

The Knights in the D&C

The Stories Behind the Verses

with Diane Mangum





Diane L. Mangum

I'd like to share some of the back stories relating to the Knight family that are behind the verses you read.

The Knight Family in 1826

Joseph Knight, Sr. and Polly Peck Knight

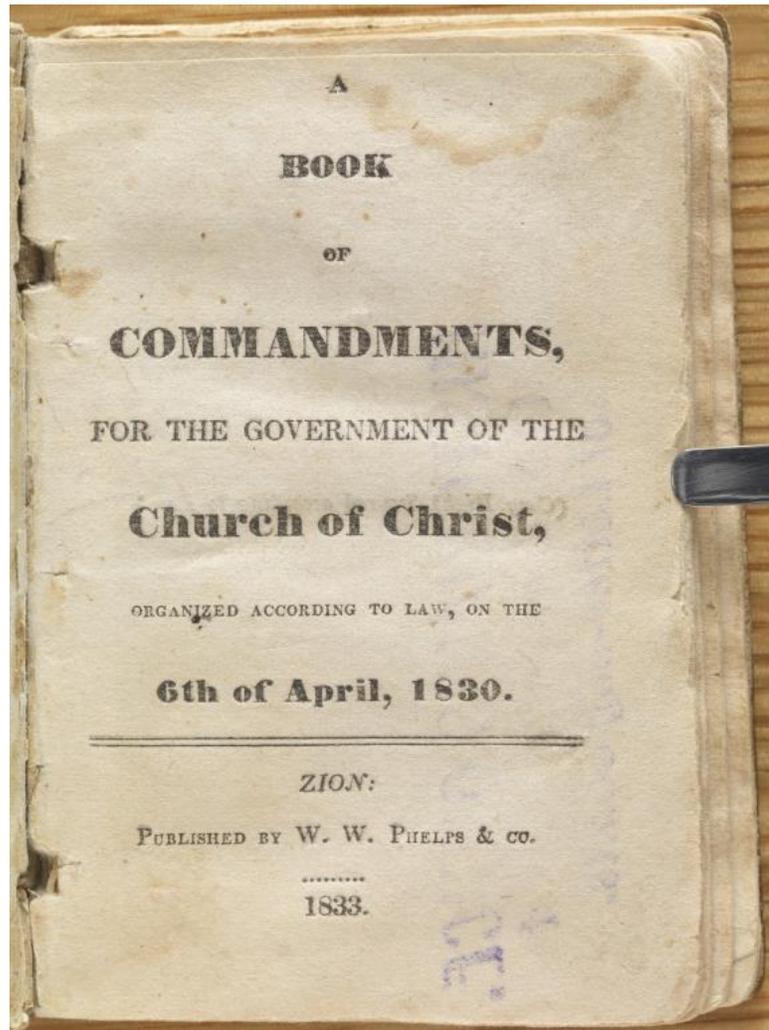
- Nahum, 30, married to Thankful
- Esther, 28, married to Wm. Stringham
- Newel, 26, married to Sally
- Anna, 22, married to Freeborn DeMille
- Joseph, Jr., 18, lived at home
- Polly, 15, lived at home
- Elizabeth, 9, lived at home



The lives of the Knights and the Colesville Saints were intertwined with almost all of the significant early events of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Knights met Joseph Smith when he came to work at the family farm in Colesville in 1826 and they watched first-hand as the Restoration unfolded.

Their lives were woven into the very fabric of the early church and knowing their stories and experiences enhances our understanding and appreciation for the revelations that are recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants.

