

The Autobiography of an Indexing Relationship

Presented by Kate Mertes

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Letter to Orson Hyde, 7 April 1834

Source Note

JS, Frederick G. Williams, and Oliver Cowdery, Letter, Kirtland Township, Geauga Co., OH, to Orson Hyde, NY, 7 Apr. 1834. Retained copy, [ca. 7 Apr. 1834], in JS Letterbook 1, pp. 82–84; handwriting of Frederick G. Williams; CHL. Includes redactions. For more information on JS Letterbook 1, see Source Notes for Multiple-Entry Documents, p. 506 herein.

Historical Introduction

On 7 April 1834, JS composed this letter to Orson Hyde, who was on a mission for the church in the eastern United States. Hyde was assigned to recruit members to travel to Missouri to help the Saints who had been driven from Jackson County. He was also assigned to raise money from church members for land purchases in Missouri and for a payment on the Peter French farm in Kirtland, Ohio. The French farm had been designated by revelation as the place where the Lord’s “holy house” would be built.¹⁰ In March 1833, a council of high priests and elders appointed Joseph Coe and Ezra Thayer to supervise the purchase of the farm,¹¹ and on 10 April 1833, Coe concluded an agreement with French.

8. The new and everlasting covenant was the “fulness of [the] Gospel,” or the church’s message that would establish God’s covenant people on earth. “New covenant” as used here could also specifically refer to the ordinance of baptism. (Revelation, 29 Oct. 1831, in *JSP*, D2:90 [D&C 66:2]; Revelation, 1 Nov. 1831–B, in *JSP*, D2:106 [D&C 1:15, 22]; Revelation, 16 Apr. 1830, in *JSP*, D1:138 [D&C 22:1–2]; see also “Everlasting covenant” in the glossary on the Joseph Smith Papers website, josephsmithpapers.org.)

9. text: Possibly “Cowdrey”.

10. Revelation, 24 Feb. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:462–463 [D&C 103:30–34, 40]; Minutes, 20 Feb. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:452; Revelation, 4 June 1833, in *JSP*, D3:111 [D&C 96:2].

11. Minutes, 23 Mar. 1833–A, in *JSP*, D3:48.

Under the terms of the agreement, Coe apparently provided \$2,000 of the \$5,000 price up front, with two additional payments of \$1,500 required, one of which was due on 10 April 1834.¹² In June 1833, Newel K. Whitney, bishop in Kirtland and a member of the United Firm, purchased the farm from Coe, and the responsibility for the two \$1,500 payments presumably fell to him.¹³ Facing the 10 April deadline on the first payment, church leaders needed funds “to redeem the farm.”¹⁴

On 17 March 1834, JS held a conference in Avon, New York, at which Hyde was directed to remain in that area and preach while four local church members—Freeman Nickerson, Edmund Bosley, Isaac McWithy, and Roger Orton—attempted to raise \$2,000 by the first of April “for the relief of the brethren in Kirtland.” Hyde was then to bring the money “immediately to Kirtland.”¹⁵ However, on 31 March, Hyde sent a letter explaining that the fund-raising efforts had not yet succeeded.¹⁶

JS received the discouraging news by 7 April. With the 10 April deadline looming, JS, Frederick G. Williams, Oliver Cowdery, Newel K. Whitney, and Heber C. Kimball went into the translating room in Whitney’s white store¹⁷ on 7 April and “bowed down befor[e] the Lord and prayed that he would furnish the means” to retire their debts.¹⁸ JS then replied to Hyde’s letter, expressing disappointment in the lack of success with fund raising, chastising church members for not contributing their means more liberally, and wondering whether the gathering of Saints to Missouri from eastern branches should continue, given church members’ apparent lack of generosity. JS was especially concerned that he would not be able to go to Missouri to help those Saints who had been driven out of Jackson County if monetary help was not forthcoming. He also expressed concern that if he could not go, the entire expedition would fail to materialize.¹⁹

12. Geauga Co., OH, Deed Records, 1795–1921, vol. 17, pp. 38–39, 359–360, 10 Apr. 1833, microfilm 20,237, U.S. and Canada Record Collection, FHL.

13. Minutes, 26–27 Apr. 1832, in *JSP*, D2:229; Revelation, 26 Apr. 1832, in *JSP*, D2:235–236 [D&C 82:11–12]; Geauga Co., OH, Deed Records, 1795–1921, vol. 17, pp. 360–361, 17 June 1833, microfilm 20,237, U.S. and Canada Record Collection, FHL.

14. Minutes, 20 Feb. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:452.

15. Minutes, 17 Mar. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:487. According to the 1830 census, Roger Orton lived in Geneseo, and Edmund Bosley lived in Livonia, both in Livingston County, New York. Freeman Nickerson lived in Perrysburg, Cattaraugus County, New York, and Isaac McWithy resided in Bennington, Genesee County, New York. (1830 U.S. Census, Geneseo, Livingston Co., NY, 14; 1830 U.S. Census, Livonia, Livingston Co., NY, 65[A]; 1830 U.S. Census, Perrysburg, Cattaraugus Co., NY, 224; 1830 U.S. Census, Bennington, Genesee Co., NY, 136.)

