



Type: Magazine Article

---

## The Nauvoo Temple

Author(s): Andrew Jenson

Source: *The Historical Record*, Vol. 8, Nos. 4-6 (June 1889)

Published by: Andrew Jenson

Page(s): 857-873

---

**Abstract:** A historical essay on the Nauvoo Temple and the events around its construction, dedication, and eventual destruction.

charity, and this, too, in a government that is called republic, the constitution of which guarantees to every one his just and equal rights."

Several articles appeared in the St. Louis papers describing, in eloquent and heart-touching language, the condition of the Saints, on the bank of the Mississippi River. The St. Louis *Reveille* said they were literally starving under the open heavens, with not even a tent to cover them. Women and children, widows and orphans, the bed-ridden, age-stricken, and the toilworn and pauper remnant of a large community; and that paper called upon the people to help them.

The condition of the exiled Saints was indeed wretched, and had it not been for a providential flight of quails in large flocks, they would have endured much greater suffering. But it seemed as though the Lord had special compassion for His people in their deep distress, for He sent them a supply of food, in the shape of quails which settled in such numbers

about their tents and wagons that many caught them with their hands. The people praised God that in their persecutions and wanderings in the wilderness, His goodness and mercy were manifested towards them as strikingly and in a similar manner to what they had been to the Children of Israel, while Moses was leading them on their dreary march through the wilderness to the Promised Land.

The arms which the mob took from the brethren's wagons were never returned to them. If there was a good rifle taken, some anti-Mormon would be sure to appropriate it to his own use, and if anything was left in its place, it would be a poor gun, of little or no value to anybody.

After camping for several days on the banks of the Mississippi River, opposite Nauvoo, this last remnant of the Saints were enabled to remove to Winter Quarters, from whence teams had been sent for the relief of the poor. (See page 838.)

---

## THE NAUVOO TEMPLE.

Soon after the Saints commenced to gather at Commerce, Hancock County, Ill., the authorities of the Church began to talk upon the subject of building a Temple at that place. Several councils were held and a place selected whereon to erect such a building. The place selected was the most elevated piece of ground within the Nauvoo town survey, being also centrally located on what afterward became Block 20 of the Wells Addition. The Temple site overlooks the Mississippi River, the landscape on the Iowa side and all the surrounding country for miles.

The matter of building a Temple was laid before the general conference held at Commerce, Oct. 6, 1840, when the Church voted to commence the work immediately. On this day also the conference appointed Alpheus Cutler, Elias Higbee and Reynolds Cahoon as a committee of three to carry the business into operation and to oversee the work. During the conference, which lasted three days, the Prophet Joseph explained to the Saints the law of tithing and the plan upon which the building of the Temple was to be conducted.

Several building plans for the Temple were made and submitted by various individuals, but the only one which was satisfactory to the Prophet was the one drawn and presented by William Weeks.

April 12, 1849, the brethren commenced the opening of a quarry from which to obtain stone for the building. Brother Elisha Everett struck the first blow on the works.

The committee contracted with Daniel H. Well, Esq., for the land whereon to build the Temple, and on Jan. 19, 1841, the Lord gave a revelation approving the selection of the Temple site, and commanding the erection of the sacred structure upon the spot. (Doc. & Cov., Sec. 124.)

In February, 1841, Elder Alpheus Cutler, assisted by Elder Reynolds Cahoon and others, laid out the foundation of the Temple. On the 18th of that month the brethren began to dig the cellar. As it was the wish of President Smith that the corner stones of the Temple should be laid on the 6th day of April next, the corners for the foundation were first excavated; and about the 1st day of March the cellar walls were commenced.

Feb. 22, 1841, the committee organized the city of Nauvoo into Wards and called upon the brethren to come forward and labor every tenth day. By this means they were enabled to rush on the work so rapidly that by the 6th day of April the walls were sufficiently high at the corners to admit of the laying of the corner stones. And notwithstanding the extreme poverty of the Church, the labor moved on quickly and the prospects seemed very cheering and pleasing.

“April 6, 1841,” says an editorial in

the *Times and Seasons*, “at an early hour the several companies comprising the Nauvoo Legion, with two volunteer companies from Iowa Territory, making sixteen companies in all, assembled at their several places of rendezvous, and were conducted in due order to the ground assigned for general review. The appearance, order and movements of the Legion, were chaste, grand and imposing, and reflected great credit upon the taste, skill and tact of the men comprising said Legion. We doubt whether the like can be presented in any city in the western country.

“At half past 7 o’clock a. m., the fire of artillery announced the arrival of Brigadier-Generals Law and Don Carlos Smith, at the front of their respective cohorts; and, at 8 o’clock, Major-General Bennett was conducted to his post, under the discharge of cannon, and took command of the Legion.

“At half past 9 o’clock a. m., Lieutenant-General Smith, with his guard, staff and field officers, arrived at the ground, and were presented with a beautiful silk, national flag, by the ladies of Nauvoo, which was respectfully received and hailed by the firing of cannon, and borne off by Colonel Robinson, the cornet, to the appropriate position in the line; after which, the lieutenant-general with his suite, passed the lines in review.

“At 12 m., the procession arrived upon the Temple ground, enclosing the same in a hollow square, with Lieutenant-General Smith, Major-General Bennett, Brigadier-Generals Wilson Law and Don Carlos Smith, their respective staffs, guard, field officers, distinguished visitors, choir,

band, etc., in the centre, and the ladies and gentlemen, citizens, surrounding in their interior. The superior officers, together with the banner, architects, principal speaker, etc., were duly conducted to the stand at the principal corner stone, and the religious services were commenced by singing from page 65 of the new Hymn Book. \* \* \*

(Sidney Rigdon then addressed the assemblage at some length, after which a hymn was sung under page 205, and another prayer was offered.)

