

# **The Murders of Joseph and Hyrum by Trusted Friends**

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## **Probable Cause**

**[Based on Case File Report]**

The facts and circumstances described below would be sufficient basis for a person of reasonable caution and prudence to believe that Brigham Young, William W. Phelps, John Taylor, and Willard Richards have committed or attempted to commit the offense of the murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith and that exhuming the remains of John Taylor should be done to retrieve the bullet from the left knee for processing against Joseph Smith's six-shooter pistol.

### **The Means to Kill Joseph and Hyrum (Not limited to what is mentioned)**

Brigham Young, William W. Phelps, John Taylor, and Willard Richards had the means to premeditate the murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Richards maintained Joseph's schedule after the death of Robert B. Thompson, the previous personal scribe. William Phelps had power in the Nauvoo City Council due to his advice that members be sent to campaign for Joseph Smith as President, leading to Phelps forcing Joseph to destroy the Nauvoo Expositor and later commit an act of treason used to imprison Joseph and Hyrum. With the excommunication of William Law and his brother Wilson Law, Brigham made Jonathan Dunham the new Major General of the Nauvoo Legion to prevent Joseph from calling on them for his rescue. Knowledge of the Nauvoo Expositor was publicly announced 15 days before Brigham Young left Nauvoo, giving ample time for finishing touches to the plot. When the men were taken to Carthage Jail, they were not searched for weapons by Robert Smith. John Taylor had mentioned days before going to Carthage Jail that he had pistols under his pillow in the Hamilton Hotel, presumably making it into Carthage Jail for the murders.

### **The Behavior Of Each Man (Not limited to what is mentioned)**

William Phelps announced the new edition of the Doctrine & Covenants 2 days after the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor for release a month later. This new edition had minutes approved by Joseph that were later removed because they limited the power of Brigham and the 12 "that the Twelve will have no right to go into Zion or any of its stakes and there undertake to regulate the affairs thereof where there is a standing High Council. But it is their duty to go abroad and regulate all matters relative to the different branches of the Church." This action by Phelps shows an expectation of Joseph and Hyrum's death within a month's time. Willard Richards stopped journaling in Joseph Smith's journal on June 22, 1844, after doing so daily for a year and a half. The journal entries of Richards are described as cryptic and sketchy in nature. Willard Richards also fakes being sick, so Joseph's bodyguard Stephan Markham leaves and cannot return to be Joseph's bodyguard. Willard Richards also prevented Samuel Smith from taking leadership in the church but was signing licenses but was asserting the power of the 12, assuming Samuel Smith would be dead soon. John Taylor, on the morning of the murders, doesn't join the rest of the men downstairs for breakfast but remains in the jailer's bedroom for an hour alone. Brigham Young doesn't cry when he learns the news of Joseph's and Hyrum's deaths; years later, his journals are altered to include him crying. Brigham also has a changing story between not having received his endowments yet to the claim that Joseph gave him his endowments and the keys of the kingdom.

### **The Motive For The Murder (Not limited to what is mentioned)**

The circumstantial evidence shows that Brigham, William Phelps, John Taylor, and Willard Richards were money laundering and embezzling from the funds from the church, which Joseph was in the process of eliminating from Nauvoo. William Marks states that Joseph was about to end polygamy and excommunicate anyone still practicing it, threatening the lifestyle of these men. Heber Kimball states that Joseph wanted to destroy the temple garments to some degree which was an attack on Freemasonry that the men were involved with. Brigham lastly mentions his disdain towards Joseph, telling him what to do and Joseph's handing of money in the church.

### **The Murders of Joseph and Hyrum**

- Willard Richards and John Taylor lied about being pressed up against the door as there was no damage to the oak doorjamb from the latch being shot.
- Willard Richards and John Taylor lied about Hyrum facing the door and being shot in the face. Hyrum died facedown with his back to the door and was flipped over postmortem.
- Willard Richards and John Taylor lied about knocking down muskets with their canes since they were not covered with burns, or suffered eye damage, or burns to their canes.
- Willard Richards lied about a mob trying to force themselves into the room, as his account states he and Joseph left the door unattended for a time.
- Willard Richards lied about Joseph being shot as he left the room through the window.
- Willard Richards lied about being shot in the earlobe at the window; his injury came from somewhere else.
- Images of Carthage Jail before remodeling shows bullet holes in the west wall that couldn't have come from the supposed mob at the head of the stairs or the claimed mob members shooting through the upstairs window.
- When the plaster was stripped from the walls of Carthage Jail during remodeling, no musket balls were found in the plaster or oak lath.

## **Case File: Joseph Smith & Hyrum Smith Murders**

For context for the murders and motive for the murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, it began in 1838.

W.W. Phelps was a member of the Mormon church who was a newspaper publisher, book publisher, and postmaster. Phelps was responsible for assisting the church in Missouri by using church funds to purchase land to sell to members moving into the area. Phelps then misused the funds by putting the land in his name and selling the land for a profit.<sup>1</sup> He was excommunicated from the church on March 10, 1838.<sup>2</sup>

In November 1838, W.W. Phelps signed an affidavit as a state witness, which was used to incarcerate Joseph Smith on December 1, 1838, in Liberty Jail for treason.<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup> This treason charge would have led to the death penalty.

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<sup>1</sup> William Wine Phelps by. Susan Easton Black

<https://doctrineandcovenantscentral.org/people-of-the-dc/william-wines-phelps/>

<sup>2</sup> William Wines Phelps Biography

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/william-wines-phelps>

<sup>3</sup> The Church Moves to Northern Missouri, Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/doctrine-and-covenants-and-church-history-study-guide-for-home-study-seminary-students-2014/section-06/unit-25-day-1-the-church-moves-to-northern-missouri?lang=eng>

<sup>4</sup> Light in the Darkness, Liberty in a Jail

Brigham Young starts leading the church in Missouri in Joseph's absence. On January 16, 1839, Joseph Smith wrote to Brigham to appoint Lyman Sherman and George A. Smith to fill vacancies in the Quorum of the 12. Brigham Young and Heber Kimball visited Lyman Sherman but did not notify him of his appointment as Sherman was "some unwell." Sherman died a few days later, on January 27, 1839, at 34 years old.<sup>5 6</sup> Wilford Woodruff would replace Sherman as a member of the Quorum of the twelve.<sup>7</sup>

On April 16, 1839, Joseph Smith escaped Liberty Jail.<sup>8</sup>

On June 11, 1839, the dictation of Joseph Smith's personal history began with James Mullholland as a scribe. James worked on 59 pages before abruptly dying (which halts the history) on November 3, 1839, at 35 years old.<sup>9 10</sup>

On July 22, 1840, W. W. Phelps is welcomed back into the church by Joseph Smith. Orson Hyde and John E. Page visited W. W. Phelps to suggest that he apologize to Joseph and return to the church on June 29, 1840.<sup>11 12</sup> W.W. Phelps begins helping Don Carlos Smith (brother to Joseph Smith) and Robert B. Thompson in the newspaper Times & Seasons.<sup>13</sup>

On July 1, 1841, Brigham Young and the other Quorum of the 12 returned from England, arriving in Nauvoo after almost two years away.<sup>14</sup>

Don Carlos Smith, a brother of Joseph Smith, abruptly died on August 7, 1841, at the age of 25. The Times & Seasons August 16th edition reported, "The deceased had been afflicted some time, but nothing serious was apprehended, and, not until a day or two before his death was he thought to be dangerous. It was then ascertained that disease had been preying upon his system in such a manner, as baffled all medical skill to check; and he gradually sunk in the arms of death."<sup>15</sup> Robert B. Thompson then abruptly

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<https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/story/historic-sites/missouri/liberty/light-in-the-darkness-liberty-in-a-jail?lang=eng>

<sup>5</sup> "Wrought Upon" to Seek a Revelation, Revelations in Context

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/revelations-in-context/wrought-upon-to-seek-a-revelation?lang=eng>

<sup>6</sup> Sherman Royal Lyman by. Susan Easton Black

<https://doctrineandcovenantscentral.org/people-of-the-dc/lyman-royal-sherman/#:~:text=Lyman%20was%20never%20ordained%20to,after%20the%20letter%20was%20written.>

<sup>7</sup> Brigham Young and The Twelve in Quincy: A Return to the Eye of the Missouri Storm, 26 April 1839

<https://ensignepeakfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/MHS2.1Porter.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Light in the Darkness, Liberty in a Jail

<https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/story/historic-sites/missouri/liberty/light-in-the-darkness-liberty-in-a-jail?lang=eng>

<sup>9</sup> James Mullholland Biography

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/james-mulholland>

<sup>10</sup> The Writing of Joseph Smith writing of Joseph Smith's History by. Dean C. Jessee

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1485&context=byusq>

<sup>11</sup> Letter to William W. Phelps, 22 July 1840

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-to-william-w-phelps-22-july-1840/1>

<sup>12</sup> We'll Sing and We'll Shout, The Life and Times of W.W. Phelps by. Bruce A. Van Orden pg. 301

<sup>13</sup> Bruce A. Van Orden, Phelps Role at Times & Seasons (Part 6 of 8 ) 4:35-4:43

<https://gospeltangents.com/2021/09/phelps-role-times-seasons/>

<sup>14</sup> Brigham Young Biography

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/brigham-young>

<sup>15</sup> Times & Seasons August 16, 1841 "Death of General Don Carlos Smith"

died after reportedly good health around August 16, 1841, and fell ill for 10-12 days <sup>16</sup> before dying on August 27, 1841, at the age of 30, reportedly having the same symptoms as Don Carlos.<sup>17</sup> [**Commentary:** The symptoms involved some type of respiratory issue which “baffled all medical skill”. I believe this suggests poisoning. I find it interesting that William W. Phelps was working with them before their deaths and that Brigham Young and others arrived in Nauvoo just before their deaths. The benefits Brigham and his friends get from the deaths seem extremely well-timed.]

With the deaths of Don Carlos Smith and Robert B. Thompson, some big changes occurred. First, Brigham Young was in charge of the tithing fund for the Nauvoo Temple on August 16, 1841. The tithing fund had been previously under the direction of Edward Patridge, who died in 1840. Brigham Young considered many to be stingy with their offerings. <sup>18</sup> On August 15, 1876, Brigham Young said he would often help himself to some of the tithings. “You will be repeating what apostates all say, "The Tithing is not used aright," etc. There is a feeling that sometimes prompts me to ask, "Did you ever pay any Tithing to me that I kept? If so, let us be informed about it." God has so blessed me with regard to things pertaining to this world, that if it can be shown that I ever received the benefit of any man's Tithing, I am able to restore it a hundred fold. This perhaps is a little levity in me, but I indulge in such things sometimes. When brother Joseph was alive, he appointed me to appraise property in the Nauvoo Temple. On one occasion, a saddle was brought in; it was valued at two dollars, and being in need of a saddle, I used it. Brother Joseph, too, once sent me the half of a pig which weighed ninety-three pounds. And while preaching in Boston, I received two and a half dollars in Tithing, which I also used and reported to brother Joseph; and since his day the right to dictate the use of the Tithing belongs to me, I have used what I thought was necessary, but I have no knowledge of using one dollar of Tithing money for my own purposes. Though after these statements I will say that I dictate the Tithing very little.. No man in this Church pays his full Tithing. I do not pay mine, but I pay as much as anybody; and I never inquire what is done with it.”<sup>19</sup>

Brigham had a poor record with the church's tithing fund in Utah, which could be reflected during Nauvoo. It's recorded that Brigham “drew on the tithing resources of the church, and at a later date repaid part or all of the obligation in money, property, or services. No interest seems to have been paid for the use of these funds.... This ability to draw, almost at will, on church as well as his own funds, was a great advantage to Brigham Young and was certainly one of the reasons for his worldly success.... while Brigham Young was probably the largest borrower of funds from the trustee-in-trust.”<sup>20</sup> "It was finally determined that his estate was worth approximately \$1,626,000, but obligations of more than a million dollars to the Church plus other debts and executor's fees reduced the family's claim to \$224,000.”<sup>21</sup> [**Commentary:** The behavior of

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<sup>16</sup> Times & Seasons September 1, 1841 “Death of Col. Robert B. Thompson”

<sup>17</sup> Robert B. Thompson Biography  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/robert-blashel-thompson>

<sup>18</sup> “The Tithing of My People”  
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/revelations-in-context/the-tithing-of-my-people?lang=eng>

<sup>19</sup> “VERY FEW WILL INHERIT CELESTIAL GLORY—LUST AFTER THE THINGS OF THE WORLD PRODUCES APOSTACY—NO REAL HAPPINESS OUTSIDE OF GODLINESS—THE LORD REQUIRES THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN OF MEN” Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, AUG. 15, 1876

<sup>20</sup> The Settlement of the Brigham Young Estate," 1877-1879, Reprinted from the Pacific Historical Review, vol. 21, no. 1, Feb. 1952, p.7-8

<sup>21</sup> Americana Illustrated, Volume 10, Part 1, 1915 pg 121.

Brigham when it comes to money can lead to one possible motive for Joseph being murdered; hiding embezzlement or simply greed.]

Another big change with the death of Don and Roberts was the halted Joseph Smith history resumed again with Robert B. Thompson, who was selected to work on the history. Robert B. Thompson had worked on only 16 pages of the history before his abrupt death. W.W. Phelps was then chosen as the new scribe to write Joseph's history as Roberts's replacement, and he soon added Willard Richards to help with the history.<sup>22</sup> Robert's position as a personal scribe to Joseph was also filled by Willard Richards, who was Brigham Young's cousin.<sup>23</sup> As Joseph's scribe, Richards maintained Smith's schedule and recorded most of his activities. (Richards, an herbalist/doctor, joined the church on December 31, 1836, to fundraise for the Kirtland Safety Society bank with cousin Brigham Young writing to his wife in January 1837, "private property is holden & Kirtland bills are as safe as Gold." Brigham was similarly minded as "Brigham Young kept better financial records than most while in Kirtland and was skilled at handling money.")<sup>24</sup> <sup>25</sup> <sup>26</sup> [**Commentary:** There is a pattern of individuals working on Joseph's history before having untimely deaths. William Phelps and Willard Richards taking over history is concerning since after Joseph's death, Brigham Young begins altering the history. Willard Richards taking over as a personal scribe is important in a conspiracy to commit murder, as Richards would have access to Joseph's schedule and be trusted to spy on Joseph. A possible motive for Willard Richards being involved in the murders of Joseph and Hyrum, like Brigham, would also be hiding embezzlement or simply greed. Willard's first action in the church is financial rather than seeking spiritual matters, which adds doubt to his reason for joining.]

Brigham Young replaced Don Carlos Smith in the Nauvoo City Council. John Taylor and Heber Kimball replaced Don Carlos Smith & Robert Thompson as Regents of Nauvoo University.<sup>27</sup> [**Commentary:** One possible motive for John Taylor to have murdered Joseph and Hyrum would be financial reasons. As University Regents, they would oversee the financial management of the university, its investments, and its property holdings. There may have been embezzlement or greed.]

After the death of Don Carlos and Robert Thompson, the Times & Seasons returned to Ebenezer Robinson, an editor. W.W. Phelps stepped in, forcing removing the Times & Seasons from Ebenezer Robinson to be sold to Willard Richards, who then transferred it to John Taylor.<sup>28</sup> [**Commentary:** The determination of William Phelps to get the Times & Seasons to Willard Richards and John Taylor is concerning as they had just arrived back in the US, and the timing of the deaths of Don Carlos Smith and Robert Thompson doesn't appear accidental. With the Times & Seasons, the control over the narrative in Nauvoo belongs to Brigham Young and the printing office where money laundering accusations begin.]

