

PART 4

NAUVOO, 1839–45

INTRODUCTION

Part 4 deals with a lengthy six-year period. It starts when Newel and his family reach the Mississippi River in May 1839, covers their time in Nauvoo, Illinois, and ends with the Church conference in the Nauvoo Temple in October 1845, in which plans for the mass exodus from Nauvoo were announced.

Newel's writing continues to be a mix of his recollections, summaries of what he had read, firsthand experiences, and diary-like entries. He borrows only slightly from published sources. By early 1845 he had brought his autobiography up to date, so the end of part 4 moves to a dated diary format.



Building in Nauvoo, 1907. Anderson Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

THE RISE OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS



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Illinois, 27 June 1844. Courtesy of the Joseph Smith Papers Project.

Because of Nauvoo's pivotal position in the course of Church history, records written by its residents while they lived there are of vital interest. Newel's insights into Nauvoo are primarily his own. He provides information about the awful sickness the Saints endured during their first summer at Nauvoo, Lydia's being healed by a handkerchief blessed by Joseph Smith, and Lydia's faith in her patriarchal blessing that kept one of their children from dying.



[May 1839]. Concluded to go to Worcester [Missouri]. As I was journeying to that place a Stranger rode up to me & Said he had been informed that I was a mill wright [and] if so he would be glad to engage me to make gears for a horse ferry boat for crossing the Miss River. I engaged to go & work for two dollars per day as soon as I could get my family situated so that I could l[e]ave them. I arrived at Worcester that evening. We had a bout a [^]peck of ~~a little wheat~~ a peck of Corn meal & a little sugar. Of this we made our supper & breakfast. I now began to studey how I should procure some thing for my family to eat while I went to work to earn more. But before I had found any probability of any thing, an old Gentleman by the name of Segget Called in to the Cabin where we had stoped. He after hearing my situation kindly offered to let me have some meal for my family, to provide fire wood for them, & C. I thanked him for his kind offer & gladly accepted of it. I also thanked my heavenly Father fo I felt that he was yet mindful of me here in a pennyless situation & among strangers.

I found a more Conv[en]ient house & moved my family the same evening & made preparations to go the next day to do the before mentioned job of work. Sunday morning I arose ate my breakfast & after Committing my family into the ~~hands~~ [^]care[^] of our maker. I left them & traveled about 30 miles to Clarksville where I was to do the work. The next day, in assisting to move the boat to a Conveinent place to do the work of the gears, there came a squall of wind & the boat got the advantage of us. And in my exertions to save ~~th~~ her I broke one of my ribs so that I could not labor for several days, mor than to draft the work, make preparations & C.

The next Sabbath I got a horse & went to see how my family were getting a long. I found them well & they [^]had[^] Corn meal water to eat. Brother Pitkins had moved about 2 miles from where I ~~left~~ my family

1. This part is almost entirely version 1, item 5, with several additions copied from the newspaper. Those copied parts are noted in the footnotes. MS 767, folder 1, item 5.

were.² I went to see him. Told him my situation. He let me have some money to buy some meat & agreed to buy a Cow for me & wait on me until I should do the work I had engaged to, when I was to pay him. Monday morning I again left my family & rode to place of labor. I now began to work & my side did not hurt me but little. I Stayed two weeks & again went to see my family. They were now in a more comfortable situation. Bro Pitkins had bought them a Cow & some hens & my wife had formed some acquaintance w[h]o let her have sewing to do, which helped her so that she began to live comfortably. I stayed over night after returning thanks to God for his mercies & Committing my all to his care & asking a continuation of his mercies to rest upon us. I left my family & went to finish the work I had on hand, which took me about three weeks longer. On settlement I received 5.5 dollars which enabled me to pay Bro Pitkins & have some money left.

I soon went to Quincy where the Father Smith³ & the most of the twelve & hundreds of the Brethren were stopped. It had been contemplated & recommended by Phs Smith while he was in Prison that the Saints make a settlement up the Miss river about 60 miles [above] Quincy. The Brethren were making preparations to move to that place.

I returned to Worcester & as soon as I could I hired a team & moved to Commerce. Bros Joseph & Hiram Smith had now got liberated & were settled here with their families⁴

I shall here take the liberty to Copy from the Prophets history the account of their sufferings & release from the M.O. Prisons & insert a

2. Probably George White Pitkin, whom Newel would have known in Jackson County. Pitkin was the Caldwell County sheriff briefly in 1838. See "Reference" at *The Joseph Smith Papers*. See also Nauvoo Municipal Court Docket Book / Nauvoo, IL, Municipal Court. "Docket of the Municipal Court of the City of Nauvoo," ca. 1843-1845. In Historian's Office, Historical Record Book, 1843-1874, 51-150 and 1-19 (second numbering). Church History Library, Salt Lake City. MS 3434.

3. Joseph Smith Sr., presiding patriarch.

4. Joseph Smith reunited with his family on April 22, 1839. See *JSP*, J1:336.

letter ^or epistle^ which he sent to the church while he was confined in Prison⁵

But to return to my self, I arrived at the new location of the Saints on Sunday a little after noon. My goods were unloaded by the side of the road near the Prophets house [cabin]. As soon as I Could, I went to see him. But I can never describe my felings on meeting with him & Shakeing hands with one w[h]om I had so long & so dearly loved. His worth & his sufferings fill my heart with mingled emotions. While I now beheld him & reflected upon the past & saw the present, I could not but raise my heart in silent but ardent desire that he & his family & his aged Parents might never be torn apart in like manner again, for I knew full well that it had well nigh born them to an untimely grave.

I soon selected a lot & commenced to build or to Cut & hall logs to build a house. I had been here but a few days when Brother Joseph came to my tent & introduced a gentleman by the name of Benjamin Brown, late from Chautauga C.O. N.Y. Brother Joseph soon introduced the propriety & necessity of building mills, as grain was plentyful but, oweing to the scarcity of mills, we had to pay at the rate of eight dols. per bbl for f1our & 75 Cts per bushel for Corn meal. I told him I was aware of the propriety of the necessity of mills but had no Capital to buy Irons Stones &.C. But as to the mechanical labor I was ready & could do it. He proposed that Bro Brown furnish Capitol & that we set in operation a mill as soon as possible.

To this he [Brown] agreed & proposed that he furnish money, & that I go directly to Cincinatti & procure a certain Patent for horse power, which he knew was for sale at that place & which he highly recommended. And allso such other materials as should be necessary to put in operation a mill. I agreed to go. The next day we selected a convenient site for the mill & I moved my tent nearer the spot & made preparations to go.

I took passage on board a Steamer & had a quick journey, found the necessary machinery & purchased it & returned to Commerce in less than three weeks. As soon as I returned with th mill aparatus I lost no

5. Newel intended to, but never did, insert "Copy of a Letter written by J. Smith Jr. and Others, While in Prison," *Times and Seasons* 1 (May 1840): 99–104.

time in putting it into operation. It was only about eight weeks from the time I first commenced until I had the mill in operation. It performed well. I ground four bush per hour & it was a great help to Brethren.

But Brother Brown's family were taken sick soon after he came to the place & he concluded to buy a farm & said he must sell his share of the mill. As I could not advance the money & would not promise to do it in time for a Certain payment on his farm, he let J. C. Anis[s] have it & took his obligation for the money. Which he afterwards lost, or the said Anis failed to pay. I at the time was very sorry to have a share of the mill fall into Anis' hands because I knew full well the result that would follow, from former acquaintance with the man. I tried to prevail on Bro. Brown to hold on to the mill a little longer & see if there would not some better way open both for himself & me & also for the general benefit of the Brethren. But it was all to no purpose.⁶

I had left building my house for the sake of putting the mill in operation & my family were now sick & living in a tent. Doct Wilder a man with whom I formed acquaintance on the boat on my return from Cincinnati had boarded with me, also a young lady my niece [Harriet Stringham] who were both taken sick & also my youngest child.⁷ Sickness prevailed to a great extent so that many suffered for want of proper nursing many were lying on beds of sickness in tents.⁸

6. On December 15, 1839, the high council gave approval for "Brothers Annis, Bozier, and Edmunds" to build "a water mill adjoining the city." Smith, *History*, 1838-1856, vol. C-1, 1003.

7. Harriet Stringham was the daughter of Newel's sister Esther Knight and William Stringham. Newel and Lydia's youngest child at this point (mid-1839) was James Knight.

