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RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING:

THE MORMON EXPERIENCE IN MISSOURI

By

Stefanie M. Vaught

Under the Direction of David Sehat

ABSTRACT

At the turn of the eighteenth century America was caught up in the fervor of religious revivals. These revivals began in the New England area and led to the largest conversion to Evangelism in US history. The revival movement became known as the Second Great Awakening. The Second Great Awakening experienced its greatest peak in the 1830s, at which point the revivals spread to many areas of America. The conflicted nature of the Second Great Awakening has led to a deep rift in the current historiography of America's religious past. While some historians argue that this movement expanded religious freedom, evidence shows that it had the opposite effect. During the Second Great Awakening the Mormon Church experienced rapid growth while settling on the Missouri frontier. The Mormons experienced ten years of conflict with the citizens of Missouri as they were persecuted for their religious beliefs and practices.

INDEX WORDS: Second Great Awakening, Mormons, Persecution

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Stefanie M. Vaught

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Masters of Arts

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Georgia State University

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2013

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING:

THE MORMON EXPERIENCE IN MISSOURI

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December 2013

DEDICATION

To my family, for all of their encouragement and support. To my thesis adviser, for rejecting all my other ideas except this one.

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Introduction

At the turn of the eighteenth century, the United States was caught up in the fervor of religious revivals. These revivals began in the New England area and led to the largest conversion to Evangelism in US history. The revivals attracted large crowds who were swept away by a preacher's impassioned speech. The attendees listened with rapture as they sought repentance and acceptance among the competing denominations. The revivals overwhelming centered upon Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian teachings, falling under the banner of Evangelical Christianity. The revival captured the attention of thousands of Americans, which nearly doubled church attendance since the time of the colonies. This revival movement became known as the Second Great Awakening, beginning roughly in 1790 and peaking in the 1830s before fizzling out in the 1840s. The Second Great Awakening ushered in great change in America as more people began attending church services regularly and became more involved in other aspects of society, especially politics. The revivals might have drawn large crowds all seeking relatively the same thing, a congregation to join; however, from the revivals came a tension in the fabric of American society. Despite the moral reform generated from revivals, the awakening brought with it religious tension among different sects and a pronounced difference among Americans.

The Second Great Awakening experienced its greatest peak in the 1830s, at which point the revivals spread to many areas of America. The revivals transformed American society in key ways, the first being church attendance, the second being political activity. Along with these transformation came new ways of defining what it meant to be American, and those outside this shift in definition experienced hardship and persecution. As American society came into its own as a powerful country, the Second Great Awakening developed parallel to political and societal

changes, giving average white American men access to sectors once dominated by the elites of society. The revivals also became a powerful tool for moral reform, especially in the business world of the nineteenth century. No longer were men to be consumed by unseemly activities such as drinking alcohol and riotous behavior; they were expected to maintain a Christian decorum. In time businessmen used the revivals as a tool of societal control. Historian Paul Johnson sheds light on this lesser known effect of the awakening. In *A Shopkeeper's Millennium* he describes how the "revivals provided entrepreneurs with a means of imposing new standards of work discipline and personal compartment upon themselves and the men who worked for them, and thus they functioned as powerful societal controls."[1] Once the revivals became a tool of societal control the very nature of the Second Great Awakening changed. Now those deemed living outside of those new societal norms were ostracized and suffered the consequences.

The conflicted nature of the Second Great Awakening has led to a deep rift in the current historiography of America's religious past. Where some historians discuss a more harmonious religious experience among Americans in the early nineteenth century, several others point to a more chaotic, conflicted history. On the one side historians like Sean Wilentz, Paul Johnson, Amanda Porterfield and David Sehat argue that the Second Great Awakening was an emancipatory experience for all religious denomination. On the other side, historians like Daniel Walker Howe, Nathan Hatch and Alan Heimert argue that the Second Great Awakening was in fact a pleasant, unifying experience for Americans and brought with it a more cohesive American identity.

In his work *The Myth of American Religious Freedom*, David Sehat argues American's Christian past was not as peaceable as modern day religious conservatives like to believe. "In

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[1] Paul Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 138.

many ways," he argues, "it was a Christian nation in that Christians had significant control over law and governance and used it to enforce morality. But if it was a Christian nation, it was not so by consent."[2] Sehat even argues that religion was used as a means of control and discusses "the role of religion in determining morals and the relationship of those morals to the coercive power of law."[3]

Paul Johnson takes this argument further as previously discussed, by arguing that the religious revivals of the mid-nineteenth century served as means of controlling the working class and created order in society. Religious control was a means of eradicating 'unseemly' behavior in society, and when one looks deeper, as did Johnson, "we must conclude that entrepreneurs consciously fabricated a religion that suited their economic and social needs."[4]

Similarly, Sean Wilentz, like Sehat and Johnson, argues that religion was a source of tension among Americans during the Second Great Awakening. He describes how "out of the postmillennialist stirrings of New England's rural Great Awakening…came a growing cultural divide between the backcountry and the seaboard, where more staid, rationalist Anglicans, Congregationalists, and Unitarians held sway."[5] Wilentz, like many of the historians arguing on the side of greater religious tension in American, as opposed to amiability, describes how politics and religion were inextricably linked and often led to conflict between differing denominations.

In *Conceived in Doubt: Religion and Politics in the New American Nation*, Amanda Porterfield discusses many of the same misconceptions about early American Christianity. Like Johnson, the use of religion as a tool of control is a persistent theme throughout the book. Porterfield asserts that "religious institutions grew as much to manage mistrustful doubt as to

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[2] David Sehat, *The Myth of American Religious Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 8.
[3] Ibid, 9.
[4] Paul Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium*, 139.
[5] Sean Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2009), 19.

relieve it. Trust in God did not save people from counterfeit bills, steep prices, or slavery. Instead, it offered hope and visualization of a better world where problems were resolved or transcended."[6] Porterfield also discusses the tension that existed in the religious movement of the Second Great Awakening. She argues that "preachers regarded people outside their religious communities as immoral, living without the commitment to Christian revelation that produced virtuous behavior. Meant to shame and intimidate religious skeptics, claims for a causal link between religion and morality may have been exaggerated, simplistic and manipulative, but they did bear out in certain situations."[7]

One of those situations can be found in the treatment of Mormons during the Second Great Awakening. Porterfield, like Sehat and Johnson, sees greater tension among Americans during this time period, and like Sean Wilentz, claim that the tension was linked to the development of democracy in America. All of these historians view religious freedom as limited by the Protestant Christian power that expanding during the Second Great Awakening.

Other historians, however, argue that the American religious landscape was largely free and part and parcel to the expansion of American democracy. Daniel Walker Howe, for example, argues that revolutions in communication and transportation drove social change in America between 1815 and 1848 and that the religious experience of Americans during the time period took part in this evolutionary social change. While Howe does acknowledge there were clashes over religion between 1815 and 1848, his treatment of both religion and democracy are far more positive. Howe focuses his book around the communication and transportation revolutions of the early nineteenth century. The invention of the telegraph was the "climactic event" spurring

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[6] Amanda Porterfield, *Conceived in Doubt: Religion and Politics in the New American Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 2.
[7] Ibid, 5-6.

revolutions in both transportation and communication. The communication revolution "included improvements in printing and paper manufacturing; the multiplication of newspapers, magazines, and books; and the expansion of the postal system (which carried newspapers and commercial business, not personal letters)."[8] The transportation revolution allowed for faster movement throughout the country, which drastically changed personal and commercial travel. According to Howe these two revolutions, when taken together, ushered in change in America; other social and political changes were secondary events brought into play by the two compelling revolutions.

Religion was one of those changes wrapped up in Howe's dual revolutions, more specifically the communication revolution. The predominant religious denominations running through American culture were Protestantism and the Enlightenment, and Morse's telegraph "appealed to both these strains in American ideology, for it fostered what contemporaries called the brotherhood of man and could also be viewed as promoting the kingdom of God."[9] This brotherhood, or religion, was how Americans interpreted the country, "as preparing the world for a millennial age of free institutions, peace and justice."[10] According to Howe, the Second Great Awakening provided Americans with more religious choices, and "for people to have so many choices about which religion to embrace (if any) enhanced individualism…religion also strengthened community ties among church members. Religion stimulated innovation in society, as believers tried to bring social practice more into conformity with religious precepts."[11] According to Howe, America's religious society flourished because of the energy it gave to

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[8] Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2.
[9] Ibid, 3.
[10] Ibid, 3.
[11] Ibid, 187.

Americans, meaning the increased level at which Americans involved themselves in the political process. This may be true, but that assertion undercuts the religious persecution of the nineteenth century.

Like Howe, Nathan Hatch's *Democratization of American Christianity* argues that the development of religion in the United States was central to the development of democracy and the religious movements of the Second Great Awakening "did more to Christianize American society than anything before or since."[12] Hatch characterizes these religious movements in the same unifying manner as Howe, arguing that "however diverse their theologies and church organizations, they all offered common people, especially the poor, compelling visions of individual self-respect and collective self-confidence."[13]

In *Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolution*, Alan Heimert similarly argues that American democracy was forged in and because of the development in religion in America.[14] Heimert also discusses the effect that religious revivals had on Americans, describing how it did not stimulate hostilities but rather mitigated "the fierce social, economic and political antagonisms" that existed prior to the Awakening[15] This idea runs throughout Heimert's analysis of the Great Awakening of the eighteenth century and the Second Great Awakening of the nineteenth century. Overall, Howe, Hatch and Heimert discuss a far more harmonious nineteenth century religious experience for Americans.

In this thesis, I will examine the experience of the Mormons living in Missouri in the 1830s in order to join this debate. The Mormon Church was, in fact, an outgrowth of the Second

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[12] Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 4.
[13] Ibid, 4,
[14] Alan Heimert, *Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966).
[15] Ibid, 9.

Great Awakening. But shortly after the Mormon Church was organized by Joseph Smith, he and his followers migrated to the edge of the American frontier in Jackson County, Missouri. During the ten year time period they lived in Missouri, the Mormons faced both physical and emotional hardships because of their religion. The non-Mormon Missourians drove the Mormons from Jackson County, Clay County, Caldwell County and eventually the entire state of Missouri.

By focusing on this time period this paper will argue that the Missourians acted out of fear and hatred of the Mormons that arose out of their own evangelical sensibilities. The Missourians systematically destroyed Mormon settlements throughout the 1830s, wanting to rid themselves of the Mormons, whom they deemed religious fanatics and a people deluded by Joseph Smith. They also found fault with the Mormon belief in revelation from God and the practice of healing by the Priesthood. While the Missourians may have believed they were acting in defense of their own lives they beat, killed and drove the Mormons out of Missouri because of their religion and its practices, which suggests the limitations of dissent during and after the Second Great Awakening.

