

ventory of the county archives of Ohio," for each of four counties in the Kirtland area—Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, and Trumbull.

IV. KIRTLAND SAFETY SOCIETY AND OTHER FINANCIAL RECORDS

The Chicago Historical Society owns the original Stock Ledger (and Index to the ledger) of the Kirtland Safety Society, on the fly leaf of which is written the following:

"Cleveland, Ohio, April 10, 1885

This Stock ledger has been secreted since the Bank failed in 1837 and was found by Arthur B. Deming (son of Gen. M. R. Deming under whose charge Joseph and Hiram Smith were killed by a mob in the Carthage Jail in Illinois June 27th, 1844) while securing evidence as to the true origin and early history of Mormonism." (Cf. Deming letters mentioned above.)

The ledger is 287 pages long and shows the entries for 200 persons including Joseph Smith, Emma Smith, Joseph Smith, Sr., Lucy Smith, Hyrum Smith, Jerusha Smith, Samuel H. Smith, George A. Smith, Brigham Young, Lorenzo Young, Erastus Snow, Lorenzo Snow, Heber C. Kimball, David Whitmer, Sidney Rigdon, Wilford Woodruff, Parley P. Pratt, Truman O. Angel, Reynolds Cahoon, Vinson Knight, Oliver Cowdery, Luke Johnson, and Elija Able, a negro convert.

This source has been little used, if at all, and throws much light on this complicated phase of Mormon history. Fielding, in his study, wrote "Details concerning the operation of the Bank are unknown. No records have been preserved, and all of the principal parties to it either say nothing, or, are very general in their accounts."⁵ And Parkin stated that "The amount of specie paid in was never disclosed, but most of the stock was paid in the form of land owned by stockholders which consisted of 180 charter members."⁶ One reason for the fact that this source is relatively unknown is that few would suppose such an item to be in Chicago.

This unique document deserves a study in itself. The following cursory analysis of this ledger reveals that the 200 individuals subscribed for various numbers of shares (from 3,000 to 5) with the face value of from \$150,000 to \$50 and paid for

⁵Fielding, "Growth of the Church," p. 191.

⁶Parkin, *Conflict at Kirtland*, p. 215. The ledger does not bear out the statement that the stock was paid for by land.

them in cash amounts varying from \$4,887.00 paid in by Joseph Smith to \$.52 by Alex Valier.

The grand totals eloquently reveal the inherent weakness of the project—200 persons subscribed to 79,420 shares worth at face value approximately \$3,854,000 at \$50 par value per share which was paid for with only \$20,725 in specie. Heber C. Kimball, for example, subscribed to \$50,000 worth of shares for only \$15 in cash. Other important Mormons paid in correspondingly small sums: Brigham Young, \$7.00; Lorenzo Snow, \$7.97; Wilford Woodruff, \$5.25; Erastus Snow, \$5.25. A few others, however, were able to come up with larger amounts: Parley P. Pratt, \$102.00; Hyrum Smith, \$169.00; Vinson Knight, \$262.00; Emma Smith, \$315.00; Joseph Smith, Sr., \$323.00; and W. J. Peterson, \$785.00.

The Journal of the Senate of the State of Ohio contains some new and valuable information regarding the Mormon efforts to secure a charter for the Kirtland Safety Society Bank. Until now about all we knew about such an attempt was through Joseph Smith who recorded early in November 1836, that Elder Orson Hyde was sent "to Columbus with a petition to the legislature of Ohio, for an act of incorporation," which "because we were 'Mormons' the legislature raised some frivolous excuse on which they refused to grant us those banking privileges they so freely granted to others."⁷ Fielding, who used both *The Journal of the Senate of the State of Ohio* and *The Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio* for that period could find no further information about this application.⁸

Apparently the Mormons tried again to secure a charter, for on February 10, 1837, the following amendment to a bill pertaining to the regulation of banks in Ohio was presented to the Ohio Senate:

Mr. Medary moved to amend the bill by adding the following as an additional section.

Joseph Smith, Jr., Sidney Rigdon, Benjamin Adams, Nehemiah Allen, Benjamin Bissel, Horace Kingsbury, Newel K. Whitney, Warren A. Cowdery, Hiram Smith, Oliver Cowdery, H. A. Sharp, and their associates, are hereby made a body corporate, under the name of the Kirtland Safety Society

⁷Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* . . . , 6 vols.: Introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City, 1902-12), 2:468.

⁸Fielding, *Growth of the Church*, pp. 162-206.

