

# The Birthplace Home of Joseph Smith Jr.

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## Introduction

On 23 December 1805, the Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. was born in the state of Vermont to Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith. Young Joseph would later translate the Book of Mormon, found The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and be widely acclaimed as one of America's great religious leaders.

The general location of the home the Prophet was born in has been known for more than one hundred years. However, for many years the style, exact orientation, and specific location of the birthplace residence has been a matter of mystery and debate. During the two hundredth

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anniversary year of the Prophet's birth many questions arose about the nature of the house he was born in and its precise location, appearance and design. This report is a response to these concerns. Archaeological study, historic photographs and other sources combine to give new insights about the birthplace home and farm.

Hopefully, this information will enable people to better appreciate the actual setting where that important birth occurred. The Joseph Smith Memorial birthplace site is located a short distance northward of Sharon, Vermont, as illustrated in figure 1.

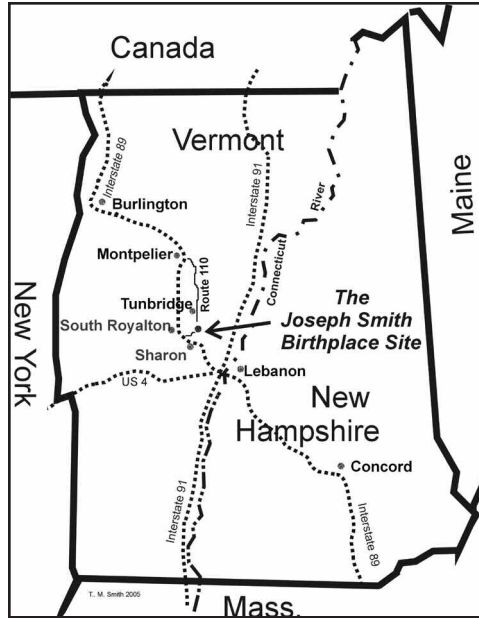


Figure 1

## Historical Sources

**Documentary Information.** Scant, but important documentary evidence on the Prophet's birthplace exists. Five sources were particularly important to our research and deserve early identification. These were (1) various materials gathered and written by Junius F. Wells during the monument project—particularly the affidavits on the Smith occupancy and the birth event, a history of property ownership, and Wells's own comments on the physical site; (2) a 1905 map of the property generated by the Church's acquisition of the property; (3) the reminiscences of Lucy Mack Smith which constitutes her history of the Prophet; (4) the brief comments made by Joseph Smith himself about his earliest years; and (5) Memorial Cottage architectural drawings and a 1907 Cottage landscape map.

As the centennial anniversary of the Prophet Joseph Smith's birthday approached considerable interest in identifying the birthplace location developed. Subsequently, an historic site acquisition and development project occurred. Junius F. Wells became the Church's agent in charge of this benchmark project of LDS Church history. A new

Memorial Cottage and monument were erected upon the birthplace site and dedicated on the Prophet Joseph Smith's birthday, 1905.

Wells gathered a number of affidavits confirming that the Smith's resided on the property and that Joseph Jr. was born in the birthplace home. They also offered information about the Smith and Mack interests. For instance, in 1905 Ebenezer Dewey, a former neighbor of the Macks who as a young boy, knew Solomon, recalled that the Mack family had occupied the home. Dewey indicated that their residency had occurred both before and after the Smith's stay and that the Prophet Joseph had been born in the home. Latent within this material are various mentions of the birthplace home and the Mack home sites which were drawn upon in a limited way for our research and will be invaluable to a future study of the wider property. A review of Wells's material leaves no doubt about the property being Solomon Mack's property and the birthplace site being the Prophet Joseph's birthplace.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, Wells recorded some birthplace home information as he built the Memorial Cottage and monument over the site. These records were both photographic and textual. This information included birthplace home foundation dimensions, measurements of the cellar, and mention of the door stoop and hearthstone. Exactly what he was measuring is not clear. That is, we are unsure if this was an exterior, interior, or centerline measure. However, the measurement difficulty did not prove critical to our assessments.

A 1905 survey of the property was undertaken as part of the project. The resulting map placed the Smith home and barn near the township's 1905 line, recorded a general orientation for the structure, and partially documented its relationship to other buildings and property lines. Also, shown was the Solomon Mack home and barn along Whitewater Brook. Of particular note was the fact that the map appeared to be the result of formal survey work and therefore accurate. This map is presented herein in simplified form in figure 2.

Lucy Mack Smith's famous history of her son, Joseph Smith Jr., is unsurpassed for the important historical detail it brings to her own family's history. Several renderings of Lucy's history are now in print. It is from her account that we learn of the circumstances leading to the brief residency on the birthplace farm. It is partly because of this important record that early interest developed in locating and commemorating the property.

In his own history, Joseph Smith records the date of his birth as 23 December 1805. He also mentions that he was born "in the town of Sharon, Windsor County, State of Vermont."<sup>2</sup> Most of the birthplace

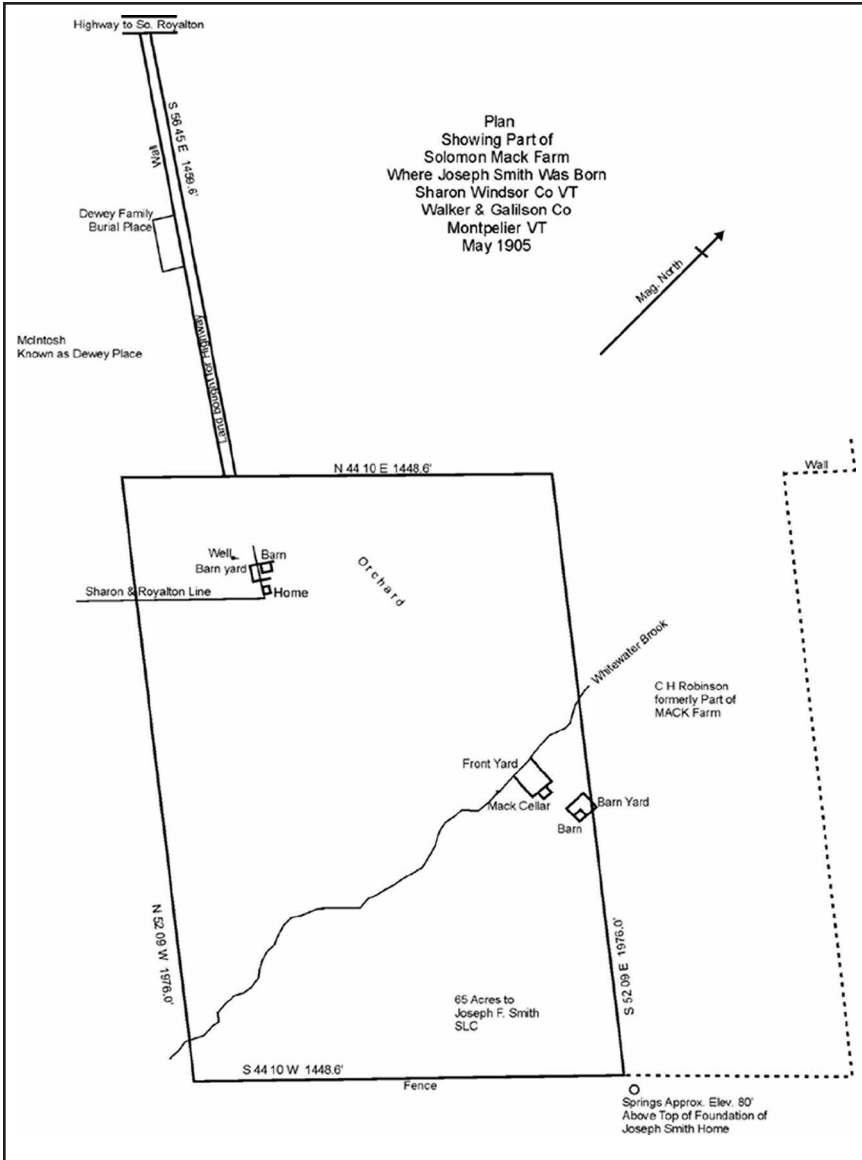


Figure 2

farm lies within Sharon Township in the context of the original township survey. Unfortunately, no direct documentation exists on the interior design of the birthplace home. Similarly, we are not told if the home was a log cabin, log home, or frame home. However, parallel evidence

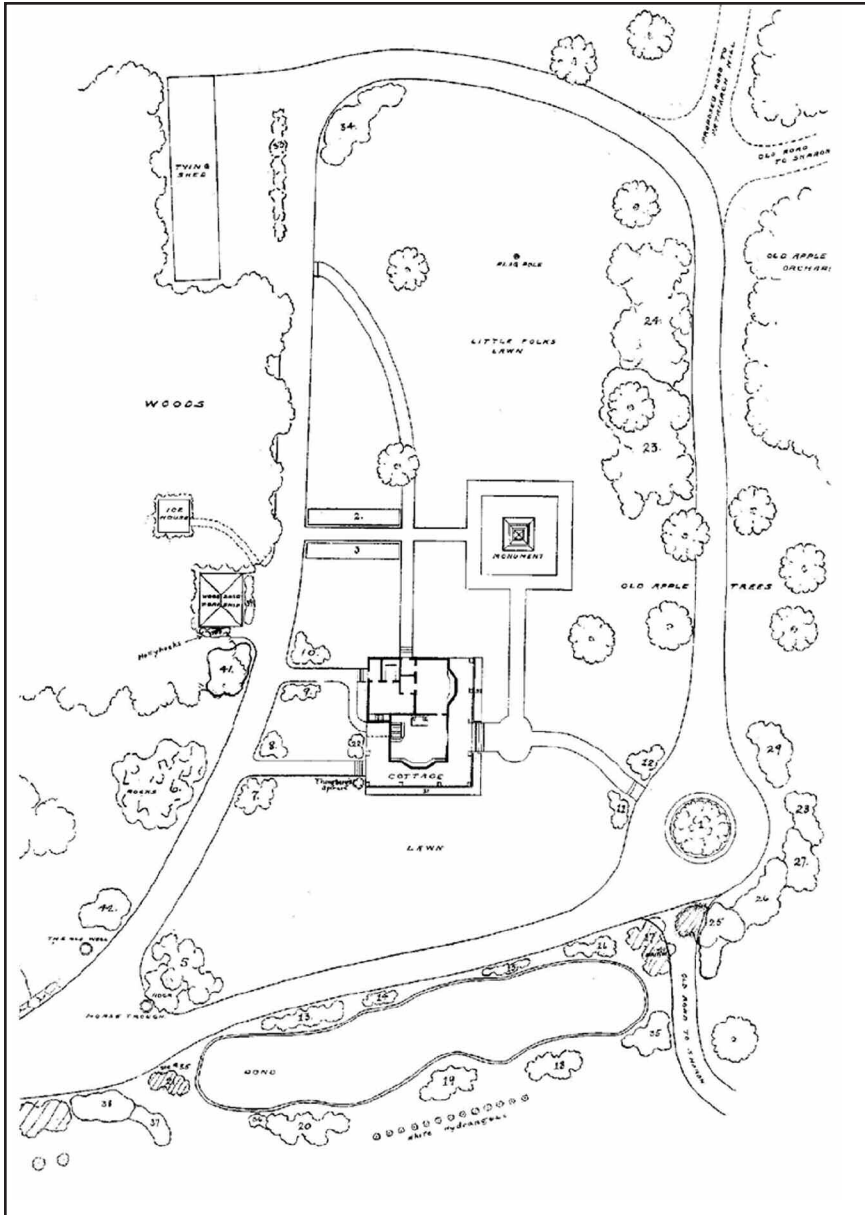


Figure 3

yields information on the construction materials, and our direct research greatly clarifies the basic interior layout.

Some have assumed that Solomon Mack built the birthplace home. Similarly, statements that the structure was a log cabin have been made.<sup>3</sup> The authors find no substantive documentary evidence for these presumptions. Ultimately, we do not presently know who built what structure or when.

As relationships between the birthplace home and the Memorial Cottage emerged within Wells's writings, the authors were fortunate to find the architectural drawings for the Cottage. These drawings, combined with a 1907 Cottage landscape plan, provided source material critical to the understanding of early LDS modifications to the birthplace site (see figure 3).

**Photographic Information.** A number of ground photographs exist of the birthplace home area. They provide particularly important documentation for this, now largely destroyed, site. These photographs were extensively drawn upon in our study and the more important images will be reviewed below. Perhaps reports such as ours will lead to the discovery of additional images which will bring forth new information. As will be noted below, our interest in old photographs should include those of the surrounding properties, for some of the present Memorial farm's old structures became portions of other nearby farm buildings.

