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## Adam-ondi-Ahman

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**Abstract:** A short historical essay around the early Latter-day settlement at Adam-ondi-Ahman.

He was elected a member of the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Illinois in the winter session of 1842-43. His acts as a member of the legislature were highly approved by the people; he displayed considerable energy in defending the Nauvoo charter and the rights of his constituents.

He took a journey to the East on business in the spring of 1843, and spent his time among the churches.

William returned to Nauvoo April 22, 1844, with about forty or fifty Saints from New Jersey. After staying a short time in Nauvoo, he had his last interview with his brother Joseph under the following circumstances:

He asked Joseph to give him a city lot near the Temple. Joseph told him that he would do so with great pleasure, if he would build a house and live upon it; but he would not give him a lot to sell. William replied he wanted it to build and live upon. The lot was well worth \$1,000. In a few hours afterwards, an application was made by Mr. Ivins to the recorder to know if that lot was clear and belonged to Wm. Smith, for William had sold it to him for \$500. Joseph, hearing of this, di-

rected the clerk not to make a transfer; at which William was so offended that he threatened Joseph, who deemed it prudent to keep out of the way, until William left on a steamboat for the East accompanied by his family. He spent his time mostly in the various branches of the Church, and collected a good deal of money for the Temple, which he used for his own accommodation.

In all his missions the course of conduct he pursued towards the females subjected him to much criticism.

In a general conference of the Church held in Nauvoo Oct. 6, 1845, Wm. Smith was dropped as one of the Twelve Apostles and Patriarch of the Church, and on the following Sunday (Oct. 12th) he was excommunicated, as more of his mean acts had come to light. Some time after he associated himself with the apostate James J. Strang, who tried to organize a church of his own, but failed.

Wm. Smith is yet alive and officiates as a patriarch in the Josephite Church, in Elkader, Clayton County, Iowa. He is about seventy-five years old, and the only brother of the Prophet Joseph yet alive.

### ADAM-ONDI-AHMAN.

Adam-ondi-Ahman, once a settlement of the Saints, was beautifully situated on an elevated spot of ground, on the north side of Grand River, in Daviess Co., Mo., about twenty-five miles north of Far West. It is the place where Father Adam, three years previous to his death, blessed his posterity, when they rose up and called him Michael, the Prince, the

Arch-angel, and he, being full of the Holy Ghost, predicted what should befall his posterity to the latest generation. (Doc. & Cov. 107:53-56.)

After the arrival of the Prophet Joseph Smith in Missouri in the spring of 1838, he began to plan for new locations for the gathering of the Saints, whose numbers continually increased in Caldwell and surrounding

counties. On May 19th, in company with Sidney Rigdon, Thomas B. Marsh, David W. Patten, Bishop Edward Partridge and others, he visited a place on Grand River, near Wight's ferry, in Daviess County, Mo., where they laid claim to a city plat, which was surveyed in township 60, ranges 27 and 29. They called the place Spring Hill, but "by the mouth of the Lord it was named Adam-ondi-Ahman," because "it is the place where Adam shall come to visit his people, or the Ancient of days shall sit, as spoken of by Daniel the Prophet." In a council, held two days later, it was decided that the Saints should secure the land on Grand River, and that region of country lying between the new location and Far West, which was subsequently done. On June 28, 1838, a Stake of Zion was organized at Adam-ondi-Ahman, with John Smith as president and Reynolds Cahoon and Lyman Wight as his counselors. Vinson Knight was chosen as acting Bishop, and the following named brethren members of the High Council: John Lemon, Daniel Stanton, Mayhew Hillman, Daniel Carter, Isaac Perry, Harrison Sagers, Alanson Brown, Thomas Gordon, Lorenzo D. Barnes, Geo. A. Smith and Ezra Thayer. Lorenzo D. Barnes was chosen as clerk of the Stake. Immediately after, the Saints commenced to gather in from all parts of the country, including Canada; and Adam-ondi-Ahman, having about two hundred families, became the center of what promised to be a flourishing farming district.

Soon after the election difficulty in Gallatin (See under *Gallatin*), the capital of Daviess County, a mob

gathered in the neighborhood of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and notwithstanding an agreement entered into between the Saints and the older citizens two days later, in which both parties pledged themselves to preserve the peace, every preparation was made by the mobbers, who gathered from eleven counties, to drive the Saints away from Daviess County. On Sept. 8, 1838, a report reached Far West, Caldwell County, that the mobbers were about to attack Adam-ondi-Ahman, and a company of men started immediately for Daviess County to help defend their brethren. Also a wagon, loaded with arms and ammunition, was captured on its way from Richmond, Ray Co., to the mobbers in Daviess County. In the meantime a portion of the State militia had been ordered out for the purpose of aiding the civil authorities to bring the "Mormons to justice," as several inflammatory letters, containing falsehoods and misrepresentations of the worst kind against the Saints, had been forwarded to Gov. L. W. Boggs, in Jefferson City. But when Gen. Alexander W. Doniphan, with a company of about three hundred men, arrived in Daviess County about the 13th of September, and camped half way between Adam-ondi-Ahman and Millport, he soon discovered that the "Mormons" were not the aggressors, as they were willing to submit to every demand of the authorities, and very anxious to be protected in their rights and possess their homes in peace. On the 15th David R. Atchison arrived with additional troops from Ray County and ordered the mobbers to disperse and go home, but instead of obeying this order, most of them repaired to Car-



roll County and there attacked another settlement of the Saints called De Witt. The troops, however, were discharged for the time being, with the exception of two companies under General Parks, and General Atchison made a somewhat fair and truthful report to the governor about the whole affair.