8. Because of Missouri troubles and then exposures during the difficult exodus, many Saints faced the summer of 1839 physically run down. Malaria, typhoid, and other river-related diseases caused by unfit drinking water and mosquitoes found easy victims. Many Saints died during July and August 1839. Garrett, "Disease and Sickness in Nauvoo," 171-72. Lydia recalled that "Pestilence and fever were seated at every fireside." Gates, *Lydia Knight's History*, 52. The Smiths took sick people into their home and inside a tent in their yard. Joseph Smith himself fell victim and was sick for two weeks. Hill, *Joseph Smith*, 267-68. When he recovered, he visited houses and tents, blessing the sick. Many experienced remarkable recoveries. He crossed the river, and during a day of blessing on

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Some who had lately emigrated from the east & many who had been expeled from M.O. & had suffered the loss of all but their lives now l^a^y on beds of distress. And ma[n]y even died throu being worn out through the persecut, privations, & hardships they had endured. And no doubt their blood will Cry to be avenged of their murderers. Oh M.O. how will thy foul & murderous deed sink the[e] down to perdition & wo, ere thou hast atoned for the blood thou hast shed & the widows & Orph tears thou hast caused to flow & imprisonments & sufferings thou hast caused the Inocent. Thou wouldst gladly become extinct & be no more forever but this cannot be for the blood & sufferings of the Saints wil still cry against you & your sins must come to judgement & your punishment you wilt then a[d]mit is just.

My wife was obliged to attend to the Sick & do all her washing & work. She had done which was quite too much for her delicate constitution,

Doct Wilder was a younger man. He had buried his wife a short time preivious to leaveing Boston for this place. He came her[e] fo the purpose of sttleing with the Saints & I believe he was a worthy man. He partially recovered of his sickness so that he went to Quincy on buisness, where he took a relapse & died. Harriet, the young la[d]y, began to recover, but our babe continued verry sick. Lydia, my wife, was threatened with a fever a bout this time & there came on a rain which rendered her situation verry inconvenient, as she was obliged to do all her cooking out of the tent. The fever increased, yet necessity compelled her to keep up & to labor much longer than her strength was able to bear. For about two weeks she kept about in this way, when she was obliged to give up & keep her bed.

Harriets health was a little better but she was not able to take care of our sick babe & do what was neccessary for the family, so that I could do but little only tend the mill. I knew my family needed a house but

July 22 he healed many, even ordering Elijah Fordham back from death's door, who immediately became whole. Joseph Smith blessed a silk handkerchief and sent it to be used to heal victims he could not visit. Smith, History, 1838-1856, vol. C-1, 964-65. As shown below, Lydia sought and received such a blessed handkerchief for herself.

at the present I could not build, & sickness made it out of the question to hire. So we were obliged to remain in our tent.

VERSION 3

The sorrows and distress of the saints cannot be discribed at this season. Robbed in Missouri, and now exposed to the deathly “miasma” of the Mississippi, were enough to make the stones shed tears.⁹

VERSION 1

One evening Lydia requested me to go to the Prothet & get a handkercheif from him, or ask him to send her a healing blessing. And, said she, I believe I shall be healed. She would have been glad to have sent for him to come & lay his hands upon her, but did not feel worthy to trouble him, as the multitude of business & Care he had over the Church she knew was more than he was abl to endure wit the sufferings of the Saints he daily. On this account I felt delicate a bout Calling on him. I went out & met met Brother Hollman & talked with him. Returned to my wife & handed her my handkercheif. She tok it but was no better the next day her fever & pain was severe. Doctor Stobey Called on us I requested him to do some thing fo my wife, for her relief he gave her medicine which she took, he alls[o] gave medicine to our babe.

A bout the first of Sept a Small Cabin was vacated & I took my family into it. Lydia was Confined to her bed at the time. She continued to take medicine but got no relief. For near two weeks her Strength failed, & she was rediced [reduced] so low she could not speak aloud. I went to her one evening after She had Sufferd much through the day when she in a whisper [said] Newel I am verry low. If the Lord does not interfere in my behalf, I shall soon be worn out, for medicine does me no good & I am allmost gone. Her strength was now exhausted & she said no more.

I felt that I had not don wright in neglecting to go to the Prophet as she had requested, although I had not told her the handkercheif I gave her was not from him. I left her, went immediately to the Prophet, & requested him to send her his handkercheif with a word of consolation & a healing blessing. Go, said he, tell her the Lord shall bless her & her

9. These lines by Newel are not in version 1 or the Allen version; they are only in version 3.

heavenly Father shall heal her. I hastened to my house & went the bed side of my Companion & told all that I had done & the promise that Prophet sent to her. I laid the handkercheif upon her head & prayed th blessing to be sealed upon her. From her Calm appearance it was evident that ther was a Change in her feelings. She soon fell asleep & rested well during the night. in the morning She Said She had felt no pain during the night. At the moment I laid the handkerchief upon her head, the pain ceased & she did not feel as if there was any disease a bout her at this time. Yet she was weak The next day the Dr. Came to see her he looked at her & examined her pulse & tounge & said he had never seen so great an alteration in a patient in his lif. Said he there is no disease about her let her be a little careful until she recovers her strength & she will get a long. It was but a few days until she was up attending to her sick babe & Cares a bout the house.¹⁰

[I] must now return to give the mill a passing notice. All my fears were fully realized, for Annis immediately set alltering first this then tht, so that the mill I forswaw would avail neither him self or any one else any thing. I tried to buy his share but to no effect. I then tried to sell mine to him he but with little success. My health began to declin about this time & could take no Care of the mill. After seeing the mangement a few weeks, I came to the Conclusion to give up my Share & have no more to do with it. He gave me a few bushels of Corn meal & I lost my summers labor. He moved the mill up to his place & repaired it until there was nothing left but the Stone & Irons, which he could not use up or alter. It was a great loss to the Brethren who had raised grain & had to go a great distance to get it ground & still kept up the price of meal & fl[o]ur.

My health was poor for about three months so that I could do but little. Some of the time we lived on potatoes & Salt, & some of the time we had bread & water to eat. Our babe still lingered & I have ever believed his mother held him by faith. Fo a long time th neighbors said he could not live & told Lydia She had better give him up fo she would

10. Joseph Smith's journal records, "The sick were ministered unto, with great success but many still remain sick & new cases occurring daily." *JSP*, J1:349. See Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 1:347-48 (July 22, 1839).

wear out her own life & loos her child too. But she could not be pre-vailed to let him go. Said she, if I k[n]ew the Lord required it I would resign him to His will. But I do not feel that it be at all for his glory or that h require th lif of this Child at this time. But disease has laid heavily upon him & no doubt the destroyer would be glad to take him from the earth for if he can destroy the rising generation he will thereby think to weaken the kingdom of God on the earth.

Oct th 6 [1839] general Conference.¹¹ Many attended from various parts. My house was to crouded during the Conference that it took all my wifes time to wait upon them, so that she had no opportunity to go to the Conference. And on the last day she cooked the last meal of we had. Just as it was on the table, two more men came in & ate with us, which Cleared the table of the last mouthful. My wife & Harriet with the little Children had not one mouthful to eat. My health had been so poor for some time that I could not procure provisions & it was verry scarce & hard to be got.

She held on to the promises made to her in her hr Patriarchal blessing given by Father Smith¹² & th blessings promised upon the Child in his infant blessing, until I gave up all hopes & thought the child must surely die. It lay verry stupid. One morning when the Prophet was passing, I Called him in to see the Child. he looked at the babe & then to its mother & said there is but one thing more that you can do. Send for Father Harris¹³ & undress the Child & have him annointed from the Crown of his head to the Soles of his feet. And if that does not help him you mist give him up for if that will not save him nothing can. Lydia replied, I Cannot give him up! The Prophet said I think it will save him. I went for Brother Harris w[h]o came & administered to the babe as the Prophet directed. Th anointing was effectual, from that time the babe

11. At this conference, Newel once again was sustained as a member of the high council. Smith, *History*, 1838-1856, vol. C-1, 969. Joseph taught that “the righteous will remain with him [Christ] in the cloud whilst all the proud and all that do wickedly will have to return to the earth, and suffer his vengeance which he will take upon them this is the second death.” *JSP*, J1:352-53.

12. See our part 2; see also Gates, *Lydia Knight's History*, 34-35.

13. Probably George Washington Harris (1780-1857), a high councilman and city alderman. See “Reference” at *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

amended fast. This was on Monday morning. And on Thursday morning the Prophet called to my house & enquired how the Child was. On hearing, he replied, you know wat has helped him [so] if he should take a relapse, attend to the same ordinance again. Before night the same day, the child was verry ill. it seemed as if the destroyer h^a^d laid hold with a full determination to take th Child. But my wif[e] soon went to the elders. Elders Bennson & Sherwood came & administered to the Child as the Prophet had directed.¹⁴ Whil[e] they were anointing the Child, his countenance Changed & he looked Stead fastly upon them. Had the sun shone in a Cloudy day the Change would not be more visibl[e] than the change was upon the babe. And from that time there seemed to be no more disease upon the Child, but he grew & soon began to walk about. I now came to a full determination that it was best to trust in God a lone for life as well as ^for^ Salvation.

As soon as I had recovered my health so that I could, I [s]ecured some provisions for my family. I commenced to build an another or a saw mill in company with Brother D Hibbard.¹⁵ We commenced to get the timber some time in Jan. As soon as the river opened for stemboat naviation, Bro Hibbard who furnished money & my Self took passage & went to Saint Lewis for Irons. We started the ___ of Feb. We had a prosperous journey & by the 6th of April we had our mill in operation & began to make lumber.