<sup>22</sup> The Writing of Joseph Smith writing of Joseph Smith's History by. Dean C. Jessee  
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1485&context=byusq>

<sup>23</sup> The Writing of Joseph Smith writing of Joseph Smith's History by. Dean C. Jessee  
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1485&context=byusq>

<sup>24</sup> Book of Mormon Central, "Why Was Martin Harris Cut Off From The Church?"  
<https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/knowhy/why-was-martin-harris-cut-off-from-the-church>

<sup>25</sup> Joseph Smith Documents from October 1835 through January 1838  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/intro/introduction-to-documents-volume-5-october-1835-january-1838?p=1&highlight=marsh>

<sup>26</sup> Raising Money in Righteousness, Oliver Cowdery as Banker By. Mark L. Staker  
<https://rsc.byu.edu/days-never-be-forgotten-oliver-cowdery/raising-money-righteousness>

<sup>27</sup> Minutes, 4 September 1841  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/minutes-4-september-1841/1>

<sup>28</sup> We'll Sing and We'll Shout, The Life and Times of W.W. Phelps by. Bruce A. Van Orden pg. 326



(John Taylor joined the church on May 9, 1836, after Heber Kimball, a close friend of Brigham Young, told Parley Pratt to go to Canada to convert. Parley traveled with Freeman Nickerson, who paid Parley's expenses during the trip. Then Parley crossed into Canada alone and met by chance Moses Nickerson on the other side, the brother of Freeman. Moses directed Parley Pratt directly to John Taylor.)<sup>29</sup>

**[Commentary:** Heber Kimball mentions that Parley Pratt's trip to Canada was important for their goals in England; it is unclear why John Taylor was important for them to get for their England plans. It should be noted that Brigham Young's first mission trip was to Canada in 1832-1833.]

On August 31, 1841, Brigham Young, Heber Kimball, Willard Richards, and John Taylor worked to bring European converts to a new city they wanted to establish in Warren, Illinois. Willard Richards is requested to relocate to Warsaw, Illinois (where the mob in 1844 will originate) to sell lots of the town plot. Mark Aldrich (who later would go to trial for conspiracy to commit murder against Joseph and Hyrum) met Brigham, Heber, and Richards to discuss the deal. The deal ended up falling through due to Joseph Smith backing out of the agreement but not before two hundred and four converts arrived in Warsaw from England.<sup>30 31</sup> **[Commentary:** If Brigham or William Phelps had worked directly with the Warsaw mob, this would have been the connection they would have had through Mark Aldrich. I feel better alternatives exist with coordinating with the mob that assisted in killing Joseph Smith.]

There were three attempts at the extradition of Joseph Smith by Missouri from 1840-1843. Porter Rockwell was arrested in March 1843 after being accused of attempting to assassinate the former Missouri Governor.<sup>32</sup>

On May 31, 1843, Thomas Bullock arrived in Nauvoo after emigrating from England.<sup>33</sup> On November 1843, Thomas Bullock was made a clerk for Joseph Smith.<sup>34</sup> **[Commentary:** These dates are important as Thomas Bullock will alter historical documents when he wasn't in Nauvoo or scribing.]

On November 5, 1843, Joseph Smith was at a dinner when he vomited violently, dislocating his jaw, believing that someone had tried to poison him. The journal entry gives the sense that Willard Richards was at dinner.<sup>35 36</sup> Brigham Young later accused Joseph's wife, Emma Smith, of trying to poison Joseph that day. "To my certain knowledge, Emma Smith is one of the damndest liars I know of on this earth; yet there is no good thing I would refuse to do for her, if she would only be a righteous woman; but she will continue in her wickedness. Not six months before the death of Joseph, he called his wife Emma into a secret council, and there he told her the truth, and called upon her to deny it if she could. He told her that the judgments of God would come upon her forthwith if she did not repent. He told her of the time

<sup>29</sup> A Mission to Canada by Eric Smith

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/revelations-in-context/a-mission-to-canada?lang=eng>

<sup>30</sup> History, 1838–1856, volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842] pg. 1224

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-2-november-1838-31-july-1842/396>

<sup>31</sup> History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Volume 4 pg. 471

<sup>32</sup> Letter from Isaac Galland, 11 March 1843

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-from-isaac-galland-11-march-1843/1>

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Bullock Biography

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/thomas-bullock>

<sup>34</sup> Willard Richards as Historian By. Howard C. Searle

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2739&context=byusq>

<sup>35</sup> Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 3, 15 July 1843–29 February 1844 pg. 156

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-3-15-july-1843-29-february-1844/162>

<sup>36</sup> Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith pg. 164

she undertook to poison him, and he told her that she was a child of hell, and literally the most wicked woman on this earth, that there was not one more wicked than she. He told her where she got the poison, and how she put it in a cup of coffee; said he 'You got that poison from so and so, and I drank it, but you could not kill me.' When it entered his stomach he went to the door and threw it off. he spoke to her in that council in a very severe manner, and she never said one word in reply. I have witnesses of this scene all around, who can testify that I am now telling the truth. Twice she undertook to kill him.<sup>37</sup> Brigham also stated besides poisoning Joseph, Emma conspired with the mob. "Emma tried to poison her husband and was connived with the mob that did kill him."<sup>38</sup> [Commentary: The claims made by Brigham Young that Emma tried to kill Joseph by poisoning him and working with the Warsaw mob seems like blame shifting.]

On December 8, 1843, the ordinance to "*Erect A Dam In The Mississippi River And, For Other Purposes,*" passed. This ordinance was later used after Joseph Smith's death because Joseph, sole Trustee and Trust, didn't share that power with anyone other than in this ordinance. "The successors of Joseph Smith mentioned in the said ordinance are those who succeed him in the office of Trustee in Trust in the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Passed December 14th, 1844."<sup>39</sup>

Porter Rockwell is released on December 13, 1843, and warns Joseph of a traitor working with Missouri to have him killed.<sup>40</sup> W. W. Phelps pushes suspicion on William Law. In early 1844 there was a concern about people money laundering in Nauvoo, and Joseph was offering a reward for the evidence against such individuals.<sup>41</sup> William Law would be accused of making counterfeit money as well as being a traitor.<sup>42</sup> (In October 1844 though, some voiced concern in the Council of Fifty that W. W. Phelps, Reynolds Cahoon, and Almon W. Babbit had conspired with the mob to kill Joseph and Hyrum.)<sup>43</sup> [Commentary: Between the concern of a traitor among Joseph and money laundering, which was threatening the safety of Mormons in Nauvoo, it appears that William Phelps picked William Law as the target of rumors. Unfortunately, William Law made a good target as he had a high position in the church that would compete with Brigham Young if left in place. Furthermore, Law had money to retaliate, leading to a crisis event to ensnare Joseph in.]

The situation that created the environment for the murders of Joseph and Hyrum begins with W.W. Phelps and William Law in city council special sessions, with W. W. Phelps a main participant, where Law testily defended himself against allegations. (W.W. Phelps was elected to the city council pro tem on June 11, 1843.)<sup>44</sup> Phelps replaced Sylvester Emmons (who became a lawyer) & Orson Spencer (who went on a missions trip).<sup>45</sup> William Law and Joseph Smith would have a heated argument on January 8,

<sup>37</sup> 6-8 Oct 1866, 36th Semi-Annual Conference, Bowery, G. S. L. City. [Deseret News Weekly 15:364, 10/10/66, p 4-5 and 15:372, 10/17/66, p 4-5; MS 28:764, 774]

<sup>38</sup> Brigham Young, Council Meeting, Feb 25, 1855, Leonard J. Arrington Papers 9-13-4, 120 Brigham Young Collection

<sup>39</sup> Ordinance, 14 December 1844–C, as Published in *Nauvoo Neighbor*  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/ordinance-14-december-1844-c-as-published-in-nauvoo-neighbor/1>

<sup>40</sup> History, 1838–1856, volume E-1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844] pg. 1857

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-e-1-1-july-1843-30-april-1844/229>

<sup>41</sup> The Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and His Brother Hyrum! By. Dan Jones pg. 6

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2235&context=byusg>

<sup>42</sup> Revised Minutes, 17 June 1844

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/revised-minutes-17-june-1844/1>

<sup>43</sup> The Mormon Hierarchy, Extensions of Power, By Michael Quinn, Pg. 229

<sup>44</sup> Nauvoo City Council Minute Book, 1841–1845, pg. 180

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/nauvoo-city-council-minute-book-1841-1845/186>

<sup>45</sup> Nauvoo City Council Standing Committees, 1842–1845

1844, immediately in front of the Phelps home. Joseph Smith informed Law that he had been dropped from the First Presidency.<sup>46</sup> This William Law would publish in June 1844 the Nauvoo Expositor, which was destroyed, leading to Joseph and Hyrum's arrest and rearrest. Other significant events came together when Joseph Smith announced his campaign to run for U.S. President on January 29, 1844.<sup>47</sup> It's been noted that "In council, the brethren (with Phelps as a major participant) came up with a plan: put forward General Joseph Smith as a candidate for the presidency of the United States!...To accomplish this, General Smith said, "every man in the city of Nauvoo who could speak through the land" would be commandeered to go to their native states and electioneer."<sup>48</sup> Joseph later organized his political committee on March 11, 1844, with The Council of Fifty (contained both Mormons and Non-Mormons).<sup>49</sup> **[Commentary:** It will appear clear that William Phelps pushed Joseph Smith to run for President to gain more power in the city council as other city council members were sent to the campaign. With William Phelps having more power in the city council of Nauvoo, it allowed for the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor. The campaign also delayed the selection of a new Prophet, giving time for Samuel Smith, next in line, to die. The Council of The Fifty contained Non-Mormons alongside Mormons, so this organization wasn't some type of spiritual kingdom Joseph was setting up as some have suggested.]

On March 2, 1844, Willard Richards paused work on the church's history, leaving off on August 5, 1838. Richards, on March 27, 1844, wrote, "It is now seven years since I have laid my head one night in my own house during that time I have been in England, near four years and the remainder of the time have spent in writing the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which, of course will afford no income until it is completed and printed which cannot possibly be done for one or two years. It is a great work and all important to the Church and the world."<sup>50</sup> **[Commentary:** I find Willard's comments about the history being completed in 1 to 2 years suspicious as to complete the history to present, there are six years left (1838-1844). It seems the implication is the only way to achieve finishing the history is for Joseph Smith to die.]

On April 6th, 1844, a conference was held, discussing sending various men out of the State of Illinois for political campaigning.<sup>51</sup> Joseph Smith gave Brigham Young the duty of drawing up the fields of labor for all the missionaries involved in the political campaign. Brigham had chosen Boston for himself.<sup>52</sup> The campaigning would result in much of the Council of Fifty and City Council out of state, which gave W.W. Phelps greater authority in the Nauvoo City Council starting around April 26, 1844.<sup>53</sup>

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<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/back/nauvoo-city-council-standing-committees-1842-1845?p=1&highlight=pro%20tem%20phelps>

<sup>46</sup> We'll Sing And We'll Shout, The Life And Times Of W.W. Phelps by Bruce A. Van Orden, Pg 371

[https://rsc.byu.edu/well-sing-well-shout/martyrdom-succession#\\_ednref12](https://rsc.byu.edu/well-sing-well-shout/martyrdom-succession#_ednref12)

<sup>47</sup> Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 3, 15 July 1843–29 February 1844 pg. 248

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-3-15-july-1843-29-february-1844/254>

<sup>48</sup> We'll Sing And We'll Shout, The Life And Times Of W.W. Phelps by Bruce A. Van Orden, pg 351

<sup>49</sup> Members of the Council of Fifty, 1844–1846

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/articles/members-of-council-of-fifty>

<sup>50</sup> The Writing of Joseph Smith writing of Joseph Smith's History by. Dean C. Jessee

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1485&context=byusq>

<sup>51</sup> Minutes and Discourses, 6–7 April 1844, as Published in *Times and Seasons*

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/minutes-and-discourses-6-7-april-1844-as-published-in-times-and-seasons/1>

<sup>52</sup> Six Days in August: Brigham Young and the Succession Crisis of 1844

[https://rsc.byu.edu/firm-foundation/six-days-august-brigham-young-succession-crisis-1844#\\_ednref36](https://rsc.byu.edu/firm-foundation/six-days-august-brigham-young-succession-crisis-1844#_ednref36)

<sup>53</sup> William W. Phelps's Service in Nauvoo as Joseph Smith's Political Clerk

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/william-w-phelpss-service-in-nauvoo-as-joseph-smiths-political-clerk/>



[**Commentary:** Brigham Young being given the power to control where everyone went would be useful in creating a delay and for any future planning needed.]

On May 10 1844, William Law published that his Nauvoo Expositor would be released soon.<sup>54</sup> On May 21, 1844, Brigham Young left, going to Kirtland, Ohio, stopping in Chester, Ohio, before going to Boston.<sup>55</sup> W. W. Phelps would push for new control over the Nauvoo Post office on May 25, 1844 as Sidney Rigdon who was in charge of it was going to Pittsburgh to run as Joseph's vice president.<sup>56</sup>

[**Commentary:** It's a bit unclear whether W. W. Phelps was in control of the mail in and out of Nauvoo around the time of the murders. It would have been a very interesting way to have mail received and sent without the knowledge of others. The Nauvoo Post Office isn't the only way mail could have been sent, as mentioned later in the Case File.]

### The Bait

On June 7, 1844, the only edition of the Nauvoo Expositor was published, accusing Joseph and others of polygamy, money laundering, etc. W. W. Phelps was the main individual pushing for the destruction of their printing press.<sup>57</sup> "William Phelps told the council that he had reviewed the United States Constitution, the Nauvoo city charter, and the laws of the land. In his mind, the city was fully and legally justified to declare the press a nuisance and destroy it immediately. "The turning point came when Phelps exclaimed he "felt deeper this day than he ever felt before" about putting an end to this press. He challenged the rest of the council to agree with him with a resounding "yes," which they did. As justification, Phelps referred to the well-known noble actions at the "Boston Tea Party." The council promptly voted to have the mayor take action to destroy the press of the *Nauvoo Expositor*."<sup>58</sup> With the council's vote mayor, Joseph Smith sent orders to the city marshal to carry out the measure. On June 10, 1844"<sup>59</sup> [**Commentary:** William Phelps was setting the groundwork to get Joseph to Carthage.]

On June 12, 1844, the Nauvoo Neighbor newspaper ran a notice that the Doctrine and Covenants (new edition) that had been in the works for two years would be ready in about a month. Phelps had played a key role already in preparing the volume. This new edition would include the story of Joseph and Hyrum's heroic martyrdom as well as other additions that did help Brigham Young with taking leadership and gathering tithing funds. In addition, the minutes of the approving 1835 conference minutes were dropped. [**Commentary:** The reason these minutes were removed after Joseph's death seems clear as Joseph says the 12 apostles led by Brigham Young didn't have the authority to lead the church.] Joseph says "that the Twelve will have no right to go into Zion or any of its stakes and there undertake to regulate the affairs thereof where there is a standing High Council. But it is their duty to go abroad and regulate all

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<sup>54</sup>Saints Volume 1 page 531

[https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/saints-v1/43-a-public-  
nuisance?lang=eng&fbclid=IwAR1OV77lfaYehoqueQ2ehNFD19Bs7tuNk4FgIV3mXtz\\_uHX9WO8nxQEL2k8](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/saints-v1/43-a-public-nuisance?lang=eng&fbclid=IwAR1OV77lfaYehoqueQ2ehNFD19Bs7tuNk4FgIV3mXtz_uHX9WO8nxQEL2k8)

<sup>55</sup> Six Days in August: Brigham Young and the Succession Crisis of 1844

<https://rsc.byu.edu/firm-foundation/six-days-august-brigham-young-succession-crisis-1844>

<sup>56</sup> Council Of Fifty Minutes, 25 May 1844

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/minutes-25-may-1844/2>

<sup>57</sup> William W. Phelps's Service in Nauvoo as Joseph Smith's Political Clerk

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/william-w-phelpss-service-in-nauvoo-as-joseph-smiths-political-clerk/>

<sup>58</sup> We'll Sing And We'll Shout, The Life And Times Of W.W. Phelps by Bruce A. Van Orden pg.374

<https://rsc.byu.edu/well-sing-well-shout/martyrdom-succession>

<sup>59</sup> Saints Volume 1 pg. 535

[https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/saints-v1/43-a-public-  
nuisance?lang=eng](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/saints-v1/43-a-public-nuisance?lang=eng)

matters relative to the different branches of the Church.”<sup>60</sup> <sup>61</sup> <sup>62</sup> [Commentary: The announcement of this new edition of the Doctrine & Covenants within a month’s time, as well as the 1835 minutes change, show anticipation by William Phelps on behalf of Brigham Young that Joseph and Hyrum would be dead before release, Phelps could be confident of that by June 12, 1844, as the Nauvoo Expositor had been destroyed.]