“The architects then, by the direction of the First Presidency, lowered the first (S. E. corner) stone to its place, and President Joseph Smith pronounced the benediction as follows:

“This principal corner stone, in representation of the First Presidency, is now duly laid in honor of the Great God; and may it there remain until the whole fabric is completed; and may the same be accomplished speedily; that the Saints may have a place to worship God, and the Son of Man have where to lay his head.

“President Sidney Rigdon then pronounced the following:

“May the persons employed in the erection of this house be preserved from all harm while engaged in its construction, till the whole is completed, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Even so. Amen.

“The meeting was then adjourned for one hour.

“The Saints assembled according to adjournment, and proceeded to lay the remaining corner stones, according to previous order.

“The second (S. W. corner) stone, by the direction of the President of the High Priesthood, with his Council and President Marks, was lowered to its place, when the President of the High Priesthood pronounced the following:

“The second corner stone of the Temple now building by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in honor to the Great God, is duly laid, and may the same unanimity, that has been manifested on this occasion, continue till the whole is completed; that peace may rest upon it to the laying of the top stone thereof, and the turning of the key thereof; that the Saints may participate in the blessings of Israel’s God, within its walls, and the glory of God rest upon the same. Amen.

“The third (N. W. corner) stone, superintended by the High Council, was then lowered to its place, with the benediction of Elias Higbee, as follows:

“The third corner stone is now duly laid: may this stone be a firm support to the building, that the whole may be completed as before purposed.

“The fourth (N. E. corner) stone, superintended by the Bishops, was then lowered to its place, and Bishop N. K. Whitney pronounced the following:

“The fourth and last corner stone, expressive of the Lesser Priesthood, is now duly laid; and may the blessings before pronounced, with all others desirable, rest upon the same for ever. Amen.

“The services were then declared closed, and the military retired to the parade ground, and were dismissed with the approbation and thanks of the commanding officers. The military band, under the command of Captain Duzette, made a conspicuous and dignified appearance, and performed their part honorably. Their soul-stirring strains met harmoniously the rising emotions that swelled each bosom, and stimulated us onward to the arduous, but pleasing and honorable duties of the day. The choir also, under the direction of B. S. Wilber, deserve commendation. \* \* \*

“In conclusion we will say, we never witnessed a more imposing spectacle than was presented on this

occasion, and during the session of conference. Such an almost countless multitude of people, moving in harmony, in friendship, in dignity, told with a voice not easily misunderstood, that they were a people of intelligence and virtue, and order; in short, that they were *Saints*; and that the God of love, purity and light was their God, their exemplar and director; and that they were blessed and happy."

In speaking upon the proper order of laying corner stones of Temples, Joseph said on the same occasion:

"If the strict order of the Priesthood were carried out, in the building of Temples, the first stone will be laid at the southeast corner, by the First Presidency of the Church. The southwest corner should be laid next. The third or northwest corner next; and the fourth or northeast corner the last. The First Presidency should lay the southeast corner stone, and dictate who are the proper persons to lay the other corner stones.

"If a Temple is built at a distance, and the First Presidency are not present, then the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are the persons to dictate the order for that Temple; and in the absence of the Twelve Apostles, then the Presidency of the Stake will lay the southeast corner stone; the Melchisedec Priesthood laying the corner stones on the east side of the Temple, and the Lesser Priesthood those on the west side."

After the corner stones were laid and the conference was over, the work upon the Temple seemed to progress more rapidly. There were about eighteen stone-cutters engaged to dress the rock for the building. Up to that time the work performed was nearly all done by tenth days' labor. But after that the Saints began to bring in some provisions, property and money; and the committee was enabled to employ a number of stone-cutters and keep them constantly at work. The tithing la-

bor also increased through the continued immigration of Saints from abroad.

When the winter season set in toward the close of the year 1841, the walls on the south side were built up to the water table, a part of which also was laid. On the north side the walls were only about two feet high. In this state the structure remained until the spring of 1842.

During all this time there had been no general tithing record opened. The money and other property contributed had all been paid over to the committee, and receipts were issued to the several donors. Elias Higbee kept the books and work accounts, and generally wrote the receipts for tithing, all of which occupied nearly the whole of his time. Elders Cahoon and Cutler hired the laborers, superintended the work and kept an oversight of the entire business.

Sept. 25, 1841, Elders Alpheus Cutler and Peter Haws started for the pine country to obtain lumber for the Temple and Nauvoo House. They took with them Tarlton Lewis, Jabez Durfee, Hardin Wilson, Wm. L. Cutler, Horace Owens, Octavius Pauket, Blakely B. Anderson, James M. Flack, Nathaniel Child, Brother Child's wife and daughter, and Peter W. Conover. These brethren spent the winter in the pine forests, and toiled diligently in their appointed work. They suffered some because of the cold in that northern region, but they made good progress. By the following July, they had succeeded in making up and bringing to Nauvoo a large raft of first-rate pine timber. By this means the prospect of the work was much brightened.

Dec. 13, 1841, the Prophet Joseph appointed Apostle Willard Richards to be recorder for the Temple and scribe for the private office of the President. The recorder opened his office in the counting room of President Smith's new brick store on Water Street, and he immediately began to record the tithings on the "Book of the Law of the Lord," page 27. The first record was made under date of Dec. 1, 1841. It was one gold sovereign, valued at \$5.00, to the credit of John Sanders, late from Cumberland, on the borders of Scotland, Europe.

