

Chapter 1 : Free Mormon (LDS) Genealogy Records by Ancestor Search

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints traces its origins to western New York, where Joseph Smith, founder of the Latter Day Saint movement, was raised.

Smith gained a small following in the late s as he was dictating the Book of Mormon, which he said was a translation of words found on the Golden Plates that had been buried near his home in western New York by an indigenous American prophet. The church rapidly gained a following, who viewed Smith as their prophet. In October , he sent his Assistant President , Oliver Cowdery , and others on a mission to the area. After Smith and other Mormons in Kirtland emigrated to Missouri in , hostilities escalated into the Mormon War , culminating in adherents being expelled from the state under an Extermination Order signed by the governor of Missouri. As church leader, Smith also instituted the then-secret practice of plural marriage, and taught a form of Millennialism which he called " theodemocracy ", to be led by a Council of Fifty which, allegedly, had secretly and symbolically anointed him as king of this Millennial theodemocracy. Relations between Mormons and residents of surrounding communities had been strained, and some of them instituted criminal charges against Smith for treason. Smith surrendered to police in the nearby Carthage, Illinois , and while in state custody, he and his brother Hyrum Smith , who was second in line to the church presidency, [7] were killed in a firefight with an angry mob attacking the jail on June 27, In this crisis a number of church leaders campaigned to lead the church. Most adherents voted on August 8, to accept the argument of Brigham Young, the senior apostle , that there could be no true successor to Joseph Smith, but that the Twelve had all the required authority to lead the church, and were best suited to take on that role. Later, adherents bolstered their succession claims by referring to a March meeting in which Joseph committed the "keys of the kingdom" to a group of members within the Council of Fifty that included the apostles. Also shown are a portion of the route followed by the Mormon Battalion and the path followed by the handcart companies to the Mormon Trail. Mormon pioneers and History of Utah Under the leadership of Brigham Young, Church leaders planned to leave Nauvoo, Illinois in April , but amid threats from the state militia, they were forced to cross the Mississippi River in the cold of February. Included are major cities founded by LDS settlers who later abandoned the area. Groups of converts from the United States, Canada, Europe, and elsewhere were encouraged to gather to Utah in the decades following. Both the original Mormon migration and subsequent convert migrations resulted in much sacrifice and quite a number of deaths. Brigham Young organized a great colonization of the American West, with Mormon settlements extending from Canada to Mexico. Roberts, Comprehensive History of the Church, 3: One of the reasons the Saints had chosen the Great Basin as a settling place was that the area was at the time outside the territorial borders of the United States, which Young had blamed for failing to protect Mormons from political opposition from the states of Missouri and Illinois. As a result, Brigham Young sent emissaries to Washington, D. Instead, Congress created the much smaller Utah Territory in , and Young was appointed governor in . Because of his religious position, Young exercised much more practical control over the affairs of Mormon and non-Mormon settlers than a typical territorial governor of the time. For most of the 19th century, the LDS Church maintained an ecclesiastical court system parallel to federal courts, and required Mormons to use the system exclusively for civil matters, or face church discipline. Mangrum , pp. Very little rain fell, and even the dependable mountain streams ran very low. An infestation of grasshoppers and crickets destroyed whatever crops the Mormons had managed to salvage. During the winter of , flour and other basic necessities were very scarce and very costly. Kimball wrote his son, "Dollars and cents do not count now, in these times, for they are the tightest that I have ever seen in the territory of Utah. Grant , a counselor in the First Presidency and a well-known conservative voice in the extended community, preached three days of fiery sermons to the people of Kaysville, Utah territory. He called for repentance and a general recommitment to moral living and religious teachings. The zealous message spread from Kaysville to surrounding Mormon communities. Church leaders traveled around the territory, expressing their concern about signs of spiritual decay and calling for repentance. Members were asked to seal their rededication with rebaptism. Several sermons Willard Richards and George A. Smith had

