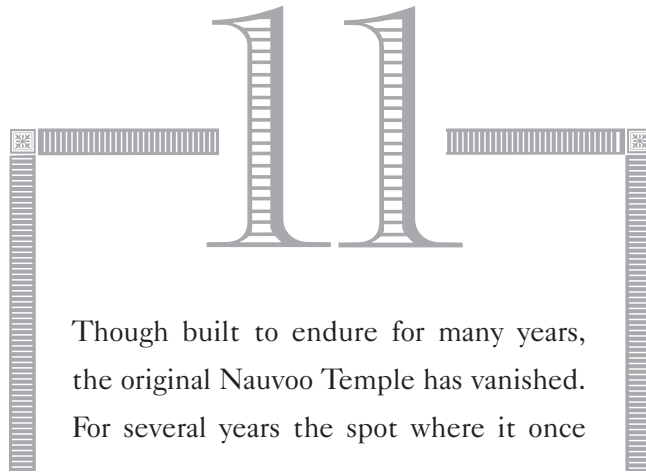




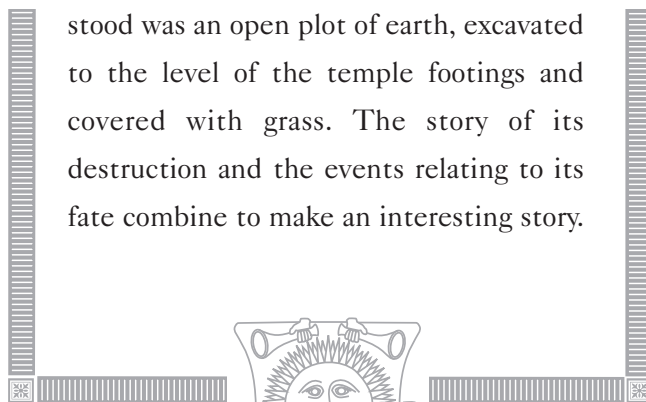
View of Temple Ruins, drawing, date unknown, Joseph Kirschbaum, LDS Church Archives.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE FATE OF

THE TEMPLE



ABANDONED TO THE MOBS

Following the temple dedication of May 1846, most Latter-day Saints still in Nauvoo departed to join their friends and families on the prairies of Iowa. They left behind only a small portion of the original population, around 640 persons consisting mainly of the poor, the sick, the aged, and single mothers with their children.¹ Having no means to purchase equipment for transportation across the plains, they had remained in the city attempting to sell



would be safe for a season from further provocation. This hope proved to be unfounded. Instead of relenting, mob elements became increasingly bolder in threats and persecution. Major Warren, an officer in the state militia who had been in charge of the governor's troops in Hancock County, had been an effective deterrent to the mobs. When he was released from command, the soldiers left to protect Nauvoo were reduced in number, and the citizens of Nauvoo were at the mercy of their enemies. As

The ferry boats were crowded, fugitives, sadly awaiting their march to the wilderness.


their property, awaiting the arrival of relief wagons from the West. Church leaders had promised to send help to the poor and sick as soon as circumstances would permit. In fact, prior to the exodus, Church members entered into a solemn covenant, pledging to use every exertion and means possible to remove every person who wished to go.²

Since the vast majority of the Saints had left the state, many felt that the remaining few

summer progressed the situation grew worse. Remaining Church members were warned to leave the state or face extermination.³

In early September 1846, a mob estimated at around fifteen hundred men, armed with rifle and cannon, approached the city. The Saints, aided by the new citizens who had recently purchased property in the city, marshaled themselves in defense. An armed battle ensued with weapons being fired by both





forces. Battles raged off and on for three days with casualties on both sides.⁴ During this conflict the temple was used as a point of observation, with a lookout posted in the tower to watch the approach of enemy forces. When mob forces were spotted, the lookout would alert defenders by beating on a bass drum and ringing the temple bell.⁵

A truce was arranged on 16 September, and both sides agreed to sign a treaty. Mob forces were to enter the city and take possession the

veyance, without tents, money, or a day's provision, with as much of their household stuff as they could carry in their hands. Sick men and women were carried upon their beds, weary mothers with helpless babes dying in their arms hurried away—all fleeing, they scarcely knew or cared whither, so it was from their enemies, whom they feared more than the waves of the Mississippi, or the heat and hunger . . . and dreaded death of the prairies on which they were about to be cast. The ferry boats were

and the river bank was lined with anxious
turn to pass over and take up their solitary

next day. Throughout the night and during the next morning, Church members could be seen fleeing across the river, hoping to escape before the mob took possession of the city. Mason Brayman, designated by Governor Thomas Ford to be an official observer of these events, reported: “In every part of the city scenes of destitution, misery and woe met the eye. Families were hurrying away from their homes, without a shelter, without means of con-

crowded, and the river bank was lined with anxious fugitives, sadly awaiting their turn to pass over and take up their solitary march to the wilderness.”⁶

Mob forces numbering between fifteen hundred to two thousand marched into the city during the afternoon of 17 September. Most of the Saints fled prior to the occupation. Others, defenseless women and children, the sick and the aged, were literally driven by the mob down



to the water's edge and across the river into Iowa. Many were actually pushed into the water. Charles Lambert, a faithful worker in the construction of the temple, was seized and led to the river. "In the midst of cursing and swearing, one man said—By the Holy Saints I baptize you, by order of the commanders of the temple, (plunged him backward) and then said—the commandments must be fulfilled and God ___ you, you must have another dip; (then threw him in on his face), then sent him on the flatboat across the river, with the promise that, if he returned to Nauvoo, they would shoot him."⁷

Lambert added this observation: "He held me until my breath was gone but he held onto me I staggered and gasped and wanted to go out but he damned me and said you must have another dip and threw me on my face. It was pretty hard on me but I got over it."⁸

The exiles established themselves some two miles north of Montrose, Iowa, on the banks of the Mississippi. Their camp came to be known as the Camp of the Poor. The people suffered considerably as they camped out in the open, exposed to the elements. Many died as a result of exposure and lack of provisions. On 9 October they were rescued by a relief party traveling two hundred fifty to three hundred miles from Winter Quarters, where the main body of the Saints was encamped.⁹

Keys to the temple were given up by Henry I. Young, caretaker of the building, to the chairman of the Quincy committee, and mob forces took possession of the temple and made it their

headquarters. The temple remained in their hands until 20 October 1846, when the keys were returned to the trustees.¹⁰ An agreement in the form of a pledge had been entered into in June 1846 by a unanimous vote of five hundred men in the camp of the anti-Mormons. They pledged that they would not injure the temple and would use their influence to protect it, looking upon it as a work of art that should be preserved.¹¹

Prior to and during the exodus, the Saints removed most of the furnishings and some ornamentation from the temple. This was especially true of those items considered to be of a sacred nature.¹² It was also true of those items that could be sold to pay the wages of workers and to assist the poor. This being the case, only the permanent fixtures and the bare walls remained in the rooms of the building.

As anti-Mormon forces occupied the temple, it is reported that some of their number ran to the top of the tower, beat on the drum, rang the bell, and shouted. A preacher in their number proclaimed in a loud voice from the tower: "Peace! Peace! Peace! to the inhabitants of the Earth, now the Mormons are driven."¹³ An interesting account regarding the occupation of the temple by mob forces was published the day after the building had been evacuated by the Saints. "On entering the vestibule of this renowned edifice, a singular spectacle presented itself.—The seats of the High Priests of the 'Twelve' and of the Seventy were occupied by a grim visaged soldiery. Some lay sleeping on their 'arms,' and others lay rolled up in their blankets.



On every hand lay scattered about in beautiful confusion, muskets, swords, cannon balls and terrible missiles of death. Verily, thought I, how are the *holy* places desecrated! . . . I am penning this scrawl to you in the upper seat of the Sanctuary. Over my head there is an inscription in large gold letters, The Lord is our Sacrifice—on my right lie three soldiers asleep, resting on their arms—my feet are resting on a pile of chain shot—and a keg of powder, just discovered, lies at my elbow.”¹⁴

Additional information was also recorded: “In front of the building, in battle array, with their mouths pointed towards the setting sun, had been placed several cannon, heavily charged.”¹⁵ The temple also became the scene of a mock court, or as Bancroft calls it, an “Inquisition,” where numerous Latter-day Saints and new citizens were intimidated and abused, being given various sentences and threats.¹⁶ This sacred edifice was further defiled by the mobs indulgence in a drunken show of boisterous behavior, vulgar song, and loud oaths.¹⁷

Though it is plain that from a spiritual sense the temple was defiled by the behavior of its new tenants, it is difficult to ascertain just how much physical abuse and damage the building suffered. Rumors were circulated among the Saints encamped on the plains, telling that the building had been defaced to a great extent, both inside and out. These reports, however, were apparently inaccurate.

An interesting eyewitness account of the physical desecration was provided by Christiana D. Pyper. As a young lady she had been driven out of Nauvoo in the fall of 1846. After a short period of exile, she and her family returned to the city. Christiana described her visit to the temple, following its occupation by the anti-Mormons: “We went up to the temple. From basement to tower, that sacred edifice was defaced with the most vile and wicked writing that could be imagined.”¹⁸ With great sadness Joseph Fielding wrote about the mobs and desecration of his beloved temple: They rendivouzed in the Temple, we had guarded it by Night and Day, a long time feeling unwilling to leave it in their Hands, but they now had it to themselves, they even Preached in it and cursed the Saints but did no great damage to it thinking it would add to the Value of their Property.¹⁹

Mob forces took possession of the temple and made it their headquarters.