A few months previous to this (Jan. 30, 1841), Joseph had been appointed "Sole trustee-in-trust for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints;" and, consequently, it became his prerogative to receive all the donations for the Church and the Temple. Late in the evening of Dec. 11, 1841, the trustee-in-trust instructed Brigham Young, President of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, to visit the members of the building committee and inform them more fully regarding their duties—to notify them not to accept any more tithes and consecrations, except such as were received from him. On the morning of the 13th, this message was delivered by Brigham to the committee, in the presence of Elders Kimball, Woodruff and Willard Richards.

When this order was understood by the Saints, the business of the recorder (Willard Richards) increased rapidly, and having many important matters crowding upon him, he found it necessary to appoint Saturday of each week as the time for receiving and recording the tithings of the brethren. He published a notice

under date of Jan. 12, 1842, informing the Saints of this regulation; and it was subsequently carried into effect. But the business increased so rapidly that he could not keep pace with the work. He therefore counseled with his brethren of the Twelve; and, having received permission from President Smith, he called Elder William Clayton, who had lately arrived from England, to assist him. Elder Clayton accordingly entered the recorder's office Feb. 10, 1842, and continued therein from that time forward.

In the revelation given Jan. 19, 1841, the Lord says:

"For there is not a place found on earth that He may come and restore again that which was lost unto you, or which He hath taken away, even the fullness of the Priesthood.

"For a baptismal font there is not upon the earth, that they, my Saints, may be baptized for those who are dead.

"For this ordinance belongeth to my house, and cannot be acceptable to me, only in the days of your poverty, wherein ye are not able to build a house unto me.

"But I command you, all ye my Saints, to build a house unto me; and I grant unto you a sufficient time to build a house unto me, and during this time your baptisms shall be acceptable unto me." (Doc. & Cov., Sec. 124, Verses 28, 29, 30 and 31.)

In the summer and fall of the year 1841, in conformity with the foregoing item of law, the brethren entered into measures to build a baptismal font in the cellar floor near the east end of the Temple. President Smith approved and accepted a draft for the font, made by Brother Wm. Weeks; and on August 18, 1841, Elder Weeks began to labor on the construction of the font with his own hands. He labored six days and then committed the work to the carpenters. August 11th Brother Weeks began carving the oxen, twelve in number, upon which the

font was to stand. After carving for six days, he consigned this branch to Brother Elijah Fordham, the principal carver, who continued until they were finished.

Nov. 8, 1841, at 5 o'clock in the evening, the font was dedicated by Joseph Smith. "The baptismal font," writes the Prophet, "is situated in the centre of the basement room, under the main hall of the Temple; it is constructed of pine timber, and put together of staves tongued and grooved, oval shaped, sixteen feet long east and west, and twelve feet wide, seven feet high from the foundation, the basin four feet deep. The moulding of the cap and base are formed of beautiful carved work in antique style. The sides are finished with panel work. A flight of stairs in the north and south sides, leading up and down into the basin, is guarded by side railing. The font stands upon twelve oxen, four on each side, and two at each end, their head, shoulders, and fore legs projecting out from under the font; they are carved out of pine plank, glued together, and copied after the most beautiful five-year-old steer that could be found in the country. \* \* \* The oxen and ornamental mouldings of the font were carved by Elder Elijah Fordham, from New York City. The font was enclosed by a temporary frame building sided up with split oak clapboards, with a roof of the same material, and was so low that the timbers of the first story were laid above it. The water was supplied from a well thirty feet deep in the east end of the basement. This font was built for the baptisms for the dead until the Temple shall be finished, when a more durable one will supply its place."

Elder Wm. Clayton writes:

"After the dedication of the font Reuben McBride was the first person baptized, under the direction of the President. Brother Samuel Rolfe, who was seriously afflicted with a felon upon one of his hands, was present. President Smith instructed him to wash in the font and told him that the hand would be healed. The doctors had told him that he could not recover before spring, and had advised him to have his hand cut. He dipped his hand in the font, and within a week he was perfectly healed.

"After this time baptisms were continued in the font, and many Saints realized great blessings—both spiritually and bodily.

"I will here state that on Sept. 25, 1841, a deposit was made in the southeast corner stone of the Temple.

"It was late in the spring of 1842, when work was opened upon the walls, and little was done until Brother William W. Player came in June. He had just arrived from England, and had come with the full intention of working on the Temple. Commencing to labor about the 8th of June, he spent some time in regulating the stone work already set which had not been done very well. About the 11th of the same month he set the first plinth on the southwest corner of the south side. During the summer he lost two weeks of work, having to wait for Elder Cahoon's sons' plinths, which they were cutting, they playing in the stone shop much of their time.

"The work progressed but slowly during this season, as there was but one crane; but the delay arose through the stones not being cut fast enough. By the fall, however, Brother Player had got all the rock-work laid around as high as the window sills, together with all the window sills, including that of the large east Venetian window. He had also two courses of pilaster stones on the plinths all around.

"During the greater part of the time in the fall, and especially toward the season when the work ceased, and winter set in, Brother Player was very sick. He nearly lost the use of his hands and feet, and several times he fell, through weakness, while on his way home. He considered that his sickness was caused by the change of climate, and by his having drunk bad water while coming up the river."

Willard Richards, the recorder, having in the early part of June, 1842, obtained permission from the President to go to the East to get

his family, made preparations to depart upon this journey. June 29th he transferred the "Law of the Lord" and books belonging to the Temple to the care and charge of William Clayton. One or two days later Elder Richards started away.

About 9 o'clock on the evening of Saturday, Sept. 3rd, President Smith was at Bishop N. K. Whitney's house, but was about to leave that place to go to Edward Hunter's. He called William Clayton to him and said: "Brother Clayton, I want you to take care of the records and papers; and from this time I appoint you Temple recorder; and when revelations are to be transcribed, you shall write them."

