

## “Quincy—the Home of Our Adoption”: A Study of the Mormons in Quincy, Illinois, 1838–40

*Richard E. Bennett*

The Mormons—We hasten to invite the attention of the charitable and humane, to the destitute condition of some of this people. A large number of families are encamped on the opposite bank of the Mississippi, waiting for an opportunity to cross, who are, we understand, almost without common necessities of life. Having been robbed of their all in most instances, by their merciless oppressors in Missouri, they have been compelled to hurry out of the state. . . . They are certainly objects of charity and their privations and sufferings must call forth the sympathies of the humane and liberal. If they have been thrown upon our shores destitute, through the oppressive people of Missouri, common humanity must oblige us to aid and relieve them all in our power.<sup>1</sup>

So wrote the editors of the *Quincy Whig* newspaper in early March 1839 as the first of thousands of ill-treated Latter-day Saints came into sight of their Illinois refuge. Banished from their Missouri homes and properties in Caldwell and Daviess Counties some two hundred miles to the west and with their Prophet leader Joseph Smith incarcerated in Liberty Jail, the Latter-day Saints were now in a pell-mell rush to quit Missouri by 8 March, the deadline set by Missouri Governor Lilburn W. Boggs, or face forced expulsion and extermination. Nothing like this attempt at religious genocide exists anywhere in American history. And seldom has a city shown such relief and compassion and genuine humanitarian concern as did the citizens of Quincy in those dark days of 1839.

The purpose of this article is to explore the essential elements and characteristics of the relatively short, but extremely important, Mormon stay in Quincy and its environs between their intermittent arrival in February of

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1839 and their piecemeal departure for Commerce (later renamed Nauvoo) beginning some fourteen months later. Considering the fact that Quincy played the lead role of refuge and relief to a hunted and harried people, a humanitarian lifeline in a sea of turmoil, we could be more than surprised that so little serious research has been devoted to the topic. Although much has been written in Church history about the Mormon stay in Missouri—and even more about Nauvoo, Quincy is relatively understudied. One reason for such a deficit may lie in the fact that the written accounts are relatively few. As one weary traveler put it, after November 1838, “our troubles were so numerous that I could not and did not write any more while we were driven out of the state.”<sup>2</sup>

The tragic Mormon expulsion from Missouri is well known and needs little rehearsal here.<sup>3</sup> Suffice it to say that in the dead of winter, several thousand Mormon settlers—turned refugees—were in a desperate search for some place—any place—to live and find shelter for that winter of 1838–39. “We left Far West Missouri 10 January,” Albert P. Rockwood recorded, “with another family and arrived at the Mississippi River after a journey of twelve days, the distance of 200 miles. We had snow and rain every day but we had heavy loads and were obliged to walk from 2 to 8 miles a day through mud and water. Camped out on the wet ground 3 nights before we arrived at the [Mississippi] River. A few days before we got to the river it grew cold, the river froze over and we were obliged to camp close to the river for 3 days.”<sup>4</sup>

William Hickman likewise tells of “much suffering and distress amongst those who were leaving Missouri, women and children barefooted and hungry.”<sup>5</sup>

Reflecting on the tragedy of it all and wondering who might befriend them and why, James Stapleton Lewis recorded these forlorn sentiments:

When we get to another state how shall we be received? My outfit was sorry enough but what can the people say to us? Here is a family exiled and driven out of Missouri as unfit to live in that sovereign state. Can we look anybody in the face, can we expect a favor or even a kind look from anybody not only so but Missouri sent all her influence against us with all manner of false and slanderous reports against us.<sup>6</sup>

## Why Quincy?

The immediate question is “Why Quincy?” The answers are multiple and complex, and though some are obvious, others require elaboration. The obvious first answer is geographic. Under government decree, the Mormons had to quit the entire state, ruling out a river retreat to St. Louis or some other eastern towns in Missouri. A return to Kirtland, Ohio, the former

Mormon capital, was impossible. Somewhere close, somewhere safe, could be the only answer. Quincy, with an 1839 population of approximately sixteen hundred, was the largest and closest Illinois city to Mormon properties in western Missouri. Furthermore, as the county seat of the newly formed Adams County, Quincy could well serve as the base for making legal petitions for redress to be carried to Missouri's capital in Springfield some two hundred miles away.