Though some physical damage and abuse was sustained by the structure, it was not extensive. This conclusion is upheld by the report of President Wilford Woodruff, who visited the building in 1848. “I went over it, however, and found it in a much better state of preservation than I expected. Two horns, one ear off the oxen was all the damage I saw.”²⁰ From this account it would appear that the mob forces, though severe in their treatment of the Saints, and abusive by their actions in the temple, had nevertheless kept their earlier pledge to each other. They had inflicted only limited physical damage to the building (see note 20, which includes a more detailed report on this subject). Following the occupation by anti-Mormons, another act of defacing the temple became common with visitors who toured the famed structure. Quoting from the record of some visitors who went through the building: “We found ourselves standing upon the highest accessible point, where thousands stood before us. . . . We placed our name within the uppermost dome, along with hundreds of others from all parts of the habitable globe.”²¹

ATTEMPTS TO SELL THE TEMPLE

While preparing to leave Nauvoo, Church leaders deemed it advisable to sell all Church property as best they could. Included with other property put up for sale was the temple. As early as 16 September 1845, agents conferred with leading Catholic priests, offering to

Figure 11.1 Old Nauvoo, drawing, 1859, Johann Schroeder, Museum of Church History and Art.



sell them the property.²² Almon W. Babbitt left on a mission to St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Chicago with the purpose of arranging a sale. On 1 December 1845 he reported on his mission, stating that the Catholics were making considerable exertions to have their members purchase the property but found reluctance to do so. They were anxious to lease the temple but not willing at that time to buy.²³

On 18 January 1846, during a meeting in the temple for the captains of the emigrating companies, trustees were selected to remain in Nauvoo and sell Church property. Those selected were Almon W. Babbitt, Joseph L. Heywood, John S. Fullmer, Henry W. Miller, and John M. Bernhisel, and they were given power of attorney by letters authorizing them to act legally in behalf of the Church.²⁴ Though their lives were in constant danger, they were well suited for this difficult assignment. Brigham Young noted: "I appointed the Trustees myself, Babbitt for lawyer, Fullmer for bulldog and growl, and Heywood to settle debts."²⁵

In April 1846 a letter from Elder Orson Hyde to President Brigham Young reported that a bid of two hundred thousand dollars had been made by a Catholic official for the purchase of the temple. The letter also declared that there was likely to be a judgment against the temple, and if it was not sold quickly the Church might lose it.²⁶ This offer fell through, but other efforts continued with attempts to lease the building on a long-term lease or to sell it if buyers could be found. Trustees placed the following ad in newspapers over a period of several months:

Temple For Sale.

The undersigned trustees of the Latter-day Saints propose to sell the Temple on very low terms, if an early application is made. The Temple is admirably designed for Literary and Religious Purposes.

Address the Undersigned Trustees

Almon W. Babbitt

Joseph L. Heywood

John S. Fullmer²⁷

Following the forced exodus in the fall of 1846, the trustees were advised to sell as opportunities presented themselves and to use their own best judgment on the price of the property. They were told to use the money so derived to pay for labor on the temple and to relieve the suffering of the poor.²⁸ Due to the uncertain situation existing in Nauvoo, with mobs in possession of the temple during part of the fall of 1846, no sale could be effected. As a new year began, further complications arose as Dr. Isaac Galland swore out an attachment on all Church property in Nauvoo for the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars.²⁹ Almon Babbitt reported this action to Brigham Young: "Galland has commenced a suit in Chancery, as well as at common law. All these are impediments against a sale of the property."³⁰

Additional legal entanglements complicated conditions in 1848. Emma Smith, widow of the Prophet, married a man named Lewis Bidamon. Shortly after this marriage, they threatened action to acquire all Church property in Nauvoo. John Fullmer commented on this action: "Now they . . . concocted a grand





scheme by which they could effectually block our wheels and enrich themselves. They hit upon the idea that the Church could hold only ten acres of land, according to a limited construction of one of our State laws, and that consequently, the deed from Emma & Joseph Smith, to Joseph as ‘Trustee’ was illegal. They have therefore, now jointly conveyed all the lots that were ever in her name which she had not previously conveyed to others. This, you will see at a glance, places the Trustees in the extremest difficulty, as to title, while it destroys the confidence of every one, and prevents those who would have purchased, from doing so. . . . It requires a judicial decision to restore confidence.”³¹

Though these actions clouded the title for a time, arrangements were finally made on 2 October 1848 for rental of the temple property. The building was rented to the Home Mission Society of New York for a period of fifteen years. No terms were mentioned in the report of this transaction.³² Before final arrangements became official, the temple was destroyed by fire. Joseph Smith III commented on the matter: “A company from New York had just leased the property for the purpose of establishing a school there, thinking—rightly, no doubt—that such an enterprise would receive considerable support and patronage in the community. On the very day of its destruction word had been received that a committee would start next day for Nauvoo, to perfect the arrangements. This school would have been a benefit and a blessing to a great many people; but destiny seemed to

have decreed matters otherwise, and it was necessary to send a message back to the committee in New York telling them of the sad disaster.”³³

Although the trustees had been faithful in trying to arrange for the sale or rental of the temple, they were prevented from being successful when potential buyers were frightened away by threatened destruction of the building and by various legal entanglements that threw the title of the property into question.

DESTRUCTION BY FIRE

Earlier, on two separate occasions the building had narrowly escaped destruction from natural causes. The first such event took place in February 1846, when the first groups of Church members were exiting the city. Stoves in the attic story had become overheated while drying clothing, resulting in a fire that burned a large hole in the roof before it was extinguished. “Willard Richards called on the brethren to bring out all their buckets, to fill them with water, and pass them on. Lines inside were formed, and the buckets passed in quick succession. The fire raged nearly half an hour. . . . It burned from the west stovepipe from the ridge to the railing, about sixteen feet north and south, and about ten feet east and west on the north side. The shingles on the north were broken in several places.”³⁴ Then in September 1846 the temple tower was reportedly struck by lightning. Though the building did not catch fire, a large scar was left to mark the event.

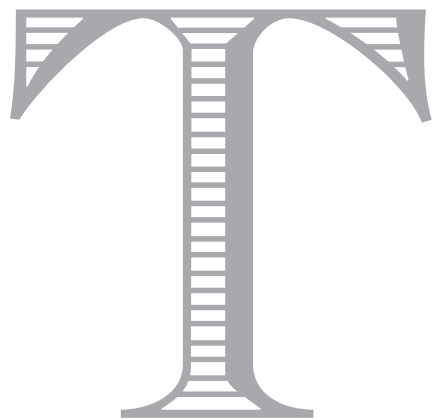




During its brief history, the temple had been the target of numerous threats and dangers. Prior to the Mormon exodus and even during nearly two years of the construction period, an armed guard kept constant watch over the temple to ensure its protection. As well as threats being made to burn the building, there were threats to blow it up. A report of such a plan was published in June 1846: “A gentleman from Fort Madison informs us that numbers had crossed the river to augment the force

apparently as an act to forever discourage the Latter-day Saints from returning to the city. A description of this fire, which resulted in the destruction of the temple, was published in the *Nauvoo Patriot*:

Destruction of the Mormon Temple. On Monday (October 9th) our citizens were awakened by the alarm of fire, which, when first discovered, was bursting out through the spire of the temple, near the small door that opened from the East side to



he materials of the inside were
 few minutes were sufficient to
 It was a sight too full of mou

opposite that place, and they make no hesitation in saying the Temple *must be destroyed*. One of them boasted that he could put his hand upon the powder that was intended to be used for this purpose. If foiled in that, they threaten to burn the town.”³⁵

Finally, on Monday, 9 October 1848, at 3 A.M. the citizens of Nauvoo were awakened to witness the great Mormon temple enveloped in flames. It had been set on fire deliberately,

the roof, on the main building. The fire was seen first about three o'clock in the morning, and not until it had taken such hold of the timbers and roof as to make useless any effort to extinguish it. The materials of the inside were so dry, and the fire spread so rapidly, that a few minutes were sufficient to wrap this famed edifice in a sheet of flame.

It was a sight too full of mournful sublimity. The mass of material which



had been gathered there by the labor of many years afforded a rare opportunity for this element to play off some of its wildest sports. Although the morning was tolerably dark, still when the flames shot upwards, the spire, the streets and the houses for nearly a mile distant were lighted up, so as to render even the smallest object discernible. The glare of the vast torch, pointing skyward, indescribably contrasted with the universal gloom and darkness around it.³⁶



throughout and cracked by the intense heat. The melted zinc and lead was dropping from its huge block during the day. On Tuesday morning the walls were too hot to be touched. The naked walls still stand, and if not demolished by the hand of man, for centuries may stand.”³⁷

The structure was entirely consumed by the flames, and only bare walls were left standing. These were reported to have been “calcined and rendered useless.” The oxen and font in the basement also shared the same fate. The reac-

so dry, and the fire spread so rapidly, that a wrap this famed edifice in a sheet of flame. rnfal sublimity.

To this account is added another descriptive report: “The fire presented a most sublime spectacle. It commenced in the cupola, and as the flames shot up to the sky, they threw a lurid glare into the surrounding darkness. Great volumes of smoke and flame burst from the windows, and the crash of falling timbers was distinctly heard on the opposite side of the river. The interior of the building was like a furnace; the walls of solid masonry were heated

tion by citizens of Nauvoo and the surrounding country was one of shock and dismay. Even the *Warsaw Signal*, a publication that voiced opposition to the Latter-day Saints, spoke out in disapproval: “No doubt the work of some nefarious incendiary. This edifice was the wonder of Illinois. . . . As a work of art and a memorial of Mormon delusion, it should have stood for ages. None but the most depraved heart could have applied the torch to effect its destruction.”³⁸



The act of burning the temple was evidently the work of an arsonist.