This was done because Elder Richards had more work than he could attend to, he being engaged upon the Church History, which the President was anxious should progress as fast as possible.

"While President Smith was concealed at the house of Father Taylor," writes Elder William Clayton, "Reynolds Cahoon and some other brethren went to visit him. He gave them many glorious instructions, and in his conversation requested Brother Cahoon, as soon as he should return home, to call upon the Saints to put a temporary floor in the Temple, that we might be enabled to hold our meetings within its sacred walls.

"Accordingly, on Sunday, Oct. 23, 1842, the committee laid before the Saints the President's request and called upon them to begin work on the morrow to accomplish this object. The following day the brethren began their labor on this temporary floor; and on Friday, the 28th, the floor was laid and seats were fixed ready for meeting.

"On Sunday, the 30th, the Saints held the first meeting in the Temple, and were addressed by Elder John Taylor, one of the Twelve Apostles. It was expected that the President would be there himself; but he was sick and unable to attend.

"This movement added a new stimulus to the work; and the hearts of all the Saints seemed to be filled with joy and gratitude for this privilege.

"The Prophet, before he went up the river, had called upon the members of the Temple Committee to come together to have a settlement. On Saturday, Oct. 1st, they met at the President's house, he being sick. The recorder and Bishop N. K. Whitney were present. Some reports had been circulated to the effect that the committee was not making a righteous disposition of property consecrated to the building of the Temple, and there appeared to be some dissatisfaction among the laborers on account of these reports. After carefully examining the books and making inquiry into the entire proceeding of the committee, President Smith expressed himself as being perfectly satisfied with the committee and its work.

"The books were balanced between the trustee-in-trust and the committee, and also each individual account was carefully examined. The wages of the trustee-in-trust, the members of the committee and the recorder were also fixed by the President; and it was agreed that each should receive \$2 per day for his services.

"The President remarked that he was amenable to the State for the faithful discharge of his duties as trustee-in-trust, and that the Temple



Committee was accountable to him and to no other authority; and that no notice must be taken of any complaint unless it was properly brought to him, when he would make things right if any change were needed.

“The parties separated perfectly satisfied, and the President said that he would have a notice published, stating that he had examined the accounts and was satisfied. This notice appeared in the *Times and Seasons* of Oct. 15, 1842.

“At this counsel it was also agreed that the recorder’s office should be removed to the Committee House near the Temple for the better accommodation of the business. Accordingly, the committee built a small brick office for the recorder; and on Wednesday, Nov. 2, 1842, the recorder moved his records, books, paper, etc., to the new office and began business there forthwith.

“Brother James Whitehead was called into the office June 11, 1842, to assist in keeping the books; and from this time forward the business continued to increase and contributions came in plentifully.

“After the work ceased upon the walls of the Temple, in the fall of 1842, the rock-cutters continued their labor with the intention of having a goodly number of the stones ready for the spring.

“Some time in the month of November, a feeling against the committee arose among the stone-cutters, who finally presented a charge to the First Presidency against Elders Cahoon and Higbee for oppressive and unchristianlike conduct, and against the committee for an unequal distribution of provisions, iron, steel, tools, etc.; also alleging that favors were shown by the committee

to the sons of its members. The trial began about 11 o’clock in the day and continued until 9 at night. Henry G. Sherwood made a plea on the side of justice, and the Patriarch Hyrum on the side of mercy. The decision was given by the President. He decided that the members of the committee should retain their standing and gave much good instruction to all parties, correcting the errors of each in kindness. The decision was marked by judgment and wisdom and cannot fail to produce a good effect.

“On Sunday, May 21, 1843, President Smith preached in the Temple.  
\* \* \* In the afternoon of that day the ordinance of partaking of bread and water, as the sacrament, was administered to the Saints for the first time in this Temple.

“The work on the building was delayed considerably this spring on account of the necessity for fixing runways for the crane. Brother Player had been sick during the entire winter, and he continued in a very feeble state until the time when he commenced again to lay the stone on the walls, which was on April 21, 1843. From this time the work progressed steadily but slowly. There was no other hindrance until the next winter set in, which was rather early, and at which time the walls were up as high as the arches of the first tier of windows all around. In this state the building was left through the winter and until the spring of 1844.

“Early in the morning of June 8, 1843, Elder Elias Higbee, one of the Temple committee, died after an illness of only five days. His death was unexpected and deeply lamented by all his brethren. He had proved

himself a worthy man, and was much respected by all who knew him.

“After this event several applications were made by men to be appointed to fill the vacant place of Elder Higbee. Elder Jared Carter was very anxious to have the appointment, and, for some cause or other, claimed it as his right. But the Spirit whispered that it would not be wisdom to appoint him. After some delay and consultation on the subject, the Patriarch Hyrum Smith was appointed by the trustee-in-trust, with the consent of the other members of the committee; and on the morning of Oct. 23, 1843, he entered upon the duties of his office, amidst the greetings and good feelings of the workers universally.

“Oct. 6, 1843, the special conference was held in the Temple. This was the first time a conference was held in the building. \* \* \*

“On this occasion the President proposed to the people to place under bonds all agents who were sent out to collect funds for the Temple and Nauvoo House. He showed that some of the Elders, when they were away, received contributions to the Temple; but as they sometimes devoted a portion of the money in other channels, they did not make proper returns at Nauvoo and the accounts did not, therefore, accurately balance. He stated that the Twelve Apostles were now about to go East to raise means for the Temple and also for the Nauvoo House. He suggested that they give bonds to the amount of \$2,000 each; and that this rule be enforced upon all the Elders from this time forward. An action was taken by the conference and it was decided by unanimous vote to carry this proposition

into effect. The Twelve gave bonds in the required amount previous to their going East, which bonds were filed in the office of the trustee-in-trust.