Organization of the Mormon Church

The Mormon Church was officially organized by its leader Joseph Smith, Jr. on April 30, 1830. However, the history of Mormonism begins in 1820. In the spring of 1820 Joseph Smith described how "there was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion, it commenced with the Methodists, but soon became general among all the sects in that region of the country."[16] The excitement described here was part of the Second Great Awakening in New England during which time Smith was living in Manchester, New York. Soon after Smith was influenced by many of the denominations, such as Methodist, Baptist and

[16] *Pearl of Great Price: Joseph Smith-History*, 5.

Presbyterian groups. However, he was skeptical of the fervor caused by the revivals. According to Smith, after reading from the Bible, in James 1:5 (*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him*) he set out to pray over which denomination to join. "I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air," Smith explained, "one of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!"[17] This event would set in motion a series of events that would change the landscape of America and the lives of thousands of people.

In the years following his divine visitation, the Smith family became well acquainted with persecution. By the time Smith began translating the *Book of Mormon*, his reputation became somewhat infamous in the small New England town of Palmyra. Throughout his early years, he was known as a "likeable ne'er-do-well who was notorious for tall tales and necromantic arts who spent his leisure leading a band of idlers in digging for buried treasure," as explained by Fawn Brodie in *No Man Knows my History*.[18] In 1826, Smith stood trial for disorderly conduct and was accused of being an imposter.[19] Despite the amount of trepidation and persecution Smith faced throughout the 1820s, he steadily gained followers for the Mormon Church. In the spring of 1830, Smith organized the Mormon Church based on revelation that he claimed to have received from God and decided to send missionaries across the northeastern United States, eventually setting his sights westward.

The Mormon Church grew significantly after its official organization in April 1830. In a short time it outgrew the Palmyra settlement and Smith began looking new areas to settle in the

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[17] *Pearl of Great Price: Joseph Smith-History*, 17.
[18] Fawn Brodie, *No Man Knows my History: the Life of Joseph Smith* (New York: Knopf, 1971), 16.
[19] Ibid, 16.

west. In the fall of 1830, Smith began sending missionaries to preach the *Book of Mormon* to the Indians in Ohio and Missouri. While there, they were tasked with finding a new site to relocate the Mormon Church. On October 17, 1830, Oliver Cowdery recorded "being commanded of the Lord God, to go forth unto the Lamanites, to proclaim glad tidings of great joy unto them, by presenting unto then the fulness of the Gospel, of the only begotten son of God; and also, to rear up a pillar as a witness where the Temple of God shall be built, in the glorious New Jerusalem." Parley P. Pratt, Peter Whitmer Jr., and Ziba Peterson were sent to assist in this work.[20]

The latter part of the mission proved to be successful as members of the Mormon Church settled in Kirtland, Ohio in January and February of 1831. Smith was eager to move his new church to the area because of a series of divine revelations. These visions instructed Smith to find a "holy city" preparatory to Christ's Second Coming. This holy city, or "New Jerusalem," as he referred to it, would be a gathering place for his people. This desire to find "New Jerusalem" propelled Smith and his church ever westward, in the belief that this city would be built in America's western frontier. He also believed that city would be "Zion" and prepared to usher in Christ's Second Coming. Along with the desire to find Zion, Smith was motivated by the desire to spread the message of his church and create a civilization that would honor God and be a gathering place for God's people.[21] This city was the "holy city" or "New Jerusalem" which would come down from heaven, which the Mormons would soon believe to be located in Independence Missouri.[22]

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[20] *Covenant of Oliver Cowdery and Others, 17 October 1830*, The Joseph Smith Papers, Dean Jessee, Ronald Esplin, and Richard Bushman, eds. (Salt Lake City: Church Historians Press, 2008).

[21] Matthew Bowman, *The Mormon People: The Making of an American Faith* (New York: Random House, 2012), 31.

[22] Richard Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 161.

In June 1831, Joseph Smith held a conference for the church and instructed Oliver Cowdery and thirteen others to travel to Missouri to continue preaching and teaching the American Indians. Cowdery traveled with the missionaries to the township of Independence located in Jackson County, about 250 miles west of St. Louis. On June 19, Joseph Smith and others also set out for Missouri preaching the gospel along the way. Smith arrived in Independence in mid-July, noticing how sparsely populated the area was as well as its potential for development. On July 20, 1831, Smith received a revelation regarding the establishment in Independence: "wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion. And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse."[23]

With that, the Mormons began to establish a more permanent settlement in Jackson County. During 1832 and 1833 the Mormons living in New York and Ohio began to move into the Jackson County area en masse. Samuel Gifford was twelve years old when his family moved to Independence, filled with the hope that they had found Zion. The Gifford family arrived in Independence in the spring of 1833, during the second wave of migration to the area. Gifford, and other families just like his, faced some of the harshest persecution heaped upon the Mormons while living in Jackson County. Gifford described his experiences while traveling to Missouri in his journal. He described the pains under which his family moved to Missouri and that "just before we started on our journey I had the mumps and while at Warren we all took the measles

[23] *Doctrine and Covenants* 57: 2-3.

and before we got to Pittsburgh we all got the whooping cough which made our journey quote unpleasant."[24]

In order to move to the new settlement many people had to sell the land on which they had lived for several years, leaving behind family and friends. David Pettegrew, who joined the Mormon Church in 1832, determined to move to Independence. In his journal he described his own experience in migrating to Missouri:

> I had heard that the people that believed in the Book of Mormon, were gathering in the upper part of the State of Missouri; thither I was determined to go. I cried unto the Lord that he would help me and that I might be soon able to dispose of my farm and property, and settle up my belongings correctly, and be soon with those that believed in the Book [Book of Mormon]. I offered my farm for sale and in a few days…My eldest Brother, seeing I had sold my farm, and had received the money for it, he being one of the trustees of Township, told me, I was deranged and it was his duty to see that I had a guardian placed over me.[25]

Even before beginning his journey for Missouri, David Pettegrew's family sought to commit him because he joined the Mormon Church. Along the way, he noted that his wife and son "had a sever [sic] attack of the Cholera and were despaired of, but through the mercies of the Almighty God and the prayers of the faithful, their lives were spared."[26] Eventually, in December 1832 David Pettegew and his family arrived in Missouri.

After experiencing such hardship along the way the Mormons were determined to make their settlement in Independence prosperous. At first, the Mormon movement into the area went undisturbed; however, as more Mormons moved into the area, signs of trouble began. The Missourians began to notice that their Mormon neighbors were very different from themselves,

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[24] Samuel K. Gifford , *Samuel K. Gifford Reminiscences, 1864*, Transcript of MS 8167, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2.

[25] David. Pettegrew, *David Pettegrew Papers, 1840-1857*. Transcript of MS 2282, Church History Library. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. 10.

[26] Ibid, 11.

everything from the food they ate to the kind of religion they practiced. In the early nineteenth century the quickest way to disseminate knowledge, next to word of mouth, was through newspapers. The newspaper system in Missouri during the 1830s was exceptional at relaying information from the state, as well as the nation. A common topic in the newspaper was the Mormon Church, discussing everything from what Missourians noticed about the community and eventually public meetings about how to drive them from the area. *The Missouri Intelligencer* was one of the most popular newspapers in Missouri and frequently published news about the Mormons.

In 1832 some of the first articles concerning the Mormons were published. On June 2, 1832 the *Missouri Intelligencer* of neighboring Franklin County published an article that relayed information about the Mormon efforts to proselytize in the surrounding areas, with very little impression made upon the Missourians. The articles described how, "in Madison county, or the Ridge Prairie, a few miles south of Edwardsville, they were more successful in making impressions. Several families, Methodist, Baptists and others were 'almost persuaded.' We believe all have been cured of this singular fanaticism but one family."[27] The article described how Mr. McMahan, a well-known Methodist preacher, was "so bewildered with their new bible, and their power to work miracles, as to follow them to Shoal Creek, where he got baptized into the Mormon faith and received from them a commission to preach and work miracles in turn." Mr. McMahan, as described, had gone mad while "fighting evil spirits" and destroyed his home and nearly sacrificed one of his children and was eventually subdued by members of his community. The Missourians were themselves bewildered by this experience and grew suspicious of the Mormons. The articles concluded that "these sudden and apparently

[27] *Missouri Intelligencer*, June 2, 1832.

providential effects of Mormon faith, as put a stop to further proselyting in this quarter. We hope the people hereafter will be satisfied with the bible God has given us, and the religion it reveals, without the addition of the 'Book of Mormon.'"[28] The story of Mr. McMahan, who was simply acting under his own dictates, is never described in any of the records of the Mormon Church, but it left an impression on the Missourians who could not help but notice the growing presence of the Mormons.

The Mormon settlement had reached around 830 citizens in 1832, and by mid-1833, there were roughly 1200 Mormons living in Jackson County and 2,000 more in Kirtland, Ohio.[29] In the spring of 1833, the first signs of trouble manifested as Missourians damaged the homes of Mormons living in the area. Mormon dissenters and those living near their settlements spread false and alarming rumors of the religious practices of Mormons, adding to the already mounting tensions between the two groups. On April 20, 1833 the *Missouri Intelligencer* published a letter from a former Mormon which referred to a meeting held among the Mormons. The letter described how the Mormons believed Joseph Smith to be a seer, that he had the keys of the kingdom and could see angels.[30] This alarmed the Missourians because they did not believe that Joseph Smith possessed this power, which power, to this day, is a pillar of the Mormon faith.

By the summer of 1833 the Missourians began expressing their disdain for the Mormons through small acts of vandalism. The Missouri mobs, as the Mormons most commonly referred to them, threw rocks and other objects in order to damage windows and other property.[31] Samuel Gifford noted, "The spirit of persecution soon became the order of the times amongst those who

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Bowman, *The Mormon People*, 38.
[30] *Missouri Intelligencer*, April 20, 1833.
[31] Elder B. H. Roberts, *The Missouri Persecutions*, (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons, Co. Publishers, 1900) 73.

were not of us, for they that were not for us were against us."[32] In *Missouri Persecutions*, B.H. Roberts describes how the Missourians also sought to "destroy the Church, spreading slanderous falsehoods, to incite the people to actual violence against the Saints."[33] In the summer of 1833 the Missourians would have their first chance to gain the leverage they thought would help to eliminate the problem.