16. The letter from Hyde is not extant.

17. The store was so named to distinguish it from Whitney’s red store. (Staker, *Hearken, O Ye People*, 214n32.)

18. JS, Journal, 7–9 Apr. 1834, in *JSP*, J1:38. The “translating room,” located in the southeast corner on the second floor of Whitney’s store in Kirtland, was where JS had worked on his translation of the Bible and was also used for administrative purposes. (Staker, *Hearken, O Ye People*, 251.)

19. It is unclear what debts or other monetary obligations JS had that would have prevented him from going to Missouri. The indebtedness that concerned him was likely connected with the debts of other members of the United Firm. Since firm members apparently bonded themselves in accordance with instructions in an April 1832 revelation, they may have each held responsibility for the firm’s collective

Although the letter is written in JS’s voice, it also contains the signatures of Frederick G. Williams, one of JS’s counselors in the presidency of the high priesthood and a member of the United Firm, and Oliver Cowdery, another firm member.²⁰ The original letter is not extant. Williams copied it into JS’s letterbook, probably soon after its composition. It is unclear if Hyde received the letter; no response from him has been located.

Document Transcript

Kirtland April 7th 1834

Dear bro Orson [Hyde]

We received yours of the 31st ult in due course of Mail and were much grieved on learning that you were not like to succeed according to our expectations, Myself bro Newel [K. Whitney] Frederick [G. Williams] and Oliver [Cowdery] retired to the Translating room when²¹ prayer was wont to be made and unbosomed our feelings before God²² and cannot but exercise faith yet that you in the meraculus providence of God will succeed in obtaining help the fact is that unless we can obtain help I myself cannot go to Zion and if I do not go it will be impossable to get my brethren in Kirtland any of them to go²³ and if we do not go it is in vain for our eastern brethren to think of going up to better themselves by obtaining so goodly a land²⁴ which now can be obtained for one dollar and a quarter pr acre²⁵ and stand against that wicked

debts. (Revelation, 26 Apr. 1832, in *JSP*, D2:236 [D&C 82:15]; see also Minutes, 26–27 Apr. 1832, in *JSP*, D2:229, 233n197; and Parkin, “Joseph Smith and the United Firm,” 37–39.)

20. Minutes, 18 Mar. 1833, in *JSP*, D3:40; Note, 15 Mar. 1833, in *JSP*, D3:38; Revelation, 26 Apr. 1832, in *JSP*, D2:235–236 [D&C 82:11]. It is unclear why Sidney Rigdon, also a counselor in the presidency of the high priesthood and a member of the firm, did not sign.

21. text: Possibly “where”.

22. Similarly, on 11 January 1834, JS, Frederick G. Williams, Newel K. Whitney, John Johnson, Oliver Cowdery, and Orson Hyde prayed together “that the Lord would provide, in the order of his Providence, the bishop of this Church with means sufficient to discharge every debt that the Firm owes.” (JS, Journal, 11 Jan. 1834, in *JSP*, J1:26.)

23. In February 1834, Parley P. Pratt and Lyman Wight presented the plight of church members who had been expelled from Jackson County to the Kirtland high council. After this, JS declared “that he was going to Zion to assist in redeeming it” and “called for volunteers to go with him.” He and several others had spent much of the preceding month trying to recruit individuals to accompany him to Missouri. (Minutes, 24 Feb. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:456–457; see also JS, Journal, 26–28 Feb. and 4–6 Mar. 1834, in *JSP*, J1:28–32.)

24. A December 1833 revelation instructed the branches of the church to “buy Lands” in Missouri and “gather together upon them.” (Revelation, 16–17 Dec. 1833, in *JSP*, D3:395 [D&C 101:72–74].)

25. Under the Land Act of 1820, settlers could purchase a minimum of eighty acres of public land for as little as \$1.25 per acre. In 1834, a considerable amount of public land still existed in Missouri. According to one history, by the end of 1830 the total acreage of public land sold “had reached nearly 1,700,000 acres; sales in the decade of the 1830’s put the total to just short of 7,000,000.” (An Act Making Further Provision for the Sale of Public Lands [24 Apr. 1820], *Public Statutes at Large*, 16th Cong., 1st Sess., chap. 51, p. 566, sec. 3; McCandless, *History of Missouri*, 43–44.)

