

ing in the wilderness after leaving Jerusalem (1 Ne. 16:10). As his party traveled through the Arabian desert and across the ocean to the PROMISED LAND, one of the spindles pointed the direction to travel. Moreover, the Liahona was a medium through which God communicated with Lehi's family. Written messages occasionally appeared on it, giving them specific directions (1 Ne. 16:26–29).

The instrument worked according to the faith and obedience of Lehi's family. When they lacked faith or disobeyed, it ceased to function. Passed down from generation to generation along with the sacred records, it was stored with the GOLD PLATES.

Liahona is the title of an international Spanish-language magazine published by the Church.

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DOUGLAS KENT LUDLOW

LIAHONA THE ELDERS' JOURNAL

The official publication for all the North American missions of the Church from 1907 to 1945 was *Liahona the Elders' Journal*, published in Independence, Missouri. It arose from the merger of *The Elders' Journal*, published by the Southern States Mission from 1903 to 1907, and *The Liahona*, a multimission publication begun by the Central States Mission in Independence on April 6, 1907. Publishing articles of interest to missionaries, people considering membership in the Church, and general members, it helped build a feeling of community among the Saints scattered throughout the North American missions. Thomas C. Romney's *World Religions in the Light of Mormonism* (1946) grew out of articles he first published in the *Liahona*. In its prime, the journal had nearly 20,000 subscribers.

With several missions publishing their own bulletins after World War I and the *Deseret News* introducing the weekly "Church Section" in 1931, *Liahona* subscriptions continually decreased until it ceased publication in 1945.

[See also *Liahona*.]

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ARNOLD K. GARR

LIBERTY JAIL

In 1833 a small jail was constructed in Liberty, the seat of Clay County, Missouri. In 1856 the building was abandoned. After a short tenure as an ice house, it fell into disrepair and was finally demolished near the turn of the century. Today, thousands of Latter-day Saints and other tourists visit the partially reconstructed jail and view it as what the LDS historian B. H. Roberts called a "prison temple" because of a notable prisoner it housed: the Prophet Joseph SMITH languished within its four-foot-thick walls from December 1, 1838 until April 6, 1839. Sharing this incarceration were his brother Hyrum (*see* Hyrum SMITH), who served as his second counselor in the presidency of the Church; Sidney RIGDON, his first counselor; and three other brethren—Lyman Wight, Alexander McRae, and Caleb Baldwin.

They were held on a variety of unsubstantiated charges stemming from the "Mormon War" (*see* MISSOURI CONFLICT), which had culminated in their betrayal and the fall of the LDS settlement of Far West, Missouri, a few weeks earlier. As they awaited trial, they suffered severe privation. Confined to the lower level or dungeon portion of the building, they slept on the straw-strewn stone floor with little light and scant protection from the Missouri winter. Alexander McRae described the food they were served as "very coarse, and so filthy that we could not eat it until we were driven to it by hunger" (*CHC* 1:521). He also recorded that several attempts were made to poison them.

Notwithstanding these trying physical conditions, Joseph Smith's greater suffering seemed to come from his anguish for the thousands of Latter-day Saints, including his own family, who were being driven from the state under the executive order of Governor Lilburn W. Boggs calling for the extermination of the Mormons (*see* EXTERMINATION ORDER). In a very long, two-part letter to the Church, written between March 20 and March 25, Joseph cried out, "O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding

place? How long shall thy hand be stayed, and thine eye, yea thy pure eye, behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants, and thine ear be penetrated with their cries? Yea, O Lord, how long shall they suffer these wrongs and unlawful oppressions?" (D&C 121:1–3).

In answer, he was told to be of good cheer: "My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes" (D&C 121:7–8). Some of Joseph Smith's most sublime writings are found in this letter. The counsel of the Lord concerning the proper exercise of priesthood authority (D&C 121:33–46) is among the most quoted latter-day scripture. Excerpts from the letter make up sections 121, 122, and 123 of the DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS.

In early April 1839, the prisoners were moved to Daviess County for trial; and then while being taken to Columbia, Boone County, on yet another change of venue, they learned from their captors that, for a variety of reasons, it would be agreeable to the officials if they would escape. With the aid of their guards, the prisoners hastened to join the exiled Latter-day Saints who were gathering in western Illinois.

Today, a commodious visitors center houses Liberty Jail that, in cutaway form, has been partially rebuilt from the original stones.

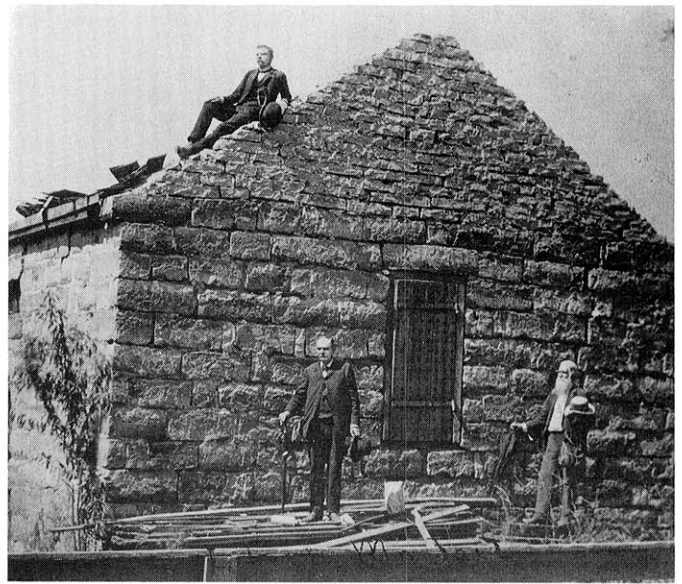
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LAWRENCE R. FLAKE

LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

Latter-day Saints believe that people should document God's dealings with them. Without sacred records, people are destined to "dwindle and perish in unbelief" (1 Ne. 3:13). In one of the first revelations received after the Church was formally organized, the Prophet Joseph SMITH was instructed that "there shall be a record kept among you" (D&C 21:1). This directive, followed a few years later by instruction "to gather up the libelous



Liberty Jail, in Liberty, Missouri, 1888. On top, Church Historian Andrew Jenson; left Joseph S. Black; right, Edward Stevenson. This building, whose outside dimensions are 22 feet square, held Joseph Smith for six months. It was used as a prison until 1856. Photographer: J. T. Hicks.

publications that are afloat" (D&C 123:4), led to the appointment of a succession of Church historians, each charged with keeping an account of the activities of Joseph Smith, his successors, and the Church in general (*see* RECORD KEEPING). Many of these ongoing chronicles, together with the accumulation of day-to-day records of Church enterprises and the papers of Church members, became the foundation of the modern Church Archives in Salt Lake City. The establishment of such archives was accomplished when there were few historical societies and no national or state archives in the United States.

Andrew Jenson, who served as an Assistant Church Historian for fifty years (1891–1941), tirelessly combed LDS communities and foreign missions for records. He wrote histories of hundreds of local wards, branches, missions, and settlements, and established a system for having local leaders produce manuscript histories (quarterly records of Church events and activities). His efforts greatly enriched the Church Archives, and the records have continued to expand with the donations of papers and diaries of many Church members throughout the years. Because of the growth of the Church, minutes of meetings of local congrega-