“Thus the Twelve were the first agents who were ever placed under bonds, when sent to collect funds for the Church. The wisdom of this order was soon manifest; for, although it was well understood and universally believed that the Twelve would invariably make correct returns, there were others who might not be so careful or scrupulous. And, inasmuch as members of this first quorum were required to give bonds, no other man could justly complain if he were brought under the same rule.

“At this conference the Saints again voted to renew their exertions and double their diligence in order that the Temple might be speedily finished. \* \* \*

“Some time in the winter or spring of the year 1844, Patriarch Hyrum Smith made a proclamation to the women of the Church, asking them to subscribe in money one cent each per week, for the purpose of buying the glass and nails for the Temple. He represented to them that by this means he would be able to meet all the requirements in this regard. He also gave a promise that all the sisters who would comply with this call should have the first privilege of seats in the Temple when it was finished. He opened a record of these contributions, which he kept, with the aid of Sister Mercy R. Thompson, until his death. Afterwards Brother Cutler was appointed to receive these offerings, assisted by Sister Thompson. There was soon a great anxiety manifest among the

sisters to pay their portion, and nearly all paid a year's subscription in advance. Since that time many have given the donation for the second year; and there has been already realized nearly \$2,000, which will do much towards accomplishing the desired object. These contributions yet continue to come in each day.

"Early in the spring of 1844, the committee commenced the construction of a second crane, in order to expedite the work, the labor having all been performed with but one crane up to this time. During the month of March the new crane was rigged, and immediately after the April conference (April 11th) Brother Player again began work on the walls."

During the excitement incident to the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, the work on the Temple ceased for two weeks, all the hands having to watch and stand on guard night and day. The work was suspended about June 20, 1844. On the second Sabbath after the murder (July 7th) the subject of the Temple was brought into consideration, and the Church voted to commence work again and finish the building as speedily as possible.

Consequently, on July 8, 1844, the laborers resumed their work, although the committee had not so much as a bushel of meal, nor a pound of flour, nor a pound of meat to feed the hands with; but the Saints seemed determined to go to work and trust in God for the means.

A few days previous (July 5th) a large raft of pine lumber, containing 87,732 feet, was landed at Nauvoo for the Temple. The brethren turned out liberally with their teams to haul it to the Temple, where it was se-

cured in a few days. Shortly afterwards another raft, containing 67,952 feet of lumber, was received and hauled to the Temple.

About the middle of July, 1844, the sisters of the branches of La Harpe and Macedonia sent word to the Temple committee and stated their anxiety to see the building progress still more rapidly. They proposed if the committee would build another crane, they would furnish the means to build it with, and seemed wishful to go ahead with it immediately. The committee and recorder counseled on the subject, and it was decided to comply with the wishes of the sisters. Sister Clark, wife of Raymond Clark, was authorized to collect the contributions. She immediately started, and returned on the 29th with money and other property, amounting in the whole to \$194, which was more than sufficient to build a new crane.

The committee immediately set the carpenters to work, and on the 3rd of August the crane was put in operation under the management of Joshua Armstrong, the setter, and Horace Owens to back up, and W. W. Dryer, Wm. Austin and Archibald Hill to attend to the crane.

They commenced work on the north side and very soon satisfied the Saints of the utility of the movement. The works now progressed rapidly.

After the return of the Twelve Apostles to Nauvoo in August, 1844, and their acceptance by the Saints as the presiding quorum of the Church, the Saints were more united and better feelings prevailed. The work on the Temple moved on with astonishing rapidity, and on Sept. 23, 1844, the first capital was put

up. The stone weighed about two tons, and when it was at its height, and the men were attempting to draw it to the wall, the crane gave way at the foot of the wing or angle, which circumstance caused considerable danger. By great care the stone was safely landed and set without any further accident.

“On Wednesday, Sept. 25th,” writes Wm. Clayton, “as the brethren were beginning to raise one of the capitals, having neglected to fasten the guys, the crane fell over with a tremendous crash, breaking it considerably. As soon as it was perceived that the crane was falling, the hands fled to get out of the way. One of the brethren, Thomas Jaap, running directly in the course of the falling crane, barely escaped being killed. The crane struck the ground and was within a foot of striking his head. This circumstance hindered the workmen some; but in a few days the crane was mended and reared, and the brethren again went to work on it.

“About this time, Ira T. Miles came down from Lyman Wight’s company, who were then in the north, having left the city, as was supposed, through cowardice, as they expected we should be routed and the city destroyed. About the same time, Jacob Morris came down from the same company and stated that Miles had come with the intention of setting fire to the lumber, that the building might be hindered, as Lyman Wight had said the Temple never would be built.

“Whether this was the intention of Brother Miles or not, we could not learn satisfactorily. However, enough was known to induce the authorities of the Church to advise the

committee to have some of the old police guard the lumber and the Temple night and day. \* \* \* There has since that been many threats thrown out from the Rigdonites and other sources that the Temple never should be built, and no doubt an attempt would have been made to set fire to it, if it had not been well guarded all the time.

“The workmen continued raising the capitals until December, 1844, when, on the 6th of that month, the last one was safely deposited in its place; which was a source of great joy to the Saints. Many fears had been entertained that Brother Player would not be able to finish them before winter set in, but it seemed as though the Lord held up the weather until this important piece of work was accomplished. About two hours after the capital was set, it commenced snowing very briskly, and at night the ground was covered about four inches, and it froze very keenly.