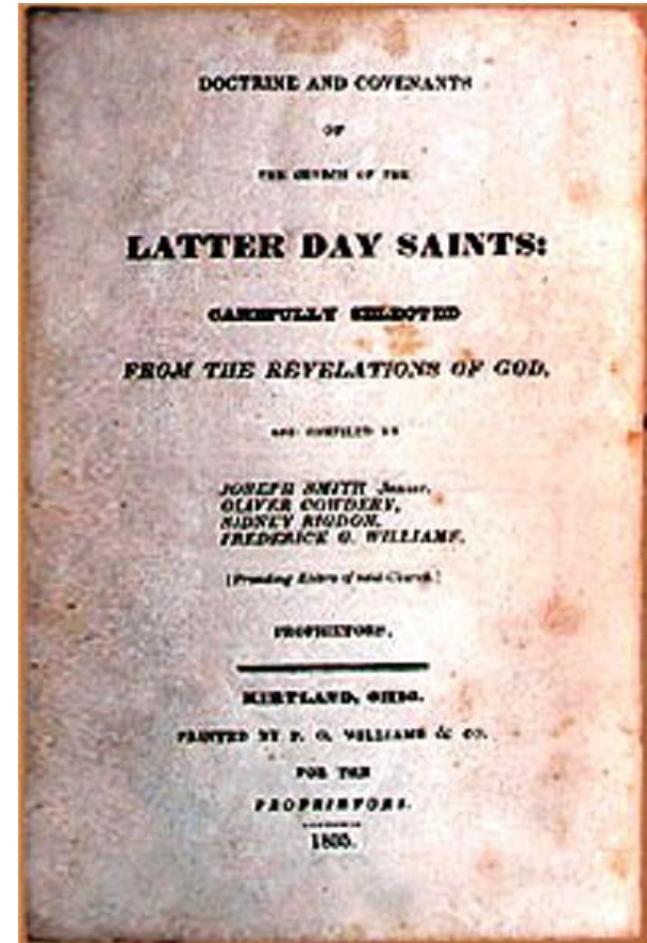
All of the members of the Joseph and Polly Knight immediate family were baptized into the newly founded Church of Christ in 1830. Many of Joseph and Polly's siblings with their families also lived in Colesville and were baptized in 1830. Collectively they became the Colesville Branch, the first branch of the church.



The first collection of the revelations received by Joseph Smith were published in the Book of Commandments in 1833 in Independence, Missouri.

Before printing was finished, a mob burned down the print shop, only about 100 copies were saved, mostly because two young girls grabbed unbound pages that had been thrown in the streets, and then ran into the corn fields to hide from the mobs.

- In 1835, the revelations received by Joseph Smith were published in a book of 65 sections.
- Sections 2-19 were recorded before the church was even organized in 1830. Those early sections were mostly a response from individuals wanting to know what the Lord would have them do, including Joseph Smith, Sr., Hyrum Smith, Oliver Cowdery.
- Section 12 was requested by Joseph Knight, Sr. during a visit to Joseph and Emma in Harmony.
- These early sections reflect anticipation of great things to come, as some phrases are seen in multiple sections, such as: "A great work is about to come forth among the children of men."





Recreated Joseph and Emma Smith home in Harmony, Pennsylvania.

Joseph Knight, Sr. was a true friend to Joseph and Emma and he helped them with food, cash, even paper to use in translating the Book of Mormon. In May of 1829 Joseph Knight, Sr. took a wagon with some supplies to Joseph and Emma in Harmony. While there, he asked young Joseph Smith to inquire of the Lord what he should do.



The answer received is **Section 12** of the Doctrine and Covenants, including the admonition to “Bring forth and establish the cause of Zion,” and “to be temperate in all things entrusted to his care.”

Section 21- April 6, 1830 – Fayette The Church was organized

- 1 Behold, there shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ,
- 2 Being inspired of the Holy Ghost to lay the foundation thereof, and to build it up unto the most holy faith.
- 3 Which church was organized and established in the year of your Lord eighteen hundred and thirty, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April.



Inside the Whitmer home in Fayette, New York.

Joseph Knight, Sr. attended the meeting when the Church was organized. He later wrote about Joseph Smith, that his "joy seemed to Be full. I think he saw the grate work he had Begun and was Desirus to Carry it out."



Restored Smith frame home on the family farm
in Manchester/ Palmyra.

