

THE
New Era

MAY

2005

SPECIAL ISSUE:
**THE TIMES
AND SEASONS
OF JOSEPH
SMITH**

The New Era Magazine
Volume 35, Number 5
May 2005

Official monthly publication
for youth of
The Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints

The *New Era* can be found
in the Gospel Library at
www.lds.org.

Editorial Offices:
New Era
50 E. North Temple St.
Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT
84150-3220, USA

E-mail address:
cur-editorial-newera
@ldschurch.org

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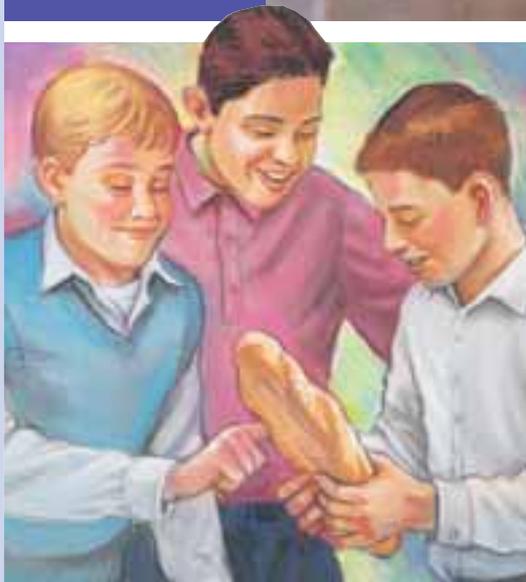
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Cover: Young Joseph
Smith begins the great
work of the Restoration.
See "Praise to the Man"
on p. 4.

**Cover painting and
photography:** The First
Vision, by Liz Lemon
Swindle (front) and
Shanna Butler, Ryan
Carr, Janet Thomas,
and Paul VanDenBerghe
(back)

Joseph
Smith . . .
has done
more, save
Jesus only, for
the salvation
of men in this
world, than
any other man
that ever lived
in it" (D&C
135:3).

**In this
special issue,
visit the
places where
the Prophet
Joseph Smith
lived, and feel
the spirit of
all he
accomplished
as the first
President of
The Church of
Jesus Christ of
Latter-day
Saints.**



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Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah, and
at additional mailing offices.

The *New Era* (ISSN 0164-5285)

is published monthly by The
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-
day Saints, 50 E. North Temple
St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-
3220, USA.

POSTMASTER: Send address

changes to Distribution
Services, Church Magazines,
P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City,
UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information:

Publication Agreement
#40017431.

Praise to the Man

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY



I have come to know the Prophet Joseph—at least in some degree, at least enough that I can testify that he was a prophet called and ordained to stand as God’s instrument in this great work of restoration.

Many years ago when at the age of 12 I was ordained a deacon, my father, who was president of our stake, took me to my first stake priesthood meeting. . . . He walked up to the stand, and I sat on the back row, feeling a little alone and uncomfortable in that hall filled with strong men who had been ordained to the priesthood of God. The meeting was called to order, the opening song was announced, and—as was then the custom—we all stood to sing. There were perhaps as many as 400 there. Together these men lifted their strong voices, . . . all singing these words with a great spirit of conviction and testimony:

*Praise to the man who communed with
Jehovah!*

*Jesus anointed that Prophet and Seer:
Blessed to open the last dispensation,
Kings shall extol him, and nations
revere.*

(“Praise to the Man,” *Hymns*, no. 27.)

They were singing of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and as they did so there came into my heart a great surge of love for and belief in the mighty Prophet of this dispensation. In

my childhood I had been taught much of him in meetings and classes in our ward as well as in our home; but my experience in that stake priesthood meeting was different. I knew then, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that Joseph Smith was indeed a prophet of God.¹

I Have Come to Know Him

I have not spoken face to face with all of the prophets of this dispensation. I was not acquainted with the Prophet Joseph Smith, nor did I ever hear him speak. My grandfather, who as a young man lived in Nauvoo, did hear him and testified of his divine calling as the great prophet of this dispensation. But I feel I have come to know the Prophet Joseph Smith.

I have read and believed his testimony of his great First Vision in which he conversed with the Father and the Son. I have pondered the wonder of that as I have stood in the grove where he prayed, and in that environment, by the power of the Spirit, I have received a witness that it happened as he said it happened.



I have read the Book of Mormon, which Joseph Smith translated by the gift and power of God. By the power of the Holy Ghost I have received a testimony and a witness of the divine origin of this sacred record.

I have read the Book of Mormon, which he translated by the gift and power of God. By the power of the Holy Ghost I have received a testimony and a witness of the divine origin of this sacred record. Joseph Smith did not write it of his own capacity.

I have seen with my own eyes the power of the priesthood that came to him under the hands of those who held it anciently. I have studied his life and measured his words. I have pondered the circumstances of his death, and I have come to know him—at least in some degree, at least enough that I can testify that he was a prophet called and ordained to stand as God’s instrument in this great work of restoration.²

In the Grove

Some years ago I was assigned to the Rochester New York Stake conference. On Saturday I said to the brethren who were with me, “Let us get up early in the morning, early Sunday morning, and go to the Sacred Grove before the conference.” They all agreed. Accordingly, very early on that spring Sabbath, the mission president, the stake president, the regional representative, and I went out to Palmyra and walked into the grove. No one else was there. It was peaceful and beautiful. It had rained during the night. Tiny new leaves were upon the trees.

We spoke quietly one to another. We knelt upon the damp ground and prayed. We did not hear an audible voice. We did not see a vision. But in an indefinable way we were told in our minds, each of us, that yes, it happened here just as Joseph said it happened. It was here that God our Eternal Father and His Beloved Son, the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, appeared to the 14-year-old boy and

spoke with him. Their matchless light rested upon him, and he was instructed in what he should do.³

A Polished Shaft

I am profoundly grateful not only for Joseph Smith as the prophet who served as an instrument in the hands of the Almighty in restoring this work, but also for all of those who have followed him. A study of their lives will reveal the manner in which the Lord has chosen them, has refined them, and has molded them to His eternal purposes.

Joseph Smith declared on one occasion: “I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; . . . knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty.”⁴

He was hated and persecuted. He was driven and imprisoned. He was abused and beaten. And as you read his history, you see the evolution of which he spoke. There developed a power in his life. There came a refinement. There grew a love for others that even overcame his own love for life. The corners of that rough stone were knocked off, and he became a polished shaft in the hand of the Almighty.⁵

We do not worship the Prophet. We worship God our Eternal Father, and the risen Lord Jesus Christ. But we acknowledge him, we proclaim him, we respect him, we reverence him as an instrument in the hands of the Almighty in restoring to the earth the ancient truths of the divine gospel, together with the priesthood through which the authority of God is exercised in the affairs of His Church for the blessing of His people.⁶



My Testimony of the Prophet Joseph

Standing as the 15th in line from Joseph Smith and bearing the prophetic mantle that came upon him, I solemnly declare my testimony that the Prophet Joseph's account of these events is true.⁷

We declare without equivocation that God the Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, appeared in person to the boy Joseph Smith.

When I was interviewed by Mike Wallace on the *60 Minutes* program, he asked me if I actually believed that. I replied, "Yes, sir. That's the miracle of it."

That is the way I feel about it. Our whole strength rests on the validity of that vision. It either occurred or it did not occur. If it did not, then this work is a fraud. If it did, then it is the most important and wonderful work under the heavens. . . .

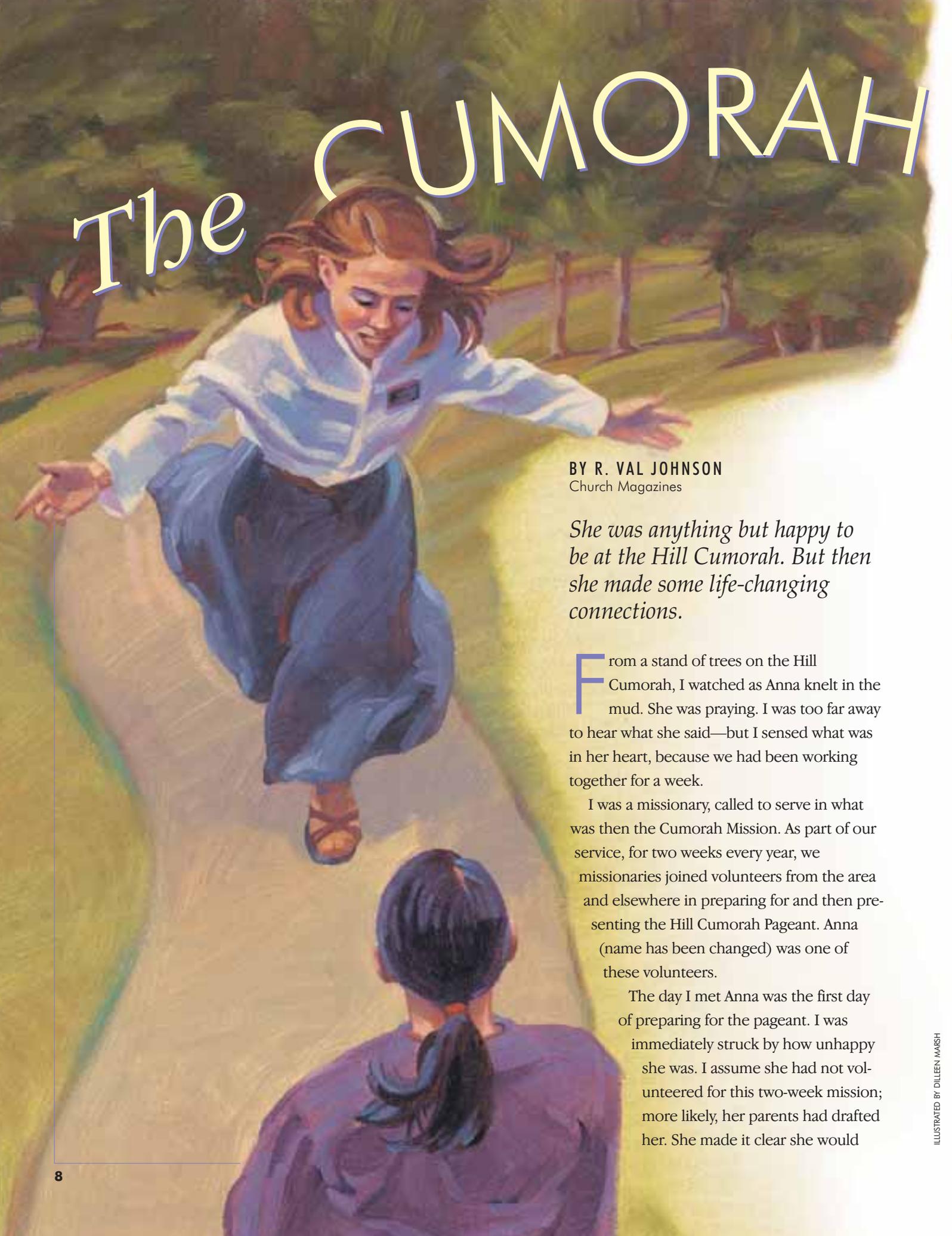
The instrument in this work of God was a boy whose mind was not cluttered by the philosophies of men. That mind was fresh and without schooling in the traditions of the day.

It is easy to see why people do not accept this account. It is almost beyond comprehension. And yet it is so reasonable. Those familiar with the Old Testament recognize the appearance of Jehovah to the prophets who lived in that comparatively simple time. Can they legitimately deny the need for an appearance of the God of heaven and His resurrected Son in this very complex period of the world's history?

That They came, both of Them, that Joseph saw Them in Their resplendent glory, that They spoke to him and that he heard and recorded Their words—of these remarkable things we testify.⁸ **NE**

NOTES

1. "Praise to the Man," *Ensign*, Aug. 1983, 2.
2. "Believe His Prophets," *Ensign*, May 1992, 50–51.
3. "My Redeemer Lives," *Ensign*, Feb. 2001, 72.
4. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1938), 304.
5. "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," *Ensign*, Sept. 1991, 5.
6. "Joseph the Seer," *Ensign*, May 1977, 65.
7. "Special Witnesses of Christ," *Ensign*, Apr. 2001, 20.
8. "The Marvelous Foundation of Our Faith," *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 80.



The CUMORAH

BY R. VAL JOHNSON
Church Magazines

She was anything but happy to be at the Hill Cumorah. But then she made some life-changing connections.

From a stand of trees on the Hill Cumorah, I watched as Anna knelt in the mud. She was praying. I was too far away to hear what she said—but I sensed what was in her heart, because we had been working together for a week.

I was a missionary, called to serve in what was then the Cumorah Mission. As part of our service, for two weeks every year, we missionaries joined volunteers from the area and elsewhere in preparing for and then presenting the Hill Cumorah Pageant. Anna (name has been changed) was one of these volunteers.

The day I met Anna was the first day of preparing for the pageant. I was immediately struck by how unhappy she was. I assume she had not volunteered for this two-week mission; more likely, her parents had drafted her. She made it clear she would



CONNECTION

rather be anywhere else than here. She was grumpy, uncooperative, unfriendly—your basic pain in the neck.

Like the full-time missionaries, the volunteers followed a missionary routine. We all rose early and had a morning devotional. We read the scriptures. We prayed. We bore testimony to one another. In addition, since part of our duties during pageant week was to greet visitors at the hill, the volunteers were taught how to approach people and invite them to learn about the Church.

Anna was assigned to our work group. At first, she was miserable to be around. But sometime during that week of preparation, she connected with a power greater than herself. She received a witness, borne by the power of the Holy Ghost, that Joseph Smith was a prophet, that the Book of Mormon really is God's word, and that the church she belonged to truly is the restored Church of Jesus Christ. Anna's heart softened, and her mind opened.

The transformation was amazing. By the time the pageant began, Anna was the happiest person there. Our group was posted at the angel Moroni monument at the top of the Hill Cumorah. We would normally wait for people to walk up to the statue from below before introducing ourselves and explaining what the statue represents. Anna couldn't wait. She would literally run down the path to greet those toiling up the hill. They connected with Anna and her message so quickly that by the time they reached us, she had them nearly ready for baptism. She did so much talking that, by the time the pageant started each night, she was hoarse.

One day during pageant week it rained. The water came down in buckets, and we were afraid the pageant would be cancelled that night. This experience was not unusual. New York in July gets rain. When it happens during pageant week, the missionaries and members always ask the Lord to intervene. And the rain usually stops, at least during pageant time.

That day the rain was so fierce we wondered whether prayer would be enough. So we started a fast. We knew from experience what a great missionary tool the pageant is, and we didn't want anyone to miss it. Just before the pageant was to start, the rain stopped.

That's when Anna went to her knees in prayer. I couldn't hear what she was saying, but I was sure she was thanking the Lord for His mercy—to her, to all of us.

