Waiting for Jesus in Missouri

Mormon[1] City and Zion Planning in the Age of Jackson

Introduction

Our utopias date us. The very perfection of the vision---and the logical inability to change anything about it later---forces us to select that above which no better can be conceived, and possibly raise it a notch. This would suffice if we could hold on to the a-chronia that utopia demands.[2] Sadly, time waits for no one, and the limits of what we can conceive are exposed.

The enormous height and the jewelled splendor of the walls of the New Jerusalem in Revelations 21f fail to explain why fortifications are needed at all. Thomas More's city of Amaurot sports fire-retarding roof tiles, but lacks in sanitation: the refuse is ditched in the space between the houses.[3] In Sir Francis Bacon's New Atlantis, the sophisticated methods of empirical research are applied to almost any question except whether the distinction between nobles and commoners is a useful one.[4]

For the student of religious anthropology, utopian vistas are a god-sent, as they snapshot what seemed good, desirable and important for a particular community about their spatial organization. The blind spots, oversights and omissions, as the example of Amaurot showed, are no less informative.

Among the more recent attempts at utopia building are the Zion and city planning activities of the early Mormons in Independence, Missouri in the 1830s under the guidance of their prophet, Joseph Smith Jr. That particular example has a lot to recommend it: First, it is enticingly well documented. Not only do we possess the original plans for Zion as well as the instructions that described the intended implementation; these sources are now accessible

[1] It is important to understand that "Mormons" is an external label, derived from one of the key documents, the *Book of Mormon* (= BoM), published in March 1830, which was in the past often meant and taken as derogatory, as was its variant "Mormonites". When the church was organized in April 1830 (see Dan Vogel (ed): Early Mormon Documents [= EMD], Salt Lake City, Volume I (1996), p.92 Fn 82), its members called themselves "Church of Christ", following a verse from the BoM (3 Nephi 27:8). Unfortunately other movements, such as the Campellites, also laid claim to that semantic space; the self-description of practicing members as simply the "Saints" has the same problem. To avoid confusion, the name was extended to "Church of the Latter Day Saints" in 1834 (see H. Michael Marquardt, Wesley Walters: Inventing Mormonism, Salt Lake City, 1994, p.156) and to "Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints" (LDS for short) in 1838. In the present age, members seem to have come to terms with this label, if the name of the world-reknown Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the website mormon.org (visited April 17th, 2014) are any indication. This paper uses "Mormon" and "Mormon Church" here in the modern non-derogatory sense to refer to any congregation that traces its ancestry to the founding event in April of 1830.

[2] The partial exception is Thomas More's Utopia, which developed into the perfect community over a period of 1760 years; cf. Thomas More: Utopia, Book 2: Of their Towns, in: Susan Bruce (ed): Three Early Modern Utopias: Thomas More: Utopia / Francis Bacon: New Atlantis / Henry Neville: The Isle of Pines, Oxfort (Oxfort University Press), 1999.

[3] More: Utopia, Book 2: Of their Towns.

[4] Francis Bacon: New Atlantis, London 1660, p.23f; p.41. The nobles form a hierarchy of mostly meritocratic standards; their heraldry is simplified to acceptable virtues; and the wearing of the sword is limited.

in digital form on the Internet, courtesy of the Joseph Smith Jr Papers project. Furthermore, as the early Mormons were pushed out of the vicinity of their stake for Zion into the newly established "ghetto county" of Caldwell in Missouri,[5] they had the opportunity to revisit the design and apply it to lay out communities, such as Far West and Adam-ondi-ahman. We possess some of the plans for these communities as well, allowing us to track the changing thinking. Finally, the rapid transformation process[6] that Jacksonian America was undergoing at the time brings out the obsolescence more swiftly.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: First, we will look at the original plat for Zion that Joseph Smith Jr and the members of his church cabinet drafted. In order to understand the assumptions of everyday life underpinning the design, we will look at how the city of Palmyra, in Wayne County, Upstate New York, developed from pioneer settlement into flourishing town to support these everyday life assumptions.
Palmyra is no arbitrary choice: Joseph Smith Jr spent his teenage and early manhood years there, 1816 to 1831. According to Mormon orthodoxy, it was there he received the Golden Plates that formed the basis of his translation of the Book of Mormon. How the Smith family experienced the urban fabric of Palmyra will give a corrective angle to the above mentioned description. Equipped with an understanding of the Zion plat and of everyday life in Palmyra, we will appreciate how Zion was meant to differ from cities such as Palmyra. That difference, this paper argues, was Joseph Smith Jr's theological response to socio-economic developments in Palmyra during the 1820s and 1830s. That response found expression in the Book of Mormon. But responding to these developments crossed the denominational aisles, and other religious or moral texts from Upstate New York responded to these developments. Appreciating the Book of Mormon's stance will bring out the utopian character of community planning in Zion. In conclusion, we will see how the Mormons had recognize the impracticality of that stance themselves, and how the city design for Far West or Nauvoo differ in that regard.

The Plat for Zion

When constituting as the new Church of Christ in upstate New York in 1831, the Mormons were embedded into an existing landscape of townships and villages. The founding members had experienced specific settlement patterns in upstate New York, Pennsylvania and other parts of New England, but were still hoping to become part of the communities they were currently living in: Harmony, Pennsylvania; Manchester, Palmyra and Colesville, New York.[7] With the eviction and subsequent gathering of the church members in Ohio, the question of how to settle arose, both in the new place and in the future Zion that the Mormons hoped to build in Missouri.[8]

[5] Todd M. Compton, Leland Homer: Fire and Sword: A History of the Latter Day Saints in Northern Missouri, 1836-39, Sandy (Utah), 2010.
[6] Daniel W. Howe: What God Hath Wrought, The Transformation of America, 1815-1848, Oxford 2007.
[7] Marquardt et al 1994, pp.153ff.
[8] In Kirtland, Ohio, the Mormons bought the Peter French farm in April of 1833; the Plat of Zion was sent to Missouri that same June. Brandon S. Plewe et. al: Mapping Mormonism: An Atlas of Latter-Day Saint History, Provo, UT (Brigham Young University Press), 2011, p.30. Lowry Nelson: The Mormon Village: A Pattern and Technique of Land Settlement, Salt Lake City (University of Utah Press) 1952, pp.25f.

The church presidency's response was the the so-called Plat of Zion, a document that reflects a revelation from June 1833, about how the city into which Jesus Christ was expected to return should be laid out. Like many revelations, the plat was both novel yet couched in terms of urban design that Joseph Smith Jr, as well as the co-signatories of the explanation, Sidney Rigdon and Dr. Frederick G. Williams, would have been familiar with.[9]

In his magisterial *The Mormon Village* (1952), Lowry Nelson observed that the three prevalent rural settlement types of 19th century North America were: the line village, mostly found in French Canada and the Arcadian-settled areas of the Mississippi bayous (p.19); the farm village, mostly found in New England (pp.7-11); and the isolated farmsteads of the Middle West and West (p.4). The majority of the early Mormon decision makers hailed from areas that followed the farm village pattern.[10]
However, as the initial group cohesion of the pioneer settlement gave way (p.10), the periphery of the villages would exhibit the isolated farmstead pattern.[11] The key disadvantage of the isolated farmstead settlement was that it optimized for the local work pattern of the families. Social and economic interactions outside the family setting required travel, often over bad or non-existant roads (p.11). This was too socially divisive, insufficiently urban for the Church presidency; as Joseph Smith Jr observed in a different context:

> [T]he farmer and his family ... will enjoy all the advantages of schools, public lectures, and other meetings. His home will no longer be isolated, and his family denied the benefits of society.[12]

Nelson concluded:

> In summary, the Plat of the City of Zion is held to be an invention of Mormonism; a crystallization resulting from the ideologies of millennialism, communism and nationalism which they derived from the social environment of the early nineteenth century, and the Old and New Testaments. (p.38)
> They [i.e. Smith, Rigdon and Williams, RCK] drew undoubtedly upon the rectangular survey method of the federal government, the New England town, and their knowledge---of city layouts. (p.40)

The document that records the Plat of Zion consists of the drawing of the plat; a description surrounds the plat on all sides and is signed by Smith, Rigdon and Williams; see the illustration in **Figure 1**. The document came with a letter, whose date in late June 1833---either 23rd or 25th, the readings differ---provides a *terminus ante quem* for the plat document. The plat is designed for a city of 1 square mile, with streets running due north-south and due east west, intersecting at right angles (p.38).