given earlier in the history of the church had touched on the concept of blood atonement , suggesting that apostates could become so enveloped in sin that the voluntary shedding of their own blood might increase their chances of eternal salvation. On 21 September , while calling for sincere repentance, Brigham Young took the idea further, and stated: I know that there are transgressors, who, if they knew themselves and the only condition upon which they can obtain forgiveness, would beg of their brethren to shed their blood, that the smoke might ascend to God as an offering to appease the wrath that is kindled against them, and that the law might have its course. Journal of Discourses 4: This belief became part of the public image of the church at the time and was pilloried in Eastern newspapers along with the practice of polygamy. The concept was frequently criticized by many Mormons and eventually repudiated as official church doctrine by the LDS Church in . However, modern critics of the church and popular writers often attribute a formal doctrine of blood atonement to the Church. Throughout the winter special meetings were held and Mormons urged to adhere to the commandments of God and the practices and precepts of the church. Preaching placed emphasis on the practice of plural marriage , adherence to the Word of Wisdom , attendance at church meetings, and personal prayer. On December 30, , the entire all-Mormon territorial legislature was rebaptized for the remission of their sins, and confirmed under the hands of the Twelve Apostles. As time went on, however, the sermons became excessive and intolerant, and some verged on the hysterical. Utah War and Mountain Meadows massacre[edit] In , the church was involved in an armed conflict with the U. The settlers and the United States government battled for hegemony over the culture and government of the territory. Pratt in Arkansas, and threats of violence from the Baker-Fancher wagon train and possibly other factors , resulted in rogue Mormon settlers in southern Utah massacring a wagon train from Arkansas, known as Mountain Meadows massacre. In , Young once again attempted to establish a permanent Order, which he now called the "United Order of Enoch" in at least Mormon communities, beginning in St. George, Utah on February 9, . Sometimes, the members of the Order would receive wages for their work on the communal property. By the end of the 19th century, the Orders were essentially extinct. Brigham Young died in August . After the death of Brigham Young, the First Presidency was not reorganized until , when Young was succeeded by President John Taylor , who in the interim had served as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Polygamy and the United States "Mormon question"[edit] Main article: Brigham Young, the Prophet of the church at that time, had quite a few wives, as did many other church leaders. This early practice of polygamy caused conflict between church members and the wider American society. In the Republican party referred in its platform to polygamy and slavery as the "twin relics of barbarism. The law also permitted the confiscation of church property [12] without compensation. This law was not enforced however, by the Lincoln administration or by Mormon-controlled territorial probate courts. Moreover, as Mormon polygamist marriages were performed in secret, it was difficult to prove when a polygamist marriage had taken place. In the meantime, Congress was preoccupied with the American Civil War. In , after the war, Congress passed the Poland Act , which transferred jurisdiction over Morrill Act cases to federal prosecutors and courts, which were not controlled by Mormons. After Reynolds, Congress became even more aggressive against polygamy, and passed the Edmunds Act in . The Edmunds Act prohibited not just bigamy, which remained a felony, but also bigamous cohabitation, which was prosecuted as a misdemeanor, and did not require proof an actual marriage ceremony had taken place. The Act also vacated the Utah territorial government, created an independent committee to oversee elections to prevent Mormon influence, and disenfranchised any former or present polygamist. Further, the law allowed the government to deny civil rights to polygamists without a trial. Church leadership officially ended the practice in , based on a revelation to Wilford Woodruff called the Manifesto. Prior to the Manifesto , church leaders had been in hiding, many ecclesiastical matters had been neglected, [13] and the church organization itself had been disincorporated. With the reduction in federal pressure afforded by the Manifesto, however, the church began to re-establish its institutions. Post-Manifesto polygamy and the Second Manifesto[edit] The Manifesto did not, itself, eliminate the practice of new plural marriages, as they continued to occur clandestinely, mostly with church approval and authority. In , Utah elected general authority B. Roberts, however, was denied a seat there because he was practicing polygamy. In , the Utah legislature selected Reed Smoot , also an LDS general authority but also a monogamist, as its first