On June 12, 1844, Brigham Young wrote a letter to his wife stating, “This is a pleasant evening on the Lake but I feel lonesome; O that I had you with me this summer, I think I should be happy. Well, I am now because I am in my calling and doing my duty, but the older I grow the more I desire to stay at my own home instead of traveling.”<sup>63</sup> [Commentary: As a traveling body of the church, the way for Brigham to get his desire to stop traveling would be to change positions in the church/reconstruct the church’s structure. This could be a motivation for Brigham to murder to avoid losing all the hard work he did.]

A Letter was written on June 17, 1844, with additional information on June 20 but reportedly never sent to Brigham Young. The handwriting of the letter is in William Clayton and W. W. Phelps, with unidentified handwriting used for Joseph Smith’s signature. It calls for Brigham Young and the other 12 to return to Nauvoo. [Commentary: The problem with this letter is that mail had stopped being sent in and out of Nauvoo after Martial law was declared on June 18, 1844. So it’s unusual that this letter would be created when they couldn’t mail it on June 20th from Nauvoo.] This is a sample of the letter.

“The excitement is very great indeed. It is thought best <by> ~~by brother Joseph and~~ myself, and others, for you to return without delay, and the rest of the Twelve and all the Elders that have gone out from this place, and as many more good faithful men as feel disposed to come up with them. Let wisdom be exercised, and whatever they do, do it without a noise. You know a we are not frightened but think it best to be well prepared and be ready for the onset; and if it is extermination— extermination it is, of course. Communicate to the others of the Twelve with as much speed as possible, with perfect stillness and calmness. A word to the wise is sufficient and a little powder, lead and a good Rifle, can be packed in your luggage very easy without creating any suspicion.

There must be no excuses made, for wisdom says that a strict compliance ~~will~~ with this request will be for our safety and welfare.

~~In haste I remain yours in the firm bonds of the new and Everlasting Covenant~~

~~Hiram Smith.~~<sup>64</sup>

On June 18, 1844, W.W. Phelps began the assembly by reading a nearby local paper, The Warsaw Signal talking about violence and concerns about violence from the Mormons. As a result, Joseph and Hyrum would declare martial law in Nauvoo. Joseph then would give a speech written by Phelps and assemble

<sup>60</sup> Discourse, 2 May 1835, as Reported by William E. McLellin—A

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-2-may-1835-as-reported-by-william-e-mclellin-a/1>

<sup>61</sup> The Story of the Doctrine and Covenants By Robert J. Woodford Ensign, Dec. 1984, pp. 32-38

<https://emp.byui.edu/satterfieldb/Rel324/Story%20of%20the%20DC.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> We’ll Sing And We’ll Shout, The Life And Times Of W.W. Phelps by Bruce A. Van Orden pg.385

<sup>63</sup> Six Days in August: Brigham Young and the Succession Crisis of 1844

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/letters-of-a-missionary-apostle-to-his-wife-brigham-young-to-mary-ann-angell-young-18391841/>

<sup>64</sup> Letter to Brigham Young, 17 and 20 June 1844

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-to-brigham-young-17-and-20-june-1844/1>

the Nauvoo Legion, their militia, to defend the city. These actions of martial law, the speech, and the assembly of the Nauvoo legion would result in charge of treason against Joseph and Hyrum bypassing habeas corpus that prevented Joseph from imprisonment on numerous occasions. On June 18, 1844, Ebenezer Robinson, the postmaster, said, on report of martial law being proclaimed in Nauvoo, he had stopped the mail and notified the Postmaster-General of the state of things in Hancock county.<sup>65</sup> Reportedly “the mail was not getting through—in either direction” in or out of Nauvoo, which led to Brigham Young and others campaigning in other states not receiving mail.<sup>66</sup> On June 18, 1844, the only remaining leadership in the church in Nauvoo was Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Willard Richards, and John Taylor; everyone else had left to campaign for Joseph Smith’s US presidency.<sup>67</sup> **[Commentary:** I believe William Phelps knew what he was doing by writing the speech that Joseph gave to cause him to commit treason.]

On June 21, 1844, Joseph and Hyrum fled to Montrose, Iowa, across the Mississippi River from Nauvoo, Illinois, to gather legal assistance. On June 22, 1844, Governor Thomas Ford got involved after looking for Joseph in Nauvoo and sending a letter hand-delivered for Joseph and Hyrum to turn themselves in.<sup>68</sup> Then on June 22, 1844, W.W. Phelps reaches Joseph, Hyrum, and Willard Richards together in Iowa at noon and convinces them to return to Nauvoo to be arrested and taken to Carthage along with Reynolds Cahoon, who accused Joseph Smith of being a coward.<sup>69</sup> (W. W. Phelps was the primary person who communicated with Ford on behalf of Joseph Smith. From the fall of 1843 through Joseph’s death in June 1844, Phelps frequently visited the governor in Springfield.)<sup>70</sup> Also, on June 22, 1844, when John Taylor learns the news of Joseph and Hyrum fleeing to Iowa, he takes the accounting books and some printing equipment with him to Montrose, Iowa, directly across from Nauvoo on the Mississippi River less than 11 miles away. There he spent hours adjusting the accounting books with his brother-in-law, Joseph Cain. John Taylor also made plans for the printing equipment to be mailed east from Montrose, Iowa.<sup>71</sup> Before leaving Iowa to arrive back in Nauvoo, Joseph Smith requested the legal help of lawyer Edward Johnstone in Fort Madison, Iowa. Still, Johnstone is going on a trip that day to western Pennsylvania. So Johnstone instead handed the letter to Hugh T. Reid, his legal assistant, to defend Joseph Smith.<sup>72</sup> **[Commentary:** William Phelps, being involved in not only the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor and treason charge but also talked Joseph and Hyrum into turning themselves in alongside Reynolds, who was believed to have worked with the mob by the Council of Fifty, is suspicious. The relationship between William Phelps and Governor Thomas Ford also appeared close as he visited the governor frequently. If Governor Thomas Ford were involved, this would be the connection. It’s also interesting that John Taylor could use the Montrose Post Office to send mail, and this most likely was how mail could have been sent to Brigham and others without notice. John Taylor spending hours adjusting the accounting books in a

<sup>65</sup> History of The Church Volume 6 Chapter 30, Pg 563.

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/online-chapters/volume-6-chapter-30/>

<sup>66</sup> Six Days in August: Brigham Young and the Succession Crisis of 1844

<https://rsc.byu.edu/firm-foundation/six-days-august-brigham-young-succession-crisis-1844>

<sup>67</sup> Sidney Rigdon Left Nauvoo for Pittsburgh

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/event/sidney-rigdon-left-nauvoo-for-pittsburgh>

<sup>68</sup> Letter from Thomas Ford, 22 June 1844

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-from-thomas-ford-22-june-1844/1>

<sup>69</sup> Joseph Smith’s Iowa Quest for Legal Assistance

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/joseph-smiths-iowa-quest-for-legal-assistance-his-letters-to-edward-johnstone-and-others-on-sunday-june-23-1844/>

<sup>70</sup> William W. Phelps’s Service in Nauvoo as Joseph Smith’s Political Clerk

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/william-w-phelpss-service-in-nauvoo-as-joseph-smiths-political-clerk/>

<sup>71</sup> John Taylor, Martyrdom Account Pg.28

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/john-taylor-martyrdom-account/28>

<sup>72</sup> Joseph Smith’s Iowa Quest for Legal Assistance, pg. 132

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4860&context=byusq>

situation like this and wanting to hide printing equipment points to money laundering as the printing offices are searched on June 26, 1844, for exactly that.]

On June 22, 1844, Willard Richards wrote his last journal entry on behalf of Joseph Smith in Joseph's journal. This abrupt stop is strange as "he made an entry for almost every day during the last year and a half of JS's life." Richards began writing in his own personal journal on June 23, 1844.<sup>73</sup> "The journal focused heavily on recording the time events occurred, however, with only brief notes as to what happened, so Richards could go back and fill in the details later. The journal was useful to the person who had written it as an aid in recalling the sequence of events, but because of its cryptic, sketchy nature it was not as useful for others who wanted to learn about those events."<sup>74</sup> The lack of details left by Richards led John Taylor to clarify in his testimony on June 27, 1854, the events of the murder. [**Commentary:** Willard's had no reason not to continue Joseph's journal as it was believed that Joseph would just be let out on bail for the riot charge and back home. Willard's action implies knowledge that Joseph was going to die and that he should write in his journal so he could be "cryptic" and "sketchy" in nature and avoid Joseph from regulating what he wrote.]

On June 23, 1844, Thomas Bullock filled the Nauvoo Masonic Lodge Secretary position, which was left vacant since May 11, 1842, due to John C. Bennett's excommunication.<sup>75</sup> <sup>76</sup> The Nauvoo Masonic Lodge was having problems with Illinois Masonic Lodge for altering documents and refusing to provide records.<sup>77</sup> [**Commentary:** The timing of filling the vacancy is suspect as Bullock is picked to work on the history after Joseph's death and his actions altering journals on behalf of Brigham.]

### Joseph's Arrest

On June 24, 1844, at around 11:45 pm, Joseph and Hyrum arrive in Carthage. They spend the night in Hamilton's hotel in Carthage.<sup>78</sup>

On June 25, 1844, at 8 am, Joseph and Hyrum received a new charge of treason for declaring martial law and assembling the Nauvoo legion on June 18, 1844.<sup>79</sup> The others charged with rioting included W.W. Phelps, who was released on bail at 4 pm.<sup>80</sup> Justice of the Peace Robert F. Smith, who also served as

<sup>73</sup> Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 4, 1 March–22 June 1844 (Historical Introduction)  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-4-1-march-22-june-1844/171>

<sup>74</sup> JCarruth, L. P., & Staker, M. L. (2011). John Taylor's June 27, 1854, Account of the Martyrdom. *Brigham Young University Studies*, 50(3), 25–62. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43044872>

<sup>75</sup> Thomas Bullock Biography  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/thomas-bullock>

<sup>76</sup> John C. Bennett Biography  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/john-cook-bennett>

<sup>77</sup> "Irregularities in the Work of Nauvoo Lodge: Mormonism, Freemasonry, and Conflicting Interests on the Illinois Frontier" By. Brady G. Winslow  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43200598>

<sup>78</sup> Timeline of 96 Hours Surrounding the Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith  
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/timeline-of-96-hours-surrounding-the-martyrdom-of-joseph-smith-and-hyrum-smith?lang=eng>

<sup>79</sup> Timeline of 96 Hours Surrounding the Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith  
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/timeline-of-96-hours-surrounding-the-martyrdom-of-joseph-smith-and-hyrum-smith?lang=eng>

<sup>80</sup> Timeline of 96 Hours Surrounding the Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith

captain of the Carthage Greys militia, left the courtroom without calling Joseph and Hyrum to answer the second charge of Treason. Later, when they were back in their room in the Hamilton House, Constable Bettisworth reappeared to take Joseph and Hyrum to jail to await trial for treason. A warrant known as a mittimus was needed for such action, their legal counsel explained, and before a mittimus could be issued, the law required that the prisoners be brought before the justice of the peace again for an examination. To everyone's surprise, the constable pulled a mittimus from his pocket, signed by Robert F. Smith. Joseph objected, and James W. Wood, Joseph's lawyer, went down the hall to the governor. Ford refused to intervene, and the Joseph, Hyrum, and several other brethren were escorted to Carthage Jail.<sup>81</sup> [Commentary: Robert Smith planned this, along with anyone who knew Joseph and Hyrum would soon be murdered.]

On June 25, 1844, at 9 pm, the men were taken to Carthage Jail.<sup>82</sup> None of them are searched for weapons that day.<sup>83</sup> Governor Thomas Ford says it's the responsibility of the Justice of the Peace Robert F. Smith to have the men searched for guns.<sup>84</sup> (Robert F. Smith was also Captain of the Carthage Greys, the militia set to protect the jail, and Robert would be later responsible for the mob that was there to kill Joseph). Due to no security, John Fullmer brought a single shooter pistol into the jail, giving it to Joseph Smith on the next day, the 26th.<sup>85</sup> Dan Jones, the bodyguard for Joseph Smith, stated that when they went to Carthage, a few of the men had pistols in their pockets.<sup>86</sup> John Taylor mentions having pistols under his pillow on June 21 in the Hamilton Hotel.<sup>87</sup> In the accounts of the murders, it only mentions Fullmer had a gun until Wheelock, on the 27th, brought in a second gun, a six-shooter produced in calibers 28, 31. Or 36.<sup>88 89 90</sup> The pistols used by Joseph and Hyrum are now in possession of the Church Museum of History and Art.<sup>91</sup> [Commentary: In understanding how the murders are possible with John Taylor and Willard Richards bringing guns into the jail, it's important to know they were not searched when they entered the jail, and John Taylor had pistols with him a few days earlier that could have been brought in with him.]

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<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/timeline-of-96-hours-surrounding-the-martyrdom-of-joseph-smith-and-hyrum-smith?lang=eng>

<sup>81</sup> Martyrdom at Carthage

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1994/06/martyrdom-at-carthage?lang=eng>

<sup>82</sup> Timeline of 96 Hours Surrounding the Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/timeline-of-96-hours-surrounding-the-martyrdom-of-joseph-smith-and-hyrum-smith?lang=eng>

<sup>83</sup> 24 Hours To Martyrdom, by Reed Blake pg. 94

<sup>84</sup> History, 1838–1856, volume F-1 [1 May 1844–8 August 1844] pg. 195

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-f-1-1-may-1844-8-august-1844/201>

<sup>85</sup> 24 Hours To Martyrdom, by Reed Blake pg. 94

<sup>86</sup> The Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and His Brother Hyrum! By. Dan Jones Pg. 10

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2235&context=byusq>

<sup>87</sup> John Taylor, Martyrdom Account pg. 20

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/john-taylor-martyrdom-account/20>

<sup>88</sup> An Eyewitness Account by John Taylor, Church Elder

<https://famous-trials.com/carthage/1260-tayloraccount>

<sup>89</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account pg. 51

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/53>

<sup>90</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%200bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>91</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%200bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>





The men would spend the first night in Carthage Jail in the cell room, but on the morning of the 26th, they were moved to the jailer's room which is sixteen by sixteen feet. Unfortunately, the lock on the door was broken.<sup>92</sup>

On June 26, 1844, at 5:30 am, Joseph was visited by his uncle John Smith who was sent to request Almon W. Babbitt, a Mormon, for legal help as an attorney. Unfortunately, Babbitt refused to help Joseph at 8:15 pm.<sup>93</sup>

On June 26, 1844, all the men went downstairs to have breakfast with the jailer. “7 a.m.—Joseph, Hyrum, and the rest of the brethren, took breakfast with Stigall, and were then removed to the room upstairs.”<sup>94</sup>  
**[Commentary:** This is an interesting note as on the day of the murders, John Taylor doesn't go downstairs to have breakfast but remains alone in the jailer's room to eat breakfast.]