“There were then twelve of the capitals without the trumpet stones; and they remained in this state until the following spring. The cost of each of the capitals was about \$300. The first and last of the capitals were cut by Charles Lambert and Harvey Stanley.

“I will further say that when the hands were raising the last capital, and had got it about half way up, one of the block shives in the tackle broke and rendered it impossible in the situation either to raise or lower the stone. This circumstance presented a great difficulty, but after some consultation the hands fastened the rope below the tackle, so that it could not slip, and left the stone suspended while they

took down the blocks, put in a new shive and fixed the blocks again. The stone was then raised without further difficulty, and was set precisely at 20 minutes before 1 o'clock. This was the heaviest stone among the whole number.

“When the Twelve returned home, after the death of President Joseph Smith and Patriarch Hyrum Smith, they held a council and appointed Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, the two presiding Bishops, trustees-in-trust. This was done on the 9th of August; and a few days afterwards, the trustees entered upon the duties of their office.

“In the early part of December (1844) the trustees and Twelve held a council to talk on the propriety of employing a suitable number of carpenters this winter to prepare the timber works for the Temple, so as to have it all ready when the stone work was finished. It was decided to employ fifteen persons as steady carpenters; and the architect was authorized to select such men as he had confidence in—men who were well qualified to do the work that was wanted. It was also concluded to fix up a shop in the Temple for the carpenters to work in. Accordingly the south side of the lower story of the Temple was weather-boarded around. A very good shop was made by this means, which was completed on the following Saturday; and on Monday, the 16th, the men selected went to work in their new shop. Their names were as follows: Truman O. Angell, William Felshaw, William F. Cahoon, Joseph T. Schofield, Samuel Rolfe, Zimri H. Baxter, Adison Everett, John Stiles, Hugh Riding, Miles Romney, Jabez Durfee. Stephen Longstroth, Benja-

min Rolfe, Nicholas T. Silcock and William Carmichael. Hiram Mace, Wandel Mace and Gideon Gibbs were appointed to attend the saw-mill and Daniel Avery to turn grindstone for the carpenters, keep the shop clean and take care of strangers who might visit the building.

“During the early part of January, 1845, the High Priests' quorum entered into an investigation of the propriety of building a hall for their accommodation. On the 26th, President Young and some others of the quorum of the Twelve attended the meeting of the quorum, when the subject was again discussed. President Young made some remarks on the subject and concluded by advising them, instead of building a hall, to go to work and finish the upper room of the Temple, and by this means they would soon have a room to attend to the ordinances and save much expense. A vote was taken on accepting President Young's proposition, which was carried without a dissenting voice. The brethren immediately commenced bringing in their donations to the Bishops for that purpose. This matter served as a new stimulus among the Saints to use every exertion to finish the Temple as speedily as possible.

“On Wednesday, March 12th, Brother William W. Player commenced work again on the walls. He got one stone up just as the bell rung for dinner.

“On Friday, the 14th, there was a man killed on the stone quarry by a stone falling on his head while the brethren were blasting rocks. This is the only accident of any moment that has ever happened on the Temple or any of the works connected with it.

“On Thursday, March 27, 1845, Brother Player put up the last trumpet stone, at about 3 o'clock, p. m. He also laid the first stringer for the large upper Venetian window in the east side.

“Monday, April 21, 1845, Brother Player put up the first star in the architrave. \* \* \* At precisely a quarter before 3 o'clock it was properly set in its place; and the instant it was set, Brothers Edward Miller and Elisha Everett sprung for the top; but Brother Miller being a little the smartest he was on first and stood erect, viewing with pride the surrounding scenery. After he got down Brother Everett also mounted the stone and stood on it for some time. The top of the star is 55 feet above the ground. The first star was put up on Joseph's corner, being the first one north of the southeast corner.

“On the morning of Tuesday, April 29, 1845, the first upper circular window was finished setting by Brother Player. On Friday, May 16th, Brother Player set the last star on the west end, and the second one from the southwest corner. It was set exactly at 3 o'clock p. m. At this time the carpenters were very busy raising the timbers for the upper floor of the building. \* \* \*

“On Monday, May 19th, while I was sitting on the Temple, Brother Stephen H. Goddard met with an accident, which was very near proving fatal. He was standing on the wall on the north side of the Temple, assisting some others to take down one of the scaffolding poles. By some accident the foot of the pole slipped and struck him on the left side of the head. He fell head foremost, being stunned by the blow.

Fortunately they had just got two joists in the floor and he fell across them, which prevented him from going down into the cellar, a distance of about 62 feet. And in all probability, if he had fallen down, he would have been killed. The brethren raised him up, and on examination found that he had received a cut on the upper corner of his left eye. His face was also much bruised and he bled profusely. I laid hands on him with two other brethren and he went home. He suffered considerable pain until evening, when it ceased, and in two days afterwards he was at work again as usual.

“On Friday, the 23rd, all the stone on the outside of the wall was laid, except the southeast corner stone. This progress was a great rejoicing to the Saints.

“The Rigdonites have prophesied that the walls would never be built; but through the blessing of God we have lived to see the prediction come to naught.

“On Saturday, May 24, 1845, at a quarter before 6 o'clock a. m., was the time appointed for the laying of the capstone of the Temple. Quite a number of the Saints had assembled to witness the interesting ceremony. There were present, of the quorum of the Twelve: President Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Willard Richards, Amasa M. Lyman, George A. Smith, John E. Page, Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt; also Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, trustees-in-trust; Alpheus Cutler and Raymond Cahoon, building committee; Wm. Clayton, Temple recorder; John Smith, Patriarch and President of the Stake, and Charles C. Rich, his Counselor. Of the High Council

Wm. Huntington, sen., Aaron Johnson, Geo W. Harris, James Allred and David Fullmer were present; also Wm. Weeks, architect, and Wm. W. Phelps.

