

# THE CURRENT RESTORATION IN NAUVOO, ILLINOIS

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## *THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY*

Approximately 250 miles southwest of Chicago and 150 miles north of St. Louis lies Nauvoo, Illinois. At this place the Mississippi River rather abruptly pushes itself into Iowa and then returns again to its generally southward course. Within the arc thus formed by the westward protrusion of the river are more than a thousand acres of land, the southwestern portion of which is quite level. On this "Flat" stood the city of Nauvoo as it was originally surveyed. Because of the curve of the Mississippi here, old Nauvoo's Main Street was once described by Robert Ripley in one of his "Believe it or Not" features as the only straight Main Street in the world having the same river at both ends. The modern city of Nauvoo is located to the east, upon bluffs which rise nearly seventy feet above the old city.

On this land, encircled by the river on three sides, the Sac and Fox Indians established a large agricultural village in the days preceding the settlement of Illinois by white men. To this locality the Indians gave the name Quashquema, in honor of one of their chiefs.

Following the designation of much of the land between the Illinois and the Mississippi Rivers as bounty lands for the veterans of the War of 1812, the Indians were moved westward into Iowa. (It was this expulsion of the Indians from their Illinois villages which led to the Black Hawk War in the 1830's.) White settlers then established homes and farms near Quashquema. Here, in 1829, Hancock County was organized and the first post office, called Venus, was established. The village of Venus served as the first seat of Hancock County, but the county administration was subsequently moved to Carthage, to make it more centrally located.

In 1834 speculators had the land near Venus surveyed in anticipation of a larger community and changed the name of the town and post office to Commerce. Commerce was situated just above the third of the Des Moines Rapids in the river, and, with a boat landing adjoining the main river channel, its proprietors hoped the town would become a thriving city. Thirty or forty people bought lots in Commerce. Some built stores, others built residences, and all waited, with the optimism which characterized America in those days, for great economic returns to enrich them.

Two years later a group of New England land speculators, who had formed a syndicate, surveyed for another town to adjoin Commerce on the north. This second city was to be named Commerce City, but before the proprietors had sold more than a few lots the severe Panic of 1837 blighted the prospects for growth of both communities. Some of the residents of Commerce abandoned their property and the future of the communities was unpromising.

It was at this time that two or three thousand Mormons, expelled from Missouri as a result of mob violence, fled to Illinois and made Quincy their temporary rallying point. Fifty miles upstream were the sites of Commerce and Commerce City. The owners of the land were anxious to dispose of their possessions. Their agents contacted the Mormons and invited Mormon leaders to visit the properties. The Mormons were destitute, but land owners in Commerce realized that the Mormon properties in Missouri could be repossessed by non-Mormons and offered to trade their Illinois lands for the Mormon holdings in Missouri. Through such transactions, several hundred acres of land in the vicinity of Commerce were acquired by Joseph Smith and his followers.

The proprietors of Commerce City made a different proposition which enabled the Mormons to purchase property. The Mormons, although lacking cash assets, had two factors in their favor. The first was the known integrity of the Latter-day Saints. They had developed a reputation for fulfilling their obligations, even in the face of adversity. The second was the fact that they had constructed the city of Far West, Missouri — the largest city in northwestern Missouri — during the first two years of the Panic of 1837 without the use of a bank or mortgage institution. They had been able to accomplish this because of an almost unbelievable homogeneity which enabled them achieve their ends.

The agents of the New England firm of investors realized by the spring of 1839 that the Panic had not yet reached its lowest ebb. (In fact, financial conditions continued to deteriorate for two additional years, and it was not until 1844 that economic conditions improved.) Apparently the agents were willing to deal with the Mormons on the premise that they could not lose in cooperating with this industrious people. They offered to sell their lands in Commerce City on a twenty-year payment plan, with no down payment and no yearly payments on the principal for five years. They calculated that if the Mormons took over their lands and remained on them five years, the Mormons would be compelled to erect dwellings and barns to shelter themselves and their livestock from the elements. In addition the thick prairie sod would have to be cultivated and fences and granaries built. If, after five years, the Mormons defaulted and the sellers were forced to repossess the land, the syndicate would acquire property which would have great market value in a post-depression period.