At this date ther[e] was a general Conference [1840] by the Saints in this place. We received much good instruction from the Pro[p]het & had a profitabl[e] time. Many of our Brethren Came from different parts to attend the Conference. My house was crowded to overflowing so that my wif did not attend but one half day. The Second day of Conference I took a severe cold so that the next day I was not able to attend. For a house [meeting place] we were obliged to use the grove & the wind was quite cold & boisterous. I cntinued to do buisness in the mill with Bro. Hibbard until the fore part of June when I sold my share to him & built

14. Probably Ezra T. Benson (1811–69) and Henry Garlick Sherwood (1785–1867), see “Reference” at *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

15. Possibly Davidson Hibbard (1788–1854). See “Reference” at *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

me a house. I had got a lot & go^o^d picket fence around & garden growing. Yet the Brethren labored und great inconvenience with regard to mills, which induced me to sell my house & lot & try again to build a grist mill, for the Brethren had good crops growing & only thing needful to make bread Cheap & plenty [of] seed, [was], to be a grist mill to manufactor their grain. Bros Rollfe & Jackman Said if I could procure the materials they would assist in doing the labor & we would own the mill in Co [ownership].¹⁶

We had not long settled on this Conclusion when a gentleman from England Came & purchased my house & lot. He paid me money enough to purchase the Stone & Irons for the mill nails & C. I went immediately to St Lewis to procure them while Rollfe & Jackman were preparing timber fo the mill. I was not gon quite a week. On my return I found all things prosperous.

There was some sickness, yet it did not prevail to [as] distressing an extent as it did last year. Nor did the sick suffer so great privations, for one years industry of the Saints & reared many comfortable buildings brought withn their command many neceraies & comforts of lif[e], which they were wholly deprived of the preivious year. Prosperity



House in Nauvoo, 1907. Anderson Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.



Home of Wilford and Phoebe Carter Woodruff in Nauvoo, 1907. Anderson Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

16. Samuel Jones Rolfe (1794-1867) and Levi Jackman (1797-1876). Jackman served with Newel on the high council in Far West.

seemed to attend the labor of the Saints & Crown their industry beyond their expectation.

About the last of Aug or the first of Sept [1840] a Gentleman by the name of J C Bennet came to the place.¹⁷ He was a Dr by practice, had joined the Church a Short time previous & Came her to reside. He appeared to be a man of Considerable & soon Commenced his professional practice, as it was a time considerable sickness among the Saints. The reason I speak of this gentleman is more particular because of the [n]ecessity I shall hav to make mention of him here after.

We got our mill house up & enclosed the gears mostly ready for operation so that we anticipated soon to be grinding. Bro Jackman & his wif were both verry sick & th man we engaged to build the dam was taken to jail ~~when~~ on an old Kirtland debt, which circumstances had [would have] rendered him free from had justice been administered.¹⁸ This disappointment together with Brother Jackmans sickness so disappointed us that we failed get the mill in operation ~~at the~~ until the winter set in & froze the river [1840–41], so as to prevent grinding before we Could do the work we had depended on others to do & were disappointed. We had spent our time laboring on the mill so that we had not laid up a winters store of provisions & our means were so exhausted we had not the means to procure it.

We now saw our only allernative was to turn our labor to procure provisions for our families & for the present cease our labors on th mill as there was no prospect its availing us any thing until the opening of Spring or such time as we could build the dam.

About this time Bro Elijah Fordham Came to my house, & seeing the prospect & situation of our affairs, he at first proposed to enter into Co partnership with us assist in finishing the mills.¹⁹ But af[t]er consulting his wif[e] on the subject he declined on the grounds that She was not willing to live near the river. She prefered living on the hill near

17. For his arrival in Nauvoo, see Smith, *Saintly Scoundrel*, 50.

18. “A Charter Granted to Newel Knight.”

19. Elijah Fordham (1798–1879) was a carpenter. See “Reference” at *The Joseph Smith Papers*; Cook, *Nauvoo Marriages*, 82; Eshom, *Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah*, 875.

the temple & he concluded to build a horse mill there. He proposed to let us have such things as we wanted to out of his Store & let us do the mechanical labor on on his mil to pay for the goo[d]s he owned.

At the same tim a grist mill across the river in mont rose propeled by horse power which was out of repair. This he want us to put in repair, which we did, & h let us have some provisions. He urged us to trade at his Store as he wished to turn his goods into a mill which he intended to build the next summer. We Concluded to do so, with the agreement to do th gears for his mil to pay for the good[s] purchased of him. Bro Br Rollfe acted as Clerk at the time of our partnership.²⁰ We gave some orders to those w[h]o had assisted us in the labor of our mill. We got but verry little for our selves, nor if so much as the labor of repairing his mil[] would amount to.

Soon after we ha[d] made this arrangement with Bro Fordham, we engaged to build a mil for one Allen on the river a bout 7 miles below Nauvoo. We commenced the mill in Dec. [1840?] The inconvenience of being from home & hireing our board induced me to move my family there for the time we should be building the mill. We had good luck & got the m^i^ll in operation. In March Bros Rollfe & Jackman were in Comp [partnership] with me in the job. The same Allen had another mill he wanted repaired & considerable labor done on. The opening of Spring [1841] we saw the situation of our own mill & the river was such that we could not build the dam or do any thing to advantage on it until the latter part of the Season when th water should be low. I concluded to stay & work on Allens mill. Brother allso stayed in company with me. Previous to this Bro Rollfe had sold to us his share in our Nauvoo mill. At the time of our settlement we allowed one hundred dollars Apc at Fordhams.

About middle of March I was taken sick. I was verry low for about one week. My Complant was Severe pain in my breast & sid[e] attended with a severe Cough & fever. After a bout a weeks severe suffering the Lord began to hear our petitions & to rebuke th the disease that was preying upon me. It was some time before I was able to labor much, yet I found my strength gradually increaseing.

20. Black, *Who's Who in the Doctrine and Covenants*, 250.

April 6th [1841]. A general Conference at Nauvoo.²¹ I attended & we had a profitable meeting.²² At this Conference the revelation from the lord was read showing his people that he required an house to be built unto his name & that it would prove their Salvation, to go too & build it according to the revelation & pattern given through the Prophet.²³ The Brethren generally responded with a hearty Amen & Covenanted to do it according to their abilities or the requirements of the revelation, which is every tenth according to law anciently given to his Saints & required of them in all ages when he has a people on the earth.

Prosperity prevailed with the Saints in Nauvoo. They had during the last Session of the legislature a liberal Charter granted them which was Calculated to sheild them from many invasions & troubles to which they had ever been exposed by the wicked w[h]o had ever sought to do us an injury & to bring troubl persecution & Death upon the Church.²⁴ We now had the privilege of making such laws & regulations as was necessary for the good & well being of our City. We all[s] had a grant for a leigon of our own or for the benefit & Safety of our City & Country. Our Prophet ha confered on him the title & Authority of Lieutenant General which he filled with honor & dignity. The Corner Stones of the temple were laid on [blank].²⁵

July 4. Th Nauvoo Leigion made a respectful & noble appearance paraded in Our beautiful City & our Prophet appeared in a most graceful manner at their head. The day passed of well & all seemed delighted

21. "Celebration of the Anniversary of the Church," *Times and Seasons* 2 (April 15, 1841): 375.

22. *JSP*, J2:49. "With his family. And several of the Twelve. viz. B[riham] Young H[eber] C. Kimball. W[illard] Richards. & gave instructions how to open organize & adjourn the special conference."

23. This revelation, given January 19, 1841, is now Doctrine and Covenants section 124.

24. Church leaders had lobbied hard with the Illinois legislature and won from it a generous city charter in December 1840. It incorporated the city and granted the Saints broad court, police, and militia powers, making it practically a city-state run by the Church. See Smith, *History, 1838–1856*, vol. B-1, 1130; Kimball, "Wall to Defend Zion," 491–97.

25. Joseph Smith supervised the cornerstone ceremony.

with the prospect of peace during this season there were no great disturbances with out & in Our City general union prevailed.²⁶

Emigration Continued to flow to our City both from different parts of our union & from the Canadas & from Europ there was considerable sickness prevailing the latter part of summer. Several of our most useful men died & it is a loss to us which cannot be made up to us, they have left a vacancy in our Cirl in our Society & City that is felt by all. Among these I would make mention of R B Thompson & D. C. Smith yongest Broter of



Cornerstone, Nauvoo Temple, 1907. Anderson Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

the Prophet & President of the high Priests Quorum & Editors of our valuable paper the tines & Seasons.²⁷ Their loss will long be felt by & remembered by the readers of that extensively circulated Paper & more especially by their families & intimate freinds.

D C Smith was young & amiable. He bore a high respectabl office in the Nauvoo Leigion which he nobly filled. I never Saw a man of his age that appeared more noble & inteligent & with whom I bade fare-well until the morning of the resurrection with mor reluctance When Oh when will death be shorn of its power & th Destroyer & Spoiler cease to act I would that they might ere long find a day of rest that the mourners might cease to mourn & the tear of the widow the orphan & bereaved might be Stayed.