[9] Pro-Mormon commentators have emphasized that the plat "was never canonized as a revelation from the Prophet" (Plewe et al 2012, p.44).
[10] Val D. Rust: Radical Origins: Early Mormon Converts and their Colonial Ancestors, Urbana -- Chicago (University of Illinois Press), 2004, esp. the map of Rowley, Massachusetts, p.32.
[11] Cf. *pars pro toto* the settlement pattern in the map of Palmyra in Plewe et al 2012, p.16.
[12] Quoted in Plewe et al 2012, p.44.

The plat has a north-south orientation, north on top, south on the bottom. The plat has three tiers, with the top and bottom tiers mirror images of each other. The city blocks in the middle tier are rectangular in shape, containing 32 lots at half-acre size; the other city blocks are supposed to be squares, with 20 lots at half-acre size. Such a mix of block sizes is not characteristic for mid-western towns and an innovation.
The streets are extremely wide, 8 rods or 132 feet.
The three rectangular lots in the center are reserved: the left one for public buildings, schools, offices and open spaces; the middle and the right block are for Church buildings such as temples or administrative offices. The lots designed for housing are laid out in alternating patterns, to keep houses from facing each other across the streets. Each lot can have only one house and each house must be set back 25 feet from the street.
While the lots are large enough to provide for the needs of a subsistence frontier community, allowing for orchards and workshops, the farm infrastructure itself, such as the barns and corrals and the wheat fields, were intended to be located outside, to the north and the south of the city.
At the planned sized, such a city could have housed 20,000 people in the limit. The notes suggest that similar cities should be placed to the east and the west at a distance to accommodate additional people, which would allow for adequate farmland, forming a band of plats like pearls on a necklace.[13]

With a basic understanding of the history and background of the Zion plat, and a quick look at its organization, the question arises how this community organization differs from the towns and villages that the Mormons were coming from. In order to compare and contrast the designs, we require a basic understanding of what everyday life looked like, both at the town center and at the village periphery, in Jacksonian America. In order to give contour to the question, the exposition will focus on Upstate New York, where Joseph Smith Jr's lived out his teen and early adulthood years.

Everyday Life in Upstate New York

Everyday life in Jacksonian America was a complex amalgamation of contexts and influences. The task is simplified by breaking the matter down along the dimensions of center and periphery, the small-town urban and the pioneer lifestyle. At the beginning of the 19th century, the east Coast regions such as Connecticut---and to a lesser degree Vermont---had been settled for close to 120 years. Regions such as the area between the finger lakes and the Lake Ontario in Upstate New York, the Genesee region, where just being transformed into cultivated land. Here, land speculators had purchased huge tracts of land---the Holland Purchase, the Phelps and Gorham Purchase, and the Morrison Reserve----which the local land agents, operating from Canandaigua, were now endeavoring to sell to groups, families and individuals.

Pioneer Life in Upstate New York

The settlers that moved into the Phelps and Gorham Purchase during the 1800s found forests, streams and abundant wildlife that only housed small groups of Indians and trappers.

[13] For a summary of the plat with different emphasis, see Plewe et al 2012, p.44.

[14] In their eyes it was a paradise: huge forests populated with deer (p.192); lakes with huge flocks of ducks and wild geese (p.399); streams teeming with salmon, bass, pickerel and speckled trout (p.266). There was both land aplenty and trees to use for building materials. Of course, this paradise was a bit of a fixer-upper: Panthers (that is, mountain lions) (p.375); bears (p.401; 418); packs of wolves (p.191; 209); and timber rattlesnake colonies along the river banks (p.412) initially made for difficult neighbors.

The pioneers had come in small groups, usually of males, bringing with them guns, tools and, if possible, seeds (p.221). The important part was to get enough infrastructure--a hut (p.379) of some form,[15] and a minimal agriculturally productive area (p.382)--put into place so that enough food could be grown and enough shelter was available to make it into the next spring. Fish, waterfowl, and deer (p.380) complemented the diet until the first harvest was ready. Maple trees provided syrup (p.273). Alternatively, the pioneers hunted for trade goods, such as pelts of beaver and fox (p.383); or prepared deer hams and skins (p.409); smoked or dried fish. Any surplus was bartered anyway for any momentary lack (p.380), as far away as Boston (p.353) or across Lake Ontario into Canada (p.411).

Once this minimal infrastructure was in place---and some never completed that stage, remaining deer hunters and trappers indefinitely---it was possible to bring in the Missus and the children (p.379); farm animals (p.380); and vegetable and fruit tree seeds (p.405). A variety of craft were available to haul in the belongings such as clothes, the minimal furniture and household goods: batteaux (p.388) for the water transport; horse and ox carts (p.380), and sleds (p.382) in the winter time---a preferred time for moving, since it was an agriculturally inert season anyway and the snow and ice smoothed over the rutted paths.

The wife and the children meant additional labor in terms of agriculture and the necessities of life, freeing the men to extend the family holdings and thus provide economic security. Bartering was expensive (p.411); it was preferable to be self-supporting; and if there was a surplus to trade with, even better.

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[14] The following description is almost entirely drawn from the reminiscences that O. Turner collected; cf. O. Turner: History of the Pioneer Settlement of the Phelps and Gorham's Purchases and Morris Preserve, Rochester 1851. This is legitimate if one keeps in mind the limitations of the source: The contributors' families were the "winners" of the pioneer settlement; those that had encountered difficulties had moved away and could not be interviewed 40 years later. Because of the generational turnover, some of the contributors had only been children at the time of the events narrated and might have never experienced them directly. Furthermore, the narratives are replete with thrilling, sensational or humorous anecdotes, especially with respect to bear encounters, where witnesses clearly indicate that they are only relating the most entertaining ones. Finally, they are narrated with moralistic intent, celebrating the hardiness of the pioneers and deploring the soft ways of the successor generation who mistake "a healthful breeze" or "to black their own boots" for hardship (Turner 1851, p.220f).

[15] In their most basic form, the log huts were simple single story constructions, with a single room that served as kitchen, living area and bedroom. More elaborate huts either had a cellar-like cool room under the baseboards, for keeping stores cold, or a garret for sleeping quarters. Upstairs apartments separated the parental room from the children's. Given the limited space, siblings slept together in a single bed into their teens.

While the husband would continue to hunt and fish as necessary, he was primarily responsible for getting more land cleared, fenced[16] and under cultivation. In the remaining time, he would improve the existing buildings (p.347), or build new ones: pens for sheep and pig, with high walls to keep out the wolves (p.409); chicken coops (p.406); barns and workshops (p.381); bedroom extensions to the log house for the growing family. Some were able to set up saw mills and grist mills (p.389), powered by the plentiful streams, which provided for additional income. Whiskey distilleries converted excess grain into a lighter yet higher-prized trade good (p.383). Others produced potash by burning plant matter (p.279), an important component for soap and gunpowder. Finally, the husband was also responsible for physical security, going out even in the dark of the night (p.191) to confront the local apex predators that threatened the livestock or the family.