**Archaeological Information.** As mentioned, no archaeological excavations have ever been done at the birthplace home locality, although limited archaeological work has occurred elsewhere on the property by author Smith.<sup>4</sup> Extensive disturbances accompanied the Memorial Cottage and 1960s Bureau of Information construction events, making the likelihood of important data recovery at the birthplace site problematic. However, signatures for the Memorial Cottage structure should remain, as perhaps do elements of the birthplace home's foundations. Fortunately, the hearthstone and doorstep stones were salvaged from the foundation remains by Wells, and have been preserved and are currently available at the site for public viewing. Additionally, evidences of the adjacent barn and outbuildings could yet survive. The events associated with the Cottage and Bureau of Information renovations are imperfectly understood and could also be studied. Additional ground disturbances to historic areas should be avoided, until proper archaeological work is done.

**Parallel Information.** As the foundation stonework for the nearby traditional Solomon and Daniel Mack homes remains intact, comparing these structures with photographic data for the Smith residence is possible. Additionally, traditions of period architecture and home usage exist which were drawn upon in our analysis. These processes led to several

important new conclusions about the architecture, construction, and room usages at the birthplace home which will be developed and expressed below.

## Historical Review

**The Smiths in Vermont.** Joseph Smith Jr.'s father and mother descended from New England ancestry. By the time of Joseph Jr.'s birth they had lived in the central Vermont region for several years and had relatives who preceded them to that region. The couple met in Tunbridge, Vermont, and married in 1796. Following their marriage they lived at a number of different locations in the area before moving to Palmyra, New York, in 1816. This period of Church history has been discussed by a number of authors and is only selectively reviewed in this study to provide the reader a basic orientation to the birthplace site and early Smith history.

In terms of the history of the Church, the most significant of the Vermont residences of the Joseph Smith Sr. family is the one they briefly rented from Solomon Mack, Lucy's father, for it was here that the Prophet Joseph Smith was born. However, other residence locations are of interest, since it was during the Vermont years that most of their children were born and much of their families formative experience occurred. Lucy records in her history how these experiences helped prepare them for Joseph Jr.'s remarkable revelatory life. Alvin, Hyrum, Sophronia, Joseph Jr., Samuel, Ephraim, William, and Don Carlos were born to the Smiths while in Vermont. Katherine, born after William, was born in nearby West Lebanon, New Hampshire, and the couple's youngest child, Lucy, was born in New York State in 1821. Beyond their own children, the Smiths were attached to the area through numerous family ties and friendships. Some members of Joseph and Lucy's family would return to briefly visit friends and relatives in later years.

Joseph Smith Sr.'s father, Asael, acquired multiple tracts of land in the area and assisted his older sons Jesse and Joseph in establishing some of his posterity on those farms. Joseph and Lucy Mack had been the recipient of one of those farms, but due to a bad business experience had been forced to sell their land to meet obligations. Shortly after selling their farm they began living as tenants on Lucy's father's approximate one-hundred-acre farm in late 1803 or 1804. A part of this time Joseph Sr. also taught school to support his family. The Smiths lived at the farm for three years, during which time young Joseph, the family's fourth surviving child, was born. Eventually, the crop failures which beset New



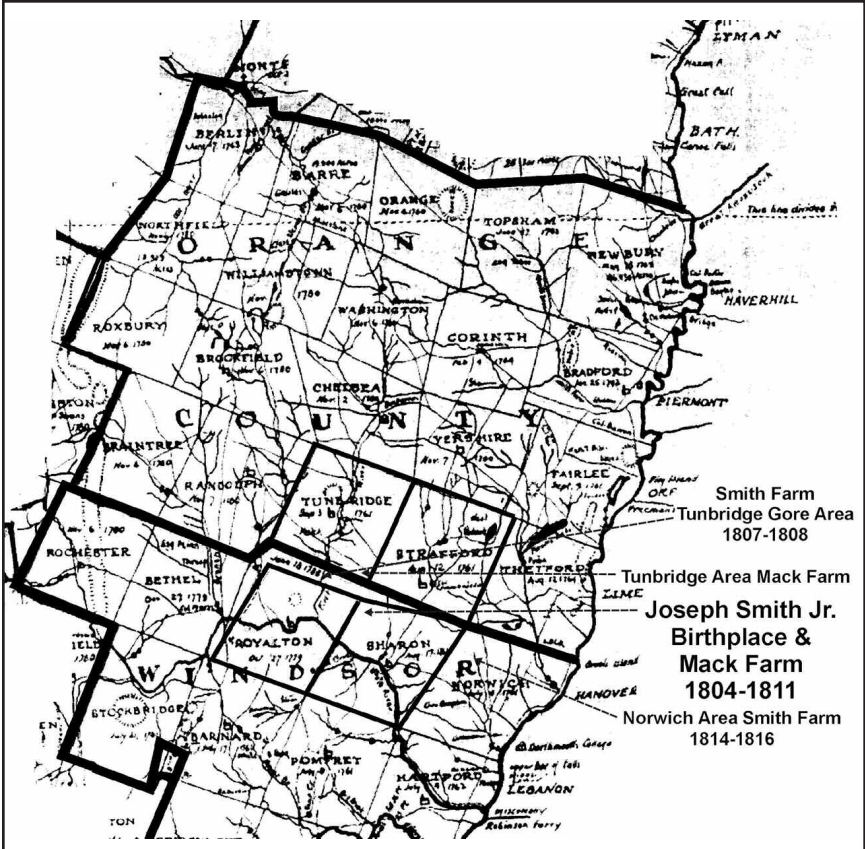


Figure 4

England in the 1814 to 1816 period, led to the family's move to Palmyra, New York (see figure 4).

**The Macks in Vermont.** In August 1804, Solomon Mack purchased a one-hundred-acre farm that lay primarily in Sharon Township. It is unlikely that he developed this one hundred acres as a farm himself, rather, he probably desired to assist his children in acquiring farm land. He was seventy-two years of age at that time and in his years previous to moving to Vermont had suffered several crippling injuries. He was described in at least one period reference as an invalid, in another as, "an infirm man who used to ride about the country, on horseback, using a woman's saddle, or what was termed a 'side-saddle.'"<sup>5</sup> Joseph Smith Sr. appears as a witness on the purchase deed for this one-hundred-acre farm, and he and Lucy, Solomon's daughter, were undoubtedly being assisted by Solomon. The couple is thought to have shortly moved onto a portion of



the farm as renters. As Joseph and Lucy were only on the farm a few years, and were without investment capital themselves, their direct impact on the landscape was probably limited.

According to a Vermont State Historic Preservation officer, property development in this part of Vermont was typically initiated by the sale of timber contracts to local saw mills followed by resale of the land to farmers.<sup>6</sup> We may anticipate that significant deforestation occurred before Solomon ever acquired the ground.

By the time of Solomon's purchase, many of the original 1761 land grants of Sharon and Royalton townships were being subdivided and reconfigured for resale. Solomon's purchase reflects the amalgamation process that was underway and that would continue through time. His one hundred acres were composed of portions of three previously surveyed properties in both Sharon and Royalton townships.<sup>7</sup> This reveals that prior to Solomon's purchase earlier settlers were developing these farms. For instance, twelve years earlier, as young men, Joseph Sr. and his brother Jesse, helped clear land in the Tunbridge Gore area, one of the last tracts of virgin land available in the area.<sup>8</sup> Such initial pioneering predated Solomon's purchase. His land would have seen similar partial clearing. The amalgamated farmland probably contained two previously erected houses, one of which was the birthplace home.

Solomon's farm was situated along a turnpike road which extended north from the village of Sharon and followed Whitewater Brook. The drainage provided a natural travel way along which the early turnpike and farm houses grew. Sharon was only three miles to the south and the turnpike linked to roads running north to Canada and south along the east coast of the fledgling United States. Solomon's sons, Stephen and Daniel, preceded him to Vermont and acquired property a short distance to the north, in Tunbridge Township.<sup>9</sup> When Solomon Mack finally settled in Vermont, he was likely interested in the Birthplace property because of its proximity to his sons' property. Joseph Smith Sr. would have been similarly interested. Joseph Sr. and Lucy's rental of sixty-eight acres of the one-hundred-acre farm helped Solomon manage his sizeable farm.<sup>10</sup> This mutually beneficial arrangement provided the Smiths with needed vocational opportunity. The birthplace residence was located along the Royalton town line near the top of the ridge west of Whitewater Brook. Another home, apparently old enough to have been of the Mack period, was centrally located in the lower "hollow" along the turnpike, a short distance to the northeast and east of that home. It is known traditionally as the Solomon Mack home and the White house, after a subsequent owner Asahel White. Given the residual foundations, it is obvious that this home was more substantial than the birthplace

home. Oral tradition holds that Solomon Mack resided there, but we have no formal documentation to support that conclusion. An affidavit given by Benjamin Latham indicates that this house and its barn were dismantled and the timbers reassembled in other nearby structures when Bela Durkee briefly owned the property in 1859.<sup>11</sup>

A third home, the “traditional” Daniel Mack home, is situated near the north end of the Church’s present acreage about half-mile north of

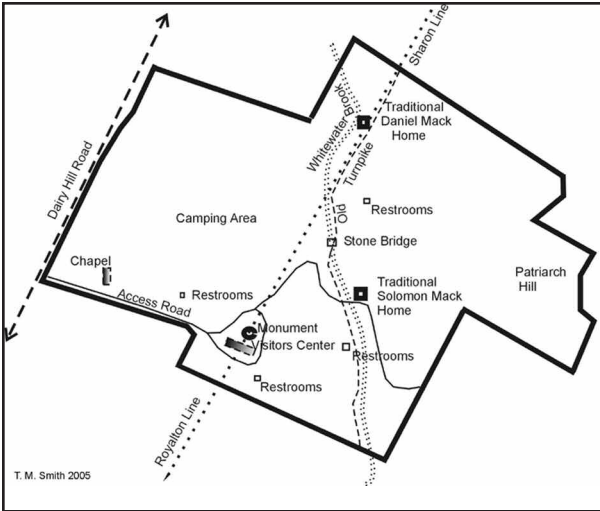


Figure 5

the Solomon Mack home, but it was not included in Solomon’s one hundred acres (see figure 5). Two of the affidavits collected by Wells mention Daniel Mack and his wife living nearby. Lucy Mack Smith mentions that after parting with her mother, when the family moved to New York, her mother lived the last few years of her life with her son Daniel. The remaining foundation stones of this home indicate that it was of similar construction to the birthplace home, but its relationship to Daniel is less than clear. He owned additional property about two miles to the north and west of his father in Tunbridge Township and may have lived there previously. While the traditional Solomon and Daniel Mack homes are long gone, their surviving foundations constitute important archaeological resources. Also, outbuilding remains have been identified at these two home sites. It is important that the archaeological remains of these sites be preserved so that the data may one day be brought to bear upon the many unanswered questions which surround the history of the Mack properties.

Just when Solomon and Lydia Mack, or Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith moved onto the farm is not known. We know the Smiths were present by the time of Joseph Jr.’s birth in late 1805, and they may have taken up residence soon after Solomon purchased the farm on 27 August 1804 for the sum of \$800, as Joseph Sr. was a witness on the property

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transfer document.<sup>12</sup> Alternatively, Solomon may have lived briefly on the farm before the Smiths arrived or concurrently with them, as the farm probably contained two residences at that time. The Smiths seemingly remained there until 1807. In October of that year they were among Tunbridge residences partitioning the legislature for relief from providing their own equipment for mandatory military service.<sup>13</sup> Solomon may have continued to live at the farm until he sold it to Daniel Gilbert on 11 May 1811 for \$500. However, one historian feels Solomon mortgaged his Vermont properties in 1807, precipitating the Smiths move to Tunbridge and subsequently to West Lebanon, New Hampshire.<sup>14</sup> Such details are presently lost to history. Solomon's actual ownership of the birthplace property appears to have extended from August 1804 until May 1811.<sup>15</sup> This would have been ample time to make improvements to the property such as clearing land, plowing fields, and planting apple trees, but such improvements have not been identified relative to those made immediately before or after Solomon's time. If Solomon had a second house constructed on the property during his ownership period, it seems that the value of the property would have appreciated over seven years time. Instead, it depreciated by \$300.<sup>16</sup> The difference between Solomon Mack's original purchase price of \$800 and its 1811 sale for only \$500 may be accounted for if he took out some of his equity to cover other debts. In the fall and winter of 1810 after the Smiths had left Vermont, Solomon Mack experienced a sort of religious conversion and published his memoirs as a booklet titled, *A Narrative [sic] of the Life of Solomon Mack, Containing An Account of the Many Severe Accidents He Met with During a Long Series of Years, Together with The Extraordinary Manner in which He was Converted to the Christian Faith*. The title page notes that it was, "Printed at the expense of the Author." One historian has suggested that the proceeds from the sale of his Sharon, Vermont, farm in 1811 likely contributed toward the printing of this booklet.<sup>17</sup>

It would be well to do a more detailed study of the history of the Mack farms and residences than this report allows. Hoping for such a study, we encourage preservation of the historic remains of these Mack homesteads along Whitewater Brook, since we are just beginning to understand the historic character of these properties.