I don't know what happened to Anna after the pageant was over. I imagine she returned home, finished school, and married. I have no doubt she remained faithful to the gospel, a beacon of light in a worried world. I can see her now in my mind, running down life's path to greet some troubled soul seeking an angel—and finding one in Anna.

Such is the power of the restored gospel.

It is a power familiar to every Latter-day Saint who has been touched by the truths of the Restoration. Most have not visited the places where the gospel was restored. But it doesn't matter. They have received their own witness, and their lives have been changed—just as Anna's was, and mine, during those days of light and rain on Cumorah's hill. **NE**

PALMYRA

BY RYAN CARR
Church Magazines

Teens from the Palmyra stake, (from left to right) Ted Tuttle, Thane Clark, Melissa Green, and Shannon Clawson, enjoy visiting the places Joseph Smith lived as a teenager and young man.

Some of the most important events in Church history happened in western New York. The Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ began there.

The Church history sites near Palmyra and Fayette, New York, include:

- A replica of the log home where Joseph Smith lived as a teenager.
- The Sacred Grove, site of the First Vision.
- The Hill Cumorah, where Joseph received the gold plates.
- The E. B. Grandin Building, where the Book of Mormon was printed.
- A replica of the Peter Whitmer home, where The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized.

Today, youth who live nearby enjoy visiting the Church history sites and feeling the Spirit there, which strengthens their testimonies. But they know that you don't have to live in Palmyra to have a testimony of Prophet Joseph Smith or the Book of Mormon. They gained their testimonies by study, prayer, and the witness of the Holy Ghost. They feel blessed to live in the birthplace of the Restoration.

Smith Family Homes

Joseph Smith and his family lived for a few years in a log home like this one (right), two miles south of Palmyra. The home in the photograph is a replica that stands on the foundation of the original. The Smiths, known for their hard work, cleared the trees around the home, started an apple orchard, and prepared the land for planting.

Joseph was living in the log home when he experienced the First Vision in a nearby grove of trees. Three years later he was visited by the angel Moroni in the small upstairs bedroom (inset, above).

A short distance down the road from the



PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR AND ALAN YORGASON

RA

BIRTHPLACE OF THE RESTORATION



Joseph Smith lived in a log home like this one (left) when he had the First Vision. He was later visited by the angel Moroni in the upstairs bedroom (inset, left). His family built the frame home (opposite page) down the road from the log home.



Joseph Smith Jr. is born in Vermont.



The Smith family moves to Palmyra, New York.



“This is the Sacred Grove [opposite page]. . . Here is where it all began, the miracle of this great work which has spread over the earth. This is the scene of the First Vision. It was here that God, the Eternal Father, appeared with His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the resurrected Lord.”

—President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Special Witnesses of Christ,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2001, 20.

log home, Joseph’s older brother Alvin planned to build a larger frame home for his parents, but he died before it was completed. The Smiths finished this home and moved into it in 1825. Near that home, they built a barn and a cooper’s shop, where Joseph’s father built and repaired wooden tubs and casks.

Nicholi Ludlow, of the Palmyra stake, likes to visit the Smith’s frame home near the Sacred Grove. “I like to walk through the Sacred Grove and then hear the couple missionaries tell where Joseph hid the plates and hear how much work the Smiths went through to build the home, and they had to leave it,” he says. “I remember feeling the Spirit in that place the first time I went there with my family.

“The faith of Joseph Smith is amazing to me—the faith to ask about something as big as which church to join. I try to have the faith that Joseph Smith had. I try to pray about decisions that are important to my life. Joseph’s story shows how important prayer is.”

After Joseph received the gold plates in 1827, many people began to try to steal them. Joseph had to hide them every day. He often hid them under the bricks of this fireplace (right) and in the cooper’s shop near the home.

Sacred Grove

As youth from the Palmyra stake walk through the Sacred Grove, the lyrics of “Joseph Smith’s First Prayer” (*Hymns*, no. 26) describe the morning of their visit. “Oh, how lovely was the morning! Radiant beamed the sun above. Bees were humming,

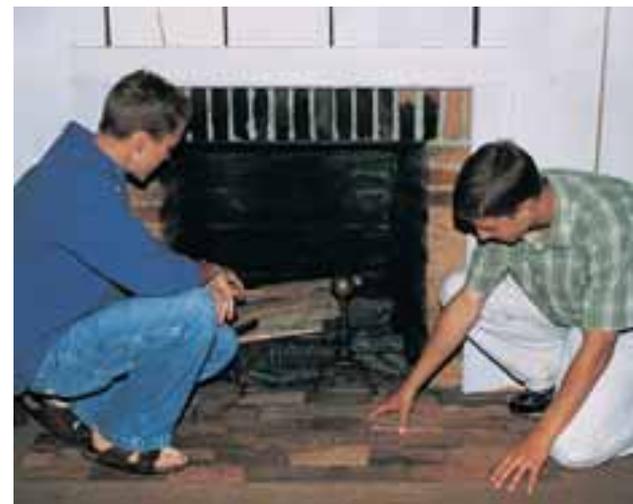
sweet birds singing, Music ringing thru the grove.” They walk “within the shady woodland,” where “Joseph sought the God of love.”

These teens—Ted Tuttle, Thane Clark, Melissa Green, and Shannon Clawson—and many others in their stake often visit the Sacred Grove. They go alone to pray, ponder, and read scriptures. They also go with their friends and families.

Of the several Church history sites near Palmyra, the Sacred Grove is a favorite for many of the local youth. Shannon says the Sacred Grove is “the most beautiful place on earth. It’s gorgeous in there.” She goes there when she is seeking comfort or answers to questions. “One thing I really like to do is go there to read my patriarchal blessing,” she says. “There’s such a sweet spirit there.”

Thane likes to go to the grove alone. “It’s one place where there’s peace and answers to the problems of life,” he says. “In the Sacred Grove I feel the Spirit and have questions answered. I read my scriptures there. Sometimes I pray. I ponder things.”

Those who go to the grove to ponder and

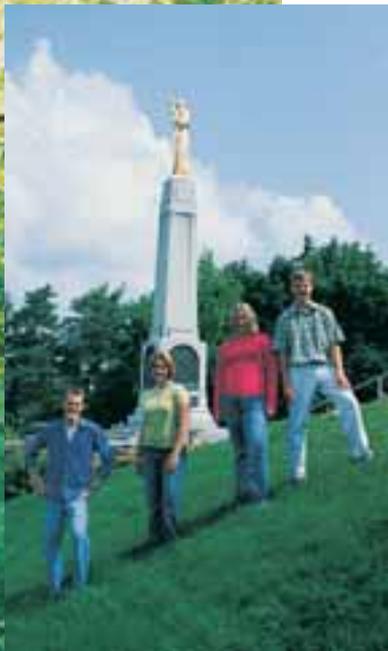




Fourteen-year-old Joseph prays and sees Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.



Moroni visits Joseph four times on September 21–22 (and once a year each September for the next four years).



pray follow in the Prophet Joseph's footsteps. Fourteen-year-old Joseph Smith came to this grove of trees near his home when he needed answers. He didn't know which church to join, so he decided to "ask of God" (James 1:5).

Hill Cumorah

From the top of the Hill Cumorah (left), you can see for miles over the green, tree-filled land below. On this hill, on September 22, 1827, Joseph was allowed to

take the gold plates from the stone box where Moroni had buried them. The Prophet Joseph translated them in 1829 and published them as the Book of Mormon in 1830.

Sarah Thomas, a recent convert, enjoyed visiting the Hill Cumorah before she was a member of the Church. She often went to the hill to watch the sunset, and she felt the influence of the Holy Ghost there, without knowing

Near Palmyra, New York, are the Sacred Grove (left) and the Hill Cumorah (inset, left). A statue of the angel Moroni stands atop the hill.

HILL CUMORAH PAGEANT

The Hill Cumorah Pageant is the largest staged production in the world about the Book of Mormon. Each summer, thousands of people see the free pageant, which shows 10 scenes from the Book of Mormon and its coming forth. More than 600 costumed cast members act out the scenes, which include real fire and water, on seven levels of stages on the Hill Cumorah.

Maren Dickens, 17, of the Palmyra stake, has been in the pageant four times. She says the pageant "has affected my testimony tremendously. It's really spiritual."

Visit www.hillcumorah.org for the pageant schedule or to apply to be a cast or crew member. Cast and crew members pay their own way and must be at least 18 to participate, but younger Church members are eligible if they attend with their families.



Joseph takes the gold plates from the Hill Cumorah, near Palmyra.



The Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods are restored in Pennsylvania.



“The Lord brought forth the Book of Mormon at a period of time when printing methods would enhance its distribution far and wide. Modern-day printing presses now enable the Church to print and distribute millions of copies of the Book of Mormon each year.

“. . . It is my personal testimony that the Book of Mormon changes human lives. It is indeed another testament of Jesus Christ.”

—President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Special Witnesses of Christ,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2001, 19.

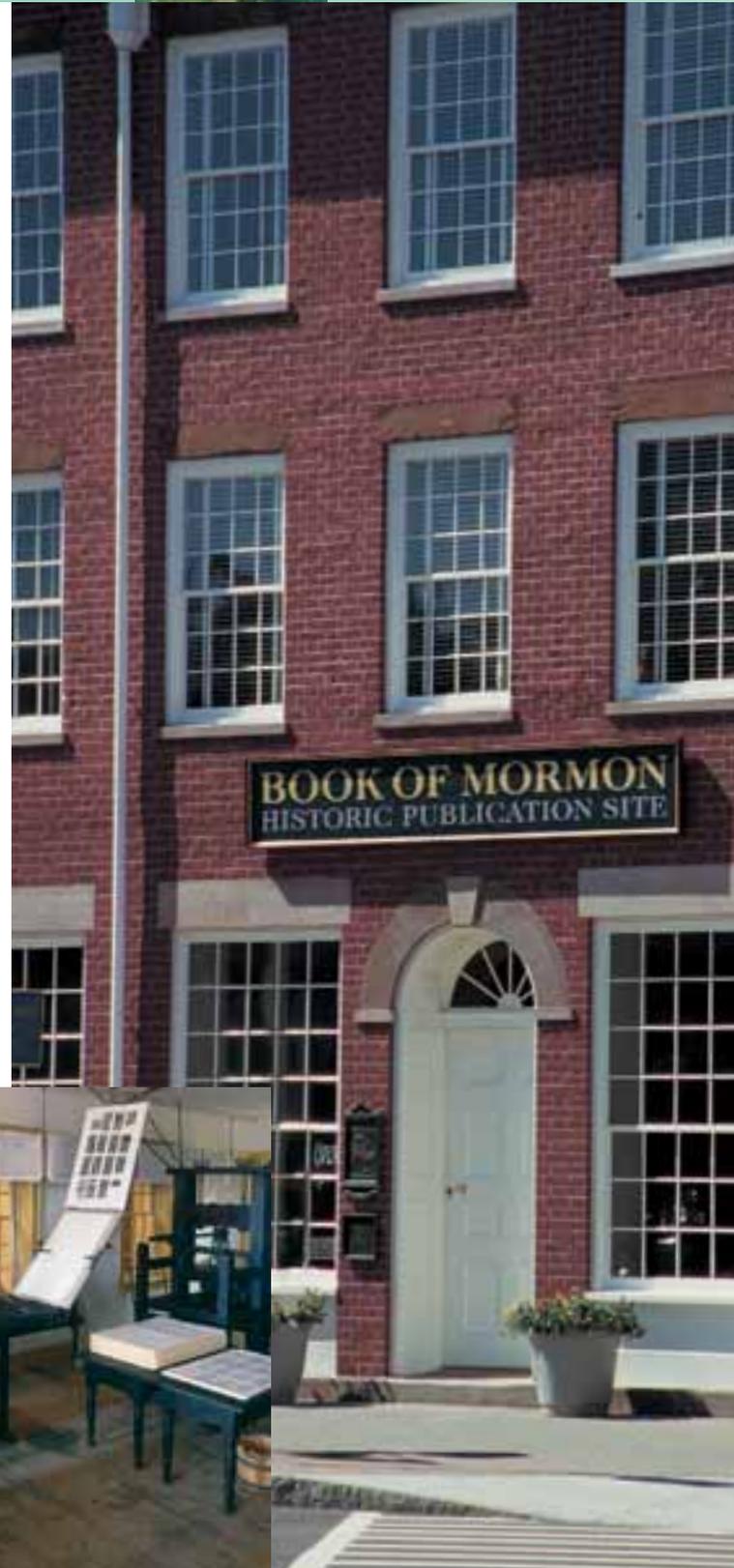
what she was feeling. “I loved being there, even though I didn’t know why,” she says.

Now as a member of the Church she knows why: “The Spirit there is so great. It’s where Moroni buried the Book of Mormon. I had no idea how incredible and important these Church-history places are. I feel very blessed to live in an area where I can visit them.”

E. B. Grandin Building

As you head down Main Street in Palmyra, New York, you see several little restaurants and bookstores and a red-brick building with a sign that says “Book of Mormon Historic Publication Site.” In this building the first copies of the Book of Mormon were printed. Joseph Smith paid Egbert B. Grandin U.S. \$3,000 to print 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon, which was a lot of copies in that day.

Step inside the three-story building. Enthusiastic missionaries will show you around. You will see the old book shop, the bindery, and





The Book of Mormon is printed at E. B. Grandin's print shop in Palmyra.



On April 6 the Church is organized in the log home of Peter Whitmer Sr. at Fayette, New York.

the black metal printing press, which was run by hand.

Eight men and boys worked 12-hour days, six days a week, for about eight months to print those first 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon. Having this press in Palmyra is a good example of the Lord preparing the way to move His work along.

Fayette

April 6, 1830, was the day the Lord designated in revelation as the day the Church should be organized (see D&C 20). That day as many as 60 people met at the small log home of Peter Whitmer Sr. in Fayette, New York (below). New York law required a church to have at least six members to be organized. So Joseph, Hyrum, and Samuel Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Peter Whitmer Jr. became the first official members of the

Church. All these young men had been baptized and had seen the gold plates.

Four important events in Church history happened at or near the Whitmer's log home:

- Joseph completed the translation of the Book of Mormon there in 1829.
- The Three Witnesses saw the gold plates near this home (see D&C 17).
- The Church was organized there in

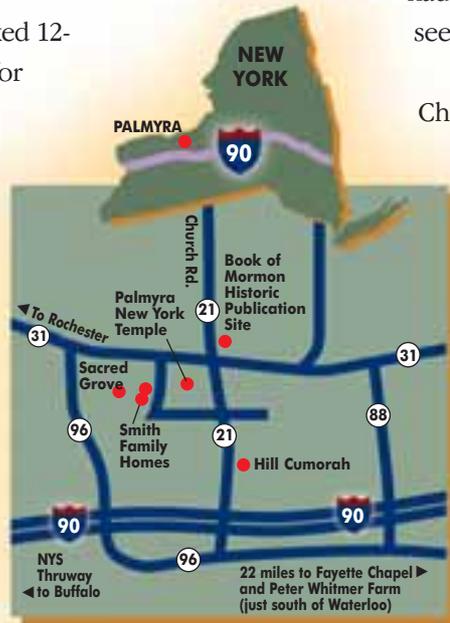
1830 (see D&C 20; 21).