26. "Celebration of the Anniversary of the Church," 375.

27. Robert B. Thompson died on August 27, 1841, and Don Carlos Smith on August 7, 1841.

In Aug [1841] I bought Brother Jackmans Share of our mill & moved back to Nauvoo. The first of Sept I was glad to again get home in the City of the Saints. I was not able to put my mill in operation by water as I had intended as it had taken nearly all my summers work to pay Bro Jackman. But Circumstances ocured which induced me so to do, which I do not think expedient name at this time²⁸ . . . fixed my mill to grind wit[h], August 18. Horse power for the pres[en]t intending as soon as I Could to build a Dam & do [bui]ness by water. During the fall & winter I grou[nd to] some advantage with horses so that my family [live]d Comfortably until ^some^ ~~about the time of high water~~ [an] ox kicked me quit severe on my in Febr [1842] an ox [kic]ked me on my leg so that I was laid up for some [ti]me before I was able to do any thing. High water prevented me from grinding & I was left in rather low [circu]mstances haveing but verry little provisi[on] [on] hand for my family. My health continued [poor] so that I coul not labor to earn but little [?]. I could not d mor than two hours work in a [day] fo a long time. What I could do I kept trying [to pul]t my mill in operation. I had repaired the gears [which was] about all that I could do. The dam was [?]king & I knew not how to build it as I had [no one] to hire & my health was so bad I could [not do] it. In vain I tried to get help. For a while [it see]med as if there was no prosperity for me, no [one] to lend a helping hand in tine of troubl & [ne]cesity.

I tried get some assistance from the Temple Committee ^by loan^. Judge Higbee²⁹ gave encouragement but Cayhoon utterly refused. He Said he believed it would be an injury to help me for he did not believe the mill could ever accomplish any thing or that there was any privilege or power for mills in the river, & if nobody would help me I would after a while give it up & let it go. But this did not discourage me for I knew the power of water & that it would be the best property in the City if

28. The edges of the first few pages are torn, so square brackets will mark where words are missing, and some will contain what seems to be missing. MS 767, folder 1, item 5.

29. Elias Higbee (1795–1843). While in Missouri, he was a Caldwell County judge. He had served on the Missouri high council with Newel. He joined the Nauvoo Temple building committee on October 6, 1840. See “Reference” at *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

it could be put in operation & prove the greatest benefit to the Publick of any thing that Could be done.

A Gentleman by the name of Law³⁰ Came to the place & had erected a Steam mill & as there was no other mill in the place & people were obliged to have their grain manufactured, he took just such advantage as he pleased. He took about one third for tole. This evil I knew would be at once removed if I could get my mill in operation. Not [that] I wanted to injure Law but I kne[w] justice was du[e] all men & that the laborers rights were due to [?] & that right would wrong no man. With this n[otion? ?] I labored under almost every inconvenience & [?] that could be imagined both in body & in mind.

Th[ese] were days of trial to me in regard to my temporal b[usi]ness. For the want of means to hire one months labor [I] was obliged to let my mill lay for months while [my] health was such that I Could not go to do a days [work] to earn any thing from the time I was hurt in [February] until the 18 day of July [1842]. We had not one Dol[lars] worth of provision or Clothing except what my [wife] earned with her hand & needle. We had four Child[ren] at the time which during the summer all have had the measles & whooping Cough. My wife labor[ed] to take care of the family, yet I never he[ard her] complain or murmur at her situation [?]ny I had no Cow. I owned a blind horse, I had p[ut?] work on my mill in the winter. I had paid twen[ty] dollars for the horse.

The best I could do or the o[nly] way I could procure a cow for my family was my Brother in law Freeborn Demill, [trade] him the horse for a Cow which would been worth ten dollars in money with an agreement if he could turn the horse to advantage he should let me have five dols worth of provisions. He soon sold the horse for a good price but never found a time give me the provisions.

During this time much of my time was occupied in the buisness of the High Council of which I had been a member ever since its organization. The before mentioned John C Bennet brought great trouble

30. Wilson Law (1806-76) was a millwright, merchant, land speculator, and farmer. With his brother William Law, he became a dissenter and opponent of Joseph Smith. He was excommunicated in April 1844. See "Reference" at *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

upon the Church & Sought to lead away & deceive through his Cunning & Deceit.³¹ Many an innocent & virtuous person & an astonishing pass did he deceive before we were enabled to put a stop to his unhallowed career. The Council were in Session a great deal & the iniquity that was proven on Bennet was past description. More especially with the females who were inexperienced & knew not the cunning of the Devil or the deceitfulness of man. Many a female did he bring to irrecoverabl shame Sorrow & the course he took & the measures & devices he practised were such as allmost justify those he deceived & make his crime double.³²

He also had a band of associates who were ready at any time testify to the basest intrigues to Carry into effect by Stateing that the Prophet upheld & taught such to be right. When his influence failed he would call on others to prove that thre was no Sin in such a cours as he sought after. And they would testif that Brother Joseph did uphold it & if they would yeild to Bennet it would a great honor & blessing to them. Thus by his cunning & deceit did he deceive & lead astray many & thereby brought great evil upon the Church.³³

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31. John Cook Bennett, baptized in Nauvoo in September 1840, rose and fell quickly in leadership roles, including as assistant to the First Presidency and mayor of Nauvoo. He was excommunicated for adultery in May 1842, whereupon he became a bitter opponent of the Church. He published *The History of the Saints; or, an Exposé of Joe Smith and Mormonism*. See Smith, *Saintly Scoundrel*.
32. Several high council meetings were convened to discipline those involved with the “spiritual wifery” doctrine espoused by John C. Bennett. For instance, Knight was appointed as one of the high council representatives to speak either for or against Chaucey Higbee in the trial before the high council for “unchaste and unvirtuous conduct with the widow Miller and others.” Higbee had clearly been influenced by Bennett’s teachings, and witnesses testified that Higbee had seduced women “and at different times been guilty of unchase and unvirtuous conduct with them and taught the doctrine that it was right to have free intercourse with women if it was kept secret and alos taught that Joseph Smith authorized him to practice these things.” Nauvoo High Council Minutes, May 20, 1842, folder 3, 1–2. Higbee was excommunicated.
33. Smith, *Saintly Scoundrel*, 86–90; Dirkmaat, “Search for “Happiness,” 94–119; Hales, “John C. Bennett and Joseph Smith’s Polygamy,” 131–81.

From the time that these evils were proven upon this wicked Clan they began to seek to destroy the Prophet & to over throw the Church. They for a time Sought to secretly decoy or betray the Prophet in to the hands of the blood thirsty, but in ths they were baffled & their designs failed. When they found they Could not succeed in Such a plot, they tried to do it by stirring up Persecution abroad. But show ^to show^ more particular the wickedness of these unhallowed men & the trials Our Prophet & the Church has had to endure I shall Copy from those that have written what I S know to be facts. And my object is that the rising generation & those that are a far off may know in a future day wat it has cost to establish & lay the foundation of this Kingdom upon the Earth in thse the last days, of the power of the Gentile upon the earth. For the Lord will in his own time come out of his hideing place & so great will be the distress of the nations that to those that know not the sufferings that they have caused & wontonly suffered to come upon the innocent, they would allmost be ready to Call upon God to stay the hand of distress & show mercy to the People. Therefore I deem it important that all people have an opportunity understand & know the truth of all that is now passing & of the sufferings of the Saints & the Cost of the establishment of this kingdom.³⁴

But to return to my self, it seemed as if after the Lord had suffered me to be brought low & in a State of Privation & trial & saw that I did not Curse God but that I still trusted in hin, he wrought out a way for my deliverance. For in my deepest trials I had not forgotten to Confess the hand of God in all things & still to trust in him & day by day did I go in to my mill & there in Secret ask for the blessings of God to attend me & to bear me off victorious over everyy trial that I should be suffered to come upon me. The only Cow I had, strayed away & I never found her. This left our little Children & selves yet more destitute, for I had not the means to buy another & it deprived us of a great comfort as the milk we got from her was a great help to our liveing.

The reader can better bett judge than any one can describe the the difference between liveing on the necessary Comforts of lif[e] & enjoying health & plenty, Seeing prosperity smile on everyy hand & all

34. Whatever Newel had in mind to include, he does not indicate what it was.

around greet him for his success, & being deprived of health, & misfortune follow after misfortune until all our earthly substance seems to be wasted or to avail us nothing. To see our family in want & not be able to supply the demands of nature & then to see many who in the days of prosperity [^]were warm & affectionate become [^]cool & indifferent & be treated with neglect because of that which has unavoidably come upon us. I say the Contrast Cannot be described & is only know to those that have passed through [^]the[^] Same. I have no doubt but Father Job knew something of this situation & also Th Savior must have known some thing of the Contrast, for we are told that he decended below all things that he might ascend above all things & that in all things he was tempted. Yet he over Came and ~~is set down on high~~ has ascended on high & is a mediator & an intercessor & knoweth how to succor t^h[^]ose that are tempted & afflicted. And if it became necessary for the ancients to suffer & even for the only begotten to experience such like temptations, I am sure I ought not to Complain for if ~~in~~ I am faithful. I doubt not but all will work for my good.

