

# 13

Near the end of the general conference session, “there was a moment of shock . . . then . . . some applause. . . . Then everyone caught themselves quickly, and for

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### T H E T E M P L E

### I S R E B U I L T

most of the rest of the meeting there was crying.”<sup>1</sup> Such was the response as Nauvoo Illinois Stake members listened by satellite to President Gordon B. Hinckley’s closing remarks during the Church’s April 1999 general conference.



He had just stated:

I feel impressed to announce that among all the temples we are constructing, we plan to rebuild the Nauvoo Temple. A member of the Church and his family have provided a very substantial contribution to make this possible. We are grateful to him. It will be a while before it happens, but the architects have begun their work. This temple will not be busy much of the time; it will be somewhat isolated. But during the summer months, we anticipate it will be very busy. And the new building will stand as a memorial to those who built the first such structure there on the banks of the Mississippi.<sup>2</sup>

In 1962 the Church  
once again had  
ownership of the entire  
temple block.

He added, “The new edifice will be named the Nauvoo Illinois Temple.”<sup>3</sup>

No announcement in the long history of the Church has created more universal excitement, interest, and positive support. This rebuilding project brings to realization the vision of many who long ago dreamed of and labored for such a day.



#### REPURCHASE OF THE TEMPLE BLOCK

It was on 20 February 1937 that Wilford C. Wood purchased the first piece of the original Nauvoo Temple property. Acting on behalf of the Church, he acquired the land at a sale of some of C. W. Reibold’s estate for the price of nine hundred dollars.<sup>4</sup> The *Deseret News* reported this purchase to Church members: “The First Presidency today announced that the Church had purchased the Nauvoo Temple lot at Nauvoo, Ill. Together with the lot, the purchase brought to the Church possession of the old well which fed the font to the Temple when that building was used before the departure of the Saints for the West. . . . The purchase was effected at a public sale held in Nauvoo this morning. Wilford C. Wood represented the Church in the negotiations.”<sup>5</sup>

Just two months later Wood, acting on his own volition, purchased a large piece of land on the northeast corner for \$1,100.<sup>6</sup> This second parcel amounted to nearly one quarter of the temple block. It became Church property just six months later when it was purchased from Mr. Wood.<sup>7</sup> Following these initial acquisitions, a crew from the Chicago Stake of the Church spent a full day’s labor (in July 1937) in an effort to beautify the property. Numbering



twenty-two persons, they were led by Dr. Ariel L. Williams and Wilford Wood. While clearing the property, they succeeded in salvaging forty-six tons of cut face stones that had originally been part of the temple. These stones reportedly weighed from two hundred to three thousand pounds each. The work was accomplished with the assistance of a bulldozer and tractors. All of the stones were piled together as the land was leveled for planting and beautification.<sup>8</sup>

Over the next several years, while acting as agent for the Church, Wood's persistent and determined efforts resulted in various other parcels of the temple block coming back into Church possession. These purchases included four pieces of property comprising the southeast quarter.<sup>9</sup> In June 1951 he negotiated the purchase of property on the northwest corner. This piece of land contained a large spacious home that was immediately converted into a bureau of information for the Church.<sup>10</sup> Altogether, Wood was instrumental in seven separate purchases of the temple block equaling over two-thirds of the total property. He also pushed for and acquired many other historic sites for the Church and dreamed of old Nauvoo being restored as a historical treasure.

Richard C. Stratford, acting as agent for the Church, purchased the narrow strip of telephone company property on 22 February 1959.<sup>11</sup> In 1961 the Church purchased and acquired title to the southwest quarter of the property, formally owned by the Catholic Church.<sup>12</sup> The final parcel of property was acquired in 1962 through an exchange of properties between the

LDS Church and the Reorganized Church. The piece of property formerly owned by the RLDS Church was acquired in exchange for three parcels of land in Independence, Missouri.<sup>13</sup> With this last purchase the Church once again had ownership of the entire temple block (see summary after figure 13.1).