On June 26, 1844, around 8 am, Captain James Singleton arrived in Nauvoo, where excommunicated Robert D. Foster publisher of the Nauvoo Expositor, told Singleton to search the printing presses for proof of counterfeiting in Nauvoo. The militia led by Singleton finds nothing after hours of searching.<sup>95</sup>

Stephen Markham writing to Wilford Woodruff on June 20, 1856, related that on the afternoon of June 26, 1844, Dr. Southwick, who wanted the church to move to Texas, accompanied Joseph to the jail on June 25, spending the night with him attended a meeting at Hamilton Hotel. The meeting was about the best way to stop Joseph and Hyrum Smith. He shared with Stephan Markham some of the details said.<sup>96</sup> Stephan Markham also mentions in this letter that Mr. Hamilton told him, “I had better go home as I would only get Killed if I remained.” and “you can do the prisoners no good & I will bring you your Horse” When Markham told him he wasn't leaving and not to bring the horse, Mr. Hamilton called the horse, bringing it to Markham, and forced him on poking him with a bayonet causing Stephan to bleed in his shoes.<sup>97</sup> It's interesting to consider Mr. Hamilton as involved in some way in the murders as

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<sup>92</sup> 24 Hours To Martyrdom, by Reed Blake pg. 17

<sup>93</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account, Pg 41 & 42

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/41>

<sup>94</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account pg. 27

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/27>

<sup>95</sup> 24 Hours To Martyrdom, by Reed Blake pg. 20

<sup>96</sup> Letter from Stephan Markham, 20 June 1856 pg. 3

<https://wilfordwoodruffpapers.org/documents/b354bbcf-bb5e-4ad6-9c5c-56645d6576c5>

<sup>97</sup> Letter from Stephan Markham, 20 June 1856 pg. 4

<https://wilfordwoodruffpapers.org/documents/b354bbcf-bb5e-4ad6-9c5c-56645d6576c5/page/f1055d73-dfb4-434d-a71b-6921faf2dcf8>

circumstantial evidence exists that Brigham Young gave Mr. Hamilton sixteen keys to the interior doors of the Nauvoo temple in February 1846.<sup>98</sup>

On June 26, 1844, at 4:00 p.m. Joseph and Hyrum Smith appear before Robert F. Smith for the initial treason examination. “The court gave Joseph and Hyrum Smith’s defense team until noon on Thursday, June 27, to gather witnesses. The treason hearing was set for Thursday, June 27, but was later moved back to Saturday, June 29.”<sup>99</sup> [**Commentary:** If this delay didn’t occur, then Joseph Smith wouldn’t have been killed in Carthage Jail.]

On June 26, 1844, at 6 pm, a letter came from Governor Thomas Ford requesting Joseph and Hyrum remain in the unsecure jailer's room that he saw them in that morning at 9:27 am.<sup>100</sup> “I would advise the Jailer to Keep the Messrs. Smiths in the room in which I found them this morning, unless a closer confinement should be clearly necessary to prevent an escape.”<sup>101</sup> [**Commentary:** This action by Governor Thomas Ford is suspicious as the Jailer’s room wasn’t a good place to be if attacked and Ford’s interest in what room Joseph was in.]

On June 27, 1844, after midnight Dan Jones reported that “about twelve 0 clock that night we lay down in the following way to sleep hyrum smith and dr willard richards in the bed joseph smith on one side of me and john taylor on the other colonel markham and another brother next to him were lying on the mattresses on the floor and that is all there were of us we expected nothing less than an attack on us nearly every hour in spite of that the only defense that we could make was to put a chair against the door in such a way that it would fall if the door were opened I had not fallen into a deep sleep when I heard the sound of heavy footsteps of an army coming toward us I got up and spied through the window where by the light of the stars I saw soldiery already at the door I observed what they said but they were whispering so secretively that I could understand hardly anything but this how many shall go in when I heard that I awoke my brethren but there was no need to tell them why for the sound of the feet rushing up to our door signified that it was time to beware we stood by the door to attack the first to open it and we clearly heard them breathing on the other side there was tomblike silence for a minute or two awaiting a shower of bullets perhaps in our midst and then J smith asked bravely and loudly who was there and what did they want he invited them in as we were ready to receive them and it made no difference to him whether he died at that time or at daylight etc at that they stole down quietly and from then to daylight they consulted near our windows what they would do at times they decided to rush in on us but before reaching the door perhaps the other party would hold them back and thus they continued until the assassin s terror the morning light scattered all of them except for about eight of the carthage grays who stayed there as guards.”<sup>102</sup>

On June 27, 1844, W. W. Phelps visited Carthage Jail at 5 am to speak to joseph, Hyrum, John, and Richards.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Artois Hamilton: A Good Man in Carthage?

[https://www.jstor.org/stable/23289935#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/23289935#metadata_info_tab_contents)

<sup>99</sup> Timeline of 96 Hours Surrounding the Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/timeline-of-96-hours-surrounding-the-martyrdom-of-joseph-smith-and-hyrum-smith?lang=eng>

<sup>100</sup> Historian’s Office, Martyrdom Account pg. 29

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/29>

<sup>101</sup> Historian’s Office, Martyrdom Account pg. 41

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/41>

<sup>102</sup> The Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and His Brother Hyrum! By. Dan Jones Pg. 13

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2235&context=byusq>

<sup>103</sup> 24 Hours To Martyrdom, by Reed Blake pg. 79

At 7 am, Joseph, Hyrum, Richards, and bodyguard Stephan go downstairs to eat breakfast with the jailer while John Taylor remains upstairs alone for about an hour and eats his breakfast in the room.<sup>104</sup> There is no explanation on why he didn't join them downstairs.<sup>105</sup> [**Commentary:** What John Taylor was doing in the room for that hour is a mystery, but perhaps he was preparing weapons in the room. Nevertheless, the behavior is suspicious and out of John's previous behavior.]

At 10 am, Wheelock is permitted to visit the jail. The guard doesn't search Wheelock for weapons due to all the formality being unnecessary.<sup>106</sup>

Dan Jones leaves the jail around 6 am, and as he goes, he is told by one of the guards of the jail "that the prisoners would never come out alive that I would see before night that he was a better prophet than Joe Smith" Dan Jones then went to Governor Thomas Ford and informed the governor of the threats. The governor assured him there was no danger to Joseph and Hyrum's lives. Dan Jones hurried to Carthage Jail to warn Joseph and Hyrum, but the guards wouldn't let Dan back into the jail even though Thomas Ford had granted permission the day before. Dan returns to Thomas Ford, who denies his request to allow Dan back into the jail, but permission is only given to Willard Richards as, Joseph's scribe, to leave and reenter the jail.<sup>107</sup> [**Commentary:** The action of Thomas Ford giving Willard Richards permission to leave and enter the jail can be seen as conspiring to kill Joseph or just allowing Joseph's scribe to move around. Interestingly, Richards doesn't go to Stephan Markham outside the jail for the tobacco he returned with when Richards "felt sick" earlier.]

At around 1:30 pm, Stephan Markham, Joseph's bodyguard, is sent out of jail to get Willard Richards tobacco and a pipe because Richards was feeling sick.<sup>108</sup> Stephan attempts to return to the jail with the pipe and tobacco but is denied access and forced to flee by Mr. Hamilton unable to deliver the tobacco and pipe.<sup>109</sup> [**Commentary:** Richards, when given tobacco and wine later by the Jailer, doesn't use the tobacco, suggesting that Richards was faking being sick to get Stephan Markham out of the jail, isolating Joseph and Hyrum.]

Jonathan Dunham, on June 17, 1844, became the Major General of the Nauvoo legion after Wilson Law and his brother William Law were excommunicated from the church by Brigham Young<sup>110 111</sup> reportedly received a letter from Joseph Smith, who was Lieutenant General of the Nauvoo Legion requesting rescue from Carthage Jail. Dunham ignoring the letter from Joseph Smith.<sup>112</sup> [**Commentary:** A reason for

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<sup>104</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account pg. 48

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/48>

<sup>105</sup> 24 Hours To Martyrdom, by Reed Blake pg. 83

<sup>106</sup> 24 Hours To Martyrdom, by Reed Blake pg. 94

<sup>107</sup> The Martyrdom of Joseph Smith and His Brother Hyrum! By. Dan Jones Pg. 14

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2235&context=byusq>

<sup>108</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account pg. 59

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/61>

<sup>109</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account Pg. 61

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/65>

<sup>110</sup> Lieutenant General's Staff

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/back/nauvoo-legion-officers-1841-1844>

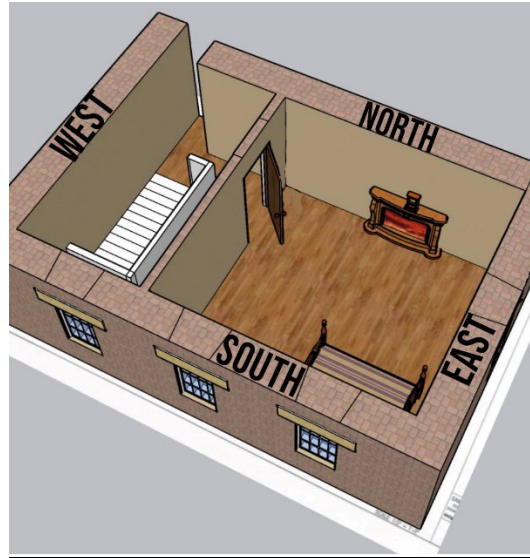
<sup>111</sup> Military Order to Jonathan Dunham, 17 June 1844–B, Willard Richards Copy

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/military-order-to-jonathan-dunham-17-june-1844-b-willard-richards-copy/1>

<sup>112</sup> Allen J. Stout, manuscript journal, 1815-89, p. 13.

excommunicating William Law and Wilson Law would be to gain control over the Nauvoo Legion to prevent Joseph from being rescued. Joseph would have escaped alive if Wilson Law were in the Nauvoo Legion.]

Governor Thomas Ford disbands the Warsaw Militia near Carthage close to 5 pm. These troops would become the mob that comes to the Carthage Jail.<sup>113</sup> [Commentary: This action by Governor Ford was either done on purpose to hurt Joseph and Hyrum or a stupid mistake.]



### The Murders according to John Taylor & Willard Richards<sup>114 115</sup>

The men in the room had the three windows open to admit air in to cool them down on this hot day. Two windows on the south side and one window on the east side. Willard Richards alone had his coat on while everyone else had taken theirs off. The jailer Stigall suggested that the men go into the more secure cell room, but Joseph and them decided to stay in the jailer's room for dinner. They were brought wine and tobacco with papers; they uncorked the wine and began to drink; Hyrum Smith asked John Taylor to sing the hymn "A Poor Way Faring Man of Grief" either back to back or John sang it first at 3:15 pm and again around 5 pm when at that moment the mob came. As the men sat on the window sills in the room, they spotted a mob with painted faces approaching the jail to enter the building from its southside entrance which leads directly to the stairway. The mob was carrying U.S Model 1795 & U.S Model 1816, which were 69. Cal muskets (diameter 0.05 inches smaller than 0.69 inches).<sup>116</sup> Hyrum Smith, Willard Richards, John Taylor, and Joseph Smith, then all four lean against the door with their shoulders of the

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T.B.H. Stenhouse, *Rocky Mountain Saints: a full and complete history of the Mormons, from the first vision of Joseph Smith to the last courtship of Brigham Young* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1873), 164n..

<sup>113</sup> Church History in the Fulness of Times Student Manual, Chapter 22- The Martyrdom

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/church-history-in-the-fulness-of-times/chapter-twenty-two?lang=eng>

<sup>114</sup> John Taylor's account

<https://famous-trials.com/carthage/1260-tayloraccount>

<sup>115</sup> Willard Richard's account

<https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/NCMP1820-1846/id/8288>

<sup>116</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

jailer's bedroom. They are unable to lock the door since the lock is broken. The mob goes up the narrow stairs (35 inches wide and 8 inches steep)<sup>117</sup> and try to open the door to the jailer's room; unable to open it, they fire a single shot through the closed door's keyhole (at a downward angle).<sup>118</sup> The door, though, had to be open because there was no evidence of damage to the oak doorjamb.<sup>119</sup> Hyrum Smith leaps back from the door facing the door, and Willard Richards did or did not leap back as well and may have moved to the left of the door with Joseph and John.<sup>120</sup> Hyrum Smith then or may have not fired his single shooter pistol<sup>121</sup> before another single gunshot passes through the door (at a downward angle 51.75 inches above the floor or lower further back in the room)<sup>122</sup> and strikes Hyrum on the left of his nose. Another bullet fired by the mob on the first floor outside passes through the east side window and enters Hyrum's lower back on his right side, striking his watch on his right vest pocket, pulverizing the face but did not penetrate Hyrum's skin of the abdominal wall.<sup>123</sup> He falls onto his back with his head one or two feet away from the northeast corner wall, saying he is a dead man.<sup>124</sup> Hyrum never moved afterward.

**[Commentary:** The evidence that the door was open when the gunshot hit the latch goes against the claim that the men were pressed against the door. Hyrum could not have been shot in the face from a bullet passing through the door as Hyrum died facedown with his head one to two feet from the northeast wall. In other words, Hyrum faced the eastern wall and had his back to the door. The gunshot to Hyrum's back was postmortem since there was no blood around the wound, and it didn't come from outside the window as it passed straight through his body.]

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<sup>117</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith  
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>118</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith  
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>119</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith  
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>120</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account, Draft pg. 54  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account-draft/64>

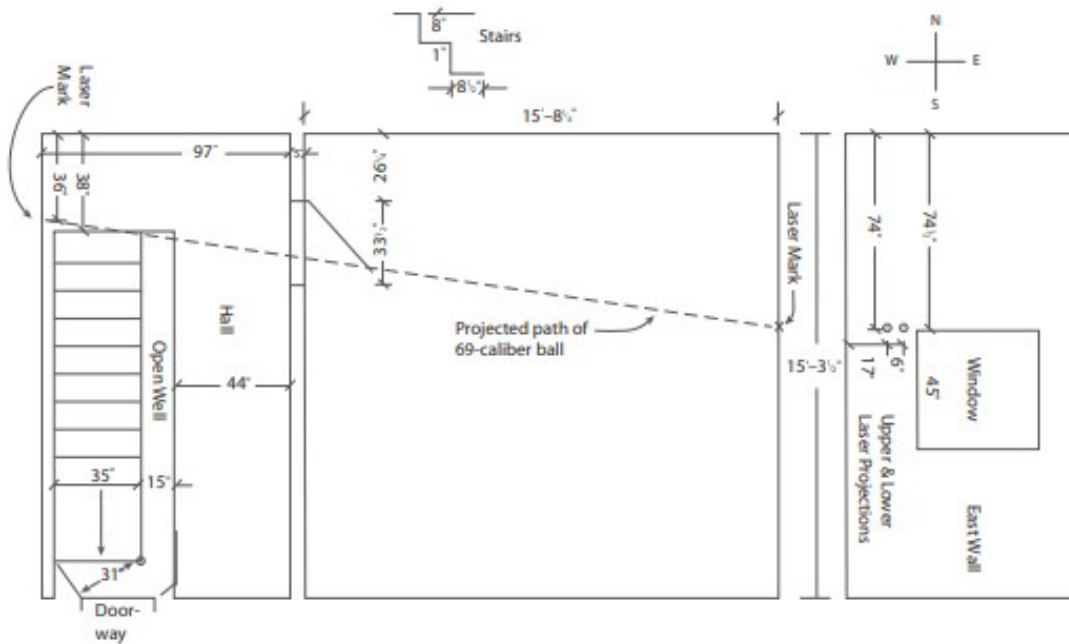
<sup>121</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account, Draft pg. 54  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account-draft/64>

<sup>122</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith  
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

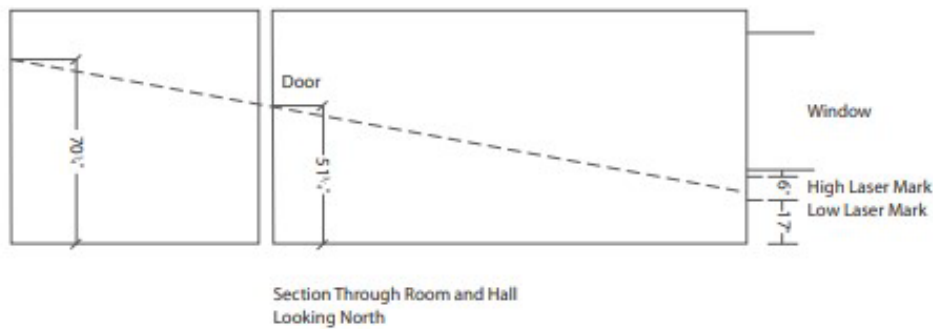
<sup>123</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith  
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>124</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account, Draft pg. 54  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account-draft/64>





**FIG. 10a.** Pathway of the musket ball that made the hole in the door panel was reconstructed using a laser pointer wedged into the bullet hole in the door. Based on diagram by David W. Lyon.