Mob²⁶ for unless they do the will of God, God will not help them and if God does not help them all is vain. Now the fact is this is the head is of the church and the life of the body and threu able men as members of the body God has appointd to be hands to administer to the necessities of the body, Now if a mans hands refuse to administer to the necessity of his body it must perish of hunger and if the body perish all the members perish with it and if the head fails the whole body is sickened, the heart faints and the body dies the spirit takes its exit and the carcass remains to be devoured of worms
Now bro Orson if this Church which is [p. 82] assaying to be the church of Christ will not help us when they can do it without sacrifice with those blessings which God has bestowed upon them I proph[es]y I speak the truth I Lie not God shall take away their tallant and give it to those who have no tallant²⁷ and shall prevent them from ever obtaining a place of reffuge or an inheritance upon the Land of Zion²⁸ Therefore they may tarry for they might as well be

overtaken where they are as to incur the displeasur of God and fall under his wrath by the wayside or to fall into the hands of a merciless mob where there is no God to deliver as salt that has lost its savour and is thenceforth god good for nothing but to be troden undr feet of men²⁹ I therefor beseech you to conjure [adjure]³⁰ them in the name of the Lord by the Love of God to lend us a helping hand³¹ and if all this will not soften their hearts to administer to our

26. In late October and early November 1833, non-Mormon settlers organized and attacked the homes of church members, driving most of them from Jackson County. In February 1834, some church leaders in Missouri, guarded by a state militia, returned to Jackson County to testify against their assailants before a court of inquiry. However, state attorney general Robert W. Wells and circuit attorney Amos Rees told the Saints “that such was the excitement prevailing there; that it was doubtful whether any thing could be done to bring the mobbers to justice.” The expedition to Missouri was thus meant to provide security for church members to reoccupy their Jackson County lands in the face of this strong and pervasive opposition. (Parley P. Pratt et al., “The Mormons’ So Called,” *The Evening and the Morning Star*, Extra, Feb. 1834, [1]–[2]; “A History, of the Persecution,” *Times and Seasons*, Feb. 1840, 1:49, in *JSP*, H2:223; Letter from William W. Phelps, 27 Feb. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:468; Revelation, 24 Feb. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:460, 461 [D&C 103:15–16, 22–25].)

27. See Matthew 25:14–29.

28. A July 1831 revelation instructed the Saints to purchase land in and around Jackson County. Edward Partridge, the bishop in Zion, was then to divide this land and distribute it “unto the saints” for “their inheritance” in Zion. (Revelation, 20 July 1831, in *JSP*, D2:8–11 [D&C 57:4–5, 7].)

29. See Matthew 5:13.

30. When this letter was copied into a later JS history, “conjure” was changed to “adjure,” meaning “to charge earnestly and solemnly” either “on pain of God’s wrath” or “on oath.” (JS History, vol. A-1, 452; “Adjure,” in *American Dictionary*.)

31. It is unclear whom Hyde contacted for donations. The minutes of the 17 March 1834 meeting in Avon, New York, state that a “bro. Perry” was to be approached for the \$2,000. This “bro. Perry” may have been Asahel Perry, who lived in Middlebury, Genesee County, New York, and who may have owned additional property in Erie and Chatauqua counties. On 1 April 1834, Perry sold 119 acres in Middlebury for \$2,300, but it is unclear whether he donated any of that sum to the church. Alvah Beaman, at whose

necessity for Zion sake turn your back up on them and return speedily to Kirtland and the blood of Zion be upon their heads even as upon the heads of her enimies and let their reccompence be as the reccompence of her enemies³² for thus shall it come to pass saith the Lord of hosts who has the cattle upon a thousand hills³³ who has put forth his Almyhty [Almighty] hand to bring to pass his strang[e] act³⁴ and what man shall put forth his hand to steady the ark of God³⁵ or be found turning a deaf ear to the voice of his servant God shall speak in due time and all will be declared amen

Your broth[er] in the new covenant Joseph

PS I am much disappointed on learni[n]g about my horse but if you cannot obtain him bring the mare and please do not [p. 83] [ride?] her very fast in a day and be very car[e]ful that I may not loose her and perhaps I may dispose of her to good advantage for the benefit of Zion—³⁶ I am yours by every sacred and holy tie that can bind up souls

Joseph Smith Jr

F G Williams

Oliver Cowde[r]y

home the 17 March conference was held, was also a prosperous member of the church in Avon; Joseph B. Noble described Beaman as “a man well off as to houses and land and goods of this world.” Whomever Hyde contacted, donations may not have been large. According to an account book for the Missouri

expedition, the church received a total of \$167 in donations “from the East for the benefit of Zion.” It is unclear how much was collected to help with the Kirtland debts. (Minutes, 17 Mar. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:487; Obituary for Asahel Perry, *Deseret News*, 3 Mar. 1869, 41; Genesee Co., NY, Deed Records, 1792–1901, vol. 32, p. 108, 1 Apr. 1834, microfilm 987,181, U.S. and Canada Record Collection, FHL; Noble and Noble, *Reminiscences*, [11]; Account with the Church of Christ, ca. 11–29 Aug. 1834, p. 138 herein.)

32. See Isaiah 59:18; 66:6.

33. See Psalm 50:10.

34. See Isaiah 28:21; Revelation, 1 June 1833, in *JSP*, D3:106 [D&C 95:4]; and Revelation, 16–17 Dec. 1833, in *JSP*, D3:397 [D&C 101:95].