### **LDS Church Acquisition and Development**

In 1905 the Church purchased this historical property after Junius F. Wells's thorough research examined its title and proved its identity. The acquired acreage included not only the birthplace and Mack residences,

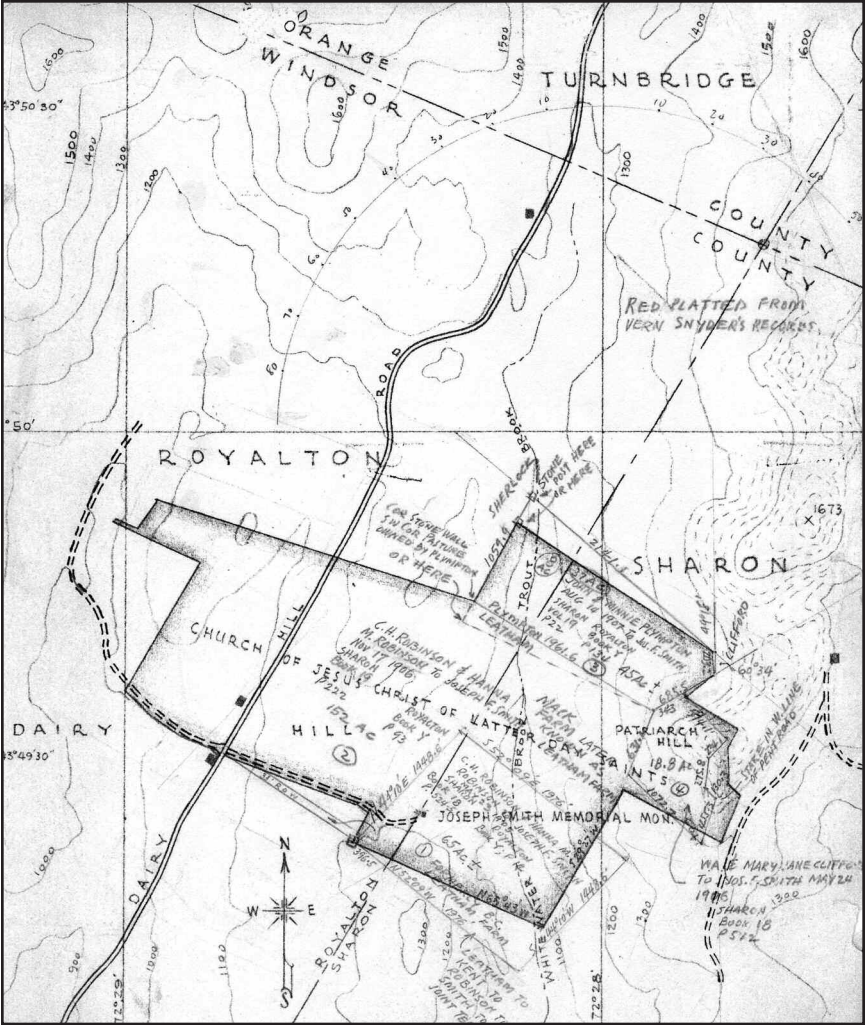


Figure 6

but also involved other lands. The four parcels acquired may be seen in figure 6. Since this initial purchase, other adjacent acreage has been added to the Church's holdings.

Following the Church's acquisition of the initial property, a Memorial Cottage was built on the site of the former birthplace home, and the famous granite monument commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the Prophet was raised. Various other outbuildings were also added. In ensuing years the property was utilized as a missionary

headquarters, historic site, and working farm.

In the 1960s the Memorial Cottage was replaced with a larger Bureau of Information and residence complex. The earlier landscaping was extensively reworked, but continued the 1905 approach of presenting the historic site as a formal European garden. This remodeling occasioned some research on the property which will be referred to in this report. In more recent years these buildings again have been remodeled and renamed to be Visitors' Center and missionary residence buildings. Connected with this work was an important 1997 resurvey of the property.

### The Birthplace Home Site Vacated

Unfortunately, the dwelling occupied by the Smith family during their residence on the farm no longer survives. After Solomon Mack sold his property the structures on it were removed. Based on affidavits taken by Junius Wells in 1905, the birthplace home could have been gone by around 1834 or even earlier, but almost certainly by 1840 or 1845. Harvey Smith, who was born in Tunbridge in 1824 and lived in the area since he was fifteen months old, offered important information about the home in an affidavit gathered by Wells. At age eighty-one, Smith recalled, "I remember old Ebenz Dewy when he died in 1834 and I knew his son Eb. who died in 1871. It was the common talk among them, after the Mormons come up and always that Joe Smith was born in the house that stood over the cellar and foundations which you now see and which have been just as they are now ever since I can remember."<sup>18</sup> Similarly, in 1905 seventy-five-year-old Maria N. Griffith stated, "[I] have picked roses around the old Smith place when a child. Never saw a house there, only the cellar and walls."<sup>19</sup> For the second half of the nineteenth century, the foundation stones were known to local residents as the place where Joseph Smith was born and remained relatively undisturbed. No new residences were built on the property by subsequent owners.

In 1905 Junius F. Wells wrote the following description of the property to President Joseph F. Smith:

The foundation stones of the farm house are still in place; also the walls of the cellar and the hearthstone and door stone; some of the stable foundation and much of stone wall that enclosed the barnyard and extended far beyond to fence off the orchard still stand. The old well, now filled with boulders, is still visible and contains water. The orchard of apple trees was quite extensive and many of the old trees, the trunks of some of them two feet in diameter, are still standing and bearing fruit. The blossoms were just beginning to burst forth from the most forward while I was

there. Dimly marked on the hillside is the grass covered road that formerly led down from the farm house to the old Sharon road, along the right bank of the White Brook, a beautiful little stream, abounding in trout, that flows through the property and about equally divides the lands of the old Mack farm. The hill, so largely covered with apple trees in bloom, surmounted by the ruins of the farm house is very picturesque and beautiful. It is an isolated, quiet, lovely sylvan spot; surrounded by some of the most charming scenery of the Green Mountains, of which varied and extended views are obtained from many points of vantage on the premise. It is probable that the place has not changed in its physical appearance for at least eighty years. It has been known to persons still living for that time as the foundation of the house in which Joseph Smith the Prophet was born.<sup>20</sup>

The birthplace home formerly stood south and slightly west of the Monument. The home's foundations and surviving surface remnants were probably removed during the construction of the Memorial Cottage. Subsequently, new outbuildings were added to the west of the Cottage in the area where earlier outbuildings had existed. A service road running between the outbuildings and the home was upgraded. In more recent years various other modifications were made to the landscape. There can be no question that these cumulative events adversely impacted the original historic landscape. The Memorial Cottage and Monument era work created an early 1900s landscape. The area was again extensively reworked during the 1960s.

No professional cultural resource study, or archaeological mitigation, was performed on any of these historic resources prior to or after the various constructions. However, at the time he purchased this property for the Church, Junius F. Wells did commission a professional surveyor and photographer to document what remained of the birthplace site before beginning construction of the Monument and Cottage. Fortunately, a number of photographs, maps, and drawings from the project have been preserved in the LDS Church Archives and show some pre-Memorial Cottage and Cottage era features. A detailed listing of the historic and prehistoric features of the wider property and post Cottage eras is beyond the scope of this report. However, it is appropriate to briefly mention the more significant known historic assets on and adjacent to the birthplace.

### **Title History**

As is typical of English colonial lands, the history of the birthplace site's land title begins with King George III and passes to the colonial Governor. Under Governor Wentworth, Sharon Township containing 22,000 acres was granted in 1761 to John Taylor and sixty-one associates. Subsequently, a drawing was held and John Downing, one of the associ-



ates, received a 127-acre parcel in the northwestern portion of the township. Downing's Lot 8 land contained most of the future Mack farm property. The balance of the future Mack property then lay west of Sharon Township in what was then the province of New York. Just to the north of Lot 8 was the 510 acres which were set aside for Governor Wentworth. That acreage rested in the northwest portion of the township.<sup>21</sup> Collectively, Downing owned many acres of land and therefore probably functioned more as a second level land speculator than a farmer. Town records of this early era speak of additional survey work being done, which no doubt facilitated the selling of property lots to farmers.<sup>22</sup>

The subsequent Mack parcel owner, David Morse, may have been the man who actually began the development of this wilderness area into farm country. However, it is possible that the subsequent owner, Samuel Shepard II actually first operated a farm on this land. He acquired a portion of the future Mack farm acreage in 1794 and other parcels in 1794 and 1796. He then held this land until 1800 when he sold to Daniel Gilbert. Interestingly, Gilbert sold the property back to Shepard four years later. Shepard then promptly sold to Solomon Mack in 1804. During this ten-year period Shepard and Gilbert are the men most likely to have developed the area as a working farm prior to the arrival of the Smiths. Did one of these men build the birthplace home?

The above overview is only part of a complicated title history, for as Junius Wells first chronicled, and, as mentioned above, the Mack farm contained acreage to the west of Sharon Township which lay in Royalton Township. Wells identified the Mack farm as having been primarily composed of a seventy-two-acre parcel which composed the western part of the original lot deeded to John Downing (Lot 8). This lot's 127 acres, was more than the usual one hundred acres. Other portions of the Mack farm included (1) a twenty-five-rod wide strip of land to the west of the seventy-two acres, which resulted from an adjustment of the original survey line; (2) a twenty-acre parcel west of the strip, which was formerly held by Joseph Parkhurst; and (3) a seven-acre parcel held by Moses Perkins which also lay to the west of the strip. Together these parcels composed about one hundred acres.<sup>23</sup> To properly understand the development of the present holdings, research would have to extend to the original farms developed on these related parcels. Such research is presently lacking. What perhaps happened is that the good agricultural ground on the relatively flat birthplace site ridge was added to the original Downing parcel, to create an improved farm. Later, when the Church acquired the land, the same pattern was repeated, and the land extending westward to Dairy Hill Road was acquired.



## The Birthplace Home

**General Location.** The general location of the birthplace home has been known, for many years, although it has been imperfectly located and poorly marked. The important 1905 and 1907 maps do indicate the general location of the home and home site to the granite monument, but Junius Wells notes its relationship to a cross point created by the intersection of the 1905 town line with the southern property boundary.

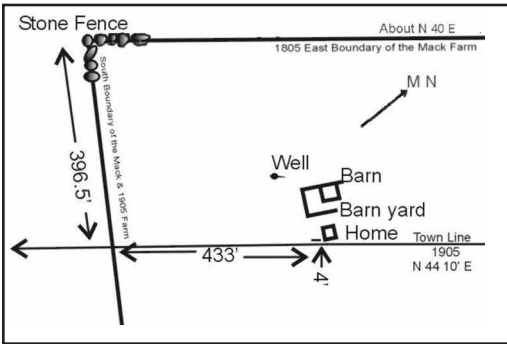


Figure 7

The town line has since been moved eastward.<sup>24</sup> The home's easterly foundations were four feet west of the 1905 town line (see figure 7).

Wells reports that the present town line crossed the southern border of the property 396½ feet east of

the old stone wall that delineated the southeast corner of the farm.<sup>25</sup> From this corner it was 433 feet on a northwesterly angle to the foundation's southeast corner. Unfortunately, a more precise angle for the later measure was not given. From this data we know about where, but not precisely where, the birthplace home was located. He also notes that old rock walls at certain corners of the property suggest the practical boundary for the property. His 1905 map records such a wall at the southwestern corner of the property. This stone wall had a slightly different, more westerly angle than the North forty-four degrees ten minutes. Apparently, this was the North forty-degree wall.

The monument is the most prominent feature of the 1905 map proximal to the home, to survive to present day. A study of ground photographs and maps indicates that the grounds around the monument have been significantly altered over time.

Maps showing the location of the Bureau of Information and residence home structures, which eventually replaced the Memorial Cottage, were prepared in the 1960s. A copy of a map prepared by Daniel A. Butler of proposed landscape and building changes, showed either the birthplace home or the Cottage in relation to the Monument and proposed new buildings.<sup>26</sup> Checking this map against the 1905 map and aerial photographs shows these various presentations appear to be consis-

tent. The building of interest was just westward of the present pathway to the Monument. Its southwest elevation was approximately halfway between the Monument and Bureau of Information, or about seventy-five feet southward of the Monument. Archaeological evidences of the Memorial Cottage site and birthplace home should be sought in that area.

**Ridge Setting.** As mentioned in our short historical review, the birthplace home was located on the crest of a ridge west of Whitewater Brook. This well-rounded ridge rises to the north, and gently slopes near its southern end. Here the home was built, on what was some of the flattest land of the one hundred-acre farm beyond the Whitewater Brook flood plain.