**FIG. 10b.** If the door was closed when the ball was fired, it would have struck the east wall just below the east window, between 17 and 23 inches above the room's floor. Based on diagram by David W. Lyon.

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<sup>125</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>



Hyrum's watch<sup>126</sup>

Joseph Smith went to Hyrum's body before going to the left of the door and opening it by cracking it with his left hand to fire his six-shooter pistol six times in his right hand. Three of the bullets misfired. The three bullets that were shot struck three members of the mob, two in the shoulder and one in the face.

[**Commentary:** It will be apparent that Joseph shot at the mob two times and the other four shots struck John Taylor and Willard Richards.]



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<sup>126</sup> Blood, Bullets, Pistols, and Mobbers: A New Look at Solving a Carthage Jail Mystery by. E. Gary Smith [https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jmormhist.45.4.0001?read-now=1&seq=17#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jmormhist.45.4.0001?read-now=1&seq=17#page_scan_tab_contents)

John Taylor, behind Joseph, with his hickory cane, pushes against the door with his cane before the mob pushes back. The mob begins firing into the room through the crack in the door as they hold their muskets above their shoulders and absorb the recoil with their hands and arms due to limited space<sup>127</sup> while Taylor begins knocking down muskets firing through the crack in the door as they pushed into the room. Some of the musket fire struck Hyrum Smith under his jaw on the right side, the side/back of his right thigh (no exit wound), and the front of his left lower leg (no exit wound). John Taylor reports the room filling with smoke from musket fire but no mention of any burns to him or the canes or eye damage from the cloud of burning powder particles thrown in a circular pattern around the musket ball moving over 1,000 feet per second that can penetrate clothing and skin.<sup>128</sup> There are only reported shots through the east window, while the two south windows are not used to shoot into the room. [**Commentary:** One of the glaring problems with the story of John Taylor and Willard Richards is that John Taylor wasn't covered with burns. There is no way around him not being injured this way, directly in front of musket fire.]

Willard Richards stood next to Joseph in an oblique direction in the south part of the room. Soon several muskets and rifles crowded the crack of the door. John Taylor, hoping to find help outside and escape, runs to the east window while Willard Richards covers for him, knocking down muskets. Taylor was about to leap out of the window when he was shot by a mob member at the head of the stairs in the back of his thigh, 5 inches above his knee<sup>129</sup> which struck his bone and flattened to the size of a quarter “ and then passed on through the fleshy part to within about half an inch of the outside.” The ball severed or injured his femoral nerve, which led John Taylor to lose all power to stand or walk. Taylor then falls on the window sill damaging his watch at 5:16 pm, and feeling as if he will fall out the window; he is pushed back into the room by something. Taylor then lands on the floor and begins to crawl or roll under the bed to the room's southeast corner next to the east window. While making his way under the bed and while under the bed, he is shot three additional times in his left wrist, entering into his hand near the pinky, left knee (never removed), and left hip as large as a hand which he says splattered blood and flesh on the wall. John Taylor then blanks out. [**Commentary:** None of the eyewitnesses of Carthage Jail saw John Taylor at the window; they only mentioned seeing Joseph and Richards, which suggests that John Taylor is lying about going to the window. The bullet in John Taylor's knee is the last remaining direct evidence from Carthage Jail of what happened. John Taylor must be exhumed to know if he was shot by a musket or shot by a bullet that can be traced back to Joseph's handgun. The gunshot to John Taylor's wrist/hand doesn't make sense if John has his arms in front of him as he crawls or rolls under the bed. The gunshot should have gone down his arm rather than up the hand.]

Willard Richards then states that he and Joseph left the door unattended, and the mob tried to shoot Richards and Joseph in the southwest corner of the room while holding their guns in their left hand. that “while they continued to reach their guns into the room, probably left handed, and aimed their discharge so far round as almost to reach us in the corner of the room to where we retreated and dodged, and then I recommenced the attack with my stick.” [**Commentary:** Another glaring problem with the story is Willard Richards and Joseph Smith leaving the door unguarded as they go into a corner of the room. If this had happened, the mob with their guns through the crack of the door would have opened it further,

<sup>127</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>128</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>129</sup> John Taylor, Martyrdom Account, pg. 59 <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/john-taylor-martyrdom-account/60>

coming into the room and killing them both. What's most likely is that Richards forgot that John Taylor had been shot in his story, and no one was at the door.]

Joseph then ran to the east window making it to the windowsill (24 inches wide)<sup>130</sup> and while he had his left leg out of the window, he was shot in his right thigh and hip by the mob at the head of the stairs and was shot under his right breast from outside, exiting his shoulder near his neck. Joseph then fell, giving part of the Masonic distress call. Richards says, "As his (Joseph's) feet went out of the window my head went in, the balls whistling all around." Richards reports that musket fire was whistling all around near the window which, "he being a very large man, and in the midst of a shower of balls, yet he stood unscathed, with the exception of a ball, ~~leaving a slight mark such as the head of a pin~~ taking away the tip end of the lower part of his left ear" as he was near the window.<sup>131</sup> Joseph landed on the left side of his body on his shoulder. **[Commentary:** William Daniels, an eyewitness outside of Carthage Jail on the east side of the building, says that Joseph Smith had not been shot when he fell out of the window. William Daniels states no gunshots were fired at Joseph in the window or after he fell from the window until the well. The wounds to Joseph's body are consistent with William Daniels account that Joseph was shot four times at the well. It's important to note that Joseph landed on his side and did not land on his face, as Joseph had a Le Fort skull fracture which the fall doesn't explain. Taking William Daniels account that Joseph hung on for dear life in the window and that he had not been shot yet gives credence to the idea that Joseph's skull was fractured, leading him to fall/be pushed from the window. With the understanding that the mob didn't shoot at Joseph while he was in the window then, Willard Richards is lying about the origin of his gunshot to his ear. I believe Joseph Smith fired at Richards, causing that injury before the skull fracture.]

John Taylor comes back to himself, and Richards and John hear that Joseph Smith has leaped the window. The mob at the head of the stairs then descended the stairs. John Taylor reports either seeing Willard Richards approach the window after the call Joseph leaped the window or seeing Richards already at the window and withdrawing from the window. Richards says he withdrew from the window at that time. He says Richards immediately ran to hide in the cell room. John calls from under the bed for help, and Richards drags John Taylor to the cell room and hides him inside the cell under a mattress. They both remain in that room together.

The mob then returns upstairs to the jailer's room, and then they leave.<sup>132</sup> **[Commentary:** Hyrum Smith bled out before being shot in the back and legs, and due to those three injuries not leaving an exit wound seen in Hyrum's clothing, they would have come from a smaller caliber than a musket. Hyrum also had to have been flipped over onto his back since the gunshot to his left lower leg was in the front.]

John and Richards remain in that room for some time before leaving the room. John Taylor was placed at the head of the stairs, where he could see Hyrum Smith dead in the room. John Taylor states "There he lay as I had left him; he had not moved a limb; he lay placid and calm, a monument of greatness even in death; but his noble spirit had left its tenement, and was gone to dwell in regions more congenial to his

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<sup>130</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>131</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account pg. 66

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account/70>

<sup>132</sup> Transcript of Thomas Bullock's Longhand Summary of John Taylors June 27, 1854 sermon

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/john-taylors-june-27-1854-account-of-the-martyrdom/>

exalted nature.” [Commentary: The phrase “There he lay as I had left him” sounds like an admission of guilt since John Taylor didn’t place Hyrum there unless he murdered him.]

Doctors soon arrived and, with a penknife, made an incision to extract the ball from John Taylor’s hand. With the penknife and compass, after some time was able to remove the ball stated as half an ounce. Samuel Smith, the brother of Joseph and Hyrum, arrives soon after. The coroner arrived, and Richards and the coroner talked and worked out the details. John Taylor states that he spoke to Robert F. Smith, who was part of the coroner’s jury. John requests Robert to have Francis Higbee, who is in the area to have him removed, which Robert agrees to do. Samuel Smith moves the body of Joseph to the bottom of the stairs. Richards and Samuel then transfer the bodies to the Hamilton Hotel. Samuel Smith then leaves to get the wagons and assistance transporting Joseph and Hyrum to Nauvoo the next day.<sup>133</sup>

[Commentary: John Taylor seems to have a friendly relationship with Robert Smith after he conspired to murder Joseph and Hyrum.]

### Other Eyewitnesses

The eye witnesses of the Carthage Jail murders other than John Taylor and Willard Richards are William Daniels and Henry Harmon. Henry doesn’t see a lot, so I have left out his account.

William Daniels's eye witness account of the room begins as he is outside the east side of the jail. “He (Joseph Smith) sprang into the window; but just as he was preparing to descend, he saw such an array of bayonets below that he caught by the window casing, where he hung by his hands and feet, with his head to the north, feet to the south, and his body swinging downwards. He hung in that position three or four minutes, during which time he exclaimed, two or three times, “O, LORD, MY GOD!!!” and fell to the ground. While he was hanging in that position, Col. Williams hallooed, “Shoot him! G-d d—n him! Shoot the dam’d rascal!” However, none fired at him. He seemed to fall easy. He struck partly on his right shoulder and back, his neck and head reaching the ground a little before his feet. He rolled instantly on his face. From this position he was taken by a young man, who sprang to him from the other side of the fence, who held a pewter fife in his hand, was barefoot and bare-headed, having on no coat, with his pants rolled above his knees, and shirt-sleeves above his elbows. He set President Smith against the south side of the well-curb that was situated a few feet from the jail. While doing this, the savage muttered aloud, “This is Old Jo; I know him. I know you, Old Jo. Damn you: you are the man that had my daddy shot.” The object he had in talking in this way, I supposed to be this: He wished to have President Smith and the people in general, believe he was the son of Governor Boggs, which would lead to the opinion that it was the Missourians who had come over and committed the murder. This was the report that they soon caused to be circulated; but this was too palpable an absurdity to be credited. [Commentary: William Daniels placing Joseph with his head to the north and his feet to the south shows either Joseph had his right leg out of the window or was lying on the window sill on his right side. With Joseph in this position, it makes the claimed gunshots to Joseph’s right hip and thigh that Richards states unlikely, as Joseph would have to have his left leg out the window for those shots from the head of the stairs. Daniel’s account also shows that Joseph wasn’t willing to leap from the window but appeared forced out. Daniel’s account, as stated earlier, makes Willard’s gunshot to his left earlobe impossible from the window. Willard is lying about

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<sup>133</sup> Correspondence between William R. Hamilton and Samuel H. B. Smith Regarding the Martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith by. Kenneth W. Godfrey

[https://ensignpeakfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/NJ11.2\\_Godfrey.pdf](https://ensignpeakfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/NJ11.2_Godfrey.pdf)



his injury. Daniels makes no account of anyone striking Joseph in the face with a rigid object necessary for Joseph's skull fracture.]

After President Smith had fallen, I saw Elder Willard Richards come to the window and look out upon the horrid scene that spread itself below him. When President Smith had been set against the curb, and began to recover, from the effects of the fall, Col. Williams ordered four men to shoot him. Accordingly, four men took an eastern direction, about eight feet from the curb, Col. Williams stranding partly at their rear, and made ready to execute the order. While they were making preparations, and the muskets were raised to their faces, President Smith's eyes rested upon them with a calm and quiet resignation. He betrayed no agitated feelings and the expression upon his countenance seemed to betoken his inly prayer to be: "O, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The fire was simultaneous. A slight cringe of the body was all the indication of pain that he betrayed when the balls struck him. He fell upon his face. One ball then entered the back part of his body. This is the ball that many people have supposed struck him about the time he was in the window. But this is a mistake. I was close by him, and I know he was not hit with a ball, until after he was seated by the well-curb."<sup>134</sup> [**Commentary:** William Daniels mentions that Joseph didn't recover from his fall until he was at the well. This seems to support the idea that Joseph suffered a skull fracture that impaired his ability to escape and perhaps not fall from the window. Daniels reaffirms that Joseph was not shot while in the window as Richards claimed.]

William Daniels also provided this witness in court when cross-examined by Josiah Lamborn.

"Did you see Smith fall from the Window.

I did.

How far was you from him.

I was out on the road East of the Jail, the crowd was between me and him.

Was he shot, before he fell, or not *[illegible]*

He was not.

...

You saw Smith fall out of the window.

Yes.

Tell us the manner he fell out what was the position when you first saw him in the window.

He held with his hands on one side and his feet on the other his body hanging out.

How long did he hang there.

I do not know how long or short A time he hung.

Was his head to the North or to the South.

His head was to the North and his feet to the South and the troops where South and East of him.

Did any person shoot at him while he hung in the window.

No.

When he fell did he lie motionless.

He did not attempt to rise.

...

Did Smith say anything as he hung in the window.

Yes he said "O Lord my God".

Was there A great deal of noise in the confusion.

While he hung in the window all was still.