A second answer is economic. By 1838, Quincy was well on its way to an economic boom. E. B. Kimball

had just established a wonderful new flour mill. S. B. Stoddard and C. Maertz were opening their stove-making facility. C. Appleton and Company was newly into the wagon and carriage business, and A. Jones was just beginning to sell his successful steel plows. Besides these establishments, Quincy could boast its share of coopers and cabinetmakers, saddlers and leather makers, and a pork-packing and meat-processing center that rivaled any other on the Mississippi north of St. Louis. It was a city on the move, destined to double in size to forty-four hundred by 1840 and then to mushroom to thirty thousand just ten years later. Surrounded by some of the richest farmland in the West, the "Gem City" was looking for workers and rich new opportunities.<sup>7</sup>

A third answer is familiarity. Mormon missionaries first preached in the city with the arrival of Samuel H. Smith on his way west to Jackson County in 1831.<sup>8</sup> Early Mormon settlers bound for Missouri stopped off at Quincy in



*Albert Perry Rockwood*  
*Photo courtesy of LDS Church Archives*

1832.<sup>9</sup> Zebedee Coltrin was preaching in Quincy in February 1834. Later, Zion's Camp, that quasi military expedition sent out from Kirtland, Ohio, to alleviate the suffering of the Mormon settlers in Independence, Missouri, passed through Quincy in the summer of 1834—or at least that portion from Michigan led by Hyrum Smith and Lyman Wight who stopped there to purchase lead and ammunition. They described the town then as a “considerable place containing about 70 houses, two inns, nine stores, and an open square in the center.”<sup>10</sup> And by 1838, there were scores of Latter-day Saints already living in the city, members like Mary Jane York, William A. Hickman, John P. Greene, and Wandle Mace, some of whom had resided there since at least 1835.<sup>11</sup>

More to the point, the Latter-day Saints already had drunk from Quincy's milk of human kindness. Back in 1832, James Lewis had been taken sick while en route west “but was cared for in all kindness and soon recovered in Quincy.”<sup>12</sup> Later, in 1838, John P. Greene, cousin by marriage to Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, while en route to Missouri, “came to Quincy and put up at Judge Cleveland,” who resided four miles from town, a man whom Greene described as “a very fine feeling man and benevolent to all and who ministers to the necessities of the afflicted Saints.”<sup>13</sup> It was Greene, a Quincy innkeeper, in fact, who formed friendships with several prominent merchants and professionals within the city for funds to aid the Latter-day Saints and who strongly encouraged Brigham Young and the Saints in exile to come to Quincy.<sup>14</sup>

Even by this time, Quincy, with its strong German and New England population base, had developed a reputation as a center for intellectual inquiry, equality, and humanitarian care and relief. The City Library was established in 1837, and as early as 1840, perhaps sooner, it served as a busy station on the Underground Railway for black slaves in search of freedom.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, there was the hope of new lands for the Saints to settle near Quincy at very reasonable rates. From the minutes of a conference of the Church held at Quincy in early 1839, we read that “John P. Greene by request, told of an offer made by a gentleman of 20,000 acres of land lying between the Mississippi and Des Moines River at \$2 an acre to be paid in 20 installments without interest. A committee had looked at the land and reported favorably.”<sup>16</sup> Isaac Galland of Commerce had purchased land north of the city on both sides of the river and was eager to find buyers among the Latter-day Saints.<sup>17</sup>

For these reasons, as well as the hope for decent medical care and adequate schooling, from five to seven thousand Latter-day Saints struggled across Missouri in the general direction of Quincy.

## Like the Good Samaritan, Quincy Opens Its Doors

By the time of their arrival on the banks of the Mississippi, the Mormons were indeed a sorry-looking, destitute people with nowhere to go but to cross the river—itsself no small ordeal. “When we came to the Mississippi River,” Samuel Gifford recalled,

Father who opened his own rented home to some of the refugees and some others cut down two very large cottonwood trees and dug them out in the shape of canoes and lashed them together a sufficient distance apart to admit the wheels of wagons in which many of the Saints crossed the river, steering their craft between the large cakes of ice that were then floating in the river, while the smaller cakes would pass between the two canoes.<sup>18</sup>

Wandle Mace, a Mormon living in Quincy, provides this sobering snapshot:

One cold blustery morning I went down to the riverside and found about fourteen or fifteen families camped on the river bottom, in a most miserable condition; they had crossed the river [one boat at a time] and would get no further. . . . I returned as soon as possible and made known there [sic] situation and in a very short time they were moved into town and made comfortable.<sup>19</sup>