Following the organization of the church in Fayette, Joseph Smith met with five men in his home on his father's farm in Manchester.

Those men, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Samuel Smith, Joseph Smith, Sr. and Joseph Knight, Sr. were all anxious to learn how they should endeavor to work to build up the kingdom. Different verses were addressed to each man.

Section 23

6 Behold, I manifest unto you, **Joseph Knight**, by these words, that you must take up your cross, in the which you must pray vocally before the world as well as in secret, and in your family, and among your friends, and in all places.

7 And, behold, it is your duty to unite with the true church, and give your language to exhortation continually, that you may receive the reward of the laborer. Amen.



Restored Joseph and Polly Knight Home

The Knight home on Windsor Road in Colesville was the meeting place and headquarters for church activity in the Colesville Branch in 1830.

Here at the Knight home a mob prevented the newly baptized Colesville members from being confirmed and had Joseph Smith arrested for "disturbing the peace."

Section 24:3

3 Magnify thine office; and after thou hast sowed thy fields and secured them, go speedily unto the church which is in **Colesville**, Fayette, and Manchester, and they shall support thee; and I will bless them both spiritually and temporally;

Section 26:1

1 Behold, I say unto you that you shall let your time be devoted to the studying of the scriptures, and to preaching, and **to confirming the church at Colesville**, and to performing your labors on the land, such as is required, until after you shall go to the west to hold the next conference; and then it shall be made known what you shall do.

of the is the necessity of humility, and meekness before the Lord, that he might take us of his ways; that we might walk in his paths, and live by every word which passeth forth from his mouth.



Early in the month of August, Newel Knight and his wife paid us a visit, at my place at Harmony, Penn; and, as neither his wife nor mine had been as yet confirmed, ~~and~~ it was proposed that we should confirm them, and partake together of the sacrament, before he and his wife should leave us. — In order to prepare for this; I set out to go to procure some wine for the occasion, but had gone ~~but~~ ^{only} a short distance when I was met by a heavenly messenger, and received the following revelation; the first paragraph of which was written at this time, and the remainder in the September following.

Revelation given at Harmony Penn, August 1830.

1. Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, your Lord, your God and your redeemer, whose word is quick and powerful. For behold I say unto you, that it mattereth

Joseph Smith recorded the visit from Newel and Sally Knight in August 1830, and the visit of a heavenly messenger.

He then recorded the revelation that became Section 27.

Section 27 – Early August 1830, Harmony, Pennsylvania

2 For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory—remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins.

3 Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, that you shall not purchase wine neither strong drink of your enemies;

4 Wherefore, you shall partake of none except it is made new among you; yea, in this my Father's kingdom which shall be built up on the earth.



“We partook of the Sacrament, after which we confirmed these two sisters into the Church, and spent the evening in a glorious manner. The Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon us, we praised the Lord God, and rejoiced exceedingly.” Joseph Smith, History of the Church

Sally and Newel returned to Colesville to report that Joseph would come August 21st to confirm the newly baptized people there.

It was almost the end of August before Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and John and David Whitmer got to Colesville to hold a confirmation service, and it took a miraculous answer to prayer to be able to do it.



Second Conference of the Church September 1830

Newel and his brother-in-law Freeborn DeMille went to Fayette to attend the 2nd Conference of the Church and discovered there was some controversy about the new revelations proclaimed by Hyrum Page.

Newel Knight wrote in his journal about the night before the Second Conference in Fayette: "Joseph was perplexed, and scarcely knew how to meet this new exigency. That night I occupied the same room that he did and the greater part of the night was spent in prayer and supplication. . ."

Newel wrote, "It was wonderful to witness the wisdom that Joseph manifested on this occasion for truly God did give him great wisdom and power."



Section 28 – Fayette, New York

This revelation declares, among other things, that only the president of the church may receive revelation for the church.