In the beginning of October a large company of Saints from Kirtland, Ohio, located at Adam-ondi-Ahman.

After the fall of De Witt, Carroll County, on October 11, 1838, Sachiel Woods, a notorious mobocrat, called the mob together and made an inflammatory speech, in which he pointed out the advantages they could derive by driving the "Mormons" out of Daviess County. The land sales, he said, were coming on, and if they could get the "Mormons" driven out, they could get all the lands back again, as well as the pay they had received from them. He assured the mob that they had nothing to fear from the authorities, as they already had full proof that they would not assist the "Mormons," and they might therefore just as well as not take their property. His advice was complied with, and the whole banditti, taking their cannon with them, proceeded to Daviess County.

In the meantime Cornelius Gillum was busily engaged in raising a mob in Platte and Clinton counties, and about eight hundred men renewed their depredations around Adam-ondi-Ahman, by burning houses, and driving off horses, sheep, cattle, hogs, etc. The Saints who lived in scattered and lonely situations fled into town for safety. Women and children, some in the most delicate situations, were obliged to leave their homes, and travel

several miles, in order to effect their escape, some almost destitute of clothing, glad to escape with their lives. The brethren in Adam-ondi-Ahman prepared for self-defense as best they could, and about one hundred of their friends from Caldwell County came up to their assistance.

During this state of affairs General Parks arrived in Daviess County and ordered Colonel Lyman Wight, who held a commission in the 54th regiment under Parks' command, to call out his men immediately and disperse the mob. Accordingly a force was raised for that purpose, and in a short time was on its march, with a determination to drive off the mob, or die in the attempt. The mob, having learned the orders of General Parks, and likewise being aware of the determination of the oppressed Saints, broke up their encampment and fled, and, seeing that they could not succeed by force, now resorted to stratagem. Thus, after removing their property out of their houses, which were nothing but log cabins, they fired them, and then reported to the authorities of the State, that the "Mormons" were burning and destroying all before them. Among other things they reported that the town of Gallatin and Millport had been destroyed, and all the public records burned by the "Mormons." These lies, and similar falsehoods communicated about the Saints in Caldwell County, and the willingness of Governor Boggs, and other State authorities to listen to the most vile and absurd accusations against the Saints, led to the calling out of the mob-militia, the issuing of the governor's exterminating order, and the final expulsion of the Saints from Missouri.

After the capitulation of Far West, General Moses Wilson proceeded to Adam-ondi-Ahman, on November 8th, and placed guards around the town, so that no person might pass out or in without permission. All the men were then taken and put under guard, and a court of inquiry instituted with the notorious mobocrat Adam Black on the bench. After three days' investigation every man was honorably acquitted, But, notwithstanding this, General Wilson ordered every family out of town within ten days, with permission to go to Caldwell and tarry there until spring, then to leave the State under pain of extermination. The weather was very cold, more so than usual for that season of the year; and in keeping this order of General Wilson, they had to leave their crops and houses, and to live in tents and wagons. As

for their flocks and herds, the mob had delivered them from the trouble of taking care of them or from the pain of seeing them starve to death—by stealing them. A committee of twelve was granted the privilege of going from Far West to Daviess County, for four weeks, for the purpose of bringing the crops of the Saints away.

At present there is not the least sign of a town where Adam-ondi-Ahman stood, but the people in the neighborhood are well acquainted with the importance the Saints attached to the place, and take considerable pains to point out to travelers the ruins of the ancient altar, the theory about which, however, they seem to have got somewhat mixed, as they call it "Adam's grave," instead of an altar, upon which he is supposed to have offered sacrifice.

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

**BADGER, (RODNEY,)** one of the Pioneers of 1847, was a son of John and Lydia Chamberlain, born Feb. 4, 1823, in Waterford, Caledonia County, Vermont, baptized in Iowa Territory 1839, and ordained an Elder in 1845. He acted as Counselor to Bishop N. V. Jones of the 15th Ward, Salt Lake City, and as special agent of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund to gather up and preserve stray stock. He also served as constable and deputy sheriff of Great Salt Lake County, and was captain of a company of the life guards of the Nauvoo Legion. On April 29, 1853, he was drowned in the Weber River, into which he fearlessly plunged to save the lives of a California emigrant family.

**DANITES** was a term made use of by some of the brethren in Far West, Mo., and grew out of an expression Joseph Smith made use of

when the brethren in the fall of 1838 were preparing to defend themselves from the Missouri mob. He referred to the stealing of Micah's images (Judges 18th Chap.) when he said that the Danites would be after them, meaning the brethren in self-defense. An apostate by the name of Sampson Avard tried to organize a secret band called Danites in Far West for wicked purposes, but this was without the knowledge of the leaders of the Church, and the companies organized by the legal authorities for the defense of the city was in no wise connected with Avard's movement. The repeated stories about Danites, or destroying angels, among the Saints in the Rocky Mountains no doubt has its origin in the wild fancy of wicked and corrupt men, whose object has been to slander and misrepresent the "Mormons."

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