senator. From to , the United States Senate conducted a series of Congressional hearings on whether Smoot should be seated. Eventually, the Senate granted Smoot a seat and allowed him to vote. However, the hearings raised controversy as to whether polygamy had actually been abandoned as claimed in the Manifesto, and whether the LDS Church continued to exercise influence on Utah politics. In response to these hearings, President of the Church Joseph F. The Second Manifesto did not annul existing plural marriages within the church, and the church tolerated some degree of polygamy into at least the s. However, eventually the church adopted a policy of excommunicating its members found practicing polygamy and today seeks to actively distance itself from Mormon fundamentalist groups still practicing polygamy. However, if a Mormon man becomes widowed, he can be sealed to another woman while remaining sealed to his first wife. However, if a woman becomes widowed, she will not allowed to be sealed to another man. She can be married by law, but not sealed in the temple. Mormon involvement in national politics[edit] Main article: Congress revoked in as part of the Edmunds-Tucker Act. In , after the church officially renounced polygamy, U. Anthony and Anna Howard Shaw. The Utah Woman Suffrage Association, which had been formed in as a branch of the American Woman Suffrage Association which in became the National American Woman Suffrage Association , was then successful in demanding that the constitution of the nascent state of Utah should enfranchise women. In , Utah became the third state in the U. Mormons and the debate over temperance and prohibition[edit] The LDS church was actively involved in support of the temperance movement in the 19th century, and then the prohibition movement in the early 20th century. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Mormonism has had a mixed relationship with socialism in its various forms. In the earliest days of Mormonism, Joseph Smith had established a form of Christian communalism , an idea made popular during the Second Great Awakening , combined with a move toward theocracy. Mormons referred to this form of theocratic communalism as the United Order , or the law of consecration. While short-lived during the life of Joseph Smith, the United Order was re-established for a time in several communities of Utah during the theocratic political leadership of Brigham Young. Some aspects of secular socialism also found place in the political views of Joseph Smith, who ran for President of the United States on a platform which included a nationalized bank that he believed would do away with much of the abuses of private banks. As secular political leader of Nauvoo, Joseph Smith also set aside collective farms which insured that the propertyless poor could maintain a living and provide for themselves and their families. Once in Utah, under the direction of Brigham Young, the Church leadership would also promote collective ownership of industry and issued a circular in which warned that "The experience of mankind has shown that the people of communities and nations among whom wealth is the most equally distributed, enjoy the largest degree of liberty, are the least exposed to tyranny and oppression and suffer the least from luxurious habits which beget vice". The circular, signed and endorsed by the Quorum of the Twelve and the First Presidency went on to warn that if "measures not taken to prevent the continued enormous growth of riches among the class already rich, and the painful increase of destitution and want among the poor, the nation is likely to be overtaken by disaster; for, according to history, such a tendency among nations once powerful was the sure precursor of ruin". During the s to the s, the Utah Social Democratic Party, which became part of the Socialist Party of America in , elected about socialists to state offices in Utah. Their book was titled *The Latter Day Saints*:

Chapter 2 : The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The Church History Library collects materials by or about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members. Treasures of the Collection Learn about the many historical treasures in the archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The church is headquartered in Salt Lake City. Name Mormons are officially referred to as Latter-day Saints. The name Latter-day stems from the belief that after the death of the early apostles, the Christian church fell into apostasy. The church needed to be restored in the latter days, which Mormons believe began in He began receiving visions at age 14, in , in which he was told it was his mission to restore the church of Jesus Christ on earth. When Joseph Smith was killed, leadership of the church passed on to Brigham Young. Young was responsible for leading Mormon pioneers west to Salt Lake City in Scripture Latter-day Saints believe the Bible is sacred. They also include in their canon The Pearl of Great Price , which includes two lost books of the Bible, a translation of the Gospel of Matthew, and the 13 Articles of Faith; The Doctrine and Covenants , a group of revelations from God and two other official documents; and The Book of Mormon , originally published in He is eldest brother of all mortals and firstborn spirit child of God. They believe that from Mary, a mortal woman, Jesus inherited the capacity to die, and from God, an exalted being, he inherited the capacity to live forever. Still, Latter-day Saints believe that fallen men and women do need redemption. Works are a necessary condition, but they are insufficient for salvation. Missionaries More than 60, men and women serve the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as missionaries in more than missions around the world. Male missionaries are referred to as "Elders" while female missionaries are referred to as "Sisters. Dietary Restrictions Latter-day Saints caution their members against using tobacco, consuming alcohol, tea and coffee. They interpret the misuse of drugs--illegal, legal, prescription or controlled--as a violation of the health code known as the "Word of Wisdom. LDS president Wilford Woodruff announced an official end to the practice of polygamy in Read more about the LDS church and polygamy here. Family Ties Mormons operate the largest genealogical library in the world containing millions of volumes of birth, marriage, death, and other records. In addition, the Church obligates Latter-day Saints to stand as proxies for their deceased ancestors in sacred rites such as baptism and eternal marriage.

Chapter 3 : Preserving the History of the Latter-day Saints | Religious Studies Center

The Latter Day Saint movement is a religious movement within Christianity that arose during the Second Great Awakening in the early 19th century and that led to the set of doctrines, practices, and cultures called Mormonism, and to the existence of numerous Latter Day Saint churches.

He later moved with his family to the rural community of Palmyra, New York, where in a religious revival occurred in the early 19th century. In a wooded grove near the family farm, Joseph knelt to pray. He was commanded to join none of the existing churches and was told that God would restore to earth the Church originally organized by Jesus Christ, with all of its truths and priesthood authority. Ten years later, after a series of revelations and dramatic visitations to Joseph and others, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was officially organized on 6 April , in Fayette, New York. This resurrected man, whose name was Moroni, directed Joseph to a hill near Palmyra, where he showed him a religious history of an ancient American civilization engraved on metal plates and buried in the ground. Four years later, Joseph was permitted to take the record and translate it. The Book of Mormon, named for one of the ancient American prophets who had compiled it, was first published in . It includes an eyewitness account of the ministry of Jesus Christ on the American continent following His resurrection in Jerusalem. The original Twelve Apostles received this priesthood authority under the hands of Jesus Christ himself. But with their passing, the authority of the apostleship disappeared from the earth. With the restoration of priesthood authority, Joseph organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with six initial members. In the mid-nineteenth century, converts were encouraged to gather with the Saints in America. Swelling ranks of immigrants from Europe and the eastern United States soon provided fuel for growing opposition as well. To escape the escalating turmoil, Church headquarters moved from New York to Ohio, then to Missouri and later to Illinois. In , the Latter-day Saints established the community of Nauvoo, Illinois, on a tract of inhospitable swampland bordering the Mississippi River. Under the leadership of Joseph Smith, they drained the swamps and began erecting a community of beautiful homes, prosperous farms and businesses. They also built a temple. By Nauvoo rivaled Chicago in population. But mounting suspicion and anxiety within neighboring communities fed an atmosphere of extreme agitation and distrust. At the height of this turmoil, Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were shot to death by an armed mob in nearby Carthage, Illinois. Church leaders knew a move was once again at hand. This one would become one of the most visionary and prodigious journeys in American history. They struggled across Iowa, eventually establishing a settlement called Winter Quarters near modern-day Omaha, Nebraska. There, during the winter and early spring of 1847, the Latter-day Saints prepared for their historic trek to the remote valley of the Great Salt Lake, 1, miles to the west. During the next 22 years, an estimated 68, Latter-day Saints filtered into this Great Basin refuge. Some crossed in wagons, but between and , ten companies of nearly 3, men, women and children walked to the valley of the Great Salt Lake pulling handcarts. Under the direction of Brigham Young, the pioneers established more than communities from southern Alberta to Mexico. When Church membership reached a million in , one hundred years after the desperate exodus from Nauvoo, it was still largely North American. After , however, the Utah proportion of membership began to shrink almost as rapidly as worldwide growth accelerated. Currently less than 14 percent of all Church members reside in Utah, and fewer than 45 percent of Church members live in the United States. At the end of , the worldwide membership of the Church stood at . When reporting about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, please use the complete name of the Church in the first reference. For more information on the use of the name of the Church, go to our online Style Guide.