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<sup>134</sup> An Eyewitness Account of the Murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith by William M. Daniels authored by Lyman Omar Littlefield  
<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/carthage/danielsaccount.html>

After this man had set him up what happened then.  
 Men was appointed to shoot him.  
 Did the man who set him up continue to hold him up while they shot him.  
 No.  
 He took him and set him by the well and went off.  
 Yes.  
 Which side of the well did he set him.  
 On the south side.  
 Did the man who shot him stand in front of him or on one side?  
 They stood in A South Easterly direction.  
 Where they facing him?  
 No exactly.  
 How many men shot him?  
 4 shot at him.  
 How far where they from Smith?  
 They stood at the fence 10 or 12 feet from him.  
 Did they all fire at the same time?  
 Pretty much at the same time.”<sup>135</sup>

In the eyewitness accounts, Henry Harmon and William Daniels did not see Hyrum or John Taylor go to the window but only reported seeing Joseph approaching the window twice and Richards coming after Joseph fell.<sup>136 137</sup>

### Coroner

Thomas Barnes, the coroner, wrote of his account. "It appears that one of the balls in the commencement of the attack passed through a panel of the door and hit hyram in his neck which probably broke his neck he fell back and died as I was informed instantly when I went into the room shortly afterwards his head was laying against the wall on the other side of the room from the door the attacking party forced the door open and commenced firing at smith as he staggered across the floor to the opposite side of the room where there was a window it is said that there he gave the hailing sign of the distress of a mason but that it did him no good in the room behind him were armed men furious men with murder in their hearts before him around the well under the window there was a crowd of desperate men as he was receiving shots from behind which he could not stand in desperation he leaped or rather fell out of the window near the well where he breathed his last when I found him soon afterwards he was laying in the hall at the foot of the stairs where his blood had as I believe left indelible stains on the floor" "You want to know what has become of richards he was not hurt you will ask how did it happen that his comrades were so badly treated and he came off without receiving any damage whatever it was in this way as I suppose I think he told me so the four braced themselves against the door to keep the mob out he stood next to the hinges of the door so when the door opened it would turn back against the wall shutting him up against the wall and he stood there and did not move till the affair was all over so that they did not see him after we were through with taylor I went to richards and said to him richards what does all this mean who done it said he doctor I do not know but I believe it was some Missourians that came over and have killed brothers joseph and hyram and wounded bro taylor said I to him do you believe that he said I do says I will you

<sup>135</sup> William Daniels cross examined by Josiah Lamborn  
<https://famous-trials.com/carthrage/1275-danielstestimony>

<sup>136</sup> Gathering-- the Scattered Tribes of Hulda Dimeras Vaughn, 1808-1886 & Her Husbands Alpheus Harmon & Loren Elias Bassett Pg.288 University of Wisconsin

<sup>137</sup> Willam Daniels 1845 Carthage pamphlet  
<https://famous-trials.com/carthrage/1255-danielsaccount>

write that down and send it to nauvoo he said he would if he could find any person to take it I told him if he would write it I would send it."<sup>138</sup>

[**Commentary:** Willard Richards suggesting Hyrum died from his neck being broken by a bullet is unusual, as you'd think he would say the death was due to blood loss or something similar. A broken neck is oddly specific and suggests Richards knows more than he's saying. Willard Richards also claims to have been behind the door hinges during the martyrdom, but in John Taylor and his testimony, he isn't behind the door hinges. Richards was lying about where he was in the room.] Page | 26

### The Carthage Jail Room

In 1885 James W. Woods, Joseph Smith's attorney claimed to have counted 35 bullet holes in the room's walls.<sup>139</sup> Sketch of the jailor's bedroom in the Liberty Jail drawn by British artist Fredrick Hawkins Piercy in 1853. The drawing appears between pages 74 and 75 in *Route from Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley* (1855).<sup>140</sup> The drawing shows two clusters of bullet holes in the west wall that could not have come from outside or the head of the stairs. These came from someone within the room.<sup>141</sup> According to Richards and John Taylor, the four men only had seven bullets, and six of them were used outside the room (Joseph's six-shooter), with only Hyrum possibly firing once with his single shooter. These clusters, though, suggest that there was an exchange of bullets within the room between the four men since staging the room this way wouldn't make sense because it conflicts with John and Willard's testimony. Repairs to the room (except the door) were not made until 1866. In 1930-1940 when the plaster was stripped from the walls during remodeling, no musket balls were found in the plaster and oak lath.<sup>142</sup> [**Commentary:** John and/or Willard Richards had to be armed to leave those bullet holes in the room.]

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<sup>138</sup> Thomas L. Barnes: Coroner of Carthage, By. Stanley B. Kimball

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1457&context=byusq>

<sup>139</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail>.

<sup>140</sup> "Long Shall His Blood . . . Stain Illinois": Carthage Jail in Mormon Memory By. Brian Q. Cannon

<https://ensignpeakfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/%E2%80%9CLong-Shall-His-Blood-.-.-Stain-Illinois%E2%80%9D-Carthage-Jail-in-Mormon-Memory.pdf>

<sup>141</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail>.

<sup>142</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail>.





## The Bodies & Clothing

Joseph Smith, when exhumed, showed that he suffered from a previously unknown Le Forte skull fracture. Willard Richards & John Taylor had a large hickory cane from Stephan Markham that could fit the description of a rigid object making this fracture occur.<sup>143 144</sup> Willard Richards might have hinted at Stephan Markham's cane being used as a club to fracture Joseph's skull when he writes in his journal Markham's club before scratching it out to write cane.

“Joseph Hyrum & Taylor's coat were of off—Joseph sprang to his coat for his 6. shooter, Hyrum for his single barrel—Taylor for Markhams club—cane— & Dr for Taylors—cane—— all sprang against the door”<sup>145</sup>



<sup>143</sup> Facial Fractures Explain the Differences Between the Death Mask and the Photograph  
[http://silverepicent.com/photofound/photofound/Photograph\\_Found/Differences.html](http://silverepicent.com/photofound/photofound/Photograph_Found/Differences.html)

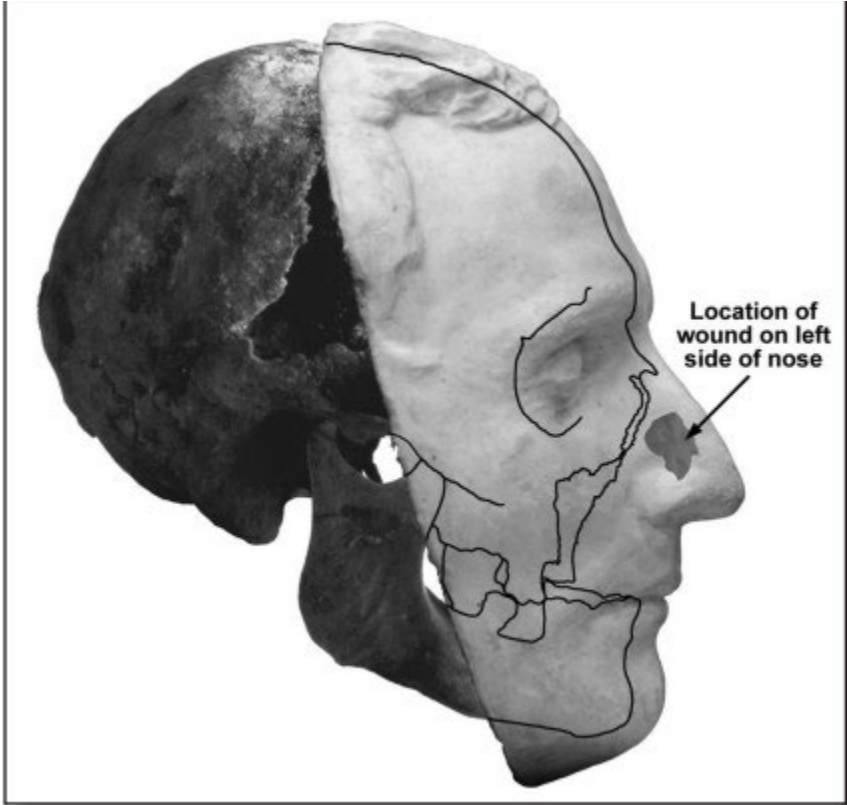
<sup>144</sup> Skulls and Crossed Bones?: A Forensic Study of the Remains of Hyrum and Joseph Smith  
<https://ensignpeakfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Skulls-and-Crossed-Bones-A-Forensic-Study-of-the-Remains-of-Hyrum-and-Joseph-Smith.pdf>

<sup>145</sup> Appendix 3: Willard Richards, Journal Excerpt, 23–27 June 1844 pg. 37  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/appendix-3-willard-richards-journal-excerpt-23-27-june-1844/19>





Hyrum Smith's Injuries



Hyrum's skull contains no damage to the top of his skull.<sup>146</sup> There are also no exit wounds evident in Hyrum's skull. Reinterment photograph of the skull courtesy of the Community of Christ Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.”<sup>147</sup> The death mask of Hyrum Smith, when you measure the cotton that had been pushed towards Hyrum's nose, exposes the outer edge of the bullet hole. The diameter of the hole was 0.7 inches.<sup>148</sup> Meaning, either, it's the entry wound of a 69. caliber or the exit wound of a smaller caliber. [**Commentary:** Hyrum was not shot in the head twice or with a musket.]

On the remains of Hyrum Smith's clothing, most of the blood stains are on the right front of the shirt, with a small amount of blood on the shirt front and a blood splatter on the left shoulder.<sup>149</sup> Reportedly the reason for the top and bottom of the right armhole of Hyrum's vest being cut out is due to it being blood-soaked.<sup>150</sup> The blood on the front of Hyrum's clothing would have come from the hole under his jaw, while there is no evidence of bloodstains around the wounds in his legs and back despite the claim that Hyrum was lying on his back the whole time. There is also no evidence of powder burns on Hyrum's clothing around his back or legs.<sup>151</sup> The blood is on the front of the clothing and not on the back, which shows Hyrum bleeding out while lying on his stomach. That means the gunshot to Hyrum's back and back/side right leg happened first. Then, Hyrum was flipped over onto his back to be shot in his lower left leg, which is the last position his body was in when the coroner and eye witness Henry Harmon viewed Hyrum lying dead on his back with his head against the northeast wall. This is problematic if you want to say Hyrum was shot in the head from the stairs and shot in the back from the window when Hyrum is facing the window with his back to the door. One explanation proposed to explain this is that “Hyrum Smith was pushing against the door with his left shoulder. When he was shot through the face, he stood up, releasing pressure on the door. The door swung partway open, striking his left shoulder and turning him to face away from the door, exposing the right side of his back to the opening. One of the attackers, with his musket held under his right arm about 49 inches above the floor, fired through the door opening and the ball struck Hyrum Smith in the back. The force of the ball then turned him another 180 degrees, and he fell to the floor with his head away from the door.”<sup>152</sup> This doesn't explain how his body made it from the door on the northwest side of the room to the other side of the room on the northeast corner, as

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<sup>146</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>147</sup> Skulls and Crossed Bones?: A Forensic Study of the Remains of Hyrum and Joseph Smith By. Curtis G. Weber, pg. 19.

<https://ensignpeakfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Skulls-and-Crossed-Bones-A-Forensic-Study-of-the-Remains-of-Hyrum-and-Joseph-Smith.pdf>

<sup>148</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>149</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>150</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>151</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>152</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

well as it conflicts with Richards and John's accounts that Hyrum was shot in the head and legs while on his back.





### After The Murders

On June 27, 1844, around 6:30 pm, Governor Thomas Ford left Nauvoo. Thomas Ford prevented George D. Grant and another man from reaching Nauvoo with the news of the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum due to safety concerns as Ford was leaving town.<sup>153</sup>

On June 28, 1844, at 12 am, news of the deaths arrived in Nauvoo by George D. Grant.<sup>154</sup>

On June 28, 1844, The bodies of Joseph and Hyrum were covered with bushes to keep them from the hot sun as they were transported in wagons.<sup>155</sup> It's also reported that they were in pine coffins during

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<sup>153</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account, Draft Pg.55

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account-draft/67>

<sup>154</sup> Times & Seasons July 1, 1844 (Awful Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith)

<https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/NCMP1820-1846/id/8270>

<sup>155</sup> Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account, Draft Pg.56

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/historians-office-martyrdom-account-draft/70>



transport.<sup>156</sup> [**Commentary:** No sources claim that the bodies were placed on ice during their travel, as some have suggested explaining the complete lack of blood on Hyrum's clothing where he was shot in the back.]

At the funeral, on June 29, 1844, W.W. Phelps gave a funeral sermon where he asserted Brigham Young as the next leader. "Be assured brethren and sisters this desperate smite of our foes to stop the onward course of Mormonism will increase its spread and rapidity an hundred fold the bodies of our brethren are marred by physical force because the flesh was weak and the but the priesthood remains unharmed that is eternal without beginning of days or end of years and the twelve mostly now absent are clothed with it as well as others and when they return they will wear the mantle and step into the shoes of the prophet priest and king of Israel"<sup>157</sup> [**Commentary:** This comment about the mantel being on the 12 apostles points to a claimed event called Joseph's Last Charge, where he gave Brigham and others their endowment and told them he would die soon. The endowment is important since that's the basis for their authority. The problem is that Brigham, in passing, will say he hadn't received his endowment yet on July 8, 1844. For Phelps to make this claim at the funeral required knowledge of the premeditated murders and what story they would tell people about Brigham as the next leader.]

On June 30, 1844, Willard Richards wrote a letter to Brigham Young, where Richards reported five wounds to Joseph Smith. The upper right thigh, right lower abdomen, right breast, right shoulder near the neck, and under his heart on the left.<sup>158</sup> <sup>159</sup>The unusual thing about this is that eyewitness William Daniels stated in court Joseph was only shot four times by the mob.<sup>160</sup> The coroner and coroner's jury also reaffirmed that Joseph died from being shot in the abdomen and right breast, with no mention of a gunshot under the heart, which would have been mentioned as a cause of death.<sup>161</sup> What makes this stranger is what was added to the Doctrine & Covenants which states "They were both shot after they were dead, in a brutal manner, and both received four balls." According to eye witness William Daniels Joseph was not shot until he was at the well and Joseph was not shot after he died. For Joseph to be shot after he died means he wasn't shot by the mob. [**Commentary:** The gunshot under the heart occurred before the coroner's review and before Samuel Smith, the brother of Joseph and Hyrum, arrived, or it happened later that night when Samuel Smith left the Hamilton Hotel. Suppose the gunshot occurred before the coroner's jury determination. In that case, it might have been possible that Joseph was shot

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<sup>156</sup> Correspondence between William R. Hamilton and Samuel H. B. Smith Regarding the Martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

[https://ensignpeakfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/NJ11.2\\_Godfrey.pdf](https://ensignpeakfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/NJ11.2_Godfrey.pdf)

<sup>157</sup> The Joseph/Hyrum Smith Funeral Sermon by: W. W. Phelps recollection June 13, 1855

[https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2191&context=byusq&fbclid=IwAR3\\_c9irlD0YvEiUixnNhRehdLACIFNqPH7UVQK12uLtZYgFFYJsH5fhv48](https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2191&context=byusq&fbclid=IwAR3_c9irlD0YvEiUixnNhRehdLACIFNqPH7UVQK12uLtZYgFFYJsH5fhv48)

<sup>158</sup> Physical Evidence at Carthage Jail and What It Reveals about the Assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3961&context=byusq#:~:text=Bullet%20holes%20in%20bedroom%20door,still%20remains%20at%20Carthage%20Jail.>

<sup>159</sup> Willard Richards letter to Brigham Young June 30, 1844

<https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/assets/d24cd0bc-93d8-4e16-b563-ebc7be00f008/0/0>

<sup>160</sup> An Eyewitness Account of the Murders of Joseph and Hyrum Smith

by William M. Daniels authored by Lyman Omar Littlefield

<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/carthage/danielsaccount.html>

<sup>161</sup> Ogden Daily Standard, July, 9, 1901, Coroner's Jury Verdict

[https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu/details?id=7725661&q=Findings%20of%20the%20Coroner%27s%20Jury%20on%20the%20Carthage%20Tragedy&sort=rel&fbclid=IwAR2X379mr-w8kpsGz7\\_XPitzYZM0KTV7mkSnCxTXoIgmYIUqitrFQh4It0](https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu/details?id=7725661&q=Findings%20of%20the%20Coroner%27s%20Jury%20on%20the%20Carthage%20Tragedy&sort=rel&fbclid=IwAR2X379mr-w8kpsGz7_XPitzYZM0KTV7mkSnCxTXoIgmYIUqitrFQh4It0)



under the heart after having bled out for 7 or 8 minutes, and due to a lack of blood, the coroners missed it, not mentioning it as a cause of death.]