- In Fayette the Prophet Joseph received 20 revelations that are recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Thomas Cleere's favorite Church-history site in western New York is the replica of the Peter Whitmer home.

"Something special happened here," says Thomas, 16, of the Palmyra stake. "As you go inside you can almost picture Joseph Smith. You can read Church history and feel the Spirit when you read that, but you can also stand where it happened and feel the Spirit." **NE**

Teens from the Palmyra stake visit a replica of the Peter Whitmer farmhouse (below, left) in Fayette, New York, where the Church was organized in 1830. From left to right: Diana Dickson, Sarah Thomas, Savannah Steele, Nicholi Ludlow, and Thomas Cleere.



LDS TEENS IN PALMYRA

What's it like to be a member of the Church in western New York? Melissa Green, 18, of the Palmyra stake, explains: "Because of the sites, members of the Church are recognized more. We're asked a lot of questions. It's the biggest missionary opportunity that can be given to us as a stake. It's easier to talk about the Church."

It may be easier to talk about the Church because of all the Church history sites there, but "it's not easy to be a member of the Church here," says Shannon Clawson, 18. "If you're going to be a member of the Church, you have to be serious about it. You have to get up at six in the morning to go to early-morning seminary. I'm one of three members my age at school."



Q & A

*“What do we mean
when we say
this is the only true church?”*

NEW ERA

The Lord Himself said that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true church. When Joseph Smith prayed to know which church was right, the Savior told Joseph that he “must join none of them, for they were all wrong” (Joseph Smith—History 1:19). Eleven years later, after the Church was organized, the Lord testified that the Church is “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth” (D&C 1:30).

The Church is true because it is the restored Church. The Lord taught His gospel, delegated His priesthood authority, and organized His Church when He was on the earth. But these blessings were lost through apostasy. The Apostles were killed, early Church members fell away from the truth, and doctrines and ordinances were changed. Fortunately, the gospel, priesthood, and correct Church organization were restored through Joseph Smith.

The gospel. The scriptures and latter-day

■ ***The Savior’s Church, priesthood, and gospel were lost during the Apostasy but were restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith.***

■ ***Ordinances must be performed by the proper priesthood authority for Heavenly Father to accept them.***

■ ***The Church is a true and living church because the Lord guides us through living prophets and apostles.***

prophets teach us the fulness of the gospel. They teach us about the Savior, His Atonement, and the doctrines, ordinances, and covenants we need to return to Heavenly Father.

The priesthood. This authority to act in God’s name comes from the Lord. It is only given to worthy men in the Church by the laying on of hands by those who hold the priesthood. Ordinances, such as baptism and temple marriage, are valid in this life and in eternity only when performed by the priesthood.

Church organization. Today we have the same Church organization that the Lord set up in His day with apostles, prophets, patriarchs, missionaries, and so on (see Articles of Faith 1:6). The prophet has the authority to lead the kingdom of God on earth.

Only in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can we receive the true teachings, essential ordinances, and opportunities to serve that help us return to Heavenly Father.

Because Heavenly Father loves His children



READERS

wherever they are, He inspires them as well. Other churches have some, but not all, truth. But the Lord has only one true and living church.

One reason The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a “living church” is that the living God reveals His will to living prophets and apostles. They give us guidance suited to our times. Think of general conference or the proclamation on the family. These inspired messages from the prophets remind us that we are members of a true and living church. **NE**



This topic is brought up often in the mission field. Our statements shouldn't be offensive but need to be bold. I like to mention that churches in general are beneficial. Being continually led by Jesus Christ is what sets our church apart. We have the fulness of His gospel. This Church has the authority, doctrine, and ordinances necessary for us to return to Heavenly Father.

*Elder Nathan Le, 19, Colorado
Colorado Springs Mission*

We mean that this Church is the church that has the fulness of the gospel. Other churches have some correct principles but lack others that we have. We do not believe that we are better than members of other churches, but we do believe we have received all the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

*Kristi Dow, 16, La Verne First Ward,
La Verne California Stake*



Over time the pure teachings of Christ were changed in other churches to fit the desires of men. Although some truths remain, others have been lost. Ours is the only church that truly and fully reflects the will of the Lord as revealed to living latter-day prophets.

Michael Arnell, 16, Chesterfield First Ward,
St. Louis Missouri Stake



We mean that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only church that Jesus Christ gave authority to. We are the only church that has the authority to baptize, bless, and receive doctrine from the Lord. No other church has the authority ours does.

Carrie Davis, 15, Draper Sixth Ward,
Sandy Utah Hidden Valley Stake

The Church is the same as it was in ancient times. It is the Church the Savior established in Bible and Book of Mormon times. It was established in these latter days by the Savior Himself through Joseph Smith. We also have the fulness of the gospel, and prophets are continually receiving revelation pertaining to the Church's organization and the truths of the gospel, for the Lord has said He "will do nothing, until he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (JST Amos 3:7).

Michael Holman, 17, Covina Ward, Walnut California Stake



When we say that we are the only true church, it does not mean we are the only church with truth. Most religions around the world have part of the truth. The Jews, Christians, and Muslims accept parts of the Old Testament. Some Christian churches have some of the organization of the primitive Church. Most members of other churches are good people, and we should respect them and their choice of religion.

Seth Lloyd, 18, Broomfield First Ward,
Boulder Colorado Stake



This work is true. Never doubt it. God our Eternal Father lives. Jesus is our Redeemer, our Lord, the Son of the living God. Joseph was a prophet, the Book of Mormon is of divine origin, and this is God's holy work in the earth."

— President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Closing Remarks," *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 105.



Although other churches might have parts of the truth scattered throughout them, our church is the only church on the earth that contains the full truth. We are also the only church that has the right to officiate in the roles of the priesthood.

Dianna Boren, 16, Westchester First Ward,
Westchester New York Stake

When I share with people that I know that this is the only true church, I am letting them know that religion is not just a matter of preference—it is a matter of truth. The Lord Jesus Christ organized His Church when He was on the earth, and that same Church has been restored. This true Church holds the authority of God and is directed by revelation from Jesus Christ Himself.

Sister Kristine Joy Iwamoto, 23,
Philippines Quezon City Mission



We have things other religions don't, such as the priesthood and Book of Mormon. We hold priesthood keys and have the only true prophet. We have been blessed to receive other doctrines through Joseph Smith.

Ben Smith, 14, Vista Peaks Ward, Mesa Arizona Alta Mesa Stake

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send your answer to the question below, along with your name, birth date, ward and stake (or branch and district), and a photograph to:

Q&A, New Era

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Or e-mail:

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Please respond by June 15, 2005.

QUESTION

"How do I prepare for the Second Coming?"

IN ONE SMALL MOMENT

... A GREAT
AND
A MARVELOUS
WORK
BEGAN.

(See 1 Nephi 14:7.)



KIRTLA

BY PAUL VANDENBERGHE

Church Magazines



“You’ve prayed me here, now what do you want of me?” Joseph Smith said to Newel K. Whitney upon Joseph’s arrival in Kirtland, Ohio. Their meeting took place in Whitney’s store, where items such as brooms, tools, shoes, and grain were sold.

If New York was the birthplace of the Church, Kirtland was its schoolhouse.

For eight years Kirtland, Ohio, was the primary headquarters of the Church and a gathering place for the Saints where they were schooled and organized. Kirtland was a place of persecution but also a place of great blessings.

In February 1831 the Prophet Joseph Smith first arrived in Kirtland and met Newel K. Whitney in an impressive manner. One account tells it this way:

“A sleigh containing four persons drove through the streets of Kirtland and drew up in front of the store of Gilbert and Whitney. One of the men, a young and stalwart personage alighted, and springing up the steps walked into the store and to where the junior partner was standing. ‘Newel K. Whitney! Thou art the man!’ he exclaimed, extending his hand cordially, as if to an old and familiar acquaintance. ‘You have the advantage of me,’ replied the merchant, as he mechanically took the proffered hand, ‘I could not call you by name as you have me.’ ‘I am Joseph the Prophet,’ said the stranger smiling. ‘You’ve prayed me here, now what

do you want of me?’ The Prophet, it is said, while in the East had seen the Whitneys, in vision, praying for his coming to Kirtland” (*History of the Church*, 1:146).

N. K. Whitney and Company Store

The Prophet Joseph Smith and his wife Emma lived in the Whitney store for about 18 months. And it was there that Joseph worked on translating the Bible. The Prophet also received numerous revelations in what is known as the Revelation Room above the store.

Next to the Revelation Room is the room where the School of the Prophets was held; it’s Adam Jones’s favorite place in Kirtland. Adam, 17, from the Stow Branch in Akron, Ohio, lives about an hour’s drive from



Kirtland. “I really like the School of the Prophets Room,” he says. “I like the spirit there. There’s a peacefulness that testifies of what the Saints went through and what they accomplished in Kirtland to help the gospel go

forward.”

Visiting the rooms where the Prophet taught the early missionaries and where he received so many important revelations—

ND

SCHOOL OF
THE SAINTS





Adam Jones, shown above in the asbery, loves to feel the spirit that permeates the School of the Prophets Room (top, right). In this room above the Whitney store, the Prophet met with other priesthood leaders to study the gospel. Also upstairs is the Revelation Room (inset), where 17 revelations were received.

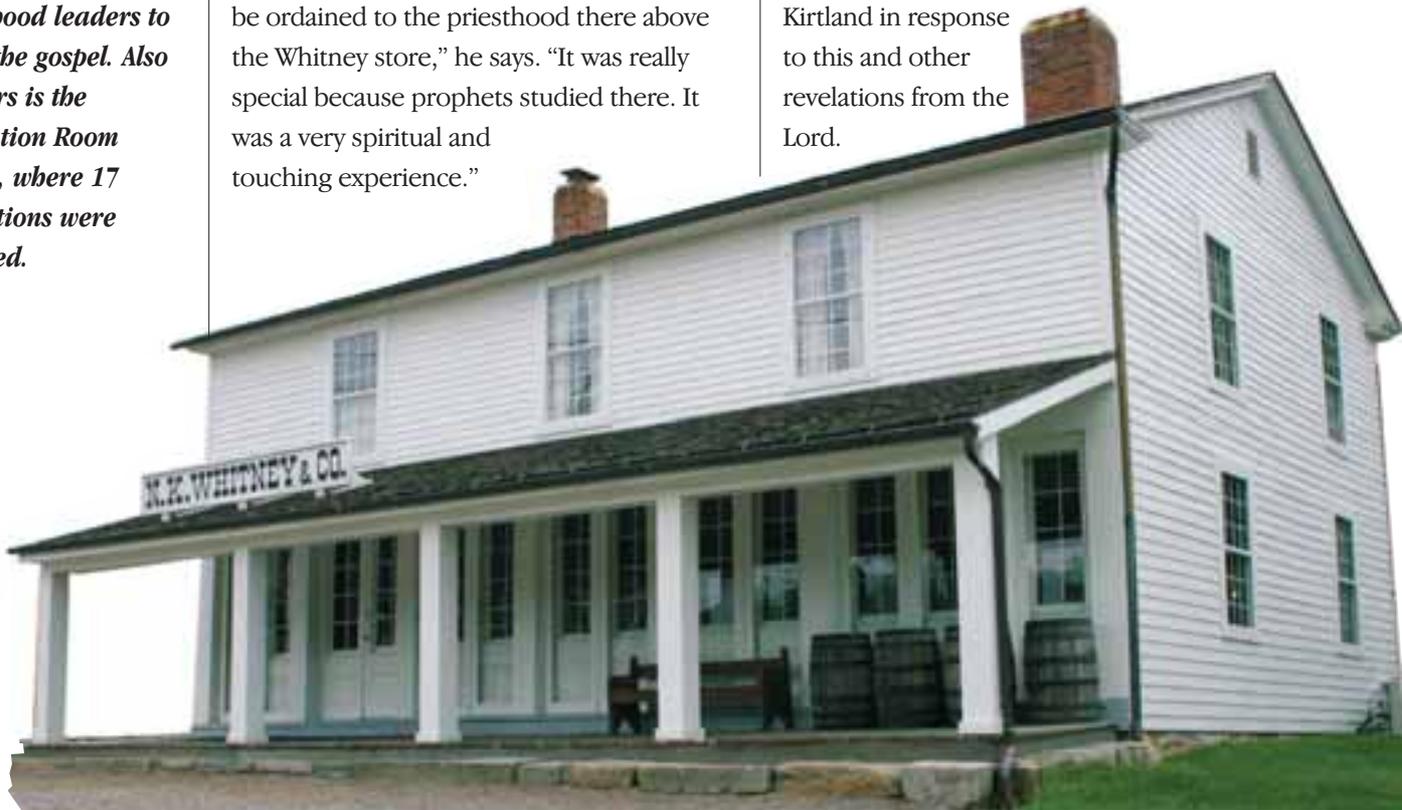
such as the oath and covenant of the priesthood (see D&C 84) and the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89)—has strengthened Adam’s testimony of the Restoration. “Being here helps your faith and helps you understand about the history of the Church.”

Clark Haymond, 17, of the Solon Ward in Kirtland has a personal connection to the School of the Prophets Room. “I was able to be ordained to the priesthood there above the Whitney store,” he says. “It was really special because prophets studied there. It was a very spiritual and touching experience.”

Schoolhouse

Another revelation given to the Prophet Joseph above the Whitney store was Doctrine and Covenants 88. In verse 118 the Lord made clear the importance of education, saying, “Seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.”

Along with the School of the Prophets, there were other schools established in Kirtland in response to this and other revelations from the Lord.





A HOME TEACHER TO THE PROPHET

Would you be a little nervous if you were called to be a home teacher to the prophet and his family? This is just what happened to William Cahoon, a young man who lived in Kirtland; and he was, in fact, a bit anxious about this responsibility.

“I was called and ordained to act as a teacher to visit the families of the Saints,” he said. “I got along very well till I found that I was obliged to call and pay a visit to the Prophet. Being young, . . . I felt my weakness in visiting the Prophet and his family in the capacity of a teacher. I almost felt like shrinking from duty. Finally I went to his door and knocked, and in a minute the Prophet came to the door. I stood there trembling, and said to him:

“ ‘Brother Joseph, I have come to visit you in the capacity of a teacher, if it is convenient for you.’

“He said ‘Brother William, come right in, I am glad to see you; sit down in that chair there and I will go and call my family in.’