Chapter 4 : History of the Latter Day Saint movement - Wikipedia

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The Mormons have had a fascinating and turbulent history. Its founder was Joseph Smith. He lived in Palmyra NY -- in " In his early teens, his mother and most of the rest of the family converted to Presbyterianism. However, Joseph was deeply troubled by the multiplicity of sects that existed in Christianity. Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists were active in his hometown. In common with many Christians before and since, he wondered which was the "true" Christian religion. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints -- the main Mormon church -- teaches that he received his answer in the form of his first vision in , at the age of 14 in Palmyra, NY. God and Jesus Christ appeared before Joseph as two separate persons, apparently in flesh and bone bodies. This conflicts with the traditional Christian beliefs that God is a spirit, and that God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit consist of three persons in a single entity. Smith wrote that he was told by Jesus to: Belief in this vision is a central belief of the LDS Church. LDS president, Gordon B. Our whole strength rests on the validity of that vision. It is either right or wrong, true or false, fraudulent or true. We just stand secure in that faith. The Church also teaches that in , at the age of 17, he received three visitations from Moroni some texts say Nephi at the time of the Autumn Equinox. The angel revealed to Joseph the location of golden tablets on which was written the history of two early American tribes. He later wrote that he had gone to the site and found: A breastplate, such as might have been worn by an ancient Israelite. These were two "stones in silver bows" which appear in Numbers They were apparently devices perhaps in the form of flat stones that the high priest consulted to determine the will of God. They might have worked something like a pair of dice. Smith claimed that through the stones "and by the gift and power of God" he was able to translate the unknown script on the golden plates into English Brass plates upon which another author, Laban, had quoted from Hebrew Scriptures and recorded genealogies. However, he was not permitted to remove the plates at that time. He was instructed to return to the spot at each Autumn Equinox. Four years later, in , he was finally allowed to take possession of the material. Translation of the golden plates: A friend of Smith, Martin Harris, attempted to authenticate the tablets by taking copies of some of the inscriptions to Professor Charles Anton and is said to have received verbal confirmation that the tablets were written in "reformed Egyptian" hieroglyphics. There is no such language. Anton later denied making this statement, and wrote that the symbols that he saw were a combination of Greek, Hebrew, inverted or sideways Roman letters, and elements from a Mexican calendar. Joseph Smith positioned himself behind a curtain and used the special stones to translate the inscriptions on the golden plates. A page Book of Lehi was translated over a two month interval in Unfortunately, Martin Harris showed the only copies to his wife who promptly "lost" them. Lucy Harris was a skeptic, and there is speculation that she believed the book to be a fraud. By forcing Smith to retranslate the book, she hoped to demonstrate discrepancies between the two versions, thus proving that the book was a hoax. Smith stated that God was so angry at this loss that he temporarily took away the special stones. Smith later decided to not re-translate the Book of Lehi, but to translate the plates of Nephi instead, which described the same events as the Book of Lehi. The preface to the edition of the Book of Mormon included the following preface referring to the loss of the Book of Lehi. It was signed "The Author: I will not suffer that they shall destroy my work; yea, I will shew unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the Devil. Wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, I have, through his grace and mercy, accomplished that which he hath commanded me respecting this thing. I would also inform you that the plates of which hath been spoken, were found in the township of Manchester, Ontario county, New-York. Mormons believe that John the Baptist later appeared to Smith and Cowdery, investing them in the Aaronic Priesthood showing them how to baptize each other by total immersion in water. Still later, the Apostles Peter, James and John invested Smith and Cowdery in the Melchizedec priesthood and commissioned them as the first two elders of the new church. Smith founded the Church of Christ: Smith and a small band of followers moved to Kirtland near Cleveland OH in Their group was renamed the Church of Latter Day Saints.