Although Quincy Mormons themselves, like Sidney Rigdon (recently released from Liberty Jail), John P. Greene, and Wandle Mace, were doing all in their power to alleviate the suffering, it was the city residents generally who willingly came to their aid and made the vital difference. Significantly, all during the late Mormon difficulties in Missouri, Quincy had taken a rather sympathetic wait-and-see stance toward the Saints. “We are well aware that the hostility is more deeply seated than has been generally supposed,” reported the *Quincy Whig* in November 1838, “and we feel assured that bloodshed and devastation only will terminate the struggles, unless the Mormons remove from the County. . . . We hope to be able to develop shortly more of the causes of this unhappy state of affairs.”<sup>20</sup>

A month later, the same newspaper reported on “the distress of these people, without home or shelter of any kind” and concluded, “A heavy sin lies somewhere and between the leaders of this misguided sect and the Missourians, it is difficult to fix the responsibility.”<sup>21</sup>

Soon after Sidney Rigdon’s release from Liberty Jail and his arrival in Quincy in mid-February to publicize the plight of his people, in a way perhaps only the outspoken and passionate Rigdon could do, public sentiment had clearly shifted. “The celebrated Mormon preacher and leader, Sidney

Rigdon, arrived in Quincy on Saturday last,” reported the *Quincy Whig* on 23 February 1839.

Illinois at present appears to be an asylum to the oppressed people as they are coming from all quarters. They appear, so far as we have seen, to be a mild, inoffensive people who would not have given a cause for the persecutions they have met with; and the whole proceedings of this people by the authorities of Missouri must stand as a lasting stigma to the State.

Two nights later, in what Wandle Mace referred to as local “merchants vieing with each other as to which would be most liberal,” the Democratic Association of Quincy drew up measures of relief for their recent newcomers. Long-time local merchant Mr. Lindsay “introduced a resolution setting forth that the people called the ‘Latter-day Saints’ were many of them in a situation requiring the aid of the citizens of Quincy and recommending that measures be adopted for their relief.”<sup>22</sup>

The list of other prominent Quincy citizens, both Whig and Democrat, who came out in support reads like a “Who’s Who” of Quincy, Illinois, in 1838. It includes such prominent names as Samuel and J. T. Holmes, merchants; I. N. Morris, attorney-at-law; J. W. Whitney; Thomas Carlin, Governor of Illinois; Richard M. Young, U.S. Senator; Samuel Leech; Hiram Rogers, M.D.; Nicholas Wren, County Clerk; C. M. Woods; and John Wood, Quincy’s mayor and earliest citizen.<sup>23</sup> By Thursday, 28 February, Holmes, Whitney, and Wood had collected \$73 from town leaders to donate to the Mormons.<sup>24</sup>

To what degree the townspeople were motivated politically and economically by the sudden arrival of thousands of potential new voters still smarting from Democrat Governor Boggs’s extermination order is difficult to ascertain. Certainly there were political overtones. Nevertheless, the alarming spectacle of so many newcomers knew no party or persuasion. Mr. N. Bushnell, a prominent local attorney, “disclaimed in strong terms against the pitiful interests of the Democratic Association in taking solely upon themselves the care and protection of the Mormons. He said he never could nor should contribute in aid of this suffering people, as a member of the ‘D.A.,’ but as a citizen of Quincy.”<sup>25</sup>

From such meetings and discussions went out several public appeals for assistance.<sup>26</sup> The response was truly immediate and gratifying in terms of financial assistance, shelter, and employment. “The people of Quincy have contributed between \$400 and \$500” reported Israel Barlow. “God has opened their hearts to receive us. May heaven’s blessings rest upon them. We are hungry, they fed us, naked, they clothed us. The citizens have assisted us beyond calculation.”<sup>27</sup>

The immediate need was for shelter. Isaac Galland opened up at least a dozen of his small cabins by the river. Several Latter-day Saints stayed at “the old Methodist Institute” five miles out of town.<sup>28</sup> Joseph Smith’s parents, Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith, rented a house, or a part of it, on the northeast corner of Sixth and Hampshire where, for a short time, they “set up a museum of curiosities, consisting mainly of several mummies from Egypt.”<sup>29</sup> There was one old man whose name he had forgotten, John L. Butler recalled, who



*Israel Barlow*

*Photo courtesy of Maurine C. Ward*

kept a large butcher down by the river and a large wholesale store down by the boat landing.