“They soon came in and took seats. He then said, ‘Brother William, I submit myself and family into your hands,’ and then took his seat. ‘Now Brother William,’ said he ‘ask all the questions you feel like.’

“By this time all my fears and trembling had ceased, and I said, ‘Brother Joseph, are you trying to live your religion?’

“He answered ‘Yes.’

“Then I said, ‘Do you pray in your family?’

“He said, ‘Yes.’

“ ‘Do you teach your family the principles of the gospel?’

“He replied, ‘Yes, I am trying to do it.’

“ ‘Do you ask a blessing on your food?’

“He answered, ‘Yes.’

“ ‘Are you trying to live in peace and harmony with all your family?’

“He said that he was.

“I turned to Sister Emma, his wife, and said ‘Sister Emma, are you trying to live your religion? Do you teach your children to obey their parents? Do you try to teach them to pray?’

“To all these questions, she answered, ‘Yes, I am trying to do so.’

“I then turned to Joseph and said, ‘I am now through with my questions as a teacher; and now if you have any instructions to give, I shall be happy to receive them.’

“He said, ‘God bless you, Brother William; and if you are humble and faithful, you shall have power to settle all difficulties that may come before you in the capacity of a teacher.’

“I then left my parting blessing upon him and his family, as a teacher, and took my departure” (quoted in Marion G. Romney, “The Responsibilities of Home Teachers,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1973, 14–15).



In March of 1832, a mob dragged the Prophet Joseph from his bedroom in the John Johnson home (opposite page, bottom). He was tarred and feathered but still had the strength to preach the next morning. *Right: Sisters Robbins and Anderson, in the restored schoolhouse, feel blessed to serve in the Kirtland area.*

There were a school of the elders, a grammar school, and various private schools where adults and youth studied not only the gospel but also subjects like math, gram-

mar, philosophy, government, literature, history, geography, and languages.

Near the Whitney store is the restored Kirtland schoolhouse, a replica of the original from the early 1800s. This building served not only as a schoolhouse but also as a gathering place for the Saints to worship through prayer, music, sermons, and partaking of the sacrament.

Ashery and Sawmill

Also restored in historic Kirtland are the ashery and sawmill. The ashery was an important industry that helped the Saints raise funds to build the temple and other Church buildings. The sawmill (below) was built to cut lumber for the temple's construction.

Consecrated to the Church by Newel Whitney, the ashery is where potash and pearlash were made. Both of these ingredients were used in making items such as soap, paper, gunpowder, cloth, and glass.

Today the Kirtland sawmill is one of the few functioning sawmills from the 1830s. During construction of the Kirtland Temple, the workers would meet at the sawmill for a prayer to begin the day. Those working on the temple then walked up the hill to the temple site, while the carpentry workers went to work at the sawmill.

Kirtland Temple

While still in New York, the Prophet Joseph received a revelation from the Lord that the Saints



were to gather in Ohio. The Lord told the Prophet, "There I will give unto you the law; and there you shall be endowed with power from on high" (D&C 38:32).

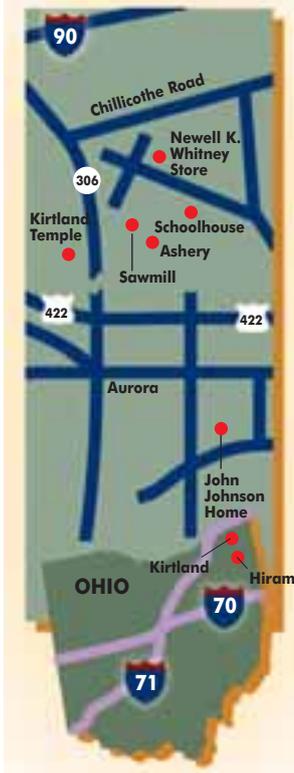
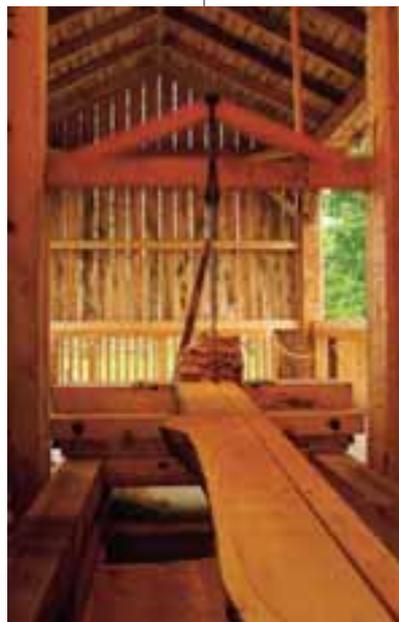
A short time later the Lord revealed the exact architecture, design, and measurements of the Kirtland Temple (opposite page, top). Construction on this, the first latter-day temple, started in 1833 and was finished after much work and sacrifice three years later.

"I love the story of how the Saints worked so hard to get that temple built," says Andrea Mann, 18, of the Solon Ward. "Every time I pass it, it's a good feeling. That's where so many important things happened."

One of the greatest occurrences in the Kirtland Temple was when the Savior, Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery

to restore important priesthood keys (see D&C 110).

Tamara Dame of the Highland Ward in Ogden, Utah, tells about visiting the temple last summer: "It was amazing to be in the room where Jesus Christ, Moses, and other prophets appeared to Joseph Smith. There aren't words to explain how I felt in that room. I was 10 or



so feet from where all these righteous leaders stood. It was the most awesome experience.”

John Johnson Home

About 30 miles (48 km) south of Kirtland is the restored John Johnson home in Hiram, Ohio. The Prophet Joseph and his family lived here with the Johnsons in 1831 for a year. During that time, Joseph continued translating the Bible and received one of the greatest revelations ever given: section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants describes how the Lord appeared to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon and taught them about the kingdoms of glory.

“I love the John Johnson home,” says Lizz Harris, 18, of the Solon Ward. “I remember going there for the first time and having a strong spiritual feeling overcome me. The Spirit is there.”

The Johnson home is also a favorite of Chris Anthony, 16, of the Stow Branch. As Chris talks about the glorious vision shared by Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon in the upstairs room of the Johnson home, he says: “I now have an actual visual perspective of where the vision happened. It’s not just words on paper that we read every day. It’s something that I’ve seen and felt.”

“I think it’s amazing what Joseph was able to do,” Chris adds. “I don’t think there’s any better example other than Jesus Christ. Next to Him, Joseph Smith is such a great example for modern-day youth.”

For the young men and women who visited these restored historic sites in Kirtland, the feelings and experiences are written deeply in their hearts. They talk reverently of the strong Spirit they felt in places where the Savior appeared and where prophets, both ancient and modern, have brought to pass a wonderful work. **NE**

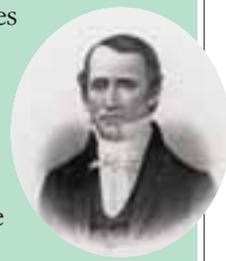


1831

In February Joseph Smith arrives in Kirtland, Ohio.

In February Edward Partridge (right) is ordained as the first bishop of the Church.

In June the first high priests are ordained at general conference.



1832

In February the revelation on the kingdoms of glory (see D&C 76) is received.

In December “the Olive Leaf” revelation (see D&C 88) is received, calling for the construction of a temple in Kirtland (right) and the establishment of the School of the Prophets.



1833

In February the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89) is

received.

In July Joseph Smith concludes the first draft of his translation of the Bible (JST).



In December Joseph Smith Sr. (left) is ordained as the first Church patriarch.

1835

In February the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles is organized (see D&C 107:23–24).

In July Egyptian mummies and papyrus are exhibited in Kirtland, Ohio; Joseph Smith purchases them, and from the writings on the papyrus, translates the Book of Abraham.

The Doctrine and Covenants is accepted as scripture.

1836

On March 27 the Kirtland Temple is dedicated (see D&C 109).

On April 3 Jesus Christ appears to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple (right). Moses, Elias, and Elijah appear and give priesthood keys (see D&C 110).



1838

In January Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and other leaders are forced to flee Kirtland, Ohio.

BY MCKAY HINCKLEY

A SNOWY DAY IN FEBRUARY

Shortly before leaving for my mission in February 2003, my father took me on a trip to a place I had always wanted to see—Nauvoo, Illinois. I was eager to see the newly dedicated temple, the Smith’s mansion, and all the other places that remain in the city the early Saints had built. Perhaps we would also be able to tour Carthage Jail.

As we made our way farther north, snow began to fall, and by the time we reached Nauvoo, we found ourselves in the middle of a blizzard. The temple was open that night, allowing us to go in and feel the wonderful Spirit there.

We checked into a hotel, and by morning our car was half buried in snow. The world had all but shut down from the blizzard the night before. My heart sank as I knew I would not get to see the rest of the city. Digging our car out of the snow, we made our way back to Nauvoo to see all we could.

As we suspected, all was shut down, and no tours would be available. However, the Lord had something

else to teach me.

We gazed across a barren Parley Street, where more than 150 years before, hundreds of wagons were lined up to leave the beautiful city.

I realized that we were there the very weekend the Saints would have begun leaving. On that bitterly cold morning with the wind howling and snow falling so hard, I developed a great respect for the early Saints and the sacrifices they made. How grateful I am to them for enduring trials so we can enjoy the blessings of the gospel today. Since that day I have decided I would not take back the lessons I learned there for anything I would have enjoyed in better weather.

I love this gospel and pray that we may all press forward as did the early pioneers. **NE**

McKay Hinckley is a member of the Plano First Ward, Plano Texas Stake.



INDEPEN



ZION IN MISSOURI

Mormon Ideals on the Frontier
1831-1839

Why did the Mormons come here? The Missouri family in its year was "Zion" for the early members of "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (Mormons). The site, the land designated by old English Joseph Smith when they first settled in a community based on righteous living and peaceful cooperation of harmony with the sacred ground of Independence, Missouri (then N.W. Corner the State) had just been to the settlement.

"If the happened to these places" The dream of a great community "Zion" had the family of Missouri in its year was "Zion" for the early members of "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (Mormons). The site, the land designated by old English Joseph Smith when they first settled in a community based on righteous living and peaceful cooperation of harmony with the sacred ground of Independence, Missouri (then N.W. Corner the State) had just been to the settlement.



DENIENCE

LIVING IN ZION

BY SHANNA BUTLER
Church Magazines

Missouri has been and will be the site of many key events in Church history. It was the location of the Garden of Eden and Adam-ondi-Ahman, where Adam gathered his posterity for a final blessing (see D&C 107:53–57). It was the place the Saints in Joseph Smith’s day started to build Zion but were violently driven out before their dreams could be realized. It is the place where the Lord Jesus Christ will return again to a New Jerusalem (see D&C 57:2–3; Articles of Faith 1:10).

And, right now, Missouri is a place where the youth of the Church are building firm foundations for the future while looking to the past for guidance.

The Temple Lot

In 1831, the Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith and others to go to Missouri, where they would receive an inheritance of land (see D&C 52:5). The Prophet dedicated the temple lot in Independence, Missouri, on August 3, 1831. Today the Church owns only a portion of that original lot. The rest is owned by other churches.

On the Church’s portion of the lot is the Independence Visitors’ Center (top, right). As you enter the center you are greeted by a large mural of Christ’s Second Coming. A quiet reverence fills the building, punctuated only by the buzz of missionaries bearing their testimonies and giving tours to visitors.

Maika Tuala (bottom, right) is a priest in the Independence Second Ward. He is preparing for a mission and has even brought an interested visitor to meet the missionaries at the center.

“It’s a privilege to live here,” Maika says. He says the modern-day Church members in Independence have a mission to spread the gospel and build up Zion.

“There are people who are looking for the gospel,” says Anita Walker (opposite page), a Laurel in the Independence Fourth Ward. “We just have to find them.”



The early Saints worked to build homes, schools, and settlements in Missouri. However, by the end of 1832, some Missourians were beginning to fear growing numbers of Mormons moving in.

Starting on July 20, mobs destroyed the Latter-day Saints’ businesses (above) and property and eventually drove them out of Jackson County in the middle of winter. The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith that they had been driven out because they were not following His commandments (see D&C 101:2–6).



PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR, EXCEPT AS NOTED; SAVING THE BOOK OF COMMANDMENTS, BY CLARK KELLEY PRICE



Adam-ondi-Ahman

Church members exiled from Independence later moved to northern Missouri. In 1838, while visiting them in Daviess County, the Prophet declared by revelation the location of Adam-ondi-Ahman (see *Church History in the Fulness of Times* [2000], 188).

Lyman Wight, one of the original missionaries to Missouri, was an early settler in Adam-ondi-Ahman (left). “He is the one that brought our family into the Church,” says Daniel Burgon, 17, of the Shoal Creek Ward. Daniel and his sisters Angela, 14, and Natalie, 12 (below), are descendants of Sanford Porter, whom Lyman Wight introduced to the gospel.

The Burgons like to go to Adam-ondi-Ahman to feel its peace and enjoy its beauty. The valley floor is now used for farmland, and the surrounding hills are deeply wooded. On the site are a few scenic overlooks, including

Spring Hill and Tower Hill. “Preacher Rock,” where the Prophet is said to have stood and taught, is a short walk off the main trail at Tower Hill. There is even a marker to show the spot where Lyman Wight’s cabin once stood.



Latter-day Saint settlements in northern Missouri, like Far West, continued to prosper in 1838, but dissension again crept into the lives of the members. A battle with the Missourians at Crooked River (above) marked the beginning of an all-out war. The Governor of Missouri, Lilburn W. Boggs, gave an extermination order against the Latter-day Saints.



Daniel, Angela, and Natalie Burgon like to go to Adam-ondi-Ahman to feel its quiet beauty. Adam-ondi-Ahman was the place where Adam gathered and blessed his righteous posterity, and it is the future site of an important millennial gathering.

THE BATTLE OF CROOKED RIVER, BY C. C. A. CHRISTENSEN; MAP BY TOM CHILD; DEDICATING THE TEMPLE LOT IN INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI, BY DALE KILBOURN; JOSEPH SMITH, JR., BY JERRY HARSTON; JOSEPH HELPS PULL A WAGON OUT OF THE SWAMPS, BY CLARK KELLEY PRICE. MAY NOT BE COPIED



1831

In July the Lord reveals to Joseph Smith that Zion, with its center in Independence, Missouri, should be the gathering place of the Saints.



In August the Prophet dedicates the temple site in Independence, Missouri.



1832

In April Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon (right) visit the members in Missouri a second time.



1834

In May the Prophet and the men who form Zion's Camp leave Kirtland, Ohio, to come to the aid of the members who had been chased out of Jackson County. They are disbanded before they enter Jackson County.