While the Missourians may not have agreed with the religious views of the Mormons, they had not yet secured a reason to expel them from Jackson County. Desperate for evidence to drive the Mormons from the county, the Missourians used an article printed in the Mormon newspaper *The Evening and Morning Star*. The newspaper was owned by the church and operated by William W. Phelps and relayed information from the other Mormon settlement in Kirtland, Ohio. In one particular article, titled "Free People of Color," Phelps simply transcribed the laws regarding the movement of freed slaves in Missouri. In the beginning he described the intention of the article when he said that "to prevent any misunderstanding among the churches abroad, respecting free people of color, who may think of coming to the western boundaries of Missouri, as members of the church, we quote the following clauses from the Law of Missouri."[34] Phelps went on to copy verbatim the wording of Missouri law concerning free people of color, explaining, "that hereafter no free negro or mulatto, other than a citizen of some of the United States shall come into or settle in this state under any pretext whatever."[35]

The intention of the article was to simply relay the Missouri law to the new Mormon emigrant; however, the Missourians saw it as an act of treason and the solution to their Mormon problem in Jackson County. While it may seem that the Missourians wished to expel the

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[32] *Samuel K. Gifford Reminiscences*, 2.
[33] Roberts, *The Missouri Persecutions*, 74.
[34] *Evening and Morning Star*, July 1833.
[35] Ibid.

Mormons based on their view on slavery, this article was merely used as a means to an end. That much is evident by the fact that the Mormons did not have an official stance on slavery and the article neither condones nor condemns slavery. Shortly after Phelps's article made its way into the hands of the Missourians there was a public meeting held in Independence. In this meeting the Missourians, paranoid that the Mormons would lead some kind of slave revolt in Missouri and take over the county, discussed how to solve the Mormon problem in Missouri.

Violent Persecutions

In July 20, 1833 a public meeting was held in Independence, in the meeting the Missourians discussed how to "rid themselves of the set of fanatics called Mormons."[36] In this meeting the Missourians professed to act, "not from the excitement of the moment, but under a deep and abiding conviction that the occasion is one that calls for cool deliberation, as well as energetic action."[37] The Missourians listed several reasons why they wished to drive the Mormons from the county, everything from the paranoia that they would incite a riot among the slaves to fear that they would overrun the county and drive the Missourians out. More than anything, the Missourians did not wish for the Mormons to live in the area because of their religious beliefs. In the meeting the Missourians complained "of their pretended revelations from Heaven—their personal intercourse with God and his Angels—the maladies they pretend to heal by the laying on of hands—and the contemptible gibberish with which they habitually profane the Sabbath, and which they dignify with the appellation of unknown tongues, we have nothing to say. Vengeance belongs to God alone."[38]

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[36] *Missouri Intelligencer*, August 10, 1833.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.

Although the Missourians did not wish to comment fully on the religious practice of Mormons, it is clear that it was one of the strongest factors in their decision making. At the end of the meeting the Missourians came to five conclusions: that the Mormon migration to Jackson County would end; those currently living in Jackson would pledge to leave in a reasonable time; *the Evening and Morning Star* would no longer be printed and the offices closed; the Mormon leaders would influence their people to leave; and closed with a threat that those who did not do so should ask Smith for a revelation concerning their fate.[39] This resolution was unanimously adopted by those present in the meeting and was the first expulsion order issued to the Mormons in Missouri.

The final term of their declarations provided the Missourians with a loophole, should the Mormons go less than willingly. Because of that final term the Mormons could scarcely appeal for redress without the fear of violence. With few options the Missourians eventually agreed to the terms set by the Missourians and had until January to leave the county. Despite the terms that they had declared, the Missourians attacked the Mormons after the meeting and throughout the fall of 1833. The home and office of Phelps were burned to the ground, and Edward Partridge was taken from his home and covered in hot tar and feathers. Edward Partridge later described this event in his own words:

> I was stripped of my hat, coat and vest, and daubed with tar from head to foot and they had a quantity of feathers put on me; and all this because I would not agree to leave the county, and my home where I had lived for two years. Before tarring and feathering me, I was permitted to speak. I told them that the Saints had suffered persecutions in all ages of the world; that I had done nothing which ought to offend anyone; that if they abused me, they would abuse and innocent person; that I was willing to suffer for the sake of Christ: but, to leave the country, I was not willing to consent to it. By this time the multitude made so much noise that I could not be heard: some were cursing and swearing, saying, "call upon your

[39] *Missouri Intelligencer*, August 10, 1833.

> Jesus," etc; others were equally noisy in trying to still the rest, that they might be enabled to hear what I was saying. Until after I had spoken, I knew not what they intended to do with me, whether to kill me, to whip me, or what else I knew not. I bore my abuse with so much resignation and meekness, that it appeared to astound the multitude, who permitted me to retire in silence, many looking very solemn, their sympathies having been touched as I thought; and as to myself, I was so filled with the Spirit and love of God, that I had no hatred towards my persecutors or anyone else.

Tarring and feathering was a common method of retaliation in the frontier of America, and had been previously used against the Mormons. On the night of March 24, 1832, while Joseph Smith was sleeping in his home in Kirtland, Ohio, a mob burst through the door, dragged Smith from his bed, ripped off his clothes, and covered him in hot tar and feathers. Meanwhile, someone attempted to kill Smith by shoving a vial of poison down his throat. Smith survived the attack, as did Edward Partridge, though they were severely injured in the process.[40] This was but a taste of what was to come for the Mormons before leaving Jackson County.

Because of the agreement with the Missourians the Mormons feared the repercussions if they were to appeal to the state for aid. During August and September the Mormon settlements were left alone, but by October the violence had once again escalated. On September 28, 1833 the Mormons sent a petition for aid to Missouri Governor Daniel Dunklin. In the petition they described some of the events that had taken place over the past several weeks, specifically the destruction of Mormons homes and the printing press, as well as physical altercations between the Missourians and the Mormons. They described how "the damages which your petitioners have sustained in consequence of this outrage and stipulation are, at present, incalculable. A great numbers of industrious inhabitants who were dependent on their labors for support have been thrown out of employment, and are kept so by the threatening of those who compose the

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[40] Bowan, *The Mormon People*, 55.

mob."[41] Desperate for help, the Mormons asked the governor for protection from the mob and to raise "by express proclamation, or otherwise, a sufficient number of troops, who, with us, may be empowered to defend our rights, that we may sue for damages for the loss of property, for abuse, for defamation, as to ourselves, and if advisable try for treason against the government; that the law of the land may not be defiled, or nullified, but peace be restored to our country."[42]

On October 28, 1833, the Mormon's received Governor Dunklin's reply, which did little to assuage the Mormons. While he did admit that the Missourians acted outside of the law, he did not readily believe the Mormons claims. "With regard to the injuries you have sustained by the destruction of property, etc.," he closed, "the law is open to redress; I cannot permit myself to doubt that the courts will be open to you, nor [believe] that you will find difficulty in procuring legal advocated to sue for damages therein."[43] Any redress the Mormons might have had would come too late as October came to an end the mobs ensued.

As news of the Mormons petition spread throughout Independence, the mobs made good on their threat to use force in driving the Mormons out. On the evening of October 31 the Missourians began to attack the Mormon settlement, leaving the Mormons bewildered and fearful for their lives. Again the mobs attacked the Mormons en masse, with excessive force. They care little who they killed or abused, just as long as they were Mormons. First they destroyed as much of their property as possible, whippings and beatings soon followed. Samuel Gifford noted that "the spirit of persecution continued to prevail until sometime in November when they determined to drive the Saints or put them to death. Some of the Saints were shot down, some were beaten with clubs, guns, ect., and some were tarred and feathered. In fact we

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[41] Petition to Governor Daniel Dunklin, Journal History, Volume 4, September 28, 1833.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Letter to the Mormons From Governor Dunklin, Journal History, Volume 4, October 19, 1833.

must leave or die."[44] The Mormons attempted to defend themselves against the violence caused by the mob, but they were unable to keep their settlements. Gifford described how the Missourians tore down many of the Mormon dwellings and "then destruction by fire spread throughout the land until many of the Saints had to leave on foot, only think, children, barefooted, crossing the burnt prairies with bleeding feet in the cold month of November."[45]

Throughout November and December the hardships the Mormons faced at the hand of Missourians continued to escalate. David Pettegrew described how the Mormons "suffered not only from anguish of heart, as the loss of home, prosperity, stock, and provisions, but these, in that cave layed a sick father, mother, wife, husband, brothers and sisters, no comfort, no relief could be procured for them and constantly exposed to the indecency of the weather."[46] The Mormons took shelter where they could, but many of them had no homes left to go to for safety. Pettegrew described just how dire their situation was, especially for the children who cried at "every moment for something to satiate their appetite and these little innocent ones were made to suffer by the bloodthirsty fiends of Jackson County."[47] The 1200 Mormons that had made Independence their home now feared for their lives and left destitute to brave the elements with little protection. Not knowing where to go, the Mormons travelled north and began settling the area of Clay County. The Missourians of Jackson County were successful in their attempts to rid the area of their Mormon neighbors.

Peace and Prosperity in Clay County

The Mormons faced extreme persecutions in Jackson County. They were abused and forcibly removed from the area during the cold winter. The majority of the Mormons fled to

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[44] *Samuel K. Gifford Reminiscences*, 2.
[45] Ibid.
[46] *David Pettegrew Papers*, 21.
[47] Ibid.

neighboring Clay County, where they were treated like the haggard refugees they were. In the coming months many of them were able to purchase meager amounts of land on which to raise crops to feed their families. Although the Mormons were content, at the time, to make Liberty, Missouri their temporary home, they sought legal counsel in order to regain their possession left in Independence. Before the Mormons left Independence, they secured four lawyers to help them with their case. Among the lawyers was Alexander Doniphan who would serve as legal counsel for the Mormons throughout the 1830s. In a letter to the Mormon leaders William Phelps and Edward Partridge they agreed to reasonable legal fees and were determined to help the Mormons. Because of their desire to help the four lawyers were threatened by the mobs, and in closing stated, "we prefer to bring your suits, as we have been threatened by the mob, we wish to show them we disregard their empty bravadoes."[48]

Given the strenuous nature of the conflict between the Mormons and the Missourians, if the Mormons wished to reclaim their possessions in Independence adequate protection would need to be provided. The attorney general of Missouri counseled with the Mormons legal counsel and advised them of the need for protection, in case either side came armed an prepared for physical altercations.[49] The Mormons brought their concerns once again to Governor Dunklin and were set on bringing a suit against the Missouri mobs.[50] On Feb 4, 1834, the governor responded, but was not readily convinced of their need for armed protection. He stated that, "as to the request for keeping up a military force to protect your people, and prevent the commission of crimes and injuries, were I to comply, it would transcend the powers with which the Executive

[48] Letter to the Mormons from their Legal Counsel, Journal History, Volume 4, October 30, 1833.
[49] Letter to the Mormons from Governor Dunklin, Journal History, Volume 4, November 21, 1833.
[50] Petition to Governor Dunklin from the Mormons, Journal History, Volume 4, December 6, 1833.

of this state is clothed."[51] Eventually the Mormons were granted some protection and traveled back to Independence for a short time. The *Missouri Intelligencer* reported that:

> On Monday Morning following, Capt. Atchison marched his company in the town, with a number of Mormons under his protection, and after the short stay of three hours, it was concluded by Judge Ryland, Amos Ree. Circuit Att. and Attorney General Wells, that is was entirely unnecessary to investigate this subject on the part of the State, as the jury were equally concerned in the outrages committed it was therefore not likely that any bills would be found and consequently no good could possibly result from any further investigation of the subject.[52]

After this incident the suit the Mormons desired to bring against the Missourians was dropped and those who committed crimes against the Mormons were not accountable for their actions.