Joseph Smith and other Church leaders signed the land contracts, called in the county surveyor and had him plat a city containing more than six hundred acres. The Mormon Prophet named the projected city Nauvoo

(stating that name was of Hebrew derivation and meant "beautiful place") and applied for a change in the name of the post office.

The new city, surveyed according to Joseph Smith's plan for a combination urban-agricultural community, consisted of 160 blocks, each of which was subdivided into four equal lots of approximately one acre each. The streets were laid out on a north-south and east-west grid, rather than having the main street follow the river bank as it did in many Mississippi Valley towns.

Joseph Smith wanted a city large enough to provide good schools and cultural opportunities, expert medical and professional services, and industries and businesses sufficient to meet the needs of the residents. On the other hand he did not desire Nauvoo to become so large that people lost the sense of individual importance. He believed that an ideal city should remain small enough to allow most of its inhabitants to have a speaking acquaintance with one another. Past experience had taught him that as a city grew in size, immorality, drunkenness, crime, political corruption and other evils tended to increase.

Joseph Smith had experimented with city planning at two sites in Missouri and hoped to find the most advantageous relationship between rural and urban life. His design called for a city of 10,000 to 15,000 residents. The community plan was in direct contrast to the typical western American settlement. The farms were to be located on the perimeter of the city so that after tilling, planting, and harvesting, farmers could return to the city at the close of each day. There they could, with their families, enjoy the cultural and religious refinements which a rural life could not provide. In Nauvoo women could organize themselves for more effective social and compassionate service than if they were isolated on farms.

It was Joseph Smith's belief that work was a blessing, not a curse from God, and provision should be made for every boy and girl, as well as every man and woman, to engage in worthwhile and productive work. The large city lots would provide ample opportunity for children to learn industry by tending animals and cultivating gardens.

Nauvoo continued to grow as converts immigrated from Canada, Great Britain, and other parts of the United States. By 1842 there were approximately 7,000 residents in Nauvoo, and in the summer of 1845 the Illinois Census reported a figure of 11,052. If the first Chicago City Directory of 1845 can be relied on, the population of Nauvoo was approximately one and one-half times that of the burgeoning Lake Michigan city.

On June 27, 1844, Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were murdered in the county jail at Carthage, while awaiting a hearing on a charge of treason. Following these murders, the spirit of anti-Mormon feeling in Illinois subsided. For a little more than a year there was relative peace. During this time many of the finer brick and frame residences of Nauvoo were erected. Strenuous efforts were exerted to complete the Temple and the Nauvoo House, which was to be the largest hotel in the Upper Mississippi Valley.

### THE DECLINE OF NAUVOO

During the summer of 1845, however, the old charges against the Mormons were revived. They were accused of cattle rustling, horse stealing and counterfeiting. It was said that Mormons secretly controlled the politics of Hancock County and the State of Illinois. Mass meetings were held at Green Plains and Carthage, and soon anti-Mormons began burning barns and haystacks of Mormons who resided outside of Nauvoo, as a warning to them to leave the county. Governor Thomas Ford of Illinois endeavored to stop these illegal actions but was unable to control the lawless elements. On September 30, 1845, by the order of Governor Ford, a commission arrived in Nauvoo for the purpose of arranging some compromise which would avoid further bloodshed and open civil war. Headed by Stephen A. Douglas, the commission conferred with Brigham Young and other prominent men. The following day an agreement was reached to the effect that the Mormons would voluntarily commence to move from Nauvoo and Hancock County in late April or early May of the following year, if left unmolested, so they might construct wagons, secure animals to pull them, and be allowed to dispose of their property. By the close of September, 1846, most of the Mormon inhabitants of Nauvoo and vicinity had left Illinois, approximately ninety percent of them having followed Brigham Young westward.