The *Nauvoo Patriot* announced that the act of burning the temple was evidently the work of an arsonist. A writer was puzzled as to who it was and what could have been his motives “to destroy a work of art, at once the most elegant and most renowned in its celebrity of any in the whole west, would, we should think, require a mind of more than ordinary depravity; and we feel assured that no one in this community could have been so lost to every sense of justice, and every consideration of interest, as to become the author of the deed.”³⁹

Lewis A. Bidamon, who had married the widow of Joseph Smith, was a witness to the destruction. He reported in 1856 that the burning of the temple had the effect of diminishing the importance of Nauvoo. Bidamon was proprietor of the Mansion House and was using it as a hotel. He declared that after the fire, his business was only one-fourth of what it had been previously.⁴⁰

Rumors and speculation spread as people tried to determine who had done the fateful deed. It was announced in the *Warsaw Signal* that the citizens of Nauvoo were offering a reward for the capture of

the arsonist.⁴¹ There were several suspects considered as possible perpetrators of the deed. One mentioned with some prominence was John W. Palmer, a former major in the anti-Mormon forces that expelled the last of the Saints from Nauvoo. His name was later cleared of the charge.⁴²

The most frequently mentioned suspect was Joseph B. Agnew. Bidamon is reported to have heard a deathbed confession of a Mrs. Walker, who boarded at the Agnew home when the temple was burned. He reported that she strongly implicated Agnew in the act.⁴³ Bidamon reported the following to Elders George A. Smith and Erastus Snow in November 1856: “The inhabitants of Warsaw, Carthage, Pontusuc and surrounding settlements, in consequence of jealousy that Nauvoo would still retain its superior importance as a town and might induce the Mormons to return, contributed a purse of Five hundred dollars which they gave to Joseph Agnew in consideration of his burning the temple and that said Agnew was the person who set the building on fire.”⁴⁴

Joseph Smith III, who lived in the Bidamon household, was also convinced that Joseph Agnew was the guilty party. He claimed that Agnew was “a ‘river rat,’ a drunken lout who confessed to the deed quite some time

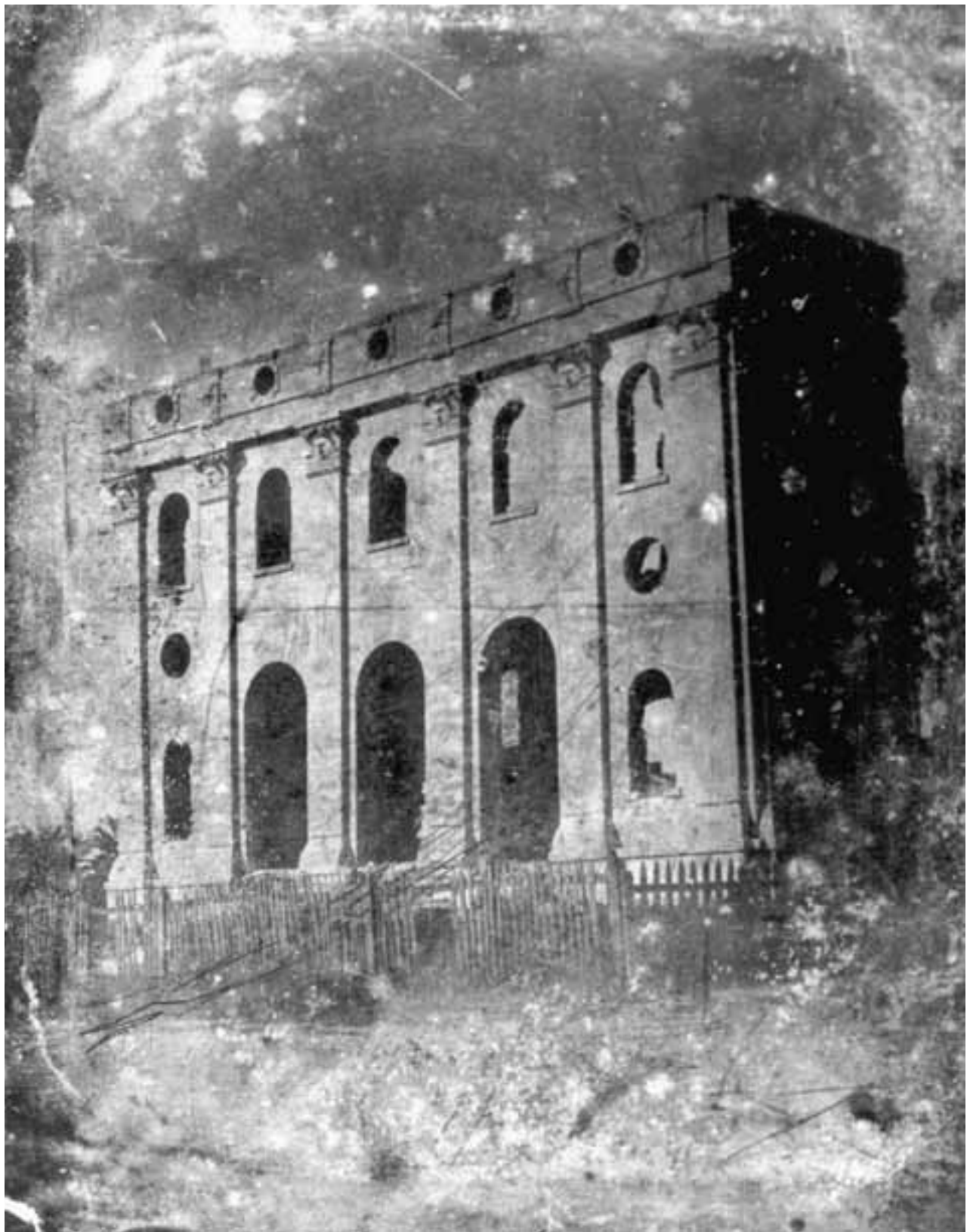


Figure 11.2 Front of Nauvoo Temple Ruins, tintype (daguerreotype), ca. 1850, T. W. Cox, LDS Church Archives.



after, and stated he had been hired to do it.”⁴⁵ This conclusion was reinforced in 1885 as B. H. Roberts was informed by M. N. Morrill, the mayor of Nauvoo at that date, “that one Joseph Agnew confessed to being the incendiary.” Morrill had assisted in repelling the mobs during the battle of Nauvoo.⁴⁶

In addition to the reports just cited, what purports to be a reliable statement came to light many years after the temple’s destruction. It was a lengthy account of the reported confession of Joseph Agnew. The statement was issued by George H. Rudisill of Bowling Green, Florida, who as a boy had lived in Fort Madison, Iowa, a short distance from Nauvoo. He reported that Agnew, who died in the fall of 1870 at the age of fifty-eight, came to him just prior to his death. In the course of their conversation Agnew told Rudisill the complete story of the temple’s burning. He then pledged Rudisill to secrecy, asking that the story not be told until after the death of all parties concerned in the deed, since those who had been in on the act had pledged themselves to secrecy.⁴⁷ Following Agnew’s death, the story was released and published in many newspapers. The earliest date found on the printing of this confession is April 1872, when it appeared in the *Peoria Transcript*.⁴⁸ This article was then quoted by other newspapers.

There is a discrepancy, however, between the reported confession of Agnew and the report of the *Nauvoo Patriot* regarding the time the fire took place. The Agnew account places the beginning of the event in the evening easi-

ly before midnight. In contrast to this, the newspaper account gives the time when the fire was first noticed as 3 A.M. This latter account is corroborated by the report of Christiana D. Pyper, who witnessed the conflagration. She remembered the event taking place between two and three o’clock in the morning.⁴⁹ This places some suspicion on the Rudisill narrative. However, since the story was told to Rudisill some twenty years after the event occurred, a lapse of accuracy in memory could account for the discrepancy in time. Silas McKaig, a close friend of Joseph Agnew, wrote a detailed article published in the *Fort Madison Democrat* refuting several points of the Rudisill narrative. He declared that Agnew “told me that several men had repeatedly quizzed him in regard to his burning the temple and in order to silence them he had ‘stuffed’ them as he expressed it to me but had made each one solemnly promise not to breathe a word of what he had told them until all parties concerned were dead. He further stated that he had told no two of them the same story, considering it a huge joke as he knew it would almost kill these persons to keep a secret.” He felt that Rudisill was one of those individuals who had only honestly repeated what Agnew had told him, that the real person who burned the temple was a citizen of Nauvoo who now lies buried in the Nauvoo cemetery.⁵⁰ Rudisill then wrote a reply (also published in the *Fort Madison Democrat*) contesting McKaig’s article and clearly reasserting his certainty of both Agnew’s guilt and the reliability of his confession.⁵¹





It would appear from the evidence available that although Joseph Agnew is the chief suspect in the burning of the temple, sufficient conflicts exist to cast doubt or questions about his guilt or innocence. So the question of who really set the temple on fire still remains an unsolved mystery.