35. See 2 Samuel 6:6–7. In a November 1832 letter to William W. Phelps, JS similarly expressed concern about those who sought to “steady the ark of God,” stating that whosoever did so would “fall by the shaft of death like as a tree that is smitten by the vived shaft of lightning.” (Letter to William W. Phelps, 27 Nov. 1832, in *JSP*, D2:320 [D&C 85:8].)

36. Financial records of the Missouri expedition note that in April, JS purchased “one Cream Colored Horse” from Isaac McWithy for eighty-five dollars. JS had attended a conference with McWithy on 17 March in Avon, New York, and had stayed with him the night of 19–20 March. Perhaps JS arranged for the purchase of a horse from McWithy at that time and instructed Hyde to bring the horse to Kirtland when he came. (Account with the Camp of Israel, ca. 11–29 Aug. 1834, p. 160 herein; Minutes, 17 Mar. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:487; JS, Journal, 19 Mar. 1834, in *JSP*, J1:35.)

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Revelation, 28 April 1834

Source Note

Revelation, Kirtland Township, Geauga Co., OH, 28 Apr. 1834. Featured version copied [between 28 Apr. and ca. 27 Aug. 1834] in Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt, Notebook of Revelations, p. [44]; handwriting of Orson Hyde; Revelations Collection, CHL. For more information on Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt, Notebook of Revelations, see Source Notes for Multiple-Entry Documents, p. 515 herein.

Historical Introduction

This 28 April 1834 revelation provided further information about the reorganization of the United Firm, which was mandated by a 23 April 1834 revelation.¹⁵⁴ The 23 April revelation directed which properties went to whom and declared that the branches of the United Firm in Missouri and Ohio were now separate.¹⁵⁵ This 28 April revelation confirmed that separation and reserved \$3,000 for the firm’s branch in Kirtland, Ohio.

Given the indebtedness of the firm’s members, the intended source of the \$3,000 is unclear. It may have come through donations or through assuming more debt. In March 1834, JS directed members in New York to try to raise \$2,000 “for the relief of the brethren in Kirtland.” Although a 31 March 1834 letter from Orson Hyde indicated that these efforts had not yet been successful, firm members may have held out hope that funds from New

152. There is no clear indication of how JS, Cowdery, Rigdon, and Williams incurred the debts, but they may have been for goods obtained from Newel K. Whitney’s store. The cash book for F. G. Williams & Co. indicates that the firm occasionally provided money to JS, Rigdon, and others when they were traveling, and N. K. Whitney & Co. may have done the same. (F. G. Williams & Co., Account Book, 1, 4, 6.)

153. Johnson’s debts may have been related to a brick tavern on the farm formerly owned by Peter French. Johnson, who was made a member of the firm in June 1833, was instructed by a revelation to manage the tavern and to “take away incumbrances” on it. The nature of the encumbrances is unclear, but a Thomas Knight held an existing lease on the tavern when Joseph Coe purchased the farm from French in April 1833. By April 1834, Johnson was trying to secure a tavern license in Chardon, Ohio, indicating that

he was preparing it for business. (Revelation, 4 June 1833, in *JSP*, D3:112 [D&C 96:9]; Geauga Co., OH, Deed Records, 1795–1921, vol. 17, pp. 38–39, 359–360, 10 Apr. 1833, microfilm 20,237; Geauga Co., OH, Court of Common Pleas, Court Records, 1807–1904, vol. M, p. 184, 5 Apr. 1834, microfilm 20,277, U.S. and Canada Record Collection, FHL.)

154. Revelation, 23 Apr. 1834, p. 22 herein [D&C 104]. For more information on the United Firm and its reorganization, see Historical Introduction to Revelation, 23 Apr. 1834 [D&C 104], p. 19 herein.

155. Revelation, 23 Apr. 1834, pp. 23–28 herein [D&C 104:19–49].

York would still be forthcoming.¹⁵⁶ On 18 April, firm member Newel K. Whitney provided JS with authorization to obtain a loan of between \$1,000 and \$8,000 in the name of N. K. Whitney & Co.;¹⁵⁷ it is possible that the \$3,000 was to come from such a loan. On 23 April, a council of United Firm members in Kirtland prayed that Zebedee Coltrin would be able to obtain from Jacob Myers Sr. “the money which he has gone to borrow for us.”¹⁵⁸ Perhaps the \$3,000 was to come from Myers, who in March 1834 had sold property in Richland County, Ohio, for \$10,250.¹⁵⁹ It may also be that the \$3,000 was not necessarily money the firm expected to have immediately but that it was a sum they planned on obtaining in the future. The intended use of the \$3,000 is also unclear. The revelation instructs that the money be spent for a right and a claim on inheritances, presumably land, but it is unclear whether that meant land in Missouri—the place designated as the location of the Saints’ inheritances¹⁶⁰—or land in Ohio. The revelation likewise does not specify when the inheritances would be obtained. Deeds to many of the stewardships assigned to firm members were provided on 30 April and 5 May 1834, but the revelation seems to imply that the inheritances would be given at a more distant time.¹⁶¹

The original manuscript of this revelation has not been located. Probably soon after its dictation, Orson Hyde created the copy featured here in a book of revelations he was keeping in Ohio. In August 1834, Hyde copied the revelation into Revelation Book 2.¹⁶² Sometime in 1834—probably after JS arrived in Missouri in mid-June—John Whitmer also made a copy in Revelation Book 1.¹⁶³ It does not appear that this revelation was ever published.