After I had been contemplating these things one morning on the 18 of July [1842], while my wif had been prepareing our Scanty meal as we sat at breakfast, I looked out & saw an aged gentleman [John Alley] looking & []ing my mill. After breakfast my little son went out & the old gentleman requested him to ask me to come out. He was a Stranger, a man that I had never before seen. Yet th Spirit seemed whisper me thre was prosperity for me with him. I walked out & after a few words the gentleman proposed to buy a Share of my mill. He asked my price. I told him. He replied that was just what was in his heart to give. I told him my situation & that as I could not set it in operation I would sell one undivided half to him. We at once made a Contract & soon reduced it to writings. He agreed to bear his equal proportion in finishing the mill. Soon returned to Boston, the place of his residence, with the intention of returning again in the fall. He paid me in part so that I was enabled set my mill in operation & supply necessary demands of my family. Thus did relief Come ~~in~~ from an unexpected hand & in an unexpected hour & I did not for get to Confess the hand of God in it & return thanks to him for the same.

On getting my mill in operation, it performed well beyond my expectation. And those that had looked on me with scorn because of Spending my time so long at what they supposed would never avail any thing, now had to confess that it was best to let every man work at his trade. And that it was for want of a little to do with that I had suffered much & not a miss guided judgement. The Inhabitants also soon found that it proved as I had ever told them great advantage to have the power of water instead of oxen to manufactor their grain for at once the tole was reduced from one third to one eighth. Time passed on & prosperity again began to smile upon us so that our table was covered with plenty & gratitude filled our hearts.

On th 17 of Oct [1842] Lydia gave birth to a little son. He was a fine & promising looking Child. We named him Newel after my self. Soon after this [the] Old gentleman, John Aley, returned to this place & was truly pleased to see our mill operate. [The] old gentleman's wife & one Daughter had for some time belonged to the Church & for their [] he came here with the intention to secure an [] with the Church for them, although he he did not belong to it him Self. However all things he [saw] in the affairs of the Church did not altogether please him & concluded to do but little here. He proposed to give up his share of th mill to me on Conditions that I should refund to him what he had paid me for the mill as Soon as Circumstances would make it Consistent fo me to do so. I accordingly gave my obligations to him & again considered my Self benefited, for it was now proven that I had not labored in vain & that I had the best property of it Cost or value in the City. Yet it need much done to have it in a finished Condition.

I had got my winters provisions laid in, bought me a cow & made necessary provisions for winter before the river froze so as to stop grinding. After winter set in [1842-43] & business in my mill Closed, I began to study how I should occupy my time. I had felt th scarcity of lumber & knew the importance of haveing it, as the demands were daily increasing & great quantities of pine was rafted down the river for the building of the Temple & Nauvoo house ~~It~~ came which necessarily must be sawed[.] I determined to try set a Saw mill in operation. I named it

[to] John Scott & he at once joined with my Opinion & he & I went to work to build it in company.³⁵

It was not long before E. Robinson, a man of Capital, proposed to furnish Capital to buy the Irons for the mill & take a share as neither Scott nor myself had Capital & could only do the manu^al labor.³⁶ We concluded it would be better to accept of Robinson proposals than to hire money to buy the necessary aparatus to set the mill in to operation. We accordingly [con]tinued our labors & at the opening of Spring [1843] we had the mill nearly ready to put in the Irons & commence Sawing.

A bout this time the before mentioned Robinson went on a mission & mad such arrangements as disappointed us & prevented us from obtaining the necessary apparatus for putting our mill in operation. This was a great disappointment to us & in particular to Scott, who had not as yet been quite so [] versed in the School of disapointment as I had. He felt [] discouraged that from the time Robinson left [his] labor was of verry little value & I soon saw that all was not moveing on the track of prosperity. I proposed to let him take my share of the mill if he would pay me for the time I had labored on it. This he said he Should not do. I then offered to buy his labor on the same terms. He would not Sell on any reasonable terms but, like the dog in the manger, held on while he did nothing & thereby prevented me from doing what I Otherwise Could have done.

On the opening of Spring I again commenced doing buisness in my grist mill & had not the above mentioned disapointments taken place I should have done well. Allso with my Saw mill. The winter has been harder than was ever before known in this place, the rver froze in the month of Nov & ther was Ice Still running on th 6 of Aril at the time of our Conference. I have never before known a Feb. to pass without the boats plying in the river. Under the present circumstances I found

35. John Scott (1811–76) was a joiner, farmer, and military officer. In 1842 he lived in the Nauvoo Fourth Ward. See “Reference” at *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

36. Ebenezer Robinson (1816–91) was a publisher and editor for Nauvoo’s *Times and Seasons*, 1839–42. He served a mission to New York in 1843. See “Reference” at *The Joseph Smith Papers*.

that nothing could be profitably done with the Saw mill & applied all my attention to making repairs on my ~~Saw mill~~ gristmill.

Considerable of my time was taken up in attending the High Council of which still remained a member, owing to the difficulty & troubles brought upon us or the Church by those that dissented from us & were ever on the alert to do an injury to the Church.³⁷

T Summer passed away & the Sawmil remained as it was. Fall [1843] came on & the want of lumber daily increased. Allso the Temple stood in need of timber being sawed. I proposed to Scott to go & give my share of the mill to the Temple & give some one a chance to put it in operation & no longer let so useful a property ly to waste to gratify the follies of passion. He & I wento the Temple Committee & he & myself both proposed to give the mill in to their hands for the benefit of the temple. This did not alltogether suit the minds of the Committee. Bro Cutler³⁸ proposed to buy Scotts part of the mill & apply it on his tithing & then put it in to my hands & let me have a chance to put it in to operation. We accordingly entered in to such measures. I gave my obligation to the Committee fo what had been Scotts Share of the mill & soon began [to] put it in ~~operation~~ readiness for operation a the Spring opened & I saw all things around look promiseing with my buisness. Tthe water is unusually high in the river.

There appears to be a scarsity of grain & from appearances there must be some exertion to supply Our City with bread. I went to Burlington & bought flat boat load of grain, but the demands for it wer so great I was induced to make another effort to supply the wants of our Brethren with out their leaveing the Temple & their labors at home to procur bread from the Country. I took passage on board the Maid of Iowa which ascended the Iowa River. I stoped at Wappelo & bought a large quantity of grain. Aas the Steamer returned I put on board as

37. "For the Times and Seasons," *Times and Seasons* 1 (February 1840): 56.

38. On October 3, 1840, John Alpheus Cutler was one of three men, along with Reynolds Cahoon and Elias Higbee, on the temple building committee. Cahoon and Cutler supervised construction. Cutler led a group of workmen into the Pineries in Wisconsin, where they cut logs and floated them down the Mississippi River to Nauvoo. See Leonard, *Nauvoo*, 245; Rowley, "The Mormon Experience in the Wisconsin Pineries, 1841-1845," 119-48.

much grain as I could get sacked & in readiness. For the remainder I bought a large flat w^{or}nd made arrangements to have it conveyed on a flat. The water still continued high so that on my return the steamer found no difficulty in stoping in front of my mill while we took the grain in at the upper door of the mill. Although at a usual stage of water, the ground was dry where the boat now floated, yet my mill so constructed that she is safe & doing buisness.

As soon as this grain was secured I again ascended the river & in a few days returned in safety with a large flat loaded with grain. I now concluded I had a bout a suffecient quantity of grain to supply the necessary demands until harvest.

About this time Sister Betsey, my Bro Josephs wife, came to visit us. It may be necessary to here go back & make mention of some particulars respecting my Fathers family.³⁹ At the time of my greatest poverty & trials about starting my grist mill, both my Father & Bro Joseph lived near by & in vain did I try to get some assistance from them.

During the past winter [1842–43] the order of family organizations was set forth & all people were instructed that it was necessary to set their house or family in order. I had longed felt the necessity of my Fathers house ^or family^ being properly organized. I solicited Fathers Cutler & Cahoon,⁴⁰ they being appointed to teach this duty to the

39. With new teachings about the eternal nature of families in mind, Church leaders advocated that families should organize themselves in order to help their own members spiritually and temporally. As Newel documents, Reynolds Cahoon and Alpheus Cutler were appointed to teach families how to do that. The organizing meeting for the Young and Richards families on January 8, 1845, indicates what family organizations were for. They gathered in the Seventies Hall and sat according to family groups. The purpose of the groups was to explain how everyone related together through specific common ancestors, to find out how many of particular common ancestors' descendants were in good standing in the faith, and to identify departed relatives for whom proxy ordinances needed to be performed. In the eternities, the group was reminded, all would be governed in family orders, with every man presiding over his own family. See minutes of the organizing meeting of the Richards and Young families, held in Nauvoo on January 8, 1845, in Barlow, *Family Recordings of Nauvoo*, 1–24.