To many Latter-day Saints, the loss of their sacred structure was a crushing, demoralizing blow. The experience of Mary Field Garner is an example. Her mother was a widow with six children. They were driven out of Nauvoo in September 1846 and were among those who were too poor to cross the plains and join the main body of the Church. After crossing the river into Iowa, they had gone somewhat downriver and so had not been rescued by the rescue party from Winter Quarters. Months later they made their way back to Nauvoo and were there when the temple burned. "One night mother heard a terrible crackling of timber, she went outside, looking up she saw the beautiful Nauvoo Temple in flames. She ran back into the house waking us . . . to watch it burn to the ground. It is impossible to describe the feelings of the saints to see their sacred temple . . . being destroyed."⁵² In spite of this, however, the strong feelings of most Church members were summarized by Brigham Young when he stated, "I would rather it should thus be destroyed, than remain in the hands of the wicked."⁵³

DESTRUCTION OF THE WALLS

Following the great fire of 1848, the bare walls of the temple stood as a silent witness to the former grandeur of the building. It was in

this condition when Nauvoo was inhabited by a new group of colonizers in the spring of 1849. The new settlers who occupied Nauvoo in March of that year were French Icarians. They were a communal society who had left France under the leadership of Etienne Cabet. First organized in 1847, the group had located in northeastern Texas prior to living in Nauvoo. In Texas their attempt at colonization and the realization of their ideal society had met with failure.⁵⁴ Upon arriving in Nauvoo, they purchased the temple ruins. One report indicates that they paid one thousand dollars for the site,⁵⁵ and the American Guide Series puts the amount at five hundred dollars.⁵⁶ No information exists regarding who sold them the property. Though the Icarians purchased the property, no immediate attempt was made to renovate the burned-out structure. This is evidenced by a report of Dr. John M. Bernhisel, who wrote to Brigham Young on 10 September 1849 concerning his recent visit to Nauvoo: "Though the walls of the Temple are standing, yet they are much cracked, especially the east one; and not a vestige of the once beautiful font remains. There has been nothing done to rebuild it, except clearing away some rubbish, and it is highly probable there will never be anything more done. The Temple is enclosed with a rude fence, and is used as a sheepfold and cow-pen."⁵⁷

Sometime between September 1849 and May 1850, the Icarians started working in the gutted ruins of the temple, hoping to reclaim it for their own use. In the midst of these preparations the building was struck by the full force







I

would rather it
should thus be
destroyed, than
remain in the
hands of the
wicked.

—BRIGHAM YOUNG

Figure 11.3 Nauvoo Temple Ruins, drawing, date unknown, Charles Piercy, LDS Church Archives. This was drawn by Frederick Piercy and published in his Route from Liverpool to the Great Salt Lake Valley, 1853.



of a tornado on 27 May 1850, making any future attempts at renovation impractical. An account of the Icarian preparations and damage inflicted by the storm was reported by the *Missouri Republican*:

On arriving at Nauvoo, in March 1849, the Icarian Community bought the walls of the Temple with a view to refit it for schools, etc. Much preparation had been made for re-establishing the roof and floors; a steam mill was purchased to fit up a saw mill; the saw mill was nearly finished; a vast shed was raising near the Temple, to shelter the carpenters, the masons were laying in the interior the bases of the pillars, when this frightful hurricane, the most terrible experienced in the country in many years, burst suddenly on the hill of Nauvoo, where lightnings, thunder, wind, hail and rain, seemed united to assail the building.

The storm burst forth so quickly and with such violence that the masons, overtaken unawares in the Temple, had not time to flee before the northern wall, sixty feet high, bent down over their heads, threatening to crush and bury them up.⁵⁸

Eight men were working in the temple. The rocks landed at their feet but did not strike them.

Fearing that the east and south walls would also fall, they fled from the structure. Another account of the destruction was preserved by the *Nauvoo Patriot*:

The dreadful tornado on May 27th, which invaded the city of

Nauvoo and neighboring places, has been for us, *Icarians* . . . a spectacle of frightful sublimity, and also a source of mortal anguish, on account of the disasters and catastrophes which have resulted from it, to the inhabitants of this county, and to us. . . .

Here are some particulars of what has happened to us during that storm; in its first blow which has been the most fatal to us, and everyone will certainly think so when they know, that part of the Temple walls was immediately blown to the ground. The Temple, which we were preparing so actively and resolutely to rebuild; the temple which we hoped to cover this year; and in which we were to settle our refectories, our halls of reunion, and our schools; that it is the temple; that gigantic monument, which has become the first victim of the tornado.⁵⁹

The next morning a general assembly of the Icarian community decided to tear down the east and south walls of the temple. They were so badly damaged that they were a hazard to safety. This was accomplished, and all that remained of the famous edifice was the west face of the temple, “united by its sides to another wall in the interior part, and surmounted by an arch.”⁶⁰ An excellent view of these ruins is furnished by an examination of a daguerreotype (Figure 11.2), along with an artist’s sketch of the ruins (Figure 11.3). The ruins of the west end of the temple were still standing in December 1856.⁶¹ Joseph Smith III recorded that “the walls kept falling from time to time, bit by bit, until only the southwest corner remained. It was then deemed advisable by





the City Council of Nauvoo to raze the remaining portion, and the temple destruction became complete.”⁶²

The building site was described in 1870 as not having one stone upon another. Where the Saints once practiced their sacred temple ordinances there was now a vineyard.⁶³ An interesting account of the fate of the temple stones is furnished by Joseph Smith III: “During the years which followed there was a gradual spoilation of the ruins of the Temple, to which I was a witness. The place became a veritable quarry and provided the materials with which many homes, wine cellars, and saloons in the town were built. At last the time came when the last stone was upturned from its resting place and taken away, and little remained to indicate the spot where once the magnificent and stately edifice had reared its proud head. Of all the stones placed in position by human hands during its erection the only ones left are those lining the well which was dug in the basement to supply water for the baptismal font and other needs of occupation.”⁶⁴

The stones used in the temple were later used in many buildings in Nauvoo, and some were carried off to other parts of the country. In 1883 nothing remained that would give evidence to the casual observer that a magnificent temple had once stood in Nauvoo.⁶⁵ All that remained were broken, scattered stones and memories.

FATE OF THE NAUVOO TEMPLE BELL

September 1845 had been a time of tension and anxiety in Nauvoo. Armed mobs were pil-

laging farms of Church members living outside the city, burning crops, hay stacks, houses, and barns. Men were being whipped and beaten and families driven from their property.⁶⁶ Refugees from these depredations fled to Nauvoo. During this time of crisis and alarm, Church leaders at the request of sheriff Jacob Backenstos organized themselves for the purposes of defense. Guards were placed around the temple and at various strategic places in the city. On 18 September 1845 Hosea Stout reported that all companies of the Nauvoo Legion were “to be in readiness for actual service at a moments warning & that they immediately repair to the ground they now occupied. At firing of the artillery it shall be the signal of alarm.”⁶⁷

Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs cited an event taking place the next day. “This morning at about 7 o’clock 2 cannons were fired near the Temple which signified for all to be on the ground.”⁶⁸ While the troops were assembled, Brigham Young explained: “As signals—we will have the flag hoisted and then let all men be on the ground as a flag with strips is hoisted it is a signal for all commissioned officers to meet in council. . . . We intend shortly to have a light at night on the top of the temple which can be seen for miles—the white flag is for the mustering of men.”⁶⁹ On 19 September 1845 Hosea Stout reported: “At about six o’clock the white flag was for the first time hoisted as a signal for mustering.”⁷⁰ This signal was also observed by Zina Jacobs: “The first thing I saw as I looked toward the Temple just as the sun was risen, a





white flag, a signature to gather.”⁷¹ This flag, apparently hoisted on top of the steeple, was visible from a long distance.

An additional means of sounding an alert is noted by the report of Hosea Stout: “At the tolling of the Temple Bell every man know it as an alarm & repair forthwith armed & equipd to the parade ground.”⁷² There is also a report that on 21 September 1845 “the flag was raised and the Temple bell rang to collect a posse to go to Carthage.”⁷³ These reports of a temple bell in September 1845 raise many questions. How large was this bell? Was it hanging in the temple or just in position on the temple grounds? The record of any purchase or installation is absent. No additional reports of its use, its description, or any comments about it surface again until June 1846, nine full months after Stout’s observation.⁷⁴ Is this what came to be the accepted temple bell? What about the bell that was to be purchased in England?

Did the temple bell come from England?

In an effort to let British members contribute something tangible toward the construction of the temple, it was concluded during the summer of 1845 that they could provide its bell. Brigham Young wrote: “We have thought it might be very agreeable to the feelings of the English Saints to furnish a bell for the temple, if this is their pleasure, you can forward it [at] the first conveyance, and we will have it hung as the building is going up. We are but little acquainted with the weight of bells: we have thought of 2000 lbs. weight, but we

leave this to your judgment. We want one that can be heard night or day.”⁷⁵

In August 1845 an editorial in the *Millennial Star* stated that all further donations of the British Saints would be used to obtain the bell and also a clock for the temple. The members were urged by Wilford Woodruff, president of the mission, to respond to this call for funds.⁷⁶ In late January when Wilford Woodruff was about to leave England and return to Nauvoo, he reported that 535 British pounds had been contributed.⁷⁷ There are reports that the bell was cast in a foundry in England, brought across the ocean on a sailing vessel, then moved up the Mississippi to Nauvoo on a riverboat.⁷⁸ These same sources indicate that the bell had come to Nauvoo from England under the care of Wilford Woodruff.⁷⁹ If this is accurate, then such a bell probably would not have arrived prior to 13 April 1846, since that was when Wilford Woodruff arrived back in Nauvoo from England. His family had arrived just a few days earlier, having gone on ahead of him by way of New Orleans and then up the Mississippi. He had taken a later ship to New York and traveled overland to Nauvoo.⁸⁰

George Washington Bean worked on the temple as a young man. He was present at the temple’s dedication and traveled back to Nauvoo from the plains of Iowa in early June 1846. Bean’s son Willard, who was with his father during his last illness, reported the following: “Among other things he spoke of a large bell some of the brethren (missionaries) had sent from England by ship to New Orleans,





thence by river steamer up the Mississippi River to Nauvoo, where it was hung, with some difficulty, in the steeple of the Temple.”⁸¹ If this report is correct, then the British Mission presidency would have purchased a bell and shipped it to Nauvoo with Wilford Woodruff’s family or on another ship after their departure.