Document Transcript

Kirtland 28.— April 1834.

Verily thus saith the Lord concerning the division and settlement of the United Firm: Let there be reserved three Thousand Dollars for the right and claim of the Firm in Kirtland for inheritances in due time, even when the Lord will; and with this claim to be had in remembrance when the Lord shall reveal it for a right of inheritance. Ye are made free from the Firm of Zion and the

156. Minutes, 17 Mar. 1834, in *JSP*, D3:487; Letter to Orson Hyde, 7 Apr. 1834, p. 7 herein.

157. Order from Newel K. Whitney, 18 Apr. 1834, p. 13 herein.

158. JS, Journal, 23 Apr. 1834, in *JSP*, J1:42–43.

159. Richland Co., OH, Deed Books, 1814–1913, vol. 11, p. 464, 27 Mar. 1834, microfilm 386,085, U.S. and Canada Record Collection, FHL.

160. Revelation, 20 July 1831, in *JSP*, D2:7–11 [D&C 57:1–7]; Revelation, 11 Sept. 1831, in *JSP*, D2:66 [D&C 64:30].

161. Geauga Co., OH, Deed Records, 1795–1921, vol. 15, p. 322, 25 Feb. 1832, microfilm 20,236; Geauga Co., OH, Deed Records, 1795–1921, vol. 18, pp. 477–478, 479–481, 5 May 1834; pp. 487–488, 3 May 1834, microfilm 20,237; Geauga Co., OH, Deed Records, 1795–1921, vol. 19, pp. 203–204, 30 Apr. 1834, microfilm 20,238, U.S. and Canada Record Collection, FHL; Deed from John and Alice Jacobs Johnson, 5 May 1834, p. 44 herein.

162. Revelation, 28 Apr. 1834, in Revelation Book 2, p. 111, in *JSP*, MRB:639.

163. Revelation, 28 Apr. 1834, in Revelation Book 1, p. 198, in *JSP*, MRB:373; Historical Introduction to Revelation Book 1, in *JSP*, MRB:5–6.

Firm of in Zion is made free from the firm in Kirtland:¹⁶⁴ Thus Saith the Lord.
Amen

Copied from the original by Orson Hyde¹⁶⁵ [p.

Discourse, 26 December 1841

Source Note

[17/1] JS, *Discourse*, [Nauvoo, Hancock Co., IL], [26 Dec. 1841]. Featured version copied [ca. 26 Dec. 1841] in JS, *Journal*, 26 Dec. 1841, in *Book of the Law of the Lord*, p. 39; handwriting of Willard Richards; CHL. For more information on *Book of the Law of the Lord*, see *Source Notes for Multiple-Entry Documents*, p. XXX herein.

Historical Introduction

[17/2] On 26 December 1841 JS delivered a discourse in Nauvoo, Illinois, on the gift of tongues. The New Testament records instances of and teachings related to speaking in other tongues and identifies speaking in tongues as one of various spiritual gifts.¹ Although he had at times encouraged speaking in tongues as a means of worship and revelation, in Nauvoo JS regularly asserted his preference for tongues as a tool to preach the gospel.²

[17/3] On the evening of Sunday, 26 December 1841, a public meeting of the Saints was held at JS's home. JS's brother Hyrum Smith, the church patriarch, and Brigham Young, president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, preached on faith and spiritual gifts. Then JS preached a sermon on the dangers and benefits of speaking in tongues. JS began by reading from 1 Corinthians chapters 13 and 14, in which Paul wrote that charity and prophecy were greater than speaking in tongues. JS warned against the unreliability of tongues, given that the devil also could speak in foreign tongues, and in turn emphasized that tongues should be used for preaching in foreign lands. He concluded by discussing 1 Corinthians 14:27—"If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret"—and emphasizing the importance of individuals hearing the gospel in their own native tongues.

[17/4] Willard Richards recorded the discourse in JS's journal entry of 26 December 1841, probably copying from notes. Richards kept JS's journal on his behalf in the *Book of the Law of the Lord*.