Section 29 – Fayette, Sept. 26, 1830 & Second Conference of the Church

- The members of the Church were commanded to gather in one place
- Freeborn DeMille, husband of Anna Knight DeMille, was baptized by Hyrum Smith and confirmed by Joseph Smith
- Newel Knight was ordained a priest by Oliver Cowdery
- Total membership of the Church was now 62. The Knight, Peck, Slade relatives from Colesville made up one-fourth of the Church.



Whitmer Home in Fayette, New York



Section 37- Jan. 2, 1831 3rd Conference – Fayette

1 Behold, I say unto you that it is not expedient in me that ye should translate any more until ye shall **go to the Ohio**, and this because of the enemy and for your sakes.

2 And again, I say unto you that ye shall not go until ye have preached my gospel in those parts, and have strengthened up the church whithersoever it is found, and more especially in **Colesville**; for, behold, they pray unto me in much faith.

Newel Knight and his brother-in-law Freeborn DeMille attended the 3rd Conference in Fayette and brought back word to the family that the gathering place of the Saints would be in Ohio. The whole extended family immediately began plans to move.

Just a few weeks later, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon visited Colesville. Such severe threats were made against them and the Knights, that they left immediately. Joseph Knight, Sr., with Polly and their daughter Elizabeth and Polly left in the dark of night for Kirtland. The rest of his children and extended family came in April.



The United Order

At the Third Conference in Fayette on January 2nd, the revelation that became Section 38 was presented, and it signaled the beginning of a new economic system known as the United Order.

Section 51 was given in Kirtland in May of 1831. The Colesville Branch was asked to be the first to live the United Order. They were asked to go as a group to Thompson, Ohio, ten miles from Kirtland, and create a self-contained community on donated land.

Section 38

25 And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself.

26 For what man among you having twelve sons, and is no respecter of them, and they serve him obediently, and he saith unto the one: Be thou clothed in robes and sit thou here; and to the other: Be thou clothed in rags and sit thou there—and looketh upon his sons and saith I am just? . . .

Section 51

13 And again, let the bishop appoint a storehouse unto this church; and let all things both in money and in meat, which are more than is needful for the wants of this people, be kept in the hands of the bishop.

14 And let him also reserve unto himself for his own wants, and for the wants of his family, as he shall be employed in doing this business.

15 And thus I grant unto this people a privilege of organizing themselves according to my laws.

Section 52 - June 3-6

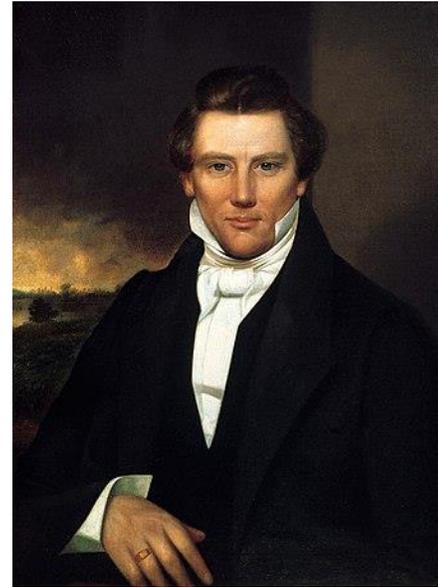
Following a conference held in Kirtland

10 Let them go two by two, and thus let them preach by the way in every congregation, baptizing by water, and the laying on of the hands by the water's side. . .

32 And let my servants **Newel Knight** and Selah Griffin both be ordained, and also take their journey.

33 Yea, verily I say, let all these take their journey unto one place, in their several courses, and one man shall not build upon another's foundation, neither journey in another's track.

34 He that is faithful, the same shall be kept and blessed with much fruit.



During the Kirtland Conference, Joseph Smith announced that 28 men were called on missions to preach variously, in Missouri, "eastern lands" and even "Detroit."

Newel's mission call to Missouri led to some great distress among members of the Colesville Branch.



Section 54

2 Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, my servant **Newel Knight**, you shall stand fast in the office whereunto I have appointed you. . .