40. Alpheus Cutler (1784–1864) and Reynolds Cahoon (1790–1861). As noted, both were members of the temple building committee.

Church, to appoint a meeting at my fathers house, which thy did to the Edification of us all.

However, my Brother Joseph was not present, he having moved to Layharp he spring preiveous [1842], a distance of 20 miles. Although I had used every exertion & made him good & advantagious offers to take hold & assist me in putting my mill in operation so that he might have an interest in the City & be where he Could enjoy the teachings of Our Prophet & be blest with knowledge & intelgence in common with the Saints, I greatly regreted that he could not have been with at Our family interviews.

But to return, his wife Said that he was quite out of health & She feard that he would not long survive. I took some pains to let her understand the principles that had been taught in regard to family order. Told her if Joseph would return to the bosom of the Church it would be better for him & his health would improve. She seemed to believe what she heard, Said She would use her influence to have him Come back. But to my great sorrow the winter passed [1843–44] & my Fathers family were not organized.

June 2nd [1844] Our enemeis have been determined to do every thing in their power to destroy us & if possible to flustrate the great work of Jehovah.⁴¹ [June] 20, Our enemies are still on the alert & from appearances the Cheif men in government are neither innocent nor ignorant of what is takeing place.⁴² O the 27 of June Our beloved Prophet & Patriarch were martyred.⁴³ I shall Copy from those that have written who were eye witnesses to facts respecting this Awful tragedy as they can do it justice.⁴⁴

41. *Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844; Hedges, “Joseph Smith, Robert Foster, and Chauncey and Francis Higbee,” 89–111; Oaks, “Suppression of the *Nauvoo Expositor*,” 862–903.

42. *JSP*, J3:295–96; Joseph Smith to Thomas Ford, January 21, 1844.

43. “Awful Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith,” *Times and Seasons* 5 (July 1, 1844): 560–61; Brian Q. Cannon, “Long Shall His Blood . . . Stain Illinois,” 1–19.

44. Here Newel wanted to rely on what others related about the martyrdom, but he never inserted anything. However, the Allen version of Newel’s journal goes into great detail about the martyrdom and then includes the following statement, apparently by Newel.



Memorial of Joseph and Hyrum Smith at Joseph Knight Sr.'s ancestral home in Ninevah (Colesville), New York.
Courtesy of Knight family.

The bodies were taken to the mansion and the doors closed, and then the bodies were laid out. I had the privilege of being in the room, and saw the wounds which the /P/rophets received. On the 29th [June 1844] the bodies were put into the coffins, and all who wished, were allowed to see them, when about ten thousand (10,000) passed through the room. /N/ear six in the evening the funeral services were performed, and I accompanied the hearse to the graves. There is a secret connected with this funeral which is not known to all the Saints; although it is generally sus-

pected, and that is, that Joseph and Hyrum were not buried at that time; but the particulars will be made known at the proper time and place.⁴⁵

I have taken up considerable space in telling you the circumstances under which two of the best men that ever lived, lost their lives for the truth's sake. I have known them from boyhood,—have been associated with Joseph from the time before he received the first revelation until the present, and Hyrum has been his constant companion since the Church has been organized.

I have shared in the blessings of the Gospel which they have enjoyed, and been a partaker of the sorrows and troubles, and fierce persecutions which they have endured. I have seen them at home and abroad,—in the discharge of their religious duties; and I have known them as the founders of a great City, and seen their administration of

45. See Brown, *In Heaven as It Is on Earth*, 279–304; Bernauer, “Still ‘Side by Side,’” 17–33; Johnstun, “To Lie in Yonder Tomb,” 163–80.

its government. In every circumstance of life they have ever been true men of God,—humane, upright and just in all their dealings; they loved righteousness and taught it to their followers; their friends loved them for the good they did, and their enemies hated them, because they reprov'd their sins and wickedness. They died as they had ever lived—faithful and true to that God who has used them as his servants to build up the Church and Kingdom of the Last Days. In the hour of prosperity they taught the people humility and meekness; in the hour of persecution, they practised these virtues and no men have done a greater work on the earth since the days of the Saviour than they have; and their names will ever be held in honorable remembrance by all lovers of truth, virtue, integrity, justice and righteousness; whilst their persecutors will sink in shame, confusion and infamy until they will go down to the place prepared for all doers of wickedness.

O, how I loved those men, and rejoiced under their teachings! It seems as if all is gone, and as if my very heart strings will break; and were it not for my beloved wife and dear children I feel as if I have nothing to live for, and would rejoice to be with them in the Courts of Glory. But I must live, and labor, and try to do good, and help to build up the Kingdom of our God here on the earth. And I pray God my Father that I may be reconciled unto my lot, and live and die a faithful follower of the teachings of our Murdered Prophet and Patriarch.⁴⁶

About the middle of July my Bro. Joseph came to see me. His health was quite poor. He appeared to be declining. I entreated him to return to the City to live. He said if I would give him employment in my gristmill he would Come, for he could not labor or do any other work. I told him if he would ~~be~~ come & do well he should have employment in my mill. He engag^ed[^] a house for his family & Soon moved in. As soon as he had Setteled his family & rested a little he Commenced tending my mill, although he was hardly able to set up all day. I had another man employed to assist in the same buisness. He commenced to tend mill on the 26 of August & I paid him 15 dollars a month. Time [went] on & mills performed well.

46. For the martyrdom, see Oaks and Hill, *Carthage Conspiracy*; Beam, *American Crucifixion*.

But to the affairs of the Church. The Twelve were mostly gone on a mission at the time of Josephs & Hyrums death. Before they returned Sidney Rigdon came here & claimed to be appointed of God by a special revelation to hin to spercede the Prophet & become the first President of the Church. ~~I shall~~ I shall leave this to be written more pefectly hereafter & for the present confine my pen to myself.⁴⁷

Much of my time was spent in Council so th that the care of my buisness Occupied all my ~~time~~ time when not in Council. In Sept [1844] I went to St Lewis to procure castings & some other necessaries. I had a good passage & soon returned in Safety. All things went on well. For a time my affairs seemed to prosper & I did not forget to return thanks to my heavenly Father for the blessings I enjoyed. On the 26 of Nov [1844] ice commenced to run in the river so that were obliged to stop business.

So that after haveing a little time to rest & settle up my buisness a little, I again began to feel after my Fathers family.⁴⁸ I got my Father to Call his Children to gather & with all the energy of my Soul did I exhort them to be engaged in those things which are most necessary for our salvation. And I greatly desired to see my aged Father arise & honorably Stand at the head of his family, set his house in order that he might be first in his own kingdom & make it honorable in the sight heaven. Yet

47. Newel's son Samuel, almost twelve, witnessed the transformation, as did Newel's nephew Oliver DeMille. Hafen, "Samuel Knight"; and the Oliver DeMille sketch in "One Man's Family: Oscar DeMille."

48. In October 1844, Nauvoo tradesmen organized to promote manufacturing. One committee looked into erecting a dam across the Mississippi River, and on January 7, 1845, the committee added Newel Knight to its membership. The temple committee and surveyors became involved. A plan for the dam was drawn up consisting of fifty-three piers, each forty feet long, ten feet wide, and fifteen feet apart. Averaging twelve feet in depth, the planks were to be put down between the piers, and the spaces were to be covered with planks also, "the whole forming a permanent dam, and a bridge forty feet wide and eighty rods long." On February 11, a committee proposed that citizens be invited to subscribe twelve thousand days work for constructing the dam. Shareholders in the dam met on February 20, and on February 27 "some of the principal men" met at the site of the dam. Jessee, *John Taylor Nauvoo Journal*, 16, 36, 39, 44, 45, 46. For years Newel had wanted the dam built, but construction never started.

all my endeavors seemed to be in vain. The winter [1844—45] passed & the family remained as they were. This has been mor greif to me than all the poverty I have ever experienced for when I look upon my aged Father & see his head already white with hardships & Cares of upwards of 70 years I wanto see him begin to put on the armor of righteousness & magnify the preisthood & Stand with his family in their proper lot.

O[n] th 12 of Feb [1845] the ice was broken in the river so that my mills again commenced operation. I again gave Joseph employment in my grist mill. His health had gradually improved from the time he commenced work for me. Time passed on, yet complaint daily increased from the customers of my mill. It became evident that Joseph did not give satisfaction as a miller. I therefore Came to the conclusion, as his health was so improved he could at various business, to discharge him from the mill. As soon as this came to my Fathers [attention] he Called his family to gather & first Called on me to Covenant to ~~hear~~ Obey his Council & let him stand at the head of my buisness & dictate the affairs of my mill. I told him that nothing could delight me more than to see our family properly organized & to see hin at the head. That I was ready to hearken & obey every thing that was in accordance withe the laws of the kingdom & to hold hin at the head of his kingdom & to honor him as such.