**Saddle/Pass Area.** The ridge has a natural saddle/pass just south of the home site and north of an adjacent sizeable hill. The saddle was a natural east-west travel way. A water well exists within it, near where the birthplace home and outbuildings once stood. A Cottage pond, Bureau of information, and Visitors' Center constructions significantly altered and expanded the form of the saddle area.

**Multiple Road Access.** The old turnpike road along Whitewater Brook provided the original primary access to the Solomon Mack farm property. In 1805, a small spur road would have connected the home on the ridge in which Joseph the Prophet was born to the Whitewater Brook turnpike. In former times the turnpike was the efficient route to Sharon, but by the mid 1800s it had been discontinued as a thoroughfare. Recent on-site reconnaissance found physical remains of the route this road originally followed along Whitewater Brook, through the now overgrown wooded area. The Dewey Hill Road provided quicker access to the village of South Royalton which displaced Sharon as the primary settlement in the area.

The current primary access road to the birthplace site is Dairy Hill Road, formerly called Dewey Hill Road after the Dewey family who lived in the area after the Smiths. This travel-way probably dates back to the early 1800s, having its birth in foot and horse paths, and then as a wagon trail which served remote farmsteads. The advent of dairy operations on many of the farms and the rise of South Royalton brought more traffic to this route at a time when the Whitewater Brook turnpike and Sharon were diminishing in importance. By the later 1800s the Dairy Hill route was clearly the chief road into the area.

In 1895, a simple wagon path extended eastward from Dairy Hill Road to the Dewey family cemetery. The path may not have extended east to the birthplace home area at that date. However, when Junius

Wells purchased the birthplace property for the Church, a roadway space was purchased sufficient to meet the anticipated traffic needs. The cemetery path was improved and extended to the saddle locality to provide access to the Cottage and Monument construction sites. The new access road was sufficient to handle the heavy construction equipment, the post construction missionary needs, and visitor traffic. Today, the modern double-asphalt road provides good access, but gives visitors a very inaccurate perception of how the birthplace home would have been accessed by the Macks and Smiths.

### Historic Photographs

Several photographs commissioned by Junius F. Wells on his various visits to the site have been preserved in the LDS Church Archives. They provided particularly important documentation for the birthplace site's foundations and our earliest views of that site. A few of the photographs document the Memorial Cottage and Monument before, during, and after their construction. These collective photographs and the 1905 and



*Figure 8*

1907 maps naturally lent themselves to the following comparative study.

**Ridge Photograph (Figure 8).** This valuable photograph is important for the overall perspective it offers. It was probably taken in the early

1900s and shows how the hillside land had been cleared of its native timber and developed as farm land. Much of the Monument's ridge is to be seen in relationship to adjacent features providing a wide perspective. The Monument, birthplace home site, related outbuildings, old stone fences, orchard fences, pastures, sheds, and farm roads may be seen at a distance. The Cottage complex is to be seen within a perimeter road. Significant alterations to the land slope in the Cottage area are seen. The new access road is partially visible. Older roads to Whitewater Brook are suggested, as are old field boundaries. After consulting the Sharon, Vermont, Quadrangle map, the birthplace site ridge is shown to run about seventeen degrees true north. The cameraman was looking southward from near the top of Patriarch Hill. Over the past one hundred years most of this ridge has been allowed to return to woodland and new constructions have significantly altered the landscape.



*Figure 9*

**Memorial Cottage Construction (Figure 9).** This revealing photograph documents portions of the extensive ground disturbance which occurred over the birthplace home site during the construction events of the monument project. The Memorial Cottage construction dominates the picture, but the base of the monument is visible to the north. Also to be seen are such things as the shallow, stony nature of the soils, stone

piles created during the construction, and general slope of the landscape. This photograph suggests what other photographs, written accounts, and observations confirm—that the monument was placed upon the high point of the ridge and the Memorial Cottage was built in the area of the birthplace home. According to Wells, the Memorial Cottage was constructed almost exactly over the home's foundations and had a basement.<sup>27</sup> Many of the soils and rocks in the picture undoubtedly came from those basement excavations. Curiously lacking is a sizable amount of dirt. This provides an opportunity to comment on the nature of the rocky Vermont farmland and the difficulty of digging in this area. Perhaps the dirt from the basement excavation was piled aside to be reused for later landscaping, or more likely, topsoil was brought in from elsewhere to create the gentle yard scape seen in the completed Cottage/Monument photographs.

**Completed Memorial Cottage—A (Figure 10).** The Memorial



Figure 10

Cottage was a handsome structure with architecture typical of its period. It served the Church well for many years. The structure is reasonably documented through photographs such as this one and Wells's descriptions.<sup>28</sup> The modified slope of the land between the previous photograph and this image is of

interest to this study. The many stone piles and rough look of the construction yard are gone. The flat open areas around the original home were probably enlarged as compared to what the old home would have had. Adjacent slopes were sculpted to create a pleasant yard and approachable residence. The general location of such features as the well, horse trough, farm roads, and new outbuilding are important items of information shown in this image. The area around the well was probably leveled and perhaps lowered. The large stones now north of the well, may have been placed within the newly created embankment. Portions of this early 1900 landscape changed considerably during the 1960s construction.

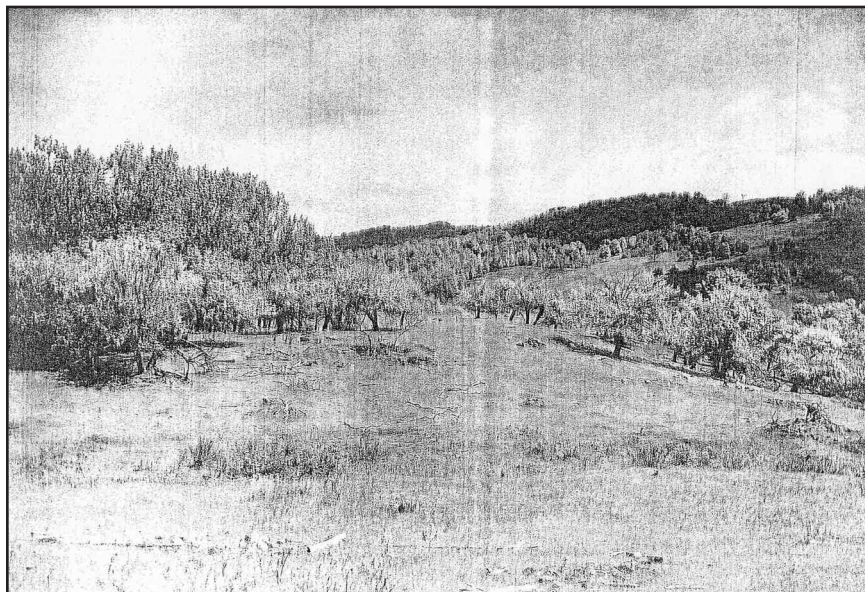


**C o m p l e t e d  
M e m o r i a l C o t t a g e - B  
(F i g u r e 1 1).**

This view of the completed Cottage offers a comparative east side view, similar to figure 9. To be noted is the considerable landscaping to achieve a pleasant and expansive country home feeling. More importantly for our study, this and the two previous Cottage photographs document the significant ground disturbance and contouring that occurred during the Cottage construction.



*Figure 11*



*Figure 12*

**Distant View of the Birthplace Home Foundation (Figure 12).** This photograph preserves a wide view of the birthplace home site prior to the construction of the Cottage complex. Taken from approximately the same location as figure 11, it provides a good comparative study. The

camera looks slightly west of north, given the relationship of the residence's ridge to the distant ridge line and adjacent Patriarch Hill. The cameraman stood off the home's gentle ridge, on the lower slope of the hill south of that ridge. This area is now the grassy hill from which many visitors photograph the Monument today. A rather gentle slope can be seen extending southerly from the home's cellar hole to the saddle. In this photograph nothing visually remains of the old home save the cellar and adjacent rocks, but their locations are clearly visible. The photograph may have been taken to document the old home site before construction began.

To be noted for our purposes here are the location of the old home relative to the slope and orchard. The "v-shaped" apple tree east of the foundations is of note. This tree and the one to the north of it provide useful reference points for orienting various photographs of this area. Foreshortening makes the sizeable Whitewater Brook drainage virtually disappear from this image. An angle measured from the intersection of the photograph's vertical and the cellar's western wall is at least thirty degrees. Given the direction of view (approximately north), we see that the foundation is orientation in the same direction as it is represented in the 1905 map. We shall examine the bearings of the map more closely later, but we note here that this photograph offers general evidence that the 1905 map is orienting the building's footprint correctly. Similarly, it provides evidence that Wells's descriptions are accurate.

**Birthplace Home Site Preparations, 1905 (Figure 13).** This interesting photograph shows the birthplace home's cellar being cleared by project workers. It clearly shows how the interior cellar wall was cut into the natural slope of the ridge and the earthen berm that clearing the cellar interior created on the exterior of the cellar. Of note is the previously mentioned v-shaped tree just a short distance to the east of the cellar. It survives into later Cottage era photographs. Also of note is the gentle slope of the land rising from the saddle and the marsh grass in the bottom of the saddle near our photographer's feet. This area was considerably reworked into a pond during the Memorial Cottage construction and then again the 1960s into a smaller reflecting pond. The cameraman stood in the low saddle area and looks up the home site ridge slightly west of north. Cleared trees and low shrubs now lay about the foundations. A section of open ground lays just to the west of the cellar and east of the tree line, suggesting an old yard, garden, corral, and/or outbuilding area as documented in Wells's 1905 map.

**Birthplace Home Cellar (Figure 14).** For this view the cameraman stood near the southwesterly corner of the cellar hole looking northeast





Figure 13



Figure 14

toward the v-shaped tree (its trunk is just below the hillside) and the tree to the north of that tree. This easterly slope was considerably leveled during the Cottage construction, probably with dirt excavated from the Cottage's basement.

In this image we clearly see the hearthstone still in position near the center of the house along the north wall of the cellar. We imperfectly see the doorstep stone behind the hearthstone, along the home's east wall line. Importantly, the cellar is seen to be longer in its east-west dimension than in its north-south dimension. Additionally, other than the large hearthstone and doorstep stones, the visible stones are of modest size, suggesting a modest sized structure. Some surface stones seem to have been disturbed overtime. Others were perhaps removed from the site. The cellar orientation, hearth and door stones, and general stone sizes are four elements which are important in obtaining a proper understanding of the birthplace home's layout.

Also of interest in this image is the small embankment southward of the cellar, the flat central chimney platform created on the northeastern side of the cellar, and the slight embankments created on the two other sides of the cellar. These earthen mounds indicate that the cellar was dug into the natural slope of the hillside and the excess earth distributed to level the foundation. No southerly access rampart is to be seen. The southern slope is modestly steep. If a doorway existed in this southern area, it would have necessitated a staircase. These mounds differ considerably from those created by Wells's cellar clearing work just reviewed in figure 13.

Behind the foundation, the ridge slopes off sharply into the Whitewater Brook drainage. Importantly, this photograph's perspective clearly shows a slightly elevated flat platform upon which the central chimney would have been built. This perspective reveals that the home was designed so that its cellar was in the southern part of the building under the kitchen. The large hearthstone would have been located directly in front of the kitchen fireplace. The other portions of the structure would have been northward of the cellar.

**Birthplace Home Site (Figure 15).** This photograph shows the same general area as the image just noted, but from the opposite perspective. That is, the cameraman took the photo looking southwestward. This view gives an even clearer idea of the position of the doorstep and hearthstones, and their relationship to each other and the adjacent northerly walls. We do not know who added the reference numbers or when they were placed on the image. Though some numbers seem to be slightly misplaced, they indicate the general location of key features and



Figure 15

are explained on the reverse side of an early print: (1) door stone, (2,2,2,2) corners of house, (3) chimney site, (4) hearthstone and (5) sumach bush growing out of cellar. Significantly, the hearthstone is located near the east-west center of the building just northward of the cellar. The chimney structures would have been located just northward of the hearth stone, probably on a stone foundation obscured by dirt, which forms the visibly flat platform. Similarly, the door step stone is visible and located along the east wall, near the north-south center of the building. This is clear evidence for a central chimney design, and strong evidence for a front door located in the easterly (southeast) wall.

**Close-up of the Birthplace Home Cellar (Figure 16).** Lastly, we include a detailed image of the cellar foundation. The cameraman stood near the cellar's southwest corner area and looked northward toward the east end of the north wall that partially supported the hearthstone (a similar angle to figure 14). Prominently seen is the large hearthstone (twenty-two by fifty-eight inches). Of particular note are the modest sizes of the other cellar stones. Many of these stones appear to be no larger than about twelve to eighteen inches in the long dimension. Obvious in the photograph are the rectangular bricks purposely set upon the hearthstone, so as to be visible in the photograph. They evidence the use of brick, probably in the chimney and/or fireplace constructions. The lack of additional brick or stone rubble at the site suggests that the chimney was dismantled and the materials reused by a subsequent owner. One per-





Figure 16

son interviewed by Wells indicated that in the mid 1800s Mack buildings were dismantled and portions reused in other nearby structures.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps the birthplace home's materials were also of high enough quality to be worth salvaging rather than simply abandoned and left to decay on the site.