He also had ten or twelve small houses that he had built on purpose to rent. He told some of his tenants that they had to seek other apartments for the Mormons were coming and they had no place to go and he was going to give his apartments to them. So the old gentlemen came to me and told me to bring my family up to one of his houses and we could live in it till we had been there a little while, so that we should have a little time to look about us and get a place. He also told us to go down to the butcher’s store and get some meat when we wanted some. He never charged us anything for what we had. There were three or four other families living close to us that were Mormons; they were living in his house that was joining ours. He treated them all with kindness. It seemed a new thing to us to be treated with kindness. . . . The folks generally were kind to our brethren all over the place.<sup>30</sup>

Many others were taken in by local townfolk and nursed back to health. It was all enough for one woman to write, “I don’t feel afraid, me dear friend, if you should come here that you would not like our little city . . . the home of our adoption.”<sup>31</sup>

As for employment, local historian Henry Asbury noted that “many found temporary employment in Quincy,” whether in sawmills or on steamboats, stagecoach driving or railroad building, blacksmithing or tanning, keeping school, or sewing bonnets.<sup>32</sup> One bit of Quincy misfortune turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Fire destroyed the meat-packing plant of Harrison, Rice, and Ward on Tuesday, 26 March 1839. Though the building

was saved, much of the meat had to be sold at a greatly reduced price, a godsend for the Saints. Furthermore, many Mormons were put to work rebuilding destroyed parts of the plant.<sup>33</sup>



Site of Joseph Smith, Sr., and Lucy Mack Smith home,  
located on the northeast corner of 6th and Hampshire,  
Quincy, Illinois.

Photo by Alexander L. Baugh

Quincy's timely aid and humanitarian assistance will be forever remembered in Mormon history. "The inhabitants of Quincy were very kind to us as a people," remembered Sarah Pea Rich, "and done all they could to give our brethren employment and assisted many that were in need and many who were sick."<sup>34</sup> William Cahoon told of Quincy as a place "where we found a people who treated us with the greatest of hospitality and kindness assisting the Saints with food and giving them houses to live in. . . . I went to live with a man of the name of Travis who gave me employment and linements and my bosom burns with gratitude."<sup>35</sup> Another writer, Samuel K. Gifford, recalls the citizens of Quincy donating "quite freely to help the most



destitute of the Saints. Such will be remembered when it is said 'Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these my servants, you have done it unto me.'"<sup>36</sup>

Perhaps the following 1841 Proclamation of Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, and Sidney Rigdon best epitomized the Mormon expression of appreciation:

It would be impossible to enumerate all those who in our time of deep distress, nobly came forward to our relief and like the good Samaritan poured oil into our wounds and contributed liberally to our necessities as the citizens of Quincy en masse and the people of Illinois generally seemed to emulate each other in the labor of love.<sup>37</sup>

Not everyone was filled with gratitude, however. Some were willing to take whatever they could get, despite the living or the dead. Take the case of a Mr. Robert Stilson and his haunted house. Eager to rent his vacant farmhouse to the soonest new tenants, Stilson willingly rented out his property to a Mormon newcomer, Mr. Hale, and his young family as long as Hale did not mind living in a spooked environment; for every improvement Hale made, such as painting, fencing, etc., Stilson would repay him—and then some. The story was that a black peddler had been murdered there and his body thrown into the well. Hale, a very active Latter-day Saint, saw absolutely no problem with the arrangement since he, as a priesthood holder, could cast out every devil in Adams County. And so, on a smile and a handshake, Hale took residency. All went well for several months until one dark night.

Father had called the family together for prayers at bed time and had read a chapter in the Book of Mormon and had knelt down and commenced to pray when there was something that fell on to the top of the house that fairly shook the house so that the dishes rattled on the cupboard . . . and so Father sprang to his feet run to the door up the corner of the house on to the roof and rebuked the evil spirits and commanded them to depart. Came back, knelt down and had his family prayers. A few Sundays after this occurrence, Father was having prayers before going to bed. He was on his knees and had commenced praying when there was something sounded like a man braying and a lot of log chains past by close to the door. These logs [had lain] for a week in front of the door. The chains rattled over those logs and passed to the end of the house. Father sprang to his feet ran down to the door and commenced rebuking this evil spirit and commanded it to depart and leave the premises. It started off dragging its chains. He followed it about 20 rods, returned to the house, had prayers and went to bed.

