers, represented their ancestors and walked across the Memorial Bridge to reach Quincy from Missouri. Then on November 5 and 6, 1999, a Quincy History Symposium honored the city's humanitarian efforts for Saints who fled Missouri.

114. "Close Friends as Witnesses: Joseph Smith and the Joseph Knight Families," in *Joseph Smith: The Prophet, the Man*, ed. Susan Easton Black and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1993), 271–84.

115. Joseph Smith and Others to Edward Partridge and the Church, March 25, 1839, in *Times and Seasons*, May 1840, 102, and July 1840, 131–32. Bishop Partridge felt the poor could be better served if scattered in various communities and not gathered in one place. Uncertain which policy to push, the conference voted against accepting the land offer (*Journal History*, February 1, 1839).

116. Truman O. Angell *Journal*, 199–200.

117. "Weakened by the rigorous trek in midwinter after the severe ordeal of persecution in Missouri, the exiles who were camped along the Mississippi River began to feel the effects of the hardships" such that "almost every family succumbed to the ague and bilious fever" (Ivan J. Barrett, *Joseph Smith and the Restoration* [Provo, UT: BYU Press, 1973], 439).

118. Dean R. Zimmerman, *I Knew the Prophets: An Analysis of the Letters of Benjamin F. Johnson to George F. Gibbs Reporting Doctrinal Views of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young* (Bountiful, UT: Horizon, 1976), 10–11.

THE SAINTS' FORCED EXODUS FROM MISSOURI

119. Henry Jackson petition in Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 247.

120. Levi W. Hancock petition in Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 225.

121. *The Mosiah Hancock Journal*, 12.

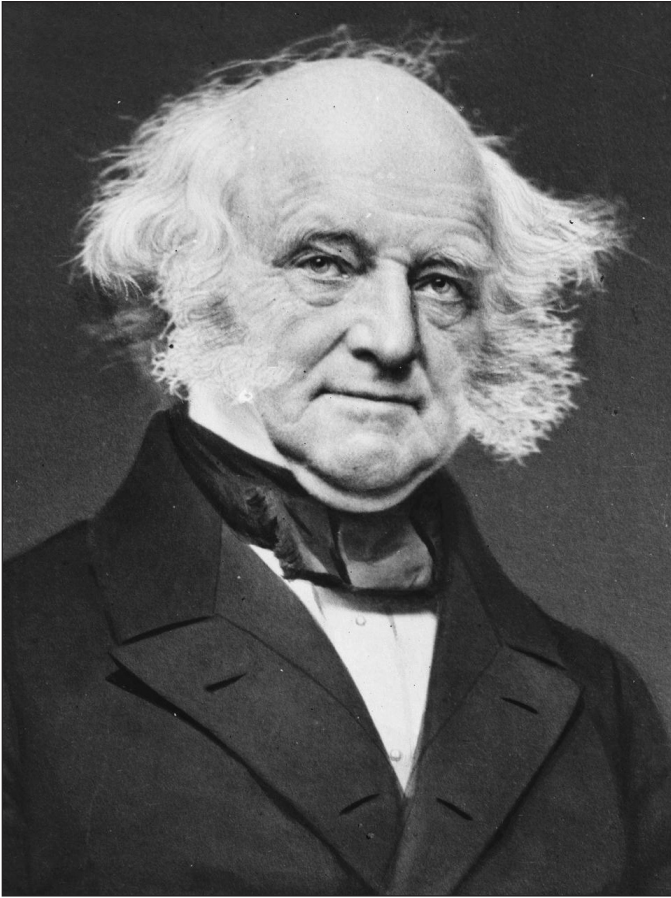
122. James Galligher Petition in Johnson, *Mormon Redress Petitions*, 218.

123. Butler denounced the hard-heartedness that Missourians had shown his wife and children and Church authorities. Such souls “will have to suffer for the ill treatment of the Saints,” he wrote, adding that “they need not think that they will escape, for the Lord is just and He will punish those that have ill treated His children” (Hartley, *My Best for the Kingdom*, 89).

124. Berrett and others, *Sacred Places: Missouri*, 329, 402, 411.

125. Photocopy of order, filed June 25, 1976, copy in author's file; also see transcript in *LDS Church News*, July 3, 1976, 4.

126. Hartley, “How Shall I Gather?” *Ensign*, October 1997, 5–17.



The Prophet Joseph Smith went to Washington to meet with Congress and the president of the United States regarding the Saints' plea for redress and restoration of their rights. After Joseph addressed President Martin Van Buren (pictured here), the president said, "What can I do? I can do nothing for you,—if I do anything, I shall come in contact with the whole State of Missouri." (Library of Congress.)