### Cellar and Foundation Ruins

**Foundation Walls.** The foundation was formed from selected and shaped rock. This rock was of modest size with many stones being twelve to eighteen inches long and six to ten inches thick and perhaps twelve to eighteen inches wide. By comparison, the more substantial, perhaps one and one-half to two-story tall, traditional Solomon Mack home, utilized much larger stone. No mortar appears present in the stone work. Some of the rock probably has been lost from the site by the time of this photograph. Interestingly, the 1905 map shows the birthplace home building as a square structure. This indicates that the surveyors approximated the original footprint of the full foundation, and did not attempt to represent the obviously rectangular cellar only.

**Cellar and Home Orientation.** Determining the general orientation of the cellar can be done on the basis of the above information. Currently, the best compass orientation data for the overall home arises from the 1905 map. Photographs offer imprecise, but complimentary

comment on that orientation. However, with a house that is nearly square or about twenty-two by twenty-four feet, it would be impossible to suggest an orientation for the structure's long dimensions relative to the compass without combining the available data. Fortunately, we have the cellar measurement and photographic data to augment the map. These combined sources allow us to orient the cellar and present a general orientation for the building. Although we are not told what Wells was measuring, when he measured the cellar as eight by twenty feet, the interior versus centerline versus exterior variances are not critical to establishing the general orientation of the cellar. For convenience in presenting figures, we will assume here that he was taking an interior measurement of open (interior) space. Consequently, we can interpret the exterior long dimension as about twenty-two feet. This twenty-two-foot dimension would be perpendicular to the home's long dimension of twenty-four feet. That is, this cellar was maybe twenty feet of open space with about one foot of stone wall on each end. This combined distance composes the twenty-two-foot exterior dimension. Tellingly, the twenty-two feet are the short dimension of the home as measured by Wells. The photographic data does not present us with two feet-wide foundation walls. The photo data indicate that the stone foundation's width was relatively modest (about one foot-wide and not two feet-wide) at its upper levels. Therefore, it is very unlikely that the cellar was oriented differently than is argued here. Additionally, the orientation data within these photographs indicates that there was general northwest/southeast bearing for the cellar's twenty feet dimension.

**Cellar/Home Size.** Given the above dimensions, the cellar occupied about one-third of the floor space of the home (twenty by twenty-two feet, and eight by twenty feet). Given the near center chimney design and the pattern of foundation elements, the cellar is clearly shown to have occupied the southern portion of the home's footprint.

**Foundation and Structure Height.** Given the modest size of the foundation stone, this structure was probably not a full two stories tall. Nevertheless, it may have had a short garret/attic level, as did many such homes.

**Hearthstone and Central Fireplace.** The hearthstone seen in the photographs is thought to have been *in situ*. Its relationship to the underlying cellar stonework suggests this is the case. Previously published information listed its dimensions as about twenty-seven by fifty-four inches.<sup>30</sup> However, it was recently measured by the author Henrichsen to be twenty-two by fifty-eight inches. As the stone is currently exhibited in a mounted exhibit display at the Visitors' Center, it is impossible to

obtain the depth measurement. The authors approximate the stone at about nine inches deep. Removed and obscured adjacent stone would have helped support the chimney. The interior of the cooking hearth would have been slightly smaller than this southeast-to-northwest, near five-foot dimension. The exterior of the chimney probably would have been widest in this dimension. The chimney probably would have been slightly larger than five feet in the northeast to southwest dimensions.

The position this stone occupies in relationship to the cellar clearly indicates that the kitchen/hall was located over the cellar cavity and that the firebox was located just northward of the cellar on the flat platform. That is, this was the hearthstone for the larger kitchen hearth, not a smaller parlor hearth. The fireplace and chimney features were relatively near the center of the home. The home had a classic, near center, fireplace configuration, and the size of the large chimney argues against a primitive log cabin and for a small frame style home.

**Front Door.** The doorstep stone described in the above photographs is assumed to have been very near, or *in situ*. The position of this stone in relationship to the easterly wall stone, hearthstone, chimney platform, and cellar walls indicates that this is a reasonable assumption. This places the front door to the home slightly southward of the center of the easterly wall. The doorstep stone was measured by author Henrichsen to be twenty-four by fifty-five by nine inches.

When the Memorial Cottage was removed, the elevation of the original home site location seems to have been lowered to provide a gracious terraced approach to the monument. The door step stone is currently displayed in a small grove of trees west of the main walkway, approximately fifty feet from its original location. Although this location is slightly higher than the grassy area and probably would be closer to its original elevation, it is potentially confusing to current visitors who presume that the stone marks the location of the original home site.

## The Home's Orientation and Size

**Bearings.** The 1905 map reveals that the home was built significantly off cardinal orientation. One set of walls ran in a northeast-southwest fashion or about 30/210 degrees magnetic (1905). Consequently, the other walls were about 120/300 degrees magnetic or southeast-northwest. This later bearing is the twenty-two-foot dimension of the cellar. The former 30/120 bearing is the twenty-four-foot dimension of the house. The above photographic data is compatible with these 1905 map-derived bearings. Figure 17 presents the general relationships of the home to

magnetic north, the southern property line, and the 1905 town line.

**Motives.** The home was positioned off cardinal orientation and differently from the overall ridge orientation. This may have been done to obtain a broad, angled building presentation to the pre-

valing weather. Additionally, the building was designed to present its front to the Whitewater Brook locality. Most of the traffic would have been in that direction during the Smiths residency. A search for pathway evidence from the saddle area to the brook should be made. Photographs like figure 8 suggest possible paths formerly used. The later Dewey Road access lead to the rear of the home and was only used in post Smith times.

**Size and Gable.** Normally, a building's ridge line runs down its long dimension. We presume this building's roof did the same. The ridge of the roof would then have been along the twenty-four-foot northeast-southwest dimension and perpendicular to the cellar's long dimension.

## The Home's Layout

**Appearance and Use.** Surviving information drawn from New England house designs and floor plans from the eighteen/nineteenth centuries, photographs of the birthplace site before it was disturbed in 1905, and archaeological analogy, define a footprint and layout for the birthplace home. As developed below this data clearly defines the location of the home's main entrance, central chimney, parlor and kitchen. The evidence indicates that the footprint and layout were typical of the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century houses in New England. The central fireplaces of these typical New England farmhouses were a dividing line in the home separating daily living space (i.e., kitchen, pantry and cellar), from semiformal space (parlor/sitting room).

The birthplace home's partially intact foundations define the home's size. The stoop stone and chimney evidence points to the main entry. The hearthstone, still in its original location, defined kitchen space, a probable pantry location, and possible backdoor positions. Additional interior detail must remain a matter of opinion and speculation, although it is probable that a steep stair accessed a sloped ceiling upper room,

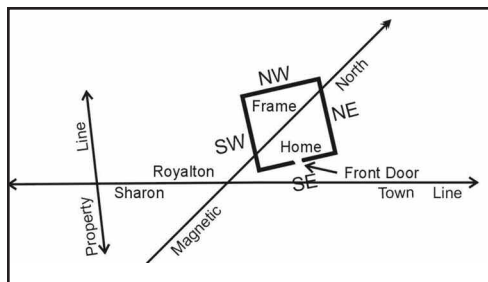


Figure 17



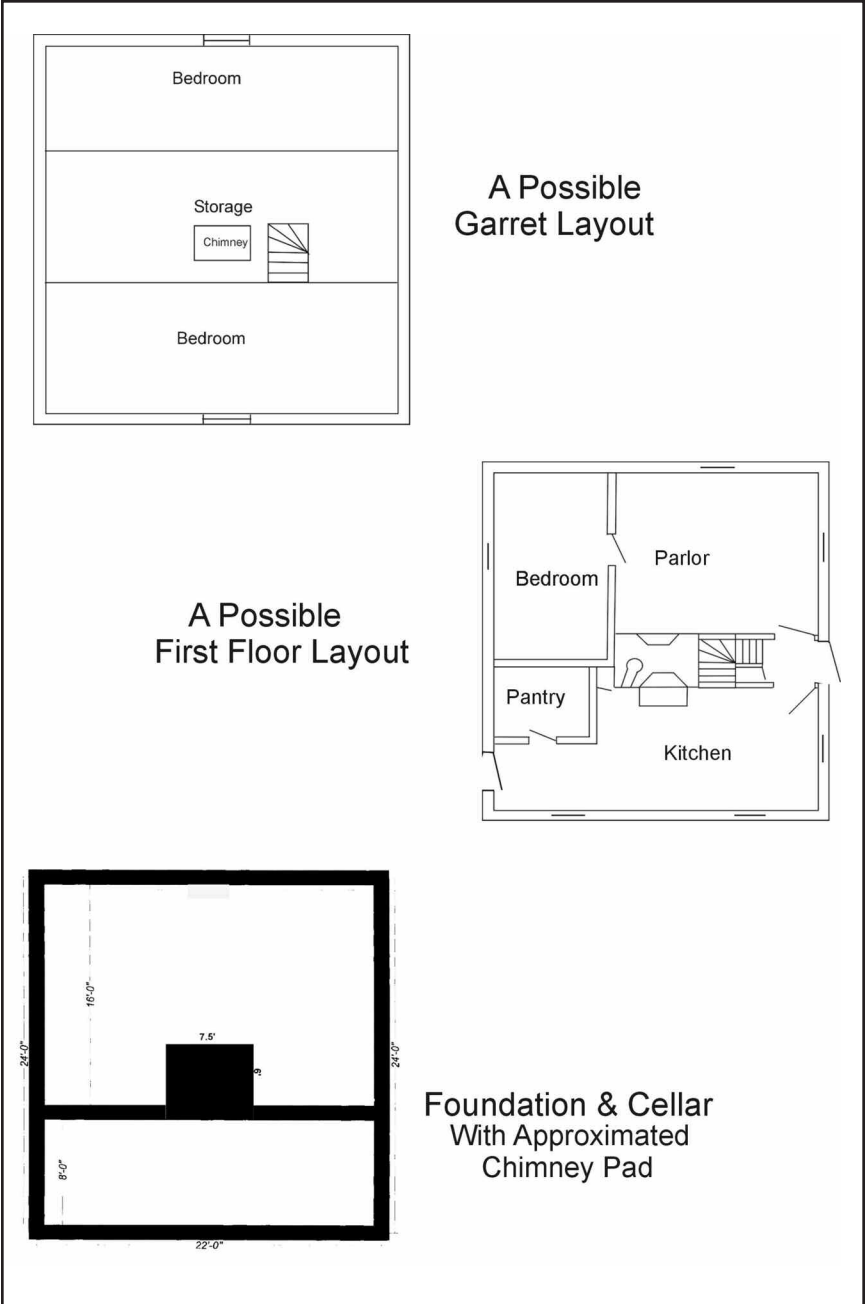


Figure 18

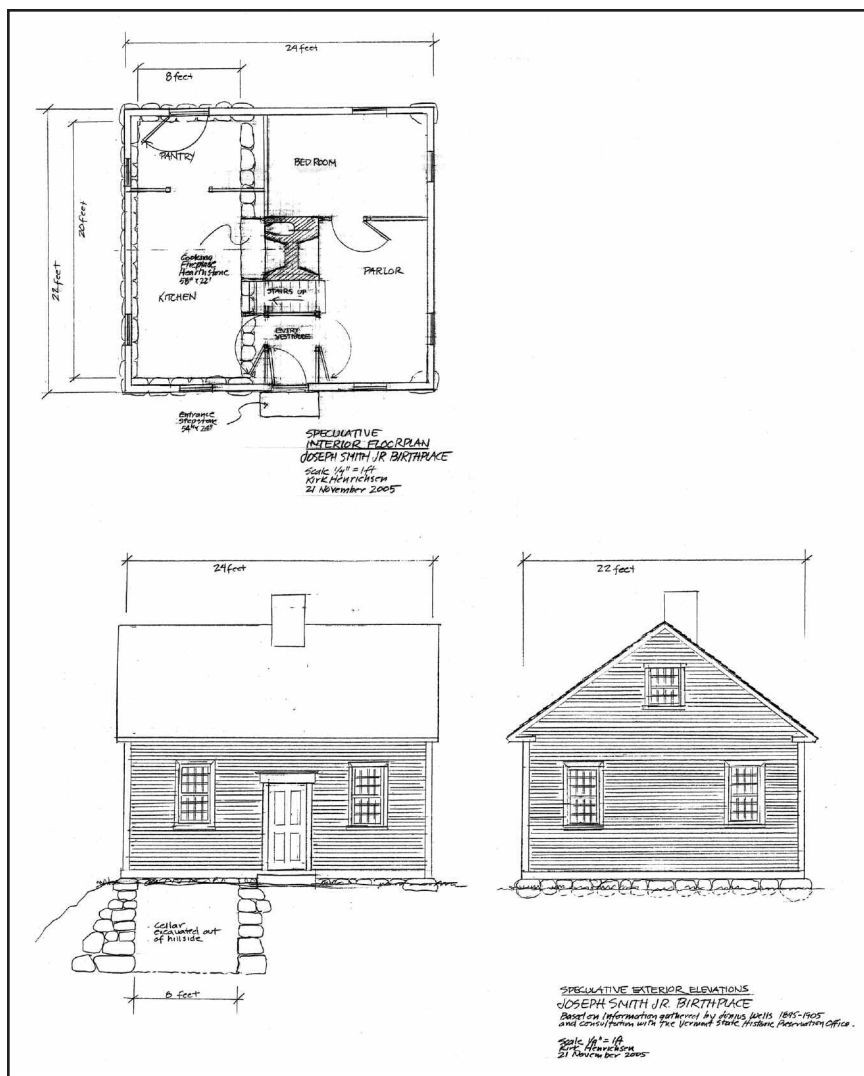


Figure 19

which was used principally as sleeping and storage space (see figures 18 and 19).

