



CHAPTER 60

The Saints Leave Nauvoo

September 1845–September 1846



After the death of Joseph Smith, the mobs thought the Church would go away. But it remained strong under the leadership of the Apostles, and Nauvoo continued to grow. This caused the mobs to try even harder to destroy the Church and drive out the Saints. The mobs printed lies about them in newspapers.



The governor of Illinois would not stop the mobs. The Saints soon realized that they would not have peace unless they left Nauvoo. The governor suggested they move far away to the west, where they would be away

from their enemies and could set up their own government. Finally the Saints agreed to leave, but they needed time to get ready.



The Saints needed to get food and clothes for the journey. They also needed to make wagons, buy oxen and other animals, and sell their homes. The Saints worked hard to get ready to leave Nauvoo.



The mobs did not want to give the Saints time to get ready. They stole things and burned some of the homes.



The Saints planned to leave in April 1846, but threats from their enemies caused them to begin leaving in February, when it was very cold.



The Saints put their things in wagons. Then they drove the wagons onto flatboats and went across the Mississippi River.

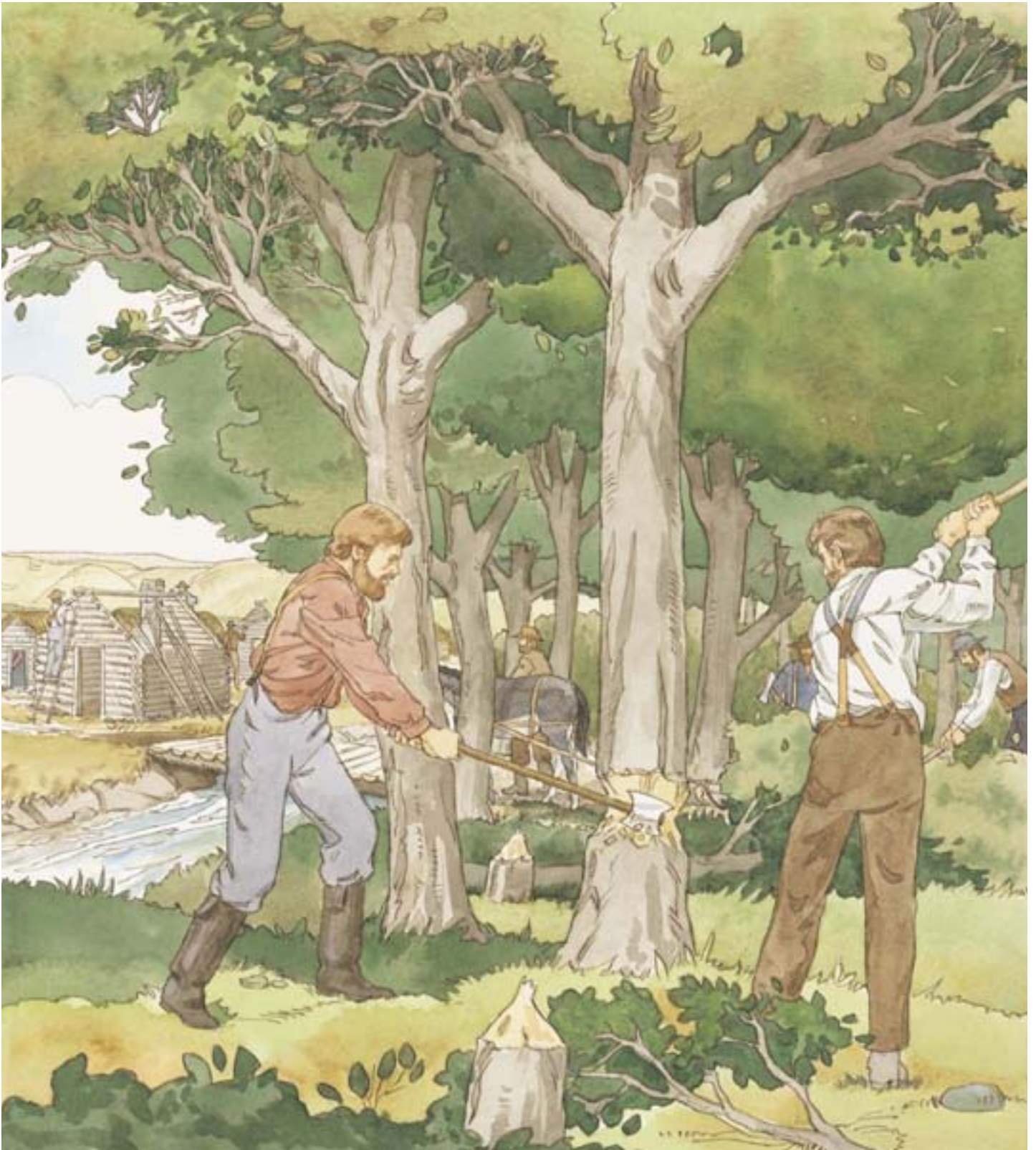


About two weeks after the first Saints left Nauvoo, it got so cold that the river froze over. Some of the Saints drove their wagons across the river on the ice.