While the older boys and young men assisted the father in his tasks, the younger ones were responsible for supervising the animals (p.191). Since there were no pastures, horses, cows, sheep and pigs were allowed to roam the woods freely during the day for sustenance, then brought back into their pens and corals at nightfall. The boys accompanied the animals and alerted the adults if predators were nearby. The boys also took on time-consuming, off-farmstead tasks, such as taking the grains to a mill for gristing using a pack horse[17], running errands (p.214) or relaying messages to neighbors.

The wife was in charge of all forms of food processing, the only type that, in the absence of refrigeration, would keep. Fruit was preserved, sauced (p.191) or baked into pies; legumes and beans dried. The wife tended the kitchen garden, where vegetables were grown, as well as the fruit orchards. If the family had cows (p.211), the milking, butter churning and possibly the manufacture of cheese (p.225 Note) would have also been under her supervision. The wife was responsible for clothes and shoes, either from deer skin (p.192) or from wool (p.211); linen had to be imported. In all of these tasks, she was assisted by her daughters to the extent they were available and could, and by the male family members during the evenings (p.191). In the absence of the men, the women were in charge of defending the homestead against the apex predators (p.192), though the avoided confronting them directly. Finally, the wife gave birth to additional family members. In the isolation of the frontier, sometimes Indian squaws were the only other women available to assist in that life-threatening task (p.426 Note).

Though children were essential farm labor, parents were conscious and desirous of the need for schooling. The men pooled their resources and labor to build block house schools; the community collected funds to employ teachers; and the children attended these during the winter months, often walking 2-3 miles each way in the snow (p.193). The quality of these schools must have varied considerably; Eber D. Howe remembers the Scotch drunkard that

[16] The classical split-rail fencing of Upstate New York, where sections of a tree are hewn into long rails and stacked in a zig-zag pattern on the side of the fields, has the advantage that the logged trees do not have to be moved very far.

[17] Cf. Eber D. Howe: Autobiography and Recollections of a Pioneer Printer, Painesville, OH, 1878, p.4, who speaks of a “two to ten miles” journey, involving two to three bags of wheat at a bushel each, thus too heavy for the children to lift themselves: should they slide of the horse, they had to wait for a grown-up to happen by.

taught at his.[18] The use of the birch to urge “some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge”,[19] as Washington Irving put it, seems to have been ubiquitous.[20]

What news and information traveled in these dispersed settlements came from chance or trade encounters. Trappers and traders formed the wide-ranging part of this information exchange, while the local population traveled as far as the outmost service point, such as the mill, they required. In an area with but a smattering of inns, hospitality was a key component, and the boarding of travelers (p.417) must almost be counted among the local entertainments. Given the restricted mate options, it is not surprising that some of these encounters[21] ended in the forming of permanent ties.[22]

In the process of fixing up their Eden, the pioneer settlers had a profound impact on their ecological context. The apex predators were sorely tempted by the livestock. Bears were especially interested in the cows (p.191) and pigs (p.409); probably the same was true for the panthers. Wolves had a preference for sheep (p.191; p.409). Foxes and birds of prey targeted the chicken (p.375). However, the settlers were better equipped for the resulting confrontations with their guns and steel tools (p.198). It did not help that many of the apex predators wore valuable pelts (p.409). The communities explicitly supported the elimination of what they perceived as threats: in a time where a farm laborer earned roughly $1 a month (plus room and board), bounties for wolf skins started at $2 (p.170) to $5 (p.402) and ran as high as $20---when the state, county and local bounties were added together (p.191). Farmers hired trappers to take out entire packs (p.191; p.532); and any bear that could be killed safely was (p.198). At the transition times to hibernation, in late fall and early spring (p.412), men would take their canoes up the creeks to the rattlesnake dens and slaughter them by the hundreds (p.425) as the reptiles were sluggishly basking on the banks.[23]

The pioneers also shifted around the fish stocks, moving pickerel from Lake Ontario into some of the local creeks, which decimated the trout population (p.375). Among the unintended consequences of settlement was the introduction of feral pigs (p.265 Note). These feisty creatures were quite capable of dealing with the bears, wolves and panthers (p.426) that still remained, and were considered the scourge of the rattlesnakes by naturalists.[24] Eventually, the pioneers had to take on this evil that they had introduced and hunt them as well. Other species simply followed the newcomers, because they could adapt to their lifestyles and the changes they caused in the predator pool: "The crow, the grey squirrel, the quail, came in with civilization. New species of birds have been coming in almost yearly. The opossum is a new comer." (p.381)

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[18] Howe 1878, p.2.
[19] Washington Irving: The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, in: The Works of Washington Irving, 15 vols., New York (Jenson Society), 1907, vol 1, p.479.
[20] Howe 1878, p.2.
[21] Cf. The Women’s Society of the Western Presbyterian Church: Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, Rochester (Herald Press) 1907 [hereafter PWCNY], p.8.
[22] Similarly, Joseph Smith Jr’s marriage to Emma Hale of Harmony, Pennsylvania, came about through a boarding engagement; cf. Linda King Newell, Valeen Tippetts Avery: Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith, Urbana-Chicago (University of Illinois Press) 1994, pp.16-19.
[23] It is unclear whether the pioneers ate rattlesnake meat, as people in the American Southwest do to this day; they did however prepare medicines from rattlesnake oil; Turner 1851, p.425.
[24] Edward Holbrook: North American Herpetology, Philadelphia, 1838, v.2, p.84 [= 1842, v.3, p.13].

Developing Urban Life in Palmyra

The sources do not allow to trace out in gapless detail the complex process of how these small agglomerations acquired enough families and homesteads to reach critical mass, to borrow the metaphor from nuclear engineering, to become a village or a town. Clearly much of this process had to do with population size and the availability of a class of people who provided primarily goods and services, treating agriculture as a secondary concern,[25] which in turn had to do with the quality of the transportation infrastructure. Once these conditions were in place, the inhabitants could undertake the legal steps to organize the township and apply for legal recognition.[26]

In the 1790s and 1800s, the Palmyra community was still struggling to get the basic infrastructure in place; a few families were working the land around pioneer founder John Swift's original homestead,[27] Every lack and every surplus required transportation over long distances (p.381; p.387). Consequently, each need that could not be met locally was an enormous drain on their resources and energies. Not surprisingly, in their pioneer reminiscences, we find an exhausting enumeration of infrastructure "firsts", be they industrial---various mills (p.389) and carding machines (p.384)---or trade-related---the first tanner (PWCNY, p.12), saddler (PWCNY, p.15), blacksmith (p.387), doctor (p.387; PWCNY, p.11), lawyer (p.388), school teacher (PWCNY, p.9), tavern (PWCNY, p.11) or emporium (PWCNY, p.12) or store owner (PWCNY, p.12)---or social: the first school (PWCNY, p.30), graveyard (PWCNY, p.37) and church (PWCNY, p.36).

Socially, all that hard work was remember as almost paradise-like in its egalitarian situation. “There was no aristocracy.” (p.384) The community members had to and did support each other (p.383), and the population was small enough to make everyone familiar with everybody. The raising of a frame house (p.383), the husking of corn (p.384), the celebration of the July 4th with its militia parades,[28] all those become the equivalent of holidays and opportunities for community. And the proximity made new forms of interactions possible: instead of direct barter or cash, which was still rare, people, like elsewhere in the United States, valued their goods and services and issued their own notes (p.275). These accounts were tracked in balance books.[29] It was this barter system of obligations that allowed the community to get by with one saw mill or carding machine.

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[25] The owners of the slave-girl Isabella, later known as Sojourner Truth, were so focused on their fishing and tavern that they neglected their farm; *but they had a farm*. Olive Gilbert: Narrative of Sojourner Truth, New York, 1853, p.28f.