About three years later the vanguard of about 500 French economic communarians known as Icarians<sup>1</sup> arrived at Nauvoo, having heard that good buildings and farms were for sale at reduced prices. They purchased some of the Mormon property from trustees who had been left behind by Brigham Young to dispose of the Mormon assets. The Icarians undertook to establish a communal society, but within seven years it disintegrated.<sup>2</sup> Some of its members made attempts to establish such societies in Iowa, Missouri, and California, but without enduring success.

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<sup>1</sup>The Lovejoy Library of Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, has recently acquired a unique collection of materials about Etienne Cabet (1788-1856) and his Icarian group. This collection consists of about 1,600 pages of letters and manuscripts, and thirty-five rare books and pamphlets.

<sup>2</sup>This failure was discussed in an interesting encounter in Paris between one of the Mormons driven from Nauvoo and a leader of Icarians, as reported in B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor*, pp. 225-227:

"Shortly after the discussion Elder Taylor left Boulogne for Paris, where he began studying the French language, and teaching the gospel. Among the interesting people whom he met there was M. Krolokoski, a disciple of M. Fourier, the distinguished French socialist. M. Krolokoski was a gentleman of some standing, being the editor of a paper published in Paris in support of Fourier's views. Another thing which makes the visit of this gentleman to Elder Taylor interesting is the fact that it was the society to which he belonged that sent M. Cabet to Nauvoo with the French Icarians, to establish a community on Fourier's principles. At his request Elder Taylor explained to him the leading principles of the gospel. At the conclusion of that explanation the following conversation occurred:

"M. KROLOKOSKI — 'Mr. Taylor, do you propose no other plan to ameliorate the condition of mankind than that of baptism for the remission of sins?'

"ELDER TAYLOR — 'This is all I propose about the matter.'

"M. KROLOKOSKI — 'Well, I wish you every success; but I am afraid you will not succeed.'



While these Frenchmen were carrying on their efforts to found an economic and social Utopia at Nauvoo, many German immigrants, attracted to Nauvoo by the lure of cheap property and housing, had made it their home. With the deterioration of the Icarian society, these immigrants and their children became dominant in the city.

The French and the German groups had each hoped to revive Nauvoo and return it to its former importance, but for more than a century, Nauvoo's history was one of general decline. It became a veritable "ghost town" in the midst of a wealthy farming community, until tourist traffic became sizeable. Slumbering by the Father of Waters, it possessed nostalgic attraction for many of its former inhabitants and their children. Beginning in the 1880's many people from different factions of the original Church visited Nauvoo. Non-Mormon residents of Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois were attracted to it because of its history.

### THE RESTORATION OF NAUVOO

When Joseph Smith purchased the southern portion of the "Flat" in 1839, a single log house stood there. As early as 1805 a government Indian trader and farmer had lived in this vicinity and local tradition claims the building was his trading post. When Joseph Smith arrived in Nauvoo in May, 1839, he made this his residence. There were two rooms, one upstairs, one down, with a large cooking hearth on the lower floor. Joseph Smith added a large frame "keeping room" on the north, which became the kitchen

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"ELDER TAYLOR — 'Monsieur Krolokoski, you sent Monsieur Cabet to Nauvoo some time ago. He was considered your leader — the most talented man you had. He went to Nauvoo shortly after we had deserted it. Houses and lands could be obtained at a mere nominal sum. Rich farms were deserted, and thousands of us had left our houses and furniture in them, and almost everything calculated to promote the happiness of man was there. Never could a person go to a place under more happy circumstances. Besides all the advantages of having everything made ready to his hand, M. Cabet had a select company of colonists. He and his company went to Nauvoo — what is the result? I read in all your reports from there — published in your own paper here, in Paris, a continued cry for help. The cry is money, money! We want money to help us carry out our designs. While your colony in Nauvoo with all the advantages of our deserted fields and homes — that they had only to move into — have been dragging out a miserable existence, the Latter-day Saints, though stripped of their all and banished from civilized society into the valleys of the Rocky Mountains, to seek that protection among savages — among the *peau rouges* as you call our Indians — which Christian civilization denied us — there our people have built houses, enclosed lands, cultivated gardens, built school-houses, and have organized a government and are prospering in all the blessings of civilized life. Not only this, but they have sent thousands and thousands of dollars over to Europe to assist the suffering poor to go to America, where they might find an asylum.'