8 And thus you [you, meaning the whole of the Colesville Branch] shall **take your journey into the regions westward, unto the land of Missouri, unto the borders of the Lamanites.**

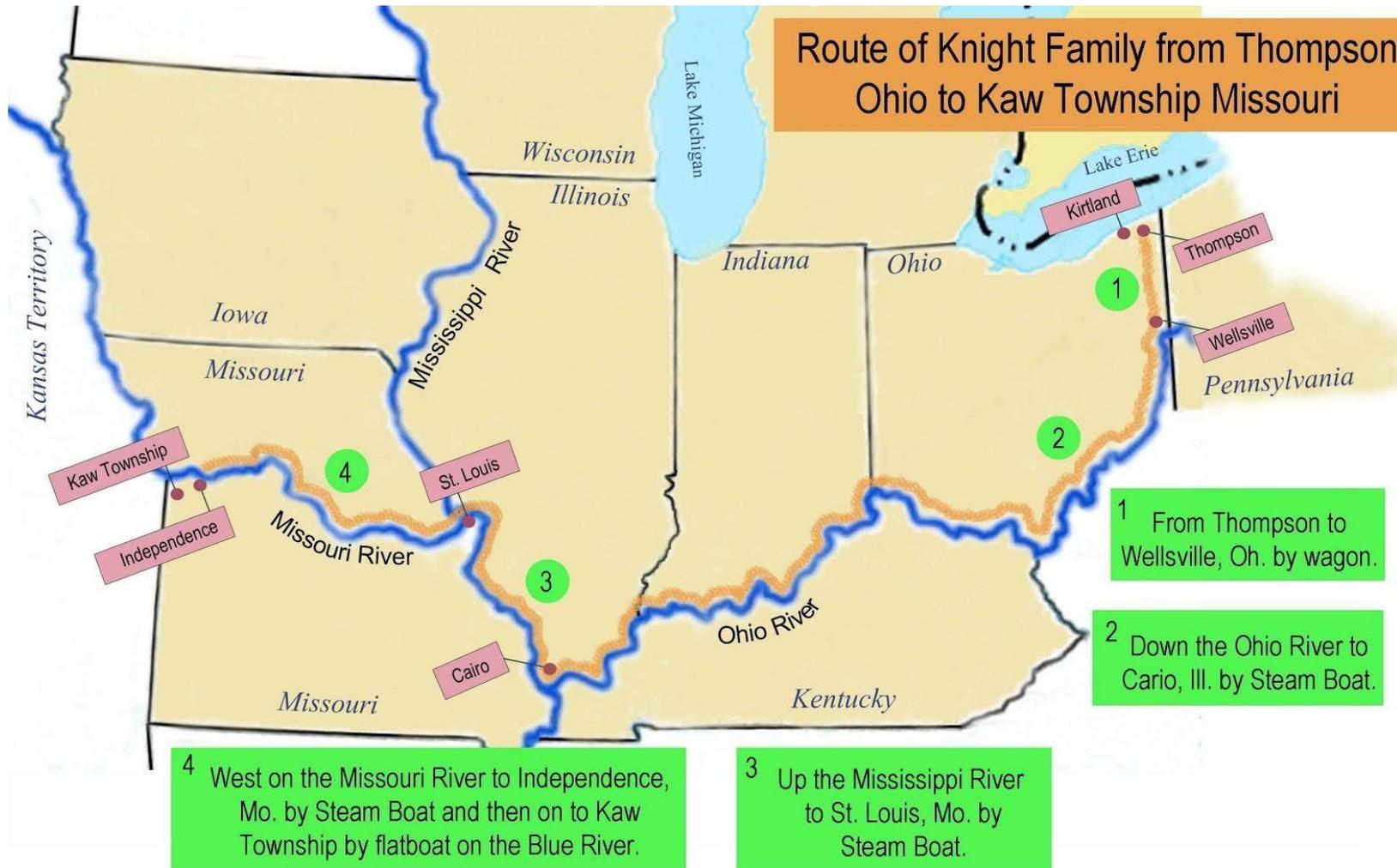
Section 56

6 For behold, I revoke the commandment which was given unto my servants Selah J. Griffin and **Newell Knight**, in consequence of the stiffneckedness of my people which are in Thompson, and their rebellions.

