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Knight, Joseph, 1772 - 1847

Reminiscences, [n. d.]

1st

From thence he went to the hill where he was informed the Record was
and found no trouble for it appeared plain as tho he was acquainted
with the place it was so plain in the vision that he had of the place
he went and found the place and opened it and found a stone Box
he uncovered it and found the Book and took it out and laid down by
his side and that he would cover the ^{place} over again then thinking there
might be something else here but he was told to take the Book and
go right away and after he had covered the place he turned round
to take ^{the} Book and it was not there and he was astonished that the Book
was gone he that he would look in the place again and so if it had not
got back again he had heard people tell of such things and he
opened the Box and behold the Book was ~~there~~ there he took hold of
it to take it out again and behold he could not stir the Book any
more then he could the mountain he exclaimed why cant I stir
this Book and he was answered you have not done vite you should
have took the Book and gone right away you cant have it now
Joseph says when can I have it the answer was the 22nd Day of September
next if you bring the right person with you Joseph says who is
the right person the answer was your oldest Brother But before
September came his oldest Brother Died then he was disappointed
and did not now what to do But when the 22nd Day of September
came he went to the place and the personage appeared and told
him he could not have it now But the 22nd Day of September
next he mite have the Book if he brot with him the right
person Joseph says who is the right person the answer was you
will know then he looked in his glass and found it was Emma
Hale daughter of old Mr Hale of Pennsylvania a girl
that he had seen before for he had Bin down there before
with me.

Joseph then went to Mr Stowel^{2nd} where he had lived sometime before
But Mr Stowel could not pay him money for his work very well and
he came to me perhaps in November and worked for me until about
the time that he was married which I think was in February and
I paid him the money and I furnished him with a horse and cutter
to go and see his girl down to Mr Hails and soon after this he was
married and Mr Stowel moved him and his wife to his father's in
Belmynra Ontario County nothing material took place until toward
fall the fore part of September I went to Rochester on Business
and returned by Belmynra to be there about the 22nd of September
I was there several days I will say there a man near By the name
Samuel Lawrence he was a Quaker and he had Bin to the hill and
knew about the things in the hill and he was trying to obtain them
he has talked with me and told me the conversation he had with the
personage which told him if he would do right according to the
will of God he might obtain the 22nd day of September next and
if not he never would have them. Now Joseph was some afraid of
him that he might be a trouble to him he therefore first his
father up to James as he called him near night to see if there was
any signs of his going away that night he told his father to stay
till near dark and if he saw any signs of his going you tell him
if I find him there I will thrash the stumps with him so the
old man came a way and saw no thing like it. This is to show
the troubles he had from time to time to obtain the plates
so that night we all went to bed and in the morning I got up
and my horse and carriage was gone but after a while he came
home and he turned out the horse all come into the house to
breakfast but no thing said about where they had Bin after breakfast
Joseph called me in to the other room and he put his foot on the bed
and leaned his head on his hand and says well I am disappointed well
says I am sorry well says he I am gratefully disappointed it is
ten times better than I expected then he went on to tell the
length and width and thickness of the plates

and said he they appear to be ³ Gold But he feared to think more of
the glasses or the rim and thummen then he did of the Plates
for says he I can see any thing they are Marbled Now they are
written in Caracters and I want them translated now he was
commanded not to let no one see those things But a few for witness
at a given time. Now it soon got about that Joseph Smith
had found the plates and people came in to see them But he
told them that they could not for he must not show them
But many insisted and offered money and property to see them
But for keeping them from the people they persecuted and
abused them and they were obliged to hide them and they hid
them under a brick hearth in the west room. about this time
came this Samuel Lawrence and one Beerman a great Rodsman
and wanted to talk with him and he went into the west room
and they proposed to go shares with him and tried every way
to bargain with him But could not. Then Beerman took out
his Rods and held them up and they pointed down to the hearth
where they were hid. there says Beerman it is under that hearth
so they had to guard the house until some time in November he obtained
fifty dollars in money and hired a man to move him and his wife
to Pennsylvania to his fathers his wife being unwell and wanted
to go to her fathers he bought a piece of Land of his father
with a house and barn on it — here the people began to tease
him to see the Book and to offer him money and property and they
browded so hard that he had to hide it in the Mountain —
He now began to be anxious to get them translated he therefore
with his wife drew of the Caracters exactly like the ancient
and sent Martin Harris to see if he could get them translated
he went to Albany and to Philadelphia and to New York and he found
men that could translate some of the Caracters in all those places
Mitchel and Anthony of New York were the most learned But there
were some Caracters they could not well understand therefore
Anthony told him that he thought if he had the original he could
translate it and he gave a very good price to Joseph