Lane K. Newberry, an artist and descendant of Nauvoo pioneers, spent considerable time over several years enlisting the aid of Church leaders, civic officials, and others in an effort to build monuments and restore portions of old Nauvoo. He wrote: "I feel that the World should honor men and women who accomplished what the Mormons accomplished in Nauvoo—the building of a substantial city in the short period of six years. . . . There was a spirit back of the building of this city that the World needs today, and it only can be attained by honoring those who had it yesterday."<sup>14</sup>

Newberry, a resident of Chicago, enlisted the aid of Bryant S. Hinckley, then serving as president of the Northern States Mission, which included the state of Illinois. President Bryant S. Hinckley became a powerful force in the restoration effort, making many visits to Nauvoo and holding numerous meetings promoting the restoration of Nauvoo. In a 1938 article printed in the *Improvement Era*, he wrote:

If the project outlined by the citizens of Illinois is completed, . . . this extraordinary project will be a matter of far reaching significance. It will bring into relief one of the most heroic, dramatic, and fascinating pioneer





achievements ever enacted upon American soil. It will reveal a record of fortitude and self-reliance; of patriotic and courageous endeavor, that should stimulate faith in the hearts of all men. . . . Annually thousands . . . will visit it. . . . Nauvoo is destined to become one of the most beautiful shrines of America.”<sup>15</sup>

Bryant S. Hinckley’s restoration efforts resulted in a centennial celebration commemorating the founding of Nauvoo in 1839. Over seven hundred Church members assembled for two days of pageants, tours, and meetings. On Sunday, 25 June 1939, hundreds gathered on the temple lot at Nauvoo. Following a speech by Bryant S. Hinckley, Brother Newberry spoke regarding his dream of seeing Nauvoo restored and “the Temple rebuilt in full-size on this spot where it once stood.”<sup>16</sup>

#### NAUVOO RESTORATION INCORPORATED

Next to carry on the dream of rebuilding Nauvoo was Dr. James LeRoy Kimball, a physician from Salt Lake City. He had visited and become interested in Nauvoo while attending the Northwestern University School of Medicine.<sup>17</sup> In 1954 he purchased and restored the home of his great-grandfather Heber C. Kimball. Then, after taking up residence in Nauvoo, he initiated projects toward realizing his dream of the restoration of Nauvoo. He later said: “The Mormon migration west from Nauvoo to the Rocky Mountains is the only migration in history in which an entire community moved itself and its industries, institutions,

professions, crafts, religion, schools and political and cultural concepts to the far west. . . . [Nauvoo’s] place in American history and its great contribution to the settlement of a western United States has never been told adequately.”<sup>18</sup>

Dr. Kimball saw the need to acquire more old Nauvoo properties. Through determination and the aid of influential friends, he succeeded. Under his direction, archaeological exploration of the temple site began in December 1961, when Dr. Melvin L. Fowler, curator of North American archaeology from Southern Illinois University, started preliminary trenching in an attempt to locate remains of the temple.<sup>19</sup> Members of the First Presidency of the Church visited the site in May 1962.<sup>20</sup> Shortly following this visit, the Church formed a nonprofit corporation to direct the restoration of Nauvoo.

The *Deseret News* reported this historic event:

Heading the new unit, Nauvoo Restoration Incorporated as president is Dr. J. LeRoy Kimball, Salt Lake physician who has taken an active leadership in purchasing property in Nauvoo during the past several years. Harold P. Fabian, recently elected chairman of the Citizens Advisory Board of National Parks Historic Sites Buildings and Monuments of the U.S. Department of Interior is vice president and trustee. A. Hamer Reiser, chairman of the Utah Park and Recreation Commission and who is Secretary of the First Presidency, is Secretary Treasurer and trustee. J. Willard Marriott . . . and David M.





Kennedy . . . are trustees. President McKay explained . . . that the new corporation is formed for the purpose of restoring . . . historic Nauvoo as . . . when the Mormons evacuated the city in 1846. The purpose of restoring Nauvoo, is to “perpetuate in history the part played by the Mormon pioneers in the building of the West.”<sup>21</sup>

Beginning in June 1962, Dee Green, an archaeologist from Salt Lake City, served as crew chief of excavation work under the direction of Dr. Fowler. Working for about five months, the archaeologists were successful in uncovering the entire area of the temple. The dimensions of the original building were established, and the basement area was excavated to a depth of five feet. Beginning in August 1966, Dr. J. C. Harrington, who had served as chief archaeologist for the U.S. National Parks Service, took charge of archaeological research for Nauvoo Restoration. Over the next three years and under the joint direction of J. C. Harrington and his wife, Dr. Virginia S. Harrington, the temple site was carefully examined as the entire basement area was excavated to the original floor level.<sup>22</sup> The excellent work completed under their direction has made a significant contribution toward understanding the temple.