7 Wherefore, let my servant Newel Knight remain with them; and as many as will go may go, that are contrite before me, and be led by him to the land which I have appointed.

In the end, Newel was released from his mission call and he stayed with the Colesville Saints.

The land that Lemman Copley donated to the United Order community was withdrawn, and Newel led the group to Missouri. They were to go to the American borders by the Lamanites and a true frontier.

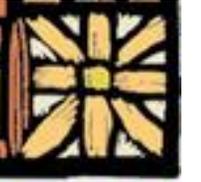


The two dozen children and about 40 adults the Colesville group had a long journey to Missouri. And to make matters worse, Polly Peck Knight was very sick. Newel even left the steamboat at one point to buy lumber to make a coffin just in case she died along the way.

Polly's greatest hope was to be buried in Zion, and she made it just barely. She passed away a few days after her family made it to Kaw Township, Missouri.



Section 59 - Jackson County, Missouri - 7 August 1831



Part of the Section 59 heading:

*Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, August 7, 1831. Preceding this revelation, the land was consecrated, as the Lord had directed, and the site for the future temple was dedicated. On the day this revelation was received, **Polly Knight, the wife of Joseph Knight Sr.,** died, the first Church member to die in Zion.*

Verses 2-4 were part of the funeral sermon Joseph Smith gave for Polly Knight.

1 Behold, blessed, saith the Lord, are they who have come up unto this land with an eye single to my glory, according to my commandments.

2 For those that live shall inherit the earth, and those that die shall rest from all their labors, and their works shall follow them; and they shall receive a crown in the mansions of my Father, which I have prepared for them.

3 Yea, blessed are they whose feet stand upon the land of Zion, who have obeyed my gospel; for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the earth, and it shall bring forth in its strength.

4 And they shall also be crowned with blessings from above, yea, and with commandments, not a few, and with revelations in their time—they that are faithful and diligent before me.



Section 100 -Perrysburg, New York October 12, 1833

3 Behold, and lo, I have much people in this place, in the regions round about; and an effectual door shall be opened in the regions round about in this eastern land.

4 Therefore, I, the Lord, have suffered you to come unto this place; for thus it was **expedient in me for the salvation of souls.**

* * * * *

In October of 1833, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon left Kirtland to parts of New York and "Upper Canada," the region north of Lake Erie. Like many missionaries, Joseph and Sidney became concerned about the welfare of their families at home and prayed for help. This revelation instructed them to preach for the salvation of souls.

Lydia Goldthwaite, a young woman visiting the Nickerson home in Mount Pleasant, heard Joseph and Sidney preach and quickly became one of those souls that it was found.



*Lydia Goldthwaite
Baptized 27 October 1833 by Joseph Smith
in Mount Pleasant, Upper Canada*



**Hyrum and Jerusha Smith Home in Kirtland, Ohio.
This is the home where Newel and Lydia met and
where they were later married by Joseph Smith.**

Lydia Goldthwaite moved to Kirtland, Ohio after her baptism. There she met Newel Knight, now a widower, had gone to Kirtland to help finish the Kirtland Temple. Lydia and Newel met at the Hyrum Smith home where they both were boarders. On Nov. 24, 1835, Joseph Smith performed the marriage ceremony and Hyrum and Jerusha hosted the wedding party for Lydia and Newell in their home.

Newel and Lydia returned to Newel's home in Clay County, Missouri after the dedication of the temple.

Like all the Knights and members of the Colesville Branch, they were pushed from Clay County to Caldwell County and then to Nauvoo. The branch no longer existed. The group fractured as each family unit tried to find their own way. Nahum Knight took his family west rather than to Nauvoo.

In Nauvoo, Newel and Joseph, Jr. resumed the family trade of mill building.