and said if he would send the original ^{4th} he would translate it But at
last Martin Harris told him that he could not have the original
~~for~~ it was commanded not to be shown and he was mad and
said what does this mean and he tore the paper that he wrote
all to pieces and stamped it under his feet and says bring me
the original or I will not translate it Mr Harris seeing he was
in a passion he said well I will go home and see and if they
can be had I will write to you immediately so he came home
and told how it was and they went to him no more —
then was fulfilled the 29th Chapter of Isaiah Now he being an
unlearned man did not know what to do then the Lord gave him
power to translate himself then were the Larned men confounded
for he by the means he found with the plates he could translate
those characters better than the Larned. Now the way he translated
was he put the urim and Thummim into his hat and darkened his
eyes then he would take a sentence and it would appear in Brute
Roman Letters then he would tell the writer and he would write it
then ^{that would go away} the next sentence would come and so on But if it was not spelt
rite it would not go away till it was rite so we see it was
marvelous thus was the book translated. Now when he began to translate
he was poor and was put to it for provisions and had no one to write for
him But his wife and his wifes Mother would sometimes write
a little for him through the winter. The Kent Spring storer Bowdoy
a young man from palmyra came to see old Mr Smith Joseph
father about this work and he sent him down to pennsylvania
to see Joseph and satisfy him self so he came down and was soon
convinced of the truth of the work

the next Spring came Martin Harris⁵ down to Pennsylvania to write for him and he wrote 116 pages of the first part of the Book of Mormon and about this time Martin wanted to go home about some business and he wanted to take the writings with him but Joseph put him off but he urged him by fair promises that he would be careful and he would return it again but he being free with it some person got hold of it and kept it so that he never could obtain it again. therefore Joseph lost his privilege for a while. but after repenting he again received the privilege of translating again. as in Book of Covenants page 163 Now he could not translate but little being poor and nobody to write for him but his wife and she could not do much and take care of her house and he being poor and no means to live but work his wife's father and family were all against him and would not help him he and his wife came up to see me the first of the winter 1828. and told me his case but I was not in easy circumstances and I did not know what it might amount to and my wife and family all against me about helping him but I let him have some little provisions and some few things out of the store a pair of shoes and three dollars in money to help him a little in January his father and Samuel came from Manchester to my house when I was busy a sawing lumber I told him they had traveled far enough I would go with my fley and take them down to morrow I went down and found them well and they were glad to see us we conversed about many things in the morning I gave the old man a half a dollar and Joseph a little money to buy paper to translate I having but little with me. the old gentleman told me to come and see him once in a while as I could I went home followed teaming till the last of March the haying being good I told my wife I must go down and see Joseph again why do you go so soon for said she says I come go and see and she went with me next morning we went down and found them well and were glad to see us. Joseph talked with us about his translating and some revelations he had received and from that time my wife began to believe and continued a full believer until she died and that was the 7 day of August 1831