Haun's Mill

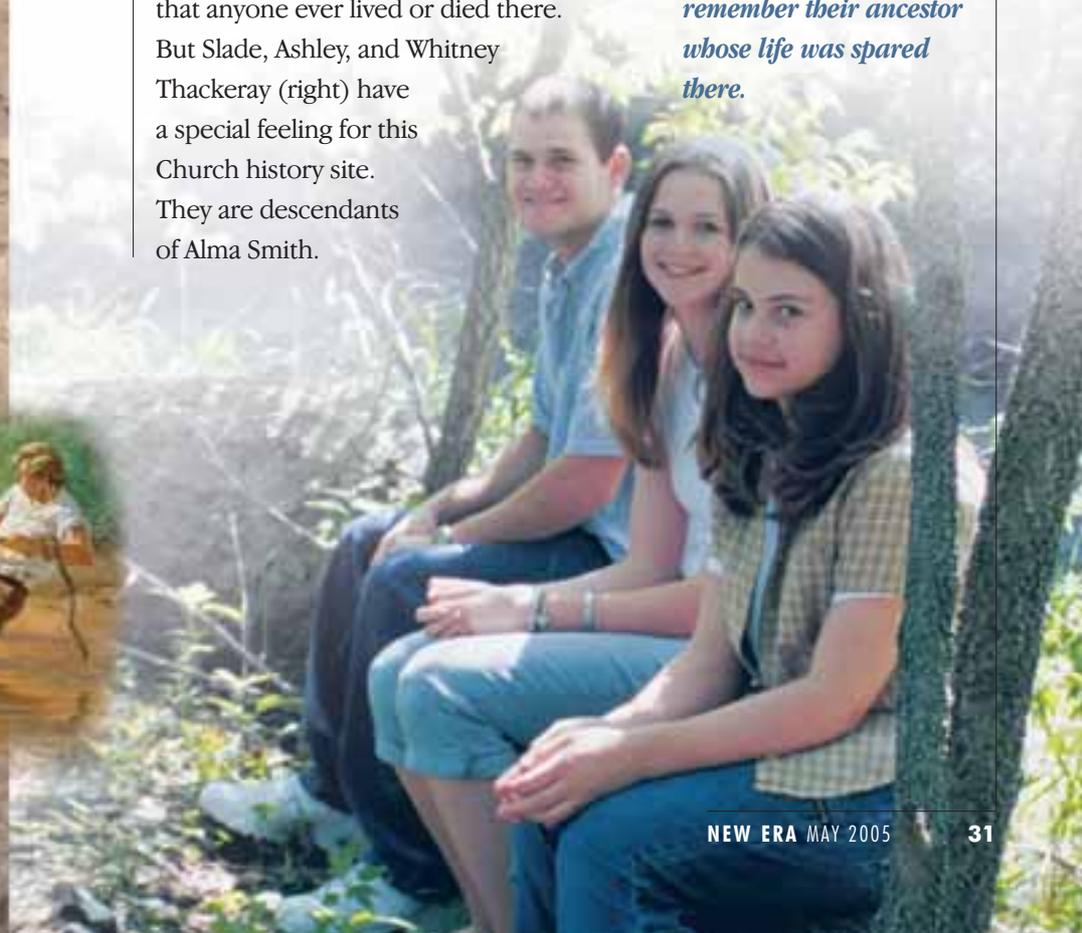
At Haun's Mill, a few miles east of Far West, the violent removal of the Saints began with full force. Jacob Haun, leader of the settlement at Haun's Mill, had disregarded the Prophet's advice to move his people out of the small settlement. On October 30, a mob came to Haun's Mill. The men living there sought protection in the blacksmith shop, but the mob shot into the shop and at everyone in sight, including women and children who were fleeing into the woods. At least 17 Saints were killed, and more than 13 were wounded.

One of the wounded was Alma Smith, age seven, whose hip had been shot out by a musket ball. His mother, Amanda Smith, found him in the blacksmith shop. Nearby were her husband and another son, both dead. She pleaded with the Lord to preserve Alma's life, and she heard a voice directing her how to heal him. He took a few weeks to recover, but Alma's hip was healed.

Today, Haun's Mill is an abandoned field, overgrown with weeds. The slow-flowing river and waist-high grass give no indication that anyone ever lived or died there. But Slade, Ashley, and Whitney Thackeray (right) have a special feeling for this Church history site. They are descendants of Alma Smith.



Above: Slade, Ashley, and Whitney Thackeray walk down the long, lonely road to Haun's Mill. Below: They sit on a fallen tree on a long-abandoned river bank where Haun's Mill used to be and remember their ancestor whose life was spared there.





Above: Joseph Smith was in Liberty Jail for four months. Below: Today, the Liberty Jail Visitors' Center allows visitors, like Becky, Joseph, and Jacob Tracy, to see what conditions in the jail were like.

Slade and his sisters know miracles are not just a thing of the past. They have seen them in their own lifetimes as well.

The first time Slade, 16, heard Alma Smith's story was in family home evening. "It changes the way I look at my family. It changes the way I pray. It has strengthened my testimony." Slade nods his head and smiles, remembering when he was very ill and was hospitalized a few months ago. "If it wasn't for prayer and priesthood blessings, I don't know where I'd be."

Liberty Jail

Before Far West was taken by the mob militia, Joseph Smith and other Church leaders were betrayed by

the colonel who led the Latter-day Saints' forces: he turned them over to the militia. The Church leaders were illegally court-martialed and sentenced to be executed. Their lives were saved the next day when a Missouri general, Alexander Doniphan, refused to obey the order.

The Prophet and five other men, including the Prophet's brother Hyrum, were sent to Liberty Jail in Clay County to await another trial. The lower level of the jail, where the prisoners were kept, was small, dirty, and had such a low ceiling that they could not stand up straight. The guards were on the floor above and lowered what little food they



JOSEPH SMITH IN LIBERTY JAIL, BY GREG OLSEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF FARR WEST, MISSOURI, BY MATT REIER; LAYING THE CORNERSTONE FOR THE TEMPLE AT FARR WEST, BY DALE KILBOURN

1838

In March the Prophet arrives in Far West and establishes Church headquarters there for a few months.

In April the Prophet receives the revelation in D&C 115 commanding the Church to build a temple at Far West. The Lord also reveals that the name of His Church should be The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In May Joseph Smith identifies Adam-ondi-Ahman (see D&C 116:1).



In October the Prophet and other Church leaders are arrested and put on trial.

On December 1 Joseph Smith, with five other brethren, including his brother Hyrum, are put in Liberty Jail.



1839

On April 16 Joseph Smith and the other prisoners are allowed to escape and rejoin the Church members who are, by now, in Illinois.



gave the prisoners through a trap door in the floor (below). The dungeon was cold, and almost no light came in through the tiny barred cell windows. They were there for four months.

Zion—The Pure in Heart

Inside the Liberty Jail Historic Site in present-day Liberty, Missouri, is a rotunda containing a replica of the jail. In the replica are mannequins representing the Prophet and his associates who were held there. Visitors can now come, sit in a semicircle around the jail, and listen to a history of what happened there.

Jacob Tracy, a priest in the Harrisonville Ward, looks down into the dungeon of the jail. At 5'11" he wouldn't be able to stand up straight if he were down there. He's looking at a replica of Hyrum Smith, his fifth-great-grandfather.

He likes to come here with his brother, Joseph, 12, and his sister, Becky, 18, (opposite page) and think about the sacrifices early Church members made. Plus, Jacob says, "Knowing the history of what happened to them can help us. We have so much to look forward to here in Zion."

Of course, these three know that Zion is not only a place in Missouri: "Thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion—The pure in heart" (D&C 97:21).

"You can live anywhere," Joseph Tracy says. "It doesn't matter where you're from."

In other words, you don't have to live in Jackson County, Missouri, to be in Zion. No matter where they live, youth of the Church can live a little closer to Zion when they build the Lord's kingdom through righteous living and giving all they have to Him (see Moses 7:18). **NE**



Historic sites in Missouri, like Liberty Jail and Far West (above), are good places to remember the sacrifices of the Latter-day Saints in Joseph Smith's day, but you can remember just as well in your own home and heart.



THEY SPOKE TO US

Last month's general conference had messages for you.

See "They Spoke to Us" in the *May Ensign* and *Liabona* for talks like these:

- ❖ See what President Gordon B. Hinckley says about poker, lotteries, and slot machines in "Gambling."
- ❖ How can you prepare now for missionary service?

Elder M. Russell Ballard gives some suggestions in "One More."

- ❖ Find out what it means to be a good friend in Kathleen H. Hughes's talk, "What Greater Goodness Can We Know: Christlike Friends."
- ❖ Why is Joseph Smith so important? President Hinckley explains why in "The Great Things Which God Has Revealed."

IT HAPPENED IN MAY

May 1, 1846: The Nauvoo Temple was publicly dedicated, with Elders Oson Hyde and Wilford Woodruff presiding.

the Church Board of Education. It was built near Granite High School in Salt Lake City, Utah.

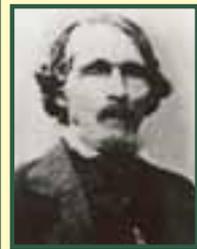
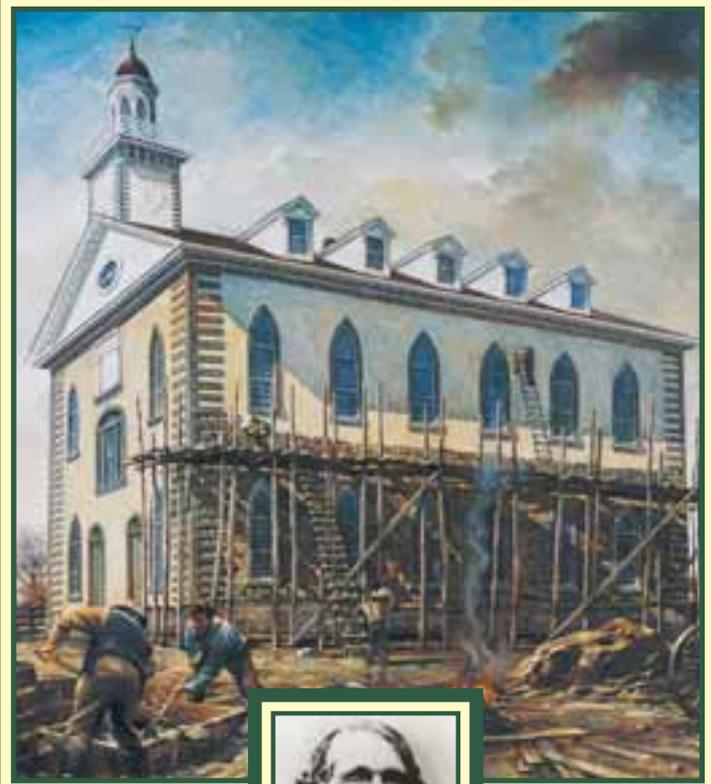
May 15, 1988: The first stake in West Africa, the Aba Nigeria Stake, was organized.

May 16, 1989: The BYU Jerusalem Center for



May 12, 1912: The first seminary of the Church (above) was approved by

Near Eastern Studies was dedicated by President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95).



"THE SPIRIT OF GOD"

This hymn of praise was written by William W. Phelps (above) for the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in 1836 and has been sung at every temple dedication since. It was sung to the tune of "Now Let Us Rejoice" (*Hymns*, no. 3) immediately

after the Kirtland Temple's dedicatory prayer. (Doctrine and

Covenants 109 is the dedicatory prayer.) We don't know who wrote the tune to which we now sing "The Spirit of God," but we do know the tune was first published in 1844 in a hymnal used by Latter-day Saint missionaries. (See *Hymns*, no. 2.)

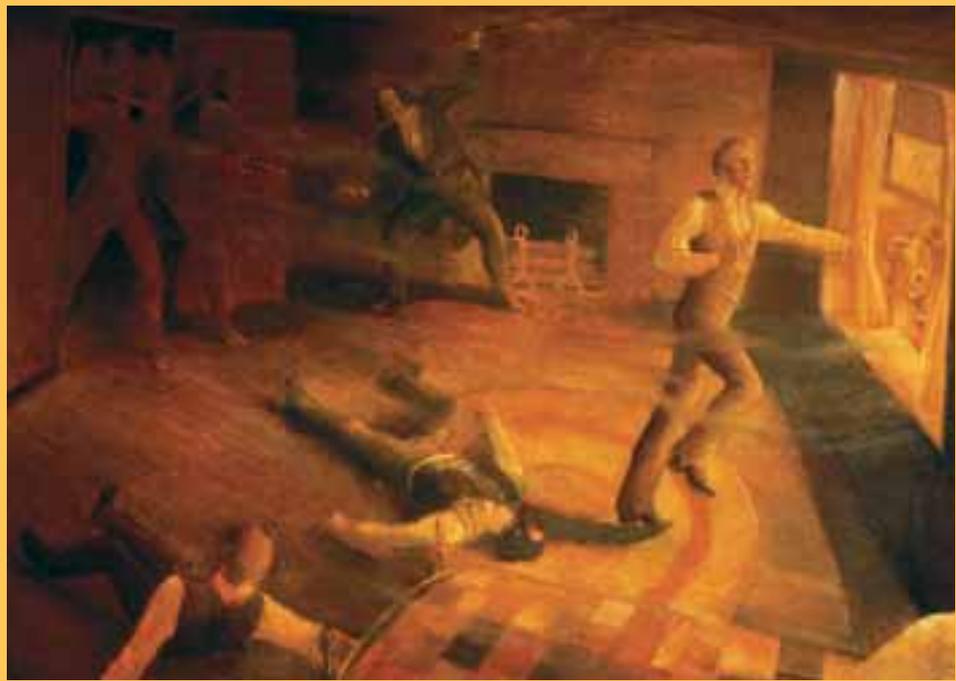
HIGH-TECH HISTORY

Want to know more about Church history? The answers are just a click away. Visit www.lds.org to tap into amazing Church history resources and get the facts in a matter of minutes. Just click

the Church History link on the home page. You will find information on Church historic sites, complete with maps, photos, driving directions, and information on what there is to see and learn at these locations.

“A testimony begins with the acceptance by faith of the divine mission of Jesus Christ, the head of this Church; and the prophet of the Restoration, Joseph Smith.”

—President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Lord, I Believe; Help Thou Mine Unbelief,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 19.



TEST YOUR LDS I.Q.

The Doctrine and Covenants is full of wonderful revelations that direct how the Church functions and offer us greater insights into the gospel of Jesus Christ. See if you can match some of these well-known revelations with the sections where they are found.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. John Taylor's account of the martyrdom | A. D&C 4 |
| 2. Eternal marriage | B. D&C 20 |
| 3. Oath and covenant of the priesthood | C. D&C 25 |
| 4. Qualifications for missionary work | D. D&C 76 |
| 5. Sacrament prayers | E. D&C 84 |
| 6. Call to Emma Smith to compile a hymnal | F. D&C 109 |
| 7. Three degrees of glory | G. D&C 132 |
| 8. The dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple | H. D&C 135 |

Answers: 1H; 2G; 3E; 4A; 5B; 6C; 7D; 8F

WRITE AWAY!