The third and last time was on Sunday again at the close of the meeting. We had had a very good meeting. The Spirit of the Lord had been in our midst to a great degree. One of the sisters looked across the room and there stood the Devil or evil spirit in the shape of a large Newfoundland dog only much larger with eyes glaring

like balls of fire looking into the house. This scared the women and children. Father spoke to one of the Brethren [and] they followed this spirit off of the farm and into the woods rebuking it by the power of the Priesthood and ordered it to return no more. No more evil spirits returned to bother us.<sup>38</sup>

### Scattered About

A city so small as Quincy, despite its every good intention, could not begin to meet the needs of so many. Nor was it the Mormon design to relocate en masse in any new central location. While John P. Greene and others were out scouting the Galland properties for what eventually did become Nauvoo, Edward Partridge, Presiding Bishop of the Church, thought that in light of their recent Missouri difficulties, "it was not expedient under the present circumstances to collect together, but thought it was better to scatter into different parts and provide for the poor."<sup>39</sup>

Consequently, they scattered hither and thither into numerous small communities and farmlands within a fifty- to seventy-five-mile radius of Quincy. Hale found his haunted house near New Liberty, just east of Quincy. Quite a large number, finding "all the houses were full" in Quincy, moved to the northern part of Adams County and set up shop at Bear Creek Timber [Woods] near Lima some twenty miles north.<sup>40</sup> Headed up by Isaac Morley, the so-called Morley settlement was arguably the largest concentration of Mormons outside of Quincy. First a branch and then, for a short time, a stake of the Church, the Morley settlement featured, among other things, a thriving home chair-building industry. "I stayed in the Morley Branch to learn the chair trade," recalled Samuel Gifford, and "labored at chairs the most of the time the Saints remained in Illinois. . . . In October [1848] Father Whiting was fixing to go to Quincy, Illinois, where we had a regular market for our chairs."<sup>41</sup>

Warren Foote and several other families took refuge on farmland near Columbus, some fifteen miles east of Quincy. Getting a job as a stagecoach driver, Foote drove the run from Columbus to Naples, a distance of forty-five miles. His choice of rest and relaxation may not have been unusual for the time.

There was an old bachelor [in Belmont] boarding with the family I boarded with, and also a young man about my age. We had a sitting room to ourselves. The bachelor was a fiddler and we used to have considerable fun during the long winter evenings. The Methodists had a wonderful revival of religion in this neighborhood and we often attended their meetings to see their performances. It was as good to us as a theater.<sup>42</sup>

Martin Henderson rented John Gault's place near Rock Creek, some

eight miles north of Quincy.<sup>43</sup> Ira Ames found shelter in “the little town of Clayton,” where “several other Mormon families” lived.<sup>44</sup> James Allred settled in Pittsfield, Pike County.<sup>45</sup> And Lorenzo Young located in Macedonia.<sup>46</sup> There is even evidence that some were living as far away as Clinton, Illinois. The list could go on and on. Suffice it to say that the Mormons were scattered over hill and dale in Adams and surrounding counties. However, as many as possible chose to live close to Quincy because of the need for medical care, better schooling, and the desire to stay close to kin.

Renting farmland was, for most anyway, the only hope of survival—and the area was known to be excellent growing country. “This is a good country here,” admitted David Foote in a spring 1839 letter. “A man [has] no need to work half as hard in this country to get a living as you do to the east. Wheat is worth \$1 and corn \$.25 per bushel, potatoes \$.75, butter can be got for \$.12 ½ per pound. We live 12 miles east of Quincy in the house with uncle Josiah Richardson.”<sup>47</sup> Martin Henderson spent the winter cutting cord wood for a Mr. Simpson Bicky “at 50 cents per cord and took my pay in corn and pork. . . . Worked a part of the farm on which we lived, raised 18 acres of corn and sold the same.”<sup>48</sup> Aroet Hale spent his winters catching quail and prairie chickens. “I have sent into Quincy 20 dozen quails and 150 chickens at a time. They was a good sale and brought the money into the family.”<sup>49</sup> And by choosing to live near Quincy, when things slowed on the farm, the Saints always could hope for work in town. “I returned to Quincy,” recalled Edward Stevenson, “and found work at a steam sawmill for \$.50 a day . . . wheel[ing] away saw dust and chop[ping] up slabs for \$.50 a cord so between the two jobs I cleared double wage. But the work was hard for me.”<sup>50</sup>