Section 124:131-132

19 Jan. 1841 – Nauvoo, Illinois

Newel was named with 11 other men to be on the High Council in Nauvoo

131 And again, I say unto you, I give unto you a high council, for the cornerstone of Zion—

132 Namely, Samuel Bent, Henry G. Sherwood, George W. Harris, Charles C. Rich, Thomas Grover, **Newel Knight**, David Dort, Dunbar Wilson—Seymour Brunson I have taken unto myself; no man taketh his priesthood, but another may be appointed unto the same priesthood in his stead; and verily I say unto you, let my servant Aaron Johnson be ordained unto this calling in his stead—David Fullmer, Alpheus Cutler, William Huntington.

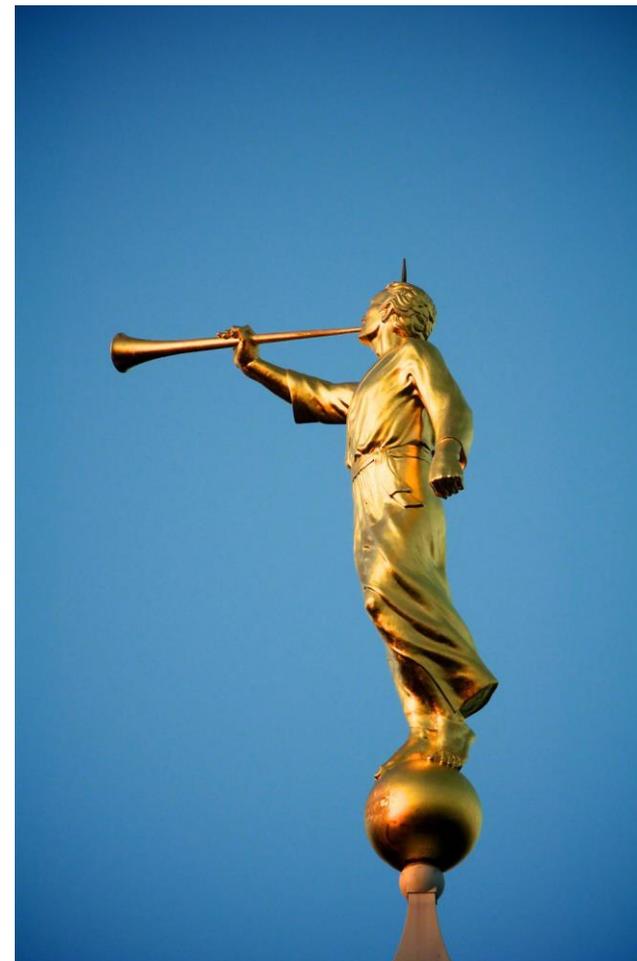


Section 128

6 September 1842 – Nauvoo

An epistle from Joseph Smith

20 And again, what do we hear? Glad tidings from Cumorah! Moroni, an angel from heaven, declaring the fulfilment of the prophets—the book to be revealed. A voice of the Lord in the wilderness of Fayette, Seneca county, declaring the three witnesses to bear record of the book! The voice of Michael on the banks of the Susquehanna, detecting the devil when he appeared as an angel of light! The voice of Peter, James, and John in the wilderness between Harmony, Susquehanna county, and **Colesville, Broome county**, on the Susquehanna river, declaring themselves as possessing the keys of the kingdom, and of the dispensation of the fulness of times!



Section 132 is the last revelation in the D. & C. that came through Joseph Smith. Joseph was martyred with his brother Hyrum in 1844. There are currently 138 Sections and 2 declarations in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Sections of the Doctrine and Covenants that mention:

- Colesville - 24, 26, 37 and 128
- Joseph Knight, Sr. - 12 and 23
- Newel Knight - 53, 54, 56 and 124
- Polly Peck – the heading of 59
- The sacrament meeting where Emma Smith and Sally Knight were confirmed - 27
- The missionary journey that resulted in the baptism of Lydia Goldthwaite Knight - 100
- General church conferences attended by Knight family members: 28, 29, 37, 51