If you have a story, quiz, tip, or activity you think would look great on the What's Up? pages, why not send it to us? Other youth in the Church are always looking for fun ideas. And remember to send photos too, if you have some, to go with your article. You can submit your item to:

New Era, What's Up?
50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT
84150-3220, USA

Or e-mail us at: cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org

NAUVOO

ON THE BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI

BY JANET THOMAS
Church Magazines

More than 165 years ago, in the state of Illinois, a beautiful new town was growing up on the banks of the wide Mississippi River. This new place became bigger than any other city in the state at the time, even more populated than Chicago. Its buildings glowed in the late afternoon sun because of the distinctive red color of the brick. Grass grew green and lush because the land had once been

swampy. And high on the hill, a spectacular white temple was lovingly built by the dedicated members of this remarkable community. They called themselves Latter-day Saints.

How the city came to be is a story of faith and sacrifice. In 1839, the Saints were forced out of Missouri and followed the Prophet Joseph Smith and his family to the little town of Commerce, Illinois. Here Joseph bought land to



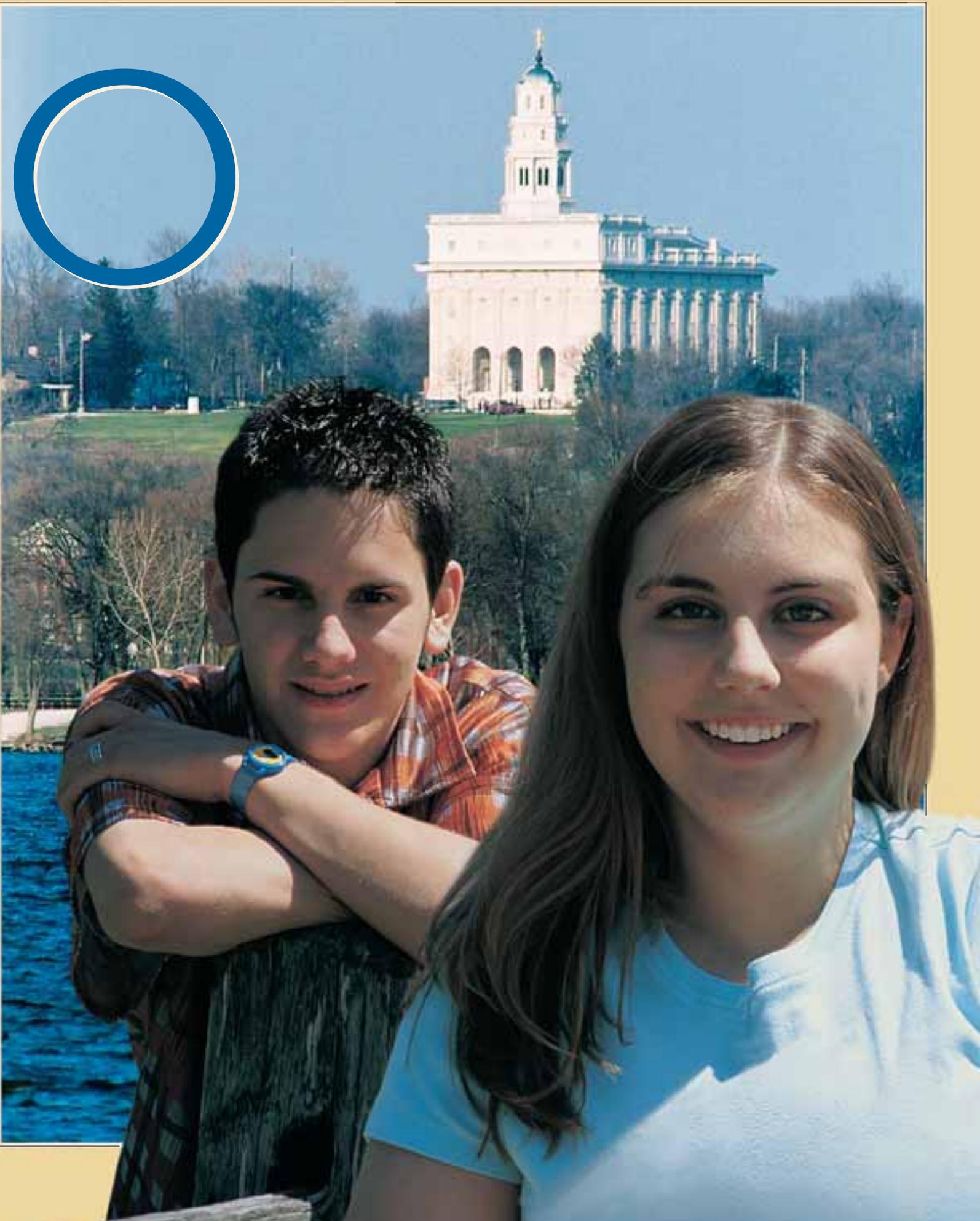
Teens from the Quincy Ward in Illinois (above). Geoff Bokish and Rachael Hills (opposite page) down the hill from the rebuilt Nauvoo Illinois Temple.

establish a settlement, a city that would be called Nauvoo.

For nearly seven years, the city grew and became one of the most pleasant in the area. But mobs harassed the Saints, making it impossible to continue living in Nauvoo. On a freezing day in February 1846, families packed their wagons, lined up

along Parley Street, and prepared to cross the river on the ice or by barge, leaving behind their homes and temple. This exodus continued until the Saints were driven out of Nauvoo in September. They were determined to find a place where they could worship as they pleased.

After the Church members left to go west, Nauvoo faded into a small farming community, yet its place in the



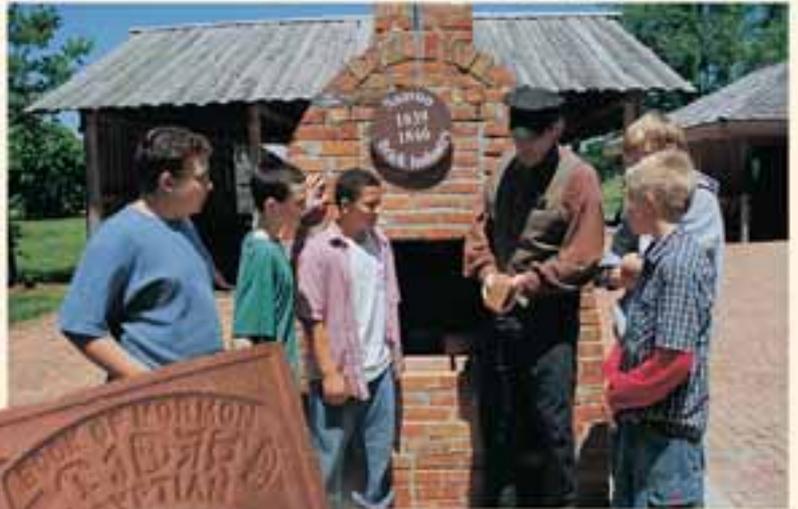
history of the Church was set. Now much of the city is being rebuilt. The Church is restoring old buildings. The temple again stands on the hill. And Church members and others are learning more of the history of what happened here.

The Nauvoo Temple

After many members of the early Church gathered to Nauvoo, they set about building a temple. In just six months, from October 1840 to April 1841, the foundation stones were set and the cornerstones were laid. The baptismal font was finished, dedicated, and put to use while the rest of the building continued to be worked on. In those days the font and the oxen were made from wood.

The temple was dedicated just as the Saints were being forced out of the city. The beautiful temple that they had worked so hard to erect was soon desecrated by mobs and set on fire by arsonists, almost totally destroying it. Eighteen months later, a tornado struck the structure and toppled the remaining walls.

Many teens who live close to Nauvoo remember what it was like before the new Nauvoo Illinois Temple was built. Brianne Bokish of the Quincy Ward says, "I remember when the temple wasn't there. There were stones marking where the corners and walls had been. My brother and I would run around, stepping on all the rocks around the whole thing. My parents took pictures of us standing in the very



center where the font had been. It doesn't seem like so long ago, but the temple is here today."

The teens in Quincy love having a temple so close to where they live. They take frequent trips to perform baptisms for the dead. Austin Rodenberg says, "I thought it was great to have a temple rebuilt that was destroyed over 100 years ago. And to actually go in it was the awesome part."

Parley Street

This long, straight street runs through old Nauvoo and directly into the Mississippi River where a ferry used to operate. It is easy to imagine the Saints lining up, waiting for their turn to cross the river heading west. Stephanie Hills says, "When I go to Nauvoo, I go to Parley Street. There's a big rock by the river where I go, and I sit and think about everything. I look back and see the temple. I cry just thinking how it must have felt to leave it."

Reed Cox also imagines what it must have been like to leave. "They had to leave their homes when they thought



1839

Joseph Smith establishes the city of Nauvoo, Illinois, for the gathering of the Saints.



1840

Construction of the Nauvoo Temple begins.



1842

The Prophet Joseph Smith organizes the Relief Society.



1844

The Prophet is nominated to run for president of the United States.

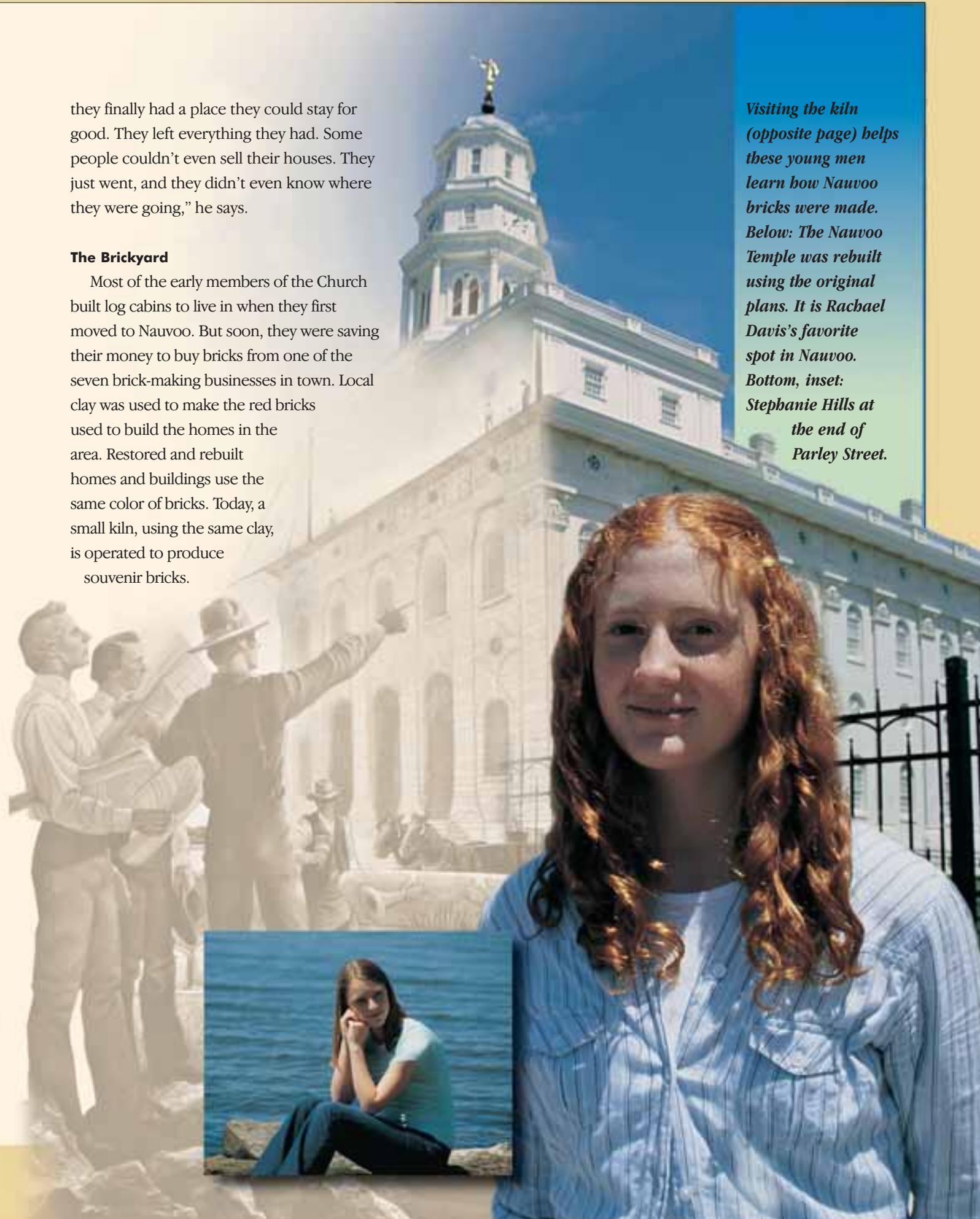
BROTHER JOSEPH, BY DAVID LINDSLEY; BUILDING OF THE NAUVOO TEMPLE, BY GLEN HORKINSON; ORGANIZATION OF THE RELIEF SOCIETY, BY ALVIN GITTINS; PATRIOTIC BANNER, © 1995, NOVA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION; JOSEPH SMITH AT THE NAUVOO TEMPLE, BY GARY SMITH; NADINE BARTON; JOSEPH SMITH, BY GARY SMITH

they finally had a place they could stay for good. They left everything they had. Some people couldn't even sell their houses. They just went, and they didn't even know where they were going," he says.

The Brickyard

Most of the early members of the Church built log cabins to live in when they first moved to Nauvoo. But soon, they were saving their money to buy bricks from one of the seven brick-making businesses in town. Local clay was used to make the red bricks used to build the homes in the area. Restored and rebuilt homes and buildings use the same color of bricks. Today, a small kiln, using the same clay, is operated to produce souvenir bricks.

Visiting the kiln (opposite page) helps these young men learn how Nauvoo bricks were made. Below: The Nauvoo Temple was rebuilt using the original plans. It is Rachael Davis's favorite spot in Nauvoo. Bottom, inset: Stephanie Hills at the end of Parley Street.



Below: Looking out a window at Carthage Jail. Brianne Bokish stands on the porch of the Heber C. Kimball home. Rebekah Davis tries to wind yarn at the Family Living Center in old Nauvoo.



Carthage Jail

A little more than 20 miles (32 km) from Nauvoo is the small community of Carthage. Carthage Jail, where Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were martyred, still stands not significantly changed in 160 years. Visitors to this place are reverent and respectful as they tour the rooms and walk up the stairs and into the small room where the Prophet, his brother, and two others were held prisoner.

Looking from the windows and imagining the crush of an angry mob on the narrow stairs, visiting teens become lost in thought as they sit for a moment in the room where the beloved Prophet of the Restoration became a martyr.