[26] Palmyra, formerly known as Swift's Landing after the pioneer settler John Swift, was incorporated in 1796; PWCNY, p.9.

[27] Swift's original log cabin and storehouse had anchored the road network, forming the basis for the intersection of what would become Main Street and, with the arrival of the Erie Canal in 1822, Canal Street.

[28] Prior to settling Palmyra, John Swift had been a soldier in the Revolutionary Army. As such, he was a natural choice to command the town militia, an insurance against the Indians and their British allies in Canada. Maybe unsurprisingly, Swift died a general during the War of 1812.

[29] See for example Vogel (ed) : EMD, Volume 3 (2000), Part L.5. Gain C. and Cains C. Robinson Account Books, 1920-1830, p.432-44.

At this stage of the development, the pioneer memories exhibit an odd sort of lacuna. We learn little about the second and the third instance of the various professions and infrastructure elements. Some of the later professions are oddly disqualified from the communal memory: the first tailors, cart- and wainwrights or the lottery salesmen receive no mention. This is not a temporal problem: the first printer, in 1817, and the first banker, in 1830, are commemorated. It could have been the weakening of the community spirit, given the population rise. By 1810, over two thousand souls inhabited the greater Palmyra area.[30] The land agents continued to bring in new settlers, to put all the land for which they are responsible under production. As a consequence, the various religious denominations began to build their own meeting houses--the Baptists in 1808 (PWCNY, p.48), the Methodists after 1811 (PWCNY, p.51). Schools were divided along political orientations, Democratic or Republican (PWCNY, p.31). Competition probably developed between the additional stores and professionals.

On November 26th, 1817, Timothy C. Strong published the first edition of the *Palmyra Register*, providing weekly snapshots of the concerns of at least some of the community members. The differentiating responsibilities come across clearly in Strong's first editorial:

> The farmer, the merchant, the mechanic and the professional man [i.e. the man that is trained in a profession, RCK], have each a duty assigned, a talent committed (p.2 col 1).

Thus the division of labor in the community, as seen from the vantage point of a local opinion maker. Among the economic issues Strong raised is the construction of the Erie Canal, and the unconvinced were goaded with the amount of flour that would be shipped to sale this way (p.2 col 2). The advertisement sections were dominated by the fine foods, clothes and tableware now available; material rewards for the hard work. No more tea made of hemlock or chocolate made of dried evans root, as had been the case for the pioneers (p.387).

The legal section, on the other hand, showed the negative side of the account system of debits: Among several others, Dr Gain Robinson, the community doctor for the last seventeen years; co-owner of the drugstore; teacher of the next generation of physicians---be it Alexander McIntyre, the co-drugstore owner and allopath, or Durfee Chase, the homeopath---was now subject to a writ of *fieri facias*, or fi-fa for short (p.2 col 3); the sheriff had to sell off Robinson's prime real estate, with Mud creek access, to meet his obligations.[31] No wonder that his drugstore partner Dr McIntyre called in the outstanding debts at the end of the drugstore's advertisement (p.2 col 5), with the promise of discounts for immediate payment.

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[30] While the population numbers are good to have, access to the household numbers could sharpen some of the arguments. As Christopher Clark has shown for Massachusetts in his book: The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860, New York - London (Cornell University Press) 1990, p.137, average household sizes shifted dramatically between the decades of the 19th century, thus preventing a straightforward computation of household size from population numbers.

[31] Stephen Durfee, son of Palmyra pioneer Gideon Durfee, noted that the cash requirement for taxes was an undue burden on the notes and accounts debt system, and attributed an unnecessary amount of land sales to this hard constraint; Turner 1851, p.383.

And so the double-edged sword of economic boom was revealed: The engine of economic growth brought in goods and services in quantity and quality, as well as the dispossessed from the bad harvests of the last years, while the sheriff sold off the land holdings of the ones who had failed to keep pace and stumbled.

The Smiths come to Palmyra

When the family of Joseph Smith Jr arrived in Palmyra in the winter of 1816, they had already seen significant oscillations in their economic fortunes. Father Joseph and mother Lucy (née Mack) had started married life with significant capital---a farm and $1000 in cash---in the late 1790s in Tunbridge, Vermont.[32] They had tried their hand at a variety of economic ventures: landlordism; farming; running a dry goods store supplied from Boston; and the export of ginseng root to China. Though the failure of the export business took down their store as well, they recovered---until the typhoid epidemic of 1813 left all of their children sick[33] and the medical bills consumed all their savings.

The after-effects of a volcanic eruption---Tambora on Sumbawa in 1815 [34]---dashed their last hopes when their crops failed for the third year in a row during the famous “year without summer” of 1816. The household move to Palmyra consumed the remains of their finances. Thus the Smith family joined the economic exodus that depopulated Vermont at that time. Unlike many others, though, they did not move on to the frontier lands in Ohio and Indiana, where land was to be had for cheap[35], but went to booming Palmyra.[36] Not only had Palmyra seen a good harvest even in 1816;[37] the family had a general preference for an urban environment.

For the first two years, they rented a house on Main Street[38] in downtown Palmyra, most likely at the intersection of Main with Stafford.[39] Joseph Smith Sr opened a “cake and beer store” off of East Main Street,[40] where they sold snacks that were easy to produce: gingerbread, pies, boiled eggs, root-beer.[41] During local festivities, such as military training days or the 4th of July celebrations, the Smiths used a handcart to peddle their wares to the

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[32] Lucy Smith: Biographical Sketches Of Joseph Smith The Prophet And His Progenitors For Many Generations, Liverpool - London, 1853, pp.45-70.
[33] There is a suspicion that the very signs of economic recovery, that Hyrum Smith was able to visit the academy at Hanover, precipitated the medical catastrophe: Hyrum probably contracted the disease there; cf. Smith 1853, p.60.
[34] Vogel: EMD, Volume 1 (1996), p.270 Fn 65.
[35] Brodie 1970, p.11.
[36] The US census data shows how the town grew by leaps and bounds. For 1810, according to the Population schedules of the US Census for Oneida and Ontario Counties, NY (roll #33), Palmyra had 2189 inhabitants; the 1820 schedules for Ontario County, NY (roll #62) indicate 3734 inhabitants, a 70% increase. One year after the Erie Canal reached Palmyra, in 1823, when Wayne County was created, the Western part of Palmyra was spun off as the township of Macedon; the 1830 schedules for Wayne County, NY (roll #117) for Macedon and Palmyra sum to 5155 inhabitants, another 40% increase, of which Palmyra township housed 3276.
[37] Henry O’Reilly: Settlement of the West: Sketches of Rochester, Rochester (Alling) 1838, p.367
[38] Marquardt et al 1994, p.117.
[39] Cf. map in Plewe et al 2011, pp.16-17.
[40] From the map in Plewe et al 2011, ibid, the shop was either on Mill or Throop Street.
[41] Pomeroy Tucker: The Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism, New York (D. Appleton & Co.), 1867, p.12.

crowds. The Smiths augmented their income with labor and crafts: Lucy Smith painted and sold oilcloth; the elder sons and Mr Smith himself hired themselves out to people in the village and on the surrounding farms as day laborers.[42]

By 1818 the family had located an “unimproved piece of land, mostly covered with standing timber”[43], two miles outside the village. They built a pioneer-style log house, located at the intersection of Stafford Street and the Palmyra and Manchester, Ontario, county line. They immediately started to clear the land and make other “improvements”. Legally, they were squatting on land that was managed from Canandaigua on behalf of minors of Nicholas Everston living on the East Coast.
When a new land agent was assigned in 1820, they articled for the acquisition of the 100 acres farm and made the down payment.[44]