in the Spring of 1829 Oliver Cowdrey a young man from Andover went to see old Mr Smith about the Book that Joseph had found and he told him about it and advised him to go down to Pennsylvania and see for him self and to write for Joseph he went down and received a Revelation concerning the work and he was convinced of the truth of the work and he agreed to write for him till it was done Now Joseph and Oliver came up to see me if I could help him to some provisions having no way to buy any But I was a Cattlekill But when I came home my folks told me what Joseph wanted But I had engaged to go to Catskill again the next day and I went again and I bought a Barrel of Mackerel and some lined paper for writing and when I came home I bought some nine or ten Bushels of grain and five or six Bushels of taters and a pound of tea and I went down to see him and they were in want Joseph and Oliver were gone to see if they could find a place to work for provisions But found none they returned home and found me there with provisions and they were glad for they were out their family consisted of four Joseph and wife Oliver and his Brother James then they went to work and had provisions enough to last till the translation was done then he agreed with Martin Harris to print they therefore agreed with E Grandin to print five thousand Copies which was printed and bound at Palmyra in the Spring of 1830 Now in the Spring of 1830 I went with my team and took Joseph out to Manchester to his father's when we was on our way he told me that there must be a Church formed but did not tell when Now when we got near to his father's we saw a man some eighty Rods before us run across the street with a bundle in his hand there says Joseph there is Martin going across the road with some thing in his hand says I how could you know him so far says he I believe it is him and when we came up it was Martin with a bunch of mormon Books he came to us and after compliments he says the Books will not sell for no body wants them Joseph says I think they will sell well says he I want a Commandment why says Joseph fulfill what you have got But says he I must have a Commandment Joseph put him off But he insisted three or four times he must have a Commandment

we went home to his Father and Martin with us Martin stayed at
his Father and slept in a bed on the floor with me Martin awoke
me in the nite and asked me if I felt any thing on the bed I told
him no says I did you yes I felt some thing as Big as a great
Dog sprang upon my breast says I was you not mistaken no says he
it was so I sprang up and felt But I could feel no thing in
the morning he got up and said he must have a Commandment to
Joseph and went home and along in the after part of the day Joseph and
Oliver received a Commandment which is in Book of Covenants Page 174
I stayed a few days waiting for some Books to be bound Joseph said there must
be a Church built up I had been there several days old Mr Smith and
Martin Harris come forward to the Baptism for the first they found a
place in a lot a small stream ran thro and they were baptized in the
Evening because of persecution they went forward and was baptized
being the first I saw baptized in the new and ever lasting Covenant
I had some thots to go forward But I had not read the Book of Mormon
and I wanted to examine a little more I being a Restorationist and had not
examined so much as I wanted to But I should a felt better if I had a
gone forward But I went home and was baptized in June with my
wife and family. there was one thing I will mention that evening
that old Brother Smith and Martin Harris was baptized Joseph was
filled with the Spirit to a grate degree to see his Father and Mr Harris
that he had bin with so much he burst out with great and joy and
sighed as tho the world could not hold him he went out into the
lot and appeared to want to get out of sight of every body and
would sob and cry and seemed to be so full that he could not live
Oliver and I went after him and came to him and after a while
he came in But he was the most wrought upon that I ever saw any man
But his joy seemed to be full I think he saw the grate work he had
begun and was desirous to carry it out. on the sixth day of April ¹⁸³⁰ he
began the Church with six members and received the following
Revelation Book of Covenants Page 177 they all knelt down and prayed
and Joseph gave them instructions how to build up the Church and
exorted them to be faithfull in all things for this is the work of God