The challenges the Mormons faced in Jackson County were known to many of the members of the Mormon Church in other areas, but they continued to move into Missouri. James and Drusilla Hendricks joined the Mormon Church while living in Kentucky and experienced considerable persecution from their own family. Their property was destroyed by a group of people, and Drusilla described how "everything stood on end, pig-troughs were in top of the gates and every old trumpery stood up on end. The wagon was propped up with the tongue sticking straight in the air and a pile of rocks lay at the gate."[53] By spring the Hendricks family made preparations to move to Missouri with the rest of the Mormons. On May 1, 1836, just months before the Mormons were again driven from another county, the Hendricks family began the journey to Clay County. When they arrived in the area, the family purchased fifty acres of land on which six different families lived.[54] While there, many of the Mormons who were driven

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[51] Letter to the Mormons from Governor Dunklin, Journal History, Volume 5, February 4, 1834.
[52] *Missouri Intelligencer*, March 8, 1834.
[53] Drusilla D. Hendricks, *Drusilla D. Hendricks Reminiscences, circa 1877*, Transcript of MS 123, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, pg 15
[54] Ibid,17.

from Jackson County shared their stories with those who just recently moved into the area, not knowing of the fate that awaited them in the coming years.

As the Mormons began to settle in Clay County, the loss of their settlement in Independence weighed heavily upon the mind of Mormon leader Joseph Smith. Despite making Liberty their pseudo-home, Smith very much wanted to reclaim their former land. In February 1834, Joseph Smith began garnering support for a trek back to Independence. The purpose of this trip was to "redeem Zion" and reclaim their lands. Smith believed that if he gained enough support the Mormons could take back their property. On February 26, 1834 Smith recorded in his journal, "Wensdy <Febuary> 26th Started from home to obtain volenteers for Zion Thursday 27th ~~startted~~ ~~Started~~ Stayed at Br Roundays [Shadrach Roundy's] 28th stayed at a strangers who entertained us very kindly <<in> Wesleville [Wesleyville]."[55]

In the spring of 1834, Joseph Smith began to travel to various Mormon settlements in Ohio and Pennsylvania in order to garner support for reclaiming lands lost in Jackson County. Smith also received monetary donations to aid in this endeavor and by the end of April was prepared to travel back to Independence.[56] The endeavor became known as Zion's Camp, and in May 1834, it was agreed that they would journey back to Independence.

As the 200-300 Mormons neared Jackson County their presence was noticed by many. The newspapers printed reports of the movement as quickly as possible. On June 14, 1834, the Missouri Intelligencer reported that "a company of 250 or 300 strong-composed of able bodied men, with the exception of one women and a few children. They appeared to be generally armed. They did not state their destination, although frequent inquiries were made upon the subject. One

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[55] *The Joseph Smith Papers: Journals, Vol. 1: 1832-1839,* Dean Jessee, Ronald Esplin, and Richard Bushman, eds, (Salt Lake City: Church Historians Press, 2008) 28-29.

[56] Ibid, 43.

of the leaders claimed to have performed more miracles than are mentioned in the Old and New Testament."[57] All the newspaper articles in some way referred back to the religious practices of the Mormons, even if they are simply trying to reclaim their rightful property. When the Missourians got word of a Mormon company moving towards the area, they systematically burned the remaining Mormon settlements to the ground. Ultimately, Zion's Camp failed as Smith was met with Missourians preventing their entrance into the county. A Cholera epidemic in the camp also resulted in fourteen deaths. While leaving the Mormons devastated, this failure left them resolved to stay in Clay County.

Throughout the remainder of 1834 the Mormons living in Missouri were instructed by Joseph Smith to lay low. In order to live peaceably among the residents of Liberty, the Mormons needed to draw as little attention to themselves as possible. In June the Missourians attempted to come into Clay County, either to meet with the Mormons or stir up more trouble but could not and eventually left. On their way back into Jackson County the ferry boat they were riding sank and many of the Missourians from Jackson died. The newspapers reported this event as an attempt to compromise and that the ferry boat sinking was the work of the Mormons. However, there was no proof to that claim.[58]

After this event there was little excitement found in Clay County during this time period, just steady migration to the area. There were no reports of mob activities and life resumed its natural pace for the Mormons with little disturbance from the Missourians. During the time the Mormons lived in Clay County, they were either treated with indifference or with neighborly affection. David Pettegrew noted how "the majority of the people looked upon us as a poor daluded people, and thought many of us were Christians and honest, when any of them were sick

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[57] *Missouri Intelligencer*, June 14, 1834.
[58] *Missouri Intelligencer*, June 28, 1834

they would send for us to see [them] and nurse them, and they thought a great deal of the Mormons."[59] During a Cholera outbreak, the Missourians again called upon the Mormons for help as Pettegrew noted in his journal, "they would invariably call upon us, to take care of the sick, and would shed tears when we would leave them, and beg us remain, as though we could save their lives…"[60]

Throughout the remainder to 1834 and well into 1835, Joseph Smith focused his attention back to the Kirtland area and spent his time building a temple. The events in Jackson County, though, were never very far from his mind. On September 24, 1835, Smith recorded in his journal that,

> This day the high council met at my house to take into conside[r]ation the redeemtion of Zion and it was the voice of the spirit of the Lord that we petition to the Governor that is those who have been driven out <should> ~~to~~ do so to be set back on their Lands next spring as we go next season to live or dy ~~to this end so the dy is cast~~ in Jackson County we truly had a good time and Covena[n]ted to strugle for this thing untill [until] death shall desolve this union and if one falls that the rest be not discouraged but pesue [pursue] this object untill it is acomplished which may God grant u[n]to us in the name of Christ our Lord.[61]

The following day Joseph Smith drew up a loose contract for those who agreed to return to Jackson County in the spring of 1836.[62] The only other time this arrangement is mentioned on October 5, 1835, when he was instructing several members of the high council concerning their duties in the following spring.[63] Not much came of this resolve and in less than a year's time the Missourians in Clay County were wearisome of the Mormons continued presence in Liberty.

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[59] *David Pettegrew Papers*, 26.
[60] Ibid.
[61] *Joseph Smith Papers,* 64.
[62] Ibid.
[63] *Joseph Smith Papers*, 68.

However amicable their experience was in Clay County, it would be short lived as the summer of 1836 approached. The whisper of old feelings in Jackson County began to spread. "The word Mormon had become odious to the people of Missouri and 'justice' was blotted out of their courts," Pettegrew reflected.[64] Samuel Gifford noted how the Mormons had a short rest from the persecution of Jackson County. Many of the Missourians "were not content with what they had done but soon made their way into Clay County, they canvased the country to see how much of the spirit of persecution they could arouse amongst the old settlers, for their whole aim was to destroy the Saints."[65] By June 1836, according to Pettegrew:

> The old feelings and excitement of Jackson County now began to show itself in Clay, it was first started by the ministers of the gospel, such as Edwards and Baldew, Baptist ministers & others soon followed, they soon had the people in arms and I suppose made the people believe they were doing God's service. I am satisfied that many of their leading men were from Jackson County, for the same spirit was manifested over again. We were forced to take up arms in self-defense, the excitement had got to its highest pitch and their head men such as Judge Cameron, Judge Birch and others made several speeches to the people which seemed to allay, somewhat their excitement.[66]

The mob activity did not reach the level of violence exhibited in Jackson County, and the residents of Clay County were determined not to resort to such measures. The Missourians of Clay County had only agreed to the presence of the Mormons on the condition that they would remain only temporarily. But they realized that after nearly two years in Liberty, Missouri, their presence was anything but temporary.

On June 29, several residents of Clay County met in order to discuss how to best arrange for the Mormons to leave Liberty while not resorting the same violence used in Independence. In the meeting the residents of Liberty made something very clear, something that those in Jackson

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[64] *David Pettegrew Papers*, 25.
[65] *Samuel K. Gifford Reminiscences*, 3.
[66] *David Pettegrew Papers,* 26

County did not want to say: that their religious beliefs were in conflict with their own. In the meeting they stated that, "the religious tenets of this people are so different from the present churches of the age that *they always have and always will*, excite deep prejudices against them, in any populous country where they may locate"[67] (emphasis added). The Missourians felt strongly that if the Mormons continued to live in the area it would end in war. However, the more level-headed citizens of Liberty knew that violence was not an option they were willing to use in order to drive the Mormons out. In the meeting they said, "we do not contend that we have to least right, under the Constitutions and laws of the country, to expel them by force. But we would indeed be blind, if we did not foresee that the first blow that is struck at the moment of deep excitement, must and will speedily involve every individual in a war, bearing ruin, woe and desolation in its course."[68] The only solution, according to the Missourians was to have the Mormons leave on their own accord and as far away as possible. The meeting did end with a slight warning to the Mormons in the area: "we further say to them, if they regard their own safety and welfare--if they regard the welfare of their families, their wives and children, they will ponder with deep and solemn reflection on this friendly admonition, if they have one spark of gratitude, they will not willingly plunge a people into civil war, who held out to them the friendly hand of assistance in that hour of dark distress…"[69]

Once again, the Missourians sought to expel the Mormons. While Missourians from Jackson County threatened Mormons with violence, the residents of Clay County and the Mormons departed on amicable terms. While the residents of Clay County were far more helpful in aiding the Mormon withdrawal from their county, the Missourians feared the continued

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[67] *Messenger and Advocate*, August 1836.
[68] Public Meeting in Clay, County Missouri, Journal History, June 29, 1836
[69] *Messenger and Advocate*, August 1836.

presence of the Mormons would end in a civil war. The Mormons were again left to find a new home and felt the inevitable bitterness at their treatment in Missouri. Clinging to the belief that God had designated Missouri to be their holy city of Zion the Mormons sought to remain near their current location.