Basic history, beliefs, and membership figures for adherents of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The people of western New York, like the rest of the United States at the time, were also influenced by folk religion. The fathers of both Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were reported to have used divining rods , though not by those within the LDS church. Joseph Smith used seer stones , [1] [2] which he used after his claimed First Vision. People of the time used such rods and stones in various ways, including to locate underground water, to find lost items, to locate buried treasure or mineral mines, as part of religious or magic rituals, or to communicate with spirits or angels. Until about the s, the use of such divining media, even as a profession, was thought by many, though not all, as "honorable and profitable employment". Palmyra Herald, July 24, Another related strand of religious thought that became important to the Latter Day Saint movement was the Restoration Movement , primarily influenced by Barton W. Stone and Campbell believed that the division among Christian sects had been caused by a Great Apostasy or falling away from the original teachings of Jesus, and that the correct principles of Christianity could be re-established by "restoring" practices described in the New Testament. The Restorationists also intended to eliminate sectarianism, arguing that there should be only one Christian church, which should be called the " Church of Christ. Because of a lack of clergy from established churches, this area was unusually open to religious innovations, new movements, and social experiments such as religious communism. Latter Day Saints do not typically distinguish between this Restoration movement and the broader Protestant Reformation , since both were an attempt by humans to return to the values and doctrines taught by Jesus and the Apostles, while most Latter Day Saint groups believe that there was a need for God to actively restore both authority and doctrine. However, in spite of their different use of the word restoration, this movement was an important part of the culture that led Joseph Smith to become interested in religion. Freemasonry and the Latter Day Saint movement Joseph Smith and several of the church founders were Freemasons ,[citation needed] and were founding members of a lodge in Nauvoo, Illinois in March There are some similarities between Mormon temple worship and symbolism and the stories and symbols of Freemasonry. Leadership of Joseph Smith[edit] Origins of the movement[edit] The early men and women who came together to form what became known as the Latter Day Saint movement, shared some beliefs in common with other Restorationists, but certain factors made them unique. Although the movements shared a belief in the need to "restore" the "true church" of Jesus Christ, the early Latter Day Saints also believed that direct authority from God was essential for such a restoration to be valid. Early accounts of this vision describe it as a vision of Jesus in which he was told his sins were forgiven. Later, more detailed accounts indicate Smith was also told that all Christian denominations had become corrupt and further clarify that Smith saw multiple heavenly beings, including Jesus and God the Father. Golden Plates Smith also described many other visions involving angels. Some of his earliest visitations involved a Nephite prophet-warrior, who called himself Moroni. Smith said this angel appeared to him many times, and showed him where to find a set of buried Golden Plates containing ancient writings that the prophet-warrior had sealed in a stone box before his death, together with other artifacts. The writings on the Golden Plates, according to Smith, contained an account of the various nations that inhabited ancient America, and described how they were led to the New World by Jesus, but eventually lost their Christian faith through a series of wars and corruption. After he said he received the Golden Plates, Smith began to dictate their translation to his wife Emma Hale Smith and various associates of his, including Martin Harris and, for most of the later translation, Oliver Cowdery. Smith said he translated the text through the gift and power of God and through the aid of the Urim and Thummim , or seer stone. The Book of Mormon was much more ambitious than being just a purported history of Native Americans. Mormons quickly adopted the book as a work of scripture of similar importance to the Bible. According to an account by Cowdery in , they went into the woods near Harmony Township, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania on May 15, , were visited by an angel who gave them the "Holy Priesthood". Messenger and Advocate, 1 1 , Oct. In , Smith and Cowdery stated that the angel was John the Baptist , and that the "Holy Priesthood" was specifically the Priesthood of