No records have been found regarding purchase or shipment of a bell from England.

Was the bell purchased in America?

Increasing persecution during the fall of 1845 resulted in a decision to leave Nauvoo the following spring. This action apparently prompted another decision—that the bell for the temple would be purchased in the United States. A

letter from Brigham Young to Wilford Woodruff on 19 December 1845 comments on this decision: “I wrote you in my last letter that we intended to purchase the bell in this country and desired you to transmit the money collected for that purpose by the first safe opportunity. I feel as ever anxious this should be done.”⁸²

Since this was an official action by the leader of the Church, it seems likely that the bell was purchased in the United States. There are, however, no clear reports of its purchase in America, its shipment or its installation in the building. Records are seemingly not available regarding this event in the temple’s construction,

though we do have an observation made in late November 1845 that the Saints “are finishing the Temple, putting in the carpets, &c., and intend to hang a bell.”⁸³ This report, if accurate, along with the above cited letter of Brigham Young, strongly indicates that no bell had been purchased or installed in the steeple by mid-December 1845. It is also possible that the bell used as a

signal in September 1845 actually became the temple bell. Evidence may in time surface providing answers on the subject.

Was a bell ever installed in the steeple?

Thomas Bullock, a secretary to Brigham Young and a reliable record keeper, reported that



Figure 11.4 The Traditionally Accepted Nauvoo Temple Bell, photograph, date unknown, Utah State Historical Society. This is how the bell was displayed in the Church Museum on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. It is now housed in the campanile on Temple Square.





on 14 June 1846 men had been called together “at the ringing of the Temple Bell.”⁸⁴ They had been assembled to defend the temple and other property in the city from threatened mob attack. Over the next several weeks, this bell was regularly used to sound an alarm. This establishes solid evidence that a bell was very likely hanging in the belfry of the temple during the summer and fall of 1846. A bell and bass drum are reported to have been in the belfry when armed mobs attacked the city during mid-September 1846. Placed in the

Temple night after night upon the hard wooden benches with my rifle by my side expecting an attack every minute, I have laid in my bed with my clothes on and my gun leaning against my pillow where I could lay my hand upon it at any hour of the night and jumped from my bed at all hours of the night at the sound of the big drum and the ringing of the Temple bell which was a signal for us to gather and I have been armed and equipped and at the place of rendezvous inside of 5 minutes.”⁸⁵

I have been on guard night after night between Nauvoo and Carthage to prevent the mob from coming in unaware and setting fire to the city and murdering more of our friends. I have lain in the

temple tower, these were utilized by lookouts to warn of mob forces approaching the city. George Morris, who remained behind to assist in the completion of the temple, vividly described this use of the bell prior to his departure from the city in mid-July: “I have been on guard night after night with my brethren on the prairies between Nauvoo and Carthage to prevent the mob from coming in unaware and setting fire to the city and murdering more of our friends. I have lain in the

Thomas Bullock recorded another use of the bell following the surrender of Nauvoo to mob forces. He wrote, “The mob went through the temple and up to the dome of the tower, ringing the bell, shouting and hallowing.”⁸⁶ Colonel Thomas L. Kane, who visited Nauvoo just a few days after the final exodus of the Saints, found the temple in the possession of mob forces. Permitted to view the interior of the building, he climbed to the observation





section of the tower and viewed the city. In the steeple he found “fragments of food, cruises of liquor and broken drinking vessels, with a bass drum and a steam-boat signal bell.” He described the bell as being in the high belfry of the temple.

In and around the splendid Temple, which had been the chief object of my admiration, armed men were barracked, surrounded by their stacks of musketry and pieces of heavy ordnance. These challenged me to

They particularly pointed out to me certain features of the building, which, having been the peculiar objects of a former superstitious regard, they had as a matter of duty sedulously defiled and defaced. . . .

A cruel spirit of insulting frolic carried some of them up into the high belfry of the Temple steeple, and there, with the wicked childishness of inebriates, they whooped, and shrieked, and beat the drum that I had seen, and rang in charivariic unison their loud-tongued steam-boat bell.⁸⁷

night with my brethren on the prairies
prevent the mob from coming in unaware
urdering more of our friends.

render an account of myself, and why I had had the temerity to cross the water without a written permit from a leader of their band.

Though these men were generally more or less under the influence of ardent spirits; after I had explained myself as a passing stranger, they seemed anxious to gain my good opinion. . . .

They also conducted me inside the massive sculptured walls of the curious Temple. . . .

Kane’s description of the bell as a “steam-boat bell” may have been accurate, or he may have been using descriptive language adding color to his lectures. He did at least witness that some kind of bell was hanging in the belfry of the temple. If this is what is now accepted as the Nauvoo Temple bell, then it did not long remain in the temple. The bell was reported to have been taken out of Nauvoo and brought across the plains to Utah in the early days of the





Mormon migration. That there was a bell recognized and accepted as the temple bell and that it was to be brought out of Nauvoo in the fall of 1846 is shown by a letter of Brigham Young dated 27 September. Having just recently been informed of the forced exodus of the poor and sick Latter-day Saints from Nauvoo, he wrote to the trustees of the remaining Church property in the city: "Since you will have no further use of the Temple Bell, we wish you to forward it to us by the first possible chance, we have much need of it at this place."⁸⁸ Joshua Hawkes reported that "he and James Houton took the Nauvoo Temple bell over the Mississippi river in 1846 and that it was in [the] charge of Joseph P. Heywood."⁸⁹ Heywood, a member of the committee left behind to look after the temple and other Church property, apparently was the one who carried out the request of President Brigham Young, removing the bell from Nauvoo and sending it to Winter Quarters.

We do have accurate information that the bell arrived in Winter Quarters by December 1846, that it was placed in the public square, and that it was used for calling people to church and other meetings.⁹⁰ When the advance company of pioneers were starting their historic trek across the plains and mountains to Utah in the spring of 1847, the Twelve, instructing the groups that would follow, issued this order: "The first company will carry the Temple bell, with fixtures for hanging at a moment's notice, which will be rung at daylight or at a proper time and call all who are able to arise to pray, after which ringing

of bell and breakfast, or ringing of bell and departure in 15 minutes, to secure the cool of the day. . . . The bell may be needed, particularly in the night, if Indians are hovering around, to let them know that you are at your duty."⁹¹

One of the lead pioneer companies to cross the plains following Brigham Young's vanguard group departed Winter Quarters on 14 June 1847. This group, led by Charles C. Rich, took with them the Nauvoo bell. "Thare was allso a skift or a boat fitted up on wheels, and the cannon placed on that. . . . So the boat and one cannon and the big bell was in our company. Mr. Rich had charge of the company. . . . The bell was so aranged over the boat and cannon, that it could be rung by pulling a roap." The weight of the bell, cannon, and boat required two yoke of oxen to pull the wagon on which they were carried. The bell arrived in the Salt Lake Valley with this group of pioneers on 2 October 1847.⁹²

Following its arrival in Salt Lake City, the bell was used at the old bowery to call the Saints to religious services and in various other community functions.⁹³ The bell was cracked as a result of a hard frost during the severe winter of 1849–50. Following this the *Deseret News* reported: "It is about being re-cast, and enlarged, and we hope to hear its cheerful tones again in a few days. It is a heavy undertaking for our present means, but it is confidently believed, that the iron furnace left by the gold diggers last season, when attached to the flue of the mint, can accomplish the object."⁹⁴ In 1860 a bell that came to be accepted as the Nauvoo Temple bell was placed in the



belfry of the Brigham Young schoolhouse, where it remained until 1902. It was later presented to the Utah Historical Society. They turned it over to the LDS Church museum, where it was displayed for many years in the museum on Temple Square.⁹⁵

No records are available on the size and weight of the original bell. It certainly could not have weighed more than a few hundred pounds. Otherwise it would have been too difficult to hang in the temple or to remove without the use of cranes.

