

A while ago I met a man in Quincy, Illinois, a little, skinny guy. He came up to me and told me how he had always wanted to meet me. I asked him, "Why?" He told me that President Ezra Taft Benson was his father—the secretary of agriculture.

I hope you boys get something good out of this interview.

Q. It has been our pleasure. Would you like to put anything else on tape for the record?

A. No, not really. But the Mormon Church is the only church moving in an upward direction in membership. Most people don't realize that. I think that's the opposition's main problem. The Catholics had a hard time sending their kids to boarding schools. They could not maintain the school in Nauvoo—they sold it to the Mormons. I know two old ladies who could not afford to live in their houses. The Mormons bought the houses and told them they could live there.

I plan on keeping my shovel [referring to the groundbreaking of the Nauvoo Temple] until the day I die. They had section of sand designated for the groundbreaking service about thirty feet in length and eight feet in width. I felt because I was not a Mormon, I should kind of stand off to the side. But Elder Staheli made me stand and take a shovelful, [laughs]

## Jim Webb

*Nauvoo, Illinois*

*Birthday: January 31, 1919*

*Interview on November 5, 2001, at the Joseph Smith Academy*

*by Diana Johnson*

*Joella Peterson also present*

Q. [Diana Johnson] How long have you lived in the Nauvoo area?

A. [Jim Webb] All my life. I was born out on the farm that I live on right now.

Q. When did your ancestors first come here?

A. In the late 1830s.

Q. Why did they decide to make their home Nauvoo?

A. My great-grandfather was born in Staffordshire, England. He lost his wife, They had two children, John and Mary. He immigrated to the United States, and why he came to Illinois, I don't know, but he came by stagecoach from New York. As far as I know, they didn't stop anywhere else, and why, I don't know. On the other side, the Hortons came from England, but they lived in Indiana and they lived in different states before they came to Nauvoo.

Q. When your ancestors came to Nauvoo, what occupations did they start?

A. Farming. I have a record from the courthouse in Carthage that he bought the forty acres where the original house was in 1840.

Q. Have you been farming here your whole life?

A. Ten years. I studied at the university and spent four and a half years during World War II. So from '36 to '46, I didn't live here. I lived back here periodically.

Q. Where were you during that time?

A. I was at the University of Illinois Champaign, and during the war I was in the Southwest Pacific with the destroyers in the Navy.

Q. What do you like about this area? What events, traditions or cultural characteristics do you like about Nauvoo?

A. When I went to grade and high school, we had a real good teacher, I thought. I had to take two years of Latin because I wanted to go to the University of Illinois, like my brothers and sisters. We were close enough to Fort Madison and Keokuk, mostly Fort Madison, I suppose for entertainment—movies, concerts and so forth.

Q. Why do you like staying here in Nauvoo?

A. After the war, and after Hazel Greeson and I were married in Bremerton, Washington, I wanted to raise my family on the farm, and my dad wasn't in very good health. He died three years after, in 1949, after I got back. I had taken agriculture and taught a year of vocational agriculture in southern Illinois before the war. When I came back, farming was kind of bad. My wife suggested that we go back in the Navy. I'm an officer in the Navy.

Then the school district in Dallas City interviewed me and I started teaching vocational agriculture at Dallas City. I ended up teaching at Hamilton when I retired. I was vocational director. We had a four-school cooperative for vocational studies at the high school level before the junior colleges were offering much vocational studies. We didn't have them yet in the 1950s. They didn't offer job opportunities, so that's what we did. We had Nauvoo, Colusa, Hamilton, Warsaw, and Carthage together. We ran the buses between those.

We had never seen commercial—we had placed students, like they do now; we did it from high school in the third or fourth year in the afternoons, mostly at Hamilton. I placed a lot at Keokuk. They got permission from the state to go out of state to place them. We put the farm boys on farms, boys that took welding in shops, and auto mechanics at Hamilton. That was quite interesting. That was before I retired. That was my thirty-five years. I got credit for four years and a half in the service, so I didn't teach thirty-five years. I always farmed all that time too.