Until their eviction in 1829, the Smiths lived on and worked the land, including building a new frame house, as a retirement place for the parents, starting in 1825. How diligent and effective the Smiths were in their decade long efforts was controversial. All sources seem to agree that they cut and sold cord wood; raised wheat, produce and fruits; produce large quantities of sugar and molasses from the maple trees on the property; and manufactured and sold black-ash baskets and birch brooms.[45]

Their failure may have been influenced by the wheat prices.[46] The lack of seeds after 1816 meant that wheat continued to fetch good prices in 1817 and 1818; perhaps Joseph Smith Sr included that knowledge in his calculus to switch focus from the store to the farm. The good prices continued until 1820, when an abundant crop and the extensive recovery of wheat farming combined to lower the price. This was the year the Smiths made their down payment. The record crop continued in 1821, and prices stayed low. Then the Erie Canal connected first Palmyra in 1822 and then Rochester in 1823 to the shipping to the East. Prices recovered, possibly due to the heightened demand, staying good in 1824 as well. 1825 and 1826 were record harvests, with low prices, and the Smiths, who had invested energy and resources into the construction of the frame house, almost lost the farm, except for the intervention of pioneer descendant Lemuel Durfee. The crop of 1827 was unremarkable, but the crop of 1828 a disaster. By 1829, the farm was lost and the Smiths were back in their log hut.

Interpreting Economic Tides

The Smiths were not the only ones who were economically disappointed at that time. Things had been going well for Palmyra as the Erie Canal was still winding its way toward the village. Then in 1822, the connection was made and for roughly a year, Palmyra was the funnel into which the transport to the East from the Genesee flowed. Unfortunately, the good times did

[42] Notice that the category of wage or day laborer did not fit in T.C. Strong’s taxonomy of the community labor pool.
[43] Tucker 1867, p.12.
[44] Marquardt et al 1994, p.5.
[45] Tucker 1867, p.14; Donald L. Enders: The Joseph Smith, Sr., Family: Farmers of the Genesee, in: Susan Easton Black, Charles D. Tate Jr (ed): Joseph Smith: The Prophet, The Man, ed. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University), 1993, pp.213–225.
[46] O’Reilly 1838, pp.362-364.

not last, and when the connection with Rochester---and thus Lake Erie and the Canada trade---was in place in 1823, the growth engine of Palmyra started to sputter. This change in economic circumstances and esp. the thwarting of expectations elicited responses from the participants that fit into their religious and moral frameworks.

The Proud Victor

The population census shows how Rochester overtook Palmyra.[47] In 1820, Rochester was half the size of Palmyra with 1502 citizens. Then in 1821 work on the aqueduct for the Erie Canal began: by 1822 the population had risen to 2700 residents, plus another 430 canal laborers.[48] By 1823, Rochester was connected to the canal. For 1825, we have two census points: in February, 4274, and in August, 5273, a growth rate of almost 1000 souls for that year alone. In 1830, five years after the completion of the canal, Rochester had 9,207 inhabitants; the thousand-souls-per-year rate had continued unabated. Another decade of that rate, and by 1840, the population had doubled to 20,191. By 1850, though the greater Palmyra area had 6727 citizens---and the majority of the growth had been on the Macedon side---Rochester was six times as large with 36403 souls.

Or take the statements of the American geographer William Darby. When Darby undertook his research trip for *Darby's Edition of Brooks' Universal Gazetteer*, published in Philadelphia in 1823, the Erie Canal ended 8 miles south of Rochester, at Heartwell's Basin in Pittsford (p.714 col 1). Though Darby glossed Palmyra as "flourishing" (p.719 col 1), he already predicted that Rochester was "unquestionably destined to become one of the greatest inland manufacturing and commercial sites in the United States" (p.719 col 1). Five years later, when Darby's *View of the United States* from 1828 was published in Philadelphia, Rochester had eclipsed all other towns in New York State, excepting New York City and the capital Albany, in population (p.571). Another five years later, in Darby's *New Gazetteer of the United States*, published in Hartford, Connecticut in 1833, Palmyra was noted for "an academy, factories, several churches" and "considerable trade" (p.392 col 2), as having good soil and access to the Erie Canal as well as to Mud Creek, which though not navigable provided water power for some mills. But Rochester was now "the most populous and important village in the state" of New York (p.476 col 2). "The river is now lined on both sides with flour mills, many of them of immense size, and constructed in the most substantial manner, being abundantly supplied with water power, from the river." (p.477 col 1) In 1832, Rochester had turned $1.16 million worth of wheat into 240,000 barrels of flour. And the other numbers for 1832 validated Darby's manufacturing prediction from 1823 equally: $166,000 worth of leather goods; $112,000 worth of woolens; $46,000 worth of iron goods; $45,000 worth of soap and candles; over $40,000 worth of boat building. And the civic infrastructure was impressive as

[47] Turner 1851, p.623.

[48] The argument pursued here in general brackets the disruptive nature of the canal construction and operation to the social fabric of the Genesee country. The workers in Rochester amounted to a sixth of the total population. For forcing the canal through the Cayuga swamps, 2000 workers were required, a significant number of whom died from the fevers; cf. William Darby: Darby's Edition of Brooks' Universal Gazetteer, Philadelphia (Bennett & Walton), 1823, p.714 col 2. Once the canal was operational, the movement of crooks was no less simplified than the transport of goods, with predictable consequences for the locals---what Carol Sheriff termed "fresh oysters and sour deals"; cf. Carol Sheriff: The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, New York (Hill & Wang), 1997. The operators of the mule groups pulling the boats, the hoggees, were a segregated social group, and the general acceptance of the "canawlers", as they were called, was low.

well: over 100 wholesale and retail stores, five weekly newspapers, and one daily. Darby's admiration is palpable in these figures.

The people of Rochester knew that they were experiencing something economically exceptional. In 1838, writing his pean to Rochester, Henry O'Reilly gave his enthusiasm free reign:[49]

> The suddenness of its rise, the energy of its population, the excellence of its institutions, the whole character of its prosperity, render Rochester prominent among the cities that have recently sprung into existence ….
> Individual enterprise, fostered by free government, has here most happily improved the bounties with which Heaven has prodigally endowed the land. Population and even business may have increased occasionally elsewhere in ratios perhaps as remarkable; but in few, very few cases, if any, will it be found that the progress in those points has been accompanied by the perfection of social institutions to the degree in which they are now already beheld at Rochester (p.23).

O'Reilly then significant space (pp.23-26) to iterating through the entries in Williams' *Universal Gazette* to pull out the well-known cities of the Old World---Oxford, Cambridge, Perth, Pisa, Maastricht, Grenoble, Tours, Arles, Portiers, Salamanca, Bergen, Halle, Darmstadt, Lubec---that equalled Rochester in size of population, or to comment on the cities that Rochester surpassed in size.

> It may be observed that these comparisons have reference merely to population. In enterprise, intelligence, and business---in moral, religious and intellectual character---in the qualities chiefly requisite to promote social prosperity and public welfare---what European town of equal size, be its antiquity what it may, can be properly placed in juxtaposition with the City of the Genesee? (p.27)

This "victory lap" of commercial success and moral superiority struck O'Reilly as supremely important:

> … it seems to us that it is only by such comparisons that we can become fully sensible of the blessings with which our Republic is endowed. The American … who examines not the condition of things social and political in the Old World, can never entertain that strong sense of his advantages which is seemingly necessary to render him fully || grateful to Heaven and to a virtuous ancestry for privileges unequalled under the best forms of government which human ingenuity has devised in other lands. (pp.27f)

Thus, the successful people of Rochester, in the reconstruction of Henry O'Reilly, felt themselves as playing out a logical system of enterprise, intelligence and business, in a God-given setting that had been readied for them by their virtuous ancestors.