The bell long accepted as the Nauvoo Temple bell can be seen today near the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, where it is permanently housed and on display in a thirty-five-foot campanile, or bell tower, erected to commemorate the one-hundred-year anniversary of the Relief Society. The bell rings every hour and is “controlled by an electronic system in the basement of the Tabernacle. The system is set according to Greenwich time, the standard time throughout most of the world.”⁹⁶ Its melodic tones have been recorded and are broadcast each day, on the hour, over radio station KSL in Salt Lake City. The bell housed on Temple Square measures 23½ inches tall, 33 inches wide at the bottom, and is about 2½ inches thick.⁹⁷

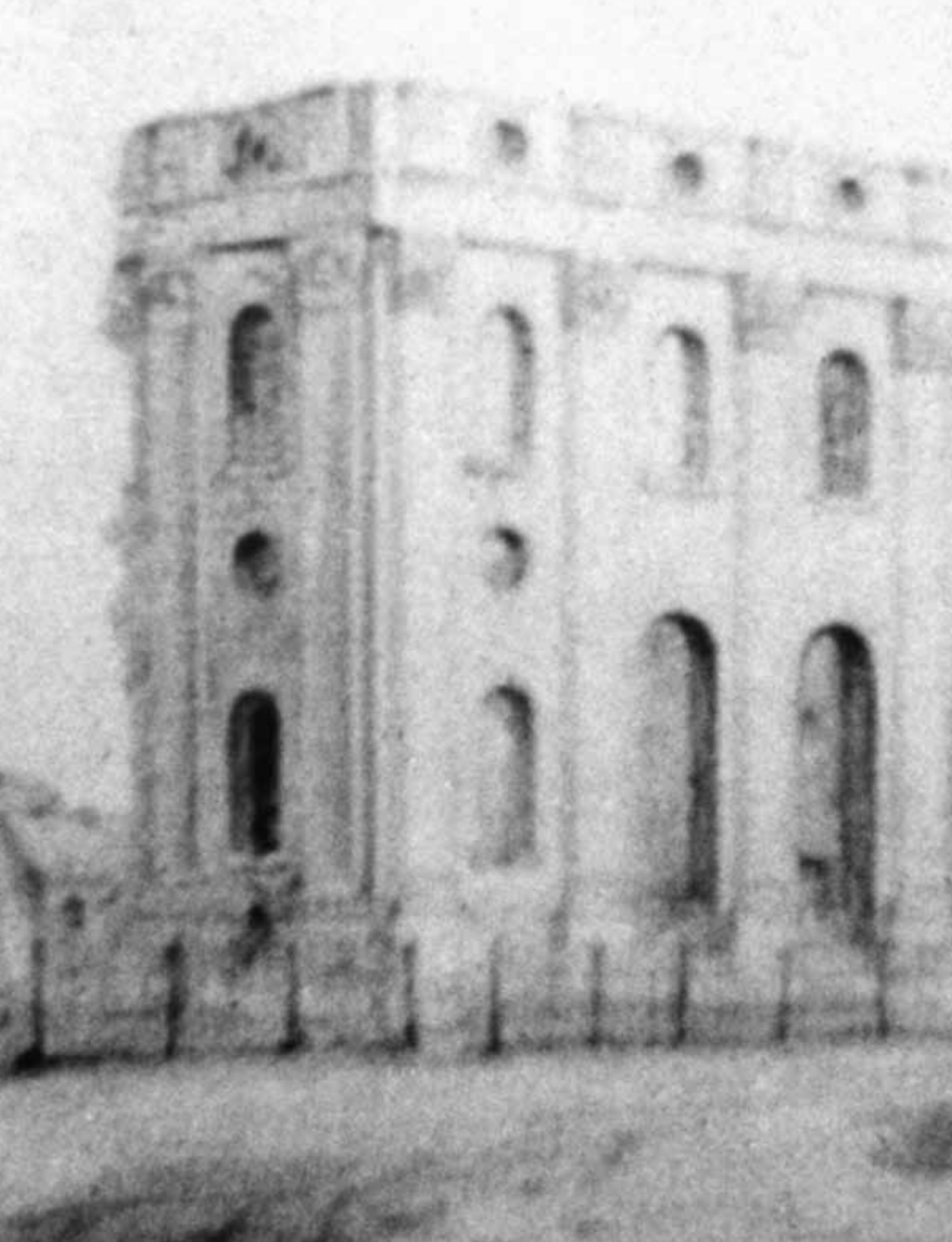
What about the bell supposedly rescued from a Protestant chapel?

A story has been widely circulated in the LDS Church connecting David Lamoreaux with the rescue of the Nauvoo bell from the tower of a Protestant church. According to the accounts, the bell reportedly had been stolen from the tower of the Nauvoo Temple and installed in a Protestant church steeple during the period when the temple was being occupied by mob forces. Lamoreaux and others reportedly took the bell down from this church steeple and buried it for a time in a river.⁹⁸

This account, which is accepted by many and printed as reliable, raises many questions. The most accurate information available on this bell (more properly referred to as the “Hummer’s Bell”) is that it was purchased by a Reverend Michael Hummer for a Presbyterian church in Iowa City, Iowa. Hummer had disagreements with the Iowa City presbytery, and they

The bell arrived in
Winter Quarters
by December 1846.







expelled him from their ministry. Feeling that the bell was due him as compensation, he with the help of Dr. J. W. Margrave let the bell down from the church tower where it had been installed. While it rested in a wagon, David Lamoreaux (a member of the LDS Church), James Miller, A. B. Newcomb, and others took the bell and sank it in the Iowa River, hiding it from Hummer and Margrave. In 1850 some in this group left for California, taking the bell with them. It arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in September 1850. Undoubtedly in an effort to accrue additional funds, those of this group going on to California offered the bell for sale to the LDS Church. It was eventually purchased by the Church for six hundred dollars.

Years later, Presbyterian Church leaders in Iowa were informed by Brigham Young of this bell's existence in Utah, and negotiations were conducted to return the bell to Iowa. The Church wanted to see it returned to its rightful owners but desired proof of ownership and some reimbursement for the funds expended in its purchase. Disputes over rightful ownership then arose between Reverend Hummer and the Presbyterian congregation, resulting in a breakdown of communication with the LDS Church. Later the Church even offered the bell without compensation if the rightful owner would just pick it up. Nothing was ever consummated, and this bell, still in its box and lacking its clapper, slipped from history. No one seems to know what happened

Figure 11.5 View of Temple Ruins, drawing, date unknown, Joseph Kirschbaum, LDS Church Archives.



to it.⁹⁹ This information throws serious doubt that this bell ever had any direct association with the Nauvoo Temple.

Summary and Conclusions

Although the original intent was to purchase a bell in England for the Nauvoo Temple, this apparently was never done, and stories of a bell traveling to America from England most likely belong to the realm of folklore. The most reliable evidence available indicates that the bell was obtained in the United States, but when and where it was purchased remains a mystery. When it arrived in Nauvoo and when it was installed in the temple also remains unanswered. It may have been purchased in the eastern states, transported down the Ohio River, and then up the Mississippi to Nauvoo. If it did come partway up the river by boat, then this could help to clarify some reports of such an arrival. The best evidence now available leads to the well-established conclusion that what has officially been acknowledged as the Nauvoo Temple bell came across the plains with the pioneers in 1847 and was later recast and enlarged.

A careful examination of the bell now hanging on Temple Square reveals six bead markings around the bell, each measuring 3/16 of an inch. In addition to these markings, there is a filed-off area on the side of the bell some 2½ inches high by 13 inches long, strongly hinting of a former inscription on the bell. It has been common practice to file off inscriptions on used bells when sold to a new owner. These mark-

ings and the filed-off area strongly indicate that the bell on Temple Square has never been recast. It is evident that some questions still remain unanswered concerning the Nauvoo Temple bell, and hopefully additional information will yet be found to provide the correct answers.

FATE OF THE ANGELIC WEATHER VANE

Clear and sufficient evidence (as reviewed in chapter 6) establishes that an angelic weather vane was placed at the top of the temple steeple in January 1846. How long it remained in place and what eventually happened to it remains a mystery. Thomas Bullock, who was driven from Nauvoo with the sick and poor members of the Church on 20 September 1846, provided this interesting report. For several days following his forced exodus from the city, he had camped near the bank of the Mississippi river opposite Nauvoo in “the camp of the poor.” Bullock recorded in his journal entry of Sunday, 4 October 1846, that Benjamin Baker had informed him that “the mob had taken away the angel and ball from the top of the temple last Friday.” This would have been on either 25 September or 2 October 1846. At the side of this journal entry, Bullock apparently later wrote, “I saw the angel on [the] 8th. all safe.”¹⁰⁰ What he meant by this added note is open to conjecture. This report seems to be corroborated by a reminiscence regarding two young men who reportedly climbed to the top of the steeple in the fall of 1846. Their report indicates that one of them comfortably seated





himself “on the dome with his legs around the flag staff.” This observer then describes “a naked flag-staff [no angel on it—she was in the dome].”¹⁰¹ If these reports are accurate, then it is possible that the angelic weather vane had been removed from the steeple by mob forces in late September or early October 1846. How long it remained off the steeple is not known. There seems to be clear evidence, however, that if indeed it had been removed, then it also had soon been reinstated in its proper place at the top of the tower. This conclusion is borne out by later witnesses. Notable among these observers is Thomas L. Kane, who visited the temple in early October 1846. He provided a detailed description of his visit to the temple and told of an angel being in place on the steeple at that time.¹⁰²

If we knew the sequence of visits by these observers, it would possibly clear up the matter. The conclusion that an angel was in place on the steeple after the fall of 1846 is also upheld by the observations of a reporter from the *Illinois Journal* who, as best as can be determined, visited Nauvoo in the summer of 1848 shortly before the temple was burned. His reminiscence of the visit portraying an extensive tour of the building from the basement to the top of the tower was published in December 1853. Describing many features of the temple in some detail, he wrote that there was an angel affixed on top of the dome “holding in one hand a trumpet, and in the other a book,” which angel was “composed of tin gilded.”¹⁰³ Several artists between 1846 and 1848 also sketched an angel on the steeple.