Q. What are some of the challenges of living here?

A. Farming has always been a challenge. It is more so now, I think, for my son and son-in-law.

They built a new bridge by our place. I watched them build the bridge in 1929; the hard road was put in 1930. When I was a boy riding to school in the buggy, the muddy roads were quite a challenge.

My parents sent three through Carthage College; then they got their masters at Illinois. I was the youngest in the family. How in the world they sent all of us, I don't know. My father raised sheep and wool for a Chicago firm and did things like that to keep going.

The Depression was the most challenging. We had a bank in Nauvoo that was corrupt. In 1929 the stock market broke one day, and the bank closed the next day. Some in the area lost all their money—except my dad, who was at the State Bank of Nauvoo, which didn't close until bank holiday and reorganization in 1933. He had the church account at that bank.

We were Presbyterians. My story is that now you can't borrow unless you go through Presbyterians, but to pay the ministry he borrowed about a thousand dollars. All the organizations only had about a thousand dollars. This was 1929. A thousand dollars was a lot of money. The church had just cancelled it, so it didn't even lose anything. My parents didn't either, but a lot of people lost their life savings because they didn't pick up their notes. The bankers played the stock market, and they had to take them out of Nauvoo at night, so that was the second exodus of leaving Nauvoo after the Mormons.

One served prison time at Joliet—best accountant, [laughs]

Q. What opportunities have you had to serve in civic office or community service organizations?

A. Of course, a farmer never retires. We just finished harvestings last Thursday night. My son and son-in-law does the farming. I've always been an elder in the Presbyterian Church. It's out in the country if you go out through the country from Niota. During the flood of 1993, we had that as our headquarters for the National Guard. The prisoners helped sandbag and everything. It flooded all of Niota, and most of the people on this back street in Nauvoo went out and rebuilt homes from FEMA, a government agency.

Since the last ten years I've been with the Nauvoo Historical Society at the Weld House. We're working on it. I'm out there on Sunday afternoons from one to five from March to late October.

I work with the Retired Teachers Association. We meet once a month in the county. There are a lot of problems too. Health insurance is being increased by the state. We work with the Springfield office of education. We took a bus to Springfield from the county in April and tried to lobby for the teachers. My wife died seven years ago, so I have only a single premium. The increased premium isn't so bad, but the other state employees get their health insurance pretty much paid, and we've been very unfortunate; it went up twenty percent from July to January the first of 2001—veto session didn't help in state legislature. We're working on that now. Unless the state of Illinois does something, it'll move up 80 percent on January the first. That's hard on people that retired before I did. They need health insurance, and that's all they have. Some don't even have social security.

Q. From your knowledge of the history of the area, what groups or individuals stand out in your mind as having made significant contributions to the growth and betterment of Nauvoo?

A. We had a pageant Queshema. Maybe you've heard it. We had it during the Grape Festival. It was a real good portrayal—better this year. It was revised; the Indians called it Queshema. James White was the first one—he bought Nauvoo from the Indians with two hundred bags of com. The state of Illinois became a charter in 1818. Iowa didn't come until 1836. So it was the most western part. Missouri was after we were.

We were not slave, and Missouri was slave. So the line was forty miles from here during the Civil War. My grandfather on the Horton side was in the Civil War, but he must have been very young. He must have been the bugler or something. We've had speakers at our historical society talk about these places where the Civil War was fought within fifty miles of here.

Commerce, Commerce City, and Venice were named; then Joseph Smith named it Nauvoo, the City Beautiful. I go to the LDS pageants in the fall.

Q. The Mormons, or members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, came to Nauvoo in 1839 under the leadership of Joseph Smith, a man they believed to be a prophet of God. Over the next few years they built a city with a population of over 15,000 people. Conflicts arose between the Mormons and the citizens of the surrounding areas that led to the Mormon exodus in 1846. What is your understanding of the causes of that conflict? Why were the citizens of the surrounding communities upset with the Mormons?

A. Governor Ford was the governor of Illinois at that time. He gave them special charters that the people thought were rather unusual. The governor gave them unusual rights of habeas corpus, a militia, and court proceedings, and so forth. I think that made the other people in Hancock County and the Indians in the surrounding counties jealous, I guess. We all have jealousy, [chuckles] That's the reading I've done.