" 'The society I represent, M. Krolokoski,' he continued, 'comes with the fear of God — the worship of the Great Elohim; we offer the simple plan ordained of God, viz: repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Our people have not been seeking the influence of the world, nor the power of government, but they have obtained both. Whilst you, with your philosophy, independent of God, have been seeking to build up a system of communism and a government which is, according to your own accounts, the way to introduce the Millennial reign. Now, which is the best, our religion, or your philosophy?'

"M. KROLOKOSKI — 'Well, Mr. Taylor, I can say nothing.' "

and general living room of the family. This was the residence of Joseph Smith from May, 1839, until August, 1843.

Based on statements of visitors to Nauvoo and memoirs and diaries of its builders, at the time of the Mormon exodus the majority of inhabitants of Nauvoo were living in hewn-log houses. Some were one-story, others were like the old trading post. Oak, locust, walnut, and other native trees were abundant. Over a thousand log houses were built using chopping and hewing axes, a few nails, window glass, hinges, door locks, and a little sawed lumber for doors and window sashes.

Situated diagonally across the street from Joseph Smith's first home, or the "Homestead," was the second and final residence of Joseph Smith at Nauvoo. The Mansion House, as it was known, was constructed by the Church. It consisted of twenty-two rooms and was operated as a hotel. The Smith family occupied three or four of the front rooms. Following the murders at Carthage the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum were brought to this house. It is reported that more than 10,000 people passed through the building while the bodies lay in state.

The two residences of Joseph Smith have belonged to the Smith family or the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints since his death. Commencing in 1918, the Reorganized Church undertook to restore these buildings, which had seriously deteriorated. Only the front portion, less than half, of the Mansion House remains today.

On the northwest corner of the block on which his first Nauvoo residence stood, Joseph Smith opened a general merchandise store in January, 1841, in the basement and ground floor of a new structure there. Although he was too busy to operate the store himself, Joseph occasionally assisted his clerks when the store was crowded. The store also served as a bank, extending credit to those who desired to build houses. The second floor of the building served as the office for the Church, and, until the completion of the Masonic Hall, it also served as the Municipal Court and the office for the City Council and City Recorder. In addition, temple ordinances were performed above the store before the Temple was completed.

Following her death, the building was sold by Emma Smith's second husband. It was razed and the bricks cleaned of old mortar. These were used in the erection of a building which is now the Nauvoo Dining Room in the Nauvoo Hotel. Some of the bricks are visible in the unplastered walls of that structure.

The Reorganized Church, which owns approximately fifty acres of old Nauvoo, including several old residences, plans to reconstruct Joseph Smith's store. They also plan to rebuild the east wing of the Mansion House and the brick stable of the Mansion House.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints did not commence the acquisition of historic sites in Illinois until 1903 when the county jail at Carthage was purchased. In 1937 some parcels of land on the Nauvoo Temple block were acquired. In 1953 the remains of buildings that had housed the Church's printing plant were purchased and renovated. The original struc-

tures — two stores with a residence between them — had been built of brick by James Ivins, a Mormon convert from New Jersey. In 1845 the Church had purchased the buildings and converted them into the Church printing plant. There was a typesetting shop, a stereotype foundry, a pressroom, a bookbindery, and a book and stationery store. The Nauvoo Post Office also used the facilities. After the departure of the Mormons, one building was used as an office for the three Mormon trustees who remained in Nauvoo to sell the property of their departed co-religionists.

Shortly after arriving in Nauvoo Mormon settlers discovered local clay that was suitable for brickmaking. It contained sufficient iron oxide to color the brick a reddish brown when subjected to heat in the kilns. Although brick buildings were more expensive than log or frame houses, it has been estimated that two to three hundred brick structures stood in Nauvoo when the Mormons migrated from the city in 1846. A greater percentage of red brick homes were found at Nauvoo in its heyday than in any community in Illinois.

