

Missouri State Archives: Finding Aid 5.1

Mormon War Papers, 1837-1841

[Full-text transcription of: Witness John Carrill, a Mormon dissenter and State Representative from Caldwell County]

application of it by him & further this deponent saith

not Morris Phelps

John Corrill a witness produced sworn & examined in behalf the State deposed & saith that about last June I was invited to a private meeting in which an effort was made to adopt some plan to get rid of the dissenters. there were some things I did not like and opposed it with others & it failed. after that I met Prest Rigdon. & he told me I ought not to have any thing to do with it that they would do as they pleased. I took his advise. I learned afterwards that they had Secret meetings. but I was never invited none of the 1st Presidency was present at the meeting above referred to, we have a rule in the church authorizing any member to consecrate or give voluntarily his supplies property to the church for charitable purposes. Prest. Rigdon last Summer preached a Sermon commonly called the Salt Sermon, which Seemed to have for its object to produce a feeling among the people to get rid of the dissenters for crimes alleged & because they disagreed with them, in a few days there seemed considerable excitement among the people. & the dissenters left. as I advised them, they were in danger. I was afterwards, invited

to one of those meetings where an oath in substance the same as testified to by Dr Avard was administered. The Society was ultimately organized into companies and captains of tens & 50's were appointed. I took exceptions only ("so" crossed out) to the teachings as to the duties' of that society where-
=in it was said if one brother got into any Kind of a dif
=ficulty it was the duty of the rest to help him out right or wrong, at the Second or at least the last meeting I attended the presidency to wit Jos. Smith Jr Hiram Smith & Sidney Rigdon & also Geo W. Robertson was there, there was at this meeting a ceremony of introducing the officers of the Society to the presidency, who pronounced blessings on each of them As introduced according to faithfulness in their Calling & they should have blessings, after this Prest Smith got up & made general remarks about in Substance as follows. rela-
-ting the oppussions the society had Suffered and they wanted to be prepared for further events but said he wished to do nothing unlawful & if the people would let him alone they would preach the gospel & live in peace, towards the close he observed to the people that they should obey the presi=

=dency & If the Presidency led them astray they might destroy them. In the last or in some public meeting Jos Smith Jr said if the people would let us alone we would preach the Gospel to them in peace but if they came on us to molest us we would establish our religion by the Sword & that he would become to this generation a Second Mohamet

About April last I heard Joseph Smith Jr & Prest Rigdon (who appeared to be vexed on account of troubles & lawsuits they had had) say that they would suffer vexatious law=
=suits no longer & that they would resist even an officer in the discharge of his duty, Smith Said he has been be

-fore court, some 20,000 times they had never found any thing against him & that made him of age & he would submit to it no longer. I heard S. Rigdon 4th July Speech I heard him say he would not suffer people to come unto their Streets & abuse them, nor would they suffer vexatious lawsuits. In substance he further remarked that "neither will we permit any man or set of men to institute vexatious lawsuits against us to cheat us out of our just rights If they do so we be unto them" this mormon church has been represented as being the little stone spoken of by Daniel which should roll on and crush all opposition to it and ultimately should be established as a temporal as well as a spiritual Kingdom. These things were to be carried on through the instrumentality of the Danite band as far as force was necessary If necessary they being organized into bands of tens. 50's & ready for war the teachings of that society led them to prohibit the taking of any person's against the presidency so much so that it was dangerous for any man to set up opposition to any thing that might be set on foot & I became afraid to speak my own mind. I objected to the course of Dr Avard in defiance to this Daniete band I rather thought Jos Smith Jr. up held him I would not allow any objections to him. After the return of the Mormons from deciet I heard Jos. Smith Jr in presence of Hiram Smith in a conversation say that application had been made to the Gov. and that they understood that he would give them no assistance & they were determined to withstand the mob, they were greatly incensed against certain persons in Caldwell & Daviss & said they intended to rid the counties of them & of the mob in the course of

that week, this was on Sunday morning and in the course of that day instructions were given to meet the next day (monday) on Monday Jos Smith Jr made a speech and some resolutions were passed purporting that those persons who would not engage in thies undertaking this property should be consecrated to the use of ["the church" crossed out] those who did engage in thees undertaking On Sunday Jos. Smith Jr in his discourse spoke of persons taking at sometimes, what at other times it would be wrong to take, and gave as an example the case of David eating the shewbread & also of the [Saviour] & his apostles plucking the ears of corn and eating as they passed through the cornfield he supposed the prejudices of the Jews and Pharisees were so great against the Saviour that they would give them nothing to eat & they took that method to get it. On the Monday when the resolutions above refered to were introduced President Rigdon

in a speech said that those who were unwilling to go into the war ought to be put upon their horses with guns & bayonets and forced into the front of the war having reference to those who heretofore had been backwards in defending themselves, & families No persons were suffered to leave the County in this extreme time and I met with Phelps to consult as to what all ought to do

After the troops got to Diahmon in all about 4 or 500 men I heard Lyman Wight addressing a portion of the men who were then (perhaps 8 or 10)" that the earth was the Lord's and the "fullness thereof with the Cattle upon a 1000 hills, & if I was "an hungry I would not tell you" that the Saints of the Lord had the Same privilege or rights, after that perhaps, the next day I saw a drove of some 4 or 5 Cattle pass along & asked what cattle these were & was answered that they were a drove of buffalo, Others, observed they were Cattle a methodist priest had consecrated Jos Smith Jr Hiram Smith Parley P Pratt Lyman Wight Geo W Robinson Caleb Baldwin Alanson Ripley Geo W Harris Geo Grant Darwin Chase Aliza McRay Edwd Partridge Jos W. Younger probably Jas W Rawlin's were in the expedition that went to Daviss, Cony, at the time Gallatin was burnt on the same day that the Company went to Gallatin Lyman Wight went with a Company to Mill port as I understand he returned & made a report as I understood it to be to Jos Smith Jr in which he said he found nothing to fight

but fences & empty houses I understood him to say the people had not taken away all their property Smith the Prophet here asked him if they had taken the negroes he said yes some one then laughed observed Smith you have lost Your negro to which I think, he made no reply

Jos Smith Jr asked Wight if he had done any thing with the property remaining in Millport Wight said not they would leave that matter for a private council.

Suman Gibbs told me he went down with the expedition that fought Bogart and he remained behind $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the battle ground ["to" crossed out] holding horses I feel confident that Isaac Morley was not in the fight with Bogart, I think the original object of the Danite band was to operate on the dissenters, but afterwards it grew into System to carry out the designs of the Presidency and if necessary to use physical force to upbuild the Kingdom of God it was to be done by them this is my Opinion as to their object and I learned it from various Sources connected with that band. It was my understanding that Dr Avard, teachings in the danite Society proceeded from the Presidency. I never heard that Constitution spoken of by Dr. Avard in the Society when I was present nor did I ever hear of

it until lately & further this deponent saith not
John Corrill

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