There's a book up in the Weld House, the history of Hancock County from 1880, but it goes back to 1818. It has more on Nauvoo Hancock County, than the whole state of Illinois, but it has more than the Hancock County than the other areas because of Nauvoo. So there's opinions that differ.

Q. What have you heard over the years about what the Mormons may have done to provoke action against them?

A. Well, the people have an opinion too. They said that they stole livestock and things like that. But my great-grandfather owned all this land, and I have the history of that from 1840 to my son, the fifth generation of Webbs. I can't find any relationship on my genealogy of the Webb Blacksmith shop, but we talk about it, and I've talked to a lot of your people. They've had Angus beef cattle here for quite a few years. The farmers farm the ground, and I suppose in about the 1960s the Mormons first started coming back. They started to build the visitors' center and everything down here.

I went to a country school, where the high school is now. The country school was in the corner until the sixth grade, and we had just three students. So the high school brought us to town. I went to seventh and eighth grade here. We got to play basketball.

Roderick Lewis was in my class. I would like to know if he is still living, but the Ourths don't know.

The Sanfords came in from Ohio. They were very good friends. One of my sister's best friends was Mildred Sanford, who always came out when we had a threshing. Florence Ourth's husband had been a very good friend of my brothers. He was my Boy Scout leader. Have you met Florence Ourth? She's ninety-seven years old. And Arnold—she calls him Arnold, but we always call him Pete. He carried me on his shoulders, and he'd be calling my folks Uncle Bert and Aunt Mary. His home life was very poor, and he stayed out with my older brothers a lot. They played basketball together. The first basketball teams in Nauvoo were back then.

Q. What accounts or interesting stories of particular events associated with that time period have come down through your family or others in the community?

A. What type of history do you mean? Of the Mormons?

Q. Any history of the city. Are there any particular stories that you've heard?

A. Of course, even when I was a boy, the Icarian buildings were still there on Mulholland Street west of the bank, where the temple is now. It was a colony. Miss Lillian Snyder is the historian. She was at the University of Illinois for four or five years before me. I was over at the University of Illinois just in September for my sixtieth anniversary, the week of the terrorist attack. The football game was canceled, but then I went back for the homecoming two weeks ago. I'm a big University of Illinois football fan. [smiles] I don't know if they play BYU or not, but we do in basketball sometimes.

Lillian has all the history up there. I know some of the French family and the French Icarian descendants. You see, the Germans—if you've been down to the Rheinberger House in the state park—came in the 1850s. I think they brought most of the grapes and everything.

Of course, the Icarians came too right after in 1847. They were all in the grape industry I think they owned something like two or three hundred acres of grapes at that time. Maybe more than that. They were all shipped in baskets across the Mississippi on the Nauvoo ferry to Montrose. We never had the railroad in Nauvoo. My folks told me that there was supposed to be an interurban railroad connecting with the Santa Fe in Niota. But it fell through, so the ferry took the strawberries, grapes, and wine—it was able to haul a whole lot of strawberries.

When my kids were in high school, they loved strawberries. They'd go pick them. By the time we cut grapes, they'd be back in school, in college.

Anyhow, they'd be shipped to cities in the refrigerated ice cars, keeping them all together on CB and QRR from Chicago, Burlington, Quincy, and now Santa Fe. They were all shipped to St. Louis, Chicago, Minneapolis, and different places. After the ferry, truck use became big. A lot of us trucked.

Then there is the wine industry. I remember when I was a boy, there'd always be trucks with barrels in the back. They'd come in to Nauvoo and get grapes to make wine. During Prohibition, from 1918 until about the 1930s, of course,

they made whiskey. Each state was different, and Iowa was stricter than Illinois. Everyone was pulling in the mud on their cars until they got the hard road in 1930. The bootleggers from Chicago would come to Nauvoo, and when I was in high school I would be curious and when somebody would get a new car, I would wonder how they could get a new car during Depression time. So those are some stories.

Q. Were any of your ancestors members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?

A. Yes. My great-grandfather William Webb and his second wife, Harriet, were. Actually, there is no official record saying that William joined the Mormon Church. The Baldwins were, and all except Harriet and her family went to Utah. I looked it up at the lands and records building.