**Main Entry of the Home.** As one entered the Mack/Smith home from its southeast side elevation, they probably stepped into a small enclosed “entry.” This served as a sort of “air-lock” to preserve the heat during the cold winter months and minimize disturbance to the fireplace

draft. At this point, in traditional house plans, one frequently had two options. To the right one could pass through a doorway to the parlor. Across that room was the parent's bedroom. From the entry, if one went left they passed through a doorway leading into the kitchen, with its pantry, cellar, and back door exiting to the barn and outbuildings. A third option in many homes was to climb the steep stairway leading to the upper level (the garret). Such stairways were often built across from the main door and next to the chimney.

**Kitchen.** The hearthstone clearly identifies the location of the kitchen. This space was the major everyday work space in the home. In the typical New England farmhouse the kitchen was almost always at the rear of the home. Here, a large central fireplace for cooking and baking opened into the room. The large masonry central fireplace, built of stone or brick or both, may have included a domed brick oven. The kitchen was the mother's and daughters' domain. Food preparation, laundry, tending children and the sick, spinning, weaving, evening and winter labor for both women and men of the household, family gatherings, informal visiting, and many other tasks were pursued here. It is well to remember that in this period of time, family and work space adjusted as seasons changed. When too cold to sleep in the garret, family gravitated to warmer areas of the home. Work and visiting also moved to a more pleasant place.

**Pantry and Cellar.** A pantry with built-in shelves was undoubtedly located conveniently off the kitchen, probably on the western side of the room, opposite the main entry door and close to a back door. Provisions, prepared foods, dishware and utensils, produce from the garden, butter, milk cream, fruit and meats, found temporary place here as they were cycled into family meals. Longer term storage for fruits, vegetables, meats, barrels of cider and crocks of foodstuffs, were placed in the coolness of the cellar. It was common for homes to have a cellar located below the kitchen area. The Mack/Smith cellar seems to have been "head high," the walls constructed of stone. It may have been accessed through a door, down a steep stairway or possibly by a trap door in the floor using a ladder. The photographs show a pit about three to four feet deep with perhaps two to three feet of rubble infill.

**Backdoor.** A secondary exterior door would probably exist in either the kitchen's southwesterly long wall or its shorter northwesterly wall. The latter would have been nearly opposite the front door and would better accommodate the suggested pantry position. If this secondary door was in the building's northwest elevation, direct access to the primary outbuildings shown on the 1905 map would have been facilitated.

Additionally, a southwestern elevation door would have required stairs because of the slope and higher cellar excavation berm. A northwest elevation door likely would not have required stairs.

**Parlor.** This was the home's "best room" and almost without exception was located at the "front" or main entrance to the house. The family's best furniture, whatever they had (settees, tables, chairs and footstools), light fixtures, floor coverings and wall hangings, (theorems, silhouette profiles of family members and samplers) decorated the space. Since, Lucy Mack Smith is known to have done oilcloth painting, this room may have a floor or table covering made by her. Here families gathered at semiformal and formal times. It was also a spillover space when necessity mandated its use for mundane purposes. It was the space where guests were most often entertained. Tea was served here. The parlor was the setting for maturing youth of the family to socialize and court. It was where the family greeted their minister and public officials and was the space for weddings and funerals. A main feature of the typical home was a massive central chimney. It usually had dual flues to accommodate multiple fireplaces. It is likely, as in most New England farmhouses of the period, that a fireplace opening or "firebox," was located in the parlor, to warm that space during cold months. The mass of brick, heated by the constant kitchen fire, would have provided some warmth to the parlor and the small garret rooms on the second level even without a parlor fireplace. If there was no fireplace opening in the parlor, the wall was generally paneled with a fine grade of wood nicely fitted and painted.

**Main Bedroom.** The foundation remains and the location of the central fireplace of the Mack/Smith home site, strongly suggest there was a bedroom off the parlor. It was traditionally the sleeping space for father and mother. Almost always the parent's bedroom was on the ground level of the home and separated from the sleeping space of their older children. Young Sophronia may have shared this room with her parents before the birth of Joseph. In small or rural New England homes, it most likely was the place where expecting mothers were "put to bed," in anticipation of the birth of their child. On that cold winter day of 23 December 1805, Joseph Smith Jr. was likely born either in the parent's bedroom of the Mack/Smith home, or in the adjacent, possibly heated, parlor. Comforts for expecting Lucy were most assuredly minimal. The fireplace of the parlor sent most of its heat up the chimney and would have warmed only modestly the bedroom where she was "confined." Since it cannot be said with certainty that there was a bedroom adjacent to the parlor, Lucy may have been put to bed in the parlor. Having a bed there, through all seasons, was still common in New England households.

The coldness of the season may have necessitated Lucy's confinement there.

The bed of her time was a "rope bed." A webbing of rope, stretched tight, tied the bed together and formed a platform on which a "tick" or mattress which was stuffed with straw or corn leaves. Traditionally the bed was made more comfortable by a tick or comforter of "down" feathers placed atop the mattress. Hand woven sheets of tow or linen and blankets, and perhaps a quilt, would have been added, if available, for comfort against the chilled temperature of the house. People slept or found general comfort in bed, partially sitting up. Thus, "bolster" and pillows supported the back, shoulders, neck and head. However, the top sheet and any blankets or quilts covering the mother were pulled back when the birthing began.

A circle of women, headed by a midwife, would have been present to assist Lucy in the birth process. When birth seemed eminent, the expecting mother was assisted to stand vertically, that gravity might aid in the birth. In Lucy's case the common practice may have been altered. One local account says, "Tradition states that he [Dr. Joe Adam Denison of nearby Bethel] was the attending physician at the birth of . . . Joseph Smith, but investigation fails to verify the story."<sup>31</sup> A doctor's presence suggests Lucy's labor may not have progressed well. When a male doctor attended, the expecting mother was generally laid prone on the bed—by hindsight, more for the doctor's convenience than the mothers—which seemingly was done to allow her greater strength for "the pushing" needed to deliver her child.

Since Lucy's mother was not far away, it seems logical to assume that she attended to her daughter and was present at the birth of her grandson. Traditionally men and children were sent away during the birthing process. Young Alvin, Hyrum, and Sophronia could have easily spent the night with their grandfather Mack. In such surroundings and conditions it seems the future first Prophet of this dispensation came into the world. Other possible attendants could have been Lucy's mother-in-law and sisters-in-law who lived in Tunbridge Township

**The Garret.** The modest foundation and general farm home architectural tradition suggests the home was a story and a half rather than two full stories. The upper level of a home, like the Mack/Smith structure, was generally used as storage space and sleeping quarters for children. Access to the garret was commonly by stairs (a loft used a ladder). We cannot be sure which system would have been used, but we presume that a modest sized steep staircase may have existed adjacent to the central chimney, facing the front door or the parlor. At the time of young Joseph's birth, Alvin would have been nearly eight-years-old, Hyrum

nearly six-years-old, and Sophronia almost two-and-one-half-years old. The two older boys would have been old enough to regularly sleep in the garret. Sophronia probably slept with her parents until shortly before the birth, at which time she would probably have been moved to a nearby trundle for the remaining approximate two years the Smiths occupied the home.<sup>32</sup>

The interior layout of the garret is speculative, but relative to its possible design we make the following comments. It may have enjoyed considerable or little finish. We favor a limited finish look. Even so it would likely have been divided by a single board partition, a curtain(s), or two partitions, to create separate male and female children sleeping areas. As previously mentioned, the access down to the home's main level was likely near the central chimney.

**Windows.** The number and style of windows were frequently a reflection of the affluence of the builder. No direct evidence of window style and placement exists. Nearby homes of this time period typically have "twelve over twelve" double-hung windows, that is, twelve small panes of glass in each window sash. Candles and oil lamps provided limited light and were an expense to be avoided when natural light was available. Even though this was a modest sized home in a rural area, a limited number of windows will be hypothesized.

Two windows probably existed in the home's front elevation. Formal symmetry was important to New England house design at this time. These windows would have provided a measure of symmetry to the principal elevation of the home. These windows, like the main entry door, would have been away from the prevailing winds. The northern window provided light to the parlor room. The southern window would have been located in the kitchen's short southeastern wall and would have provided important light and ventilation to the busy kitchen area.

One or two additional windows may have existed in the southwestern wall of the kitchen. Existing examples of slightly larger homes from this period typically have two windows on their gable ends. Such a window(s) likely existed to light the kitchen work area. The dimensions and location of the pantry are purely speculative. A second window in the southwest side wall may or may not have lighted the pantry room, depending upon the actual internal room layout and wealth of the original home builder.

Windows may or may not have existed along the back side of the home. A back door from the kitchen may have occupied the place of one window. Assuming that there was a bedroom adjoining the parlor, we would expect that it would have at least one window and preferable two for cross ventilation in the summer. The northeastern wall of the home

would have been divided by the parlor and the bedroom. As just mentioned above, we would expect that this wall would contain at least one window and probably two. There could have been small windows at both of the gable ends of the upper garret to provide summer ventilation and a modest amount of light.

### **Birth Room and Township**

A tradition exists that the town line ran through the birthplace home and that the Prophet Joseph was born in the east room on the Sharon side of the line. The interior room arrangement discovered in this research adds credibility to an eastern side of the home birth event. The east room would have been the parlor where a fire in a small, northerly, hearth would have created a better birthing environment amidst the cold December conditions than the westerly bedroom would have provided. Early survey techniques were somewhat imprecise compared to modern satellite survey work, which is reflected in the Church's 1997 map of the property. With the home so close to the Sharon and Royalton town line some debate about the accuracy of the tradition, its origins, and the perceptions of early settlers naturally occurred.

Wells partially investigated the tradition during his survey work noting two important issues. There were stone walls which could have served as property boundaries which did not precisely correspond to the bearing lines, and one small variation in particular could relate to the tradition. Wells reasoned that at different times, the town line ran at both forty-four degrees ten minutes (common to his era and a stone wall line) and alternatively at forty degrees, a figure he claims was mentioned in the original survey. Both bearings were evidently magnetic north bearings. Wells found that the former figure throws the entire foundation into Royalton and the latter figure splits the home nearly evenly. Variances in stone walls and survey accounts gave rise to the slightly differing angles. Although the 1905 project map used the currently legal line, which places the foundations in Royalton, Wells concluded that originally the town line could have run through the home on the alternative bearing, giving rise to the tradition.<sup>33</sup>

It is common for a resurvey to yield slightly different results. Metes and bounds surveys that used streams, rocks and trees, as many early surveys like these did, can and do vary. Additionally, the magnetic pole shifts through time and boundary lines were sometimes not marked by the owners exactly according to the legal survey. The surveyor doing Wells's work found no record in the town book on the variance, but commented that it could have existed and never been recorded. The wall



remnant reference point identified in the 1905 work gives rise to the important variation. It was located two thousand feet south of the sixty-five-acre parcel—a considerable distance. As presently understood, the bearing differences may result from (a) a boundary wall to survey discrepancy, (b) the lack of recording in town records of a slight line change, (c) survey event variance, or (d) a combination of the above. What is apparent is that the original town line, as evidenced by Wells's original survey data, could have dissected the birthplace home.