On July 1, 1844, W.W. Phelps, Willard Richards, and John Taylor announced that the church needed to wait for Brigham Young to arrive back in Nauvoo, which delayed Samuel Smith, who was named as the next successor from taking his rightful leadership.<sup>162</sup> Such a meeting with Samuel, Richards, and Phelps happened on July 10, 1844. Samuel Smith was in good health.<sup>163</sup> Despite them telling others to wait, Willard Richards is asserting the authority of Brigham and the rest of the 12 behind Samuel's back by signing licenses "Twelve Apostles, President."<sup>164</sup> [**Commentary:** The coordinated delay of Samuel Smith from taking leadership by having everyone wait for Brigham Young to arrive points to premeditated murder. Additionally, Richards willingness to assert Brigham Young and the 12 as the next leaders when Samuel Smith was next in line shows Richards believes Samuel Smith would die shortly, pointing to a belief Samuel would be murdered. Finally, Richards and Phelps met with Samuel on July 10th, which indicates that Samuel was healthy enough to meet, and the claim he died because of his travel to Carthage Jail is ridiculous.]

Meanwhile, in New York on June 25, 1844. Parley P. Pratt claims he felt urged to leave New York and head to Nauvoo. On the day of the murders, June 27, 1844, Parley coincidentally is on the same canal boat as his brother William Pratt who was also supposed to stay in New York campaigning. They both learned the news of Joseph and Hyrum's death on July 3, 1844, near Chicago. Parley traveled on foot for five days to arrive in Nauvoo on July 8, 1844. Parley reasserts the claim that Samuel Smith shouldn't take leadership of the church and that everyone must wait until Brigham Young and the others arrive.<sup>165 166</sup>

On June 27, 1844, Wilford Woodruff added to his journal what he and Brigham Young were doing the day Joseph and Hyrum were murdered. The addition says, "In the evening, we sat together in the depot while Joseph & Hyrum were killed. Brother Young was very sorrowful & pressed in spirit without knowing the cause".<sup>167</sup> [**Commentary:** This account doesn't seem creditable as when Brigham says he learned the news that Joseph and Hyrum died, and later in Wilford Woodruff's journals, Brigham doesn't cry or mourn their deaths. Brigham wouldn't mourn their deaths when he doesn't know they are dead and then not mourn when he knows they're dead.]

On July 8, 1844, Brigham Young wrote a letter to Willard Richards that stated, "We cannot get one word from our families by letter of late. Sister Ruth Sayers has received a letter from her husband, that, I understand, gives some information which seems to be satisfactory." This comment by Brigham Young that the 12 were not receiving any mail is contradicted by Heber C. Kimball's comments on December 21, 1845, that Joseph, just before the martyrdom, had informed them "to lay aside their garments, and take

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<sup>162</sup> Times & Seasons, July 1, 1844 (To The Church of Jesus Christ Of Latter Day Saints)

<https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/NCMP1820-1846/id/8276>

<sup>163</sup> The Mormon Hierarchy, Origins of Power by: Dr. Michael Quinn Pg 152.

<sup>164</sup> Six Days in August: Brigham Young and the Succession Crisis of 1844

<https://rsc.byu.edu/firm-foundation/six-days-august-brigham-young-succession-crisis-1844>

<sup>165</sup> The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt Pg 370

<sup>166</sup> Church History in the Fulness of Times Student Manual, (Chapter 23: The Twelve to Bear Off the Kingdom, 2003)

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/manual/church-history-in-the-fulness-of-times/chapter-twenty-three?lang=eng>

<sup>167</sup> Wilford Woodruff June 27, 1844 pg. 278

<https://wilfordwoodruffpapers.org/documents/6e34557b-3015-4803-9a97-d913b4afd003/page/d338e232-fc02-45da-87fd-64b4289cc64c>

them to pieces, or cut them up so that they could not be found.”<sup>168</sup> <sup>169</sup> [**Commentary:** It seems likely there was communication between Brigham and others in Nauvoo.]

Brigham continues later in the letter, “I want to see you and the rest of the brethren in Nauvoo. Give my best love to Brothers Joseph and Hyrum. I cannot be there to see them, but I pray for them continually, and for you and all the brethren in our beloved city, and I pray my heavenly Father to preserve my brethren, my family and the whole city. I pray that we may finish the Temple and get our endowments.”<sup>170</sup> The interesting part of this letter is Brigham’s comment that he prays that he and Richards would get their endowments which suggests they haven’t received their endowment yet. Brigham’s claim to leadership is that he had received all his endowments from Joseph Smith before the murders. [**Commentary:** For Brigham to make the claim he has been empowered in his later journal entries, it requires Brigham to know about the premeditated murders of Joseph and Hyrum.]

Joseph’s Last Charge is claimed to have been this “We were in council with Brother Joseph almost every day for weeks, says Brother Joseph in one of those councils there is something going to happen; I don’t know what it is, but the Lord bids me to hasten and give you your endowment before the temple is finished. He conducted us through every ordinance of the holy priesthood, and when he had gone through with all the ordinances he rejoiced very much and says, now if they kill me you have got all the keys, and all the ordinances and you can confer them upon others.”<sup>171</sup>

On July 13, 1844, Brigham to a group of people in a conference says, “I preached to the Saints and showed the organization and establishment of the kingdom of God upon the earth; that the death of one or a dozen could not destroy the Priesthood, nor hinder the work of the Lord from spreading throughout all nations.”<sup>172</sup> Supposedly, Brigham is responding to rumors of Joseph and Hyrum’s death. [**Commentary:** For Brigham to say the authority isn’t lost if Joseph and Hyrum die is asserting the Last Charge claim, which contradicts his statement on July 8th.]

On July 16, 1844, Brigham Young stated, “While at Brother Bement’s house in Peterboro, I heard a letter read which brother Livingston had received from Mr. Joseph Powers, of Nauvoo, giving particulars of the murder of Joseph and Hyrum. The first thing which I thought of was, whether Joseph had taken the keys of the kingdom with him from the earth; brother Orson Pratt sat on my left ; we were both leaning back on our chairs. Bringing my hand down on my knee, I said the keys of the kingdom are right here with the Church. Received a letter from brother Woodruff confirming the news of the death of the Prophets. I started for Boston; staid at Lowell all night.”<sup>173</sup> [**Commentary:** According to him, Brigham’s first response when learning the news of the murders is to wonder if Joseph or Hyrum gave their authority to anyone else. This contradicts what he said on July 13th, that the authority is safe if they were to die as well as rejecting his claim to Joseph’s Last Charge. Furthermore, the posture of Brigham lying back in his chair and no mention of mourning or concern about Joseph’s family is unusual for someone just learning about the murder of someone they claim to love.]

<sup>168</sup>Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith pg. 189.

<sup>169</sup> Journal of Heber C. Kimball, 21 December 1845

<sup>170</sup> History of The Church Volume 7 Chapter 17, 209-210

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/online-chapters/volume-7-chapter-17/>

<sup>171</sup> Times & Seasons, September 15, 1844 “Trail of Elder Rigdon” Pg. 561

<sup>172</sup> History Draft [21 June–8 August 1844] pg. 11

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-draft-21-june-8-august-1844/11>

<sup>173</sup> The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star Volume 26, Pg 359 (June 4, 1864)

Brigham also later added that on this day that “the idea of assuming Joseph’s office (position) had never occurred to him.”<sup>174</sup> Additionally, on February 12, 1849, Brigham mentions that on this day, “He experienced such a severe headache that tears came to his eyes.”<sup>175</sup> “His head had felt as though it would crack. The disorientation of the loss receded only when the distinct thought came to him that though the Prophet and the patriarch had died, the keys of the kingdom remained with the Apostles.”<sup>176 177</sup>

[**Commentary:** It’s interesting to note that Brigham crying due to a headache caused by the murders is a later added detail to make Brigham appear innocent.]

On July 17, 1844 Brigham Young visits Wilford Woodruff in Boston. In Wilford’s account we see that Brigham Young was not mourning the death of Joseph and Hyrum<sup>178</sup> and is considered “clear-eyed and determined”<sup>179</sup> but in the History of the Church a sentence is added onto “Brother Young took the bed and ***gave vent to his feelings in tears***”. This addition appears no where in the record and is to give Brigham the appearance of sorrow.<sup>180</sup> [**Commentary:** This points to Brigham’s involvement in the murders and feeling the need to change his story to appear innocent.]

On July 18, 1844, Brigham Young spoke at a meeting in Boston. Young did not linger on the events of June 27 or eulogize the deceased Joseph Smith.<sup>181</sup> Brigham instead states, “be of good cheer, the testament is not in force while the Testator liveth when he died it was in force so it is with Joseph, on the day of Pentecost their was but 120 of the Saints, but at that time their were added 3000 souls. when God sends a man to do a work all the devils in hell cannot kill him until he gets through his work. So with Joseph He prepared all things gave the keys to men on the earth and said I may be soon taken from you.”<sup>182</sup> The huge problem with Brigham saying this is that “He was already using the last charge as a text.”<sup>183</sup> [Commentary: As stated earlier, for Brigham to point to the fabricated Last Charge, it would have required his knowledge before Joseph’s death that in Nauvoo, this history would be created for him and would be promoted by W.W. Phelps. Brigham’s inconsistent story between having received an endowment and authority to needing his endowment and not assuming authority points to his role in the murders as he struggles to keep his story straight and appear surprised.]

On July 30, 1844, Samuel Smith died at 36 years old, a month after his brothers Joseph and Hyrum were murdered. This news is soon published. Samuel’s daughter, wife, and brother believed that Samuel was

<sup>174</sup> Brigham Young, “Remarks Before a Family Gathering,” December 25, 1857, Brigham Young Papers, Church History Library.

<sup>175</sup> Brigham Young: Student of the Prophet by: Ronald W. Walker

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1998/02/brigham-young-student-of-the-prophet?lang=eng>

<sup>176</sup> Succession of Church Leadership

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/succession-of-church-leadership?lang=eng>

<sup>177</sup> Historian’s Office general Church minutes, 1839–1877, Feb. 12, 1849,

<https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/assets/3a6f2979-8fca-45b4-a575-0c8744a5afdb/0/0>

<sup>178</sup> Wilford Woodruff July 17, 1844 pg. 288

<https://wilfordwoodruffpapers.org/documents/6e34557b-3015-4803-9a97-d913b4afd003/page/2a564cf1-267b-4db2-acfd-9cbda413969c>

<sup>179</sup> Six Days in August: Brigham Young and the Succession Crisis of 1844

<https://rsc.byu.edu/firm-foundation/six-days-august-brigham-young-succession-crisis-1844>

<sup>180</sup> History of The Church Volume 7 Chapter 15, Pg. 195

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/online-chapters/volume-7-chapter-15/>

<sup>181</sup> Brigham Young, Pioneer Prophet, By John G. Turner, pg. 108

<sup>182</sup> Wilford Woodruff Journal July 18, 1844

<https://wilfordwoodruffpapers.org/documents/6e34557b-3015-4803-9a97-d913b4afd003/page/b5110328-94d8-4349-b43f-4fb4cc277e9c>

<sup>183</sup> Six Days in August: Brigham Young and the Succession Crisis of 1844

[https://rsc.byu.edu/firm-foundation/six-days-august-brigham-young-succession-crisis-1844#\\_edn55](https://rsc.byu.edu/firm-foundation/six-days-august-brigham-young-succession-crisis-1844#_edn55)

poisoned with a white substance given to him while he was sick by Hosea Stout.<sup>184</sup> Hosea Stout had a reputation for threatening people, even William Clayton<sup>185</sup> and was told “to rid ourselves” of individuals not deemed loyal to Brigham in February 1845.<sup>186</sup> On September 30, 1844, John P Greene, the chief of police and brother-in-law to Brigham Young (married to Rhoda Greene), dies from alleged poisoning.<sup>187</sup> <sup>188</sup> Hosea Stout fills John’s position as the new chief of Police soon after.<sup>189</sup> [Commentary: This pattern of Hosea Stout is concerning, to say the least. The motivation for killing the Chief of Police is unclear except to place Hosea in that position.]

On July 26, 1857, Brigham Young denied involvement in the deaths of Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, and Samuel Smith. “They have not as good a man to deal with as they had when they had Joseph Smith. I do not profess to be very good. I will try to take care of number one, and if it is wicked for me to try to preserve myself, I shall persist in it; for I am intending to take care of myself. When they killed Joseph, they were talking about killing a great many others. Would you believe that the apostates say that I was the instigator of the death of Joseph and Hyrum? And William Smith has asserted that I was the cause of the death of his brother Samuel, when brother Woodruff, who is here today, knows that we were waiting at the depot in Boston to take passage east at the very time when Joseph and Hyrum were killed. Brother Taylor was nearly killed at the time, and Doctor Richards had his whiskers nearly singed off by the blaze from the guns. In a few weeks after, Samuel Smith died, and I am blamed as the cause of his death. We did not hear of the death of Joseph until some three or four weeks after he was basely martyred.”<sup>190</sup>

[Commentary: Brigham’s comments about taking care of himself and preserving himself over anything else are consistent with Brigham's motive for killing Joseph. Brigham was concerned with taking money from the tithing fund, being caught money laundering, and being excommunicated for polygamy, as William Marks claims Joseph was planning before his death. Brigham goes directly into his alibi of how he couldn’t have killed Joseph, Hyrum, and Samuel directly but doesn’t respond to the issue of being an instigator. ]

Thomas Bullock alters a document from May 28, 1843.<sup>191</sup> Bullocks inserts in his handwriting that Joseph Smith says that Brigham Young is loyal as it states, “ Of the first Twelve Apostles chosen in Kirtland and ordained under the hands of Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and myself, there have been but two, but what have lifted their heel against me, namely Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball.”<sup>192</sup> We know that Thomas Bullock had not moved to Nauvoo nor was he a scribe for Joseph by May 28, 1843. Additionally, Thomas Bullock reportedly had not worked on this portion of the historical documents as noted; Bullock

<sup>184</sup> Quinn, D. Michael. 1994. The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power. Pg 152-153

<sup>185</sup> William Clayton’s Journal, November 11, 1847.

<sup>186</sup> DIARY OF HOSEA STOUT (1844-1846)

<https://doctrineandcovenantscentral.org/history/hosea-stout/>

<sup>187</sup> John Portineus Greene Biography

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/john-portineus-greene>

<sup>188</sup> Samuel Smith: Missionary to Prophets

<https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/content/museum/samuel-smith-missionary-to-prophets?lang=eng>

<sup>189</sup> Hosea Stout

<https://mormonarts.lib.byu.edu/people/hosea-stout/>

<sup>190</sup> Nebuchadnezzar's Dream, Volume 5, discourse 17, pages 72-78

<https://journalofdiscourses.com/5/17>

<sup>191</sup> Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 2, 10 March 1843–14 July 1843, pg. 225

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-2-10-march-1843-14-july-1843/233?mibextid=Zxz2cZ>

<sup>192</sup> History, 1838–1856, volume D-1 [1 August 1842–1 July 1843] pg. 1563

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-d-1-1-august-1842-1-july-1843/206?mibextid=Zxz2cZ>

didn't go beyond February 28, 1843 (except this document). Leo Hawkins was assigned this portion of the history.<sup>193</sup> [**Commentary:** The fact that this document is altered to make Brigham Young a loyal, trusted friend after the murders of Joseph and Hyrum is extremely suspicious and points to guilt in the murders. An innocent man wouldn't feel the need to make such a change.]

On August 6, Brigham Young arrived in Nauvoo to begin his campaign to be the church's next leader. Brigham, on August 8, 1844, states, "I feel as though I wanted the privilege to weep and mourn for thirty days at least, then rise up, shake myself, and tell the people what the Lord wants of them; although my heart is too full of mourning to launch forth into business transactions and the organization of the Church, I feel compelled this day to step forth in the discharge of those duties God has placed upon me."<sup>194</sup>

[**Commentary:** Brigham didn't weep or mourn the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum as the only discomfort Brigham reports is on July 16 for a second as he asked if Joseph took the authority of leadership with him to the grave.]