### Other Important Events in Church History at Quincy

This same Edward Stevenson tells of their receiving letters from the Prophet Joseph Smith, then languishing in Liberty Jail, “believing that God who seeth us in this solitary place, will hear our prayers and reward you openly.”<sup>51</sup> By April 1839, Joseph Smith, his brother Hyrum, and others were released from their incarceration and made a direct line for Quincy, arriving there 21 April 1839 “amid the congratulations of his friends and fond embrace of his family.”<sup>52</sup> “The celebrated Mormon leader, Joseph Smith, who has been in confinement in the upper part of Missouri, arrived in town on Monday last [22 April],” the *Quincy Whig* reported.<sup>53</sup>

His arrival electrified his followers, who for almost six months had wandered “as sheep without a shepherd.” Upon finding his mother, father, wife,

and children well, he took time to thank the citizens of Quincy. "I have been delivered out of their hands," he said, "and can enjoy the society of the Saints whom I love and to whom I feel united in bonds that are stronger than death; and in a state where I believe the laws are respected and whose citizens are humane and charitable."<sup>54</sup>



*Sidney Rigdon*  
Photo courtesy of LDS Church Archives

Speaking at an outdoor conference on 4 May held at the "old Presbyterian campground," Joseph made an unforgettable impression upon those who heard him speak. "He stood for an unusual length of time without uttering a word," one observer remembered.

His soul was filled with emotion and it seemed as though relief could not be uttered only with a flood of tears. He looked calm, however. . . . He then said, "To look over this congregation of Latter-day Saints who have been driven from their homes and still in good faith as pilgrims in a strange land, and to realize that my life has been spared to behold your faces again seemed to me so great a pleasure."<sup>55</sup>

Relying upon intelligence and earlier reports from his subordinates, Joseph Smith at this same

conference counseled his people to prepare to leave for Commerce and other nearby areas in the newly obtained Galland purchase in what would soon become the city of Nauvoo, Illinois.

This Quincy conference was of more import than deciding on a new home. Several of the Twelve Apostles, for instance, some newly called and others sick, left on their memorable missions to England from this very same Quincy area. And it was here that Brigham Young was set apart as the new President of the Quorum of the Twelve and where George A. Smith and Wilford Woodruff were sustained in their apostolic callings. Frederick G.

Williams, a once-prominent leader in the Church and medical doctor by profession who at one time practiced in Quincy, was excommunicated (along with several others), only to rejoin the Church a few months later shortly before his death.<sup>56</sup>

It was also in Quincy that Sidney Rigdon gathered up hundreds, if not thousands, of petitions for redress to be considered by both the United States government and the government of Missouri—petitions that largely fell on deaf ears.<sup>57</sup>

Little known in Church history are the facts that a Quincy branch of over two hundred members was organized in 1840, with a Brother Calhoun presiding, and that a short-lived Quincy stake was organized in October 1840, with Daniel Stanton as president.<sup>58</sup> For a very brief time, in November 1840, some members of the Quincy Branch, including the newly converted Ezra T. Benson, performed baptisms for the dead (presumably in the Mississippi River) until instructed shortly thereafter to desist until further instruction and until a proper place or baptismal font could be erected in the new Nauvoo Temple. This instance was among the very first of this sacred ordinance being performed in this modern era.<sup>59</sup>

In August 1843, Quincy Mayor John Wood, ever a friend of the Mormons, invited the Prophet and some of the leading citizens of Nauvoo to be his guests for the day. As one observer noted, “Brother Joseph was the after-dinner entertainer, for he talked and the others listened with the greatest attention and were loath to have him depart.”<sup>60</sup> Within a year, the Mormon leader was dead, a victim of a vicious mob attack in Carthage, Illinois. By 1848, Joseph L. Heywood, a former Nauvoo trustee following the exodus of the Mormons under Brigham Young in 1846, led out a company of his own in what may have been the last remnants of a Latter-day Saint population in Quincy on a trek to the Great Basin. Not until 1949, over a century later, would the Church return to Quincy with Thomas Kinrade becoming the first branch president of a local Mormon congregation in the twentieth century.<sup>61</sup> Today, Quincy boasts a flourishing ward of the Church.