Over a century and a half after the fateful exodus from Nauvoo and amid favorable reactions, the Latter-day Saints officially returned to Nauvoo. Though the temple had been destroyed, it still remained a shrine in the hearts of Church members. As old Nauvoo was

restored, the temple site became an integral art of the nearby Nauvoo Visitors’ Center and has annually been visited by thousands.

#### REBUILDING THE NAUVOO TEMPLE

The historic announcement to rebuild the temple came in the April general conference of 1999. During the spring and throughout the summer, several architects worked diligently on the project. Every possible source that could shed light and provide information on the original building was collected, carefully examined, and evaluated for accuracy and authenticity. This included the partial set of original architectural drawings, historical accounts, daguerreotypes (early photographs), sketches, paintings, eyewitness descriptions of the building, personal journals, building and billing records, archaeological excavation reports, and any other resources that could be found. In addition to this, any existing stones that could be found from the old structure were measured and carefully examined. On the basis of these efforts, the architects designed new sets of plans, historically reproducing the original plans of the temple. These historic reproductions would essentially form plans for the exterior of the new building. They would also serve as the basis for modified plans on interior sections of the building.

Under the direction of F. Keith Stepan, managing director of the Temple Construction Department, and Robert T. Dewey, the construction manager, a Historical Review Committee was formed.<sup>23</sup> Committee members

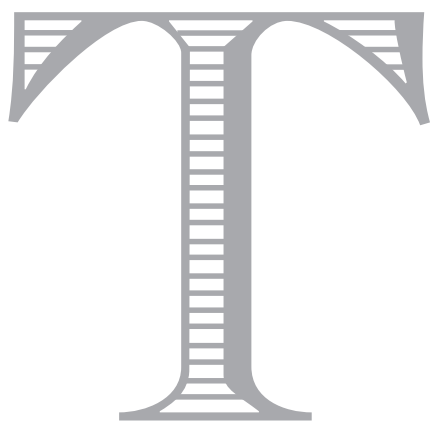




composed of historians and architects having in-depth knowledge of the subject or extensive experience with Nauvoo Restoration were asked to submit any pertinent information they possessed regarding the original Nauvoo Temple. As plans were drafted, these committee members (in varying degrees of involvement) were asked to carefully review and critique the historical reproduction drawings for accuracy and authenticity.<sup>24</sup> Every effort was made to construct as accurately as possible an

FFKR Architecture Planning/Interior Design of Salt Lake City (see chapter 12), which drafted plans and oversaw construction under the direction of Roger P. Jackson, a principal member of the firm.

On 24 October 1999 more than five thousand people crowded onto the old temple site as President Gordon B. Hinckley presided over the groundbreaking ceremonies. Among those in attendance were the mayor of Nauvoo and members of the city council, along with other




here will grace this site a  
that which existed here and  
great epic period of the his

authentic replication of the original structure. Some areas, such as the west front portico and the east end of the building, were planned using only fragmentary evidence. Plans for those sections of the structure were completed with careful attention to features common in other buildings of the 1840s and were faithful to the fragments of known information. After the completion of preliminary sketches, the work was largely turned over to the firm of

government officials and Church and business leaders. President Hinckley explained: “There will grace this site a magnificent structure, a recreation of that which existed here and served our people so briefly during that great epic period of the history of the Church.”<sup>25</sup> He went on to explain that the building’s exterior would look the same as the original. Though made of reinforced concrete, it would be faced with the same kind of stone as the original. “It will be





stronger and will last a very long time.”<sup>26</sup> He further said that in the interior some changes would be made to accommodate current building codes and ordinance work. The first floor of the temple will include an assembly room, but the second floor will be occupied by ordinance rooms.<sup>27</sup>

President Hinckley declared that the idea of rebuilding the temple is not a new one. He explained that his father, Bryant S. Hinckley, while serving as president of the Northern

for sacred purposes. “This will be the House of the Lord. It will be dedicated as His Holy House. It will be reserved and set aside for the accomplishment of His divine and eternal purposes. It will occupy a special place in the belief and testimony and the conviction of this people. It will have great historical significance. It will be a thing of beauty and, I hope, a joy forever.”<sup>29</sup>

At the conclusion of his address, President Hinckley offered a dedicatory prayer upon the site. Assisted by other Church leaders and city

---

magnificent structure, a re-creation of  
served our people so briefly during that  
tory of the Church.