The Wells group evidently did not undertake extensive research into the history of the tradition that alleges that the town line split the home. It would be interesting to do this, but that lies beyond the primary research questions of this work. Interestingly, Wells gathered a statement from one Harvey Smith, a Sharon resident born in 1824, who was aware of the tradition. We may ask if this was initially a local Vermont tradition. We may further ask if it grew up in an era of anti-Mormon sentiment and is a backward-looking, degrading comment. Research by others has indicated that Vermont senators were particularly active in the anti-polygamy legislation and some have asked if that sentiment may have given rise to, or affected the existing tradition during the era.<sup>34</sup>

There is an additional aspect to the town line debate which should not go unnoted. Approximately twenty-five years after the family had moved from the birthplace home, Joseph Smith Jr. wrote in his 1832 history that he was born “in the town of Charon.”<sup>35</sup> It would be easy to over detail Joseph's meaning, and perhaps that has occurred. Abundant documentation exists to show that he was not born within that village proper, but within the wider township. Although the Mack farm contained a small amount of land in Royalton, the farm was primarily in Sharon Township. A technical argument can be made that Joseph was actually born in Royalton Township, but speaking categorically, it can be equally argued that, according to his understanding, he was born in Sharon Township. The Smiths were socially related to the travel-way and drainage to the east of their home. During their stay on the farm, their attention was clearly easterly toward Sharon Township. Joseph's comment should be understood in light of his family's experience. That experience was a Sharon-looking view, not a Royalton-related view. As Joseph referred to his birthplace, he may have been speaking from the family's cultural experience, and not referencing the fine points of the town lines. After all, Joseph Jr. was only about three when his parents moved from the farm. He probably had no personal memory of the birthplace home and is depending on what his mother had told him. Lucy Mack Smith may have been oblivious to the technical survey details of her father's property and understandably would have simply told her son

that he was born in Sharon, Vermont.

### **Time of Construction**

The variations of the town line, and their relationship to the Sharon birth tradition, also generate interesting implications for the date of the home's construction—if the property boundaries are considered. Early property records research and archaeological field checks by qualified people, could add information on the changing property boundaries, the development of the parcels, and the possible construction dates for the birthplace home.

Good evidence suggests that the location of the home as seen through early 1800s eyes and modern eyes, was that the home was either in Royalton Township or in Royalton and Sharon combined. It was never just in Sharon Township. The home could date back to a period when the town line ran through the home, or was just east of the home. While the outbuildings shown on the 1905 map may partially reflect post-Smith events, it is possible those outbuildings also represent an early pattern extending back to the homestead's original development. These outbuildings were/are within Royalton. Perhaps the home itself was originally associated with a Royalton parcel which was added to the western portion of Downing's 127-acre parcel. In any event, the presumption should be that the builders knew where the town line was located.

### **Birthplace Home Moved or Salvaged?**

The affidavit material Wells gathered provides important information about Daniel and Solomon Macks residences in the hollow which lie beyond the scope of this paper, but are the subject of further study. However, an important implication for the birthplace home is to be found within them. Benjamin Latham, who was born in the area in 1824 and lived in the neighborhood continuously, save for a period between 1849 and 1868, and was an owner of a portion of the current Memorial Farm property. In 1905 he noted, "I knew Asahel White, who used to live in the Mack place in the White Hollow," and remembered "when Bela Durkee bought the Mack farm from White and Downer and he [Durkee] lived on the Royalton part in the same house that I occupied. He [Durkee] took the White house and barn down. The latter is Robinson's horse barn now, being the same as I [Latham] rebuilt it."<sup>36</sup> From this record we learn that Durkee, the man who was joining the Coy and Mack farms together in the 1830s, was dismantling Mack buildings

before his sale of the property in 1859. We are caused to wonder if a similar fate did not befall the birthplace home? Little lumber remained on site when Wells had the photographs taken, suggesting that the home may have been moved, or the site well cleaned after the home was dismantled or fell into ruin.

### **Rethinking the Birthplace Home**

Internal site evidence and site to site comparisons within and beyond the property, suggest that the Birthplace Home was not a cabin nor log home, but a timber frame home. Sawn lumber was available from saw mills in the area and post and beam framed homes with clapboard siding were common to the wider area by 1800.<sup>37</sup> The stone walled cellar and sizable foundation work at the birthplace site also suggest a framed home, rather than a more temporary log structure.

It is likely that Solomon was acquiring land already partially developed. Even if the home was not already standing, he probably would have had the means to construct a framed structure, rather than build a less expensive and primitive log building. From the available data we cannot unequivocally determine the basic type of home formerly on the site, but the preponderance of evidence suggests a frame home.

We do not know just who built the home, or when it was built. Likely the home was a modest frame home, typical for the area in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Given the timing of Solomon's property acquisition, the arrival of the Smiths, and the lack of any mention of them building a structure and outbuildings, it is likely that this residence and the nearby farmstead were extant when the Smiths arrived. It may have been built by the owners of the portion of the property that was originally part of Royalton Township, previous to its consolidation and subsequent purchase by Solomon Mack. The amalgamation of the one-hundred-acre farm predates Solomon's purchase. Additionally, Benjamin Latham, a local resident interviewed by Wells, recounted how Ebenezer Dewey, who knew Solomon, had stated that Solomon had lived in the home before and after the Smiths, giving Solomon little time to construct a dwelling before the Smiths arrived.<sup>38</sup>

### **The Memorial Cottage**

**A Mission Home.** The Cottage was a substantial, well-used, and admired mission home and visitors' center structure that served the Church from 1905 to about 1960. Like the birthplace home, the fact that

it is no longer extant does not disqualify this handsome building and the landscape modifications which accompanied it, as objects of historical interest. Indeed, some aspects of the Cottage complex are directly related to the birthplace home. Therefore, a description of the Cottage and these interesting connections are given below. Junius F. Wells probably desired that it be constructed directly over the original home site as a memorial.

Attitudes and approaches to historical preservation and commemoration have shifted significantly since the building of the Cottage. Today we usually place greater value on the actual physical remains of old buildings. Fortunately, it will still be possible to archaeologically study remnants of these structures. The location of the Memorial Cottage is much easier to identify, and remnants of its basement foundation stone work and/or concrete, are probably partially preserved under the present grassy landscape. In order to properly study this landscape both buildings must be jointly considered. We can appreciate the similarities and differences between these two related and important structures by studying Wells's commentary, drawings, maps, and the discoveries of the research presented above

**Cottage Basement and Home Footprint.** Fortunately, Wells left considerable information about the Cottage site. One comment is particularly important. Wells indicates that the "foundation walls were laid on the same lines so far as the differences in size and style of houses would permit." He also declares that an eight foot-tall basement was placed "under the entire building." From this we see that the Cottage was placed similar to, but different from the original home, in ways that are unspecified.<sup>39</sup> The placing of the Cottage's basement surely removed the old cellar's northeastern wall. Below we will see that the living room design also removed the cellar's southwest wall and affected the old cellar's northwest and southeast wall lines.

### Interior Features of the Memorial Cottage

**Hearthstone and Living Room.** Wells describes interior portions of the Cottage, but these textual descriptions are occasionally less than clear. Fortunately this text can be supplemented by references to architectural drawings. He indicates that, "The hearthstone rests where it did in the old house," and that this stone was the central feature of the living room.<sup>40</sup> This living room was twenty-three by eighteen-and-one-half feet and had a three by fifteen foot bay which contained a low seat. The north side of the room had a hearth which reused the hearthstone. Wells

may be stating that the stone was repositioned in the two horizontal dimensions close to or right on its previous location. Later we will comment upon its likely changed vertical position. The living room was located similarly to the old home's hall/kitchen room.<sup>41</sup>

The interior distances between the northwest and southeast walls of the old cellar and the Cottage's living room are close—about twenty feet and twenty-three feet respectively. From the drawings we can see that the center of the hearthstone was approximately twenty-four feet, four inches south of the exterior of the Cottage's northeast wall. Its center point was also close to twelve feet west of the exterior of the building's southeast wall. The Cottage's living room was larger than the old home's kitchen because its south wall extended about five feet further southward excluding the Cottage's large bay window. While the hearthstone was reset near original horizontal position, the adjacent northeast walls on each side of the fireplace were a couple to several feet northward of the old home's kitchen wall, depending upon from which side of the Cottage's fireplace one measures. The birthplace home's kitchen and pantry areas were about ten feet by twenty feet, while the Cottage living room was about eighteen-and-one-half feet by twenty-three feet.<sup>42</sup> That is, the living room was more than about eight feet wide in its northeast/southwest dimension. It was about eighteen-and-one-half feet wide. The living room's design required larger foundations than did the old home's kitchen—but principally only in two of its four dimensions (see figure 20).

**Main Door and Stairway.** Wells writes that the Cottage's main door location was in the same general position as in the old home.<sup>43</sup> Our comparison indicates that the birthplace entrance doorstep stone would have been located about seven-and-one-half feet north of the Cottage's main doorway. This suggests he made some record of the old home's doorstep and wall data before taking the remaining stone up. Apparently, these notes have not survived. As noted above, the early photographs show the birthplace home's door stone in that location.

**Dining Room.** A dining room measuring thirteen by twenty-one feet was located northward of the living room. It was positioned about where the old home's parlor would have been. The dining room contained a second bay window on the southeast wall, with a seating area the same size as that in the living room. A vestibule with an outside northern entrance was located off this dining room, providing direct access to the Monument. A passage through a large China closet connected to the kitchen.<sup>44</sup>

**Kitchen.** The kitchen measured eleven by twelve feet and had an

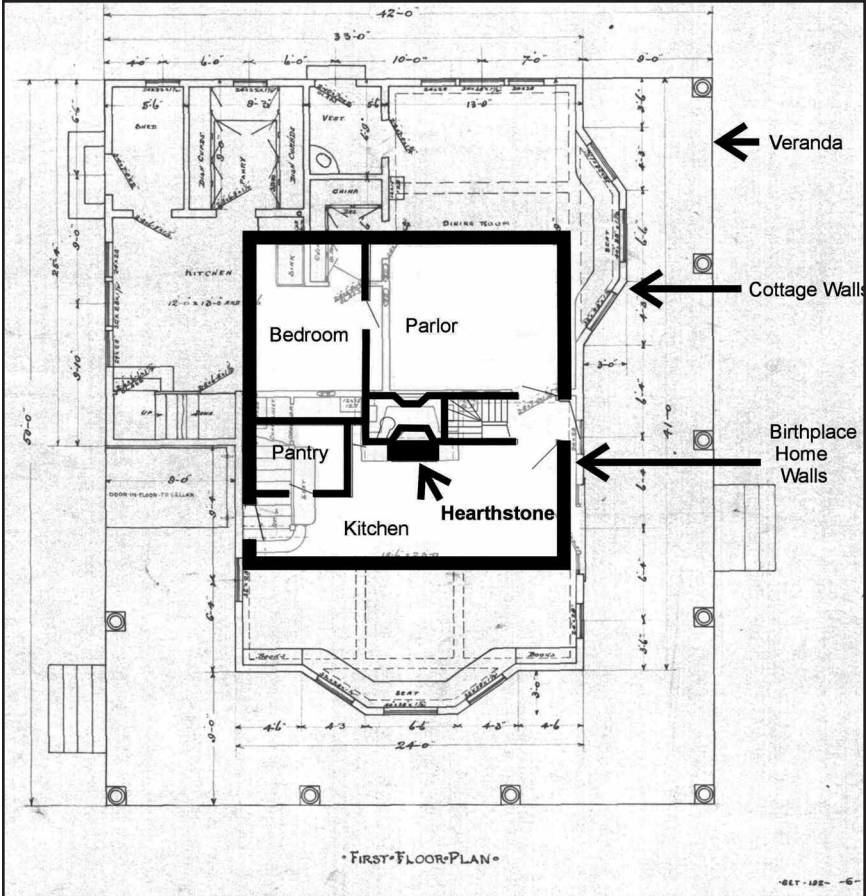


Figure 20

adjacent pantry eight feet square. A vestibule was located nearby and contained a secondary entrance.<sup>45</sup> The location of the kitchen and pantry areas do not follow the birthplace home's pattern, but Wells may or may not have been aware of that earlier pattern.

**Veranda.** A covered, nine-foot-wide veranda stretched from the northeasterly corner southward along the eastern side, around on the southward side, and half way up the western side.<sup>46</sup> The veranda greatly enlarges the visual appearance of the Cottage. The actual square footage of its main level is only about double the birthplace home. Photographs reveal that at least part of the veranda's outer perimeter was supported by pillars. The foundational elements under the pillars are not clearly appar-



ent, but probably would have been pedestals and not continuous walls.