On July 1, 1836 the Mormons held a public meeting among the Mormons in order to discuss their current options regarding the declarations made by those in Clay County. The Mormons, as a token of their gratitude, thanked the citizens of Liberty for allowing them temporary asylum. The Mormons too felt that a peaceful solution could be reached. In the meeting they expressed their desire for peace and sought the good will of the Missourians and made a promise to the citizens, "we will use all honorable means to allay the excitement, and so far as we can, remove any foundations for jealousies against us as a people."[70] At the end of the meeting the Mormons left resolved to accept any help that they Missourians would provide and declared that, "for the sake of friendship, and to be in a covenant of peace with us, notwithstanding the necessary loss of property and expense we incur in moving, we comply with the requisitions of their resolutions in leaving Clay County."[71] With that the Mormons began the search for a new settlement, but help would come in the form of Alexander Doniphan, a constant friend and legal counsel.

Settlement in Caldwell County

After five years of turmoil, being violently driven from their homes in Jackson County, and now being asked to leave their homes yet the again. The Mormons made preparations to leave Clay County and slowly began to move just north of Liberty near Shoal Creek. Some Mormons made their way to neighboring Ray County but were never able to make a permanent

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[70] Public Meeting among the Mormons, Journal History, July 1, 1836.
[71] Ibid.

settlement. Throughout September many of the families moved in Far West, which would be incorporated into Caldwell County.[72] By December nearly all of the Mormons living in Clay County had successfully relocated to Far West and began the process of petitioning for a new county.[73] While the Missourians in Liberty helped the Mormons to move out of Liberty, they received little help from the local or state government. Just after the public meetings among the Mormons and the residents of Clay County the Mormons alerted Governor Dunklin of their situation. Whether exacerbated from the office which he held or with the constant struggle between the Missourians and the Mormons, Dunklin had little patience for new issues. He wrote to the Mormons expressing his sympathy for their plight but assured them that he could not help them. Dunklin referred them to the courts but made clear that little would probably come of it. In the letter he wrote, "public sentiment may become paramount law; and when one man or society of men become so obnoxious to that sentiment as to determine the people to be rid of him or them; it is useless to run counter to it."[74] The Mormons were indeed obnoxious to the Missourians and were now being segregated to a county designated for them by the state.

The establishment of Caldwell County came by way of Missouri state law in December 1836. Immediately after agreeing to leave Clay County, the Mormons sought settlements in neighboring Ray County. However, the residents refused to allow them into the area. Doniphan, a Clay County state legislator and legal counsel to the Mormons, organized a bill that would create two new counties, Caldwell and Daviess. The Caldwell area would be specifically for Mormons, while Daviess County would be open for settlement to anyone. The Mormons, having nowhere else to go, agreed to the terms of the bill. The settlement would be a haven for the

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[72] Journal Entries, Journal History, September 1836, Volume 8.
[73] Journal Entries, Journal History, December 1836, Volume 8.
[74] Letter from Governor Dunklin to the Saints in Missouri, Journal History, July 18, 1836,

Mormons who could control the local government without intervention. The bill was passed on December 19, 1836, and the Mormons began to settle the area.

In time it became clear that the growing county would not contain the steady emigration that was common among the Mormons during the 1830s. On January 8, 1837, Doniphan, knowing the area to be too small for substantial growth, wrote a letter to William W. Phelps concerning the new territory granted to the Mormons. Doniphan argued in favor of expanding the borders of Caldwell County, but his plea met opposition from Missourians in Ray and Jackson County. In the letter, Doniphan explained how he had not succeeded in securing the larger boundaries and explained that "the present limits of your county are contracted and I regret it much, but you are aware of the prejudices and ignorance that are to be found and combatted every where in this county on this subject as well as with the legislature as the Common Herde."[75] Without securing a larger county and being buffeted by the persecution of Missourians, Doniphan and the Mormons settled for the land that was granted to them. At the end of 1836, news of the settlement in Caldwell County reached Mormons in the Kirtland, Ohio, settlement which would prompt migration to the area in the coming years.

In the December edition of the *Messenger and Advocate*, the article relayed the good news that "health was restoring to that afflicted people. They have made purchases in a new place, and many families are already prepared for winter: in all probability, they have made such an arrangement, and have cultivated that friendly understanding with their neighbors, that they will now be permitted to gather by themselves and form a community of their own."[76] While they were pleased at the prospect of a new settlement, they did not forget what brought them there. In that same article, it said that although they were grateful to the residents of Clay County

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[75] Letter from Alexander Doniphan, Journal History, January 8, 1837.
[76] *Messenger and Advocate*, December 1836

who assisted in the move to Far West, "we candidly believe, that had it not been for the vile slanders an opprobrious falsehoods, circulated by our enemies here, and sent to the ears of men in the west, concerning us, our friends in that country, they would now have been enjoying all their former blessings of prosperity and happiness."[77]

The Mormons established the city Far West shortly after arriving in the area and wasted no time developing a thriving city. Many members of the Mormon Church that moved into Far West were among those who experienced the violence of Jackson County and the dissolution of their settlement in Clay County. These members were excited at the prospect of settling an area all their own, without fear of violence. Kentucky emigrant Drusilla Hendricks recounted "we were to be left alone there so we were glad to do so and not be mixed up with. Our leading brethren worked day after day to accomplish this move…we soon selected a place, built a cabin and cut hay for we had little time to prepare for winter."[78] In fact, many of the members who had experienced such hardship remained faithful to the Church and to Smith, and Hendricks noted that "we never missed a meeting for we loved the Saints and had confidence in them."[79] Many other members began to settle successful farms in the area, David Pettegrew recounted how "we were in a great way to prosper as I stated before, in opening my new farm we soon had schools, started in school districts and soon our children were benefited by the learning they received."[80]

While several Mormons in Clay County moved into the area, several more migrated to the area from different parts of the US. In the summer of 1836, the Curtis family, formerly of Pennsylvania, moved to Kirtland, Ohio for a short time before moving to Far West. The Curtis family was originally on their way to Clay County when the news of the Mormons being driven

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[77] *Messenger and Advocate*, December 1836.
[78] *Drusilla D. Hendricks Reminiscences*, 18.
[79] Ibid.
[80] *David Pettegrew Papers*, 29.

from the area spread and eventually made their way to Far West. John Curtis recorded that his family journeyed over eight hundred miles in just two months while experiencing sickness along the way. At the end of their journey to Far West, the family purchased a farm and "as the county became more settled it became more healthy and the Saints gathered in from different parts of the land hoping to live in peace."[81]

Throughout 1837, the Mormons were busy building a great city in Far West. In a year's time the Mormons built a thriving city in Caldwell County. The population of Caldwell County grew to nearly 1500 and became the ideal city that Joseph Smith had been trying to build. Many critics of early Mormonism, like Sarah Gordon, describe how the Mormons "maximized their political and economic strength by bloc voting, forming a private militia, and dealing exclusively with approved merchants."[82] What Gordon fails to mention is that by 1837 the Mormons were driven from two different settlements, beaten, harassed, and many lost their lives for being different. The once tired Mormons were thriving in their own territory and building up a successful city. They very much existed in their own community without much hindrance for over a year and a half.

While the settlement in Far West was developing at a rapid pace, the city would soon fail to hold the growing population. In late 1837, the Mormons began expanding their settlements in Daviess County which was open to all, including the Mormons. The state legislature did not account for the growth the Mormon settlement would experience in 1837 and were powerless to prevent settlement in the area. By 1838, the population of Far West had reached nearly 5,000. They had also erected a number of buildings, offices and homes. The town contained over 100

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[81] Joseph Curtis, *Joseph Curtis Reminiscence's and diary, 1839 October-1881 March*, Transcript of MS 1654, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. pg 8.

[82] Sarah B. Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002) 24.

buildings along with a town square. Perhaps the most important structure to the Mormons, a temple site was decided upon and the members began making the necessary arrangements to build a temple.[83] There were as many as 2,000 farms operating, with individual families owning around forty acres each, this was indeed a city that Smith could call his Zion.

On January 12, 1838, Joseph Smith and his expectant wife, Emma, began their journey to Far West. Smith described the hardships his family faced as they traveled and were pursued by a mob from Ohio. In his journal he related:

> The weather was extremely cold, we were obliged to secrete ourselves in our wagons, sometimes, to elude the grasp of our pursuers who continued their pursuit of us more than two hundred miles from Kirtland, armed with pistols and guns, seeking our lives. They frequently crossed out track, twice they were in the where we stopped, once we tarried all night in the same house with them, with only a partition between us and them; and heard their oaths and imprecations, and threats concerning us, if they could catch us; and late in the evening they came into our room and examined us, but decided we were not the men. At other times we passed them in the streets and gazed upon them, and they on us, but they know us not.[84]

Joseph Smith's experiences while moving to Far West were similar to those of other Mormons moving to the new city. Many of the other Mormons living in Kirtland began migrating to Far West, and soon the area designated for their settlement in Caldwell County was running out of room. Smith ordered the city to be expanded and officially ordered the leaders to seek land in other areas. A surveying part traveled north to Daviess County rather than heading south into Ray County, believing that as long as they stayed out of that area they were not in breach of their agreement. The surveying party remained in the area in the beginning of the summer of 1838, which would prove to be a fatal decision.[85]

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[83] Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 342.
[84] Letter from Joseph Smith to the Saints in Kirtland, Ohio, Journal History, January 12, 1838.
[85] Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling,* 346.

Jacob Bigler, who grew acquainted with Mormonism in his home state of Virginia, moved to Far West in 1838 and was baptized there.[86] Bigler purchased a large tract of land for his family in June 1838 a total of 240 acres. The following month he returned to Virginia to collect his family and return to Far West.[87] Before Bigler could even return and settle his land, the Mormons were expelled from the state. The Young family, who had been living in Kirtland, headed for Far West. The patriarch of the Young family, Joseph, was involved in the affairs of the Mormon Church in Kirtland and participated in the failed Zion's Camp. He gathered his family and several others in September and began their journey. The journey to Far West from Kirtland was extremely long considering it was done on foot, a distance of over 600 miles. Along the way, the Young family stopped at a small farm, asking the owners for milk to feed the children, and "the woman at the place begged him to go back, she said if you are Mormons you will surely be killed."[88]

In August 1836, there was an election in the state legislature. At that point, the Mormons made up a third of the voters in Daviess County. On the morning of August 6, Joseph Smith recorded in his journal, "this is the day for General Election throughout the state for officers, office seekers from without the Church who depend very much on our help, begin to flatter us with smooth stories but we understand them very well through the wisdom of God given unto us they cannot deceive us for God is with us and very near us,"[89] One of those candidates was William Peniston, [Whig]. He asked the Mormons to support his candidacy, but when they began

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[86] *Jacob G. Bigler Autobiography, 1907,* Jacob G. Bigler,Transcript of MS 10735, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1.
[87] Ibid.
[88] *Biographical Sketch of Joseph and Jane B. Young, undated*, Joseph and Jane B. Young, Transcript of MS 2792, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 3
[89] *Joseph Smith Papers*, 297.

voting for another he tried to prevent the Mormons from voting. Because of this a fight ensued.[90] After years of being berated by the Missourians, many of the Mormons present began to fight in defense of their right to vote. In his journal Joseph Smith recorded:

> during the Election on yesterday at that place some two or three of our bretheren were killed in consequence of the Malignity of the Missourians, it was reported that the citizens of Daviess County who were opposed to our religion, did endeavor to prohibit the bretheren from voting at the election in that place, and that, men who were killed were left upon the ground and not suffered to be intered, and that the majority of that county were determined to drive the bretheren from the county.[91]

When word of the struggle reached Far West many believed that several Mormons were killed. Despite serious injuries, no deaths were reported. Not knowing the rumors of the death of Mormons to be false, they could no longer stand the brutality of the Missourians. In June 1838, just weeks before the election day struggle, the Danites were formed, a kind of secret militia society aimed at protecting the Mormons. The Danites would play a central role in the coming months and their leader, Sampson Avard, would turn on the Mormons and Joseph Smith. It is important to note that the Danites were neither sanctioned nor condoned by Joseph Smith, although he was largely held responsible for their crimes.