But, before I could Covenant to give my temporal business over to him, it would be necessary for him to become responsible to my Creditors as ther were Considerable debts standing against me which I should not be able to meet only from the resourses of my mills, which if properly managed with the same prosperity I had hithertoo had, I should no doubt be able to meet. Tthat as these debtes had been contracted by me for the express purpose of ~~getting~~ ^benefitting^ the mills, it would be doing them injustice to let my property go out of my Controll until they were made secure or satisfied. Neither could I do my self & family justice to enter in to such measures until I should be honorably discharged from debt & have to my family some provisions for a subsistance, as we had struggled hard ^to^ get our property. I should be glad to enjoy it in peace & in righteousness. However I did not conceive that any of these things ought to or need hinder us from all that could

be required in regard to a proper organization of family. After I had finished my remarks, little ~~until~~ more was said & we again dispersed.

On the 01 of April [1845] one of the gudgeons of my sawmill broke.⁴⁹ I was obliged to go to St Lewis to procure another. I took passage on board a Steamer which soon Conveyed me there in safety. I procured such articles as I chose & again embarked for home.⁵⁰

I now found a little at rest from a multiplicity of Cares & buisness which daily occupied my attention. When at home I gave my self to reflecting upon the situation of my Fathers family. Aall the day long did I ponder & at night Sleep departed from me. I Called upon God & desired that he would guide me & direct me by his holy Spirit so that I might not er[r]. It was foreign from my desire to treat lightly the Council of my Father or to greive him. I had therefore still employed Joseph although it had been to my disadvantage but to do according to his request in all my affairs and not appear expedient to me. I therefore sought earnestly to know what the Lord would that I should do. The situation of the family bore me down with greif & pained my inmost soul.

I saw that my Father was old & according to the common lot of man he could not long survive. I saw & knew also that Joseph did encourage him to or use stratagem to cause hin to make such requirements of me as before mentioned & that he did seek advantage of me in other respects & to turn the influence of the Brethren against me. I felt bad. I was alone as it were in my Faters family. I searched my self to see if I had given occasion for this. I could not feel tat I had. I knew my intentions were & ever had been good. I could do no more than to commit all in to the hand of God & trust the event with him, praying that the understanding of my ^father^ be enlightened & that he may yet

49. A gudgeon is a metal journal (the part of a machine shaft or axle supported by a bearing) mounted in the end of the main shaft, so the wheel (usually a water-wheel) may turn on bearings.

50. On April 19, 1845, Lydia sent Newel's apology to the high council "in behalf of my husband . . . whom I love and reverence" for his absence at that meeting. "He is sick," she said, "quite confined to his bed with a severe cough and fever." Newel requested they consecrate a bottle of oil for him. Two weeks later he felt well enough to attend the council's meeting. Nauvoo High Council Minutes.

honor the Preisthood & Stand honorably at the head of his family or kingdom. And that Joseph may allso come up honorably in his proper lot. And that I may be kept in all my aged Father, whom I love & delight to honor, know that it is & ever has been my theme to do right & deal justly. And may the Lord preserve him & let his old age be crowned with with evvery good thing & his life be prolonged as long as life shall be desired by him. And I would that Joseph may yet see the truth as it is & that all things that have been wrong ^be right & be^ may be forgotten & that union & love & Confidence may exist betwen us which becometh not only Saints but which is doubly binding upon Brothers.

Oh Lord wilt thou give me patience & Wisdom & let thy holy Spirit direct me in all things for these things do weigh heavily & peirce like a pointed dagger to my heart. All the privations losses & Persecutions which I ^have^ passed through from our Eenemies abroad cannot Compare with the Sorrow & bitterness of soul that the situation of my Fathers family gives me. I can only Commit all in to the hands of our great Creator who guideth the destinies of the Children of men on the Earth.

Saturday, May 24, 1845.⁵¹ The Capstone of the Temple was laid this morning at a little past Six O Clock in the morning, after a little more than four years hard labor of the Sants, during which time we have passed through scenes of persecution too great to be panted by man, & the blood of our best friends men have Stained the floor at Carthage Jail & he earth has drunk their blood. While our enemies have been thus cruelly satiateing themselves, The brethren have been laboring by day & watching by night to accomplish the house which the Lord hath Commanded them to build unto his most holy mane. The mornig was cool, Clear & beautiful: the Saints rejoiced while the band echoed forth their sweetest strains of music upon the top of the walls. When the Stone was placed there was a united Hosana to God & the Lamb Amen

51. Here, inserted into the journal, is a half sheet or scrap of paper. It contains Newel's comments based on his reading and borrowing from an article in "The Capstone of the Temple," *Times and Seasons* 5 (June 1, 1845): 926.

^&^ Amen shouted three times which not only gave joy to the Saints but filled heavens with gladness.⁵²

The Twelve & other authorities of the Church were present to witness & direct the scene. President Young made some appropriate remarks & as it was the Seventh day, the same that God finished his work & rested, so the Saints might do the same. A new hymn was sung & all hearts rejoiced in the hope that the wrath of our enemies might be stayed until the building shall be completed & the faithful receive their endowments therein.⁵³

This day Mrs Caroline, Wif of William Smith, was buried⁵⁴

An address delivered by Elder Orson Pratt one of the Quorum of the Twelve. I shall if

Bro Heige is willing her[e] insert the speech delivered by him on the 15 of June 1845 as reported by G L Watt.⁵⁵

June 14th, [1845].⁵⁶ My health is considerably improved & my business seems to prosper. A general time of peace & prosperity seems to smile upon the Saints. Crops lok well. An abundant harvest promises to reward the faithful laborer for all his toil. The Temple is progressing finely. good intelgence from Europe & the Iselands of the Sea & various parts of the world. I think a more general time of prosperity never daund upon this kingdom

July 1st All is well with the Saints as a People. Properity attends them & health is tolerable good in the City.

[July] 13. As to my business I am prospered & fell to give thanks to my heavenly Father for all blessings I enjoy.

July 27, 1845. Just one year one month & one day have elapsed since our beloved Prophet & Patriarch fell martyrs to the cause truth. I have

52. See William Clayton, journals, May 24, 1845; Anderson and Bergera, *Joseph Smith's Quorum of the Anointed*.

53. Anderson and Bergera, *Nauvoo Endowment Companies*, xi–xlii and table 1.

54. Newel took this information from a very long article in the same issue of the *Times and Seasons*.

55. Newel never added this speech to his manuscript, leaving the remainder of the page blank.

56. Here the narration resumes on the next regular page. Because Newel had brought his record up to date, he now writes dated, diary-like entries.

this day visited the Jail & viewed the place where they were so bound & Cruelly murdered. My Wif & my self went into the room where the out rag[e] was committed. The Scared walls & blood still crimson on the floor (in spite of all the efforts that have ben made to erase the & cleanse the blood from the floor) stand as a bold testimony against the Nation that suffers all to pass unnoticed. Me heart was filled with emmotions that I cannot find language to express. Pen cannot paint the scene.⁵⁷

July 31. Blessings are bestowed upon us as a People. Less sickness hav has prevailed [than] any previous season since the Saints began to settle here & infact ther is less than at any place from which we have intelligence in all the Country a round. In this the words of our martyred Prophet are verrily fullfilled, for at a time when sickness prevailed to so great an extent that there not well ones enough to take Care of the Sick, Our Prophet Joseph exhorted the Brethren & Sisters to be faithful & put their trust in God & all their afflictions should work for them an exceeding & eternal weight of Glory, & time would come that it should be said & the report should go forth that Nauvoo is a healthy place. Thousands can now bear testimony of the fulfillment of this prophecy & many of the Brethren who at that time lay sick in tents, haveing the year befor been deprived of all their rights as Citizens in the State of M.O. & had barely escaped with their lives, are now in good Circumstances, Surrounded with the blessings life health & plenty.

As to my Self I have labored hard & th^r^ough the blessing of my heavenly Father I hope soon to see my family situated comfortably. My mill is now in a properous condition so that we are comfortable for food & raiment, so that if Brother Clap⁵⁸ performs the job of building a house for me acording to Contract by the first of Sept I shall have the satisfaction seeing my family comfortably situated.

Aug 1st, We had an excellent discourse delivered by Elder H C Kimball ^and^ well calculated in its nature to instruct encourage & s[t]

57. See Jessee, "Return to Carthage," 3-19; "Martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith," 301-2; Laub, "George Laub's Nauvoo Journal," 151-78; Taylor, *Witness to the Martyrdom*.

58. Possibly Benjamin L. Clapp.

imulate the Saints to atten to such duties as will prepare them for usefulness in life & prepare them for an exaltation in the Celestial world.

[August] 8 I am truely glad to see the peace & union that exists among the Brethren. The High Council Continue to meet as usual, but I am happy to say that [f]requently of late have little to more than to lift our united petitions to the most high for peac & prosperity to attend their people & for the spread of truth, & the establishment of righteousness upon the earth.

[August] 18 There was never a more eventful day than the one in which we live. The past Spring & Summer has such a Catalogue of events by water & calamities by land the report thereof is a vexation.⁵⁹ Freedom & the rights of man are trampled upon with impunity & it seems that mercy find no admittance & justce no place among the nations of the earth. Truely the Sants have great reason to rejoice for the peace & good order that prevails in our City & according to the words of the Prophet the time will come when he that will not take up his sword against his Neighbor will have to flee to Zion for Safety.