In 1954 Dr. James LeRoy Kimball purchased the Nauvoo residence of his great-grandfather, Heber C. Kimball, an early apostle. Heber C. Kimball erected the two-story portion of this house during the summer of 1845. The ornate front porch, the green shutters, and the concrete porch and steps are typical of the post-Mormon additions made to many of the houses by the French and German immigrants. Since it has been restored and fitted with period furniture, the Kimball House has become one of the city's chief attractions.

Dr. Kimball was aware that Nauvoo had an unusual story to tell. He envisioned a complete restoration of a part of the old Mormon city, with its institutions, industries, arts, crafts, and culture visually and audibly telling that story. This idea moved toward reality in July, 1962, when, under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Nauvoo Restoration was organized. This is a perpetual foundation, organized under the Illinois "General Not for Profit Corporation Act," with its office at Nauvoo, Illinois. Dr. Kimball was made president of the Board of Trustees. Members of the first Board of Trustees were Harold P. Fabian, long associated with the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg and a member of the Citizens' Advisory Council to the National Park Service; A. Hamer Reiser, retired lawyer and business man (one of whose ancestors operated a shoe factory at Nauvoo); A. Edwin Kendrew, Senior Vice-President of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia; David M. Kennedy, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States; and J. Willard Marriott, Chairman of the Board of the Hot Shoppes and Marriott Motor Hotels, of Washington, D.C. These original appointments, and subsequent additions to the board, have been made on the basis of the appointees' vision of the possibilities of the project, their geographical locations, their interest in such projects, and their willingness to donate freely of their time to the cause. None are salaried officials.

According to the Articles of Incorporation, the purposes of Nauvoo Restoration are:

To acquire, restore, protect, and preserve, for the education and benefit of its members and the public, all or a part of the old city of Nauvoo in Illinois and the surrounding area, in order to provide an historically authentic physical environment for awakening a public interest in, and an understanding and appreciation of, the story of Nauvoo and the mass migration of its people to the valley of the Great Salt Lake. . . .

At the time of incorporation it was hoped that financial aid might be obtained from foundations, business corporations, and private individuals. With the exception of a grant from the National Park Service for the research concerning land grants at Nauvoo, to date all expenditures for land acquisitions, administrative expenses, the archeological surveys, and the historical research have been paid by the Mormon Church.

#### *RECENT LAND ACQUISITIONS*

The first task that faced Nauvoo Restoration was to obtain large pieces of land in that portion of the city which is to be restored. Dr. Kimball dealt individually with the landowners and has acquired extensive holdings while retaining the good will of the community. Nauvoo Restoration now owns or controls more than a thousand acres of the land which Joseph Smith purchased for the city. This includes, in addition to the original platted city of Nauvoo, the entire Temple Block on the "Bluff" and a few parcels adjoining the old city near the Nauvoo State Park. On these lands approximately forty brick, stone, and frame buildings from the Mormon era are standing. Some acquisitions are of special interest:

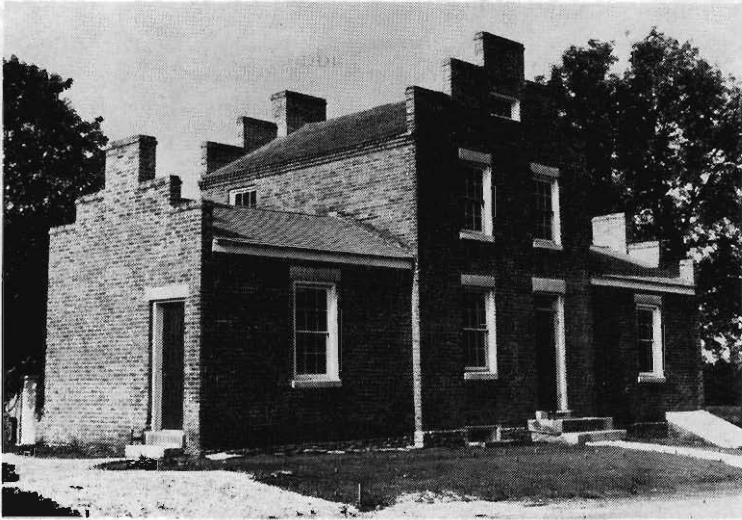
##### *The Nauvoo Temple Site*

In 1841 the Mormons began their Temple, probably the most widely known landmark of Mormon Nauvoo. It was placed at the highest point on the bluff overlooking the "Flat." Built of white limestone taken from nearby quarries, it was 128 feet long and 88 feet wide. The Temple rose 60 feet to the square of the walls, and with the tower on its western side, the total height of the building was more than 157 feet. At the time of its dedication, May 1, 1846, the Temple was probably the largest completed structure west of Cincinnati and north of St. Louis. It could be seen from nearly every spot in Nauvoo as well as from Iowa.

The Temple had thirty buttresses and was decorated with large stones which had a Sun or a Moon or a Star in bas-relief. Sun stones were placed at the top of each buttress. Only three of these have survived — two at Nauvoo and one in Quincy, Illinois. Moon stones served as plinths (or base stones) for the buttresses. Only three of these stones are known to have survived in one piece — all three are in Nauvoo. The star stones, five feet in height, with one elongated ray projecting downward, were set in the frieze above the buttresses. A fragment now on display in Nauvoo is the largest surviving portion of the only known fragment of the star stones.



The Temple was damaged by an incendiary in the autumn of 1848 and partially destroyed by a tornado in May, 1850. After the tornado, the Icarians, who had purchased the Temple from the Mormons, razed the building. Its stones were used throughout the vicinity for many buildings. Even the footings of uncut or roughly hewn stone were taken for other structures, so that very little of the foundation remains on the site. One of the few portions of the building which was found intact when Southern Illinois University excavated the Temple site in 1962 was the base of a wall which divided two of the baptismal dressing rooms in the basement. The Temple well, from which water was pumped into the large baptismal font, was also uncovered. Excavation on a much smaller scale continues at the Temple site during the summer months. This work has concentrated on an area of the Temple lot which was inaccessible in 1962.



*The Brigham Young Home as restored today.*

### *The Brigham Young Home*

Archeologists, historians, and architects have studied the lot where Brigham Young's one-room house was built in 1843. Fence lines and out buildings have been located by careful examination of the sub-soil.

Excavators have found valuable things in some rather unusual places. In the bottom of what appears to be an old privy vault in the yard of Brigham Young's home were many items of crockery, pottery, and glassware, including two fiddle flasks and an American Trade bottle; rum, wine, and medicine bottles which were imported from England; assorted perfume and hair oil bottles; two lamp chimnies and the base of a whale-oil lamp; a banded cream pitcher from Tunstale, England; and featheredge dinner plates. Some of these items could be from the period of Young's occupancy; all of them are useful in the restoration of interiors.

*The Wilford Woodruff Home*

The Wilford Woodruff Home, which was built of brick, was finished in 1843. It is one of the best examples of Federalist architecture that has survived at Nauvoo. The Woodruff home has eight rooms, each with its fireplace and hearth. Most of the fireplaces were for heating, although several apparently were also used for cooking. The restoration of this house was completed in 1969. It is now open to the public.

*The Orson Hyde Home*

The Orson Hyde Home was built by the citizens of Nauvoo to honor Apostle Hyde for his many years of missionary service for the Church. (He is best remembered for his mission in 1839-41 to the Holy Land, which he dedicated for the gathering of the Jews.) This frame house is in Federalist style, which was popular in the Upper Mississippi Valley at that time. Originally, the houses in Nauvoo had no front or back porches, offsets, or window shutters. Those which exist now were added in the post-Mormon period.

The number of frame or sawed-lumber houses in Nauvoo indicates the interest citizens had in raising the standard of living above frontier norms. Records indicate that four or five hundred frame dwellings were built while the Mormons lived there.