---

States Mission in 1939, suggested to the First Presidency that the Nauvoo Temple be rebuilt. “I count it something of a strange and wonderful coincidence that I’ve had a part in the determination of rebuilding this temple.”<sup>28</sup>


Those in attendance were informed that when reconstruction of the temple was finished, the building would be open to the public “to look over . . . carefully and thoroughly,” following which it then would be dedicated

officials, he then led in the ceremonial groundbreaking. It was then announced that anyone in attendance who so desired could participate by taking a shovel and turning some of the soil. “Hundreds accepted the offer and lingered in line for as long as an hour to have a chance to be part of that history.”<sup>30</sup>

Following the groundbreaking ceremonies, work on the rebuilding of the temple proceeded at a rapid pace. The new temple is con-



structed to replicate the original temple built on the same site in the early 1840s. The limestone exterior is a near duplicate of the original.

The reconstructed Nauvoo Illinois Temple is scheduled for completion during the spring of 2002 and for dedication on 27 June 2002, the 158<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. The work of the reconstruction, like that of the original building, has been attended by answers to prayers, spiritual blessings, and divine guidance. The saga of this magnificent structure is a “story of faith” that continues to be written. 

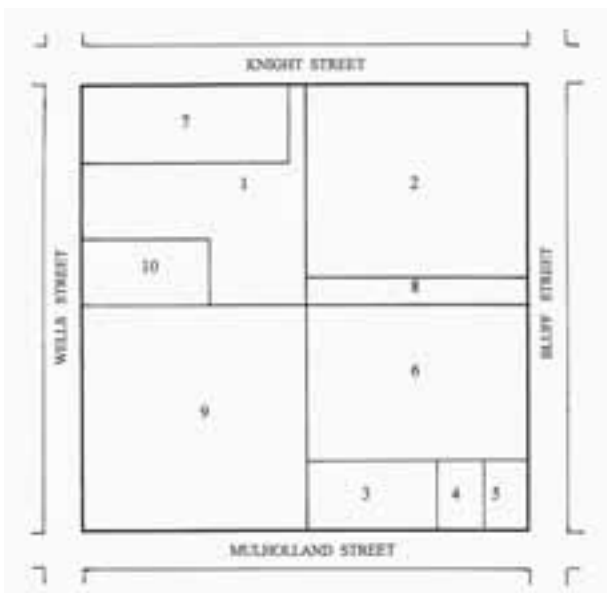


Figure 13.1 Repurchase of the Nauvoo Temple Block, drawing, 2000, Don Colvin. This is a catalog of the different purchases of the temple block.

#### LDS CHURCH PURCHASES:

*Parcel 1.* Purchased 20 February 1937 at a land sale for \$900, Wilford Wood acting as agent for the Church.

*Parcel 2.* Purchased by Wilford Wood on his own vol-

ition 19 April 1937. Known as the “Opera House” property, it sold for \$1,100. Six months later it was purchased from Mr. Wood by the Church.

*Parcels 3, 4, 5, and 6.* All purchased by Wilford Wood acting as agent for the Church. The small lot on the southeast corner was purchased for \$350.

*Parcel 7.* Purchased in June 1951 by Wilford Wood acting as an agent for the Church. The property contained a large old house that was turned into a Bureau of Information and Visitors Center.

*Parcel 8.* A small 25-foot-wide lot purchased from the telephone company on 22 February 1959. Richard Stratford made the purchase acting as agent for the Church.

*Parcel 9.* Purchased by the LDS Church from the Catholic Church in 1961.

*Parcel 10.* This last piece of the temple block was purchased from the RLDS Church in 1962. The property came in trade for properties in Independence, Missouri.

#### NOTES

1. Durrell N. Nelson, as quoted by R. Scott Lloyd, “Historic Nauvoo Temple to be Rebuilt,” *Church News*, 10 April 1999, 3.

2. *Ensign*, May 1999, 89.

3. Greg Hill, “Rebuilding of Magnificent Temple,” *Church News*, 30 October 1999, 6.

4. *Carthage Gazette*, 26 February 1937.

5. *Deseret News*, 20 February 1937.

6. Richard L. Evans, “Nauvoo Opera House Acquired,” *Improvement Era*, April 1937, 356; *Carthage Gazette*, 7 May 1937.

7. Wilford C. Wood, “Exhibits of Mormonism,” *BYU*







*Leadership Week Lectures* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1953), Special Lecture Series J, 15 June 1953, 5.