[17/5] President Joseph read the 13th chap of 1st corinthians and a part of the 14 chap, and remarked that the gift of Tongues was necessary in the church; (but) That if satan could not speak in tongues he could not tempt a Dutchman, or any other nation, but the English, for he can tempt the Englishman, for he has tempted me, & I am an Englishman;³ but the Gift of Tongues, by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the church, is for the benefit of the servants of God to preach to unbelievers, as on the days of Pentecost,⁴ when devout men from evry nation shall assemble to hear of the things of God. let the (elders) preach to them in their own Mother tongue. whither it

is German, French, Spanish or Irish. or any other. & let those interpret who understand the tongue (Language) spoken. by in their mother tongue. & this is what the Apostle meant. in 1s[t] corinthians 14:27. [p. 39]

1. [17/n1] See, for example, Acts 2:4; and 1 Corinthians 12:1.
2. [17/n2] See Historical Introduction to Minutes, 22–23 Jan. 1833, in *JSP*, D2:379–380; and Discourse, between ca. 26 June and ca. 2 July 1839, in *JSP*, D6:523.
3. [17/n3] In a summer 1839 sermon, JS explained similarly, “The Devil can speak in Tongues. The Adversary will come with his work, he can tempt all classes Can speak in English or Dutch.” (Discourse, between ca. 26 June and ca. 4 Aug. 1839–A, in *JSP*, D6:548.)
4. [17/n4] See Acts chap. 2. In the summer of 1839, JS stated that tongues “were given for the purpose of preaching among those whose language is not understood as on the day of Pentecost.” (Discourse, between ca. 26 June and ca. 2 July 1839, in *JSP*, D6:523.)

**From Docs12 (The Joseph Smith Papers, Documents volume 12, March-July 1843;
indexed from Windows doc files of final edited pages, 2021**

Minutes, 13 March 1843

Source Note

[11/1] *Macedonia branch, Minutes, Macedonia, Hancock Co., IL, 13 Mar. 1843. Featured version copied [ca. 13 Mar. 1843] in Macedonia Branch, Record, pp. 32–33; handwriting and signature of Joseph Johnson; CHL.*

[D12:40]

[11/2] The Macedonia Branch Record was kept on a commercially produced leather-bound ledger book measuring $12\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ inches (32×21 cm). The ledger volume contains ten gatherings of sixteen leaves each, with a total of 320 pages. Each leaf measures $11\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ inches (30×19 cm), and each page contains thirty-six faint blue horizontal lines, one faint red horizontal line, and three faint red vertical lines in a bookkeeping or accounting format. Eighty-eight pages in the ledger volume have been numbered; these pages contain minute entries and other writings that begin on 7 April 1839 and end on 28 April 1850. Entries are in the handwriting of William Perkins, William Wightman, W. W. Greene, J. M. Benson, John E. Johnson, and James Fife. Pages 51 through 64 of these numbered pages are blank; 115 total leaves are blank. On the spine of the ledger are two labels likely placed there by employees of the Church Historian's Office (now CHL) in the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. One label reads "Record of the Ramus Branch", and the other reads "1746"; both inscriptions are in unidentified handwriting. [11/3] By May 1852 branch members had departed Illinois and Iowa for the Salt Lake Valley and may have taken the record with them. The record was listed in inventories that were produced by the Church Historian's Office in 1858 and in subsequent inventories.¹ The labels on the record and the record's inclusion in church inventories indicate continuous institutional custody since 1858.

Historical Introduction

[11/4] On 13 March 1843, JS presided over a church meeting held in Macedonia (formerly Ramus), Illinois, to settle difficulties relating to leadership in the branch there.² A conflict had emerged between those who supported John Lawson as the presiding elder in Macedonia and those who preferred Almon Babbitt, who had recently arrived in the branch.³ Church member Benjamin Andrews wrote to Brigham Young on 5 March 1843, explaining the "somewhat extraordinary" circumstances. According to Andrews, a group of church members clamored to remove Lawson from his position and to have a "new President" appointed. Joel Johnson and his brother Benjamin F. Johnson, who led the group, started a petition to end Lawson's tenure in favor of Babbitt.⁴ Joel Johnson previously served as the presiding authority in the branch but was discharged in winter 1842 by Hyrum Smith, a move that upset the Johnson brothers.⁵ Babbitt's arrival emboldened them to foment a leadership change. Andrews expressed concern about the division in the community and asked Young, "Cannot there be something done for us better. Is it

not possible to obtain a man from Nauvoo, There is no one here that can unite all parties, for Brother Lawson has tried, and the more he tries to enforce the keeping of the commandments of God the more some seem to brake them.” For his part, Andrews supported Lawson as “an [D12:41] [11/5] honest faithful man” and did not want Babbitt as the branch leader.⁶ After Young received Andrews’s letter, he and JS went to Macedonia to settle the matter.

[11/6] On 11 March 1843, JS and Brigham Young rode from Nauvoo, Illinois, to Macedonia, where they lodged for the next two nights with Benjamin F. Johnson. While in Macedonia, both JS and Young preached to the congregation during Sunday meetings, and JS pulled sticks and wrestled with the town’s strongest men. JS and Young attended an afternoon meeting on 13 March to help resolve the leadership issues in the branch.⁷

[11/7] During this meeting, JS gave his support to Babbitt to lead the branch. Though Babbitt had a history of problems with church leaders and authority, he also had leadership experience. According to the minutes featured here, with JS’s support, Babbitt was ultimately “Chosen to Preside in place of Elder Lawson.” Following this business, the meeting adjourned until the evening, when the branch reconvened for JS to bless the children. The next day, he and Young returned to Nauvoo.⁸

[11/8] Joseph Johnson served as the clerk for the 13 March 1843 meeting and recorded the minutes in the Macedonia branch’s official minute book. Given the narrative nature of the minutes, Johnson likely worked from notes or original minutes taken during the meeting to pen this entry. Any original minutes or notes, however, are apparently no longer extant.