*The David Yearsley Home*

The David Yearsley Home is the only surviving three-story residence in the city. The masonry of this brick building is perhaps the finest in Nauvoo. Yearsley was a Pennsylvania merchant who migrated to Nauvoo and opened a mercantile establishment. He sold the house and started to Utah with his family before the woodwork of the upper floor had received its first coat of paint. Today it remains unpainted.

*The Jonathan Browning Home*

The home of Jonathan Browning, a Kentucky-born gunsmith who settled at Nauvoo in 1843, still stands, as does a small brick blacksmith shop and a gunsmith shop which belonged to Browning. After leaving Nauvoo, Browning settled at Council Bluffs, Iowa, before going to Utah in 1852. During his lifetime he made more than two hundred guns, including some of the earliest repeating rifles and pistols. His son, John Moses Browning, who learned gunsmithing at his father's workbench in Ogden, became the inventor of the famous Browning automatic pistols, rifles and machine guns.

*The James White Home*

In the 1820's, Captain James White acquired a large tract of land on the Mississippi at the former site of Quashquema. On the river bank he erected a large two-story house of untooled flaked limestone which came from the nearby quarry. The floor joists, stairway and interior finishing wood were of local walnut. The building was important in the organization of Hancock County. The first canvassing of the votes in the first election was held in White's house, as well as were the early meetings of the County Com-

missioners' Court. The Mormons acquired this building in 1839 and used it for the Nauvoo Post Office.

The construction of the Keokuk Dam in 1913 raised the water level of the river nearly twenty feet, bringing it to the very doorstep of this historic building. The building was razed and the stone and lumber from it was used for new buildings in the city. All that remains of this once important structure are the foundation stones. Nauvoo Restoration contemplates the ultimate rebuilding of the James White Home.

### *The Masonic Hall*

After Freemasonry was revived in Illinois in 1840, former Masons from the eastern part of America who had migrated to Nauvoo petitioned the Grand Lodge for a charter. A charter was granted, a lodge was organized, and the cornerstone for the Masonic Hall was laid in 1843. The building was eventually used to house three Masonic lodges. At the time of the Mormon exodus to the West, the Masonic fraternity at Nauvoo outnumbered the combined membership of all other lodges in Illinois.

The Masonic Hall in Nauvoo was probably the first one constructed in Illinois. It had three stories. The lodge rooms were on the top floor. (In 1884 the building was remodeled into a private residence, at which time the entire upper floor was removed.) The building also served as headquarters for the city government, including the police and the militia. School was held in the building during the daytime. The ground floor housed the Nauvoo Theatre, where dramatic productions were staged. Touring professional actors played the leading roles and the rest of the cast was made up of local people.

The front of the building originally had a stucco exterior which had been finished to imitate marble. It had been neglected for years when it was acquired by Nauvoo Restoration in April, 1967. Measures have been taken to protect the building until it can be completely restored.

### *The Icarian Building*

The Icarians erected a communal hall and organization headquarters, using face stone salvaged from the Temple. Following the dissolution of the Icarian community, the building was used variously as a post office, drug store, office building, and apartment building. For thirty-five years the Icarian Building served as a Roman Catholic parochial school. In January, 1964, it became the temporary Information and Visitors Center for Nauvoo Restoration.

### *The Edwin D. Webb Blacksmith Shop*

At Nauvoo, the five Webb brothers operated a wagon and blacksmith shop in which many of the wagons used in the westernward journey were built. Although the shop was made of stone, there were no visible remains of the building when an excavation was made on the site in 1967. During the excavation, the foundation, which was over sixty feet in length, was uncov-

ered. More than twelve hundred pounds of scrap iron have been taken from the shop excavation. In the near future the shop will be rebuilt and used as a craft house.

### *RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATION*

Since 1965, resident architects have been investigating the buildings that Nauvoo Restoration plans to restore. Most of these structures underwent remodeling after the Mormons moved from Nauvoo. By examining the construction and by studying old photographs, architects and research historians are able to ascertain the original state of many buildings. Drawings are then made for proposed reconstruction. Still photographs and movies, in black and white as well as color, are made of the rooms and special features of each building to preserve an accurate history of the restoration work.