As we step back into the clear light of historical evaluation, the meaning of the story of Quincy and the Mormons in 1839 far transcends a humanitarian gesture of goodwill to a peculiar band of religionists. To Mormon history, Quincy’s compassion was a lesson in Christian service that saved the Saints as a people and may even have saved the Church as an institution.

Yet, in a very real sense, this service merits far more than a footnote in either a Mormon or a local story. In many ways, it represents the finest tradition in American history—a victory for the kind of tolerance, human kindness, and compassion that has welcomed millions of immigrants and huddled masses to America’s shores in previous centuries, as well as hun-

dreds of thousands of refugees from Kosovo to Cambodia in modern times. Such openness and willingness to accept new cultures, religions, skin colors, and tongues have made America the great nation it is today.

Finally, on another level, the Quincy model is a lesson for all mankind. Such horrors as extermination orders and cultural genocide—holocausts—still exist. Hatred and prejudices are ingrained in so many countries and cultural identities. Many people today are shivering on the banks of their own Mississippis all over the world, waiting and hoping to cross into a new, kinder world of improved attitudes and diminished prejudices. Will there be a Quincy in mankind's hearts for them? God make it so.

### Notes

1. *Quincy Whig*, 2 March 1839.
2. Josiah Smith, Journal, 29 November 1838. Church Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, hereafter referred to as the Church Historical Department.
3. For an excellent study of the Mormon Expulsion from Missouri, see William J. Hartley, "'Almost Too Intolerable a Burthen': The Winter Exodus from Missouri 1838–1839," *Journal of Mormon History*, 18 (Fall 1992): 6–40.
4. Albert P. Rockwood to his father, Quincy, Illinois, 1839. Found in the Albert P. Rockwood Journal Entries, October 1838–January 1839. Church Historical Department.
5. William A. Hickman, Autobiography, Church Historical Department.
6. James Stapleton Lewis, Journal, Church Historical Department.
7. Harry L. Wilkey, "Infant Industries in Illinois As Illustrated in Quincy, 1836–1856," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 32 (December 1939): 4:474–97.
8. Lucy Mack Smith, *The Revised and Enhanced History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, Scot Facer Proctor and Maurine Jensen Proctor, eds. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 280.
9. James E. Stapleton Lewis, Journal, Book 2, 18.
10. Taken from the 1834 entries of the "Manuscript History of Illinois," an unpublished scrapbook-like collection, Church Historical Department. For a fuller discussion of the travels of Zion's Camp, see Roger D. Launius, *Zion's Camp—Expedition to Missouri, 1834* (Independence, Missouri: Herald Publishing House, 1984).
11. Mary Jane Bethers York, Biography, Church Historical Department.
12. James Stapleton Lewis, Journal, May 1832, Book 2, 18.
13. John P. Greene, Diary, 15 November 1838, Church Historical Department.
14. See the pamphlet by John P. Greene entitled "Expulsion of the Mormons" (Cincinnati, Ohio: R. P. Brooks, 1839), 6. Wrote Levi W. Richards, 12 February 1839: "The people are preparing to leave as fast as they can conveniently. Many have already left. Our kindred are in Illinois and have been for weeks except cousin Brigham Young and his family, and they expect to start the day after tomorrow. I think I shall accompany them to Quincy and then return here [Far West] again for my goods, which will take about three weeks. Cousin Greene's family are in Quincy keeping Tavern" (Journal History, 12 February 1839).
15. See Paul R. Anderson, "Quincy, An Outpost of Philosophy," *The Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 15 (1922–1923): 3:579.
16. Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, February

1839; hereafter cited as Journal History.

17. Galland had been introduced to the Mormon plight by Israel Barlow. See Journal History, 26 February 1839.

18. Samuel K. Gifford, Autobiography, Church Historical Department. Fortunately for the Latter-day Saints, the winter of 1838–39 had been an unusually mild one, which accounts for the earlier-than-normal breakup of river ice. An arrival four years earlier when the temperature had reached -32 F in January of 1835 would have spelled an untold disaster. See Asbury, 75 and the *Quincy Whig*, 19 January and 9 March 1839.

19. Wandle Mace, Autobiography, 32, Church Historical Department. Continued Mace: “Many of the Saints were glad to find shelter in my home from the storms until they could find a place to live in. Many nights the floors upstairs and down were covered with beds so closely it was impossible to set foot anywhere without stepping on some one’s bed.”

20. *Quincy Whig*, 10 November 1838.

21. *Ibid.*, 22 December 1838.