Now after he had set things in order and got a number of mormon
books we returned home. Then in June as I before said I and my family
and a number more were baptised Joseph being present and confirmed
them. and through that season there were many baptised in many places
and the Church grew and multiplied But soon after the Church began to
grow the People began to be angry and to persecute and said them fools
and said they were deceived. But along towards fall Joseph and Oliver
Cowdrey and David Whitmore and John Whitmore came from harmony
in Pennsylvania to my house on some business, and some of the vagabonds
found they were there and they made a cat's paw of a young fellow by the
name of Doctor Menton in Chenango County to issue out a warrant
against Joseph for as they said pretending to go under ground a little
because they found in the York Laws against such things the officer
came to my house near knite and took him I harnessed my horses and
we all went up to the village But it was so late they could not
try him that nite and it was put off till morning I asked Joseph if
wanted Counsell he said he that he should. I went that nite and
saw Mr James Davison a man I was acquainted with. the next morning
they gathered a multitude of people that were against him Mr Davison
said it looked like a squaley day he that we had better have John
Read a pretty good speaker near by. I told them we would so I employed
them both. so after a trial all day yest. at nite he was dismissed
then there was a nother officer was hired and took him on the same case
down to Broome County Below forth with. I hired both these Lawyers
and took them down home with me that nite the next day ~~and~~ it continued
all day till midnite But they could find no thing against him therefore
he was dismissed. soon after this Joseph left the Susquehanna river and
went to Manchester to his father there about the first of May Sidney
Biglin came from Ohio to see Joseph and they both came down to Broome
County and Joseph and Sidney went down to harmony to settle some
business and the Mob found they were gone and they found when they
were expected back and we found they had a plan laid to take Joseph
and Sidney and me now Sidney had been at my house several days
and had preached there several times and he was too smart for
them therefore they wanted to trouble him and the day we expected them
I sent my son down to meet them and told them of their plan

and they turned across to Shenango point and so went to the Lakes and
I loaded up what I could carry and went away that nite for the Lakes
I also took my wife and daughter for we was calculating to go soon for we
a little before had a revelation to go to Ohio so the Mob. watched all
nite at the Bridge. But behold we all came up missing and the poor
mob lost all their trouble. Now Joseph and I went nite on to Kirtland
Ohio but did not stay long there for in March we went to the town of ~~Heath~~
Thompson about twenty miles and in the Spring the Colerwill Church
all came on But Joseph remained in Kirtland and Sidney soon came
to Kirtland now this Spring Joseph received anumber of revelations
one was to purchase a thousand acres of Land which was claimed by
Leman Copley and not paid for he had a little before come into the
Church and appeared to be zealous and faithful we all went to work and
made fence and planted and sowed the fields, about this time we were
called upon to consecrate our properties But Brother Copley would not
consecrate his property therefore he was cut off from the Church
then we was commanded to take up our journey to the Regions westward
to the borders of the Lamanites and we sold out what we could But
Copley took the advantage of us and we could not get any thing for
what we had some we left Copleys in June and moved our things
to wellsvill on the Ohio river which was about ninety miles then we
went on Board the steamer the third Day of July and we landed
up on Misouria the 26th of the same Month. we found our felues
among Strangers But the people seemed to be friendly with us and
we found the Country to be beautiful rich and pleasant and we made our
felues as comfortable as we could and in a few Day Joseph and
Sidney and a number of Brother in came and they looked out and
entered a considerable of Land for the people to settle on we found
it a new Country with some settlers on it there was one Joshua Lewis
that had come into the Church the winter before he and his wife and they were
faithful and good to us and took us in to their house my wife being sick as I
before stated she died the seventh Day of August and Joseph and Sidney
attended her funeral on the eighth she was buried in the woods a spot
chosen out by our felues I was a long By where she was buried a few days
after and I found the hogs had began to root where she was buried I being
very unwell But I took my ax the next day and went and built a pen
round it it was the last I done for her

Joseph at this time Looked out the¹⁰ Country and found the place for the City and Temple and set a mark, and after giving all other necessary instructions he returned Back for Kirtland but as time came along we often heard from him and received revelations. The next year ~~he~~ in 1832 he came again to Missouri and set things in order and bled the Colesmill Church to gather and state them up to eternal Life and this made some little feeling among others But I think he never ~~best~~ so that passed of and he returned to Kirtland again and I think he did not come to Missouri the next year for the Mob began to show their Black heads in 1833 but Joseph sent and counseled during our troubles in Jackson County and after the worst came to the worst that we had better leave the County

22 Sept 1827

Manuscript of the early
History of Joseph Smith

binding of plates, etc.