[11/9] Between the time of this past Church meeting & the next The town of Ramus was Changed to the named of Macedonia⁹ Some Dificulty having Arisen Respecting the presiding Elder Pres Jo^s. Smith was Called upon to Come out and settle Difficulties¹⁰ The Church being Called to gather Mar 13th. 1843 E[benezer] Page opened servise by prayer Pres Smith took the Chair and Stated the meeting to be for the purpose of Setling the Difficulties of this Branch

[11/10] After Some Remarks President Smith spoke of the aspersion Cast & the Character of Almon Babbitt & stated that he was in Full Fellowship in the Church¹¹ [D12:42] [11/11] & said he was just such a person as should preside here that Elder [John] Lawson was not A Fit Person For the Station Elder Lawson spoke in justification of his Conduct & Stated that Elder Babbitt Came here striving to make Division in the Church Elder B[enjamin] F Johnson Corrected Elder Lawson remarks & spoke of his bacctalking & Slandering Elder Babbitt in Public

[11/12] After some remarks Babbitt was nominated to Preside over this branc[h] Pres Smith then Said the Question was then open For Debate After some Considerable Deliberation A Babbitt was unanimously Chosen to Preside in place of Elder Lawson [p. 32]

[11/13] No objection being made Except by Elder Lawson

[11/14] B F Johnson was then unanimously Chosen as Agent For the Church in this place¹² Meeting adjourned untill Evening which was occupied in blessing Children Meeting adjourned

[11/15] Jo^s. Smith ^{Pres.}

[11/16] J[oseph] E Johnson ^{Cl.} [p. 33]

[D12:43]

1. [11/n1] “Historian’s Office Inventory G. S. L. City March 19. 1858,” [3]; “Historian’s Office Catalogue Book March 1858,” [13]; “Index of Records and Journals in the Historian’s Office 1878,” [13], Historian’s Office, Catalogs and Inventories, 1846–1904, CHL.
2. [11/n2] Though previously known as Ramus, the town was incorporated under the name of Macedonia on 3 March 1843. (An Act to Incorporate the Town of Macedonia [3 Mar. 1843], *Laws of the State of Illinois* [1842–1843], pp. 304–307.)
3. [11/n3] It is likely that Babbitt arrived between 23 January and 5 March 1843. His name does not appear in the Macedonia Branch records in entries prior to that of 13 March 1843, the previous entry being 23 January 1843, and the conflict arose on 5 March. (See Macedonia Branch, Record, 7 Apr. 1839–13 Mar. 1843.)
4. [11/n4] Benjamin Andrews, Ramus, IL, to Brigham Young, Nauvoo, IL, 5 Mar. 1843, Brigham Young Office Files, CHL. Babbitt was a brother-in-law to the Johnsons. (Johnson, “Life Review,” 48.)
5. [11/n5] Johnson, Autobiographical Sketch, 30–31.
6. [11/n6] Benjamin Andrews, Ramus, IL, to Brigham Young, Nauvoo, IL, 5 Mar. 1843, Brigham Young Office Files, CHL.
7. [11/n7] JS, Journal, 11–13 Mar. 1843, in *JSP*, J2:306–307; Young, Journal, 1840–1844, 11–13 Mar. 1843.
8. [11/n8] JS, Journal, 14 Mar. 1843, in *JSP*, J2:308; Young, Journal, 1840–1844, 14 Mar. 1843.
9. [11/n9] The previous meeting recorded in the branch record took place on 23 January 1843. (Macedonia Branch, Record, 23 Jan. 1843.)
10. [11/n10] For more on the difficulties in Macedonia, see Benjamin Andrews, Ramus, IL, to Brigham Young, Nauvoo, IL, 5 Mar. 1843, Brigham Young Office Files, CHL.
11. [11/n11] There may have been lingering questions about Babbitt’s standing in the church because of previous issues between Babbitt and JS. In summer 1840, church leaders withdrew fellowship from Babbitt before JS reconciled with him and appointed him president over the church in Kirtland, Ohio, in October 1840. As the presiding authority in Kirtland, Babbitt encouraged Latter-day Saints to stay in Kirtland, contrary to JS’s instructions that church members should gather to Nauvoo. At a general church conference in October 1841, the minutes of which were published in the *Times and Seasons*, church members voted to disfellowship Babbitt again. Perhaps some church members in Macedonia were not aware that Babbitt subsequently reconciled with JS and was restored to full fellowship. (Minutes and Discourse, 3–5 Oct. 1840, in *JSP*, D7:422; Minutes and Discourse, 1–5 Oct. 1841, in *JSP*, D8:286; Johnson, “Life Review,” 87–88; see also Letter from Almon Babbitt, 19 Oct. 1841, in *JSP*, D8:317–324.)
12. [11/n12] Johnson previously served as an agent for JS’s business interests. He may have been given the specific responsibility to collect and take to Nauvoo funds or goods collected for temple construction. Four weeks later, JS gave Johnson a power of attorney to act on his behalf in

Macedonia. (Johnson, "Life Review," 88; Hancock Co., IL, Bonds and Mortgages, 1840–1904, vol. 1, pp. 358–359, 10 Apr. 1843, microfilm 954,776, U.S. and Canada Record Collection, FHL.)