As far as I know, he's never had a middle name, but William Webb married Harriet Baldwin. They were married on October 12, 1843, by the justice of peace. He bought the farm in 1840. I was able to get this information from the lands and records office when Elder and Sister Jones were here a few years ago. In fact, I had a Webb house, a whole forty acres that I bought from one of my ancestors, with no basement that was built a hundred and fifty years ago. I offered it to Mr. Jones at the visitors' center, but they weren't interested in it. I meant to move it in if they wanted to move it and show the type of farmhouses that were built during the Mormon era.

My son is on the first responders and fire department, so we burned the house on two different Saturdays. The state used it for fire people to get experience in putting out burning buildings. State fire marshals came from Champaign and Springfield. They all said, "Yes, it's more than one hundred and fifty years old."

It is kind of unique because it was one of my grandpa's brothers' houses. He raised a big family in that little house without any basement. From there, they went to colleges. One of them went right to Harvard from Carthage Academy. He rode a horse to Carthage to school and then transferred from there to Harvard. He became a lawyer. I still have contact with those cousins.

That house owner was George Washington Webb. My grandfather was William Giles, and my great-uncle, who was up the road north, was James Webb. There was a daughter, Sarah, who married Emmett Horton and is buried in Lebanon, Nebraska.

I tried to find out about the Baldwins from the LDS records agency, but her married name wasn't Baldwin and because of our fire in 1993 that burned our house down, it burned all of her records and everything. My wife and I visited with this couple that was in Nauvoo for eighteen months. I don't have their name, but they lived in Sacramento. That was in the 1970s, and they were there for the Mormon Church. It was all the genealogy that they gave us on the Baldwins that burned. She was my fifth cousin on the Baldwin side. Her great-grandfather was James Baldwin, a brother of Harriet Baldwin, my great-grandmother. So I say that connection was the Mormons.

As you enter from Nauvoo, the second tallest tombstones in the city cemetery belong to Great-Grandpa William Webb and Harriet Baldwin. Great-Uncle James, whose grave is on the east side near our lots, was born in 1846. I didn't know any of this until after I retired. It has been about fifteen or twenty years since I looked all this up.

I would like to know if my aunt Edwina Kimball had any connection with the LDS Kimballs. They were Catholics, and she had a Bible. I would like to know who got that Bible. She said that it was written in there that on the ship coming over—the Baldwins were on the ship with William Webb. His two kids were there and said that her brothers were out talking about Mr. Webb. He said, "Me marry a widow with two children?" But he did. That's the story that was written in the Bible, and I wish I had a copy of it. I don't know who got the Bible.

Preston Kimball was a nephew. They sent him through college. That's the house straight down the street, the Heber C. Kimball home. It's owned by the Mormon Church. It was owned by President Kimball, and he was a lawyer here in Nauvoo. He was my lawyer until he died. He was at the University of Illinois when I was, but he had already gotten his master's in Texas and had taught commerce. Then he got his law degree in Illinois. We were really close. They lived just where the new temple parking garage is going to be, up on top of the hill. I think they built that house. I was small when we moved things in from their farm. I rode with my oldest brother and helped drive the team of horses.

My folks and my brother raised horses on the family farm. It was called the Jim Webb farm. She was the only daughter of Jim Webb, and she married a Kimball. They had a real nice house in Nauvoo. My mother said that we had to be really careful with the china when we ate with them. They didn't have any children of their own.

The Catholic church has a plaque on the wall. They gave all their farmland to the Catholic church. Father Tholon was here then. It was Father Reibold before that, my mother said. But Father Tholon was the one that I knew when I grew up.

We had a high school and then down here where the temple is. They had a full high school, and when we played basketball, if we would foul one out, we'd win. If we had been together, we'd beat Carthage, but that was in the 1930s.

They have a plaque hanging in the Catholic church. I like to go there and look at it. In 1941, while my brother and I were still teaching in Southern Illinois High School, I went to a funeral, and later we watched the land being sold at the bank comer. Land was just one hundred dollars an acre then, but that's another old story. One of my uncles bought the farm north of ours, the former great-uncle James Webb Farm.