John L. Butler, who was present at the time of the scuffle between the Missourians and the Mormons described the event. In his account he recorded:

> There was a rush to the polls on the part of the Missourians until they were principally through with the voting, when Wm. Penningston [Penniston], one of the candidates stood upon the head of a whiskey barrel, and made a very inflammatory speech against the saints, stating that he had headed a company to order the "Mormons" off of their farms and possessions, stating at the same time that he did not consider the "Mormons" had any more right to vote than the

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[90] Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 357.

[91] *Joseph Smith Papers*, 298-299. It is noted in the footnotes of page 298 that no Mormons were actually killed during this struggle, just a few serious injuries were reported. The rumor of the deaths is believed to be partly responsible for the intensified violence on both sides.

> niggers…I went to where they affray was and saw they had attacked the brethren with sticks, clapboards (or shakes) and anything they could use to fight with.

Smith recorded in his own journal how quickly the Mormons responded the events of August 6th, describing how "under these conciderations quite a number of us volunteered to go to the assistance of our bretheren in that place accordingly some 15 to 20 men started from this place armed and equipt for our defence the bretheren from all parts of the county, followed after and continued to come and join us."[92] The Mormons reacted quickly to the scuffle, but those in the farther settlements were unaware of the oncoming struggle.

While all this had taken place, word of the struggle had not reached Kirtland and many of the Mormons currently en route to Far West. The Young family had been warned not to pursue their journey to Far West, but knew little regarding the situation awaiting them. As the small company was traveling, Joseph Young Jr., son of patriarch Joseph Young, described how they "were stopped early one morning by a company of fifty armed men who asked if they were Mormons and were going to Far West & receiving an affirmative answer they said no more emigrants would be allowed to go to Far West & demanded their arms and threatened their lived and insisted that they go back or stay there."[93] The elder Joseph Young consulted with those in the company and eventually agreed to give up their arms. Young attempted to compromise with the armed militia, stating that they were moving to the area to find homes, while asking if they could secure work if they remained where they were (the journal does not specify their exact location). The negotiations seemed to be going well, both the captain of the mob and Young agreed that if they remained, they would then find work. A few members of the company were hesitant to remain, and while arguing a member of the militia cried out "You ought all to be

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[92] *Joseph Smith Papers*, 299.
[93] *Biographical Sketch of Joseph and Jane B. Young*, 3-4.

killed and I think the best thing we can do is make an end of you all right now."[94] Eventually, the militia left satisfied that the Mormons would remain in that area. Following several arguments over what to do, the company of Mormons continued their journey in the security of night arriving at Haun's Mill in October.

After experiencing so much violence at the hands of the Missourians, the Mormons sought protection against the mobs. The journals used throughout this thesis describes how each of the Mormons were preparing themselves for battle. Drusilla Hendrick's husband James was called upon to help defend the Mormons. She described some of their preparations, noting in her journal:

> My husband had to stand guard for three months as the mob would gather on the outside settlements. The brethren had to be ready and on hand at the sounding of a base drum. At three taps on the drum my husband would be on his horse in a moment, be it night of day while I and my children were left to weep for that is what we did, at such times. I was willing for him to go as I was always was until he fell in defense of the kingdom of God…this scene of things continued until Oct. 24, 1838 when the mob gathered on the south of us and sent out the word that they would burn everything they came to and that they already had two of our brethren as prisoners and the prairies were black with smoke.[95]

As prepared as the Mormons were to fight the Missourians were similarly armed, William Peniston was also the colonel of the Daviess County militia. Adam Black, a justice of the peace, also began to make preparations for confrontation. Just days after the election, the Missourians and the Mormons were on the precipice of conflict, and people on both sides of the fight were ready to take up arms. The Missourians, who never tired of fighting against the Mormons, were gathering from as far as Jackson County, made their dislike of the Mormons known.[96] By early September, both sides were braced and prepared for a fight, neither side willing to compromise or concede in order to prevent bloodshed. What followed quickly became

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[94] Ibid, 5.
[95] *Drusilla D. Hendricks Reminiscences*, 19
[96] Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 358.

a Mormon bloodletting. While the Mormons faced persecution for their religious and, at times, political beliefs, nothing compared to the events of the fall of 1838. Being driven from Jackson County and asked to leave Clay County pale in comparison the so-called 'Mormon War.'

War among the Missourians

After the events of August 6 unfolded, both the Mormons and Missourians prepared to defend themselves. The Mormons, who previously could be described as pacifists, were prepared to defend the lands and their people. Drusilla Hendricks described how "my husband had to stand guard for three months as the mob would gather on the outside settlements. The brethren had to be ready and on hand at the sounding of a bass drum. At three taps on the drum my husband would be in his horse in a moment, be it night or day while I and my children were left to weep for that is what we did, at such times."[97] Many of the women and children could do little to prepare for what awaited them in the coming weeks. Despite their preparations, many feared for their lives.

Far West and Haun's Mill were at the epicenter of the mob activity, and those in the surrounding area of the settlement were called upon as reinforcements. Joseph Curtis, not quite yet twenty years old, was among the reinforcements sent to the surrounding areas. Curtis described how "Soon after this [his mother's death in August] I went to ondiahman [Adam-ondi-Ahman] 25 miles north to fight if necessary in defense of the citizens of that place in company with others as a mob had gathered and commenced depredations also threatening to drive the saints…soon I was called upon to go to Far West as mobs were collecting in several places."[98] During the month of September, there were a few clashes between the Mormons and Missourians in the surrounding counties of Carroll and Daviess. It became abundantly clear that

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[97] *Drusilla D. Hendricks Reminiscences*, 19.
[98] *Joseph Curtis Reminiscence's and diary*, 7.

the two groups could no longer live in the same area. Men like Joseph Curtis were sent to different areas of central Missouri in order to defend themselves against the agitated and growing mob of Missourians. For the past five years, the Mormons had complied with the terms the Missourians had set. However, they could no longer tolerate the violence that was heaped upon them.

The Mormon War is not considered a war in the classic sense, though at the times both the Missouri and Mormon forces were preparing as if it were. Joseph Smith had little military experience and relied on Colonel George Hinkle for military advice and assistance, while the Missourians were led by David Atchison. Atchison had once been a friend to the Mormons, but was now called upon to lead the forces bent on expelling the Mormons from Missouri. Throughout September, the Mormons tried everything possible to avoid violence and appealed to the courts for assistance. The local leaders and courts rarely came to the aid of the Mormons, often believing them to be the cause of the problem. On September 2, Joseph Smith wrote a letter to David Atchison asking him to "come and counsil with us, to se[e] if he could not put a stop to this collection of people, and to put a stop to hostilities in Daviess County."[99] According to the Joseph Smith Papers, Smith also "sent a letter to Judge [Austin A.] King containing a petition for him to assist in putting down and scattering the mob, which are collecting at Daviess."[100] Little came from this endeavor as the mobs continued to attack the Mormon settlement. Appealing for redress resulted in quelling the mob for a short time. However, in October the Mormons would use force to protect their people.

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[99] *Joseph Smith Papers*, 313.
[100] *Ibid.*

Joseph Curtis was among those who fought in defense of the Mormons. At just eighteen he had joined the Mormon forces and scouted the area surrounding Far West and helped make preparations to defend the city. Described in his journal are his experiences:

> I in company with a large number George M. Hinkle and Capt. Branson acting as Commander went soon. To our surprise we found an large force between us & the city, but with a considerable caution a hastey ride a part going east and some west we arrived in town about sundown as the above named force were in the act of storming the city, they however retreated and camped for the knight. Much labor was preformed in the knight to form breast works for the following day, soon our leading men were delivered into their hands by our Commander G.M. Hinkle. The brethren surrendered their arms. I laid down a gun belonging to Bro Benjamin. This happened about the first of November a rain and snow storm commenced about this time which increased the suffering of many who had hastely came to gather fleeing from threatening danger from our enemies now the town were filled with armed forces in every direction insulting men women & children in the most brutal manner.[101]

Samuel Gifford, who was only sixteen, also joined the Mormon troops. Though quite young and untrained, Gifford described how he was given, "a pistol about one foot long, and a spear in the end of a long pole with which I trained, stood guard, etc. I was ready to fight in defense of Zion, although I was young and small for my age."[102] The Mormons in surrounding areas gathered in Far West, as described by Joseph Curtis, hoping to be more protected from the mobs. This strategy would ultimately lead to the death of almost twenty Mormons in just one day. Ira Ames who was living outside the vicinity of Far West in Randolph County, came to the aid of his people when he received word of the mob activity. Ames described how "Far West was full of brethren who had come from the county with nothing to eat, I turned out a fat ox, the only ox I

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[101] *Joseph Curtis Reminiscence's and diary*, 9-10.
[102] *Samuel K. Gifford Reminiscences*, 4.

had, Far West was immediately put under martial law and they allowed no one to enter or leave without a permit."[103]

As the end of October neared, the fighting reached a climax, with the mob increasing their activity, Drusilla Hendricks described how on "October 24, 1838 the mob gathered on the south of us an sent out the word that they would burn everything they came to and that they already had two of our brethren as prisoners and the prairies were black with smoke."[104] The mobs made good on this promise and the last week of October would be the most brutal for the Mormons in Far West. The culminating event of the struggle between the Mormons and the Missourians took place at Haun's Mill on October 30, 1838. This day became known as the Haun's Mill Massacre an famous part of Mormon history. The days leading up to the fight were filled with preparation on the part of the Mormons.