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←Chapter 54→

Pay Order to William Clayton, 18 April 1843

Source Note

[54/1] *JS [as mayor], Pay Order, to William Clayton, for "bearer," Nauvoo, Hancock Co., IL, 18 Apr. 1843; handwriting and signature of JS; one page; JS Collection (Supplement), CHL.*

[54/2] Single leaf measuring 3 × 8 inches (8 × 20 cm). The bottom and right edges of the leaf have the square cut of manufactured paper, whereas the top and left edges were apparently cut by hand, suggesting [D12:216] [54/3] that the document may have been detached from a larger leaf or sheet. The document was folded in half horizontally and into thirds vertically, although the right vertical fold has two creases. There is some separation along the folds.

[54/4] The provenance of this document is unclear. The Church Historical Department (now CHL) published a register of the JS Collection in 1973. Between 1974 and 1984, staff continued to locate documents authored by or directed to JS in uncataloged church financial records and in name-and-subject files. The department also acquired additional JS documents from donors, collectors, and dealers. These newly located and acquired documents, including this pay order, were kept together in a supplement to the JS Collection. A preliminary inventory of the supplement was created in 1992. This group of records was named the JS Collection (Supplement), 1833–1844, and its cataloging was finalized in 2017.¹

Historical Introduction

[54/5] On 18 April 1843, JS wrote and signed a pay order as mayor of Nauvoo, Illinois, directing William Clayton, the city treasurer, to pay an unidentified individual one dollar from the city treasury.² Typically, pay orders such as this one were three-party financial transactions, with the mayor directing the treasurer to make a cash payment to an individual for services rendered to the city government.³ Pay orders often used the standardized language of "bearer" rather than naming a specific individual to be paid, which allowed the pay order to be transferred multiple times.⁴

[54/6] The circumstances surrounding the issuance of this pay order are not known, nor is it known for whom the order was meant. Although JS's journal frequently includes financial information, including outgoing expenditures, it does not mention the pay order or any one-dollar transaction on or around 18 April 1843.⁵ Similarly, William Clayton's journal reveals several interactions with individuals and mentions various financial transactions from around this time period, but there is nothing that clearly identifies the bearer of this pay order.⁶ The Nauvoo treasury ledger includes many one-dollar transactions in 1843, but none are specifically dated 18 April 1843.⁷

[54/7] JS wrote the pay order and then presumably gave it to the bearer that day or shortly thereafter so the bearer could convey it to Clayton to receive payment. However, there are [D12:217] [54/8] no endorsements, notations, or other evidence on this document or in other documents that indicate any action was taken to redeem the pay order.

•3

[54/9] City of Nauvoo April 18th 1843

[54/10] Brother [William] Clayton

[54/11] Dear Sir

[54/12] I wish you would let the bearer have one doller out of the tresury and oblige

[54/13] Joseph Smith [p. [1]] [page [2] blank]

[D12:218]

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1. [54/n1] See the full bibliographic entry for JS Collection (Supplement), 1833–1844, in the CHL catalog.
 2. [54/n2] According to the Nauvoo City Council Minute Book, William Clayton replaced John S. Fullmer as the city treasurer via election on 9 September 1842. An entry in Clayton’s journal, however, indicates that Clayton was “reappointed city Treasurer” until 11 February 1843, suggesting he did not fill the role until that time. (Nauvoo City Council Minute Book, 9 Sept. 1842, 101; Clayton, Journal, 11 Feb. 1843.)
 3. [54/n3] See, for example, Pay Order to Nauvoo City Treasurer, 12 July 1842, in *JSP*, D10:253–256; JS, Pay Order to Nauvoo City Treasurer for Shadrach Roundy, 27 Aug. 1842, JS Collection, CHL; Pay Order to City Treasurer for James Sloan, 30 Jan. 1843, in *JSP*, D11:385–386; and JS, Pay Order to Nauvoo City Treasurer for Shadrach Roundy, 1 June 1843, JS Collection, CHL.
 4. [54/n4] See Historical Introduction to Pay Order from Robert Snodgrass, 18 Sept. 1838, in *JSP*, D6:245–246. With the Nauvoo City Council’s disavowal of Nauvoo city scrip in March 1843, pay orders and treasury orders took the place of local currency as a circulating medium in the community. (Nauvoo City Council Minute Book, 4 Mar. 1843, 167.)
 5. [54/n5] JS, Journal, 18 Apr. 1843, in *JSP*, J2:363.
 6. [54/n6] Clayton, Journal, 12–18 Apr. 1843.
 7. [54/n7] Nauvoo City Treasury Ledger, 5–9.