Q. What is your understanding of the role that anti-Mormon activists and newspapers played in stirring animosity between the Morons and the citizens of the surrounding areas—particularly Thomas Sharp and the *Warsaw Signal* newspaper?

A. I had question marks on that. I think I've heard of that name, but that's probably because it's in the record book in the Weld House. Those books have been reprinted. I used to go to the courthouse and read the books, but they got real flimsy, and they were afraid to let anyone use them. Now they have been reprinted. No one really goes there on Sunday afternoons, so I go there and read some of the books, but I don't remember the names of them. But Warsaw, it says, in your pageant [*City of Joseph*], "Some rough heads arm wrestled with Joseph Smith." I guess he was quite physical.

Q. What is your understanding of how Joseph Smith was viewed by his enemies in the 1830s, and how had he been viewed by succeeding generations down to the present time?

A. There is an opinion in the book about that too—opposite opinions.

Q. Do you have an opinion about the issue?

A. No, I think you are wonderful people. When the people from Sacramento were here, we visited back and forth. They don't drink coffee, but in the summertime we visited and had strawberries and ice cream. They lived in one of these little houses, and we would visit them back and forth. My wife had her first stroke at the age of fifty-one, and that's the time when they were here—in 1976 and 1977. I think they have records. I asked Mr. Jones that day if they'd have records of all those that have been here. The skipper of my second ship, a destroyer, and his folks were here. During the war, the found out that we were both on the same ship, and my folks visited with them. His name was Jack. I've already gotten in contact with him so he can come and visit us and stay at our house when the temple is up. He lives in the East.

On one of the destroyers that I was on, there was an RLDS [Community of Christ] man from Independence, Missouri. His name was Smith. He and his wife visited us after the war. Then after his wife died, he came back and visited us a second time. By this time, he had married an LDS woman. We always ate with them, and they would stay over for a couple of days. So we've had some connections. There's nothing bad that I can say about the Mormons.

There's one other thing. Our flat was just weeds when I was in grade school and high school, and as soon as the LDS people started to clean it up and mow it, now it looks beautiful. And I love the statues. I had my Midwest group from my last destroyer in here about three years ago, and we spent all morning looking at the statues and the shops. They really enjoyed the bakery and the gun shop. I planned it all ahead of time, which ones we would visit; then all afternoon we went to the learian sites. We saw the winery, of course, and we ate at the Hotel Nauvoo that evening. They were here on a Friday, Saturday, and Sunday morning. They came out and looked at the elk.

Q. I've seen those elk. They are neat. With the perspective of nearly 160 years of history behind us, what are your thoughts and feelings today about that period of Nauvoo's history, about the 1830s, '40s, and '50s?

A. I think it's quite interesting.

Q. Do you have any thoughts on that?

A. Well. I am real interested in Abraham Lincoln, and I hope you get to get around to the state capitol. The Lincoln-Douglas debates were in the county, and I think (of course, this is all after their exodus), but they were getting state offices and there was a division. I think that they influenced Mormons in this area, because they were very influential. But I haven't gotten the true picture on who was for what or anything. But I said that you would rebuild the temple, but not in my lifetime, so I wasn't right there. My wife and I, in the '40s, after we were married in '45 (she was

from Champaign), when people would come and visit us, we would take them through the Mansion House or whatever it was then. I know that one time—it must have been during some holiday—Fourth of July, I think—and we were at one of the houses. They said, "Would your party mind if we take the governor and his people through before you?"

We said "No, go ahead."

So even the governor of Illinois is going through these houses. That would have been in the 1950s and 1960s.

Q. Are you familiar with the history of the Icarians who were here in the 1840s and 1850s?

A. I'm familiar with what I have found from Lillian Snyder. I've gone to a few of their meetings and things that they have.

Q. What legacy has been left in Nauvoo by the Icarians from their ten-year stay? Were any of your ancestors associated with them?

A. No, they weren't. The Icarians were French, and all of my family is English—the Hortons and the Webbs. The Hortons have things like Horton Lake. My first cousin was mayor when they dedicated the state park. We dedicated the state park last year. The governor was here, Governor Adlai Stevenson, in 1950.