“A few minutes before 6 o'clock the band came up and arranged themselves on the platform in a circle a little back from the corner. The names of the members of the band who were present were: Wm. Pitt, leader; Stephen Hales, Wm. F. Cahoon, Robert T. Burton, John Kay, James Smithies, Daniel F. Cahoon, Andrew Cahoon, Charles H. Hales, Martin H. Peck, J. T. Hutchinson, James Standing, Wm. D. Huntington, Charles Smith and Charles C. Robbins; also William H. Kimball, color bearer.

“At 6 o'clock the band played ‘The Nightingale,’ and afterwards, while the people were collecting, they played another tune. At 8 minutes after 6 o'clock, Brother Wm. W. Player commenced spreading his mortar, perfect silence prevailing,

“President Young stood on the wall immediately north of the cornerstone, with Elder Heber C. Kimball on his right hand.

“When the mortar was spread, the stone was lifted to its place by President Brigham Young, Wm. W. Player, Tarlton Lewis, Elisha Everett, John Hill, Edward Miller, Chas. W. Patten, Samuel Hodge, Hans C. Hansen and Thos. Jaap.

“President Young then stepped on the stone, and taking a large peatle began beating it to its place. He finished laying the stone with the assistance and direction of Brother Player precisely at 22 minutes after 6 o'clock.

“The band struck up the ‘Cap-

stone March,’ composed and arranged by Wm. Pitt, the leader, for the occasion; after which President Young spoke to the congregation, instructing them with regard to shouting the ‘Hosannah,’ and then said:

“‘The last stone is laid upon the Temple, and I pray the Almighty in the name of Jesus to defend us in this place, and sustain us until the Temple is finished and have all got our endowments.’

“The whole congregation then, following the motion of President Young, shouted as loud as possible: ‘Hosannah! hosannah! hosannah! to God and the Lamb! Amen! Amen! and Amen!’ This was repeated a second and third time.

“The President concluded by saying:

“‘So let it be, thou Lord Almighty!’

He continued and said:

“‘This is the seventh day of the week, or the Jewish Sabbath. It is the day on which the Almighty finished His work and rested from His labors. We have now finished the walls of the Temple, and we may rest to-day from our labors.’

He said he would take it upon him to dismiss the workmen for the day; and requested the people to hallow the day and spend it giving thanks to God.

“He then dismissed the congregation, and in company with the brethren of the Twelve retired to the place of their retreat, where they could be safe from arrest by constables and other officers who were prowling around the city from Carthage.

“The people began to move away, but the band continued playing. John Kay also went on the cornerstone and sang a song composed by Elder Wm. W. Phelps, entitled, ‘The Capstone Song.’ The morning was very cold and chilly. The Saints seemed highly interested and

pleased with the morning's performance. According to the request of President Young all works were suspended and the day was kept as a holiday. On May 28th, 1845, the first 'bent' of the attic story of the Temple was raised by the carpenters, and up to this time they continued to raise the timber works with pleasing rapidity.

"Thus the work of this Temple has progressed from the beginning to the present time without any serious accident except in the incident which happened at the stone quarry. The blessing of God has attended the whole progress of the work, and it has advanced beyond our most sanguine expectations. Our enemies have threatened all the time, and for the last two years we have had very little cessation from writs and other efforts of the enemy to prevent our finishing it. Many prophecies have been uttered against it; but the Saints have invariably pursued a steady course of perseverance. As the building has progressed, the Saints have increased their donations and tithings, and this spring (1845) has exceeded all past times for liberality and donations from the brethren."

Early in the fall of 1845 the steeple and tower of the Temple were completed and preparations made to hold the October conference in the building. So great was the anxiety to complete it that it was decided that all the carpenters that could be obtained should be put to work at it immediately, while others should gather the harvest and attend to other labors. Under date of Aug-21, 1845, President Young wrote from Nauvoo to Wilford Woodruff in England:

"The Temple is up, the shingles all on, the tower raised, and nearly ready to put the dome up. The joiners are now at work finishing off the inside."

In the beginning of October, 1845, the Temple was so far completed that meetings could be held in it. The first meeting held within its walls (Oct. 5, 1845) was attended by 5,000 people. The building had by this time been entirely inclosed. The windows were in, temporary floors laid and pulpits and seats arranged to accommodate several thousand persons. On that day the Temple, so far as completed, was dedicated to the Lord as "a monument of the Saints' liberality, fidelity and faith." On the following three days the general conference was held in the Temple, which was the only general conference ever held within the walls of that building.

After this conference work was resumed on the Temple, and it progressed so far that the attic story was plastered and ready for use on the 30th of November following, on which day that part of the building was dedicated. During the month of December, 1845, and January, 1846, a large number of Saints received their endowments in the Temple. On the 9th of February the roof of the building was discovered to be on fire, the stovepipe having ignited it. The alarm was immediately given, the citizens rallied to the scene and the fire was extinguished in about half an hour, having done but little damage.

The exodus from Nauvoo was commenced in February, 1846, but that did not have the effect of stopping the work on the Temple. When President Young and others of the Twelve started for the West, Orson Hyde was left to take charge of the



Temple and administer to the Saints in Nauvoo.

