

I always took great pleasure in reading history, both religious and profane; but as to getting an education such as is requisite for a professional man in the world, I did not have the chance, excepting the one before alluded to, and that I did not choose to accept of.

In 1833 I moved to Kirtland with my father, and went to work on the Temple, doing whatever I was able to do.

I will here digress from the subject of my experience, and remark that I have asked a great many if they could tell who those twenty-four Elders were who laid the foundation of that Temple; but I have never yet got the information: and if there are any who can give it, they are smarter than me, and I was there and looked on. If there are any of the brethren who have this information, they should hand it in to the Historian's Office, where it can be preserved in the archives of the Church.

It is proper here to say that I went to work at the first principles, and that you know is necessary for everyone to do. I went to work at quarrying rock, then hauling rock, tending mason, and performing such other work as I was considered capable of doing in my bungling way.

We were a pious people in those days; but, notwithstanding our piety, our neighbors soon talked of mobbing us. They had already tarred and feathered the Prophet Joseph and Sidney Rigdon, and they threatened us with mobbing and expulsion. As I remarked, we were then very pious, and we prayed the Lord to kill the mob.

It was but a little time before the Saints were driven out of Jackson County, Missouri, the printing press destroyed, men tarred and feathered, women ravished, and men, women, and children scattered to the four winds of heaven, all in consequence of our religion.

Now, I am never afraid when I do not think anything is going to hurt me. When I am certain that there is no danger, then I am not the least afraid. The reason I have been called a coward has been from the fact that, whenever I believed there was any danger, I have always gone in for providing for it, and used my ingenuity to thwart that danger; and hence I have been called a coward by some.

With my brethren who have addressed you, I have lain by the side of the Prophet, in Kirtland, to guard him half of each night for a whole winter, so that, if anything occurred, I could give notice to all the brethren in a very short time.

I have been by those crossroads that some of the brethren remember, and have seen our enemies pass by so near that I could have knocked them down with a stick. Things were so arranged that, if a considerable number came along, I was prepared to communicate it to the brethren. I have had considerable experience, and I have learned that, curious as it may appear, whenever a man becomes a Latter-day Saint, the Devil wants to kill him.

As I have told you, I was raised in the northern part of New York, a rough country, where, instead of going to get poles to fence with, we used to cut down hemlock trees, and split them up into rails.

East is said to be the quarter for light: hence it may be admitted that I have acquired a little. I once strayed as far as Massachusetts, and in a town where there were several Baptist priests. I endeavored to preach the Gospel; but they sent their sons into the meeting-house, who smoked out the congregation with brimstone; and that is a specimen of what would be poured out upon the Saints by the whole Christian world, if they had the opportunity.