8. *Deseret News*, 2 July 1937.

9. Wood, "Exhibits of Mormonism," 6.

10. *Ibid.*, 7.

11. *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 22 February 1959.

12. A. Hamer Reiser, interview by the author, Ogden, Utah, 1962. Mr. Reiser was the secretary-treasurer of Nauvoo Restoration Inc. and secretary to the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

13. *Ibid.*, also Janath R. Cannon, *Nauvoo Panorama* (Nauvoo, Ill.: Nauvoo Restoration, 1991), 82.

14. Bryant S. Hinckley, "The Nauvoo Memorial," *Improvement Era*, August 1938, 460.

15. *Ibid.*, 460, 511.

16. *Nauvoo Independent*, 29 June 1939, as cited in Cannon, *Nauvoo Panorama*, 75.

17. Cannon, *Nauvoo Panorama*, 78.

18. Luacine C. Fox, "The Nauvoo Dream," presentation at a Nauvoo Mission Reunion, September 1983; Nauvoo Restoration Inc., files, Nauvoo Visitors' Center, 7–8, as cited in Cannon, *Nauvoo Panorama*, 78–79.

19. Virginia S. Harrington and J. C. Harrington, *Rediscovery of the Nauvoo Temple* (Salt Lake City: Nauvoo Restoration, 1971), 6; also, Dee F. Green, "Archaeologists 'Digging' into History of Nauvoo," *Church News*, 14 July 1962, 7. Excavation work at the temple site was conducted under the direction of Dr. Melvin Fowler of Southern Illinois University. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints supplied a financial grant to the university to cover the expense of the project. Dee F. Green, a member of the Church, served as field director of the work.

20. *Deseret News*, 5 May 1962.

21. *Ibid.*, 24 June 1962.

22. Harrington and Harrington, *Rediscovery of the Nauvoo Temple*, 7.

23. Historical Review Committee members were Glen Leonard, Steve Baird, Donald L. Enders, Don F. Colvin, Richard Oman, and Quinn Orr. Extensive research and evaluation was also conducted by Robert Dewey; by his secretary Diane Dieterle; by Roger P. Jackson, Steven Goodwin, and Gerald Tim Maxwell of FFKR; by William Richardson, Neil Richardson, Joseph Coates, Kevin Horne, and Tony Barros of Richardson Design; as well as by Uriel Schlair and Gerald McElvain, from Harry Weese & Associates. Others assisting in the process were Elder Ronald J. Prince, construction project manager in Nauvoo, as well as sculptor and design artists LaVar Wallgren and his partner James Dell Morris.

24. Personal observations of the author, who served as a member of the Historical Review Committee.

25. Hill, "Rebuilding of Magnificent Temple," 6.

26. *Ibid.*, 7.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*





## APPENDIX

### HIRED WORKERS ON THE NAUVOO TEMPLE

*The following partial list of hired workers on the Nauvoo Temple was recorded by William Clayton:*

I will now give a list of the names of the officers and laborers on and connected with the temple.

In the office are the trustees, viz:

Newel K. Whitney and George Miller. William Clayton, Temple Recorder. James Whitehead, Clerk. John P. McEwen, Assistant Clerk. Joseph C. Kingsbury, Disbursing Agent for Trustees.

The temple committee are:

Alpheus Cutler, Reynolds Cahoon, Elias Higbee (recently died). William Weeks, architect and draughtsman.

The following are the workmen on the walls of the temple.

William W. Player, principal setter. Edward Miller, his assistant.

The names of the constant hands who attended Brother Player's Crane are Tarlton Lewis, Archibald Hill, John Hill, Hans C. Hanson and Charles W. Patten.

Elisha Averett was the principal backer up, or, in other words, he set the stone on the inside walls and also the inside courses of the main wall. He was assisted by his brothers, Elijah and John Averett, and Truman Leonard.

The hands who worked on the second crane, being E. Averett's Crane were John Harvey, Thomas N. Pearson, George N. Potter and William L. Cutler.

Brother Joshua Armstrong set the greater portion of the upper part of the north wall. He commenced when the third crane was put up. He was assisted by Charles R. Dana. The hands who tended the crane were William W. Dyer, William Austin, Thomas Jaap and William L. Cutler.