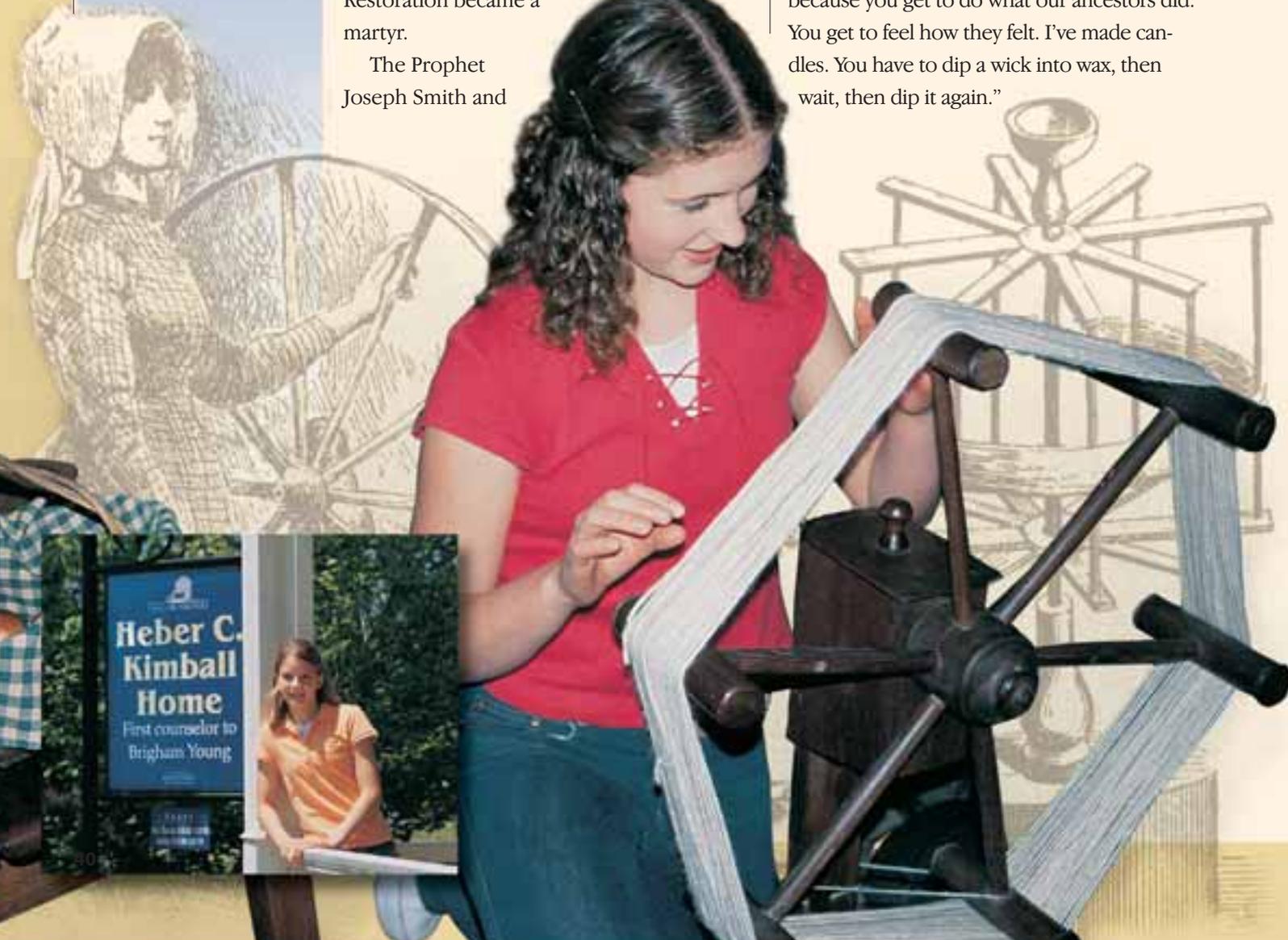
The Prophet Joseph Smith and

Hyrum are buried in Nauvoo along with other family members in the Smith family cemetery. The cemetery is a lovely spot with trees surrounding substantial granite monuments marking the graves.

The Family Living Center

What was life like in Nauvoo? The Family Living Center is a place where Church members preserve the old ways of doing things. It is one of Quintin Hansen's favorite places to visit when he and his family go to Nauvoo. "They make bread in an oven in the fireplace," he says. "They show you how to make candles and rope and barrels."

Cassandra Stewart says, "I like this place because you get to do what our ancestors did. You get to feel how they felt. I've made candles. You have to dip a wick into wax, then wait, then dip it again."





JOSEPH BIDS FAREWELL

When Joseph Smith was leaving Nauvoo for the last time on his way to Carthage Jail, one of the men with him recorded what the Prophet said as he turned to look at the city: “Joseph paused when they got to the Temple, and looked with admiration first on that, and then on the city, and remarked, ‘This is the loveliest place and the best people under the heavens; little do they know the trials that await them’ ” (*History of the Church*, 6:554).

Homemaking skills and self-sufficiency are still important in the Church.

The Cultural Hall

The Cultural Hall, one of the few buildings that survived from the original Nauvoo, was used for plays and concerts, church and business meetings, funerals and court sessions. Brigham Young performed in the first play there.

Rachael Hills says, “My favorite place is the Cultural Hall. When we took a tour, they showed us the original floor. It was a place Joseph Smith would have walked. They let you dance there because that was what the floor was used for originally.”

Heber C. Kimball Home

One of the first homes in Nauvoo to be restored was



1844

On June 27 Joseph Smith is martyred at Carthage with his brother Hyrum.



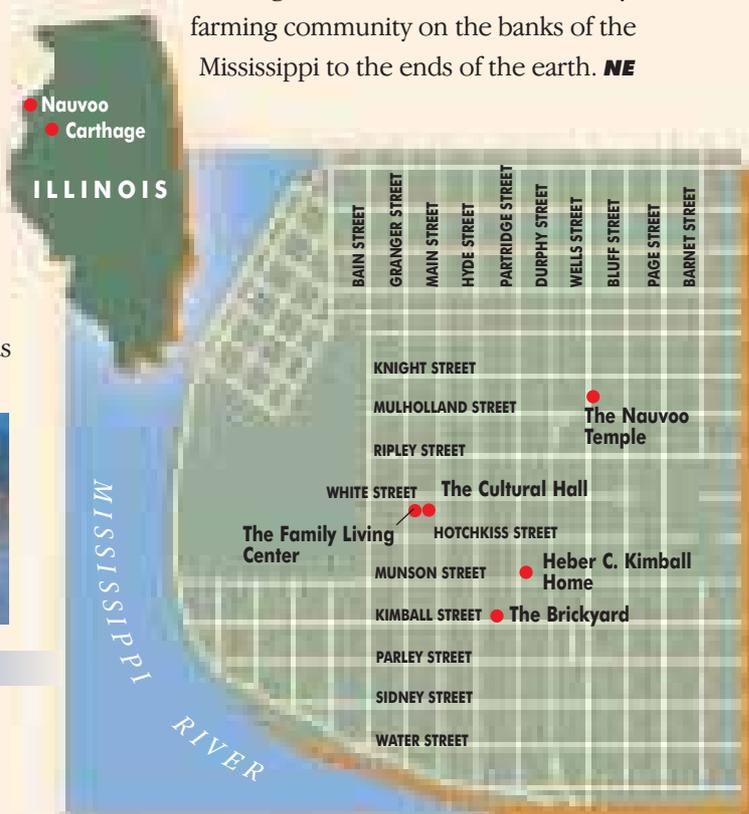
1846

The Latter-day Saints are driven out of Nauvoo.

the Heber C. Kimball home. Heber, his wife Vilate, and their three children came to Nauvoo with virtually nothing, having lost everything they owned in Missouri. Heber built two log homes before finally completing this brick home. The Kimball family lived here only four months and five days before joining the exodus from Nauvoo.

Beautiful Nauvoo is being rebuilt. Some original buildings are restored, and others have been reconstructed. Nauvoo is a precious part of the Church’s history, but it was just one of the starting places. The Church and gospel have spread across the land and across the world. Nauvoo had the first temple where baptisms for the dead, endowments, and family sealings could be performed. Now temples are being built wherever the members can fill them. Nauvoo was a gathering place for church-loving, righteous people. But now, many cities in many lands are being influenced for good by members of the Church.

Nauvoo is a beloved historic city, and the lessons learned and taught here have since traveled beyond this farming community on the banks of the Mississippi to the ends of the earth. **NE**



Tears

FOR THE PROPHET

BY SALLIJUNE ANDERSON ALLRED

When you reenact the martyrdom of Joseph Smith once and sometimes twice a day, six days a week for over three months, something happens to you.

During the summer of 2001, I had the opportunity to serve as a young performing missionary in Nauvoo, Illinois. That summer I learned that when you devote your time to the Lord, you can have amazing experiences.

Every day the young missionaries performed in the “Nauvoo Adventure”—a musical depicting the pioneers’ life from Quincy, Illinois, through their journey west. After performances people would often tell me, “It looked like you were really crying up there. You should go into acting as a career.”

I never really knew how to respond to this statement. I was crying—but I definitely wasn’t acting. When you reenact the martyrdom of Joseph Smith once and sometimes twice a day, six days a week for over three months, something happens to you.

I remember the first time I cried on stage. There I was on the ground, at the foot of a coffin made to look like Joseph Smith’s, and my body started to shake. I was no longer acting the part of a missionary. I was a missionary. I loved this man, Joseph Smith, with whom I had never talked.

A missionary once asked me what I thought about to get the tears to flow. I told him that some days I cried for the widows.

Some days I cried for the desire to do what was right. I cried because I know the truth and feel so selfish at times. I cried for spending more time in front of the mirror than studying the scriptures sometimes. I cried to say I was sorry. I cried out of sheer joy.

Day by day I became less ashamed of my tears. Toward the end of the summer, I no longer wanted to hide under a bushel, or under my bed. I wanted everyone to know the peace I felt, to know the peace that comes from having the Holy Ghost confirm the gospel is true.

I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. He still is. I felt his humble spirit pervade Nauvoo and know that he could have only done what he did by a power larger than what mortal man can muster. I know the Book of Mormon is true. I know Jesus Christ is the Savior of all mankind.

One time a little boy said to me, “Why were you so sad?” I treasured telling this little boy that sometimes it’s possible to feel so happy that you think you’re going to burst with joy. When this happens, you cry. You cry because you have found the thing you love. You can’t explain it. You just know it. **NE**

Sallijune Anderson Allred is a member of the 11th Ward, Salt Lake Central Stake.



TREASURES OF TESTIMONY

BY ELDER L. TOM PERRY

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Sometimes we attach less value to familiar things because they are so common to us. I challenge you to stand tall and proclaim loudly the treasured teachings of our common heritage.



I thought my lunch was embarrassing, but my friends surprised me. It turned out to be my best lunch-trading day of the entire year!

When I was in junior high, I was honored by the school administration when I was asked to become a member of the student hall patrol. On the days we were assigned to be on hall patrol, we were instructed to bring our lunch to school and eat it together. It was always a special treat, and there was always a lot of competition to see whose mother had prepared the most desirable lunch. Often we traded lunch items among ourselves.

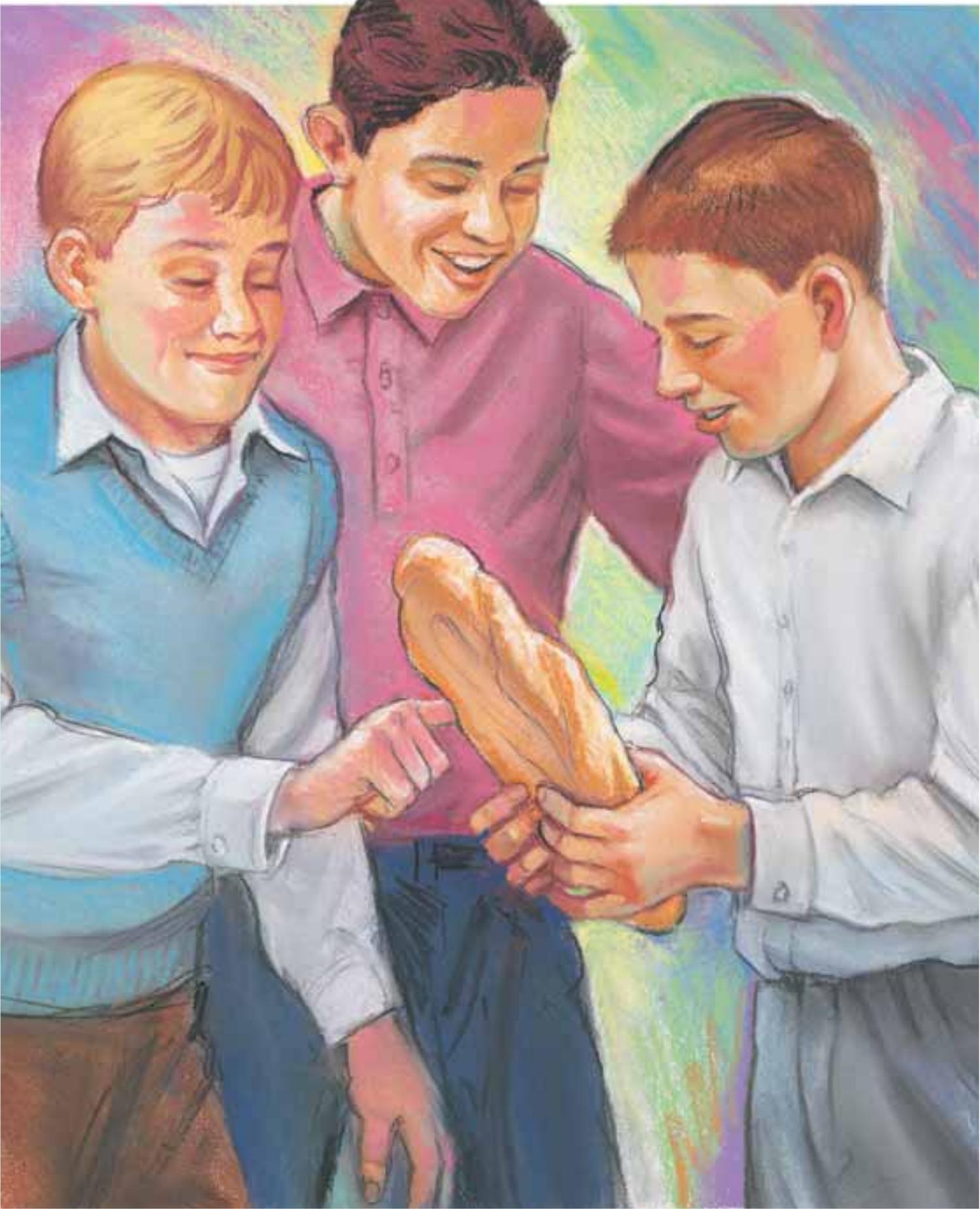
One day when I was assigned to be on hall patrol, I forgot to tell Mother I needed a lunch until I was almost ready to leave for school. An expression of concern came over Mother's face when I requested a lunch. She told me she had just used up her last loaf of bread for breakfast and would not be baking until that afternoon. All she had in the house to make a lunch was a large sweet roll left over from the previous night's supper. Mother made delicious sweet rolls. She always arranged them in a pan so there was one large one across the top of the pan and then rows of smaller ones down the length of the pan. Only the large one remained. It was about the size of a loaf of bread in length

but, of course, not in thickness. I was embarrassed to take just a sweet roll for lunch when I imagined what the other patrol members would have, but I decided it was better to go with the sweet roll than go without lunch.