On August 8, 1844, Sidney Rigdon and Brigham Young talked about why they should lead the church, but Brigham's claim to Joseph's Last Charge was used to win many in the crowd.

W.W. Phelps is then used to testify against Rigdon's excommunication hearing against the rules for an excommunication trial, as Phelps was neither a member of the Twelve nor a member of the high council. However, he was a member of the critical Council of Fifty. He was the only non-apostle to testify against Rigdon and was allowed to provide motions in the trial."<sup>195</sup>

In the coming months, personal possessions such as Hyrum's ring and Joseph Smith's wool coat go missing, and accusations are made between Brigham and Joseph's wife, Emma.<sup>196</sup> [**Commentary:** This might point to a killer taking a trophy from the murdered victims.]

On August 15, 1844, the widow Emma Smith confronted William Clayton with her attorney Esquire Woods to get the church records, personal deeds, and other documents concerning her husband Joseph Smith's estate. Clayton goes to Brigham Young for counsel and is told not to share anything pertaining to the business of the Trustee in Trust. Clayton tells her no because Esquire Woods is conspiring against her. Emma responds, "all the business of the Trustee must be presented. We had no secrets that we must keep back from the public, for she was determined to have everything settled now".<sup>197</sup> [**Commentary:** A possible reason for keeping Emma from seeing the records was a concern that theft would be discovered.]

On August 1844, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles issued an epistle that required all Mormons to immediately pay a tenth of all their property and money and then let them continue to pay a tenth of their income from that time forth.' There was no exemption for Mormons who had already paid one-tenth of their property upon conversion. In January 1845, a Quorum of Twelve's epistle reemphasized 'the duty of all saints to tithe themselves one-tenth of all they possess when they enter into the new and everlasting covenant: and then one-tenth of their interest, or income, yearly afterwards. However, two weeks later, the Twelve voted to exempt themselves, the two general bishops, Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, and

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<sup>193</sup> The Writing of Joseph Smith writing of Joseph Smith's History by. Dean C. Jessee  
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1485&context=byusq>

<sup>194</sup> History, 1838–1856, volume F-1 [1 May 1844–8 August 1844] pg. 297  
<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-f-1-1-may-1844-8-august-1844/304>

<sup>195</sup> We'll Sing and We'll Shout, The Life and Times of W.W. Phelps by. Bruce A. Van Orden pg. 414  
[https://rsc.byu.edu/sites/default/files/pub\\_content/pdf/28%20aide%20to%20the%20apostles.pdf](https://rsc.byu.edu/sites/default/files/pub_content/pdf/28%20aide%20to%20the%20apostles.pdf)

<sup>196</sup> Brigham Young, American Moses, Pg 118.

<sup>197</sup> An Intimate Chronicle, The Journals of William Clayton pg. 143



the Nauvoo Temple Committee from any obligation to pay tithing. This was due to their services to the church.<sup>198</sup>

On August 28, 1844, Brigham sent Dan Jones and Wilford Woodruff on a mission to England.

[**Commentary:** It's possible that this was done because Dan's account contains details left out by others.] His account was written in Welsh and was not translated into English until recently.<sup>199</sup> Page | 39

On September 24, 1844, Thomas Ford commissioned Brigham Young as Lieutenant General of the Nauvoo Legion.<sup>200</sup> [**Commentary:** Joseph Smith wasn't commissioned by a governor, but Brigham Young was. If Governor Ford was involved, this might have been a motivation.]

On April 1, 1845, Brigham beings to assist in altering Joseph Smith's history. "I commenced revising the history of Joseph Smith at Brother Richard's office: Elder Heber C. Kimball and George A. Smith were with me. President Joseph Smith had corrected forty-two pages before his massacre. It afforded us great satisfaction to hear Brother [Willard] Richards read the history of the infancy of the church. Adjourned at eleven p.m. having read one hundred and forty pages in Book 'A'".<sup>201</sup>

Brigham Young has Thomas Bullock alter a document from August 1842 to include a prophecy from Joseph to move the church into the Rocky Mountain region. The small handwriting crammed into the bottom of the page is Thomas Bullocks.<sup>202</sup> Thomas Bullock didn't arrive in America until May 31, 1843, and wasn't a scribe until November 1843, as stated earlier, so it's not original.<sup>203</sup> Brigham comments regarding this prophecy, "I did not devise the great scheme of the Lord's opening the way to send this people to these mountains. Joseph contemplated the move for years before it took place, but he could not get here, for there was a watch placed upon him continually to see that he had no communication with the Indians."<sup>204</sup> "The Prophet Joseph has been referred to, and his prophecy that this people would leave Nauvoo and be planted in the midst of the Rocky Mountains. We see it fulfilled. This prophecy is not a new thing, it has not been hid in the dark, nor locked up in a drawer, but it was declared to the people long before we left Nauvoo."<sup>205</sup>

Brigham is not new to creating prophecy, claiming it's something Joseph said. Brigham mentions concerning Joseph's death that "Though he had prophesied that he would not live to be forty years of age, yet we all cherished hopes that that would be a false prophecy, and we should keep him forever with us; we thought our faith would outreach it, but we were mistaken—he at last fell a martyr to his religion. I said, "It is all right; now the testimony is in full force; he has sealed it with his blood, and that makes it

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<sup>198</sup> "The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power" By. Michael Quinn pg. 199

<sup>199</sup> Saints Volume 1, Chapter 45, An Almighty Foundation

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/saints-v1/45-an-almighty-foundation?lang=eng>

<sup>200</sup> Brigham Young Commissioned as Lieutenant General of Nauvoo Legion

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/event/brigham-young-commissioned-as-lieutenant-general-of-nauvoo-legion>

<sup>201</sup> Brigham Young, History of the Church 7:29, p. 389; April 1, 1845

<sup>202</sup> History, 1838–1856, volume D-1 [1 August 1842–1 July 1843] pg. 1362

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-d-1-1-august-1842-1-july-1843/5#facts>

<sup>203</sup> Thomas Bullock Biography

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/thomas-bullock>

<sup>204</sup> Testimony to the Divinity of Joseph Smith's Mission, Volume 4, discourse 6, pages 33-42

<https://journalofdiscourses.com/4/6>

<sup>205</sup> Difficulties Not Found Among the Saints Who Live Their Religion, Volume 3, discourse 37, pages 254-260

<https://journalofdiscourses.com/3/37>

valid."<sup>206</sup> [**Commentary:** There is no such record of any prophecy given by Joseph Smith saying he wouldn't live to be 40 years old, which isn't as disturbing as Brigham's casual attitude about it.]

Early October 1845, proffered charges of counterfeiting against Young and other leaders happened in local courts. Governor Ford and Major William B. Warren, the head of the peacekeeping force in Hancock County set in place by John J. Hardin, refused to enforce the writs.<sup>207</sup> On December 18, 1845, Brigham Young and other leaders were indicted by a federal grand jury for counterfeiting.<sup>208</sup> On December 23, 1845, federal marshals attempted to arrest Brigham Young for counterfeiting but mistakenly arrested Henry Miller, dressed as Brigham Young.<sup>209</sup> <sup>210</sup> Brigham Young and the other leaders flee Nauvoo moving to Iowa to avoid capture. They left three trustees behind in Nauvoo to bring the stereotype plates for the Doctrine and Covenants to Winter Quarters, but the plates were never used again and were considered lost. So instead, Brigham Young in Utah had copies imported from England in 1854. In fact, until a greatly revised edition was printed in Salt Lake City in 1876, all of the Church's editions of the Doctrine and Covenants were printed in England.<sup>211</sup> [**Commentary:** The actions of Governor Thomas Ford to protect Brigham Young and others from counterfeiting charges suggests that Thomas Ford was benefiting from money laundering. Once the Federal Marshalls got involved, Thomas Ford could no longer intervene, leading to the Mormons leaving Nauvoo, Illinois. The fact that the stereotype plates for the Doctrine and Covenants go missing right after charges of counterfeiting occurs suggests strongly that the stereotype plates were used for such purposes and didn't simply go missing.]

On November 1847, Brigham stated that he alone decided what was fair compensation for himself and for the other apostles. I know my standing before God & before the people then you will feel & know things that you never knew before but as the lot is mine don't quarrel with it—if it is a man's lot to draw 1,000,000 of money & all the rest get nothing don't say you have as much money as I have but I have a carriage & can ride over you.<sup>212</sup>

Brigham Young, in 1849 stated, "I would rather have been shot in Carthage Jail than be under the necessity of owing to run to my brethren before I can speak before the public. Must men be eternally grumbling because my stick is the longest."<sup>213</sup> "How much fault have I found with Thomas B. Marsh, Joseph Smith or Sidney Rigdon? I never opened my mouth when they lammed it on me."<sup>214</sup> If my lot is to preside over the church must I eternally be asking when should I speak? If this body is the head of the Church, I am the head of the Quorum and I am the mouthpiece and you are the belly.<sup>215</sup> [**Commentary:** These comments by Brigham show he didn't want anyone telling him what to do and resented Joseph

<sup>206</sup> Weaknesses of Man, Volume 1, discourse 52, pages 358-365

<https://journalofdiscourses.com/1/52>

<sup>207</sup> Part 4: January 1846

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/intro/administrative-records-volume-1-part-4-introduction-january-1846>

<sup>208</sup> Church Leaders Indicted for Counterfeiting

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/event/church-leaders-indicted-for-counterfeiting?highlight=counterfeit>

<sup>209</sup> Brigham Young Escaped Arrest

<https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/event/brigham-young-escaped-arrest>

<sup>210</sup> Nauvoo under Apostolic Leadership

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/manual/church-history-in-the-fulness-of-times/chapter-twenty-four?lang=eng>

<sup>211</sup> The Story of the Doctrine and Covenants By Robert J. Woodford Ensign, Dec. 1984, pp. 32-38

<https://emp.byui.edu/satterfieldb/Rel324/Story%20of%20the%20DC.pdf>

<sup>212</sup> Conflict in the Quorum, Orson Pratt, Brigham Young, Joseph Smith by Gary James Bergera pg. 59

<sup>213</sup> Mormons at the Missouri, Winter Quarters, 1846-1852 By Richard Edmond Bennett · 2004 pg. 209

<sup>214</sup> Brigham Young, Pioneer Prophet, by John G. Turner 2012, pg. 42

<sup>215</sup> Mormons at the Missouri, Winter Quarters, 1846-1852 By Richard Edmond Bennett · 2004 pg. 209

Smith, and he would rather die than listen to him or anyone else. These could be grounds for a motivation for killing Joseph Smith.]

Brigham makes a similar statement when he says, “ I can tell the people that once in my life I felt a want of confidence in brother Joseph Smith, soon after I became acquainted with him. It was not concerning religious matters—it was not about his revelations—but it was in relation to his financiering—to his managing the temporal affairs which he undertook. A feeling came over me that Joseph was not right in his financial management, though I presume the feeling did not last sixty seconds, and perhaps not thirty. But that feeling came on me once and once only, from the time I first knew him to the day of his death.”<sup>216</sup> [Commentary: Brigham’s comments about Joseph’s handling of money provides a motive for murdering Joseph as Brigham preferred to handle all the money himself, as he speaks about in earlier comments.]

On March 21, 1858, Brigham Young’s statement regarding his relationship with Joseph Smith should also be considered. This statement found in the church’s vaults was copied by Michael Quinn, a historian who was part of the church. "I will deviate from my subject a little, and say a few words with regard to br. Joseph that some, perhaps, have not understood. If Joseph Smith, jun., the Prophet, had followed the Spirit of revelation in him he never would have gone to Carthage. Do you understand that? [Voices, "Yes"]. A great many do, and some do not. Many of the first Elders of this church have a different understanding . . . never for one moment did he say that he had one particle of light in him after he started back from Montrose to give himself up in Nauvoo . . . But if Joseph had followed the revelations in him he would have been our earthy shepherd today." <sup>217</sup> [Commentary: This is concerning because Brigham suggests Joseph Smith is a fallen prophet. Brigham taught a doctrine called Blood Atonement which said that murder was okay in certain circumstances, which could have provided justification.]

Here is a sample of Brigham Young statements on Blood Atonement. “Will you love your brothers and sisters likewise, when they have committed a sin that cannot be atoned for without the shedding of their blood? Will you love that man or woman well enough to shed their blood? That is what Jesus Christ meant.”<sup>218</sup> And “This is loving your neighbour as ourselves; if he needs help, help him; and if he wants salvation and it is necessary to spill his blood on the earth in order that he may be saved, spill it.”<sup>219</sup>

In the years after Joseph’s death, William Marks, who had served as the President of the Nauvoo Stake in 1843, reported that in the weeks before his death, Joseph Smith had issued instructions for the Mormons to abandon polygamy. Marks wrote in 1853: “When the doctrine of polygamy was introduced into the church as a principle of exaltation, I took a decided stand against it; which stand rendered me quite unpopular with many of the leading ones of the church. . . . Joseph, however, became convinced before his death that he had done wrong; for about three weeks before his death, I met him one morning in the street, and he said to me, “Brother Marks, . . . we are a ruined people.” I asked, how so? He said: “This doctrine of polygamy, or Spiritual-wife system, that has been taught and practiced among us, will prove our destruction and overthrow. I have been deceived,” said he, “in reference to its practice; it is wrong; it is a curse to mankind, and we shall have to leave the United States soon, unless it can be put down and its practice stopped in the church. Now,” said he, “Brother Marks, you have not received this doctrine, and how glad I am. I want you to go into the high council and I will have charges preferred against all who practice this doctrine, and I want you to try them by the laws of the church, and cut them off, if they will

<sup>216</sup> He that Loveth Not His Brother Loveth Not God, Volume 4, discourse 54, pages 295-302  
<https://journalofdiscourses.com/4/54>

<sup>217</sup> The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power By. Michael Quinn pg. 145

<sup>218</sup> Prophet Brigham Young, *Deseret News*, April 16, 1856

<sup>219</sup> Prophet Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, v. 4, p. 220

not repent and cease the practice of this doctrine.”<sup>220</sup> [Commentary: If this testimony is true, Joseph Smith was preparing to have Brigham Young and others excommunicated from the church. Brigham would have viewed Joseph as rejecting both polygamy. As Heber Kimball noted, Joseph spoke of temporarily or fully destroying temple garments; this could be enough to justify blood atonement and feel no remorse.]

Regarding Joseph and polygamy, Brigham Young said, “Joseph was worn out with it,” but added, “I never knew that he denied the doctrine of polygamy. Some have said that he did, but I do not believe he ever did.” This statement suggests Joseph was done with it but a denial by Brigham of Joseph condemning it and thus condemning it now.<sup>221</sup>

A prophecy is claimed to have been made by Joseph Smith in 1843 regarding Willard Richards lack of injuries, but there are zero records of such a claim written until sometime in the 1850s. The prophecy reads, “Elder Richards had not been injured in the attack. This miracle fulfilled a prophecy made a year earlier by Joseph Smith, who had told Elder Richards that there would be a time when “the balls [*bullets*] would fly around him like hail, and he should see his friends fall on the right and on the left,” but he would not be hurt.”<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> William Marks, “Epistle,” *Zions Harbinger and Baneemy’s Organ* 3 (July 1853): 52-54 (published in St. Louis, by C. B. Thompson).

<sup>221</sup> Brigham Young address, October 8, 1866, Elden J. Watson, *Brigham Young Addresses: A Chronological Compilation of Known Addresses of the Prophet Brigham Young* (unpublished, 1984), 5:52.

<sup>222</sup> *History of the Church*, 6:619