Aaron ", which included the power to baptize. Today this area is preserved as the Aaronic Priesthood Restoration Site. Smith and Cowdery further elaborated for the publication of the Doctrine and Covenants that they were also later visited by Peter , James , and John , who restored the "keys of your ministry" and the "keys of the kingdom". Neither Smith nor Cowdery ever gave a date for this visitation. Organization of the Church of Christ[edit] Map of the eastern United States , showing locations important to the Latter Day Saint movement from to History of the Church 1: These converts did not belong to a formal church organization. Nevertheless, this community of believers referred to themselves as "the Church of Christ", and included converts in three New York towns: Fayette , Manchester , and Colesville. Some time in April , Smith dictated a story of Alma the Elder , the former priest of a wicked king, who baptized his followers by immersion, "having authority from the Almighty God", and called his community of believers the "church of God, or the church of Christ". The church was to meet regularly to partake of bread and wine. Cowdery was described as "an Apostle of Jesus Christ". On April 6, , Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and a group of approximately 50 believers met to formally organize the Church of Christ into a legal institution. Also, the church formally ordained a lay ministry. Smith and Cowdery, according to their account, were each ordained as "an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church". While based in Kirtland, the church changed its name to the "Church of the Latter Day Saints", and added a number of new doctrines and leadership offices. An attempt to establish a communitarian economy known as the " Law of Consecration " was established in The Latter Day Saint understanding of the priesthood was elaborated by the separation of the higher or Melchizedek Priesthood offices from the lesser or Aaronic Priesthood offices and by the restoration of the Patriarchal Priesthood. During the Kirtland era, many charismatic experiences were reported, many involving visitations of angels or communication from God through stones. However, some Church members claimed to receive revelations that contradicted those received by Joseph Smith. He and several followers prayed about the issue, and Joseph recorded a series of revelations, which included a description of several real spiritual gifts, a statement that only Joseph Smith, as the Prophet, could receive new doctrines and commandments for the Church, and a warning that not all supernatural experiences come from God. This effort to balance charismatic experience with order and stability became a lasting characteristic of the Latter Day Saint Movement. The temple was associated with the Kirtland-era " endowment ", and with the temple ceremonies of "foot washing" and "solemn assembly. At Kirtland, Smith reported many revelations including the " Word of Wisdom " advocating temperance and dietary restrictions. He acquired Egyptian papyrus scrolls which he said contained the writings of the Biblical patriarchs Abraham and Joseph. According to some reports, it was in Kirtland that Smith first began to practice the doctrine of plural marriage when he married Fanny Alger as his first plural wife in When it failed, some of the Kirtland membership became disillusioned, including a third of the church leadership. Re-establishing the original "Church of Christ" name, these "reformed Latter Day Saints" took possession of the temple and excommunicated Smith and Rigdon. Smith and Rigdon relocated to Missouri and were followed there by hundreds of loyalists in a trek known as the " Kirtland Camp. Joseph Smith had revealed to Latter Day Saints that they were to prepare "the way of the Lord for his Second Coming ", "for the time is soon at hand that I shall come Settlement was rapid and non-Mormon residents became alarmed that they might lose political control of the county to the Latter Day Saints. In October , non-Mormon vigilantes succeeded in driving the Mormons from the county. Deprived of their homes and property, the Latter Day Saints temporarily settled in the area around Jackson County, especially in Clay County. Years elapsed, and despite Mormon lawsuits and petitions, the non-Mormons in Jackson refused to allow the Mormons to return. Meanwhile, new converts to Mormonism continued to migrate to Missouri and settle in Clay County. In , the Missouri legislature created Caldwell County specifically for Mormon settlement and Missouri branches of the church gathered there, centering on the town of Far West. A brief leadership struggle left the former heads of the Missouri portion of the church excommunicated, such as David Whitmer , Oliver Cowdery , William Wines Phelps and others. Years later, many of this group of "dissenters" became part of the Whitmerite schism in the Latter Day Saint movement. While the church was headquartered in Far West, Smith announced revelations that changed the name of the church to the " Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints " and initiated the "Law of Tithing. These escalated into what has been called the Mormon War. The perceived