22. Journal History, 25 February 1839.

23. Theodore C. Pease, *The Centennial History of the State of Illinois 1818–1848* (Springfield, Illinois: Illinois Centennial Commission, 1918), 343.

24. *Quincy Whig*, 16 March 1839, 1.

25. *Quincy Whig*, 2 March 1839. Bushnell went on to say “that the meeting [of the Democratic Association] was unknown to the great mass of the people of Quincy and that his object was solely of a charitable nature.”

26. See opening quotation of this article.

27. Israel Barlow to his wife, Elizabeth, 24 February 1839, as quoted in Ova H. Barlow, *The Israel Barlow Story and Mormon Mores* (The Israel Barlow Family Association, 1968), 150.

28. Samuel D. Pea Rich, Autobiography, Church Historical Department.

29. Asbury, 153.

30. John L. Butler, “A History of the Biography of John L. Butler,” 27–28, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

31. Mary R. Heywood to Miss Sarah M. Blodgett, 13 October 1840 and 3 April 1841, Papers of Joseph L. Heywood, Church Historical Department.

32. Asbury, 153.

33. *Quincy Whig*, 30 March 1839. See Aroet Hale, Journal, Church Historical Department.

34. Sarah D. Pea Rich, Autobiography, Church Historical Department.

35. William Farrington Cahoon, Autobiography, 47, Church Historical Department.

36. Samuel K Gifford, Autobiography, 4, Church Historical Department.

37. “A Proclamation to the Saints Scattered Abroad—Greeting,” *Times and Seasons*, 2 (15 January 1841): 6.

38. Aroet L. Hale, Journal, Church Historical Department.

39. Minutes of a conference of the Church held at Quincy, February 1839, Journal History, February 1839.

40. Nora Hall Lund, “A Brief History of Almira Pulsipher Burgess,” *Pulsipher Family History Book*. Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

41. Samuel K. Gifford, Autobiography, 4. He continued in the chair-making business while crossing the plains: “I stayed in Mt. Pisgah [Iowa] and worked in the chair shop until the fall of 1848.”

42. Warren Foote, Autobiography, 45, Church Historical Department.

43. Martin Henderson, Memorandum, Church Historical Department.
44. Ira Ames, Journal, Church Historical Department.
45. James T. Allred, Biographical Sketch, Church Historical Department.
46. Lorenzo Young, Autobiography, Church Historical Department.
47. David Foote to his brother and sister, 15 May 1839, David Foote Collection, Church Historical Department.
48. Martin Henderson, Memorandum.
49. Aroet Hale, Journal.
50. Edward Stevenson, Diary, 133, Church Historical Department.
51. *Ibid.*, 120.
52. *Ibid.*, 123.
53. *Quincy Whig*, 27 April 1839, 2.
54. Stevenson, 123. For more on the Prophet's gratitude to Quincy and more especially to George Miller for providing for the Prophet's family, see the author's article, "A Samaritan Had Passed By: George Miller—Mormon Bishop, Trailblazer, and Brigham Young Antagonist," *Illinois Historical Journal*, 82 (Spring 1989): 2–16.
55. Edward Stevenson, Journal, 129.
56. Frederick Granger Williams, Autobiography, 319 (6 and 7 April 1840), Church Historical Department. Williams is buried in Quincy.
57. Clark Johnston, *Missouri Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833–1838 Missouri Conflict* (Provo, Utah: Regional Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1992).
58. See "A Record of The Branch of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Quincy, Illinois," Church Historical Department. See also the Manuscript History of the Quincy Branch, Northern States Mission, Church Historical Department. The Quincy Stake existed only until the spring of 1841, at which time all stakes outside of Nauvoo and Lee County, Iowa, were discontinued.
59. See "A Record of the Branch in Quincy," 9 November and 15 November 1840, Church Historical Department. See also B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 2:76, 92. Roberts indicates that Joseph Smith first taught the doctrine of baptism for the dead—an ordinance Mormons believe is one of conditional salvation for deceased ancestors—at least as early as 1840 and that some baptisms for the dead were indeed performed in the Mississippi River until a baptismal font could be erected. He is silent, however, as to exactly where the baptisms took place.
60. Mary Ann Winters, Account in *Young Women's Journal*, 16 (December 1905): 12:558.
61. Lapreel D. Huber, "A Brief History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Quincy, Illinois, 1838 to 1969," 1, Church Historical Department.