

ism,” or having any idea of such a Church and people.

There were the witnesses and their testimony to the book, to its translation, and to the ministration of angels; and there was the testimony of the translator; but I had not seen them, I had not heard of them, and hence I had no idea of their organization or of their Priesthood. All I knew about the matter was what, as a stranger, I could gather from the book: but as I read, I was convinced that it was true; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, while I read, and enlightened my mind, convinced my judgment, and riveted the truth upon my understanding, so that I knew that the book was true, just as well as a man knows the daylight from the dark night, or any other thing that can be implanted in his understanding. I did not know it by any audible voice from heaven, by any ministration of an angel, by any open vision; but I knew it by the spirit of understanding in my heart—by the light that was in me. I knew it was true, because it was light, and had come in fulfillment of the Scriptures; and I bore testimony of its truth to the neighbors that came in during the first day that I sat reading it, at the house of an old Baptist deacon, named Hamblin.

This same spirit led me to enquire after and search out the translator, Joseph Smith; and I traveled on foot during the whole of a very hot day in August, blistering my feet, in order to go where I heard he lived; and at night I arrived in the neighborhood of the little village of Manchester, then in Ontario County, New York. On the way, I overtook a man driving some cows, and enquired for Joseph Smith, the finder and translator of the Book of Mormon. He told me that he lived away off, something more than an hundred miles from there, in the State of Pennsylvania.

I then enquired for the father of the Prophet, and he pointed to the house, but said that the old gentleman had gone a journey to some distant place. After awhile, in conversation, the man told me that his name was Hyrum Smith, and that he was a brother to the Prophet Joseph. This was the first Latter-day Saint that I had ever seen.

He invited me to his home, where I saw mother Smith and Hyrum Smith’s wife, and sister Rockwell, the mother of Orin Porter Rockwell. We sat up talking nearly all night; for I had not much spare time, having two appointments out, and a long day’s journey for a man to walk. I had to return the next morning, and we conversed during most of the night without being either sleep or weary.

During that conversation, I learned something of the rights of the Church, its organization, the restoration of the Priesthood, and many important truths. I felt to go back and fill the two appointments given out, and that closed my ministry, as I felt that I had no authority, and that I would go back and obey the Priesthood which was again upon the earth.

I attended to my appointments, and was back again the next morning to brother Hyrum’s. He made me a present of the Book of Mormon, and I felt richer in the possession of that book, or the knowledge contained in it, than I would, could I have had a warrantee deed of all the farms and buildings in that country, and it was one of the finest regions in the world. I walked awhile, and then sat down and read awhile; for it was not my mind to read the book through at once. I would read, and then read the same portion over again, and then walk on. I was filled with joy and gladness, my spirit was made rich, and I was made to realize, almost as vividly as if I had seen it myself, that the Lord Jesus Christ did appear in