

Missouri State Archives: Finding Aid 5.1

Mormon War Papers, 1837-1841

[*Full-text transcription of:* Witness James C. Owens, a Mormon dissenter who was present at Far West, October 30, 1838]

James G Owens, a witness produced Sworn and examined on behalf of the State, deposed and saith In this morning of the day that the militia arrived at Far West. I heard Joseph Smith Jr. in a speech to the Mormons troops say, that he did not care any thing about the coming of the troops nor about the laws, that he had tried to please them_ If they lived together it wouldn't please them if they scattered it wouldn't please them & that he did not intend to try to keep the [] to please then any longer. that they were so damned set, and God should damn them, so help him Jesus Christ.—That he meant to go on them as he had begun, and take his own course, and kill & destroy-and told the men to fight like angels that heretofore he had told them to fight like devils, but now told them to fight like angels. that angels could whip devils_ I think in this speech it was that he said that what they lacked in numbers the Lord would make up by sending angels and send two angels where they lacked one man. He swore considerably and observed that they might think that he was swearing, but that God Almighty would not take notice of him in cursing such a damned set as they were. He further stated that they pretended to come out as militia, but that they were all a damned set of mobs.- He stated at that or some other time that as they had commenced consecrating in Daviess county that he intended to have the surrounding counties consecrated to him, that the time had come when the riches of the Gentiles should be consecrated to the saints-(“after prisoners” crossed out) while the last of expedition was in progress in Daviess county_ a portion of the troops returned to Far west to whom & to the people assembled I understood Sidney Rigdon had read a letter from Jos Smith Jr_ I asked him to read it to me which he did and it was as near as I can recollect as follows That the enemy was delivered into their hands, and that they need not

not fear, that this had been given to him by the spirit of prophecy in the name of Jesus Christ. Sidney Rigdon appeared to rejoice at the information, and gaive unto the thing- A few days before the Militia got to Far west Jos Smith Jr observed that he did not intend to obey the laws any longer, that he had had a great may ("law suits" crossed out) writs served on him, & that he was of age, and did not intend to have another served on him- And further this deponent saith not-

James C. Owens

Nathaniel Carr. a witness produced, sworn and examined in behalf of the State deposeth and saith- While the last expedition was going on in Daviess county a portion of the troops returned to Far West, and was paraded before Mr Rigdons door- A letter was produced by him. Recd as he said from Jos Smith Jr & Lyman Wight, and perhaps Hiram Smith, and I think Elias Higby- The letter was read, which stated something like this that all things were going on well in Daviess that they had nothing to fear, and that the enemy was in their hands,- I understood from what was said in the letter that they knew this from revelation. The letter was read to about 200 men most of them under arm- The town appeared under military rule, picket guards were sent out morning & evening_ this state of things was continued for three or four weeks & until the mormons surrendered their arms. When the forces that went out to attack Bogart were collecting about midnight I heard them say that a mob was collecting near Fields who had taken some of the brethran prisoners, and that they were collecting a company to release them- and further this deponent saith not, Nathaniel Carr