It has generally been concluded that the angelic weather vane was most likely destroyed in the fire of 1848. Some, however, have claimed that the angel found its way to Cincinnati, Ohio, where it was placed on the steeple of a Protestant church.¹⁰⁴ This claim was summarized by Marie Dickore, a noted local historian and member of the Salem Evangelical Reformed Church. She related the story that over one hundred years ago, a committee of this church had an angelic weather vane built to place upon the top of their church steeple. When the finished product arrived, the congregation was upset to discover that it was an angel in a standing position. The committee and congregation had wanted the figure of an angel to be placed in a horizontal position, serving as a weather vane. The one they received could not be modified or used as desired. In frustration the project was set aside and years later taken up by another committee. They at that time reportedly heard of a horizontally designed angel weather vane for sale at Nauvoo, Illinois. This angelic weather vane had supposedly flown over the Mormon Temple at Nauvoo. The story goes on to claim that the figure was purchased and placed on the steeple of the Salem Evangelical Reformed Church at Sycamore and Orchard Streets in 1867. The congregation looked upon it as the angel Gabriel blowing his horn. Miss Dickore claimed that there was a strong tradition among ministers and members of the congregation that they were possessors of the angel that once flew over the Latter-day Saint temple at Nauvoo. She also claimed to have read the





purchase records from the old German script records of the church located on bookshelves in the minister's office.

The possibility of this being the Nauvoo weather vane was called to the attention of local Cincinnati LDS Church officials and the Church Historians office as early as 1961. On 20 July 1961 Robert D. Craig, a member of the LDS Church, interviewed Miss Dickore and listened to her story. By this time her own personal records or notes from the old German script had been lost. In 1962 Marie Dickore, accompanied by Robert Craig and Mrs. H. Frersing, conducted a search looking for the old books that outlined the purchase from the Mormons. The books could not be found; they had supposedly been destroyed. In 1966 a violent wind storm nearly tore this Cincinnati angelic weather vane from the church steeple. It was then taken down, and a decision was made to construct a duplicate of the original. This new duplicate angel was placed on the steeple in the late summer of 1968. The former Cincinnati angelic weather vane was stored in the basement and later offered to the LDS Church.¹⁰⁵

In November 1968, the old Cincinnati weather vane was transferred to Nauvoo Restoration Inc. It was hauled in an open pickup truck to Nauvoo, Illinois, by J. Byron Ravsten, resident manager of Nauvoo Restoration at the time. He was accompanied on the trip by his wife Elva.¹⁰⁶ At first glance there was some consideration that the Cincinnati weather vane might have come from

the Nauvoo Temple.¹⁰⁷ However, after further examination, officials of Nauvoo Restoration concluded that claims of this being the original Nauvoo Temple weather vane were subject to serious question. There was a general feeling and agreement that it was not a work of quality in line with the excellence of other temple artwork. Dr. J. Leroy Kimball, president of Nauvoo Restoration, and his son James Kimball Jr., an associate researcher, were confident that this Cincinnati vane was never part of the temple.¹⁰⁸ Dr. T. Edgar Lyon, research historian for Nauvoo Restoration, seriously questioned its authenticity, as did the Harringtons, who were in charge of the temple site excavation.¹⁰⁹ Donald L. Enders, who is a materials culture specialist and a senior curator of historic sites for the LDS Church, worked for Nauvoo Restoration. He personally examined the Cincinnati vane on at least six separate occasions. He concluded:

1. The Cincinnati weather vane was not a religious icon of the 1840s era. Angel weather vanes of that period came in various formats, but they were all clearly angels. The cherublike figure such as the Cincinnati vane is an icon for other than that of a religious structure, possibly a theater.

2. The construction of the Cincinnati tin figure is unlike the work competent tinsmiths of the 1840s produced.

- a. It was not constructed of hand-dipped tin but of a later, less-quality tin.

- b. Its three-dimensional shape was crude, its edges not "joined" nor





soldered by competent hand craftsmen—which the Nauvoo Temple Tinnners Association was comprised of—but was the work of a machine-aided maker.

c. Rather than a finely produced three-dimensional shape appearing almost humanlike, the Cincinnati “angel,” was simply two mirrored images joined by a strip of tin between, curving to accommodate the shape of the creature.

d. The Cincinnati angel was painted to give body and clothing colors, very unlike the gold-leaf vane purported for the Nauvoo Temple.

Altogether, the style, materials used, construction method, and finish in no way represented what is described in the sources about the weather vane of the Nauvoo Temple.¹¹⁰

Other problems are raised by the Cincinnati weather vane. It did not look the same nor clearly resemble drawings of the original angelic weather vane intended for the Nauvoo Temple. Photographs of the Cincinnati angel show no book in its left hand, as was clearly shown in drawings and descriptions of the Nauvoo angel. Concluding that this Cincinnati production was not authentic, it was stored away and has since disappeared.

NOTES

1. Thomas L. Kane, *The Mormons: A Discourse* (Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1850), 8–11.
2. B. H. Roberts, ed., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Period 2: Apostolic Interregnum* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 7:465.

3. B. H. Roberts, *The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965), 357–58.

4. *Ibid.*, 363–64; and John S. Fullmer, *Expulsion of the Saints from Nauvoo* (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855), 38–39.

5. E. Cecil McGavin, *Nauvoo the Beautiful* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946), 241.

6. Mason Bryman, as quoted by David R. Crockett, *Saints in the Wilderness* (Tucson: LDS Gems, 1997), 173. This is not documented but is likely taken from Ford’s *History of Illinois* or Gregg’s *History of Hancock County*.

7. *Millennial Star* 10 (15 January 1848): 29.

8. Charles C. Lambert, “Reminiscences and Diaries, 1844–1881,” 20, LDS Church Archives.

9. *Millennial Star* 10 (15 January 1848): 29; and Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of Utah* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), 232–34.

10. *Journal History*, 4 November 1846, LDS Church Archives.

11. *Quincy Whig*, 24 June 1846, taken from news clippings, *Mormons in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri and Iowa*, Collection 8:135, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

12. Kane, *The Mormons*, 21; also, *Deseret Evening News*, 7 March 1876; “James Ferguson’s First View of the City of Nauvoo,” *Liahona, the Elders’ Journal* 11 (20 January 1914): 502.

13. Andrew Jenson, *Historical Record* 8 (June 1889): 856; and *Journal History*, 18 September 1846.

14. *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, 24 September 1846.

15. *Warsaw Signal*, 19 October 1848, quoting the *Manmouth Atlas*.

16. Bancroft, *History of Utah*, 230.

17. Kane, *The Mormons*, 11.





18. Christiana D. Pyper, “True Pioneer Stories,” *Juvenile Instructor* 57, no. 5 (May 1922): 246.

19. Andrew F. Ehat, “‘They Might Have Known That He Was Not a Fallen Prophet’—The Nauvoo Journal of Joseph Fielding,” *BYU Studies* 19, no. 2 (winter 1979): 165.

20. *Journal History*, 22 August 1848. This report by Wilford Woodruff differs with three other accounts that each describe more extensive physical damage to the building.

The *Hancock Eagle* of 5 October 1846, written during the time that the mob was in possession of the temple, provides the following description: “The damage done to the temple is considerable. Some who have examined it say that \$1,000 will not cover the damage. Holes have been cut through the floors; the stone oxen in the basement have been considerable disfigured, horns and ears dislodged and nearly all torn from their standing. Names have been chiseled in the wood engraving in the upward passage, in a very careless manner.” As cited by E. Cecil McGavin, *The Nauvoo Temple*, 128. If holes had indeed been cut into the floor and the oxen dislodged from their standing as here reported, then it is possible or likely that this damage had been repaired prior to the visit of Wilford Woodruff, who came two years after this account.

John Scott in a journal entry for 28 February 1848 describes his visit to the temple as part of his “Journey from Winter Quarters to St. Louice [sic].” “I then obtained the key of the temple of the Lord, and went in and locked myself in, there to view the destruction of the hard labor of the Saints for many years. The temple is very much [sic] disfigured the walls and doors are all written over the names of the Governors mob and other who have visited the temple and city. All the rooms both above and below are damaged very much and the carved work and molding cut and destroyed, there are all kinds of writing

and disgraceful figures drawn on the walls, the oxen and that the font rests upon is very much defaced, some of the horns broken off, thee [sic] ears, and other parts much injured.” John Scott, *Journal of John Scott*, 3, LDS Church Archives.

An article written by an unknown author who most likely visited the building in 1848 and whose observations were published in the *Illinois Journal* of 9 December 1853, reported the following damage to the building: “Many names were scratched on the dome and cut in the balustrade. . . . The woodwork of the doors and windows was composed of beautifully carved work. The top of the doorjams being ornamented with Corinthian capitals of the most exquisite workmanship. But these, alas! shewed the marks of sacrilegious hands of the visitors who wished to preserve some relic of the wonderful edifice. The beautiful vine-work had been deprived of many delicately executed leaf and bud, and a smiling cherub of its nose—then, another of the feathered tip of its wing.” As republished in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 38 [1945]: 484–85.

It appears that some of the damage listed in these reports was the result of mob actions during the fall of 1846 and that other damage was the result of visitors who toured through the building over the next two years.

21. *Warsaw Signal*, 19 October 1848, quoting the Manmouth Atlas.

22. *Journal History*, 16 September 1845.

23. Roberts, *History of the Church*, 7:537.

24. *Journal History*, 18 January 1846.

25. Minutes of Trustees Meeting, 22 January 1847, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives, as cited in Richard E. Bennett, *We'll Find the Place* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997), 317.

26. John D. Lee, *Diaries and Official Records*,





117–18, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

27. *Hancock Eagle*, 15 May 1846 and 12 December 1846.

28. Roberts, *History of the Church*, 7:346.

29. *Journal History*, 20 January 1847.

30. *Ibid.*, 5 April 1847.

31. *Ibid.*, 27 January 1848.

32. *Ibid.*, 2 October 1848.

33. *Ibid.*, also Joseph Smith III, *Joseph Smith III and the Restoration*, ed. Mary Audentia Smith Anderson (Independence, Mo.: Herald House, 1952), 101.