Q. Can you tell me how the Icarians may have influenced this area?

A. I know that they raised the apple orchards. It's called Mormon Springs. My great-uncle Jim Gifford (my mother is a Gifford on that side) and I remember that he lived to be about ninety-six. I was about five or six years old at the time. That was the first time that I was ever in the RLDS church. He was there, but I haven't been able to find out where his grave is. I went down to get the records on the marriage of my greatgrand- father; I said, "Do you have anything more on the Giffords? I'd like some more information." They didn't have anything else, so I gave them everything that I had on the Giffords. He was a riverboat pilot. He even rode in the Pony Express before that. There was a man that talked at the Joseph Smith Academy last year from Fort Madison. He is a historian. His name is Jerry Sloat from Fort Madison. The paper has had a lot of articles in the past. I gave them to Dean Gabbert, so he has those stories.

Q. Are you familiar with the beginning of the history of the wine industry in the area?

A. Our historical society was just transferred to the Rheinberger house. I just got a copy of it from Lichtenberg. Germany. That's where the Rheinbergers came from in the 1850s. We got someone in this area to translate it from German to English, but I haven't seen the copy yet. But it should be in the historical society. Mary Ann Reid or Joyce from the RLDS Church might know about it. They're on the historical society committee. My folks were prohibitionists. Nauvoo was open during that time, but I never tasted wine until—and I didn't care for it.

Q. Do you know what caused the winery to decline over the years?

A. I think that the grape industry declined because agriculture encroached with the growing of all the farm crops and livestock and corn. They all raised livestock. That's my opinion. Soybeans didn't come in until—well, we didn't start buying soybeans until not far after the war. about 1946. They just came in from Japan and different countries.

Q. Were your ancestors involved with the wine industry?

A. No, they weren't.

Q. Are you familiar with how the Nauvoo bleu cheese industry came about?

A. They came in about 1930, when I was in grade school. There is a story about a boy in one of our pageants. It's about a boy with a dog, and somehow his sandwich had mold on the cheese. That's where the wine and cheese idea started. I guess that was in France. But the bleu cheese here is not an independent company now. It is owned by ConAgra.

A lot of girls and boys go and work there right from high school. It's evolved and expanded quite a bit. It has

given employment to a lot of people that need manual work, and so forth. I think one or two of the original people living started the factory. Their ancestors went through it—that would be the Rhodes.

Another thing, they had a boy pick up our milk, or the cream from it, for the cheese factory and gave a better sale; then they'd bring the skimmed milk back for the hogs too. That was the very start of it. It's the only factory, really.

Q. What churches have been influential in the Nauvoo area over the years?

A. I'm not sure of all the history, but it seems like the Presbyterian Church, which is very small now. We were members of the Appanoose Faith Presbyterian founded in 1860. My folks were married in 1899. As I grew up there was always the Presbyterians, the Methodists, Lutherans, RLDS, and the Catholics. The Catholics ran their own school, the St. Peter and Paul, and the St. Mary's Academy for girls, many foreign. The guys used to sneak the girls out the back window. I never did, but I heard those stories.

Lately, the churches have had some real good programs. And we've had some real good ecumenical services. We have one now. It's a Passion play in the spring—Palm Sunday weekend. There are also your groups that sing so good and so forth. They have added so much to the city. We've had it every year for quite a few years, and Brother Bill, a Methodist minister, taught religion and arts at the Catholic academy. He would originate all these things. There's quite a bit of history with him at the Weld House. Weld was a doctor that came to Nauvoo in 1837. We had the history up there.

They open up in May. I walk all the time, and when it's wintertime I walk around the temple square. There were only four boys and, I think, twenty-seven girls during the first semester at Nauvoo. They came to our ecumenical world day of prayer.

Last year when I was around here, a busload pulled in. The university in Idaho—it used to be called Ricks—were touring. I remember talking to them and asking them where they were from. I talked to the gentleman and his wife who taught history at the Joseph Smith Academy last year. He gave a program at the auditorium about the friar from Santa Fe, New-Mexico. She had made the hood and frock and everything, and it was real interesting. They gave the history from way back.