**Second Floor.** Upstairs on the second floor there was a central hall that accessed five bedrooms and one bathroom.<sup>47</sup>

**Garret.** A garret existed above the second floor rooms, which was lighted and ventilated by eyebrow windows.<sup>48</sup>

### Cottage and Monument Locations

As indicated above, Wells records location information on the Cottage, hearthstone, and the Monument. He notes that the Cottage was located eighty-seven feet south of the Monument and that the Monument was “set on the crown hill.”<sup>49</sup> Interestingly, Wells’s *Proceedings* records the bearing of these lines as forty degrees ten minutes (magnetic), which is slightly different than his report to Joseph F. Smith which states a forty degree bearing figure previously mentioned, and significantly different than the forty-four degrees ten minute figure shown on the 1905 map. Further study and resurvey will be necessary to resolve these discrepancies. Again, no detail is given upon whether the close sides, centers, or far sides of these structures are being measured by the eighty-seven-foot figure. Additionally, no direct comment is made as to the angle of measurement. This means that the distance could be as little as eighty-seven feet or as much as 149 feet. A conservative interpretation of this situation would split the error of the Monument platform by assuming the reference is to the center of the Monument. As the northeast corner of the Cottage would have been closest to the Monument, we will presume Wells refers to the smallest Cottage to the Monument distance on this angle. This produces a distance of ninety-three feet.

### Hearthstone and Basement Elevations

The Cottage’s hearthstone does not appear to have been vertically positioned exactly like it had been in the birthplace home. The Cottage was larger than the birthplace home and extended up the hill further than the old home did. The Cottage’s foundation design provided that the Cottage’s northeastern (uphill) veranda, had sufficient ground elevation to prevent premature decay of its wood. Unless there was considerable down cutting of original ground slopes the hearthstone would have to lie higher. Therefore, the hearthstone’s new position was probably more elevated that it had been. Of course, we have no figures on the

amount of soil potentially removed from the Cottage site as part of the site preparation and landscape work, but working with the available photographic information, we presume that original soils were not extensively down cut over the old home's footprint. Similarly the removal of the Cottage would have required a quantity of new soil to infill the basement cavity. We presume that this work did not drastically alter the previous slope. This being the presumption, it is possible that archeological excavations may find that the basement's cut depth may not have been that much different from the old home's cellar excavation's depth.

### **Post 1905 Era Modifications**

Nearly half a century after the erection of the Monument and the construction of the Cottage, this site again underwent significant changes. In 1959 the Cottage was removed and its basement hole back-filled. A new Bureau of Information building and companion residence, were built. Most of the pond was in-filled and part of the birthplace ridge trimmed away to create additional flat space near the old pond to accommodate these two buildings. A new visitors' access pathway was constructed with symmetrical terracing. This construction cut away land on the west (near the birthplace location) and added fill on the east side of the walkway. These and other constructions were undertaken which will not be detailed here, but which did bring considerable ground disturbance to the historic site which should not be overlooked. In the later 1990s further modifications were made to the new buildings during a largely interior remodeling.

### **Summary**

Combining the available data to footprint the Cottage yields a structure fifty feet in the northeast-southwest dimension by forty-two feet in the southeast-northwest dimension when the veranda is included.<sup>50</sup> The Cottage site, including the veranda, was obviously a considerably larger footprint than the birthplace home. The old remnants were enveloped by the new structure and created a beautiful structure which conveyed a considerable sense of presence. It served as a memorial for the old foundation for many years, but that location concept was abandoned in subsequent constructions.

The Cottage's living room seems sized and positioned such that its northeast, southeast and northwest walls align well to the corresponding cellar walls of the birthplace home. The hearthstone was generally posi-

tioned to replicate its former position.

The placement of the Cottage's basement probably destroyed most of the original cellar's remains. But, there is a remote possibility that Wells may have incorporated the original cellar stone into the walls of the new basement. The overall elevation of the Cottage's main floor seems to have been higher than the old home's. The new basement may not have been deeper than the original cellar.

### **Wider Farmstead Observations**

**Well.** The 1905 map shows a well located a short distance west of the home and barn. This well appears better sited for the livestock than the human residents. Livestock kept close to the home would have consumed considerable water relative to human water consumption. A turn of the century photograph shows a square stone well curbing with a post well sweep, but by this time the older outbuildings are largely removed. There could also have been a well closer to the original home. An archaeological search could be made for such a well.

**Orchard.** As evidenced by the 1905 map, later maps, the 1905 era affidavits, and the photographic data, a sizable orchard formerly existed on the homestead. It wrapped around the northeasterly portions of the home site, if not originally the northwesterly portions as well.

**Livestock Outbuildings.** The 1905 map places a modest barn and barn yard to the west of the home and north of the well. Of course, other nearby pasture and crop lands would have existed.

**Other Outbuildings.** Other outbuildings, such as the privy, likely existed. Remnants potential survive of some of these outbuildings.

### **Non-Smith Cultural Resources**

As mentioned above, the property is known to contain a number of historical resources which are not directly related to the Smiths, but which are important to our understanding of the early history of the farm. A study of the alleged Mack homes, their outbuildings would be particularly valuable, while a similar study of the ill-defined pre-Mack property parcels and their tax records may yield information about the development of the Mack farm. An intensive archaeological survey of the overall property has potential to add to the list of known historical features, for the property has never been thoroughly nor professionally walked. Of course these features should be preserved until studied, rather than assumed to be of no value.

Other features of the farm such as the alleged Mack foundations and the old turnpike, bridge, and farm fences, well, and outbuildings add to the historical interest of the wider farm. Interesting, prehistoric features similar to, but perhaps more modest than the stone chamber to the immediate southwest of the farm and the Calendar I site a short distance to the northwest of the farm may exist undiscovered on the farm.<sup>51</sup>

### **The Reference Location**

The exact center of the Cottage's hearthstone is the critical axis point for the Cottage. That is, the Cottage was positioned relative to that point. Presuming Wells's placement of this stone to be as accurate as he implies, identifying that point can position the stone within the birthplace home more exactly than can be done on the bases of the above photographic record or existing maps. Unfortunately the Wells's era survey notes which are presumed to have existed and would have allowed a precise placement of the hearthstone back to its original position as the Cottage was being built, have not been located and perhaps did not survive. Searches should be made among surviving old Vermont survey records and among papers of Wells's associates. Nevertheless, approximations may be made from the available data. The estimate of Wells's Monument-to-Cottage distance of approximately ninety-three feet would place the hearthstone at about 120.7' from the southern edge of the monument using the most efficient angle.

The important and more precise southern distance data on the cellar's location shown in figure 7 are also important in estimating the hearthstone's position. Assuming the stone was about half way east-west in the northeastern wall of the cellar, the center of the hearthstone would be at least 442 feet north of the southern boundary and about fifteen feet westward of the 1905 town line.

### **Conclusions**

The general location of Joseph Smith Jr.'s birthplace home and its hearthstone has been known for many years, but their exact locations continue to be a matter of question. It is likely that the birthplace home's original cellar and foundation alignments were destroyed during the Memorial Cottage construction, but the Cottage's living room and basement were partly built upon the cellar's footprint. Identifying the location of the Cottage's basement walls becomes important to locating the original home's cellar and hence, the location of the birthplace home. It

is possible that portions of the Cottage's basement walls and/or birthplace home's cellar walls partially survive. Some of the birthplace home's stone foundation may have been reused in the Cottage's construction. Both those stones and some of the home site's stones may be recoverable, although it would not be possible to distinguish these two sets of stone and difficult to separate such from many of the stones unearthed during the construction of the Cottage's basement.

When purchased by the Church, the birthplace home was located entirely within the boundaries of Royalton Township. However, a former town line which could predate the home, may have bisected the home. The majority of the wider farm was always located within Sharon Township and the birthplace home's westerly outbuilding complex was always within Royalton Township. Further study of early pre-Mack property and tax records done in conjunction with a study of the early physical remains related to those early parcels, is necessary. Through this study a better understanding of when the birthplace home may have built and who might have constructed it may be obtained.

We may now be more confident, but not assured, that the birthplace home was a frame and timber home because of the abundance of such homes in the area during that period, and the fact that the nature of the foundations and substantial interior chimney argues against a primitive log cabin. We may be very confident about the existence and location of the central chimney, hearth, front door, cellar, kitchen and parlor positions of the home. We may be modestly confident that a bedroom and pantry area existed on the main floor, respectively adjacent to the parlor and kitchen areas, and that there were sleeping spaces in a garret, because of the commonality of those features in this type of home. Given the above research, a reasonable replica of the home could one day be reconstructed. However, prior to any such reconstruction, archaeological excavations should be done to search for remnants of the birthplace home and Memorial Cottage structures. It is important that those archaeological resources not be further compromised before that study is done.

Additional research on other aspects of the historic property such as Smith outbuildings, the traditional Solomon and Daniel Mack homes, the turnpike, and history of the birth tradition, and other early property owners and their home sites would be useful. It is important that the remaining archaeological assets of these property features also be protected, so that one day they may be properly researched and exhibited as resources allow.

## Notes

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2. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 1:268.

3. See for example, LaMar C. Berrett, ed., *Sacred Places: New England and Eastern Canada* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999), 98, 108.

4. T. Michael Smith, “Preliminary Study of the Solomon Mack/Joseph Smith Sr. Cabin Site at the Joseph Smith Jr. Birthplace Memorial Site, Sharon Township, Vermont,” report submitted to the LDS Museum of Church History and Art, Salt Lake City, 1991; and T. Michael Smith, “Solomon Mack Home Stabilization Project at the Joseph Smith Jr. Birthplace Memorial Site, South Royalton, Vermont,” report submitted to the LDS Museum of Church History and Art, Salt Lake City, 1996.

5. Daniel H. Woodward letter as cited in Richard L. Anderson, *Joseph Smith’s New England Heritage: Influences of Grandfathers Solomon Mack and Asael Smith* (Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book and BYU Press, 2003), 29.

6. John Dumville to Kirk B. Henrichsen, 2005. Dumville is a specialist in the Division of Historic Preservation, Montpelier, Vermont.

7. Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 3–4.

8. Berrett, *Sacred Places*, 113.

9. Berrett, *Sacred Places*, 117.

10. Berrett, *Sacred Places*, 98.

11. Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 21.

12. Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 2.

13. Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy’s Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith’s Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature Book, 2001), 169.

14. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 168.

15. Berrett, *Sacred Places*, 116; also Index to Deeds, Sharon Township, Windsor County, Vermont (1761).

16. Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 6; also Sharon Town records, Book 6, 1 May 1811, 459.

17. Anderson, *Joseph Smith’s New England Heritage*, 29.

18. Harvey Smith affidavit in Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 19; also published in Junius F. Wells, *Proceedings at the Dedication of the Joseph Smith Memorial Monument* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1906), 36–37.

19. Maria N. Griffith affidavit in Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 20.

20. Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 19.

21. *Index to Papers of the Surveyor-General of Vermont*, vol. 2 (Bellows Falls, Vermont: P. H. Gobie Press, 1922), 246; and Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 3, 10.

22. See notes made in Index to Deeds, Sharon Township, Windsor County, Vermont.

23. Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 3–4.

24. Lawrence E. Swanson, “Property Survey of the Land of The Corporation of the Presiding Bishop of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Town Highways 3, 14, and 18, Royalton, Vermont, Sharon Vermont,” LDS Church Archives; and Judson H.



Flower Jr. to Tom Peterson, Joseph Smith Birthplace Site Director and Exhibits Manager, 2 March 2002. LDS Museum of Church History and Art, Salt Lake City, Utah.

25. Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 10.

26. Daniel A. Butler, "Memorial Farm Property—Vermont." The map, prepared around 1960, shows proposed modifications to the farm property and some historic features. Copy on file at the LDS Museum of Church History and Art, Salt Lake City, Utah.

27. Wells, *Proceedings*, 31.

28. See Wells, *Proceedings*, 31–37.

29. Benjamin Latham affidavit in Junius F. Wells to Joseph F. Smith, 20-21; also published in Wells, *Proceedings*, 35–36.

30. Berrett, *Sacred Places*, 100.

31. Evelyn M. Wood Lovejoy, *History of Royalton, Vermont* (Burlington, Vermont: Free Press Printing Company, 1911), 751.

32. Jenny Lund, personal communication to T. Michael Smith, November 2005. Lund is a curator at the LDS Museum of Church History and Art, Salt Lake City, Utah.

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35. Jesse, *Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:3.

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37. John Dunville to Kirk Henrichsen, 2005.

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39. Wells, *Proceedings*, 31.

40. Wells, *Proceedings*, 15, 31.

41. F. A. Walker, Architectural Drawings of the Memorial Cottage, 1905, first floor plan, LDS Church Archives.

42. Walker, Architectural Drawings of the Memorial Cottage.

43. Wells, *Proceedings*, 15; and Wells, 1907 map.

44. Wells, *Proceedings*, 31.

45. Wells, *Proceedings*, 31.

46. Wells, *Proceedings*, 31.

47. Wells, *Proceedings*, 31.

48. Wells, *Proceedings*, 31.

49. Wells, *Proceedings*, 26.

50. Walker, Architectural Drawings of the Memorial Cottage.

51. See Warren W. Dexter, and Donna Martin, *America's Ancient Stone Relics* (Rutland, Vermont: Academy Books, 1995); and James W. Mavor and Byron E. Dix, *Manitou, The Sacred Landscape of New England's Native Civilization* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1989).