I have got my Celler dug & all of my part ready for Brother Clap to perform his part but to my great disapointment he is not on hand acording to Contract. My Father's health is good & I still feel a pleasure in administering to his wants. May he be blest & live long upon the Earth & yet to see many good days is the desire of my heart, Amen.

[August] 25th I have been makeing every preperation ~~on my part~~ to secure to my family a comfortable house, for the sickness & privations that we have endured in consequence of the persecutions of our enemies haveing been from tine to time obliged to leave all & barely escape with our lives in Common with the Saint ^has rendered us in circumstances that a comfortable house to us would be to us of great worth^. I have bought pine lumber for Sash, window, door Caseings, doors & C. And hired Brother Foster to make it ready for the house so that if Bro Clap had not disappointed me I should soon have had the pleasure of Seeing my family Comfortabl. But he has not commenced to lay up the walls which is a great disapointment to me.

59. See *Times and Seasons* 6 (August 15, 1845): 999.

Sept 1st. The time has arrived that Bro Clap should according to agreement ~~should~~ have done the job of puttind up & enclosing my house ready for the inside finish. But he has not commenced the walls & but verry little preperations on his part appear to be making. Our children are Sick, our family large & in circumstances that we greatly need a better place to live ^in than^ that we now have.

[Sept.] 7, Sabbath. We had an excellent discourse delivered & instructions well Calculated to enliven & unite & Stimulate the ~~bethr~~ Brethren to tose thing which are necessary to their best intrest here & secure to them an exaltation in that plac where the wicked Shall not have dominion.⁶⁰ My Children are Still sick with the whooping Cough & the Chills & fever. My wife is allso confined. She has a fine Son [Jesse] born last night. Both are doing well.

[Sept.] 12 My business is prosperous & the health of the Brethren I think is generally better than it has ever been any Season Since we have lived here. Yet there is Some Sickness in our City, but I think far less according to the no of inbitants than in any Town or City About. Our Children are sick. Newel⁶¹ had a fit to day, he has partially recovered from it. My wife is getting a long as well could be expected.

We suffer great inconvenience for house room, & from the littl preparation Bro Clap is making I think there little propect of having a better one. Had he fullfild the Contract made



Jesse Knight, Newel's son, became one of Utah's earliest wealthy businessmen. Courtesy of Knight family.

60. On September 9, 1845, the Council of Fifty voted to organize companies to leave for Utah. *JSP*, A1:465-69.

61. Newel and Lydia's son, born 1842, here is almost three years old.

between him & my Self I Should now have had the pleasure of Seeing my family Comfortably situated, which after the many toils & privations we have Suffered would be a precious boon to us. The patience with which Lydia has ever borne all the Scenes of Sufferings & privations we have passed through Seems to lay a double obligation upon me to make her Comfortable now. And after advanceing pay to Bro Clap & makeing Such Calculations as I have, it is not possible fore build a Comfortabl dwelling if he fails to fulfill his Contract.

[Sept.] 15th [1845]. Our enemes begin to fear lest in the midst of the blessings which our perseveance & industry is Crowning us we shall be Surrounded with the blessings of plenty Peace & quietness, & that if they do not do as wicked men have allways have done, too many of the Candid & Honorable men of the Earth will lay Shoulder to the wheel & that Mormonism will be more than a match for them. The Temple is in a great State of forwardness & a more general appearance of prosperity never dawned upon a People. A Golden havest rich & abundant is on hand & the Brethren are united in accomplishing those things which the Lord hath Commanded us to do.

As I before Said the wicked begin to think their Craft in danger & lust after fruits of the industrious labors of the Saints & to try the old method of obtaining it.⁶² They have Commenced mobbing & burning houses on the out parts of our Settlements. thinking no doubt it will all be winked at or Sanctioned by the administrators of the law, as have been all roberies, murders & every kind of wickedness which have been from time to time practiced upon the Church of Jesus Christ of latter day Saints.

Oct 1. Our enemies, or rather the enemies of the kingdom which God hath set up on the earth, are rageing & doing all that is in their power to destroy the Saints from off the Earth. So violent have been their measures & seemingly aided or abet[t]ed by those who hold the

62. In September 1845, arsonists, proudly labeling themselves “anti-Mormons,” torched more than a hundred buildings and burned out the Saints living at Morley’s Settlement, two dozen miles south of Nauvoo. See Hartley, *1845 Burning of Morley’s Settlement*. Inspired by their success, they vowed to burn other Latter-day Saint settlements, including Nauvoo.

reins of goverment that all our brethren whose lives have been Spared have been compelld to flee from every part of the C.O. [county] into the City for Safety while their houses & Chattels have been given to the flames, their horses Cattle Sheep hog &C have become an easy prey to their enemes together with their numerous feilds of grain.

While I write my hand & heart trembling at the picture or reality of the acts of men who are made in the likeness of God & ought to be noble & like him ^in^ their motives allmost forbids, & quite makes me blush to record their acts. So violent have been the works & so little heed has goverment paid to our Cries & petitons for redress of ou[r] wrongs, that the only way possible for us to check the flame & Stay the hand of persecution & thereby save the lives of the innocen babe, the sprightly youth, to gather with the middle-aged & the Silver headed veteran who once fought with a Washington to plant the Standard of freedom & Spread the banner of liberty in this glorious land, I Say the only possible means Checkng the fury of this nation has been to Sign a decree that the People Called latter day Saints in mass leave this boasted land of liberty that they neither sow nor reap again upon their possessions.

O Columbia! Oh boasted land of America! how hath thy glory faded, thy honor fled. How will the Nations a far off reproach thee when thy foul deeds play in in gore written in letters of blood go forth for they cannot be concealed. The Widows Cry & Orphans greif will burst every land & u^n^cover every act, that thy works may appear naked in the eyes of all Nations. But those whom thou now persecutest & drivest out from thee & alltogather despisest & hath refused them an Asylum or one cheering hope of justice, shall yet rise in magesty & Glory & Shine forth glorious & powerful as the Sun when thy glory hath departed.

First meting in the Temple.⁶³ On Sunday the 5 day of Oct, through the indefatigable exertions, unceasing industry, & heaven blest labors in

63. Feeling the pulse of antagonistic sentiment in the region, the Twelve decided that the Saints must pull out of Nauvoo and relocate somewhere in the West. On October 5-8, 1845, in the almost-finished Nauvoo Temple, they presided at the Church's first general conference held in three years. About five thousand

the midst of trials tribulations, poverty & worldly obstacles, solemnized in some instances by death, about five thousand Saints had the inexpressible joy & gratification to meet for the first time in the house of the Lord in the City of Josph. From mites & tithing millions, had risen up to the glory of God, as a Temple where the Children of the last kingdom Could Come together & praise the Lord.

It certainly afforded a holy Satisfaction to think that since the 5 of April 1841, when the first Stone was laid amidst the most straitened Circumstances, the Church of Jesus Christ of latter day Saints had witnessed their bread Cast upon the waters or more properly their obeidience to the Commandments of the Lord, appear in the tangible form of a temple entirely enclosed, windows in, with a tenpory floors pulpits & Seats to accomodate so many persons preparatory to a General Conference. No General Conference haveing been held for three years past according to the declaration of of our martyred Prophet:

“There shall be no more baptisms for the dead until the ordinance can be attended to in the font of the Lords house & the Church shall not hold another general Conference untill thy can met in Said house. For thus Saith the Lord.”

President Young opened the Services of the day in a dedication prayer presenting the temple thus far Completed as a monument of the Saints liberality fidelity & faith

Lord we dedicate this house & Our Selves unto thee. The day was occupied most agreeably in hearing instructions & teachings & offering up the gratitude of honest for so great a privelege as worshipping God with in instead of with out an edifice whose whose beauty & workmanship will Compare with any house of worship in America &

Saints attended. As President of the Twelve, Brigham Young opened the services by offering a dedicatory prayer for the temple thus far finished. On the second day, members sustained general and local officers of the Church, including Newel to continue as a high councilor. That day and during the next two, speakers explained why and how the Saints must vacate Nauvoo by the next spring. “Conference Minutes,” *Times and Seasons* 6 (November 1, 1845): 1008–16. Newel here quotes from “First Meeting in the Temple,” *Times and Seasons* 6 (November 1, 1845): 1017–18; the quotation ends with “whose motto is Holiness to the Lord.”

whose motto is Holiness to the Lord. On the 6 [Oct. 1845] was held the a general Conference in the house of the Lord the minutes which I extract as reported⁶⁴

64. Newel here intended to copy from "Conference Minutes," *Times and Seasons* 6 (November 1, 1845): 1008-16, though he never did. This ends MS 767, folder 1, item 5. We conclude our part 4 here so that part 5 can deal with the Nauvoo exodus story, which this conference announced and launched the preparations for.