I came once and there was a lady from Brown University. She gave a lecture on tracing the outlet of the Mississippi, but they didn't know that it dumped into the Gulf of Mexico. She traced the findings by Marquette and Joliet. She had the history on that. She had maps and everything. She had researched that whole thing. It was in the auditorium at the visitors' center. That was before the Mormons obtained the monastery. They have always had some real interesting programs.

Q. What have you heard about the people's thoughts and feelings about what the Mormons have done over the past few decades in restoring some of the old homes and businesses down on the flats?

A. It's made Nauvoo awfully beautiful.

Q. How do you feel about the tourists? Do you think the changes are good or bad?

A. Things always change, and we just have to go with it. They've been very cooperative, I think. I don't know if they are going to change any of the roads so that the trucks going through have a way. There are about three options at the chamber of commerce meetings, and your group has it figured out. One option is that they would build it, but the township would have to upkeep, and our township doesn't have the money to upkeep. That started the controversy of that.

I talked to the different chamber of commerce members just this last spring. Of course, they would have to widen and take land on both sides; then they could put in a road straight west of the Nauvoo High School. I think that from the Catholic Cemetery, there may be a road down through to the Colusa elevator.

All of our corn and beans are exported through the barges, and it's very important to the farming community in this area to have that. Everything will be improved. I don't think we'll ever have a four-lane highway. When they built the Route 96, my dad gave two and a half acres to the state. He just gave it to them. In those days, they just wanted to get out of the mud. I went to Quincy with my parents in a Model-T Ford, and there was a big sign that said "Build 96 Now." We had a big barbecue. It rained all day, and we had to put the side curtains on the Ford to come home. At that time, there was one big hill you went up going to Quincy, and I remember my dad saying, "Well, I'm glad that we're going down the hill in this mud." In those days, the '20s, there weren't any hard roads until you got to Peoria, Illinois, one hundred miles from here. I couldn't imagine our ancestors in that generation, not even my own parents. They were

bom in 1874 and 1878. My greatgrandfather was born in 1811 in Stratfordshire, England. Harriet Baldwin was born in 1818 in Herefordshire, England. I kind of joke, "Well, who else could they marry? There weren't that many farmers available." We had a real good relationship with the people from Sacramento. My wife had had her stroke, and when they left a year later, they stopped by and hugged us and said good-bye, but we never did correspond. She did leave me more history than I already had, but it got burned up too.

Q. What was your reaction to the announcement that the Mormon temple was being rebuilt in Nauvoo? What had you heard from others about their thoughts and feelings about the temple, and how do you think it will affect Nauvoo?

A. I thought it would be really good for industry. I know it's good for the concrete trucks, because they've gone by and they're still going by every day. I know that the local men in Fort Madison sold out to Ideals, which is a big company. I haven't heard any remarks from other people, just what I've read in the paper.

There are a few controversies between people. It is change. It's what we live by. It's going to come to pass, and I accept it. Everybody I know accepts it. I noticed when I went to the grade school carnival, how many children there were running around. I didn't know as many people as I used to know when I went to the community events. That's true with the generations as they get older.

Out of my four children, two of them live away and two of them live in this area. I'm lucky that the fourth one is a boy so that he can be the farmer. We had a daughter in Champaign. She said, "Can I go to University of Illinois at Carbondale?" So we said, "Sure, it's okay. I don't know why, but that's all right." My daughter still lives there, and we go back and forth from there a lot.

I was very fortunate that my oldest brother taught at Country Day in St. Louis. It's a private boys' school, and I got to go there to visit. We did a lot of traveling back and forth from there for school, ball games, and the Fox Theater. The Fox Theater is tremendous. It's stood idle for a number of years, and then they redid it, and about every week, my daughter gets tickets for us to go and see the different shows. *Hello, Dolly!* was great, and she still must be almost as old as I am! She belted out her songs, and I enjoy and hear all these musicals we have here.