[49] O'Reilly 1838, p.23.

The Disappointed Second

For the second place people in Palmyra, who saw themselves as possessing enterprise, intelligence and business acumen, and certainly as God-fearing and endowed with virtuous ancestors, the problem was a very difficult one, given the backwater into which their town had slumped.

In 1950, Whitney R. Cross issued a warning for all socio-economic analysis applied to the Burned-over District in general:

> The relationship of the Burned-over District enthusiasms to specific sociological conditions could easily be overdrawn. Religious zealots were in no conscious fashion motivated by calculations of their social and economic interests. They found direct inspiration in the Bible and aimed at some kind of millennium within their own time. ... No rigid determinism can be applied to men who sought always the right and never the expedient, according to insights which were invariably individualistic. Still, they lived within an environment whose influence they could scarcely escape, however much they might disregard it. (p.74)

Thus, without reducing any of these events to the economic circumstances, it remains important to note that the next round of revivals took place in Palmyra from 1824 to 1825, and that the work on the Book of Mormon began in 1827. I currently have no records for the 1830s and 1840s that capture the sentiments of being passed by; most likely they would be found in the newspapers of Palmyra from these time periods, in journals, letters and memoirs. The narratives gathered for Turner's *History of the Pioneer Settlement*, published in 1851, primarily showed traces of nostalgia for the glorious past, its collaborative setup, and the willingness of sacrifice; and the main daemon indicted there was whiskey, not economic deflation.[50]

But in 1857, in his Thanksgiving address, the Presbyterian minister Dr Horace Eaton explicitly had to address the fact that there was buyer’s remorse afloat in his Palmyra congregation. His sermon targeted the local elite, the descendants of the pioneer settlers, as the title, Early History of Palmyra, suggests. The ancestors of his listeners had had opportunities to go elsewhere, to places that had since blossomed, while Palmyra had slumbered. For a God whose hand was visible in history, even in the history of this town, that situation required some explaining. Eaton's argument bears quoting in full.[51]

> The visit of William Hopkins to Long Island, just at the right time, doubtless diverted from many of you the possession of the land upon which Cincinnati now stands. The father of John Hurlburt offered his son the choice of lands in Rochester or Palmyra; he preferred the same number of acres in Palmyra. Pardon Durfee, too, contemplated purchasing the site of Rochester; but when, on a survey of the country, he was attacked with fever and ague, he came home to Palmyra in disgust. (p.24)

[50] Turner 1851, p.383.
[51] Horace Eaton: The early history of Palmyra: a Thanksgiving sermon, delivered at Palmyra, N. Y., November 26, 1857, Rochester 1858.

Eaton consoled his listeners with the moral superiority of their situation, and, interestingly enough, also with their virtuous ancestors.

> Let not the greed of gain count these decisions unfortunate. You might have rode as millionaires; but it may well be questioned whether the industrious principles and virtuous competency received from your fathers, are not a safer inheritance than the indulgence and dangers of overgrown wealth. ... My hearers, you have a goodly heritage. The Lord hath dealt bountifully with you. (p.24)

From the fact that the published form of the sermon came down to the present, one cannot deduce much about how consoled the members of Eaton's congregation felt. And one wonders how many noticed the irony of the book having been published in Rochester.

At the Bottom of the Heap

The reaction from the point of view of the lower end of the socio-economic distribution must have been decidedly different. The descendants of the pioneers were frustrated with not having become millionaires; families like the Smiths had just wanted to keep their farms. The weakness in the prices and the trade possibilities had left the upper echelon with merely "a goodly heritage"; but it had crippled the chances of the lower levels, many of which would subsequently be forced to move on. If God was to be found in history, then what would their reaction be?

The Smiths themselves, as the reminiscences of Lucy Smith and William Smith show, knew that they had been doing a great job of clearing and fencing the property, improving the land by adding a cooper shop and other buildings.[52] Clearly, Lemuel Durfee was willing to purchase the farm in February of 1825 from the Everston land agent[53], and Joseph Knight Sr and Josiah Stowell were willing to contract with the Smiths for wheat in 1827. But the contemporary logic of virtue and industry brought the people of Palmyra to attribute the failure of the poor to the individuals themselves. The Smiths had lost the farm in 1829, and that required an explanation. An explanation that could not involve the wheat prices in Rochester. Thus, when testimonials were gathered against the Smiths for Eber D. Howe's *Mormonism Exposed* of 1834, or pioneer son Pomroy Tucker drew upon his personal interactions with the Smiths for his *Origin of Mormonism* in 1867, the well-established members of the community interviewed gave the standard explanations: the Smiths were drunks; and they were not willing to work hard, but rather given to treasure hunting. Never mind the fact that community pillar Dr Gain Robinson had drinking problems too.[54] Or the fact that wealthy Pennsylvanian farmer Josiah Stowell had engaged the Smiths to treasure hunt a Spanish silver mine for him.[55]

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[52] The evidence is summarized in Enders 1993, pp.213–225.
[53] Marquardt et al 1994, p.122.
[54] Vogel (ed): EMD, Volume 3 (2000), p.433, reports that Dr Robinson was disciplined in 1828 by the Presbyterian Church for intemperance.
[55] Marquardt et al 1994, p.121.

The look from the bottom up took a different tack, by embracing a different sentiment that was floating around in the community's discourse.

> There was general prosperity in the early settlement; all were friendly; mutual dependence made us so; and struggling with the hardships of pioneer life, there was a fellow feeling, a sympathy for each other's misfortunes, but little of which exists now [in 1851].[56]

The problem, according to that sentiment, was the loss of the initial unity of social egality---"there was no aristocracy in those days"[57] ---and support that had existed in the community, at that pristine point in time.

In the developed days of Palmyra, however, that social contract was no longer valid. The economic strata had differentiated and the lower stratum could not rely on the upper to put sympathy before gain. Joseph Smith Jr saw this very early in his career; his mother recalls that one of his arguments for not participating in the revivals of 1824-1825 was the discrepancy between the degree of respect the church members commanded and their social consciousness with respect to those less fortunate.[58]

Such separation into social and economic classes is glossed critically in the Book of Mormon [59] and tied to the effects of trade[60] as a cause of differential prosperity. Consider Helaman 6 or 3 Nephi 6 as examples.[61] In Helaman 6, the Nephites are entering a period of peace and prosperity through trade.

> And it came to pass that the Lamanites did also go whithersoever they would, whether it were among the Lamanites or among the Nephites; and thus they did have free intercourse one with another, to buy and to sell, and to get gain, according to their desire. And it came to pass that they became exceedingly rich, both the Lamanites

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[56] Stephen Durfee reminiscence, quoted in Turner 1851, p.383.
[57] Mrs Eden Foster reminiscence, quoted in Turner 1851, p.384 Note.
[58] Lucy Smith used the story as an example of early prophetic abilities of her son. In her narrative, Joseph Smith Jr predicted that the successful businessman Henry Jessup, also known as Deacon Jessup, in spite of his eminent position in the Western Presbyterian Church of Palmyra, would foreclose on a poor widow with infant children if she owed him as much as a cow. "At that time this seemed impossible to us, yet one year had scarcely passed when we saw Joseph's supposition literally fulfilled." Smith 1853, p.91; The background information on Dean Jessup follows Vogel (ed): EMD, Volume 1 (1996), p.307f Fn 106.
[59] My approach interprets the BoM as substantially representing the theological opinions and sensibilities of Joseph Smith Jr, couched in the religious context of Upstate New York. Whether this is due to his original authorship or to his role as the translator of an ancient record is a separate matter and does not affect the argument advanced here. However, literary primitivism is in general unsustainable, given its ahistorical assumptions, whether applied to the Bible or to the BoM.
[60] The following exposition uses the materials referenced in Allen J. Christenson: Nephite Trade Networks and the Dangers of a Class Society, in: Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. (ed), The Book of Mormon: Helaman Through 3 Nephi 8, According To Thy Word, Provo, Utah (Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University), 1992, pp. 223-240, though it considerably differs from Christenson's conclusions.
[61] In the orthodox chronology of the Book of Mormon, Helaman dates to 29-23 bc and 3 Nephi 6 to 26-30 ad. They form a temporal continuity because the prophet Nephi who wrote 3 Nephi is the son of the prophet Helaman.

