

thirty-seven or thirty-eight years, but a great many of the people have been in only a few years. A very large portion of our population have been reared here, and consequently a brief sketch of the early incidents of our history may not be unprofitable to any.

When Joseph Smith took the plates of Mormon from the hill Cumorah, he was immediately surrounded by enemies, and though he was a young man of unexceptional character, he was compelled to go from place to place, while translating the work, to avoid persecution. The press and the pulpit denounced him as an impostor and his followers as dupes. As soon as he preached the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, and organized a Church with six members, he was arrested and brought before a magistrate, honorably discharged by him, and immediately arrested again and hurried into an adjoining county, where he was insulted, spit upon, and kept without food during the day, and then given crusts of bread and water. The next day he was taken before magistrates who, after a rigid examination, found no fault in him. A mob resolved to “tar and feather” him, but through the instrumentality of the constable, who previously treated him roughly, but who now became his friend, he made his escape in safety. All these proceedings were instigated by clergymen and professors of religion in high standing. A similar spirit of persecution was manifested in a greater or less degree in every place where the Gospel was proclaimed, not only against Joseph Smith, but also against other Elders who preached the word.

This system of persecution continued, especially in the shape of vexatious law suits, numbering some fifty in all, up to the day of his death, and in all of which a most vicious

and vindictive spirit was manifested outside of judicial questions. In every case he was honorably acquitted, and upon the charge of treason upon which he was detained in Carthage jail, when murdered, he had not even been lawfully examined before a magistrate. In all these trials except one he had been before persons religiously opposed to him—his enemies were his judges—and all this while every act of his life was prompted by a firm desire to do good to his fellow men—to preach the Gospel of peace, to magnify the high and holy calling he had received from the Lord, and thereby lead back to the ancient faith of Jesus Christ his fellow beings who had fallen into darkness.

Vexatious law suits not accomplishing the work to the satisfaction of the persecutors of the Saints, mob violence was resorted to, as being more effective. On the 25th day of March, 1832, in Hyrum, Portage Co., Ohio, Joseph Smith was dragged from his bed and carried to the woods, daubed with tar and feathers, and otherwise ill-treated. The following is his account of the outrage:

“On the 25th of March, the twins before mentioned, which had been sick for some time with the measles, caused us to be broke of our rest in taking care of them, especially my wife. In the evening I told her she had better retire to rest with one of the children, and I would watch with the sickest child. In the night she told me I had better lie down on the trundle bed, and I did so, and was soon after awoke by her screaming ‘murder!’ when I found myself going out of the door, in the hands of about a dozen men, some of whose hands were in my hair, and some had hold of my shirt, drawers, and limbs. The foot of the trundle bed was towards the door, leaving only room enough for the door to swing. My wife