militant attitude adopted by the church caused some leaders, including Thomas B. Marsh , president of the Quorum of the Twelve , to break with Smith and Rigdon. Hinkle , who had been the Mormon commander of the Caldwell County militia. As a result of the war, 2, Missouri militia troops were called out to put down the Mormon "rebellion. Movement in Illinois[edit] Main article: History of Nauvoo, Illinois Joseph Smith marshalling the Nauvoo Legion With the help of sympathetic non-Mormons in Illinois, in the spring of the Latter Day Saint refugees regrouped and began to establish a new headquarters in Nauvoo. Smith and other leaders were allowed after several months of harsh treatment to escape Missourian custody, and they rejoined the main body of the movement in April, In , construction began on a new temple , significantly more elaborate than the one left behind in Kirtland. The Nauvoo city charter authorized independent municipal courts, the foundation of a university and the establishment of a militia unit known as the " Nauvoo Legion. It was here that Smith introduced Baptism for the dead , Rebaptism , the Nauvoo-era Endowment , and the ordinance of the Second Anointing. In addition, he created a new inner council of the church " containing both men and women " called the Anointed Quorum. Although, according to some reports, Smith himself had been secretly practicing what he later called plural marriage for some time, in Nauvoo he began to teach other leaders the doctrine. In March , Smith was said by William Law to have organized a secret council of the church called the "Council of the Kingdom". Practices of this council included acclaiming Joseph Smith as "Prophet, Priest, and King" in addition to polygamy. These secrets were threatened to be released in a newspaper called the Nauvoo Expositor. Smith, acting in his capacity as mayor and head of the municipal court, responded by having the newspaper declared a "public nuisance" and by ordering the destruction of the press. Death of Joseph Smith[edit] Main article: Death of Joseph Smith Whenever Latter Day Saints gathered in large numbers, they met with opposition from neighbors who suspected that Mormon bloc-voting would lead to theocracy. By the mids, many non-Mormons in Hancock County felt threatened by growing Mormon political power, commercial rivalries, and a new religion with at least two elements that were hard to digest in the religious community of that time: When Smith submitted to imprisonment in the county seat of Carthage , the Governor of Illinois, Thomas Ford , left the jail, taking the only impartial local militia unit with him. With the jail being guarded only by two guards and a unit of anti-Mormon militiamen, the Carthage Greys, a mob of disbanded militia units, attacked without resistance. Joseph and his brother Hyrum were killed. Another Smith brother who may have been a presumed successor should both Hyrum and Joseph die, Samuel , died a month later. Before Brigham Young could return to Nauvoo and stake his claim, another Smith brother, William was also considered as a potential successor. As a result, three of the principal claimants on the scene were: In a general meeting of the church at Nauvoo on August 8, , Rigdon and Young presented their respective cases. As the only surviving member of the First Presidency who had not officially apostatized , Rigdon argued that he should be made "guardian" of the church. Young argued that without Smith there, there was no presiding authority higher than the Twelve. Therefore, he proposed that the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles be constituted as the new presiding authority. Soon after, Rigdon left Nauvoo and established his own church organization in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Rigdon, Young and Marks were later joined by a fourth claimant, James J. Strang of Voree, Wisconsin , who claimed that Smith had sent him a letter designating him as his successor.

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