Bank, to be established in the town of Kirtland, in the county of Geauga, the capital stock of which, shall be three hundred thousand dollars; upon which question,

Mr. Medary called for the Yeas and Nays and they were ordered; when the same was taken and lost. Yeas 11, Nays 24. . . .⁹

The Ohio Historical Society has two exceedingly rare promissory notes. The first, dated September 1, 1837, for \$269.81 borrowed from the Bank of Geauga, Painesville, is signed by thirty-two men. Few extant documents bear so many signatures of so many important Mormons. Among the signers are Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, Brigham Young, Noah Packard, Josiah Butterfield, and Reynolds Cahoon. The failure of the Kirtland Bank undoubtedly occasioned the signing of this note.

The second promissory note signed by Hyrum Smith, dated Kirtland, January 30, 1838, is for \$20.16 "due Lewis Robbins . . . to be paid in Land . . . in the State of Missouri in Caldwell Co.," is good evidence that Missouri lands served as surety for notes contracted in Ohio.¹⁰

Of the many Kirtland Bank notes scattered throughout the country, some are located in the following repositories: The Dawes Memorial Library of Marietta College, (Marietta, Ohio) has a \$10.00 bank note dated March 1, 1837, signed by J. Smith, Jr., cashier and S. Rigdon, President. Yale University Library's Western Americana Collection has a \$1.00 banknote made out to Orson Pratt or bearer and signed by Joseph Smith, Jr., cashier and Sidney Rigdon, President. The Boston Public Library has a \$10.00 note, dated March 8, 1837, signed by Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and others. The Western Reserve Historical Society has one of the few complete sets of Kirtland Bank notes in denominations of one, two, three, five, ten, twenty, fifty, and one hundred dollars, all signed by various members of the Church, the majority bearing the names of Joseph Smith as cashier and Sidney Rigdon as president. Some, especially the three dollar ones, are overprinted so that Kirtland Safety Society Bank becomes the Kirtland Safe-

⁹*Journal of the Senate of the State of Ohio*, (Columbus, 1837), pp. 365-366. See also the *Painesville Telegraph*, February 24, 1837, which reports on the Senate sessions.

¹⁰These notes are described in detail by Kenneth W. Duckett, *Echoes* (the Association of the Ohio Historical Society), 2 (January 1963), 1.

ty Society anti-Banking Co.¹¹ The New York Public Library has a \$1.00 note in its William Berrian Collection.

V. MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS

In the Chicago Historical Society is a certificate of ordination certifying that, "Sylvester B. Stoddard has been received in to this church . . . and has been ordained an elder . . .," signed Joseph Smith, chairman, and F. G. Williams, clerk, Kirtland, Ohio, October 13, 1836. On the reverse side it is countersigned by Thomas Burdick, recording clerk. Stoddard later served in a bishopric in Nauvoo and as a missionary to Maine in 1844. He became embittered afterward, however, left the Church, and returned to Kirtland.

The Lake County Historical Society has various other important collections: census records, indexed cemetery records, genealogies and scrapbooks of Lake County families, and a large map collection. This society also has a deed regarding land which Joseph Smith sold to Samuel Whitney, Sr., dated April 10, 1837, Geauga County and signed by J. Smith, Jr., Emma Smith, Hyrum Smith, and V[inson] Knight.

Mr. D. W. Garber of Stockton, California, has a valuable collection of Jacob Myers papers.¹² Myers was a millwright who erected mills for the Mormons in various places, including Ohio. Included in these papers (which cover the period 1816-1856) is a "Patriarchal Blessing of Jacob Myers by Joseph Smith, Sr., dated at Kirtland, September 13, 1835. Mr. Garber also has a Kirtland Safety Society Bank note, dated February 10, 1837, and signed by J. Smith, Jr., and S. Rigdon.

The Ohio State Library has a huge collection of miscellaneous cemetery, census, family, bible, church, and marriage records for three counties in the Kirtland area—Cuyahoga, Lake, and Portage—which was brought together by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress has a collection of fifteen maps of Ohio for the period

¹¹Described in *Transactions of the Western Reserve Historical Society . . . Annual Report for 1922-23*, pp. 57-58. See also Robert R. Murray, "Mormon Money," *Lawyers Title News* (July 1967) and Lynn Glaser, "The Mormons' Anti-bank," *Numismatic News*, (January 1968).

¹²Since this collection is west of the Mississippi, it is somewhat out of place here. I first learned of it, however, when Mr. Garber still lived in Perrysville, Ohio, so I am including it.