34. Roberts, *History of the Church*, 7:581; also Norton Jacob, “The Life of Norton Jacob,” 27, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, states: “He said they would start to-morrow, and that some of the brethren had already crossed over three or four days ago, and that they are crossing all the time. . . . Mon. About four o’clock p.m. a fire broke out in the temple by a stove pipe in the main deck roof, and for some time it looked rather fearful but by cutting up a portion of the deck and roof it was subdued after doing about \$100.00 damage.” Norton Jacob was foreman of all the framing of the roof, the tower structure, and the dome. Also, Thomas Bullock, as quoted in Gregory R. Knight, “Journal of Thomas Bullock,” *BYU Studies* 31, no. 1 (winter 1991): 49, states: “The clothing in the Temple was being washed and dried in the upper room. The stove got over heated. The wood work caught fire and burned from the railing to the ridge about 16 feet North and South and about 10 feet East and West. The shingles on the north side were broken through in many places. The damage to that part is about 100 dollars but other damage was also done in the anxiety to put out the fire. When it was completely extinguished the Saints gave glory to God and shouted Hallelujah which made the air rejoice.” And additionally Brigham Young, as quoted in Roberts, *History of the Church*, 7:581: “I went to the Temple

as soon as I could, after the fire had been extinguished, the brethren gave a loud shout of Hosanna, while standing on the deck roof.”

35. McGavin, *Nauvoo the Beautiful*, 279, citing an article in the *Daily Missouri Republican*, 15 June 1846.

36. *Journal History*, 9 October 1848, citing an article in the *Nauvoo Patriot*, of the same date.

37. *Keokuk Register*, 21 September 1848, taken from *News Clippings 2*, no. 18, 2; also *Iowa Sentinel*, 20 October 1846.

38. *Warsaw Signal*, 19 October 1848, quoting the *Burlington Hawk-Eye*.

39. *Journal History*, 9 October 1848, quoting an article in the *Nauvoo Patriot*, of the same date.

40. *Journal History*, 9 October 1848.

41. *Warsaw Signal*, 30 December 1848.

42. J. Earl Arrington, “Story of the Nauvoo Temple,” 10, LDS Church Archives.

43. *Ibid.*, 9.

44. *Journal History*, 9 October 1848.

45. *Joseph Smith III and the Restoration*, 101.

46. Roberts, *The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo*, 369.

47. The Rudisill narrative is found in its complete form in identical wording in the following sources: Robert Aveson, “Burning of the Nauvoo Temple,” *Newspaper Clipping*, no date, on file in the Utah Historical Society Library. He produced the article from his scrapbook, the original appearing in the *Fort Madison Iowa Democrat*, no date given; McGavin, *Nauvoo the Beautiful*, 284–87, quoting a newspaper account, but not documented; a condensed version appeared in *Salt Lake Tribune*, 18 April 1872, citing the *Peoria Transcript*; also, *Chicago Post*, 30 April 1872.

48. *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, 18 April 1872, quoting the *Peoria Transcript*, no date given.

49. Pyper, “True Pioneer Stories,” 247.

50. *Fort Madison Democrat*, 14 January 1895, repub-





lished in the Nauvoo Independent, 25 January 1895.

51. *Fort Madison Democrat*, 28 January 1895, republished in the *Nauvoo Independent*, 12 February 1895.

52. Annie Gardner Barton, "Life of Mary Field Gardner," 7, LDS Church Archives.

53. *Deseret News*, 14 October 1863; also, Barton, "Life of Mary Field Gardner," 7.

54. Will Griffith and Katherine Griffith, ed., *Historic Nauvoo* (Peoria, Ill.: Quest, 1941), 30–32.

55. *Ibid.*, 32.

56. Federal Writers' Project of Illinois, *Nauvoo Guide* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1939), 38.

57. *Journal History*, 10 September 1849.

58. *Ibid.*, 27 May 1850, quoting the *Daily Missouri Republican*.

59. *Ibid.*, 27 May 1850, quoting the *Nauvoo Patriot*.

60. *Ibid.*

61. *Ibid.*, 8 December 1856.

62. *Joseph Smith III and the Restoration*, 101–2.

63. *Journal History*, 7 December 1870.

64. *Joseph Smith III and the Restoration*, 102.

65. Richard W. Young, "In the Wake of the Church," *Contributor* 4 (January 1883): 150–51.

66. Roberts, *History of the Church*, 7:439–45.

67. Hosea Stout, *On the Mormon Frontier, the Diary of Hosea Stout 1844–1861*, ed. Juanita Brooks (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:66.

68. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "All Things Move in Order in the City': The Nauvoo Diary of Zina Diantha Huntington Jacobs," *BYU Studies* 19, no. 3 (spring 1979): 320.

69. Stout, *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 1:67.

70. *Ibid.*, 1:68–69.

71. Beecher, "All Things," 320.

72. Stout, *Diary of Hosea Stout*, 1:66.

73. *Journal History*, 21 September 1845.

74. Bullock, as quoted in Gregory R. Knight, "Journal of Thomas Bullock," 68.

75. *Millennial Star* 6 (15 July 1845): 43.

76. *Ibid.*, 6 (15 August 1845): 77.

77. *Ibid.*, 7 (1 January 1846): 5; 7 (1 February 1846): 44.

78. Mary Grant Judd, "A Monument with a Message," *Relief Society Magazine*, January 1942, 11.

79. Lois Leetham Tanner, "I've Heard There Is a Story behind the Bell on Temple Square. Can You Relay It?" *Ensign*, February 1981, 16.

80. Matthias Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff—His Life and Labors* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), 245.

81. Willard Bean, as quoted by Joseph J. Cannon, "President Joseph J. Cannon's Message," *Temple Square Topics, Official Organ of Temple Square Mission*, August 1939, no. 3.

82. Brigham Young to Wilford Woodruff, 19 December 1845; LDS Church Archives.

83. *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, 20 November 1845.

84. Bullock, as quoted in Gregory R. Knight, "Journal of Thomas Bullock," 68.

85. George Morris, "Autobiography," 26, typescript 1953, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

86. *Deseret News*, 17 June 1939; also Benjamin Ashby, *Autobiography of Benjamin Ashby*, 16, LDS Church Archives.

87. Kane, *The Mormons*, 6–8, 11.

88. *Journal History*, 27 September 1846; and Preston Nibley, *Exodus to Greatness* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1947), 245.

89. Andrew Jenson, *Andrew Jenson Papers*, Nauvoo Bell Folder, LDS Church Archives.

90. *Manuscript History of the Church*, 20 December 1846; also John D. Lee, *Journals of John D. Lee*, ed. Charles





Kelley (Salt Lake City: Western Printing, 1938), 127.

91. Journal History, 16 April 1847; and Nibley, *Exodus to Greatness*, 368.

92. Sara De Armon Pea Rich, as cited in Carol Cornwall Madsen, *Journey to Zion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997), 376–77.

93. Judd, “A Monument with a Message,” 12.

94. *Deseret News*, 14 September 1850.

95. *Ibid.*, 4 August 1902; also Ronald G. Watt, “A Tale of Two Bells: Nauvoo Bell and Hummer’s Bell,” *Nauvoo Journal* 11, no. 2 (fall 1999): 33. This article clears up the confusion and inaccurate reports regarding the Nauvoo Temple bell having been stolen, etc.

96. “Nauvoo Bell Rings Out on Day of Thanksgiving,” *Church News*, 13 April 1991, 5.

97. On 15 March 2000 the bell housed in the Camponile on Temple Square was carefully measured by Robert Dewey (a Church temple architect who worked on the Nauvoo Temple reconstruction project) along with Roger Jackson and Steve Goodwin, architects from the FFKR architectural firm in Salt Lake City, Utah, that was engaged by the Church to draw plans for and supervise construction of the rebuilding of the Nauvoo Temple.

98. Tanner, “Story behind the Bell on Temple Square,” 16.

99. Watt, “A Tale of Two Bells,” 33–40; also, note 18 of this article citing the Shadrach Roundy Diary, which indicates that the purchase was made by Asa Calkin of the Church while President Brigham Young was in southern Utah.

100. Thomas Bullock, *The 1846 and 1847 Mormon Trail Journals of Thomas Bullock*, ed. Will Bagley (Spokane, Wash.: Arthur H. Clark, 1997), 71.

101. J. M. Davidson, editor of the *Carthage Republican*, 25 February 1864, as cited in E. Cecil McGavin, *The*

Nauvoo Temple (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1962), 93–95; also, “The Old Temple,” *Nauvoo Independent* 7, no. 9 (20 December 1889): 7.

102. Kane, *The Mormons*, 20; also, *Illinois Journal*, 9 December 1853.

103. *Illinois Journal*, 9 December 1853, as republished in the *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 38 (1945): 484.

104. Robert D. Craig, “Mormon Angel in Cincinnati,” LDS Church Archives; also, collected material concerning a weather vane in Cincinnati, Ohio, LDS Church Archives, including articles and letters by Marie Dickore, Robert D. Craig, and John A. Taylor.

105. *Ibid.*

106. Elva Ravsten, interview by author, Ogden, Utah, 3 January 2000.

107. *Ibid.*

108. James R. Kimball Jr., interview by author, Ogden, Utah, 3 January 2000.

109. *Ibid.*, also Donald L. Enders, interview by author, Ogden, Utah, 3 January 2000.

110. Donald L. Enders, interview by author, Ogden, Utah, 3 January and 10 January 2000; also Donald L. Enders, personal communication, 25 January 2000.