The Haun's Mill area was home to a large Mormon community with several families living within a mile of the area. James McBride and his father were living just three quarters of a mile from the mill and were called upon to protect the area. Despite everything the Mormons had yet faced, they were still prepared to defend their people. McBride described how "though many of the followers of the Prophet Joseph Smith had been beaten, tarred and feathered, driven from their homes and their property confiscgated for the use of mobocrats, their persecutions were not yet to cease, threats were made against the Mormons, the rights of citizenship were denied them."[105] James McBride and his father were among the first involved in the preparations to defend the mill and the events of October 30th left a lasting impression on those directly

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[103] *Ira Ames Autobiography and Journal, 1858*, Ira Ames, Transcript of MS 6055, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.
[104] *Drusilla D. Hendricks Reminiscences*, 19
[105] *James McBride Autobiography, 1874-1876,* James McBride, Transcript of MS 8201, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 25

involved. Many of the stories differ, depending on how involved the people were in protecting the mill or helping wounded men after the attack. Their stories are filled with anguish regarding both the events of that fateful afternoon and the expulsion from Missouri that immediately followed. James McBride recorded his thoughts on the events on that day:

> One beautiful after-noon on the 30th day of October 1838, my father came home from meeting with the brethren at the mill. He talked with me, and told me the arrangements made. He was called to help to form the guard. I was sick at the time, with the every other day ague, and father said on my well day I should take his place with the guard and that he would guard on the day that I was sick. That with himself and me he wished to fill one man's place…father was in good spirits and his countenance wore a cheerful expression…he started on his return to the mill to join the rest of the guard…my father had but little more than got to the mill, in fact not more than thirty minutes had elapsed from the time he left the house, when a gun was heard and another followed by the deadly crack of musketry which told too well the fate of all who fell pretty to the blood thirsty mob![106]

McBride described how his father "had been shot with his own gun, after having given it into the mobs possession. He was cut down and badly disfigured with a corn cutter and left lying in the creek."[107]

The deadly attacks at Haun's Mill touched the lives of every Mormon living in Far West, and several members witnessed the bloodshed first hand. Like James McBride, David Lewis, who had only recently moved to the area, was a victim of the attack. Lewis described how "the people that lived in that country became alarmed to see so many people guether to one place all of one religion and politicks, they raised many false accusations against us in order to have us drove away from the state that they might possess out homes and farms, we being too few in number to defend ourselves against the many thousands guethered against us."[108] David Lewis

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[106] *James McBride Autobiography*, 29.
[107] Ibid.
[108] *David Lewis Autobiographical Sketch, 1854*, David Lewis, Transcript of MS 5142, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1.

was at the mill the day of the attack, as it was not far from his farmstead described in his own words:

> while thus situated on Tuesday the 30 day of October about three hundred armend men on horseback came in full lope towards us, until they got in about one hundred yards of us when amediately halted and commenced firein at us…they came there about four o-clock in the afternoon and continued one hour and a half. There was eight of our number fled at the start. Such groans of dying, sutch struggling in blood…they was still continuing there fyering with an increased rapidity and closing the circle around us, as they was not meeting mutch resistance from the few that was left.[109]

David Lewis also witnessed first-hand the brutal attack carried out on James McBride's father, who was, Lewis explained, "shot with his own gun as I was informed by a sister that was concealed under the bank and witnessed the sceen and Jacob Rogers then took an old sythe ablade and literally gashed his face to pieces."[110] Lewis went on to describe how two young boys were killed in the attack, and how:

> these two little boys was not shot axidental by being in the crowd, but after the men as all down and gone and there was none to resist they on the outside closed up and one man discovered these boys concealed under the blacksmith bellows, he deliberatey stuck his gun in a crack of the shop and fyred at them as they was concealed together. One of their own men reproved him saying it is a d—d shame to shoot such little fellows he camly replied little shoots make big trees, as mutch to say they will make more Mormons after while if not killed.[111]

The accounts of James McBride and David Lewis are similar to other Mormons who were either trapped in the mill, survived, or in the neighboring farms. They all describe the horrific events of that day.

Just days after the attack, Smith met with Major-General George Lucas of the Missouri militia in order to reach some kind of compromise. However, Lucas demanded that the Mormons give up their property, leave the state, and the Mormon leaders were to surrender themselves and

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[109] Ibid, 2.
[110] Ibid.
[111] *David Lewis Autobiographical Sketch,* 4.

be tried for treason. If they did not agree to these terms the killings would continue. With his back against the wall, Smith convinced the Mormons survivors to leave the state.[112] The terms set forth by Lucas, especially the part about the Mormons leaving the state, were already in line with a special order given by Governor Lilburn Boggs. On October 27, 1838 two days before the attack at Haun's Mill, Governor Boggs issued Executive Order 44 addressed to General John B. Clark. The order described how previous 400 men were to be sent to the Mormon settlements, and how the Mormons openly defied Mormon law and made war upon the people of Missouri. The text of the order states: "The Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the state if necessary for the public peace-their outrages are beyond all description. If you can increase your force, you are authorized to do so to any extent you may consider necessary."[113] The order called for additional troops to bolster the militias in Daviess, Clay and Ray County. In the order Governor Boggs ordered 500 more men to assist General Doniphan and another 400 to Brig. Gen. Parks in Ray County.[114] With the additional men and the support of Governor Boggs to drive the Mormons out of Missouri, the mobs ransacked the Mormon settlements and, as discussed, carried out those orders with precise and unmerciful precision.

Executive Order 44 stands as one of the strongest examples of religious persecution during the Second Great Awakening. The order expelled an entire religious sect of people from the state. It is important to note that although the order became known as the 'Extermination Order' among the Mormons and some Missourians, it is believed that no Mormons were actually

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[112] Brodie, *No Man Knows my History*, 239.
[113] United States, Governor of Missouri, *Executive Order 44*, By Lilburn W. Boggs, October 27, 1838, Missouri Secretary of State.
[114] Ibid.

killed. Those involved in the attack at Haun's Mill, three days after the order was given, had no prior knowledge of Bogg's decision to drive the Mormons from the state.[115]

Once news of Executive Order 44 reached the Mormon settlements it spread to the outlying cities and farmsteads. After the chaos of the attack dissipated Smith quickly realized that the only course of action was to go along with the terms set by General Lucas, if not he could risk the lives of the thousands of Mormons still in Missouri. On November 1, Smith and the Mormons surrendered. Despite the surrender and the Mormons willingness to leave the state, "marauders were attacking the outlying farms, molesting women, whipping men, and killing animals."[116] Samuel Gifford, who witnessed a mob attacking the Mormon farms described how "the cattle of the Saints that were running in the wood and upon the prairie were shot down like wild beasts upon the plains, the sound of musketry adding horror to the scene."[117]

Drusilla Hendricks, who survived the attacks while her husband was badly wounded, described how "we were compelled to stay at Far West until after the surrender when we went home. The mob had robbed the house of my bedding and in fact everything but my beds. My husband could not yet move hand or foot. Then we had to settle our business matters and fix to get out of the state."[118] James McBride also described the days after the attacks and the repercussions from Boggs's order: "the suffering cause by that extermination order of Bogg's, could hardly be described, families were turned out of their homes, and the widows and orphans found themselves cast helplessly upon the mercy of the church, some were without teams, and

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[115] Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 365.
[116] Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 367.
[117] *Samuel K. Gifford Reminiscences*, 4.
[118] *Drusilla D. Hendricks Reminiscences*, 21.

almost destitute of food and clothing, thus exposed to the storms of winter, and travel a journey of more than two thousand miles."[119]

Many of the Mormons were left homeless because of the attacks and lost most of their belongings and the county offered no protection from the mobs. There was nervousness among the Mormons because not only were they continually being attacked, their leader was now in the hands of the Missourians. David Lewis, who spent time in hiding after the attacks, was on his way back to Far West when he encountered a group of Missourians when he received news of the order. Lewis learned that the Mormons were to leave the state immediately and told the Missourians that he did not have the means of leaving the state so quickly. The dispassionate company informed him that "you must either go now or deny your religion or go to Richmond and stand trial…"[120]

Joseph Smith was accustomed to standing trial as he was brought on several different charges many times in his life, but the trial facing him now was one of the worst. When Smith surrendered to General George Lucas he and several others were taken prisoner. After failed negotiations between the Mormon leader and General Lucas, the prisoners were to be executed immediately. Call it divine intervention, or a stroke of luck, but Smith and several others lives were spared that day because General Alexander Doniphan, a longtime friend and support to the Mormons was assigned to carry out the order. Doniphan refused to carry out Lucas's order, believing Smith to be innocent of any wrong doing. In an act of defiance, Doniphan marched his men out of the camp where Smith was being held. Lucas was left wondering what to do and how to react because Doniphan left with a threat to hold him to a tribunal if he executed the men. Not knowing what to do, Lucas paraded the prisoners throughout the camp and then marched them

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[119] *James McBride Autobiography*, 37.
[120] *David Lewis Autobiographical Sketch*, 5.

towards Independence, Missouri to stand trial. The time in Independence would not last long, eventually Smith and the other prisoners were sent to Richmond, Missouri to be arraigned. Alexander Doniphan attempted to defend Smith and the other prisoners, but the judge, Austin A. King, had previously accused the Mormons of arson and murder.

The arraignment represented one of the most obvious abuses to the basic rights guaranteed by American law because the prosecution stacked witnesses against Smith, intimidated those who tried to be witness on his behalf, and he was held in prison for five months without ever being formally charged with a crime. The prosecution gathered as many witnesses as possible against Smith, especially those who had been forced to leave the Mormon Church. Judge King sought after reasons to find Smith guilty of treason and murder. The lynch pin in the prosecution's case was that Smith had not killed anyone during the war and remained out of the action as much as possible. Despite his exclusion for much of the conflict, the Missourians believed this to be an opportunity to finally put an end to Mormonism, executing Joseph Smith. Sampson Avard, chief witness for the prosecution, saw the arraignment as an opportunity to seize control once Smith was eliminated. Avard's testimony painted a picture that put Joseph Smith in the middle of a separatist group bent on destroying Missouri and the United States. Despite Avard's and other's testimonies there was no real proof that Smith had committed treason against the state, in the words of Fawn Brodie, "they could offer nothing but rumors about the temporal nature of Joseph's kingdom of God upon the earth."[121]

The arraignment is one of many examples of injustice and intolerance towards Joseph Smith and the Mormons. Alexander Doniphan, who served as Smith's lawyer during the arraignment, attempted to find anyone who would testify on Smith's behalf, which became

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[121] Brodie, *No Man Knows my History*, 244.

nearly impossible. While none of the prosecution's witnesses could place Smith at any of the raids they spoke against his character, making him seem guilty of an egregious crime. Despite these setbacks Doniphan tried his best to defend Smith, but, in again in Brodie's words, "it soon became common knowledge that the moment a Mormon witness was named, Captain Bogart hunted him down and arrested him. The defense could muster only six, three of them women, and these were stifled by the judge almost as soon as they began to talk."[122] As the arraignment came to a close all but ten of the Mormons were released, with four remaining in the Richmond jail, while Smith, Rigdon and four others were sent to Liberty Jail, all being denied habeas corpus and the opportunity to post bail.