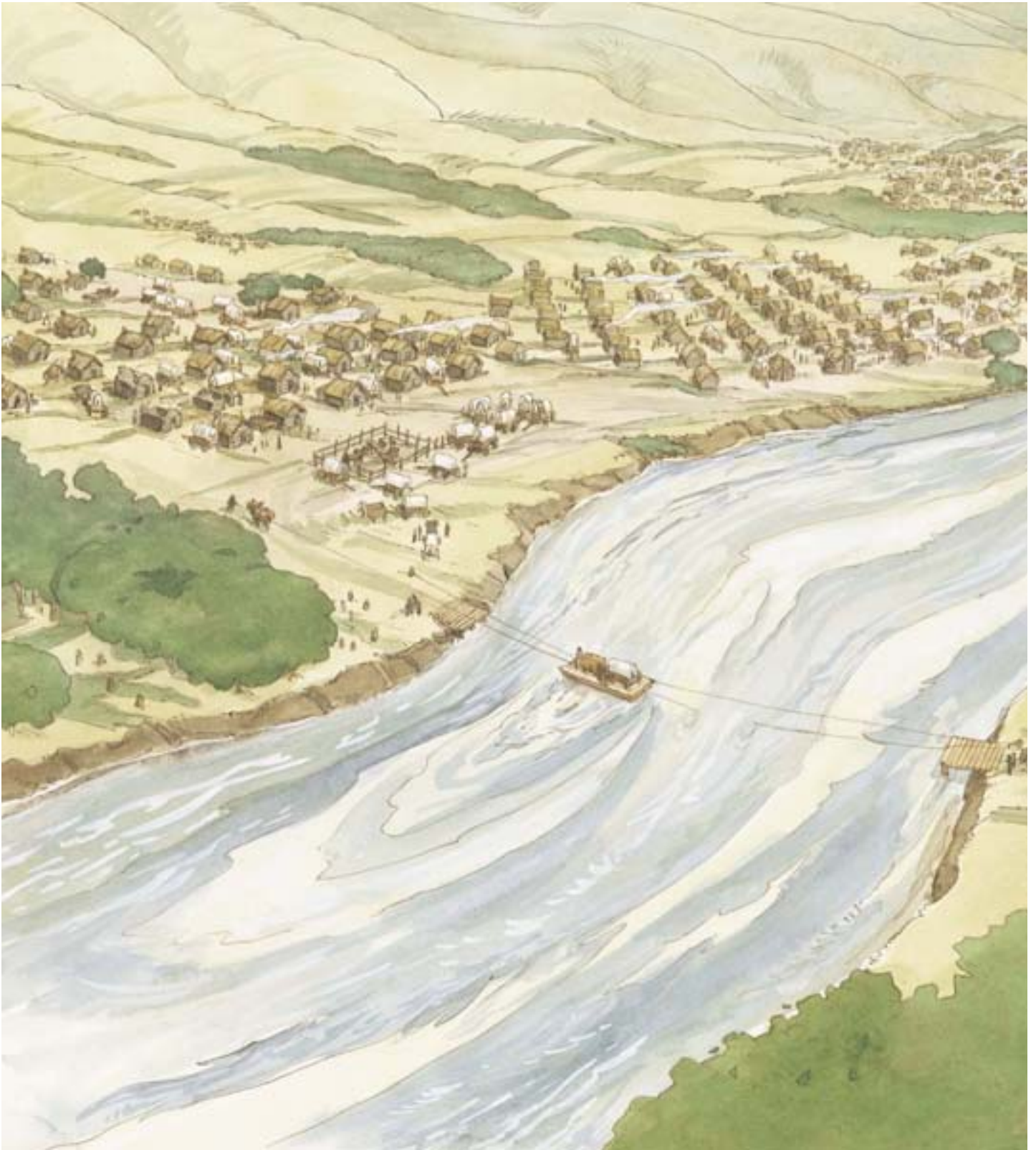
The Saints camped by the river for a few days. Some of them did not have enough clothes and were very cold. Some of them did not have enough food. Those who had enough food and clothes shared with others.

Soon the Saints moved and made another camp. Brigham Young chose leaders who helped the people get organized and prepared for the journey to the west. The Saints who were traveling to the west were called pioneers.



In March 1846 the pioneers began traveling west across Iowa. Their progress was slow because of bad weather, bad trails, and other problems. Brigham Young sent men ahead to find good places for other camps. These men

cut trees and made log cabins. They also planted crops and built bridges across streams. They made it easier for the pioneers to travel.



In June 1846, about four months after leaving Nauvoo, the first group of pioneers made it all the way across Iowa to the Missouri River. They stopped at a place called

Council Bluffs and built a ferryboat for crossing the river. Other Saints soon came to join them (see the map on page 190).



While many Saints had left Nauvoo in February 1846, many others stayed behind for a little longer. Some of them had been assigned to finish the temple. Others tried to sell some of the property. By September, most of the Saints had left the city.



As the Saints left Nauvoo, they looked back across the river and saw their beautiful city, with the temple on the hill. They were sad to leave, but they were happy they had finished the temple of the Lord.



Many of the Saints who left Nauvoo in the later months were too sick, poor, or unprepared to travel. Hundreds of them were scattered along the banks of the river and had little shelter or food. But the Lord helped them by sending flocks of small birds called quail, which the Saints were able to catch and eat.



When Brigham Young heard of the troubles of these Saints, he sent some men to rescue them. These men saved them from starvation and helped them travel to Council Bluffs and other places in Iowa where the Saints were camped.