

# Oliver Cowdery Birthplace

Wells, Vermont, USA

Oliver Cowdery, witness of the Book of Mormon and Second Elder of the Church, was born on October 3, 1806 in Wells, Vermont to William Cowdery and Rebecca Fuller. His family had strong traditions of patriotism, learning and religion.<sup>1</sup> Oliver lived in the home in Wells for perhaps only two years before his family moved to Middletown, a nearby village.

Oliver played a significant supporting role to the Prophet Joseph in the early years of the Restoration and served as the principal scribe for the Book of Mormon. He was present when both the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods were restored<sup>2</sup>, becoming the first person baptized with authority in this dispensation. He served as one of the Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, one of the six original members of the Church, and Assistant President of the Church, and has been referred to as the Second Elder of the Church.

While in Jackson County, Missouri, Oliver married Elizabeth Ann Whitmer. Although excommunicated from the Church in 1838, he remained true to his testimony of the restored gospel. While others who left the Church became embittered toward it, Oliver remained a friend and corresponded with many of his former acquaintances. In 1848, he traveled to Winter Quarters, where he was re-baptized into the Church. Although he hoped to travel west with the Saints, his health declined and he died in 1850 in Richmond, Missouri.

A small monument now stands at the birthplace of Oliver Cowdery, a second witness of the restoration of the gospel.

## SOURCES

<sup>1</sup> Richard L. Anderson, Encyclopedia of Mormonism, 1-4 vols., edited by Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 335.

<sup>2</sup> See Doctrine & Covenants 13, 27: 7-8, 12.



Oliver Cowdery Birthplace Marker  
*Photo courtesy of Alexander L. Baugh*

## VISITOR INFORMATION

### *Address:*

Wells, Vermont 05774

### *Hours of Operation:*

Daylight to Dark

### *Admission:*

Free

## ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

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Richard L. Anderson, "Cowdery, Oliver," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* Vol. 1, (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 335.

Larry E. Morris, "Oliver Cowdery's Vermont Years and the Origins of Mormonism," *BYU Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 106.

Junius F. Wells, "Oliver Cowdery," *Improvement Era*, March 1911, Vol. 14, 379.