While in Liberty Jail, Joseph Smith did not betray his religious beliefs, relying heavily upon prayer to see him through his most difficult moments. Throughout his time as leader of the Mormon Church, Joseph Smith recorded the visions and revelations he experienced in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. The time spent in Liberty Jail did not prevent him from recording his interactions with God. On March 20, just a month before his escape from Liberty Jail, Joseph Smith recorded a fervent prayer on behalf of those imprisoned with him. The prayer is recorded in Doctrine and Covenants, section 121:

> O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covert thy hiding place? How long shall thy hand be stayed, and thine eye, yea they pure eye, behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants, and thine ear be penetrated with their cries? Yea, O Lord, how long shall they suffer these wrongs and unlawful oppressions, before thine heart shall be softened toward them, and thy bowels be moved with compassion towards them. O Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven, earth, and seas, and of all things that in them are, and who controllest and subjectest the devil, and the dark and benighted dominion of Sheol--stretch forth thy hand; let thine eye pierce; let thy pavilion be taken up; let thy hiding place no longer be covered; let thine ear be inclined; let thine heart be softened, and thy bowels moved with compassion toward us. Let thine anger be kindled against our enemies; and, in the fury of thine heart, with thy sword

[122] Ibid, 245.

> avenge us of our wrongs. Remember thy suffering saints, O our God; and thy servants will rejoice in thy name forever.[123]

While Smith may have appeared both serene and bold in his writings during the early days of his imprisonment, by the end he was pleading to God for his release. Smith's ardent prayer shows how the long winter he experienced in Liberty Jail weighed heavy on his mind.

The time spent in Liberty Jail gave Smith perspective and allowed him to fully consider the injustices being heaped upon the Mormons because of their religion. On December 16, 1838 Joseph Smith sent a letter to his wife that contained an epistle he wrote to the Mormons. In the epistle he wrote:

> To the church of Latter day and all the Saints who are scattered abroad and are presecuted and made desolate and are afflicted in divers manners for Christs sake and the gospel and whose perils are greatly augmented by the wickedness and corruption of false brethren. May grace mercy and the peace of God be and abide with you notwithstanding all your sufferings, we assure you that you have our prayers and fervent desires for you welfare and salvation both day and night. We that that God who seeth us in this solitary place will hear our prayers and reward you seeth openly. Know assuredly dear brethren that it is for the testimony of Jesus Christ we are in bonds and in prison but we say unto you that we consider our condition is better notwithstanding our sufferings than those who have persecuted and smitten us and borne false witness against us.[124]

Despite what Joseph Smith may have thought, or even hoped, none of the Missourians involved in the Mormon War, who blatantly killed innocent people, were never held accountable for their crimes. In the end only one Missourian died during the conflict while over twenty Mormons were killed, among them small children, the youngest only nine years old.

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[123] *Doctrine and Covenants* 121: 1-6

[124] *An Epistle given to the Church of Latterday Saints In Caldwell County Missouri by Jesus Christ through Joseph Smith while in Liberty Jail Clay County Missouri, December 16, 1838*, Joseph Smith Collection, 1827-1844 (collection), Correspondence, 1829-1844 series, MS 155, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Mormon War in Missouri eventually caught the attention of the many surrounding cities, the news even spread as far as Vermont and New York, the former settlements of the Mormons. Several newspapers reported on the events in Missouri, some in defense of the Missourians, some shaming them for their actions. Once such article was published in the *Caledonian* in St. Johnsbury, Vermont on May 7, 1839. The articles describes how, "the Mormons were in truth a moral, orderly and sober population. They were industrious farmers, and ingenious mechanics. They were busy about their own affairs, and never intermeddled in the concerns of their neighbors. They were exceedingly peaceful and averse to strife, quarrels and violence."[125] The article goes on to describe the events of Oct. 3, 1838:

> the massacre at Horne's [sic] Mills ought to rung through Christendom. A body of men commanded by a *Senator* from Charlton county, went down to that mill and there fell upon their victims, precisely as the pirates of the Carribean fell upon theirs. The poor Mormons took refuge in a blacksmiths shop, and were there murdered I detail. The attacking party leisurely and deliberately thrust their rifles between the logs of the building, and there as the Mormons were pent up like sheep in told, butchered them!

This particular article is more sympathetic to the Mormons and points out that the "series of wrongs and outrages perpetrated on the Mormons, and the closing acts of injustice, by which those wrongs and outrages were suffered to escape, not only unpunished but triumphant, form the elements of a PERSECUTION, which in vain seeks a parallel in the history of our country."[126] The article states what so many in history have been willing to point out, that the level of persecution heaped upon the Mormons was excessive. The *Columbia Democrat*, based in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, was far less sympathy to the plight of the Mormons, describing them as "deluded fanatics" and "infatuated villains."[127] The article mentions different letters sent

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[125] *The Caledonian*, May 7, 1839.
[126] Ibid.
[127] *Columbia Democrat*, November 24, 1838.

between the Missourians which describe some of the Mormon attacks upon the Missouri militia. One letter described how "Captain Bogard, who was ordered with his company to guard the frontier of Ray county, was attacked and cut to pieces by immense numbers. They were overpowered by 3 or 400 Mormons, while they were guarding their own frontier."[128] Both the Mormons and Missourians fought in defense of their lands and for what they each believed to be right.

While many articles seemed to support one side of the Mormon War, others were critical of both. The Vermont *Phoenix* described how, "The ferocious fanaticism of the Mormons seems to be just about upon a par with the ferocious prejudices and intolerance of their Missouri neighbors; and in the collusion which seems about to take place, much bloodshed and terrible cruelties to be apprehended. The project seems to be to annihilate the Mormons. That, however, is easier said than done. They will die game."[129] This article seems to equally disdain both sides of the struggle, describing the Mormons as fanatics and the Missourians as prejudiced and intolerant. The article also described how "the State of Missouri is about to be disgraced with a bloody and ferocious civil war, more disgraceful than anything which has occurred within out limits since the United States existed as a nation."[130]

The difficulty between the Mormons and the Missourians was relatively contained in Missouri during the early 1830s. However, these articles show that by the time war broke out between the two it gained greater attention. Despite of how positively any of the articles may have depicted the Mormons, they were again a homeless and destitute people. With Joseph Smith and other leaders imprisoned in Liberty Jail the Mormons were at a loss as to what to do, only

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[128] Ibid.
[129] *Vermont Phoenix*, November 23, 1838.
[130] Ibid.

knowing that if they remained in Missouri they would surely lose their lives. As 1838 came to a close and the Mormons began making preparations for another wintery move, surviving the elements took its toll on them. Samuel Gifford described how, "thus the Saints were again driven from their comfortable homes in the cold of winter, a great portion of them had to travel without tent or wagon cover and wade through mud and snow with no one to take them in until we reached the state of Illinois."[131] Gifford accurately described the conditions all the Mormons faced while leaving the state of Missouri, many were saddened at the loss of their homes and their loved ones. After everything the Mormons had been through, Missouri had been their home and one they were not looking forward to leaving.

Conclusion

After experiencing the hardship and devastation in Missouri the Mormons began to move toward Illinois in the winter of 1838. Though not excited about the extreme wintery conditions they were facing, the prospect of living free from the worry of the mobs carried the Mormons through their journey. Samuel Gifford described the events in his journal; "We landed in Quincy, Illinois where we were received with kindness by the citizens of that place. Some merchants and leading men of Quincy donated quite freely to help the most destitute of the Saints."[132] The Mormons eventually settled in Nauvoo, Illinois and began to build a thriving city. By the spring of 1839 Joseph Smith and those detained with him in Liberty Jail were able to escape and joined the rest of the Mormons in Illinois. Though the memories of Missouri lived on the hearts and minds of the Mormons, they now concerned themselves with settling Nauvoo. In time the Mormons were able to once again erect a great city and for almost seven years lived in relative calm. In the summer of 1844 some of the old feelings in Missouri resurfaced and after being

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[131] *Samuel K. Gifford Reminiscences*, 5.
[132] Ibid.

hauled to Carthage Jail Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were gunned down and killed on Jun 27, 1844.

The nine short years the Mormons lived in Missouri were filled with conflict and were met with intolerance and prejudice. The Mormons were systematically targeted by the Missourians and singled out as a scourge, a blemish on normal Christian society. Regardless of whether the Missourians felt justified their actions under protecting the public welfare of their citizens, they openly and repeatedly persecuted the Mormons because of their religious beliefs. In a time when the Mormons should have been able to live in peace and harmony with their neighbors, they were beaten and killed because of their religious differences. The Mormons were repeatedly denied many of the rights guaranteed them by the American Constitution. On more than one occasion the Mormons were denied the right to vote, their right to seek redress for their persecution was denied by the state, as was their right to worship as they pleased. The struggle between the Mormons and the Missourians are just one example of the rising tension in the United States during the nineteenth century.

During the years of the Second Great Awakening Americans caught up in the revivalist experience focused on religion with renewed fervor. The revivalist movement spread across the American continent swiftly and led to an increase in church activity. With this activity came the watchful eye that waited to point out religious difference. Rather than expanding religious freedom for all Americans, it became quite limited. Those operating outside of normal society were ostracized and at times heavily persecuted. The Mormons represent one such group. Throughout the 1830s they were repeatedly driven from their homes, beaten, killed, widowing countless women and leaving many children orphans. The Mormons nearly every kind of hardship imaginable, being driven from their homes in the cold of winter and being heckled by

angry mobs willing to kill anyone, so long as they were Mormon. Indeed, their religious freedoms were limited and constantly interrupted by the Missourians. Countless documents used throughout this paper show that the Missourians would use any means necessary to drive the Mormons out of the state.

While historians like Howe, Hatch and Heimert may argue that the Second Great Awakening gave Americans a shared experience and united them in a common cause, evidence shows that was not the case. The experiences of Mormons living in Missouri during the 1830s, show that not all religious groups enjoyed the same freedom granted to others. It also stands as a strong witness that the Second Great Awakening was filled with religious tension. Despite the hardship that the Mormons faced throughout the 1830s and 1840s the church survived and has reached over 15 million members.

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