> and the Nephites; and they did have an exceeding plenty of gold, and of silver, and of all manner of precious metals, both in the land south and in the land north. (Helaman 6, 8f)

But the riches makes the people wicked; the chief judges are murdered, and the terrible gang called Gadianton's robbers and murderers begins to trouble the Nephites. Through a terrible war, the robbers are suppressed and peace is restored. But then trade returns, and the riches return, and with it the class divisions.

> And it came to pass that there were many cities built anew, and there were many old cities repaired. And there were many highways cast up, and many roads made, which led from city to city, and from land to land, and from place to place. (3 Nephi 6, 7f)

> But it came to pass in the twenty and ninth year there began to be some disputings among the people; and some were lifted up unto pride and boastings because of their exceedingly great riches, yea, even unto great persecutions. For there were many merchants in the land, and also many lawyers, and many officers. And the people began to be distinguished by ranks, according to their riches and their chances for learning; yea, some were ignorant because of their poverty, and others did receive great learning because of their riches. (3 Nephi 6, 10-12)

This time, the whole church is destroyed, that is, the religious community is torn asunder, and only a few carry on the true belief.

> Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world. (3 Nephi 6, 15)

Fortunately, new prophets are then raised that preach against the elites of high priests and legal experts to get the people to return to God.

To be clear, the question of trade, wealth and social class is not the main focus of the Book of Mormon; the work is far-ranging, discussing, in Alexander Campbell's famous words, "every error and almost every truth discussed in N[ew] York for the last ten years", including "infant baptism, ordination, the trinity, regeneration, repentance, justification, the fall of man, the atonement, transubstantiation, fasting, penance, church government, religious experience, the call to the ministry, the general resurrection, eternal punishment, who may baptize, and even the question of freemasonry, republican government, and the rights of man".[62]

[62] Alexander Campbell: Delusions: An analysis of the book of Mormon with an examination of its internal and external evidences, and a refutation of its pretenses to divine authority, Boston 1832, Section: Internal Evidence, Point #7, p.13.

Planning for Zion

In the summer of 1833, three years after the publication of the Book of Mormon and two years after the move from Palmyra, New York, to Kirtland, Ohio, Joseph Smith Jr and the other members of the church presidency were planning the plat for the new Zion, to be built in Independence, Missouri.

The model that Joseph Smith Jr had in mind was inspired by the experiences of the community in Palmyra. Their well-knit society of supportive pioneer agriculturalists had been sacrificed for pride and gain to the engines of economic growth such as the Erie Canal and to the engines of class differentiation such as trade and manufacturing. The utopian community of Zion would have none of these elements.

Joseph Smith Jr designed a plat that contained family farm homesteads, churches, public buildings and nothing else. There was no main street to be lined with shops nor a general store to convert the surplus into cash and social cachet. There was no academy; only space for public schools. There were no manufacturing companies; all professions were to be carried out from the homesteads, just as Joseph Smith Jr had done when making barrels in the cooper workshop on the family's Palmyra farm. And most decidedly, there was no access to routes of trade. No highways or overland roads lead into or out of the settlement proper. There was no creek, river or other form of moving water; even if that meant foregoing water power, and thus grain or saw mills, or carding machines.

The plat for Zion suggests that at this very point in Joseph Smith Jr's theological thinking, he preferred a form of egalitarian agricultural primitivism to the class-inducing professionalization and economic integration, whose boom and bust effects he had witnessed in Palmyra during the formative years of his boyhood and adult life. This was in line with the United Firm, the economic program the Church had been practicing in Kirtland, Ohio.[63]

It would turn out to be a lesson that he could not sustain. Though the equi-sized division of lots would continue into the plats of Far West, Adam ondi-Ahman and Nauvoo, the claim that all were equal at that socioeconomic level had to be abandoned. The need for shops and the demand for goods that were not produced locally was simply too great. It is instructive that the division of that prime real estate, the downtown shopping district, is one of the most worked-over aspects of the plats we have for Far West. More and more shops were pressed into that small space.

And with Nauvoo, a re-plat of a frontier city ominously named Commerce, the focus on trade along the Mississippi River came to the fore, with a separate docks and the warehouse district. The amount of commerce moving along the Mississippi made the Erie Canal look like Mud Creek. This time Joseph Smith Jr embraced the developments wholeheartedly. After the

[63] It is possible that the elimination of outside trade that the United Firm entailed was also designed to limit the influence of non-Mormons on the community; cf. Marvin S. Hill: Quest for Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism, Salt Lake City (Signature Books) 1989, p.38.

harrowing experiences of the Mormon War of Missouri, Joseph Smith Jr and his congregation were ready to live the urban life to the fullest.

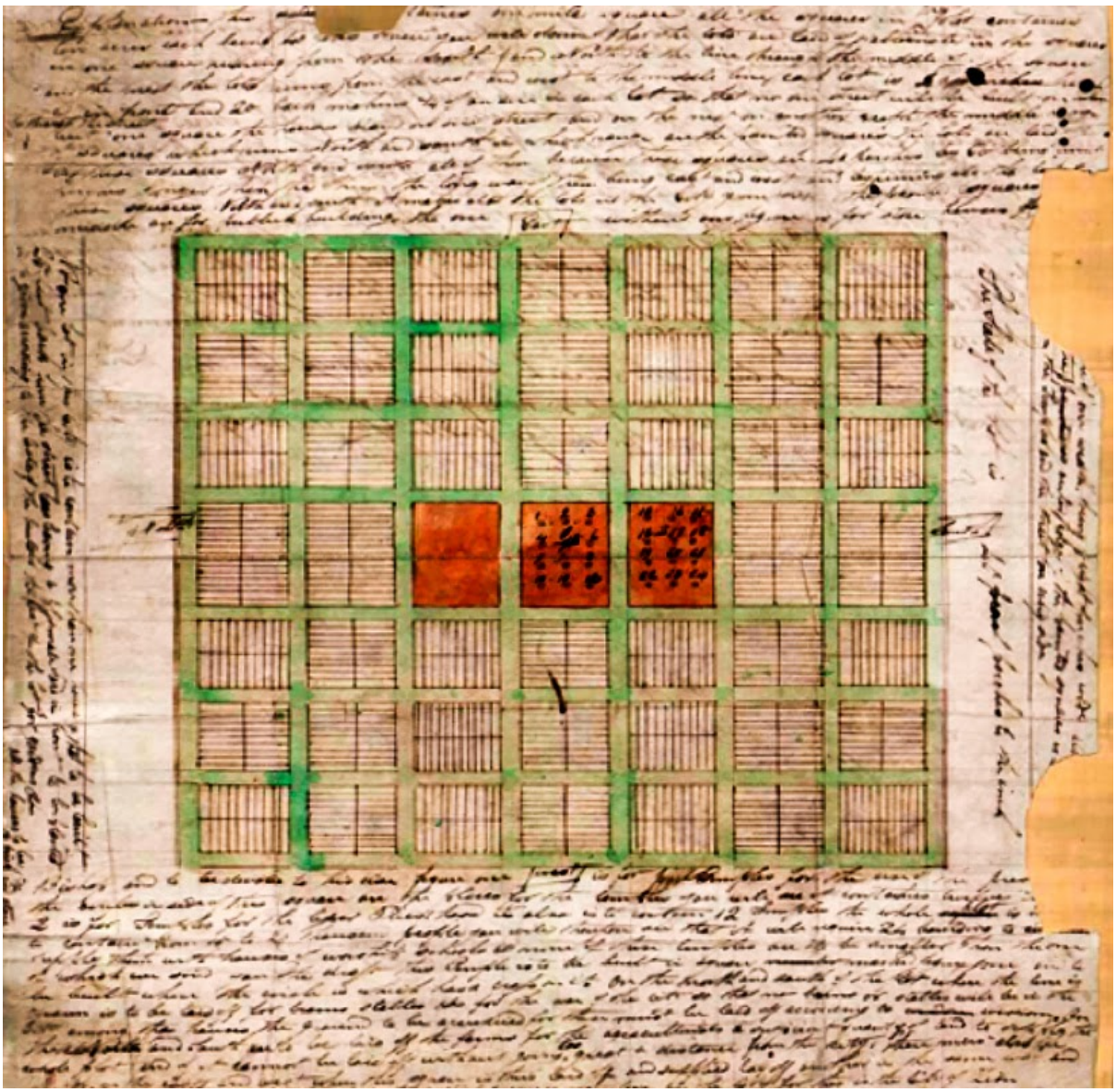
Joseph Smith Jr first had a large house, then moved into a hotel[64]. He bought fine horses for his wife Emma[65] and had the church provide him with his own steamboat[66]. As general of the local militia, he supervised parades.[67] With a population that swelled to twelve thousand by 1844, Joseph Smith Jr was as if in charge of his own Rochester. Except, with its lack of manufacturing and focus on professionals, it was not like Rochester at all, but like Palmyra, all over again.[68]