I love hearing Dean Gabbert talk about the ghosts on the Mississippi. He was a newspaper publisher before he retired and built his house in Sycamore Haven. In fact, Robison Creek, which runs by his house, is what my kids call their creek—Robison Creek Elk Farm. It dumps right down where they built their house at the end of the road. He has a tremendous history. He has a book all about the river. When they put the buoys out, sometimes he writes articles about that. I rode the barge out there. We're trying to get all the dams lengthened to eleven hundred feet like Keokuk.

I rode a barge last spring out of Burlington. We had people from the University of Iowa and the University of Illinois, hog producers, beef producers, soybean producers, and corn producers. It was clear full. They had a barge that fit everyone. It was real interesting. I guess you can pay to ride on it when it goes down the river. When they break up the barges to go through six-hundred-foot locks, it takes them about three to five hours—in Keokuk they can go through in less than an hour. They know when they're coming, and they can be ready to raise it up and bring them out. I don't know if you can still go through there or not. You used to be able to take people that would come to visit.

My son-in-law works on the locks now. But they don't work the winter months. They just repair and pour concrete and work the gates. I think it's kind of hazardous.

Q. For the past few years, there have been groups of Brigham Young University students coming to Nauvoo to study. What contact have you had with the students? What have you heard from others about them being here?

A. I haven't heard anything about you being here. A lot of people don't know it. I've tried to contact some of them and talk to them. I get so happy when we have these ecumenical programs and you come. When the Catholic academy was here, they had girls from Mexico and all the different countries, and they dressed up in their native costumes at one of our programs. They sang or played an instrument or whatever they did at home. It was real interesting—something like that could be worked out now too.

In Appanoose. I think it was, about fifty of your people came out to our Presbyterian church for an ecumenical service. I've spoken several times to the head of your church here—the president, Mr. Nelson. He has a wonderful family. This is my comment: "Well, everything that you do in your church is handed down from above?" He agreed with me. I said, "That's one difference in our Presbyterian Church." We do our amendments and everything from our local church to our Great River Presbytery to a general assembly. We can make amendments on our own and have a vote—very democratic, I think.

We have half laymen and half pastors at Presbytery. We all have the same voice. I'm not talking political. It's all a democratic way of doing business. We've talked, and I like his talks on flowers and gardening. He's been here the longest of any that I know. I know that he's been here at least twenty years. He's raised his family here.

I said the other night to someone at the grade school, "How many of all these people are permanent, and how many are temporary?" He said about half are going to be here permanently, and half are just working on these projects. So I don't know how many people are going to stay. Of course, tourism is going to be tremendous. I'm sure of that. Someone said that Nauvoo won't get any bigger, but I think Nauvoo will get larger. Some say it won't, but that's another opinion I've heard.

Q. What do you think of the future of Nauvoo? What do you see happening, and what do you expect to happen?

A. I expect that the LDS Church will take over everything. I mean, I would like to keep our schools and so forth, but I don't really know. I imagine that the tourism is going to be a great thing. We've tried to make our uptown historical society as interesting. Of course, down at the park, at the Rheinberger house, it has most of the Joseph Smith things, I think. We have very little up here at the Weld House. They are paid by the state, but I'm a volunteer. We don't get that many people, but it's interesting when they do come up to see the different things we have.

I don't think it will ever be like Salt Lake City. As I go into St. Louis, I see the temple there. It's much bigger than this temple. This Nauvoo Temple was made to the original size of the old one, whereas those other ones are much bigger. A few years ago, my neighbors would go to Arizona in the winter, and they timed their trips so they could be there for the open house in St. Louis. Most of my navy friends have asked me to be sure and let them know when the temple is done in April. I have it in the January 2002 issue of our ship's paper.

Q. Do you have any other comments or observations you would like to make for the record?

A. The restoration has been tremendous. I haven't been through all the buildings. Since my wife has been gone, we don't have as many visitors come by to take through to different places. The first place I always take them to is the statue garden, I like how they have a history on the different sculptures. I think that your women's organization, the Relief Society, is a great thing. It started clear back in Nauvoo. It helps so many. Things just seem to be getting bigger. I haven't been to Salt Lake City yet. When I was younger in the navy and I couldn't get on a plane, I took the train out west. When we went across the Great Salt Lake. I looked out the window of the sleeper car, but that's all that I did. We didn't stop there or anything. That was in about 1943.