In the evening of April 30, 1846, the Temple was privately dedicated. Elders Orson Hyde, Wilford Woodruff, John, Joseph and Phineas H. Young, John M. Bernhisel, Joseph L. Heywood and several others were present; Elder Joseph Young offered up the dedicatory prayer. On the next day (May 1st) the Temple was publicly dedicated by Elder Orson Hyde, Elders Wilford Woodruff, A. W. Babbitt and Joseph A. Stratton being present and taking part in the services.

This much accomplished the Saints were contented, having fulfilled the commandment to build the holy edifice, and immediately after all who were able to do so crossed the Mississippi River and followed their predecessors in the exodus.

The Nauvoo Temple was built of light grey limestone, nearly as hard as marble. It was 128 feet long, 88 feet wide and 65 feet from floor to roof. From the ground to the top of the spire was 165 feet. It had 30 hewn pilasters—six at each end and nine at each side—which cost about \$3,000 each. The base of the pilasters were crescent new moons, and the capitals, nearly 50 feet high, were suns with human faces in bold relief, 2½ feet broad, and ornamented with rays of light and waves, the whole surmounted by two hands holding trumpets. There were two stories in the clear, and two and one half stories in the recesses over the arches, four tiers of windows, two gothic and two round. The baptismal font, supported on twelve carved oxen, was in the basement story, and with the oxen, was intended to be gilded with gold. On the west

front of the building was inscribed in golden letters:

THE HOUSE OF THE LORD:

BUILT BY THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

The amount expended by the Saints on this building exceeded \$1,000,000.

After the famous battle of Nauvoo in September, 1846, the Temple was taken possession of by the mob, who immediately set to work defacing it in various ways, and desecrating it by their hideous oaths and dreadful blasphemies.

Nov. 19, 1848, the Temple was fired by an incendiary. The fire when first discovered about 3 o'clock in the morning was bursting out through the spire near the small door that opened from the east side to the roof on the main building. When first seen the destroying element had taken such hold of the timbers and roof as to make useless any effort to extinguish it. The materials of the inside were so dry and the fire spread so rapidly, that a few minutes were sufficient to wrap the famed edifice in a sheet of flames.

In the History of Hancock County the following appears concerning the burning of the Temple:

"It was a beautiful night, and about 3 o'clock (in the morning) fire was discovered in the cupola. It had made but little headway when first seen, but spread rapidly, and in a very short period the lofty spire was a mass of flame, shooting high in the air, and illuminating a wide extent of country. It was seen for miles away. The citizens gathered around, but nothing could be done to save the structure. It was entirely of wood except the walls, and nothing could have stopped the progress of the flames. In two hours, and before the sun dawned upon the earth, the proud structure, reared at so much cost—an anomaly in architecture, and a monument of religious zeal—stood with four blackened and smoking walls only re-

maining. If any party or parties had been contemplating the purchase of the Temple, for any purpose, its destruction, of course, put an end to the scheme."

Elder George A. Smith and Erastus Snow, who visited Nauvoo about eight years afterwards, learned from Lewis A. Bidamon, landlord of the Nauvoo Mansion, that the inhabitants of Warsaw, Carthage, Pontoo-suc and surrounding settlements, jealous of Nauvoo and fearing that it would still retain its superior importance as a town, and the "Mormons" therefore might be induced to return, contributed a purse of \$500 which they gave to one Joseph Agnew for burning the Temple, and that he was the wretch who set the building on fire. Mr. Bidamon added that the burning of the Temple did have the effect to diminish the importance of Nauvoo, for his hotel did not have one fourth the custom after the conflagration that it had previously.

Soon after the burning of the Temple the ruins were bought by the Icarians who set to work repairing the building with a view to making it an institution of learning, but while thus engaged a tornado blew down the north wall. The *Hancock Patriot*, a newspaper published at Nauvoo at that time, says in this connection:

"The dreadful tornado of May 27th (1850) which invaded the city of Nauvoo and neighboring places has been for us Icarians (little accustomed to such revolutions in the atmosphere) a spectacle of frightful sublimity, and also a source of mortal anguish, on account of the disasters and catastrophes which have resulted from it, to the inhabitants of this county and to us.

"The Temple, which we were preparing so actively and resolutely to rebuild—the Temple which we hoped to cover this year, and in which we were to settle our refectories, our halls of reunion and our schools—

that gigantic monument has become the first victim of the tornado.

"How many projects are buried under those heaps of rubbish! How much outlay and days of hard labor has been lost to us! It was for that magnificent edifice to again give a soul to that great body, that one of our agents in the north pineries has just bought all the great beams necessary for its rebuilding; it is for it that we were adding a saw-machine to the mill, and establishing a vast shed to shelter our laborers; in a word, it was for it that all our efforts and strength have been employed; and now one gale of the tempest brings to naught all our endeavors—has violently ended what incendiary had begun in November, 1848, and what *union fraternity* tried to repair in 1850. We resign without murmuring to that catastrophe.

"There now remains nothing of the gigantic work of the Mormons, except the west face, strongly united by its sides to another wall in the interior part and surmounted by an arch; between the two walls at the north and south are the two towers or seat of the staircases."

After this no further attempt was made to rebuild the Temple, but the remaining portions of the walls were gradually taken down and the rock hauled away to be used for the construction of other buildings, both in and outside of Nauvoo. Subsequently some of the rock were shipped a great distance—it is said to almost every State in the Union—and some choice blocks have even been shipped to Europe, where they at present adorn the palaces of noblemen or are preserved as relics. But for many years there has not been one stone left upon another to mark the place where once stood the noble edifice—the second Temple reared by the Saints of God in this generation. The ground upon which it stood is now owned by C. W. Reimbold, a German, who keeps a little store near the old site. There are ten other buildings on the Temple Block, four of which were built by the Icarians.