Conclusion

Utopias as concretization of religious and political programs give shape to how people want their lives to be. By studying their arrangements and comparing and contrasting them to their past we can reconstruct the things they wished to change. The Zion plat of 1833 that the Mormon Church Presidency in Kirtland, Ohio, drafted, captures a noton of agricultural self-sufficiency and professionalism that was most akin to pioneer romanticism and was becoming rapidly outdated in the Upstate New York area they had just left behind. The rejection of the twin engines of progress, trade and manufacturing, which had propelled Rochester from a hobble to the third largest city in New York in two decades, gives an anti-modern slant to the design. This anti-modern stance can be at least illuminated, if not completely explained, by an analysis of the socio-economic developments that Joseph Smith Jr witnessed during the formative years of his boyhood and early adulthood as a day laborer's son at the economic bubble town of Palmyra. Processing these experiences in theological or moralistic ways was a common behavioral pattern in Upstate New York as well, and Smith Jr embraced it in the way the Book of Mormon rejected trade-fueled class divisions. The resulting tension between economic possibility and social consequences was however not subdued by fiat, and as the Mormons repeatedly implemented their community visions in Missouri and Illinois, the tension resurfaced in unmitigated force.

[64] Newell, Avery 1994, p.160.
[65] Newell, Avery 1994, p.142.
[66] Newell, Avery 1994, p.258.
[67] Newell, Avery 1994, p.139.
[68] It is for this reason that the population comparison between Nauvoo and Chicago, which is gladly offered by Mormon apologetics, is so unhelpful. Even if the twelve thousand citizens of Nauvoo in the 1840s was three times as large as Chicago, which had counted 4470 in the 1840 US Census, in 1850 Chicago was at 29,963---and most likely due to manufacturing.

Figure 1



Appendix I: Web Resources

This research would have been almost impossible without two efforts, the Internet Archive and its strong contributor, the Google Books digitization. Together, these two made the vast majority of the early to mid nineteenth century literature available that the argument in this paper relies on. This has somewhat lessened the impact of the massive transcription efforts that Dale Broadhurst had undertaken in Mormon studies in the past---though for some volumes, “Uncle Dale’s” transcriptions are still the most helpful.

Equally helpful were the online availability of “older” books from Signature publishing house, and of papers from the Religious Studies Center at Brigham Young University.

In the interest of replicability of findings, I have given preference to source editions and secondary literature available on the web whenever possible. Where necessary, http://www.bitly.com has been used to shorten the URLs.

Texts in the Internet Archive

Francis Bacon: New Atlantis, London 1660
https://archive.org/details/fnewatlantis00baco

Alexander Campbell: Delusions: An analysis of the book of Mormon with an examination of its internal and external evidences, and a refutation of its pretenses to divine authority, Boston 1832
https://archive.org/details/delusionsanalysi01camp

William Darby: Darby’s Edition of Brooks’ Universal Gazetteer, Philadelphia (Bennett & Walton), 1823
https://archive.org/details/darbyseditionofb00broo

William Darby: View of the United States, Philadelphia, 1828
https://archive.org/details/viewofunitedstat01darb

William Darby: New Gazetteer of the United States, Hartford, Connecticut, 1833
https://archive.org/details/anewgazetteerun01dwiggoog

Horace Eaton: The early history of Palmyra: a Thanksgiving sermon, delivered at Palmyra, N. Y., November 26, 1857, Rochester 1858
https://archive.org/details/earlyhistoryofpa00eato

Olive Gilbert: Narrative of Sojourner Truth, New York, 1853
https://archive.org/details/narrativeofsojour00gilb

Edward Holbrook: North American Herpetology, Philadelphia

- Edition of 1838
    - Volume 2: https://archive.org/details/northamericanher02holb
- Edition of 1842

- Volume 3: https://archive.org/details/northamericanher13holb

The Works of Washington Irving, 15 vols., New York (Jenson Society), 1907

- Volume 1: https://archive.org/details/worksofwashingto01irvi

National Archives Record Administration, United States Census
https://archive.org/details/us_census

Henry O'Reilly: Settlement of the West: Sketches of Rochester, Rochester (Alling) 1838
https://archive.org/details/settlementinwest03orei

Lucy Smith: Biographical Sketches Of Joseph Smith The Prophet And His Progenitors For Many Generations, Liverpool - London, 1853
https://archive.org/details/BiographicalSketchesOfJosephSmithTheProphet

Pomeroy Tucker: The Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism, New York (D. Appleton & Co.), 1867
https://archive.org/details/originriseandpr00tuckgoog

O. Turner: History of the Pioneer Settlement of the Phelps and Gorham's Purchases and Morris Preserve, Rochester 1851
https://archive.org/details/historypioneers00turngoog

The Women's Society of the Western Presbyterian Church: Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, Rochester (Herald Press) 1907
https://archive.org/details/palmyrawaynecoun00palmrich

Texts from Google Books

Christopher Clark: The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860, New York - London (Cornell University Press) 1990.
http://books.google.com/books?id=wyi_a_ckGFQC

Texts from Dale Broadhurst's Archive

Eber D. Howe: Autobiography and Recollections of a Pioneer Printer, Painesville, OH, 1878
http://www.solomonspalding.com/docs/howe1878.htm

Texts in the Signature Library

Marvin S. Hill: Quest for Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism, Salt Lake City (Signature Books) 1989
http://signaturebookslibrary.org/?p=5303

H. Michael Marquardt, Wesley Walters: Inventing Mormonism, Salt Lake City, 1994
http://signaturebookslibrary.org/?p=8353

Texts from the Religious Studies Center (BYU)

Allen J. Christenson: Nephite Trade Networks and the Dangers of a Class Society, in: Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. (ed), The Book of Mormon: Helaman Through 3 Nephi 8, According To Thy Word, Provo, Utah (Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University), 1992, pp. 223-240:
http://bit.ly/1mVv7Gr

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