Hancock County and Nauvoo city records, as well as records of assessors, tax collectors, and individual families have provided information for a map of old Nauvoo. Although this map is not yet complete, sites identified on the map account for more than 7,000 of the city's inhabitants. According to present estimates, families at that time averaged 5.2 persons each.

Research continues for information concerning the life style of people who lived in Nauvoo. Newly discovered journals, letters, and other primary sources provide additional information regarding home life as well as cultural, political, and commercial life in Nauvoo.

The archeological diggings at Nauvoo continue to attract interest to the restoration project as well as provide crucial knowledge. To see workers literally digging history out of the earth has great fascination for the touring public. And the location of foundation remnants of an abandoned well or cistern, of the vault of an old privy with its many artifacts, or of early fence lines and gates contributes important information for the physical restoration of the site or the interpretation of its cultural or economic history.

In my work as director of historical research, I am assisted by Mrs. Rowena J. Miller. Archaeological excavation is directed by Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Harrington, formerly of the National Park Service, and by Dr. Dale Berge of the Department of Anthropology, Brigham Young University. Steven T. Baird prepared the plans for the current phase of restoration. Mr. Baird and Mr. Rex L. Sohm prepare necessary architectural drawings. The actual physical reconstruction work is directed by J. Byron Ravsten, resident manager of the Nauvoo Restoration project. Robert E. Smithson, an ingenious builder, directs a crew of specialized craftsmen.

### *THE EXODUS IN PERSPECTIVE*

Five days after signing the agreement to evacuate Nauvoo, a conference of the Church convened in the Nauvoo Temple. At this conference the people put themselves under covenant to assist each other on their journey west. They further agreed that not one person who desired to go with the body of the Church would be left behind, as long as anyone in the Church had means to assist them. The sick, the crippled, the aged, the widows, the orphans



were all guaranteed assistance in leaving the city. To an amazing degree, this plan was carried out.

But in addition, not only were the *people* planning to leave, but it was the conviction of the people and the leaders that the *City of Nauvoo* was likewise to be moved. Besides their personal belongings, the Mormons took the written and published records of the Church — membership records, historical and financial records, and Temple and Nauvoo House records. The documents of the City Recorder, the minutes of the City Council and records of the Municipal Court were all taken west. The Nauvoo Charter, granted by the state in 1840 and later repealed, was also taken. Nothing pertaining to the corporate City of Nauvoo was left behind.

Not since the seventeenth century, when a few small towns in Massachusetts had moved themselves into Connecticut to secure greater religious freedom, had America been the scene for any enterprise comparable to the Mormon exodus. This was to be a migration of a religious body — the aged and destitute as well as the affluent — as a common shared migration. It would take the largest homogeneous body the greatest distance ever traversed by such a migrating body in the history of America into a hitherto uninhabited and untried land to reestablish the City of Nauvoo. It was a decade before all of those who started and desired to go on had reached their destination. But through cooperative effort it was accomplished. Nearly 2,000 people made the trip to Utah in 1847. The following year an additional number of nearly 3,000 joined them. With Salt Lake City only fourteen months of age, it had a population of nearly 5,000 souls. Within the city practically every craft and occupation carried on at Nauvoo could be found in operation. Salt Lake — transplanted Nauvoo — had become the only large supply depot between Westport or St. Joseph, Missouri and San Francisco. Gold-seeking "49ers" as early as the summer of 1849 (and many others in subsequent years), finding themselves short of supplies and with weary animals and weakening wagons, used Salt Lake as a source of supply; without it many would have been unable to continue and untold numbers would have suffered great hardships.

In view of the important part played by the Mormons in the westward expansion of American civilization, the National Park Service designated Nauvoo as a National Historic Site. It was the starting point of the largest and most unusual migration to the West; a migration which established the first city between the Missouri River Valley and the Pacific Coast and which had a profound effect on the settlement of the western frontier. The restoration of Nauvoo is dedicated to the perpetuation of this important story.