For the most part of the time there was only one team to draw the stone to the cranes. Brother Ephrium J. Pearson attended the most of the time. After he left Alma N. Shennan took his place. When the second team was put to work Brother William H. Dame was appointed to attend to it. Old Thomas Travis, a faithful brother from England, was the man who mixed the mortar. This was his business from the beginning of the works; he was sometimes assisted by the tithing hands. He was one of the first who commenced to dig the foundation of the temple.

The following is a list of the stone cutters who cut the stone for the Temple, to-wit:

Alvin Winegar, James Standing, Harvey Stanley, Daniel S. Cahoon, Andrew Cahoon, Stephen Hales, Jr., William Jones (he cut the first plinth), John Keown, Rufus Allen, Samuel Hodge, Bun Anderson and George Ritchey. These persons were among the first who commenced cutting stone for the Temple and have continued to the close. Pulaski S. Cahoon, John Dresdale and Aaron Johnson also commenced to cut stone at the beginning, but did not continue long.





The following persons have cut stone much of the time but not from the beginning to-wit:

William Huntington, Sen., Samuel Williams, John Anderson, David B. Dille, Augustus Stafford, Jerome Kimpton, Buckley B. Anderson, Edwin Cutler, Franklin B. Cutler, William L. Cutler, Charles Lambert, John Pickles, James Sharp, Joseph G. Hovey, Welcome Chapman (he worked on the 3rd crane after it was erected), Joshua Armstrong, James H. Rollins, Lucius Merchants, John Harper, James D. Miller, John Miller, Peter Campbell, Samuel Heath, Morgan Thomas, Ira K. Hillman, Foster Curtis, Joseph Bates, Henry Parker, Andrew Smith, Benjamin T. Mitchell (he cut the first capital which was cut for this Temple), Isaac Allred, Wiley P. Allred, Wilson Lund, Parmelia A. Jackman, Wm. Jackman, William Adams, Thomas McLellan, Chancy Gaylord, Thomas Johnson, David Burrows and William Cottier, The last is a steady, faithful quiet, good workman.

Brother Charles Lambert cut the capstone, which was set on the south east or Joseph's corner on Saturday last. He cut the stone and bought it, and when finished he gave the stone and the labor free of all charges. He has proved himself a liberal-hearted, faithful, good man from first to last.

During last winter, 1843, towards the latter part of it, the Twelve decided to take down the old wood Font and put up a new one of cut stone. The men selected to cut the stone for the Font are William W. Player, Benjamin T. Mitchell, Charles Lambert, William Cottier, Andrew Cahoon, Daniel S. Cahoon, Jerome

Kimpton, Augustus Stafford, Bun Anderson, Alvin Winegar, William Jones and Stephen Halles, Jr.

Brother Albert P. Rockwood has been the overseer or captain of the stone quarry from the commencement. He has been assisted by Charles Drury.

The following is a list of the steady carpenters, hired to work on the Temple: Truman O. Angell, foreman over regular joiners, William Felshaw, foreman over tithing donations, Wandle Mace, foreman over the framers, William T. Cahoon, foreman over the raisers and also time-keeper for carpenter shop.

Miles Romney, foreman over the Star builders. He also carved all the capitals for the tower. Elijah Fordham, principal carver.

John S. Schofield, William Carmichael, Addison Everett, Zinni H. Baxter, Hugh Riding, Hiram Mace, Stephen Longstroth, Nicholas T. Silcock, Samuel Rolfe, Vernon H. Bruce, John Stiles, Gideon H. C. Gibbs and Jabez Durfee (carpenters).

The following are employed to frame the timber and raise it on the building: Levi Jackman, William Anderson, Stephen H. Goddard, Easton Kelsey, Daniel McCole, Clark L. Whitney (now in carpenters' shop) Stephen N. Farnsworth and Frances A. Brown.

Jesse P. Harmon is door-keeper to the carpenter shop. His duty is also to keep the shop in order, turn grindstone, and wait on strangers who come to see the works of the temple.

The names of the sawyers are James Bennett, Joseph Busby and Moses Thurston.





Whitney Markham is teamster for the carpenters and sawyers.

The following persons are the painters already hired to paint the works of the Temple, to-wit: William Pitt, Edward Martin, Alfred Brown and John F. Hutchinson.

---

*Copied from William Clayton's Journal, Journal History, 31 December 1844, 12–15.*