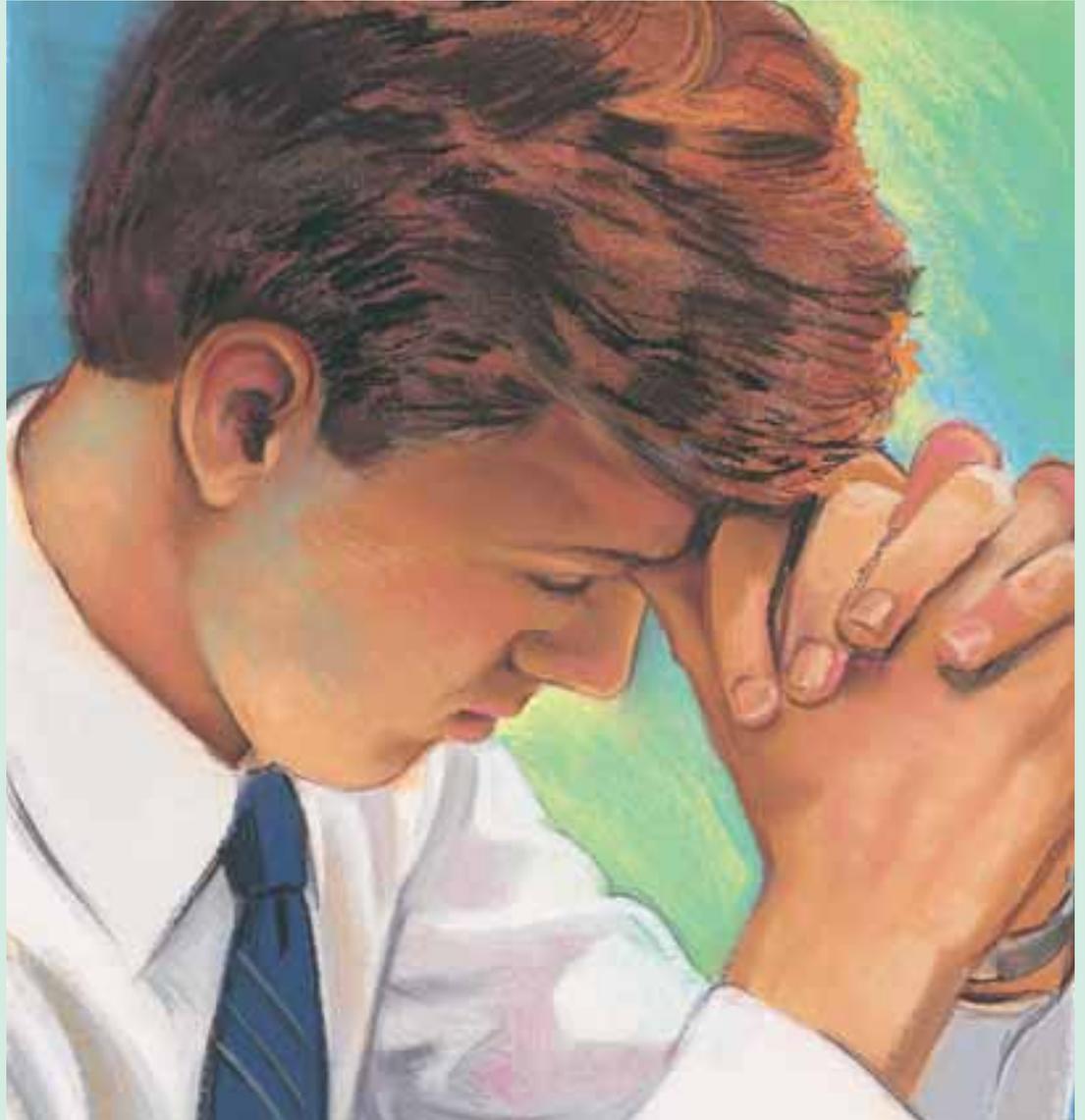
When it came time to eat lunch, I went to a far-off corner so I wouldn't be noticed. When the trading of lunches started, my friends wanted to know what I had. I explained what had happened that morning, and to my dismay, everyone wanted to see the sweet roll. But my friends surprised me—instead of making fun of me, they all wanted to have a piece of the sweet roll! It turned out to be my best lunch trading day of the entire year! The sweet roll I thought would be an embarrassment to me turned out to be the hit of our lunch hour.

As I have reflected on this experience, it has occurred to me that it is often part of human nature to attach less value to familiar things simply because they are so common to us. One of these familiar things could be our membership in the restored Church.

What the members of the Church possess is a "pearl of great price" (Matthew 13:46),



We are blessed with a great and noble heritage that offers a pathway to truth that veers dramatically from the so-called ways of the world. We need to remind ourselves of the value of our heritage so we do not underestimate its worth.



yet sometimes this priceless gem is so familiar to us that we do not appreciate its true value. While it is true we should not cast our pearls before swine, this does not mean we should not share them with people who will appreciate their value. One of the side benefits of missionary work is watching the value that others who have not previously heard about our beliefs attach to them. There is a great benefit in seeing one's treasures through someone else's eyes.

My concern is that we often take for granted the unique and valuable blessings that we have of membership in the Lord's Church, and in such a state of underappreciation we are more likely to be

complacent about our Church membership and are less valiant contributors to building a community of Saints.

We are blessed with a great and noble heritage that offers a pathway to truth that veers dramatically from the so-called ways of the world. We need to remind ourselves about the value of our heritage so we do not underestimate its worth. I challenge the Saints to stand tall and proclaim loudly the treasured teachings of our common heritage, not with a spirit of pride or boasting but with a spirit of confidence and conviction. **NE**

From an April 2001 general conference address.

D&C 135:3

Joseph Smith restored the Church and gospel of Jesus Christ to the earth. The effects of his faithfulness are still rolling forth today. John Taylor, who became the third President of the Church, wrote this description of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Read the Bible Dictionary entries for “prophet” and “seer,” and then study Joseph Smith—History. As you read his history, write down all the evidences you find that Joseph Smith was a prophet and seer. Bear your testimony of what you learn.

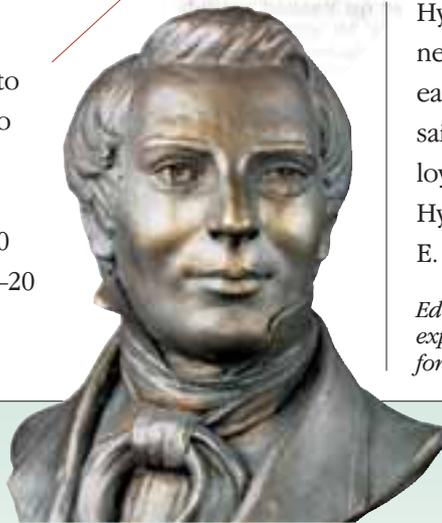
It took the Prophet Joseph Smith only about 65 working days to translate the Book of Mormon, during the time he had the gold plates (see Neal A. Maxwell, “By the Gift and Power of God,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1997, 39.)

For a Duty to God or Personal Progress goal, commit to reading the Book of Mormon in as many days as it took the Prophet to translate it. You can do it if you read about nine pages a day.

President Taylor (1808–87) was referring to North America and Europe. The Book of Mormon is now available in more than 100 languages all over the world.

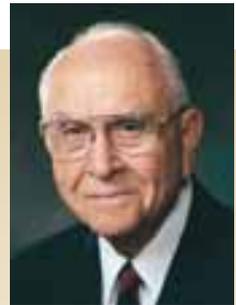
Read these scriptures to find out about others who sealed their testimonies with their deaths:

- Stephen—Acts 7:51–60
- Abinadi—Mosiah 17:7–20
- Zenos—Helaman 8:19



3 Joseph Smith, the “Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more to save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it. In the short space of twenty years, he has brought forth the Book of Mormon, which he translated by the gift and power of God, and has been the means of publishing it on two continents; has sent the “fulness of the everlasting gospel, which it contained, to the four quarters of the earth; has brought forth the revelations and commandments, which compose this Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and many other wise documents and instructions for the benefit of the children of men; gathered many thousands of the Latter-day Saints, founded a great city; and left a fame and name that cannot be slain. He lived great, and he died great in the eyes of God and his people; and like most of the Lord’s anointed in ancient times, has sealed his mission and his works with his own blood; and so has his brother Hyrum. In life they were not divided, and in death they were not separated!”

“Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. He is our Savior, our Redeemer. He is our advocate with the Father.



He is the one who died and suffered great agony, great humiliation, and great pain for us. The Restoration of the gospel is true. Someday we’ll know of the greatness of the Prophet Joseph Smith. All this work is true.”

—Elder David B. Haight (1906–2004), “This Work Is True,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 23.

The Church now has more than 51,000 full-time missionaries and has members in most countries.

Nauvoo, Illinois

Hyrum was the first to be killed in Carthage Jail. He was nearly six years older than Joseph, and the brothers loved each other dearly. President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) said of Hyrum: “No mortal man could have been more loyal, more true, more faithful in life or in death than was Hyrum Smith to the Prophet of the living God” (in James E. Faust, “Some Great Thing,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 47).

Editors’ note: This page is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of the selected scripture verses, only a starting point for your own study.

IN HIS DEBT

BY LIZZIE MILLS

The most amazing part of my trip to visit Church history sites was when my family and I went to the Smith family homestead. As I sat on the bed in a replica of the room where the angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith, I felt the pure love of God. I knew at that moment that what is

written in the scriptures is true.

That afternoon we were led through the Sacred Grove. Everything in the Sacred Grove seems spiritual, even the birds and animals. I think they must know why we come, so they sing for us as we sit and pray.

I am in awe every time I think about the amazing sacrifices of our first latter-day prophet. All of the pain and suffering must have been overwhelming, physically and spiritually: getting tarred and feathered while at the John Johnson home, losing his son Joseph because of the mobs, and being mocked and scorned almost daily. His strength seems beyond anything except for the suffering and agony endured by Jesus Christ.

I am so incredibly grateful for all Joseph Smith did. I am forever in his debt. I know he restored the gospel of Jesus Christ and translated the Book of Mormon. **NE**

Lizzie Mills is a member of the Gladstone Ward, Milwaukie Oregon Stake.

AN EXAMPLE TO THE WORLD

BY JANICE TREASURE

I've always tried to be a good example to others, but it wasn't until I read D&C 115:5 that I realized I am an example not only



IN CARTHAGE JAIL

BY KELLIEANN BURTON

One of my greatest experiences with Church history was at Carthage Jail. We had a tour of the jail and learned what happened there. As I saw the bullet hole in the door of the room where Hyrum Smith was killed and the window that Joseph Smith fell from, tears came to my eyes. Just thinking that Joseph and his brother, Hyrum,

two great men of God, had stood in that room overwhelmed me.

Now I have a better appreciation and understanding about what Joseph and others went through so we can have the true gospel and, if we are righteous, live with God again. **NE**

Kellieann Burton is a member of the Muscatine Ward, Iowa City Iowa Stake.

to my friends but to the world. People are always watching to see what I do as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

By living the teachings of the gospel and striving to maintain high values, I can "be a standard for the nations" so that people who know me will want to know why I care

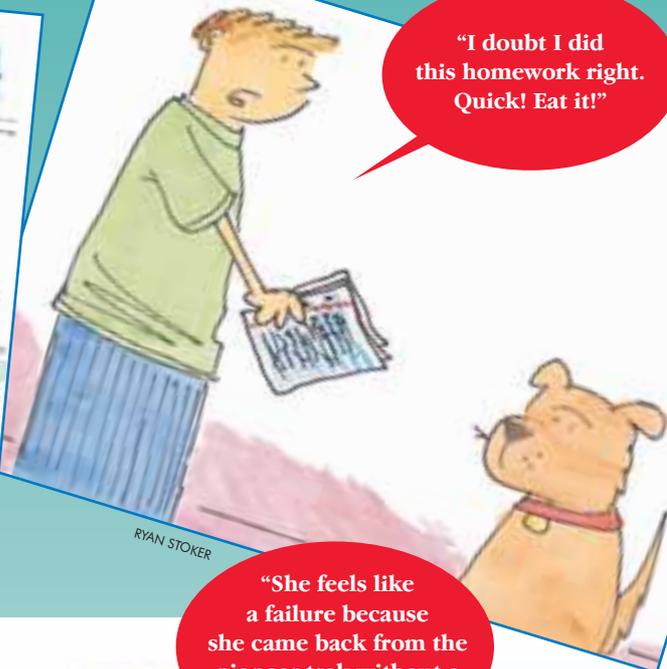
about my religion. I want to live my life in such a way that I can "shine forth" and share the gospel with others. This verse has become my motto scripture, and each day I try to be an example of the Savior's love. **NE**

Janice Treasure is a member of the BYU 180th Ward, Brigham Young University First Stake.

"I know you don't want to be seen at the mall with your parents, but this is ridiculous!"



"I doubt I did this homework right. Quick! Eat it!"



"Is that really necessary?"



"She feels like a failure because she came back from the pioneer trek without a single blister."





REJOICE

BY KIMBERLY WEBB

A house of faith,
the Kirtland Temple,
shined with teardrop
shards of light.
Broken glass, china crushed,
revealed Saints' sacrifice.

A house of glory
blazed like fire, gold,
pure snow, the noonday sun.
He showed His face to humble men,
His voice like mighty oceans—
“Lift up your heads and rejoice.”

A house of God,
bathed in light, grandeur
beneath a star-splashed sky,
teaches of eternities—
reveals His sacrifice.



*“We do not worship
the Prophet. We worship God
our Eternal Father, and the
risen Lord Jesus Christ. But we
acknowledge him, we proclaim
him, we respect him, we
revere him as an instrument
in the hands of the Almighty.”*

See “Praise to the Man” on p. 4.



THE SACRED GROVE



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG DINGHO

WHAT HAPPENED HERE CHANGED THE WORLD. LET IT CHANGE YOUR LIFE.