

this land, which led them out of—what shall I say? out of bondage?—perhaps that is not quite the phrase to use—but which led them out of the older States of America, where persecution had followed the Saints from their earliest history, across the great plains, guided by the prayer of faith and the inspiration of the Almighty, manifested through President Brigham Young and his brethren, who counseled and guided the people hitherward, and planted their feet in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains. It was not our seeking. As President George A. Smith once quaintly remarked: “We came to this country willingly, because we were obliged to.”

When persecuted in the State of New York, the early churches fled to Ohio—established themselves on the “western reserve”—the northern part of Ohio—located a Stake of Zion—built a temple unto the Lord in Kirtland, from which Elders were sent out into all parts of America, and into Europe. Persecuted in those regions, most of them emigrated westward and located in Missouri, where several Stakes of Zion were organized, and again foundations were laid for a temple, and the Twelve, with others of the Priesthood, were commanded of the Lord to take their departure to the nations of Europe and other parts of the globe, to preach the Gospel. Persecutions arose in that land, and became more general than any persecutions that had preceded them, until the State became embroiled, and an executive order was issued by the then Governor Lilburn W. Boggs, who directed his principal generals and aides-de-camp to gather together the militia of the State, and expel the Saints from the State. And in his executive order this remarkable

phrase was used; speaking of the Mormon people it said: “They must be exterminated or driven from the State.” Strange that in a republic like ours, a country of law and government, such an executive order should appear. But it is beyond dispute; it has passed into history; the annals of the State attest it; and the result of such an order is well known in the history of this people. They were not exterminated, but they were driven from the State. Time would fail me to tell of the tears, the sorrow of women and children, when husbands and fathers and brothers were dragged to prison, or compelled to flee and to make their escape in various ways, through the wilderness of the Great West, through the then unsettled regions of northern Missouri and Iowa, until they found a stopping place on either side of the Mississippi, in Hancock County, Illinois, and in Lee County, Iowa; these places becoming rallying places, temporarily, for the Latter-day Saints, where the banner of truth was again unfurled, and the Saints began to establish themselves in those, at that time, almost entirely unsettled regions. In the short space of seven years they had increased to tens of thousands, and established several Stakes of Zion on both sides of the Mississippi, with the beautiful city of Nauvoo as the center of their operations and the site of the new temple. It was here that the ire of the people both of Illinois and Missouri was aroused against the Saints—especially the ire of the surrounding counties, both in Illinois and Iowa—until it became evident that the Saints must again take up the line of march to some other unsettled region. Of the history of the persecutions that followed in 1845–6; the martyrdom